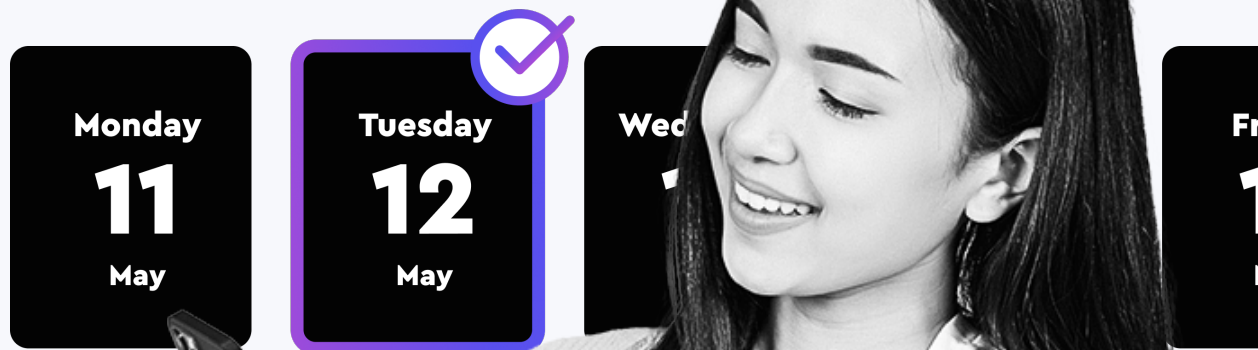


# The Pros and Cons of Online Booking



A Practical  
Guide to Modern  
Scheduling for  
Dental Practices

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# Why This Guide Exists

Running a dental practice today is more complex than ever. Patients expect instant communication, self-service options, and 24/7 accessibility—especially from their healthcare providers. Meanwhile, practices are trying to do more with less, balancing the needs of patients, staff, and daily operations.

## One of the biggest modern shifts? Online booking.

Adding an online scheduling system might feel like handing over the keys to your front desk, but here's the truth: the way people book appointments is changing—fast. Over two-thirds of patients now say they prefer online booking over calling. But we get it. You've worked hard to build strong patient relationships, and change feels risky.

## So, is it worth it?

Let's break it down.

Running a dental practice today is more complex than ever. Patients expect instant communication, self-service options, and 24/7 accessibility



## The Pros of Online Booking

# Patients Love It— and Expect It

### Our take:

Online booking gives patients what they want: convenience, control, and flexibility. And when patients are happy, they show up, they stay loyal, and they refer their friends.

### What the research says:

**67% of patients say they'd rather schedule online than call the office.**

**68% say they're more likely to choose providers who offer it.**

Source: Gozio Health

### Why it matters:

Your front desk might be amazing—but even they can't answer calls at 10 p.m. When patients want to schedule after hours or while juggling kids and work, online booking gives them an easy win—and gives your practice a competitive edge.

### In real life:

Instead of losing patients to the practice down the street with online scheduling, you can offer the same modern experience while still providing your trademark personal care.

The Pros of Online Booking

# It Helps You Fill Your Schedule and Reduce Gaps

## Our take:

Online booking helps you control your schedule without sitting on hold or chasing voicemails. And it fills cancellations faster than a phone tree ever could.

## What the research says:

**Practices using online booking fill more last-minute cancellations and open slots than those using phone-only methods.**

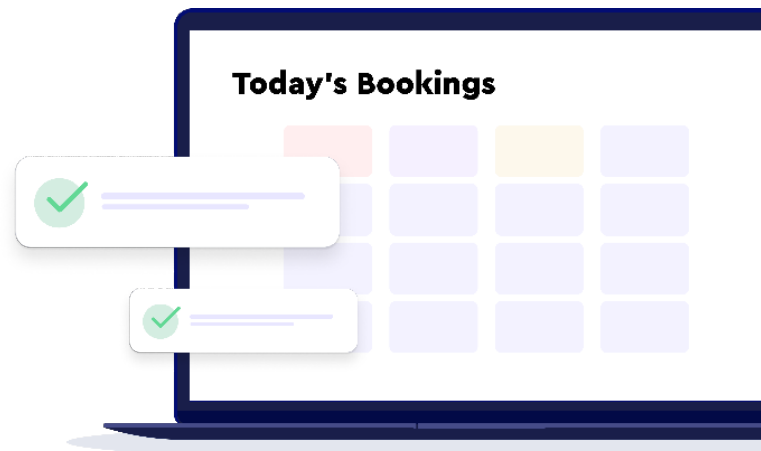
Source: LinkedIn

## Why it matters:

You've got a cancellation at 2 p.m. and a patient browsing your website at 10 a.m.—why not make the match? Online booking increases the odds they'll grab that opening.

## In real life:

Even a single filled gap each week adds up to thousands of dollars annually. More efficient scheduling = less wasted chair time = more revenue.



The Pros of Online Booking

# It Lightens the Load on Your Front Desk

## Our take:

Online booking doesn't replace your front desk team—it helps them breathe. It frees up time to focus on patients in the office instead of being buried in phone calls and calendars.

## What the research says:

**Automating appointment scheduling can reduce call volume by up to 50%, allowing your staff to focus on in-office experiences.**

Source: Industry averages, LinkedIn case studies

## Why it matters:

Burnout is real. When your team spends all day repeating "How about 2 p.m. on Thursday?", it slows down everything else—insurance, billing, check-in, you name it.

## In real life:

Your rockstar front desk team member gets to be just that—greeting patients, answering important questions, and supporting the clinical team instead of playing calendar tag all day.



The Pros of Online Booking

# Patients Can Book Anytime—Even at Midnight

## Our take:

You might close the office at 5, but your patients don't. Online booking lets your practice be "open" 24/7 without you working overtime.

## What the research says:

**A majority of online bookings happen after hours—when your phones are off.**

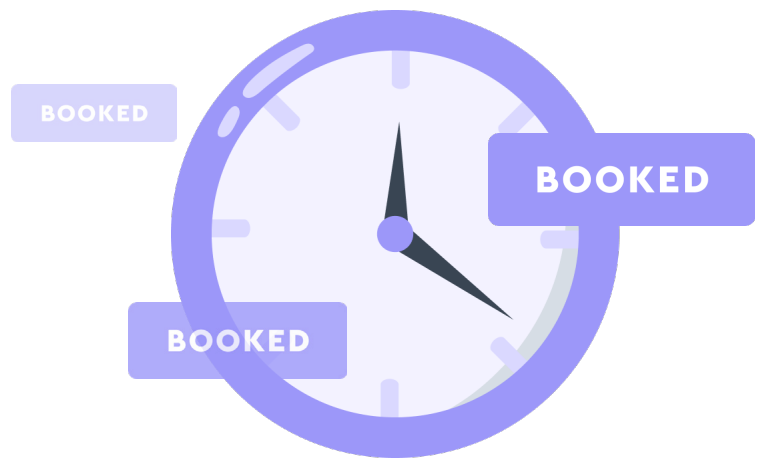
Source: Dentli.io

## Why it matters:

Patients who work long hours, travel, or manage families need flexibility. Giving them a way to schedule at their convenience increases the chance they'll follow through.

## In real life:

Imagine waking up to three new appointments—booked overnight, no voicemails, no follow-ups needed



**The Cons of Online Booking**

# What If I Lose Control of My Schedule?

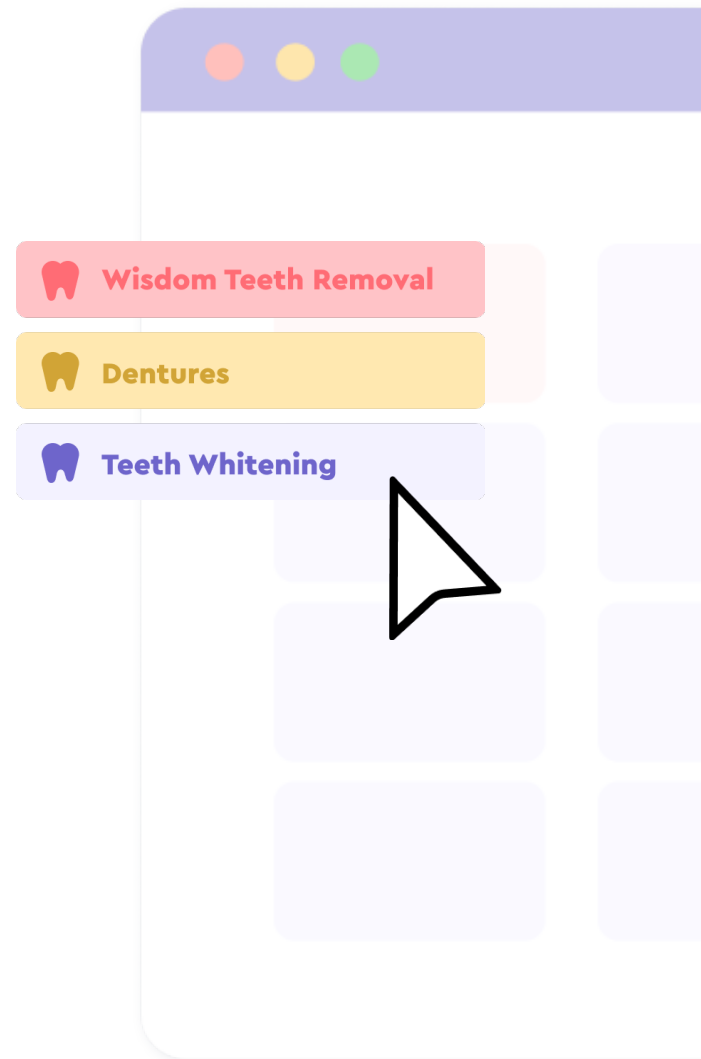
## Our take:

Let's be honest—this is the number one fear office managers have when they hear "online booking." You've spent years building a finely tuned schedule, balancing hygiene appointments, high-value procedures, last-minute cancellations, and doctor preferences. The idea of patients clicking their way into your day without guardrails? Terrifying.

But here's the truth: modern online booking software isn't a free-for-all. You're not handing over the keys—you're setting the rules. The right system gives you control over who can book, what they can book, when they can book, and with whom. Think of it as letting patients request a time within the boundaries you define—not giving them a blank calendar.

## Why it matters:

You know your practice rhythm better than anyone—when the schedule needs to flex, and when it needs to stay tight. Online booking should protect that flow, not disrupt it.



**The Cons of Online Booking**

# Not All Patients Are Comfortable Online

## Our take:

Some older patients or less tech-savvy individuals still prefer calling. That's okay. Online booking should be an option—not a replacement for human connection.

## Why it matters:

You might have patients who don't use smartphones or aren't confident with digital forms. But don't let that stop you from offering the option to others.

## In real life:

Keep your phone lines open, but give younger or busier patients the option to click instead of call.



The Cons of Online Booking

# Integration Can Be a Headache (At First)

## Our take:

Yes, connecting a new system to your PMS takes effort—but it's a one-time lift that pays off long-term.

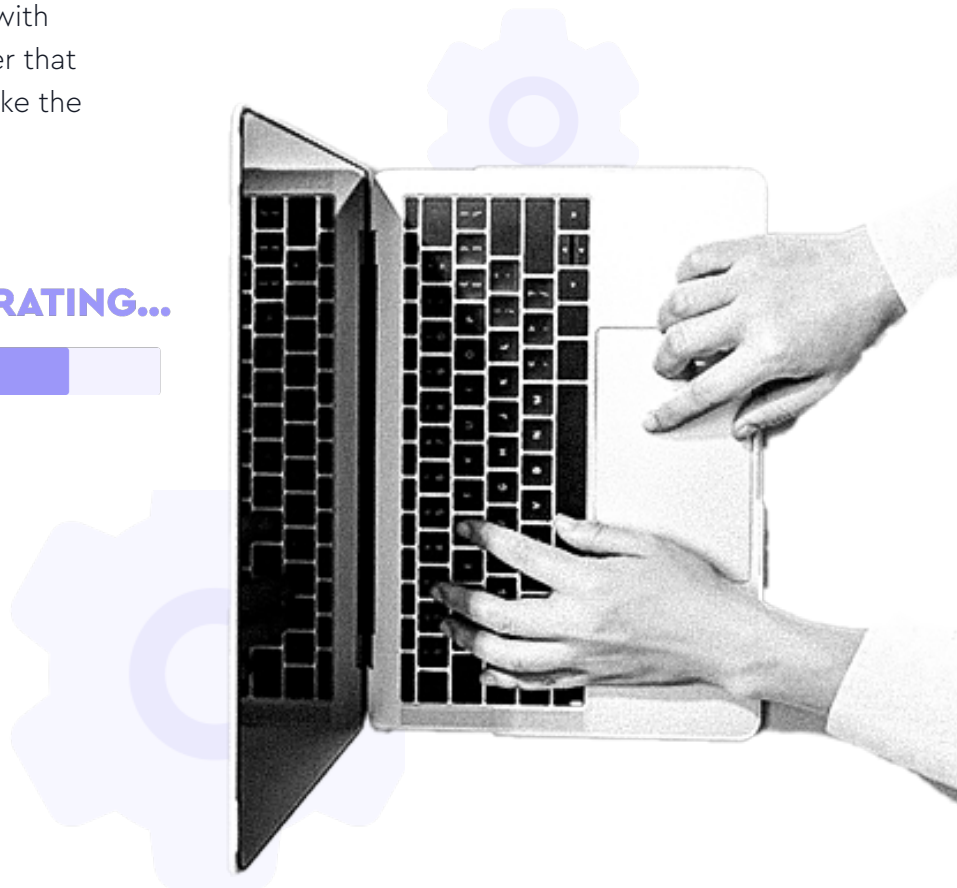
## Why it matters:

Not every online booking tool plays nicely with your current software. You'll need a provider that offers strong integration and support to make the transition smooth.

## In real life:

When it works, it works. Sync your schedule, avoid double-bookings, and manage everything from one place.

INTEGRATING...



# How Smart Software Helps You Stay in Charge

## Set appointment types and time blocks.

Only want new patient consults on Tuesday afternoons? No problem. Want to block off 8–10am for production-heavy work? You can.

## Define booking windows.

Allow same-day bookings? Or require 48-hour notice? It's your call. No one sneaks onto your calendar last minute unless you say so.

## Control provider schedules.

Bookings can follow provider availability—so no one ends up triple-booked or booked during surgery blocks.

## Customize patient eligibility.

Limit online booking to new patients, returning patients, or specific procedures. You can even require pre-approval for high-value or complex cases.

## Keep final approval if you want it.

Some practices allow patients to request a slot that's held until the front desk confirms. You still maintain the final say.

Here's an example of how online booking can make it EASIER to control your schedule:

Let's say you're an office manager with a full hygiene schedule, a doctor who likes to do crowns in the morning, and three team members who rotate lunch breaks. You don't want patients booking a crown at 12:30 or filling up hygiene with low-priority checkups during production hours.

## With the right system:

- You can block out 12–2pm for lunch coverage.
- Only show crown appointment slots from 8–11am.
- Restrict new patient bookings to Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Route specific online requests through a front desk approval queue.

**BOTTOM  
LINE**

**Online booking doesn't take control away from you. It gives you a better system to manage it. You'll spend less time juggling your calendar and more time keeping the day running smoothly—on your terms.**

# How to Add Online Booking to Your Website

## *(Without Breaking a Sweat)*

You don't need to be a tech wizard or hire an expensive developer. Here's how to get it done in five simple steps:

- 1 Choose a Booking Tool**

Pick a provider that integrates with your existing dental software like Pbn or others with direct PMS (Practice Management Software) APIs.
- 2 Customize Your Availability**

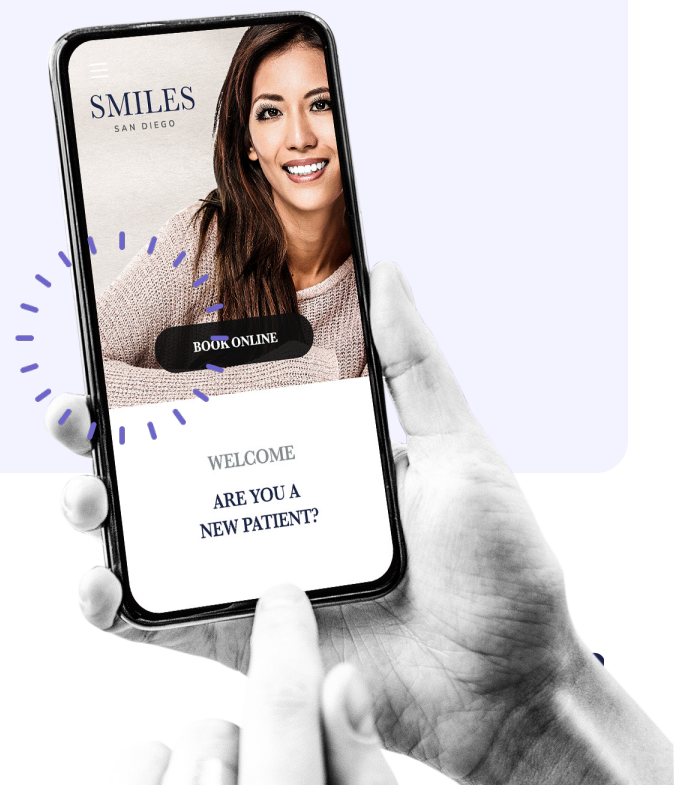
Set which appointment types are bookable online—new patients only? Hygiene? Emergencies?
- 3 Add the Widget to Your Website**

Your vendor will give you a link or code snippet to add to your homepage. It's usually copy-paste simple.

- 4 Test It Out**

Run through a booking yourself. Make sure the flow is clear and confirmation messages look professional.
- 5 Promote It to Patients**

Add a "Book Online" button to your email footer, social bios, and appointment reminder texts.



# Conclusion: Modernization Is a Must—Here's How to Get Started

Here's the bottom line: patient expectations are changing, and practices that offer online booking will be better positioned to attract and retain patients. It doesn't mean abandoning what works—it means giving your patients more options and your team more bandwidth.

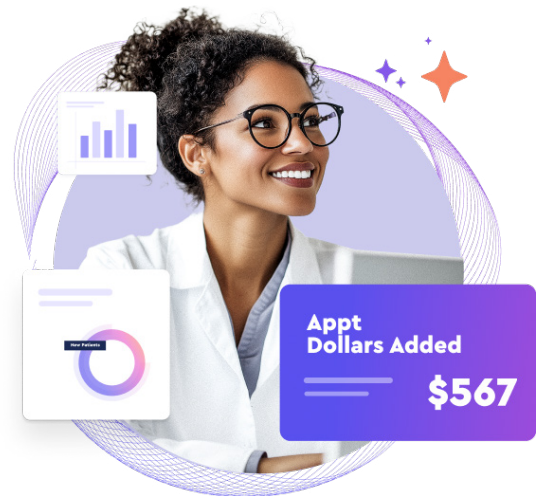
## If you're still on the fence, start small:

- Survey your patients about their interest in online booking.
- Pilot it with hygiene appointments or new patient consults.
- Talk to vendors who offer flexible, integrated solutions.
- Start with software that scales with you—no need to go all-in from day one.

Online booking isn't just a nice-to-have—it's the modern foundation of a future-proof practice.

Ready to take the first step? Make a list of what you want in a system, then schedule demos and ask how they support office managers like you—not just tech-savvy IT teams.

You've got this. And your future patients will thank you for it.





Practice by Numbers (PbN) is an end-to-end software solution for dental practices that eliminates the need for multiple, disconnected tools. This unified platform streamlines scheduling, patient engagement, revenue cycle management, and performance analytics.

PbN helps dental practices reduce no-shows, optimize insurance workflows, and ensure profitability, all from one easy-to-use dashboard. No more jumping between systems, no more guesswork—just smooth, automated workflows that make running a practice easier, faster, and more profitable.

Thousands of dental practices trust PbN to do more with less, save time, and boost revenue—all while delivering an exceptional patient experience. Because when the office runs smoothly, everyone wins.

For more information, visit [PracticeNumbers.com](https://PracticeNumbers.com)

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