



WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Abstract

The benefits of digital transformation in an oral surgery office depend on a number of factors. Before beginning the process of digitization, oral surgeons must understand these factors and determine if their practice is a candidate for digital solutions.

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Who will benefit from digital transformation?

Digital transformation offers oral surgeons numerous potential benefits, including increased revenue, improved operational efficiency, less dependence on the physical labor, and higher patient satisfaction. But not all practices will experience these benefits equally, and not all practices are ideal candidates for digital transformation. Before embarking down the highway to digital integration, surgeons must understand the factors that influence the relative success of digital initiatives.

Who is an Ideal Candidate?

Ideal candidates for digital transformation are practices that have the necessary motivation and resources to invest in digital technology. These practices often share a number of characteristics:

1. **They have the necessary financial commitment to invest in high quality software and equipment.**

Digital transformation typically requires the incorporation of several new technological elements at once, which can all boast a sizable price tag. It is important to consider that technology is constantly evolving, and software and hardware will need to be updated and replaced over time. Furthermore, time dedicated to transformation is time that cannot be spent performing other duties (e.g., seeing patients). In other words, practices will experience short term

losses before long term increases in revenue.

2. **They are located in a highly competitive implant market.**

Digital transformation allows surgeons to differentiate themselves from other clinicians, particularly from the often less expensive GP. Therefore, practices most likely to benefit from digital investments are those interested in expanding their market share despite rising levels of competition. Practices not facing competition from other clinicians (e.g., practices in rural, low density areas) are more likely to find that the short term financial costs of transformation are greater than the potential long-term increase in revenue.

3. **They have a substantial, referral-based implant service that constitutes a significant portion of practice revenue.**

With the development of new planning software, implant surgery has become increasingly accessible to GPs, and is being performed by non-specialists at a much higher rate than in the 1990s and early 2000s. Digital transformation offers oral surgeons a unique opportunity to disincentivize GPs in their network to perform surgery, thereby simultaneously expanding their referral base and reducing competition. A sufficient client base also provides greater opportunity for expansion.

Who will benefit from digital transformation?

4. They have easy access to technology and human capital.

Practices pursuing digital transformation must have access to equipment vendors. To mitigate the likelihood of technical mishaps, they should also have access to the manufacturer's technical support staff. Additionally, successful digital transformation relies on dedicated staff, and will likely require hiring one or more technically skilled team members. Practices located in or near urban centers are more likely to have a larger, more diverse pool of applicants, and are, therefore, more likely to successfully fill the position in a timely manner.

5. They are motivated to pursue digital solutions.

As digital technology has become more user-friendly, the knowledge barrier to digital transformation has been lowered. The issue is no longer how to use technology, but how to leverage it to optimize business operations and output. In order for a practice to capitalize on digital investments, the surgeon and their staff must understand the benefits of technology and be motivated to incorporate it into their daily operations.

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