



Elevating the Skills of Both Doctor and Team

Spear Practice Solutions Case Study:

Robert Conte, D.M.D.

Spear Practice Solutions client since February 2017



Dr. Robert Conte ran a productive practice for more than 20 years. His staff was satisfied. Revenue was consistent. He had worked with dental consultants in the past. The practice was growing and there was no urgency to seek another outside voice on how to improve. Still, since Dr. Conte was familiar with Spear's quality from his involvement with Spear Education and CEREC® for nearly a decade as a student and trainer, he decided to pursue Spear Practice Solutions. He wanted to see if he could do anything different to optimize practice productivity. The results were difficult to ignore:

 **+\$209,000**
in production revenues

In just six months, the practice had its best month ever with more than \$209,000 in production revenues

 **+40%**
overall production

Average monthly production increased by nearly \$25,000 and overall production is on pace to increase by 40 percent from 2016 to the end of 2018

 **+89%**
patient retention

Patient retention increased from 68 percent to 89 percent

About:

Over the years, Dr. Conte grew West Shore Dental Associates in Warwick, Rhode Island, from a “fixer-upper,” three-room operation into one of the most respected dental offices in the Providence metro area. He focused on restorative, technology-driven dentistry. A CEREC® owner since 2006, Dr. Conte is also a CEREC faculty member and certified trainer.

When Dr. Conte earned his D.M.D. from the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine, he became the first person in his family to graduate from college. He is a member of the American and Rhode Island dental associations. In addition to the extensive coursework he completed through Spear, Dr. Conte completed a one-year Advanced Education in General Dentistry Residency and is a member of the Pierre Fauchard Academy and fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry.

Challenges:

Even though Dr. Conte's revenues were consistent, and his practice enjoyed a strong reputation in the community, he sensed that he hit a plateau with productivity. Business wasn't declining, but it wasn't on an upward trajectory, either. He and his team were simply in a comfortable rhythm with how they scheduled patients, organized treatment plans and addressed their overall practice goals.

Dr. Conte felt like he and his staff could be doing something different, though he doubted that a new dental consultant could show him any new areas for growth. He had worked with consultants since 1999 and had some success identifying areas to improve workflow. However, he remembered how past consulting experiences were inefficient at times, and he had to go through an extensive process to achieve minimal results.

His staff members were content, but Dr. Conte knew he and his team could achieve more. He decided to give consulting another shot and became one of the first practices to implement Spear Practice Solutions.

Solution:

Dr. Conte was excited to learn about the customizable analytics platform provided through Spear Practice Solutions. The real-time graphics, charts and tables clearly identified the key practice indicators for potential growth.

In his past experiences with dental consultants, Dr. Conte said he would typically review data every two or three weeks at the earliest. With Spear Practice Solutions, he and his team found themselves engaged with the platform every day. They could visualize daily, weekly and long-term goals.

Dr. Conte's staff began using the platform to address their daily individual assignments. Everything on the online platform was automated, eliminating unnecessary time sorting through the entire platform or trying to locate reports to discuss with a consultant later. Rather, the practice solutions consultant worked with the team to proactively uncover areas for potential improvement.

With their Spear Practice Solutions membership, the entire team received access to Spear's online library of educational materials, such as training videos and coursework to augment their work. The practice solutions consultant worked with Dr. Conte and his team to establish a schedule of purposeful regular meetings.

Dr. Conte also flew his 12-person team to the Spear Campus in Scottsdale, Arizona, for the two-day *Practice of Excellence* workshop, which is designed to help practices with team alignment. In the past, staff members would fear a consultant's visit to their practice. They would anticipate major changes, expecting work or the threat of losing their jobs. But any apprehension dissipated in Scottsdale.

Dr. Conte described the trip as empowering for everyone. While his staff members had heard him talk positively about his work with Spear, the experience of being on campus fostered buy-in and helped everyone understand how to use Spear Practice Solutions for the collective growth of the practice.

Results:

Dr. Conte's system of weekly team meetings proved effective thanks to the regular dialogue with his practice solutions consultant. Before adopting Spear Practice Solutions, he would struggle to come up with content for regular meetings during his busy clinical schedule. The meeting agendas developed by his practice solutions consultant accurately reflected his practice goals and kept his team on task.

As each month passed in his first year with Spear Practice Solutions, Dr. Conte recognized that his practice was operating like a streamlined business while still maintaining its unwavering focus on patient care. He noticed significant improvements in how his team addressed hygiene retention. By the end of the first year with Spear Practice Solutions, the practice achieved an 89 percent patient retention average. The analytics platform revealed the factors that caused the practice to lose some patients, and

their practice solutions consultant led them to adopt an efficient rescheduling system to ensure all hygiene chairs were filled daily.

Since Dr. Conte was already running a successful practice, the 11 percent increase in overall production — from more than \$1.7 million to more than \$1.9 million — he achieved in the first year with Spear Practice Solutions was significant. He would have been happy with 5 percent growth, so the numbers brought a great sense of achievement. In his sixth month using the platform, Dr. Conte's practice experienced its best month ever, totaling more than \$209,000 in production revenues.

“By looking at our day-to-day and week-to-week goals, we're able to schedule more intelligently and productively.”

An overall sense of team alignment spread through the practice. The more patients he talked to, the more Dr. Conte recognized the impact that Spear Practice Solutions had in unifying everyone on collective goals and providing them with a framework to execute their individual assignments.

With all the data and practice-management material at their fingertips, Dr. Conte's staff was operating at a high level with greater confidence. Their optimized workflow led to less stress, which translated to a more organized and relaxed environment where patients were more receptive to treatment planning.

Conclusion:

Since the *Practice of Excellence* workshop proved so powerful for his team, Dr. Conte planned to bring staff members back to Scottsdale for two more workshops. He decided to take his four treatment coordinators for one session and return later with his hygienists for another, hoping to increase everyone's skillset even more.

Dr. Conte built on the momentum he experienced in his first year with Spear Practice Solutions by continuing to use the platform to drive daily and weekly practice production. His team continued to use the system to identify the best mix of procedures to meet their goals, adjusting workflow as necessary to schedule more effectively.

Additionally, Dr. Conte moved forward with plans to expand his office to add more chairs to address an influx of new patients — which he attributed to using Spear Practice Solutions to visualize production issues, correct workflows and recognize how to improve retention.



Are you ready to grow your practice?

Spear Practice Solutions combines expert consulting with tailored educational content for team alignment and a real-time analytics platform to improve practice health.

Take your practice to its full clinical and business potential. To learn more, contact us at sp@speareducation.com or 866.781.0072 (ext. 3) or visit speareducation.com/practice-solutions.