

CallRail

Ebook

Healthcare marketing outlook for 2024



Introduction

Everybody needs healthcare, but people are far more careful about purchasing medical and dental services than they are about frivolous purchases. Costs, trust, competency, and even potential “fit” with a provider inform their decision, while practices like yours have to respect the rules of the road to engage with them. So, what’s the best way to go about it?

CallRail spoke with three dozen healthcare providers and healthcare marketing agencies to get a clearer understanding of the [healthcare marketing landscape for 2024](#) and beyond. Our findings reveal several key marketing trends that can move you forward with better online visibility—all while you continue to build trust, create a patient-forward experience, and adhere to HIPAA compliance.



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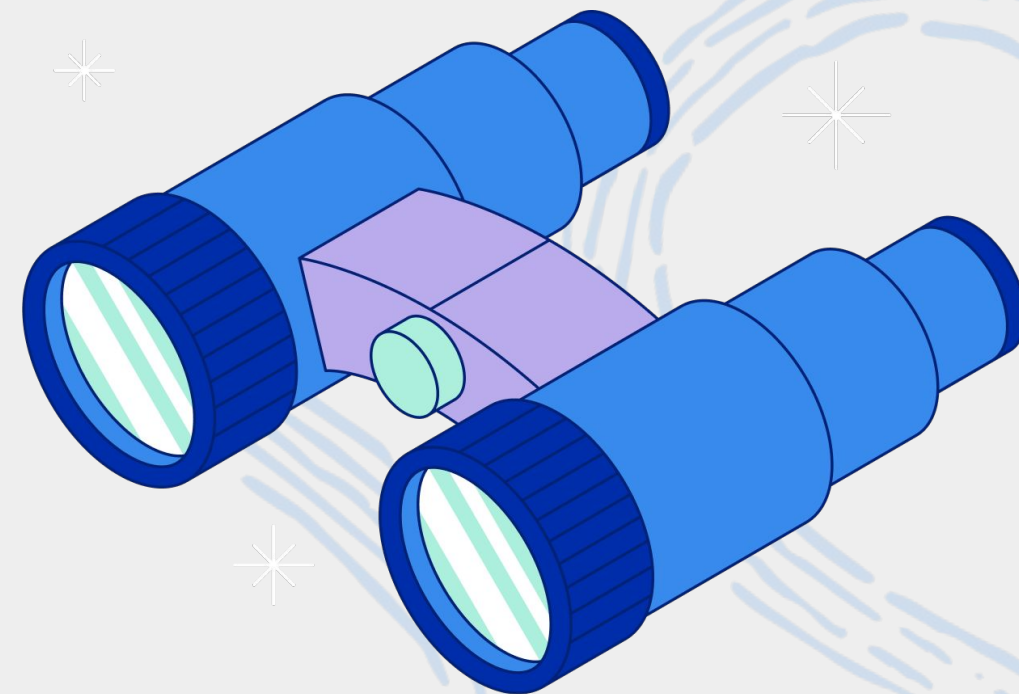
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Trend #1

Digital channels will dominate healthcare marketing in 2024



Postcards or mailers still have their place, but healthcare marketing strategies increasingly favor digital channels. According to the [IMARC Group](#), U.S. healthcare ad spend in general will rise to \$29.2 billion by 2028, with [Insider Intelligence eMarketer](#) adding that digital ad spending in healthcare will increase from \$15.84 billion in 2023 to \$20 billion in 2024. CallRail's research shows how this breaks down and why.

Providers want to dig deeper into digital marketing.

As people spend more time in the digital world, wise providers know they need to go digital to reach new patients. So, does that mean running Google ads, being active on social media, or something else?

A little bit of everything, as our research shows widespread digital marketing across the board. Notably, providers are zooming in on a few initiatives:

- **79%** invest in website and SEO
- **64%** engage on social media
- **54%** communicate via email marketing

Practices still execute non-digital tactics

Traditional marketing still plays a valuable role, even if it's lower on the priority ladder for your budget. Providers trust a few tried-and-true initiatives for their marketing mix:

- **43%** participate in events
- **32%** use print marketing



Best practices for healthcare marketers

Healthcare marketing is trending toward digital—just like most other industries. Focus your healthcare marketing strategies around digital platforms to reach and engage with new patients.

- **Enhance your website and SEO** for both search engines and user experience, from creating relevant content with targeted keywords to improving mobile friendliness.
- **Leverage social media** to engage with potential patients on their favorite platforms, including sharing posts, running ads, and measuring performance.
- **Communicate via email marketing** to enhance personalization while sharing educational materials, sending appointment reminders, and building loyalty.

Trend #2

Use of AI and online scheduling technologies will increase



Artificial intelligence (AI) took off like a rocket, with people using it for everything from brainstorming their grocery lists to generating lifelike imagery. Marketing is one of the biggest winners, with tools such as ChatGPT, Jasper.ai, Midjourney, and others constantly unlocking new use cases. Our study shows both the benefits and risks of implementing AI.

AI has a place in healthcare marketing.

Healthcare providers can benefit from the AI boom. Many are exploring its value to save time and improve healthcare marketing strategies:

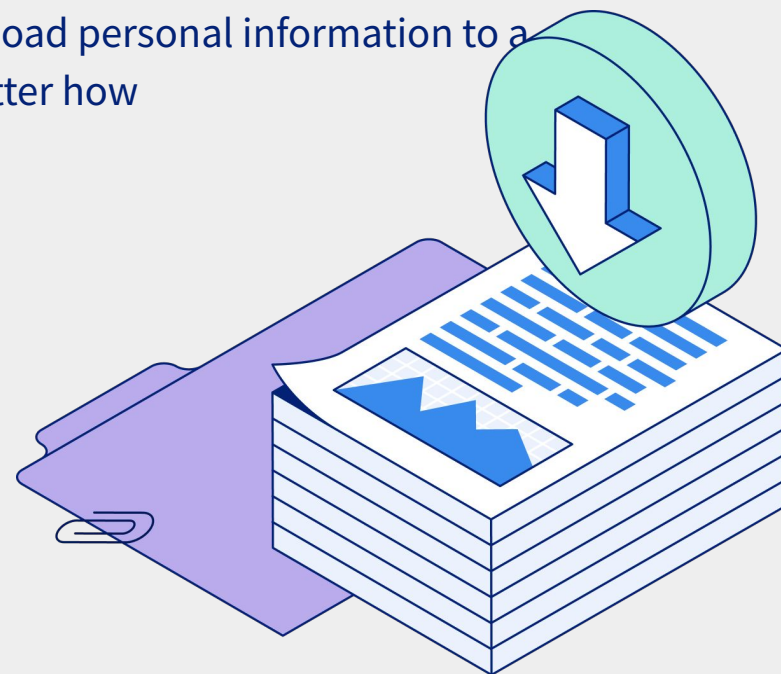
- **68%** streamline lead generation and qualification
- **36%** generate copy for treatments and procedures
- **25%** leverage language translation and localization
- **25%** automate appointment scheduling

As Eric Hubbard, founder of [Pain-Free Dental Marketing](#) puts it, online scheduling is one of the most significant shifts. “We’ll see the large organizations moving toward it, and they’re going to put pressure on the smaller single operators to roll out online scheduling.”

Leaning too heavily on AI has limitations and risks.

That said, you can’t forget that the industry prioritizes confidentiality and safety. AI stores anything you input and uses it to teach itself, and personal information can’t ethically be part of the lesson plan.

There are still too many unknowns about the breadth of how systems use information. To maintain HIPAA and HITECH compliance, you can’t just upload personal information to a tool such as ChatGPT—no matter how much it’s anonymized.



Best practices for healthcare marketers

Healthcare marketers should embrace the potential of AI to solve challenges and improve their productivity. Within the bounds of patient confidentiality and data safety, it has the potential to improve and streamline healthcare marketing strategies.

- **Capitalize on automation** across marketing initiatives such as lead generation and qualification, copy, and even appointment scheduling. AI tools can improve efficiency, reach, and personalization.
- **Remember the limitations and risks** of AI and use it judiciously with human oversight to ensure HIPAA compliance, prioritizing patient privacy and security.

13 Best Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools for Healthcare Marketing



Trend #3

2024 Will be the year of showcasing value and building trust



Providers must offer a differentiated experience. Between patients who expect more and practices that don't accept insurance, there's a greater burden to prove why a particular doctor is worth the expense.

The focus of conversations is changing.

Consumers have become more discerning about how they spend their time and money, and this perception has begun to extend to services like medical care where it didn't in the past. Providers need to establish trust with prospective patients who don't just need a doctor in their specialty, but who desire a doctor that provides expertise and service to match.

Communicating that fit offers credibility and helps both sides because it brings quality patients through the door who are more likely to remain long-term and makes patients feel welcome and comfortable getting in touch.

Most leads still come by phone.

Even with the trend toward digital, leads and patients are still most likely to pick up the phone to get in touch. Part of this is because many offices can't readily accommodate streamlining technologies such as live chat.

As Hubbard puts it, calls are still the path of least resistance, noting that "Practices do not have the technical capability nor the team to roll out something that isn't phone-centric. They can easily answer the phone because it's right there." With such an overwhelming reliance on phone calls, call tracking is an indispensable add-on to improve marketing campaigns.



Best practices for healthcare marketers

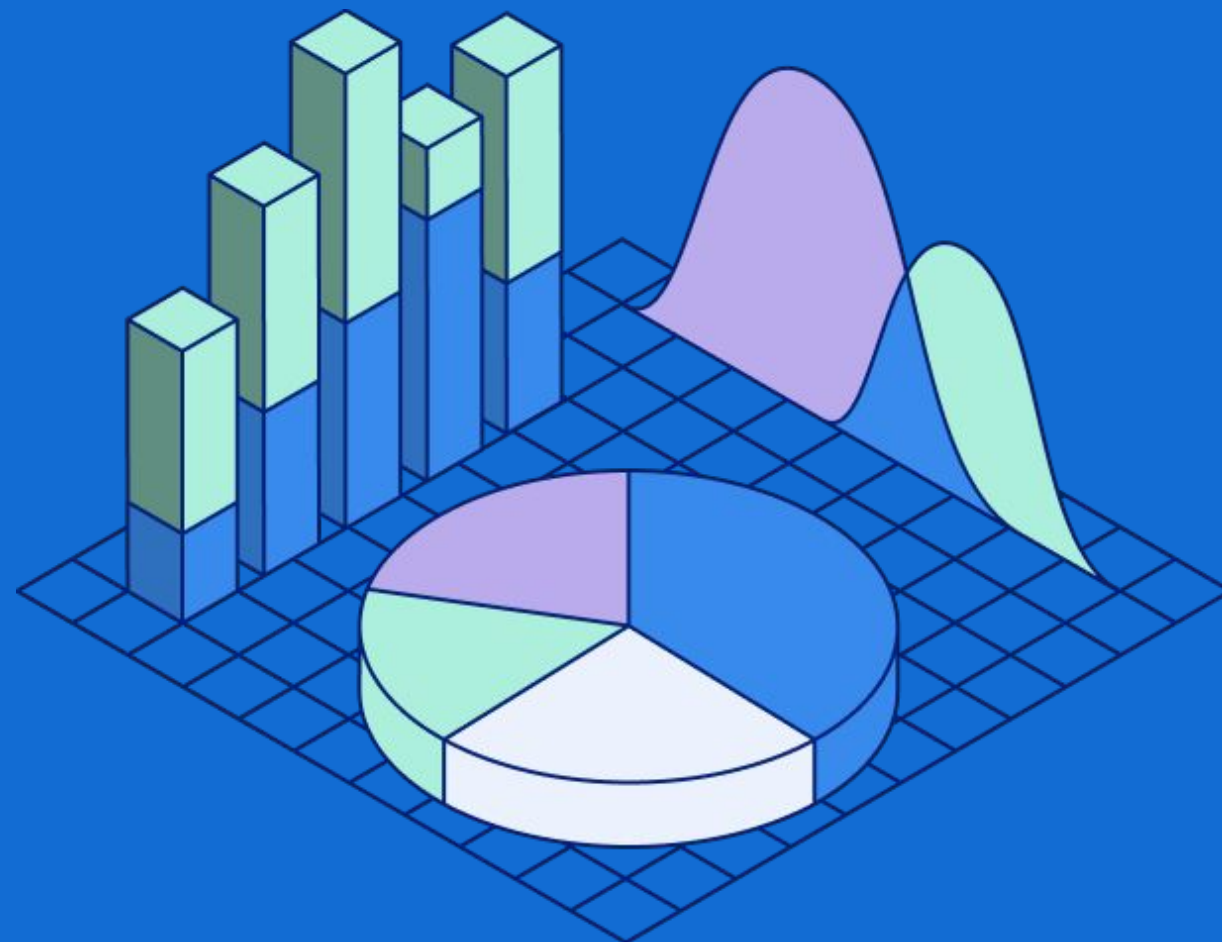
Patients need to know they'll receive the best care, while healthcare marketers need to ensure sound communication and campaign effectiveness. You can answer both sides with a few simple measures:

- **Demonstrate value** and measure satisfaction with NPS scores, ensuring satisfied patients have an avenue to give feedback and leave reviews.
- **Implement call tracking** to determine the campaigns that are and aren't driving patients.

[How to Use Call Tracking and Conversation Intelligence in Medical Practice Marketing](#)

Trend #4

Economic headwinds will be the biggest challenge



Healthcare is still a business that faces specific challenges the same way any other organization would. Unfortunately, the economy impacts the chance of success—shaping the financial outlook and patient attitudes. We found a few common themes to keep in mind:

Economic shifts are challenging healthcare.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, we've witnessed waves of inflation and economic uncertainty. The fact that people always have some degree of care needs makes healthcare somewhat recession-proof, but economic conditions still cause some degree of slowdown. Just like you might put off a car repair, patients are likely to delay a procedure because of cost. This can have long-term health and wellness ramifications.

Competition in a crowded marketplace impacts patient acquisition

Consumers aren't willing to take risks amidst the many healthcare service options available. However, medical and dental competency is hard for consumers to determine, so they use other factors to become comfortable with their purchasing decisions. They need to see through the eyes of others that a care decision stands a solid chance of meeting their health and personal needs. As a result, case studies of success and reviews are more important moving forward.

Maintaining HIPAA compliance restricts marketing capabilities.

Don't get caught off guard by an important change. Data privacy and HIPAA are becoming hot buttons, but between new guidance from the government and lawsuits restricting marketing capabilities, practices aren't always immediately aware of shifts. Stricter data privacy makes it harder to target efficiently and draw patients in.

Best practices for healthcare marketers

Address economic challenges by focusing on what your practice brings to the table. By prioritizing value-based messaging, building trust and credibility, and fostering transparency throughout your marketing efforts, you can improve success.

- **Be sensitive** to patients' financial concerns and focus messaging around providing value.
- **Differentiate yourself** and earn potential patients' trust by finding a balance between proving expertise and providing social proof.
- **Prioritize HIPAA** compliance across the marketing spectrum, ensuring data confidentiality and ethical marketing practices.

[How to Reduce Your Patient Acquisition Costs](#)





Transform your healthcare marketing strategy

If the healthcare marketing outlook for the year teaches us anything, it's the need to balance technology with human value. Digital tactics paired with AI are paving the way forward, but practices must establish trust and value with patients and prospective patients.

The combination of Call Tracking and Conversation Intelligence® by CallRail could be the difference-maker. By leveraging advanced insights for each call that comes in, you can show that you understand both patient needs and the marketing initiatives that drove them.

[Schedule a demo today](#) to see how CallRail can drive results for your marketing.

Ready to dive in?

[Request your free trial to get started](#)