



# MAKE THE MOST OF A LOW-CAPACITY REOPENING

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## 5 WAYS TO FIND VALUE

(EVEN WITH HALF EMPTY OPERATORIES)



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# INTRODUCTION

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Waiting is hard. Uncertainty is harder.

Being a small business owner in the midst of a global pandemic and resulting recession is not an easy position to navigate. Balancing the needs of your family and community with the real-world implications of keeping your practice doors shut—for you and for your team—requires impossibly hard decisions on your part.

States are starting to reopen. Even if dentists are back to work, patients may not be ready to be back in the chair. This book is intended to be a quick overview on five simple actions that can deliver savings and value even as we stumble along the road to normal, whatever that will look like.

Good luck out there!





REAFFIRM  
PATIENT TRUST



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It should come as no surprise that a significant gap exists between meeting the technical threshold for a “safe” reopening and the emotional threshold necessary for patients to actually show up. As healthcare providers, clinical guidelines and rules are part of your day-to-day and take on even more value during moments of uncertainty. The communities you serve will need to know those guidelines, but more than any governing body, they need to know how you’ll take care of them.

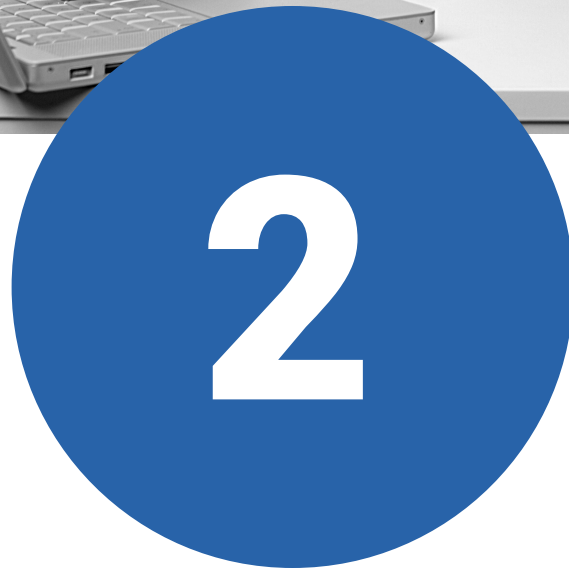
Hopefully, you already have a system in place to email your entire patient base. More than any promotional offer, now is the time to use it! In drafting the communication to them, it is important to start by stating your commitment to both their overall health and their oral health. If there are specific guidelines put out by your state, you can explain those in patient-friendly terms and outline how you intend to implement them in your practice. Next, remind patients that in the most important sense, they are the last word in what is required to “go back to normal.” Invite patients to submit questions via email.

If you have a timeline in place for reopening, share it, but don’t make any promises you can’t keep. Handling this well—calmly, compassionately and with an emphasis on patient safety—will serve as a real-time example of how your practice sees its patients as more than just customers, but as part of a community. That is the kind of practice people will want to support, and that is the kind of dentist people will trust with questions about treatment down the road.



**If you want customers to know they  
matter to you, show it by being  
interested in what matters to them.**

*Scott McKain, author of "Create Distinction: What to Do When 'Great' Isn't Good Enough"*



**REVIEW FRONT  
OFFICE PROCESSES**



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When you are in the middle of a work day, crunching numbers at the end of the month, or dealing with an influx of patients trying to “use up” all their benefits at the end of the year, it can be hard—nearly impossible, in fact—to take the time to sit down and review what’s working well versus what’s working because it has to. When it comes to front office processes, from marketing to scheduling, new patient forms to treatment plans and payment, there’s a lot to assess and, like dominoes, each piece has an impact on the rest. That’s why it can be so hard to pull one section out and change it; you have to consider the entire system. When you’re seeing 10 or more patients a day, finding the space in the schedule to evaluate things with your team, let alone make a major change feels like one thing too many.

What this means is that you’ve probably overlooked, put off or outright avoided some of the upgrades in software and process that could save you money or bring in additional revenue. It could be chatbots on your website to help answer would-be patients’ questions after hours. It could be a new algorithm that finds the most profitable holes in your schedule and then targets the best patients to fill those holes. It could just be a chance to digitize key files or tasks that you’ve been talking about for ages. You have the time, so find the savings that are likely hiding just under the surface.



**Those who initiate change will have  
a better opportunity to manage  
the change that is inevitable.**

*William Pollard, British Writer*



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**REEVALUATE  
CHAIRSIDE WORKFLOW**



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Whether graduation from dental school was recent or not, innovations in materials science and technology/operatority integration suggest there are at least a couple new ideas or best practices worth your consideration. Clinical routines developed in the classroom 20+ years ago can be hard to break, especially if your emphasis is on being consistent—not current.

How do you know which aspects of your clinical workflow are worth reevaluating? A good place to start is by asking yourself how many work-arounds you've created to accommodate a certain materials, or how much loss you're willing to allow to support an older technology.

One example of this would be the workhorse of any practice: the handpiece. Most dentists learned on air-driven handpieces in school and this is the technology they're most likely to use in their practices. If you think about how materials have evolved since then, chances are, the crowns you're cutting through today are lithium disilicate or zirconia, and trying to cut through those with an air-driven handpiece is so much harder than it has to be, costing you time and probably quite a number of burs. You need something with more torque that will deliver a smoother experience for you and more pleasant experience for the patient. If you haven't considered an electric handpiece previously, now is a great time to research how the technology has improved over the last several years and is improving workflow for dentists around not only crowns, but creating margins and preps, reducing risky aerosol contamination and more.



**Education is not the filling  
of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.**

*William Butler Yeats, Irish Poet*



## RESEARCH EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY



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A number of tradeshows are cancelled (or up in the air) as the result of safety concerns. For many clinicians, the time spent in lectures was a chance to learn about exciting new products and techniques, and the exhibit hall was a way to see many of those products up close. The entire dental industry is going through the COVID-19 adjustment together, which means that a number of companies are working overtime to get information and education in front of the dentist through digital platforms.

Whether its a KOL-led webinar, a virtual chat with a sales rep or a deep dive into clinical studies, you have a number of outstanding opportunities to research the products that can help deliver meaningful progress on the questions, ideas or goals that resulted from the review of your front office and chairside processes. Even if it isn't a product you think makes sense for this calendar year (which is likely to be somewhat erratic), you can be thoughtful about the products that will be most worthwhile clinically and valuable in terms of ROI when things do "go back to normal."

This is also a great time to think about training and updates on technology already in your office. How can you make your current equipment last longer or train the team to work smarter?

# 5

## REACH OUT TO MANUFACTURERS

As we said in the previous section, the entire dental industry is navigating this staggered reopening together. It may seem a little strange at first, but don't be afraid to ask if there are opportunities that you can take advantage of during this time, whether that is trade-ins, upgrades, or restructuring payments.

Make sure you invest your dollars in the kinds of companies that are willing to stand by you during times of uncertainty for you and your patients.

## WHAT NEXT?

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The moment we are living through is unprecedented and safety is top of mind in this next phase of reopening and reestablishing patient trust.

With their ability to significantly minimize risk from aerosol spray in addition to offering the only sterilizable anti-retraction valves, Bien-Air electric handpieces are your safest bet in responding to COVID-19 concerns, and the smarter option in a number of clinical situations. Safety may be the selling point that gets you to reconsider integrating electrics into your practice, but we know you'll find many more reasons to love it.

Unprecedented times call for unprecedented offers. Bien-Air wants to make it as easy as possible for you to get the gold-standard in safety, engineering and service.

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\*OF EQUAL OR LESSER VALUE  
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FROM JUNE 2020 TO DECEMBER 2020



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