

The West Coast's First Mobile Dental CT Scanning Service



Mobile CT Imaging

I don't know about you, but I drool when I see new technology. Of course, I would love to have the newest and greatest gear, and 3D cone beam imaging is at the top of my list. Now, imagine the convenience of having a cone beam CT (CBCT) scanner right outside in your parking lot. Imagine how relieved your patients will feel that they won't have to drive to an unfamiliar radiology lab to have a scan taken. Thanks to Mobile CT Imaging (MCTI), this convenience is now available to patients of dentists, ENTs, and other medical specialists in the San Francisco Bay Area. Using a customized van straight out of *Monster Garage*, MCTI, a Bay Area company founded by four local dentists, has introduced the West Coast's first mobile dental CBCT scanning service and is, according to its motto, "Bringing 3D Technology to You."

The company's van is equipped with a NewTom VG Flex CBCT scanner. This machine uses an 18-second scan with a radiation dose that is a fraction of conventional medical CT scans and lower than even a traditional film panoramic X-ray to generate 3D images of the subject. These images can then be manipulated with software to create an infinite number of views from different angles at different depths, and that are selective for different tissues. It is absolutely fantastic to see these images and the tremendous amount of anatomical information that you now have at your disposal. It makes every single case you do much easier to plan and reconstruct. These scans are particularly useful for dental implant planning, tooth impaction studies, orthodontic surveys, TMJ studies, and evaluation of lesions for pathology.

Until the introduction of MCTI's service, it was necessary for patients to visit a remote X-ray laboratory or radiologist to have their CBCT scan taken. These CT scans are extremely valuable to patients and doctors, and will become the new standard of care for many procedures like implants, complicated extractions, and sleep apnea studies. In speaking with one of the co-founders, Dr. Leo Arellano, a general dentist in San Francisco, California, he and his partners felt that if the CT scans were not convenient, then they would be largely underutilized. By bringing the CT scans to the dentist's office, dental practitioners quickly realize the benefits of the NewTom scans.

As practicing dentists with experience in dental implantology, oral surgery, orthodontics, and endodontics, MCTI's owners can appreciate firsthand the value of a mobile service to a dental practice. We all realize that we would love to have this technology in our offices but the price tag makes it impractical for many of us to own one. It would take 20-25 scans per month to break even and most dental offices simply do not have the sort of volume needed to make it profitable. A mobile unit that essentially allows many dentists to use a single CBCT scanner, and that makes a lot of sense.

MCTI recently brought its mobile unit to the 2008 California Dental Association Convention in San Francisco where it was displayed in the AFP Imaging booth, distributors of the NewTom VG CBCT scanner. I saw it with my own eyes and it is really incredible. Currently serving the San Francisco Bay Area, MCTI's future plans include adding more customized vans to their Bay Area fleet as well as assisting groups across the nation and even internationally with introducing a mobile CBCT service to their locations.

Smart Buy Summary: CT scans are the wave of the future and the NewTom VG CBCT scanner is as good as it gets. The mobile van concept can work well for enterprising dentists who would like this technology for their own practice and would like to have another stream of income by providing this important service to other practices in their community. ■

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