

Executive Guide to Search Engine Optimization for Healthcare Providers

How to Get More Patients from Google, Bing, and Yahoo



Introduction

Brazzell Marketing Agency has specialized in health care marketing since 2003, and we started out the old-fashioned way. We telephoned prospective clients, set a meeting, and went to visit them. However, in 2006, Brazzell Marketing Agency transitioned from being a regional agency to being a national presence. The vast majority of our new clients now come to us via organic search results. We understand offline and online healthcare marketing (especially home health, home care, physical therapy, and hospice). Our own business growth demonstrates that we understand how to acquire clients through organic search results.

Search engine optimization (SEO) refers to the strategic management of an online presence for the purpose of improving rankings in organic search results. In this paper, we reveal the essentials of the three most important aspects of SEO today: keywords, backlinks, and human engagement. This paper will prepare the busy executive to engage with website designers more productively and even to do some SEO independently.



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Brazzell's SEO Service

Our SEO service costs about half the industry standard and gets real results for healthcare providers.

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Referral Doubling Strategy



The one marketing strategy that has doubled referrals for home health and physical therapy has nothing to do with online marketing. Learn the Referral Doubling Strategy FREE—No Obligation.

All Points Bulletin™
Client Communication Where You Need It. *Everywhere.*

Facebook. Email Newsletters.

Blogging. All done for you while you stay in complete control. All inclusive pricing starting at less than \$20 per month. Our social media program gets real and measurable engagement from adults in your community.

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Keywords

The Most Important Factor in Organic Search Results



Organic Search Results

Organic search results means listings that appear on a search engine that are not paid advertising and that are not local directory or map results.

Have Search Terms Built Into Your Text

Keywords are the search terms or phrases your page is designed to win. For instance, you may want your website to appear in the first page of search results for "Physical Therapists in Houston TX," "Hospice Providers in Orlando Florida," or "Home Health Agencies in St. Lucie." Those search phrases are your key words. For search engines to know your webpage is about those topics, your webpage should include those words in the text, and it should do so repeatedly.

The most important error we see in healthcare provider websites is that the location is not mentioned at all in the text or that the practice/agency location is only mentioned on the contact page. Google and most other search engines tend to look at each page as if it is about separate subjects. Therefore, a mention of your address on the contact page will not necessarily transfer meaning to your home page in the eyes of the search engine.

Picking the Right Keywords

When people are serious about starting an episode of health care, they do internet searches that combine some description of the service they seek plus some description of their geography. These are the search phrases the top-level pages of your website should target.

Trying to win more generic phrases such as "back pain," "home health," or "fall injuries," puts you in nationwide competition. It is usually not cost-effective for a very local provider to target such generic search terms, but there are exceptions.

Not All Words are Text

Search engines read all the text on your website, but they do not read the photographs. Some words on your website may actually be photographs of words rather than actual text. Images of words generally do not affect SEO.



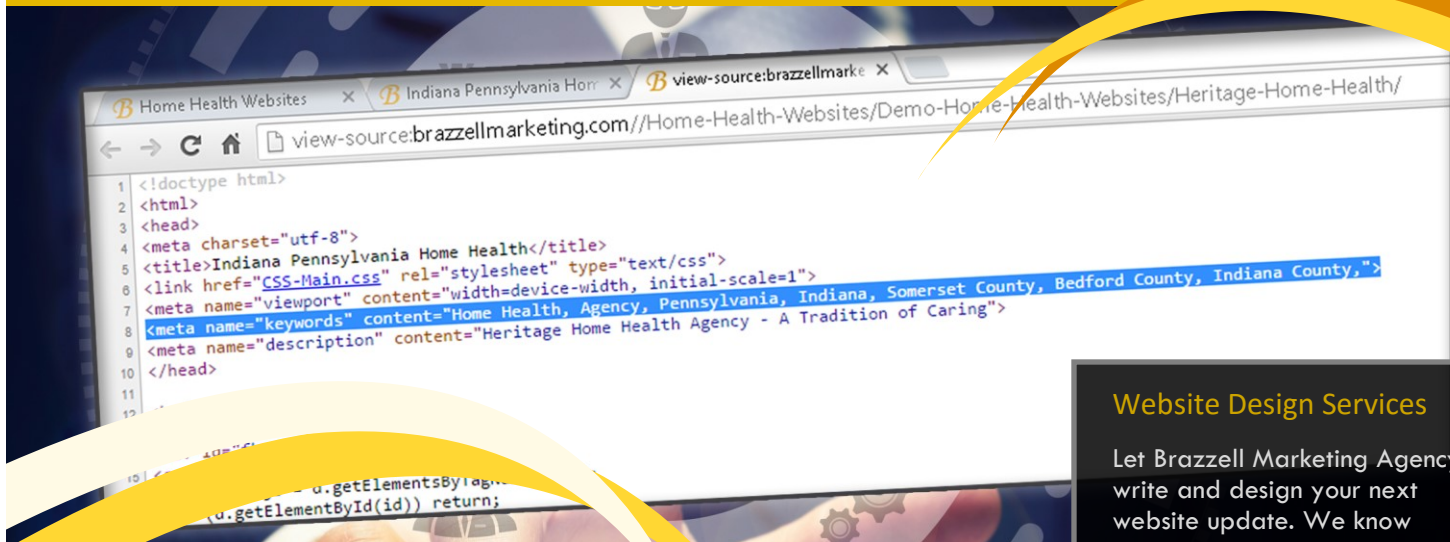
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Relevance

Making Keywords Work Better



Website Design Services

Let Brazzell Marketing Agency write and design your next website update. We know healthcare and SEO.

More Info: [Website Design](#)

Keyword Strategies

Many websites contain the same keywords. Google must further decide for its users which webpages are more relevant to the search terms the user enters. Relevance to a certain search phrase is determined both by backlinks (discussed later in this paper) and by how keywords are used on your page. Different placements of words give more points to your relevance. The lowest weighted words on your page will be fine print at the very bottom.

Place your keywords in the highest weighted locations on your page.

Words on your page that will be weighted higher include:

- **Headings:** The larger the text, the more weight it carries for relevance scores.
- **Title tags:** This is determined in the Head section of each webpage's code. You can see the title tag content in the top of each tab of your browser window.
- Text that is bold or italicized
- **Meta keywords:** This is code in the head section of your website to let search engines know which are the most important words on the page. The more words you put in the keywords tag, the less weight each word is given. For this reason, we usually limit entries in the keywords meta tag to about eight words.
- **Meta description:** This is code in the head section of your website. We will discuss this later.

Keyword Density

Using a search phrase repeatedly in your text will convey more relevance than using it only once. However, search engines tend to penalize webpages that use a search phrase too often. Target a keyword density of 3% to 8%. Keyword density is the number of times a word or phrase appears on a page divided by the number of words on the page. There are number of free tools online that will quickly calculate your keyword density.

Finding Your Meta Keywords

The meta keywords your website designer may or may not have put on your webpage are only visible at the code level. Right-click on any white open space on the page. In the popup menu, select something along the lines of "View Source." In the source code, look for a line that begins with <meta name="keywords". The content of that line is your meta keywords.



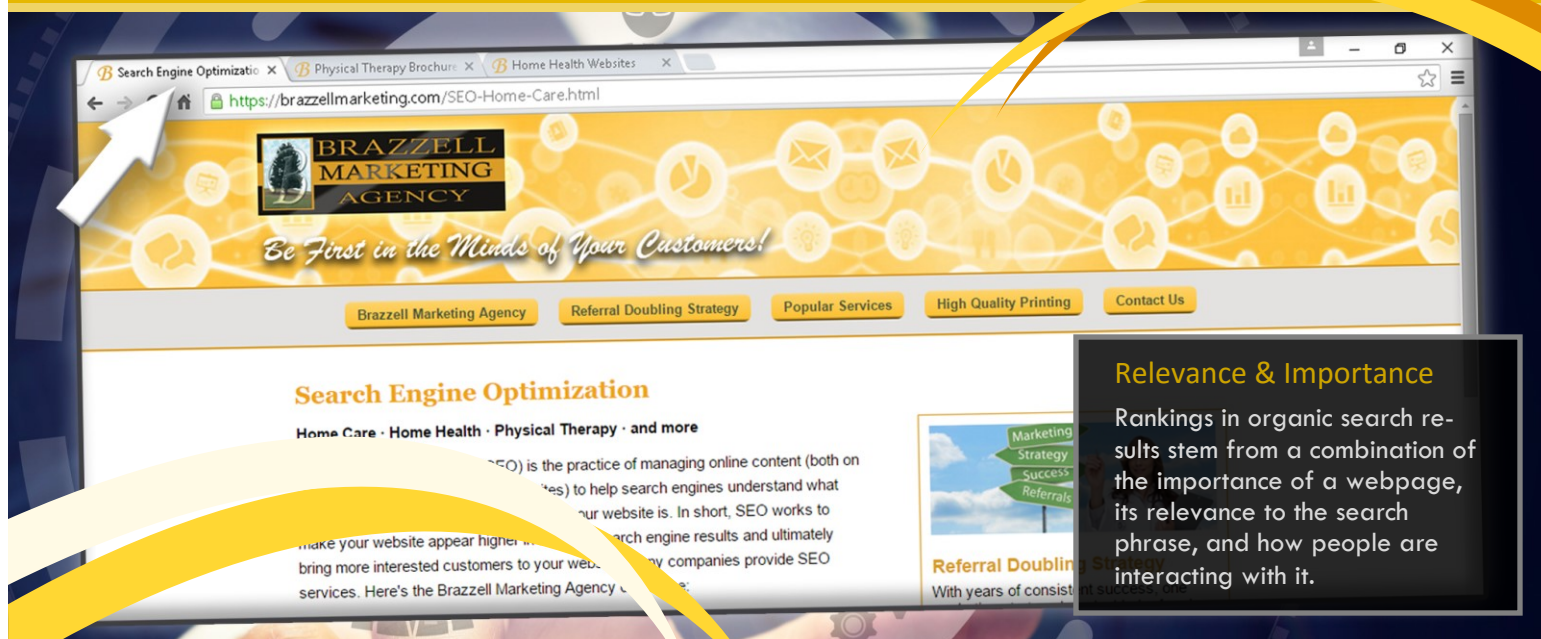
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Title Tags

The Most Important Words on Each of Your Webpages



Relevance & Importance

Rankings in organic search results stem from a combination of the importance of a webpage, its relevance to the search phrase, and how people are interacting with it.

Title Tag Strategies

The words in your title tag carry more weight for SEO relevance than any other words on a webpage, and most executives don't realize they exist. In casual internet browsing, you can see the text of a page's title tag at the top of each tab in a browser window. Some pages have title tags that are too long to see in casual browsing. In this case, you have to go to the code of your website to see what your website designer has input for your title tag. Right click any empty space on the webpage. In the popup menu, select something similar to "View Source." This will launch a window showing the code of your webpage. Look for a line that begins with <title> and ends with </title>. Everything between those two tags is the text of your title tag.

Make a Different Title Tag for Each Page

Google knows that the purpose of multiple pages on your website is to divide text by subject material. Therefore, Google frowns on the practice of making every title tag the same on every page of the website.

Less is More

The title tag as a whole only carries a certain amount of weight. The more words you put in the tag, the less weight each word carries. For highly competitive search phrases, three words in the title tag is optimal. For less competitive search phrases, multiple words in the title tag may be sufficient.

Low-Cost Referral Source Marketing Online



Imagine hundreds of referral sources seeing your ads weekly if not multiple times per week from now on—all at the lowest cost you have ever paid. With a cost per ad view averaging less than 2 cents, this new way of reaching doctors and other referral sources is the most affordable way to reach doctors and referral sources ever! Using the Facebook platform, BMA can create ad campaigns tailored for discharge planners, the right types of doctors, and their staff and ensure that the paid impressions only go out to those referral sources. Your ads bypass gatekeepers by appearing on Facebook, Instagram, and more.

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Exact Phrases

Every Single Word Can Make a Difference

Precision

Checking Your Own Rankings

Even when you are not logged in, Google serves search results customized to you. To see what first results would look like, search in the privacy or incognito mode of your web browser.

Facebook Millionaire Marketing



Home Care Assistance
Not all Home Care is Alike
Known for the Industry's Best Caregivers

Private duty providers need not waste their advertising dollars on people who won't need services or who can't afford it. Our Facebook Millionaire Marketing program will spend your advertising dollars only on the older millionaires or multimillionaires very close to your office, to maximize return on investment.

Learn More: [Millionaire Marketing](#)



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Pay Attention to Exact Wording

If your webpage contains the exact phrase that a user typed in to a search engine, it will be more likely to appear on the first page of results than if the same webpage only contains an approximation of the search phrase. For instance, all other things being equal, when a user searches for "Home Care Agency," the webpage with the title "Home Care Agency" would come up first; the webpage with the title "Homecare Agency" would come up second; and the webpage with the title "Homecare Provider" might come up third.

For this reason, it may behoove an agency to describe itself and its geography in more than one way on a page. It is also a good strategy to optimize different pages for different phrasing variations of the same search meaning. For instance, the home page might repeatedly use the term "home care" while the about us page might use the term "homecare" instead.

Distance between keywords also matters. When using the description of your service, try to phrase headings and sentences so that a description of your geography is not far behind. This will get your webpage more relevance points than having "Physical Therapy Practice" in the heading, but having the name of your city in the footer.



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Duplicate Content

Search Engines Penalize Duplicate Content



Plagiarism Hurts

When website designers plagiarize your website text, it can damage your SEO results. Learn how to stop them on this page.

Search for Content Thieves

An order for SEO services with Brazzell Marketing Agency always involves an internet search for duplicate content. If other original and relevant pages are available, search engines will display those before pages with duplicate content. This tends to occur on a page-by-page basis. So copying and pasting a press release into your blog will not harm the search results of your home page if they are separate sections of your website.

Duplicate content is most harmful to your SEO objectives when it appears on your home page. Practice and agency owners often have duplicate content and are not even aware of it. This happens in three ways: (1) Your website designer used his or her own template to create your website, and they used the same text for other clients; (2) Your website designer barely understands your industry and instead of writing original text, stole text off of similar websites in different markets; and (3) another website stole your content. Content thievery occurs periodically and without warning. It can sabotage your SEO results.

Periodically search for content thieves and deal with them. CopyScape.com has free features with sophisticated plagiarism search. Alternatively, you can Google an exact sentence from your website with quotes around it. The quotes tell Google to return results for the exact search phrase first.

How to Address Online Plagiarism

Send a polite message to the website owner asking him or her to take down the offending content. In addition to the contact page of the website, you may be able to obtain website owner contact information through a [Whols Search](#). Keep in mind that the website owners may be as much a victim as you are.

The Whols search will also give you contact information for the website's domain registrar and internet host. You can contact them as well to politely request that the plagiarism be addressed.

If this fails, file a [DMAC Infringement Notice](#) with search engines such as [Google](#). Use [Archive.org](#) to prove the content was on your webpage before it was on the offending webpage. Search engines will block offending content.



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Backlinks

What Points at Your Website Defines Your Website



Build Backlinks for Relevance and Importance

A backlink is a link from another website to yours. In addition to guiding people on other websites to visit your website, the backlink provides two distinct SEO advantages.

For Relevance

First, the backlink tells Google what your website is about. If the backlink is from a page about home health, that gives your website more relevance for search phrases involving home health. The text in the backlink may also affect how Google perceives the subject of your page. For instance, a backlink with the text "See More" would do less for the website than a backlink with the text "Woodlawn City Home Health Agency."

For Importance

In search results, Google displays webpages it finds more important before webpages it finds less important (even in some cases where the less important webpage has text that is more relevant to the search phrase in question). The number and quality of backlinks a webpage has affects how Google sees the importance of a webpage.

Brazzell's SEO Package

Half the price compared to industry norms plus a track record of meaningful results for healthcare providers.

Get Started: [SEO Package](#)

Never Miss an Opportunity for a Backlink

Healthcare agencies/practices have backlink opportunities from their social media accounts, state websites listing providers, online telephone directories, state associations, credentialing bodies, the chamber of commerce, and more. Ask for backlinks and make them happen.

Avoid Automated Backlink Programs

Building backlinks on relevant webpages or quality websites is a good strategy, but Google will penalize domain names that look over-optimized in this way. If you have several backlinks from very unimportant websites, Google expects that you will have a small percentage of backlinks from important websites. Having the quality of backlinks out of proportion can result in SEO penalties. In addition, having too many backlinks appear at once invites penalties.



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User Engagement Patterns

User Behavior with Your Website Determines Whether You Keep Your Rankings



Optimize Your Website for Human Engagement

One of the strongest factors in SEO results today is how users engage with your listing in Google search results. This mostly revolves around click rate and bounce rate. The more your website gets clicked for a particular search phrase, the higher it will rise in the rankings. Alternatively, even if the relevance of the text on your website gets you listed, and the backlinks push you to the top of organic search results, if users consistently click other websites instead of yours, your search rankings will continue to fall.

Likewise, a high bounce rate will cause your website to drop in the rankings on a search-specific basis. Different search engines may define bounce rate differently, but it essentially means users took one look at your website and used the back button on their browser to jump back to their search results and continue their searching. Accurate SEO elements, excellent content, good usability, and videos all help minimize your bounce rate compared to that of competing websites.

Business Card Printing

Save money. Increase convenience. Improve print quality. Order business cards through Brazzell.

[Low-Cost Business Cards](#)

Patient Newsletters that Increase Census



Patient newsletters can protect patient loyalty and reactivate past patients by educating them about your services and reminding them to call you for future needs. We've done the math and we know the metrics of which home health providers and which physical therapy practices will benefit from this core marketing strategy.

Learn More: [Patient Newsletters](#)



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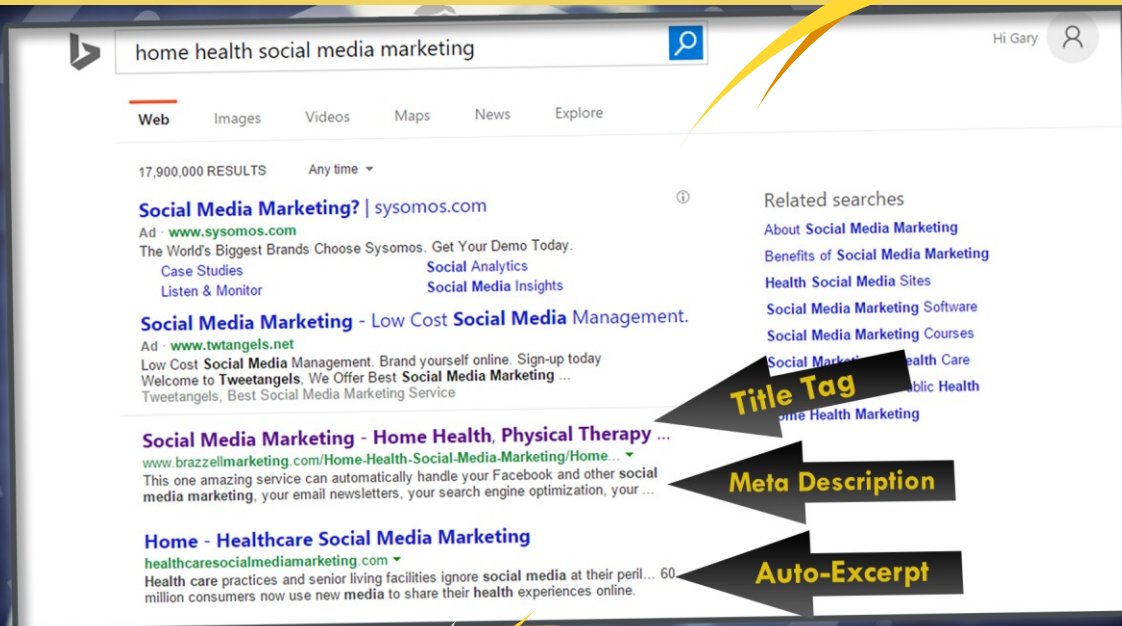
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How to Improve Click Rate

Relevance and Importance Get You There. Click Rate Keeps You There.



Three Strategies for Optimizing Click Rate

Click rate is the number of times your website is clicked from search results divided by the number of times your website is displayed in search results. An improving click rate improves your search rankings.

One: Name Recognition

People click what they know. The agency/practice that has done advertising and public relations will get more clicks from search results compared to the provider the user finds unfamiliar. Even healthcare providers with relatively small budgets can define small but high-value audiences and use advertising to cost-effectively build brand awareness - influencing future purchase decisions. Learn more about [low-cost, highly-targeted healthcare advertising](#).

Two: Title Tags

The top line of a search result is often the title tag for the page (see pages above for more about title tags). This is also the largest text and most colorful text in a search result. In addition to thinking about what search phrases you want in title tags, think about what messages in a title tag could draw clicks.

- Continued Next Page -

Custom Brochure Design
with a Team That Can Fully Participate in Strategy and Creative



Our core competency is content creation and effective marketing for home health, home care, physical therapy, and hospice. Industry knowledge, excellent design, plus low-cost / high-quality printing make Brazzell Marketing Agency the best choice for your brochures, business cards, and all your promotional printing.

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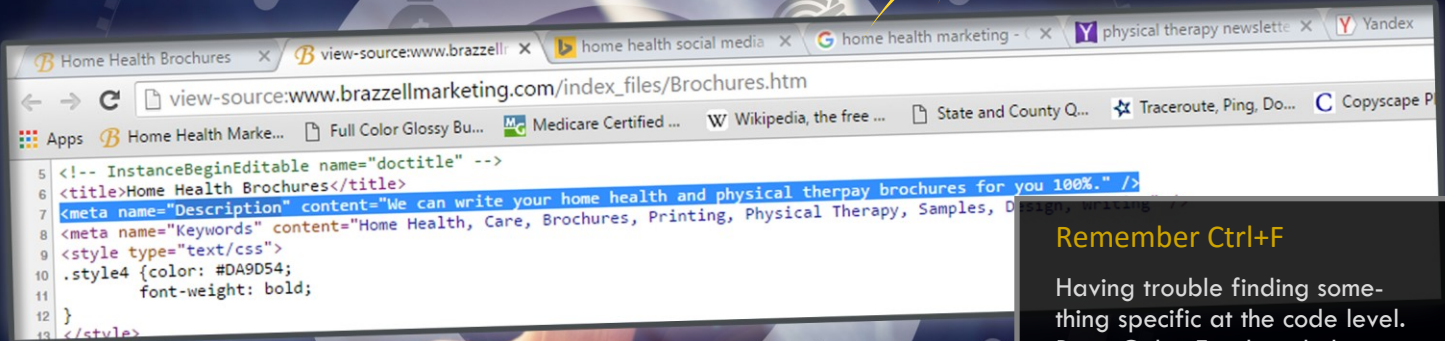
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How to Improve Click Rate

Continued From Previous Page



Remember Ctrl+F

Having trouble finding something specific at the code level. Press Ctrl + F to launch the page search utility in your browser.

Three Strategies for Optimizing Click Rate

Three: Meta Description

Every organic search result has a short section of text excerpted from that page. The website designer can suggest what that text should be in the meta description tag. In different search results, Google will test the text you suggest against text it automatically excerpts from your page. Google will determine which text maximizes your click rate, and will show that text more often in the future. You should be able to suggest descriptive text that is more persuasive than something a search engine automatically excerpts from your page.

To see what your web designer has suggested, executives must check the code for each page. Right-click any open space on the page. In the pop-up menu, select something like "View Source." In the source code, look for a line that begins <meta name="description".



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- Easy to start
- Fast results
- No long-term obligations
- Detailed reporting
- A track record of success with healthcare providers

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Referral Doubling Strategy



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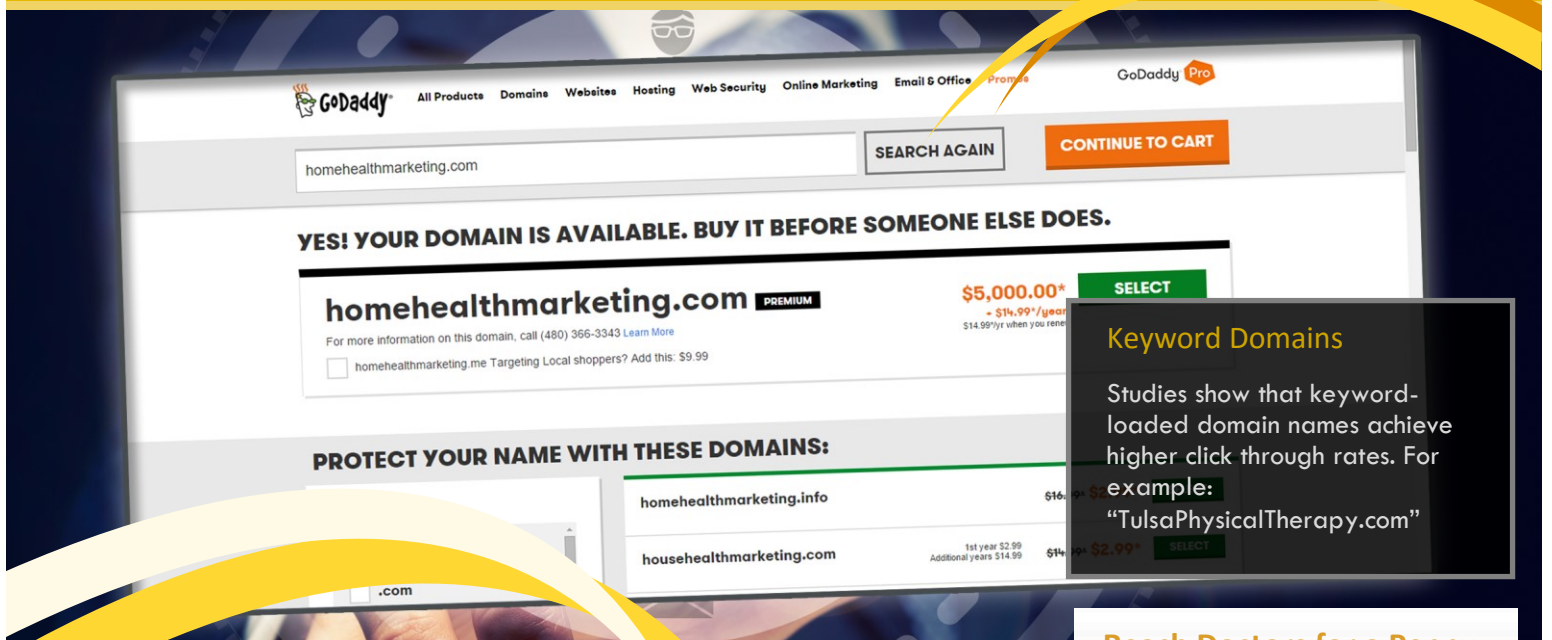
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Do NOT Buy Multiple Domains

Multiple Domains Can Kill Your Google Results



Keyword Domains

Studies show that keyword-loaded domain names achieve higher click through rates. For example:

"TulsaPhysicalTherapy.com"

Reach Doctors for a Penny per Impression!



Imagine hundreds of referral sources seeing your ads weekly if not multiple times per week from now on—all at the lowest cost you have ever paid. With a cost per ad view averaging less than 2 cents, this new way of reaching doctors and other referral sources is the most affordable way to reach doctors and referral sources ever! Using the Facebook platform, Brazzell can create ad campaigns tailored for discharge planners, the right types of doctors, and their staff. We ensure that the paid impressions only go out to those referral sources. Your ads bypass gatekeepers by appearing on Facebook, Instagram, and mobile apps.

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Use One Main Domain Name

The less scrupulous players in the domain name business have been promoting the concept that you should buy multiple domains to protect your brand. Since 2003, we have never seen an instance of a local healthcare provider having to deal with branding infringement where a domain name would have made any difference. For most healthcare providers in the U.S. multiple domains are a waste of money. More importantly, when set up incorrectly, Google will likely interpret the multiple domains as duplicate content on multiple websites. Google is bad at recognizing that one website has multiple domains - very bad. This can result in negative consequences ranging from diluted backlink value to the Google algorithm removing most of your content from search results as a penalty.

To be more specific, if you have multiple domains, the extra domains should be set up as a 301 redirect to your primary domain. Do not set them up as add-on domains targeting the root directory. If you are like 99% of the population, that made zero sense. If that made zero sense to you, don't buy multiple domains and don't trust any do-it-yourself website company advising you to do so without giving you very specific detail about how these domains will work with your website.



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