



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

New postage rates effective May 14th. I was just celebrating because I was about to use up my last roll of 37 cent stamps. And now the post office is raising their rates again. At least this time they are selling a new "forever stamp" that will eliminate all those 2 cent stamps I've been having to use.

The new postage rate for the first ounce goes up to 41 cents. Second and third ounce drops to 17 cents. Four ounce pieces will cost \$1.31 to mail plus 17 cents for each additional ounce up to 13 ounces. Postcards will increase to 26 cents.

Theft. I heard that another dentist near me had their computers stolen recently. Are you prepared if that should happen to you? Last year a client had to send a letter to his patients warning them of possible identity theft when his server was stolen.

Backups. I got a call from a local dentist because all their data "went away." This office was not enrolled in support with their practice management software company. It was actually a fairly easy fix as all that I needed to do was re-index their databases. But what was scary, was that their one backup disk was not readable. Are you backing up your data every day? Have you tried restoring your data? Do you have everything you need to access your business critical information if your server was destroyed or stolen?

Vista. I've been getting a lot of questions about Microsoft's new Windows operating system. First, verify that your existing software will run on Vista. Many dental practice management software systems are still recommending Windows XP Professional. I strongly discourage upgrading operating systems on an existing computer because it's usually not cost effective. It often makes more sense to get new hardware with the operating system pre-installed. If you are buying a new computer with Vista, I recommend the "Business" version. Note that Vista has some pretty extensive hardware requirements:

- a. **Certified Hardware:** All hardware should be Microsoft certified to run Windows Vista Business or Ultimate.
- b. **Memory:** 1 GB RAM (Dentrix is recommending 3 GB, which seems like a lot to me)
- c. **Media:** DVD Drive.
- d. **Dedicated Graphics Card:** DirectX 9/3D capable, WDDM driver, 128-256 MB RAM, Pixel Shader 2.0
- e. **Processor:** 2.4 GHz Intel processor (better is recommended).
- f. **Disk Space:** At least 20 GB of available space (much more depending on workstation usage).

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