

Why Successful Technology Integration is Critical for an Efficient Dental Practice

by Darby TechForce



The number of computer-based devices in the dental office has exploded in recent years. In the front office, a busy practice has a handful of workstations. Each exam room also has its own computer with access to the practice management system. The server sits in the back, a closet, or elsewhere. Add a CAD/CAM device, an intraoral camera, and digital x-ray equipment to the equation and the modern dental office starts to look like a mini technology amusement park.

When it comes to software and digital peripherals, things are just as complex. In addition to practice management software, many dentists use several different programs for appointment reminders, credit card processing, digital imaging, and capturing patient signatures. The programs are as different as the hardware used to run them. Each of these systems is designed to make a dental office run more efficiently, but the opposite can happen without successful technology integration.

What is successful technology integration?

You could have the most tech-savvy practice with all of the latest gadgets in digital dentistry. But, if they don't work together seamlessly, it's impossible to get the maximum return on your investment. Successful technology integration happens when all computers, digital cameras, software applications, and other technologies communicate with one another and are accessible for the task at hand.

Here's an example of successful technology integration at work in an efficient dental practice. A patient comes in for his first visit with Dr. Jones and uses a tablet to fill out his health history and sign a HIPAA consent form. His information is stored in the practice management system, which Dr. Jones can pull up on her computer in the exam room. Because the practice management software is integrated with the digital imaging software, Dr. Jones can access the patient's chart and take x-rays without launching another program. With a couple of clicks, the computer displays digital images of the patient's mouth, which can also be accessed from any other computer in the practice.

Why is technology integration important?

With successful integration, a dentist doesn't stop to think that he or she is using technology. It's second nature. Technology becomes a chore when a dentist has to perform several manual actions to accomplish a single task, like displaying an intraoral image on the computer screen. This leads to a loss of time and productivity, which directly impacts a practice's bottom line.



Another thing that can happen without technology integration is an increase in likelihood that different components won't work together. When you plug anything into a computer, whether it's a sensor, an intraoral camera, or x-ray imaging equipment, it searches for the driver, which is a piece of software that talks to the computer. Every piece of equipment has a different driver, and not all drivers work together. This means that a dentist may have to re-set and fumble around with one or both of the components while a patient is waiting in the chair, causing significant downtime and compromising the quality of patient care.

Then, there's software. Your practice uses a handful of different programs to keep patient records, take digital x-rays, and run credit cards, among other critical tasks. Problems can arise when your different software applications don't work well on the same version of your computer's operating system. Some programs lag, while others might not open at all. Full technology integration means being able to use all of the software your practice needs to operate efficiently for a seamless workflow.

Boost practice efficiency with successful technology integration

Achieving technology integration requires thinking about all of the hardware and software in your dental office as a single system that works like a well-oiled machine. A dental-specific IT provider who is certified in each of the major components in your practice can analyze your system and provide full integration quicker and with a higher level of expertise than a non-dental provider. At Darby TechForce, that's what we do.

Our dental IT experts are fluent and certified in all of the hardware and software you use to run your practice every day. You've invested thousands of dollars to modernize your practice – why risk allowing an installer who isn't certified fumble around with your expensive equipment? We know how all of your software works and the precise specifications of the computers you need to operate it. When you're having a problem with your sensor, we can access your network and fix it remotely. If we can't, we can dispatch someone to your office no matter where you're located.

With successful technology integration, your practice can streamline operations, boost practice efficiency, optimize patient care, and squeeze every last dollar out of your investments. Contact Darby TechForce to see how our dental IT experts can help you maximize the use of technology in your practice.

Call us at 800-886-2093 or send us an email at connect@darbytechforce.com.

