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Benefits to Business	Cost savings	x
	Streamlined processes	
	Improved productivity	x
	Increased sales	x
	Reaching new customers	x
	Product or process innovation	
	Improved financial management	
	Staff development	
	Supply chain efficiencies	
	Recruitment	
	Flexible working	x
	Improved customer service	x

A complementary health care clinic based in South Yorkshire uses Internet technology to provide private consultations and group training all over the world.



About Tickhill Clinic

Tickhill Clinic has been practising complementary health therapies for over 20 years from a beautiful location in the village of Tickhill, near Doncaster.

The clinic is run by Dr Tam Llewellyn-Edwards PhD and Mary Llewellyn. Between them they have considerable experience in a range of therapies, from both practising and training perspectives. The clinic offers therapies ranging from Hypnotherapy,

Psychotherapy, Homeopathy and Reflexology to Meridian Energy Therapies.

The clinic also provides bespoke 24 hour residential care, including accommodation, meals and therapy at its relaxing rural location. Its clients come from all walks of life and professions ranging from teachers and emergency service workers to senior managers.

Reducing travel with the Internet

Due to the diverse complementary therapies offered at Tickhill Clinic and Tam and Mary's extensive experience, demand from overseas has been an integral part of the clinic's success.

Tam and Mary have travelled all over the world to locations as diverse as Australia, Italy, Bulgaria and Saudi Arabia. They speak at conferences on complementary therapies or train new therapists on emerging techniques.

It was not unusual for the couple to be travelling to six or more conferences a year, which left them with less time at the clinic treating individual clients.

Tam recalls, "We could often be travelling as far afield as Saudi Arabia for what equated to a few hours teaching. As well as the costs involved to the customer, it also took up a lot of our time purely travelling.

"Lovely as it is to see these countries and different cultures, we do not want to be travelling all the time as we have many valued clients here in the UK, many of whom wish to come to our clinic."

Tam continues, "We already carried out a number of consultations over the telephone so, with the advent of internet technologies such as Skype, we began to look at alternatives to travelling to every overseas appointment and equally to give our clients another option to a face to face meeting."

Consultations Online

In order to maximise opportunities, the clinic looked at relatively inexpensive internet technologies such as Skype and Skype video. Skype is an internet-based service that can carry both voice and video calls, at little or no cost. It is simple to install, requires no special equipment and can be operated from any computer that has an internet connection and a webcam. This means that it is easy for the clinic's clients to access and use.

With Skype and a simple webcam, the clinic can now be in contact with clients anywhere in the world at any time. The clinic can give face to face consultations, regardless of the patient's location.

Tam explains, "We would prefer to have an initial consultation face to face, but that is not always possible due to location. Then, for follow up consultations when we know the patient, using Skype video can be an effective tool in terms of time.

"Some patients may be suffering from agoraphobia and be unable to leave the house, so online consultations are invaluable. Also, for our disabled clients or those suffering from MS, it is a great, simple way for them to communicate with us."

Mary adds, "It is difficult to do an initial consultation without seeing into the patient's eyes so Skype video has enabled us to do this without the patient having to travel to us. It also supports our 24/7 service, where we make ourselves available at any time to patients."

Online Conferences

With the growth of the internet and the current financial climate, a number of conferences in the complementary therapy field have moved online. For example, a recent worldwide conference ran over 10 days online. With just an hour a day featured online, the conference attracted over 44,000 delegates – far more than a physical conference could have accommodated.

For Tickhill Clinic, the internet has provided the opportunity to present at conferences without having to travel. Using an Apple Mac and Apple Video, they can link up to four computers, allowing the presentation to be shown on the screen at the conference and their voices to be projected within the conference room.



Overcoming cultural barriers

Saudi Arabia has become a growth area for complementary therapies. Tam and Mary have visited the country on a number of occasions to train doctors and health professionals in a number of complementary therapies. However for cultural reasons, Mary could not be seen to be physically teaching the women, meaning that Tam would have to lead the sessions.

An online presentation overcomes this issue and can include both Mary and Tam taking teaching roles as they are not in the same room as the women.

Improving the patient experience

Tickhill Clinic is keen to develop its work over the internet and provide a more reliable two-way communication for conferences, with more interaction made possible. However, they do encounter issues with broadband and the amount of bandwidth available in some locations both here and abroad. As greater bandwidth becomes available, low cost internet conferencing tools will be much more reliable and effective.

Mary Llewellyn concludes, "With our ability to undertake consultations over the internet using video tools, we have opened up our services to a wider audience. Those people who may not have the time or the budget to travel can now have face to face consultations.

"With conferences and training, it gives us the ability to be more flexible and removes the requirement to travel on every occasion. These technologies can only improve and so ultimately will both the patient' and therapist's experience."

Tickhill Clinic www.tickhillclinic.co.uk
Skype www.skype.com



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