

# The Healthcare Marketer's Paid Search Playbook

How Healthcare Marketers Can Generate More Valuable Phone Calls & Improve ROAS From Paid Search

# Introduction

Phone calls are the preferred way for patients to contact healthcare providers. For healthcare marketers running paid search campaigns, your success hinges on how well your ads drive phone leads to your locations. It's a challenge that has only gotten harder now that organizations are reducing ad budgets and marketers are under pressure to do more with less.

To help, we put together this playbook of paid search strategies you can use to drive more phone leads to your locations cost-effectively. It also suggests ways to help locations convert more callers to appointments so you can grow your patient base with fewer leads and less budget.

# Most Patients Searching for a Healthcare Provider Convert by Calling

People will usually call providers when they're making healthcare decisions. This is because healthcare journeys are complex, and patients frequently have questions about insurance, procedures, and other specifics. Patients may also feel uncomfortable sharing personal healthcare information via an online form, and prefer the reassurance of speaking to a human.

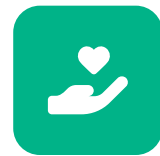
## Patient Acquisition Hinges on Phone Calls



**88%**

of **healthcare** appointments are set over the phone

*(Sequence)*



**70%**

of sales leads to **senior care** providers come in over the phone

*(Invoca)*



**60%**

of tours at **senior living** communities are from inbound calls

*(NextWave Care)*

# Local Searches and Phone Calls Are on the Rise

According to Google, searches for local businesses drive billions of calls and website visits every month, making it a critical source of leads and revenue. Calls are also one of the best drivers of loyal patients and customers, but only for organizations that deliver the right experiences to convert them.

## Local Searches Drive Billions of Monthly Calls

Every month, Google searches for local businesses drove

**over 2 billion**

phone calls, website visits, and direction requests

(Google)

## Calls Drive Revenue & Loyalty

Phone calls to businesses convert to customers

**3x more**

than web clicks

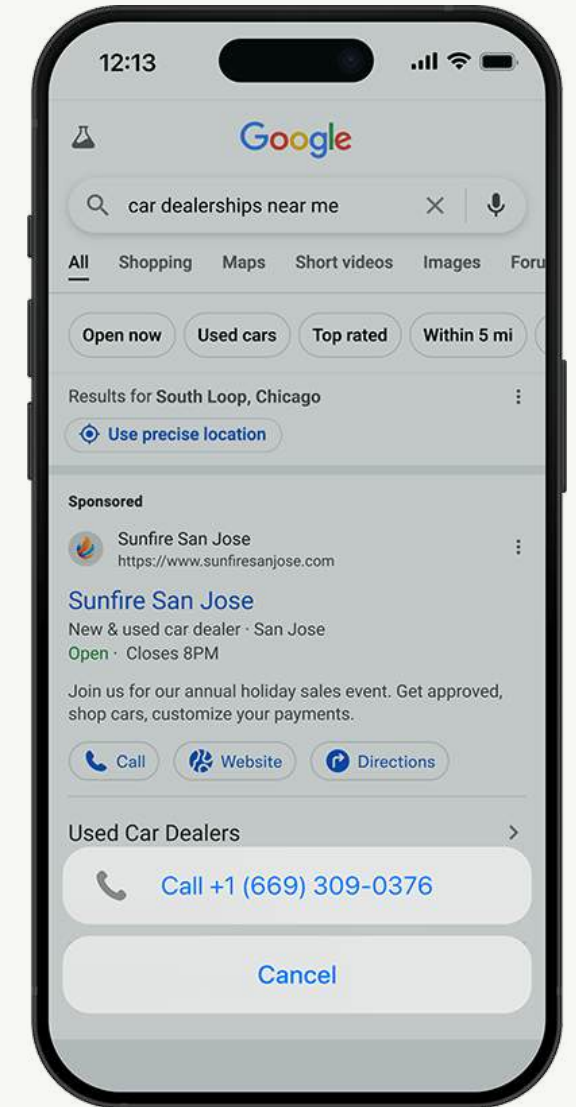
(Google)

Consumers that call a business are

**4x more**

likely to work exclusively with them

(Zillow)



# Phone Calls to Locations Are a Unique Challenge for Healthcare Marketers

Phone calls are the most valuable paid search lead types for healthcare providers. But they can be frustrating for marketers to manage and optimize, especially if your organization has multiple locations.

First, you have to ensure your campaigns are not only driving calls that are likely to convert, but doing so cost-effectively. Then, your locations have to answer those calls, provide the right answers, and an empathetic experience to convert them. If either step breaks down, you waste your budget on calls that won't result in patient acquisition or won't convert because they weren't answered or the experience was poor.

## Phone Call Answer, Lead, and Conversion Benchmarks

	Calls Answered	Answered Leads	Leads Converted
Behavior & Rehab	56%	35%	39%
Hospitals	68%	46%	47%
Hearing	55%	60%	39%
Hospitals & Health Systems	58%	49%	33%

*(Invoca internal call data, 2025)*

# Paid Search Strategies for Healthcare Providers

If your job performance — and your organization's revenue — hinges on the phone calls you drive from paid search, don't leave it to chance. Here are strategies to help you drive more of the right calls and ensure your locations convert more of those callers to appointments and new patients.

**1** Make It Easy for Searchers to Call Your Locations

**4** Reduce Unanswered Calls with Ring Group Routing

**2** Drive More Valuable Phone Leads Cost-Effectively

**5** Correct Call Experience Issues Hurting ROAS

**3** Qualify, Route & Assist Callers With IVRs

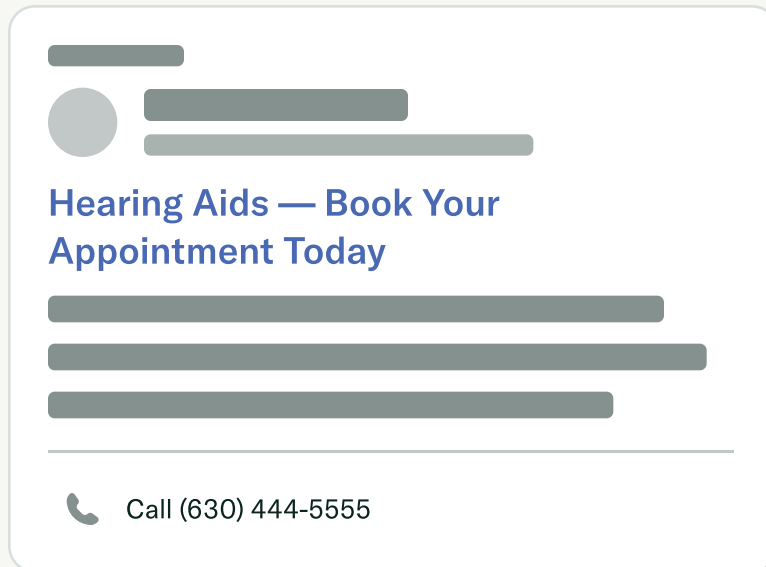
**6** Ensure HIPAA Compliance: Work with BAA-Signed Vendors

# Make It Easy for Searchers to Call Your Locations

Strategy 1

Most patients searching for a healthcare provider want to call and speak to a person before converting. To maximize your conversions from paid search, make that move from digital to voice as easy for patients as possible. Here are some options to consider.

## Add call assets to drive calls directly from the SERP



If a searcher is ready to call, they don't want to waste time visiting a website to find a phone number. Call assets (formerly called "call extensions" by Google) are an easy way to add a clickable call option to your search ads.



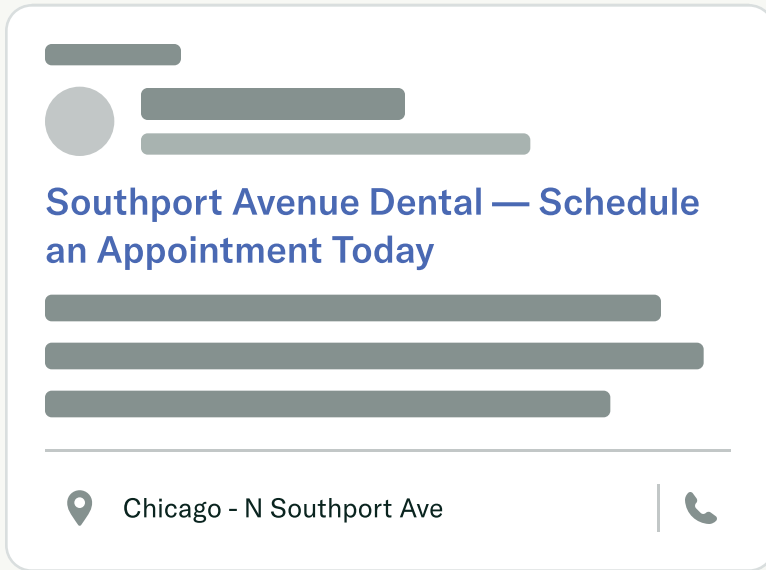
**Use bid adjustments for call assets:** Call assets won't show with every ad impression. Consider bid adjustments to show call assets more often.



**Create localized ads:** To best drive calls from patients in your area, consider running localized versions of your ads in each geo, with localized text and a local phone number for the call asset.



**Use an IVR to route calls from non-localized ads:** More on IVRs later, but if you are running the same ad in multiple markets, an IVR can ask callers for their ZIP or postal code and route them to your closest open location.

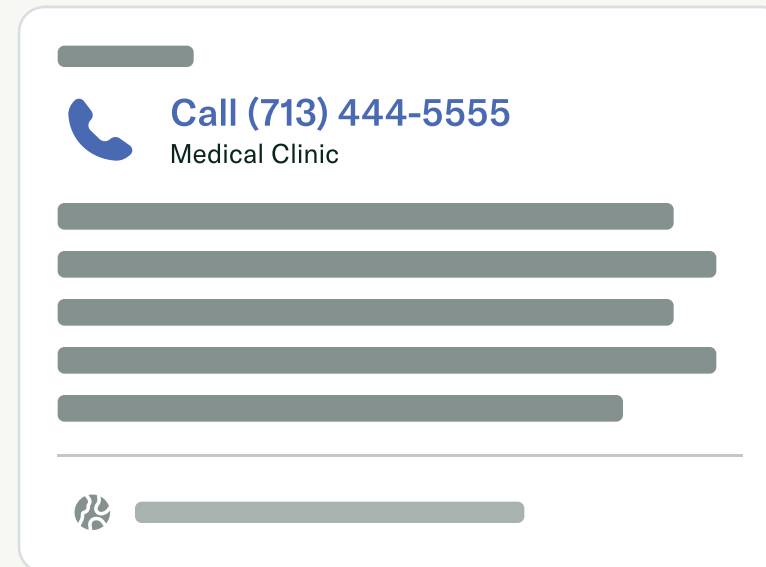


## Use location assets to help searchers call their closest location

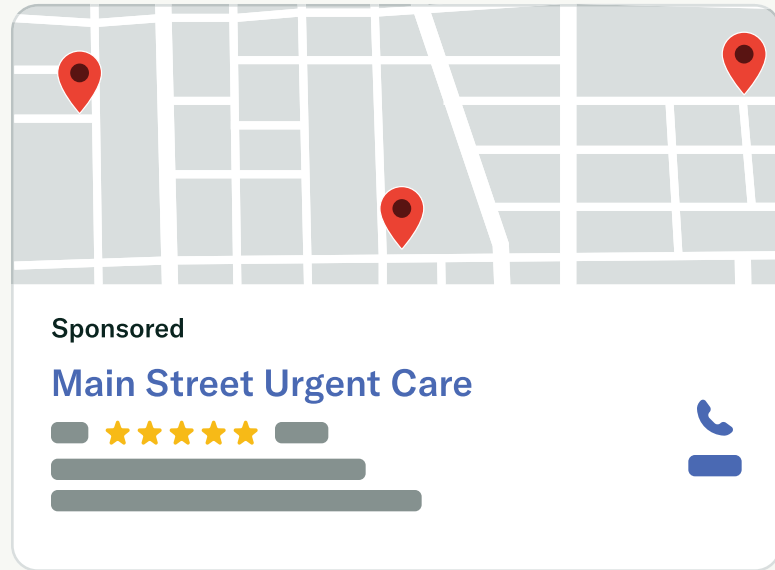
Location assets (formerly “location extensions”) enable you to list your nearby locations in your ads with a phone number or clickable call option (on mobile). They are useful if you want to drive foot traffic to locations but searchers want to call and speak to someone before visiting.

## Experiment with call ads

Call ads (formerly “call-only ads”) feature a large phone icon and appear only on devices that make phone calls. Any click on the ad triggers a call, though some ads may include a second link to visit your website.



**Tips for call ads:** Tips for call ads: Set up call ads in their own geo-targeted campaigns to easily adjust settings for ad language, budget, and time of day. Use ad language that gives people a compelling reason to call. Only schedule ads that drive calls when your organization is open and you are staffed to answer.



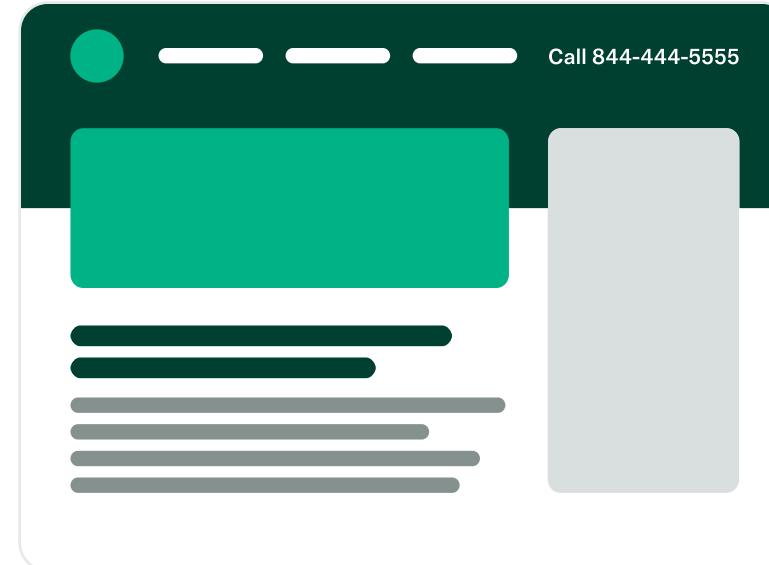
## Drive calls to locations with Google's Local Services ads

If your Google Business Profile (formerly “Google My Business”) listings are a good source of phone leads, consider investing in Local Services ads to boost call volumes, especially to locations that aren't getting as many calls.

## Optimize your landing pages to drive calls

Add a prominent “Call Now” call to action to your landing pages. Send people from geo-targeted ads to localized versions of landing pages that use local phone numbers and make sure those numbers are clickable on mobile devices.

### Landing Page A/B Test: Local Numbers Drive More Calls



Version A: Toll-Free Number



Version B: Local Number

# Miracle-Ear

Invoca Success Story

Miracle-Ear is a leading provider of hearing aid technology, with over 1,500 locations. About 80% of their digital marketing conversions happen over the phone, with consumers calling to set in-person appointments.

## Invoca Solution

Miracle-Ear uses Invoca to get accurate, real-time data and insights from calls to hit their marketing and sales goals. That includes:

- ✓ **Granular Call Attribution:** Invoca captures the marketing channels, ads, campaigns, keywords, and website experiences driving calls to locations.
- ✓ **AI-Driven Conversation Insights:** Invoca's AI analyzes conversations to accurately identify calls for new appointments vs spam and support.
- ✓ **Integrations and Optimizations:** Invoca passes attribution and user-level call outcomes to Google Ads, Google Campaign Manager, Adobe Experience Cloud, and Facebook to fuel optimizations that drive better results.

It's been a huge success — Invoca is tracking and analyzing over a million calls a year for Miracle-Ear, who use it to improve paid media efficiency and digital marketing performance.



“After 2 months we were seeing 16% cost efficiency in our cost per conversion. That's huge... Invoca is one of the platforms that helps drive that growth and innovation of the organization.”

[Read more of their story ↗](#)

# Drive More Valuable Phone Leads Cost-Effectively

Most patients searching for a healthcare provider want to call and speak to a person before converting. To maximize your conversions from paid search, make that move from digital to voice as easy for patients as possible. Here are some options to consider.

## Measure the value of calls driven by paid search

### Phone Calls: Search Keywords

PPC Keywords	Call Count	Appointment Calls	Converted on Call
hospital near me	454	45%	31%
neurology	140	37%	25%
radiology	134	39%	29%
oncology	115	46%	37%
urgent care	67	47%	25%

Many calls from paid search aren't leads. So it's important to have data on not only the volume of calls driven by paid search at the keyword level — but their intent, outcome, and value — to know what's driving the best results. Conversation intelligence solutions like Invoca can provide you with that data.





**Look at more than calls from keywords:** To understand what's really working and make the right strategic decisions, compare the volume and value of the following:


- ✓ Calls from mobile vs. desktop
- ✓ Calls to each of your locations
- ✓ Calls at different days and times
- ✓ Calls directly from your PPC ads vs. calls from website visits
- ✓ First-time callers vs. repeat callers
- ✓ Calls from PPC vs. SEO and other channels

## Use call value data to improve PPC optimizations

Once you know what is driving your most valuable calls, you can make better optimizations to drive better results.


 **Adjust your budget for top-performing geos:** If you are driving more value from callers in certain areas, run separate campaigns targeted only to those geos so you can increase bids and budgets to maximize your ad impressions.

 **Take advantage of bid modifiers:** Look at your call data to see what's generating the most leads and adjust your bid modifiers accordingly. For example, increase bids to ensure your ads are shown during the days/times generating the best results.

 **Improve smart bidding results:** Passing data on lead quality, conversion outcome, and revenue generated for each call into Google Ads and Microsoft Advertising (or your bid management tool) enables them to make better optimizations to hit your goals.

## Segment callers into audiences based on their conversations

Consider retargeting leads who didn't convert on the call, building lookalike audiences from callers who converted, and excluding non-appointment calls from seeing ads that aren't relevant.

 **Adjust bids, copy, and keywords by audience:** Consider broadening your keyword lists for past callers who are good leads but didn't convert on the call. Bid more for that audience and adjust your ad copy to incentivize them to call back.

# Comfort Keepers

Invoca Success Story

Comfort Keepers is a leading provider of in-home care for seniors, with over 650 franchisee locations. Comfort Keepers marketing team is responsible for sending phone leads to each franchisee for two audiences — sales opportunities and job applicants.

## Invoca Solution

Comfort Keepers uses Invoca to attribute calls from paid search down to the keyword and analyze conversations to determine if the caller is a sales lead or job applicant and if they converted on the call. Invoca call data is activated in Google Ads so smart bidding can optimize bid strategies for what drives the most valuable calls.

Comfort Keepers also uses Invoca to segment callers into audiences in Google Ads based on their conversations to retarget leads that didn't convert, find lookalikes resembling their best callers, and eliminate wasted ad spend on irrelevant audiences.

With Invoca's help, Comfort Keepers' data-driven optimizations drove a:

- ✓ 50% increase in sales conversions from calls
- ✓ 14% increase in conversion rates from job applicant calls
- ✓ 50% reduction in overall cost per call



“Thanks to Invoca’s AI and call tracking data, we are driving more sales opportunities and caregivers to our franchisee network. It’s been transformative to our business.”

[Read more of their story ↗](#)

# Qualify, Route & Assist Callers With IVRs

Strategy 3

A big part of converting phone leads is connecting them with the best available location or agent. Who that is, however, can vary depending on each caller's intent, their location, and the structure of your organization. Marketers can use IVRs (automated phone menus) to qualify, route, and assist callers from paid search and other channels for better conversion rates.

## Ways to Use IVRs to Improve Caller Experiences



### Route by Intent

Have IVRs ask why they are calling (e.g., booking an appointment vs. rescheduling one) and route callers to the best location or agents to help — consider dedicating staff just for converting new leads.



### Route by ZIP or Postal Code

Have IVRs ask callers to provide the ZIP or postal code they are calling from and route them to the closest open location to assist.



### Automate Call Handling

Have IVRs assist callers when locations are closed or busy. IVRs can answer common questions or ask callers to request a call back.



### Route by Interest

Have IVRs ask callers what service or department they are calling for (e.g., pediatrics vs. oncology) and route them accordingly.



### Screen for Ineligible Calls

Have IVRs ask questions to filter out callers your organization can't serve so your staff doesn't waste time assisting them.



### Help Callers Convert Online

Instead of forcing callers to wait on hold, give the option for the IVR to text a link to complete their appointment.

# Reduce Unanswered Calls with Ring Group Routing

Strategy 4

You invest a significant portion of your marketing budget to drive calls to your locations. You never want those calls to go unanswered because a location is closed or their staff is too busy. With ring group call routing, instead of sending calls to a single location, forward them to a list of phone numbers until someone answers.

## Routing Options to Reduce Missed Calls



### Forward Unanswered Calls to Call Centers

Route calls to a location first, but if they don't answer, forward callers to your call center to assist.



### Ring Every Agent's Phone at Once

Have calls ring every sales agent simultaneously — the first person who answers gets the call.



### Send More Calls to Your Best Sales Agents

Have more calls forwarded to your top agents to increase your overall conversion rates.

Call next number if no answer after  seconds

Attempt to connect calls

Call Acceptance

	Label (Optional)	Number
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↓	1. Agent #1	312-444-5544
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑	2. Agent #2	312-444-5545
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↓	3. Agent #3	312-444-5522
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ↑	4. Receptionist Desk	312-444-0000

# University Hospitals

Invoca Success Story

University Hospitals is a leading US healthcare provider with more than 200 locations, 18 hospitals, and 55 health centers. They receive more than 400,000 calls a month and use Invoca to help provide them with the best experience.

For example, Invoca uses real-time data from University Hospitals' CRM to know callers have already seen a specific provider. Rather than having those callers go to a call center handling thousands of calls, Invoca routes them directly to their provider, helping to cut call center call duration by 50% and increase conversions by 300%.

University Hospitals also uses Invoca to detect and correct caller experience issues costing them patients. In one example:

- ✓ Invoca data showed University Hospitals that 29% of phone calls were being routed to a physician messaging service where only 10% were resulting in appointments.
- ✓ University Hospitals made changes internally to reduce the drop-off, including training the service on the right talk track.

Now 68% of those callers are scheduling appointments, leading to a significant increase in conversion rates.



**University Hospitals**

“ We have a responsibility to make sure that when patients call, they get the information and care they need, right when they need it. That responsibility includes using better technology to create a better patient experience, which is why we implemented Invoca.”

[Read more of their story ↗](#)

# Correct Call Experience Issues Hurting ROAS

The worse your locations are at answering and converting phone leads, the more leads you have to send them (and the more budget you have to spend) to grow your patient base. Improving the caller experience helps you drive more new patients from your marketing with fewer leads and less budget.

## Monitor call handling at your locations

First, it's important to understand what percentage of the calls you send to locations are going unanswered or don't convert. This helps you identify your bottom-performing locations to examine more closely.

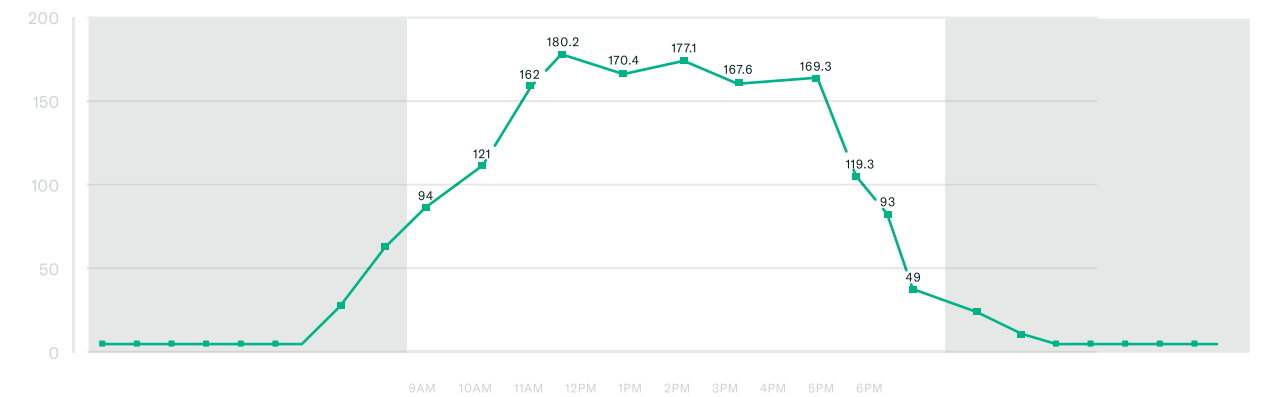
### Location Call Handling Performance

Location	Call Count	Converted on Call	Unanswered Calls	Revenue from Calls
Indian Peaks	1,687	47%	34%	\$671,989
Centura Mall	1,555	45%	14%	\$508,906
Mountain Springs	1,534	77%	15%	\$783,059
New Hope	1,508	78%	64%	\$430,459

## Examine when missed calls occur

If missed calls occur when a location is closed, stop running ads during those times or reroute calls to a contact center. If a location can't handle call volume during specific days or times, let location managers know so they can adjust staffing.

### Unanswered Calls by Hour



## Personalize call experiences with digital journey data

With Invoca PreSense, you can show agents why patients are calling with digital journey data in a screen pop that appears before the call begins. This reduces call handle times and enables agents to focus on providing an empathetic experience and setting appointments.

The screenshot shows a 'VOICE INTERACTION (INBOUND)' interface. At the top, it says 'Campaign: Invoice\_end\_to\_end'. Below that, the patient's name 'Michael Roberts' and phone number '7252108668' are displayed, along with a 'Callback: No' status. A section titled 'Interaction Details' lists the following information: Google Search: knee replacement surgeon; New Patient: Yes; Products: Bundle: Internet, TV, Mobile; Other Party Number: (805) 433-0265; Calling Webpage: /providers-santa-barbara; Specialist: orthopedics. An 'OK' button is located at the bottom right of the screen pop.

## Understand why phone leads aren't converting

For locations with low conversion rates, review call recordings to learn what they are doing wrong (Invoca's AI can also score all calls automatically to tell you). Are they not greeting callers properly or asking them to book appointments? Tell location managers so they can coach staff to improve.

### Location Call Handling Scores

Location	Call Count	Proper Greeting	Asked for Appointment	Positive and Polite
Chicago	513	94%	43%	50%
Minneapolis	485	95%	37%	49%
Cincinnati	448	97%	50%	46%
Indianapolis	375	98%	37%	42%

# Banner Health

Invoca Success Story

With 30 acute care hospitals, 50 urgent care centers, hundreds of health centers and clinics, and over 52,000 employees, Banner Health is one of the largest healthcare systems in the country. Banner Health uses Invoca to drive more appointment calls to their locations and convert those callers to patients:

- ✓ **Marketing Optimization:** With Invoca, Banner Health can see how many appointment calls each campaign, ad, and keyword drives and track its true ROI. This allows it to double down on what's working and cut spend on underperforming campaigns.
- ✓ **Audience Segmentation:** Invoca helps Banner Health build higher-performing segments by providing rich 1st-party data from callers.
- ✓ **Improving the End-to-End Patient Experience:** Invoca has given Banner Health a full view of the phone call channel. Now, departments collaborate to improve experiences, so more callers become patients.



“The magic of Invoca is in marrying the data with emotion. Invoca’s data helps us create more empathetic experiences for our patients, so we can respond with compassion throughout the journey.”

[Read more of their story ↗](#)

## THE RESULTS



**597% decrease**

in CPA from social media campaigns



**74% decrease**

in overall patient acquisition cost



**35% increase**

in phone call conversion rate

# Ensure HIPAA Compliance: Work with BAA-Signed Vendors

Strategy 6

The Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) issued a reminder bulletin outlining the use of online tracking as it relates to HIPAA in 2022. While the bulletin did not provide new guidance or policy, it led healthcare marketers to reevaluate their existing ad and website tracking solutions. In some cases, healthcare companies took the drastic action of removing conversion tags and turning off automated solutions like Google Ads Smart Bidding.

Many healthcare marketers are feeling some pain from losing access to data they relied on to optimize campaigns. However, they still have access to valuable first-party patient data they can use to power campaigns without running afoul of HIPAA and HHS.

## How Invoca Ensures HIPAA Compliance

Proper handling of your protected data is a top priority at Invoca. Invoca is HIPAA compliant and does not transmit PHI to third-party systems unless the customer explicitly creates such a data feed.

Invoca requires all HIPAA-covered entities to execute a Business Associate Agreement (BAA). This establishes a legally binding relationship that ensures Invoca's collection of PHI is permissible and will not violate HIPAA. Invoca can provide and will sign BAAs with its healthcare customers to ensure compliance.



### How to Maintain Your Web Analytics and Remain Compliant

Healthcare marketers can still collect the data they need to understand and optimize campaign performance. To do so, Invoca recommends customers evaluate the following three approaches before taking the drastic measure of shutting off website tracking tags for platforms like Google Analytics.

Regardless of the approach you choose, Invoca can still be used to provide valuable data to marketing teams and contact centers in a way that follows the HHS guidelines.

1

#### **Review and adjust data flows from current website tracking platforms**

This option is best for customers who have the resources to evaluate, document, and make adjustments to current data flows. This entails a comprehensive review of all your website analytics tags to identify what data and types are being collected and sent to other systems. Putting a process in place to evaluate any new data streams will help ensure compliance moving forward.

2

### Switch to a HIPAA-compliant analytics vendor

This is the best option for companies that want to maintain their current analytics capabilities but lack either technical resources or do not want to create new internal processes. For these customers, Invoca recommends implementing a HIPAA-compliant platform (ie. [Piwik Pro](#), [Amplitude](#), or [Piano Analytics](#)) as an alternative as these analytics platforms include features that help marketers protect PHI.

3

### Utilize a server-side data intermediary

This is the best option for customers who want to use non-HIPAA-compliant solutions such as Google Analytics and still adhere to the HHS guidelines. You can use server-side data collection to collect your first-party data and then pass it to an intermediary. Using this method, data flows can be tightly controlled and PHI is sure to be de-identified before being transmitted to non-compliant platforms or other entities that do not have a BAA (such as Google Analytics). This can be created in-house using technical resources or by adding a software solution like [Freshpaint](#) which eliminates the need for highly technical resources within the marketing team.

# Next Steps

We hope you enjoyed this playbook. For healthcare marketers, the two best levers to grow revenue are to drive more phone leads from your campaigns and deliver experiences to convert more of those callers to patients. The strategies covered here can help you do both. Please visit [invoca.com](https://invoca.com) for more best practices and success stories. You can also [request a personal demo](#) of Invoca's conversation intelligence solution to learn how it can help increase your paid search conversion rates and ROAS.

## About Invoca

Invoca is the leader in conversation intelligence AI for healthcare brands. Invoca provides a single platform and shared dataset for marketing, sales, CX, and operations teams to drive more valuable calls to their locations and contact centers and convert more of those callers to patients.

“Invoca has been a game-changer for our team. It allows us to maximize one of our most valuable resources — our marketing dollars.”

Chris Pace  
Chief Digital Marketing Officer

 Banner Health

## Invoca Powers Patient Acquisition for Leading Multi-Location Healthcare Brands



University Hospitals



 Banner Health

 Miracle-Ear®

 Ochsner Health

 ACADIA  
HEALTHCARE

INVOCA 

**INVOCA**<sup>®</sup> 

[invoca.com](https://invoca.com)

