



Is Your IT Provider a Partner or a Pain?

Your IT provider can be integral to your building a successful practice—
or just someone that's always trying to sell you equipment you don't need.

arevtech

Managing Technology | Enabling Success

MISTAKE #7

Dealing with vendors that sell you equipment you don't need.

Is Your IT Provider a Partner or a Pain?

Your IT provider can be integral to your building a successful practice—or just someone that’s always trying to sell you equipment you don’t need.

In his excellent Dental Economics article that describes key steps to building a successful practice, Dr. Priya D. Kothari, DMD identifies these top four success factors:

- ✔ **1. Professionalism:** Adhering to the special conventions, mannerisms, and forms of politeness that a business should practice and project to its customers.
- ✔ **2. Patient care:** Always maintaining the “customer comes first” attitude.
- ✔ **3. People management:** Making sure everyone is motivated to perform to the best of his or her abilities and to play as effective team members.
- ✔ **4. Product integrity:** Ensuring your services are delivered using tools, technology, processes, and people that are all aligned to maximize patient satisfaction.¹



Is your IT provider helping you succeed?



Sticking with obsolete IT infrastructure comes with real costs. Does your current IT provider help you achieve these key success factors? Or have they become a distraction—consistently trying to sell you equipment that doesn't align with your goals, or racking up costs for services you're not even sure are making a difference?

It's vital that your IT provider understands your business strategies and makes measurable contributions towards your goals. Let's review these four key success factors for dental practices and examine how your IT provider should be supporting each.

1. Professionalism

An IT partner that truly understands your business, its people, and processes will help you build an information infrastructure that helps your staff manage patient information with strict privacy and discretion. A reliable information system and network that allows secure, accurate, and timely access to patient records, invoices, appointment schedules and other key information helps your staff present a more professional, responsive demeanor to your patients.

2. Patient care

The quality of your patient care is vital to the success of your practice; it's job number one. You already make huge investments in the right dental technology and materials to enhance patient care. But those investments can be undermined by a weak IT infrastructure or one that is poorly monitored and managed. The most innovative dental equipment doesn't matter to a patient whose appointment was accidentally lost or had to be postponed due to an issue with your office system. Even worse, imagine having to notify all your patients that their health records may have been breached by a hacker. Your IT partner should understand how to regularly assess your IT environment and changing needs, to continuously maximize patient care.

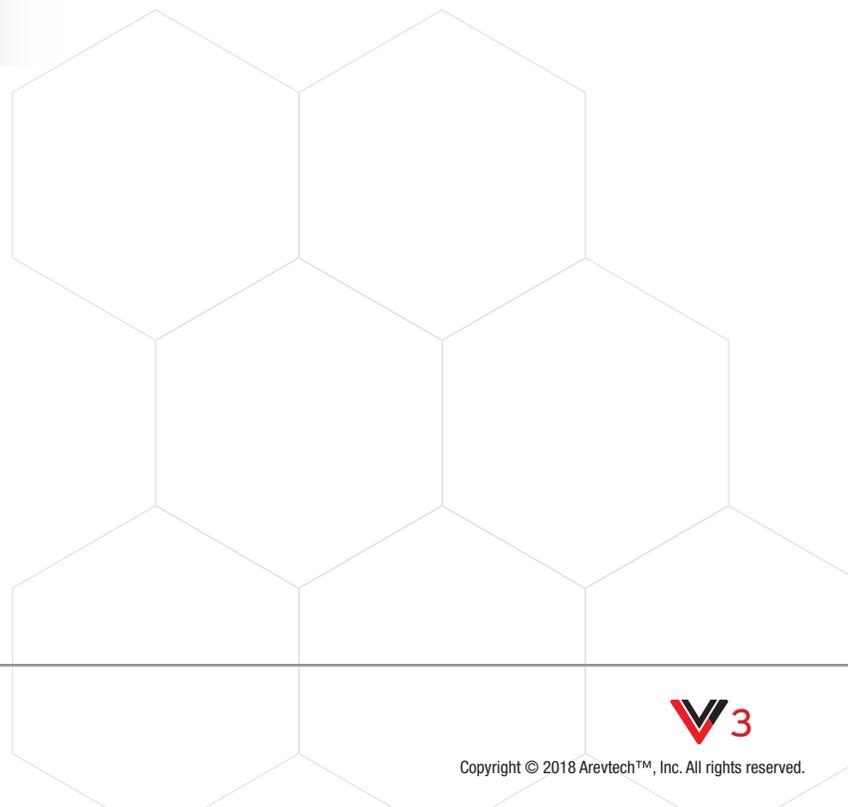
Is your IT provider helping you succeed? (cont.)

3. People management

Teamwork is critical to your practice's success. Your IT partner should be helping you leverage the latest technology to foster collaboration, timely and secure communications, and remote or mobile access. Be sure your IT partner is truly service-focused in their business model – and takes the time to get to know your people and your processes.

4. Product integrity

Your products are your patient care services. Your patients need to know that your services are supported by the latest technologies and equipment. And they need to know that their information is safe and protected from security breaches, hackers, malware, viruses, and other cyber threats. So your IT partner needs to be focused on supporting the integrity, reliability, and quality of your services.



Is your IT provider truly a services company?

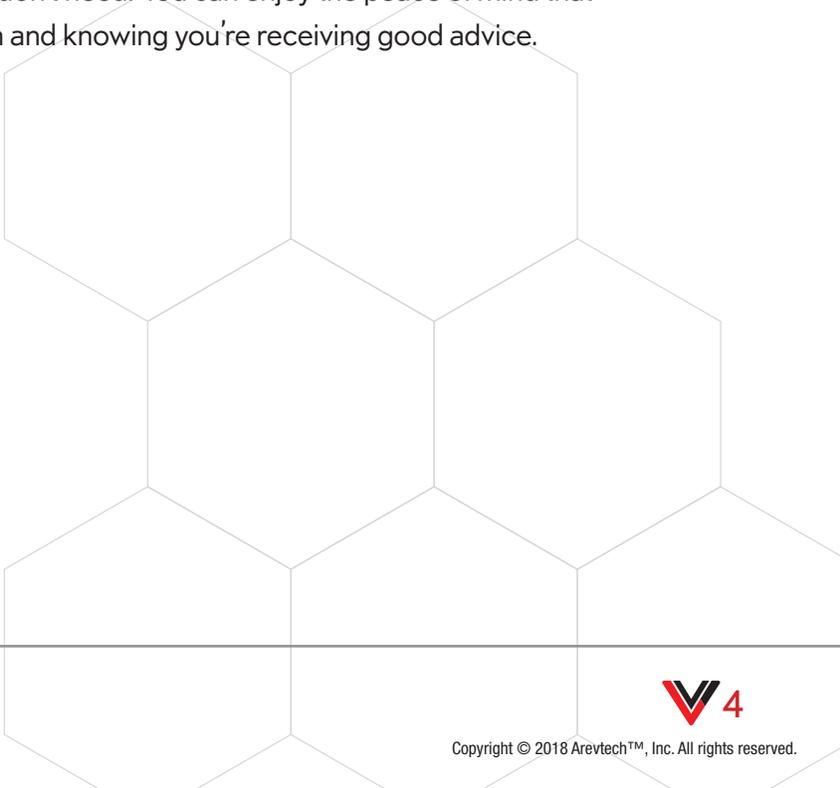
Many IT services companies are also resellers for a wide range of hardware, software, networking, and other third-party products. Some even provide dental supplies and equipment, dental software, and related services. There's nothing inherently wrong with that, if they're truly looking out for your best interests and not simply their profit margins.

But in many cases, the resale of third-party products is a major component of their business model and profit margins. They need that revenue stream, and that means they have strong incentives to keep finding opportunities to sell products to you.

Find an IT partner that's focused on service

A good IT partner is service focused. While they may occasionally sell products or software, it's not their primary goal or something they rely on for their success. They are a service business with the expertise to recommend the right technologies and products you need to run a more productive, secure, and compliant practice.

A service-focused IT partner simply wants to make sure you have the right products, so they can deliver a consistent, supportable IT environment that adheres to important standards and best practices. With your IT provider focused on top-quality service, you don't have to worry about their advising you to buy products you don't need. You can enjoy the peace of mind that comes with trusting them and knowing you're receiving good advice.



Making the right purchase decisions

“Companies waste money on technology at the same time that they reap benefits from it. Sometimes these wasted dollars come in the form of unnecessary software and hardware purchases.... However, technology waste also begins at the strategic level—when projects (and the solutions for them) are defined without proper vetting.”³

—Mary E. Shacklett, President, Transworld Data

The Business Development Bank of Canada offers some excellent tips to their small and mid-size business customers on making the right equipment purchases.² Their first two tips are:

Assess your business reality

You need to first understand your objectives and whether an investment in new equipment or software will help you achieve them. Do your objectives require an IT purchase? Could you, instead, upgrade your current equipment or software to achieve most, if not all, of the same objectives?

Get an external point of view

If you're making a significant purchase, it's worth finding a trusted external consultant to help you assess your needs and ensure you're making the best decision. You'll want to look at various factors (capacity, usage, current resources, technical expertise, etc.), perform a cost-benefit analysis, and understand your total cost of ownership (TCO).

How to find a partner you can trust



Choosing an IT services company to help you with purchase decisions is important business. You have to be able to trust your IT partner's advice. In addition to making sure they're a service-focused business that isn't out to sell you equipment you don't need, there are many questions you can ask in your search for the right IT partner:

- ✔ Do they understand your business, your goals, your people, and your processes? Do they have deep IT experience in dental practices? (They should take the time to get to know your specific practice, your team, and how you're organized.)
- ✔ Do they have strong knowledge of the wide range of information technologies that dental practices need to maintain a productive, efficient, secure operation?
- ✔ Do they understand the HIPAA and PCI-DSS regulations and policies you need to comply with?
- ✔ Do they have proven experience in helping dental practices protect patient records and other information from hackers, malware, viruses, phishing, and other threats?
- ✔ Do they understand technologies designed to support remote or mobile employees?

These are just some of the questions you need to ask yourself to ensure you've got a trusted IT partner that can help you make smart purchase decisions.

Looking for an IT partner you can trust? Look to Arevtech.

At Arevtech, we have years of experience delivering managed IT services that help dental practices like yours build and maintain an IT infrastructure that boosts uptime, defends against security threats and data breaches, and helps protect patient data while ensuring compliance (and audit readiness) with regulations such as HIPAA and PCI-DSS.

We perform regular security assessments of your IT systems as part of our Regulatory Compliance Services. Our primary goal is to help you build a successful, healthy practice and ensure that it's truly compliant, safe, secure, and protected from data breaches and cyber threats.

Peace of mind, and more

In addition to safeguarding your practice and ensuring regulatory compliance, we offer 24/7 network monitoring. That means we're always on the job, keeping your critical systems and network up and running, securing your vital data, and addressing IT issues ahead of time—before they become serious problems for your practice. It also means you enjoy the peace of mind that comes with doing all you can to maintain good dental practice health and avoid painful and costly IT crises.

arevtech

Managing Technology | Enabling Success

Contact Us Today

Contact Arevtech today to learn more about how we can give you peace of mind around your IT, and minimize the distractions that keep you from focusing on patient care. Arevtech is ready to help.

714.256.1500 Talk to one of our Dental Practice IT experts,
or visit us at www.arevtech.com/Dental

NOTES:

[1] "Seven Steps to Building a Successful Practice," Priya D. Kothari, DMD, as published by Dental Economics, October 1999
<http://www.dentaleconomics.com/articles/print/volume-89/issue-10/departments/viewpoint/seven-steps-to-building-a-successful-practice.html>
(Accessed on 4/19/2018)

[2] "9 Tips for Making the Right Equipment Purchase," Business Development Bank of Canada, <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/money-finance/get-financing/pages/equipment-purchasing-9-tips-business-owners.aspx>
(Accessed on 4/20/18)

[3] "Not vetting your tech investments? You're setting fire to money." Mary E. Shacklett, Tech Pro Research, Sept. 2016
<http://www.techproresearch.com/article/not-vetting-your-tech-investments-youre-setting-fire-to-money/>
(Accessed on 4/20/18)

arevtech

