

# Interest in cone beam imaging for orthodontics grows

By Joseph Allbeury

Orthodontists Darin Ballard and Teriko Rex split their time between practices in the Sydney suburb of Lane Cove and Port Macquarie on the NSW north coast. Panoramic and cephalometric imaging is an essential diagnostic requirement for orthodontics so the couple naturally installed an OPG with ceph when they built their new Lane Cove operation. For the Port Macquarie practice however, they decided to go a step further.

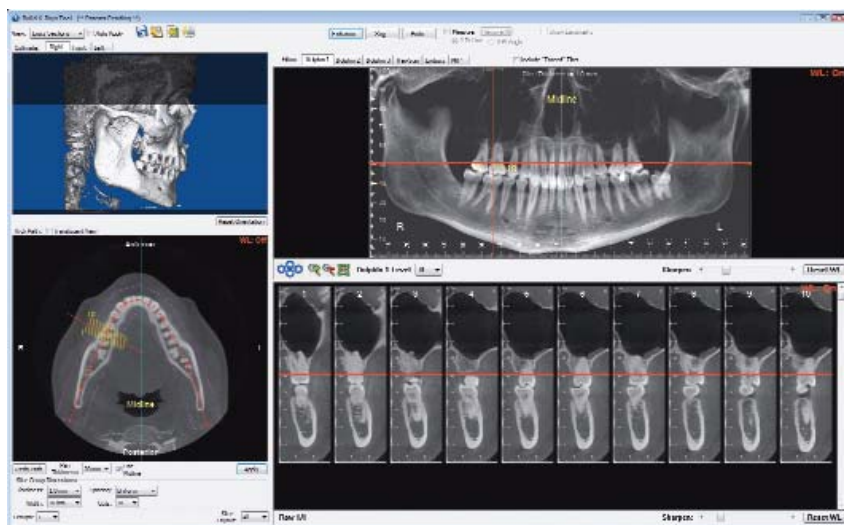
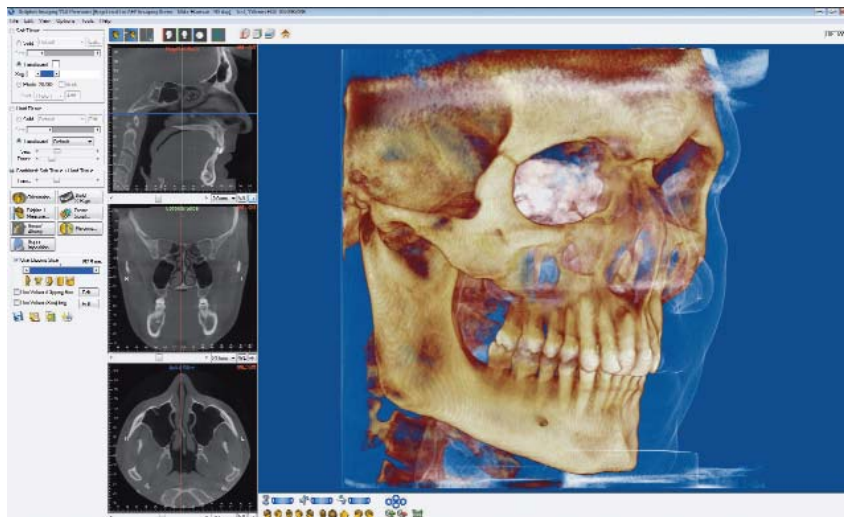
“We took over Port Macquarie Orthodontics from another specialist looking to retire and there was no imaging capability in the practice,” Dr Ballard said. “So up until now, we’ve been referring patients for OPGs and Ceph to the local radiologist but they’re very busy and that was causing us delays,” Dr Ballard said. “So to streamline our consult process, we decided to investigate installing imaging into the practice.

“Cone beam CT scanning is generating a lot of interest in all areas of dentistry, including orthodontics, so rather than install a traditional OPG unit, we decided to go for state-of-the-art 3D imaging instead.

“There are also no other cone beam units available on the mid-north coast of NSW, so after chatting to other dentists and doctors in the area, we could see there was a need to service the local population as well as for our own needs. The nearest cone beam unit to Port Macquarie is in Newcastle, so we took a leap of faith that other practitioners in the area will make use of it and invested in a NewTom VGi from Inline Medical and Dental.”

The NewTom VGi met all of Dr Ballard’s criteria following a thorough investigation of cone beam CT units on the market.

“When I went shopping, I looked at most of the major manufacturers and there



were then five machines I took a serious look at. As part of my selection criteria, I was looking at ease-of-use and integration into our practice. We already used Dolphin imaging software and this is supplied with the NewTom VGi as standard, so there is excellent integration between the software

and the unit. The more I explored, the more my choices narrowed. It came down to 3 or 4 machines but 2 of those weren’t in the country and I had a definite timeline for supply. I needed the machine that would do the job that I wanted, fit in the space I

*Continued on page 110*

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*Continued on page 106*

had, integrate with the rest of the practice, was available and offered outstanding service and support. In the end, the NewTom was the only choice.

“Mike and his team at Inline were brilliant every step of the way. They were outstanding and really know what they are doing. They coordinated the whole process and kept me up to date throughout.”

Dr Ballard said that the quality of the images the system produces are excellent and having the facility in-house dramatically increases efficiency as well as being far more convenient for patients.

“There is so much more diagnostic information in a cone beam CT over and above an OPG and Ceph,” Dr Ballard said. “As an orthodontist, the scans are particularly useful for impacted teeth and ascertaining the position of any supernumerary or if there are teeth missing. It is also ideal for determining the position of nerves for implant placement or extractions.

“Apart from the 3D imagery, we can

create an OPG view using the Dolphin system and it is in a true 1:1 ratio without any distortion. The OPGs and cephs it produces are exceptional. This is a combination of the NewTom VGi and the quality of the Dolphin Software. The integration is seamless.”

Apart from Dolphin imaging software, the NewTom VGi system comes complete with a high quality HP server with a large hard drive and everything else that is required to operate the system.

“Inline Medical and Dental did a first class job from day one,” Dr Ballard said. “They installed the system and set everything up. All our IT company had to do was register it on the network. We didn’t have to buy any additional hardware other than what came with the machine.”

Dr Ballard said the NewTom scans are around 150Mb in size and Dolphin can compress these for storage. Lower resolution scans can also be performed. The practice uses tape drives for on site backups of the files and the two practices also

automatically synchronise their data overnight as a further safeguard.

“Inline gave us full training on the unit and it’s very easy to use. They deliver the first stage of the training in how to use the NewTom itself and how to get the images into Dolphin. Then Dolphin come and do their own training.

“I am really impressed with the NewTom, really impressed, and it’s exceeded my expectations at every level. Inline Medical and Dental have also been amazing throughout the process and have been fantastic to work with.

“Having the NewTom here allows us to provide the latest treatment options for patients and it’s also a good marketing tool to draw patients to the practice. Our treatment planning is far more accurate now and there are no delays. I look forward to using it more and more and fully understanding everything it can do.”

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*For more information, contact Inline Medical and Dental on 1300-033-723.*