

Comparing apples to apples:

How networks are measured makes all the difference

As the marketplace leader, Delta Dental has the nation's largest networks of participating dentists. More than three out of four dentists nationwide participate in one or more of our programs—but what does this really mean in comparison to our competitors who make similar assertions?

Network size is measured in many different ways. Some carriers count unique licenses, some count unique office locations, while still others count “access points.” And, unfortunately, some carriers may not keep their records up to date, failing to remove retired or no longer practicing dentists from their lists of participating dentists. These differences can artificially inflate a network's size, making it appear much larger than it truly is.



What's the difference?

- **Unique licenses** refers to the total number of distinctive dental licenses. Every dentist is assigned a unique license number and the dentist's unique license is not impacted by the number of offices in which a dentist works. This is the most accurate indicator of the network size, and the indicator upon which Delta Dental relies the most to measure our networks.
- **Unique office locations** is a helpful but secondary indicator of network size. Dentists who practice in multiple locations bring their expertise to a broader geographic area, but with limited availability at each location.
- **“Access points,”** perhaps the most confusing indicator of network size, are arrived at by multiplying the number of unique dentists by the locations in which they practice. For example, 4 dentists practicing in 5 office locations would equal 20 “access points.” These “access points” are not necessarily indicative of practical access as an enrollee could still only see one unique dentist at one office location at one point in time.



What does this mean to you and your employees?

An artificially inflated network is a hassle for you and your employees—just imagine the phone calls you may receive when employees encounter problems accessing participating dentists. To ensure that you're receiving an accurate representation of a network's true size, it's important to understand how a carrier quantifies their networks.

With two of the nation's largest dental networks, Delta Dental offers access to more than 142,000 dentists (unique licenses) at more than 251,000 access points in our Delta Dental Premier® network, our fee-for-service program. And we offer access to more than 83,900 dentists at more than 168,000 access points in our Delta Dental PPOSM network, our preferred provider organization program. In short, Delta Dental has significantly more participating dentists than any competitor. You and your employees can count on Delta Dental to accurately report our network strength.

Our popular Delta Dental PPO plus Premier program provides access to **two** of the nation's largest networks of participating dentists—our Delta Dental PPO network AND our Delta Dental Premier network. No other carrier can offer you and your employees two layers of cost savings and balance-billing protection in one program the way Delta Dental can with this program!

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to accurately report our network strength.*

Statistics: Delta Dental Plans Association, May 2012