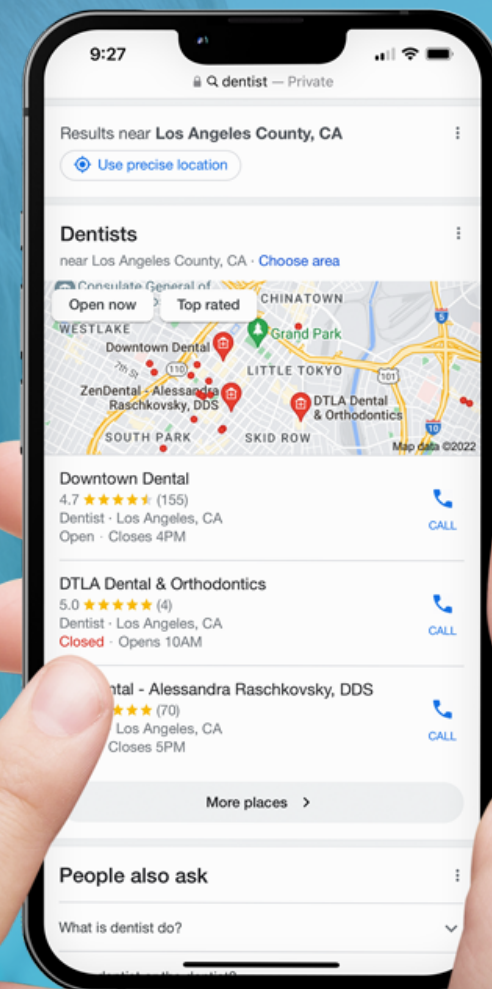DYMIC
DIGITAL

Local Search 2.0 for Dental Practices

The Path to New Patient Acquisition

If you wanted to describe the first stage of a patient's journey in just a few words, you might say: **Symptom Recognition,** Or **Find Provider,** Or **Make Appointment.**

But if you really wanted to capture what is going on, you could simply say, **Local Search.**

The Way We Find A Dentist Has Changed

Not long ago, there were three common ways to find a dentist: A referral from a friend or family member, your Healthcare Plan, or the Yellow Pages.

Although these paths still exist, **the digital age and healthcare consumerism** have increased our access to healthcare information. This has empowered us and changed the way we find—and select—providers.
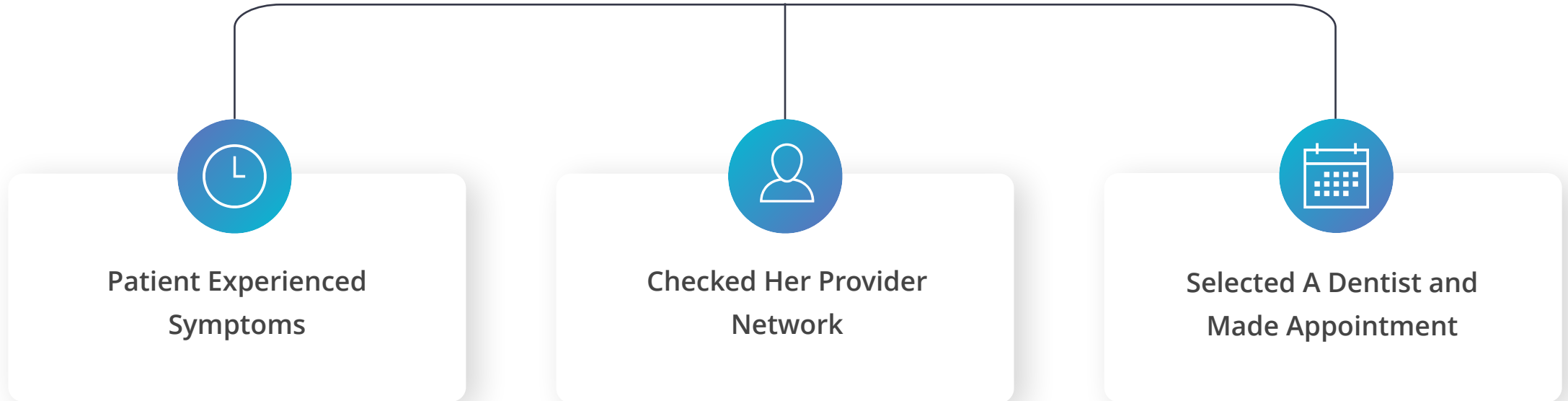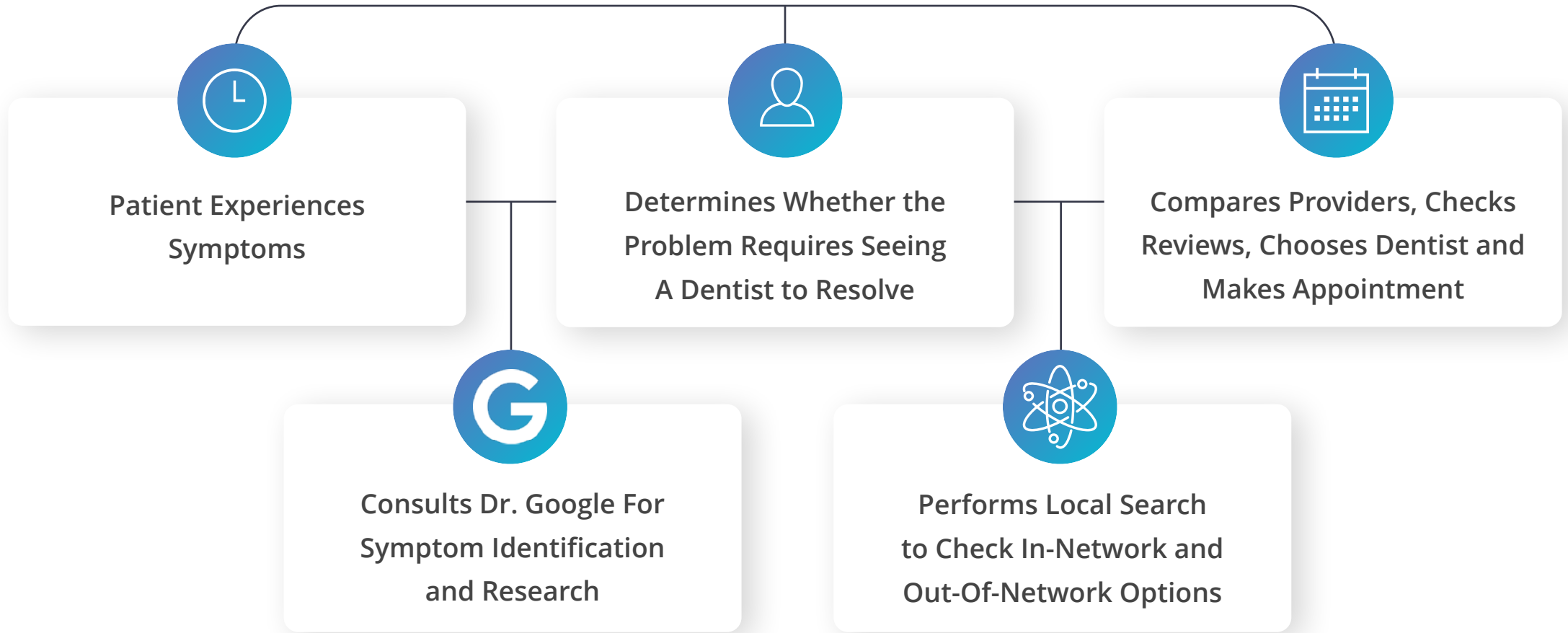
The result? Digital has become *intimately connected* with the first stage of **the patient journey.**

Traditional Patient Journey

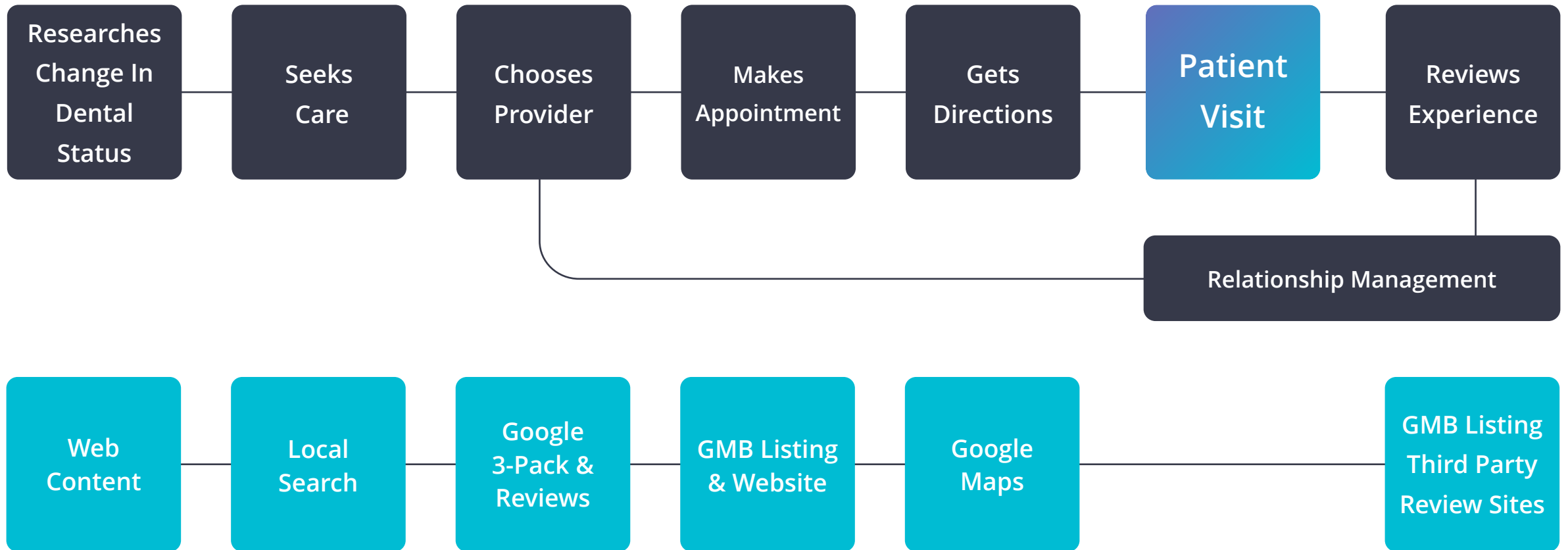This first stage was primarily based on the provider's authority and guidance.

Patient Experienced Symptoms

Checked Her Provider Network

Selected A Dentist and Made Appointment

Digitally-Powered Patient Journey

Patient Experiences Symptoms

Consults Dr. Google For Symptom Identification and Research

Determines Whether the Problem Requires Seeing A Dentist to Resolve

Performs Local Search to Check In-Network and Out-Of-Network Options

Compares Providers, Checks Reviews, Chooses Dentist and Makes Appointment

The new model includes digital touch-points that **directly affect patient decisions.**

Mapping Digital Touch-Points
to the Patient Journey

Researches Change In Dental Status — Seeks Care — Chooses Provider — Makes Appointment — Gets Directions — Patient Visit — Reviews Experience

Relationship Management

Web Content — Local Search — Google 3-Pack & Reviews — GMB Listing & Website — Google Maps — GMB Listing Third Party Review Sites

What about Dentist to Dentist Referrals?

This is the age of patient autonomy. Even when referred by other dentists, patients go online to verify the diagnosis, explore options, read reviews, and research qualifications to confirm the recommendation.

In fact, 77% of all patients use online search prior to booking an appointment—and **ONLY 5%** make it to page two of those search results.
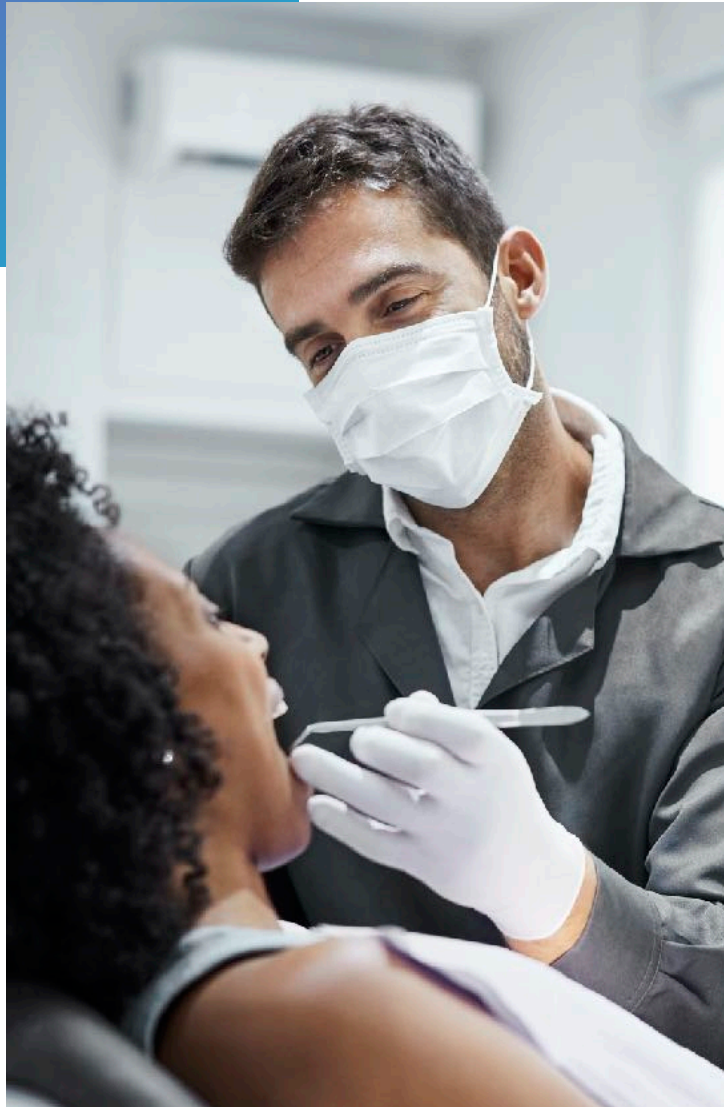
77%
PATIENTS USE
ONLINE SEARCH PRIOR
TO APPOINTMENT

95%
DON'T MAKE
IT TO PAGE TWO
OF SEARCH RESULTS

68%
USE REVIEWS, SOCIAL
MEDIA & HEALTH RESEARCH
SITES TO FIND A DENTIST

What does this mean?

If the majority of patients look no further than page one and your practice isn't listed in those search results, then they're likely making appointments with your competition.

In today's digital landscape, it's the <u>quality</u> of a provider's digital footprint and online reputation that **drives** **new patient acquisition.**

But **local search** is the **vehicle.**

What is **Local Search?**

Here's the technical definition: The use of 'Specialized Internet Search Engines' that allow users to submit geographically constrained searches against a structured database of local business listings.

In Dental Healthcare, that translates to – enabling potential patients to find you online when they need dental related information, advice, and a dental health provider.
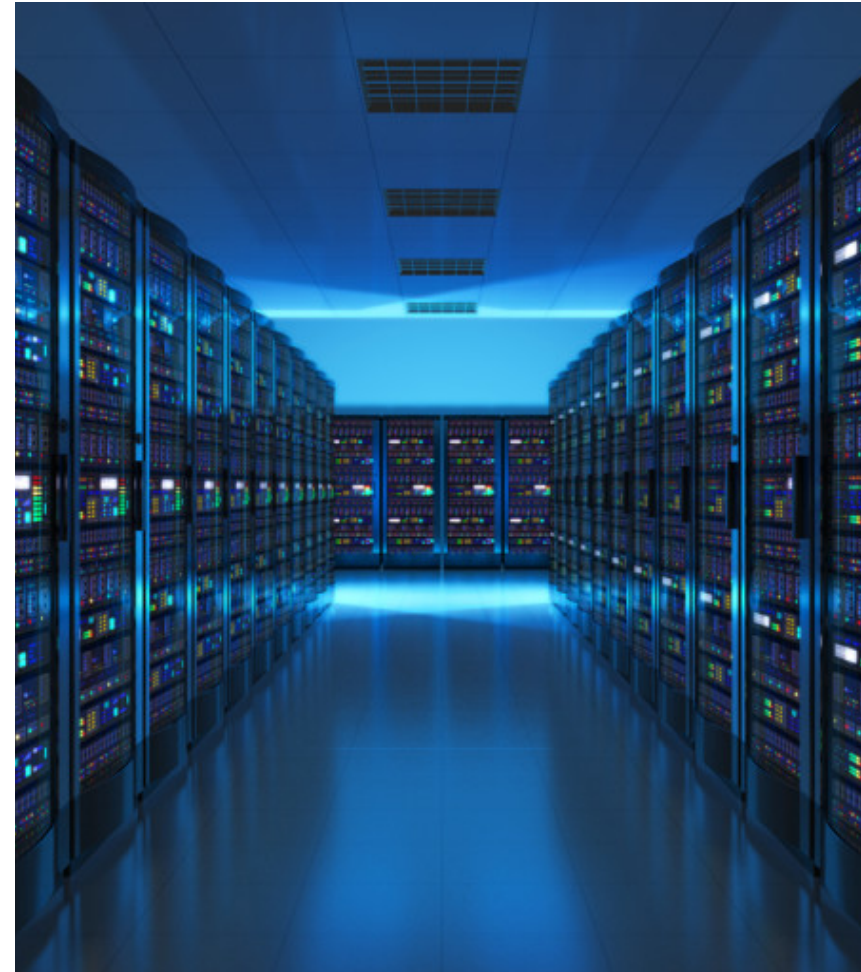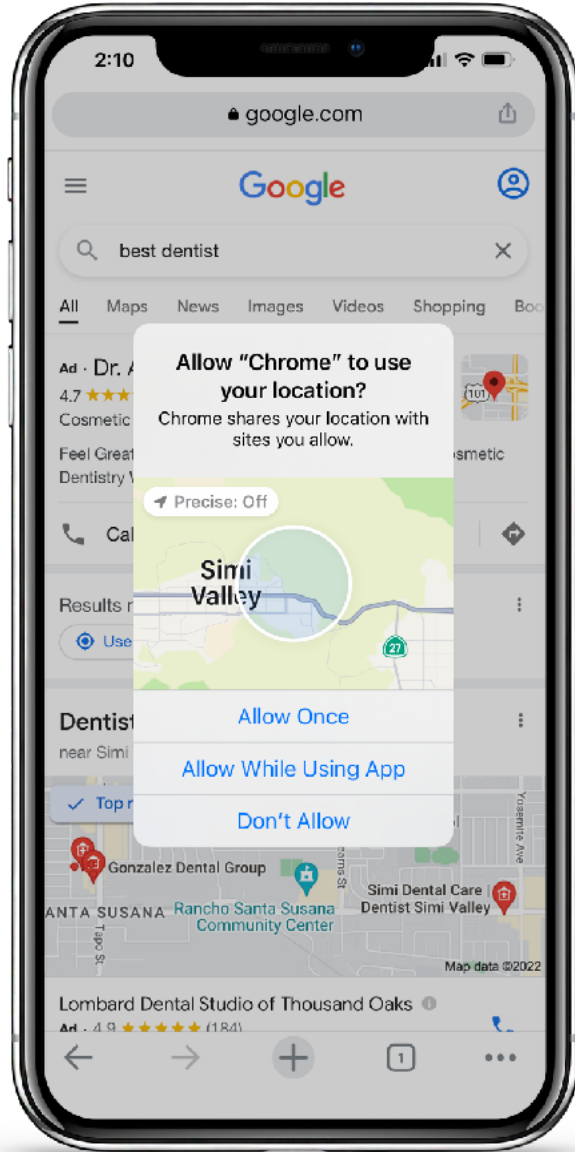
Over The Past Couple Years, Search Results Have Become Hyper-Localized

Data from Google suggests that local searches without "near me" or other location qualifiers (such as zip codes or city names) have grown **150% faster** than searches including "near me."

**Why?** Because Google has started taking a user's location into account when serving results.

This indicates **major changes** in Google's approach to finding and displaying **local search results.**

Most Impactful Change:
Google's Local 3-Pack

Whenever we search for a local service online, Google shows a map as well as a list of businesses. This is known as a 'Local Pack'—which is displayed at the top of page one search results.

Recently, in an attempt to better serve mobile users, they reduced the 7 Pack to just **three results.**
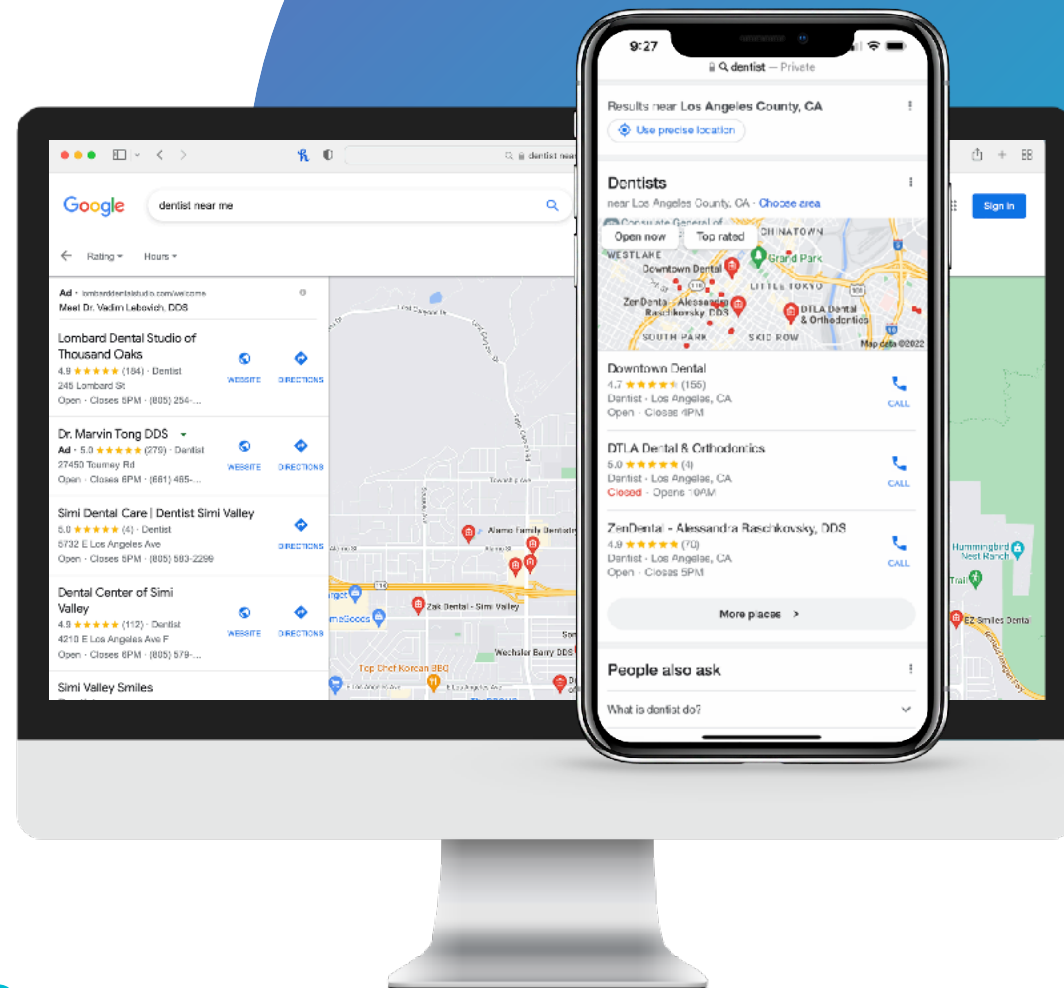
31%
1ST RESULT
CLICKS

15%
2ND RESULT
CLICKS

9%
3RD RESULT
CLICKS

54%
THE LOCAL 3 PACK ACCOUNTS
FOR 54% OF ALL LOCAL SEARCH CLICKS

Google's Local Pack is prime real estate, and only the most optimized dental practices get into those <u>coveted three spots.</u>

Dymic's Local Search 2.0 Campaign is dedicated to **helping your dental practice be one of them.**
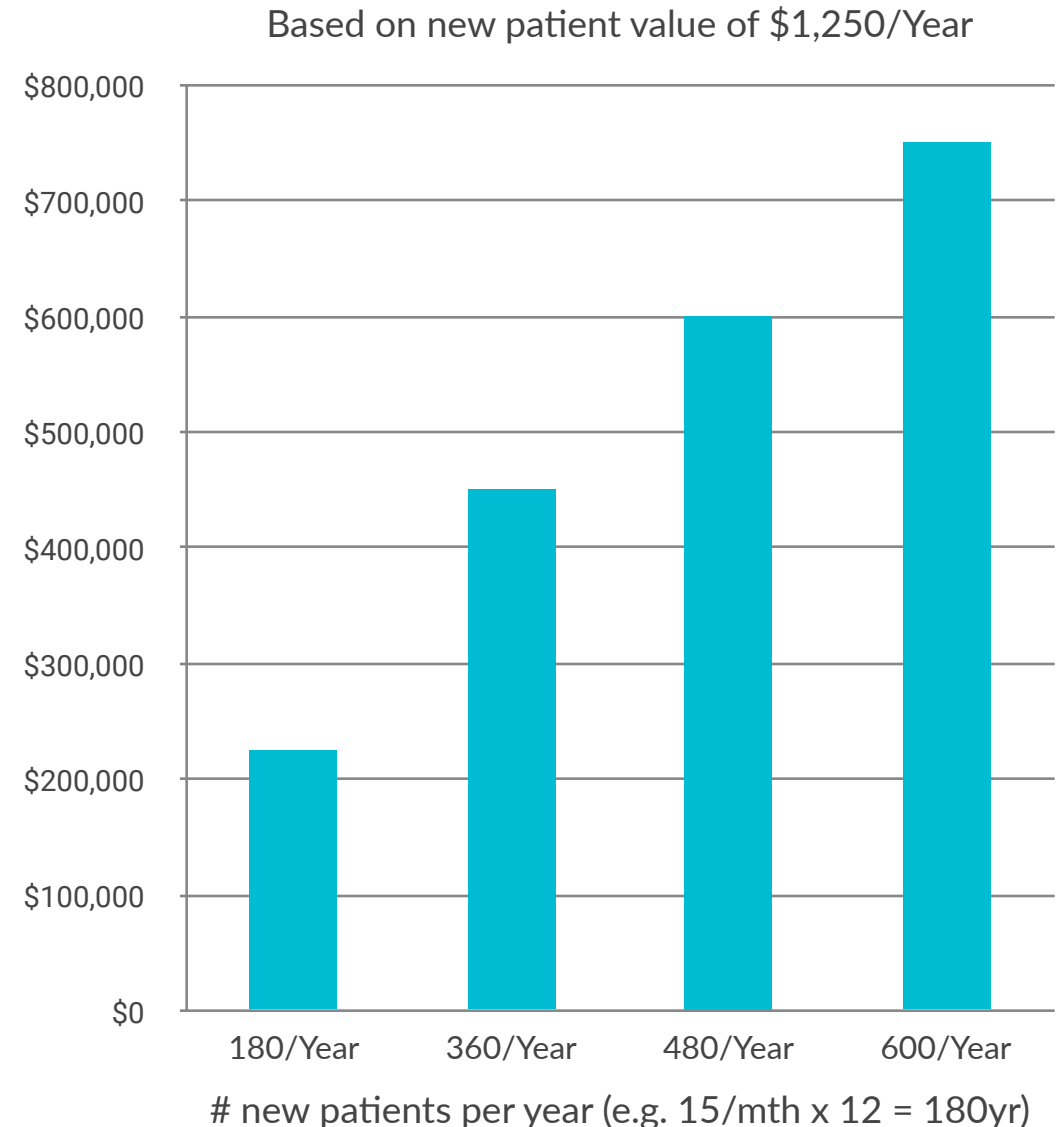
New Patient Acquisition's
Impact on Revenue

The average new patient is worth $1,250 annually, which is twice the value of an existing patient. So it's a must to bring them into your practice – even in the best of times. Moreover, the average solo dentist requires 15–50 new patients per month (depending on practice size) for consistent growth, especially when you consider patient attrition.

The chart reveals the impact new patients have on annual practice revenue, and why improving local search rankings makes sense.

Based on new patient value of $1,250/Year

$800,000	
$700,000	
$600,000	
$500,000	
$400,000	
$300,000	
$200,000	
$100,000	
$0	

180/Year   360/Year   480/Year   600/Year
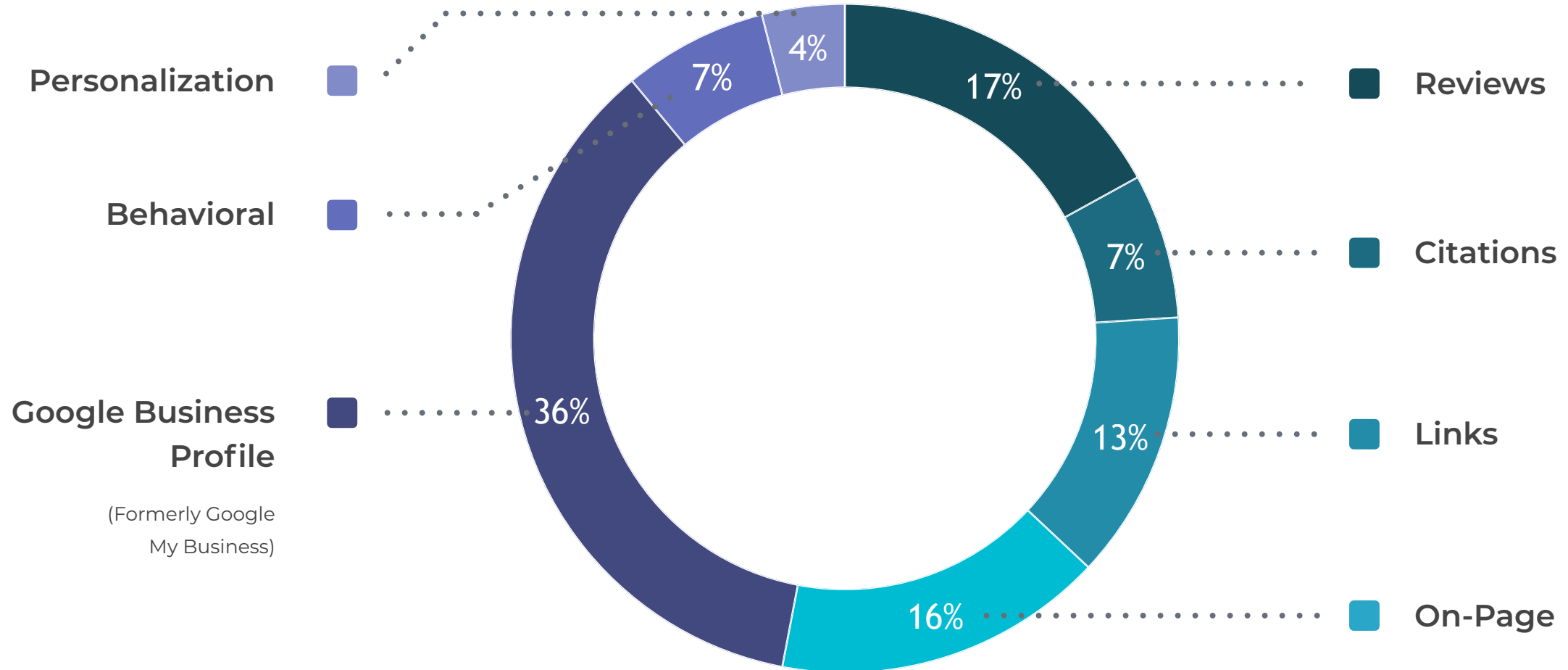
new patients per year (e.g. 15/mth x 12 = 180yr)

Google's Biggest Local Search Algorithm Update in 5 Years

In December (2021), Google rolled out a new local search algorithm update (known as the Vicinity Update) that is likely one of the most significant updates to local search in many years. In this update, proximity seems to be the primary ranking factor.

Local search results have long relied on proximity; however some businesses have been able to optimize to rank far from their actual location. Google is reprimanding this practice with this update, which will in turn give local search results even more relevance.

Local Search 2.0: **Updated Ranking Factors**

Personalization

Behavioral

Google Business Profile

(Formerly Google My Business)

Reviews 17%

Citations 7%

Links 13%

On-Page 16%

36%

7%

4%

Local Search 2.0: **Basic Deliverables**

1 **Data Aggregator Submission**
Submit to and manage every major data aggregator resulting in new local citations

2 **Citation Cleanup:** Submit to Top IYP directories (30), including logos, photos, and featured message

3 **Google My Business:** Build out, optimize and maintain your Google My Business landing page

4 **Proprietary Backlink Network:** High authority backlinks from websites in your industry— pages built out according to your top keywords (WP only)

5 **Call Tracking:** Setup call tracking number on local citation properties

6 **High Authority Guest Post Backlinks**
Two High authority (DA50+) backlinks from guest blogs linked to your website monthly

7 **Monthly Blog Article:** One monthly blog article optimized for local search and posted on your website

8 **Website & Voice Search Optimization:** Optimize your website to rank for local search, and submit to Amazon Alexa, Google Home, Siri, etc.

9 **Dymic Analytics Dashboard:** Track all local progress, Google My Business traffic and traction, call tracking information, and local citation submission

10 **Review Management:** Monitor, collect, and respond to patient reviews with detailed reports and alerts to keep you updated

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Get In Touch

To learn more about our Local Search 2.0 Campaign for Dental Practices

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THANK YOU!