

# EARLY ADOPTERS

The goal of our new Early Adopters articles is to allow readers to get a peek at new technology that's actually being used in dental practices on a daily basis. It can be a scary notion to dive into a big technology investment, so here you will find insights from your peers who have taken the plunge and want to share what they've learned. If you're an early adopter, let us know and maybe we will feature you in an upcoming issue. You can reach us at [balaburda@dentalproductshopper.com](mailto:balaburda@dentalproductshopper.com).

## AIR TECHNIQUES

# Spectra



*Sonya Stoltze Newstrom, DDS, has a private practice in Ames, IA. She graduated from the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and has been practicing for 7 years.*

*John Tsaknis, DDS, has been in practice for 14 years. He graduated from the University of Maryland and has a general dental practice in Washington, DC. They took time out of their busy schedules to talk about Air Techniques' Spectra caries detection device.*



**Q:** Would you call yourself an early adopter when it comes to new technology?

**A:** **Dr. Stoltze Newstrom (SSN):** Before I joined the practice in 2007, my father had always been on the cutting edge of new dental technologies. We continue to closely follow the newest available materials and equipment. My main goal with investment in technology is to make experiencing dentistry easier for my patients, with higher quality results.

**Dr. Tsaknis (JT):** I usually wait about a year to see what the buzz is and then I jump in with both feet if I feel it will enhance my practices.

**Q:** There are several caries detection devices on the market, what made you choose Spectra?

**A:** **SSN:** One of my dental hygienists brought the Spectra information to me after hearing Gordon Christensen speak about it at the Star of the North Dental Meeting in Minnesota. My Air Techniques rep came into the office for a demonstration of the technology. I liked the quality of the images it produces, it's easy to use, and it integrates easily into my software.

**Q:** The diagnostic images created using Spectra are pretty cool. They look a lot like Doppler radar images. How is this type of imaging useful in detecting caries?

**A:** **SSN:** The imaging allows me to visually map the affected areas and easily see where caries is more extensive. In addition I'm able to keep this visual record in the patient's chart for future reference.

**JT:** The various colors represent the density and therefore the depth of bacteria within tooth structure, when used properly. This allows patients to see the good and bad areas.

**Q:** How has using Spectra changed the way you do dental exams?

**A:** **SSN:** I think of it as another tool in my toolbox. I go through the same protocol with my exams, I just have another piece of information to use when making diagnoses.

## THE IMAGING ALLOWS ME TO VISUALLY MAP THE AFFECTED AREAS AND EASILY SEE WHERE CARIES IS MORE EXTENSIVE.

**JT:** We can now take an image, save it, 6 months later do it again, and be able to compare and prove to the patient that something is getting worse.

**Q:** What was the integration like? How did you educate yourself and your staff on the use of Spectra? And how did you explain its use to your patients?

**A:** **SSN:** We made the decision to use it during all of our recare and new patient appointments. We decided that while this was an extra step, the value of the information was worth it. I've always described pit-and-fissure decay as being like an iceberg—they may look small on the surface, but they can be much larger underneath. This has not been the case with as many of the lesions found using Spectra, saving people possible sensitivity issues, weakening of remaining tooth structure, and in extreme cases, root canals.

**JT:** Integration was relatively simple, as we already take photos on patients. It was easy to add another layer to the training and patient's appointment. As we describe what we see in the photos, we can then compare it to the Spectra photo.

**Q:** Investing in new technology can mean time and money to you and your practice. Can you discuss your return on investment with Spectra?

**A:** **SSN:** I feel that the Spectra is more an investment in prevention than anything else. These caries will be found sooner or later. Better to fix them small now than wait on them to be clinically detectable with an explorer later when they are much larger.

**JT:** I have a lot of younger patients who want to have everything proven and the older patients like how I can show them the technology. Both tend to move forward with accepting treatment.

**Q:** How has Spectra aided you in patient education and treatment acceptance?

**A:** **SSN:** I find that patients are much more receptive to treatment recommendation acceptance when they



feel they are a part of the process. We have monitors that the patients can view while we are doing the exam, and they can easily see the red areas on their teeth.

**Q:** Would you recommend Spectra to other dentists?

**A:** **SSN:** Yes. I believe it's easy to use and provides additional information that is very useful.

**JT:** I love the product and we use it daily to encourage patients to take better care of their mouths.



**AIR TECHNIQUES, INC**  
FREE Product Information  
CALL 888.592.9909 ext. 11137  
CLICK [www.dps.li/a/4GO-137](http://www.dps.li/a/4GO-137)  
CIRCLE Reader Service 137