

From vision to reality

Levitch Design brings client's sketchy ideas to life

By Danny Chan

The construction and renovation of a dental facility involves a hands-on approach from various departments including engineering, architectural, interior design, project management and graphic design. Throughout the process, the one thing that keeps the project travelling along a common path is the vision. It acts as glue, without which the myriad ideas and contributions cannot hold together. The vision invariably comes from the client, in consultation with the fitout team. The key to a successful renovation, hence, lies in getting an entire fitout team to internalise, and work according to, the client's vision. Not as easy as it sounds. In fact, getting it right is often what separates the professionals from the wannabes.

Working on Mona Vale Dental's fitout project, Levitch Design Australia had to harmonise the virtual and building design elements within a multidisciplinary scope of functions. This was a comprehensive makeover project involving image branding and physical construction work. To the client's pleasant surprise, LDA team members were able to rally around his core vision and produced some amazing results.

"The practice environment needed to complement the quality of the team at Mona Vale Dental. My previous premises, although a great space, was not up to this standard. I wanted to achieve a place where patients felt comfortable and welcomed – it should be the type of place that they would recommend to their friends and



family," says Dr Alistair Graham, the principal dentist and owner of Mona Vale Dental, about his initial concept.

Dr Graham graduated in dentistry from Bristol University, England, and completed a post-graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry (Oral Implants) at Sydney University. After honing his clinical skills in London for seven years, the affable practitioner moved to Australia in 2004 and started Mona Vale Dental in 2009. Highly qualified and experienced in the field of implant dentistry, Dr Graham is one of a few dentists with the skills and credentials to provide patients with both the surgical and restoring phases of the treatment.

Proud of his achievements and those of his team, Dr Graham wanted the practice environment to imbue these attributes while highlighting key areas of patient comfort and customer service.

"The practice has an enviable position above street level with light and airy views on two sides. I wanted to maintain that feeling of light and space with a semi-open plan feel to the practice. It should allow open communication through the practice for the team but with sufficient privacy for patients."

Dr Graham also wanted to maintain an open concept that permits eye contact and visual communication between team members, which he reveals, is a unique component of their working style.

"Closed doors are not something that I wanted to have in the





practice, although private space could be achieved by having a separate consultation room," he outlines.

The Levitch Design Team had to reconfigure the entire layout to create space for: 3 chairs; a recovery room; CBCT; CEREC; and sterilisation equipment. The treatment room needed to be large enough to accommodate the needs of implant surgery.

On top of building responsibilities, Levitch Design assumed the task of rebranding the practice. Dr Graham considers LDA's ability to merge building and construction with branding strategies into a seamless package as the firm's unique feature. The synergistic results, he says, are palpable:

"The new branding DNA flows throughout the marketing strategies and logo design, through the physical design elements into the web design."

"I believe the Levitch team took the rebranding exercise very seriously and regarded the future growth of our practice as much a priority as the fitout itself."

Dr Graham's last comment speaks volumes of LDA's consummate work ethic, especially when you consider the dentist's glowing assessment of the final renovation.

"The practice has transformed into a true modern centre of excellence, without feeling like an overtly clinical space. Levitch nailed whatever was presented in the brief."

From subtle aesthetics to bold flourishes, the LDA team certainly knows how to make a statement. Each oil painting carefully curated for style, tone and theme – apparently, pop art with a 'nature' twist. Fixtures and furnishings tastefully match with shades of avant-garde and classy neutrals. Glass and PVC panels shimmer under well-placed light sources to generate 'bokeh' reflections and muted shadows.

With clever use of light and space, the LDA designers made the first floor unit space appear bigger and brighter. What once resembled a dull office cubicle is now a sublime reception area featuring a stylish front desk with rounded corners, around which ample walking space has been wisely created.

In step with the client's vision, large windows and glass partitions ensure that natural light does not get obstructed but fills the open and flowing space. Meanwhile, down and strip lighting creates a soft and soothing ambience, accentuated by warm oakish



tones of the laminate floors. The half frosted glass partitions maintain that "semi-open plan" that the dentist had envisioned, which allows for a measure of privacy without blocking the visual cues shared between staff members.

In so far as materialising the client's vision, LDA was right on the money, Dr Graham confirms. He would even go as far as to praise LDA designs for their future-proofing qualities:

"What I found most impressive is that they really listened to my vision and were able to incorporate my vision so thoughtfully in the design and layout. The fact that the entire Levitch team understood my singular vision in moving the practice forward means a lot. It seems to me that every member of the team took the vision to heart while working collaboratively."

"In my opinion, they didn't simply deliver on the deadline. They realised my vision by looking 10 years into the future!"

Dr Graham would, without hesitation, recommend LDA's services. Once again, he qualifies the team's ability to transform abstract ideas into tangible results.

"The time they took to understand what it was that we wanted to achieve meant that they were able to surpass my expectations in the final result – and they have done it perfectly." ♦