AHO: New patient starts increased moderately in 2010

Still below record levels of 2004

Patient starts by AAO members increased by 4 percent per member in 2010 over 2008, according to the latest AAO Member & Patient Census Study.

Conducted every two years, the study tracks such trends as patient starts, staffing concerns and referral patterns. The study showed that new patient starts increased moderately from 228 per member to 237 last year.

These figures remain below the peak of 2004 when members experienced an average of 262 new patient starts. In addition, new patient exams dropped slightly from 375 to 359 per member and new case presentations fell from 232 to 226.

Total patients in active treatment increased 0.8 percent per member, from 502 to 506, again indicating a modest rise in volume. The number of active, practicing AAO members continue to
Disability insurance — A must for all orthodontists

By Dennis J. Tartakow, DMD, MEd, EdD, PhD
Editor in Chief

Imagine that everything in your life (professional career, family, etc.) is perfect. Then out of nowhere the unimaginable occurs: you become disabled!

What would you do if you were unable to run the day-to-day operations of your practice tomorrow because you suddenly became disabled? Would you call (a) your colleagues to see your patients and save your practice, (b) a placement service to find an orthodontist to cover your office, or (c) the AAO regarding suggestions about what to do?

Speaking from experience, it happened to me! After 25 short years of a fantastic orthodontic practice, in 1999 I began noticing rapid and progressive paralysis in both hands, then forearms and wrists, then motor atrophy followed in just a few years of a fantastic orthodontic practice, I was successful but left me with a 50 percent chance of being a quadriplegic and a 30 percent chance of being a seven-level procedure was poor, leaving a 50 percent chance of being a quadriplegic and a 30 percent chance of being a permanent disability can be devastating, which required immediate and acting, which required immediate and extensive neurosurgery to repair the damage to my cervical spine.

The doctors said that even with surgery, the prognosis of a seven-level procedure was poor, leaving a 50 percent chance of being a quadriplegic and a 30 percent chance of being a permanent disability can be devastating, which required immediate and extensive neurosurgery to repair the damage to my cervical spine.

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Introducing the new cloud-based Sesame 24-7 online patient connection system for the orthodontic industry

Sesame Communications leverages cloud-technology with its new Sesame 24-7 to provide a single point of access to practice analytics anytime, from anywhere. Sesame 24-7 integrates performance data on websites, patient engagement, automated patient reminders, social media, search engine optimization and online marketing into one easy-to-access dashboard. Gain immediate 360-degree views on operations, marketing initiatives, campaign effectiveness, return on investment and operational key performance indicators.

Sesame 24-7 streamlines and optimizes orthodontic practice online presence by integrating all communication channels. Expand awareness with a Top Patient Appeal Rated™ website and enhance online effectiveness with a professional mobile site for on-the-go existing and prospective patients. Reduce no shows and strengthen patient commitment with automated reminders. Open two-way digital communications with your orthodontic community through effective outreach initiatives. Improve administrative processes and provide patients the convenience of on-demand 24-7 access to appointment and account information, online bill pay and more with a state-of-the-art patient portal.

Available through any web browser, Sesame 24-7 gives orthodontists analytics on team performance and online marketing effectiveness to patient engagement and patient satisfaction levels. With a click, Sesame 24-7 offers real-time, anytime reporting — and detailed graphics and charts, measuring practice performance is easy and efficient. Sesame 24-7 provides the CEO of an orthodontic practice the right information at the right time to help make better decisions to accelerate practice growth.

For a brief demo to learn how Sesame 24-7 can accelerate the growth of your orthodontic practice, call (866)-530-7295, e-mail solutions@sesamecommunications.com or visit www.sesame24-7.com.

The number of patients in treatment by members grew by 2.5 percent in 2010 to 4,888,000. Of the total number of patients treated, about 3,440,000 were children ages 8 to 17, representing about 8.2 percent of U.S. children in that age group.

As the population grows, assuming AAO members continue to treat 8.2 percent of U.S. children, each member will gain, on average, 44 more patients in 2015 as compared to 2010. Adult patients increased 2.5 percent to a total of 1,075,000.

Other survey findings:
• Members saw patients an average of 30 hours a week in 2010, up one hour a week from 2008, while clinicians devoted 45 hours a week to the practice, down an hour from the previous survey.
• Members saw an average of 50 patients a day, up from 48 in 2008.
• The average length of treatment reported is 22 months.
• In 2010 the average AAO member employed seven full-time and three part-time staff members.
• The number of members in multiple-doctor practices declined from 28 percent to 24 percent, down significantly from 31 percent in 2006.
• Nearly half (47 percent) of members report using Facebook to promote their practices and more than one-third (35 percent) say they spend more than $10,000 a year to promote their practices.

(Source: AAO)
OrthoVOICE in Vegas

For orthodontists attending the OrthoVOICE meeting in Las Vegas in October, there was no chance they would want to let what happened “stay in Vegas,” because what happened at the OrthoVoice event at Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino was useful, intimate learning experiences with a diverse group of like-minded, growth-seeking orthodontists.

OrthoVoice, which aims to provide unique opportunities not found at larger meetings, included such innovative programs as:

• Dinner with Strangers: For Dinner With Strangers, attendees found a list in their registration materials of various restaurants around Las Vegas where OrthoVOICE made reservations for eight to 10 people. Attendees chose a restaurant they wanted to go to and then headed to meet up with other attendees who they haven’t yet met over dinner.

• OrthoVOICE Charity Golf Tournament: This scramble-style event allowed attendees a chance to relax and meet new friends and play with their favorite group. Proceeds from the event will support the national Smile for a Lifetime Foundation.

• VOICE of Excellence Lecture: Dr. William Proffit gave the inaugural lecture for this series. Proffit is the Kenan professor and former chairman at the University of North Carolina Orthodontic Department. According to organizers, Proffit exemplifies excellence in orthodontics and has made many contributions to the profession globally.

Plan now to attend next year’s event, which will take place Oct. 11-13, 2012, at the Planet Hollywood Resort in Las Vegas. Registration is only $199 per person through Feb. 29, 2012. For more information, see www.ov2012.eventbrite.com.
OrthoMetrics: Measure it. Improve it.

Being an informed business manager isn’t an option — it’s a must

By Mary Beth Kirkpatrick

We find our practices in a challenging marketplace: a new consumer, increased competition for that consumer and rising costs for delivering treatment. In today’s practice, being an informed business manager isn’t an option; it’s a must.

Maintaining a healthy practice requires managing the clinical and the business components efficiently and profitably. Orthodontic practices need accurate and strategic information to monitor performance, identify trends, target areas of concern and develop a “go forward” business plan.

OrthoMetrics, a cloud-based business analytics tool, was developed by Mary Beth Kirkpatrick and her practice management consulting team at Impact 360 in partnership with OrthoBanc, a payment management company with services that streamline the payment acceptance process for more than 2,000 orthodontic practices.

In creating OrthoMetrics, their vision was three fold: 1) identify strategic information important in the day-to-day operation of a practice, 2) automatically collect accurate key practice information without the need of staff intervention, 3) deliver the results to the orthodontist/practice in a powerful, eye-friendly graphic format.

Turning practice information into business value

Introduced in January 2011, OrthoMetrics has received strong endorsements from participating practices: “It’s a must — I look at it every day” ... “I’m a raving fan!” ... “No more plowing through paperwork. One click, and I have more ‘on target’ information than we could ever have collected.” ... “I never realized how significant the discrepancy was between new patient calls and actual exams. We’ve changed our new patient greet and enroll process to make sure new patients come for their exam. Thank you, OrthoMetrics.”

Although practice-management systems record and generate statistical information, it’s often scattered throughout various reports and locations requiring a significant amount of staff time generating, compiling and moving information into a more manageable format at the end of the month. To accomplish one of the core
Mary Beth Kirkpatrick is a managing partner of impact360, a firm that provides client-focused comprehensive business solutions and technology expertise to orthodontic practices. She consults nationally and internationally to organize day-to-day operational systems, improve practice performance and increase profitability. In addition, the 360 technology team provides innovative hardware and networking solutions to create maximum workplace efficiency. For more information, please see www.impact360.com.

**About the author**

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Industry standard benchmarks are measuring tools for practice efficiency

The design of OrthoMetrics incorporates more than 25 industry standard benchmarks for achievement. With a system of alerts when the practice is outside the preferred range, tips are generated to help locate and find a solution. Coupled with the unique consultant portal, the practice can grant its consultant(s) access to the data ending the task of generating and transmitting timely information.

Each consulting firm has the ability to set benchmarks for its clients. Through a system of interactive notes or online collaboration, the consultant has an up-to-date vision of the practice and can design action plans and immediate followup.

**Practice management software integration**

Currently OrthoMetrics is fully integrated with OrthoTrac and on target to have a completed integration with Dolphin Management by the first quarter of 2012. Other software companies are in line to integrate data with OrthoMetrics. To obtain additional information or a demo of OrthoMetrics, please e-mail marketing@orthometrics.com or call (800) 287-5596.

You can also access www.orthometrics.com for additional information. Practices that utilize this analytics tool to position themselves in the new marketplace will be greatly rewarded.

Introducing the new Cloud-based Sesame 24-7.
The right information at the right time to grow your practice.

Sesame 24-7 is the revolutionary new cloud-based patient connection suite from Sesame Communications. As CEO, Sesame 24-7 provides the information you need to manage your orthodontic practice more effectively.

This new Sesame 24-7 patient solution suite integrates:
- web & mobile design
- social media
- search engine marketing
- PPC advertising
- patient portal
- automated reminders
- real-time analytics dashboard

Sesame 24-7 provides key performance statistics and quantifies ROI on patient communications, patient engagement and marketing investments.

"We looked for a company to provide us with a strategic solution for maintaining our practice prominence in this new digital age, and Sesame proved to be the right partner for our practice." – Dr. Andrew Ochin

See for yourself. Visit us during NESCO at booth #1034 and unleash the power of Sesame 24-7.

Or call us today at 866-530-7295 to view a demonstration of Sesame 24-7 or email us at solutions@sesamecommunications.com.

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About Scarlett

Scarlett Thomas is an orthodontic practice consultant who has been in the orthodontic field for over 23 years, specializing in case acceptance, team building, office management and marketing. As a speaker and practice consultant, Scarlett has an exceptional talent to inform, motivate and excite.

After implementation of her concepts into your practice, Scarlett invites you to experience not only tremendous growth and increased income but a well organized practice.

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