Digital radiography that seems designed for pediatric practices

By William F. Waggner, DDS, MS, Pediatric Dentist, Las Vegas

Is there a technology you’ve come to rely on so much that you can’t imagine how you ever got along without it? For me, that technology is digital radiography with flexible wireless sensors.

When I first started private practice, we used film radiography exclusively. After a few years, we invested in a wired digital sensor system. It didn’t take long to realize that a large number of children, especially the young ones, couldn’t tolerate the hard sensors. So, after a few months, we went back to film. For the next several years, I never gave it much thought, either—other than when my staff would complain about having to clean the chemical processor.

About eight years ago, however, I discovered and invested in ScanX phosphor storage plates — now more commonly called flexible digital sensors — for our two offices. Manufactured by Air Techniques, the small, soft, flexible, wireless ScanX sensors are comfortable for any pediatric patient who can tolerate a film radiograph, unlike hard sensors.

Recently, Air Techniques introduced the ultra-compact ScanX Swift, which I ordered for a third pediatric office that we just opened. Here are 12 advantages I have come to appreciate about ScanX in general, and this new Swift model in particular:

1) Excellent image resolution. ScanX images enhance your case acceptance by helping you show the patient’s parent the extent and location of any problems.
2) Faster image processing. All ScanX models process images in literally seconds, a much faster time than with a wired sensor. This makes you much more likely to capture the complete coronal-to-apical length and not miss a root apex or distal cuff, which means fewer retakes.
3) Easy image manipulation. Brightness and contrast can easily be manipulated, and areas of the film can be magnified for better viewing and diagnosis.
4) Same placement technique as film. ScanX digital sensors are placed in the patient’s mouth just as X-ray films are.
5) Easy software integration. ScanX software integrates easily with most imaging software and also with and offers a 30-day free trial.
6) Easy software integration. ScanX software integrates easily with most imaging software and also with and offers a 30-day free trial.

The ultra-compact ScanX Swift processor makes it possible to have fewer sensors. This is something your patients’ parents will appreciate.

Planning for partial retirement can be tricky

By Nicholas Spanakos, Group Practice Manager, PNC Bank

If you want to keep working, only on a less demanding schedule, you’re not alone. Many people these days are considering a “partial retirement.” According to a 2013 study by a University of Michigan study, 20 percent of those ages 65 to 69 consider themselves partially retired, while in 1960 this group was nonexistent.

The reasons for this trend vary: Some partial retirees need to bolster income to support their lifestyle, but others simply enjoy their work and don’t want to stop.4 Certainly, the trend is toward a more flexible process. Part-time and flexible arrangements are growing more common.

While the process of retiring, especially partial retirement, is complicated for dental professionals, largely because of their practices. If you’re the owner of a private practice, a partial retirement must be planned well in advance. And generally is more successful if retirement is planned well in advance. It requires a change in work habits will affect the ownership of the practice, and a clear plan for the future.

This plan should cover financial matters, including how much you expect to earn and how that will cover your living expenses, work responsibilities including scheduling, such as on-call hours, regular hours worked and patients taken on, the expected duration of this arrangement, how a change in work habits will affect the ownership of the practice, and a clearly stated plan for the eventual transition to complete retirement.

All of the above goes double if you’re in a solo practice and plan to eventually sell or hand down your practice to the next generation. Preparing a business for sale takes years if you want to get the best price, and both you and your patients will benefit from long-term planning.

ScanX sensors are 30 times thinner than wired sensors, so they fit even the smallest mouth. Retakes are easy because of the speed with which images are scanned and available.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Designs for Vision is introducing a 3.5 expanded-field dental telescope that can be used all day, the Micro 3.5ef Scopes. The Micro 3.5ef Scopes uses a revolutionary optical design that reduces the size of the prismatic telescope by 50 percent and reduces the weight by 40 percent, while providing an expanded field, full-oral-cavity view at 3.5x magnification.

“We listened to dentists who wanted the field of view of an expanded-field 3.5x telescope, but were concerned about wearing them all day because of the size and weight,” said Designs for Vision President Richard Feinbloom. “Designs for Vision was started by my father, Dr. William Feinbloom, as an optical company in 1961 to design innovative head-borne optical devices, and the new Micro 3.5ef Scopes continues that tradition of optical innovation. We’re excited to be offering several new products this year, including our NanoCamHD™ loup-mounted video camera, and two new frames: Nike® Retro and DVI Sport frames.”

Designs for Vision’s new NanoCamHD records digitally at 1080p high-definition resolution. The NanoCamHD records magnified HD images from the user’s perspective. The complete system includes 2.5x, 3.5x, and 4.5x lens systems to match the magnification dental professionals are already using — and providing a true user’s point of view.

As an added feature, still photographs can be taken from live video feed or during playback. Video or still images can be uploaded into a patient file, included in presentations or courses, or shared with a colleague or lab for collaborative consultations. The NanoCamHD complete system includes a color-corrected ULTRA Mini LED Day-Lite® headlight. The combination headlight/NanoCamHD can be attached to your loupes or it can be worn on a lightweight headband.

The system also includes a foot pedal to enable hands-free operation of the NanoCamHD Record/pause, mute/unmute and still photography are controlled by the operator hands-free via the foot pedal. For best results, combine the NanoCamHD with Designs for Vision’s dental telescopes — matching true magnification levels of 2.5x, 3.5x or 4.5x to produce the most realistic simulation from the user’s perspective.

Designs also is introducing two new frame offerings this year: The DVI Sport and the Nike Retro. The Nike Retro frames are exclusive to Designs for Vision, which describes them as having “a classic look and excellent function.” The frames are available in tortoise shell, black and translucent gray.

The DVI Sport frames can be used for all magnifications and can incorporate eyeglass prescriptions — providing the protective wrap without any distortion. The NanoCamHD can be attached to the new Nike Retro or DVI Sport frames.

Be the first to “See the Visible Difference” by contacting Designs for Vision at info@DesignsForVision.com or (800) 345-4009 for a demonstration in your office. You can visit Designs for Vision in exhibit halls at upcoming meetings: American Association of Endodontists (booth No. 724), American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (booth No. 813), American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (booth No. 813), and the Texas Meeting (booth No. 1169).

(Designs for Vision)