UN LOCK

Lower cost, higher impact

Building healthcare campaigns that convert

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Today's facilitators

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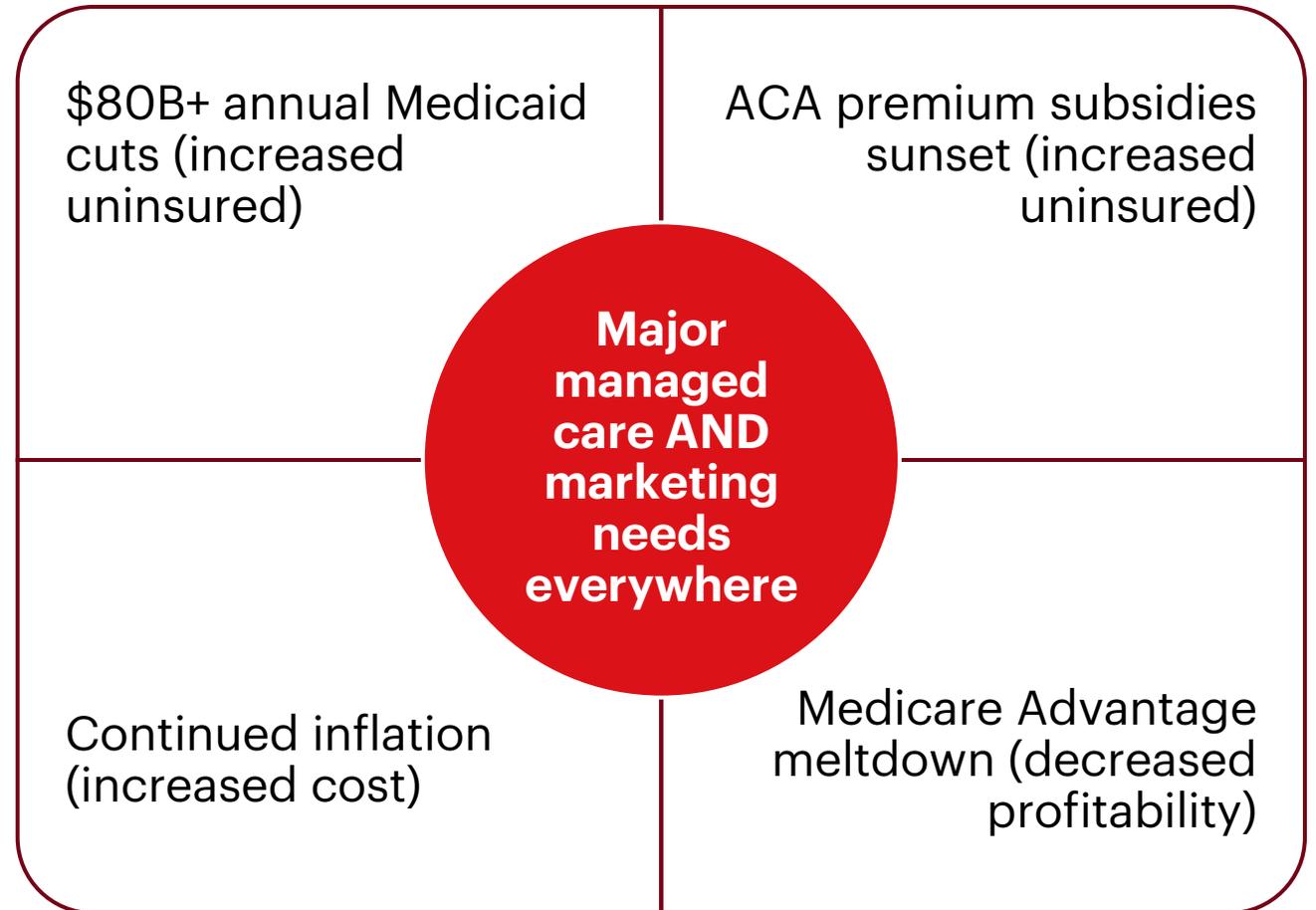*Unlock Health*

Let's dive in

1. New era in healthcare

2. Keys to success

3. The importance of testing and how to do it

4. Optimal service lines for full-funnel treatment

5. What hurts and drives SEM performance

6. Campaign killers

7. Brand strength as a driver of conversions

8. Key takeaways

A new era in healthcare

The need for digital sophistication and increased visibility into marketing ROI is more prevalent than ever as the industry strives to move beyond point solutions and achieve comprehensive marketing insights.

# Healthcare marketers need to understand the big picture

$80B+ annual Medicaid cuts (increased uninsured)

ACA premium subsidies sunset (increased uninsured)

Major managed care AND marketing needs everywhere

Continued inflation (increased cost)

Medicare Advantage meltdown (decreased profitability)

Expenses are high while revenue is flat or declining

What is the "75-75 conundrum"?

Expenses

Costs remain elevated due to staffing shortages and inflation.

75% of expenses driven by:

Supplies & drugs — 25%

Salaries, wages, & benefits — 50%
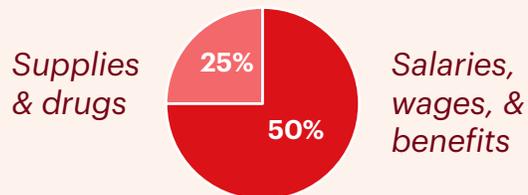
Fundamental financial mismatch

Revenue

Payments are fixed, flat, or declining year-over-year.

75% of expenses driven by:

- *Medicare / Medicare Advantage*
- *Medicaid*
- *Self-pay patients*

> *Transformative strategies and not incremental change will be required to advance healthcare to sustainable levels of cash flow on a more enduring basis."*
>
> *~ Fitch*

What can digital performance marketing do to help?

State of the industry

Key points

- Healthcare search queries continue to increase

- Search increase aligns with the most profitable service lines for hospitals: Cancer, Cardiology, Neurology, and Orthopedics

- Primary care, urgent care and preventative screenings are the front doors for new patients

- Search continues to be the most cost-effective advertising that yields the most measurable results

- Social media is a growing platform where younger generations are turning to as the starting point for their healthcare research and decision making

- Positioning your digital strategy to align with these trends and capture market share from competitors is paramount

Tip one

Do more with less

Precision marketing through smarter data integration

Recommendation

Integrate first-, second-, and third-party data to enhance audience segmentation, increase campaign efficiency, and reduce acquisition costs.

- Combine CRM data with behavioral and claims-based insights to identify high-propensity consumers.

- Leverage Authentic Healthcare Marketing personas to reach audiences we may not be reaching right now.

- Use segmentation models to prioritize campaigns for audiences with both clinical need and commercial value.

- Implement dynamic performance dashboards to monitor ROI and reallocate budget in real time.

Tip two

Drive commercial volume

Focus on high-value patient segments through performance marketing

Recommendation

Prioritize service lines with high commercial yield by executing targeted, conversion-driven performance marketing campaigns.

- Audit current SEM, SEO, and paid social strategies to refocus on profitable segments and geographies.

- Launch full-funnel campaigns (from awareness to appointment) using patient journey-based creative.

- Set shared KPIs across media, CRM, and access teams to ensure alignment on patient acquisition goals.

Tip three

Double down on brand

Withstand reputational shots and bolster performance-focused efforts

Recommendation

Keep momentum and investment on brand-building marketing and activities.

- Create an Authentic brand voice and positioning rooted in organizational mission, vision, and values.

- Ensure leadership and frontline staff believe in brand positioning and tone.

- Evaluate new messages, messengers, and channels to reach people less likely to trust institutions and experts.

- Correlate your efforts for both brand strength (awareness, preference, likelihood to recommend) and media cost per lead (CPA) – The Unlock Health Tipping Point.

Ensure all marketing efforts align to four dimensions of Authentic Healthcare Marketing
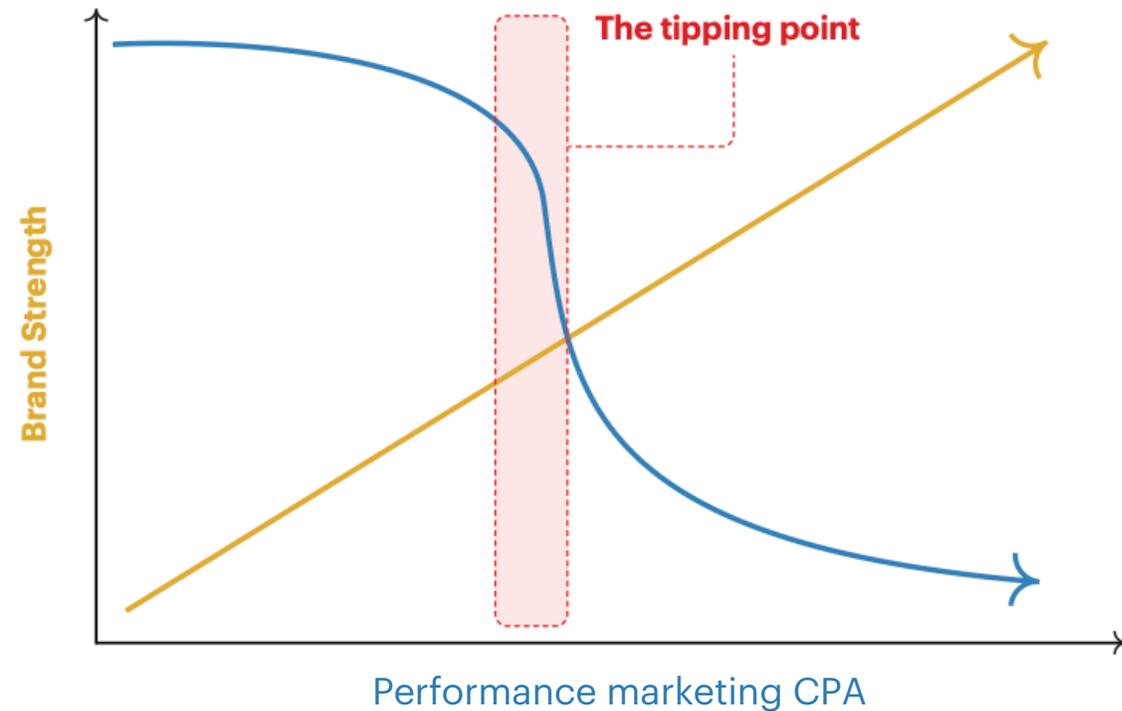
Does it speak a human truth to our audience?

Is it meaningful for our audience?

Is it believable?

Can our audience trust this?

As brand strength increases, CPA decreases

The tipping point

Brand Strength

Performance marketing CPA

Why to run Brand SEM ads

The data

- Brand strength drives Brand searches

- Brand SEM ads convert on new clients (incremental lift) **1.7x** that of existing ones*

- Brand SEM incrementality is heavily affected by SEM competition on the Brand - the higher the competition, the higher the incrementality*

The tactics

- Break out Brand traffic into its own campaign - to ring-fence budget and to set different bidding

- Once separate, using tCPA bidding custom to this traffic

- Avoid Target Impression Share if your aim is incrementality

- Don't want to go all-in on brand for immediate incrementality purposes? Set Target IS bidding aiming for >10%. Then at least once per month, check auction insights for interlopers

*Source: Haus.io (Sept 2025)

Tip four

Establish meaningful metrics of success

Discussion of KPIs and meaning

- Alignment on internal goals
- Most important:
    - CPA (cost per acquisition)
    - Actual calls and online leads
    - Impression share
    - Competitive insights
- Quality metrics
    - CPA
    - Top impression %
    - Abs top %

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Agreement on reporting

- Example:
  - Weekly check-in
  - Monthly performance reporting
  - Quarterly strategy session
  - Annual planning

Prerequisites

What you need to succeed

Priorities

- Flexibility

- Nimbleness

- Effectiveness

- Focus

- Measure ROI

The value of testing

Why it's important and how to do it

SEM testing

Ad messaging A/B testing	Better CTR, conversion rate (hence CPA)
Ad messaging Dynamic location insertion, auto-countdown	Better CTR, conversion rate (hence CPA)
Bidding Ideally, testing with experiments	Better CPA, volume within budget
Extension messaging A/B (and on/off)	Better CTR, CPC (due to better Quality Score), conversion rate (hence CPA)

Tips

✓ Use an ad creation process conducive to testing at scale (campaign level Ad Variant Experiments)

✓ Ad group customization can still be possible (at scale) and customized fields can be A/B tested

✓ Pre-requisite is clean traffic/data

✓ Only perform one test at a time for hygiene.

✓ Use new asset-level performance metrics (new as of June 2025) to assess what asset (e.g., headline) needs to be improved upon.

YouTube testing

Shorts-specific content	Better view rate, reach, demographic spread
Ad sequencing	Better frequency, engagement
Demand Gen campaign	Better CPA, conversion volume
Audience vs. Topic targeting	Better view rate, conversion rate, engagement
Video Partners network (with and without)	Better view rate, conversion rate, engagement

Tips

✓ Use audience retention insights/analytics (new for 2025) for content testing inspiration (and reviewing tests).

✓ Brand risk associated with Video Partners Network.

Social media testing

Leverage HIPAA-compliant third-party audience options	Better CTR, conversion rate
Test network distribution options (Automated vs. manual)	Better CTR, conversion rate
Audio Test different music and/or voiceovers on same footage	Better CTR, engagement
Test calls to action See what resonates most with different audiences	Better CTR, conversion rate

Tips

✓ Aim for high-risk (condition) audiences with messaging/imagery speaking to subsets.

✓ Review competitor ads in Ads Library to ensure your ads differentiate your brand/offering

✓ Ad sequences can now be set up, offering more testing options

Programmatic testing

Test third-party audience platforms

Better CTR, conversion rate

Formats and sizes
Video, animated, all text, native, etc.

Better CTR, conversion rate, frequency

Test placement or topic targeting
With messaging variants

Better CTR, conversion rate

Test calls to action
See what resonates most with different audiences

Better CTR, conversion rate

Tips

✓ Pay attention to device performance – some formats work better on one device over another.

✓ Invest most heavily on devices that tend to send traffic that converts (e.g. Urgent Care is heavily Mobile)

✓ Post-view conversions should be taken into account where possible but post-click remains preferable.

To maximize the return on your marketing dollar…

Assess candidate service lines for full-funnel treatment

Some service lines that <u>most</u> mirror retail-style funnel (and likely to be most profitable)

Orthopedics/sports

Bariatrics, weight loss, liposuction

Cancer and other routine screenings

Prenatal services

Electives, like vasectomies

Neurology/spine

Service lines that can benefit from cross-channel/full funnel coverage

Urgent care

Primary care

Transplants

Pediatrics

Hospice care

Behavioral health/rehab

Dos and don'ts

What hurts and drives SEM performance

What hurts SEM performance

- Tracking that's inadequate, unreliable, not insightful

- Search partners

- Over-reliance on broad match

- Campaigns that are too granular, or running too many

- Lack of customization to service line

- Unclear goals

- Budget that's inadequate for performance aspirations

- Geo-targeting including "Interest" (most of the time) vs "Presence"

- Dwelling on "Ad strength" score at the expense of effectiveness

- Intent filtering (non-patient searches)

- Not dealing with ambiguity with productive LP solutions

- Over-paying for traffic (no max CPCs, low Quality Score)

What drives SEM performance

- Tight control of traffic (needed in healthcare context)

- Custom structure to service line, priorities, and landing page options

- Honing traffic to avoid unproductive intent

- Impactful, relevant ad copy

- Maximizing ad assets ("extensions") – like images, callouts, sitelinks

- Ensuring structure and traffic is "clean" before applying CPA-based auto-bidding.

Steer clear of...

Campaign killers

Campaign killers

- Inauthentic, uncompelling ad and landing page messaging

- Text-heavy, overly busy landing pages

- Landing page design ill-suited to dominant device

- Limiting conversion action options – avoid conversion friction

- Clunky, confusing UI/UX

- Distracting links to other parts of the website

Key takeaways

Key takeaways to crack the CPA code

You need

- Flexibility
- Nimbleness
- Effectiveness
- Focus
- Measure ROI

Move the needle by testing

- Different options per channel
- SEM requires clean data (traffic control)
- Never stop testing

Do

- Keep tight control of traffic & message
- Limit campaign granularity
- Filter traffic for intent too

Don't

- Use generic messaging
- Rely on broad match
- Have cluttered, confusing landing pages
- Limit conversion options

Brand strength

- Brand SEM can drive incrementality
- Use MMM to drive your branding efforts toward a tipping point that will power measurable patient growth

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Q & A

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