State of Dentistry 2025

Annual Benchmarks and Industry Trends

dental intelligence

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Whenever you're scrolling through social media, catching up with colleagues, or attending industry events, you're probably hearing the concerns: a challenging economy, more patients rescheduling, and practices struggling to attract new patients.

But the data tells a more nuanced story. Dentistry isn't declining — it's evolving. And while some aspects of running a practice are becoming more challenging, adaptation and innovation are creating new paths to success.

Here's what analyzing data from over 10,000 practices has shown us.

Year-Over-Year Industry Benchmarks

	2023			2024		
	Bottom 10%	Average	Top 10%	Bottom 10%	Average	Top 10%
Pre-Appointment %	30%	54%	75%	29%	54%	75%
New Patient Re-Appointment %	14%	48%	70%	21%	48%	69%
Patient Growth %	-11%	2%	19%	-10.7%	1.8%	19.2%
Collection % (Net Production)	89%	100%	101%	93%	102%	104%
Hygiene Pre-Appointment %	18%	59%	78%	31%	60%	80%
Hygiene Re-Appointment %	39%	84%	93%	61%	81%	94%
Perio Patient % Age 30+	1%	12%	32%	1.3%	11.7%	27%
Average Restorative Presented Per Exam	$403	$1,537	$3,244	$722	$1,858	$3,060
Same Day Treatment $ Acceptance %	11%	28%	58%	14%	29%	46%
Treatment $ Case Acceptance %	22%	42%	64%	22%	39%	58%
AR Days	60 Days	22 Days	5 Days	75 Days	28 Days	7 Days

Download a printable version here

*Dollar amounts presented are in USD
** Note: Through ongoing refinements in our data analysis methods, some 2023 figures reflect improved accuracy from previous reports.

What does any of this mean for you? Let's dive in.

Where We're Winning

Patient retention is telling an encouraging story. We're seeing practices make significant strides in keeping patients engaged, with pre-appointment percentages climbing and fewer patients falling into that dreaded "unscheduled active" category. Despite economic headwinds, the average practice is still growing — not as quickly as in years past, but growing nonetheless.

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Where We're Facing Headwinds

Let's be direct — some metrics are causing concern. AR days are creeping up, case acceptance is showing some weakness, and new patient numbers aren't what they used to be. But just like practices adapted to COVID-19, they're finding ways to address these new challenges.

Let's Break Down What's Really Happening

1. The AR Days Challenge

↑**6 days** increase in average AR days

AR Days is a measure of how many days a balance sits in your AR (Accounts Receivable) before you receive payment. And make no mistake, it's taking longer to collect payments. Six days longer for the average practice, and more than two weeks longer for the bottom 10%. It's even taking the rock stars two more days than it was a year ago. Keep in mind, this isn't about insurance balances — we're talking purely about patient portions.

Why are AR days creeping up? The story is in the patterns we're seeing: Economic pressures are affecting how patients approach their dental bills. With increased focus on household budgets, we're seeing more patients carefully weighing their treatment options and timing. It's not that they don't want the care — they're just being more strategic about when and how they pay for it. Think of it this way: patients who used to pay their entire balance at time of service are now asking about payment options. Those who used to pay

within 30 days are stretching to 60. It's a ripple effect that shows up clearly in the AR metrics.

But here's the thing — practices are finding solutions:

- Payment plans and financing options are becoming a game-changer, letting patients break down larger amounts into manageable chunks.

- Smart follow-up systems are keeping balances from aging into oblivion.

- The most successful practices are tackling this head-on with clear financial discussions upfront.

Payment Plan Terms
6-month payment plan
5/18/2022 10:48:19 AM

Patient	Phil Jones
Guarantor	Phil Jones
Treatment Plan Cost	$2,093.40
Downpayment	$523.90
Management Fee	5.00%
Total Management Fee	$78.51
Total Financed Amount	$1648.26

Detailed Plan ▶
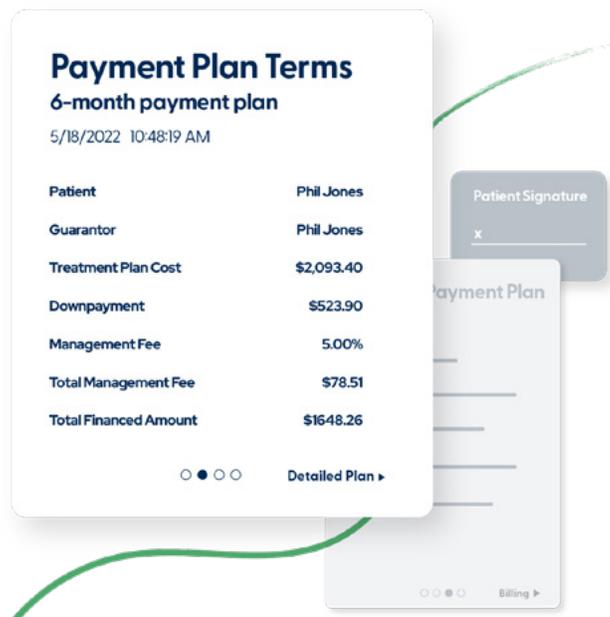
2. The Case Acceptance Situation

3% decrease in average Treatment $ Case Acceptance %

Treatment Dollars Case Acceptance % (the percentage of treatment dollars a patient agrees to accept and pay for) shows a slight dip across all categories except the lowest performers, who are managing to hold steady at 22%.

Why? See above; it's rough out there. Regardless of the reason, the data shows this metric down 3% for the average practice, and down as much as 6% for the top performers.

That may not seem like much, but if your practice diagnoses $1 million in treatment annually, a 5% dip in case acceptance means $50,000 just walked out the door. That's real money that could have gone toward team bonuses, new equipment, or practice improvements.

But successful practices aren't accepting this decline as inevitable. They're taking strategic steps:

- **Strengthening Treatment Conversations:** Clear communication about the long-term cost of delayed treatment helps patients understand why acting now matters. Patients who grasp that a $500 filling today could prevent a $3,000 crown next year are more likely to prioritize care despite financial pressure.

- **Making Financing Options Crystal Clear:** Present payment options early in the treatment discussion — not as a last resort. Breaking down a $4,000 treatment into twelve manageable payments can transform an automatic "no" into a thoughtful "yes."

- **Tracking Case Presentation Metrics:** Monitor which team members and approaches yield better acceptance rates. Understanding these patterns helps practices replicate what works and adjust what doesn't.

3. The New Patient Numbers Story

.2% decrease in average Patient Growth %

Let's talk about new patients. The data shows a concerning trend in growth rates that deserves our attention. While practices are still adding patients overall, the pace of that growth has shifted significantly.

The causes aren't simple — practices are dealing with a perfect storm of challenges. Economic uncertainty has patients thinking twice about switching providers, digital advertising is getting more expensive while delivering fewer results, and competition for new patients is intensifying in many markets.

Practical Next Steps to Address the New Patients Challenge

Measure Marketing ROI Carefully: Track exactly which channels bring in qualified patients at reasonable costs. A lead that costs twice as much but schedules treatment is worth far more than a cheaper lead that never converts.

Build on Retention Wins: The data shows pre-appointment rates are holding steady — that's a bright spot worth investing in. Every patient who stays active in your practice is one you don't need to replace through costly acquisition efforts.

Focus on Referral Systems: Your existing patient base can be your best marketing channel. Create systematic ways to identify satisfied patients and make it easy for them to refer friends and family. A strong referral program can help offset rising acquisition costs.

What's Working Right Now?

The data tells us something fascinating — thriving practices aren't just working harder, they're working smarter. Let's break down exactly how top performers are making it happen:

1. ***They're making it easier for patients to say "yes" financially.*** Think about it — when was the last time someone turned down treatment and said, "I just don't want healthy teeth"? It's almost always about the money. That's why top practices use Payment Plans to break down financial barriers.

   With Dental Intelligence's tools, they're offering manageable installments that fit patient budgets while tracking everything automatically. No more awkward financial conversations or crossed fingers hoping payment will come through — just clear options that help patients prioritize their care, even when money's tight.

2. ***They're doubling down on keeping existing patients engaged.***
   Remember those rising marketing costs we talked about? Smart practices are focusing on the patients they already have. Using Follow Ups and Engagement tools, they're making sure no patient falls through the cracks. Automated reminders about appointments, balances, and unscheduled treatment keep
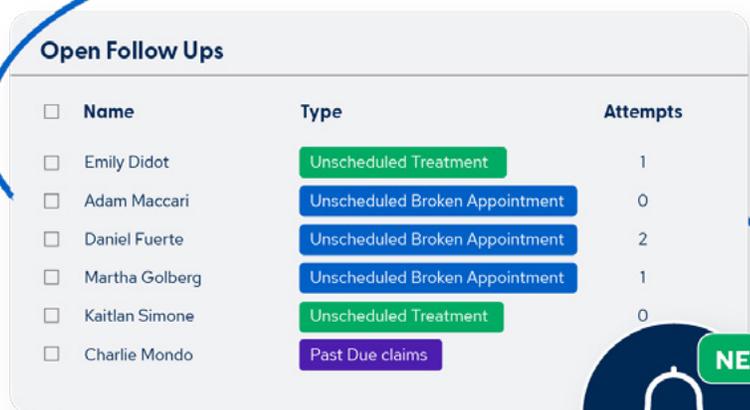
Open Follow Ups		
Name	**Type**	**Attempts**
Emily Didot	Unscheduled Treatment	1
Adam Maccari	Unscheduled Broken Appointment	0
Daniel Fuerte	Unscheduled Broken Appointment	2
Martha Golberg	Unscheduled Broken Appointment	1
Kaitlan Simone	Unscheduled Treatment	0
Charlie Mondo	Past Due claims	

NEW

everyone connected — whether through text, email, or phone. *Here's how one group used Follow Ups to schedule $1.1 million in 2024*.

But here's the real game-changer: Pre-Appointment and Re-Appointment analytics show exactly where scheduling workflows need attention. No more guessing about why patients aren't coming back.

3. **They're letting data drive their decisions, not hunches or habits.** Gone are the days of running a practice on gut feelings alone. The most successful teams use real-time dashboards to spot trends before they become problems.

Want to know why case acceptance dropped last month? Or why AR days are creeping up? It's all there in black and white. *Dental Intelligence's free Practice Snapshot* even shows how you stack up against industry averages, so you know exactly where you stand and where you can grow.

4. **They're embracing AI to work smarter, not harder.**
Artificial Intelligence in dentistry isn't hypothetical (or just hype) anymore. It's already here and is starting to deliver real results. Solutions like Overjet, VideaHealth, and Pearl are making leaps forward in diagnostic and patient education offerings, and it will be interesting to see how they will affect key metrics (like Treatment $ Case Acceptance %) in the coming years.

At Dental Intelligence, we're harnessing AI to bring you Dot, your virtual Scorecard Assistant. Now, instead of having to pore over data to painstakingly extract points of interest, you can essentially have a conversation with your data. Ask a very human question like, "What metric should I focus on right now?" or "Where have we seen the greatest improvements this quarter?" and you'll get a clear answer in seconds. Learn more about it here.

So What's Next?

Is running a dental practice getting more complex? Absolutely. But the data shows something interesting: practices that tackle these challenges systematically — using clear metrics, proven tools, and consistent processes — are better positioned to navigate the road ahead.

While there's no magic solution to today's challenges, Dental Intelligence comes close. With incisive, exacting analytics and tools to put the data to practical use, it's everything a practice needs to build resilience and establish systems for long-term success.

It all starts with knowing where you stand.

How Does Your Practice Compare?

Want to see exactly how your numbers stack up against these benchmarks? Get a free Practice Snapshot from Dental Intelligence. No strings attached — just clear data to help you plan your next steps.

Get A Practice Snapshot
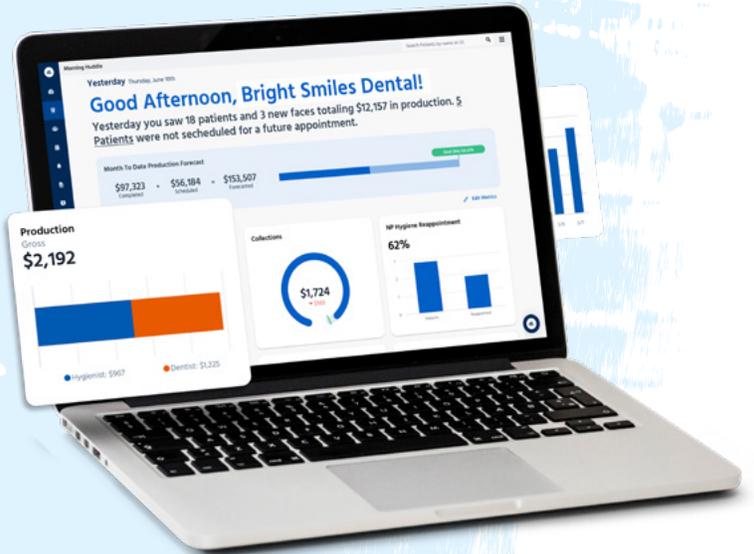
What are practices saying about Dental Intelligence?

⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

"Dental Intelligence has been a wonderful addition to our dental office! In the past 2 months, we have doubled our same-day treatment acceptance, and greatly improved on our morning huddle! I highly recommend Dental Intelligence to other colleagues!"

Gabrielle – Grand Oaks Dental

⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

"We have scheduled over $12,500 back into the practice using Follow Ups! We have improved our hygiene re-appointment from an average of 60% to 78% in our first 14 weeks with Dental Intelligence!"

Dr. Jethva – Cosmetic & Family Dentistry

⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

"Dental Intelligence helps you visualize your data and properly interpret what it means. If you use it, you can have a much better conversation about what to do. Instead of saying, "we need to produce more," Dental Intelligence helps you know how to actually do that. It reveals opportunities that already exist but that aren't easily seen. Instead of spending money trying to capture new patients or adding new services, Dental Intelligence lets you build on what you already have."

Dr. Chodavadia – Enamel Dentistry