

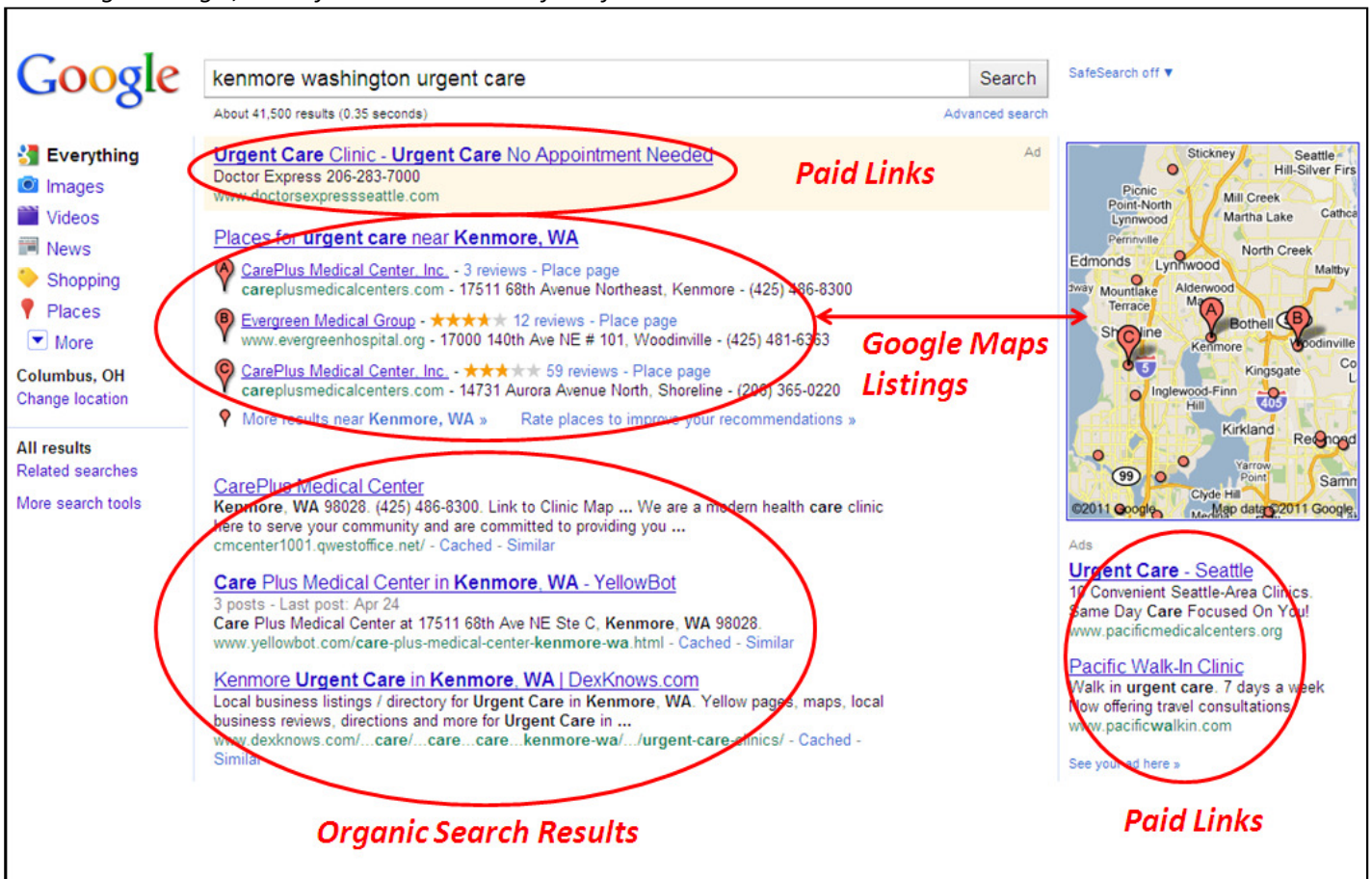
**Ten Ideas for Getting Your Website Noticed**  
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In the past ten years, marketing expenditures have shifted dramatically from print media—newspapers, magazines and the yellow pages—to the Internet. Today, the Internet is typically the first place consumers look for health information, including where to go when minor illness or injury strikes. Key for urgent care is to be the “solution” retrieved when consumers go online with their medical questions. This entails aligning Internet content—how urgent care centers describe themselves online—with the words that consumers type into search engines.

As illustrated in Figure 1, there are two paths for website listings to appear in a search engine—“paid” and “organic”:

- Paid advertising links are “fed” to Internet users based on their location and the keywords they are looking for. The success of “paid search” is measured by the rate at which users “click-through” the link to the advertiser’s website. The advantages of paid search are rapid deployment and increased likelihood the user will notice organic search results, but downsides are the cost and that advertising is often dismissed by consumers who feel “organic” results are more “real.”
- Organic search rankings are based on the relevance of keywords on the website to the search terms, the number of links to the website from other websites, volume of traffic to the website, and the depth and quality of the website’s content. Organic search is measured by the order in which the website is returned during specific searches (e.g. “Seattle urgent care centers”)—the higher the order, the more effective the website.

**Figure 1: Sample Google search results for “Kenmore Washington Urgent Care”**  
*According to Google, 97% of consumers search for information on local businesses online.*



## First Step: Define Keywords to Assure Rich Content

When it comes to organic search, content is “king,” so put yourself in the shoes of prospective patients and consider what they may be looking for—“walk-in clinic in Kenmore, Washington?” “school sports physicals?” “family doctor accepting Aetna?” Once you understand what people may type into a search engine, devise a list of keywords from your products/services, clinical capabilities, in-network payers, common diagnoses, and competitor websites. The keywords you identify should be prominent and repeated throughout your website to assure you’ve covered whatever someone may be looking for in an urgent care center.

Although Google doesn’t account for keywords in its search rankings, other search engines do and the rigor involved in evaluating key search terms is a natural first step in assuring you have the quality of content that results in consumers “converting” from the search engine to your website.

### The following next steps can assist in improving the visibility of an urgent care center’s website:

1. Submit your site directly to be “crawled” by the major search engines. Web crawlers browse the Internet in a methodical, logical fashion—often following links from other sites—to identify and prioritize webpage content. The “big three” search engines are:
  - Google: <http://www.google.com/addurl/>
  - Yahoo: <http://search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html>
  - Bing: <http://www.bing.com/webmaster/SubmitSitePage.aspx>
2. Search engine crawlers evaluate and index a webpage’s title, header, meta tags, and links so all should be relevant and include keywords:
  - Each page’s title tag should be named so it includes the center’s name, location and targeted keywords. For example, the title “ZoomCare: Urgent Care and Primary Care in Portland, Oregon” clearly describes what that page is about.
  - A header is the rectangular section at the top of every webpage that identifies a website’s brand—it’s the first content consumers see and is considered the “most valuable space on the page” so it should utilize keywords to describe each page’s content.
  - Meta tags are data elements coded into the website (but not visible to users) that provide information about a webpage’s content. Meta tag descriptions of each webpage should be short, succinct, and keyword-rich.
  - Utilize descriptive keywords when naming links, documents, and images within the site. For example, a picture called “Seattle\_Urgent\_Care\_Clinic.jpg” is far more likely to be retrieved by a search engine than “Pic1.jpg.”
3. A sitemap can be compared to a table of contents—it’s a list of pages in a website, typically arranged in hierarchal fashion, which is available to search engine crawlers and end users. To improve visibility of your website to search engines, create a site map that includes all of your targeted keywords. Several free sites including <http://www.xml-sitemaps.com> can generate a site map automatically, which can then be submitted to the major search engines.
4. Have a clear, logical website address (URL) preferably in the .com domain such as [www.hometownurgentcare.com](http://www.hometownurgentcare.com) or [www.carenow.com](http://www.carenow.com). Think of possible misspellings or variations of your center’s name and incorporate those misspelled words into additional URLs that re-direct to the homepage as well as meta-tags on current pages. For example, First Urgent Care may utilize firsturgentcare.com as its primary domain but then re-direct URLs such as fristurgentcare.com and 1sturgentcare.com. Likewise, consider using URLs that describe your business such as “saltlakeurgentcare.com” or “saltlakewalkinclinic.com” even if such is not the center’s official name.
5. Optimize submissions to Google Maps by adding descriptions that include the center’s location and targeted keywords, website URL, telephone numbers, and additional content like photos, promotions, and video. When describing a physical location, include details such as city, school district and/or neighborhood names, names of

adjacent communities, and nearby landmarks such as shopping centers, universities, highways, etc. Google Places provides the data for Google Maps and is available free of charge to any business with a mailing address—to set up an account, register online at [www.google.com/placesforbusiness](http://www.google.com/placesforbusiness). Prior to posting, Google typically mails a post card with a validation code to confirm that the business exists.

6. Increase the likelihood that quality, credible third party websites link to your website by publishing the kind of content that is of interest to others including lists, articles, expert advice, blog entries, press releases and multi-media. In addition, ask the Chamber of Commerce, professional organizations, or community groups you sponsor to post a link on their website to yours, ask patients to post reviews on sites like Yelp.com, and participate in online forum discussions (including a link to your center in your response).
7. Because search engines like Google compile listings from other websites and databases, your search ranking can be improved by submitting your center information and website to local yellow pages and directories including:
  - [www.superpages.com](http://www.superpages.com) (Verizon)
  - [www.yellowpages.com](http://www.yellowpages.com) (AT&T)
  - [www.dexknows.com](http://www.dexknows.com) (Qwest/CenturyLink)
  - [www.yellowbook.com](http://www.yellowbook.com)
  - [www.local.com](http://www.local.com)
8. In recent years there has been explosive growth of the “mobile Internet”—accessed through iPod, Android, and Blackberry devices. Make it easier for mobile users to find information about your urgent care center by creating a .mobi version of your website which includes only essential content—services, location, hours—and minimizes images and graphics to facilitate fast download and viewing on smaller screens.
9. Submit your URL to Open Directory—a network of volunteers who review websites for content depth and is thus considered by Google to provide relevant, spam-free information on websites. Similar human-reviewed websites charge for their services and are considered less credible. Open Directory: <http://dmoz.org/add.html>
10. If the terms “HTML,” “meta-tags,” or “URL” leave your head spinning—hire a professional. Local website designer fees typically start at \$1,500 to develop a sleek, high-quality, search engine optimized website (complete with text, graphics, and images), and most developers will support that website with ongoing hosting and maintenance.

The job of a website is to drive people to a business. In order to do so, it must capture eyes, which occurs as the website is retrieved towards the top of online search results. While these steps cannot guarantee that a website will always be at the top—after all, the algorithms used by leading search engines are highly guarded and constantly changing—they will certainly help assure relevant, compelling content.