

The New State of Dentistry

Thanks to a myriad of factors, including its world-renowned powdery snow, Utah's community of dental companies continues to thrive

by Dentaltown special projects editor John Lannon



UTAH, dubbed the Beehive State in 1848 by Mormon settlers who considered bees to be symbolic of hard work, industriousness and community, is abuzz today with yet another entity symbolizing these attributes: a burgeoning dentistry-specific business sector. Since Ultradent Products opened shop in 1978 in West Jordan, there's been a steady migration of dental companies into the state, with a true surge occurring in the mid-2000s.

According to Val Hale, executive director of the Utah Governor's Office of Economic Development, this surge was not unexpected, thanks in part to the glowing marks Utah has received from such heralded publications as *Forbes* and *CEO Magazine*, and the state's economic development philosophy, which Gov. Gary Herbert succinctly describes as "keeping government off of your backs and out of your wallets." (According to an article written by *Forbes* contributor Alan Hall, a Utah resident, Herbert made good on this statement in 2012, when he reviewed the state's nearly 2,000 administrative rules and eliminated or modified 368 of them.)

Forbes has named Utah one of the nation's best places for business for six of the past seven years, and *CEO Magazine* named its workforce as one of the nation's best, hailing it as one of the youngest, fastest-growing workforces in America. And not to be overlooked is the fact that, according to

Hale, one-third of the workforce is bilingual, largely as a result of the state's Mormon population, which advocates international missionary work.

A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ECOSYSTEM

One person who signed off on this workforce when determining where to locate his company was Andy Jensen, vice president and chief marketing officer for Orem-based Curve Dental, a manufacturer of cloud-based dental software that began operations in Utah in late 2009.

"Curve Dental chose to establish an office in Utah because it would give us access to a labor pool with the specific skill sets the company needed, all related to the dental market," Jensen said. "Additionally, the state attracts businesses due to its overall business-friendly ecosystem, its close proximity to outdoor recreation, a longtime cultural





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emphasis on traditional family values, an appreciation for the arts and state legislation focused on economic growth.”

He also noted that several established dental organizations including Henry Schein (American Fork), Ultradent (South Jordan), Dr. Gordon Christensen's Clinicians Report (Provo) and SolutionReach (Lehi) have exposed hundreds of Utahns to the advantages and benefits of working in the dental market.

“Many of the individuals in these companies have moved on to either create their own companies or join new companies in the dental space; it's this that has created a Utah dental community,” Jensen said. “And many times when boarding a Salt Lake City flight to the next big dental show, I'll recognize these faces.”

A STRONG COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Dr. Densen Cao, president of CAO Group, founded his leading global technology and manufacturing company in West Jordan in 2000.

“After receiving my PhD from the University of Utah, I was fortunate to work for two great dental community leaders, Drs. Gordon and Rella Christensen of the CR Foundation (then CRA),” Cao said, adding that these iconic influencers in dentistry along with Dr. Dan Fischer, Ultradent's founder—all Utah residents—helped establish a strong connection among the

state's dental community and influence the dental community globally.

Discussing Utah's assets as a locale for dental businesses, Cao said, “Utah is a great place to live and grow a family; it's business-friendly, with resources for top talent. It offers low cost in operations and it has an international airport. This is why I started the CAO Group here.”

According to Kevin Bunker, president of Henry Schein's North America Dental Practice Solutions, one way to explain Utah's mid-2000s uptick in dental companies, particularly high-tech dental companies, is to conjure up memories of two tech giants of a bygone era: Provo-based Novell, founded in 1979, and WordPerfect, originally developed in 1979 under contract at Brigham Young University for use on a Data General minicomputer. Bunker noted that these companies created thousands of experienced developers, managers and even investors to incubate a robust technology sector along the Wasatch (Mountains) Front.

Bunker further noted that another reason Utah produces a large number of dental technology companies can be attributed to the success of Henry Schein's Dentrix, which was started in 1989 and now has more than 35,000 users.

“Dentrix's founder, Larry Gibson, demonstrated that the dental market is fertile ground for technology startups,” Bunker said. “Also, Dentrix was open to partnering



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with other dental software companies to give startups the ability to integrate their products with Dentrrix to give our joint customers best-of-breed solutions.”

COLLABORATION IS KEY

Weston Lunsford, CEO of Provo-based Dental Intelligence, noted that a robust collaborative mindset is evident among the executives in the state’s strong dental company network.

“Although we are competitors in some regards, there is also an openness and attitude of sharing that, like the rising tide, lifts all boats,” Lunsford said.

And not to be overlooked when discussing Utah’s business climate is its citizens’ vigorous entrepreneurial and collaborative spirit.

“There are lots of bright, hardworking people in Utah who are asking important questions about how technology can be used to improve people’s lives,” Lunsford said.

An educated workforce. An encouraging state government. A stellar high-tech history. A sense of community. All commendable observations explaining the Beehive State’s frenetic dental business activity. Yet, not to be underestimated or misplaced is the observation put forth by Hale.

“Utah, particularly Utah County, is very much a mecca for tech companies in general. The Silicon Valley? We’re the Silicon Slopes—just like the Silicon Valley but with better skiing.” ■

Notable Utah Dental Businesses

American Sleep Dentistry

Cedar City
800-555-1518
americansleepdentistry.com

American Sleep Dentistry assists dentists in becoming certified in sleep dentistry, enabling them to offer their patients a custom oral appliance for treating sleep apnea, replacing a CPAP. Through advertising, the company generates hundreds of patients a year to a practice, and works with dentists to become credentialed to bill Medicare and medical insurance.

Angie’s Dental Supply

La Verkin
855-655-4290
angiesdental.com

Offered by Angie’s Dental Supply, Contact Hero is a simple yet effective device designed by a practicing dentist to open blocked or tight contacts. It removes excess cement from crowns and opens naturally hard-to-flow contacts.

Arrowhead Dental Laboratory

Sandy
800-800-7200
arrowheaddental.com

Instead of offering just one class of restoration, Arrowhead Dental Laboratory offers three: traditional crowns, a blend of value and quality that provides aesthetic-grade crowns at a price point every patient can afford; Bella restorations, which offer higher levels of aesthetic quality at midmarket prices; and elite crowns, Arrowhead’s signature product.

B&D Dental Corp.

West Valley City
800-255-2839
origincadcam.com

B&D Dental Corp. provides high-quality products to customers through high-class customer service and continual improvement. Its Beyond Plus Zirconia is more than just a replacement for lithium disilicate; it is stronger with equal or better aesthetics.

Boomcloud Dental Membership Software

Saratoga Springs
800-260-9285
boomcloudapps.com

Fifty-five percent of Americans don't have dental insurance plans. With Boomcloud's help, dentists have the opportunity to create an in-house membership program for their patients with no waiting periods. Its software organizes and creates plans, adds members to those plans, tracks benefits, automates payments and analyzes reports.

Business Promotion

American Fork
866-664-5216
businesspromotion.com

Business Promotion, a web design and marketing company, has delivered complete online business solutions since 2008. Its mission is to help its clients obtain new customers as they continue to provide great service to their current clientele.

CAO Group

West Jordan
877-877-9778
caogroup.com

CAO has been a leading original equipment manufacturer in dental devices and materials for more than 15 years. It pioneered LED curing light and diode laser technologies in dentistry, and its Sheer Film technology is a revolutionary method to deliver medicaments to the oral environment without annoyance to patients.

Cottonwood Orthodontic Labs

Murray
801-904-2006
cottonwoodlabs.com

Since opening its doors in 2004, Cottonwood Labs has provided doctors with high-quality orthodontic appliances that are delivered on time with little to no adjustment needed. It has continued to grow year after year, and contributes this success to the valuable relationships fostered with its doctors. Cottonwood Labs does everything in its power to "make it right."

Curve Dental

Orem
888-910-4376
curvedental.com

With its 100 percent cloud-based dental software offering practices true freedom, power and security, Curve Dental, led by a seasoned management team with more than 100 years of combined dental software experience, has distinguished itself among cloud-based dental software offerings and within the dental profession.

Dental ATM

Orem
855-226-4421
dentalatm.com

Dental ATM's automated treatment messaging, hailed as the new standard in messaging, allows dentists to tap into revenue lost in unscheduled treatment.

Dental Intel

Provo
dentalintel.com
855-776-2673

Founded in 2013 yet active in the dental industry since 2004, Dental Intel, a web-based practice intelligence platform, builds intelligent software that helps dentists use actionable metrics to improve patient care, team performance and practice profitability.

DentalMarketing.net

Heber City
877-319-7772
dentalmarketing.net

Formerly 123 Postcards, DentalMarketing.net gives dentists the marketing tools needed to make educated decisions about whom to target with their marketing and how to market their practices to them. Dentists make the decisions and stay in control while DentalMarketing.net conducts the research and carries out the campaigns, guaranteeing results.

Gordon J. Christensen—Practical Clinical Courses

Provo
800-223-6569
pccdental.com

Hailed as affordable, hands-on education, Christensen's practical clinical courses prepare dentists to practice faster, easier, better dentistry at lower cost. The courses provide reliable, real-world, noncommercial, proven information that can be implemented into practices as soon as course attendees return home.



Notable Utah Dental Businesses

Henry Schein (Dentrix)

American Fork
800-336-8749
dentrix.com

Henry Schein Practice Solutions provides market-leading dental practice management systems, integrated e-services and business coaching. Used by more than 35,000 dental practices, Dentrix delivers integrated e-services such as electronic claims, patient communication and insurance manager, as well as dozens of Dentrix-Connected partner applications and technology that work together as one system. This simplifies and speeds up the office workflow. Advanced reporting and coaching help dental teams work smarter to improve management and grow the practice.

Jive Communications

Orem
877-548-3007
jive.com

Starting in July 2006, Jive has emerged as an international provider of cloud communications for both public and commercial markets. Jive replaces expensive, obsolete on-premises phone systems with cloud-based unified communications products that include hosted voice, contact center, video conferencing and mobility. With Jive, organizations of all sizes can enjoy advanced communications technology while reducing costs.

Maxtec

West Valley City
800-748-5355
maxtec.com

Maxtec, a leader in oxygen analysis and delivery products for more than 15 years, provides a full line of replacement oxygen sensors and peripheral capillary oxygen saturation probes compatible with all major applications in the market.

My Social Practice

Lehi
877-316-7516
mysocialpractice.com

One of the dental industry's leading social media marketing companies, My Social Practice provides an integrated, complete solution designed to help practices grow and thrive.

OraTech

South Jordan
800-526-6880
oratech.com

OraTech, which started out as a private label manufacturer of dental products, is now a proven resource for major health care companies worldwide, offering end-to-end product development, manufacturing and packaging.

OrthoSelect

American Fork
866-695-3319
myorthoselect.com

OrthoSelect began in 2003 as an orthodontic laboratory specializing in high-quality orthodontic plaster study models. Today, it provides proprietary software and tens of thousands of 3-D digital study models each month to more than 1,000 doctors in all 50 states and internationally. Its digital indirect bonding system, a forerunner in orthodontics' digital and 3-D printing revolution, includes digital bracket-placement software and 3-D printed bonding trays.

Pioneer Lasers

West Jordan
877-236-4402
pioneerlasers.com

Pioneer Lasers, inventor of the modern diode soft-tissue laser, launched the first compact diode laser for dentistry in 2003. Through its distributor, it has sold more than 10,000 units under the Odyssey Navigator and Odyssey 2.4G brands, which now have been renamed the Pioneer Elite and Pioneer Pro.

Notable Utah Dental Businesses

Podium

Lehi
833-276-3486
podium.com

Podium brings marketing, operations and customer experience into one platform, helping businesses drive user-generated content to better understand customers, increase visibility and influence purchase decisions. Built to utilize everyday consumer technology, Podium enables users to influence what is said and where it's said by focusing on the sites and thematics that matter most to their businesses.

Precision Dental Products

Draper
866-668-2483
onebite.com

Founded by Juan Olivier, CDT, MDT, FACE, Precision Dental Products strives for precision in developing products that maintain superior function, design and execution. Its OneBite system enables dentists and laboratories to capture a full record of midline and horizontal aesthetic planes.

Prosper Healthcare Lending

Draper
888-602-6066
prosperhealthcare.com

A subsidiary of Prosper Marketplace, America's first peer-to-peer lending marketplace, Prosper Healthcare Lending offers a patient financing platform that allows providers to help make health care affordable for patients by referring patients with good credit to affordable installment loans offered through Prosper.

Riverside Dental Studio

St. George
435-628-2777
riversideds.com

Riverside Dental Studio is a dental lab that combines the standards and values of old world craftsmanship with the new world of cutting-edge technologies and the digital era. The Invisible Implant Abutment is the company's specialty.

TuttleNumbNow

Orem
tuttlenumbnow.com

Founded by Dr. Gregory K. Tuttle, TuttleNumbNow is a primary injection for lower posterior teeth, replacing the IA nerve block. It involves immediate feedback without having to wait for a patient to get numb. This luxury lets dentists immediately "set down the syringe and pick up the drill."

Ultradent Products

South Jordan
888-230-1420
ultradent.com

Ultradent is a global dental and orthodontic manufacturing company that has experienced nonstop growth for more than 30 years. Its products are used worldwide by dentists, orthodontists, group practices, dental labs, government agencies and universities. Among its notable products are Opalescence tooth whitening systems, Valo curing lights and Triodent sectional matrix systems.

WaveOrtho

Ogden
888-705-1214
orthoease.com

Formerly Orthoease, Wave orthodontic practice and patient management software was designed, developed and proven inside top orthodontic practices. Native to Mac but also running on Windows and the cloud, it improves efficiency and profitability.

Weave

Lehi
888-579-5668
getweave.com

Weave patient communication software combines all communication streams—clinicians' practice management systems, mobile devices, business phones—into a single, simple tool that creates productive, meaningful conversations by serving up relevant patient details during every patient interaction.

WhiteCap Institute

Heber City
877-248-7208
whitecapinstitute.com

Dr. P.K. Clark, after observing the immense change implantology has brought to general dentists and their patients, founded the WhiteCap Institute and created a teaching environment where protocols and systems instill greater confidence in attendees and produce repeatable and predictable results.

Xlear

American Fork
877-599-5327
xlear.com

Xlear is a manufacturer of xylitol oral care products, including Xlear all-natural xylitol and saline nasal spray and the Spry Dental Defense System, a comprehensive xylitol product line.

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