

Dentist Uses Innovative Tools for Superior Patient Care

Dr. James S. Ho relies on web-based solutions to keep his office running after a key staff member moves to China.

Summary

Customer Name:

Dr. James S. Ho

Industry:

General dentistry

Headquarters:

Palo Alto, CA

Number of Employees:

6

Challenge

- Allow remote, on-demand evaluation of patient records
- Connect international employees to local office for real-time interaction with patients
- Provide cost-effective technology solution to meet small business needs

Results

- Established pioneering business model while controlling technology costs
- Improved client care by enabling easy offsite access to patient information
- Enabled flexible work arrangements with remote staff to support business continuity

Solution

- Online meeting tools allow remote employees to interact with patients at local office
- Web-based tools enable offsite access to office computers
- Easy-to-use applications enable small staff to provide continuous care

Challenge

Dr. James S. Ho has practiced general medical dentistry at his office in Palo Alto, California for the past ten years. A graduate of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Dr. Ho offers teeth cleaning, orthodontic treatments, dental implants, and a range of other dental services.

As the owner of a busy dental practice, Dr. Ho must be able to respond to client concerns and answer questions from staff even when he's away from the office. "I often get emergency calls from patients or need to make important business decisions when I'm at home or traveling," says Dr. Ho. "If I can't review a client's treatment history or don't know what's happening at the practice, then it becomes more difficult to give my patients the best possible care."

Dr. Ho realized he needed a technology solution that would enable offsite access to patient records and other practice information, a concern that became even more pressing when his long-time financial manager unexpectedly moved to China. "My billing and insurance payment manager needed the ability to work with patients and review their accounts while living in Asia," Dr. Ho says. "So I needed to find a dependable tool that would help everyone working at the practice stay connected to the office and our patients no matter where we happened to be."

Results

Since implementing Cisco WebEx™ solutions at his office in early 2009, Dr. Ho has transformed the way that his practice works. He is able to consistently retrieve and review patient records from offsite locations, enhancing his office's high level of patient service. "Now I can log into my practice's computers from home or at a hotel and review X-rays or treatment histories," says Dr. Ho. "By using WebEx, I always have access to patient information so I can be more responsive and provide the best, most complete care based on a patient's specific medical needs."

Other members of Dr. Ho's relatively small staff can also respond to patient concerns at anytime, even when working far from the practice's local office. "Now that one of our staff members lives in China, she works at the practice primarily through WebEx," Dr. Ho says. "WebEx has allowed us to keep our financial manager working on our billing processes from Asia, interacting with clients and staff in real time. She's been able to maintain long-term client relationships even though she's working on the other side of the globe."

Not only has WebEx® given Dr. Ho the ability to work with offsite staff, allowing him to address staffing challenges more flexibly and equipping him for ongoing business continuity, WebEx tools have also made it possible for Dr. Ho offer technology solutions that have put his practice at the forefront of innovative healthcare services. "Using WebEx has allowed my business to become a forward-looking practice while controlling technology costs," Dr. Ho says. "Our patients have noticed that we use WebEx, and they appreciate knowing that we can respond to their concerns at any time."

Solution

In the past, Dr. Ho used Symantec pcAnywhere to access patient information remotely, but he found the application cumbersome to install and difficult to keep connected. "We needed a solution that was easy to install and use," he says. "More importantly, we needed reliable connectivity."

After exploring several options, Dr. Ho chose WebEx based on its reputation for quality and ease of use. "I knew WebEx offered excellent features and support, so we gave it a try," says Dr. Ho. "It was so easy to set up. Better yet, my remote access to my office computer is much more stable and reliable than it was before."

Switching to web-based tools from WebEx has been an effortless process, and Dr. Ho's employees have been extremely receptive to the new technology. "Even though we only have six people on staff, it was very easy to deploy WebEx at the office. Within a few days, everyone at the practice was using the program," Dr. Ho says. "Using WebEx to integrate our offsite employee into our daily office management activities has been easy, and we've been amazed at how much value it adds to our interactions with each other and our patients," he says.

"WebEx has allowed us to keep our financial manager working on our billing processes from Asia, interacting with clients and staff in real time."

— Dr. James S. Ho, DMD MPH

Next Steps

Dr. Ho hopes to work with WebEx to explore other opportunities for integrating online collaboration technology into his practice. He is also interested in evaluating other Cisco® technology solutions, including IP phones, to improve the practice's IT and communications infrastructure. He says, "We've had such positive experiences with WebEx that it just makes sense to continue looking for ways in which we can use Cisco technology for enhancing patient care."

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco WebEx, go to <http://www.cisco.com/web/products/webex/index.html>.

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