

## NDX Green Laboratory

NDX Green Laboratory (formerly Green Dental Laboratory) is a growing network of dental laboratories in the U.S. Their network of labs provides quick, consultative, high quality products and services. Almost every item they produce (dentures, retainers, implants, crowns) is unique and custom.

### The Challenge

NDX Green manages hundreds of cases per day which are expected to be turned around in 5 business days. There may be as many as 1000 cases in the lab at any given time. When cases are received, paperwork is created, and the case is clipped to a case pan that carries the item being produced from start to finish. Cases are fulfilled by technicians, and in some cases, more than one employee will interact with any given case depending upon the fulfillment requirements for that order.

In general, the process goes smoothly unless there is a need to have the case reviewed or modified. When this situation arises, supervisors are responsible for locating the case pan, which can be a very time-consuming task. Because dentists are scheduling follow up appointments for their patients, it is critical that NDX Green process cases according to the schedule.

### Situation

As case pans are being handled, they are stacked on top of each other, with the average size of a case pan being 5x8 inches. This causes a bottleneck in the process when technicians or expeditors have to search through stacks of pans in order to locate the correct case. The time spent searching for cases means less time spent fulfilling case orders.

Joe Bowers, Director of Information Management, was tasked with improving the current system of manual location and identification. Joe was familiar with RFID and the potential this technology could have on improving their case fulfillment process. "We thought the implementation of RFID could lead to being able to see where the case had been, where it is right now, and why a case has not moved," said Bowers.

Cases are processed out of several individual lab rooms, as well as one large, open-area lab lined with workbenches. "We wanted enough coverage to move pans from one area to another without losing track of the cases," noted Bowers.



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Joe Bowers, Director of Information Management, NDX Green

## Solution

With the goal of implementing an RFID system, Joe and his team began the search for a solution provider who could help them design a strategy for case identification, and implement an RFID system to streamline workflows and improve employee productivity. "MSM Solutions looked at our facility and laid out a plan for us that not only solved our immediate challenge, but accommodated future growth as well," Bowers said.

The implementation of RFID tags on the case pans was just one aspect of the comprehensive solution brought by MSM Solutions. Bowers liked that everything was inclusive; labels, software, service and hardware. "MSM approached our situation as a partner of ours, not just a company trying to sell us hardware," said Bowers. "We also appreciated their experience in the healthcare space and taking the time to understand our system as a whole," he added.

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## PortalTrack

One example of the depth of the solution was the inclusion of MSM Solutions PortalTrack™, an RFID data management tool which provides real-time access to information passed through active and passive RFID System installations. With PortalTrack™, any authorized personnel can pull up a web page and locate the desired case on a map of their facility.

Offering customizable reports and integration, PortalTrack™ made this solution quick to install and seamless to operate. As a Zebra Premier Solution Partner & RFID Specialist, MSM Solutions installed Zebra RFID printers and encoders for their application. "I have been working with Zebra printers since 1995. They were a proven entity then and continue to be a valuable addition to our solution," said Bowers.

Since Zebra RFID printers can encode RFID tags on pitch it made the technology more affordable. Part of the implementation included two handheld devices that were used throughout the day to locate cases in the lab. Fixed readers were deployed throughout their environment to provide real-time location of product moving through the facility.



## Results

Technicians, cases expeditors, supervisors and team leaders looking for a case can now pull up the history of every order and instantly identify its location and status in their process. They can see where the case was and its current location. They can also see why a case has not moved and quickly address any issue with a stagnant case. NDX Green has decreased lost hours significantly.

NDX Green customers also enjoy the benefits delivered by this new RFID solution. Since dentists schedule specific patient times, there are no delays in the receipt of their orders that could lead to patient dissatisfaction.

**Ready to bite down on lost time and productivity in your organization?**

Contact MSM Solutions today to schedule a facility assessment to see if RFID is right for you.