

# “Patient education needs to be part of the daily activities of a practice”

An interview with Dr Reena Gajjar, Canada



Dr Reena Gajjar

**\_My Dental Hub** is premier web-based dental patient education software. Accessible via your computer or mobile device, including the iPad, it provides patients with informative material on major areas in dentistry, including 3-D animations. Patients are then empowered to make educated decisions about the proposed treatment. **roots** spoke to Dr Reena Gajjar about the idea behind and the benefits of the software.

**\_roots:** *How did the idea for My Dental Hub evolve?*

**Dr Gajjar:** My Dental Hub (formerly Click & Print) started back in 1996, when I joined my husband's prosthodontic practice. Having a background in computer graphics, I developed educational printable materials using images and simple explanations for our practice. These were used exclusively during patient consultations.

It soon became apparent that the treatment plan acceptance rate was increasing dramatically with these materials.

My husband, Dr Ken Hebel, began employing these materials and experienced the same response. Patients asking about treatment options were presented with the printable materials to review and take home. We both found that in addition to enhanced case acceptance, this material was a referral driver.

This digital educational tool, facilitation of patient comprehension and acceptance of proposed treatment manifested in a software program, was originally called Click & Print, which contained printable forms and a few animations that demonstrated dental procedures. Click & Print was sold on a disk for several years. Four years ago, we started to notice a shift in the way that companies were doing business—becoming cloud based—and we made the investment to convert our disk-based product to a web-based product. The development took over a year, but the investment proved to be a smart decision, since we emerged as My Dental Hub—the first cloud-based patient education and practice-marketing solution.

As a cloud-based company, we have the ability to constantly upgrade and update our product offering, and customise our solutions to the needs of our clients. As the dental industry starts moving towards cloud-based solutions, we are well positioned to offer solutions to meet the needs of the individual dental practice, as well as the collaborative needs of dental organisations.

**\_How do/did you obtain the information used in the software? Do you collaborate with universities and/or companies?**

Most of the software content was written and developed by Dr Hebel and me. We collaborated with dental colleagues for some of the clinical content; however, all the 3-D animations are designed and created in-house. The users of our program play an important role in the development of our content, since we develop content based on what our clients need.

Clients submit requests for content they would like to see, and based on popularity and demand, we develop the content. So, in fact, it is actually our users that have guided the direction of the content in the software. This is one of the tremendous advantages of being a web-based company. As we develop new content, we upload it to the program, and it is immediately available to our users. No need to wait for next year's disk upgrade!

*Convincing patients to invest in dental treatment, e.g. an implant treatment, is a challenging task. How will My Dental Hub help?*

We believe that there are three primary components to case acceptance. Patients will invest in dental treatment if they understand the problem and understand the treatment that is being offered, but more importantly, patients must understand the value of the treatment and how that treatment will improve the quality of their life (whether it is related to improving function or aesthetics). The content in My Dental Hub has been specifically developed to address these components of patient education in a language that patients will understand. The 3-D animations are used to visually explain the procedure and the benefits of the treatment, and the printable (e-mailable) documents serve as reinforcement of the animations and as a resource for patients to review at home.

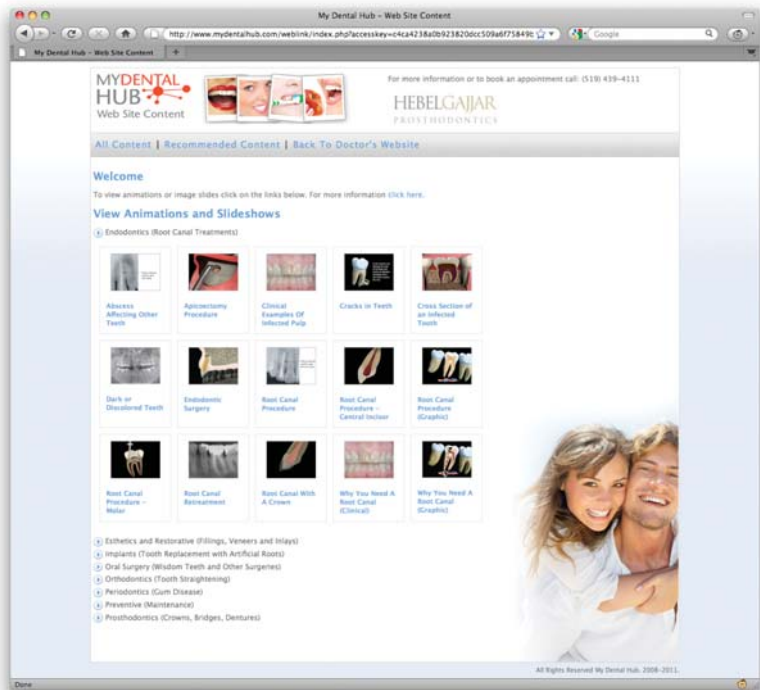
*What are some of the additional features the software offers?*

One of the key features of the software is the ability to e-mail the animations and documents to patients. This allows the dental practice to extend their consultation from their office into the patient's home, where patients can share and discuss the recommended treatment with those involved in the decision-making process.

My Dental Hub has several modules within the program. We offer animations, image documents, narrated slide shows, customisable text documents, a document creator, a patient and photo management section allowing the practice to upload and store patient images, as well as a presentation-creation module. Our newest module, *Easy Consult*, has been extremely popular and is currently our most-used module. *Easy Consult* allows the busy

practice to do a consultation in three simple steps and then e-mail the entire consultation to their patients. It automates the consultation process. It's very simple and highly effective!

Users can link their practice website to the Website Content template, which is personalised with the doctor's logo and contact information.



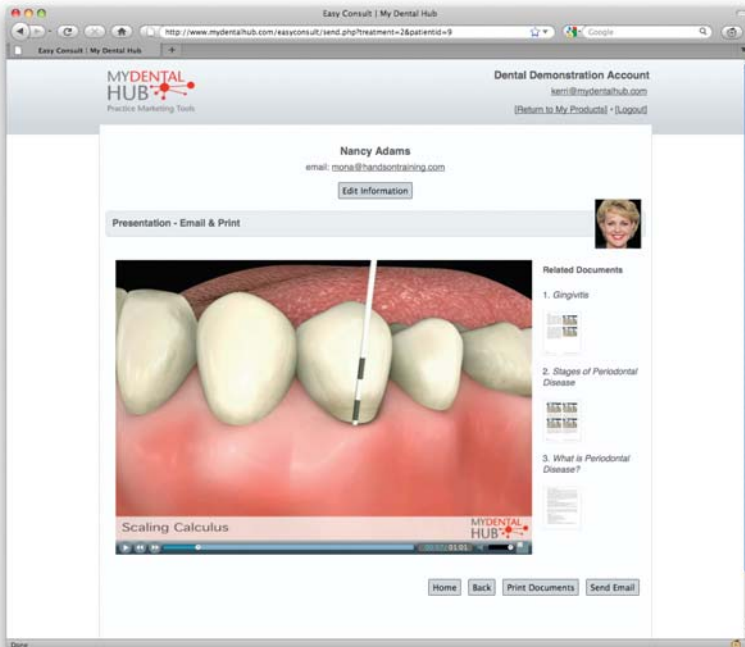
My Dental Hub also offers mobile applications (apps), available on iPad, iPhone and Android tablets, containing all our animations and slide shows. The iPad app is extremely popular in dental practices as an easy way to explain treatment to patients. It provides an exceptional presentation on oral-hygiene instruction, which invariably is a significant driver in any dental practice.

Users can also embed any of the narrated animations or slideshows directly in their practice website to maintain branding and consistency.

*Easy Consult* allows the busy practice to do a consultation in three simple steps and then e-mail the entire consultation to their patients.

In addition, we offer a product called *Web Site Content* that allows users to place any of our animations and slideshows on their websites or linked to their website. High-quality animations on a website allow patients to obtain information about the procedures offered by the practice and

facility. External marketing includes websites, advertising, mailings, etc. that are done virally through e-mail or regular mail. Many dentists are not trained in marketing and find it inherently difficult to embrace marketing to grow their business. Many do not know how, many just don't think they need to.



Many dentists do not take the time to educate their patients or understand the value of patient education. Many feel that patients will accept treatment on the sole basis that the dentist told them they need it. That may have been the way it was, but we now live in an information-based society, and if patients do not receive adequate information from their dentist, they will seek it elsewhere. (Hopefully, that won't be the competitor down the street!)

We did a survey of our My Dental Hub clients to determine how effective patient education was in their practices. Our end users told us that they had experienced an increased case acceptance of **53%**! This number indicates the importance of educating patients, and the impact it has is apparent in any business, including the business of dentistry.



The process of patient education needs to be woven into the daily activities within a practice. This requires enhanced staff training and implementation. Many dentists do not invest the time to integrate the process into their practice procedures. Acceptance of a practice philosophy mandates that training for implementation is as important as training in the procedure.

*Can My Dental Hub also be a helpful tool for cutting through language barriers or communicating with disabled patients?*

Absolutely! A picture is worth a thousand words. Visual images and especially animations tell a story, even if the words cannot be understood. Many of our dentists use our iPad app for that reason. Even with the narration turned off, patients use the iPad to browse the animations and learn about the different dental procedures offered by the practice. Most of us are visual learners. In situations in which there may be a communication barrier, we find that our client base uses the animations as a component of informed consent.

*Is the software available in different languages?*

The software is currently only available in English; however, we are working on translating the software into Spanish and French. We have

Instant presentations make even the most complex case presentations easy, with supporting documents ready to be printed or e-mailed.

offer a powerful branding and marketing tool for a practice.

*In your opinion, what are the most common mistakes dentists make in patient education/marketing their dental practice?*

There are two types of marketing that dental practices should do—internal and external marketing. Internal marketing includes posters, brochures, discussions, etc. delivered within the

many international practices that have requested translations and our goal is to offer the program in multiple languages, thus catering to an international clientele.

*How much does the software cost? Are updates available free of charge?*

My Dental Hub is a suite of products and is subscription based. All updates are included in the subscription fee. The full package includes animations, slideshows, documents, patient and photo management, presentations, and *Easy Consult*. The software comes with an unlimited licence, which means that within a practice, there can be an unlimited number of computers and users. The subscription also includes unlimited training, unlimited support, all updates and upgrades, all new content, an unlimited number of e-mails, unlimited storage of patient data, photos and documents and daily backup. We offer special pricing for American Academy of Periodontology members (we were chosen as their exclusive patient-education provider), and other organisations. Pricing can be found on our website. We also offer a "lite" version of the software that provides access to all of our animations and narrated slideshows on both computers and mobile devices.

Web Site Content allows the practice to link their website to the entire library of narrated animations and slideshows so patients can browse through all the content and/or they can embed specific content directly into their website. We also offer a free ten-day trial that can be requested on our website.

*In your opinion, how will digital tools change the dental practice and the way in which doctors communicate with their patients?*

The entire world is digital—not "becoming" digital. Dentists must embrace this new means of doing business simply because it is now a component of everything, from paying a bill in a restaurant to travel, shopping and doing something as basic as reading.

In terms of communication, digital tools enable a dental practice to communicate quickly, easily and effectively with patients or referrals. No more printing, no more mailing, diminished expense and waste.

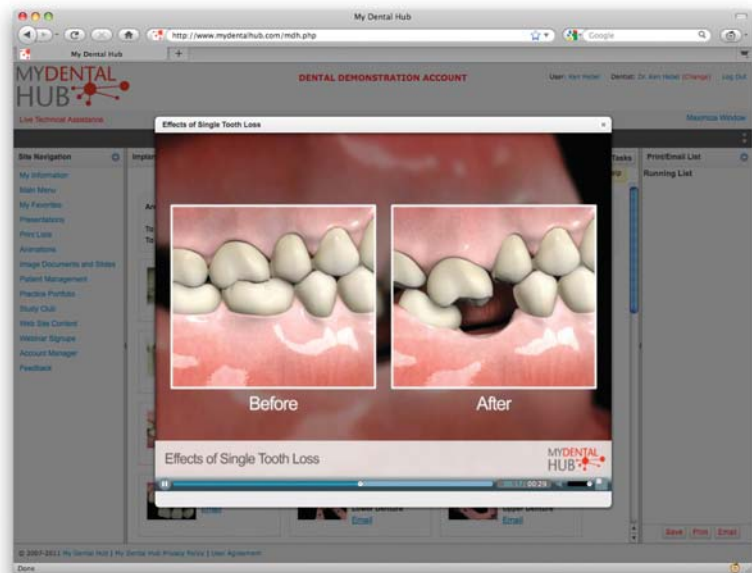
Society is changing. People are more aware of their environment and doing their part to go "green". With simple tools, a dental practice can deliver high-quality education directly and exemplify "environmental friendliness" as well. Ten years ago, if you had told people you could e-mail

animations to patients to show them a dental procedure, no one would have believed it possible. Today, this is the way of the world and the way business is being done.

I believe that with the incorporation of digital tools into a dental practice, "elegant simplicity and seamless connectivity" with patients and

Hundreds of videos with narration can be accessed easily.

Industry leading, stunning animations explain dental procedures in a clear, concise manner.



colleagues will become the standard. Those who embrace today's technology will be tomorrow's industry leaders.

A simple photo management module organises patient photos and offers easy to use editing tools.

We all live in a connected world. My Dental Hub is about being at the epicentre of that connection in the dental world.

For more information please call +1 877 789 4448 or visit [www.mydentalhub.com](http://www.mydentalhub.com).