



PRACTICE PROFILE

DENTAL PRACTICE

Hilgers Orthodontics
Goodyear, Ariz.

Michael J. Hilgers, DDS, MS

Kelly Hilgers, DDS, MS

Greg Mathieu, DDS

OFFICE

Square feet: 3,000

8 operatories

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- A-dec Dental Lights
- A-dec Treatment Consoles
- Dolphin Imaging
- Dolphin Practice Management
- Midmark Classic Series Vacuum
- Midmark M3 Sterilizer
- Midmark PowerAir Oil-less Compressor
- Porter MXR-1 Flushmount Flowmeters
- Porter Vanguard Manifold System
- Schick 33 Sensors
- Sirona Heliodent Intraoral X-rays
- Sirona Orthophos XG 3D Pan/Ceph
- Sirona Orthophos XG 3 Digital Pan
- Summit Dental Systems Biscayne Ortho Chairs
- Summit Dental Systems Dental Lights
- Summit Dental Systems Doctor's Stool
- A-dec 511 Dental Chairs
- A-dec 541 12 O'Clock Delivery Systems
- A-dec 1601 Doctor's Stools
- A-dec 1622 Assistant's Stools



Fun by Design

An old gas station is transformed into a fun and nostalgic Route 66-themed orthodontic practice that patients love to visit.

Michael J. Hilgers, DDS, MS, knows that exceptional patient care is only part of what makes an orthodontic practice successful. Extraordinary customer service, an outgoing and friendly staff, and an enjoyable environment – in addition to top-notch care – are all key elements of the doctor's successful Goodyear, Arizona practice, Hilgers Orthodontics.

Michael's two offices, located just 15 miles apart, each feature a unique theme that makes trips to the orthodontist feel more like a party than an appointment. "The public appreciates creativity, customer service and fun," he said. "No one has ever said they didn't have fun here."

In the family

Though a passion for orthodontics runs in Michael's family – his uncle and cousin are both orthodontists and have patented many of the orthodontic appliances on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. – he didn't automatically gravitate toward the field.

An all-star soccer player in high school, Michael looked forward to playing the sport on a scholarship in college. Unfortunately, a knee injury sidelined him. During his rehabilitation, he became interested in athletic training and pursued the career for a few years after graduation, but tired of the extensive travel it required.

Michael decided to follow in his family's footsteps and pursue a career in orthodontics. He enrolled at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver, Colo., where he graduated near the top of his class with a DDS degree. There, he also met his wife, Kelly Hilgers, DDS, MS, a pediatric dentist. He went on to complete two years of residency at Yale University and received his MS degree and orthodontic specialty certificate at the University of Louisville.

After the couple had completed their education, a dental office became available for purchase in the Palm Valley Office Park in Goodyear. It was the perfect place for Kelly to establish her pediatric practice as well as the start of a strong partnership with Patterson Equipment Specialist David Rosas. The doctors were impressed with Rosas' knowledge, expertise, and customer service during Kelly's build. When Michael decided to purchase an office just a few blocks down the street, he didn't hesitate to call on Rosas for assistance.

Rosas helped Michael bring to life his vision for a Mardi Gras themed office, complete with the latest productivity boosting equipment and technology. The practice was a near-instant success, and Michael discovered that many of his patients were driving up to 25 miles for a visit. That's when he decided to build a second satellite office where he and Kelly could practice together. >>





Inspiring smiles

Michael discovered the new office in an unlikely location: an inoperative gas station in the Estrella Mountain Ranch community of Goodyear. The building provided the inspiration for a nostalgic Route 66 theme.

Michael and Kelly didn't overlook a single detail in bringing the iconic Mother Road to life right in their office. Used gas pumps, car parts, meters, neon signs, a checkerboard floor, wallpaper featuring Route 66 scenery and a '57 Chevy for a front desk create a whimsical and festive environment. "When you walk into our practice, you don't feel like you're in a dental office," Michael said. "Our patients instantly have a smile on their faces."

But the fun doesn't stop at the practice's decor. Patients can play video games in the arcade, surf the Web in the Internet Cafe and catch up on their favorite shows or movies on the ceiling-mounted flat panel monitors in car doors above the operatories. "Patients love the office," Michael said. "I worked really hard to put my personality into it."

The doctors also consulted their children, ages 4 and 7, when designing the practice. Watching how the children interacted with the practice provided them with valuable feedback. "Our kids showed us what is working and what isn't," Michael said.

The staff at Hilgers Orthodontics, all of whom have 10-15 years of experience, have also made a big contribution to the practice's warm and welcoming environment. "They are absolutely amazing," Michael said. "They provide excellent patient care and they like to have fun. When they are happy, our patients are happy."

Two practices in one

With two practice builds already under their belts, Michael and Kelly weren't strangers to the ins and outs of office design and construction. They worked with a friend and contractor to maximize the 3,000-square-foot office for both of their practices. They also called on Rosas for assistance in equipping the space with the state-of-the-art equipment and technology. "Dave is always keeping me informed about new technology. Having someone like that in your corner is huge," Michael said.

An open bay design with five chairs, plus three private operatories – all equipped with A-dec 511 chairs, stools, cabinetry and delivery systems – allow both doctors to practice comfortably. Mobile cabinets from Summit Dental Systems house their computers and allow for maximum flexibility.

Michael has been using Dolphin Imaging and Dolphin Management software since he graduated from orthodontic school, a decision he has never been disappointed with. He recently moved all of the practice's systems to a Dolphin Cloud Session, which eliminates the need for a physical server and supports his multi-office situation. "It is the best orthodontic office management software and has the most potential for the future," Michael said. "I'm excited to see what they're going to come up with in the next five years." >>



“Patients love the office. I worked really hard to put my personality into it.” – Dr. Michael Hilgers



Sirona HeliodentPLUS intraoral X-ray systems offer incredible image quality and adaptability for both orthodontic and dental indications. A Sirona ORTHOPHOS XG 3D system gives the doctors 2D and 3D capabilities and seamlessly integrates with Michael's Dolphin software.

Michael and Kelly have been more than pleased with the result of this most recent project with Patterson. "We picked Patterson because we knew that working with them was going to be a great experience," Michael said.

Built for growth

Though most patients come to Hilgers Orthodontics via word of mouth, Michael also markets his practice in fun, educational and charitable ways. The doctors frequently participate in community events, host photo booth fundraisers at local schools, collect gifts for Toys for Tots, and have even provided much needed free dental care to underserved children in the area. All of these efforts have led to highly successful practices for both doctors. "We love giving back," Michael said.

Michael currently practices at the Estrella Mountain Ranch location four to five times a month. As the economy continues to improve, he is confident that he will work additional days at the office, and eventually bring on an associate. Having the office already built ensures that when the time comes, he will be prepared.

Michael encourages any doctor who might be thinking of building a new practice to take the leap, regardless of their fears about the economy. "When the economy is like this, it's even more important to build a great practice to give you an edge," he said. "You'll go through a lot of growing pains, but it's better than the alternative." **PT**



From left to right:
Chad Bushman, Greg Davis, David Rosas, Dr. Michael Hilgers and Dan Lamley

PATTERSON TEAM

Chad Bushman, *Branch Manager*

Dan Lamley, *Territory Representative*

David Rosas, *Equipment Specialist*

Greg Davis, *Service Technician*



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