

PATIENT INSIGHTS UNVEILED:

Exploring patient habits and the impact of
media, thought leadership, and advertising



SURVEYING AND RESPONSE

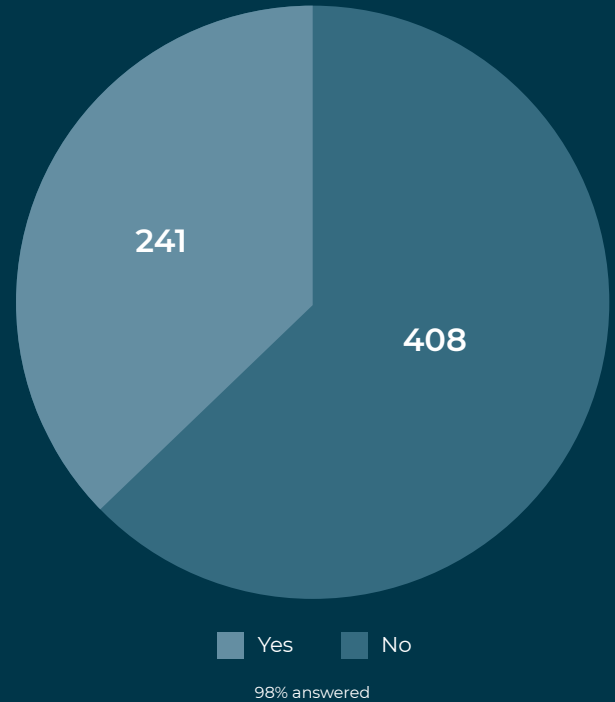
In 2023, MLive Media Group launched a survey asking Michigan's healthcare patients to answer questions about their decision-making around selecting primary and specialist care, how they interact with healthcare advertising, and their experiences with appointment-setting channels (both human and electronic).

In evaluating patient responses, we saw distinct patterns of behavior and preferences emerge. Armed with the knowledge of these preferences and patterns, healthcare practices of any size can improve upon their marketing strategies to create real results. In understanding these results, we hope that practice leaders, practitioners, and marketers will discover the unique preferences, habits, and methods of healthcare decision making that is unique to Michiganders. Patient acquisition and retention is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor.



663
TOTAL RESPONDENTS

Do you book and manage anyone's appointments besides yourself?



How old are you?



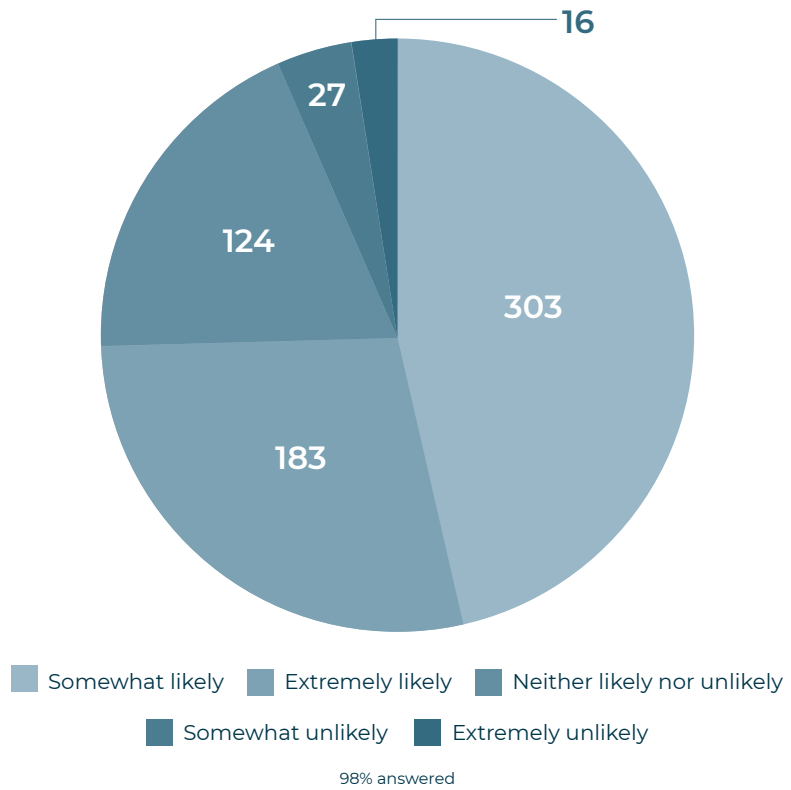
THE TIME TO STRATEGIZE IS NOW.

1 IN 2

respondents said they are seeking a healthcare specialist in the next 6-12 months (dermatology, plastic surgery, Ophthalmologist, OBGYN, etc.).



How likely are you to ask your healthcare provider for a specialist who you've heard about through family, a friend and/or advertising?



Why do you choose one primary care doctor over another (family physician or pediatrician)? (Select all that apply)



PATIENT'S MEDIA CONSUMPTION IMPACTS MARKETING MIX

The Evolution of Television

When creating a marketing mix, the first thing marketers need to consider is where their audience is spending time. With use of newer technologies permeating every generation – it is no longer traditional channels.

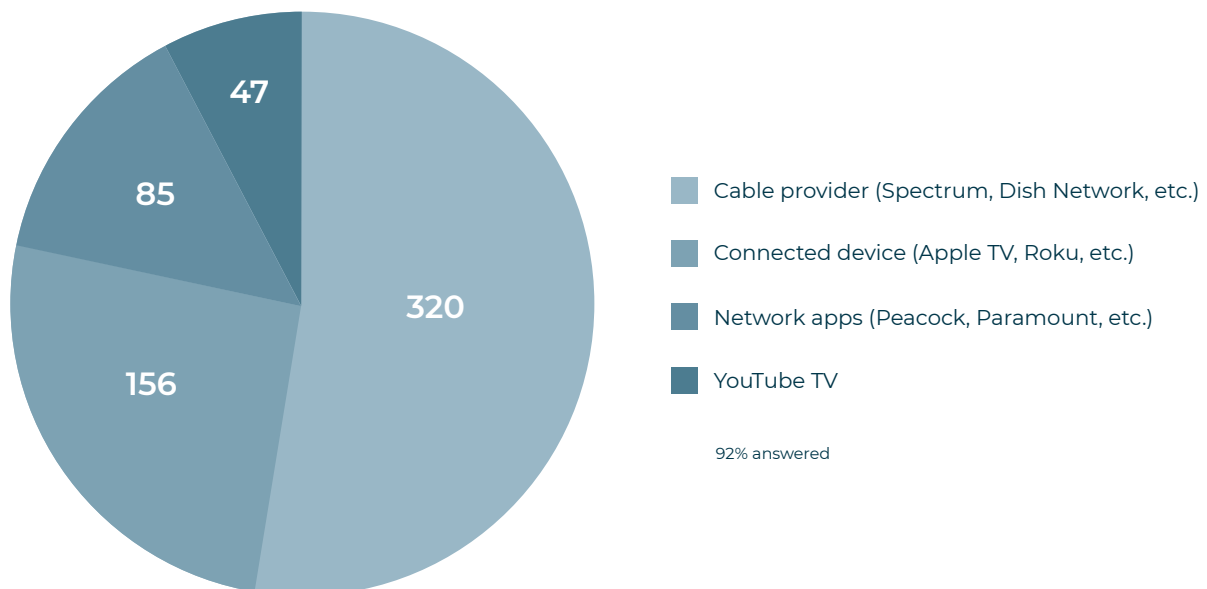
Let's start with TV. While Gen-Z and Millennials left traditional TV providers and viewing years ago, this habit has spread to all generations.



1 IN 3

of all respondents prefer to watch TV through a connected device, such as Apple TV, Roku, etc., or on YouTube.

How do you prefer to watch TV?



This means the days of placing a single local TV spot and being successful are gone. If traditional TV or cable advertising is a big part of your marketing mix, you are missing a large segment of your potential audience. Instead, marketers must devise a strategy that reaches a variety of devices through OTT/CTV platforms or other video platforms like YouTube.

WHAT IS OTT/CTV?

OTT (over-the-top) and CTV (connected TV), is a means of providing television and film content over the internet at the request and to suit the requirements of the individual consumer (i.e., you choose what to watch and when). Some of the most popular OTT/CTV platforms include: Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, and Amazon Prime.

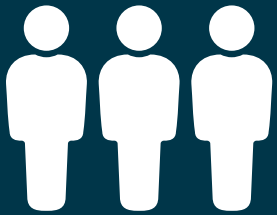


Leveraging Social Media Engagement

Social media has evolved from the days of messaging between friends into a way to connect with your community.

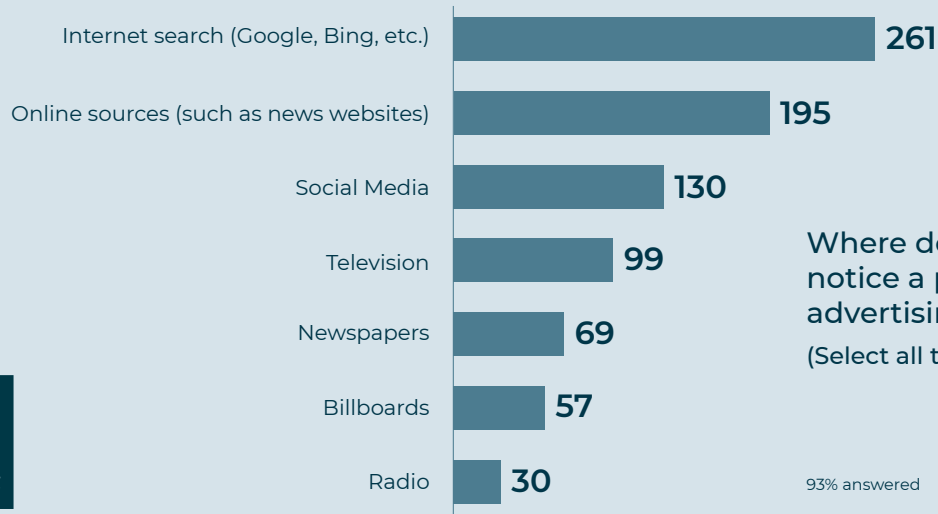


1 IN 6 people ages 42-69+ say they notice a practice's advertising on social media.



In Q1 of 2023, [Meta reported](#) that Facebook had 3.03 billion users worldwide, with 1.8 billion daily active users spending an average of 38 minutes per day on the platform.

Amongst these billions of interactions, people interact with groups and brands as often as they interact with their friends.



Where do you typically notice a practice's advertising?
(Select all that apply)

93% answered



Creating a healthy social media platform can be overwhelming. Often marketers feel pressured to post frequently on every social platform which leaves less time to create quality content. To have a truly impactful social strategy that will get you noticed, it is important that you be ready to create content that feels authentic to each of these platforms and to your audience. Take time to evaluate which platform you can commit to making a priority – *based on your audience and content creation abilities* – and make sure to create a healthy strategy before adding additional platforms.

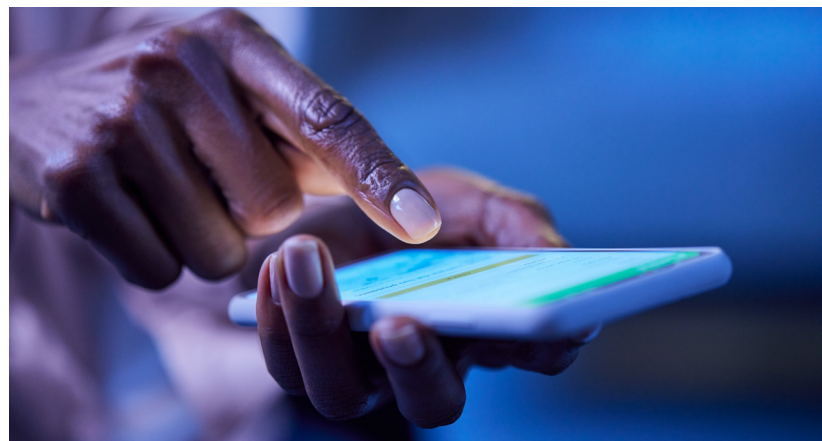


An Increase in Video Creative

Even though YouTube and TikTok are exclusively video platforms, Facebook and Instagram have gone video-heavy with Reels and feed content filled with video. We've seen Meta putting a preference on Stories and Reels which reiterates the need for vertical video. We have seen the performance of Meta campaigns increase when these ad sizes are utilized. Be careful plugging the same video into campaigns across channels – Reels, Stories, and Shorts – video sizes, subtitled graphic styles and video length vary by platform.

But Don't Forget Static Creative

Static posts still work, but marketers must produce content to fit each app's specific sizes and styles. Consider various ways to convey information when creating feed posts. Create a mix of engagement posts and informative posts that can allow the user to dive deeper into education about your brand/services. Link to blogs/content or provider pages on your site. This gives your brand credibility and a reputation as a thought leader.



CONNECTING PATIENTS TO INFORMATION

For many patients, the healthcare decision journey starts with research. Whether they are seeking basic or specialized care, typing their symptoms into a search engine, or seeking help post-diagnosis, patients turn to the internet for information. We asked survey participants where they seek information.

Using Search Engines to Attract Patients

When a prospective patient uses a search engine to answer a question about how, what, where or which product/service, they are raising a hand, saying “*I have a question.*” **40% of people surveyed said they use a search engine when researching healthcare topics.** Meaning it is critical to be present in Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs). There are two ways to set your practice up for success in search.


1 The first, **Search Engine Marketing (SEM)** focuses on gaining traffic and visibility from paid search. It begins by selecting keywords that align with your services and what your potential patients are searching for. However, real success comes from monitoring paid search results and making real-time optimizations – as the internet is ever changing and audience engagements will give you great insight into your potential patient pool.

2 **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** focuses on optimizing your website to gain organic search traffic. When optimizing your website, place importance on creating a mobile-friendly design and content that matches frequently searched terms and topics. Create a content strategy to keep the information on your website relevant and up to date.

Whether you focus on Search Engine Marketing or Search Engine Optimization – or better yet a combination of both, your website is an incredibly important part of your branding and marketing to potential patients.

7%

of Google's
daily searches
are health
related.



Optimizing Your Website for Patient Use

Today it is hard to find a business that does not have a website, healthcare is no different. A practice's website serves as a place to connect with both current and prospective patients. It must serve as a tool to bring in new patients, a place of education, and a place of business.

73%

of people look for provider and/or procedure-specific information on a practice's website.



34%

of people rely on information from a practice's website to gain information on treatments before scheduling an appointment.



A Place of Education – Many practices have a sense of dread when approaching the task of creating a content strategy; thinking that it can be time consuming and unsure where to begin. When first launching a content strategy, begin with listing all the frequently asked questions your patients might ask. This could include logistic information about appointment setting, insurance processes, or treatment specific information. Think about how your website is designed and create a space where the answers to each of these questions can be housed and the copy is searchable – whether it be a blog section or service line pages with expanded information.



A Place of Business – After the work of finding, attracting, and bringing a potential patient to your site, it is important to guide them to your desired conversion point. Whether you make appointments online or via phone, evaluate your website for how frequently your desired appointment setting method is mentioned. Is it on every page? If the answer is no, consider adding a “make appointment” button or your phone number (even a click to call for mobile sites) to your website header or prominently positioned near informative content, not just provider or location pages.

QUALITY OF CARE CREATES REFERRALS

No matter your marketing budget and strategy, nothing can impact the success of your practice more than providing quality care. The most reliable marketing influence is word of mouth and referrals from a trusted source. Obviously, the care provided is key to gaining referrals and positive reviews, but there are things that a practice can do to support referrals and reviews.

34% of people said they choose a specialist based on a family/friend referral or because of good reviews.



How do you choose a specialist? (Select all that apply)



98% answered



Don't Forget to Ask!

Build into your patient admin a process for asking and collecting patient testimonials. Gathering these testimonials at the time of service or shortly after is a great opportunity for you to gather real-time feedback. It can be as simple as an automated email after an appointment or a reminder to leave a review on your social channels/website in an appointment reminder.




Create a Place to Post Testimonials

Once you have made gathering testimonials a priority, create a place where these will make an impact. Add them to your website or use social media review platforms to collect and publish. Wherever your audience is most likely to engage and share!

Rewards for Referrals or Testimonials

Struggling to generate testimonial or referrals from your patients? Building a reward into the ask can help increase engagement. For example, giving a discount for referrals or including a testimonial request in a sweepstakes. These can be low-cost ways to quickly increase engagement and often grow your email database. Be sure, though, to have the patient disclose in their testimonial that they are receiving a benefit.



In an age when every patient is an online researcher and reviewer, healthcare providers/practices must work harder than ever to tell their story and build their brand. What we learned in our 2023 Patient Survey, is that healthcare marketing must focus on aligning precision targeting with engaging content and quality care to build success.

Sound like a heavy lift? We understand and are here to help. MLive Media Group and our [Healthcare Marketing team](#) are experts in healthcare marketing and equipped to partner with you in developing a marketing strategy unique to your practice's goals.

