



THE 10 MOST COMMON MISTAKES MADE BY ORAL SURGEONS DURING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Abstract

Digital transformation is a complicated, comprehensive process that affects all aspects of an oral surgery office. To ensure the success of their digital initiatives, oral surgeons must understand how to identify and minimize common mistakes.

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1. Not understanding what it truly means to digitally transform an OMFS office

One of the biggest mistakes oral surgeons make is not having a complete understanding of what digital transformation entails, particularly what it requires and, above all, how and when to start.

Digital transformation of an oral surgery practice is very different from a digital workflow set up by an implant company.

The majority of oral surgeons have not been able to successfully digitally transform their offices because their main focus had been on purchasing and learning how to use digital equipment; There is no focus on truly integrating these technologies into their daily activities.

2. Not having clearly defined goals

No oral surgery practice should begin its digital transformation without having a clear, defined strategy. This strategy must include a timeline, employee roles during transformation, an analysis of current digital assets, and other relevant information. *Strategies must be detailed, yet flexible* enough to respond to new opportunities and considerations and to adapt and evolve throughout each phase of the digitization process.

3. Procrastinating and delaying plan execution

Digital strategies are ineffective if there is not a strict timeline in place. Many oral surgeons do not realize that excessive

planning and strategy revision will have the unintended consequence of delaying their goals. Within digital transformation, *the most important metric of success is strategy execution*, and progress must continually be made.

4. Rushing the digital process

Adherence to a strict strategy timeline should not mean rushing the process.

Digital transformation often inspires a sense of urgency, as products and equipment are constantly evolving. But failure to develop a comprehensive strategy may lead to wasted time, energy, and financial investment. There must be a balance between patience and progress.

5. Failing to acknowledge all relevant stakeholders

There are many oral surgeons who believe that development of a digital transformation strategy should be limited to the activities of their practice. In reality, *successful transformation involves and affects many different stakeholders*, including patients, referring dentists, implant companies, milling centers, dental labs, and freelance designers.

6. Buying technology that does not suit practice needs

Investing in the wrong technology is an expensive mistake. It is critical not to be distracted by the latest technologies or swayed by a vendor's sales pitch. Equipment selection significantly impacts practice operation, and cannot be based

on inadequate information. *Oral surgeons must use technology where it matters to drive efficiency and accelerate change.*

7. Failing to recruit necessary professionals

In a recent study, MIT revealed that an investment in technology is of equal worth to an investment in talent. Attempts to digitally transform a practice without the necessary professionals in place are more likely to fail. *Transformation is a lengthy, labor intensive process that requires involvement from dedicated and effective staff.* Oral surgeons must be prepared to add new members to their team, if necessary.

8. Inconsistent monitoring of the digital process

Digital transformation of an oral surgery office does not end with the blindly purchase of equipment. Successful transformation requires adherence to new, digital protocols by all relevant team members, as well as consistency across all digital processes. *To assess the success of implementation, systems must be developed to directly monitor staff compliance.* Efforts must also be made to monitor patient experiences and referral engagement among GPs, which will both improve following successful transformation. Red flags within any of these metrics may signal larger issues within the digital system, and must be addressed in a timely fashion.

9. Considering digitization as a cost, not as an investment

Digital transformation does not come for free, and requires heavy, front end financial investment. However, *efforts to reduce cost cannot be made at the expense of function.* Attempts to cut corners jeopardize the success of the digital transformation process, and will ultimately cost oral surgeons more in the end. Fulfillment of equipment and hiring needs represent short term costs that will yield long term revenue.

10. Imitating the digital transformation of competitors

Each practice is different, and oral surgeons cannot base their digital strategy on strategies employed in offices offering similar implant services. *The uniqueness of a business model is its most important competitive advantage,* and what works in one office may fail in another.

In today's technology-driven world, digital transformation represents an important opportunity for oral surgeons. Digitization is not without risks, but, if managed correctly, offers improved efficiency, higher employee and patient satisfaction, and a competitive advantage over other oral surgery practices.

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