



Animal Hospital of Cotati

331 East Cotati Ave.
Cotati, CA 94931
(707) 792-0200
Fax (707) 665-0453

KELKOM

CASE STUDY: ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF COTATI

Compiled March 10, 2013 by Carlton Hinkle, Owner

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to provide a complete picture of how we utilize the KELKOM lighting system. It will provide background of the business overall to provide a window into the flow of our business as it relates to KELKOM, as well as the specific way in which we utilize the system.

BACKGROUND:

We are Animal Hospital of Cotati. We have been in business for fourteen years, and we are currently a four doctor practice with twenty two employees. We are an extremely busy veterinary practice.

We practice primarily "Western" or "Standard" veterinary care, such as you would receive at any high quality veterinary hospital. Additionally, we provide multiple types of Holistic medicine, including Acupuncture, Bioresonance Therapy, Chinese Herbs, and Chiropractic Treatments. We are an AAHA Accredited hospital, which is the elite organization of our industry which we submit to continual inspections and standards to maintain our accreditation. For a more in-depth look at our hospital, feel free to view us at www.animalhospitalofcotati.com

REASON FOR CHOICE OF KELKOM

At our 10 year anniversary, we purchased a building and moved our business. This gave us the opportunity to design our new facility in the way we found most advantageous to the way we practice, and strive to practice veterinary medicine.

A big factor for our hospital in our new layout was how we deal with noise. We believe that a key part of creating a healing environment is to control the noise of the animals as well as the business operations. Many many veterinary hospitals are unable to create this healing environment due to the necessity to communicate with the staff members on a continual basis everywhere in the hospital. The ongoing audible sounds of a standard paging system simply didn't fit with our business model. Our desire to find a way to communicate with our staff in every room in our hospital without creating a disturbance for everyone, every time is what drove us to consider the KELKOM system.

Personnel is a significant cost for our industry because every aspect of our business requires a live person. The challenge we face is providing the right number of staff members, in the right places, to provide the high level of customer service we strive to serve, but also while getting all of the behind the scene work completed as well. Communication in our environment is the key to efficiency.

WHAT IT DOES, AND DOES NOT DO FOR OUR HOSPITAL

We utilize our KELKOM system to keep in constant contact with our staff without creating a disturbance for every person, and every animal in the hospital. Every day we have situations in which we have staff that we need to communicate with in recovery areas where even the volume of a speaking voice would be disruptive to the animal being treated. The last thing a doctor or technician needs when dealing with a sensitive or potentially volatile animal is a loud vocal page going off to add to the tension of the moment. In other cases, it is simply emotionally sensitive when we are dealing with the end of life situations in our "Comfort Room" facilitating a euthanasia to someone's dear loved family member, again the last thing we need to add to the situation is a loud page.

We utilize our system by having each crucial treatment area of the hospital represented on our light bars by the numbers 1 - 10. This allows anyone that has received minimal training to recognize the specific room where someone is needed. We then indicate the specific staff member by a light that indicates if it is doctor, technician, or technician assistant 1, 2 or 3 that is needed in the specific room. As most efficient communication tools, it is extremely simple.

In many of our rooms our system is set up with the auditory light "beep" that indicates a new piece of information has been added to the system that requires everyone look up to see if it involves them specifically. This light beep is almost unnoticeable to our clients and animals we are treating. When a command is entered, it requires the person clear the light from the system once they are addressing the need. This serves as a great communication tool as no one assumes someone else has attended to the need, unless the light goes out.

In our most sensitive areas, we have the option of turning off the audible beep sound so it will not disturb our potential volatile treatments or our emotional euthanasia's.

This system allows us to not only communicate with our staff members to tell them when there services are needed in a specific room, but it allows our doctors and technicians to call for assistance in rooms without having to leave the room, or pick up a phone. When a doctor is in a room and they need assistance, they can hit a light and call someone without stopping the conversation they are having and summon one of several different levels of support.

Additionally, a big advantage with this system is we can also communicate to a doctor or technician behind a closed door, without interrupting the conversation or treatment in which they are involved. We find it extremely helpful to be able to tell a doctor in one exam room that we need them in a different exam room to be able to stay on track with our schedule, or to summon them for an emergency situation.

We also have a "all hands on deck" call where we can indicate to everyone that we have a situation that requires all the help possible in the lobby when the need arises.

SUMMARY

In short, the KELKOM system allows us to provide the quality of care we do, within the limitations of the environment we work strive so hard to create and maintain. Without this system, we would be unable to operate as efficiently as we do with our staff, and we would not be able to create as positive of an impression as we do on our clients and there animals.

This system was a substantial outlay of funds initially that I quite frankly struggled with, but it immediately proved itself to be one of the best spends I have made regarding the design of our hospital. Due to the expense, I have specifically tracked how productive it is and it has paid for it self in multiple ways:

- Staff - Our staffing plan to support 2 doctors each shift utilizes 1.5 fewer staff support members than our research has shown is being used at other clinics in the area that are of similar size. The savings in this area alone pays for the system expense.
- Customer Service - Because we are able to communicate with everyone in the hospital immediately, we are able to consistently exceed the expectations of the client, which is a direct contributor to our referrals, client compliance with treatment pans, and

ultimately our bottom line. Clients are not waiting for assistance while a staff member bathes a dog in the back of the building and is out of touch.

- Environment - Our Kelkom system is a crucial part of our ability to communicate without destroying our calm quiet environment that is so crucial to healing. When a doctor in an exam room with a client says they will have something done, and they hit a light on the wall and during the client conversation a staff member pops in and asks what the doctor needs, we simply look good. We also have the added security which we do not take lightly of having a system where when one of our staff members is dealing with a member of the public that might make them uncomfortable for any reason, they can call for assistance without drawing attention to the situation which is extremely beneficial to managing a potentially volatile situation.

We made lots of decisions when we designed and built our hospital, and many of them I would do differently now, but choosing the Kelkom System to improve our communication, customer service and ultimately profitability would not be one of the decisions we would make differently.