
How Flow helped one clinic increase production by 30%

Summary

Two business partners bought a clinic with archaic systems and optimized its operations with a proprietary intra-clinic notification and communication system that instantly drove production up, improved staff morale and kept patients happy.

Background & Problem

Two business partners acquired an 8-operator dental clinic in Haileybury, Ontario. While the patient mix was strong, they were looking to grow the practice and needed to pay off their debt and investment quickly. They also identified major inefficiencies in the way the clinic was operating. It was a large practice and staff were running around from one end to the other trying to communicate and give direction. The former owner was not tech savvy and owned the clinic for many decades, but did not invest in core infrastructure and systems to help optimize operations.

Rick Iaboni, one of the partners, saw a major opportunity to improve operations and increase production. More importantly, Haileybury being 500+ kilometers north of Toronto, was not a major draw for hygienists or dental assistants - it was very difficult to attract good talent and retain it. Inefficiencies at the clinic were putting pressure on human resources and staff retention - the partners were seeing an exodus of talent since the

acquisition, mainly attributed to the mental drain on staff from having to chase one another all day long. While patients were generally loyal to the clinic, a new more modern competitor was actively poaching clientele from Haileybury; the partners knew they needed to reinvent the clinic and optimize it to retain patients and keep their staff happy.



The Solve

Rick knew the inherent problem with Haileybury was with the way staff were communicating with one another and the lack of an efficient system and process to move patients around the clinic. So much time was lost in running around the large space and trying to get the attention of the dentists or hygienists on duty.



With the help of the founding developer, Rick designed an application that would run on tablets in the clinic. Every operatory or room would have a tablet installed in clear eye view. The system was meant to be simple, but effective - allowing staff in that room to communicate with all the other rooms by requesting the need for a service, like a recall exam. The prompts would be fully

customizable allowing great flexibility, but would serve a single purpose: let the entire clinic know what you need in the room that you are in and prevent the need for running around the clinic looking for it. Rick would later commercialize this software at scale and call it Flow.

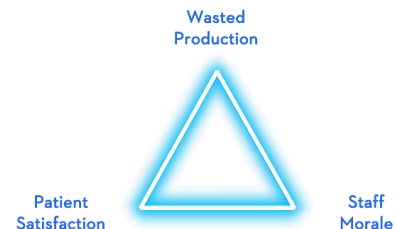
Methodology

The partners knew they had something special and wanted to measure just how great it was. They chose a three metrics to focus on:

Production: how many more cleanings, exams and general business are we generating from implementing the new system.

Staff Retention: what's the staff turnover like once the system is implemented.

Patient Retention: are patients being lost and going to competition or are we seeing our clientele repeatedly and maintaining strong customer retention.



Results

After 14 months of the system being implemented the partners dove into the numbers and started analyzing the impact of the changes they made to their clinic, with the implementation of Flow being the single largest initiative.



Production: after analyzing the financials and the production volume, the partners saw a significant spike year-over-year. Comparing to the production pre-acquisition to the production they were doing now with Flow, they saw 30% increase in billings.

Staff Retention: employee satisfaction was elevated instantly. Staff absolutely loved the system and that mental drain of chasing and waiting for their colleagues was gone. Staff churn dropped below 4% once the system was implemented.

Patient Retention: with a clientele book of approximately 5,000 patients, 94% of them returned for regular cleanings and exams, up from approximately 74% in the previous year of owning the clinic.

Conclusion

Rick's idea to maximize efficiency and improve operations with a simple, yet effective intra-clinic notification system proved to be a home run. The partners were able to solve their three core problems since the acquisition. The paid off their debt 18 months after implementing the system (2.5 years after acquisition), strengthened the clinic's culture and employee satisfaction, and grew their patient count, holding on to more clients than ever before.

As more and more temp staff visited Haileybury they became in love with the Flow system and asked where it was sourced from. When Rick responded that he built it himself, most staff laughed, but recommended he gets it into every clinic in the country. Five years later Rick listened and sold his interest in Haileybury to focus his time on commercializing and scaling Flow to help other clinics enjoy the same benefits he brought to Haileybury.

