Bigger isn’t better; better is better

Practice management software from an orthodontist’s point of view

By Peter Kimball, DMD

In June of 1993, after I graduated from my orthodontic specialty program, the excitement of starting a new chapter in my life brought another set of challenges with it.

Selecting a practice management system was not the most significant decision I faced, but it would certainly be ranked among the most complex decisions I had to make after graduation.

Even though the practice management software industry was full of options, there weren’t any programs that were both affordable enough to fit my budget and customizable enough for me to run my practice the way I wanted to. Because I did not want to spend a huge sum of money on a practice management system that would limit my choices of hardware/operating systems and offer little flexibility and customization in the exam and treatment charting areas, I decided to take a different route. Using my knowledge of programming and understanding of computer systems, I developed a practice management system that later became the foundation of Orthoease.

I had written the program to run my own practice more efficiently and had no intention of selling it to other practices. The plan changed quickly when some of my friends who were also orthodontists saw the program and wanted to buy it.

What attracted them to the program was its intuitiveness and flexibility. It was written by a practicing orthodontist, so naturally the flow of steps made sense to other orthodontists. The fact that the program could natively run on both Macs and PCs was also appealing to many.

Before long, the program was installed in dozens of practices, and I found myself looking for programmers, customer service staff, business managers and partners to take the program to the next level. In a matter of months, Orthoease was formed.

During the last 16 years, the program has evolved to become one of the leading practice management systems available to orthodontists, but we haven’t lost sight of what makes Orthoease different. It is an intuitive program that offers the most flexibility and best value.

Being a privately held company allows Orthoease to stay true to its roots, while having a practicing orthodontist as the chief architect of the program gives Orthoease a look and feel that is not only clinically efficient but is also intuitive.

Whether you are an established orthodontist or a new graduate, selecting the right practice management system can have a big impact on your success. So, before you commit to the bigger, I invite you to consider the better option.

Dr. Peter Kimball is a graduate of Marquette University. He has more than 17 years of experience as a practicing orthodontist and operates two successful practices in Laguna Beach and Laguna Niguel, Calif. He enjoys running and has competed in the Boston Marathon six times. His other passion is technology and computer programming. It was his love for technology and orthodontics that motivated him to develop Orthoease Practice Management System.

He is passionate about finding ways to deliver better treatment outcomes, higher clinical efficiency and greater patient satisfaction. Kimball lives in Laguna Beach with his wife, Nette, and three children.

For more information, please call Orthoease at (800) 217-2912 or e-mail info@orthoease.com.
Improve your practice with MRC Clinics

New concept of treatment puts emphasis on patient education and interactive activities

By Kristine Colker, Managing Editor

Encouraging early myofunctional habit treatment among growing children has been a continuous goal for Myofunctional Research Co. (MRC) during the past 20 years, but now the company has taken it a step further with the introduction of the MRC Clinics.

Since 1989 when Dr. Chris Farrell founded the company, MRC has made significant improvements to children’s faces and has educated people about the effects of soft-tissue dysfunction on the dentition.

The company’s many appliances, including the T4K, the Myobrace and the i-3, have assisted the correction of myofunctional habits in patients around the world.

Unlike traditional orthodontics, the goal of myofunctional treatment is not just to have straight front teeth, but to also remove the bad influences on a child’s dental and facial development, allowing the child to achieve his or her full genetic potential.

The idea for the MRC Clinics grew out of Farrell’s vision for the company, but it’s only been in the last couple years that the idea has become a reality. Launched in 2009, there are now MRC Clinics in the United States, Europe, Asia, Latin America and Australia.

“There is a whole concept behind the MRC Clinics,” said Damien O’Brien, international sales and training executive for MRC. “We’ve known for a long time that we need to have a way to help the doctor so that he can get compliance and make sure the patients are prepared to use the appliances properly.”

Basically, the MRC Clinics differ from regular practices in that there is an emphasis on better patient education delivered as enjoyable activities. These activities teach children through games and interaction about the bad oral habits that cause incorrect dental development and find ways to improve their general health and well-being through breathing and nutrition activities.

Children learn to be more in-control and responsible for the treatment itself and become more motivated as they become better aware of the gradual improvements.

A visit to a clinic starts with a sit-down between an auxiliary, a patient and the parents in front of a computer in a dedicated room equipped with a mirror so a patient can see his or her own face.

Together, they will go through a special CD-ROM, which will help educate the patient and parents in understanding that habits are always a part of what’s going on and that these habits are going to affect the patient’s face and future treatment.

“The whole idea is to move the patient from ‘Oh, doctor, you can fix my teeth,’ to ‘Oh! There’s something wrong with my tongue, my lips, my breathing, and I’m going to have to work with the doctor to fix it!’” O’Brien said.

This way, O’Brien said, a busy clinician doesn’t have to educate everybody but yet the patients still understand what they have to do.

The other dimension to the clinics is a special area for follow-up activities. Every four to six weeks during their follow-up appointments, patients are reminded to not just focus on their teeth but to make sure their tongue, lips and breathing habits are also improving.

Dr. Andrew Shieh is one of the first orthodontists in the United States to open an MRC Clinic. He has been in practice for the past 15 years, splitting his time between two practices in Huntington Park and Santa Ana, Calif.

“I first heard about MRC Clinics about two years ago, and although it was an interesting concept, I didn’t look into the full potential of it until looking for a treatment to correct my autistic son’s anterior bilateral crossbite,” Shieh said.

“It being that my son is autistic, I knew traditional fixed braces were going to pose a challenge but that he might be able to handle a Trainer.”

Unlike traditional fixed braces, the Trainer System by MRC allows patients to continue with their lifestyle as usual. Patients are able to eat and maintain good oral hygiene because the T4K is used only once a day and overnight.

Shieh’s Huntington Park MRC Clinic officially opened April 11, after about six months of getting it up and running.

“Overall, patient reaction has been fantastic and comments are nothing but great,” Shieh said.

If you are interested in running your own MRC Clinic, you must understand the habits and problems of myofunctional therapy, have been using the MRC appliances for at least a year and have an area big enough to be able to develop the clinic.

For more information on the MRC Clinics and how they are evolving, as well as for instructional videos and contact info, visit myoresearch.com/doctortraining or lessbraces.com.

He said any practitioner wanting to open an MRC Clinic should consider that three out of four children have incorrect dental and facial development.

“The MRC concept is unique in that it provides education and training tools for both the doctor and staff,” he said. “It has training programs available that focus on diagnosis and treatment planning in conjunction with the MRC appliances. The MRC Clinics’ layout also allows for a dramatic increase in patient flow.”

The best part, though, is that “Seeing the MRC Clinic open in Huntington Park has spiked patient interest,” Shieh said, “therefore bringing in more patients inquiring about treatment.”

5000 series of orthodontic treatment chairs

Boyd Industries, a market leader in dental specialty equipment, recently announced the introduction of a new series of treatment chairs for the orthodontic market.

The 5000 series of chairs incorporates all the features customers have come to expect in a Boyd chair but in a smaller, more streamlined look.

“Our customers have been asking us for a more compact lift base chair,” said Bruce Livingston, president of Boyd Industries. “The MS5000.LC answers that call.”

The MS5000.LC and MS6000.LC models feature an all-steel frame, low-voltage DC motors, programming, easily accessible chair-function controls with dual return-to-home switches, recessed headrest slot and a one-year comprehensive warranty supplemented by a three-year parts warranty.

Boyd Industries
Phone: (800) 235-2693
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Ortho2 is the largest privately held orthodontic practice management software provider in the world and works exclusively with orthodontists. Recently, Ortho2 launched an innovative and comprehensive practice management system, Edge®.

**Revolutionary and reliable**
The revolutionary Edge system includes the latest advancements in state-of-the-art management, imaging and communications software, as well as an off-site data hosting option. This web-based data model provides secure, full access from anywhere, even handheld devices, while eliminating the cost, complexity and risks associated with in-house servers and backups.

**Innovative new solutions**
This all-in-one solution takes practice management to the next level, offering leading technology to increase efficiency and profitability, including a new Edge Imaging platform and new Edge Animations for patient compliance and treatment.

**Edge Imaging**
Edge Imaging has everything you would expect, as well as innovative new features such as card flow presentation, drag-and-drop layout customization, unlimited undo and redo, silhouette image alignment, the ability to e-mail images or layouts, a simple import and more. It even includes an index layout to view all images and time points.

Edge Imaging can be used with all Ortho2 management systems as well as with other management systems or by itself. Edge Imaging works with Ortho2’s SmartCeph module to provide cephal analysis and Bolton Standards overlays.

**Edge Animations**
Edge Animations is a powerful tool for enhancing patient education, compliance and case presentation. Edge includes a set of patient-compliance animations at no charge and an optional extended set of treatment-based animations. According to Ortho2, the cutting-edge rendering techniques used produce videos of such quality they must be seen to fully appreciate their educational power. These animations allow the patient and parent to experience and quickly understand many aspects of treatment and compliance in ways that still images and verbal descriptions can’t match.

**Comprehensive features**
This revolutionary system also includes workflows standardized tasks, patient reminders, HR management, dynamic dashboard and widget library, Edge reports, goal tracker, smart scheduler, collections assistant and more. Edge is compatible with PCs, Macs or a mixed environment, and can even support multiple monitors for a power user.

**A history of success**
For nearly 30 years, Ortho2 has designed, developed and provided all software and services solely to the orthodontic market. More than 1,600 orthodontists have discovered its software, effective conversion process, quality training, ongoing support and optional equipment services.

From the beginning, Ortho2 has delivered innovative and reliable software solutions for orthodontists. The company continues to build upon its core business and expand its product lines to help its orthodontic partners advance and succeed.

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**SUS2**

The SUS2 is new and improved. This “one-size-fits-all” versatile chairside Class II corrector includes an adjustable internal spring that provides increased patient comfort and better hygiene, while avoiding the “pinching” effect that commonly occurs with an external spring. In addition, the new Easy Arch Adapter allows for quick, efficient attachment and removal from the lower archwire.

The new and improved patient starter kit comes with Turbo Springs and Crim- pable Spacer Rings that can be added during treatment to advance the case even more efficiently. At a price of only $269 for a three-patient starter kit, this appliance provides 25–30 percent savings over other available kits.

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**eBite Intraoral Lighting System**

New from Great Lakes, the eBite Intraoral Lighting System provides a wireless and rechargeable illumination solution for oral examination.

Lightweight and portable, eBite provides full illumination of intraoral work-space and quick, reliable isolation of the quadrant. The eBite system features autoclavable silicone bite blocks designed for optimal patient comfort, a rechargeable Li-Polymer battery and convenient docking cradle.

The eBite system is ideal for a variety of applications in general dentistry, orthodontics, dental hygiene and periodontics.

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