



A good run

For world-renowned veterinary orthopedics specialist Aldo Vezzi, giving dogs back their mobility is satisfying yet challenging, requiring hard work, expertise and good technology

CASE STUDY

Clinica Veterinaria Vezzi,
Cremona, Italy



Case Study

INTERVIEW WITH:

DR. ALDO VEZZONI,

MED. VET., S.C.M.P.A.,

DIPL. ECVS AND OWNER OF VEZZONI CLINIC

“Canine orthopedics is a challenging field, but very rewarding,” begins Dr. Aldo Vezzoni. “To see these dogs regain their mobility, their active life-style, pain-free, is very satisfying.”

For Dr. Vezzoni, successful outcomes require a combination of professional skill and top-notch equipment. And in his own Clinica Veterinaria Vezzoni, he chooses to rely on Agfa computed radiography (CR) for all X-ray imaging. In 2019, he replaced his CR 30-X with the high-volume CR 15-X, to support both his international orthopedics case load, and the requirements of his growing veterinary practice.





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Dr. Aldo Vezzoni, Clinica Veterinaria Vezzoni



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Dr. Aldo Vezzoni, Clinica Veterinaria Vezzoni



Did you know?

Dr. Vezzoni has been actively involved in the development of the Zurich Cementless Total Hip Replacement (THR) and in the development of improved surgical techniques. "One of the goals is a prosthesis that lasts throughout the dog's lifetime," he explains. "Sometimes, we need to do surgery quite early, on puppies as young as 6-7 months with severe dysplasia, for example. So, the prosthesis may need to last 10-15 years." Sharing his expertise in his specialization is an important part of his calling: Dr. Vezzoni speaks at conferences and symposia, teaches continuous learning courses for veterinarians, and has extensively published in scientific journals.



The long path to excellence

The historic town of Cremona, in northern Italy, is known by many for its musical history, but is also the home base of Dr. Vezzoni, who is internationally recognized as a veterinary orthopedic expert. A founder of SCIVAC (the largest small animal veterinary association in Italy) in 1984, he brought the society's headquarters to Cremona, where it is now a renowned center of continuing

education for veterinarians.

Dr. Vezzoni performed his first canine total hip replacement (THP) procedures in 1997. By 2020, he had carried out almost 3,000, making him quite possibly the world's leading specialist for this difficult yet vital procedure. "I have a very high case load, with patients coming from all over Italy, Switzerland, Eastern Europe and beyond," he describes.

High imaging demand leads to selection of high-volume CR

Dr. Vezzoni carries out most of his surgeries in his Cremona clinic. The rapidly expanding animal hospital offers a full range of veterinary services. "Since opening in 1976, we have grown to 15 vets and 10 staff. This year, we are moving to a new site: our third move since opening. We have built the new site from the ground up, based on our long experience and the best examples around the world."

In the new site, as in the current location, all X-ray imaging will be done using Agfa CR, which was supplied by Alcyon Italia, Agfa's authorized dealer in Italy. The long-time Agfa customer installed its first Agfa CR 30-X in 2007. As patient throughput grew, in 2019 Dr. Vezzoni added a CR 15-X. "We do

from 100 to 200 X-rays every day, so we need a system that can support a very busy environment. The CR 15-X offers us the same, excellent image quality and ease-of-use as the CR 30-X, in a high-volume solution."

The CR 15-X is used by all the veterinarians for a broad range of exams. "Our internal medicine specialists rely on the images for thoracic evaluation in cases of cardio-pulmonary disease, to give one example. We often combine X-ray and ultrasound for abdominal imaging, to get a more complete diagnosis. And our neurologist uses spinal X-rays to rule out vertebral problems, before determining if a CT or MRI is necessary."



An unusual patient: Girl, the Malaysian tiger

With 3000 total hip replacements under his belt, Dr. Aldo Vezzoni is a recognized expert around the world. His renown led to an unusual opportunity in 2011: the first ever THR on a tiger. Malaysian tiger "Girl" had been suffering from arthrosis and lameness for a year before the operation. A team of five specialists at Leipzig University, led by Vezzoni, carried out the 3-hour operation on Girl, fitting a titanium-based Kyon prosthesis originally developed for dogs.

Agfa Solution

CR 15-X



Designed to support **high-volume imaging environments**



Affordable, compact, easy-to-use imaging solution for a **broad range of applications**



Convenient and fast workflow, with user-controllable speed and resolution



MUSICA image processing for **excellent image quality**



Robust yet **easy to install** and maintain



Fits in small spaces and is suited for mobile applications



Networking capabilities deliver **seamless integration**



Optional cesium needle-based detectors offering up to **60% dose reduction**¹



The bones of the matter: X-ray and orthopedics

For Dr. Vezzoni's orthopedic work, the importance of high-quality imaging is clear. "We have about 300 orthopedic cases a month. When we do imaging for orthopedics, we create a complete overview of the patient, checking all joints in the front and hind limbs. With dogs over 5 years old, we also take images of the thorax and spine, to be sure there are no concomitant problems. For new patients, this means 10-20 X-rays. For returning patients, we only need 5-10 views," he describes.

The CR 15-X is an important tool for diagnosis and for planning surgery, he describes: "To give an example, we use the X-rays to confirm the diagnosis of cruciate ligament rupture, calculate the tibial slope, and plan the size and positioning of the tibial plateau + osteotomy (TPLO), calibrating the image with a marker on the X-ray table. When planning a hip or stifle replacement, the images are very useful in calculating the correct size for the implants (again after calibration)."

MUSICA image quality: consistency is key

Consistency of images is also critical for orthopedics, he continues. "We need to be able to compare images, for example when diagnosing the cause of a patella luxation or a hip dysplasia. This requires both a good imaging system and good positioning by the technician. Fluoroscopy installed inside our radiology equipment is very helpful to shoot the radiographs in the proper required views, avoiding useless exposures."

According to Dr. Vezzoni, many vets are unaware of the importance of image

processing software to ensuring image quality. All Agfa digital imaging systems come with MUSICA image processing. MUSICA is adapted to veterinary needs and processes images precisely, every time, regardless of dose, technique, staff differences, patient size or condition.

Because image processing and calibration are completely automated, there is no lengthy training required and technical experience is not necessary to get consistent look and feel on the images.

¹ Testing with board-certified radiologists has determined that Cesium Bromide (CR) and Cesium Iodide (DR) Detectors, when used with MUSICA image processing, can provide dose reductions between 50 to 60%, compared to traditional Barium Fluoro Bromide CR systems. Contact Agfa for more details.



User-friendly tools for orthopedic needs

“Image quality is, of course, very important, and Agfa’s CR solutions deliver this,” says Dr. Vezzoni. “But for me, what really sets the Agfa solutions apart is the ease of use; for orthopedics, this is especially the planning and measurement tools.

The MUSICA workstation is easy to learn: users gain confidence in its operation very quickly. I have worked with other vendors’ systems in the past, and they are not as user-friendly as Agfa.

Support and service are fundamental in keeping the imaging workflow at the clinic smooth and productive. “Our relationship with Alcyon Italia is very important: we have confidence in

their ability to help with any problems, and to offer us fast assistance.”

“Agfa also works with us to ensure the specific requirements of orthopedics are met. One of the issues that can occur with X-rays and implants in the body is an Uberschwinger artefact: a black halo effect around the metal parts of a prosthesis. This type of unwanted artefact in digital radiography could lead to the wrong diagnosis of a loosening implant. Agfa was able to remove this artefact, for clear imaging of the entire prosthesis area. The Agfa technician was very patient and dedicated to getting us the best image quality. This level of quality and support is why I choose Agfa CR,” concludes Dr. Vezzoni.

“ What really sets the Agfa solutions apart is the ease of use. I have worked with other vendors’ systems in the past, and they are not as user-friendly as Agfa.

Dr. Aldo Vezzoni, Clinica Veterinaria Vezzoni



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