

# best practice

DENTISTRY, BUSINESS & POLICY

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

**HS**  
Henry Schein  
Helping Health Happen

Give Kids A Smile!

SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY

Henry Schein  
Helping Health Happen

ADA Foundation  
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MEMPHIS MEDICAL COLLEGE  
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ADA Foundation  
Give Kids A Smile!

**3D PRINTING:  
AN OFFICE TOOL OF THE  
PRESENT AND FUTURE**

**GIVE KIDS A SMILE  
ENSURING FREE DENTAL  
CARE FOR KIDS IN NEED**

**FASTER, SIMPLER  
CLAIMS**

**Jeffery W. Johnston, DDS, MS**

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Professional Services and Chief Science Officer

Delta Dental of Tennessee



PHOTO: STEVE MCCLELLAN

EDITOR'S NOTE

# SIMPLE

## solutions for *complex* problems?

### SCIENCE IS UNDER ATTACK.

*Fact has become opinion. Opinion has become truth. Truth has become fluid.*

This is not just dangerous, it's insulting to those of us who believe in, honor and advocate for the scientific method.

The logic, certainty and reproducibility provoked my interest in the sciences and mathematics, eventually leading me to a career in dentistry. In this world,  $2+2=4$ . It always has and likely always will. True mathematics and science are not subordinate to modish whims nor subject to a specious majority vote.

Changes in science occur through observation, hypothesis, prediction, experimentation and statistical analysis. Unfortunately, STEM education and proficiency have been declining in the United States since the 1980s.<sup>1, 2, 3</sup> The proliferation of social media has amplified opinions, allowed fringe theories to gain widespread traction and served as a primary source of science discreditation. It makes one wonder: *Does real science still have value?*

**Mathematics and experimentation alone do not science make.** Astrologists use mathematics to generate horoscopes, and yet this is not considered science. Alchemists routinely used experiments to transform base metals into gold without success. Alchemists were not considered scientists.<sup>4</sup> So, what is the true nature of science? Wikipedia defines science as "a rigorous, systematic endeavor that builds and organizes knowledge in the form of testable explanations and predictions about the world."<sup>5</sup> However, this definition fails to capture the essence of science since this can be vaguely applied to nearly any endeavor. A better definition is needed.

McFadden argues Occam's razor is the only feature differentiating science from superstition, pseudoscience or fake news.<sup>6</sup> Occam's razor, the principle or law of parsimony, is the principle of using the simplest solution or explanation since it likely contains the least variables. In other words, when choosing between competing hypotheses, one should choose the hypothesis that requires the fewest assumptions. Occam refers to William of Occam (1287-1347), a Franciscan friar and noted logician to whom the concept is attributed. Occam is the name of the English town where William was born. Razor distinguishes between two hypotheses by "shaving away" unnecessary assumptions or cutting apart two similar conclusions.<sup>7</sup>

In modern vernacular, this is often referenced as "When you hear hoof beats, think horses, not zebras"<sup>8</sup> or KISS, "Keep it simple, stupid."<sup>9</sup> The idea that perfection equals simplicity and vice versa has been attributed to Aristotle and the phrase, "The more perfect a nature is, the fewer means it requires for its operation."<sup>10</sup> Occam's razor alone proves nothing. It merely serves as a heuristic device, a guide to distinguish between the various hypotheses.

**Science is a dynamic process.** What is true today may not be true tomorrow. However, the changes are based on new information, experimentation and reproducibility rather than the whim of unsubstantiated opinions, emotions or feelings. Pseudo-science can be bad for your health, so unbiased investigators vet the scientific literature and use the scientific method to debunk the plethora of false information masquerading as science. This uniquely distinguishes the sciences from other fields of endeavor. In a world of increasingly complex problems, perhaps the scientific method can offer some simple solutions.

1 <https://www.csis.org/blogs/perspectives-innovation/us-should-strengthen-stem-education-remain-globally-competitive>. 2 <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsb20221/u-s-and-global-stem-education-and-labor-force>. 3 <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-launches-new-initiative-enhance-stem-education-all-students>. 4 Research argues that Occam's razor is an 'essential factor that distinguishes science from superstition' <https://phys.org/news/2023-12-occam-razor-essential-factor-distinguishes.html>. 5 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science>. 6 J McFadden, Razor sharp: The role of Occam's razor in science Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences Volume1530, Issue1 December 2023 Pages 8-17. 7 <https://conceptually.org/concepts/occams-razor>. 8 Dickinson JA. Lesser-spotted zebras: Their care and feeding. Can Fam Physician. 2016 Aug;62(8):620-1. 9 The Routledge Dictionary of Modern American Slang and Unconventional English, Tom Dalzell, 2009, 1104 pages, p.595. 10 <https://learningspy.co.uk/featured/seven-tools-thinking-5-occams-razor/#:~:text=Aristotle%20first%20suggested%20the%20idea,what%20is%20done%20with%20less>.

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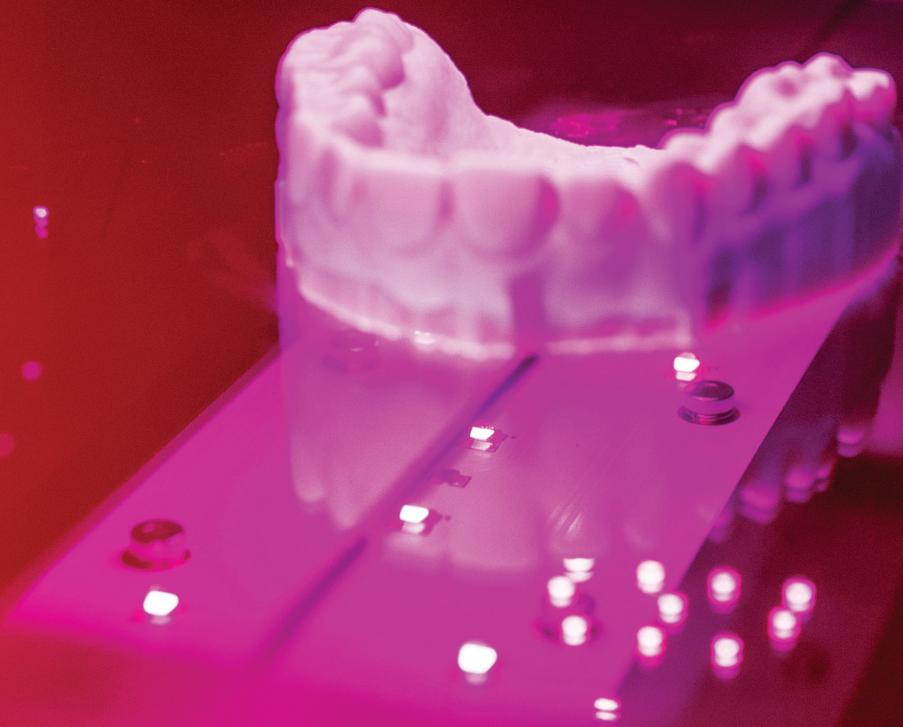
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CAUTION  
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# 3D PRINTING

AN OFFICE TOOL OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE



## THE ADVENT OF 3D PRINTING TECHNOLOGY HAS USHERED IN A NEW ERA OF INNOVATION ACROSS VARIOUS INDUSTRIES, INCLUDING DENTISTRY.

**This technology, which allows for the creation of three-dimensional objects from digital models, has transformed some dental practices by improving the efficiency, accuracy and cost-effectiveness of a wide range of procedures.** In 2023, Grand View Research pegged the global market value for 3D printing in dentistry at more than \$2.5 billion, and that valuation is projected to grow more than 23% by 2030.

Dr. Patrick Dionise, of Dionise Dental, is an early adopter of 3D printing tech and said the decision was a solid one.

“My experience has been very positive so far,” said Dionise. “Patients are impressed when they see the technology, so it could also be used as a marketing tool. If you have a team member that is interested in the technology, it helps keep them engaged. Another added benefit is that when a team member has downtime, they can be working on printing or the lab work involved with printing.”

### UPPING PRECISION

**One of the most significant advantages of 3D printing is the extreme precision it offers.** Traditional methods of creating dental prosthetics (crowns, bridges and dentures) often involve manual work done by human hands. Human hands are, of course, subject to human error. With 3D printing, these processes are handled digitally, resulting in highly accurate renderings. Digital scanning technologies allow for the creation of detailed

3D models of a patient’s oral cavity and these near-perfect scans can then be used to design near-perfect prosthetics.

Some practices are taking a hybrid approach to digital dentistry, utilizing a “partial” digital approach that melds traditional subtractive/milling techniques done in the lab with 3D printing and/or scanning practices.

### UPPING EFFICIENCY

**The traditional fabrication of dental prosthetics can be a lengthy process, often requiring several weeks from initial impression to final fitting.**

3D printing can reduce this time frame significantly. The integration of 3D printing with computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) systems also enhances workflow efficiency in dental laboratories. A survey conducted by the American Dental Association (ADA) in 2022 found that dental practices utilizing 3D printing technology reported a 30% increase in productivity. This boost in efficiency allows dental professionals to serve more patients and focus on providing high-quality care.

Dionise can attest to this increase in efficiency.

“I was unhappy with bite splints I was receiving from the lab. We had to scan the patient’s teeth, send the scan out, the lab would make them, send them to us in the mail, and we brought the patient back. It was usually around a two-week turnaround,” he said. “If they didn’t fit

properly, I had to send them back. If there was an issue in the coming months (broken splint, dog ate it, etc.) the lab had to remake it at significant cost.

“The printer allows us to remake them for a very low cost to the patient if something is to happen. Files stay in the cloud and we can access them at any time.”



**(Adding a 3D printer to your practice) is worth considering. There are many different 3D printer setups, and the barrier to entry doesn’t have to be very high.**

—Dr. Patrick Dionise  
Dionise Dental

## COST-EFFECTIVENESS

**While the initial investment in 3D printing technology can be substantial, the long-term cost savings are significant.** Traditional dental prosthetics require multiple materials and labor-intensive processes, leading to higher production costs. In contrast, 3D printing reduces material waste and minimizes the need for manual labor, resulting in lower overall expenses.

“We started 3D printing surgical guides for implants. The CBCT (DICOM file) is merged with the intraoral scan (STL file) and a surgical guide can be designed and printed fairly easily,” Dionise said. “We are also printing models of patients’ teeth for various applications, which has been nice getting away from pouring up models.”

A cost analysis published in the Journal of Dental Research showed that dental laboratories using 3D printing technology experienced a 40% reduction in production costs compared to traditional methods.

## MATERIALS AND BIOCOMPATIBILITY

**The versatility of 3D printing materials has expanded the range of dental applications.** Early 3D printing technologies were limited to a few types of resins and plastics, but advancements have introduced a variety of biocompatible materials suitable for dental use, and Food and Drug Administration approvals are regularly updated as new materials are developed and tested.

Biocompatibility is a critical factor in dental prosthetics, as materials obviously must not cause adverse reactions in the mouth.

## ORTHODONTICS AND ALIGNERS

**Perhaps the area of dentistry most visibly impacted, in the eyes of the public anyway, by the advent of 3D printing technology is orthodontics.** Ever heard of Invisalign™? Those semi-transparent straightening devices are made possible by 3D printing and scanning technologies.

The scanning systems and manufacturing processes of 3D printers have made it possible to create ultra-customized orthodontic systems tailored to each patient and to do so in a relatively short period of time.

Traditional ortho devices certainly remain viable (and still the best solution in many cases) but even those time-honored systems are seeing 3D printed options in play. LightForce™, for example, creates 3D-printed ceramic brackets that can be customized to the shape and orientation of each tooth using 3D scans and software.

## EDUCATION IMPACTS

**Dental schools are also tapping into 3D technology, using 3D-printed models to enhance the learning experience for students.**

These models can replicate a wide range of dental conditions and anatomical variations, providing hands-on training opportunities that are more realistic and comprehensive than some traditional methods, while also providing increased convenience and reduced lab costs.

Dental educators have reported improved student engagement and understanding when using 3D-printed models. These models also allow for repetitive practice without the concerns associated with working on people.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

**The future of 3D printing is fascinating and offers plenty of promise.** Advancements in bioprinting point to a future in which 3D-printed items are made of materials that incorporate living cells in tissue-like structures that can encourage cell-to-cell growth to regenerate tissue to enhance the functionality and longevity of dental prosthetics. Add to this technology, the prospect of artificial intelligence and machine learning systems that continue to improve, and the potential offered to dentistry could be profound.

If you're considering adding a 3D printer to your practice, the ADA has a 3D Printing Guide available to provide insights into considerations around adding more digital to your dentistry. You can find the guide at [engage.ada.org](https://engage.ada.org).





# THE FLUORIDE DEBATE:

## A CENTURY OF DENTAL HEALTH AND CONTROVERSY

In the early 20th century, researchers in the United States made a fascinating observation: people living in areas with naturally high levels of fluoride in their community water supplies had teeth that were remarkably resistant to decay. This discovery set the stage for a groundbreaking public health experiment.

In 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan, became the first city to add fluoride to its water supply in a controlled manner. Over the next 15 years, data showed a significant reduction of more than 60% in tooth decay among 30,000 school children in Grand Rapids, demonstrating the protective benefits of fluoride. By the 1950s, the U.S. Public Health Service and the American Dental Association (ADA) acknowledged the success of water fluoridation in reducing cavities. This led to the widespread adoption of adding fluoride to community water supplies and its inclusion in dental products such as toothpaste and mouthwash.

Despite its success, water fluoridation is now a topic of debate. No federal law mandates the fluoridation of water supplies; the decision is typically made by municipal governments, city councils, or local water authorities. Recent studies and political leaders have called its success into question. For instance, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., U.S. Secretary of Health, claimed that water fluoridation at U.S. levels is associated with numerous health issues, including cancer. He has suggested that the



**It's one of the nation's top 10 public health achievements of the 20th century, effectively preventing tooth decay regardless of a person's socioeconomic status or access to care.**

—U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>3</sup>

Trump administration would advise all U.S. water systems to remove fluoride from public water.<sup>1</sup>

However, the ADA has reiterated its support for community water fluoridation, issuing a press release that cites studies showing it reduces tooth decay by more than 25% in children and adults, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources such as toothpaste.<sup>2</sup> The ADA maintains adding fluoride to the water supply has been a boon to the dental health of Americans, with research indicating a very low risk of adverse consequences.

Yet, the debate continues. The state Senate recently voted down a bill that would have limited the fluoride amounts in water to the 0.7 mg/L amount recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service. Opponents testified that water systems would not be able to maintain fluoride levels close enough to this exact amount in order to comply. According to the Tennessee Department of Health, 88% of Tennesseans are currently served by fluoridated water systems.

As the discussion around water fluoridation evolves, it remains a critical public health issue. The balance between its proven benefits in preventing tooth decay and the concerns raised by recent studies and political figures will continue to shape the future of its practice.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/what-is-fluoride-why-is-it-added-us-water-supply-2024-11-25/> <sup>2</sup> <https://adanews.ada.org/ada-news/2025/january/ada-reaffirms-commitment-to-community-water-fluoridation-amid-jama-pediatrics-report/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CTo%20prevent%20dental%20disease%2C%20the,%2C%20D.S.%2C%20in%20the%20release> <sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00056796.htm>

# New Delta Dental Groups

Delta Dental of Tennessee welcomes the following new groups. You can check eligibility and coverage details in real time with Dental Office Toolkit (DOT), or call customer service at 800-223-3104. If you need to register for DOT, email [ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com](mailto:ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com).

Lighthouse Ministries of Antioch, TN dba Lighthouse Christian School	Antioch
Snoyer Signs LLC dba Big Visual Group	Antioch
Jarrett Concrete Products & Supply Inc	Ashland City
Denard & Moore Constructions Co., Inc	Belfast
Lamplays Building Partnership	Bon Aqua
AHS Management Company, Inc	Brentwood
Compassus OhioHealth Holdings, LLC	Brentwood
Ascension Health at Home, LLC	Brentwood
Edwards + Hotchkiss Architects PC	Brentwood
Alpha Omicron Pi Fraternity, Inc	Brentwood
Brighton Accounting and Payroll Town of Brighton	Brighton
Draingo, LLC	Brighton
Carthage Family Chiropractic LLC	Carthage
Little Rockets Child Care of Chapel Hill LLC	Chapel Hill
CBL & Associates Management, Inc	Chattanooga
The AIM Center	Chattanooga
Russel Metals	Chattanooga
Tennessee Stillhouse	Chattanooga
Kordsa, Inc	Chattanooga
Miller & Martin PLLC	Chattanooga
Vascular Institute of Chattanooga, PLLC	Chattanooga
Rise Partners, LLC	Chattanooga
RPA Insurance LLC, dba RSS Insurance	Chattanooga
Valley Machine	Chattanooga
Chapel Hill Christian Academy	Clarksville
F&M Bank	Clarksville
New Beginning Child Care	Clarksville
The Pet Studio LLC	Clarksville
Legacy Senior Living, LLC	Cleveland
First Baptist Church Cleveland	Cleveland
Medical Exchange Answering Service Inc AKA Voice Exchange	Collierville
Pro-HVAC, Inc	Columbia
Community Pathologists' Laboratory, PC	Cookeville
Wesley Housing Corp. of Memphis, Inc dba Wesley Living	Cordova
Jim Pang MD PLLC dba Interventional Psychiatry Group	Cordova
Jamieson and Fisher, Inc	Covington
Onsite Wellness Group, LLC	Cumberland Furnace
Legg Real Estate, LLC	Dickson
Landrum Heating & Air LLC	Drummonds
Mountain Valley Bank	Dunlap
K-LOVE, Inc	Franklin
Mitsubishi Motors North America	Franklin
Miller Helpers Inc dba Senior Helpers	Franklin

CKE Restaurants Holdings	Franklin
Generations Christian Academy	Franklin
Tennessee Legacy	Franklin
Franklin Engineering Group	Franklin
Patrick Transportation LLC	Franklin
Wholesale Fasteners	Franklin
MD Publishing	Franklin
Reliant Realty	Gallatin
CSR Mechanical Services LLC	Gallatin
Town of Gordonsville	Gordonsville
Eastside Independent Baptist Church	Greeneville
Consumer Credit Union	Greeneville
Greeneville Rental Station LLC	Greeneville
Friendship Logistics	Hendersonville
Bloom and Biome Consulting, Inc	Hendersonville
Cross Driven Construction	Hendersonville
Lotus Psychiatric Center	Hermitage
Massive Mission LLC	Hermitage
Humboldt City Schools	Humboldt
Town of Jacksboro	Jacksboro
Tri-County Power Equipment, Inc	Jefferson City
SOFHA Employment Services, Inc	Johnson City
Johnson City Schools	Johnson City
Healthpartnerone, LLC	Kingsport
Holiday Shores Water Services, Inc	Kingston
Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery Assoc PC	Knoxville
Central Baptist Church of Fountain City	Knoxville
City Employees Credit Union	Knoxville
Priority OnDemand, LLC	Knoxville
Management Solutions, LLC	Knoxville
Adams and Sons	Knoxville
DOC Brands, Inc	Knoxville
Thermal Label Warehouse, LLC	Knoxville
Standard Air Conditioning Co	Knoxville
Careadigm, Inc	Knoxville
Timberline Barns, LLC	Knoxville
The Skin Wellness Center	Knoxville
The Benefits Group, LLC dba Wealth Benefits Group	Knoxville
Tennessee Valley Asset Management Partners	Knoxville
Skeens Restoration & Construction, LLC	Knoxville
Tennessee Surgical Specialists	Knoxville
Slayden Door and Hardware, Inc	La Vergne
Permobil, Inc	Lebanon
Bakers School of Aeronautics	Lebanon
Tressler & Associates PLLC	Lebanon
HotSprings Spas of Music City, LLC	Lebanon
Shangri-La Therapeutic Academy of Riding	Lenoir City
McDonalds HVAC, Inc	Leoma

Tractor Town Inc	Lewisburg	Services, Inc	Nashville
Quality Building Supply, LLC	Lobelville	Old Hickory Credit Union	Nashville
Montara Boats	Loudon	Aegis Sciences Corporation	Nashville
Warren County Government	McMinnville	Studio Bank	Nashville
Warren County Board of Education	McMinnville	VCE, Inc	Nashville
Main Street Media LLC	McMinnville	ABEC Electric Company, LLC	Nashville
Walker Sod Farm Inc	McMinnville	Tennessee Primary Care Association	Nashville
Tennsmith Holdings, Inc	McMinnville	Division 2 Constructors of TN, LLC	Nashville
Shelby County Health Care Corporation dba Regional One Health	Memphis	Ovyl, LLC	Nashville
Memphis-Shelby County Airport Authority	Memphis	Team Air Distributing, Inc	Nashville
Enjoy AM, LLC	Memphis	Leap Service Partners, LLC	Nashville
LeMoyne-Owen College	Memphis	Door Tech of Nashville, Inc	Nashville
Frayser Community Schools	Memphis	Curb Records, Inc	Nashville
Owen Brennan's	Memphis	Tin Roof Acquisition Company	Nashville
Wright Investments Inc	Memphis	Endodontic Associates, P.A.	Nashville
Empowered To Connect	Memphis	Back Blocks Publishing	Nashville
GFG Investments LLC	Millington	Allied Behavioral Health Solutions	Nashville
Johnson County Schools	Mountain City	Golden Life Inc	Nashville
Kasai North America, Inc	Murfreesboro	MCH Nashville	Old Hickory
Novus Manufacturing Solutions LLC	Murfreesboro	8Loop Logistics, Inc	Ooltewah
Work Zone Traffic Control LLC	Murfreesboro	Paragon Energy Solutions	Philadelphia
Workwear Outfitters, LLC	Nashville	Bledsoe County Government	Pikeville
Peck Construction, Inc	Nashville	Blalock Development Company	Sevierville
Harpeth Capital Management, Inc	Nashville	Winnett Associates PLLC	Shelbyville
AGAPE Nashville	Nashville	Musgrave Pencil Company	Shelbyville
i3 Verticals Management		Edenton Simpson & Co	Somerville
		American Woodland Trading Company	Somerville
		Cardin Forest Products, LLC	South Pittsburg
		Zanini Tennessee	Winchester

## New Delta Dental Providers

Delta Dental of Tennessee welcomes our new and returning contracted providers. You can check eligibility and coverage details in real time with Dental Office Toolkit (DOT), or call customer service at 800-223-3104. If you need to register for DOT, email [ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com](mailto:ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com).

Benjamin Vilensky	Alcoa	Austin Pate	Knoxville
Akriti Kapur	Brentwood	Mark Pozega	Knoxville
Nisha Patel	Brentwood	Chad Waltz	Knoxville
Osama Betrous	Chattanooga	Bracy Haynie	Lenoir City
Aaron Keiser	Chattanooga	Brittany Burwell	Lewisburg
Kristina Slavik	Chattanooga	Colin Abbott	Memphis
Lindsay Lybarger	Clarksville	Jesse McKinney	Memphis
Essra Jameel	Columbia	Eric Sharks	Memphis
Laura Watterson	Dickson	Mary Smith	Memphis
Brea Fleming	Dyersburg	Anitra Craig	Mount Juliet
Sam Jameel	Gallatin	Matthew Ellis	Nashville
Denise Terese-Koch	Goodlettsville	Hannah Griffin	Nashville
Taylor Wyatt	Goodlettsville	Mohamed Hania	Nashville
Nauzanene Jafari		David Norris	Nashville
Fard Vyjoyeh	Hendersonville	Gregory Tao	Nashville
Gustavo Moretta	Hixson	Stephen Fowler	Powell
Lawson Hoover	Johnson City	Santa McKibbins	Pulaski
Ragaa Abdulmoniem	Kingsport	Molly Ramsey	Rogersville
Adam Jenkins	Kingsport	Clyde Blair	Sevierville
Stephanie Till	Kingsport	Sarah Weiss	Thompson Station
Thomas Harper	Knoxville	Beshoy Aziz	Tullahoma
Thomas Lucas	Knoxville	Rong Zeng	Wartburg



# HOW IS YOUR MARKETING PLAN COMING TOGETHER?

If that question gives you pause—or perhaps even that tinny taste of dread in the back of your mouth—you’re not alone. Many small business owners, including those who own and run dental offices, often find marketing challenging.

A survey conducted by marketing automation software provider OutboundEngine found that roughly half of all small businesses do not have a marketing plan<sup>1</sup>. Given that 99.9 percent of all companies in America are small businesses (according to the U.S. Small Business Administration), just about half of all businesses in America lack a basic marketing plan.

Whether you’re looking to attract new patients or to help foster long-lasting patient loyalty and brand recognition, marketing can play a substantial role in your overall business. Let’s dive into the building blocks needed to get started on the road to better marketing.

## WHAT’S THE POINT?

To create a successful marketing campaign, channel your best Julie Andrews and belt out the most famous of lines from “The Sound of Music”: “Let’s start at the beginning...a very good place to start.”

**What is it that you hope to accomplish with your marketing efforts?** Answering that question is where a marketing plan begins.

Regardless of how big (or small) your practice is or the demographics of the community in which it is located, one of the first steps to marketing success is defining your goals.

In its 2024 State of Marketing survey<sup>2</sup>, HubSpot, a leading marketing platform, found that for companies with effective marketing campaigns in 2023, the top two goals defined for 2024 efforts are increased revenue/sales and increased brand awareness.

Whether you’re looking to generate more revenue and retain more patients through improved brand recognition or if you’re simply looking to improve the visibility of your business, knowing what you’re looking to accomplish with your marketing efforts is essential.



## DIGITAL DOMINANCE

**Once your goal for marketing is defined, the next challenge is determining how you’ll spread your message.**

Digital marketing continues to dominate the landscape, with social media and video platforms

# WHAT ABOUT AI?

Artificial intelligence is here to stay. The dental industry will see its share of AI advancements and impacts, just as the marketing realm will. More specifically, dentistry has the potential to see impacts from AI, which excels with data analysis and pattern recognition, as well as generative AI, which is designed specifically for creation. From a purely marketing perspective, generative AI will most often come into play.

According to research firm Gartner's 2024 Marketing Predictions, AI will "radically reshape social media and search landscapes, creative work, brand positioning and perceptions of truth."

In that study, Gartner found that AI is already a staple of the marketing landscape, with 64 percent of marketing teams using AI to help generate marketing campaigns.

How can you utilize AI to help with your marketing efforts? Here are just a few ideas:

Text generators like Grammarly and OpenAI's ChatGPT can help you create marketing copy, analyze website copy for search engine optimization value and generate ideas for social media content.

Image generators can help create graphics and images for marketing campaigns. Design staples like Adobe

PhotoShop and Canva already offer generative AI options, and systems like OpenAI's DALL-E can turn text-based requests into stunning images.

Creating videos is essential to a well-rounded marketing strategy, particularly when utilizing social media. Video creation is now available with AI assistance and is a fast-growing segment of the AI world. Platforms such as Synthesia.io, invideo.io and DeepBrain.IO's AI Studio are a few of the current leaders in AI-generated video.

pulling in huge audiences. "Traditional" marketing outlets are still utilized (think television, radio, billboards, etc.), but much of the marketing efforts in today's business world takes place in a digital space, and that percentage continues to increase.

**Which digital outlets will you target?** According to HubSpot, Facebook continues to be the top platform, with 57 percent of marketers using it. It is followed by Instagram at 55 percent, YouTube at 52 percent, TikTok at 44 percent, and X (formerly Twitter) at 39 percent.

## MEASURE IT

**Monitor the performance of your marketing efforts regularly and analyze key metrics to gauge effectiveness.** Tracking website traffic, conversion rates, social media engagement and growth can keep you on track and help you determine the return on your investment in time and marketing dollars.

## THE WRAP-UP

**Marketing can play a vital role in the success and growth of every business, including dental practices.** By embracing strategic marketing initiatives, leveraging emerging trends and implementing proven tactics, you can enhance your practice's visibility, attract new patients and grow brand awareness and loyalty.

## DELTA DENTAL IS HERE TO HELP

### Are you looking to up your social media game?

Delta Dental of Tennessee's marketing team would love to lend a hand.

We're continually posting new blogs and social media content to spread the good word about the importance of oral health, and we'd like you to help us make it as useful as possible for your office, too.



Simply visit [DeltaDentalTN.com/Blog](https://DeltaDentalTN.com/Blog)

(or scan the QR code) and let us know what you'd like to see included in our content. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and X @DeltaDentalTN. We'll tailor new articles and posts to fit your needs and, hopefully, give you a jumpstart on your future social media efforts to promote oral health. Email us at [BestPractice@DeltaDentalTN.com](mailto:BestPractice@DeltaDentalTN.com).



# NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH: A smile for every child



Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM) to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. This initiative has reached millions of people across the country, promoting the development of good habits at an early age and encouraging regular dental visits to ensure a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

One of the highlights of this month is the ADA Foundation's Give Kids A Smile program, which has been providing free oral health education and services to underserved children since 2003. This year, nearly 1,100 events are scheduled nationwide, aiming to serve approximately 325,500 children with the help of around 25,000 volunteer dentists and dental team members.

The kick-off event took place at Meharry

Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, Tennessee. The event provided screenings, treatments, and oral health education to approximately 300 children from the Nashville area. The theme, inspired by the



animated film "Inside Out," aimed to make the dental visit a fun and familiar experience for the kids.

In addition to dental services, the event featured interactive stations where children learned about proper brushing and flossing

techniques and healthy choices through the Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures program. National sponsors Henry Schein, Inc., and Colgate-Palmolive Company donated essential oral health care products. The goal was to ensure that every child had a dental home, whether at Meharry or with a local dentist.

The ADA Foundation's Give Kids A Smile program continues to be celebrated nationally in February, with events taking place throughout the year.

Supporters of the program have an opportunity to contribute through the Gift Kids A Smile initiative, with donations helping more children in need and supporting dental schools' outreach efforts.

# KEYS TO HASSLE-FREE CLAIMS

At Delta Dental of Tennessee, we want the claims process to be a painless, efficient experience for network providers. Dental Office Toolkit™ (DOT) is the most efficient way to submit claims.

We've devoted countless hours to developing, refining and enhancing the Dental Office Toolkit™ to make it as efficient and effective as possible.

Most claims submitted through DOT are processed in a matter of seconds, and if enrolled in the voluntary electronic funds transfer system, they are usually paid within 24 hours.

However, sometimes, claims are rejected simply because of an inadvertent mistake when submitting. Here are a few common mistakes to avoid that can lead to delays in processing claims.

## COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN SUBMITTING CLAIMS



### Stay inside the box

Make sure all info is contained within the box provided in the form for paper claims.



### Keep your caps on lock

Use all capital letters (CAPS) when entering data. This is easier for the system to read and will lead to fewer processing errors.



### Don't get too attached

When submitting a claim, there is no need to attach a primary carrier EOB. Simply mark the amount that primary paid in the remarks section.



### Zero is not your hero

Do not enter \$0 unless the primary carrier's determination was actually \$0.



### Practice good form

When submitting for services previously approved on a pre-treatment estimate, use the pre-treatment form and fill in the date the service was completed. Do NOT send a new claim.



### Your fees, your schedule

Always submit claims using your own fee schedule and not the amount on Delta Dental's fee schedule. The DOT system will adjust the fee if necessary.



### Who done it?

Always submit a claim with the treating dentist's name and license number regardless of the business name or business owner. The claim form is a legal document and the treating dentist's information must represent who treated the patient.



### Save the date

For procedure codes that require multiple appointments, always submit using the date the treatment was completed. For example, if submitting for a crown, always use the seat date, not the prep date.



### Step away from the marker

Do not highlight any section of the claim form, as this will black out the highlighted areas.

**ACCESS DENTAL OFFICE TOOLKIT**  
by visiting [www.dentalofficetoolkit.com](http://www.dentalofficetoolkit.com).

# LOOKING TO SATISFY YOUR CE CREDITS?

We've got some great new continuing education (CE) courses starting this fall and, best of all, they're completely **FREE** for Delta Dental network providers.

The courses are available on the Delta Dental Online Continuing Education Courses website. Scan the QR code below.



## Check out the lineup

### UNDERSTANDING RISK MANAGEMENT AND RECORD KEEPING WITH EMPHASIS ON FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

This course provides dentists with essential knowledge and skills to effectively manage fraud, waste and abuse risk, along with strategies for ensuring business continuity and maintaining comprehensive recordkeeping in their practice. This presentation will demonstrate practical applications and strategies to minimize professional liability while maintaining accurate records for compliance with regulatory requirements. We will also provide dentists with an understanding of fraud, waste and abuse. The course will explore various forms of fraudulent activities, unethical behaviors and regulatory compliance related to dental practices. Participants will learn how to identify, prevent and report fraudulent activities, ensuring compliance with regulations and ethical standards through case studies, discussions and practical examples. Participants will be able to develop strategies to safeguard their practices and promote integrity in health care delivery.

### WOMEN'S ORAL HEALTH ISSUES: THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND EDUCATION

Women undergo a variety of hormonal and physical changes as they age, including puberty, pregnancy and menopause. These changes may have a significant impact on their overall health, but also their oral health, and the connection between the two is critical. The importance of regular dental visits in young children, establishing a dental home and an effective home care routine that can be maintained long-term is a key part of minimizing the negative effects of hormonal changes in women. With improved oral hygiene habits and an overall improvement in oral health, not only will women see decreased impact on the mouth as they age, but also avoid irreversible changes that lead to decay, gum disease, and ultimately, tooth loss.



### PREMEDICATION FOR INVASIVE DENTAL PROCEDURES AND PREVENTION OF ASPIRATION PNEUMONIA

The course reviews the current recommendations for SBE and LPJ infection prophylaxis indications and regimens. The history and rationale behind the recommendations will be presented.





# 25 YEARS OF

Delta Dental of Tennessee (Delta Dental) recently marked a significant milestone, celebrating 25 years of dedicated service to the community it proudly calls home. With a mission to ensure healthy smiles, this not-for-profit organization has donated over \$70 million since 1999, significantly improving the oral and overall health of Tennesseans.

Delta Dental, along with its philanthropic arm, the Smile180 Foundation, has been a steadfast

supporter of the state's dental colleges, children's hospitals, free and reduced-cost dental clinics, and other like-minded charities.

Delta Dental's commitment to improving health and well-being is evident through its various programs. The company and the Smile180 Foundation provide resources and financial support to organizations like St. Jude, the American Red Cross, and the Governor's Early Literacy Foundation. Delta Dental is also the

**“Our community is our foundation and our passion. Every day, our employees work to ensure that Tennesseans can live confidently and thrive.”**

**Jeff Ballard**  
President and CEO,  
Delta Dental of Tennessee

**155,000+**  
Mouthguards donated  
since 2006



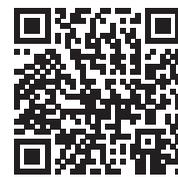
# GIVING BACK

largest donor to Tennessee's two dental schools: the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) College of Dentistry and Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry.

As part of our 25 Years of Giving celebration, we encouraged our employees to make an impact in their neighborhoods as well. We're proud to share our employees volunteered a total of 1,659 hours in 2024, whether donating items to their

local animal shelters, choosing their favorite non-profit to volunteer their time, or helping at group organized functions like gift sorting for The Salvation Army Angel Tree Program. We encourage you to help make an impact in your community as well!

To learn more about Delta Dental's philanthropic efforts, scan the QR code below.



## 2.1 MILLION

Toothbrushes distributed since 2003

## 110

Touchless water bottle filling stations installed in schools





## Have patients with dental benefits administered by Delta Dental of Arkansas?

READ THIS



Even though you practice in Tennessee, you may have patients with dental benefits administered by Delta Dental of Arkansas (payer ID: CDAR1).

This is because Arkansas-based employers that utilize Delta Dental of Arkansas for dental benefits (including Walmart) may have employees who live in other states.

To verify benefits for these patients, Delta Dental of Arkansas has a new Dentist Portal that your office should use.

### To access Delta Dental of Arkansas' new Dentist Portal:

1

Visit the Delta Dental of Arkansas website: [www.deltadentalark.com](http://www.deltadentalark.com) and click "Login/Register" in the upper right corner.

2

Click on the **blue** "Login" button, which will direct you to the sign-in page for the NEW "Dentist Portal." If you go to Delta Dental of Arkansas' old "Dental Office Toolkit," (**green** login button) your patient's coverage will show as inactive.

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For any questions or assistance, call 800-462-5410.