



To Lease, No More

After years of leasing her space, Dr. Janette Pinedo seized the opportunity to buy

Lease renegotiations can be tricky for dentists. Then again, Janette Pinedo's went so well that she ended up buying a different space than the one she'd been leasing.

How exactly does that work? To get there, we'll need to take a step back. Pinedo, owner of Janette Pinedo and Associates in Torrance, Calif., hired a broker about two years before her lease was due to help her hash out the terms of the new lease. Nervous about her ability to negotiate the lease on her own, hiring a broker seemed like the right move.

"I'm not the best with negotiations," Pinedo said. "And dentists in general tend to be a little too nice – we're not good at the cutthroat stuff. So about two years ago I started to look around for a broker."

After beginning her career as an associate, Pinedo leased practice space for about 15 years as a solo practitioner. After a few years, she brought on an associate, and a few years later, another. All three are working mothers, and finding a manageable work-life balance has always been important to Pinedo. Together, they shared responsibilities and kept in mind the high quality of care that was important to them. Pinedo refers to the three as the Charlie's Angels of dentistry. >>



PRACTICE PROFILE

DENTAL PRACTICE

Janette Pinedo and Associates
Torrance, California

Janette Pinedo, DDS
Shirley Cheng, DDS
Lorie Mann, DDS

OFFICE

Square feet: 2,700
7 operatories

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- Midmark Assistant's Instrumentation
- Midmark Artizan Expressions Central Stations
- Midmark Artizan Expressions Treatment Stations
- Midmark Elevance Dental Chairs
- Midmark G5 PowerVac G
- Midmark LED Dental Lights
- Midmark Monitor Mounts
- Midmark Preva Intraoral X-rays
- Midmark Sterilization Center
- Schick 33 Digital Sensors



So, as the space she was in two years ago approached the end of the lease, she had a lot on her mind. It needed renovation, but she was still interested in staying there on a new lease. The broker Pinedo hired helped sweeten her deal – convincing the landlord to drop her rate and make other concessions. Then, even with the improved deal on the table, the broker gave Pinedo some interesting advice: You should consider buying a commercial space.

“There were some other doctors in my building at the time that had ventured out and lost it all,” Pinedo said. “I was very hesitant and I wasn’t sure it was something I wanted to take a risk on. But as I started looking and playing with the numbers I started to realize: I can do this. I got more serious about my search and found this space, which was originally a law firm. Its location was the best and I knew if I didn’t grab it when I did, it was going to be a lot more expensive.”

With Patterson Equipment Specialist Dave Groce’s help, Pinedo started to make a plan for converting the space into a state-of-the-art dental office. Groce said the team needed to get creative during the process, opening up a shear wall and relocating a steel building beam to improve patient and staff flow.

The new space would be a leap for Pinedo and her staff. Though it was only two miles from her previous space, it was in a smaller business condo development, not the large medical building they were used to. There were perks to that, but Pinedo wanted to make sure she was able to move her staff and patients alike to the new space.

“I started to look at the team I had at the time and started preparing them for the big move,” she said. “First, I had to make sure they wanted to join me. I worked with a consultant to improve my web presence and to get my team ready for the move. It’s so important to retain your patients from the course of time that could be up to nine months when you finally make the move.”

Filling the new space

Like all practice owners who start to furnish a new space with a clean slate, Pinedo had to ask herself about what she wanted her practice to look like, and what kind of feeling she wanted it to convey to her patients. “I definitely did not want to have the typical cabinetry you see that looks like an old-school dental office,” she said. “I wanted to avoid the traditional look and go for the modern, spa-like practice. Most of all, it had to be something that would look good and make my patients feel comfortable.”

In considering her floor plan, Pinedo did research by looking at examples of new practices and visiting the in-house showroom at the Patterson Dental Los Angeles Branch. She credits Groce for spending hours with her and her team to ensure everything went well, starting from the equipment selection process, through ordering and installation.



“My Patterson team was instrumental in making this my dream office. When I was first considering a change, I thought maybe I would update my current space with some new equipment. At that point, even looking at one room can be overwhelming,” she laughed. “But as the process evolves, you start picking and choosing what you want, and my Patterson team encouraged me to look at everything – the advice on the equipment and prices they gave me was instrumental to the process.”

Pinedo’s husband creates custom cabinetry, and had a number of connections in the local office design community to help with developing a design. But Pinedo still found value in the dental-specific industry professionals she found through Patterson. In fact, when the general contractor she first selected was unable to meet her timeline, Patterson connected her with one that could. She also used a Patterson-suggested designer. “For the functionality part of the layout in particular, I relied on Patterson to help me,” Pinedo said. “I used two separate designers to help me with the original look and feel – and that’s the first thing people tell me when they walk in. But those designers were people outside of the dental industry, so after we considered their designs, Patterson helped make the adjustments to make it work as a dental space.”

Groce elaborated on the way teams came together to make the space viable for Pinedo and her practice. “The interior design and equipment complemented each other nicely, and I don’t think either could have turned out better,” he said. “The project team, including the contractor and interior designer that Patterson was able to bring together, worked in complete synchronization with Dr. Pinedo during the project. As a team, we were able to help her build a beautiful office that will look great for many years and truly achieve what she was trying to do.”

Once Pinedo had her practice layout nailed down – she opted for an open-operatory layout that featured seven operatories, like her previous space – it was on to equipment selection. After researching her options, she chose Midmark chairs and cabinetry, because of the array of materials to choose from and what she called a cutting-edge, up-to-date feel.

Groce said Pinedo was drawn to the designer-friendly cabinetry of the Midmark Artizan Expressions line, which gave her the ability to select unique and individualized design color schemes with Lumicor resin finishes. Her Midmark chairs even feature massagers and heaters. “Patients love it,” Pinedo said. “They are very surprised that technology >>



like that is available. It's not the same dental experience it used to be in the past."

Patterson Territory Representative Jody Much, who has worked with Pinedo for more than 12 years, said it was inspiring to work with her to bring her new practice vision to life. Improving the patient experience was a major focus of Pinedo's – and, therefore, of her Patterson team – from start to finish, and her eye for creating beautiful spaces also factored in during the process.

"Everything she did, she did with the patients in mind," Much said. "She's so patient-centric that creating an unbelievable patient experience was always top of mind for her. She also really values the aesthetic of the office, so she wanted to create beautiful spaces, both in the layout and in the details."

Pinedo's research also led her to make other changes in her space – perhaps most notably, switching to a rear-delivery system from the front-delivery system used in the previous space. Though she knew this would be an adjustment for her staff, she felt strongly about installing rear-delivery for the sake of the patients.

Rather than seeing the delivery system in front of them, or feeling it on top of them, there's simply open space. Pinedo relied on some change management and an open-minded staff to work through the kinks, which they did.

"I'm just so pleased with how everything came out," she said. "The operatories themselves are bigger and more spacious. That was a decision we made during the process: rather than have more operatories, we opted for more space. The room that we have compared to the old space is amazing, and the look, the feel, and the quality of the equipment makes a huge difference. I'm proud to show it to people that come in. I feel like having the latest technology gives us an advantage over other practices."

Patients love the way the design turned out and the feeling they get walking into the operator. But it's not just the patient experience that has changed – it's also Pinedo's outlook.

"It's been inspiring. For someone who's been a dentist for 20 years, it's so refreshing – I feel like it's brand new again." **PT**



PATTERSON TEAM

Jason Owens, *General Manager*
Jody Much, *Territory Representative*
David Groce, *Equipment Specialist*
Luis Guerra, *Service Technician*
Nabor Gonzalez, *Service Technician*
Nemecio Bello, *Service Technician*
Raul Cervantes, *Service Technician*
Laura Grundmeier, *Office Designer*

From left to right:
Nemecio Bello, Raul Cervantes, Nabor Gonzalez,
Jason Owens, Dr. Janette Pinedo, David Groce,
Jody Much, Laura Grundmeier

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For more information about Janette Pinedo, DDS,
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