



Dr. Peter Rosandich



For Dr. Peter Rosandich, the timing on building a new rheumatology clinic couldn't have been better. Herman Miller had just introduced Compass, a breakthrough modular system for healthcare made up of interchangeable components that can be changed around to meet varying needs. It gave the doctor everything he wanted and more—plus the flexibility to take the whole system with him if he ever moved.

HEALTHCARE
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Topic:

*Collaboration
Engagement
Performance*

Application:

*Caregiver Work Environments
Healthcare Administrative Areas
Patient Care*

Project Scope:

*Break room, business manager
office, caregiver station,
conference room, doctors'
offices, exam rooms, infusion
therapy room, reception,
waiting room*

Herman Miller Product:

*Compass™ System
Ethospace® Nurses' Station*

Year Completed:

2010



Dr. Peter Rosandich was making plans to build a new rheumatology clinic when he ran into a slight glitch: His construction loan was about \$90,000 short on the estimated cost of the exam rooms, caregivers' station, and registration desk. "I knew reducing the built-in casework was the simplest answer," he recalls. But where would that leave him?

A friend suggested he check out Goodmans Interior Structures, the local Herman Miller dealer, and the timing couldn't have been better. Compass, Herman Miller's breakthrough modular, flexible system of interchangeable components for patient rooms, exam spaces, and clinical areas, had just been introduced to the market, taking "Best of NeoCon Gold" that year. Because it was modular, it fell under the financing for furniture, not construction.

Once Dr. Rosandich learned more about it, he was sold. Depreciation was better with Compass, too: seven years versus 30 years for traditional millwork.

A NEW WAY OF THINKING BASED ON YEARS OF RESEARCH

"Compass gave Dr. Rosandich everything he needed and more," says Wendy Muth, Compass Technical Sales Specialist for Herman Miller Healthcare. "Compass wasn't just a new product line, it represented a whole new way of thinking, which really appealed to him because he is a person who appreciated innovation and new ideas."

The Compass system, designed by Gianfranco Zaccai, has years of research behind it, including mock-ups and prototypes that were judged and re-judged by healthcare professionals. Hundreds of people gave their input, including caregivers, facilities department staff, infection prevention experts, and environmental services.

As a result Compass offers:

- Modularity and flexibility to accommodate change
- Features such as cantilevering and healthcare-appropriate finishes to make cleaning easier and help reduce the risk of infection
- Aesthetics that are every bit as appealing as built-ins
- Durability to withstand tough environments and constant use

"My experience with Herman Miller is that every new product introduction brings cutting edge design solutions that answer complicated issues," states Marilyn Kelly, Account Manager at Goodmans. She has nearly 30 years of experience in healthcare environments.

[left] With Compass, it's easy to make changes or add components, such as this linen cart, which was added after the initial installation.

[center] Compass offers a number of solutions to enhance patient/caregiver interactions and can be arranged in a variety of ways, based on user preferences.

[right] Features such as a splashless sink, cantilevering, and healthcare-appropriate finishes make Compass ideal for clinical settings.

"I think with his scientific and aesthetic sensibilities, Dr. Rosandich could see the benefits of Compass at first glance."

Dr. Rosandich agrees, adding that the very first thing that attracted him was the way Compass looked. "It was very sleek; I liked its low profile and that it didn't sit on the floor, which I think makes furniture look heavy."

EXCELLENT DEALER SUPPORT

Kelly worked closely with Dr. Rosandich to understand how he wanted to set up his exam rooms. "With so much technology in use now, such as electronic medical records, designing for the doctor-patient relationship is more important than ever," she says. "Doctors want to be face to face with patients when they talk with them, not looking at a computer. Using modular components that can move around and adapt to different situations offers tremendous advantages."

Kelly feels Compass is designed to be intuitive, too. "Because of the way the tools are organized, you're visually guided to choose what you need rather than hunt for it," she notes, adding that when she points out features to doctors and staff like the splashless sink and cleanability of the tiles for infection control, "it's like singing to the choir."

Because Compass was so new, Kelly also spent a lot of time learning how the system would integrate with the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems within the architectural environment. "Marilyn's commitment and expertise played a huge role in creating a flexible, adaptable environment for Dr. Rosandich," says Muth.

TOTAL FLEXIBILITY

Thanks to the individual components, Dr. Rosandich could change things around when he wanted to or add more if he needed to expand in the future.

Ethospace, also a Herman Miller modular system, was chosen for the administrative areas. "It coordinates well with Compass and is also very flexible," says Muth. "Dr. Rosandich knew he would be adding more doctors in the future, which would require new support staff, and Ethospace components could be added as needed, too."

Ethospace also fell under the furniture budget. Another big plus: the doctor could take both systems with him if he ever moved from the leased space.

MORE CONTROL OVER THE ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Rosandich also liked that components came in various sizes to accommodate exam rooms large and small. He appreciated, too, that he could set things up for the way he

works. "The exam rooms are just the way I want them," he states, adding that he's also changed things around several times, "and if other physicians come in and don't like where I've put something, they can just move it."

"No matter how perfectly a space is designed, invariably, when someone starts working in it, they find things they want to change," says Muth. "With built-ins, they have to learn to live with it; with modular, they can adapt the environment to meet their needs."

"The ability to make changes at both micro and macro levels gives people so much more control over their work areas," she continues. "If a nurse wants to move the soap dispenser, she can, and if the office needs another electrical outlet, it's not a big deal. In a stick-built environment, you'd be dry walling, finding studs, drilling, sanding, and painting. With Compass, it's simply a matter of taking a tile off, rerouting electrical in front of the drywall, and putting a new tile in. What used to take days now takes hours, which impacts the bottom line, too: every minute a room is out of commission means lost revenue."

If more components are needed later, ordering and installation is much faster and simpler with modular furniture, too, as was the case when Dr. Rosandich added a linen cart.

OTHER CONVENIENT FEATURES

Convenient Compass features such as the hands-free sink and accessory rails also make life in the clinic easier. Cleaning has proven to be a breeze, too. "With casework there are all these corners and crevices to clean; with Compass you don't have that," Dr. Rosandich observes. "You don't have all the dust bunnies rolling around, either; everything just looks much cleaner."

He also really appreciates the keyless locks. "Before, I'd have to pull out my overloaded key ring to find the key that would open the locked cabinet overhead in the room that held the syringes and needles, then select the specific items needed for each patient and lay them out on the countertop. It wasn't easy to see the supplies in trays up on the shelf. Now they're in a waist-high drawer right next to the exam table where everything is in view, easy to access, and secured by a touchpad lock. The lock just flips closed when I'm done so I don't need to search through my keys to lock up."

Because it was so new at the time, Dr. Rosandich's clinic was the country's very first installation of Compass in an exam room. Even that has had its benefits. "People who know Herman Miller look at it and know it's cool," he says with a smile.

Now that he's lived with it awhile, would he recommend Compass to other physicians? "Absolutely!" he states emphatically. "Everyone except my competition, that is."

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