

How Software Automation Boosts Productivity at Your Dental Office



Patterson Dental's National Technology Advisor, Dan Easty, offers valuable tips on taking back your office time.

You know the list. Those things within your dental office that take entirely too much of your valuable time. Determining which patients are eligible from an insurance standpoint, for example. Or what about communicating with patients and reminding them of upcoming appointments? Even backing up your data each week can be time-consuming.

Here's the good news: Advances in software automation now make most of these labor-intensive tasks relatively pain-free. And, we're going to see more software enhancements in the future that will allow you to focus even more time on your patients.

How is software helping dental offices run more efficiently today? Generally speaking, automation helps things that are set in the background to run efficiently. Day-to-day tasks like organizing your morning huddle, for example. In this case, you could use automated reports to help identify opportunities with patients that will be seen that day or use information from those reports to celebrate patient care wins from earlier in the week. You could also automate tasks like insurance processing so your front desk staff can stay focused on the patient experience.

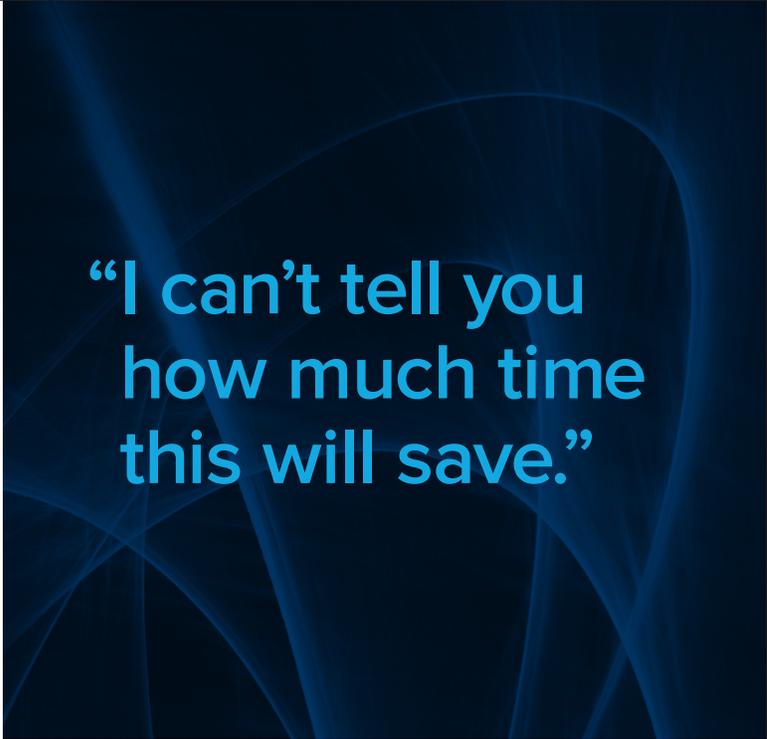


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One dental office I've been working with is beta testing automation with period processing in **Eaglesoft 21**, and it's already making a big difference. This office is using software automation to compile quarterly and year-end processing of all office financials. This office is also using a "silent installer," which essentially updates all computers "silently" to the newest version of Eaglesoft the moment it becomes available. When the office staff member realized this, he raved, "I have 13 computers and I can't tell you how much time this will save."



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But, specifically, what are the areas of your office where software automation can make the absolute biggest difference? Three come to mind:



1

BACKING UP YOUR PATIENT DATA

Historically, backing up data has been a gargantuan task. But for those who use software automation, like **DDS Rescue**, this now happens in the background without a single click. Thanks to software like this, not only can you back up your patient data with ease, you can also recover from a system crash in just 10 minutes – something that took hours to recover from in the past.

What's more, software automation now makes it possible to back up patient data not just to your servers, but also to the cloud. So, no matter what, your data is safe and sound. And, you didn't have to lift a finger to protect it.



2

COMMUNICATING WITH PATIENTS

Another time-consuming task for offices in the past, communicating with patients, can now be automated quite easily with tools like **Solutionreach** and **RevenueWell**. A couple of years ago, I remember working with one dental office that was using four to five cell phones to reach out to patients and remind them of upcoming appointments. I remember thinking “Oh my gosh, you really should be automating this process!”

Not only do these types of tools help you automate simple reminder emails and texts, they also allow patients to request appointments and make payments online, rate their experience after a recent visit, and fill out forms online as they prepare for their visit. All of which will help boost productivity – especially among front desk staff.



or visiting payer websites – many software tools allow you to check on eligibility right in the platform, saving you hours on the phone and on the web.

There are certainly other areas of running a dental office where software automation can help – these just happen to be the areas with the biggest potential for immediate impact. For example, practice analytics software like **Dental Intelligence** can help you analyze practice data, track progress toward business goals, and spot red flags. Essentially this kind of software “runs in the background” and sends automated reports right to your inbox each day so you can manage your office more efficiently. Dentists who have implemented this kind of automation have called it “life changing!”

With a significant portion of dental offices not automating simple tasks, there is still opportunity. And, for those who are automating, future software enhancements will most likely allow you to take your productivity and patient experience to a whole different level. Just think about how artificial intelligence will start to impact the insurance claims process down the road.

For now, automating simple tasks with software can truly help improve your office’s productivity. Whether it’s appointment reminders, managing the onerous claims process, or backing up your patient data, software automation can allow you to focus more time on the reason you got into dentistry in the first place: your patients. ●



3

MANAGING THE INSURANCE PROCESS

Whether it’s confirming eligibility or reviewing coverage levels for patients, insurance to-dos can take a long time. But software automation tools can help relieve that stress and can result in real bottom-line savings. For example, you can now submit claims electronically to payers, which can save your office \$0.88 per claim on average and reduce rejections and improve payment time from insurance companies. And forget about those long phone calls to insurance companies