

Embrace the cloud and inherit the Earth

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The only global constant is change.

As far as technology platforms are concerned, something more efficient is guaranteed to change the status quo, and generally speaking, Windows was proving to be much more flexible than DOS — and certainly far more appealing.

Let us admit that DOS had a perception problem when placed next to Windows. What patient wants to trust their oral health to a doctor who is holding on to yesterday's technology? DOS quickly became the poster child for everything outdated, from 8-track tapes to laser disk players. Every dental practice was chucking their green screen CRTs and paper appointment books for monster client-server setups. And the DOS revolution ended.

But that's not the end of the story. (Actually there is no end to this story.)

As far as technology platforms are concerned, something more efficient is always guaranteed to change the status quo. For example, Windows, with its graphical appeal and flexibility, replaced DOS as the technology standard in the early 1990s.

Change is constant and change is afoot. At this very moment, hundreds of doctors are in the process of chucking their client-server setups and moving to the cloud.

Indeed, so far this year, thousands of doctors have already moved to the cloud. And thousands moved to the cloud last year.

And, according to some polls, tens of thousands will move to the cloud in the next two years. A new cycle of change is whirling: The cloud has replaced servers and client-server software as the technology standard.

So what's in your practice?

For many doctors across the country, they are using the cloud every day to manage wonderful, progressive practices. Their practices are not chained to a server. Rather, they chucked their space-hogging servers that were sitting in broom closets or under desks to enjoy the natural benefits of the cloud.

What are the natural benefits of the cloud?

1. *Always the latest and greatest.* Are you ever required by Amazon to install an upgrade so you can use the latest shopping features? Nope. When you use a cloud-based management system to manage your practice, all of the latest features are always at your fingertips.

2. *Anywhere, anytime availability.* You can shop Amazon any time of the day from anywhere. All you need is an Internet connection. Cloud-based dental software, such as Curve Dental, provides access to patient information all the time. No third-party, bolt-on communication software is required.

There's a lifestyle and work-style quality here, too. The cloud lets you work how, when and where you want to work. You can swap time in the office for time with the kids, as an example, choosing to review



patient charts and notes at home after bedtime.

3. *Your data always backed up.* If you're constantly worried about backups, don't. The specifics are different with every vendor that provides cloud-based dental software; however, with Curve Dental, your data is backed up to multiple servers in multiple locations with every keystroke. Even if your practice burns, floods, is crushed or robbed, your data is preserved up to the last change in data.

4. *Better HIPAA compliance.* A server in your practice is a magnet for potential HIPAA violations. Nineteen different security rules dictate everything about that server, such as access policies, disposal and reuse of backup media, and requirements for emergency availability.

5. *Reduced technology footprint.* It's simple: Get rid of your server and you get rid of the hassles that come with it, such as the expense, maintenance, backup, upgrades, wiring, space, clutter, etc. Cloud-based dental software requires a basic computer, a browser and Internet access. That's it! Keeping it simple reduces IT and hardware costs.

The key to solid cloud-based dental software is the stuff you can't see, commonly referred to as the infrastructure, the systems required to consistently and quickly deliver the software to your computer. Murphy's Law states that if something can go wrong, it will go wrong.

An occasional failure is part of learning and improving. Curve Dental, for example, has had more than 11 years of cloud development experience. Certainly, in the beginning, the company dropped a few passes. But after 11 years, you should expect any company to provide dependable service. Those with less experience are going to drop more passes.

Naysayers are a dime a dozen.

The cloud is the current technology standard, and it's changing the dental profession — the way you shop for dental supplies, communicate with your patients, collaborate with colleagues, earn C.E. credits and more. Amazon's foray into the dental profession and gain of market share is another example of how the cloud is changing dentistry.

Eric Hoffer, one of America's greatest philosophers and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, said, "In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

To this point, Darwin said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."

Whether you like it or not the cloud is the current technology standard.

What's in your practice?_

(Photo/Provided by Curve Dental)