



X-RAY / IMAGING / MRI

Think Outside the Box With Digital Imaging

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According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), employment of chiropractors is projected to grow 17 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations - in large part because patients increasingly prefer nonsurgical methods of treatment. For DCs, it's a great time to be in business and enjoy the benefits of a thriving practice.

But as is true in any business, good times shouldn't equate to static times. Looking for ways to further improve patient care and the practice's bottom line should be ongoing. One way to achieve this - which may seem to be an out-of-the-box approach to some - is with digital imaging.

With the many advances in digital imaging in recent years, there is now a wide range of solutions to cost-effectively meet the needs of chiropractic entities ranging from the single-practitioner practice to teaching institutions. Whether you are not yet providing digital imaging, or still find yourself with film or CR, between the demands from an educated and engaged patient population and shifts in reimbursement, there has never been a more opportune time to rely on DR imaging.



Take a look at Seland Chiropractic and Living Well Center in Fishers, Ind. Providing treatment options for a range of conditions from migraines, back pain and chronic pain, to scoliosis, neck pain, and herniated and degenerated discs, Seland upgraded from CR to DR in 2014. Not only was their decision to invest in DR a bold move as one of the first practices to do so, but so was their use of it.

No longer is imaging something that happens in a darkroom or other area away from the patient. It's now a positive, show-and-tell environment, building trust, retention and referrals.

When patients come to see Dr. Trond Seland, he shows them their X-rays and, through technology, the various ways in which he can manipulate them, letting them see first-hand what's going on. Dr. Seland takes the approach that if he gives the best to his patients, they, in turn, will give the best back - not only their confidence in returning, but also by encouraging others to visit the practice.

With the ready access to priors and other images for comparison, Dr. Seland is able to educate his patients and show them what normal looks like, what their image looks like, and the improvement process along the way as they make strides back to "normal." It's an investment that continues to pay for itself.

In contrast to a small-town practice, consider implementation of DR at Life Chiropractic College West (LCCW) in Hayward, Calif. Akin to its vision to create a brighter future for humanity, the college invested in DR imaging to assure that its students and future chiropractors would be learning on the most advanced technology they will rely on when they start their own practices.

According to Jon Nichols, imaging director for LCCW, in the past two quarters, they had 195 interns

and were performing 475 X-ray series a month. As the students move from the classroom and applying their learning to real people in a clinical setting, they are able to complete all required imaging with DR - full spine, cervical exams, extremities, hips and more.

The patients also benefit. While the busy teaching facility uses high-tech equipment, with clearer images and the possibility of more dose-efficient outcomes, it means happier patients. And the word is spreading. The facility is now getting referrals from up to 20 miles away. That's quite a trip for chiropractic care.

So, as you are evaluating your practice and your strategy for success, perhaps it's time to think outside the box. While patient volume may be high and the results good, the addition of digital imaging may make things even brighter with unexpected benefits.