



Advantage Practice Management Software

How it could help your practice in a down economy

Terry Fisk, Vetech Software

The current unstable economy is causing many animal owners to cut back on veterinary services, in turn causing many veterinarians to reconsider their practice management strategies. Automating your practice might seem like an untimely investment but in the long run the benefits of time management, consistency and increased revenue will outweigh the initial investment. If you are postponing automating your practice consider how Advantage practice management software can help during these difficult economic times.

Reality check – Assess your fee schedule and revenue to determine the current status of your business. This is often a time consuming manual process but a snap with the comprehensive reports included in the Advantage system. Among the many included Advantage reports the Practice Analyzer offers a three year snapshot reviewing practice production, provider production, fees, accounts receivable and new client statistics. Consider comparing the total number of invoices you processed for a given time frame. Has there been a decline in revenue, new clients or return visits? Are you seeing a consistent pattern (increase or decrease) in particular services? Do you need to adjust your fees for certain services or inventory to reflect the current economy? Increasing or decreasing fees individually is quick and easy with the global tool. Need other stats or date ranges? Not a problem. Retrieve daily, weekly, monthly and yearly data with any of the many included reports or create a report with the custom report feature.

Stock or not to stock - Does your inventory report match the on shelf quantities; are you constantly over stocked or under-stocked on certain items? Does inventory go out of date before it's used or dispensed? Monitor drugs and supplies received, sold and administered in hospital. Set up inventory re-order points to avoid overstocking or under stocking and prevent stagnant and out-of-date inventory. Advantage allows users to designate their desired maximum on hand, minimum on hand and actual quantities in stock. Upon invoicing, the system stock levels are automatically decreased and invoice prompts alert staff of low inventory items. Inventory reports indicate items that need to be re-ordered or are expired and controlled drugs are automatically logged. Advantage also records who checked-in, dispensed and invoiced products for increased quality and quantity control.

Reduce missed charges - Missed charges and incorrect pricing have a huge impact on a practice's bottom line. Missed income affects the money available for salaries, equipment purchases and building improvements. Develop a solid system to identify which items are missed most often by pulling charts at random and comparing the entries to the Advantage systems Daily Invoices Report. Not only will this identify which charges are frequently missed it will identify which staff member processed the invoice and identify veterinarians and staff who frequently omit charges and/or discount services.

Wrap it up - Bundling or grouping services allows several items (services and/or inventory) to be combined under one service code. Not only is this a big time saver; bundling also prevents missing items commonly included with certain medical and surgical procedures.

Review your reminder system – Manual reminder systems are labor intensive and often miss targeting more than just vaccinations for return visits. They also make it difficult to track the percentage of return visits generated by reminders. With Advantage users may define reminders for any service or inventory item, even multiple reminders for one code. Reminders are automatically triggered by invoicing the item thus freeing up staff time and improving on the percentage of return visits. Review reminder reports for non-responsive clients and follow up with a second card, E-mail, letter or telephone call. Consider sending seasonal reminders or for follow-up blood work, specific species and services or refills on prescription medications and diets. Create reminder messages that reflect the benefits of the recommended service or your concern for the health and welfare of the patient.

Follow up – Reflect your concern for the health and well being of your patients. Call, e-mail or mail clients for post-surgical or post illness progress reports or for pets on chronic medications. Remind them to schedule a follow-up examination or before prescriptions are renewed. Contacting clients at least 30 to 60 days in advance will provide ample time for an exam and/or blood work before their prescription runs out. Advantage allows users to define recalls for any service or medication. Like reminders, recalls are automatically generated upon invoicing a particular service or inventory item.

Get a grip on Accounts Receivables – The best policy is to collect from clients at the time of service. However, when this is not policy or possible having up-to-date account balance information is invaluable when clients call or arrive for an appointment or the doctor goes out on a call. Advantage provides the client's current to 90 day balances and three year purchase summary. User defined prompts may be created for those who have special payment arrangements, are severely delinquent or sent to collection. Monthly statements are professional and legible, itemizing client transactions (including payments, service charges, sales tax and discounts) by invoice date or patient.

Reduce staff expenses – Manage employee discounts and overtime before resorting to laying off staff members. Not only does automating free-up staff time, reports offer valuable information on discounts applied to employee invoices and overtime hours. The integrated TimeTracker employee time clock tracks employee hours allowing the staff to clock in and out on any workstation. Administrator features include hourly and overtime reports and editing of hours.

Target your market - It makes sense to control expenses but also to market your services and maintain communication with existing clients. Consider marketing specific or specialty products and services by creating monthly promotions or newsletters. Utilize the Advantage query and document merge features and mail or e-mail your custom documents to your all clients or a target audience.

Generate new clients - Create a customer referral reward program or contest. Advantage allows users to create custom post card messages. Hand these out to clients to pass on to friends and family and easily track the responses with Advantage's client referral reports. Reward new clients and/or existing clients who refer the most with a gift, discounted or free service.

Cut the clutter – A good deal of wasted time, space and disorganization is associated with paper medical records. Staff members are often consumed with pulling, filing and looking for miss-filed records or deciphering illegible hand writing. Typing or hand writing file and prescription labels, cage cards and patient id tags takes up even more valuable time. Advantage allows users to reduce the paper load by starting as or evolve into a paperless or paper-light system. Client and patient records are legible and easy to retrieve from any computer in the practice or remote computer. Medical history, lab results and images are easy to enter and single pages or the entire record may be quickly printed, e-mailed or sent by FAX for any date or range of dates. No more photocopying medical records, hand writing vaccination and sterilization certificates, prescription, file or cage labels or dealing with space consuming file cabinets. Labels, certificates and medical records automatically insert client and/or patient data in a professional, easy to read format.

Get Creative – The time saving and revenue increasing possibilities are unlimited utilizing the many features, function and reports within the Advantage practice management system. If you have questions we are here to help. Simply contact a Vetech representative for a personal telephone or online consultation.