



Practice Profile

DENTAL PRACTICE
Costanzo Orthodontics
Fresno, Calif.

Cory Costanzo, DDS, MSD

OFFICE
Square feet: 3,080
Eight operatories

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- A-dec 311 Dental Chairs
- A-dec 361 Support Center
- A-dec 1601 Doctor's Stools
- A-dec Accessory Cabinets
- A-dec Dental Lights
- A-dec ICC Sterilization Center
- A-dec Lisa Autoclave
- Air Techniques AS30 Compressor
- Air Techniques VacStar 50H
- Biotec Mobile Treatment Centers
- SciCan Statim Autoclave
- Sirona XG 5 Pan/Ceph X-ray

New-Fashioned Tricks of the Trade



Costanzo Orthodontics ramps up for success with new technology and a fun attitude

When patients enter Cory Costanzo's practice, they quickly figure out what Dr. C (DDS, MSD), as he's known, does for fun. The skateboard enthusiast's foyer sports colorful skateboard decks on the walls and several decks have found a second life as the base for a glass-top coffee table. Even the practice logo has a stylized skateboard in it, and a hip, architectural half-pipe-like wall differentiates the office from its more staid contemporaries.

His new Fresno, Calif., location is ideally situated for year-round skateboarding – a fact that is reflected in the design of his open, airy new office. Costanzo is a skateboarder,

and he gets out every weekend to practice, visiting many of Fresno's great skate parks. It's this youthful vigor that informed Costanzo's goal: to build an office that reflected the fun, friendly, upbeat practice he had built, "where we don't play Muzak over the radio," he said.

In October 2009, as Costanzo considered renewing his lease, which was up in July 2010, he weighed his options. The building where he had practiced since 2004 lacked proximity to his target demographic, and he was renting more than 4,000 square feet of space that was originally intended for a group of specialists, but that plan never materialized. It was about this time that

Costanzo's Patterson Dental sales representative, Brett Constable, visited. Costanzo mentioned that he was thinking of building new, and Constable told him to go for it. "I'm kind of toying with the idea of building an office, or at least finding out what would be involved in building an office," Costanzo said to Constable. "I had no idea where to start with something like that."



Constable told him the first step would be finding a location, so he put a real estate broker in touch with Costanzo the very next day. "He took me around to a few buildings," Costanzo said. "We nailed down the location that I wanted, and then the next step of the process was designing a full floor plan."

From there, Constable and Charmen Brummer, his Patterson equipment specialist, provided contacts for the independent contractor, financing company and interior designer on the project with the goal of being a one-stop shop to make the office buildout less stressful for Costanzo. As the process of building a new office moved forward, Costanzo said his relationship with his Patterson team grew.

Constable had worked with Dr. Costanzo on implementing small projects, such as getting started on providing fluoride treatment during orthodontic banding, but building the new office led them to talking about the bigger possibilities. "It really wasn't until I started floating this idea of building a new office, [that] he kind of took it and ran with it," Costanzo said of Constable. For his part, Constable provided knowledge as well as support. "I told him 'Make this thing your own. Dream big,'" Constable said.

Costanzo chose his location near Clovis, an area just two miles north and east of his old practice, because he found during an informal survey his existing patient population was concentrated in the area, and he wanted to stay close to his patient base while also appealing to new patients from nearby. >>





The new building attracted Costanzo with its large windows, high ceilings and wide open spaces. "I wanted to have sort of an open feel to the floor plan," he said. "We want to welcome everybody to the practice, and we want everyone to feel like they are part of our family. So I didn't want any closed doors; I didn't want the waiting room to be separate from the treatment area. I wanted people to be able to come and go as they please."

After choosing the light-infused location, Brummer got involved. "I sketched out the floor plan I was thinking about on graph paper, gave that to her, and she took it from there and made a digital version," Costanzo said.

Brummer created a floor plan that maximized exposure to the windows and used natural light to illuminate the treatment areas. While Costanzo was concerned about the aesthetics of his practice – that the modern décor and skateboard motif is carried throughout – he also wanted to be certain that lab, sterilization and office areas were top notch. "That's where Charmen really helped me figure out how to best configure those areas to make them the most practical," he said. "She suggested moving the sterilization center closer to the treatment area, for one. Things like that that I wouldn't normally think about, but they're thinking

about them all the time."

The new practice has six open-bay operatories and two private operatories in 3,090 square feet of useable space. The initial exam is done in a private room and the flow between open-bay and private rooms has improved. "In our old office, the private rooms were across the other side of the office," he said. "It was a little less convenient."

The open-bay operatories are a key design aspect of Costanzo Orthodontics. "I think the main difference between an ortho office and a general office is our main open treatment area," Costanzo said. "An open treatment area facilitates going from chair to chair. With orthodontics, we tend to spend less time at each chair, but see more patients per day. We needed to have something that flows so we can get from chair to chair easily and be able to communicate easily without having a bunch of separate treatment rooms."

Other improvements include all new A-dec 300 chairs. "I had considered bringing some of that old equipment over, and that's something that I'm glad Charmen talked me out of. I think it would have been a big mistake to bring that old equipment into this nice new office," he said with a chuckle.



The game-changing piece of equipment is without a doubt the new Sirona Orthophos XG5. "I had an old analog pano machine at the old office, so we had the darkroom, [and] we had to develop everything," Costanzo said. "Going to digital X-ray has been huge. Just being able to have a patient go in there, take a 10-second pano, and be able to see it immediately on the screen speeded things immensely. The quality of that Sirona machine – I've compared it to X-rays that I get emailed from other offices that are using different machines – is amazing. The pictures that I get are extremely clear, and I'm able to see so much more that I wasn't able to see with my old machine."



One of the biggest challenges Costanzo Orthodontics faced was moving from a paper based to paperless practice, which included going to digital X-rays. The paperless systems have allowed workflow to move more smoothly and using digital charting and

X-ray has allowed the practice to run more efficiently, even with an increased patient load, Dr. Costanzo says.

"Since we've moved, we've had steady growth," Dr. Costanzo says. "Orthodontics is usually not seen as a necessity, so a lot of people have been putting that off. I think the new office has kind of helped me weather the storm, weather the economy, and not only prevent decline, but actually increase production a little bit even during these tough times."

While the economy may have been gloomy, Dr. Costanzo chose Patterson in part for his team's positive attitude. Prior to getting started on the project, he spoke with other dental supply companies that gave him the impression that it would be too much work and too costly to build a new practice, Dr. Costanzo recalls. "But after talking to Brett and Charmen, I just kind of got this feeling from them that, yes, this was the right thing to do," he said. "Just their optimistic outlook – 'Yes, this can work and we're going to be there every step of the way to make it as easy as we can for you' – that's just the feeling that I got from them."

Dr. Costanzo has fun with his patients, whether he's wearing fairy wings if someone loses a tooth or taking fun pictures of patients and staff to put on the practice's Facebook page and website. Last >>

