



The Healthcare Marketer's Guide to Directory Management

Connecting with Patients in Moments that Matter

Introduction

Your physician and location directory is the foundation of your digital strategy.

But for many healthcare providers, the foundation is broken. Building a stronger foundation of data that encompasses all of your locations and physicians is critical to your ongoing ability to attract and retain patients.

Most people — nearly eight in 10 — turn to a search engine when they have a medical need. Their search usually involves looking for a local healthcare provider to treat them. Yet searching for physicians online remains a messy and painful process. Patients expect to find a doctor with the same ease they do while shopping on Amazon. They want their healthcare experience to match how they shop for anything else. But patients aren't getting the experience they expect, and that causes frustration.



80%

of people search
online for
medical care.

What's in this ebook?

In this ebook, we'll explain how engaging consumers in moments of need requires a Directory solution that combines physician and location data with content and experiences to transform patient experience right from the start.

Elements of a Directory Solution

Data — and More Data

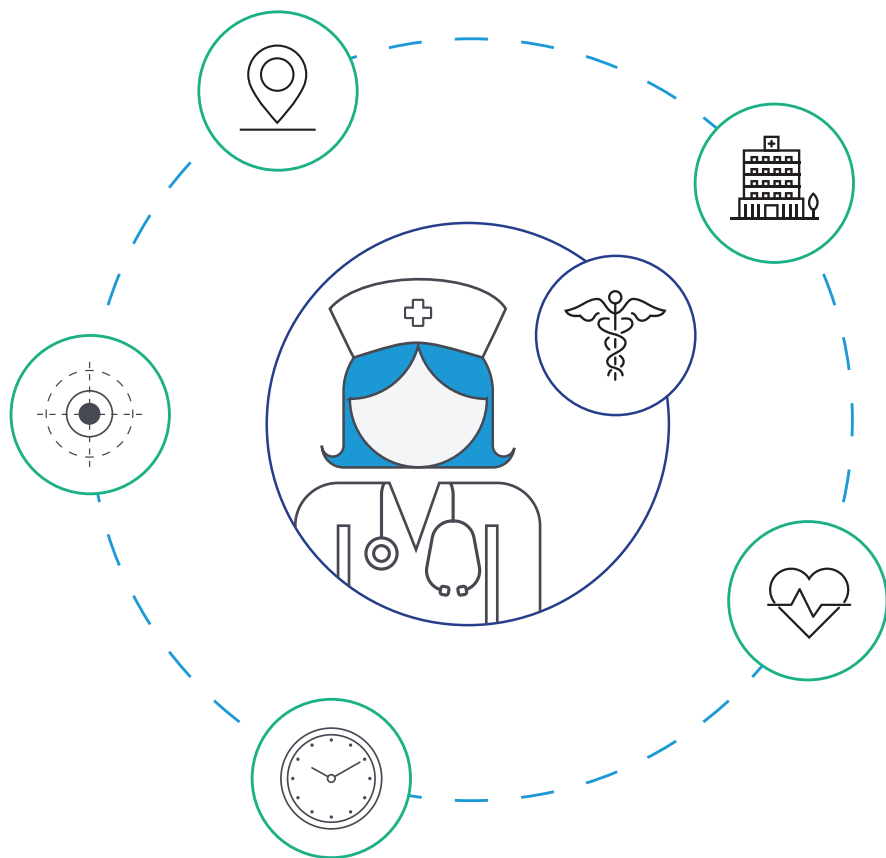
At the core of a good Directory solution is — you guessed it — data. In turn, the data that informs physician and location directories are what drives listings across the web and serves as a foundation for organizations to build their entire digital strategy.

Healthcare consumers typically start their search online and find doctors through listings before they visit a doctor's website for more in-depth information. Physician profiles with accurate, complete data are not only easier to find, they also provide important information consumers need to make decisions. The more data patients can find about your physicians, the more trust and confidence they'll feel about choosing from your network.

The most successful directories use accurate and complete data to turn moments of need into moments of conversion. Creating a data foundation means publishing accurate physician and location data across the entire ecosystem where patients conduct “near me” searches for care. Manually updating an online directory with data provided by internal resources is no longer adequate — automation is necessary to keep up with myriad data sources consumers use to find your doctors and locations.



Primary Elements of Physician Data



NAP Data

Consists of data elements core to business location, including business name (also referred to as “business title”), address, and phone number.

Latitude/Longitude

Your latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates, which comprise your pin data, make it possible for your business location to appear accurately on mapping such as Google Maps and Apple Maps.

Business Category

The type of business you are. Business category is often classified by industry, but data aggregators and publishers use their own taxonomies.

Business Description

A brief description of what you do. A healthcare system will likely need to manage multiple descriptions of different services offered.

Hours of Operation

These may vary among services offered inside a healthcare organization.

What Makes an Effective Directory?

The effectiveness of your Directory can mean the difference between a site visitor becoming your patient or leaving your site. In its most basic form, an effective directory helps drive traffic to your site for common non-branded searches such as “cardiologist near me.”

Your website visitors want a physician directory that plays matchmaker by providing the option to sort and filter potential doctors according to various attributes, such as their insurance coverage and geographic location. To meet patients' needs and provide a great user experience, make sure the physician directory is visible, accurate, contextual, actionable, measurable and able to be shared with data aggregators and third-party sites.

More complex directories help patients dig into which provider is the best fit based on filters such as gender, conditions treated, and even personality factors that are evident in a physician video bio.



Optimizing a Physician Directory

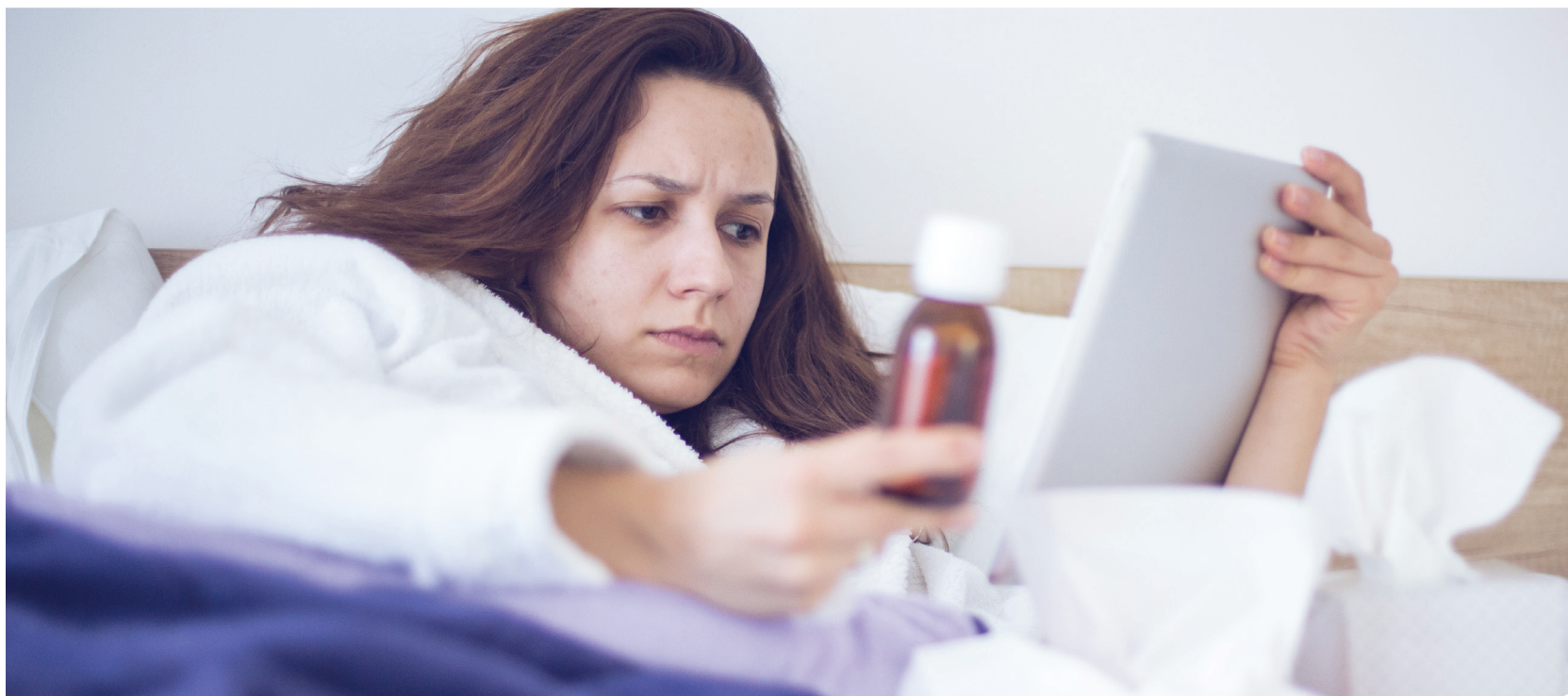
An optimized physician directory solution weaves all these elements together to create a better discovery experience for patients and improves results for your healthcare system.

The next section dives deeper into each of these elements.

Make Your Physician Directory Visible

No one can find a doctor on your website unless you make your physician directory visible.

Make sure your physician directory is prominently displayed on your site and easy to find through search engines. When you enhance the physician directory on your website, you not only satisfy the needs of new patients and returning patients looking for doctors — you also improve your rankings for non-branded search queries that occur across Google, Bing, Facebook and thousands of other sites.



Creating Actionable Moments

All the work you put into building a useful physician directory can be wasted if you fail to build a foundation with accurate information about your physicians. Accurate information builds trust and it gives consumers the tools they need to make decisions.

Data must be accurate on your physician profile pages so that when your patients use your directory to find physicians, they have a positive user experience, and the beginning of a positive patient experience. Ensure that physician pages contain correct information such as name, address, and phone number (NAP) data. Make sure patients have the right number to schedule or change an appointment.



Ensuring accuracy is not a one-time action. You'll need to complement your efforts to build a directory with a robust data management strategy that ensures ongoing updates are pushed to your physician pages.

Data Attributes

It's equally important to provide contextual content on physician pages. Data attributes consist of information such as gender, languages spoken or conditions treated, and differentiate physicians, to help consumers decide who to choose for care.

Providing Contextual Data and Content

Make the process of finding the right physician quick and easy.

Your site visitors need a painless path to find care. When a visitor starts navigating the physician directory, it's crucial that you serve up search options that are most likely to match their requirements.



Examples of Contextual Data

Notice how this health system's physician directory features insurance front and center, which is an example of contextual data.

The prominent positioning of that search option is no mistake. We know that the number one factor influencing the search decision is whether a doctor is covered by a patient's insurance plan.

You should also help patients narrow their search by offering fields that show proximity to the patient, specialty, gender, conditions treated and written and video bios.

Provide contextual data such as hours, specialties and insurances accepted, to help patients make decisions in the moment.

The Importance of Ratings and Reviews

An increasingly important form of contextual content for website visitors are patient ratings and reviews. Ratings and reviews play an increasingly important role in helping patients choose physicians, whether on a directory or on search engines or review sites. In fact, 68% of healthcare consumers have chosen one provider over another based on ratings and reviews.

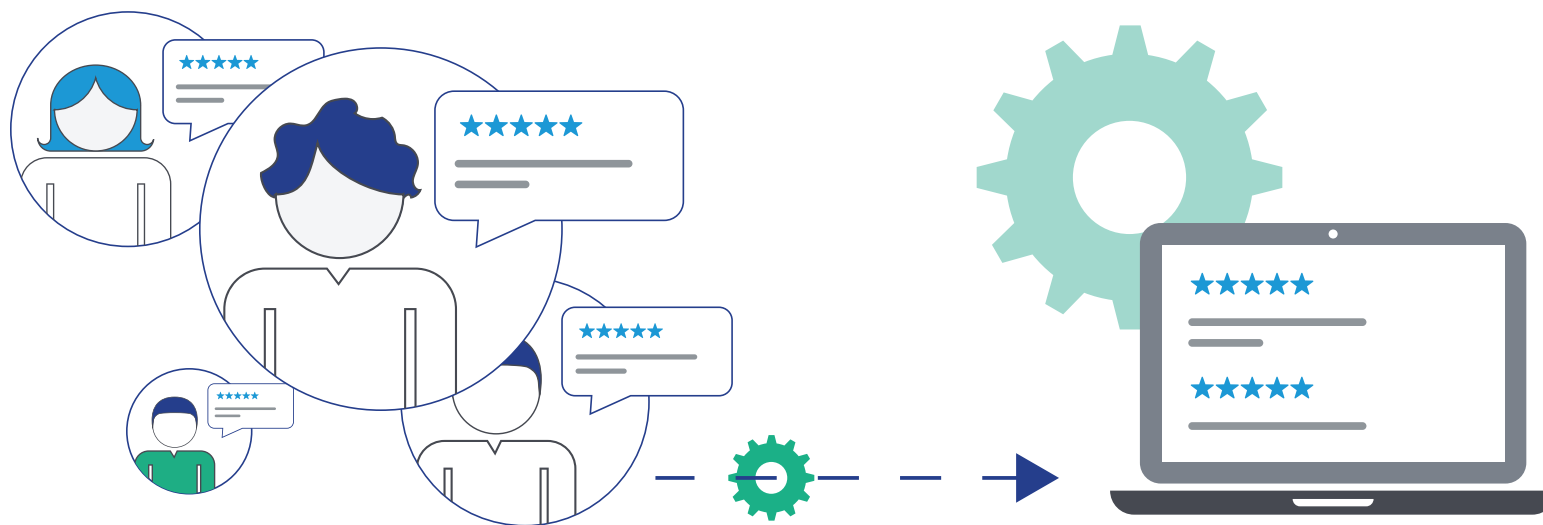
Providing ratings and reviews builds trust through transparency. Consequently, your directory should serve up ratings and reviews for each physician prominently, and can do so in several different ways. Generating star ratings through CAHPS data; streaming star ratings from third party review sites; or creating custom review links to send to patients, to name a few.

Predictive search is important functionality to have on your physician directory. This means searches for likely topics are auto-completed, which comes in handy if a patient is trying to recall the name of a doctor or is narrowing choices based on location, specialty or symptom.

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Turn Customers into Advocates



Optimize physician pages for mobile devices with actionable content such as appointment request forms and online scheduling options. This lets patients interact with you the same way they do other familiar brands they use every day.

For example, when a health system's find a doctor tool returns information about physicians within a searcher's parameters, the search results display some important details that help ensure conversion:

- Name, address, and phone information.
- Ability to request an appointment, view more profile details, or get directions without even needing to leave the physician directory results page, to encourage conversion.
- The doctor's location as a pin on the map on the page, which complements text with a visual – and facilitates finding directions on Google Maps.



Make it Easy

Strive to make the process as quick, easy and painless as possible. The shorter the time frame from search to scheduling an appointment, the better. Scheduling should be seamless, ADA-compliant and work well on mobile. And, of course, your physician profile pages need to connect directly to your physician directory results.

Populating a Physician's Profile

Clicking on “View Profile” on a result from the physician directory page opens up a deeper level of detail by linking to the physician’s profile page.

Our client populates its physician profile pages with information ranging from credentials to a comprehensive list of insurance plans covered. Notice also the appearance of more descriptive content, such as a video bio and credentials. That kind of information assists in decision-making after the patient has found a doctor.



Next to the doctor’s name is a crucial link: “View all office locations.”

Doctors seldom work in one place every day of the week. They may work out of multiple locations and keep different hours at each. Clicking on “View all office locations” reveals all the information a patient needs to figure out which location is best for them, without having to leave the physician directory.

Measuring Performance

Measurement goes way beyond page views and focuses on patient actions that lead to care, including clicks to call, appointments scheduled and Uber ride requests.

Traditional metrics such as page views, while helpful, are not sufficient for understanding how well your physician directory performs. Here are some key metrics to track:

Time spent and ease of use

How much time does it take for a patient to find what they need? Are your searches providing results? How many filters are people using? Are there filters that might provide a better experience?

Conversions

What on page actions will be considered a conversion? Clicks on areas that are crucial to creating next moments — such as calls, scheduling widgets or maps with driving directions — should be considered.

ROI modeling

What is the value of a new patient? What is the value of a click-to-call action versus getting driving directions? Create standards to measure the impact on your healthcare system.



How to Get Started: Physician Data

Your physician directory is only as good as the data it's built upon.

Health systems must treat their location data as a scalable asset that is both actionable and accessible, to drive visibility in moments of need — as well as create next moments to turn site visitors into patients. Here are the four essential steps to get you started:

1. Take inventory of your network of physicians.

Do physician profile pages exist for each doctor in your system? Create profile pages based on accurate attributes such as areas of specialty. Take care to pull that inventory from a single source of information that you trust to be accurate. You may need to cross-check against insurance information to create an accurate inventory. If you have 100 cardiologists in your network, make sure you account for all 100.

2. Assess the health of your physician data.

Healthy data is accurate data with reach. Your physician pages need to possess accurate data to build trust with patients, but that data also needs to be shared throughout the digital world where people conduct “near me” searches. Healthcare systems should assess both the accuracy and reach of your data often. Doing so can be complicated for large enterprises with a wide network of physicians whose data constantly changes.

Accurate physician data provides a foundation for findability across an omnichannel discovery ecosystem – encompassing discovery modes such as search, apps and GPS systems — and enables you to share it with publishers such as Apple, Facebook, Foursquare and Google, as well as aggregators such as Infogroup, Factual and Neustar Localeze. These aggregators distribute business data to publishers.

Assessing physician and location data health across your ecosystem means verifying that you are formatting physician data for each publisher and aggregator — and ensuring that the data is shared.



3. Mind your data attributes.

Descriptive, contextual content, such as languages spoken, insurance accepted or weekend hours differentiate physicians. Data attributes are important because they help patients choose physicians based on their needs beyond office location and specialty. Organize and publish data attributes to help patients make more informed choices.

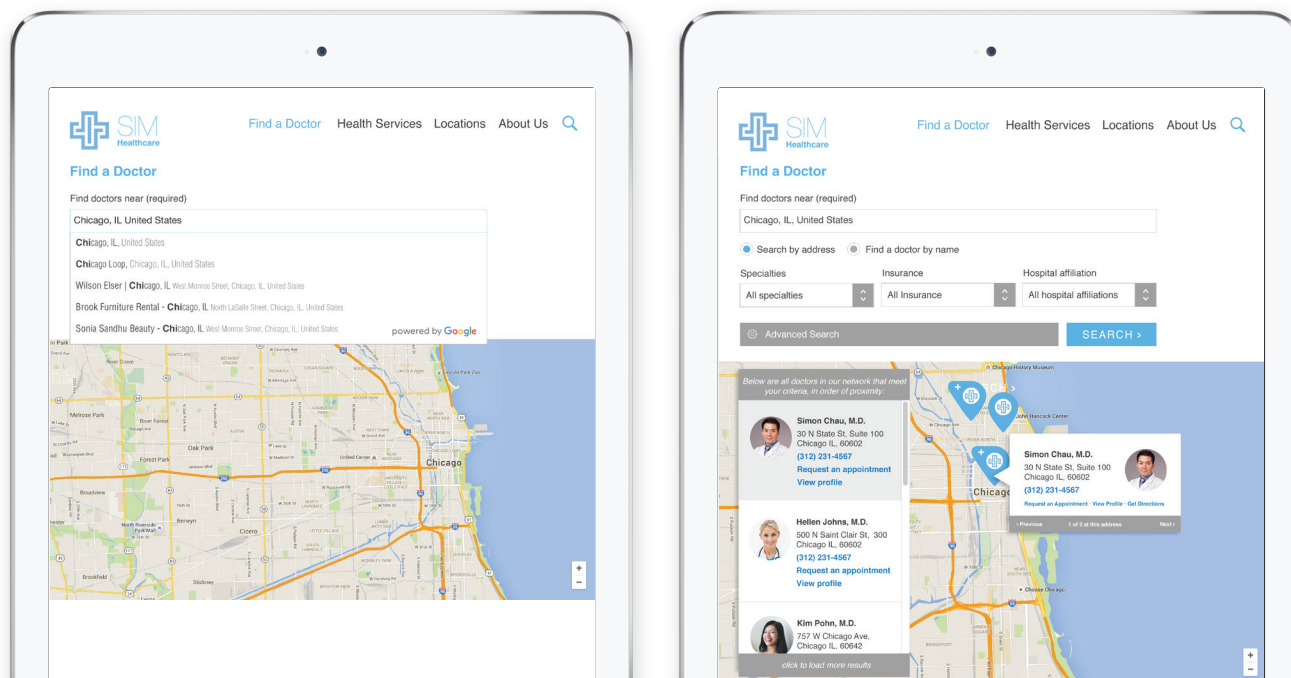
4. Organize your location and physician data from one central source.

When you create a central repository of your location data, your physician directories, physician profile pages and local listings stay up-to-date -- eliminating the need to update content and information in multiple sources. A strong repository also ensures your content is published and optimized for mobile and voice search.

82%

of smartphone shoppers
conduct 'near me' searches.

SearchEngineLand



90%

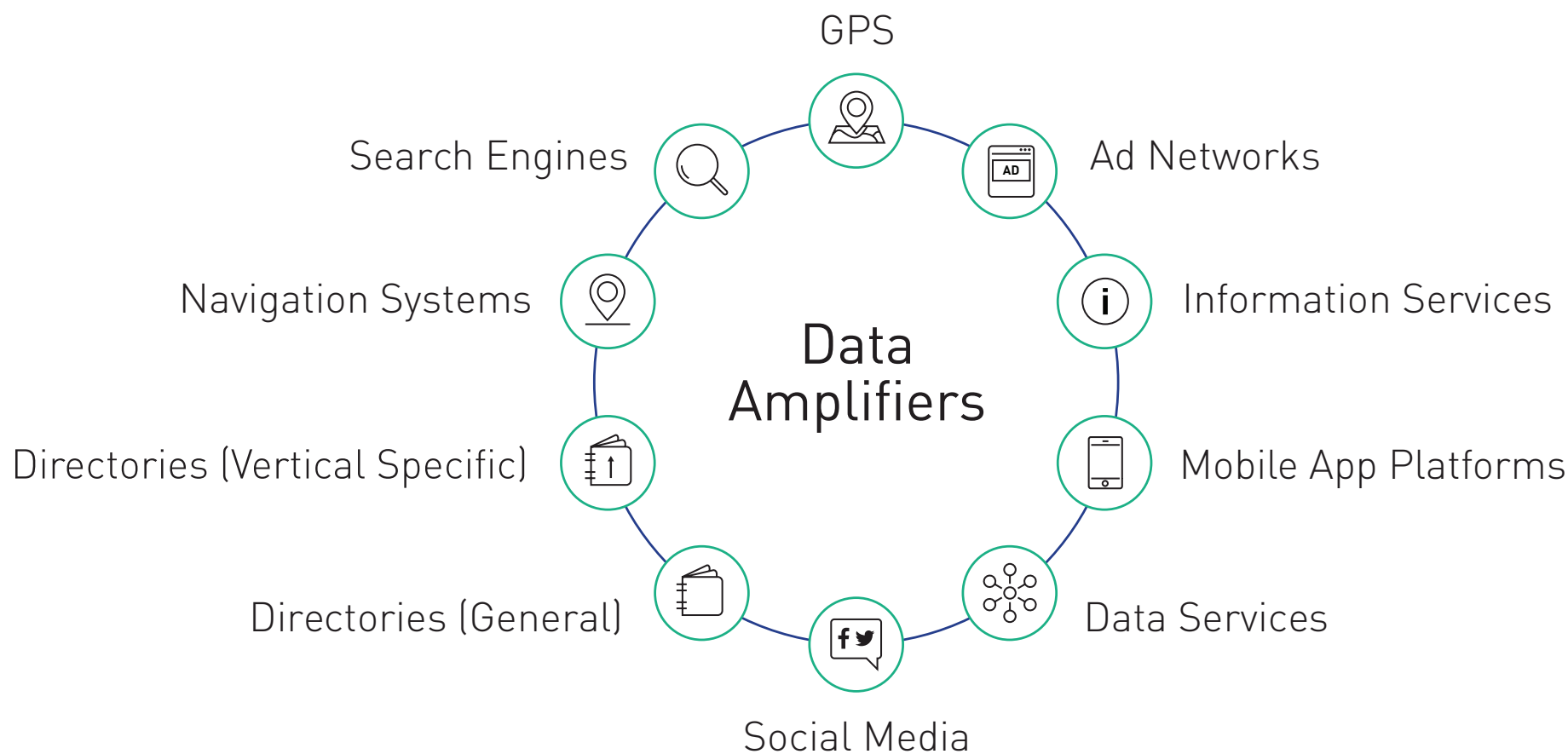
of survey respondents also said
they were likely to click on the
first set of results.

SearchEngineLand

The Local Data Ecosystem is Complicated

Reputation.com applies a proprietary algorithm that automates the process of verification, management and publishing data.

We first examine the accuracy of your data, ranging from basic information to insurance coverage, for starters. We also assess the health of your physician data across the search ecosystem.



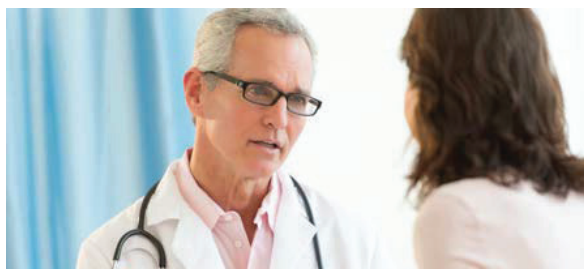
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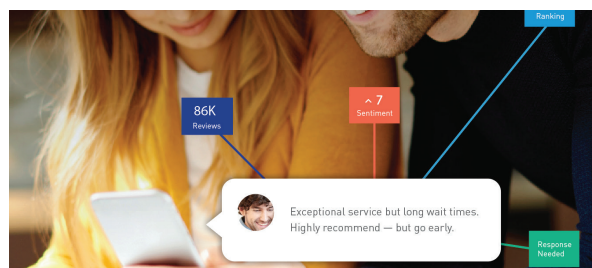


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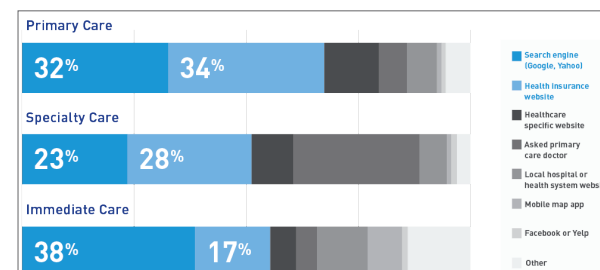
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