

Over deliver on budget



By Danny Chan



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When it came time to renovate two surgeries and a reception area at Bundoora Dental Clinic, the main goal for Dr Thanh Nguyen was getting the job done fast while minimizing down time and patient inconvenience. Thankfully, he got more than he bargained for.

Dr Nguyen says the fitout firm he picked had to be flexible enough to work around his schedules, since he divides his 6-day workweek between the two surgeries. The general dentist joined the busy practice in Bundoora in Melbourne's North-East in 2001 and became a co-owner – one of four partners – in 2011. Established in 1968, the 11-chair surgery enjoys a loyal suburban clientele and a growing demographic.

Accommodating Dr Nguyen's hefty work commitments and the scale of renovation, a speedy turnaround was no mean feat. He attests: "We wanted a complete overhaul which involved stripping out walls, floors and ceiling. The entire layout had to be redesigned and fitted out."

That the project took fitout specialist Dentequip only three weeks to complete was impressive in itself but even more so, the dentist maintains that throughout the period – Dr Nguyen was overseas two of the weeks – he hardly skipped a beat carrying out his clinical routines.

And the results, he says, was well worth the \$188,000 renovation budget:

"The newly renovated surgeries not only look great and provide a more comfortable environment to work in they have become more practical and efficient. The entire mood and atmosphere is also more relaxing (and less "clinical") for patients."

While the improvements were not merely cosmetic, the facelift alone seems to warrant the budget. Gone were the sedated hues and 80s-style furnishings. Instead bold lime green dental chair upholstery and matching wall panels, combined with sandstone columns and melamine cabinets bring out a zesty vibrancy absent in most clinics.

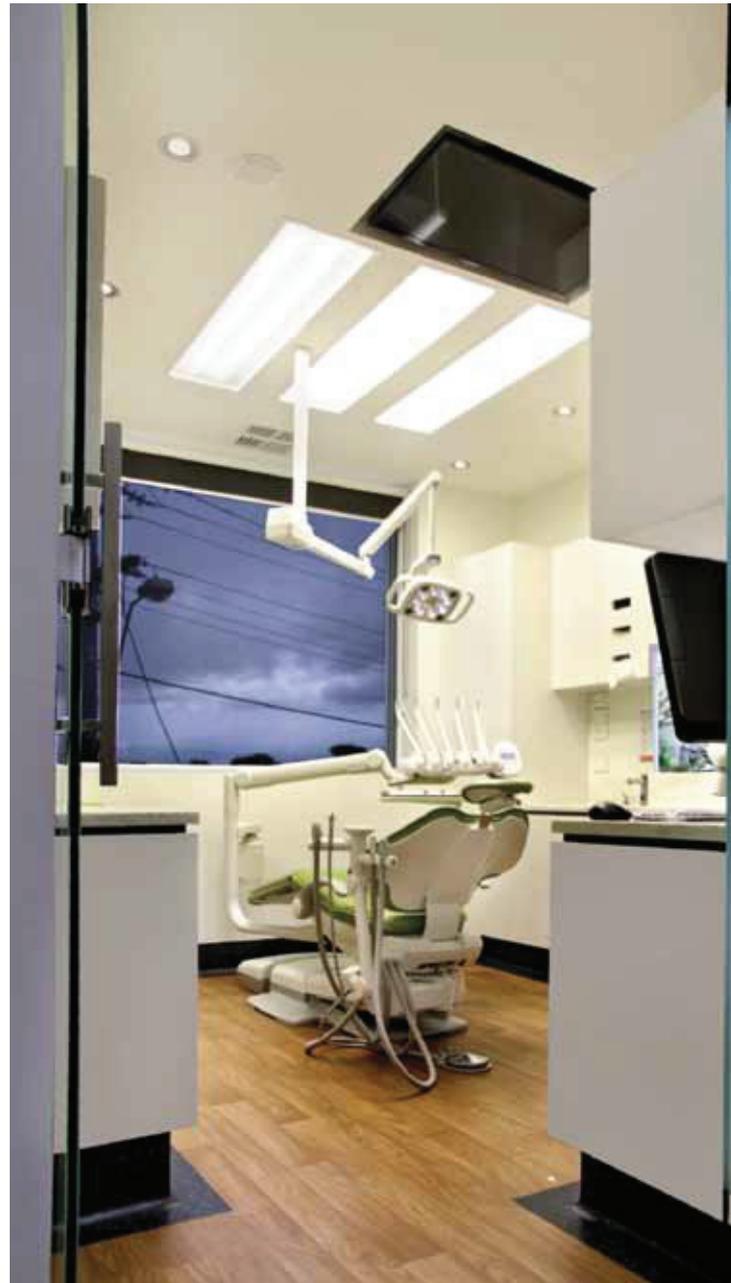
The other adjoining surgery presents a staid looking but no less complementary take on modern design, deploying the popular duck egg blue theme to tasteful effect.

Every inch of the 24-sqm allocated for the renovation was cleverly utilized as a visual treatise on "how to make a room look bigger than it really is".

The most salient display of Dentequip's unique approach to space maximization has to be, hands down, a mini tropical aquarium that doubles as a partial partition wall between the two surgeries. Bringing spa-therapy to a new level, the fish tank decidedly steals the limelight from the dental units as the room's traditional centerpiece.

Custom-built cabinets fill out available corners and limited wall space, while providing ample storage and a clutter-free environment. Other space-saving visual trickeries include frameless glass doors and panels, single piece Corian benchtops with integrated sinks, integrated patient seating with magazine storage as well as enlarged windows.

As a testimony to the finish quality not compromised by work speed, all joinery of the Corian benchtops were vinyl wrapped for ease of maintenance. As well, both surgery windows were re-engineered and widened within the three-week period.



In addition, a recessed ceiling screen was incorporated into the design, providing Internet access, stereo sound and TV/Bluray entertainment. Dentequip also supplied and installed X-ray machines to satisfy both technological and aesthetic demands. New Adec chairs, lights and handpieces complete the instrument/equipment side of the upgrades.

Asked for his customer feedback, Dr Nguyen enthuses: "Dentequip delivered exactly to my requirements. They provided great products to quality finishes and even managed to keep costs down while working around my schedule. The service (from project manager Cale Ziola) was simply professional."

As for his favorite aspects, the affable dentist says he is torn between the fish tank and the natural stone feature walls. The new look and feel, he adds, flowing from the classy reception area (with hidden led strip lighting) to the modern glass doors and sophisticated-looking surgeries need to be admired as a whole to be fully appreciated.

He concludes unequivocally: "It's the sum of all the parts that makes this renovation project so rewarding. It's good value for money and I would definitely recommend their services." ♦