

DOM (Denturist Office Manager)

- Software Specifically for Denturists

- 2002 Denturism Canada Magazine

“Perpetual improvement is the single most powerful competitive weapon in a our changing business world.”

- Tom Peters (best-selling business author)

Electronic Billing -- Get Paid Sooner

Finally electronic billing is here! So how is E-Billing going to affect your business? Favourably. You are going to get paid sooner and your pre-authorizations are going to get assessed quicker, often instantly. Electronic Billing, however, requires software. Denturist Office Manager, (DOM) is a software program which provides enormous potential through business solutions that are not exclusive to just E-billing. In fact, proactively using such well-written software can directly help to increase revenue and decrease costs, which will result in a more efficient and profitable practice. Here are some specific examples showcasing exactly how DOM software can benefit your practice.

Accounting -- Increase Profit

For many who own their our own business, “Accounting” is generally regarded as a task that is completed for tax purposes only and therefore rarely kept current. Yet, accounting is, and was invented to be, the measuring stick for business. With profit as the ultimate goal, a good accounting system is key to business success. Fortunately, there are tools that can help. By using an integrated billing and accounting program, you’ll be able to automatically journalize all of your revenue and cost transactions to the appropriate ledger accounts.

A completely integrated billing and accounting program will also allow you to print balance sheets and income statements at any time. The DOM is such a software solution, and is specifically designed for the Denturist. Using this system negates the need for a separate accounting program, while at the same time giving you access to daily updates of financial statements. DOM also allows you focus on your business and patients, as it automatically inputs your journal entries. Financials are generated regularly, without the user ever having to know a credit from a debit, or understand a contra-account, reversing entry, double entry, or GAAP rules.

Now, with the convenience of printing full financials at any time, you’ll also want to routinely examine your company’s spending habits. If you want to reduce costs, first determine what they are and how and why they differ from month to month. Based on your spending patterns, DOM will create individualized graphs outlining each cost venture. These graphs are ideal for keeping costs in check and suppliers honest. With

the right attitude and information, this system of playing cost detective can actually be fun!

Once your budget is under control, you may want to look at ways to generate increased revenue. One of many valuable tools is your Accounts Receivable to Monthly Collections ratio. This program is capable of creating time specific data that can be compared to former and future ratios. Monthly examinations are recommended. For example, if John Smith has an outstanding A/R of \$20,000 and he is collecting \$20,000 per month, then his A/R to monthly collections ratio is 1 to 1. By understanding your financial positions, you'll now be better equipped to control and maximize them. Here's a simple and financially safe way to instantly increase your production: allow your A/R to monthly collections ratio to increase, for example to 1.2 to 1.

Begin by approaching every patient who has turned down treatment, solely on the basis of affordability, and offer an extended payment plan. (beyond whatever plan you previously offered). The extent of this increased acceptance and productivity can be directly dependent upon the degree of generosity your new payment policy provides.

Facilitating this patient payment program can be profitable, safe and easy, by adapting it one step at a time. Through regular DOM financial updates, you can maintain a close eye on any potential increase in bad debts, as you access payment and/or extended payment through carefully crafted patient plans. Financial statements can be produced for any time period, allowing you to oversee current collection ratios and of course, your readily available Income Statement.

As a safeguard, all payment plans that allow extended payments should require post-dated cheques or credit card authorizations. Whenever a patient chooses this option, he or she is recommended to write all of the payments, dated according to your agreement, prior to treatment. File the post-dated cheques in a special folder and keep track of them with your software.

There are many ways software produced reports can help you increase profits. The underlying principle is that what gets measured, gets done. The key is to know what to measure and having the tools to painlessly accomplish the task.

"Integrated Billing and Accounting" and a "Billing" system are separate products. A stand-alone Billing system can print Accounts Receivable ledgers and various revenue reports. An Integrated Billing and Accounting system however, provides a complete and meaningful set of financial statements. To ensure that the software you invest in has these full accounting abilities, find out if it can print cheques, a complete Balance Sheet, expense accounts, and a Statement of Income.

Recall -- Increase Revenue

The most amazing revenue generator for an existing business is hidden in the patient files. Recall is a gold mine. However, the manner in which you mine it determines how lucrative it will be.

Recall can be a labourious activity when using a manual paper system. So a computer system such as DOM is ideal. Yet as you know, recall management is different between

a dental office and a denturist office. So allow your recall philosophy to be determined by your needs and not simply dictated by your computer. Recall should have some standard searches, but the users should also be able to design and save their own recall searches. An additional benefit is to flag individual patients by using a recall date directly from the patient file. Therefore, maintenance of a flexible and customized recall system is key to maximizing business potential.

Contacting patients for your recall system can be done via phone calls, letters, and/or post cards, automatically generated and printed by your computer. A unique feature in DOM is the Contact Log. The contact log allows an office to keep track of all patient correspondence combined with the notation of important items discussed. The contact log is linked to the recall list so that office personnel can maintain efficiency and avoid calling a patient twice for the same purpose.

Scheduling

Scheduling patients is a matter of convenience and office/staff procedure. However, a computerized scheduler can present some advantages. When you schedule a first time patient directly into the computer, a new patient file is created and subsequently can be immediately printed onto all patient charts, exams, invoices and receipts. Staff schedules can also be quickly printed and posted each day. For offices with more than one computer networked together, a computerized schedule is particularly handy for inputting and viewing current group schedule information and may even be accessed from home.

Oral Exams, Partial Planning, Digital Imaging

In addition to scheduling, DOM software has other useful features. Many of these features can be treated as options dependant on the individual office. To fully benefit from the Oral Exam and Prosthesis planning features, it is ideal for offices to have a computer in each operatory networked to the main computer at the reception area. Having all patient information stored on the computer is useful, as the entire practice can then be backed-up and regularly stored, remotely off-site, to protect from disaster. As well, E-mailing partial planning and digital images to Dentists is becoming more common within practices.

Hold it, I Can't Type...

Good applications in most Windows environments actually require very little typing. Most of what you will need to input is selected with a click of the mouse or by what is called a "drop down menu". The "drop down menu" in DOM is equipped to remember previously input items, so that you do not need to retype anything. For example, if you want to specify that Bioform teeth were used to make a patient's Denture, then you could simply select Bioform from the "drop down menu".

Referrals -- Increase Revenue

Referrals are a very effective way to increase revenue is with referrals. So how does a computer help your business attain referrals? Think of a place of business that you prefer to be a patron of. The preference to do business there is probably based on a

relationship and/or a perception of value. And a computer can help you in both of these areas.

Attitude is by far the most important catalyst in developing a positive relationship. The objective is to make your patient feel important and satisfied. An ideal way to help accomplish these goals is to make personal notes regarding each visit.

For example, if Mr. Jones clearly enjoys talking about his granddaughter and her accomplishments on the piano, then it is a good idea for office staff to make personal notes about this. This way, when Mr. Jones returns the staff can “remember” his granddaughter’s name and even what grade of piano she is in. The ability to see personal information immediately on your computer is a very powerful way to help build patient loyalty and trust.

Perception of value is often about appearance and trust. Value does not necessarily mean a lower price. A sense of value is achieved when the entire office staff believes in the value of their service, genuinely care about the patients and effectively communicate this. But not all communication is verbal. Offices that access information quickly and present professional invoices and statements appear highly competent. And a perception of competence instills even greater trust. Achieving these goals will result in patients accepting more recommended treatment plans and increased referrals.

The Bottom Line

There are many ways software can help you become more profitable. However, none of these methods will do any good unless you use them and search for ways to reach your profit goal. If you are passionate about making great dentures, you will find ways to produce them. If you are passionate about relationships with people, you will secure a positive work environment. And if you are passionate about business, you will seek out means to become more profitable.

For more information about Denturist Office Manager (DOM) you can reach Dean Fenwick at 1-800-495-8771.