

Expanding from the top down

Well-known Melbourne dentist Harry Marget had finally had enough. Since moving into his practising home, East Bentleigh Dental Group, over 30 years ago, he'd undertaken several renovations on the premises in an ad hoc manner, typically with the aim of increasing the number of treatment rooms available.

"I began renovating surgeries as early as 1976 when I did my initial renovation here at East Bentleigh," Dr Marget said. "It was all done by myself with the help of one dental equipment company. I had all the design problems myself, most of which ended up in disasters. After hiring my second and third dentist, I again renovated in 1979 and then again in 1981. Both of these renovations were fraught with disasters as they were done by qualified electricians but with little carpentry experience and certainly no dental knowledge.

"After this episode I embarked on a course of instruction in how to work with dental surgeries and also developed a plan for group practice based largely along the lines of the large dental centres in North America. From that time, I began another course on surgery renovation, finally deciding on a dental company to initiate the first major renovation increasing the size of the practice to five surgeries. This went well until a problem with the air conditioning developed at which stage a major fight erupted between us and the builder ending with a court action that left a bad taste in my mouth. After that, I decided a different approach was required."

Dr Marget graduated from Adelaide University in 1972 and moved to Melbourne shortly after. He worked in general practices in Camberwell and Hawthorn before moving into a Crown & Bridge practice in Collins Street where he gained

much experience in both dentistry and redevelopment plans. His business partner at East Bentleigh Dental Group, Dr Yelena Magit, graduated from Adelaide University in 1995 after having previously graduated from the University of Moscow some years earlier. She joined the practice in 1998 and became a partner in 2003.

"The latest renovation we have just completed stands head and shoulders above the rest," Dr Marget said. "We found Medifit through Australasian Dental Practice magazine and contacted Sam Koranis who came and saw us the same day. He embraced the concept of building and redeveloping a high profile practice with smooth traffic flow immediately and managed to bring it to reality."

When Dr Marget contacted Medifit, East Bentleigh Dental Group occupied the first floor of a two-story building. The plan was to leave the existing practice



untouched and expand into the ground floor shop-front with four new treatment rooms. On completion, both floors would be one large practice. The grand floor had previously been tenanted by a third party.

“Sam and his design team initiated moves and decisions that made sure our existing practice was not interrupted during the construction phase and the business of dentistry continued,” Dr Marget said. “That was paramount and they achieved it with ease.”

A relaxed, modern and flowing feel was desired for the overall space with an element of the dynamic. Dr Marget wanted the space had to make a statement about the professionalism and quality of the practice.

The new main reception was created on the ground floor of the practice to handle both levels. The goal was to create a modern but approachable



statement to clients entering the building. The walls are predominantly a light coffee/latte colour with a decorative patterned molding on the entry walls to add some interest and detailing rather than the typical paintings/prints.

The ceiling space at the entry is painted a dark grey/black colour so that your eye is drawn to the bulkhead and reception counter. The dropped pendant light fitting adds focus for the reception and provides a more intimate setting by dropping the feeling of height at the counter.

The main wall behind the counter contains stylised versions of the colours used on their business cards set into a backdrop of a bronzed mirror which, while being reflective and increasing the perception of depth, also adds a golden haze to the reflection and obscures it slightly so it's not as harsh as a plain mirror.

The counter itself is sprayed in a 2pac automotive finish that provides a seamless glossy 'block'. Accent lighting under the floor recess helps the counter to appear as if it were floating in the air. The floor is timbergrain vinyl which is both visually attractive and very hard wearing.

The practice manager's room is tucked in behind the reception counter and the underside of the staircase that leads to the upper floor was cut back to allow the surgeries and corridor to be accessible.

The large bulkhead that runs the length of the hallway allows the air-conditioning ducts to be concealed as well as providing a transition from the reception to the surgeries.

With only one set of windows at the shop-front, the lack of natural light was a challenge to overcome and one criteria the client wanted to address. Hence, the corridor is made up of long built-in cupboards with lightboxes along their length which cast light into the treatment rooms where no natural light exists. All of the lighting is concealed and bounces off of the ceiling to create a diffused effect that softens the impact of the straight corridor.

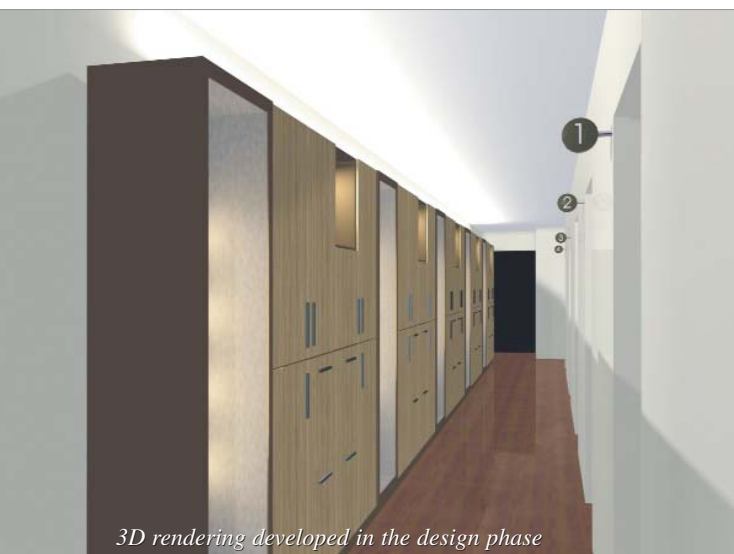
All four surgeries are spacious and roomy and are serviced by the centrally located sterilisation area.

"We chose Sirona equipment because of its style, reliability, cost, service and above all, simplicity," Dr Marget said. "The service team and the backup support are always available to help us and that is critical. It's proven to be an excellent decision and we enjoy the simplicity of the management of the units.

"The stylish Sirona equipment also compliments the Medifit design. Without doubt, I would recommend Sirona every time and Medifit seem to have a balanced understanding of the system and what was required to position it for optimum use.

"Installing an OPG for the first time has also brought benefits beyond our wildest dreams. I will always recommend Sirona and there is no way a modern surgery can operate without an OPG and this is one of the best."

As part of the project, the exterior of the building was repainted with all new signage and a new DigiGlass shopfront which creates a complete picture from the streetscape.



3D rendering developed in the design phase

Summary

The Practice

Principal	Drs Harry Marget and Yelena Magit
Type of Practice	General
Location	East Bentleigh, Melbourne
Size	126 square metres
No of chairs	4

The Team

Design	Medifit
Construction & Joinery	Medifit

Equipment

Dental Units	Sirona C8+ with Sivision Patient Communication
X-Ray	Sirona Heliodent DS
OPG	Orthophos XG3DS Digital
Autoclaves	Sirona DAC Professional Class B
Compressor	Dürr QUATTRO Silver Airline
Suction	Dürr VS900
Software	Oasis practice management

The project was scheduled to be completed within 10 weeks but through tight planning and scheduling of trades, an 8-week program was achieved by Medifit.

"I wish to thank the Principals and staff of East Bentleigh Dental Group for their cooperation throughout," said Sam Koranis, managing director of Medifit. "A project like this can only run effectively if the client cooperates and responds to questions in a timely manner which allows us the freedom to do what we do best.

"Drs Marget and Magit wanted to achieve uniformity with the existing upstairs practice and we in turn laid the carpet on the stairs leading to the reception and waiting room to achieve a

seamless transition between new and old. Painting to the stairwell and modifications to the reception counter reinforced the design outcome. Overall, it is a great result."

"Sam and his team are to be congratulated for the amount of insight and development skills they brought to bear to produce the result we have now," Dr Marget said. "I highly recommend the Medifit team to produce an outstanding aesthetic result on time, on budget and with a great deal of skill, aplomb and flair."

"The outcome was and is a facility that is truly functional, aesthetic and a joy to the eye. We have no hesitation in recommending Medifit for any design and construction project."

