

There's much more to a fit-out, than just the design

By **Winston Crick** – Project Consultant at Levitch Design

Renovating and updating your practice is an exciting, yet busy time with a lot of things to think about and get right. Designing and building is only one part of the complete practice presentation, so it is important to also think about the other aspects of the business including your logo, signage, uniforms, marketing and much more.

While a new surgery design alone will bring positive financial and environmental results, there are other aspects of visual communication that require attention in order to gain the most benefit from a new fit-out.

Logo design, stationery, signage and marketing collateral, as well as the personal presentation of staff are just as important as the physical design of a practice. If these elements project a consistent image of a practice, combined they are a powerful tool in communicating the attention to detail and standard of services offered.

Signage

There are several points to consider with signage, outside of simply marking the location of a new practice. For example, have patients been notified of the change of address well in advance, and leading up to their appointment? Are there clear directions to lead patients to the new location, and contact numbers displayed for those who might visit the old location by mistake or habit? Existing patients will be well informed of the new practice if these points are considered, but it's also important for signage to attract new patients.

Clear, well-designed signage positioned well, can be an effective form of advertising. Another consideration is consistency in style with the practice's interior. A patient's perception based on exterior appearance and signage should be confirmed rather than confused when they enter a newly designed practice.

Uniforms

It's absolutely critical that staff have impeccable personal presentation. Staff members are one of the most important



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elements of practice image. Patients need to feel confident and comfortable whilst being cared for and staff wearing ill-fitting, outdated, or badly worn uniforms will immediately reflect badly on the expertise of the practice. A new surgery fit-out presents an opportune time to improve staff presentation by upgrading uniforms. If they aren't updated, uniforms can appear inappropriate and out-of-synch with the new practice image.

Logo

It's important that a logo reflects an accurate image of a practice. If a refurbishment or relocation is on the agenda, the style and presentation of the premises will transform dramatically, so it's often necessary to update a logo to ensure it's in-keeping with the new practice environment. As a logo is a graphic representation of a practice's identity or 'personality', it should be designed with careful consideration. If not, it can project a misleading or even negative image.

A well-designed logo will not only withstand the test of time, but can with subtlety, make reference to practice

location, the nature and age of patients being treated and the type of services offered. In other words, give it a point of difference. Having a logo professionally designed is a one-off expense that will deliver benefits for years to come.

Stationery

Along with the new logo, a new surgery fit-out is a good time to upgrade the printed image of a practice as this is what the client looks at after they leave the physical space. Stationery design can date just like the physical environment and needs to be refreshed regularly to reflect well on the practice. This could include items such as the appointment cards, with compliments slips, letterhead and referral slips for specialists. An upgraded practice usually provides a greater range of services to patients. A great way of informing prospective and existing patients of these is to develop a practice brochure, setting out the range of services offered as well as profiling the staff who care for patients. In today's world, receiving printed stationery often has a bit impact in being positively remembered by your patients.

Marketing

A well-designed and presented surgery is a powerful marketing tool and it's worth considering, updating or increasing marketing activities, in order to maximise the benefits a new fit-out can deliver. Before proceeding however, a clear and definite budget should be established. To ensure marketing expenditure is proportionate to business activity, a reasonable budget would be in the vicinity of 1.5% to 2% of practice turnover. The real trick is to actually allocate the money towards the right mediums to achieve the best return on investment. If you need help in writing a marketing plan, Levitch Design Australia can write one for you.

There's no question a refurbishment or relocation requires a great deal of time and attention, however, if the finer aspects of practice presentation are considered and a unified approach adopted, a new fit-out will deliver far greater positive results. ♦