

## 10 TIPS TO BOOST >>>>

# your medical tech savvy

**1 Determine what usability means to you**  
The most important feature of any technology system is your ability to use it. If it takes longer to do a task electronically than on paper, chances are you have the wrong system.

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**2 Get broadband**  
A lack of high-speed Internet service can make EMRs, e-mail, e-prescriptions and health information exchanges even more frustrating than paper-based systems.

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**3 Take advantage of tax deductions for IT purchases**  
The purchase price and monthly fees associated with information technology used in your practice — including smartphones and laptops — likely qualify for tax deductions. Talk to your tax professional for specifics.

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**4 Invest in denial management software for cleaner claims**  
Several systems, Web-based and add-ons to practice management billing software, can review insurance claims automatically. Submitting cleaner claims helps eliminate denials and ensure timely payments. Some systems also use alerts to ensure that appropriate billing codes are used.

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**5 Evaluate responsiveness of potential vendors**  
Vendors should be willing to sign a contract that includes strict timetables for responsiveness, penalties for unresponsiveness and contingencies if the business is sold or goes under. Ask practices similar in size and scope about their vendor experiences.

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**6 Automate the informed consent process**  
Electronic tools, such as videos and interactive Web sites, can help educate patients before a procedure, save physician time — and reduce liability. Automated processes also can eliminate staff time spent maintaining paper forms.

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**7 Don't jump on newest technology hype**  
New devices such as the iPhone create buzz, but early adopters quickly find things that need improving. Waiting for the second version of a new technology often can produce a more user-friendly experience.

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**8 Don't be so quick to delete e-mails**  
E-mails between physicians and patients can be considered part of medical records. E-mails with information about treatment plans or care need to be archived — manually or through an electronic medical records system — for the period required by your state.

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**9 Get online and ranked high in search engines**  
Being well-placed in a Google search can help attract new patients. Participating in online communities or social networking, and including your Web site in your tagline, will get you noticed by search engines and help build your online reputation.

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**10 Keep your eyes on the patient**  
Patients get annoyed if you're asking questions and typing, rather than looking at them. To avoid a technological barrier, set up the screen so patients can see it, and invite patients to look at the information you're entering.

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