

# WHY BE A MEMBER

of a DENTAL PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION?

MEMBER ARTICLE | BY MCKENZIE BERRY, MAADOM

With the number of responsibilities an office manager juggles on a daily basis, it is safe to assume that joining a professional member-based organization is fairly low on the priority list. It might even be hard to imagine that anyone would voluntarily sit through more meetings and activities after a full day of meetings at work. But the reality is that joining a professional organization will provide an invaluable wealth of knowledge, resources and opportunities that are otherwise missed.

Reasons to become part of a professional organization:

1. Professional Development
2. Networking Opportunities
3. Exclusive Online Resources
4. Conferences
5. Continuing Education

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the greatest benefits professionals can take advantage of in organizations is the opportunity to invest in their professional development.

Membership-based organizations provide their members with access to training, research materials and industry insights to help develop new skills for the purpose of advancement in a field. Dentistry requires professional development in order to renew certification or licensure. When joining an organization you are putting yourself on the cusp of emerging trends in your industry.

**MEMBER  
FEATURE**

PEER-TO-PEER ARTICLE

## NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Expanding your network organically can be a long process. Professional associations provide better networking opportunities with people who are specifically in your industry. Whether you are pursuing employment opportunities, connecting with other industry professionals or even looking for a mentor within a given profession, networking opportunities are invaluable. The advantage of having networking within a professional organization is the potential wealth of resources and insight they provide.

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The relationships built in a professional organization tend to be rich and diverse, which is often unavailable in the conventional work environment.

## EXCLUSIVE ONLINE RESOURCES

There's nothing more exclusive than the "members only" online resources and forums. A membership to a professional association typically provides exclusive access to journals, articles, webinars, infographics and message boards to add value to your professional growth and development. Leadership training and distinctions earned through professional organizations enrich leaders who go on to contribute to their professions in significant ways.

## CONFERENCES

Yearly events and conferences are a great way to get to know fellow members. Networking at events helps to grow contact lists and builds connections with other leaders in the industry. Members typically get priority access to events and webinars at special rates. Vendors are usually in attendance to promote their products and software. It is a great opportunity to learn about leading industry technology. Vendors usually offer member promotions at events that help offices save money on products. The more involved you are with an association, the more it will benefit your professional growth.

## EDUCATION

Many professional associations provide opportunities for their members to educate themselves on the best practices in their industry. Events and conferences are great opportunities for education, but some associations provide even more personal opportunities for self-education with workshops, seminars and online courses, with industry leaders who have years of experience.

The largest professional organization for dental office managers is the American Association of Dental Office Management (AADOM). Members of AADOM rise to the top of their profession through AGD/PACE accredited continuing education and networking through local chapter meetings, seminars and national conferences. AADOM offers three tiers of dental distinction that can be earned. The first level of distinction, Fellowship, requires a minimum of three years of dental practice management along with thirty-one hours of continuing education. A manager who meets the top tier of designation, Diplomate, has been actively involved in AADOM and has earned a minimum of 150 CE credits, completed required Dale Foundation training modules, published articles in dental publications, and participated in community service projects.

Investing in professional development builds confidence in the work being done, credibility

as new skill sets and certificates are earned, as well as support on multiple levels for managers to cope in this ever-changing world. Membership in a professional organization such as AADOM lifts one up, and who doesn't need a bit of help these days? ■



## MEET THE MEMBER

McKenzie Berry, MAADOM graduated from Ouachita Baptist University in 2015 with her bachelor of the arts degree in business management and marketing. After graduation she moved back to her hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma to work as the office manager for her step-dad's dental practice for over five years. During her time at the office she was fortunate enough to work with her two step-brothers who are dentists, her step-sister who is a hygienist and her mom who is the practice administrator. Recently, she moved to Oklahoma City to work for Catalyst Dental Allies as a practice performance coach for seven dental practices in the OKC Metro area. McKenzie is a member of the American Association of Dental Office Management, (AADOM). She received her Fellowship, (FAADOM) in 2018 and most recently received her Mastership, (MAADOM) designation at the 2022 Conference. In her spare time she loves to cook, travel, and spend time outside with her dog.