

# Make It Personal with Dentrix Communication Manager

Take advantage of a more unified, integrated, and high-tech approach to patient communications

It's difficult to overstate the importance of developing strong relationships and maintaining consistent contact with patients. These close connections keep patients coming back for regular checkups. They help build the trust and confidence people need to follow your recommendations and complete their treatment plans. And they reduce the number of missed appointments and eliminate costly empty chair time.

But today, building and maintaining these productive relationships requires more than occasional handwritten reminder postcards and follow-up phone calls. Thanks to email, smartphones, and the Internet, people communicate differently than they used to. They have higher expectations. If you're not taking full advantage of the latest communication tools and technologies, you're probably not communicating with your patients as effectively as you could be.

Of course, these new ways of communicating introduce both opportunities and challenges for your practice. On one hand, e-mail, texting and the Internet offer faster, more interactive ways to reach out and stay in touch with your patients. On the other hand, they can complicate your communication efforts, which, can lead to more busy work for your staff and confusion for your patients. For example, it's simply not realistic to expect your front office team to manually print and send postcard reminders, type e-mails, send text messages, and make reminder calls for every appointment.

So how can you leverage all of today's best communication tools and technologies to build stronger relationships with your patients – without adding busywork and complexity? And how do you make all of these different communication options work together, so they become part of a unified, seamless communication experience rather than a confusing barrage of disjointed messages?

The most promising answers to these questions revolve around a new kind of patient communication strategy that focuses on automating, managing and unifying all of the different communication tools at your disposal – from basic postcard mailers to emails and two-way text messages. This centralized approach allows you to combine and leverage the unique strengths of many different communication methods. And it allows you to improve the quality, professionalism, and consis-



tency of your patient interactions. Of course, there is a wide range of different patient communication options available to you, but there are a few key characteristics and capabilities you should always look for and insist on.

## Moving Beyond Manual, Text-only E-mails

Text-only e-mail reminders that you create and send manually are time consuming, static and thoroughly forgettable. Your patient communication solution should start with professional, visually appealing and interactive e-mails you generate and send automatically. Your patients should be able to confirm their appointments, update their calendars, set reminders, and even get driving directions to your office by simply pointing and clicking within the e-mail. This rich, dynamic approach to reminder e-mails can significantly reduce no shows and lower your costs by grabbing your patients' attention early, making it easy for them to respond without calling your office.

## Quick Connections with Two-way Texting

Text messaging is fast, convenient, and nearly universal. In fact, on average people read and respond to text messages in less than one minute. This makes texting an ideal method for sending quick reminders to patients before their appointments. It's important to find a communication management solution that gives you the ability to send automated text reminders on whatever schedule you decide is best for your patients. Also, make sure your texting solution gives your patients the option to confirm their appointments by simply sending a reply.

## A Fresh Take on Traditional Postcards

Traditional postcard mailers still serve a valuable purpose – even in the Internet age. But creating and mailing them doesn't have to take a lot of extra time and effort. The right communication management solution can simplify the process by auto-

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## Townie Choice Awards Public Notice

This notice is to provide the purpose, methodology and input required from dental professionals, dental companies and Dentaltown.com and Hygienetown.com, divisions of Farran Media, LLC, regarding the Townie Choice Awards.

**Purpose of the Townie Choice Awards:** To provide dental professionals with an impartial resource to assist them in their selection of dental products, equipment and services.

**Fees to participate:** None

**Methodology:** Categories of the most common dental products, equipment and services are developed, with the aid of multiple industry resources and the Dentaltown.com and Hygienetown.com online communities. For each category, all dental manufacturers are given the opportunity to submit up to three products of their choice. Dentaltown and Hygienetown do not attempt to make any recommendations on inclusion or exclusion of any products, equipment, or services listed on the voting ballots. Please note that all entries are subject to review. Companies shall not offer incentives to any existing or future Townie for voting for a specific product. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from ballot. **Voting process:** Voting is done online. One ballot per licensed clinician.

**Results:** Results will be electronically tabulated and the winning entries for each category will be published in the December issue. The results will be made available online at [www.dentaltown.com](http://www.dentaltown.com) and [www.hygienetown.com](http://www.hygienetown.com) after the December issue is printed and delivered.

### Responsibilities of each party:

#### Dental Community:

- Vote! Let your voice be heard. Share your experience with fellow dental professionals.
- Provide feedback as to the process of the awards to help make this resource useful to dental professionals.

#### Dental companies:

- Participate in the Townie Choice Survey. Enter your products to be included on the ballot.

#### Steps to participate:

- Farran Media will send an e-mail notice so products can be loaded in a secure ballot.
- Load your products into the online ballot May 7-31, 2013.
- Any questions, contact Leah Harris at [leah@farranmedia.com](mailto:leah@farranmedia.com) or 480-445-9693

#### Farran Media, LLC:

- Send the manufacturers a notice that will allow them to enter products on the ballot.
- Offer a non-biased platform to dental companies to participate in the survey.
- Provide a non-biased platform to dental professionals to benefit from the survey.
- Offer all dental companies an equal opportunity to list their products, equipment, and services.
- List product choices in alphabetical order.
- List winners with product images and descriptions in December special edition of *Dentaltown Magazine* at no charge.
- Display the top Townie Choices in each category with voting details including number of total votes and votes per product on [www.dentaltown.com](http://www.dentaltown.com) and [www.hygienetown.com](http://www.hygienetown.com).
- Provide the Townie Choice Award artwork/logo to winning companies to use on their marketing materials at no charge.
- Will not rent, sell or otherwise make available dental professionals names and their corresponding choices.

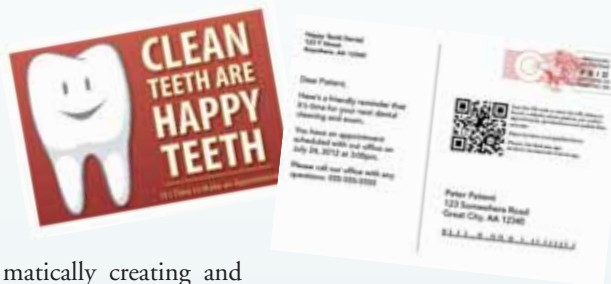
#### Schedule:

July 8-September 6, 2013 – Townies vote for their preferred products online

Late-September 2013 – Farran Media will notify the 2013 TCA winners

October 11, 2013 – Deadline for the winning companies to submit product information and images

December 2013 – The 2013 TCA winners are revealed in *Dentaltown Magazine!*



matically creating and sending attractive, professional postcards to notify patients whenever they're scheduled for a visit. An automated and "outsourced" fulfillment model means you never have to keep an expensive supply of postcards in your office – or spend valuable time preparing, addressing, and mailing them. And postcards don't have to be old fashioned. Thanks to the growing popularity of QR codes, you can create interactive postcards that allow patients with smartphones to confirm their appointments, get directions, and automatically update their calendars with a quick, simple scan.

### Integration with Your Practice Management Software

All of these specific communication tools and technologies should play an important role in your overall patient communication strategy. However, to work effectively together, they all need to be tightly integrated with your larger practice management system. When this integration works the way it's supposed to, customized reminders go out automatically based on information in your central appointment book. E-mail and text message appointment confirmations are updated in your system instantly and automatically. And you never have to retype or manually enter patient information to generate and send different types of reminders. In other words, when your patient communications and practice management systems are properly integrated, all of the pieces work together automatically to keep your patients happy and informed.

### Make It Personal with Dentrix Communication Manager

Building, automating, and integrating all of these advanced communication capabilities into your main practice management system makes sense. And it doesn't have to be a difficult, complicated, or prohibitively expensive undertaking. Dentrix Communication Manager combines all of the critical patient communication tools and capabilities you need to expand, strengthen, and personalize every patient interaction into a single unified solution, and it's designed specifically to work with Dentrix practice management systems. That means embracing, combining, and taking full advantage of all the latest communication technology may be easier and less expensive than you think. Visit [www.dentrix.com/communicate](http://www.dentrix.com/communicate) or call 1-800-DENTRIX to learn more. ■