

THE LEADING SURGERY DESIGN TEAM AT LEVITCH DESIGN ASSOCIATES ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT

BUILDING, INTERIORS AND MARKETING IN ORDER TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PRACTICE PRESENTATION

Style Guide #4 2010

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Q: “I’ve been in my current practice for 8 years and things are starting to get a little cramped. I’d like to expand from a 4 chair practice to a 6 chair practice – can you tell me how much space I would need and what I need to be aware of when considering potential new premises?”

A: Over the past 25 years we have worked with hundreds of dentists, and designed surgeries of all sizes and shapes. Over this time we have accumulated comparative figures for analysis and determined that, for each dental chair, an average of 40sqm is required. It is possible to get away with slightly less space, however you will need to compromise on some of the items you may have on your ‘wish’ list. We recommend that even after compromises are made, 35sqm really is the bare minimum that should be allowed per chair.

The main factor we utilise to determine the size required is function. A dental practice has three functional zones:

1. Public
2. Clinical
3. Private

These need to be separated into distinct zones, but relate to each other in a way in which is natural to the flow of traffic around a practice.

function



When addressing functional relationships, we look at the following:

- ◆ **Measurement**
The size and configuration of the space
- ◆ **Regulation**
Ensuring the design of your practice complies with all relevant statutory requirements
- ◆ **Limitations**
Recognising the limitations of the space and implementing design elements to overcome, or reduce the impact of, these issues
- ◆ **Flow**
Determining the optimum flow around your practice for staff and patients
- ◆ **Ergonomics**
Considering the way in which you work within the space, and designing your workplace with your comfort in mind.

It may be surprising to some, but the surgeries themselves take up only 20-25% of your practice space. Corridors, reception and waiting areas will require just as much space. Allowing ample room for sterilization, storage and staff areas will ensure your practice functions efficiently. Other areas to consider are patient rest rooms, private payment areas and courtesy stations. Whilst these areas are non-essential in a dental practice fit-out, it is these areas that will define for your patients the type of practice you are and the level of service you provide.

SPACE COMPARISONS FOR UP TO 6 SURGERIES

Average for General Dental

Space	Sm	ave %
Reception / Waiting area	40	13%
Administration	14.15	5%
Consultation room	9.97	3%
Principals Office	9.48	3%
Practice Manager Office	7.43	2%
Surgeries	63.08	21%
Lab	6.52	2%
Practitioner's room	4.9	2%
Sterilisation	9.08	3%
OPG 0%	3.44	1%
Laundry / Plant	4.5	2%
Staff Room	21.3	7%
Rest Rooms	13.36	4%
Staff Lockers	1.67	1%
Storage	6.42	3%
Total Used Space	215.3	
Wall Space	16.94	6%
Corridors & Circulation	65.32	22%
Total Area	297.56	100%
Average sm / surgery	49.59	

As touched upon earlier, well designed premises also take into consideration the flow of patients and staff around your practice, making the best use of the space. This allows for the best operational flow and can have a far-reaching impact on staff morale. Increased efficiency and a more harmonious environment means happier staff and higher levels of staff retention. These premises will also provide a clear delineation between public, private and clinical areas.

A good designer will resist compromising on the critical areas, as this will significantly detract from the presentation of the practice. By understanding the sub-conscious effects of space, designers can ensure your patients and staff enjoy the space.

Our best advice is to allow for the space required and let the premises work for you.

Q: I get confused by all the marketing jargon – brand, logo, what’s the difference? I already have a logo – isn’t this enough?

A: Many people mistakenly believe their logo is their brand, and that once they have a logo created then – voila – they are marketing their practice and the patients will come. In reality, your brand is so much more than this!

Your ‘brand’ is the essence of who you are and what you do. It is your corporate identity, and is defined by how people perceive you, how they perceive the service you provide, and their feelings toward you.

Your brand is defined by a psychological response, which you cannot create, you can merely aim to influence, by communicating the qualities that make your brand unique. To convey these qualities effectively, you must first be clear on what they are.

Assigning your brand ‘human’ attributes allows you to create a brand personality. Determining how you want your brand to be perceived then allows you to establish the messages to be contained within your marketing.



Your brand is communicated via various elements including your name, logo, tagline, and philosophy. Every brand should have its own unique personality and image, and occupy its own exclusive position within its market. Your logo, practice name and tagline should all be created to support and convey the ‘story’ of your brand.

Your logo is simply a visual representation of your brand. It is a tool that acts as a trigger and reminder – when someone sees your logo it should evoke an emotional response. Your logo should prompt them to think about your brand – who you are, what you do, and what that all means to them.



Each of these logo’s have been created to support a different brand message. They appeal to different target markets and evoke different emotional responses

A logo:

- ◆ Is like a flag or signature
- ◆ Does not sell directly, instead it identifies
- ◆ Derives its meaning from what it symbolises

Whilst we all have our subjective ideas as to what constitutes a good logo design, most would agree a good logo does not require the audience to read – it is distinctive and instantly recognisable. It will convey something to the audience about the experience they will have with your brand and should provide a sub-conscious indication of the services you offer.

An issue can arise when there is a disconnect between the messages a brand is wanting to convey via their marketing tools, and the messages they actually are conveying. The best approach is to ensure a clear brand direction is established prior to the creation of any marketing tools, and not the other way around. Only after being associated with your brand can your logo take on any real meaning. ◆

If you would like to find out more about interior or graphic design, we would be happy to evaluate your current situation and answer any of your queries. Kimberley Ward and Genna Levitch can be contacted at: info@levitch.com.au or + 6 12 9880 9300.



Dr Genna Levitch is a principal of Levitch Design Associates, an award winning building and interiors consultancy specialising in Healthcare Facility Design. Genna has over 25 years experience in private practice, is a regular contributing columnist to industry publications and an international speaker on Dental Practice Design and Presentation.



Kimberley Ward is the Business Development Manager for LDA and has over 6 years experience in marketing and business development, having worked in various roles within the property industry across Australia and the United Kingdom.

Levitch Design Associates (LDA) has been providing innovative design solutions to healthcare professionals for over 25 years. Offering architectural, building and interior design, through to graphic design and marketing solutions, LDA provides an integrated design approach; from the look of the building to that of your business card. For more information about LDA, please visit www.levitch.com.au