

March 28, 2009

Tom A. McFerson, CPA, ABV
Gatto McFerson, CPAs
528 Arizona Avenue, Suite 201
Santa Monica, California 90401

Re: Current Economic Environment for Veterinarians in California - February

Dear Tom,

As we mentioned in our previous letters, our nation's economy has taken a major turn for the worse. The veterinary industry, usually resilient during tough financial times, has significantly felt this slowdown.

Given the current state of events, we thought it would be a useful service to our clients, colleagues, and friends to track how the veterinary industry is performing throughout California. The previous letters reported the results for October 2008 through January 2009. **This letter looks at February 2009.**

We are currently tracking monthly revenue numbers for almost **ninety-five practices**. We have segregated these practices into three classes: Small Animal – Southern California (up to and including Bakersfield), Small Animal – Northern California, and Specialty & Referral.

The results are attached to this letter. We are tracking:

- How our industry performed for the first two months of 2009, as compared to 2008.
- How our industry performed during the month of February 2009, as compared to February 2008 (this was the fifth full month of the worsening crisis).
- How the above numbers look after removing any price increases in 2009. This gives us the true growth/decline of these practices.

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According to our numbers, it appears that the small animal general practices in both Southern and Northern California dipped slightly in February 2009, with both parts of the state posting small losses as compared to the prior year.

Specialty and referral practices continued to fare the worst, reporting revenue drops of close to 10% again for the month, compared to the prior year.

It appears that the results for March have been mixed. We will gather March 2009 data and once it has been analyzed, we will send you the results.

The more veterinary practices that we include in our sample, the more accurate a picture we can paint of what is happening economically, so if you know of any practice owners who might like to take part, please let us know. Financial data can be submitted directly to us via our website www.gattomcferson.com. Once they have shared information, they would be added to distribution list. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Results will also be posted on our website.

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments on the above information.

Sincerely,



Tom A. McFerson, CPA

**Veterinary Practice Performance in California
February 2009**

	Gross Revenues			
	<u>One Month Ended December 31, 2008</u>	<u>One Month Ended January 31, 2009</u>	<u>One Month Ended February 28, 2009</u>	<u>Two Months Ended February 28, 2009</u>
<u>Small Animal - Southern California</u>				
Increase/(decrease) as compared to prior year	3.65%	5.16%	-2.47%	1.03%
Increase/(decrease) as compared to prior year - adjusted for price increases	-0.49%	4.63%	-3.04%	0.49%
<u>Small Animal - Northern California</u>				
Increase/(decrease) as compared to prior year	10.42%	1.73%	-1.02%	0.39%
Increase/(decrease) as compared to prior year - adjusted for price increases	5.93%	1.11%	-1.35%	-0.09%
<u>Specialty - California</u>				
Increase/(decrease) as compared to prior year	-4.09%	-9.78%	-9.80%	-9.81%
Increase/(decrease) as compared to prior year - adjusted for price increases	-8.02%	-10.20%	-10.59%	-10.36%