In an interview with Dental Tribune, Dr. Bradley Engle, a periodontist in Naples, Fla., who founded and runs an educational Web site, www.dentaledu.tv, discusses online continuing education and how it addresses the needs of dental professionals.

Please tell our readers a bit about your own personal dental background and how you became interested in continuing education.

I went to Ohio State University and gained early acceptance to dental school. By age 24, I earned my dental degree from the Medical University of South Carolina. Over the next 26 months, I earned my periodontics certificate as well as a master’s of health science degree [MHS].

Soon after residency, I passed both parts of the board exam to become a board certified periodontist.

I became a clinical associate professor at the Medical University of South Carolina in 2004. Due to the travel distance between Charleston, S.C., and Naples, Fla., it was clear that I had to provide a more direct link between the periodontal residents and me.

It was simply impossible to provide teaching there any more than once every couple of months.

In 2006, I hired a professional company to install a high-definition surgical production studio at my Naples location. It was kind of fun recording surgical procedures and making DVDs for the residents to watch and archive for reference.

Since graduating from residency, I have enjoyed providing lectures around the world.

Periodontist Dr. Bradley Engle discusses online continuing education and how it addresses the needs of dental professionals

How many courses do you offer?

Over a period of six months, we filmed over 50 content providers with over 65 course titles. All of our content providers are recognized as key opinion leaders in dentistry. In addition, our user base is expanding rapidly.

The site obviously offers tremendous convenience for dental professionals who can learn at home, at their own pace. But are there any disadvantages for those who seek continuing education online?

Dentaledu.tv provides the complete solution for online dental C.E. Recently, I was told that we were the “next generation Webinar.” There are disadvantages to online C.E., which include the following: Some health care providers coordinate their vacations with taking C.E.

Their tax deductible vacation expenses are lost when there is no longer a need to travel to receive credits. Despite dentaledu.tv having the ability to provide clean, full-screen video streaming, the interaction with the instructor is lost online.

To help increase the interaction with the provider, we developed a two-way chat system to allow the user to communicate directly with the content provider during live events.

Your Web site is very high-tech and very professional. How complicated was it to set it up?

I spent day and night over the last two years dreaming and implementing the development of this project. Forming strategic relationships with other professionals, I got lucky to get as far as I have gotten.

Owning 100 percent of both the production company, www.1mediaproduction, and DentalEdu, www.dentaledu.tv, has kept the control and advancements of this project solely with me.

Since we are a video Web site, I have partnered with someone — Emanuel Boeck, a major film producer and director from Europe — who has made full-length films. He can mobilize a film crew to produce a one-hour course or can cast call a DentalEdu commercial.

Emanuel helped perfect the use of our video format and has been a loyal friend throughout the last two years.

Our full-time programmer has incorporated patent pending technology that provides a lot of the functionality of the site. He understands and has rewritten the Adobe video players to function as we need them to.

Since May 2009, he has perfected all of the databases and has created a completely automated Web site.

In your opinion, what do you think the future holds for online dental continuing education?

Due to providers’ crazy profession schedules, online education will reduce or eliminate trade shows and some of the smaller venues.

The larger venues will use a platform like dentaledu.tv to broadcast high-definition, TV-quality videos to providers that were unable to travel to the meeting.

The next few years will be crucial. Our video systems can stream video to the iPhone. Currently, all of our videos are saved on our server, ready to stream. The future is video.