CANFIELD IMAGING SYSTEMS CASE STUDY: Cultura Medical Spa, Washington, DC

Cultura Medical Spa is a rapidly growing, full-service medical spa in Washington, D.C. With an innovative and highly successful approach to skin care, Cultura integrates expertise in dermatology, laser surgery, plastic surgery and spa therapy with 21st century medical technology for a synergistic approach to enhancing skin health and reducing the signs of aging.

BACKGROUND

When Eliot Battle, M.D., a cosmetic dermatologist and laser surgeon, and Monte Harris, M.D., a facial plastic surgeon, first met each other at a conference on aging, they quickly realized that in addition to sharing a common dream, their individual areas of expertise complemented each other perfectly as well. In 2001 the two noted physicians founded Cultura Medical Spa, providing a pioneering and innovative approach to skin rejuvenation. The cornerstone of the practice's facial rejuvenation services is the Cultura Integrated Approach (CIA) based on proven scientific principles. The approach combines cutting edge technology, prescriptive medicines, exfoliating and vitamin-based topicals, dermatology, plastic surgery, laser and rejuvenation treatments to assist patients in their desire to age gracefully.

CHALLENGE

To be effective as well as credible, the Cultura Integrated Approach needed to reflect the extensive medical and scientific background of the founders. The process had to be based upon objective skin measurements taken quickly and accurately with a solution that complemented Cultura's warm, patient-friendly environment. For effective assessment, treatment planning and education, the use of the patient's photos would serve as the baseline communication point from initial consultation through treatment and ongoing maintenance.

Essential to the imaging requirements for the Cultura Integrated Approach were three identified needs:

The first requirement was for an imaging system to clearly and accurately measure and document facial conditions for use in planning the most effective treatment therapies and procedures. This was of special importance because some sixty percent of Cultura's patients are of the deeper skin tones of Asian, Black, Brazilian, Indian, Italian, Latino or Native American backgrounds, long regarded as challenging skin types for cosmetic and light-based therapies, and for which physicians Battle and Harris have developed specific highly successful rejuvenation techniques.

Secondly, the imaging system needed to simplify and facilitate patient education, providing the warm, comprehensive "Cultura touch" for an enhanced patient experience while simultaneously providing economies of time for patient-staff interaction.

Finally, the imaging system would need to provide consistent, repeatable results for all aspects of facial imaging, meeting Cultura's standards for the highest quality patient images, yet accomplishing this with minimal staff time and training involved.

With Cultura's photo-driven patient communication model, however, one additional imaging need soon arose as large numbers of digital images were taken of diverse areas for skin rejuvenation, ranging from neck and shoulders to other parts of the anatomy. Imaging requirements continued to expand as the number of medical staff, including new physicians with experience and expertise in medical photography, grew to handle the increasing caseload.

SOLUTION

Cultura turned to Canfield Imaging Systems and its VISIA Complexion Analysis System as the key component in meeting the three identified needs for documentation, treatment planning and education/communication. VISIA's unique, patented skin analysis software provides quantitative assessment of patient skin features such as visible spots, pores, wrinkles, texture, porphyrins, and invisible UV spots (sun damage).

For physicians and staff skin care specialists, VISIA's measurement of features for surface and subsurface skin conditions provided the objective data for accurate treatment planning across the broad range of skin types who make up the Cultura clientele.

That same data in the form of easy-to-understand VISIA reports was also provided by staff to patients during their initial consultations, again providing expanded information while reducing the time required to educate about skin condition and treatment options. In the areas of time savings and quality consistency, VISIA's intelligent interface that "walks" the operator through the imaging process meant ease of operation while maintaining high image quality.

To increase the range of photographic documentation for facial rejuvenation, Cultura also obtained the OMNIA Facial Imaging System, a dedicated facial photography system that provides 180 degree photographic coverage for standardized views at any of seven preset "click-stop" angles from full profile through frontal.

To simplify management of its images, Cultura added Canfield's Mirror PhotoTools software to archive, manage and edit images, plus the Mirror Rejuvenation module to demonstrate the positive benefits of dermal fillers such as Botox®, Restylane and other

facial fillers, with staff employing the easy-to-use simulation software for visual communication using the patient's own image.

For ease of access to its images, all of Cultura's office computers were equipped with Mirror software in a networked environment, with patient images centrally archived on a server for medical staff access as well as safe backup.

RESULTS

Cultura's reputation as a leading-edge medical spa was enhanced through the use of its patient imaging systems from Canfield. In particular, the VISIA Complexion Analysis System proved highly valuable as the Phase One imaging and consultation baseline for the Cultura Integrated Approach to Skin Rejuvenation. VISIA is such an integral part of the patient experience, and has been such a success within the practice, that it is featured in a special section of Cultura's website, and even available as a Gift Certificate sales item from Cultura's spa services.

As a result of their VISIA image analysis and consultations, patients feel more confident about the objectivity of treatment and product recommendations. Staff productivity is increasing due to easier access of patient images and sales increased 20 percent, an improvement attributed to the powerful and persuasive consultative effects from VISIA. With the combined capabilities of VISIA Complexion Analysis, Mirror PhotoTools and Mirror Rejuvenation software, and the OMNIA facial imaging system, Cultura has implemented a customized, comprehensive and state-of-the-art imaging system benefiting its patients and providing leading-edge imaging and communication capabilities for its staff.

Due to the progressive and groundbreaking leadership of its founding physicians Battle and Harris, and its patient-oriented, image-based treatment planning and communication model, Cultura Medical Spa has realized the following achievements and recognitions:

- OVERALL BUSINESS GROWTH-- Achieved $1.3 million in sales during 2003, increasing to $3 million in 2004.
- BUSINESS OF THE YEAR - Named "Emerging Business of the Year" by the Washington, D.C., Chamber of Commerce for the year 2003.
- 4-STAR RATING - Received the 4-Star Rating for spas in the metropolitan area from Washingtonian Magazine, with special recognition for skin expertise, physician strength, personal attention and range of treatments available.
- COVER STORY-MEDICAL SPA REPORT MAGAZINE- Featured as the cover story of the Medical Spa Report, a leading medical esthetics business publication and the official publication of the Medical Spa Society, in May 2005.

PHYSICIAN PROFILES

Eliot F. Battle, Jr., MD, is a cosmetic dermatologist and highly recognized laser surgeon, as well as being considered the leading authority of cosmetic laser therapy on darker skin types. His laser research at Harvard helped to pioneer the new generation of safe, non-invasive cosmetic lasers. A National Institute of Health research scholar, Dr. Battle has published and lectured nationally and internationally on a variety of cutaneous laser surgery topics.

He has been featured in numerous magazines and TV shows including TIME, Good Morning America, ABC's 20-20 and MSNBC, FOX, ABC and NBC. He is a member of the American Society of Laser Medicine & Surgery, International Society of Laser Medicine & Surgery, Brazilian Society of Laser Medicine & Surgery, European Society of Laser Aesthetic Surgery, International Academy for Laser Medicine & Surgery, American Academy of Dermatology and the current chairman of dermatology for the National Medical Association.

Monte O. Harris, MD, is a board certified/fellowship trained facial plastic surgeon who also has expertise in cosmetic laser therapy and aesthetic skin care. He is considered a pioneer of comprehensive cosmetic facial rejuvenation for individuals of darker skin tones. Dr. Harris completed over seven years of subspecialty surgical training focusing exclusively on the head and neck while undergoing postgraduate training at the University of Michigan, with an additional year-long dedicated fellowship in facial cosmetic surgery with one of the nation's leading facial plastic surgeons. To improve the efficacy of surgical facial rejuvenation, Dr. Harris is currently spearheading research to define the process of facial aging across ethnic groups.

Dr. Harris is a clinical assistant professor in the Georgetown University Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery and the Howard University Department of Dermatology, and lectures nationally on topics ranging from nasal plastic surgery to cosmetic facial rejuvenation. Dr. Harris is a member of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, American Rhinologic Society, and the National Medical Association.