

# Delivering “Profitability” Management

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Dentistry knows Dentrix, and vice versa. The original practice management software, launched more than 20 years ago, hasn't just kept up with the Joneses (so to speak) but has continued to release new features and services that help dentists improve the productivity of their practice. With the release of Dentrix G4, Henry Schein Practice Solutions expands the role of its market-leading practice management system to also deliver “profitability management” tools, to continue to help practices maximize the profitability of their key operations.

This is especially important in today's economy, which presents new and unique challenges for dentistry, testing every weakness a dental practice can have – patient flow, case acceptance and new patient generation, to name a few. It is difficult to break even – let alone remain profitable – in a market as unstable as this, where patients are forgoing needed treatment or even scheduled check-ups. Practice management tactics must always evolve with the times in order for dental offices to remain profitable.

With that in mind, Henry Schein Practice Solutions worked with leading dental consultants to develop a powerful new tool in Dentrix G4 called Practice Advisor that helps dentists identify areas of their practice they can improve to not only survive, but thrive in today's economy.

## Dentrix Practice Advisor

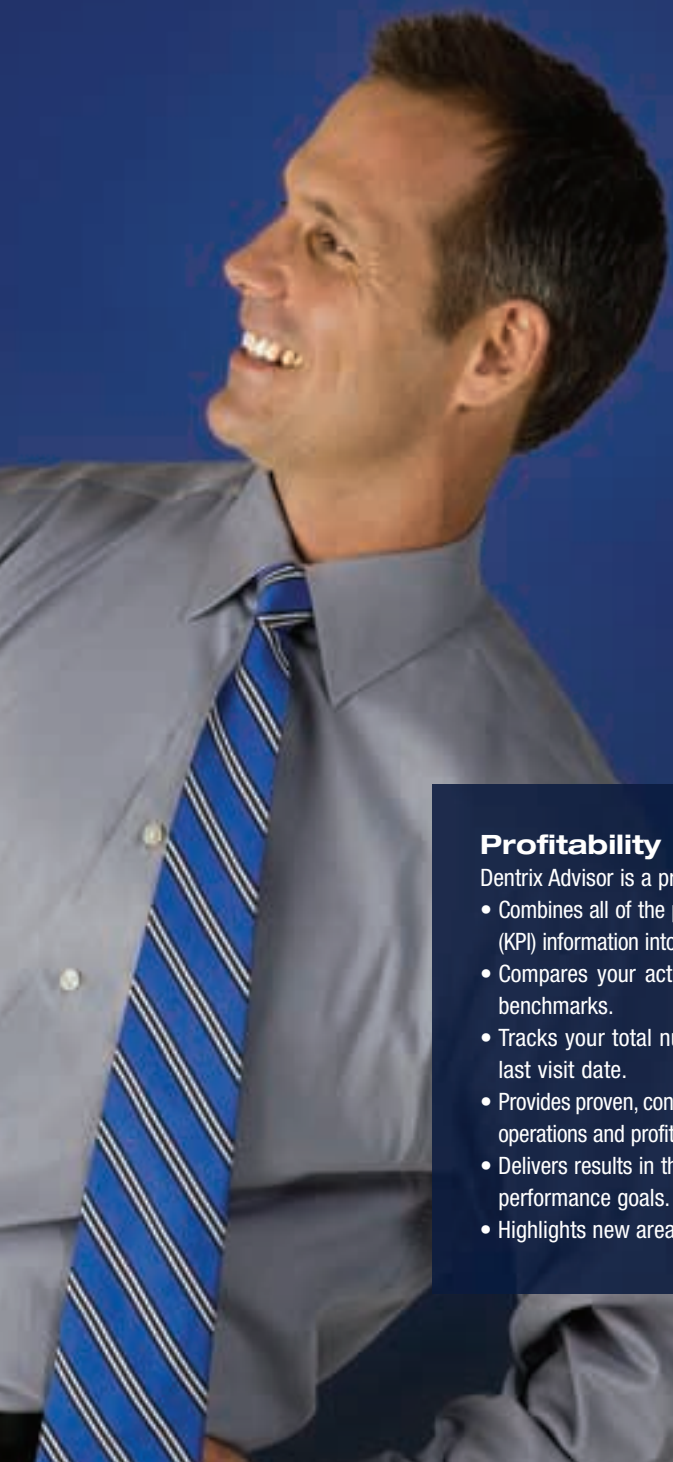
How does your practice stack up against the average practice's results or even against your own practice last year?

Practice Advisor develops easy-to-read reports for dentists to compare the financial and operational results of their practice with standard industry benchmarks or customized benchmarks of their own. Dentrix also took benchmarking a step further. Rather than leaving it up to you to compare the numbers and determine a management plan, Practice Advisor takes all of the guesswork and number crunching out of practice analysis and provides consultant-endorsed recommendations for making improvements – essentially transforming available data into actionable information.

“For example, a practice may be meeting its overall production goals but after running Practice Advisor will learn a doctor or hygiene



*Dentrix redefines practice management software with tools to help practices improve finance and operations in an unsure market.*



department is under-producing compared to industry benchmarks,” says, Tammy McHood, practice diagnostics product manager for Henry Schein Practice Solutions. “Practice Advisor associates a dollar value for those unfilled hours so practices can view these as more than just empty time units but as lost opportunities.”

Practice Advisor’s default benchmarks are tied to national averages of solo general practices. However, dentists can customize the benchmarks to their practice goals or specific type of practice, such as Specialty or Multiple Provider. “The flexibility to customize benchmarks is an effective management tool for consultants or accountants who are helping practices set higher operational and financial goals,” McHood said.

Another way Practice Advisor helps practices become aware of problem areas is by identifying the active and inactive patient base. Cathy Jameson, founder and CEO of Jameson Management Consulting, says, “Most dental practices can double the amount of dentistry they provide by nurturing that which they already have: their existing patient family.”

Jameson, who also helped in developing Practice Advisor, said one of the first questions most practice management consultants ask is, “How many active patients do you have?”

With Practice Advisor, practices can identify their active patient base in order to build marketing programs to bring the inactives back into the office.

Fred Peck, DDS, AACD, owner of a private dental practice in Cincinnati, Ohio, says Practice Advisor has improved the efficiency and profitability of his practice. “The Dentrix Practice Advisor has made a major difference in the way we track and share key business metrics,” says Peck. “Practice Advisor is very flexible and customizable. We can easily adjust benchmarks and choose what information appears on the report based on our unique needs and goals. Practice Advisor is also the only report we’ve found that brings all the key performance information we need together in one place, makes it relevant and easy to under-

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### **Profitability Management**

Dentrix Advisor is a profitable and easy-to-use tool which:

- Combines all of the practice’s Key Performance Indicators (KPI) information into one unified report.
- Compares your actual data to industry or customized benchmarks.
- Tracks your total number of active patients based on last visit date.
- Provides proven, consultant recommendations to improve operations and profits.
- Delivers results in the context of your practice’s unique performance goals.
- Highlights new areas of opportunity.



stand and even provides practical recommendations for refining our business and taking advantage of new opportunities.”

Many practices take Practice Advisor results to their daily huddles or team meetings to brainstorm ways everyone on the team can help improve operations to increase the future profitability. Practice Advisor is fast and easy to use for the entire staff. “The gathering of the information and the time it takes to produce the reports has made a huge impact,” said, Dayna Johnson, treatment coordinator at Saratoga Dental in Langley, Washington. “If the doctor asks: ‘Can you get me the Monthly Practice Monitor on my desk by lunch?’ using our old monitors I might not have been able to fulfill his request. But with Practice Advisor I can have it on his desk in three minutes, or I can teach him how to print it himself.”

“The secret to effective practice management, whether in a challenging economy or a time of abundance is managing by statistics versus perception and judgment (which is almost always incorrect). That is why it was such a pleasure to contribute to Dentrix’s Practice Advisor. This important addition not only allows a team to have a clear view of how they are progressing as compared to key, customized benchmarks but also offers important solutions to reinforce success and confront challenges directly. The Practice Advisor isn’t just another template to exhibit statistics – it’s

an interactive tool that has true range norms and real advice that can help a Dentist and team feel in control of their future success,” says Amy Morgan, chief executive officer, Pride Institute.

### New Profitability Management Features Coming in Next Version of Dentrix G4

Dentrix is already hard at work developing its Productivity Pack 8 for Dentrix G4, to be released later this year, with new features, such as:

- **Daily Huddle** – includes a collection of reports that gives the practice a view of the daily schedule and key performance metrics. Office management can measure performance against daily and monthly goals for production, collections, scheduling and attracting new patients. The daily production schedule includes a variety of flags used to guide staff assignments and prepare for patient visits including flags for lab work, treatment plans, appointment information, insurance eligibility and more.
- **Dentrix Communicator** – Similar to instant messenger, this interoffice communicator lets clinicians and staff easily communicate with each other through their office computer network to increase productivity.

## Dentrix Helps Dentists Use New Technology to Improve Practice Management

One of the hallmarks of Dentrix has been its incorporation of new technology advances into its software to improve its features and user productivity. Most recently, Dentrix announced new tools for dentists who want to use mobile devices, such as smart phones and the Apple iPad, as part of their dental practice.

### Access Dentrix Data from Smartphones with Dentrix Mobile

Now you can access your schedule and patient information anytime, anywhere from your smart phone. Dentrix Mobile is a new feature for Dentrix G4 that gives dentists secure access to their patient and provider schedules, as well as important patient information such as prescriptions and medical alerts – all from their smartphone or mobile device.

Kevin Bunker, vice president and general manager of Henry Schein Practice Solutions says, “Dentrix Mobile eliminates a common frustration for dentists who cannot immediately recognize if the individual calling to request



a prescription is a current patient or not. With Dentrix Mobile, dentists can enter the caller’s name to verify the patient contact information and prescriptions within seconds.”

Dentrix Mobile runs on the latest smartphones and mobile devices, including BlackBerry, iPhone, iPad, Palm Pre and Android.

Dentrix Mobile’s security protection involves password-protected access to the information securely stored at the eServices data center in American Fork, Utah. Dentists use their smartphone or mobile

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device to securely access the information in the same way they use a Web browser to conduct their online banking or purchasing.

“Since no patient information is stored on the mobile device itself, dentists do not have to worry about anyone accessing confidential information if their device is lost.” Bunker said. “Any data viewed with Dentrix Mobile is erased the second the mobile Web browser is closed.”

Dentrix Mobile is available to Dentrix G4 users on a current Dentrix Customer Service Plan at no additional cost.

### Is It Time to Replace the Clipboard with an iPad?

Apple has revolutionized personal computing with its leading tablet device, iPad. Some doctors are using iPads in the waiting room to allow patients to surf the Internet or, more importantly, update their personal information. With the recent launch of Kiosk for Dentrix, your practice can make the paperless check-in a reality by eliminating the clipboard and instead giving patients an Apple iPad to complete forms. Using an iPad or other Kiosk device, patients can verify their current information, provide updates and verify which forms are complete and incomplete – all without any manual entry from your office staff.

“The iPad Kiosk for Dentrix really gives patients a more enjoyable customer experience,” said Adam McDaniel, eServices product manager. “Forms completed on an iPad are imported into Dentrix in seconds, eliminating manual entry and all the errors that accompany paper forms. Plus, using electronic forms speeds up the check-in process so the doctor or hygienist can begin treatment faster.”

Since the Kiosk for Dentrix leverages the same technology used with the eCentral Web Site Manager, Dentrix practices can also post these forms on their eCentral Web site and direct patients to complete them online from their home, which further speeds up check-in, McDaniel said.

### Using the iPad for Patient Education

Now dentists can use the iPad as an educational tool to teach patients about procedures and treatment plans using Henry Schein Guru. The popular patient education system offers dentists animations, presentations and videos that can now be played on the iPad, giving the doctor the freedom to teach anywhere in his practice.

### Taking the Risk out of Cloud Computing

Because technology progresses so rapidly, and new software innovations are introduced to dental offices every

day, practices are urged to update their computer hardware every two to three years. Demands set on hardware by today’s software applications make it necessary to have an up-to-date system to keep efficiency levels at peak performance. However, as more and more practitioners clamor for better connectivity, mobility and usability, practice management software companies are embracing cloud computing – where information is stored on external servers and on the Internet, and users can connect directly from anywhere in the world. So how is Dentrix taking advantage of this?

For nearly a decade, Dentrix has provided Web-based services, called “eServices,” such as remote data storage, patient insurance eligibility verification and online patient forms, which are performed “in the cloud” at their eServices data center.

“Having us perform these types of services in the cloud makes perfect sense for Dentrix practices because of their trust in our resources and systems to deliver quality service,” said Steve Roberts, director of core products and electronic services for Henry Schein Practice Solutions. “We are a proven, trusted leader in delivering Web-based services, processing millions of transactions each month. But most importantly, the data processed in the cloud is always synched to their Dentrix system in the office. This gives dentists the security and control they need to safely manage their practice. Dentists should always have the flexibility and freedom to choose which elements of their practice management system they want to run ‘in the cloud’ and which they should continue to run in their office to maintain control and reduce the risk of service downtime.”

An example of the hybrid model inaction is the eCentral Appointment Manager for Dentrix, which allows office staff working from home or outside of normal business hours to use their Web browser to manage appointments, view patient contact information, insurance information, and eligibility status.

The next release of Dentrix Mobile will be another example of the hybrid model where Web services sync with Dentrix in the office. “In the very near future, we will expand Dentrix Mobile’s capability to allow users to move beyond just seeing schedule and patient information on their smartphones, to also posting changes, such as creating prescriptions, updating patient information and changing schedules – just as if they were using Dentrix in their office,” Roberts added.

Roberts points out that Henry Schein Practice Solutions will continue to roll out new Web-based services designed to offer synchronized data protection to ensure practices can continue to operate in the case of a disruption of internet service. ■

