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SIX QUESTIONS

to Ask Before You Choose Your Next Practice Management System

A short guide for DSO
and dental group leaders.

Before You Turn the Page, Think About This...

Changing practice management software is no small task. It touches every provider, every front desk, and every patient interaction. So, if you're going through a change that important to your success, go through it once, and go through it with a PMS partner that's here for the future of your business, not where it's been.

The six questions ahead aren't the only ones worth asking. But they're ones that separate a decision you're glad you made in five years from one you're revisiting in eighteen months.



> **Each page pairs a simple yes/no question with a short checklist — use it to pressure-test your own answer before you sign anything.**

QUESTION ONE

1

Is this really an upgrade or am I about to learn an entirely new system?

Many teams gravitate toward the option that feels familiar because the alternative seems harder. But even a move with a familiar vendor requires a full relearning curve, a full data migration, and a full training cycle. Don't let what seems familiar drive your decision. The real question is whether the system is actually better for your patients, your providers, and your business.

THINK IT THROUGH

- [ ] **Is the new platform cloud-native, or is it a server-based system hosted somewhere else and dressed up to look modern?**
- [ ] **Does it centralize data across every location, or will each office still manage its own silo?**
- [ ] **Will my team gain real new capability or just a new coat of paint with the same limitations?**
- [ ] **If I'm retraining my entire staff, am I choosing based on what's genuinely best or what feels safest?**

QUESTION TWO

2

Will this platform support where we're headed, not just where we are today?

Your organization won't look the same in one, three, or five years. New locations, new specialties, new opportunities. A real upgrade doesn't just fit today; the platform you choose either grows with your future or stands in its way.

THINK IT THROUGH

- [ ] Can the platform easily support new locations, specialties, and acquisitions as our business grows?
- [ ] Can leadership see cross-location performance and benchmarking today, or is that "on the roadmap"?
- [ ] Is AI built into the platform data layer, surfacing findings inside the chart and workflow, or is it a separate tab that your team has to remember to open?
- [ ] Is this a PMS built for the dental enterprise era or always playing catch-up?

QUESTION THREE

3

Is a new solution simply replacing today's software, or can it improve how we operate?

A new login screen isn't a strategy. If the switch doesn't reduce manual work, standardize how locations operate, and tighten up revenue cycle, you'll absorb all the disruption of change without earning any of the upside.

THINK IT THROUGH

- [ ] Does the system automate revenue cycle management—eligibility, claims, posting, denials—or just move the same paperwork online?
- [ ] Will it standardize workflows across locations or keep every office in separate silos?
- [ ] Do tools like patient communications, revenue cycle, and imaging live inside the platform, or are those systems my team has to log in to separately?
- [ ] A year from now, will my team's day actually be easier or just different?

QUESTION FOUR

4

Does the platform truly eliminate complexity or just move it somewhere else?

Even a system that looks like it improves how you operate today can quietly be creating greater complexity for you to deal with. Moving to a system without an open architecture just trades one kind of complexity for another. A truly modern platform reduces the number of places where your data lives without limiting the vendors you can work with.

THINK IT THROUGH

- [ ] Is the API genuinely open, or will every integration require custom development and vendor sign-off?
- [ ] Does data move automatically between imaging, analytics, RCM, and the PMS, or is someone still exporting spreadsheets?
- [ ] Is there one source of truth for reporting, or will my team still be reconciling numbers by hand?
- [ ] Am I trading an aging server for another closed system that's just as hard to get out of?

QUESTION FIVE

5

How much flexibility will we have as our needs evolve?

Functionality today only matters if it holds up as needs change. The right platform doesn't lock you into today's assumptions. Whether it's a new specialty, a new AI capability, or a new ownership structure, your software should be able to flex with your business without a rebuild.

THINK IT THROUGH

- [ ] Can we add best-of-breed tools as they emerge, or are we locked into one vendor's pace?
- [ ] Does the platform meet us where we are on AI today with room to grow into more automation later?
- [ ] Will onboarding the next acquisition take weeks or months, every single time?
- [ ] If our needs shift, does the platform bend, or do we?

QUESTION SIX

6

Are we choosing a vendor or a long-term partner who will help us lead the change our business needs?

Technology is only half the decision. The other half is who's standing next to you on day one, day ninety, and year five. Switching systems is disruptive no matter who you choose. The difference is whether you choose a partner that's there to help you lead that change or leaves you to survive it alone.

THINK IT THROUGH

- [ ] Does the vendor have a structured change-management approach, or are we on our own once the contract is signed?
- [ ] Is training role-based and phased, with real support through go-live and beyond?
- [ ] Does the team that sold us the platform stay engaged after go-live, or do they hand us off and disappear?
- [ ] Will this be a partner we're glad we chose in five years or a decision we're revisiting in eighteen months?

You've Asked the Right Questions...

Now Put Them to the Test.



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How the Options Compare

Not all cloud platforms are built the same. Here's how Denticon stacks up against two other names DSOs often consider when evaluating a move to the cloud.

Category	Dentrix Ascend	Open Dental
Platform Architecture	Established single-database cloud PMS within the Henry Schein ecosystem	Open-source, primarily on-premise; cloud hosting available via third-party partners, not natively cloud-built
Open Ecosystem / APIs	Historically a more closed, vendor-controlled ecosystem	Very open database/API a real strength, but assembling integrations is on your team
Imaging Integration	Imaging typically linked, not natively unified	Broad third-party imaging compatibility, no owned/ unified imaging platform
Specialty / Ortho Support	General PMS; limited dedicated ortho module	General PMS; no dedicated ortho-specific module
AI Capabilities	Strong AI feature set built on a governed, closed ecosystem; AI tools require HS1 certification to integrate	No native platform AI; open API invites third-party AI add-ons instead
Revenue Cycle Automation	Integrated claims tools; automation varies by module	Core RCM is basic; DSOs typically layer in third-party automation via API
Multi-Location Track Record	Long-standing presence in the market	Each location runs a separate local database; centralized reporting requires manual data aggregation or custom development
Change Management & Onboarding	Standard implementation process	Self-service model with strong community/forum support; less structured for enterprise rollout

Curve Dental	Denticon (Planet DDS)
Cloud-native SaaS; no server hardware required; hosted on AWS with automatic backups; single real-time database across all locations	**Cloud-native DentalOS platform, purpose-built for multi-location DSOs**
Curated vendor marketplace; limited public API; less flexibility to choose best-in-class alternatives as needs evolve	**Open API program; connects analytics, imaging, HR, and finance tools without custom builds**
Built-in imaging module with hardware bridges; cloud-stored images accessible across locations; no dedicated AI diagnostics platform	**Apteryx Cloud Imaging natively integrated with AI Assist diagnostics**
General dentistry focus; lacks native ortho contract/payment plan support; ortho practices typically require a separate system alongside Curve	**Cloud 9 Ortho Practice Management built in**
Eligibility + AI-powered insurance verification; AI features focused on billing and scheduling; no platform-wide clinical AI	**Platform-level AI across RCM, imaging, scheduling, and engagement**
Integrated claims management and billing automation; automation depth best suited to small-to-mid-size groups, not enterprise-scale RCM	**Planet DDS Pay automates eligibility, posting, and denial workflows**
Serves multi-location groups and emerging DSOs; positioned for groups with 1–15 locations; less proven at large enterprise (100+ location) scale	**Supports more 100+ location DSOs than any other cloud-based PMS provider***
Structured implementation with go-live support and training resources; straightforward for small-to-mid groups though enterprise rollout structure is less proven at scale	**Structured kickoff, role-based phased training, and post-launch reviews built into every rollout**

See What's Possible with Planet DDS

Changing software is disruptive no matter who you choose. If you're going to do it, do it once, and do it right, with a partner built to grow with you.

Click the button below to schedule 20 minutes with our team. No pressure, just a conversation about where you're headed and how we can help you get there.

SCHEDULE TIME WITH DENTICON

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POWERED BY DENTALOS®

Planet DDS is a partner in growth for DSOs and dental groups outgrowing legacy systems and fragmented tools. DentalOS brings Denticon Practice Management, Cloud 9 Ortho Management, and Apteryx Cloud Imaging together on one open, cloud-native platform that's trusted by more 100+ location DSOs than any other cloud-based provider.

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