



Keeping Remote Workers Safe and Secure

Doctors, office managers and anyone who even checks on the schedule remotely, this article is for you!

Imagine taking someone from 2003 and showing them how work is done today. It's not just about better technology; our work environment has changed drastically.

Instead of trudging to the office to use the computer, many are able to work from home, enjoying the flexibility it offers. But with this freedom comes security risks. This guide will help you understand and address these risks to keep your home office safe.

Understanding the Risks: Most cybersecurity issues stem from human error. Working from home adds new challenges, as each location has unique security concerns.



Home networks lack the layers of protection found in office environments, making them easy targets for cyber criminals. Personal devices may not have the same security measures as company-issued ones, and handling business data outside the secure office environment poses additional risks.

Essential Security Measures: Start with basic security measures like strong passwords, multi-factor authentication, regular updates, and secure Wi-Fi networks.

Educate your team about cyber threats and ensure regular data backups. Secure video conferencing is also crucial to protect sensitive information during virtual meetings.

Advanced Security Strategies: Move beyond the basics with advanced measures such as using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) for encrypted internet connections, endpoint protection for all devices, and secure file-sharing tools with end-to-end encryption.

Intrusion Detection and Prevention Systems, employee training, incident response plans, and third-party risk management are also vital components of advanced security.

Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation: Cybersecurity is always evolving, so continuous monitoring and adaptation are essential. Real-time threat detection, Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) tools, threat intelligence, security audits, and penetration testing help stay ahead of emerging threats.

Regularly update security patches and refine incident response plans based on past incidents. Ongoing employee training and compliance with industry regulations are also critical for maintaining security.

Securing your home office requires a combination of basic and advanced security measures, along with continuous vigilance.

Remember, you're not alone in this. Seek help from experts if needed to ensure the safety of your remote work environment.

Letter from the Editor



Pam Snell,
DMS Advocate

Are you using AI in your practice?

We're using several artificial intelligence apps: Grammarly for spelling and correct grammar (can't compete with the Grammar Goddess, Susan Rooks, though!), ChatGPT and Copilot for some programming, creative and research-related projects. We are always careful to check their work and to NOT give any sensitive information to the app because they are not secure!



This month's infographic is about 10 ways that you can use Copilot at work and 10 ways that you can use it at home.

You'll see that I have commented on many of these uses and whether I found them helpful or not.

One I find very helpful is the feature that creates images. Many years ago, before anyone knew that images on the internet were often copyrighted, we got into trouble with Getty images. It was a lesson that we'll never forget!

I use several free images resources including Canva, which is great for things like creating my infographics. For this Copilot infographic, I asked Copilot Designer to create the image of the woman at work and at home. It took me about 5 or 6 tries until it looked the way that I wanted.

If you'd like to read the infographic, or request a free print copy (it's 8 1/2" x 14"), go to **Dental-ManagerSociety.com** and you'll find it on the home page.

Don't think it could be useful to your practice? I have found that it does a wonderful job simplifying information and making it more understandable.

If you are creating any kind of patient-focused communication, such as newsletter articles, blog posts, take-homes, or Q&A, it takes your text and makes it more intelligible (a word that Copilot gave me when I asked for another word for understandable!).

Let me know if you've tried any of these Artificial Intelligence apps and if they have been useful to you. They aren't great at everything. I tried to make a word search in both Copilot and Copilot Designer. They failed miserably (or maybe I failed in my instructions!). Copilot does do a good job writing poetry, though.

Have fun and try it for yourself!



Unlocking Opportunities: The Power of New Mover Marketing

In the dynamic landscape of business, identifying and targeting the right audience is crucial for success. One often overlooked yet highly promising demographic is the group of individuals who have recently moved to a new location. New movers present a unique and untapped market that can be a game-changer for businesses willing to seize the opportunity.

New mover marketing involves tailoring strategies to connect with individuals who have recently relocated. These individuals are in the midst of establishing new routines, discovering local services, and building relationships in their new community. Here's why they make for the best customers to target:

Blank Slate:

New movers are starting with a clean slate in their new surroundings. This means they are open to discovering new businesses and establishing new loyalties. Unlike established residents who might already have preferred service providers, new movers are more receptive to trying out different options.

Immediate Needs:

Moving comes with a myriad of immediate needs – from finding a new grocery store to locating healthcare services and everything in between. Businesses that can quickly address these needs and offer convenience are more likely to win over new movers as loyal customers.

Lack of Brand Loyalty:

Since new movers are unfamiliar with the local business landscape, they lack brand loyalty. This provides an excellent opportunity for businesses to make a lasting impression and secure customer loyalty from the very beginning.

Word-of-Mouth Potential:

New movers are often in the process of making new social connections. Satisfying their needs and providing excellent service can lead to positive word-of-mouth

recommendations within the community. This can have a domino effect, attracting even more new customers.

For businesses looking to tap into the potential of new mover marketing, taking the initiative is key. Here are some strategies to consider:

Timely Outreach:

Act swiftly to reach new movers. Welcome them to the neighborhood with special offers, discounts, or exclusive promotions. This not only provides immediate value but also creates a positive association with your brand.

Local Partnerships:

Forge partnerships with local businesses and services to create a network that can collectively cater to the diverse needs of new movers. Cross-promotions and referrals can be mutually beneficial for all parties involved.

Digital Presence:

Establish a strong online presence through local search engine optimization (SEO) and social media. New movers are likely to turn to the internet to discover local businesses, making it essential for your business to be easily found online.

Personalized Engagement:

Tailor your marketing messages to address the specific needs and challenges faced by new movers. Personalized communication can make them feel seen and valued, fostering a positive relationship with your brand.

In the fast-paced world of business, adapting to changing demographics and seizing unique opportunities are crucial. New mover marketing offers a fresh and largely untapped customer base, making it an attractive avenue for businesses seeking growth and increased market share. By understanding the needs of new movers and proactively reaching out to them, businesses can position themselves as the go-to choice in their respective industries, setting the stage for long-term success.



Allison Nuovo, owner of Town Hall Guide, specializes in New Mover marketing. Allison has been helping to promote local businesses for over 20 years.

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The Ultimate Guide To Partnership Marketing

What's better than an expert providing immense value on a particular topic? Two experts coming together to share their knowledge on that topic.

That's exactly what partnership marketing — also known as "a collaboration between two companies or brands to reach a broader audience base and mutually benefit both parties," according to WordStream — is for. When considering this marketing tactic, you may have some hesitancy and wonder if it's actually beneficial for your company.

As shared by [Impact](https://impact.com/partnerships/why-do-partnership(-marketing-check-out-these-powerful-benefits)), [https://impact.com/partnerships/why-do-partnership\(-marketing-check-out-these-powerful-benefits\)](https://impact.com/partnerships/why-do-partnership(-marketing-check-out-these-powerful-benefits)) partnership marketing can:

- Increase brand awareness.
- Establish credibility and trust.
- Grow audiences.
- Improve customer retention and lifetime value.
- Encourage cross-sell / upsell opportunities.

In this guide, we give the lowdown on partnership marketing: getting started with it, understanding its success, and bringing in support to facilitate it.

Getting Started with Partnership Marketing (Part 1 of our 3-part series)

Determine the Topic

The first step in partnership marketing involves determining the topic you'd like to focus on. If you don't already have a few ideas in mind, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What are our clients / customers struggling with lately?
2. What's a trending topic that falls within our area of expertise?

3. Which component of our business do we want to push the most?

You'll likely end up brainstorming several options, allowing you to create a list and then narrow it down from there. Hold onto the ideas that you don't pursue this time around, as you can use them for future collaborations.

Once you know the focus of the offer, you can then start to flesh out the plan.



Set Goals for the Partnership Marketing

As with all things in marketing, don't dive into partnership marketing by throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping that it sticks with no true plan in mind. Have a clear intention for why you want to pursue this collaboration in the first place and then set goals for it. Your goals might include:

- Increasing website traffic.
- Generating leads.
- Growing your email list.
- Building your social media presence.
- Establishing new connections.

These goals will then guide you towards picking the right format of your offer that will help you to achieve those results.

For example, if you would like to generate leads, hosting a webinar might be best, as it gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your expertise and then encourage attendees to reach out to you afterwards for a consultation. If you would like to grow your email list, you may consider writing a white paper, where both you and your partner will be able to get access to the list of email addresses that downloaded it.

After selecting the topic and outlining your goals, you can start to think about the right expert — or experts, as there may be more than one — to partner with.

Find the Right Thought Leaders

Partnership marketing is exactly that — a partnership. In order to be successful, it's crucial to find the right partner(s) who are going to contribute and put in an equal amount of work and resources. You may already have someone in mind, but if you don't, the following sources can help you seek the right fit:

1. Your network, either someone you know or someone a colleague recommended.
2. Search engines
3. Social media
4. Podcasts
5. Conferences

Although you may want to dive right into things, it's crucial to "vet" or "qualify" the expert first to ensure they're truly the right fit.

The qualifications may vary depending on the partnership, but ideally, you'll want to check for the following:

- **Expertise:** Does their knowledge align with your offer? If the partnership involves any sort of public speaking, do they have experience in that and know how to engage an audience?
- **Time and Resources:** Do they have the time and potentially resources (money towards expenses that might occur as well as team members who can help out) to commit to this opportunity to guarantee its success?
- **Marketing:** Do they have a big and active presence online that will help with awareness for the opportunity? If they don't have a huge audience, are they at least consistent with their marketing? Will they agree to hold up on their end of the promotional plan?

If the thought leader checks all of these boxes, then you'll feel confident reaching out to them about the opportunity and beginning this partnership.

This is Part 1 of a 3 part series

Read **Select the Format of Your Offer**, part 2 of Ashley's 3 part series In May's Newsletter.

Or read the entire article at:

<https://dashofsocial.com/the-ultimate-guide-to-partnership-marketing/>



Ashley Mason is the founder of Dash of Social, a content marketing firm specializing in social media, marketing strategy, blogging, and email marketing. Working closely with their clients, Ashley and her team help small business owners and entrepreneurs craft and execute value-driven marketing strategies designed to establish thought leadership, grow online communities, and build connections and leads.

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Vacation Time, Anyone?

Despite these dreary and rainy days, this is an ideal time for employers to think about their vacation policy and perhaps provide clarification to employees who may be confused as to how and when they can take their days.

Policies generally serve as a communication tool for businesses. Employees want the ability to refer to a policy to find out exactly what their employer is providing. Vacation is certainly an area where there should be no misunderstandings.

Are you one of those VERY FEW employers that don't provide vacation? After all, it isn't required under Massachusetts law. That's right. Vacation is not a mandated benefit for private non-unionized employers in the Commonwealth.

Then why do you have a vacation (a/k/a PTO) policy? Why have you been counseled about the importance of providing such paid time off? The answer includes the fact that most job seekers "expect" to have PTO. And, paid vacation not only addresses the needs of recruitment, but also helps to maintain your existing valued employees. Generally, employers want a workplace where their employees are not completely burnt out! Consider the fact that providing a vacation benefit reduces employee turnover. It also supports employee work-life balance.

Is it always possible for an employer to offer vacation? If you have a snowplowing business, your concern would be having sufficient staff for the winter months. If it is a seasonal business, and you are hiring employees solely for your busy season, it may be a situation where vacation is not offered.

Assuming you have a year-round business and you are in the majority of employers who do provide vacation time, you may set limits on when vacation time may be utilized based on the needs and demands of your business.

For example, do you traditionally have a "busy season"? Florists and candy shops are usually very active in the weeks leading up to Christmas and the time before Valentine's Day. Can you have a policy

that states employees will not be granted vacation time during those periods? YES.



These parameters, however, must be set forth IN ADVANCE, so that employees understand those restrictions. Ideally, this policy should be provided when an offer of employment is made. Or, if you implement the policy at another time, post-hire, it's only fair to provide sufficient notice to all the employees.

In the snowplow business, where there may be other year-round duties, consider letting the employees know during the summer of 2024 that there will not be any vacation time granted during January or February 2025, so that these employees are not blindsided in 2025 and can make appropriate plans for vacation during other months.

Although vacation is not required, when an employer offers paid vacation days to an employee in an offer letter, in their policies, as part of a contract, or as part of a written agreement, those paid vacation hours are considered "wages" in Massachusetts.

The methods of providing such paid time off vary. Businesses may have employees earn / accrue vacation days, typically on a monthly basis. You may choose to have an employee complete an introductory period before allowing the accrual or the use

of available days. Or, you can provide a frontload or lump sum of days or weeks at the beginning of a calendar year or upon the employee's anniversary year.

In choosing a method of providing vacation time, employers MAY consider whether applicants for employment expect access to time off on a more immediate basis rather than waiting for a few hours or days to be accrued each month. But some employers may not be comfortable providing a liberal number of weeks to a newer employee. Perhaps that "privilege" would be extended to longer term employees (i.e., frontload for those employees with 3+ or 5+ years in the Company. Another consideration is the requirement that employers must pay employees for all accrued unused vacation at time of separation from employment, whether or not the separation was voluntary or involuntary.

What is a "use-it or lose-it" policy? One that would require your employee to use their vacation time within the year it was accrued (the anniversary year or the calendar year, whichever your business uses for providing these employee benefits). An employee who fails to use the vacation time would lose that paid benefit. As an alternative, you can implement a policy that allows the employee the ability to "carry over" *some* of the unused vacation but lose the remainder.

In addition to the vacation hours an employer allows, some businesses close for certain weeks during the year and give those weeks as "paid vacation" to staff. It is common for employers to close the week of July

4, as many businesses find that to be a slow week (except for entities in vacation areas, such as stores or restaurants at the Cape!). Similarly, some employers close for the holiday week in December. Providing employees with paid time off during those weeks is sometimes referred to as "forced vacation."

Employers may set up their own procedures for the vacation request and for scheduling. It is important to retain the right to determine whether or not to approve the request for time off. Always use objective factors to make that determination, which might relate to the needs of the business during the requested period of time.

A reminder that vacation time that is provided as a benefit is viewed like earned wage. Employers may not hold back vacation payment as a disciplinary measure. In Massachusetts, and many other states, it must be paid at time of separation from employment, whether that separation is voluntary or involuntary.

To properly track sick time and manage vacation time, some employers prefer to keep "separate buckets" while other roll the time off into one category of Paid Time Off (PTO). There are pros and cons to both approaches.

When you revise your handbook or other policies, you may choose to rethink your vacation policies and adjust those provisions accordingly. As with any aspect of the interpersonal human resources function, communication as to your policies and expectations in terms of vacation is key.

Attorney Helene Horn Figman combines specialized legal knowledge in employment law with the skills and perspectives uniquely suited to Human Resources Consulting. www.figmanlaw.com

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This article has been prepared by the Law Offices of Helene Horn Figman, P.C. for general informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice and is presented without any representation of warranty whatsoever.



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This newsletter was thoughtfully edited by Susan Rooks, the Grammar Goddess, so we can look and sound as smart as we are.



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LIVE EVENT!

The Dental Managers Society Hosts Massachusetts Express Grant Program Reimbursed Networking Course*

Dental office managers and other healthcare professionals know that personal referrals are critical to the growth of their practice. Yet, their stomachs clench as they think of attending a networking event.

This concise, 2-hour in-person seminar will help alleviate the stress.

**The Dental Managers Society is hosting the special event
Thursday, May 29, 9am to 11am
Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce
100 Armstrong Road, Suite 204, Plymouth**

RSVPs are required, and the session is \$97 per person.

*Note – This program is part of the Massachusetts Express Grant program and can be completely reimbursable by the state for most. Applicants will receive instructions on how to apply.

For more information and registration link: **DentalManagersSociety.com/express-grant**
Come see old friends and make new ones!