



Small Town, Big Dreams

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Spacious checkout area with two counter levels makes checkout accessible and a breeze.

Marché Schulte's journey to owning her own practice and building a new one is not what most people would call easy. She spent the first half of her career as a dental hygienist. Asked if she had thought about being a dentist at the outset, Dr. Schulte said that yes she had, but wasn't thrilled with the prospect of giving intraoral shots to patients. Then came the turning point: her last hygiene job where giving shots was required.

"I love dentistry and wanted to stay in it. And I figured if I had to give shots, I would go the rest of the way and become a dentist," Dr. Schulte said. "It wasn't the easiest path but it worked for me."

After graduating from the University of Nebraska Medical Center-Lincoln in 2004, she spent a year as an associate in an O'Neill, Nebraska practice. She purchased her current practice, Atkinson Family Dental Center (about 180 miles northwest of Omaha) in late 2005 and transitioned official ownership on January 1, 2006.

What she didn't realize was how much modernization her "new" practice needed. The century-old structure had two operatories and a quasi third one... the third didn't have plumbing or an x-ray machine.

"We used Goetze to equip the third operatory and upgrade almost everything else. It was a great experience,"

says Dr. Schulte. "We modernized practically everything — two new sterilizers, new electric handpieces, a pano, digital x-rays, new instruments and phone lines...that office didn't even have a modern computer, sound system, fax machine or credit card ability. The technology was basically out of the 1950s. Some of that equipment you'd actually find in a dental museum today."

Updates Aren't Always Enough

But even with all of the updates, the practice was still bursting at the seams.

"We knew we'd eventually need to build a new practice, we just didn't realize how soon we'd need to build it. We updated the old building as much as possible — all the new equipment arrived and on the first day of using it, my face hurt from



Dr. Marché Schulte



Five functional operatories with room for nine make Dr. Schulte's new practice future proof.

State-of-the-art equipment including a large-screen monitor assists hygienists in this new operatory streaming with natural light.



smiling so much. It made me so happy to have modern tools for my job. But by 2009, we started talking about a new space."

Dr. Schulte had indeed maxed out the old space. Despite all of the modernization, her practice was beginning to turn patients away courtesy of a perfect storm: one dentist in town had fallen ill, and the other dental office had burned down. Atkinson doesn't have a large population but surrounding towns in the region bring in hundreds if not thousands of additional patients. All served by what was now the only office in town, Atkinson Family Dental Center.

Dr. Schulte and her staff were booked out four to six months on the dental side. Hygiene was booking out eight full months. If an emergency came in, they had to take the current patient out of the chair and give it to the emergency one. They were overwhelmed and working 12-hour days just to try and keep up.

To make matters worse, there was no handicap accessible bathroom, nor was there space to install one. One of her patients who uses a wheelchair used to jokingly chide Dr. Schulte about the bathroom situation. "She told me if she ever hit the lottery, she was going to build me an accessible bathroom," said Dr. Schulte. "She stuck with us for several years in our old space. We're lucky to have so many loyal patients."

By 2011, planning began in earnest for the new space. Creating a plan that took the office from 1,100 square feet to 3,500 (with another 2,500 in the basement) was a dream come true for Dr. Schulte and her staff. They began working with Goetze senior designer Inga Paul to design a space that flowed well and put everything they needed at their fingertips. This also called for hands-on showroom visits to

see, sample and select the equipment and furnishings that would make their new office as efficient, logical and comfortable as possible.

In November of 2012, Dr. Schulte, her husband Jon (who serves as the office's Director of IT), hygienists Nicole Kemp and Jen Jordan, and assistants Andrea Connot and Diane Tasler visited A-dec's Oregon showroom where they looked at different equipment options. The only staff who didn't make the trip were assistant Becky Estill and receptionist Kimberly Stenka. Dr. and Mr. Schulte also made a special trip to Goetze's Kansas City showroom to look at options.

"I wanted the staff involved because they work with the equipment every day, too," said Dr. Schulte. "I wanted them included in the decision-making process. We all picked out a lot of A-dec equipment. We like that it's very comfortable to use, it's durable, and made in the USA. Bill Adams, the A-dec representative, was awesome. He's what'd I call a stellar rep. And we feel the same about our Goetze reps Justin Hinkle and David Burke too. The whole experience was just great."

Breaking Ground, Building Dreams

The foundation was poured in April 2013 and Dr. Schulte and her staff were moving in by the end of the year. It would've been a faster buildout had they not had challenges finding qualified contractors with room in their schedule. With a population of about 1,200 people, Atkinson, Nebraska is not exactly a booming metropolis.

The new office began with an emphasis on operatories. Five functioning operatories were built (two are dedicated to hygienists) with room to expand to

nine. Each one is spacious and has a large window for lots of natural light — something that was painfully absent in the old space. In the old space, in fact, Dr. Schulte had windows cut into the operatories, even though they looked out onto an alley. Because some natural light was better than no natural light.

The new operatories are designed and equipped such that the hygienists no longer need to turn around to get to their equipment. Nor does anyone bump into anyone else when walking the halls. There are also extra operatories dedicated to providing patients with additional services.

"We had a vision for the new space, and part of that was for visiting practitioners. We have an endodontist who comes in and uses an operatory, plus we have orthodontists and plans for an additional associate," said Dr. Schulte.

Atkinson Family Dental Center now has a dedicated sterilization room — the old office shared that room with the lab



The Instrumentarium Orthopantomograph OP30 aids in quick imaging.



Custom A-dec cabinetry streamlines the sterilization process.

area and break room. Dr. Schulte even has her own spacious, private office; she previously shared a very small office with her husband.

One of the other things that Dr. Schulte and the staff love is the new ergonomic equipment. "I was having a lot of back and neck issues. The old equipment didn't help. It was getting to the point where I didn't know if I could practice long-term. So we did a combination of things: I found a great chiropractor and great new equipment that doesn't cause me to overstrain my muscles. We also have winch lifts for disabled patients and that has made a real difference," said Dr. Schulte.

The waiting room size was also doubled. Instead of six or seven sardined chairs, now there are 10 chairs and a bench — and none of it is standing room only. There are also two televisions in the waiting room (one of which is for patient education) and a dedicated children's area.



A spacious, private doctor's office is only one of many improvements at the new Atkinson Family Dental Center.

There are also intraoral cameras and dedicated nitrous in all operatories. The old office had an anything-but-convenient push-around tank. Dr. Schulte also went to all digital records in the new office.

What new equipment does she enjoy most?

"I love my A-dec electric handpieces the best. Because they're electric, they have a consistent cut and you don't get the chatter, they're a lot quieter. I can complete a crown prep much more efficiently with an electric piece with less noise, which the patient also likes. I use it all day so it's one of the most important pieces of equipment in the practice," said Dr. Schulte.

An Investment in Service

"We wanted to build this practice as much for our patients as for us. We think that people in this area deserve the same standard of care as anywhere else. It was kind of a culture shock because of the old office and the condition it was in. A lot of people who had never experienced anything with this standard asked, 'Why do you need something better than good enough?'"

"But we were in a decrepit old building... a few people think we built the Taj Mahal here. We wanted functionality and we wanted it to be attractive. We have 3 colors of siding and it floors people. We have high-def laminate and some people think it's granite. But all in all, the new office has been well received. People really like it and it's great to have the space we need to serve everyone," said Dr. Schulte.

Though the old building didn't suit her burgeoning practice, it's just right for its new occupants. Dr. Schulte donated it to the local food pantry. Her mother is a board member there.



Natural light filters into wide hallways.

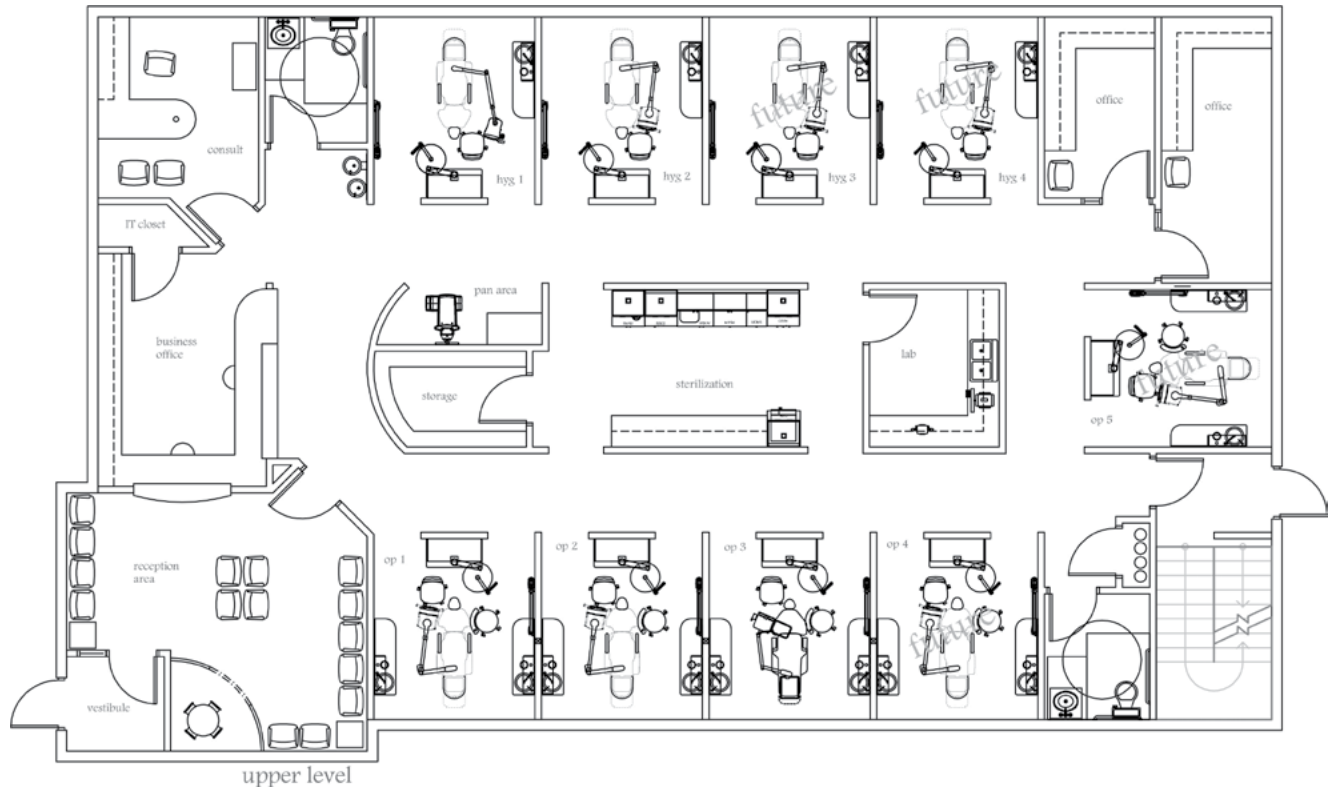


Reception is spacious. Note the horns over the door; the new office is decorated in a well-received Western theme to reflect the region's rugged personality.

And what about that special bathroom?

"Now we have two bathrooms, one of which is the patient bathroom that's accessible and just huge. I call it my Ann bathroom in honor of that patient who was so loyal to us even though our old office wasn't easy for her to navigate. We just love it, all of it!" said Dr. Schulte with a smile.

BLUEPRINT



NEW EQUIPMENT LIST

A-dec 511 Dental Chairs
 A-dec 532 Traditional Delivery Systems
 A-dec 5580.42 Treatment Consoles
 A-dec 545 Assistant's Instrumentation
 A-dec 5531 Accessory Consoles
 A-dec 5730 Dispensing Units
 A-dec 5590 Custom ICC Sterilization Center
 A-dec Lisa Sterilizer
 Air Techniques Mojave 2V3 Vacuum System
 Air Techniques AirStar 70 Compressor
 Preva by Midmark
 Porter Vanguard Manifold
 Porter MXR Digital Flowmeters

