

## Digital Dental Benchmarking What do the numbers say?

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### Overview

This article speaks 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 other articles, please write to [benchmarking@sikkasoft.com](mailto:benchmarking@sikkasoft.com). In the past articles we have discussed four reclaims: Profitability, patients, control and peace of mind. We have also discussed fee optimization, patient demographics analysis, and patient reactivations.

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 2010 is showing some mixed signs in the last 3 months. The data presented here is through June 7 2010. More recent data can be requested at [www.nationaltrends.sikkasoft.com](http://www.nationaltrends.sikkasoft.com), our real time national trends website. The signup is free.

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 6,400 opt-in dental installations with many in Canada and hundreds of business and clinical variables in real time. These are only rollups and summaries without any identifier information. The results are interesting for the year 2010. Patient gross production per visit has been steadily declining and has now reached \$300 average value. This is also tracking approximately \$75 below the 2009 numbers. This may be indicating of a weaker treatment acceptance and lack of financial resources among the dental patients.



Dental practices are stepping up the reappointment efforts and the credit goes to the front office and scheduling teams. 2010 has seen consistently higher patients reappointed compared to patients visited in 2009.



Here is more information that corroborates the trend that practices are doing everything to increase treatments diagnosed. After seeing nearly identical levels of X-rays to Comprehensive Exams between 2009 and 2010, May and June seem to have 2010 numbers breaking away and increasing further compared to 2009.



Recall effectiveness is showing a sharp drop. This is very concerning and so lets look into this in a little more detail.

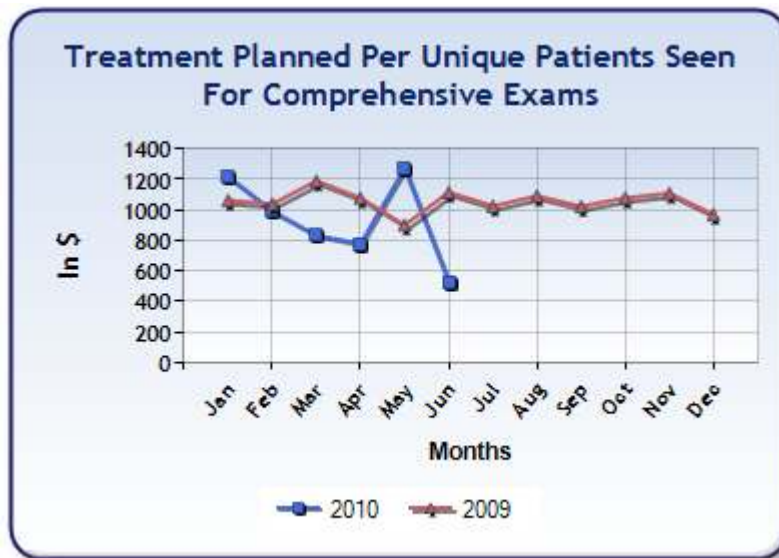
*Recalls: Number of patients who had D0120 and D0120.1 procedures performed on them in last 6 months. For Canadian practices equivalent CDA (Canadian Dental Association) codes are used.*

*Recalls Potential: Number of patients who had D0120 or D0150 procedures performed on them in the last 6 month excluding current month.*

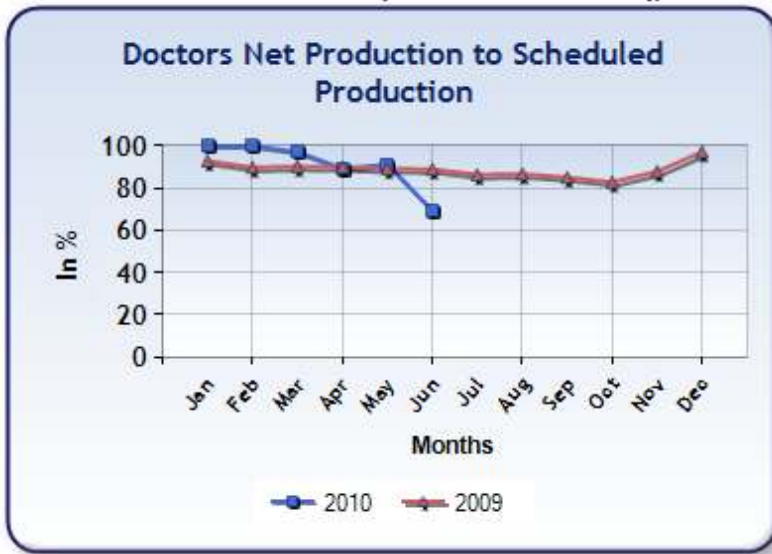
*Recall Effectiveness: (Recalls / Recall Potential) x 100*



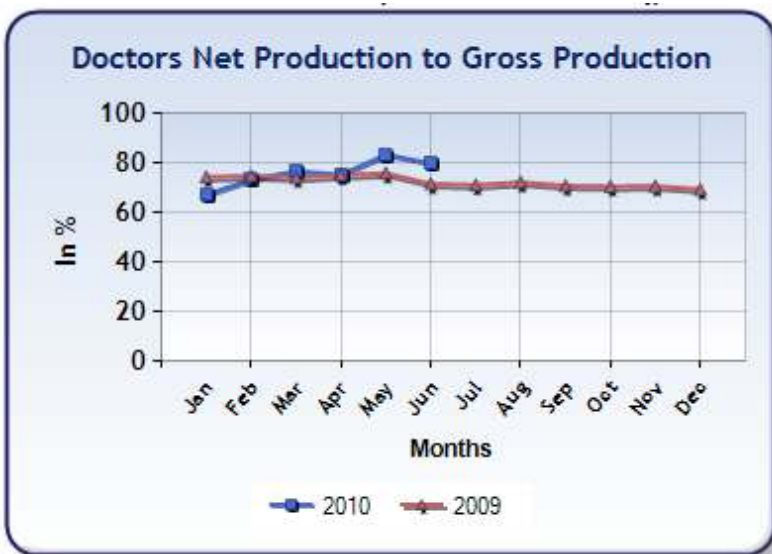
Another trend that is not tracking very well is the Treatment Planned Per Unique Patients Seen. After seeing a nice increase in January compared to 2009, only May witnessed higher treatment planned per unique patients seen. Rest of the months in 2010 have tracked below the corresponding monthly 2009 levels.



Doctors net production to scheduled production was tracking near 100% during the first quarter of 2010 and higher than 2009 but in the second quarter has lost a little steam and dropped to about the levels of 2009. The dip in the month of June for 2010 should be ignored because it is not a complete month's data.



The interesting story is in the Doctors Net Production to Doctors Gross Production. The increase in 2010 indicates that providers are not handing out too much discounts and practices are getting better in more accurately managing net.



# New Patients to Patient Visits

Here is perhaps the best news of all. There is an increase in new patient activity.



Compared to the new patient numbers from 2009, 2010 is improving. February saw the highest number of new patients and June promises to be even better.

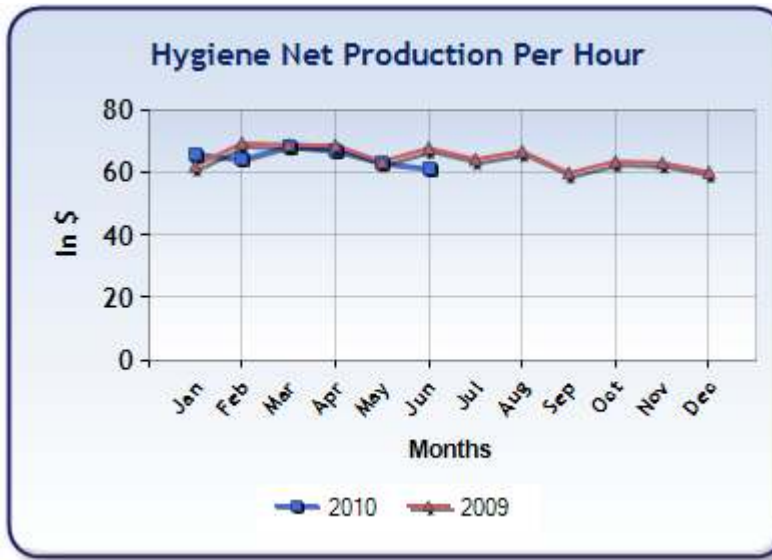
Direct restorations are generally insurance paid and are below the 2009 numbers indicating less of them are being done or billed throughout the year. This could indicate a potential problem in collection in the coming months. The indirect restorations as a percentage of comprehensive exams are tracking fairly steady compared to 2009.





## THE HYGIENE STORY

There is mixed news on this front. Hygiene net production per hour is flat and above \$60 per hour. This is similar to 2009. That is good news considering the earlier discussion on drop in the recall effectiveness.



Locally Applied Antimicrobials (example Arestin® and others) are losing momentum in the first half of 2010.



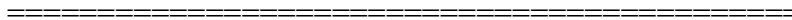
But SRPs to Prophy ratio in adultsthat hadtrailed in the first quarter of 2010 compared to 2009 is making a comeback.



Bite Wing X-rays to Prophy ratio is tracking at the same level as 2009 numbers and is lower than 2008 numbers.



Lets keep our fingers crossed and hope some of thenegative trends turn around and we will keep an eye out for optimistic signs in the upcoming summer months and report back to you.



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. This tool auto reads from your practice management system and your financial system. Keep reading and keep that feedback coming please. [vijay@sikkasoft.com](mailto:vijay@sikkasoft.com)



Vijay Sikka is the President and Chief Executive Officer of 6 years old Sikka Software Corporation. He is a healthcare informatics expert with more than 20 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 UniversityNew York, pursued graduate studies in neurosciences at StanfordUniversity, and is a Registered Continuing Education Provider with the Dental Board of California. He is a speaker in healthcare conferences and has written in several trade publications. 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.