

DOCTOR *of* DENTISTRY

Special Feature

Riding the Future's
Technology Wave
With SurfCT

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Information

Riding the Future's Technology Wave With SurfCT

By Margo W. R. Steiner

In a world where technology "experts" seem to hang their shingles on every street corner, there is no lack of resources for computer owners with a problem. When the problem is a specialized one, however, as it often is for dental and medical professionals who tend to use highly specific and highly specialized software, one's local computer specialist is not the one to call.

Because of the nature of the technology they require, dentists and medical professionals are better served by a firm that understands not only the unique software germane to the profession, but also the ways in which dentists work and dental practices operate. Competition in the

dental technology arena is still small, but one firm has already carved out a sizeable niche — and a well-deserved reputation — as the go-to firm for dentists in need of new digital system implementation, technology planning, software integration and dental IT consulting.

Just seven years after its founding, SurfCT is already setting the standard for practice-based IT management and delivery. With offices throughout New England, as well as New Jersey, New York, Florida and Philadelphia, it's one dental information technology firm that is not only riding the technology wave, but also defining the way that wave is delivered.

Outside of the office, SurfCT's network engineering team includes (l to r) Luis Santos, Jeremy Ortiz, Matt Jussaume, Tony Vigario, Sergio Restrepo, Jon Insero and Richard Carvalho





PHOTO BY DANIELLE DE LUCIA

Working together for company growth and quality service is the Northeast sales team, which includes Jeremy Ortiz, Kyle Wells, Paul Vigario, Corey Kimple and Marc Pereira.

Founder and President Paul Vigario is quick to point out what makes his firm different from other consultancies. "It's the combination of what we know," he says, "and what we're able to offer that separates us from the rest of the field. There are plenty of firms out there that 'do' computers, but there are very few that specialize in dental technology. SurfCT, however, devotes itself to *technology for dentists*." Because of the company's specialized focus, it knows precisely the problems faced by dentists — as well as the best practices solutions to address them.

"We're not the so-called 'computer expert' listed in the phone book who works out of his house and whose staff is usually limited to one or two entry-level techs," Vigario notes. "For the home user with a computer problem, an outfit like that is probably fine, but for professional men and women who use technology developed specifically for their professions, troubleshooting and software setup require a different kind of professional; one familiar with all the variables and with the profession as well."

Where the local tech usually requires an appointment and can only serve one client at a time, SurfCT fields an entire staff, any one of whom can be deployed at a moment's notice. "We're an integrated team," says Vigario. "When one of our staff is on vacation or out sick, we have others who are equally well trained, well prepared and ready to go. It gives our clients a real sense of security knowing their IT team is on their side and looking out for them."

The firm's expertise goes beyond mere technology, however, and includes an understanding of dentistry as well. An extensive working knowledge of IT issues and solutions coupled with an expertise in the myriad aspects of dental technology and digital network design — including dental and operator ergonomics — has allowed the company to develop a very unique niche market and a stable of products and services very much in demand by dental professionals who are going increasingly high tech.

"Traditional dentistry," says Vigario, "has given way to a more technology-driven delivery of care — care, by the way, that's

much improved. Today's dentists want to be educated about the technology options available to them. They're interested in receiving good, professional, sound and unbiased information. They want to be comfortable with the technology they're presently using and they want to keep themselves and their staffs well versed in new and developing technologies as well."

Solving these and similar issues is precisely what has propelled SurfCT into the forefront of dental technology. In addition to Vigario, SurfCT's staff includes experienced technology specialists with expertise in, among other things, 3-D technology and digital imaging, software integration, networking and installation, ergonomic mounting and installation, network wiring and network engineering.

"Because we have chosen to specialize in dental technology exclusively," notes Vigario, "we're able to devote all our resources to optimizing the incorporation of technology into every practice with which we work. Our specialty," he continues, "is network integration and the support of dental office systems."

Vigario remembers in particular one dental client who wanted the ability to view digital X-ray images from multi-office locations. Other technology firms had already told him it was impossible. SurfCT, however, knew it could be achieved — and had the expertise to make it happen. This it did, enabling the dentist to view X-rays from all four of his practice locations, exactly as he'd wanted.

SurfCT staff members continually cross train, keeping up not only with advances in technology and networking, but also with various facets of dentistry as well. They regularly attend dental shows and seminars across the country. "On the one hand," Vigario explains, "it's a way for potential dental clients to get to know us, but from the company's point of view, there's another side to our being present: We want to know as much as possible about the dental field — current issues, unsolved problems and how dentists would like to operate their practices in the best of all possible worlds." Venues such as this also allow Vigario and his staff to share with dentists the myriad ways that technology can help them

Generations: Paul Vigario, President, and his dad, Tony, who is a valuable part of the team at SurfCT.



work not only smarter, but also more efficiently — in the end serving their clients even better.

When not presenting to dental study groups or attending dental shows, Vigario and his technology and networking experts can often be found at the headquarters of leading dental product and dental service providers. SurfCT continually invests in staff trainings with advanced dental technology providers. "This ongoing training," explains Vigario, "allows us to leverage our knowledge to our clients benefit. It's what allows SurfCT to stay on the forefront of cutting-edge dental technologies and provide the practices with which we work the most optimal IT solutions for their individual needs."

Although knowledgeable about many different dental technology products, SurfCT prides itself on maintaining its independence and offering unbiased advice to clients on the most advanced dental technology. "Our team trains with all the top dental technology providers," explains Vigario, "so as to be able to provide each particular dental practice with what we consider the 'best of breed' for its individual

needs." The company's goal is to provide dentists with the latest and most appropriate technology for *today*, while ensuring that the systems the company puts in place will serve them well for years to come. An added plus for many dentists is an improvement in the patient experience and maximized practice productivity.

Because Vigario and the SurfCT team possess the highest level of computer education, they're often called in to diagnose and troubleshoot the most complicated cases. As Vigario sees it, if a dentist has invested a significant amount of money in technology, IT and networking solutions, it only makes sense that he or she should turn to a professional organization with the appropriate expertise when a problem arises. "Because SurfCT has the specialized knowledge," he explains, "we can very quickly diagnose, correct and get our dental clients back in business. It's not something the local 'computer repair shop' can generally handle."

As further testimony to the firm's expertise in dental technology and information systems, SurfCT was chosen over



PHOTO BY DANIELLE DE LUCCA



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The first voices you hear when you call for sales and service are Michele, on the left, and Katie, on the right, two wonderful friendly professionals who set the tone for solid business every day.

several other candidates by the University of Connecticut in 2007 to be lead technology advisor for the University's Center for Research in Education and Technology Evaluations (CRETE). The CRETE Innovation Center, to be built at UConn's School of Dental Medicine, will be the nation's first academic, practice-oriented education and research facility.

The center will be configured as a private practice dental office, with treatment rooms, a dental laboratory, a sterilization area, a reception area, a records area, staff areas and consultation rooms. SurfCT's responsibility? To ensure that the project has the most modern dental technology currently available. The firm will also oversee all new dental technologies tested there in the future.

In 2001, Vigario saw a need and envisioned a better way to deliver technology to the dental profession. Today, the company he created to help dentists incorporate digital technology and innovative network solutions into their

practices is sought after across the country. Vigario has obviously found the right niche, and has both the specialized knowledge and a well-trained team to deliver technology solutions to dentists who prefer to concentrate on what they do best — providing patient care. "We're the very best at what we do," notes Vigario, "and when we take care of our clients' technology needs, they can take better care of their patients."

To contact Paul Vigario or learn more about how SurfCT can get your practice connected, visit the company's website at www.surfct.com or call 1-866-494-0128. ■

