

Drug Rehab Marketing: A Guide To Growing Your Addiction Treatment Program



When it comes to drug rehab marketing, the terms “drug rehab” and “marketing” put together might make some people feel squeamish. It makes the addiction treatment [industry](#) sound like some sort of soulless, sales-hungry business... I mean, do we *market* drug rehabs like we market a new kind of diet soda? Of course not!

The purpose of drug rehab marketing isn't just to “get a sale” or make a profit. The purpose is to actually get the word out about your treatment program. It's one of the only ways you can *connect* with people who truly need your life-saving services.

More than 20 million adults deal with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) each year in the U.S. Sadly, more than [90% of those people don't receive the treatment](#) that they need. **Your drug rehab marketing**

efforts work towards helping more people and responding to an increasing need.

Drug rehab marketing might sound impersonal—especially when a large portion of [marketing today happens online](#). However, the best strategies are actually aimed at establishing a kind of human connection.

The idea of treatment or seeking help, in general, is intimidating, but the internet has given people struggling with substance abuse new power. Searching for treatment facilities, recovery centers, or just resources about addiction on the internet is private and confidential. As a result, more people feel comfortable doing so.

You need rehab marketing strategies that connect your facility with these people in need, while also *connecting* with them on an emotional level.

Digital Marketing For The Drug Rehab Industry

- **Low CPA** – Digital marketing is the lowest cost marketing channel
- **Targeted leads** – Drive phone calls from real patients in need of your services
- **Increase your awareness** – Save more lives and help more families in need

How do you increase your brand's visibility online? How do you build trust online with those who are seeking treatment for drugs in

[medication-assisted clinics](#)? More importantly, how do you reassure them that your treatment program will truly help them recover?

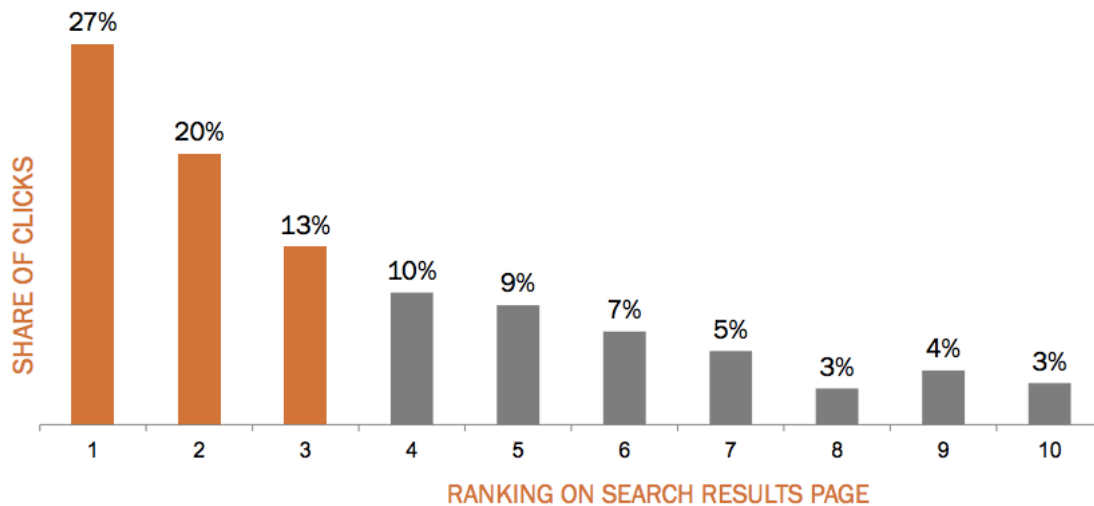
All of these goals are accomplished through a diversified approach to drug rehab marketing. **We've got six basic strategies that—in combination—bring you relevant, high-quality leads:**

SEO: The Best Drug Rehab Marketing Strategy

[Drug rehab search engine optimization](#) is still the king of addiction/recovery marketing, and online marketing in general. It's the best inbound marketing strategy, and it should be a top priority for your brand. Search engines are like librarians, designed to direct people to solid, useful information.

The search algorithm seeks to provide the most relevant and highest-quality results for that person's search. But, you want *your* program's website to appear in those search results. The first 3 organic search results get 60% of the clicks on a page. Moreover, 3 out of 4 people never scroll past the first page of search results.

60% of all organic clicks go to the top three organic search results.



SOURCE: MARKETINGSHERPA, FEBRUARY 2007

There are a few major factors that play into which websites will rank the highest:

- **Providing Valuable Content** – To get noticed, your website needs to provide content that is valuable and worth reading. This is most often done through a blog. People are online searching for information about substance abuse, treatment, and recovery. The hope is that they'll come across your website's resources. This may lead someone to look into your treatment program for themselves or a loved one. Most importantly, your search ranking improves as you draw more traffic to your site.
- **Keywords** – A search engine analyzes the keywords in someone's search to match them with content that also uses

those relevant keywords. The content that you offer needs to be optimized for the keywords someone is likely to search, and often for keywords that are more specific. An article about the science of addiction can rank for important keywords like “what is addiction.” Or, an article about equine therapy at your facility can rank for long-tail keywords like “where can I find a drug rehab that uses equine therapy.” You want a range of keywords in your wheelhouse. Having more content means more keywords, which increases your visibility with search engines.

- **Backlinks** – These are links to your website that exist on other web pages. When another site links to your website as a resource or cites a link to an article on your site’s blog, search engines notice. Each backlink is like a vote of confidence, giving your site greater credibility. Your site recognized as more valuable as you accumulate more backlinks. [The best way to earn backlinks](#) is by providing truly useful content, as well as networking with other brands and organizations to collaborate.

Clearly, strategies like these take time to implement, so you won’t see an immediate return from your initial SEO efforts.

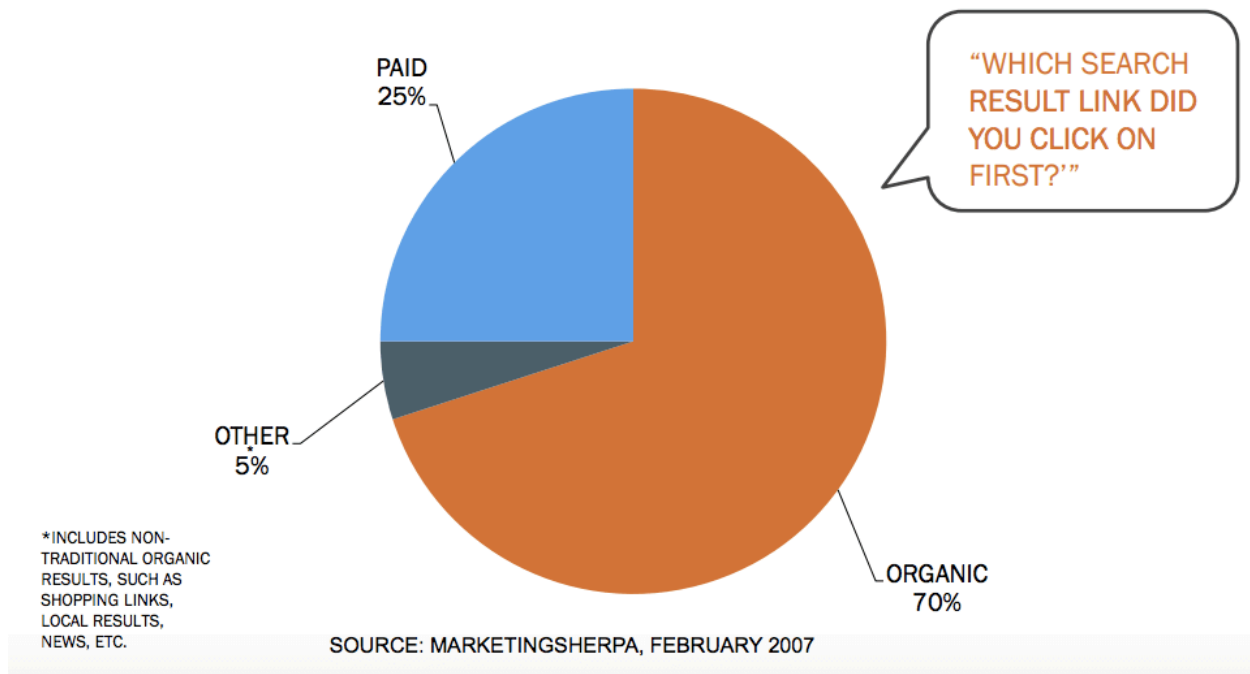
You’ve got to create the content, optimize it for keywords, earn links from other websites, and then continue to create valuable content consistently. Search engine optimization is not a simple science.

There’s a reason that we house a team of SEO experts to help brands with their SEO. It’s an intricate field that requires specific knowledge and experience. Increasing your search ranking is a long-term process, but the payoff is well worth it.

Although Google pay-per-click (PPC) ads have gained a lot of attention in the world of drug rehab marketing, PPC ads are extremely expensive, especially if that is the sole focus of your long-term marketing efforts.

A good SEO strategy has the lowest cost-per-click of any online marketing approach. Plus, building quality SEO and improving your search rankings has a much greater effect on increasing your traffic than paid search. **In fact, 70% of the links users click on are organic search results, not paid search.**

70% of the links search users click on are **organic**—not paid.



Social Media Builds Community, And Your Brand

Of the more than 5 hours that the average person in the U.S. spends online each day, around 2 of those hours are spent on social media platforms. People spend a *huge* chunk of their day on social media.

Facebook is the largest and most-used platform by far. Facebook is also geared towards mobile phones, and mobile internet usage has been steadily increasing over the years. At this point, nearly 20% of the time that people use the internet on their phones, they're on Facebook.

That means there's a massive and active audience to reach through social media marketing efforts on Facebook or other social media platforms.

First and foremost, social media is a means of building community.

Yes, you earn likes on your page, but your brand also gains a following of people. You want to keep that following around, continue to build it, and stay engaged with them.

Social media is a great way to stay in touch with alumni who have completed treatment at your facility, continue to offer them resources for their recovery, or even announce alumni events.

Your social media pages are also key to driving traffic to your website because you can post links to content from your blog. That content may be seen by an even *wider* audience than just your following if a post is shared.

You can also share useful resources from other sites, so your community a reason to continue following and interacting with your page.

Because there's such a large, diverse audience using social media platforms regularly, Facebook ads are also effective. Your ads have the potential to reach a huge mobile audience, it's a generally cheaper form of online advertising, and it lets you target ads towards specific audiences.

The major problem with social media as a drug rehab marketing tool is the intent of users.

People on Facebook use it to socialize, not to search for information like through an online search engine. Even if someone is struggling with substance abuse and comes across your Facebook ad, they may not be in the mindset to go to treatment.

Having a solid presence on social media is important—for building a community and building your brand. It's far better than *not* having a presence.

Create Valuable Content & Keep Creating It

As mentioned earlier, content is *huge* in terms of drug rehab marketing strategies. **You need to create quality content, and you need to create it consistently and regularly.**

Content creation is an additional time investment, and you may feel confused about how best to approach it. However, by hiring a quality writer, or with the help of our content marketing team, you will establish yourself as a worthwhile online resource.

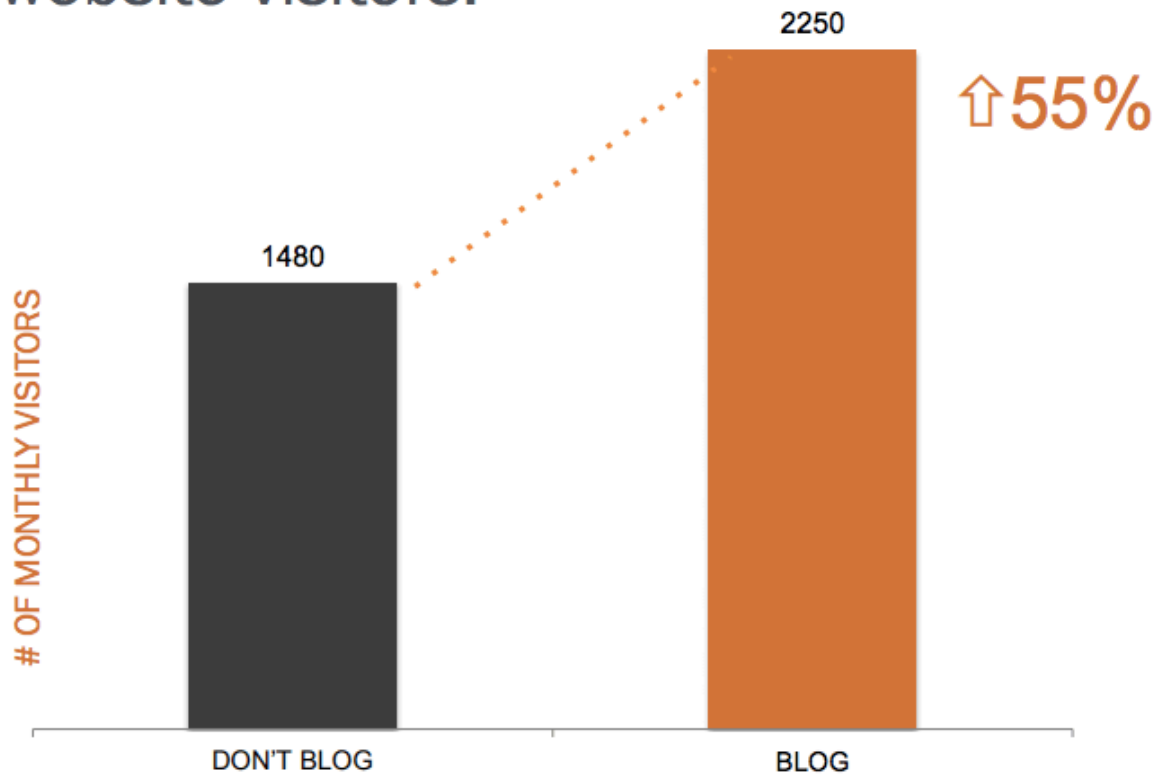
Each blog on your site adds to your count of indexed pages. Businesses with more indexed pages get over **3 times as many leads**. By including a blog on your website, you are able to offer articles about a wide range of topics:

- patterns of substance abuse
- how loved ones can help those who are struggling
- unique therapies that your program practices
- what addiction treatment centers are like
- emerging addiction research
- tools to help someone in their recovery

You're not limited by these ideas. **By creating useful content, you amplify your brand's online visibility.** Content that's thorough, informative, and properly optimized for relevant keywords can increase the search ranking of your treatment program's website.

High-quality content like this is more likely to be read—which means more traffic coming to your site—and it's more likely to be linked to as a resource on other websites. Companies that blog have an average of 55% more website visitors than companies that don't blog.

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By sharing content from your site's blog on your social media platforms, you widen your exposure and draw even more traffic to your website. If that content is truly helpful or interesting, it's more likely to be shared by social media users.

As you continue to create more and more useful content, you establish greater credibility online—both with search engines and online users.

Even just seeing your treatment program pop up in search results or its name associated with an interesting article on Facebook makes your brand more recognizable to people.

When you're well-known, your treatment program is more likely to attract new clients. **Plus, your content itself is an effective branding tool.** Your blogs can highlight special services offered at your treatment program.

Targeted and resourceful content gives new visitors to your site information about your brand, which builds greater trust. Most importantly, you can include calls-to-action in your content.

If someone is looking for equine therapy online, encourage them to call to find out about your program. Also, provide a phone number within the text of your article. If someone is learning about heroin from a resource on your website, include a message that tells them help is available and which number to call.

Attract New Leads With PPC

We've talked about how organic search reigns supreme, but that doesn't mean paid search has no value. **Google's pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns may be expensive, but they are extremely targeted.**

A major struggle in drug rehab marketing is investing in strategies that reach a relevant audience and bring in relevant lead generation.

With PPC ads, you bid for specific keywords *and* a certain position in the search rankings. For example, if someone searches for "drug

rehab trauma therapy” and you have bid on those keywords as well as the top search position, then your program’s website will appear at the very top of the search results—above even the organic search results.

Moreover, *almost half* of the people online can’t tell the difference between paid ads and organic search results. When a brand is just establishing itself online or SEO efforts haven’t yet resulted in high enough search rankings, PPC ads help to get more eyes on your website—if it fits in your marketing budget.

Much like SEO, creating a great landing page requires specialized skills and an in-depth understanding of drug rehab marketing. **To help treatment programs like yours, we’ve created a fully customizable landing page platform: the Treatment Leads Platform.** There, we build a micro-website for you, with the ability to duplicate landing pages and tweak them to match the unique search terms in your PPC ads.

This means you have *more* quality landing pages, each of which is specially designed *for* those specific keywords that someone searched before clicking on your ad.

We don’t believe in robbing brands of their creative control—you still decide which pages your paid traffic will go to, while our Treatment Leads Platform guarantees that your leads generation will be the most relevant and will actually convert.

Use Email To Stay Connected With Alumni

There’s lots of hype about intense digital marketing campaigns and social media, but email marketing isn’t dead by any means. As a drug

rehab marketing approach, [email campaigns](#) are a great, more personal way to stay engaged with [alumni](#).

Although you share content on social media, you can't guarantee that your alumni will see it. You also can't guarantee that all of them will actually look at it.

Yes, people may easily disregard or delete emails, but most everyone checks their email regularly. It's a direct line of communication that you should capitalize on.

By keeping an email list of your alumni, you always have an audience. With their permission, you add them to your mailing list and send out regular newsletters, whether it be weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly.

These are consistent opportunities to share content from your blog and keep alumni up-to-date on upcoming events. In a marketing sense, these are sound strategies. You are driving traffic to your blog and to your website, which helps with your SEO efforts. You stay engaged with those alumni, who are then more likely to post favorable reviews online. Or, they tell friends and family about your treatment program.

Hosting alumni events may even work in your favor. Not only do those events continue to build your connection with alumni, but they also demonstrate your involvement in the community. This does wonders for your brand's reputation.

But, beyond these marketing goals, there's a deeper reason to establish a system of regular contact with alumni from your program:

it's the ethical thing to do. Treatment isn't a quick fix- it helps establish a foundation in recovery, but true recovery is a lifelong process.

The majority of people relapse within their first year in recovery. There's a responsibility for treatment programs to provide some form of continuing care—even if it's just maintaining email contact or sharing helpful blog posts.

If those people do begin struggling with substance abuse again, you want them to know that help is available and your treatment program's doors are open to them.

The Power Of Word-Of-Mouth Marketing

At the end of the day, word-of-mouth referrals are a tried-and-true form of drug rehab marketing.

Before the marketing landscape became increasingly digital, referrals from friends and family were relied upon as one of the most effective—if not *the* most effective—marketing tactic. Now, even with all of these other drug rehab marketing tools at your disposal, word-of-mouth still gets the job done.

It's a highly effective tool and, best of all, it's completely free. **After SEO and direct traffic, referrals have the third-highest lead-to-customer conversion rate.**

If a person who's looking for treatment hears from someone else who's already been through your program or who knows about your

program, that testimony carries more credibility than most advertisements they might come across online.

This is why 92% of people say they read [online reviews](#) when making a decision about a local business. After all, they want to know about other people's experiences to inform their own choice.

When more people are talking about your treatment program and are willing to recommend it, you've tapped into a powerful form of organic marketing. **So how do you get people talking about your addiction treatment program?**

Be an active member of your community. Participate in recovery advocacy efforts and fundraisers. Consider hosting events of your own. Get your staff or interested alumni involved in volunteer work in your local treatment community.

This gets your treatment program's name out there so it's recognizable to local people.

Most importantly, just continue to do good work. Provide quality care, evolve with new evidence-based practices, and stay in touch with clients who have left your program.

An individual or their loved one who's looking into treatment will likely turn to someone they know who's been through the process. **By leaving clients and their loved ones satisfied with the care you provide, they're more likely to recommend your facility.**

Expand, Diversify, Connect

These six drug rehab marketing strategies work together to grow your brand, generate leads, and ultimately reach more people in need of your services.

One of the fatal mistakes that many treatment programs make is relying on *one* singular marketing strategy. By *expanding* your marketing horizons, you'll find that one drug rehab marketing strategy (like quality SEO) is related to and intertwined with another (like creating valuable content). Each tactic has its value, but they are *most* powerful together.

*Diversify your marketing efforts. You'll cover more ground and reach a broader audience. **Your SEO strategy, your content posting, your online advertising campaigns — all of it is ultimately working towards a common goal: to connect with people in need of treatment.***