



The reception desk at Dr. Hickerson's office reveals the elegant design style established by interior designer Inga Paul, Hickerson, and his wife.

Out of the Gate: A Dentist Creates His First Office

After almost ten years working as an associate to other dentists, Dr. Chris Hickerson was ready to take on the challenge of growing his own practice.

In 2013, Dr. Chris Hickerson located the right space for his practice, although it would take some creative configuration to transform the two adjoining offices in the Derby, Kansas strip mall into an open, free-flowing dental suite.

A chat with an old classmate led Hickerson to Goetze Dental, where he connected with sales representative Chris Klein. Says Hickerson:

“Goetze was a good fit for me, and I like how they work, what they sell and how they sell it. They are transparent...they put their cards on the table and they're honest. You know what you're getting.”

DESIGN TEAM

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Equipment Specialist:
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Sales Representative:
Chris Klein

Senior Interior Designer:
Inga Paul

At the beginning of the design process, Klein suggested to Hickerson that he travel to the A-dec equipment headquarters and manufacturing facility outside of Portland in Newberg, Oregon—an option offered to all Goetze clients at the beginning of the design process—in order to see, as Klein says, “the care the A-dec people put into the product.”

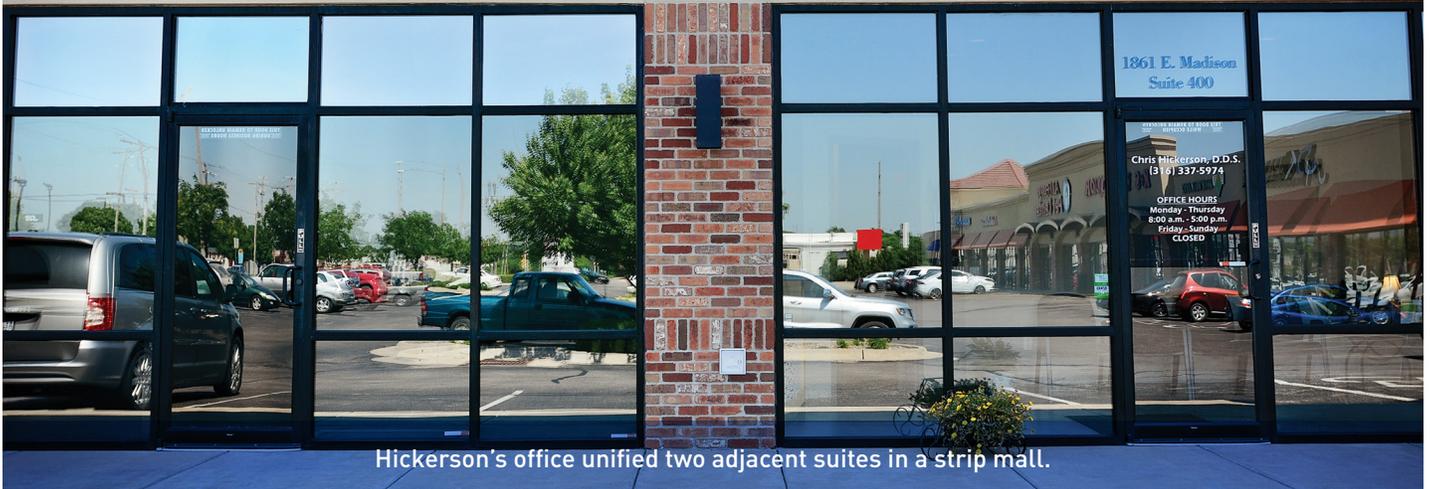
Says Dennis Thome, the Goetze equipment specialist who helped shepherd Hickerson's project: “It's a great trip because A-dec meets you at the airport with a limo and takes you to your hotel. They really treat you right.”



Dr. Chris Hickerson

CHRIS HICKERSON, D.D.S.

General Dentistry & Orthodontics



Hickerson's office unified two adjacent suites in a strip mall.

Hickerson jumped at the chance; in June 2013, he and his wife were in the Pacific Northwest, making hands-on choices about the chairs, lights, cabinets, and tools that would outfit his new office. A tour of the plant came first, where customers like Hickerson see just how the components come together, since 90% of A-dec's product line is crafted in-house. Hickerson and his wife spent a lot of time in the display area trying out the 20+ different operatories, getting a handle on all of the options for setting up his treatment areas.

While Dr. Hickerson already had a pretty good idea of how he wanted the space to feel, Klein says that they "really started to put everything together" on the trip to A-dec. Back in Derby, the initial estimates to combine the two retail spaces were nearly twice what Hickerson wanted to pay, so he needed to bring down costs fast so construction could begin. Bob Simpson of Simpson's Construction helped get the project right on budget, and worked with the Goetze team to figure out how to get

all the A-dec equipment into what would soon be a 2000-square-foot office.

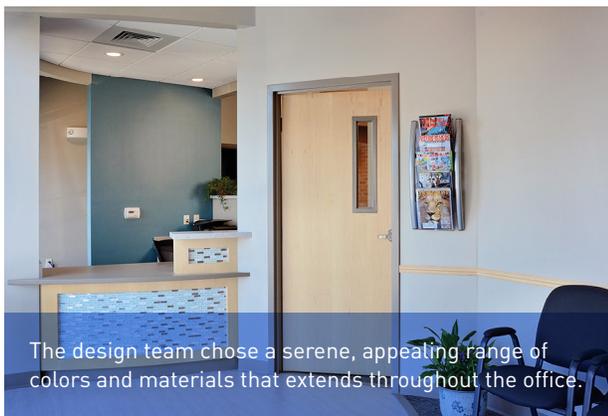
Hickerson says: "We started with elaborate designs and it was neat, but we had to abandon that and go with 90 degree angles and not waste corner space.

We needed every square inch to be functional space." Form had to follow function in order to use the suites efficiently. Construction was efficient as well: by the time Goetze's installers were on site to put in equipment, Thome says that the "plumbing and electrical were ready to go and there were no hiccups."



Dr. Hickerson and his staff

With a desire to keep his current footprint small but understanding that his practice will grow over the next few years, Hickerson chose to outfit two operatories, and carve out space for three more. Allowing room for expansion is a smart strategy for a small office, as it's far more expensive to plumb



The design team chose a serene, appealing range of colors and materials that extends throughout the office.



Additional space for more operatories was reserved for a future expansion.

an operatory after the fact rather than during its initial construction.

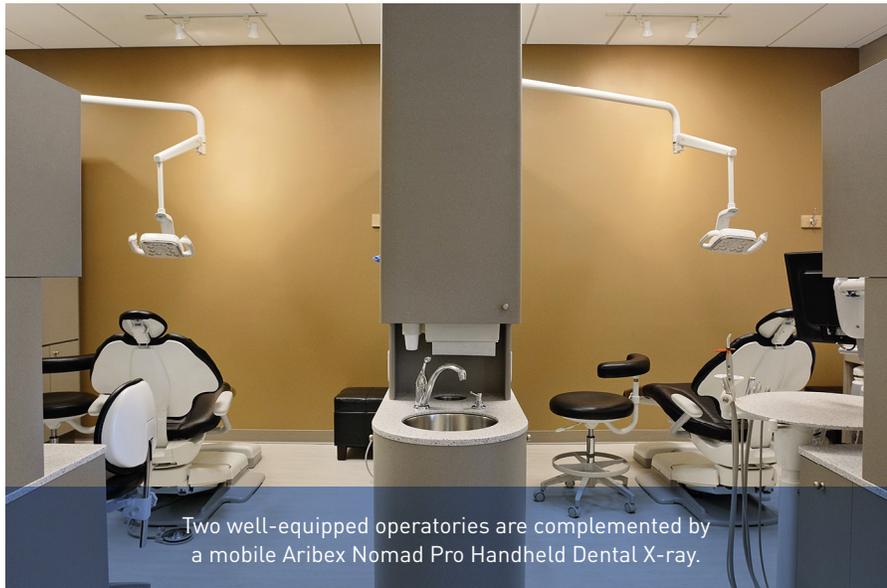
Hickerson also made the decision to install serialized dental equipment, as opposed to locally-built cabinets. Selecting serialized equipment means that the landlord can't keep the cabinetry if and when Hickerson's office moves to another location years down the road. Thome mentions that sometimes dentists contract with a local cabinetry contractor for their buildout, and later regret it because once constructed, the cabinets become technically and legally a part of the building.

Another advantage of serialized cabinetry: if you break a hinge or a door glide, those pieces are readily available for replacement. Says Thome,

“ Cabinet doors, drawers, panels: you can just call A-dec for the exact replacement, and they can make what you need even 15 years down the road. You can even change the color of the drawer panels if you do a re-design without having to redo the cabinet.”

Installing a Nomad portable x-ray instead of a fixed system meant more cost savings for Hickerson, as he can just carry the machine between operatories. The office is fully digital, meaning no film costs and near-immediate development of the images which show up directly on his computer screen. Safety concerns are moot: new x-ray machines have such a precise focal spot with so little radiation scatter that they're just as safe as a wall-mounted, fixed x-ray machine.

Now that the project is complete and Dr. Hickerson has settled in for the long haul, he delivers key advice for other dentists just starting the design process. Think ahead is his mantra, since so much of the planning was “considering what the [practice] needs would be going forward,” which meant using cabinetry for operatory walls (which can be moved in the future) and anticipating the space for three more operatories. The end result is a soothing, sandy-colored space that seems much grander than its size and location, but while still retaining the intimacy of a small-town dentist.



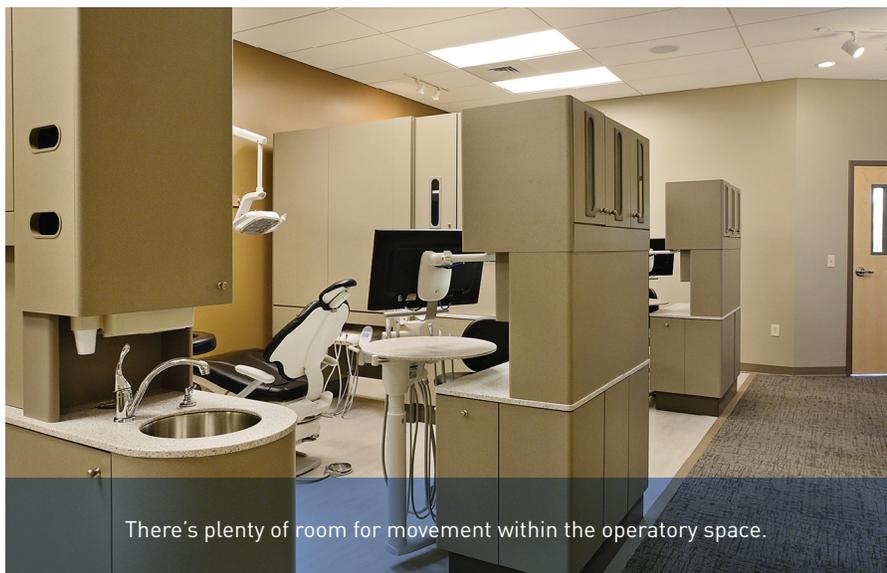
Two well-equipped operatories are complemented by a mobile Aribex Nomad Pro Handheld Dental X-ray.



An Instrumentarium Imaging OP300 with Ceph provides enhanced treatment planning.

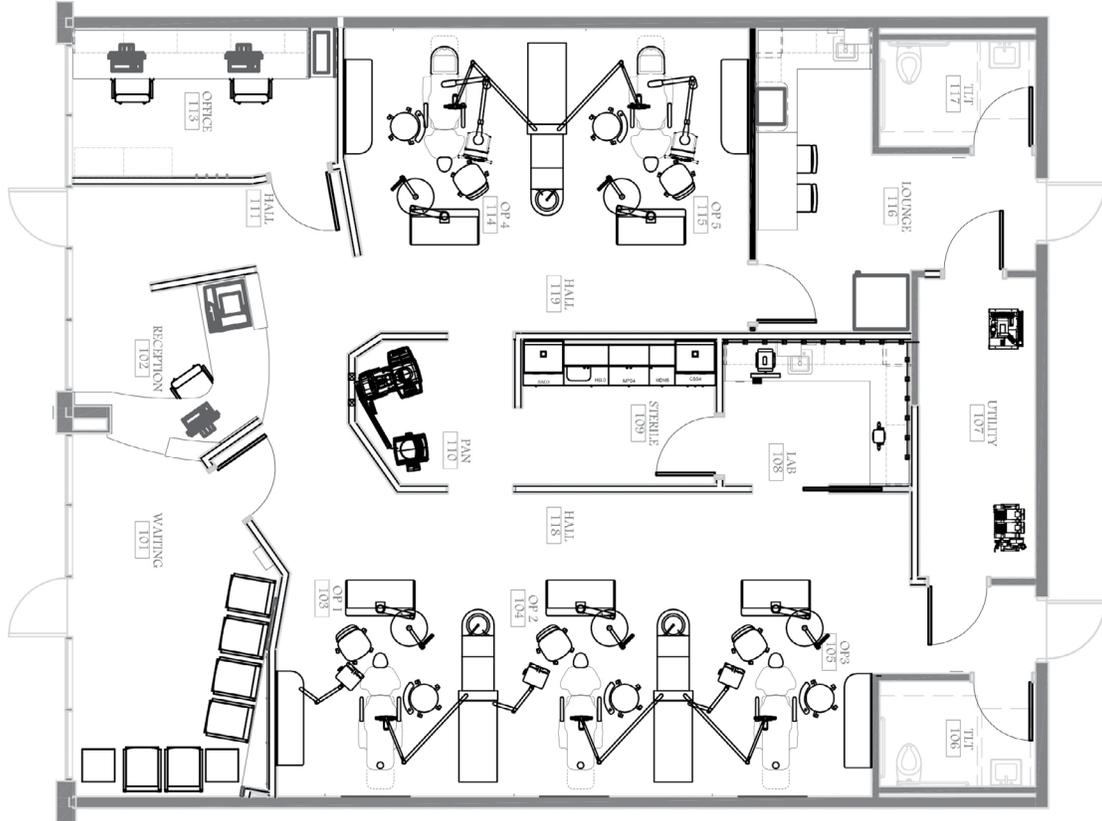


The A-dec Preference ICC Sterilization System simplifies maintenance and sterilization.



There's plenty of room for movement within the operatory space.

FLOORPLAN



NEW EQUIPMENT LIST

- A-dec 411 dental chairs
- A-dec 5543.TB.49 Central Console
- A-dec 574 Cabinet Mount Lights
- A-dec 5580.42 Treatment Consoles
- A-dec 545 12 o'clock Assistants Instrumentation
- A-dec 5531.58 Accessory Consoles
- A-dec 542 Side Delivery System
- A-dec Preference ICC Sterilization System
- A-dec Assistina Plus
- Air Techniques Mojave V3 Dry Vacuum System
- Air Techniques AirStar AS30 Compressor
- Air Techniques 53251 Control Panel
- Air Techniques Stack Rack
- Aribex Nomad Pro Handheld Dental X-ray
- Dentsply Cavitron Jet Plus
- ICW T2 Paralink Monitor Mounts
- Instrumentarium Imaging OP300 with Ceph



Even in a 2000-square-foot office, it's essential to carve out room for an employee lounge.



The design of the office allows for ample cabinet and desk space.