

DOLPHIN'S DREAM TEAM

LOCKING IN SUCCESS WITH UNMATCHED CUSTOMER SERVICE

by Kyle Patton, Associate Editor, *Orthotown Magazine*

Dolphin is a worldwide leader in high-quality 2D/3D imaging, diagnostic, practice management and patient education software, with available mobile and Cloud options. Its dedicated support reps are coached and nurtured with a well-crafted, multi-faceted program that addresses interpersonal skills as well as the technical. The goal? To deliver an experience that results in more than just resolved software issues; each customer contact is aimed at enforcing the culture of community that has set Dolphin apart for over a quarter century. *Orthotown* spoke with Michael Zazucki, Manager of Technical Support, to learn what makes Dolphin's products and customer service top of the line.

How did Dolphin get its start?

Michael Zazucki: Dolphin was founded in 1988 by Dr. Marc Lemchen, a New York-based orthodontist with a vision of a product very different from what we offer today: a 3D non-radiographic imaging device for analyzing cephalometric data. The DigiGraph system debuted at the 1989 AAO in Anaheim, and was featured in the June 1990 issue of *JCO*. It was a pretty exciting time for our small upstart. We then focused on our strength—which is software—and never looked back.



What is your experience in ortho?

Zazucki: Since I joined Dolphin in 2005 as a technical support representative and became manager in 2011, I've worked directly with doctors and staff of countless orthodontic practices to solve their technical issues. Along the way, I've gained an inside understanding of the business and clinical needs of an orthodontic practice. I also regularly attend scientific conferences and trade exhibits. This provides me the opportunity to further interface with orthodontists and discuss these challenges and concerns in a broader sense.

Dolphin has a mission statement but you created one specifically for your team—why?

Zazucki: The Dolphin mission statement addresses our company as a whole. However, our support team has a very specific function, and for this reason we wanted one that expresses the distinct “customer service” aspect of our team.

What is your team's mission statement and how was it crafted?

Zazucki: “A team committed to consistently providing complete solutions to our customers, coworkers, and business partners in a respectful and professional manner.”

I wanted our statement to come *from* the team members—not be imposed upon them. So I asked the question: “What does it mean to be a Dolphin technical support representative?” I collected the responses and identified the key meaning for each. Collectively, we created this statement ensuring that it captured the essence of what it means to be a part of the Dolphin Support team.

Please describe the structure of your team.

Zazucki: The unique structure of our team enables us to provide the unmatched customer service that has earned us our “Dream Team” status. Our team consists of four supervisors: Lorin Voigt is responsible for all internal training of new and current employees. She also produces the knowledge base articles that are used as a reference during calls with customers. Bryan Steinrad and Josue Salmeron handle day-to-day operations in the cube farm and oversee the performance of each technician. Nick Gonzales, our Technical Lead, is responsible for all open issues and oversees the Tier 2 and Tier 3 technicians. He ensures that challenges beyond a Tier 1 skillset are escalated and addressed accordingly.

To clarify, we have three separate groups of technicians: Tier 1 techs provide Incident Management. Their responsibility is to restore normal operation to a practice as quickly as possible. Tier 2

techs are more advanced troubleshooters, and their job is to resolve issues that have been escalated. Tier 3 techs communicate issues identified by our support team to our software developers, and work to improve the Dolphin software suite.

Can you tell us about your team member training and your continuing education program?

Zazucki: All new hires in the Dolphin tech support team start in a three-month training period before they begin to answer calls on a full-time basis. They spend the first month learning about the orthodontic profession and the fundamentals of customer service as well as Dolphin software. They are then required to give a presentation to the management team that demonstrates they have a sufficient working knowledge. If passed, they are then assigned selected phone calls while we listen/monitor in real time to assess their skills. After two months of this rigorous process, we then evaluate if they are fit to take care of our customers.

Further, we close our support lines from 9:00–10:30 a.m. Pacific Time every Friday for uninterrupted training time. These Friday sessions address the latest topics utilizing live presentations, exercises, webinars or exams. We've realized that while weekly general training is very beneficial, technicians also need personalized coaching. So we conduct one-on-one training throughout the week to provide more personal and in-depth training for any technician who needs to brush up on various topics, from software usage to orthodontics, to better technique in serving customers.

How does customer feedback guide training and the support you offer?

Zazucki: We send out a customer service survey following every support call. The feedback we receive lets us identify our weak spots so we can address them immediately. Maybe the customer felt the technician wasn't knowledgeable on some part of our software, maybe the customer felt his or her tone was not as accommodating as it should have been, or perhaps the wait time was too long. Since our phone system allows us to listen in on recorded past calls, we can get a real feel for the customer's experience and what is being expressed in the survey response. This information lets us target precisely what kind of individualized training the tech might need to improve.

We've learned that what makes an excellent support tech is a whole lot more than just computer skills—or being an “IT Guy.” A support tech needs to be a good listener, communicate clearly and be patient. He or she needs to be able to judge a situation and troubleshoot in a respectful manner that leaves both the customer and the tech more knowledgeable by the end of the call.

Can you tell me about some of the strides Dolphin has made over the last few years?

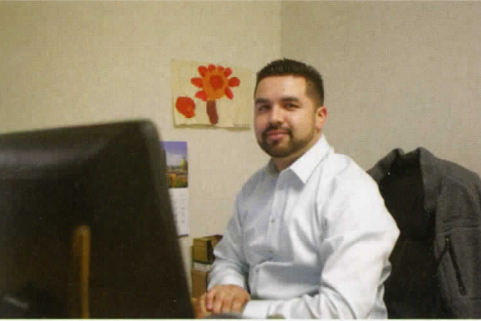
Zazucki: A few years ago we implemented a top-of-the-line, call-center grade phone data system that happens to be the same one NASA uses. I'm proud to say that within three years' time we are handling double the number of calls, and have reduced our average answer delay time from more than 10 minutes to a remarkable 23 seconds!

Implementing a system that could collect and monitor performance statistics was crucial to set and achieve departmental goals. Our phone system generates a daily performance report that tells me our average answer delay, in addition to who took the most and fewest calls. This technology allows me to quickly identify and methodically address problems as they arise. On a different level, it provides me a quantifiable means to foster a culture of hard work by holding individuals accountable to performance goals.

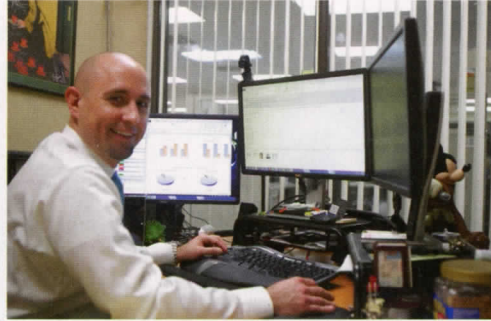
Team-building initiatives have been put in place to promote a more productive teamwork environment, and have resulted in a palpable positive energy and renewed enthusiasm among the team. Monthly team meetings are held to discuss internal concerns and challenges. These meetings provide a risk-free environment that encourages candid and open communication. I would also say that one of our biggest accomplishments is that employee retention has doubled!

"Dolphin has been serving the orthodontic community for more than 25 years, and as a result we have some very loyal, long-term customers. We've watched them grow their businesses, open more locations, and become leaders in the profession. Many Dolphin customers are considered 'champions' and sought out to share their knowledge and experience at educational events throughout the world."





Josue Salmeron, Support Team Lead



Michael Zazucki, Support Team Manager



Gabriel Mejia, Implementation Specialist

What is the importance of monitoring call statistics and customer surveys?

Zazucki: At a high level, the importance of call stats and surveys is accountability. It's important that each tech recognizes how his or her singular performance impacts how our customers perceive Dolphin overall, not just the support team. From the moment a call comes in, everything is tracked by our phone system. It gives us daily reports that we closely peruse. If we notice any extreme fluctuations in the statistical data, we immediately try to identify what caused them. This provides us a quantifiable way of monitoring and evaluating our performance. That's why each technician has both call and survey goals.

What are the team-building video projects all about?

Zazucki: I guess you could say that having fun is a big part of the Dolphin culture. We schedule group activities as often as possible for team-building and to perpetuate the "Dolphin Culture" that our customers value in Dolphin. Sometimes these activities take the form of a video project. Last year we filmed "Dolphin is Happy," which showcased the talents of our techs and other Dolphin members that would otherwise never get the spotlight. Before that, we filmed "Dolphin Does the Harlem Shake" right smack in the support cube farm. We filmed on a quiet Friday, of course to minimize disruption in taking care of our customers. If you missed these videos on Facebook or our website, check them out and others at our YouTube channel at [Youtube.com/user/DolphinTalk](https://www.youtube.com/user/DolphinTalk). Other group activities Dolphin holds include "Lunch Truck Fridays" during the summer months, the annual Thanksgiving Potluck, group charity events such as volunteering at the Los Angeles Food Bank, and more. These are projects that get everyone on the Dolphin team involved and help us bond with one another.

What sort of success have orthodontists had working with you?

Zazucki: Dolphin has been serving the orthodontic community for more than 25 years, and as a result we have some very loyal,

long-term customers. We've watched them grow their businesses, open more locations, and become leaders in the profession. Many Dolphin customers are considered "champions" and sought out to share their knowledge and experience at educational events throughout the world. They have built their careers with the help from utilizing crucial tools made by Dolphin, and that makes us proud.

What do you think the future of orthodontics looks like over the next 10 years?

Zazucki: I see the future of orthodontics building on the current trends of mobility, flexibility, and social interaction. As technology becomes more sophisticated and bandwidths get faster, devices will become smaller and more mobile. Future technology advancements will reduce treatment time and further perfect results. Human intervention will be reduced for further automation and accuracy of data gathering and treatment. I also see CAD/CAM becoming more accessible to the everyday orthodontist. A desktop 3D printer will become a staple in the orthodontic practice. Traditionally, orthodontics has been one of the most progressive professions, and it is displaying an even faster rate of adoption going forward.

What's the best way an orthodontic practice can get in touch with you or get more information?

Zazucki: There are several ways to contact me and my team. You can reach us via email at support@dolphinimaging.com with a guaranteed response within one business day, or for non-support issues, email info@dolphinimaging.com. You can also call (800) 548-7241 to speak to me or any one of my team in person. You can also live chat with our team via our website, Dolphinimaging.com. Customers outside the U.S. and Canada can reach us free of charge via Skype using (800) 548-7241. And of course, you can cruise over to Dolphinimaging.com for information on all of our products; or make a social visit to [Facebook.com/dolphinimaging](https://www.facebook.com/dolphinimaging) to see what we're up to and interact with our team. ■