



MORE PATIENTS, LESS GUESSWORK:

# Answers to Common Marketing Questions for Healthcare Practices



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Presented by the  
healthcare marketers at:



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# Introduction

Running a healthcare practice today means balancing patient care with the realities of business. Margins are tighter, patients have more options, and **trust in healthcare has dropped — from 71.5% in 2020 to just 40.1% in 2024, according to Johns Hopkins**. While physicians remain respected, patients now research online, read reviews, and compare providers before making a choice. If your practice isn't visible and credible in those moments, you risk losing them to competitors.

Marketing isn't about gimmicks; it's about making your practice easy to find, easy to trust, and easy to choose. This eBook gives you a proven framework to do just that — practical strategies refined over decades to help medical groups attract new patients, build credibility, and drive consistent growth.

Whether you're adding a physician, expanding locations, or simply keeping your schedule full, these strategies will help you get there.

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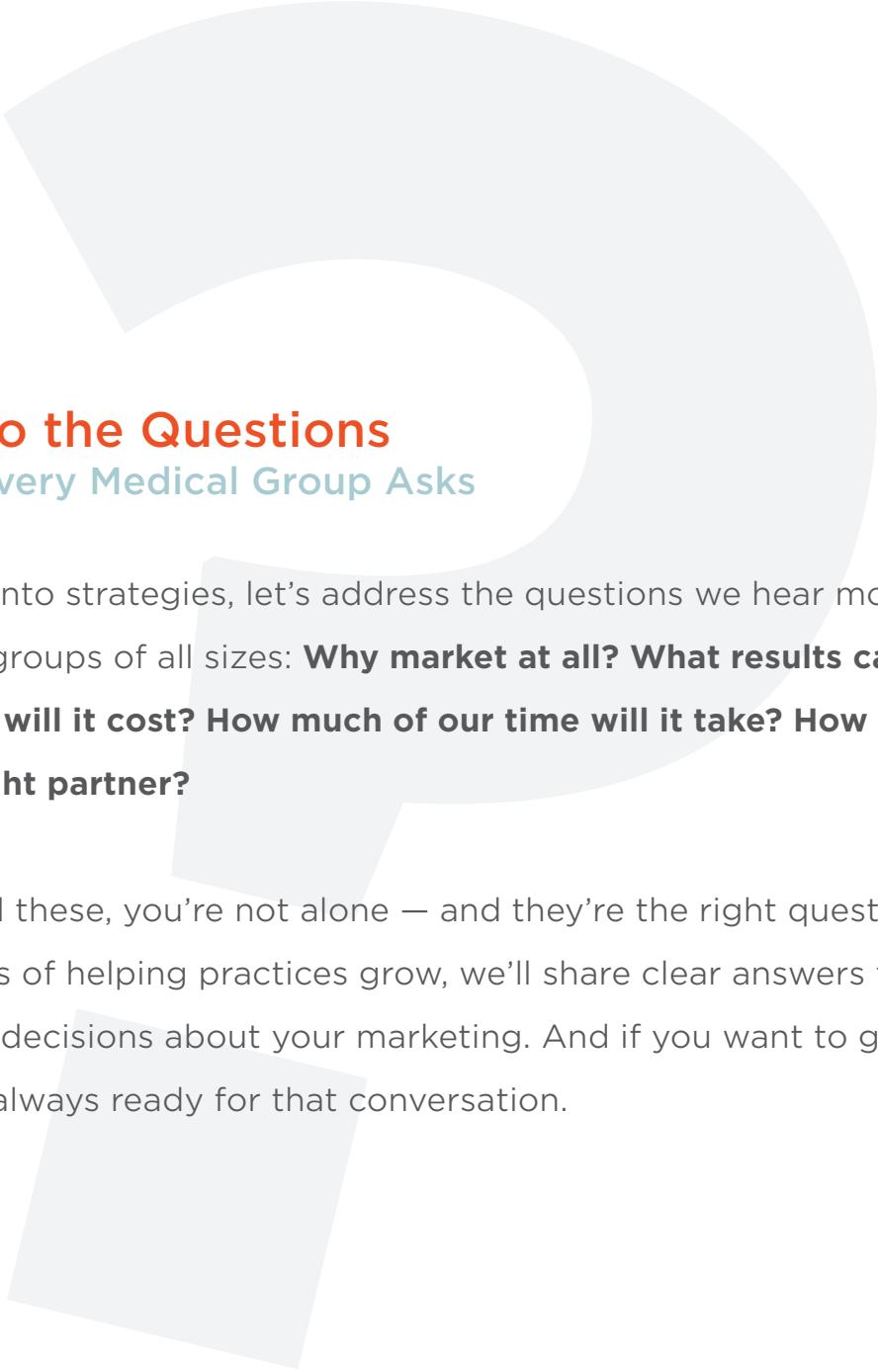
***“Patients expect fast responses, clear info, online scheduling, trust signals (reviews), and a good website user experience. Missing these tends to increase cost (lost leads, low conversion).”***

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## Who Is This E-Book For?

This eBook is written for any healthcare provider who wants to attract more patients and grow their practice. That includes general physicians, specialists such as cardiologists and orthopedic surgeons, as well as dentists, chiropractors, and physical therapists. The strategies here apply across the spectrum of healthcare — because regardless of your specialty, patients are making choices about who to trust and where to go for care.

For simplicity, throughout this eBook we'll use the term "medical group" as a short-hand. But whether you run a solo practice, a multi-specialty clinic, or something in between, the principles in these pages can help you strengthen your reputation, expand your reach, and ensure a steady flow of new patients.



## **Straight to the Questions**

### Questions Every Medical Group Asks

Before diving into strategies, let's address the questions we hear most from medical groups of all sizes: **Why market at all? What results can we expect? What will it cost? How much of our time will it take? How do we choose the right partner?**

If you've asked these, you're not alone — and they're the right questions. Based on years of helping practices grow, we'll share clear answers to guide smarter decisions about your marketing. And if you want to go deeper, we're always ready for that conversation.

## Why Should We Bother With Marketing?

Many practices feel confident in their referral network, and that can certainly help bring patients through the door. But referrals alone are no longer enough. Patients today don't simply take the first referral they're given — they research online, read reviews, and compare providers before making a choice. If your practice isn't easy to find or doesn't make a strong first impression, those patients may end up with another group instead.

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- **A large majority of patients use digital channels: many begin with online search or review sites.**
- **Mobile usage is highly significant (web traffic, searching).**
- **Online reviews have strong influence.**
- **Larger share of marketing budgets are going digital (Google Ads, social media ads, email marketing, etc.).**

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At the same time, trust in the healthcare system has been declining. Patients are more cautious, more skeptical, and more likely to question where they receive care. Smart marketing gives you the chance to tell your story, highlight your expertise, and show patients why they can feel confident choosing your practice. In the end, authenticity matters much more than trends.

Finally, growth requires visibility. Even the best doctors can't fill their schedule if new patients don't know they exist. Strategic marketing ensures a steady flow of patients, helps you build lasting credibility, and pays for itself many times over. Done right, it's not an expense — it's an investment in the future health of your practice. **In fact, a single new patient often covers the cost of a month's marketing, often times more.**

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### **LTV - Patient “LifeTime Value” to a practice:**

- **For primary care: ~\$5,000+ over the lifetime (or relationship duration).**
- **For specialized practices: can be substantially more, often times 5x - 10x more, depending on treatment frequency and complexity.**

# What Will Marketing Do For Us?



The most immediate benefit of smart marketing is **patient growth**. By making your practice more visible online and in your community, marketing helps new patients find you and choose your office over other options. This creates a steady, reliable flow of patients instead of relying only on referrals or seasonal spikes.

Marketing also supports your larger business goals. If you bring on a new physician or open another location, you'll need to quickly fill schedules to make those moves successful. Strategic marketing ensures that growth is backed by a strong pipeline of patients who already know and trust your practice.

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***“Key pressure points for small to medium-sized healthcare organizations: staffing shortages limit the ability to see more patients even when demand increases. Also, technologies like self-scheduling are still not widely adopted, which can cap growth.”***

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Finally, marketing strengthens your reputation. Consistent communication, professional branding, and patient testimonials not only build credibility with patients, they also encourage word-of-mouth and referrals from other doctors. **Over time, this creates lasting loyalty and makes your practice the first choice in your specialty.**

## How Long Will it Take to See Results?

Some strategies generate results quickly — for example, targeted online ads can drive new patient inquiries within weeks. Others, like SEO and reputation building, take longer but create lasting impact. That's why the right comprehensive mix, aligned with your practice's goals, is essential.

Most groups should allow about four to six months to establish a strong marketing foundation. This gives quick tactics time to deliver wins while long-term strategies gain traction. Even with ads, time is needed to gather local data, refine campaigns, and improve performance.

**It's also worth remembering that patients may see your practice today but not reach out until weeks or months later. The goal isn't just quick results — it's building a steady, sustained presence that keeps your practice visible, trusted, and top of mind when patients are ready for care.**



*“We saw a nearly 18%  
increase in new patient  
appointment requests  
in the first 3 months of  
launching our marketing  
efforts with PatientJoin.*

*This allows our staff to  
focus more on patient  
care rather than acquiring  
new patients!”*

Elaine - Michigan Orthopedic Center

# Bench- marks & Ratios

Here are some key metrics/  
ratios that are frequently  
observed in agencies working  
with healthcare clients; these  
help set expectations:

## Return on Investment (ROI): 3x - 5x returns are fairly common in case studies when we optimize paid search, PPC (pay-per-click), and ads for our healthcare clients.

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### **Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC):**

Varies a lot by specialty; industry survey shows CAC for patients often in the \$300-\$1,000+ range depending on competition, specialty, region, but good agency work brings that down.

### **Cost per Lead (CPL):**

One benchmark from a healthcare agency report is ~\$40 CPL for top agencies, versus higher averages (e.g. ~\$73.50) for less optimized marketing spend in some sectors.

- *Hydrate Medical (IV clinic) tripled its revenue in ~2 years after engaging in a professional marketing plan, with an estimated ROI of ~1,039%.*
- *AK Pain & Spine saw 220% increase in patient appointments and a 96% boost in conversion rates under agency-led SEO + Google Ads + branding work.*
- *A practice with PPC/paid search optimization (Gentiva Health) improved ROI from 1:1 to ~3:1 in three months.*
- *Email marketing: high ROI – in one summary figure, medical practices see \$42 back for every \$1 spent in some email/retention-oriented campaigns.*

*This indicates that when agency strategies are well-executed, small/medium practices can see 2-3x+ meaningful growth in revenue or patient volume within months to a few years. This suggests that investing in an agency isn't just a cost but often has payoffs that often exceed what internal efforts can achieve.*

## What Will it Cost?

The cost of marketing should always be viewed as a business investment, not just an expense. In fact, for most medical groups, just one new patient can often cover the cost of an entire month's marketing. That's because the revenue from even a single appointment — and especially from a long-term patient relationship — far outweighs the cost of attracting them.

We also understand that every practice is different. That's why marketing packages are flexible and can be tailored to your size, specialty, and goals. Some groups want to start small and scale over time, while others are ready to move quickly to support a new doctor or location. Either way, we'll work with you to find the right fit.

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***Practices of 2-5 physicians often spend \$2,500-\$10,000/month on digital marketing, which is about 3-6% of gross revenue. These numbers include agency fees as well as media/ad fees. Larger groups spend more and often with higher expected returns. Practices often see 3x to 5x return for every dollar spent on advertising.***

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Most importantly, our approach is grounded in numbers. During onboarding, we look closely at the lifetime value of a patient (LTV) in your practice. This ensures that every marketing decision is made with profitability in mind. The goal is simple: to spend the right amount in the right places so your practice grows, your investment pays for itself, and your patient flow is steady.

But, an active medical group should be ready to spend a few thousand dollars a month on marketing. Depending on tactics, it can be higher than that. Any quality agency will be able to create a plan to your comfort levels, with a clear roadmap forward.

 **Increasing patient retention by just 5% in healthcare is associated with profit increases of 25%-95%.**

*(Retention is cheaper than acquisition and has a larger bottom-line impact)*

 **Personal communication (emails, reminders, texts, educational content) often lead to higher follow-up rates and more returning patients.**

## How Much Time Will it Take from Us?

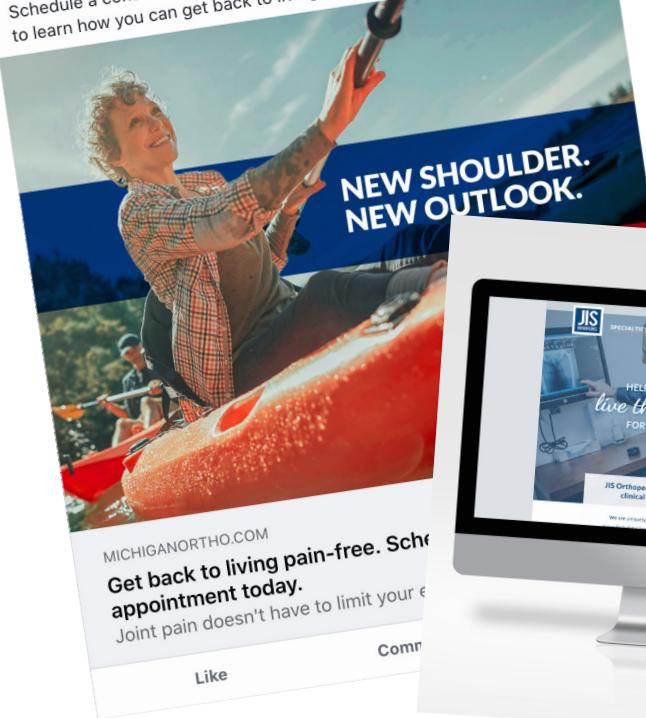
We know your top priority is patient care, not marketing. And that's how it should be. That's why our process is designed to be easy and require very little of your time. Most of the heavy lifting is done by our team, so you and your staff can stay focused on what matters most — taking care of patients.

It all begins with a simple onboarding session. In that meeting, we gather the information we need — such as the average first-year value and lifetime value of a patient, your goals, and any preferences you have. From there, we take over the strategy and execution. You can be as involved or as hands-off as you'd like, reviewing campaigns regularly or leaving it entirely in our hands.

Throughout the process, we'll keep you updated with clear reports and insights, so you'll always know what's working without having to dig into the details. **The bottom line: marketing with PatientJoin won't be a burden.** It's designed to be simple, effective, and to let you keep your focus where it belongs — on delivering excellent care to your patients.



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## What Marketing Tactics Should We Focus On?

Every practice is different, and that means the right marketing priorities aren't the same for everyone. A pediatric group won't have the same needs as an orthopedic practice, and a single-location office will need a different approach than a large multi-specialty group. That's why there's no "one-size-fits-all" answer to this question.

**The key is to start with a clear understanding of your practice — your patient base, your services, your growth goals, and even the value of a typical patient over time.** That's why we begin with a focused onboarding session. In that meeting, we ask detailed questions, review your current efforts, and gather the information needed to see where your biggest opportunities lie.

From there, we create a clear roadmap showing which marketing mix to start with and how it should evolve. That might mean SEO for visibility, paid ads for faster patient flow, or reputation and referral support. You shouldn't have to guess — with the right agency partner, proper discovery, and a tailored plan, you'll know exactly where to begin.

# How Do We Choose the Right Marketing Agency/Partner for Us?

Not every marketing agency understands the unique challenges of healthcare. Medical groups face issues of trust, compliance, and reputation that don't apply to other industries. That's why it's important to choose a partner who knows the healthcare landscape and can tailor strategies specifically for medical practices.

**The right partner will also focus on results that matter.** It's not just about clicks or impressions — it's about new patients, filled schedules, and measurable growth. A good agency should be able to show you how they track outcomes, explain what's working, and adjust when something isn't. That way, you know your investment is driving real results for your practice.

Finally, look for a partner who feels like part of your team, not just a vendor. **The best marketing relationships are built on communication, responsiveness, and a shared commitment to your goals.** You want someone who listens, brings proactive solutions, and gives you confidence that your marketing is in good hands — so you can stay focused on patient care.

A quality agency should have, and be able to speak to, their direct experience in healthcare, and the problems they solved.

So  
What  
Does  
it All  
Mean



# 1 Have Strong Online Visibility

SEO, local search, good website usability/mobile readiness. Because many patients start online.

# 2 Use Trust Signals

Reviews, testimonials, educational content, transparency. These build credibility.

# 3 Focus on Both Acquisition and Retention

It's cheaper to retain existing patients, and retention amplifies value over time. Personal communications help here.

## Measure and Optimize

Analytics, tracking which campaigns produce leads/patients, A/B testing, using data to refine targeting & messaging.

## Use Multiple Channels

Social media, content, paid search (Google Ads), email, reviews, a solid web presence, traditional advertising, etc. A diversified approach tends to reduce dependence on any one channel and can better reach different patient segments.

## Follow-through & Speed

Fast response to inquiries; ease of scheduling; strong patient experience.

# Want more answers and to learn how PatientJoin can help grow your practice?

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Schedule a no-pressure introduction call to learn more about  
how PatientJoin can aid in your growth at:

**[www.patientjoin.com](http://www.patientjoin.com)**

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Can't wait? Call us today at: **(888) 973-6743**

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Or, shoot us an email and let us know what your  
biggest pain point for growth is at: **info@patientjoin.com**

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