

Stacee (00:00):

Everybody welcome to this week's episode of ivetsohard. I am joined by my colleague, Dr. Caitlin DeWilde. Hi, Caitlin.

Caitlin (00:09):

Word up. How's it going?

Stacee (00:11):

Pretty good. Pretty good. So today we have a very important guest. You're gonna die when I tell you about Melissa Brown. She is a new friend of mine. We recently connected because I was working with a veterinarian in California that uses Melissa's company services. Her company's Concierge Elite, and I like had to meet Melissa immediately

Caitlin (00:38):

Just because you needed to geek out with somebody else. Yeah. You're cheating on me. What's happening here. You're cheating on me!

Stacee (00:43):

She's our people. So let me tell you a little bit about Melissa and then we'll bring her in. Melissa Brown is the chief of staff for Concierge Elite. Her educational background includes a master of arts degree in business management with a specialization in human resources. She has several certifications in remote staffing, which we love adult education, which we love and training development, which we love. Melissa has over 20 years experience sharing her expertise that is deeply rooted in a lifelong learning and her devotion to growing and developing people. She enjoys finding creative solutions to business challenges, innovating new products and developing processes of, and efficiencies within organizations and in her personal time, which I don't know that she has much of Melissa enjoys camping and planning events. So she's totally our people, Melissa, welcome to our show.

Melissa (01:38):

Thank you so much. Thanks for having me. Yes. I'm excited to be here.

Caitlin (01:42):

So Melissa, we are excited to learn more about you and what you do. So maybe tell us a little bit about how you got into the veterinary industry and how you realized there was an opportunity here.

Melissa (01:56):

Sure. So concierge elite was birthed out of a need and desire to staff the front desk. So in training and development. We were continually hearing our practices say, well, that's great that I have staff or that I don't have staff that I have, that I have all these extra tools and things, but I need people to manage them. My phones are ringing off the hook, but I have no one to answer them. And so, you know, while business was going great, pre COVID people needed help. And so there's always that need to find help. And so pre COVID, we really found this niche within the market that we could help people answer their overflow calls. We could do that remotely and we could do it just as well as they could do it in the office. And so from that came out of this need, came this innovation of really creating this remote front desk staff. Then COVID hit and it redefined how we look at the industry redefined. We look at how we staff

our offices and our practices. And so really that became the driving factor in what we do. So it's not a temporary solution. It's a permanent solution to staffing issues within the veterinary scope, as well as the other, other medical industries.

Stacee ([03:17](#)):

It's so amazing. I am so excited for your business, Melissa. Bravo, to you for getting the inspiration to kick off your new company. Because I think a lot of people would say that's a great idea, but they wouldn't necessarily have the gumph to go for it. So good job.

Melissa ([03:36](#)):

Thanks. Yeah, it's been fun. It's been a fun ride.

Stacee ([03:40](#)):

Tell our listeners how does it actually work? Like if I'm a veterinary practice and I'm listening to this podcast, what do I get if I sign up with concierge?

Melissa ([03:52](#)):

Yeah. So if, if you don't know Concierge, really our goal is to bridge the gap between the home and office. So really take those two factors and bridge the gap and bring that staffing together. And we do it at zero cost. That means we don't charge like a staffing agency or a hiring agency typically would. So when you think of that, you think of these hefty fees on top of paying the employees. So that's not us. And we really can get your team member up and running in as little as two hours of the practices, time, two hours, we have it down to a science. And then what we do is we take care of everything. We take care of that hiring for somebody, the payroll, the training, everything that you don't like doing as a practice owner practice manager, we're gonna handle for you for the entire time that that employee works for you. And so how do we do it? Well, we have an amazing training program where we're able to train people to be medical receptionist. And then again, we take two hours of the practices, time to get it set up and get the details ready and running.

Caitlin ([04:54](#)):

So do practices have the ability to kind of customize what they want? Let's say like somebody's calling in, right. And do they have like customizable phone scripts? Like I want my clients to get this answer, right. Is that, is that something that you guys build into your process?

Melissa ([05:12](#)):

It's a hundred percent customizable. So we use the practices, protocols, their processes, their procedures, their software, everything is integrated. There's things that we bring to the table. Like we have certain scripts that we can use and they can choose to have us use them or not we're using your software. Our team learns hundreds of softwares. So it's just one of those things where we become integrated in your practice. So we do it exactly like someone who's sitting in the desk chair would do.

Stacee ([05:44](#)):

I am still trying to get my head wrapped around this. So your people, your employees that you are bringing to the table to the veterinary teams, your remote employee, their new best friend will know their own software.

Melissa ([05:59](#)):

Yep. So if you're using a software such as your guys', our team is already pre-trained in that we do as best as we can now. Of course, there's sometimes when we come in with a software we haven't heard of, and that's fine, we do all the training. So we dive in our team of trainers, go in, learn that software. We teach it to that employee and we get them up and running in that software. We do have a software meeting. That's one of the biggest chunks of time. So it's the one hour that we take. And that's where we really go through the practices, software, what they're using, how they use it. We've got it down to a science. We really have fine tuned what we can do in terms of training and how our teams work.

Stacee ([06:40](#)):

How many softwares do you typically find Melissa that practices are using?

Melissa ([06:45](#)):

Well, I think there's a good five to 10 softwares that are the main softwares out there, those systems, but generally it is each practice has between one and three that we'll learn. So that can be anything from, you know, their main practice management software, their customer service software. And then if they do anything like with insurance verifications or things like that, billing you know, taking deposits, we'll learn those as well because we wanna do that prescription refills too, could be another software that they potentially have if they have a pharmacy and we learn all of those, we do it all.

Caitlin ([07:23](#)):

Super cool. Super cool. What do you think when you are working with practice, what do you think are the most common skills that they utilize your team members for?

Melissa ([07:33](#)):

So really it's going to be answering the phone calls, booking appointments, because one of the biggest things that I hear from the front desk who are in house, they would rather spend more time with the patients who are there and that's really what they're great at, right? So we wanna be able to allow them to spend that time with them increase the, you know, how much money that they, you know, may or may not spend while they're there, but really have that quality time with their patients. And so that aftercare, if the phone's ringing off the hook, they can't do that. And they can't do it well. So we take the majority of the phone calls by booking appointments, rescheduling appointments, and doing that sort of thing. And then from there, the second kind of things we do is reactivation calls. So clients who haven't been in in a while, that's the number one thing that people never get them in a day. You just run out of time. So all those people who haven't been in, who are due for vaccinations, who are due for upcoming checkups, our team can call them, remind them they have an appointment, get them on the schedule.

Stacee ([08:30](#)):

I mean, I can't see why every veterinary practice in the United States doesn't use your services, honestly.

Melissa ([08:37](#)):

Sure. I can't either. It's it really takes a huge load off, allows everybody to focus on really what's important prescription refills too. That is another big time waster we can do that. We can get in and get it done. And when you hear, you know, what we charge for, you're gonna be blown away too. But it's, it's one of those things where I think the hardest thing to kind of understand is the remote and people

really worry that a remote person may not fit with what they're doing. But when you think about it, in terms of let my team focus on people who are here, the people the pets that come in and then let that team really handle all those other tasks, it really begins to make sense. And that's what our customers are finding is that once they get this in place, it's like, oh my gosh, this works. And it works amazing

Stacee ([09:29](#)):

I hear practices say things like, well, we want to have a small town feel, we want that mom and pop feel, or our customers would know if we had a remote employee that isn't one of us. They would not be happy. But I think you have to start now asking yourself the question, how happy are they now, when you can't get them in and you are short staffed. And I think too, the world is a little more open-minded to having remote employees, even in working in another country. I know I have employees working in other countries and zoom and internet, and the new way of the world has really opened up opportunities for us to expand our service model, to be more inclusive.

Melissa ([10:21](#)):

I absolutely agree. And we do a lot of things too, to help bridge that gap. Some of those things are having those team members on the daily huddles. If they have huddles, you know, or the sit in on the meetings, the weekly meetings show up via zoom, do those types of things really be included. We send some, you know, their picture and we send a why we chose remote and we have them put their picture at the front desk so they can meet them. Because I think when our practices feel like they wanna keep that small town feel, let's do it, let's introduce them to your clients and say, listen, we hired this amazing person who's got great talent and we've made them part of our team. So welcome them when we think of it as, oh, this just this outside outsourced person, that's kind of the mentality that our then customers will have. And so just welcoming them as part of the team really makes it inclusive.

Stacee ([11:16](#)):

I know at my old practice we had, we were part of a corporation and we had a call center that was offsite and they would do the reactivation calls. And the problem I experienced with that is there was a whole slew of people calling my clientele and my team didn't know those callers at all, but what you've done, that's unique. And I think so awesome is you give the practice a dedicated person. And that's their person. So it's not like it could be one of 10 people calling it's the, the person I've worked with with Dr. Cosko's practice is Kristian and he's been fabulous, responsive, on point. Like, I can't say enough nice things about him. So I think that's also a really key point here is you're getting a dedicated person.

Melissa ([12:10](#)):

Yeah, that's absolutely right. You're getting a team member. They're not an agent, they're not a call center. You know, person that you would get, they're a team member and that's what we like to call them. And, and that's how we like to add them to the team.

Caitlin ([12:24](#)):

What about the practices that don't have say a cloud-based system? What are some of the workarounds for that is that I assume a slight struggle that you guys encounter?

Melissa ([12:35](#)):

No, it's not a struggle. So what we do require is a dedicated workspace for the team member just as you would in house. So if you don't have that, we also allow you to rent some equipment free of charge, actually. So we'll send you a laptop and we'll have that set up in the practice. We have a technical team that will help you, and we install a software on there that allows us to access your in-house software. So simple, simple, we have really perfected this and that's why I take my background seriously, because I really work with efficiencies. How can we make practices efficient? And nowadays with the great recession coming is how do we cut and reduce overhead and not sacrifice service and not sacrifice the feeling that everybody who's built their businesses for. And I think this is solution

Stacey ([13:27](#)):

For sure. What does a practice pay for their own assistant? I'm nervous to ask

Melissa ([13:32](#)):

<Laugh> well, I know we're working out a special deal with you and your clients for sure. In terms of that and joining our services together. So you know, I know we're gonna mention that, but \$2,400 a month, that's for 120 hours a month, 40 hours a week. So you can hire for less than I think that's something like \$11 an hour for someone who specialized in the medical field I don't think that's the going rate. So we've worked well to be able to do that and then handle everything, the taxes, the overhead, you know, the workman's comp, the social security, everything that you don't wanna do within your payroll system, the training. And that's a huge added as well because that employee will be in our continuous training programs as well. So they will be continually trained over and over and more and more so growing as well.

Stacey ([14:30](#)):

Caitlin, can you see why I was so excited for you to meet Melissa?

Caitlin ([14:33](#)):

<Laugh> Yes. Yes. For sure. It makes, makes a lot of sense now, I guess I'll let you cheat on me with her. It's fine.

Stacey ([14:42](#)):

Melissa, do you ever get any weird requests from the veterinary teams? Like they want coffee delivered or anything like that?

Melissa ([14:51](#)):

Not too many weird things. You know, one of the biggest things we hear is how can I incentivize my team member? They're doing an excellent job. I wanna give them stuff. I want to give them, you know a coffee gift card or I wanna give them money for booking all these appointments, whatever. And so we've found some creative solutions to be able to incentivize their members. So that was, that was one of them that came up in the beginning, but nothing too weird.

Stacey ([15:15](#)):

And Dr. Cosko is telling me recently that she has even elevated her services with you guys to get basically a assistant

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Melissa ([15:24](#)):

Yes. Personal assistant. Those doctors love those <laugh>.

Caitlin ([15:32](#)):

Okay. So tell us more about that. What kind of things are those people doing?

Melissa ([15:38](#)):

The personal assistants work directly with the doctors and they can do transcript medical transcription. They can book personal appointments for the doctor, travel arrangements. All of that sort of things handle their personal email. So they just work more directly with the doctor and whatever they need them to do.

Stacey ([15:53](#)):

I'm getting one, I just have to, I can't wait. <Laugh>, I'm gonna be signing up with you soon, Melissa

Caitlin ([16:00](#)):

<Laugh>. Is there anything like where they like take them in the room? Like virtually take them in the room so they can like do notes as they're going or anything like that?

Melissa ([16:09](#)):

Actually they haven't yet, but, but that is definitely a possibility to be able to do we have, we have the software and the technology to do that

Stacey ([16:17](#)):

Super cool. Well, this has been so enlightening. I can't wait for practices to get to know your company more and you've just been a delight to work with. Everyone on your team has been super pro and I work with a lot of veterinary people. So I feel very confident in saying you guys are awesome. Where can practices go to learn about your services?

Melissa ([16:40](#)):

Sure. So we will obviously provide them a link, a booking link because we wanna make sure that we give the listeners and this a special deal. And then you can go to a conciergeelite.com and you can find us on Facebook, Instagram, you know, all of those social medias as well.

Stacey ([16:59](#)):

Great. And a practice can be up and running with a new team member in as short as a couple of hours, it sounds

Melissa ([17:05](#)):

Two hours of their time and a maximum of two weeks. Yep.

Stacey ([17:09](#)):

Guys your future looks pretty bright. If you're listening to Melissa and thinking about taking on her services, you can get the help you need without having to even interview a person. It's awesome.

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Melissa ([17:21](#)):

Absolutely. Thank you guys so much.

Stacey ([17:25](#)):

All right, guys, we appreciate you joining us for this week's episode of ivetsohard, and we look forward to seeing you real soon. If you have a second, please give us a rating or review wherever you listen to your podcast. And you can also download the show notes by visiting ivetsohard.com. And if you're interested in the special booking link, we will stick it in the show notes guys. Thanks again for being here and we'll see you real soon.

New Speaker ([17:51](#)):

Here is the special booking link. Be sure to mention you heard about Concierge Elite from ivetsohard to unlock your VIP pricing perk! <https://koalendar.com/e/concierge-elite-front-desk-solutions>