Dr. Larry Emmott has more than 30 years of experience as a practicing dentist and has been speaking and writing on high-tech in dentistry for nearly 20 years. He has helped thousands of dentists learn about and understand high-tech equipment and how it can be used effectively in the dental office.

**How did you get started in the high-tech area?**

I started practicing in the days of peg boards, film and paper. When technology started to invade our society, some people found it frightening, I found it fascinating and exciting. I jumped into technology and quickly learned two things: high-tech systems had the potential to revolutionize dental practice, and many dentists were confused and making poor technology choices. I have made it my mission to help fellow dentists make wise technology choices.

**What are the biggest problems or mistakes you see dentists making when it comes to choosing high-tech equipment?**

The biggest mistakes are not picking the wrong sensor or network, they are more fundamental and they are somewhat related. Mistake No. 1 is not knowing what is possible and therefore having no plan or vision as to how you will use technology. If you have no plan, you tend to buy random technology that may not really benefit you or your practice.

The second mistake is poor or limited training. Even when dentists invest in high-quality systems, they frequently do not get full value because they do not know how to use them. I often have people come to me and say, “If my system just did XYZ it would be great.” The fact is usually that the system does do XYZ and has for years, but the practitioner just did not know how to use the system.

**You have been successful in presenting what some see as a complex and boring topic. How do you make it interesting?**

You are right. What could be more boring to a dentist than talking about computers? The answer is “KISS” and have fun. KISS stands for “keep it simple, stupid.” I don’t believe dentists or dental team members are stupid, however, I also don’t believe learning to use technology means learning about bits, bytes and code. I always relate technology to what we do every day in the dental office and how it compares to our old non-technical systems.

The second component is fun. We have fun at the training sessions I’m involved with. For example, I sponsor a C.E. vacation program in Sedona, Ariz., called Technology on the Rocks. It combines real education with a great vacation destination.

**Is that the mountain biking program?**

Yes. I get to indulge both my passions: high-tech dental equipment and mountain biking. Sedona is an amazingly beautiful place and a world-class mountain biking destination. However, you don’t have to be a cyclist to enjoy the area, there is lots to do for everyone. Have fun, learn a lot and do it in a beautiful place; what’s not to like?

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