October 2020
Dental Managers Society Newsletter
We Welcome Medical Managers Too!

October Is Cybersecurity Awareness Month!

CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a global effort to help everyone stay protected whenever and however you connect. The overarching theme for the month is, '***Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart***' and ACTSmart is proud to be a champion and support this online safety and education initiative this October.

2020 saw a major disruption in the way many people work, learn and socialize online. Our homes and businesses are more connected than ever. With more people working from home, these two internet-connected environments are colliding on a scale we've never seen before, introducing a whole new set of potential vulnerabilities that users must be conscious of.

The emergence of telemedicine, digital health records, internet-connected medical devices, patient wellness apps and an increasing amount of third-parties entering the health supply chain has created many benefits, but also exposed the industry to vulnerabilities that cybercriminals regularly attempt to exploit.

Facts and Figures:

- 92% of employees said they believed it's their company's job to secure remote working, yet 42% claimed current security policies make it difficult to do their jobs.
- 90% of IT professionals believe remote workers are not secure and 70% think remote staff pose a greater risk than onsite employees.
- The IoT (Internet of Things) device market is anticipated to reach $1.1 trillion by 2026.

What can you do?

Keep Tabs on Your Apps – Most connected appliances, toys and devices are supported by a mobile app. Your mobile device could be filled with suspicious apps running in the background, or using default permissions you never realized you approved – gathering personal information without your knowledge while putting your identity and privacy at risk.

Share with Care – Think before posting about yourself and others online. Consider what a post reveals, who might see it and how it might affect you and others.

Think Before You Click – If you receive an enticing offer via email or text, don't be so quick to click on the link. Instead, go directly to the company's website to verify if it is legitimate. If you're unsure who the email is from – even if the details appear accurate – or if the email looks "phishy" do not respond and do not click on any links or open any attachments as they may be infected with malware.

When In Doubt, Throw it Out – Links in emails, tweets, texts, posts, social media messages and online advertising are one of the easiest ways for cybercriminals to get your sensitive information. Be wary of clicking on links or downloading anything that comes from a stranger otr that you were not expecting. When available, use the "junk" or "block" option to no longer receive messages from a particular sender. Don't trust those links!

All month long we'll be posting cybersecurity tips and info on our Facebook page (Facebook.com/ACTSmart) and our website (ACTSmartIT.com). You can also sign up for FREE Cybersecurity weekly tips at ACTSmartIT.com/tips.

Cybersecurity is EVERYONE's Job!

Letter from the Editor

Pam Snell,
DMS Advocate

Welcome Friends!

Although our last publication was in March, we have been working diligently to keep you safe, informed and up-to-date with information to help you survive the initial quarantine and then the resumption of your practice.
If you are not a Dental Office Manager, WELCOME! We have added healthcare folks to this mailing list because many of our resources and topics are perfect for you, as well!

If you haven't been getting our email notifications, drop me a note. You may have noticed that email has become very touchy! Email providers are becoming more and more strict about what email addresses that they let through in order to control spam and keep hackers out. We'll work it out with you – the information in our emails is worth it!

We started sending emails with critical information as soon as the quarantine started. We shared knowledge about PPP, EIDL, the CARES Act and other financial considerations from Rosen & Associates. Cindy Cushman, Owner & Lead HR Partner of HR2fit explained the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and Attorney Brian Hatch helped us understand legalities relating to teledentistry, contact tracing, mask legalities and the legal documents necessary to reopen your practice. Megham Steinberg, of SteinbergHR, wrote a very thoughtful piece "CONVERSATION, DISCOMFORT, ACCOUNTABILITY; Have you talked about race and the movement with your employees?"

We also shared articles about marketing during the pandemic, ADA and MDS guidelines and other very timely topics.

In April, we started holding secure Zoom meetings since we were no longer able to meet in person. At that time, almost everyone was working from home and needed to talk through how they were feeling, what was happening in their practice and how they were planning and preparing for the future. Nancy Kagan of Summit Dental Partners (Now Rosen Summit Advisors) was, as always, an awesome facilitator!

Once people got back to work in the office, we saw another change. Many signed up for our Zoom meetings so they could get the recording but weren't able to attend because they've had to work on Friday mornings. It's the new reality! Although our meeting on Friday, September 11th was sparsely attended, the information given by Danielle of Rosen Summit Advisors about insurance submission hacks was invaluable! We'll continue with this type of exceptional subjects and speakers.

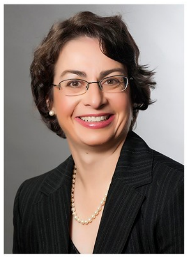
We won't be holding a meeting on Friday, October 9th at 10am ***unless*** we hear that you really want to continue with this schedule. That doesn't mean that we won't meet again – we'd like to give you a few choices and ask you to give us your thoughts. (If you have never been to a meeting – PLEASE JOIN US!)

Here are a few choices for SECURE Zoom meetings:
Friday, October 9th at 7am
Friday, November 13th at 7PM (a BYOB cocktail party)
Any other day that you think you can make it – day of the week and time
PLEASE visit DentalManagersSociety.com/next to offer your suggestions.

As I get information to help you and your practice survive and thrive, I'm posting it on the home page of DentalManagersSociety.com – it's a great resource!

Sending you all love!
~ Pam

Defining What It Means To Be Paperless vs. Chartless



by Ann-Marie DePalma, CDA, RDH, MEd, DrBicuspid.com contributing writer

As dental practices and teams move away from paper charts and handwritten clinical notes and toward the digital environment, understanding the differences in maintaining the patient record becomes increasingly important.

Many team members think that not having a paper chart equals going paperless, but there is more to it than that. There is a difference as to whether a practice is paperless or chartless and the requirements that each demands.

A paperless practice is one where all information (from patient demographics and communication to clinical notes to accounting and insurance processing) is done electronically. Paper may be received, but it is scanned into the practice management software and then destroyed.

A chartless practice, meanwhile, is one where things such as patient information and clinical notes are in the practice management software, but the practice may generate and/or keep paper documentation.

Each practice must decide whether going paperless or chartless is the best goal and option for that business. This article will review what is required for either a paperless or chartless practice to be successful.

When the Affordable Care Act was passed, there was a mandate that medical practices were required to convert their patient records and communication to the digital world. However, most dental practices, with a few exceptions, were not required to move to the paperless environment.

Over the past few years, however, as patients are becoming more accustomed to receiving healthcare information digitally, they are also looking to their dental providers to do the same. Going digital, whether as a paperless or chartless practice, has one goal in mind: To benefit the patient. How a practice and team decide to accomplish that goal depends on the practice.

Many dental teams and practices don't want to be completely paperless because they are afraid of "the computer crash" and not being able to obtain essential information. It is a fact of life in the 21st century that computers crash or have other issues. The difference between a practice that embraces the paperless or chartless mentality and one that doesn't is that there is a protocol in place in the event technology is not available.

Teams also need to understand that a component of HIPAA requires that a disaster plan be implemented. Having the appropriate hardware, internet access and speed, and stable networking environment also add to the technology checkpoints prior to embarking on the journey to becoming paperless or chartless.

Does the practice have up-to-date practice management software? The latest version of any software includes improvements, as well as fixes to issues and enhanced security. Not being on the latest version can cause several concerns for the practice. If the practice is looking to move toward becoming paperless or chartless, the latest version of the practice management software can assist in the process.

Additionally, it is important that the team has been trained on the latest information contained in the software. Vendors update the programs regularly and teams often lack the appropriate training to accomplish everyday tasks. This can lead to frustration and improper information. Dedicated training time is essential when a practice decides to move to the digital environment. Each software vendor offers a variety of training options, from in-house team training to remote access. A practice moving to becoming paperless or chartless needs to avail itself of the training available to be successful. Not utilizing the training is a recipe for failure.

Does the team understand the importance of documentation and follow the most appropriate note entry protocol, whether documenting clinical notes in SOAP (subjective, objective, assessment, plan) format or patient conversations in the appropriate area? Is the current Code on Dental Procedures and Nomenclature (CDT Code) utilized in the software and does the team understand that services are coded based on the most appropriate code for the treatment provided? Without paper, the team is reliant on the documentation process, which is becoming more critical for reimbursement from third-party payors.

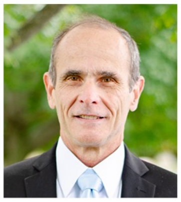
What is the practice's protocol for entering patient communication and clinical notes? A paperless or chartless practice details all information in the appropriate manner by all team members.
Does the practice utilize patient engagement solutions from text message reminders to online patient education materials? Gone are the days when a patient is handed a paper with information about a procedure. Patients now want to be entertained and engaged with any educational information. Many patients don't listen to phone messages, so utilizing text messaging services can be a definite benefit for the practice. There are a variety of options for patient engagement, depending on the practice's goal and budget.

For teams to make the successful transition to being paperless or chartless, the current patient flow from initial patient contact to dismissal needs to be documented. What are the steps currently used on paper? How will the steps be recreated in the paperless or chartless practice? Do new protocols and procedures need to be adopted? Who will be responsible for making sure the new steps are created and followed? How will paper records be used or inactivated during the transition process? These and many other questions need to be addressed.

Is your practice ready to take on the challenge of being paperless or chartless to enhance the patient experience? Understanding the process and answering the questions posed will assist you in undertaking the challenge with positive results.

Ann-Marie DePalma, CDA, RDH, MEd, is a fellow and certified educator of the Association of Dental Implant Auxiliaries (ADIA) and a fellow of the American Academy of Dental Hygiene (AADH). She spent more than 25 years in clinical hygiene and is currently employed as a technology adviser/trainer for Patterson Dental. Email Ann-Marie at annmarie.depalma@pattersondental.com

Effective Lease Negotiation Strategies



by Attorney Brian Hatch, www.HatchLegalGroup.com

Negotiating good lease language is one of the most important parts of buying a practice and negotiating new terms at the end of a term when options to extend can give a lessee leverage to change the details of the lease. After all, the expense of rent can easily be 5-10% of the overall budget of a practice. Dental practices have specific needs when looking at lease terms so be aware of them when discussing this aspect of a purchase or reviewing the current lease to exercise an option.

Rental rates vary widely according to the location, so it is good to get an estimate from a realtor or look at commercial rents paid for professional office spaces in other parts of the community of the practice site. Annual rent increase rates based on inflation are often written into the lease, and often the rates can be 3%, so it is good to get a reasonable fixed rate, and not accept language allowing a fixed rate or the market rate, depending on which is greater.

Dental practices are normally good tenants, since practices don't go out of business as often as other commercial tenants, and once the space is built out as a dental practice, practices are usually sold and a new tenant occupies the space without interruption in rental payments. Therefore, use this as leverage in convincing the landlord that the value of a good tenant is worth giving the lessee good terms.

Is there room to expand the practice outside of the existing space? And is that possibility considered in the lease? This is valuable to a prospective buyer who is looking at long-term growth of the practice. And if there are other professional spaces available in the building, try have an exclusivity clause included so another competitive dental practice can't locate in the same building.

There may be a personal guaranty required of the lessee, particularly if there is a new practice or a practice corporation which hasn't been in existence for long. Try to either not have a personal guarantee, or have it limited to the first few years of the lease while the practice is building up a stable patient base.

The provision on assignment and subletting is crucial to prospective selling of the practice, since if there isn't clause requiring at most a landlord consent "not to be unreasonably withheld" it may hold up a sale. A clause allowing more tenant freedom to assign the lease if it is to another dental practice can add value to the lease and also be agreeable to a landlord looking to continue to have solid continuation of tenants when the time comes for a practice to be sold. Sometimes an unreasonable landlord may demand an exit payment to obtain consent for an assignment.

Lease extension options are important, and for long periods into the future, such as a number of five year options, with the opportunity to renegotiate some of the terms at the end of each option period. Banks often require these kinds of lease extensions before financing long-term loans for practice purchases.

The triple net lease, or tenant payment of a share of taxes, insurance and maintenance is often offered, instead of a gross lease, in which the landlord pays these expenses, so it is important to require information on what the average increases in these figures have been, and may be in the future. A good term is to require that major or exterior maintenance be taken care of by the landlord, except for perhaps the cost of snow plowing or regular landscaping. Avoid language which may allow for costs which should be borne by other tenants to be included in the maintenance expenses. There should be language regarding the allocation of the potential future costs such as repair or replacement of the HVAC system. It must be laid out what is considered a repair to the structure of the building, which generally should be covered by the landlord, what is the tenant's responsibility, particularly if it affects the interior premises and functioning of the practice, such as the provision of utilities. The owner of the premises should be required to have a general liability insurance policy, with the tenant required to have personal property insurance to cover individual items such as dental equipment.

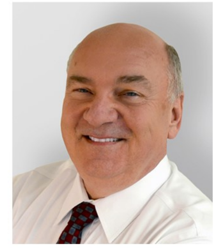
For dental practices the provisions on allotted parking spaces and signage are important to insert to ensure that enough convenient parking is available for patients, and that marketing the practice through good signage is allowed by the landlord up to the extent of local ordinances.

A good lease is of value to a practice seeking to develop a long-term transition plan, since it is one of the factors prospective buyers look at first when weighing where to locate. So don't accept blindly what the landlord is offering before negotiating something better!

Hatch Legal Group is a Provider of Quality Legal Representation to Dental Practices in Practice Purchases and Sales, Litigation, Business, Employment and other Legal Matters. Attorney Brian T. Hatch has experience in all Massachusetts trial and appellate courts and has appeared before the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Dentistry. Call Us at (508) 222-6400 or email Brian at brianhatch@hatchlawoffices.com

What You Need to Know Before Buying a New Business Phone System

by David Snell, www.ACTSmartIT.com | 855-WOW-SERVICE! (855-969-7378)



If you're in the market for a new business phone system, the choices can seem overwhelming. To make things a little easier, consider the fact that today's business phone systems fall into three basic categories:

Landline

This is the known and trusted analog phone system we all grew up with. It operates via your phone company's copper wiring, but you'll also need PBX hardware on site. That's what gives you the additional features most businesses need, like multiple extensions, call transferring, call directories, and voicemail.

One of the primary benefits of a landline system is reliability. You don't have to worry about losing your phone service if there's a problem with your internet or cellular service. On the other hand, landline systems can be expensive to install and maintain, and you really need an IT department to manage the PBX component.

VOIP

VOIP stands for "voice over internet protocol," and that's exactly what it means: Your phones operate over your internet connection. They're a great way for smaller businesses to afford advanced features like automated attendants, email delivery of voicemails, desktop controls, desktop directories, voicemail transcription, Interactive Voice Response, interoffice instant messaging, ring groups, and mobile phone integration that allows remote and traveling employees to use the business phone system.
The main drawback of VOIP systems is that if your internet connection goes down, so does your phone system. It also requires a reliable, high-speed connection, which might not be available in all areas. On the other hand, VOIP systems offer small and medium businesses a wealth of options they might not be able to afford otherwise (VOIP systems are usually less expensive than landlines). They're also easy to install, configure, and maintain.

VOIP systems are further broken down into self-hosted and cloud-based services:

With a self-hosted system, the business owns the equipment, keeps it onsite, and is responsible for any needed maintenance. That means a steep upfront cost and the need for employees to administer and service the system. On the other hand, the equipment is yours, which gives you a higher degree of control.

With a cloud-based service, your service provider – the host – owns and maintains all of the equipment. Rather than having equipment on site, you access it through the cloud and are able to configure and run the system from your computer. Because it's structured around per-user fees, it's an affordable way to obtain advanced features and add new lines as your business grows. On the other hand, you have to rely on your service provider when things go wrong, so it's important to consider the level of customer service the vendor provides.

Virtual phone systems

With a virtual phone system, callers who dial the business's main number are forwarded to the appropriate employee's phone – wherever that employee might be. Virtual systems typically provide advanced features like an automated receptionist, call forwarding, voicemail, and faxing.
The downside is that there is no "real" phone system. All calls are routed through the primary phone number, which could be a landline, mobile, or VOIP system. Depending on the type of service you have on that phone, it could incur high usage costs, because all calls will be billed to that one number.

When it comes to choosing a business phone system, the right one for you comes down to features, cost, and ease of use. Regardless of the system you choose, today's options let even the smallest businesses present a consistent, professional voice to their customers.

What's Next?

Before you put pen to contract, there's another VERY important aspect to consider - compatibility with your internal network and security. NOW is the time to reach out to your IT provider to get their valuable input. We've seen businesses who purchased a new phone system and when it came time for the actual installation, their IT engineers had multiple challenges getting things to work properly.
If the phones connect to your internal network there are usually a number of configuration changes required to make them work - and in some cases additional equipment necessary to enable all the different features of the system.

If you would like to discuss the different Pro's and Con's of a particular phone system BEFORE you sign a contract we're ready to help. Give me a call at 781-826-9665

9 Quick Tricks to Fill Your Social Media Calendar

by Alicia Piazza, The Spark Social, Inc. | thespark.social

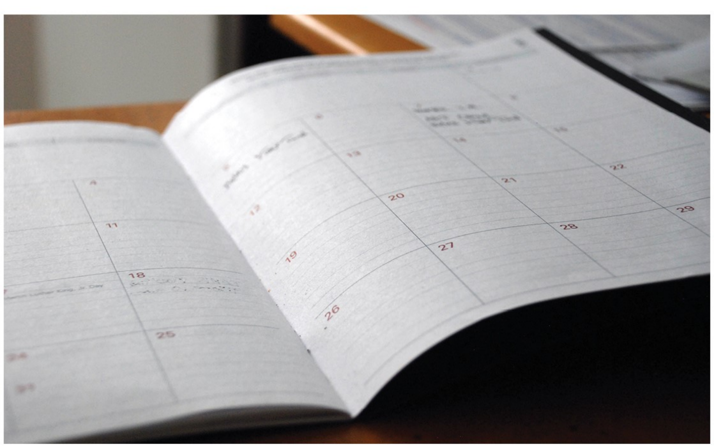
Okay. It's time for that noontime Facebook post. [cracks knuckles] There's got to be something exciting to talk about. Do we have any new photos? What happened in the lunchroom yesterday?…maybe I'll see what other pages are posting… oh, hey, they just posted a video and OMIGOD what is that cat doing with that hairdryer??

And before you know it, you're down the rabbit hole. Without a post to show for it.

Posting regularly on social media is a fun and effective way to engage your target audience and showcase your company's strengths. But, it's also a challenge. Lots of frazzled business owners and staffers end up scrambling for ideas at the last minute. The best way around this situation is to plan out your posts at least a couple weeks in advance—or, even better, months at a time. So, here are 9 starter ideas to put on your social media calendar and reuse every month. Let's get your creative juices flowing!

1. MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL

Posting informative articles or videos is a terrific way to establish your company as a helpful resource, not just a promotional machine. The topics could be directly related to your industry, but you should also think beyond. For instance, if your audience is parents, link to an article on healthy school lunch options or local family activities. Don't forget about quick tips and advice from your in-house experts.



2. GIVE VOICE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

Your social feed is a great place to share customer reviews, so those happy testimonials can reach audiences beyond your website and other review sites. Copy the original text into a visual format, and then schedule the posts regularly throughout your content calendar.

3. GO LOCAL

Let your followers know about other businesses you support and work with. It could be as simple as a shout-out to your office's favorite takeout lunch spot or a neighboring office. This is not only helpful info, it can promote engagement from other business pages and boost your exposure to new audiences.

4. VIDEO, VIDEO, AND MORE FACEBOOK LIVE VIDEO

If video isn't part of your social media strategy yet, it's time to make it happen! Cisco predicts that nearly 80% of all internet traffic will be driven by video in 2020, with live video streaming increasing to 13% of all video traffic by 2021. The types of videos you create depends on your goals and resources. Some videos, like Facebook Live videos, are great to do on a smartphone for an authentic, grassroots feel. If you're trying to produce a more polished video, such as an office walk-through or client testimonials, you may want to hire a professional videographer or social media agency.

5. COME UP WITH CONTESTS

Everyone loves a contest! This is a great way to increase engagement and have some fun with your audience. You might even get ideas for a product design tweak or a new marketing campaign. You can do anything from caption contests to asking for pics and choosing a winner. Just make sure the contest is in good taste, has a goal, and follows social media guidelines (here are Facebook's, Instagram's, and Twitter's).

6. DOING GOOD? LET PEOPLE KNOW.

If your office participates in any charity events or partners with community-related causes, talk about it in your posts. It's not just about promoting the good work your team is doing; you can also help promote the cause and even inspire others to get involved. When you write a post, add in real content and context. Show pictures of your team volunteering, and interview staff members about what this cause means to them.

7. NOT-SO-FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Offer a Question and Answer session now and then—it's a good way to get your audience engaged and learn a thing or two about what's important to them. Ask your followers for questions, and then feature one or more staff answers (text or video!) in a separate post. You can also generate your own entertaining Q&A topics, like asking staff about their hobbies or favorite animals.

8. PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS

Events get a lot of attention in the Facebook algorithm—and you can feature everything from specials and promotions to fundraisers and customer appreciation days. Facebook will recommend events to users based on a number of factors, such as location, timing, and event type, so provide as much data as you can. Be sure to select the appropriate event category, too. Lastly, add tags that you think people might be searching for.

9. GO BEHIND THE SCENES

This is a great way to give your business a face and a personality—customers love connecting with real people! Add some behind-the-scenes posts to your calendar, with candid pics of your team at work (or at play) in the office or elsewhere. If you have staff members who do interesting things, like volunteering at animal shelters or running marathons, post a short bio and a personal quote. You might be surprised how many of your followers can relate.

See? You're on fire! Look at all this content you've got at your fingertips. Every one of these ideas can be fleshed out into multiple posts. If you're doing a staff Q&A theme, make it a series that you post once a week. If you're partnering with a local charity, set up multiple posts throughout the fundraising period. Meanwhile, pay attention to which types of posts get the most engagement, and use them as a guide for future ideas. Remember that you can track the type of content your followers like the most.

Paid Family And Medical Leave (PFML) And New Massachusetts Holiday 2021

by Attorney Helene Horn Figman, www.FigmanLaw.com

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE (PFML)

Beginning January, 2021 most workers in Massachusetts will be eligible for job-protected paid leave under Paid Family and Medical Leave*. PFML provides 12 weeks of job-protected paid family leave for the birth, adoption or the placement of a child or because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that a family member is on active duty or if a family member is called into active duty.

Under PFML, covered individuals may be eligible for up to 20 weeks of job-protected paid medical leave if they have a serious health condition that incapacitates them from work and up to 26 weeks of paid family leave to care for a family member who is a covered service member with a serious health condition.

Effective July 1, 2021, the law further provides up to 12 weeks of job-protected paid family leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition.

*Covered individuals are eligible for no more than 26 total weeks, in the aggregate, of paid family and medical leave in a single benefit year.

The program is funded by premiums paid by employees, employers, and the self-employed. PFML is separate from the federally mandated proteted unpaid time offered by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Employers should already be registered with MassTaxConnect and be filing quarterly reports, as well as deducting contributions from employees and making their contributions (if applicable) to the Family and Employment Security Trust Fund. In addition, employers should have a PFML Poster displayed with other mandated workplace posters and should have PFML information included in their Company policies/handbook.

JUNETEENTH

Juneteenth, (June 19) commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, is now a recognized Massachusetts holiday under a bill passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Charlie Baker on July 24, 2020.

The law adds "Juneteenth Independence Day" to a list of holidays — along with Memorial Day, July Fourth, and Labor Day — on which employees must be paid holiday pay (*this refers to hourly work actually performed) but employees cannot be required to work. On those days, the state allows retail stores to be open but not to sell alcohol.

In a signing statement, Baker wrote that the law "establishes Juneteenth Independence Day as an annual state holiday on June 19 in order to recognize the continued need to ensure racial freedom and equality.

If you have questions regarding the above and what it means to your business, please contact us at 781-238-2700

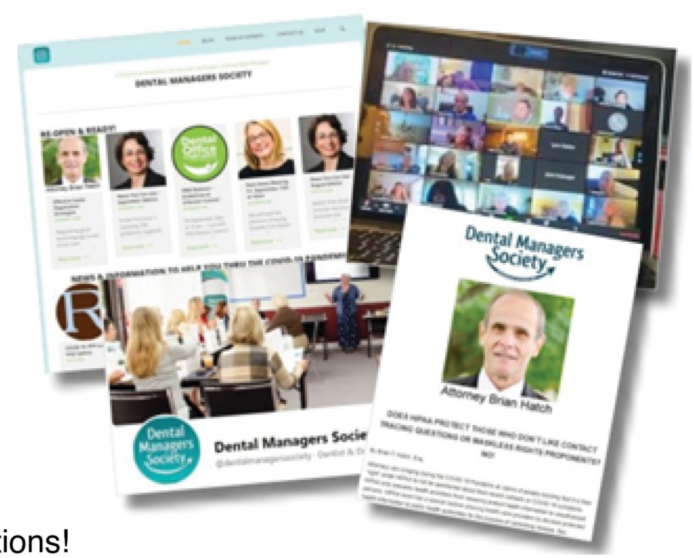
Dental Managers Society - Sponsored by ACTSmart IT
70 Corporate Park Drive, Suite 1225
Pembroke, Massachusetts 02359

Team of Experts

To signup for our FREE printed newsletter go to www.DentalManagersSociety.com/join

Are You Taking Advantage of These FREE Resources?

Our Dental Managers Society has great information and resources for other Healthcare Providers too!



Practice Management – Although dental insurance submission and payments is often a hot topic, we also have:

- HR Experts
- Financial Best Practices Experts
- Legal Experts
- IT Experts (ACTSmart IT)
- Person Growth Experts
- Marketing Experts
- Social Media Experts
- Supplies Experts
- Secure Zoom Meetings – share challenges and solutions!

We can help you and your practice ***survive and thrive!***

- Visit our website DentalManagersSociety.com
- Visit our Facebook page at Facebook.com/dentalmanagerssociety
- Subscribe to our email blasts by contacting Pam@ACTSmartIT.com

If you know someone who could benefit from these resources, visit DentalManagersSociety.com/join