

Sustainable & Green Strategies

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How DSOs Can Implement a Balanced Sustainability Strategy

Explore different sustainability dimensions for dental support organizations and identify two factors that can help DSOs enable sustainable growth and standardize clinical excellence.

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key points

- 95% of business leaders believe sustainability is important.
- Sustainability means more than making environmentally conscious business decisions—it refers to any action that ensures the longevity of the DSO and the community, society, and environment it coexists with.
- Sustainability and profitability are not mutually exclusive for DSOs.
- Collecting and analyzing practice data can provide DSOs with visibility into opportunities for sustainable growth.
- In line with the standard for sustainable dentistry, holistic workflows replete with the training, materials, and support needed to render treatments can eliminate inefficiencies to reduce expenses and waste, save time, and produce more consistent outcomes.

According to a survey by Software AG, 95% of CEOs around the world consider sustainability to be a high priority. However, some 84% feel that sustainability initiatives take a backseat to commercial objectives in times of economic instability.

Decision-makers of dental service organizations can certainly understand these sentiments. DSOs face the seemingly insurmountable challenge of establishing and enforcing a policy of sustainable growth across a diverse network of practices.

Disjointed efforts to become a more sustainable organization can be a waste of time and resources. But a harmonized approach that balances all the demands of sustainability and profitability will benefit the organization in manifold ways.

Additionally, implementing effective solutions and working with partners who have set a course for a sustainable future can help DSOs to reach their own sustainability goals and reap the benefits.

Why Aim for Sustainability?

While the word ‘sustainability’ may bring to mind concepts such as waste reduction and shrinking a company’s carbon footprint, the term has much broader meaning and value. Sustainability refers to efforts made to benefit the current generation without having a negative impact on the next.

Sustainability therefore means sustaining a profitable company itself while preserving a place on Earth and among human society where it can continue to thrive.



It is easy to point to the fact that there is currently no real market consequence for lacking a sustainability strategy, but that could soon change. Even if the risk of penalty is not a significant impetus for establishing a sustainability policy, there are more important reasons for DSOs to consider how they can make their organizations more sustainable.

Sustainability has direct and indirect impacts on profitability. Sustainability and profitability are not mutually exclusive. In fact, profitability is an integral part of a healthy and sustainable organization. DSOs who are interested in growing their profitability do well to consider how they can become more sustainability-focused entities. By providing more sustainable oral care, DSOs could eliminate inefficiencies to improve the way treatments are delivered, resulting in the saving of time and resources.

Sustainability initiatives deliver essential immeasurable value. At its core, sustainability is about humanity, and DSOs are human-centered businesses. Sustainability initiatives include efforts to better support employees and customers of a business, and there are ample ways for DSOs to do so for their own employees, clinicians, and customers, as well as the communities they interact with. By establishing and publicizing a sustainability initiative, DSO can strengthen their brand and demonstrate their commitment to helping those affiliated with them to reach their goals. This can deliver immeasurable yet immense value for the company and its shareholders by helping to attract oral care consumers and clinicians to the organization.

Sustainability is essential to growth. Sustainability is becoming increasingly more important to the up-and-coming generations of investors and clinicians who will keep the organization running for many years to come. Younger generations of today are more concerned with issues like social equality and climate change, as these issues will have a more immediate impact on their lives, including their retirement plans. By pivoting their companies onto the path to sustainability, DSOs can essentially become magnets for the human resources they need to grow and thrive.

Sustainability inherently includes risk mitigation.

Part of being a sustainable corporation includes maintaining compliance with local regulations and legislation, as well as maintaining transparency in company finances.

The Two Keys to Sustainability

Incorporating sustainability into the company's values is only the first step. The real challenge lies in implementing the culture on a granular level among all practices in the network.

Sustainability in clinical dentistry is defined as the provision of preventative care and treatments of the highest quality to ensure long-lasting outcomes and to reduce the need for future interventions.

This approach could result in:

- an advanced patient experience
- an elevated employee value proposition (EVP)
- time savings which can improve overall access to oral care
- long-lasting oral and overall wellness that allows patients to enjoy a better quality of life

While sustainable dentistry is ideal, it is no simple feat to implement it in every practice in a DSO's estate.

There are two factors that can help DSOs effectively implement a balanced strategy that satisfies commercial objectives and supports digital transformation while helping organizations meet their goals for sustainable growth: data-driven decision making and comprehensive workflows.

Data-driven decision making. The ability to aggregate and analyze all types of data from across the network yields vital insights into opportunities to improve profitability, eliminate inefficiencies, leverage the potential of the current patient cohort, identify the potential to improve sustainability, and benchmark treatment outcomes and clinician performance. Data supplies DSO leadership with big picture-level visibility into the performance of the organization as a whole, enabling them to make informed decisions tailored to the unique needs and capacities of each practice in the network.



Comprehensive workflows. End-to-end workflows that provide all the training, materials, and support needed to render treatments can help clinicians to achieve consistently excellent outcomes while reducing appointment times. Such workflows also centralize supply ordering for specific procedures to reduce the costs and waste production typically associated with those treatments. This streamlined efficiency and economy, when enacted across multiple practices, can assist DSOs in reaching their goals for rendering sustainable dentistry to their customers.

Conclusion

Far from being a corporate buzzword or a nonessential luxury, sustainability is a must for DSOs seeking to build a long-lasting and thriving company now and for future generations. Instead of coming at the cost of profitability, efforts to become a more sustainable organization can have a positive impact on profitability. Sustainability initiatives can include enhanced data collection and analysis and comprehensive workflows that eliminate inefficiencies and reduce costs.

Straumann Group has developed sustainability initiatives that reflect our commitment to building a brighter future and partners with DSOs to help them execute solutions that give them greater insight into and control over the sustainable growth of their organizations.

Visit Straumann Group’s [resources page for DSOs](#) to learn how.

Straumann Group’s Sustainability Initiatives

Advance Oral Care

Help 10 million + smiles per year by 2030

Today: 4.4 million smiles

Provide 35% of our educational activities in low- and middle-income countries

Today: Goal Maintained

Empower People

50% of leadership positions to be held by women by 2026

Today: 39%

By 2026, at least 80% of our employees to report that they have good opportunities to learn and grow

Today: 76%

Caring for The Planet

100% renewable electricity by 2024

Today: 80%

Achieve net zero emissions by 2040

Today: Set target in 2022

references

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