

A Sterilization Center Keeps Production Flowing



An Example of a Well Put Together Stericenter — *Photo: MCC*

A well-conceived Sterilization Center or SteriCenter is instrumental to properly supporting a productive office by eliminating the bottleneck associated with keeping a dental facility on

pace throughout the day. When you are designing a sterilization center for the office there are many considerations. Chief among those concerns are the ingredients that comprise

a highly functional unit that works seamlessly with your staff.

The expertise of a dental design build contractor who utilizes dental specific cabinetry on the project offers the best of all worlds when it comes to functionality, pricing (including tax advantages), fit, and built-in accessories that make the unit valuable to saving time for the practice.

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STERILIZATION CENTER

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Compare the Cost With the Local Cabinet Maker

When comparing pricing with a local cabinetmaker, there are many considerations that are not included in those bids that will always be included in the cost of a factory built steriocenter. There are many extra costs incurred that need to be considered that aren't included from the local cabinet guy.

Add the cost of:

The electrician charges for installation and items including clock, task lighting with on/off switch, Blue/red indicator lighting for dirty/clean, electrical outlets for accessories and autoclave.

The plumber will need to bill you for stainless steel sink, chrome pull down faucet, foot or knee operated faucet control, HVE line and vacuum QD, Air QD, and water treatment system as well as installation on all of these.

Cost of counter tops, regardless of surface type, are often provided by yet a different vendor

Glove & towel dispensers, soap dispenser, contaminated waste and non-contaminated waste cans are included from the factory are optional locally.

Additional features that are standard on factory built steriocenters that are often missing from local cabinets include:

- Hands free doors on contaminated area
- Matching laminate on inside and outside of doors
- Steel sub bases, eliminating cabinet damage from flood or

floor cleaning on factory made units

- Color and pattern matched PVC edge banding on factory made units
- High pressure laminate application which significantly reduces delamination issues later on
- Long term warranty support
- Solid surface counter top is sometimes standard included on factory made units
- Soft close drawers

And finally, the investment in a factory built steriocenter which is serialized, allows you to expense the cabinetry as capital equipment instead of leasehold improvement, which provides additional instant tax benefits

Features to Consider When Configuring Your SteriCenter

The planning of a SteriCenter is fundamentally configured to maximize space and function to process instruments in the most efficient manner. These characteristics should help you when considering the build of your unit:

- Task lighting
- Drop down counter top for ultrasonic cleaner
- Grommet to lead discharge from ultrasonic unit into side wall of adjacently located sink
- A separation barrier between the dirty area and clean processing
- Air source for handpiece maintenance area
- Red LED lighting for upper dirty storage
- Blue LED lighting for upper clean storage
- Straight linear design wherever possible
- Located within the office

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Arminco Inc. To Open Towson Design Center

Arminco Inc. announces the opening of the (mid/late January 2023) Arminco Design Center – Towson, located at 1030 York Rd. in Towson, Maryland. The new facility will accommodate the growing demand for Arminco's healthcare specific design/build capabilities with a complete offering of fully functional dental equipment, an impressive design studio and experts available on site.

Prospective clients may obtain the comprehensive knowledge and insight that they need to have functionally superior, cost-effective, and ergonomically sound facilities.

Headquartered in Sterling Va., the firm is renowned for it's specialization in creating beautiful patient treatment spaces. 2023 will be Arminco Inc's 25th year in business. During that span the company has completed over 800 healthcare facility design/build

projects, in addition to hundreds of other mainstream business build-outs.

Their unique process brings value-added quality to the Greater Baltimore region. Arminco Inc. President Artin Safarian had this to say about the company's northern facility expansion, "with this new design center we'll be able to better serve the Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware market's growing demand for our services. We're excited to enable our well appreciated design/build process to immediately benefit more healthcare clients in the region."

Please contact Arminco, Inc. 703.430.6669 for further info.



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STERILIZATION CENTER

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centered within treatment area for easy access

- Length of unit should be approximately 2.5' per operator (e.g. 5 ops = 12' unit)
- Solid surface standard counter top
- Sterilization "tower" for stacking autoclaves featuring slide out shelving
- Foot activated sink for hands free operation
- Knee activated trash drawer for hands free operation

As you consider an upgrade or build of your dental facility, a well-designed, factory built sterilization center is your best solution for your sterilization needs as well as being your best value.

Whether you use equipment daily, weekly or monthly, everything needs upkeep. The following list, which was supplied by American Dental Accessories, will help you know what to do to keep that equipment in top shape. The list is not all-inclusive, but it should cover most of what the average dental practice is using.

Daily

At the beginning of the day:

- Turn on compressor, vacuum and main water lines (you should have a solenoid on your water).
- Check fluid levels in sterilizer and X-ray processor, topping off if necessary, and then turn them on.
- Run a cleaning sheet through your processor (if such is available for it).
- Turn on delivery systems and open oxygen and nitrous tanks (if you have a central system).
- Check ultrasonic cleaner solution.
- If using self-contained water systems and air purging every night, run handpieces and depress water buttons on air/water syringes to establish water-line pressure.

- Refill water bottles of self-contained systems.
- Verify previous day's computer backup and install next generation of media (i.e., the next drive/cartridge etc., in sequence).

At the end of the day:

- Clean the sterilizer door gasket with a soft cloth and mild (non-antibacterial) liquid soap.
- Clean out or change chairside vacuum traps and run vacuum system cleaner through all vacuum lines. Be certain to securely replace the lid of the trap after checking screen on trap.
- Empty waste bottle/tank on sterilizers equipped with one.
- Turn off all equipment as above—delivery systems, oxygen and nitrous

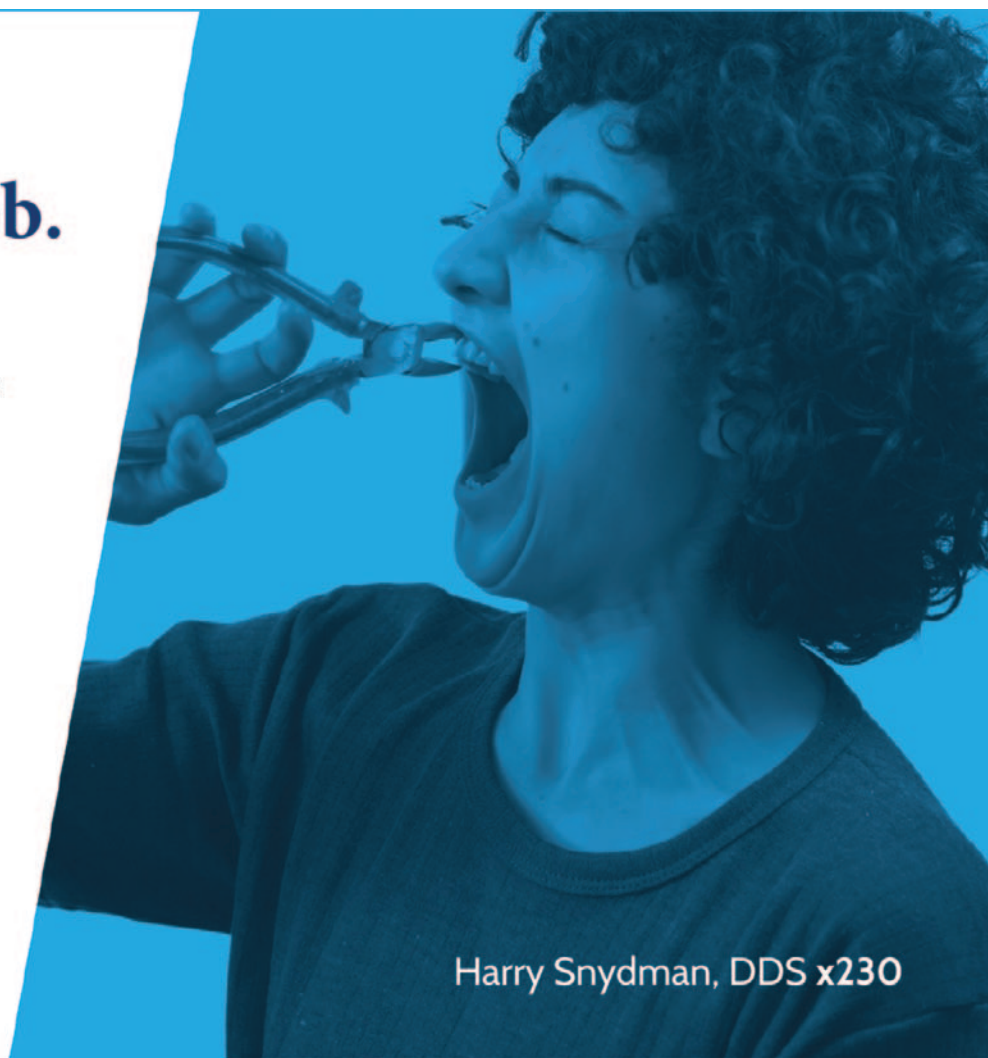
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Harry Snyderman, DDS x230

Equipment Maintenance List Continued From Previous Page

tanks, sterilizer, processor, compressor, vacuum and main water line. If using a Dent-X processor, remove the cover and slide the covers of the solution trays to the side, allowing vapors to escape.

- Dry water lines by purging with air (if using self-contained water systems).

Weekly

- Clean interior and exterior of sterilizer(s), including reservoir. Check autoclave safety valve by pulling on the ring with pliers (it should spring back).
- Check sterilizer filters and perform a spore test.
- Verify sterilizer is level.
- Check chairside trap screens and lid O-rings for wear, and replace if necessary. Be certain to securely replace the lid of the trap afterward.
- Check and replace or clean out central vacuum and main water-line filters
- If present, check amalgam separator.
- Disassemble and lubricate vacuum valves (HVE and SE).
- Clean ultrasonic cleaner.
- Clean operating light reflectors and lens shields (make sure reflectors are cool first).
- Check oil on oil-lubricated compressors and drain compressor tank. An auto-drain can also be installed on your compressor to drain as needed, automatically.
- Clean processor racks according to manufacturer's instructions. You may need to let them dry over the weekend as well.
- Empty and clean out bottles of self-contained water systems.
- Clean boiling chamber of water distiller.

Monthly

- Perform extended cleaning of X-ray processor per manufacturer's recommendations.
- Special cleaning solution may be required as well.
- Check/clean plaster trap.
- Check emergency resuscitation equipment.
- Lubricate joints in operating lights, sterilizer door hinges, air/water syringe buttons, and other similar items around the office.
- Clean Pan or Ceph X-ray screens with a screen cleaner.
- Using heat-resistant PPE, check sterilizer safety valve while under pressure, and check sterilizer door for plumb.
- Check air and water filters in junction boxes.

Quarterly

- Check filters on compressor and central vacuum.
- Check compressor oil (if oil-lubricated).
- Check tubing on delivery systems, nitrous, and vacuum as well as handpiece gaskets and/or coupler O-rings for signs of wear.
- Clean model trimmer wheel and drain lines.
- Lubricate drive chain on Dent-X processors.
- Check hydraulic fluid of patient chair.

- Check life of computer battery backup (UPS).
- Test smoke alarms.
- Verify computer backup by restoring from a backup.

Annually

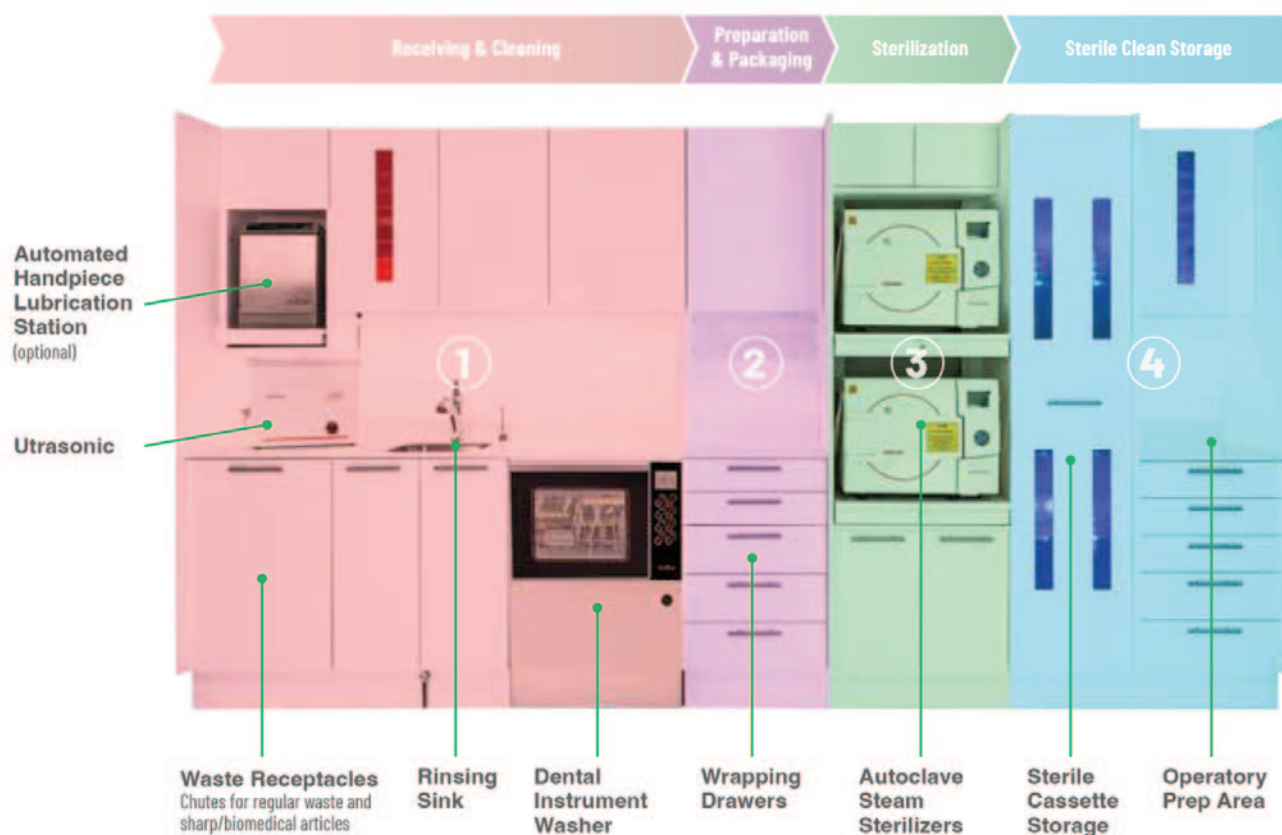
- Change sterilizer door gasket, bellows and fill filters.
- Change oil (if oil-lubricated) of compressor.
- Check power cords for all electronic equipment around the office and replace any that are frayed or worn.
- Have fire extinguisher(s) inspected.
- Observe a complete sterilization cycle, looking for any signs of malfunction, such as a steam leak.
- Conduct staff OSHA training.
- Review emergency procedures with staff—how to handle patient emergencies as well as what to do in case of fire, etc.
- Have X-ray equipment inspected, calibrated and certified (requirements vary—may be as infrequently as once every five years).

In General

- Be observant. Note any equipment which exhibits unusual behavior, such as loud or abnormal noises or an unusual appearance/discoloration.
- Keep owner's manuals for all equipment in a secure place.
- Consult owner's manuals for manufacturer's recommended maintenance, and supplement the list above accordingly.
- Check with local authorities for your requirements. Some things (for example, spore tests) may have a different frequency requirement in your area. We have attempted to list such things at the most common intervals, but there can be wide variation.
- Be aware of seasonal tendencies for extremes of heat, cold and humidity, and the effect these extremes can have on specific pieces of equipment. For example, replacing compressor dryer desiccant is commonly required in the summer months.
- It may be helpful to have primary equipment wired to a master switch to simplify turning on in the morning and off at night (just one switch to throw).
- Be mindful of critical equipment and always have spares of the following on hand:
 1. Light bulbs for operating lights and curing lights
 2. Filters for air and water lines
 3. Replacement screens/traps for central vacuum
 4. Fuses for chairs, sterilizer, processor, etc.
 5. Hydraulic fluid (if you have hydraulic chairs)
 6. Compressor oil
 7. Have a back-up plan in case of failure of compressor, vacuum or sterilizer. Having a smaller secondary unit on hand that can be “hot-swapped” temporarily can keep you up and running.
- Have a contingency plan in case of failure of computer system.



ASEPTX® Sterilization Process and Features



These units have been designed around the 4 stages of the Sterilization process as outlined by CDC and IPAC standards. Our units are loaded with all the features to ensure an efficient and safe Sterilization process.

Stage 1 – Receiving & Cleaning

- Designed for cassette use which requires 60% less linear counter space
- Upper Red Light Module is for soiled instrument holding
- Shelves made of 1/4" Solid Surface materials
- Ample countertop area for optional Ultrasonic machine
- Handpiece lubrication pull-out shelf
- Standard hands-free water activation, with large sink and pull out spray faucet
- Pull out module offering a variety of regular, biohazardous, and sharps waste options
- Use of tabletop/built in ultrasonic or instrument washer

Stage 2 – Preparation & Packaging

- Built-in side barriers protect materials during this key stage
- Barriers combined with standard solid surface counters form an anti-microbial area for the packaging process
- Convenient shelf houses cassette wrapping I.D. tape dispensers
- Accessible cassette wrap drawers with internal covers act as an additional work surface and storage for wrap materials
- Lower storage compartment with slide out drawer accommodates Statim drain bottle

Stage 3 – Sterilization

- Sterilizers have been located with ergonomics in mind
- 3 slide-outs in the tower section can accommodate any size sterilizer and Statim with convenient loading shelf
- Lower drawer is ideal for the storage of sterilization materials
- Pull-out for service ability

Stage 4 – Sterile Clean Storage

- Upper storage includes blue light module to signify items have been processed and are ready for use
- Upper storage modules provide sufficient storage for both trays and cassettes
- Lower utility drawers provide lots of storage for all your supplies
- Optional manual pull-out pantry for storage of clean cassettes and instruments

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2023, The Year of Video Technologies in Dental Communication

Presented by NOVA Computer Solutions

Lights, Camera, Action! Video technologies are revolutionizing how we communicate and share information - it's here to stay! Say hello to revolutionary technologies online that will make life easier and more profitable for dentists in 2023.

2023 plans to shake up dental practices. This is one guarantee, dentistry globally will change for the better in the upcoming year, thanks to video technologies. Incredible developments in online dental technology continue to evolve and improve how dental practices today educate patients and take a huge step forward in the overall care offered.

Dental practices from coast to coast must continue to use and deploy the latest technology tools and services to revolutionize their patient care. From innovative tools and systems that promote patient education and engagement to cutting-edge technologies for precise imaging and restorations—it's an exciting decade for those perfecting their smiles. Not only does this new array of services provide better outcomes for patients, but it also enables dentists to become someone patients look forward to visiting. Thus, it eliminates the fear of seeing their dentist and makes dental practice indispensable in maintaining optimum oral health. With cutting-edge technology transforming dentistry as we know it, 2023 is set up to be a historic year for dental practices everywhere!

In this article, I want to dive deeper into a critical area in keeping your schedule full and your practice profitable. To drive new patients and educate your current patients about your practice you need to jump into Digital Video Marketing in 2023.

Lights, Camera, Action

Did you know that video content can take your dental marketing to the next level?

Anyone can create excellent video content – no technical expertise is required!

Ninety-seven percent of surveyed marketers observed that video helps customers better understand their products. A close-up, for example, can spotlight a product more effectively than even the most descriptive copy. Additionally, audiences retain 95% of the message after watching a video but only 10% after reading the text. Out of all promotional content, video is by far the most engaging. It adds personality, voice, and a face to your business, thus building trust before you even speak to a potential patient. For several reasons, the vast majority of dental offices miss out on video's business growth potential. Often, practices shy away from video marketing because they aren't sure how to approach producing them or, even what they would talk about in them. The good news is video production doesn't have to be complicated.

There are multiple promotional videos a dental practice can make, and they all have different focuses. Let's review some of those.

- **Staff Profiles** - Staff profile videos are a great way to introduce your team to current and prospective patients. It's like a moving version of your "About Us" page. Whether it's a video of an employee talking about their experience in the field or working in your dental office, staff profiles are great for spotlighting your team.
- **Take your patients behind the scenes in your practice** - Behind-the-scenes videos use footage that looks into a typical day at your office. It shows how you and your team work and communicate together. They tend to be more impactful than scripted content because they humanize your business and offer an authentic look at your operations.
- **Patient Testimonials** - One of the most

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SYNERGY PRACTICES DENTAL

Podcast

EPISODE PODCAST:

THEME:

Red Card Ep. 48

Two practices,
One roof



SYNERGY PRACTICES DENTAL

Podcast

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THEME:

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No feasibility study?
Unfeasible



DENTAL COMMUNICATION

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impactful forms of advertising is word-of-mouth. Patient testimonial videos are a great way to capture real customers advocating for your practice while having some control over the content. The content should focus on the aspects of your practice that matter the most to your current and future patients.

- Education - Educational videos can give your patients tips and best practices. Educate your patients about dental hygiene. These videos are inherently more engaging since they allow users to learn about subjects that interest them. They should be short, easy to understand, and attention-grabbing. To that end, it helps to make them consistently and address timely topics to help build thought leadership and trust.
- Community Outreach - Building trust and healthy brand growth requires you to act as a responsible member of your community. Supporting and participating in community initiatives helps the practice establish an image of trust and resonate with your current and future patients. These videos are suitable for raising awareness for local current events or persistent issues and increasing engagement on social media.

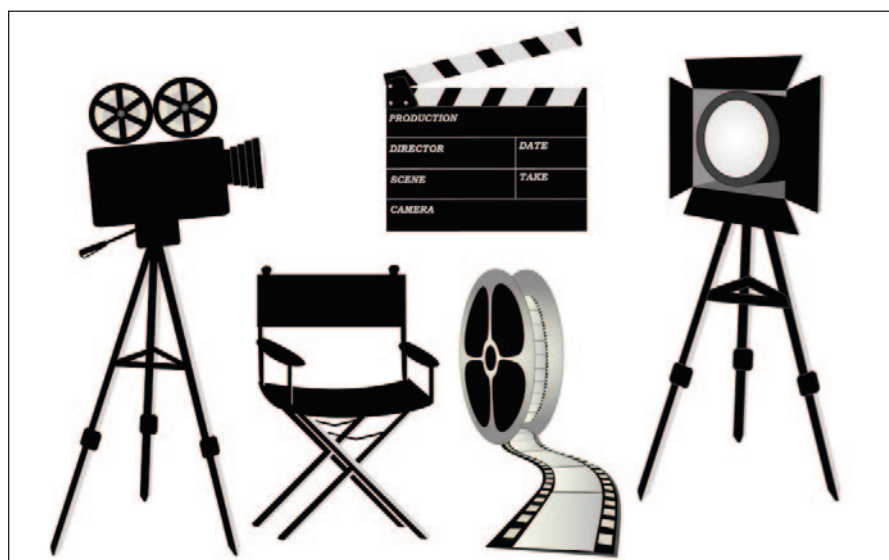
Now that we have covered many different areas of video content you can create, let's review the tools and equipment you will need to make these quick and easy videos.

- Camera - If you're making a

video, you need a good camera. Start with the basics. You can use your smartphone camera for filming. It won't get you the same level of quality as a professional-level full-frame mirrorless video camera, but

huge difference in the quality of your video. Getting your lighting right is not easy, but there are many options to choose from that will make your light just right.

- Gimbal - A gimbal is a



it's more accessible, and the video quality constantly improves.

- Tripod - It doesn't matter how good your camera's stabilization is, you need a tripod. Even small shakes can be visible in a video. A tripod turns a basic camera into a much better video production tool and will seriously improve the video quality of any camera.
- External microphone - While some video cameras, camcorders, and phones have great audio pickups, they still leave much to be desired. If you're using something smaller, the audio will likely be terrible because these devices aren't designed to capture high-quality sound. External microphones significantly improve the quality of your audio. This is especially important when filming video lessons, courses, live streams, interviews, or anything else that contains speech.
- Lighting - Lighting makes a

stabilizer for your camera. A gimbal stabilizes your shot using pivots and weights, which is especially important when you're moving. When your camera is still, a tripod will work. If you're moving around, you'll need a gimbal.

So now, let's discuss which platforms dental practices should focus on for your video content.

- YouTube - YouTube is powerful, the number two search engine online, and dental practices can have a compelling strategy on YouTube. YouTube videos can serve many purposes, from embedding on your website to sharing in a newsletter or social media. More and more of your patients have cut the cord on traditional TV and watch YouTube channels in the comfort of their living rooms.
- Facebook - Studies have shown that the average Facebook user logs into their Facebook

account six to twelve times each day. Facebook allows a dental practice to make an instant connection through their business profile and personally. Facebook is a great platform to share information, hygiene tips, and even fun facts about dentistry.

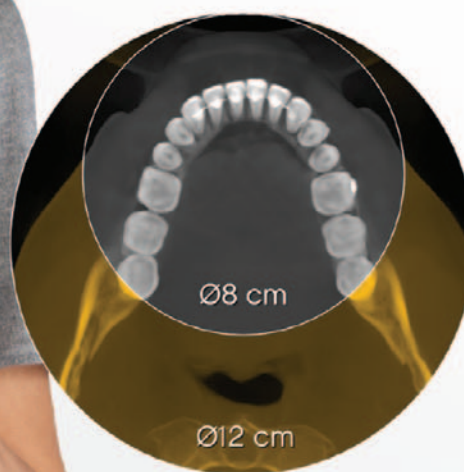
- Instagram - Like Facebook, Instagram is another platform that allows dental practices to connect instantly. In addition to connecting with your patients, platforms such as Instagram allow you to build a network of influencers who can help promote and share the great things you do in your practice.
- TikTok - Tik Tok is the new kid on the block. Tik Tok, like all other social platforms, provides the dental clinic with a mechanism to reach new audiences. Tik Tok is a platform for new generations, and many Tik Tok users may be off Facebook, YouTube, or other services.

There you have it, it's easier than you thought, right? Before you know it, you will be making fantastic videos that are bound to engage your viewers. Whether your goal is to educate your viewers, increase your patients or your company's profile online, you can just by making a quick video. If you are still unsure where to start or need assistance in picking out the proper gimbal you don't have to go it alone. NOVA Computer Solutions is here to help get you going on your way to becoming the video star of your practice.

Start Creating Your Videos!



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PRACTICE FINANCE

Synergy Dental Podcasts Reveal Design/Build Solutions

By Brian Frederick

Sasha Hewadapal, Arminco's Director of Sales, has successfully hosted 50 Arminco podcasts over the last two and one-half years. Topics cover many of the issues encountered when one is considering, amidst, or postscript - evaluating the various particulars and value proposition of a project. These intensely forthright podcasts are intentionally designed to bring the needed information for dentists seeking enough input to make smooth transitions vital to healthy growth of their practices, specifically in improving the physical plant.

Actionable education delivered in intentionally simple terms has allowed the messages from the Arminco Inc. podcasts to resonate, allowing clients to receive superior architectural, interior design and/or engineering services to be more fully informed.

Sasha's journey as an expert voice on all things construction began with his interest in the field and his first job as an HVAC technician, working part time while in high school. After studying engineering and technology in college, he joined the design team of a custom home builder and honed his skills on fundamental design.

In 2010, knowing little about the field of dental design/build, he joined Arminco, Inc. As a junior designer under the tutelage of Arminco's CEO &

President Artin Safarian and Executive Vice President Mike Marutyan, Sasha became knowledgeable on the intricacies of excellent dental office design/

times when he would need to multi-task, supervising on site at one project, while designing a different office on his laptop!

This talented individual

were building continued to mushroom, and with that, a new series of growth initiatives brought about the addition of architectural, design, and



Arminco President Artin Safarian and Sales Director Sasha Hewadapal leading another riveting podcast for dentists seeking design/build knowledge. — Photo by: Arminco, Inc.

build. At that time, Arminco was, as they are today, one of the most dynamic and progressive healthcare design/build firms on the East Coast.

Furthering his development, Sasha became a very 'hands on' site supervisor as the company was growing rapidly. There were

became a project manager, and that is where we first crossed paths a decade ago while I was representing a major equipment supplier for mutual clients of Arminco's. The team at Arminco was becoming a strong leader in the field as the numbers of new dental facilities that they

engineering team members.

Embracing the role of Design Manager of the expanded department with his fundamentally sound, collaborative approach, Sasha contributed significantly to the Arminco brand by refining his

SYNERGY PODCASTS

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desire to help clients by utilizing the company’s vast array of tools to reach the goal of providing dental facilities that would consistently surpass expectations. Providing a best-in-class build out experience generates a pride of creation, client goodwill and much appreciated referrals to future opportunities for the company. The solid protocols that Artin and Mike infused, and that Sasha nurtures is foundational to a company that is so passionate about the success of its’ clients.

With a tried-and-true proven process in place, Arminco Inc. has added a talented group of knowledgeable consultants to

oversee the details of the client experience and to be the intermediaries between internal departments and outside vendors working with our clients. The leadership of this team is under Sasha’s purview as he is Arminco’s Director of Sales. This latest development allows the company to scale growth sustainably and without compromise.

So, with his experience working on, supervising, designing or otherwise connected to over 300 projects during his 12+ years at Arminco, Sasha has channeled those experiences into one of the most successful podcasts around. Originally intended as a tool to connect with potential clients during the pandemic, the broadcast took off as dentists

particularly appreciate the transparent and direct unfiltered information that they were receiving.

Pod-O-Matic rates Arminco’s Red Card Series and standard podcasts consistently in the top ten of any given week within the Entrepreneurship category. 670+ dentists from around the country tune in to these frequent podcasts! A format featuring real world issues and focused discussion to help potential clients by providing transparent, actionable, and relevant topics has been a formula for the kind of podcast that anyone serving the dental profession should be proud to promote. So, what started as a series of ‘lunch & learns’ in the core market of the DMV has blossomed into a pertinent messaging tool which

now thrives on a broader national scale. Arminco’s podcasts are available on Spotify, Google, and Apple.

If you are in search of a podcast that is designed to prepare you to ask the right questions for your project, we hope that you enjoy engaging with any of our podcasts – past, present, future. Please check the QR code below for more information.



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The 3900 Chair Mount Package

features Pivot and Sidebox mounting

options, with multiple light and unit

options to fit your specific needs.

A high-quality dental chair with a blue upholstered seat and backrest, mounted on a black base. Above the chair is a large, adjustable dental operating light. To the right of the chair, there is a sidebox unit with various dental instruments and hoses hanging from it. The background is a light blue gradient with faint architectural lines.

Poor Air Quality in Dental Offices Demands Action

While Covid-19 raised public awareness of the dangers of airborne viruses, indoor air quality has long been a concern for dental practices well before the pandemic. In 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor named “dental worker” (which includes dentists, hygienists and assistants) as the most unhealthy job, based on high scores for exposure to contaminants and disease pathogens found in the air of dental offices. Various articles dating back 20 years or more call out unhealthy air in the dental environment.

According to the EPA, indoor concentrations of pollutants can be up to five times higher than outdoors. This is especially true for dental environments, where a number of factors contribute to poor air quality:

- **Bioaerosols** Dental instruments create hazardous bioaerosols—a fine mist of droplets containing microbes from the saliva, blood, and subgingival fluids that can stay suspended in the air for hours.
- **Chemicals** Dental office air can contain a number of undesirable chemical compounds, ranging from harsh disinfectants to mercury vapors created during the removal of amalgam fillings.
- **VOCs** Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are potentially harmful airborne gases that can be emitted from furniture, dental equipment, and flooring.
- **Viruses and Bacteria** Just one sick patient can spread infectious illness throughout the practice, exhaling fine



droplets that are capable of migrating up to 160 feet from the mouth.

- **Dust Easily airborne**, dust commonly includes a mix of skin cells, hair, clothing fiber,

bacteria, dust mites, soil particles, pollen, and even microscopic bits of plastic.

- **Noxious Odors Unpleasant** odors and old, recirculated air result in stale indoor air quality.

You might think that your existing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system offers built-in protection. Ironically, outdated HVAC systems can actually make poor air quality worse by continually redistributing and recirculating airborne contaminants throughout the dental environment.

Arminco, Inc. has multiple solutions to this health issue as we specialize in facility design with focus on health, ergonomics and efficiency. Call us for an evaluation of your air quality and to explore the best solution for your practice.



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Should I Consider Selling My Dental Practice to a DSO?

Dental service organizations (DSOs) are a much discussed topic when it comes to selling a dental practice. If you have a large practice (meaning \$1.5 million or more in annual revenue) you may even get an unsolicited offer to buy your dental practice from a DSO.

Whether you ultimately decide to do so is a personal decision. However, before you consider the offer, you would be well advised to consult with a dental practice transition specialist in order to make sure you are getting all that you can out of the deal.

How DSOs Work

A DSO is a network of dental practices owned and operated by a single corporate entity. That corporation may be privately owned, but more likely, it will be a publicly-owned company. Increasingly, DSOs are using capital from private equity investors.

One of the main advantages of a DSO is they can operate with an economy of scale by buying equipment and supplies in large quantities, getting a discount for the bulk purchase.

They also have deeper pockets than your average dental practice buyer, so they can invest more heavily in marketing and expansion (meaning they can offer you more than an individual doctor for your practice).

Whether to Sell Your Dental Practice to a DSO

As stated above, if your goal in selling your dental practice is to maximize the amount you get

from the sale, a DSO may be a good option for you. They will be able to pay top dollar for your practice and may be willing to outbid other buyers.

If your practice transition goals include more personal aspects—such as preserving the legacy of your practice and the level of care that is provided to your patients—then you will want to look closely at other doctor's experiences in selling to DSOs before you make your decision.

Some Pros and Cons of DSOs

For instance, if you are nearing retirement—just not quite there yet—the thought of being free of the business and administrative side of a dental practice can sound very appealing. A DSO can be a good option because their goal is not to replace doctors, but to take over the business and administrative side. Because of their size, they have economies of scale, which means that setting up their practice models around your clinical work can be mutually beneficial.

You'll make a good living doing what you do best—practicing dentistry—in the practice you've built, but without the headaches and extra hours needed to take care of the business side.

On the other hand, after years of being your own boss, you have to seriously consider how well you would do as an employee. Before you sell a dental practice to a DSO, you need to be sure it'll be a good fit for you and you're willing to work for another two to five years.

What to Look For in a DSO

When you are selling a dental practice, whether to a DSO or private buyer, you need to look closely at who you are selling to. You need to decide what is important to you about your practice and how to preserve that. The answer to that question will be quite personal.

When transitioning your practice be sure that everything you need to have as part of the deal is recorded in the deal papers. Not only does this protect you, your patients, and your staff, it also makes sure everyone is on the same page about how you are moving forward.

Some things you should consider include:

1. **Terms of payment.** Will you be paid for the practice up front? Will you have an equity position? What accounting methods are they using to calculate the sale price or commissions?
2. **Employment status.** It's typical for a DSO to require the seller to stay on for a minimum of two years after the sale. You should have an employment contract that explicitly lays out how you will be paid your salary, whether commissions are based on your personal production level or the practice's overall profit or collections and what the exit strategy is.
3. **Support services.** This refers to the business and administrative side. This is

what the DSO is supposed to be good at, but you need to make sure it's going to help you and your staff, not be a hindrance. Speaking of staff, be sure to be upfront with them about the changes that are coming and make sure the DSO is hands on during the whole transition process. Good support services will make it much easier to run and grow your practice.

4. **Exit Strategy.** If you have an idea of when you want to leave the practice, let that be known up front. Be clear on the process and, if you want, ask to be guaranteed that you will have a say in your replacement.

As with any time someone is selling a dental practice, you should research your options. Talk to other doctors who have sold to the DSOs you are considering and find out their experiences. A good DSO is one that gives you peace of mind that the practice is growing and well run while allowing you to focus on dentistry.

Why You Need a Dental Practice Transition Specialist

If you are interested in selling your dental practice to a DSO, you might think that because they have deep pockets and experience with buying dental practices, you don't need a broker to represent your interests, as they will have an established method.

This is not so. DSOs, being

Valuation Killers

- 1. Flat or inconsistent production and cash flow
- 2. Poor or inconsistent online presence and branding
- 3. No marketing, "just a static website"
- 4. Over spending on scattered marketing (like social media or Google ads)
- 5. Too few 5 Star Google reviews compared to competition, lack of fresh, consistent Google reviews
- 6. Lingering effects from COVID production dip from 2020 that reveals momentum shift downward.
- 7. Relying solely on word of mouth patient referrals or insurance plans for new patients.

SELLING MY PRACTICE

carefully handled process.

Continued from page 15

primarily driven by their bottom line, will look for any opportunity to pay less for your dental practice. If they are dealing with a selling doctor who is not properly represented, it is in their best interest to take advantage of the seller's lack of knowledge and experience for their own gain.

When you are properly represented by an experienced broker and team of professional advisors, DSOs will expect to have to pay the true value of your dental practice. The value of what DDSmatch Mid-Atlantic can bring to the table will show you that, in this instance, knowledge definitely is power. In most cases, as an experienced dental broker we will end up paying for ourselves easily with the money we save and earn you through a more

Find Out How We Can Help with Selling Your Dental Practice

A good dental broker will help the selling dentist to design and execute a successful practice transition. They will also understand how to help doctors maximize practice value, identify appropriate and qualified buyers, and efficiently manage the entire transition process.

At DDSmatch Mid-Atlantic, your dental practice transition goals are our goals. An essential part of our process is working with you to learn and define those goals so we can use our expertise to best help you. We bring the experience of hundreds of successful dental practice transitions from all over the country and put it to work for you, to get you the best match for you and your practice. Contact us today and find out what we can do for you.

General Practice Benchmarks

Key Performance Indicator	Industry Benchmark
Overhead	55% - 65%
Staff Salaries	20% - 25%
Clinical Supplies	6% - 8%
Lab Fees	7% - 10%
Advertising	1.5% - 3.5%
Office Supplies	2% - 3%
Officer Compensation	30% - 40%
Production Per Day — Doctor	\$3,500 Per Doctor
Production Per Day — Hygiene	\$1,000 Per Hygienist
Hygiene Production	25% - 35% (3X Wage)
Active Patient Count*	1,500 Per Doctor
New Patients Per Month	20 - 25 Per Doctor
Accounts Receivable	1X Avg. Monthly Collections

* Active patients are typically defined as patients seen in the last 18 months
* Source: Internal Data

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while getting the best value for your practice.*



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CDT Code Changes for 2023

The ADA's code maintenance committee has released the additions, deletions, and editorial changes that will take effect on January 1, 2023

22 New Codes

- **D0372** Intraoral tomosynthesis – comprehensive series of radiographic images
- **D0373** Intraoral tomosynthesis – bitewing radiographic image
- **D0374** Intraoral tomosynthesis – periapical radiographic image
- **D0387** Intraoral tomosynthesis – comprehensive series of radiographic images, image capture only
- **D0388** Intraoral tomosynthesis – bitewing radiographic image, image capture only
- **D0389** Intraoral tomosynthesis – periapical radiographic image, image capture only
- **D0801** 3D dental surface scan – direct
- **D0802** 3D dental surface scan – indirect
- **D0803** 3D facial surface scan – direct
- **D0804** 3D facial surface scan – indirect
- **D1781** Vaccine administration – human papillomavirus – Dose 1
- **D1782** Vaccine administration – human papillomavirus – Dose 2
- **D1783** Vaccine administration – human papillomavirus – Dose 3
- **D4286** Removal of non-resorbable barrier
- **D6105** Removal of implant body not requiring bone removal or flap elevation
- **D6106** Guided tissue regeneration – resorbable barrier, per implant
- **D6107** Guided tissue regeneration – non-resorbable barrier, per implant
- **D6197** Replacement of restorative material used to close an access opening of a screw-retained implant supported prosthesis, per implant
- **D7509** Marsupialization of odontogenic cyst
- **D7956** Guided tissue regeneration, edentulous area resorbable barrier, per site
- **D7957** Guided tissue regeneration, edentulous area non-resorbable barrier, per site
- **D9953** Reline custom sleep apnea appliance (indirect)

5 Deleted Codes

- **D0351** 3D photographic image
- **D0704** 3D photographic image – capture only

14 Revised Codes

- **D0120** The term “complete” series of radiographic images was replaced with “comprehensive” and the language defining 14-22 films was removed. Including edentulous and interproximal areas was added
- **D0393** Revised definition: “virtual treatment simulation using 3D image volume or surface scan”
- **D0709** Replaced “complete” with “comprehensive” series of radiographic images, image capture only. No longer defines the series to 14-22 images, added inclusion of interproximal and edentulous areas
- **D3333** Removed “filing claim” and added “same provider”.
- **D4240** Removed “or external root resorption”
- **D4241** Removed “or external root resorption”
- **D4266** Added “natural teeth,” “defects around natural teeth,” and removed “peri-implant defects”
- **D4267** Added “natural teeth” and removed “includes membrane removal”. Defined that it can be used for periodontal defects around natural teeth, removed “and peri-implant defects.”
- **D4355** Replaced “oral” evaluation with “periodontal” evaluation. Removed language requiring a separate visit to complete a D0150, D0160 or D0180
- **D4921** Added “with a medicinal agent” per quadrants, removing the requirement to use a prescription medicinal agent
- **D7251** Added “impacted teeth only” to the definition
- **D8000-D8999** Removed language referring to interceptive procedures, allows limited or comprehensive procedures to be repeated based on clinical rationale.
- **D9110** Palliative treatment of dental pain – removed terms “emergency” and “minor procedure” and added “treatment that relieves pain but is not curative; services provided do not have distinct procedure codes”
- **D9450** Added case presentation “subsequent to” detailed and extensive treatment planning. Removed “established patient. Not performed on same day as evaluation



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**Mobile
Product
Overview**



Dental Wet-Vacuum; What does it cost your office?

Currently, the majority of Dental Practices are using traditional wet ring vacuum technology, costing their owners thousands of dollars annually without them knowing. A wet-ring pump consumes one gallon of water per minute for every horsepower in the motor. That means the average clinic in North America is consuming 100 gallons of water per hour, that is 800 gallons per day, which equates to 200,000 gallons per year. So, you may ask yourself, what is a wet-ring pump, and why is it so wasteful?

Wet Vacuums

Wet-ring or liquid ring dental vacuums are a very simple design introduced decades ago that work on the principle of spinning water to create a vacuum seal between the pump's impeller and pump casing. This wet vacuum seal is what creates the suction for a Dental Clinic.

How Liquid Ring Vacuums Work

The pump has a fixed impeller on the shaft that spins within the pump body. The centrifugal force spins the water from the center to the outside of the pump body creating a seal. As the air and water from the suction lines enters a small hole at the center the space expands into the water ring creating the suction.

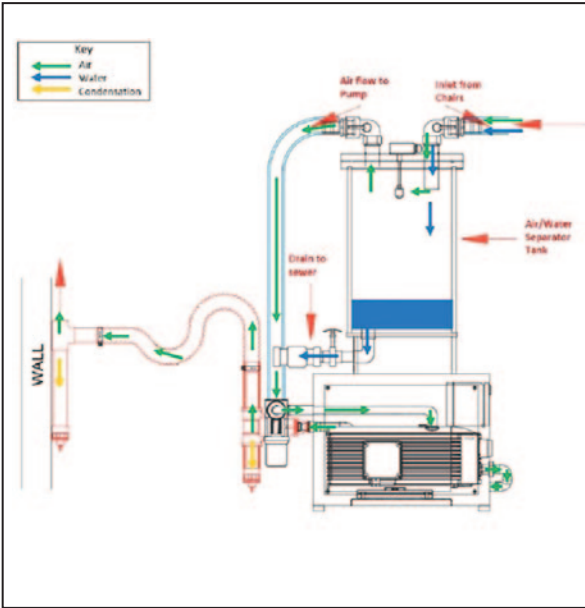
The Costs

The operating costs are three-fold. One is the cost to purchase city water at 1 gallon per minute per HP of the pump motor. Two, the sewage cost of disposing of the used water and three the cost in repairing the pump due to damage by mineral deposits in hard or harsh water.

Attention to the costs of running a wet-ring pump can vary depending on municipality utility fees, the location of the clinic, and if the clinic space is owned or leased. In the past few years, Publicly/ Privately Owned Treatment Works (POTWs) have been increasing their focus on the Dental Industry, specifically what is

being consumed in city water from filtration plants and being discharged from the clinic. The recent EPA amalgam regulation has highlighted the once-overlooked Dental Industry, causing water treatment experts to change how they look at Dental Clinics. In direct relation to the increased scrutiny, clinics that lease may find their landlords no longer include water in the rental agreement. You may also find your city mandating water metering. So, what is this high consumption of water costing a doctor?

1) **Water Consumption:** The following are average water consumption and



wastewater rates for four western municipalities in Virginia.
\$4.15/1,000 Gallons for water consumption rate = \$830 annually
\$4.20/1,000 Gallons for wastewater discharge rate = \$840 annually
Total = \$1,670/year

2) **Back-flow Preventers:** Almost every industry has a back-flow preventer required by law to be installed on their water supply. In dental, many municipalities require a back-flow preventer to be installed on the water supply of a wet-vacuum pump. The purpose of these devices is to ensure contaminated water from a device such as a wet-ring pump doesn't back track into

the freshwater supply line. These devices can cost \$1,500 to install with an annual inspection fee of around \$500.
Total = \$500/year

As you can see, an "inexpensive" wet vacuum can cost a dental practice \$2,170 in annual operating costs. If a wet-vacuum costs your clinic this much annually, it may be time to convert your clinic to a dry-vacuum system.

Dry-Vacuum

Dry-vacuum systems are more cost effective by design. Unlike wet-vacuums, these systems don't require any water to create suction. Instead, they rely on vanes, impeller fans or internal rotors to produce vacuum. These systems have an air/water separator tank to separate the air and fluids from the clinic's HVE and SE lines. The fluids fall to the bottom of the tank while the air travels through the top to a dry vacuum pump. The exhaust air is then exhausted outside.

The elimination of water-related costs by a dry-vacuum system results in a significantly lower ongoing operating cost for the clinic. Depending on your dry vacuum, the maintenance could be minimal, saving the clinic even more money and time.

Is it hard to upgrade?

Converting from a wet-ring pump to a dry vacuum can be easy if the right vacuum is chosen. The key is to choose a vacuum system that offers enough vacuum power to deliver high suction performance through the clinic's existing vacuum lines without requiring a costly vacuum line upgrade. The higher vacuum will allow a clinic to utilize existing vacuum lines while increasing their vacuum power when compared to a traditional wet-ring pump which typically runs at 12" of Hg. Dry-vacuums should be vented to the outside of the clinic and the mechanical room should be properly vented to maintain a comfortable temperature. Some dry vacuum systems require a larger foot print than others. Some can be stacked to fit in the wet-vacuum space.

DENTAL WET VACUUM

Continued from page 15

What is the typical ROI for upgrading to dry?

Using the example of a 5-6 chair practice, the average return on investment from a wet-ring pump to a dry vacuum is about 3-5 years. After that period, the clinic saves approximately \$2,170 annually by converting to a dry vacuum.

Time for Change

Choosing the right vacuum system for a Dental Practice is not a decision that should be made lightly, as it is the heart of the clinic. Without suction, the clinic cannot function.

The great news, choosing the right dry vacuum system has many great benefits. With the right dry vacuum system, your clinic will have a stronger vacuum, experience reliable/low maintenance costs and you will save thousands of dollars per year by not using and wasting water unnecessarily. The choice to go dry seems very clear.

To learn about upgrading from a wet vacuum, follow our next article in the Spring release of Ask Dental. We will be covering 5 Things to Consider when Converting from Wet to Dry Vacuum.

Sources

Water Consumption – Water User in Vacuum Pumps Systems & Viability for Water Conservation Best Management in California by James Fryer

Number of Dental Practices in the USA
<https://www.ibisworld.com/united-states/market-research-reports/dentists-industry/>

Water rates for western Virginia
<https://www.westernvawater.org/i-am-a-/new-or-existing-customer/rates-and-fees>

Is Your Practice HIPAA Compliant?

Today, HIPAA requirements are well-defined and well-enforced. If your dental practice is found to be non-compliant with HIPAA, it could result in disastrous consequences. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) oversees compliance to HIPAA, and any enforcement actions are taken through HHS's Office of Civil Rights. HHS OCR imposes strict financial penalties on any dental office found to be willfully negligent of HIPAA policies.

How do you know if your dental practice is compliant with HIPAA requirements? Start by reading up on these two rules:

- HIPAA's Privacy Rule, which details who is covered by HIPAA. The Privacy Rule also clarifies what personal information must be protected, under what circumstances this confidential information may be used or disclosed, and how it may be used.
- HIPAA's Security Rule, which identifies what administrative, physical and technical safeguards must be implemented by a dental practice in order to protect the health information of their patients. The

Security Rule also states what measures a dental office must take to protect its own interests.

It's important to have clearly-detailed written policies and procedures in place to show HHS that you understand and comply with HIPAA in the event of an audit. This documentation should include signatures from all of your practice's staff confirming that they understand and follow these rules. Should you fail to demonstrate adequate understanding of and adherence to HIPAA, it may be very harmful for your dental practice's bottom line.

Some dental practices take HIPAA compliance very seriously and can easily demonstrate that if they are audited. Others may feel frustrated or overwhelmed by HIPAA, and such feelings may have caused them to procrastinate on compliance initiatives. If your dental practice falls into the latter category, the good news is that it's not too late to become compliant before you find yourself in trouble with the OCR.
<https://etactics.com/blog/hipaa-compliance-for-dental-offices#>

Dental Patients Are Social Media Savvy

According to a study by the Pew Research Center, 72% of all American adults use social media sites. This means that if you're not using social media as part of your dental marketing strategy, then you're missing out on a huge potential audience.

- The latest research from Google shows that patients are searching are going online to examine their health care options:
- 77% of prospective patients do their research through search engines online
 - 76% of prospective patients do their research on a providers website
 - 52% use general health information sites for research

Pew research reports that 80% of internet users have searched a health related topic online

- Google data shows us that patients are being thoughtful and strategic in their online search.
- 48% did more than two weeks of research before scheduling an appointment

- As the boomer generation approaches 65, the way in which they research healthcare for themselves and loved ones is proving to be uniquely tech-savvy:
- Boomers are just as active in searching online for healthcare-related information as any other adult demographic
 - 57% have searched for health and wellness information online
 - They're also more likely to look up medication and treatment information for friends and loved ones.



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