Healthgrades: Using topical search to generate more case starts

By Sesame Communications

When consumers go online, the vast majority start at a search engine. According to Pew Internet, 93 percent of online activities begin with a search. Healthcare is a very popular search, as 72 percent of Internet users looked online for health information within the last year.1

With the high volume of content at larger search engines, there has been a shift toward what's known as vertical search or topical search sites. These are websites that focus on a specific topic or area of interest. In the last half of 2012, topical sites had an 8 percent increase in search traffic while major search engines decreased by 3 percent.2

Today, the largest topical search site for U.S. health-care providers is Healthgrades. Each year, more than 225 million visitors use Healthgrades to search, evaluate and connect with health-care providers. Healthgrades.com visitors represent the ideal demographic for orthodontics — overwhelmingly female (72 percent), highly educated (84 percent have post-secondary education) and affluent (52 percent have annual household incomes greater than $75,000). Healthgrades offers orthodontic practices a large, highly focused audience of prospective patients. During the past 12 months Healthgrades tracked more than 20 million searches for dental care providers, with orthodontists being one of the top searched specialties within that group.

Most importantly, Healthgrades users don’t just search — they schedule appointments. More than half (54 percent) of Healthgrades visitors will schedule an appointment with a local provider.

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References
2. www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Health-online/Summary-of-Findings.aspx

Here at the AAO
To learn more about having a Healthgrades enhanced profile, stop by the Sesame Communications booth, No. 1937.