

What do the numbers say? Are Patients Keeping Appointments?

By:
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Overview

This is the third in a series of articles that speak about how you can use some high technology and some not so high technology tools and techniques to help you uncover and recover profitability in your practice. For readers who wish to get Part I and II, please write to article1and2@sikkasoft.com. In the first article we discussed the four reclaims: Profitability, patients, control and peace of mind. We discussed fee optimization, patient demographics analysis, patient reactivations for those who left among other things.

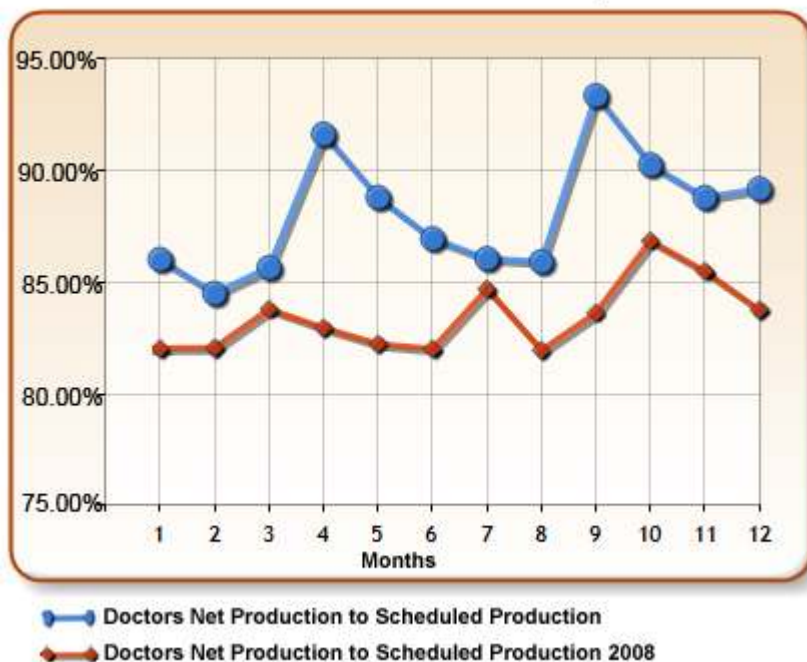
In this article we will see what the real time trends are telling us about the treatments we present, the recall effectiveness, the production per visit and production of dentists and hygienists. We will discuss how 2009 is showing some positive signs in the last 3 months. The data presented here is through November 30 2009. More recent data can be requested at www.nationaltrends.sikkasoft.com, our real time national trends website. The signup is free and so is data from 2007 and 2008.

Sikka Software [Dental Practice Optimizer Lite Free Trial](#) helps you achieve these objectives. It installs automatically and reads data seamlessly from all major practice management systems and financial systems in the US and Canada.

Article

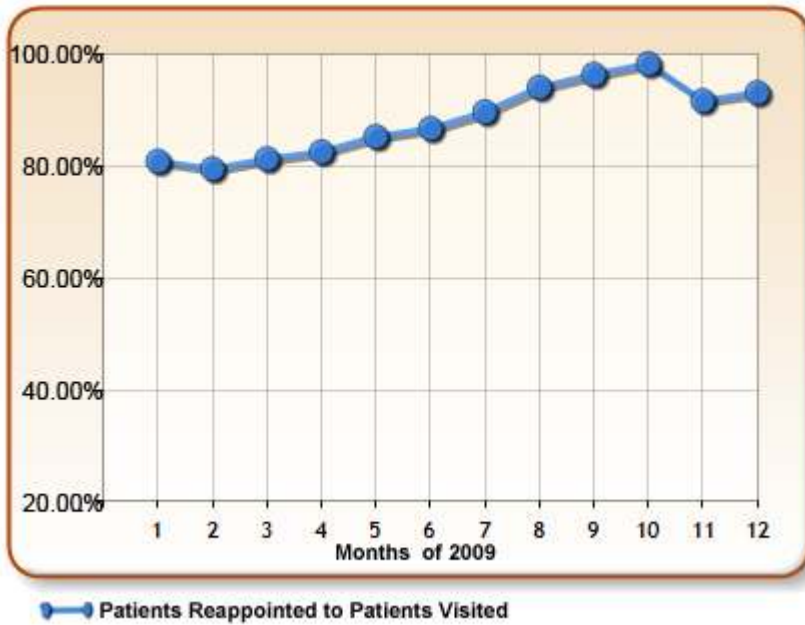
Sikka Software Corporation is tracking over 6,000 dental installations and hundreds of business and clinical variables in real time. The results are amazing for the year 2009. Dentists actual production to scheduled production is tracking better than 2008. This shows more accurate treatment planning, better treatment acceptance and a clear confidence increase among US dental patients.

2009 Shows better actual to scheduled production



Here is more information that corroborates this trend. More patients are accepting reappointments. Patients reappointed is seeing a steady increase from the beginning of the year.

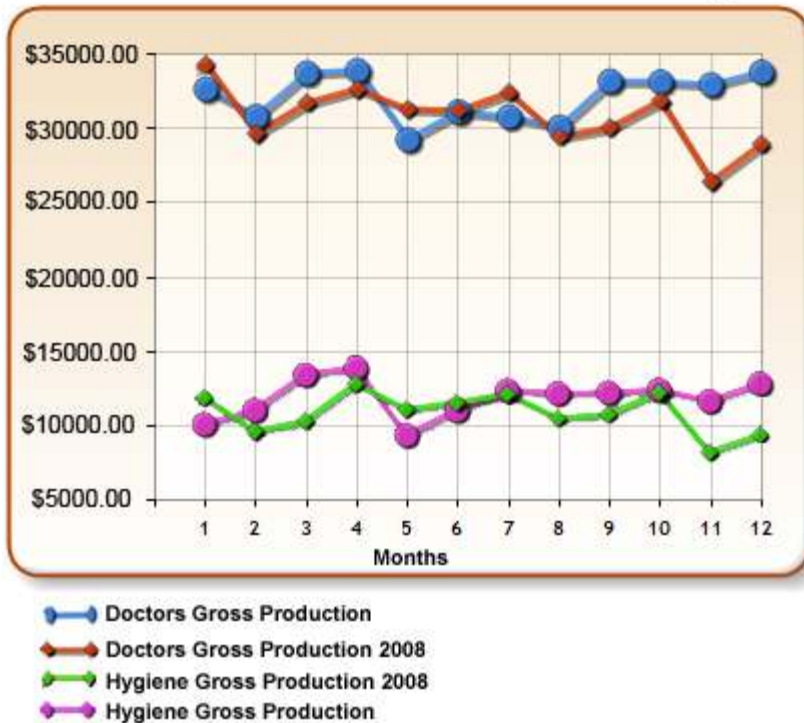
Scheduling Team is succeeding!!



DOCTOR'S GROSS PRODUCTION

Here is perhaps the best news of all. Doctor's gross production in 2009 in the last 3 months is rebounding and after a slower summer is at better levels than 2008! Hygienists gross production is trending at the same levels and is steady.

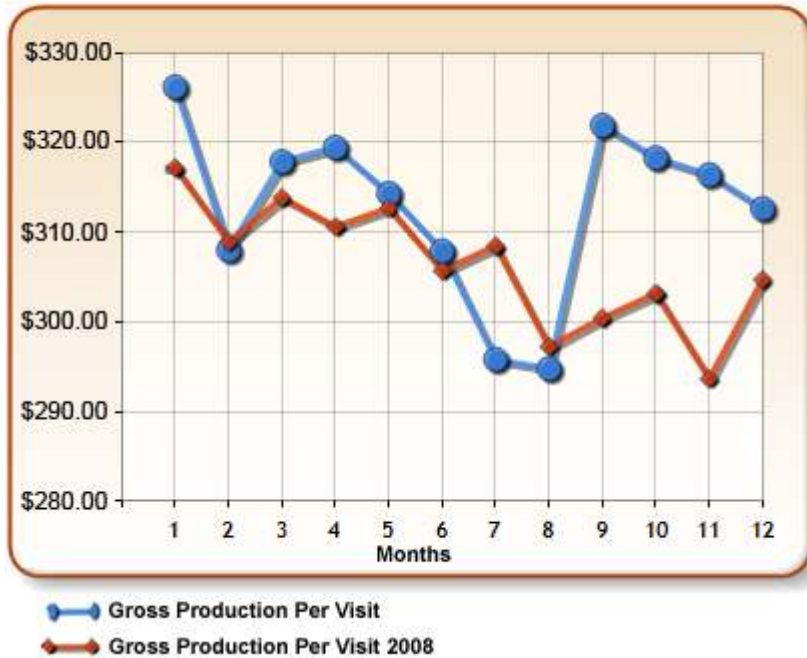
Doctors Gross Production in 2009 Rebounding!



GROSS PRODUCTION PER VISIT

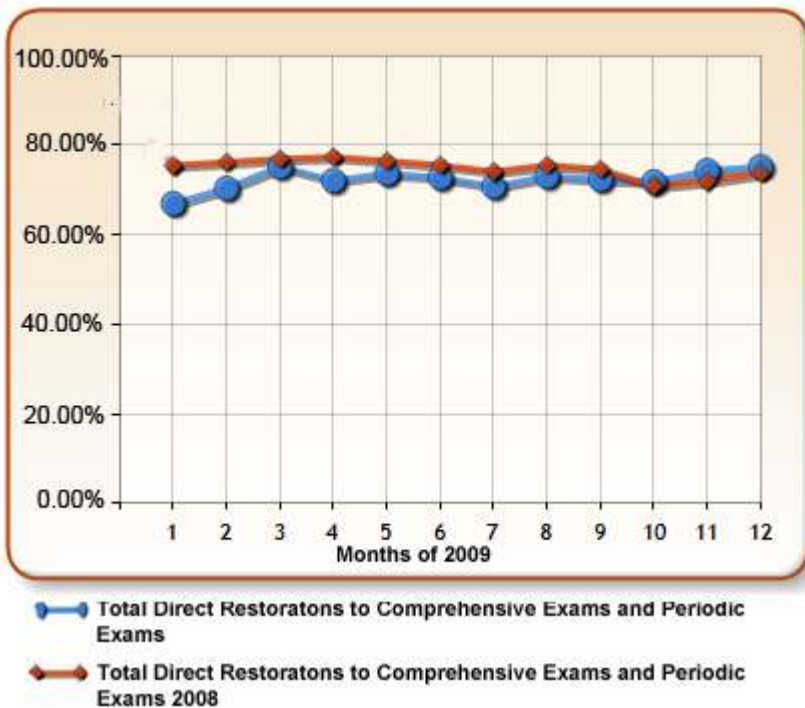
For a while 2009 seemed to be following the downward trend of 2008 for gross production per visit. The last 3 months have bucked that and actually shown a very healthy rise. This is again due to better acceptance of treatment plans by patients and better execution by the dental offices.

Gross Production Per Visit is Rebounding!!



So why is the gross production per visit going up? The bigger ticket items are making a comeback!! Direct restorations are generally insurance paid and are steady throughout the year, but notice the Indirect restorations as a percentage of comprehensive exams!! The last three months are singing a beautiful song!!

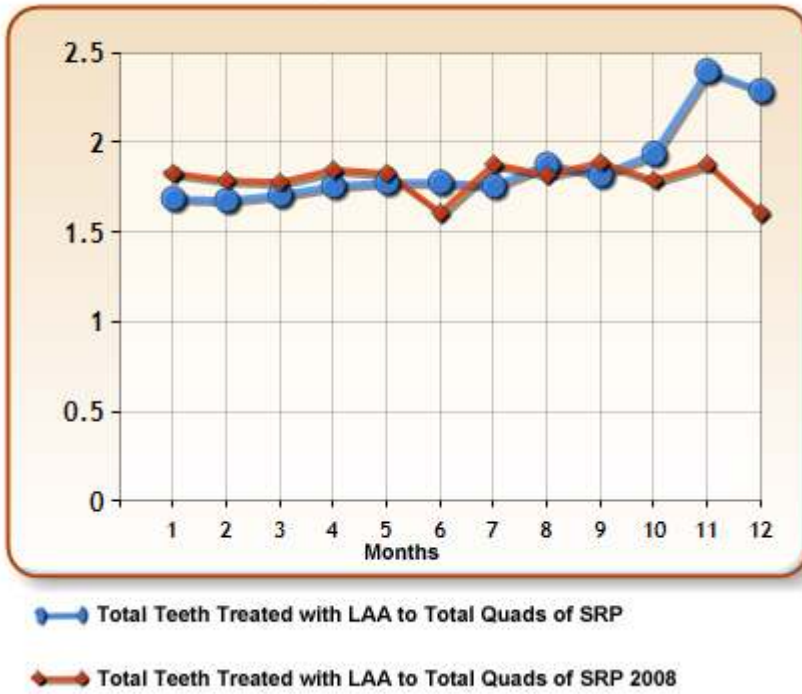
Bigger Ticket Items Are Coming Back!



THE HYGIENE STORY

There is mixed news on this front. Locally Applied Antimicrobials (example Arestin® and others) are being used more and more on SRP patients. Average has now exceeded 2 teeth for total quads of SRP.

More Locally Applied Antimicrobials!!



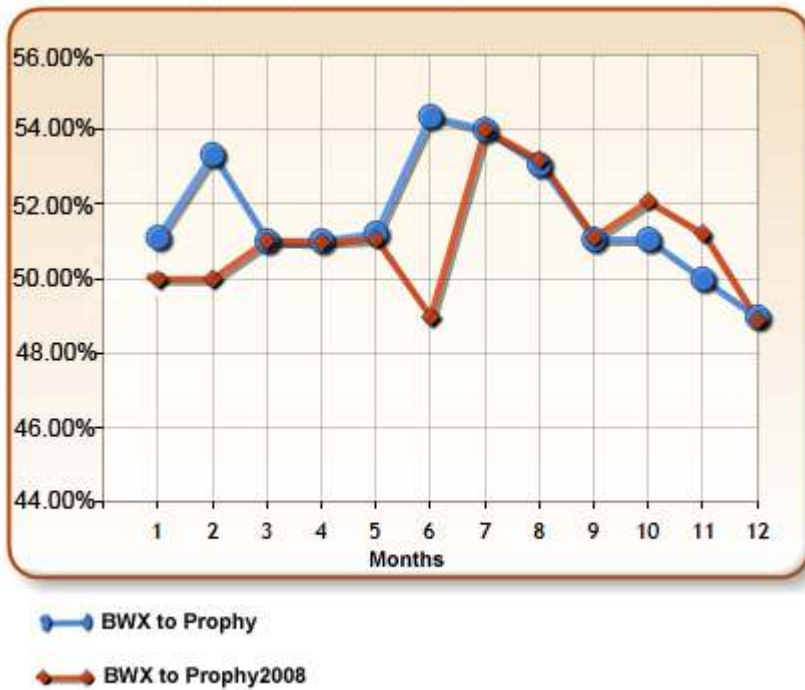
But SRPs to Prophylaxis have lost momentum in the second half of 2009. In addition, it is at lower levels than it was at the same time in 2008.

SRP to Prophylaxis has lost momentum in second half of 2009



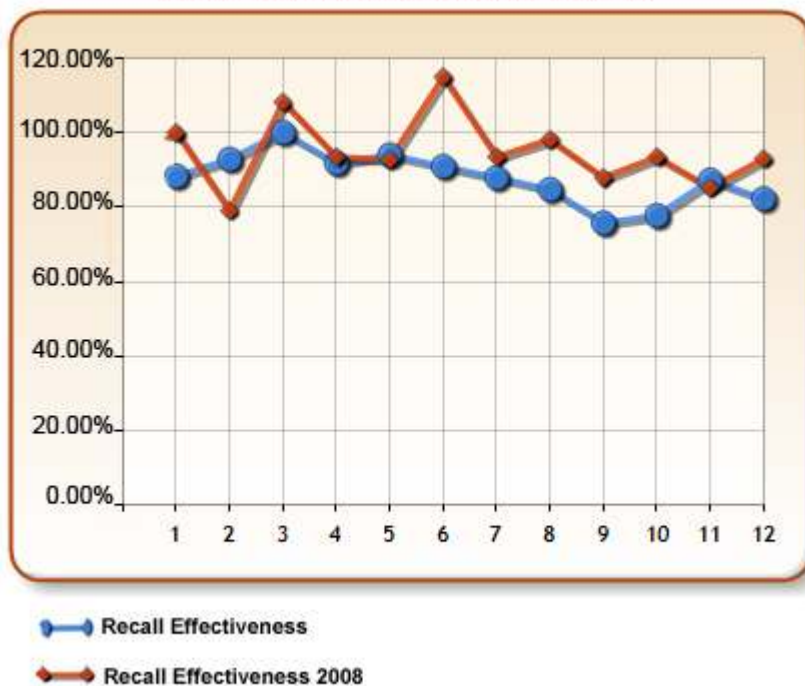
Another interesting trend is the Bite Wing X-rays to Prophy ratio is dropping and is now lower than 2008 numbers.

Bite Wing X-Rays to Prophys ratio is dropping



Finally, an interesting observation on recall effectiveness: After languishing at below 2008 numbers for most of the year, it is finally starting to build and has now caught up with the 2008 levels. All these are positive affirmations that more and more patients are keeping appointments. Lets keep our fingers crossed and hope some of these cautiously optimistic signs continue and bring cheer this holiday season to the dental industry.

Recall Effectiveness is catching up



This is a series of articles that share with you what you can do to help identify each element of your practice and use tools such as [Dental Practice Optimizer Lite Free Trial](#) by Sikka Software let you do that in conjunction with your practice management system and your financial system. Keep reading and keep that feedback coming please. vijay@sikkasoft.com



Vijay Sikka is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Sikka Software Corporation. He is a healthcare informatics expert with more than 18 years of software development and quality experience including large scale projects with National Institutes of Health, Glaxo Smith Kline, Roche and UCSF affiliates. In 1996, Vijay founded IBrain Software, Inc., a business intelligence company, and served as its CEO until its acquisition in 1998 by Entigen Corporation, that later became part of Roche.

Vijay holds an M.S. degree from Syracuse University New York, pursued graduate studies in neurosciences at Stanford University, and is a Registered Continuing Education Provider with the Dental Board of California. He is a speaker in quality conferences and participates in W3C standards groups. Vijay's book on Maximizing ROI on Software Development was published by Taylor and Francis in 2004 and is available in Sony ebooks and Amazon Kindle electronic edition. [Click here](#) to visit Amazon and purchase the book.