

problem I sincerely hope that any future articles classify and describe devices according to their fundamental electronics.
Sincerely yours,

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Response from authors

We thank Dr Nekoofar for his interesting letter. We are pleased that his aim is not to criticize, and that he agrees there is confusion arising from a lack of clarity in some publications. The main aim of our review was to review modern instruments and draw together some data on their accuracy. This could not be done without delving into a certain amount of history. For completeness the early machines were mentioned and the literature of the time was surveyed. We chose not to investigate in much greater depth as recent developments (the last 10 years, say) have provided us with machines far more tolerant of the variations in conditions found in root canals. They also offer practitioners much greater accuracy than before. Even with these limitations we ended up with approaching 120 articles, and at 13 pages one of the largest reviews to appear in the IEJ. We would hope future workers might approach the history from a purely electronic standpoint, but perhaps the result would not be of great interest to the current readership.

We are pleased to report that the review has generated significant interest from all around the world. With the sole exception of Dr Nekoofar, all our correspondents have asked what machine they are using! From manufacturer's addresses and digital photographs sent electronically we have been able to identify them all. It is of major concern that the marketing of electronically identical devices around the globe under different names leaves clinicians unable to relate their instrument to others which appear in research publications and advertisements.

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