

# Keys to a Successful Multiple Location Practice

Optimize Efficiency and Economies of Scale  
Build Loyal, Happy Staff • Maximize Growth and Profits

***DENTRIX*ENTERPRISE™**



## About the Author

**Dr. David Ting** started practicing general and cosmetic dentistry in Las Vegas in 2000. He designed, built and established Boston Dental Group, now BDG Dental Services, in 2002. As of 2016, there were 23 BDG Dental Services locations in Nevada, California and Arizona, with a team of 40 dentists and 250 employees. With a mission to “create a better life for all,” Dr. Ting has added tremendous value in his community by completely changing patients’ impressions about dentists, touching the lives of staff, creating a life-changing career path for doctors and offering hope again for people in need.

Dr. Ting appreciates industry mentors like Henry Schein that have helped his organization and is happy to pay it forward. Readers can reach him with comments or questions at [davidtingdmd@bdgdentalservices.com](mailto:davidtingdmd@bdgdentalservices.com).

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# To Centralize...or Not to Centralize?

## Weigh the Risks and Benefits

What are the benefits of centralization versus decentralization for a multilocation dental practice? It can seem like an eternal debate. Should we centralize? When? How? Which aspects—phone calls, insurance billing and follow-up, claim posting or other elements?

I've been through these same confusing questions as my practice, BDG Dental Services, expanded. A lot of growing pains led to our decision to centralize. Do any of these challenges sound familiar to you?

- Competitive threats in a saturated market
- Separate billing databases, duplicate records and claims
- Inefficiency and duplicated efforts among offices

- Wasted money through inconsistencies
- Multiple hardware/software platforms to maintain
- Constant staff turnover and training
- No standards for hiring, marketing or even running each office

If you relate, you may be in the same position we were years ago. In this eBook, I'll share with you the lessons I've gained over the years that have enabled us to grow BDG Dental Services from one location to 23. Keep reading to learn how you too can optimize efficiency and economies of scale in your multisite practice, build loyal staff who are passionate about their jobs and maximize growth and profits.

# Expand Your Vision

## Maximize Efficiencies & Profits



We may be dentists by trade, but we are also entrepreneurs and business owners. Since we are driven by success, for many of us, one profitable practice leads to two, three and more.

When I started practicing in 2000, it was easy to expand locations during a shortage of dentists. But as dentists moved in, increasing competition forced prices down. I learned the hard way that my paradigms needed to change. I had to change my viewpoint from “me” to “we.” In today’s competitive climate, it’s not enough to cut costs. And you can’t increase revenue by just finding more patients, because even when patient flow increases and production goes up, collection doesn’t necessarily increase proportionally to deliver net revenue. In my search for answers, I realized that to be profitable, you must maximize efficiency.

I admire the clinicians who are able to hold everything together while running multiple individual, decentralized clinics. I did it myself with my first several locations, multitasking to exhaustion. Are you doing “all the right things” and still not increasing revenue? You may relate to this definition of insanity: Doing the same thing repeatedly and expecting different results!

There is a tipping point for each of us where it is not possible to continue running this patched-together solution, where we reach the end of our capacity to

### Answer the Question

Every practice is different, but I’ve found that once an organization reaches three or more locations, most dentists struggle to stay on top of all of the details and unique needs of their different offices. Which of these sound like your practice?

Decentralized organization:

- Constant training and education to compensate for high staff turnover
- Account aging and collection problems
- A large human capital expense, with additional people (usually cheap labor) needed to do administrative tasks

Centralized organization:

- A practice that focuses on patient care and customer service
- Employees who are experts at their jobs and can do what they are passionate about
- Good re-care rates
- High production
- Low staff turnover

Are each of your offices doing their own thing? Have you reached a tipping point where you can’t manage it all? It may be time to centralize!

# Expand Your Vision

## Maximize Efficiencies & Profits

manage things on our own. When I hit my tipping point, I had to expand my vision. I realized:

***Centralization is the key to maximizing profits as you continue to grow your practice.***

I know from experience that the idea of centralization can be an intimidating step into the unknown, but don't be afraid to consider what may feel like the impossible. Whenever you try something new, there will inevitably be mistakes, but those are also tremendous learning opportunities.

Start by asking lots of questions as you mine your network of resources. One helpful

resource for us was the Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO). Our software vendor, Henry Schein, also gave invaluable support and counsel on how to improve operations.

Look for places in your organization where you can streamline and standardize to reduce inefficiency and duplication. As you find answers for your specific needs, create an action plan that will become your map for the future. Doing these simple things will fulfill your two biggest goals: increasing revenue and providing better patient care from everyone in your organization. It's time to expand your vision as you step forward into your new paradigm.

# Push Beyond Your Tipping Point

## Embrace the Paradigm Shift



As your practice expands to a few locations, you may hit a tipping point where you need to do things differently. Have you noticed that if you focus on patient care, you aren't able to give proper attention to the administrative or business side of the practice (or vice versa)? What works so well about centralizing is that it enables you to run all of these aspects successfully at the same time.

Take a step back and objectively look at the way you've been doing things. Good and bad practices alike become habitual at each office, and it can be hard to recognize some of those habits, let alone switch to new concepts or ideas. But getting rid of bad practices and duplicating successes is key to growth and higher revenue.

### ***Creating consistency enables higher efficiencies***

At about three offices, our organization realized that we were working harder and harder while getting less done. Every person was expected to be an expert in multiple areas. There were too many tasks on each person's plate. You may hire someone for the front desk because she's good with the public, but then she ends up also having to handle claims and billing—not her areas of expertise. As she is no longer doing what she does best, her

## **Create Consistency**

Have you created consistent standards, policies and procedures across all of your practices? **If not, you are losing money.** Creating consistencies is a great place to start recovering revenue, since each office often has its own equipment, software, procedures and hiring practices.

Examine each of your offices to seek out best practices, then look for ways to copy them in other offices. As you create best practices with specific, trackable tasks, you can hire the right people to do them. Centralizing elements of the organization then takes these good things you're doing a level deeper.

Here's an example: How often do you want claims to be thinned out? Set a policy, such as every night. Expect office managers to be consistent, and specify a set way and time to report to you so you can see a snapshot of all locations at once. One by one, incorporate best practices like these to improve efficiency across all of your locations and make your business more successful.

# Push Beyond Your Tipping Point

## Embrace the Paradigm Shift

work slows down all around. Yet hiring someone else to pick up the slack can cause more chaos and stoppage. Hiring more people doesn't necessarily make you more efficient. There is a better way. When you break tasks down, you can hire people with the right skills for the right jobs.

A second tipping point for us came at 10 offices, when we realized that we could attain even greater efficiency by creating a corporate team. By creating a standard system for centralized hiring, you achieve an even greater degree of power to hire the right people. Use a personality screening, such as DiSC, to identify someone's skills and aptitudes so you never again hire based on a gut feeling. As you change your mindset about hiring, your need for cheap, temporary labor and the constant training that comes with turnover from unhappy, overwhelmed employees will dramatically decrease.

Changing the structure of the organization means a whole new way of thinking. It's a difficult decision because it represents a significant

investment. Take the long view: Hiring a human resource manager or marketing person doesn't generate immediate revenue, but it will pay off as it creates a better system for a large, growing organization.

You'll create the greatest overall organizational efficiency when each of your offices runs consistently. This includes standardizing your software, reporting and records, which can be a nightmare even for a single provider. Although this was a big concern for our organization, we got through it by relying on our resources. We were fortunate to have a strong partner in Henry Schein Dentrax Enterprise, who helped us through every step of the transition to make it go as smoothly as possible.

Expect some turbulence, but always keep your goals in mind as you move to a new business model, and use your resources to help you make the transition. Remember that you're making an investment in a better, more efficient way of doing things that will pay off in the long run.



# Centralize Your Organization

## Gain Critical Consistencies



As we began to centralize operations, we started small: a few people in a corporate office, a bookkeeper in one office, a regional manager in another. It was a good start, but we needed even more consistency.

### ***Consistency is the KEY ELEMENT for growth.***

Although initially centralization is costly, if you view it as a long-term investment, you won't panic if it doesn't generate immediate results. For instance, one year you may create a standardized software and voice IP system. That year your revenue may not be as high as the year before. However, your investment in infrastructure will increase efficiency by creating consistency between practices, and that efficiency is exactly what you need for long-term success. Your organization will be more successful over time if you make decisions following your long-term vision instead of constantly cobbling together a patchwork solution in an effort to cut costs.

One thing that has tremendously benefited our organization is to do employee training at 30, 60 and 90 days after hiring. It's true that training and creating a positive work environment may not generate immediate results on your balance sheet. But like a financial investment, in the long run, your investment in your people will pay big dividends. Previously, we were hoping to hire the right people. Now, we know

### ***Understand the Big Picture***

How do you track efficiencies to get a truly accurate representation of production?

Imagine you are a restaurant owner who needs to understand how to get the most value for purchased ingredients. Is everything just categorized as "food?" Or have you broken it down into what you spent on vegetables, spices, poultry and meat?

Without subcategories, you can't know exactly which foods to buy that will generate the most revenue. Is it the vegetarian dishes, the meat or the seafood? Once you find out, you can duplicate what's working, which will make shopping and cooking more productive as well as increase the restaurant's revenue.

The way to know what's happening in your organization is to split up tasks, then hire people with the best skillsets for those tasks. Now it's easy to track efficiencies. That's a secret for success whether you are a dentist or a restaurant owner!

# Centralize Your Organization

## Gain Critical Consistencies

that we can create the right employee out of anyone who has the right attitude by training them and then letting them do what they do best.

Cultivating a consistent environment of education and company culture is key. Your business will be most successful when you build an organization where people are passionate about their jobs. I recommend creating personal growth and leadership within employees with programs by Dale Carnegie or John Maxwell. Our organization even sponsors a sports league so employees can practice hands-on leadership

and teamwork skills while they also cement relationships by having fun together.

Create your vision of an organization where employees love their jobs and are continually improving through a centralized education department that (or dedicated person who) reinforces your intentional culture. When your primary business is growing people instead of running a dental practice, you'll end up with a thriving organization filled with productive, efficient employees who will naturally give great patient care at every level of the organization.

# Lay the Right Foundation

## Choose a Long-Term Partner for Success



In addition to consistency, reliable, trusted enterprise software is the foundation for a successful centralized organization. We chose Dentrix Enterprise as the software solution for our organization and were fortunate to have a great relationship with our Henry Schein representatives. They went above and beyond to teach our in-house coach, and Support also helped our IT get set up. Laying the right foundation with a good vendor partner will allow you to expand seamlessly with both acquisitions and partner offices.

Is your software platform the same at different locations? If not, you can count on trouble, because your decision-making and analysis will always be behind and response time too slow. It's important to standardize so that you have a complete dashboard that shows what's really happening across all locations. The right software is key to delivering the efficiency you need.

Of course, this is a big investment. Don't be tempted by a start-up just because it looks like a good deal. It's about more than the software: You need a long-term relationship. Look for a company that you can count on to be here in 10 or 20 years. Find out if they are willing to reinvest in the software to make continual improvements. Carefully examine the benefits you'll receive for the cost. The best investment now in the

### *Invest Smart*

Dentrix Enterprise offers powerful features such as

- Centralized scheduling, billing, collections, continuing care appointments, accounting and insurance processing
- Single patient and provider record
- A scalable solution that fits as you grow
- Complete reporting for all locations
- Client-server model that gives complete ownership of the system and data from start to finish
- Hosted solution for thin-client access across multiple locations through cloud access
- Mineable crystal report database, allowing organizations to write their own reports and pull data for any field
- Integrated electronic services for billing and claims
- Integrated third-party applications from trusted partners
- EHR Incentive Program Certified to enable eligible providers to attest for funding through meaningful use
- Customization available through professional services requests

Dentrix Enterprise is the preferred software of large organizations for over two decades.

# Lay the Right Foundation

## Choose a Long-Term Partner for Success

right software will work best in the long run to create a lucrative business.

Dentrix Enterprise has given our organization the tools we need to make running a complex operation completely within our reach. It's important to us that they care about our opinions and continue to release updates in response to our feedback.

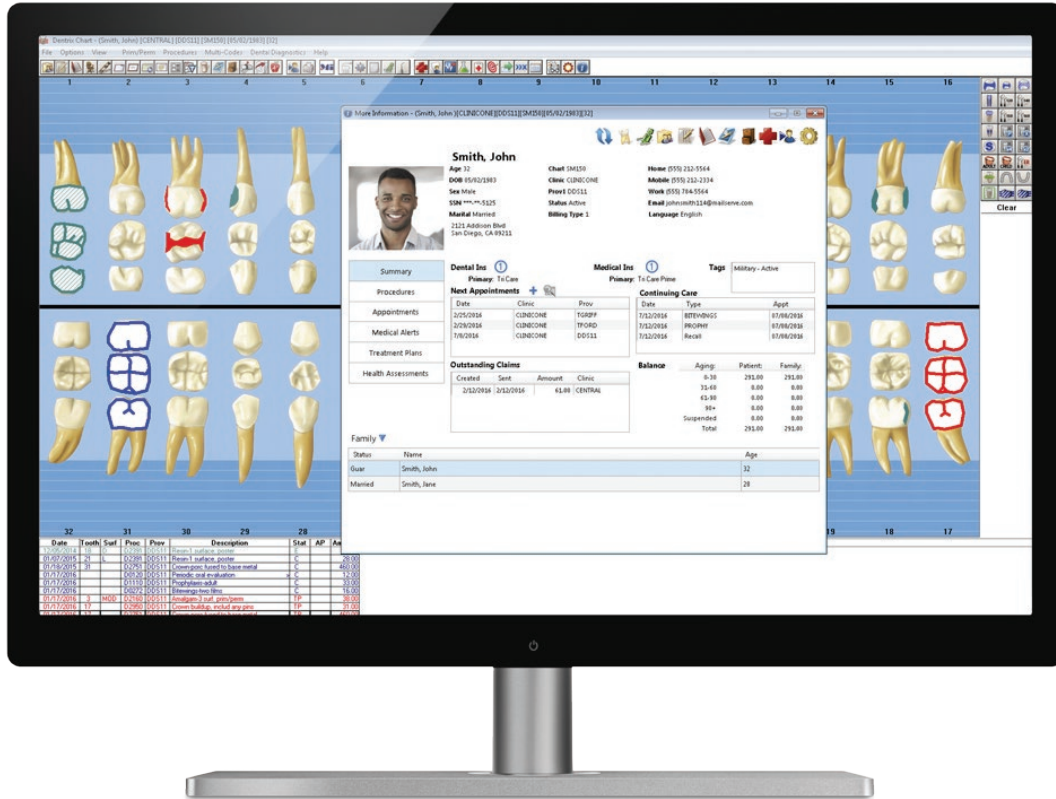
As our organization is now expanding overseas, having this strong foundation is more important than ever. Set your foundation, then realize your dream business by

- Duplicating successes within your organization to create greater efficiencies.

- Centralizing functions or operations to maximize economies of scale.
- Standardizing wherever possible.
- Building your team and leadership from within.
- Creating an organization where patients receive the best care at every level from loyal employees who do what they do best and are passionate about their jobs.

By focusing on these elements, your organization will maximize growth and profits as your vision becomes true.

# Make Complexity Comfortable



Growing practices like BDG Dental Services need robust practice management software. Henry Schein Dentrix Enterprise is the industry-leading solution for large-group and multisite dental practices, tackling complex issues of centralizing and streamlining data with ease. Since the 1990s, Dentrix Enterprise has been the go-to software solution for large organizations like multilocation dental group practices, hospitals, correctional facilities, educational and government institutions, and community and federally qualified health centers.

Dentrix Enterprise started with a vision of a completely paperless office. That early pioneering work, along with vast experience over the years, continues to pave the way for

further innovative tools that boost practice productivity and improve overall efficiency. Henry Schein has made substantial investments in establishing the finest technical services in the profession, which enables Dentrix Enterprise to develop the highest quality products.

Integrating top-notch support, award-winning clinical tools and leading dental equipment, and giving you the benefits of economies of scale, Dentrix Enterprise helps you succeed now and as you grow so you can maximize efficiency and profitability. Call 855.589.8809 today to find out how Dentrix Enterprise can help you manage your enterprise organization and achieve your financial goals.





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