



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I can't believe that the summer is almost over. I hope you are enjoying yours!

**Automated Appointment Confirmations.** A number of my clients are using web based systems to send patients e-mail and text message reminders of their up-coming dental appointment instead of calling. These include Smile Reminder, Demand Force, and Televox. This service is a great time saver and works well in all of my clients.

There have been 2 issues with this service:

- The first time I implemented it, I under-estimated the time it took to gather e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers so the client paid for the service for 4 months before we had enough information to turn on the service. I recommend starting to collect cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses from all your patients now or plan to start collecting this information at least 6 months before activating such a service.
- Some patients did not like that they were being charged 10 cents to receive a text message on their cell phone. My clients have developed good verbal skills to respond well to that concern.

### **Clean up your hard drive.**

If your computer is running slow, it may be because it's got stuff cluttered around the hard drive in such a way that it's having to run in circles to do what it needs to do.

There are 5 things you should do every 6 - 12 months on your computers:

- empty the windows temp folder
- clear the browser disk cache
- empty the recycle bin
- run a check disk
- defragment the hard drive

If you want to do this yourself, see <http://www.dcsidental.com/cleanhd.html> for more detailed instructions

### **Computer Use Policy**

Having an effective, realistic, enforceable computer usage policy is a dilemma for many of my clients. On one hand, you want to be the nice guy and let your staff use the computers and access the Internet. And you know they will, some more than others. But on the other hand, if you get infected by a virus or spyware it will affect your productivity and it could be expensive to remove the infection.

Do your employees know what they can and can't do? Here's one of my client's policy statement from their employee manual written by Larry Levy, employee relations and management consultant, (415) 892-1497:

#### **Use of Computers**

The Practice has invested substantial assets in order to provide employees access to computers to perform the responsibilities of their jobs. Although many employees are provided computers or access to computers for job-related purposes, all Staff members should fully understand that the computers, as well as information temporarily or permanently stored or transmitted with the aid of computers, remain the sole

and exclusive property of the Doctor and is subject to access, copying, and use by the Doctor in any manner it deems appropriate. Staff Members should not assume any privacy right or interest in any information that is temporarily or permanently stored on the computer, nor should employees anticipate receiving a proprietary interest in any such information.

The use of the computers is to be limited exclusively to the business of the Practice with the exception that Staff Members may access the Internet during their lunch period and before or after business hours. Due to the increased risk and potential damage caused by computer viruses, accessing, receiving or sending personal e-mail (including, but not limited to Yahoo, Hotmail and AOL) is strictly forbidden at all times.

Confidential and proprietary information of the Practice is accessible on or from the computers. Staff Members are expected to take all steps necessary to protect the Practice's and patient's proprietary and confidential interests in such information and not to allow or cause the dissemination or improper use, access, or exploitation of such information.

In addition, Staff Members should not add or load any software to a computer without the proper approval of the Doctor nor should they use a computer for any improper or unauthorized purpose. Inappropriate



purposes include, without limitation, downloading proprietary information of others, engaging in inappropriate disclosures or defamatory communications, or engaging in or facilitating competitive activities or activities that are tortuous because they violate or may tend to violate the rights of third parties, the Practice, or co-workers.

Staff Members should not allow or facilitate access to computers of the Practice by outside individuals or unauthorized individuals. In addition, no data stored on a computer of the Practice may be removed, downloaded or transferred without the approval of the Doctor. Any violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and possibly including immediate termination.

### **Spring Cleaning**

Last month I suggested that you clean the inside of your computers. A client sent this picture. I hope yours was not this bad.

### **Circuit breakers wipe out the Web**

This was the headline of the July 26th Business section of the SF Chronicle. The author said that some of the web's hottest destinations - Craigslist, Yelp, Second Life and RedEnvelope, were down for up to 11 hours on Tuesday. She quotes a Mr. Gordon of Technorati "If (we're) that vulnerable to a power outage, what if something really catastrophic happened, like an earthquake." This is another wake up call for all of us. Do you have a business continuity plan? Have you reviewed it in the past 12 months? What would you do if there was a fire, flood, theft or earthquake at your office?

If you need any help with the computers or technology in your dental office, please call us.

Charlie Kleiman

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Helping premier dentists use technology to achieve excellence.

Dental Computer Systems Integration  
492 Blackstone Dr.  
San Rafael, CA 94903-1302

(415) 491-1930 Voice  
(415) 491-1937 Fax  
(415) 531-0444 Cell / pager

Web site: [www.dcsiDental.com](http://www.dcsiDental.com)