

modern hygienist

“Something that was a dream on paper becomes this working model that actually plugs into a system – and people want it. That’s pretty cool.”



Becky Logue, RDH

Inventor of the Dental RAT

Modern solution. Dental RAT. Literally, a large mouse. Operated by foot, it allows a hygienist to complete all of his or her electronic periodontal charting without outside assistance.

Making it happen. Many people dream of the sleek, efficient high-tech practice. Becky Logue was lucky enough to wake up each morning and go to work in one. She loved the technology and the computers, but found herself frustrated because, with all the technological advancement, she couldn't complete her periodontal charting without asking for help. "I'm probably too independent," she admits, "but I wanted to do it myself instead of waiting for somebody else all the time and relying on them."

Searching around for a viable solution, she didn't find one that worked until she looked down: her feet. Used for so much already, it seemed that the foot would be a

natural choice, if she could come up with the right product. With the help of engineers and the guidance of patent attorneys, the Dental RAT was developed. By the time the development process was over, however, there were no funds left to put towards marketing the product. For advice, Ms. Logue went to the Boise State University TechHelp center, where they pair Idaho innovators with MBA students in need of projects. In addition to helping establish a business and marketing plan, Ms. Logue's team also persuaded her to offer the RAT as an Idaho



Stock Offering and use the resulting investment funds to kick-start the marketing campaign.

Some of the marketing students advised her to print brochures and begin a direct mailing campaign, but after watching her front office go through junk mail in short order, with nothing making it back to her or the dentists, Ms. Logue bypassed their business experience and focused on her hygienist experience. "I know how I get new products and learn about new products," she says, "So I knew I needed to go through the magazines we read, the trade shows and the colleges."

And it worked. The orders started coming in and the Dental RAT is in offices all over the United States, and other countries are starting to make inquiries. "It kind of blows me away," says Ms. Logue with a laugh. "It's grown faster and bigger than I ever pictured."

The ever-after. As the business continues to grow, Ms. Logue still spends one day a week practicing clinical hygiene, just to keep her foot in the door. In the meantime, she tends to her own up-and-coming inventors: her kids. "They've learned from this immensely," she says. "Everything is a new invention in their minds. They say, 'if my mom can do it, so can I.'"

To fledgling inventors. Staying positive is paramount. She's observed that even with day-to-day hygiene patients, the negative ones are the ones that stick with people. Instead, let the negative roll off. "Be persistent and keep going forward," she says. "If it's meant to be, it will happen."

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