



■ Reputation

Thriving in the Face of Change

5 Consumer Experience and
Marketing Trends for Healthcare
in 2021

/ Whitepaper /

Introduction

What to expect in 2021

Last year brought far more to healthcare leaders than lessons in managing a pandemic - it forced us to rethink strategic priorities and adopt rapid digital transformation. Even the most resistant to change have realized that “business as usual” is no longer an option. Digital transformation is necessary and imminent.

In this whitepaper, you will learn how to adapt and thrive as several trends accelerate the pace of change in 2021.

1 Digital Transformation Accelerates

For years, healthcare leaders have sought to deliver the digital front door – enabling consumers to access care in new ways such as via mobile apps, chat, online scheduling, and virtual visits.

Despite the competitive threats from retail and technology companies, large healthcare organizations have been slow to deliver an omnichannel experience for patients, often due to data silos across technology platforms.

Patients may have tolerated data silos across medical records, relationship management, revenue cycle, and marketing in the past. But today's consumer has more choices for care, and expects to schedule an appointment, check-in, pay a bill, or see a doctor virtually – all from a mobile device.

Take Action

Patients expect a better experience.

- Identify all sources of data. Audit and open data silos and seek a single source of truth – provider, location and patient data
- Review and revise policies, especially Notice of Privacy Policies (NPP) and California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) compliance statements
- Evaluate your technology stack for efficiencies to be gained across platforms rather than point solutions.

Virtual Care Usage

+3,000%

in 2020

as a result of the COVID-19 crisis

Continued Impact of Telemedicine in 2021

Throughout 2020, healthcare saw a dramatic uptake of virtual care services as patients avoided going into doctors' offices. Research firm YouGov surveyed U.S. adults ages 26-64 on behalf of Reputation, to understand what factors influence choice of a healthcare facility or physician. The ability to access care virtually was among the top five considerations, along with insurance accepted, location, out-of-pocket costs, and safety/cleaning policies.

These findings are consistent with a recent Accenture study, *Elevating the Patient Experience to Fuel Growth*, which found that since using virtual care during the Covid-19 pandemic, 60% of consumers want to continue using technology to communicate with healthcare providers and manage their care.

Sources:

<https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/health/elevating-patient-experience-growth>

2 Omnichannel Experience Management Grows

Formerly viewed as separate functions, Marketing and Patient Experience now partner to deliver an omnichannel experience. The experience is no longer limited to a clinical interaction; the goal is to eliminate potential friction across the healthcare journey.

Traditional CAHPS surveys provide important quality and experience data, but they fall short of providing a holistic understanding. Today's patients deliver real-time feedback via Google Reviews and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

Take Action

Use patient feedback.

- Service recovery – build automated workflows to address real-time issues
- Feedback hub – bring multiple sources together (both in-person and virtual) in a single hub for natural language processing (NLP) analysis, and operational insights



3 Healthcare Systems Focus on a Revenue Rebound

Healthcare systems must drive patient volumes when and where they are needed most. Not-for-profit health systems lost up to 40% of their revenue in 2020 due to temporary closures of care facilities and postponed elective procedures.¹

Organizations need to build up key ancillary services in orthopedic care, cardiology, and neurology to quickly recoup revenue. But, with budgets tighter, Marketing must abandon the billboards, print ads, and broad digital advertising in favor of highly targeted, personalized messaging that connects the right patient to the right care.

To reach the right individual at the precise moment in their journey, leading healthcare systems are focusing their strategy around **Search Intent**.

What Is Search Intent?

Gone are the days of sending consumers to your website homepage and expecting them to navigate to the care they need.

Healthcare marketers must understand consumer intent and **send a consumer to a customized, dynamic landing page tailored to the care they need based on their search**.

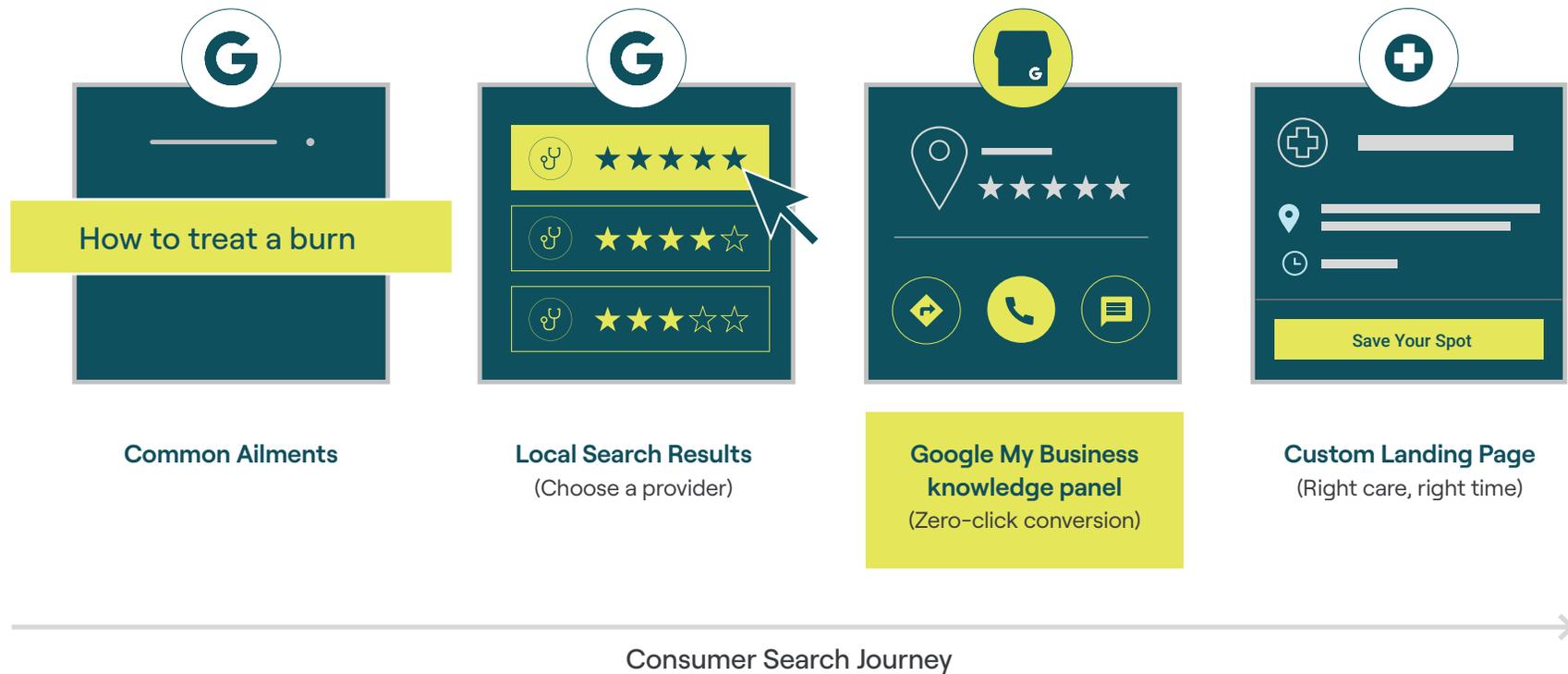
¹ Bannow, T. Modern Healthcare. A tentative hello to 2021 - 'Payviders,' burnout and COVID-19 are among the threats to a better year for hospitals in 2021



Connecting Patients to Care

By understanding a consumer's search intent, healthcare brands can direct patients to the most appropriate treatment for common ailments, based on keywords.

For example, a search of symptoms or treatments on their mobile device delivers tailored results based on the type of care needed. Brands are making it easy to access care by optimizing their Google My Business presence.



Driving Traffic to Specialties

Search intent can also be used to drive qualified leads to key specialties and service lines.

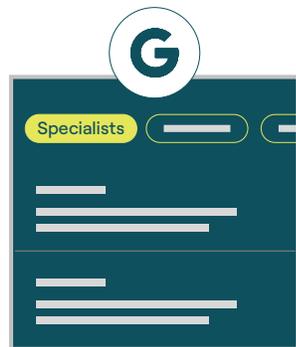
For example, a consumer may start with a search around symptoms, and Google provides related links for treatments and specialists. In just a few clicks, a consumer connects to the right specialist for their care.



What does a sprained ankle feel like?



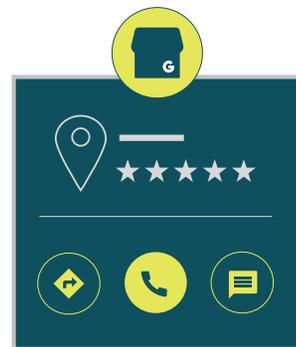
Symptoms



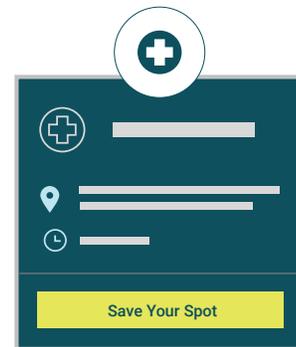
Specialists



Local Search Results
(Choose a provider)



Google My Business
knowledge panel
(Zero-click conversion)



Custom Landing Page
(Right care, right time)



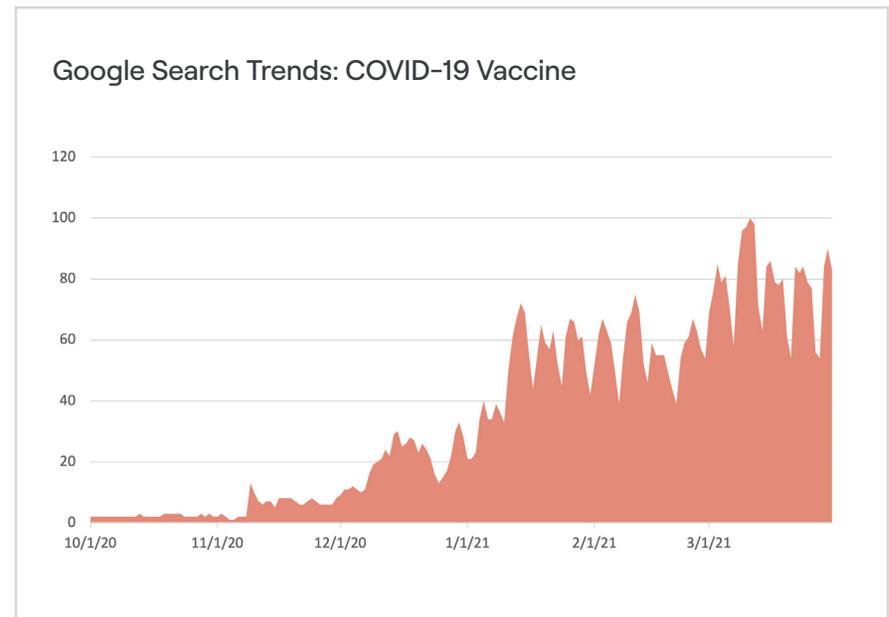
Consumer Search Journey

4 Patients Continue to Focus on Safety

The latest research indicates patients are still concerned about the safety of their in-person experience amid the pandemic.

Consumers have never been more focused on safety as concern related to their experience of a brand. During the early months of Covid-19, patients were worried about infection control within healthcare facilities.

Safety concerns now extend beyond infection-control protocols to include fears related to the Covid-19 vaccine. Google Search activity related to vaccine safety was up 167% from November to December of 2020.



Take Action

Make safety a focus of marketing.

- Use social channels to combat misinformation, communicate safety protocols, and reinforce your message.
- Conduct pulse surveys of patients, caregivers, and other employees to understand perception of safety as well as identify potential risk areas where improvement is needed.

5 New Competition Threatens Traditional Healthcare

Retail Healthcare Providers Ascend to Greater Heights in 2021

Technology and retail companies already have the infrastructure to move faster, and they are willing to take more risk. For example, retailers such as Kroger and Walmart have expanded their services for outpatient and pharmaceutical care. The distribution of the Covid-19 vaccine has cast a stronger spotlight on their power and influence, with Kroger Health and Walmart taking an early leadership role in distributing the vaccine¹.

In some ways, the expansion of healthcare services by retailers may help overburdened healthcare systems as they continue to reel from the strain of the pandemic.

As patients seek less expensive alternatives to care, national retailers will extend their influence and reach, especially for retail prescription drugs, which account for 10% of healthcare costs, according to author and economist Scott Galloway². Walmart continues to build clinics and pharmacy services³ that capitalize on the retailer's scale and convenience (90% of the U.S. population lives within 10 miles of a Walmart).³

And no prediction would be complete without mentioning Amazon. Amazon Care is in its early days, but in 2021, you can be sure major employers will be watching its growth closely as they seek ways to contain healthcare costs among their employees — especially now that Amazon said it will offer Amazon Care to other employers in the United States.⁴

Sources:

1 <https://chainstoreage.com/walmart-kroger-co-walgreens-among-chains-administer-free-covid-vaccines>

2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjRR1mSBhZw>

3 <https://www.beckersasc.com/asc-news/walmart-health-is-expanding-5-things-for-asc-execs-to-know.html>

4 <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/17/amazon-is-expanding-amazon-care-telehealth-service-nationally-for-employees.html>

Recommendations for Healthcare Providers

Make your virtual care services easy to find and easy to use.

Virtual care covers a spectrum of services, ranging from an appointment via a webcam to conducting an online chat. Help patients understand what to expect during a virtual care session, including the technology to be used and how to access it.

Showcase your physicians. Your physicians are your strongest answer to the growth of nontraditional retailing healthcare services.

They are your brand ambassadors. Invest time to make sure their online reviews are up to date, and that their backgrounds are complete on physician listings. Include videos introducing their practices and sharing their personalities. 2021 is the year for making your physicians stand apart.

Ask for patients to review their experiences, and learn from this feedback.

Find out what patients think of your services and if there are parts of the journey that could be improved. What do they think of your patient portal? Is it meeting their needs? Why or why not? How effective is your virtual care? Give your patients a voice and improve your services accordingly.

Feedback anywhere.

About Reputation

Reputation, creator of the Reputation Experience Management category, is changing the way healthcare brands gather and act on customer feedback to drive decision making and enhance Customer Experience (CX) programs. Reputation's interaction-to-action platform translates vast amounts of solicited and unsolicited feedback data into prescriptive insights that healthcare brands use to learn from and grow. Thousands of organizations rely on the patented algorithms behind Reputation Score X to provide a reliable index of brand performance in order to make targeted business improvements. Backed by Ascension Ventures, Heritage Partners, Bessemer Ventures and Kleiner Perkins, and trusted by over 250 integration partners, including Google, Facebook, Salesforce, J.D. Power, Amazon and Web.com, Reputation turns feedback into the fuel to grow businesses around the world.

Visit reputation.com/healthcare to learn more and request a demo.

