



## CASE STUDY:

# Cleartooth helps established Colorado practice go digital

Recently retired, Dr. Jim Monk bought his practice in South Boulder nearly 30 years ago and offered general dentistry services in this eclectic college town until selling his practice in 2013. His philosophy was one of building patient relationships to last. The notable length of service of Dr. Monk's staff—several were with him for more than 15 years—was important to his patients. In this tight-knit community, the trust this kind of stability engendered meant a lot of repeat business.

For most of his time in practice, Dr. Monk and his team used traditional film X-rays. At the time he started, film was pretty much the only game in town. Even as the years went by and digital X-ray technology began to be more widely used, Dr. Monk was still reticent to embrace it. He had a strongly held belief that "technology needs to improve the quality of dentistry" and his ability to diagnose problems early or it would not benefit his practice.

### Moving from film to digital

In 2012, he saw a demonstration of Cleartooth™ Digital X-Ray. This solution takes intra-oral X-rays using advanced sensors and software, with the resulting high-resolution images providing the clarity Dr. Monk was looking for to help support his practice.

The quality of the images, which are far clearer than film, and the expertise of the Cleartooth team were the two deciding factors in his decision to make the move to digital. He felt that if the Cleartooth technology could help him make a better diagnosis, then it was worth the investment. With clear images that have good contrast and do not need adjustment to easily locate interproximal caries, Dr. Monk found the diagnostic improvement and confidence he was looking for.

He acquired the system and contracted with Cleartooth to develop an entire technology package for his practice—from securing a network provider to installing the Cleartooth software and hardware. He put touchscreen computers in three operatories and one consultation room. Acquiring two # 2 sensors and one # 1 sensor, Dr. Monk and his hygienists each have a dedicated # 2 sensor and share a # 1 sensor among their four operatories which allows them maximum convenience within budget. With a quick, onsite training session from Cleartooth staff, his office was up and running. Even those on staff without much computer experience found the system intuitive and easy to learn.

### Saving time on X-ray tasks means more time for patients

Almost immediately Dr. Monk and his staff began to see the benefits. The Cleartooth system captured and displayed X-ray images almost instantly. With no time wasted on developing film, dentist and patient could both see any issues on screen in seconds and a retake could be done, if needed, without even removing the sensor from the patient's mouth.

Dr. Monk and his staff found they could save at least five minutes each time they took a patient X-ray—bitewings and periapicals, and even X-rays for periodontic cases. And the minutes add up. With multiple operatories in use at any given time, those minutes turn into several hours each week. Saving valuable time in each appointment where X-rays were taken enabled him to see more patients, and spend more time with them—which had a positive impact on patient relationships.



# cleartooth digital x-ray

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“I don’t believe in technology for technology’s sake, but the Cleartooth system improves our ability to care for patients by providing better images, faster,” Dr. Monk said. “It gave me an improved confidence that we could see things on the images that we might have missed on film, and gave us back valuable time to spend with our patients.”

Dr. Monk says that while Cleartooth has saved his practice a lot of clinical time by taking images quickly and eliminating film development and drying time, it has also saved administrative time. The Cleartooth system allows the front office to find and attach an image and submit insurance claims digitally with just a few clicks.

Dental assistant Kathy Siebring noted, “The Cleartooth system makes things so much easier. I take X-rays when needed, for a toothache or broken tooth. Because I can see the images immediately and can zoom in on any area I need, it allows me to help educate the patient.”

## **Lower radiation makes for happier patients**

Throughout his time in practice, Dr. Monk took a conservative approach to X-rays, taking them only when needed, and taking as few as possible to get the job done. “People in Boulder are conservative about radiation—many won’t let you take X-rays at all,” he said.

His cautious approach aligned with the desires of health-conscious Boulder residents and, when he switched to Cleartooth, a side benefit that appealed to both Dr. Monk and his patients was the reduced amount of radiation needed to make a diagnosis.

Kathy Siebring agrees. “Our patients appreciate that the radiation we use is as minimal as possible. And there’s another benefit to the Cleartooth system: the lack of chemicals like film developers and fixers. That’s better for the environment and that’s a big thing for people who live in Colorado,” she said.

## **An investment that enhances practice value**

Beyond saving time and increasing productivity, investing in Cleartooth technology had another advantage for Dr. Monk. Modernizing his practice and teaching his staff how to use advanced digital X-ray technology made a difference when it came time to retire.

“The dentist who bought my practice hadn’t seen the Cleartooth system before, but he liked the way it worked. He also liked that with Cleartooth he was able to talk to the software developers directly and even meet them in person,” said Dr. Monk. “I definitely think having the Cleartooth technology in place in my practice added value in his eyes.”

The simplicity of system, the touchscreen that eliminates the need for a keyboard and mouse, and the speed and clarity of the images are what Dr. Monk most appreciated about the Cleartooth technology.

Asked if he would ever consider going back to using film, Dr. Monk commented, “Once you switch to digital you’ll never go back. With film, you may get a nice, smooth image quality, but it’s really tough to enlarge film the way you can with digital. It’s just so much easier to see things when you can zoom in on the image.”

## **About Cleartooth**

Cleartooth™ Digital X-Ray from Cleartooth Electronics offers dental practices the most advanced, easy-to-use digital imaging solution available today. With unmatched image clarity and reliability, our innovative touch-screen digital imaging system is an essential tool in diagnosing early decay and disease with confidence.

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