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SCOTT H. POPE, D.D.S.

1844 San Miguel Dr., Suite 200
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
Tel: (925) 939-4989
Fax: (925) 939-4991
Email: appointments@popedental.com
www.popedental.com

Scott Pope DDS
Fellow Academy of General Dentistry
Fellow International College of Oral Implantologists

Practice Background

My practice has been located in Walnut Creek, CA for over 20 years. We began as a four operatory practice, and have grown over the years to eight operatories. We included Kelkom™ in our initial office design because of recommendations from other colleagues in practice based on its ease of use, ability to effectively and quickly communicate with staff and long term reliability.

As we expanded the practice and increased number of staff, we have relied more on Kelkom to manage our back office patient flow.

During the last 5 years we have updated other equipment and technologies in the office, which allowed us to investigate new technologies in inter-office communication. Each system claiming a better way to solve communication needs for the back-office. Most of these involve the use of PC workstations, and these are the ones we reviewed.

Meanwhile, we have been long-time users of two leading practice management (PM) software products, Dentrix and now, Eagle Soft. While each software product does a good job at managing patient records, data and appointment information, neither could effectively be used for back-office communications. We run a very efficient dental office with lots of advanced technology and dental treatment that relies on a staff in constant communication, working together to deliver exceptional dental care to our patients. Inter-office communication is critical and we have found Kelkom to be the most effective way to achieve this. We reviewed the communication capabilities embedded in the two PM products, as well as several 3rd-party products including one that was "free." Nothing came close regarding quick, effective inter-office communication.

Realizations & Recommendations

We were surprised that the results of our analysis centered on 2 aspects of communication style or approach versus specific features available in the products. The first aspect is the ease of use of the human interface; the second is flexibility and efficiency in use.

All of the products fail as "easy to use" in practice, while in theory they sound fine – even cool in a few cases. Reading, interpreting, and replying to any form of TXT message – especially in bubble formats – is a huge waste of time. I want my staff

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delivering excellent care not spending their time typing and mousing while our patients sit in chairs.

Possibly worse than typing messages is mousing through pull-down menus to communicate, and worse still is to search through an application to find the communication menu. An unbelievable waste of time – especially mine - even when the staff uses the PC and application for patient care like viewing patient x-rays, charting, treatment planning, or education.

This leads directly to the other aspect – the software products cause my staff to be less efficient delivering care. The reason depends on the ergonomics in the Ops – specifically the PC screen and keyboard / mouse at the 12 o'clock position in the Ops.

The time impact and patient satisfaction and comfort impacts are subtle. To look at and use the PC requires us – either me or my assistant - to turn into or toward the patient and the plumbing coming from the cabinet in order to read and respond to a communication – tangles of all sorts result.

The difference is vast with Kelkom - a quick turn away to press 2 or 3 buttons that are easy to see and touch quickly.

We realized another subtle benefit of Kelkom. Because the user panel is not in direct view during treatments, we can include in messages delicate information about patient or office status. This would otherwise require verbal discussion that would be overheard, and a break in the delivery of excellent care to our patients.

The simple yet meaningful communication approach of Kelkom allows my practice to excel in service to our patients while assuring me, the practice owner, improved business management practices.

We could not achieve these any other way.

Sincerely,

Scot H. Pope, DDS, FAGD, FICOI

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