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Now let me introduce our presenter. As a seasoned digital marketing expert with a decade of experience, Mario Rios has dedicated his career to empowering mental health professionals to reach their goals in their private practices. With an impressive track record of assisting thousands of mental health professionals, Mario uses his expertise to help them streamline administrative tasks, craft multi-state digital marketing strategies, and unleash the true potential of social media and take their practices to the next level. Welcome, Mario Rios.

Mario Rios: Thank you very much. This is quite exciting for me. I'm always super excited to be able to get the opportunity to do this for the APA. I've honestly lost count how many years I've been doing this for you guys, and it is always a blast every single time. Especially recently, if you are a tech nerd of any degree, like myself, this is quite an exciting time as the internet and technology is consistently evolving and changing. That is going to be the main topic of our presentation today, is the advancement in technology and ultimately the ability to adapt and cope and keep up with the times to ensure that we are being as fluid as possible when it comes to how we are using technology as an advantage to your practice.

What we're going to be going over today is how AI has utilized itself into a traditional incorporation into how people are ultimately searching or utilizing resource-based material. What we're going to be covering today is the current search landscape. How people are searching and how it's changed over the years from a traditional Google search to more people now utilizing more AI patterns in order to help

progress and get solutions for goods and services, questions answered, so on and so forth. Then how traditional search works versus how AI search works.

First, though, I always like to start this off by, we're going to be talking a lot about AI. What that is, it's artificial intelligence. What does that mean? The artificial intelligence that we're going to be talking about today is going to more or less be based around how people are using AI as a search engine, not how they're using it for other resources. Our particular presentation today is just going to focus on AI search, as it's most likely going to be most relevant to you in terms of patient interactions, how patients are finding you. Artificial intelligence is a program or a chatbot like ChatGPT that generates human-like interaction via text, code, imaging.

It's basically responding to you based on what you're searching for. It uses natural language prompts. Basically, what that means, it's using information presented to it to help give you an answer for what you're looking for, for the questions that you're asking. Now, it uses a full landscape of information. It doesn't just use Google, it uses the entire internet to help determine and give you an appropriate response based on what you're searching for. Now, it's not assumptive, and it only generates responses based on what it deems as facts. There's no emotion involved.

It doesn't get to choose between McDonald's and Burger King. It's essentially just going to lay out the facts. "Hey, here is, based on what their algorithm that they use, this is the best resource for what you're looking for." It's more of a matter-of-fact type scenario than it would be impulsive. It can be used as a resource center to search for goods and services the same way that you would search for Google, or you use Google to search. Whether you're looking for a chiropractor or a dentist, psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker. A new shoe store, pizza restaurant to go to. It's another avenue that you can use to get a response to what you're searching for.

This type of search is not intended to be used as a self-diagnosis. I know that's a big assumptive. Anytime I work with practitioners is that they fear that people are using AI strictly for a diagnosis system. It's just nature. That's going to happen. I sprained an ankle not too long ago. The first thing I did was like, "Hey, what should I do?" I wasn't going there to ask AI, "What do I do in this moment?" I'm looking for steps. I'm looking for information on what I should do. If it's this swollen, do I do X, Y, Z? If it hurts when I turn it left, do I go see a doctor?

More and more people are using it as a means of instant information. It's not intended to be used as a doctor. It's not an actual person that you're communicating with that's going to help treat your symptoms. It's there to provide you information based on what you're giving to the AI model. Using it appropriately is going to be important. Roughly less than 5% of AI searches are being generated as a self-diagnosis tool. Now, 5% out of 40 billion searches or inquiries is still a strong number. Just know that the majority of people that are using AI, it's to get information and resources. it's not to self-diagnose themselves.

What's really neat is, even when you're using an AI search, you can still use it to help explain confusing medical terms. You might have heard, be like, "Hey, what does this mean? I was told that I might need to talk to this type of practitioner. What does that mean?" It can generate a list of smart questions to ask your real doctor. "Hey, based on what I've told you, AI, what should I be asking my doctor when I go see

them?" It can provide recommendations who to go see. "Hey, this is exactly what my issue is. Who is the best person that I need to see in order to get the results that I'm looking for to get the help that I need?" Let's go ahead and move to the next slide, please.

The current search landscape, Google has traditionally been the top way all searches are handled, especially for mental health-related resources. AI-powered tools like ChatGPT are now changing how patients are searching. Since the late '90s, I believe Google launched in 1996 and became a fully functioning search engine, roughly 1998 into 1999. Then you have other search engines like Yahoo, Bing, DuckDuckGo. There's a lot of other smaller search engines out there. That takes up about 70% of most searches. That's what we're all familiar with. It's what we've all grown up with. It's what we're accustomed to.

We're looking for resources? We go to Google. Therapist near me, chiropractor near me, X, Y, Z near me. That's what we're using to help make decisions. 60% to 70% of most decisions are made based off a search. That's assuming you don't have a direct insurance recommendation, you don't have a referral source. It's just done through an organic search chat. As of July 2026, as you can still see, Google, still the king daddy. 105.9 billion monthly users utilizing Google, and 6.1 using, which would be the largest chat model that they have right now, or AI models, what they call it, is ChatGPT.

I would say Gemini is right in there, because Gemini is Google's version of ChatGPT, which we'll touch on here in a little bit. That's 6.1 billion monthly users, and that number is growing, every year, by at least a billion to two billion searches. It's projected that at that rate, which could potentially keep doubling year over year, they'll be equally matched with Google within the next five years. There's going to be just as many searches done through AI models, if not more, than Google. If you would have mentioned that to anybody in the tech field five years ago, they would have looked at you like you had three heads because that would have been an impossible feat.

Google's always been the leading way in which people are searching and getting information for what they're looking for. As we can tell now with these trends, the AI models are quickly approaching Google-type levels, and it just makes sense. The point of this presentation is to figure out why this landscape is happening, how to enhance your overall online presence through these new opportunities, and maintain yourself online. Using more than just Google as a model, we're now using different means to help get your practice out there, and it's the way of the future. This isn't going away.

If you watched the Super Bowl last year, where you probably saw at least seven or eight AI commercials, next year it's going to be all AI commercials. It's going to be ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Perplexity. Everybody's going to have a commercial. You're going to see it more and more. All your phones come equipped with it. You can't get away from it. Unfortunately, it's one of those things that's just going to adapt and evolve over time. Just like Google, people were afraid of Google when that first came out.

"I'm not putting my information on Google. They're going to come get me," that sort of thing. The unknown is scary. We totally get it. At the end of the day, what it comes down to is you have to evolve and adapt with the technology, if you're still looking to grow your practice. If you're using the internet as a resource, this is going to be one of those viable options that's going to help you succeed using those resources. Next slide, please.

All right. How a traditional search works. This is what we've been accustomed to. This is years and years of us doing the same thing over and over in terms of getting resources and recommendations using Google as a resource. We use Google as a primary because most people are going to be most familiar with Google and use Google. How it works, it's pretty straightforward. You open up your web browser, you get to Google, you type in, "Psychologist near me." Psychologist Dallas. Psychologist, your ZIP Code. You type it into Google. What it's going to end up happening is it's going to generate three different separate types of results.

At the very top, you're going to have your paid Google advertisement. Those are going to be those paid spots. Those guaranteed exposure, your paid spots. That's where that resource is going to be allocated to. Then probably about five years ago, we started noticing that now AI Overviews is taking a section of that real estate. What that is, that's Gemini working. That's their AI model. When you're looking for a psychologist in Dallas, now you're going to start getting AI responses that are going to come automatically on Google. You can turn that off, in your settings, if you want to. I recommend keeping it on.

That's going to take up a little bit of the real estate. Then that third spot is going to be your organic results. That'll be your map area, where it's going to show you all your local options. Then it's going to show you the organic approaches to who they're recommending. It's going to list all the websites. Now, the downfall to this is it's going to give you 50,000 results, because theoretically, psychologist Dallas could match a lot of different websites. Just using the word Dallas alone is going to generate some responses that aren't necessarily what you're looking for. Those are going to be later on, page 52, 53, so on and so forth.

What it's doing is it's trying to give you the best answer for what you're searching for. That's Google's job. It's called an algorithm. It's what they use to help determine who to place on that page. In that algorithm, it's a wide range of information that they use to help determine who to recommend. It's called a quality score, online presence score. There's a lot of factors that go into that. Your overall online presence, your directories and listings. Do you have a Psychology Today? Do you have any local directories? Do you have an active website? Do you have any reviews?

It's essentially a credibility source. Google is very strong on credibility. The stronger your online presence, the stronger that you have in terms of certifications and accreditations and that sort of thing, the more backlinks you have that identify you as a verified mental health practitioner. Those are all things that go into that quality score that helps Google recommend your practice specifically. You get those lists of results. Now it's up to the searcher to determine who they want to reach out to. Now you have to do your own detective research.

You're going to have those paid ads at the very top. Those are the guys that are ponying up the money to be at the very top. You can look through those. You have your AI Overviews. Their AI models are going to recommend some practices based on what you're searching for. They might try to drill down a little bit and figure out exactly what type of mental health you're looking for, what your issues are, that sort of thing, before they present you some viable options. Then you have your organic. At the very bottom, those are the other websites that you have to look through.

It's not just providers, unfortunately. It's not just individual practices. You also have Psychology Today popping up. You have WebMD and Healthgrades and Alma and Growth Therapy and BetterHelp and all these other resources that are also taking up a lot more of that real estate. As an individual practitioner, it's getting harder and harder to get yourself out there on a consistent basis. It's not that you're doing anything wrong, it's just that landscape is getting harder and harder to penetrate because there are far more options. It's a lot harder to be consistently found through Google than it used to be. That's why a lot more people are switching to more AI models. Go ahead and switch to the next slide, please.

Now, how does an AI model work? How does an AI search work? It's very straightforward. You can use a service like ChatGPT or Gemini, which is Google's ChatGPT. There's a couple other that we'll go over. You're essentially pulling those up and you're using it like a Google search. Except now you can be far more detailed. You can ask a full question. Who's the best psychologist in Dallas for anxiety who offers same-day appointments, is open on Wednesdays, takes Aetna insurance, and will see me virtually? You can be as detailed as you'd prefer.

What they're going to do now is AI is going to take the information from what you're searching for and they're going to use the entire internet to help scope and determine who to recommend. Who am I going to present to this individual? Because guess what? If they're correct, if you provide a viable resource for your searcher and it ends up being exactly what they're looking for, you're probably going to go back to ChatGPT next time, and you're not going to go back to Google. They're successful if they presented you the right response. It ended up in a positive engagement.

It ended in you being able to contact your specific provider or find the service that you were looking for. It does that work for you. If you remember, with Google, you had to do that yourself. You had to look through all these different websites, you had to click on them, then you had to go cycle through the paid ads, you had to do all this other stuff to get a result, but you had to make that decision without being able to drill down. Now with AI, it's going to give you a short list with a few options. I've never seen more than five options before, unless you specifically ask for more.

AI produces that short list and summarizes their credentials, their real-time availability, their reviews. It's going to give you like, "Hey, these are the reasons why we're recommending this practitioner based on what you're searching for." It's going to drill down everything for you. Now, if it has four out of five of the criteria, it'll let you know like, "Hey, it matches everything that you're looking for, but they aren't open on Wednesdays." It will let you know if it doesn't match your search 100% completely, but you're going to get some viable options.

Now, how impactful do you think that would be? With Google, you have 50,000 options, they got to do their own work, they got to do their own research and determine who they want to reach out to. With AI, what if you're one of those four or five options? Now you have a 20% to 25% chance that someone's going to click on your website to get to your website, as opposed to throwing a dart. It's a lot more direct. Getting yourself on these AI models, the quicker that you can do that is going to significantly help enhance how you're being recommended, not only through the AI models, but through Google models, because they work hand in hand.

I'm going to get into a little bit more of that here in a couple slides. It's like love and marriage. You can't have one without the other. You can't be really strong on Google and not be strong on AI and vice versa. It's about building that full ecosystem throughout the internet, because if you are consistently being recommended by Google, AI catches onto that, and that's just going to help them enhance. It's giving you the opportunity, at different avenues, to be recommended, other than just one stop on a search engine. Move to the next slide, please.

In the next section here, we're going to take a closer look at AI search. Why AI search matters, and then popular AI search platforms. As we're progressing and evolving into this new modern technology, we want to figure out how these AI models work. What makes them tick? How to get known on these AI models. Go over some of the more popular options, because you might get people that call you or book an appointment.

Inevitably, when you ask, "Hey, how did you hear about the practice?" "Well, I found you through Claude." You're going to go, "I don't know what that means." It's going to be good to get familiarized and familiarize yourself into practice with these different types of AI models. That way, when people are inevitably finding you through them, not only will that feel good, knowing that you're being recommended by an AI search model, but it'll give you a little bit of assurance moving forward as well. Next slide, please.

Why does AI search matter? More and more patients are using AI. OpenAI reports that 40 million people turn to ChatGPT daily for healthcare questions. 47% of patients report using AI to search healthcare providers. That's nearly 50% of patients are using AI when they're searching for a healthcare provider. 89% of healthcare searches now trigger an AI Overview. I'll explain that in a second. Ultimately, you need to show up where these patients are searching, so that they can find you. In this model, you'll see at the very top, Google, still at the very top. That's not unnatural or a shock to anybody.

As you can see, through this model, you have other services like ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Claude that are quickly growing, going back from 2024 when most of these launched. Most notably with ChatGPT, it's going to continue to evolve and move forward. This is going to be the way of the future. This is the direction that people are going with a lot of our social media influence. Everybody's using AI for everything at this point. It's one of those situations where we have to evolve and adapt along with the technologies if we still plan on being successful and using internet as a resource.

AI Overview, which is really nice because what AI Overview does is it gives you a synopsis of what you're searching for or who you're searching for, the practice that you're searching for. If you're going through AI and you find a practitioner that fits the criteria, AI Overview will actually give you a synopsis of who they are as a practitioner, how long they've been in practice, who they are, what they treat, who they can help, what models do they use, what approach do they use, what style, what type of practitioner that they are. That's all important because it gives you a little bit of a sense of, "Do I want to reach out to these people?"

It gives you more influence to go one way or the other, which is fantastic. At the same time, with AI Overviews, it's going to help you eliminate the risk of working with somebody that just you know right away isn't really going to pan out. It's an overview or a synopsis of the practice. All that information comes from the internet. Nothing gets made up. They don't doctor up their own means or results. It's all based on what's on your website, what's on your professional profiles. What's listed on your Psychology Today, what's listed on your Doctor.com profile, what's listed on your WebMD profile.

This is where they're getting this information. None of it gets doctored up. None of it gets altered. What's really neat about AI is there's no way to influence this, in terms of money. With Google, you can purchase a paid ad. If you want to be at the top of Google, and you don't want to wait to organically do that, or put the work into organically moving up, guess what? You can just pay for it. You can pay for that top spot on Google, and it's been that way for 30 years, probably. With AI, there's no way to do that. There's no paid model. It's not like you can pay AI to recommend you. It has to be done naturally.

Now, will that change in the future? Maybe. It's definitely a possibility that there could be a paid model. "Hey, I want to be at the top of all AI searches," and you can pay for that placement. Presently, there's no influence that you can have in terms of throwing dollars at it for AI to consistently recommend you over another practitioner. That's all going to happen naturally, organically, through their algorithm, and through what people are searching for. Next slide, please.

Popular AI search platforms. ChatGPT is by far and away the biggest one. Think of ChatGPT as the Google of AI models. It's one of the most popular. I know Gemini was the first to become present, but they didn't adapt with Google until the 2024. ChatGPT has been around for a little bit longer. It quickly built up a lot of momentum because it was very attractive to a lot of the younger generation that really caught on to ChatGPT, especially in the tech field. A lot of people were using it to help with coding.

Most notably, it started right away with just coding, helping to build backends of foundations of servers and websites and that sort of thing. Then a lot of people started shifting to using it more as a day-to-day management tool, a scheduling agent. Think of it like a personal assistant. People were using it like a digital virtual assistant. Help take care of some of the tasks throughout the day, so on and so forth. It's by far the most popular, handling 2.5 billion queries each day, which is a pretty solid number. That's obviously not just mental health-related, but that's just overall, in general, a lot of people using ChatGPT on a daily basis.

Gemini and AI Overviews provides AI-based summaries at the top of the traditional Google search results. Gemini is the AI behind AI Overviews, though you can go to that tool directly. You can just use Gemini instead of Google, but it's basically still using Google. They integrated in 2024. Like I said before, you had the option of turning AI Gemini on and off when they first integrated it. If you never turned it off, it's now just automatically going to be included with your Google searches. You can turn it off completely. It does take up a big chunk of the real estate on a search, though.

If you like using the AI models and you want more detailed responses and more cared responses, keep it on. Read through what they say and recommend, and ultimately, it gives you the opportunity to make a more valuable decision. Some of the other ones that you probably have heard of or will hear of in the future, Perplexity is super popular right now. That one's really picking up steam over the past year. Claude is another one that a lot of people are using. You have Grok, which is definitely picking up momentum. Then you have Copilot.

Copilot is more of like a real-time personal assistant. If you guys are Marvel superhero fans, just think Iron Man, Tony Stark, and J.A.R.V.I.S., his AI assistant. It's basically those. Claude can do a little bit of that, Perplexity can do a little bit of that as well. It gets to know you a little bit more. You give it some information about your tendencies, your day-to-day schedule, how you function and organize your day, and it'll help produce and give you opportunities to save on time, help out with activities, things that you can do to reduce cost in certain avenues or alleviate some work that needs to be done.

These are some of the biggest growing AI search platforms on the market presently. Next year, we'll be talking about some other ones. This is a quickly growing cash grab for a lot of tech companies. There's going to be new ones coming in and out, very similar when Google first launched. There were hundreds of search engines. Not all of them made it through the course of time. If you remember, Yahoo was just as big as Google for a really long time. Then AOL had a search engine feature that was very, very popular late '90s into the early 2000s.

That's when I grew up. That was very, very well-known and popular there. As time progressed, Google, more or less took over the landscape and took the lion's share of most searches. Yahoo's still around, still gets used. Bing is probably one of the newer ones. Though it's Microsoft's version of Google. People are still using that. It's going to be the same type of trend with the AI. There's going to be some that stick around for a long period of time, some that come and go, and there's going to be new ones coming in and out at all times. All right, next slide, please.

In this section, how AI decides who to recommend. The factors that affect AI search recommendations. What goes into who they're recommending and why. Monitoring your online reputation to help enhance how you're being recommended, and how to optimize your practice and your website to better influence the AI models to find you, to recommend you. This is a big piece of-- It's very similar to Google. How do I get on top of Google? That's been the question for many, many years.

What's the method? What's their algorithm? What do I have to do to get at the top of Google? Which is still going to be very, very important for your practice for the foreseeable future. Now you have to start thinking of, "Well, how am I going to get to

the top of the AI models? What do I have to do? What actions can I take on my end to help influence how I'm being recommended by AI and how AI sees me as a practitioner?" Let's go ahead and move into the next slide.

Perfect. Factors that affect the AI search recommendations. AI search platforms look for two main factors when deciding which mental health professionals to recommend. You have your online review/your online presence, and then you have your website/online presence. What this means is with both AI and Google, a big chunk of what they call your quality score is what the general public perceives of your practice. The tangibles. What do they see when they type in your name? What's going to populate?

I'm not just referring to reviews in this regard, but we're referring to how you are being represented, not only through your own individual website and online presence, but all your other directories and listings. Where you are, your practice is mentioned, or you as a professional is mentioned. What criteria, what credentials, what certifications, what accomplishments, what people are going to see when they're searching. That's very, very valuable to the AI models, because their job is to present the best viable resources, the best options for people. Very similar to Google.

There's an algorithm that they use to help determine who they want to recommend. With AI and with SEO, it's a foundation that can be improved upon with very simple steps. You have to be aware of what the general public perceives of the practice. That online awareness is going to be priority one. In the mental health field, it's a little bit more difficult, as we all know. It's with Google reviews and Yelp reviews and WebMD and CareShare and Doctor.com and all these other avenues for people to mention your practice and leave remarks about the practitioner.

It's not something that can be endorsed or something that you can actively engage in full totality, but it's still something that you need to be aware of. It's a simple method in terms of how you want to orchestrate your online presence to a couple of different degrees as you have multiple situations that are going to be out of your control. Where a bad experience from somebody, most people, first thing that they're going to do is they're going to go online. They're going to blast their experience, whether it be true, factual, or not. Those are things that are going to be out of our control.

That's what we consider the nature of doing business, because what we hear a lot is, "I don't want to put myself out there, because I know that these things are going to happen, and I'm dealing with people that--" Let's be honest, in the mental health field, everybody's not exactly in the best state of mind when we're dealing with them. You're leaving yourself wide open. It's a darned if you do, darned if you don't situation.

If you're looking to continue to grow, if you see yourself doing this for several more years, it's one of those things where you really have to start paying attention to what the general public perceives of your practice, because that's how the AI models and the search engines are going to ultimately determine who to recommend. It's just the nature of the beast, unfortunately. When it comes to your website, you really have to be descriptive. Utilizing your website as a tool is probably 50% of your online presence. What it's going to do, it's going to help solidify the who's, what's, how's,

when, where's. It's answering the questions for the AI models and the search engines.

The more descriptive that you can be for the who you are and who you can treat, the better odds you're going to have to fulfill the criteria for AI, the criteria for Google. We have to be very descriptive on who you are as a professional, who you treat as a professional, what services you provide, and why you're the best option for X service. Those are all the most valuable things that we can do to help enhance and help trigger the AI models. It's ultimately a virtual commercial for you. Your website is a standalone entity. It's not something you share, like Psychology Today, with other practitioners.

It's not a profile. It's not a directory. It's your own individual presence. You help control that. You help control what the public sees. Why not spice it up? Let's literally enhance who you are as a professional. The appropriate services, detailed services, and then we ultimately want to be able to highlight why you're the best at what you do. That's going to help enhance how AI is recommending you. Now, there's going to be little tricks that we're going to go over here. Let's move to the next slide.

With monitoring your online reputation, what steps can we do to help this out? We have, create directory profiles. Show AI that you're a trusted practitioner by expanding your digital footprint with profiles like Yelp, Google Business Profile, which is very, very important, healthcare-specific directories. I mentioned a few of them before. CareShare, Healthgrades, Doctor.com. There's so many different directories that you can be a part of. Even if it is just registering for Alma or Grow or some of those other mental health-related websites, it's just exposure. You want to be able to create backlinks. It's called a footprint, a digital footprint, or a breadcrumb is commonly used.

It's a way for you to go directly from your profile to your website and vice versa. It's credibility. It's instilling confidence into somebody that's visiting your website. They see all these credentials, they see all these things you're a part of. Not even to be cheeky, but even just normal things. Some church affiliations that you may be a part of, or some not-for-profits that you help participate with, local food drives. Anything in the community that you're involved with, share that with people. Don't hide it because, once again, that's going to help establish your online reputation, your online presence. These are all little things.

All these directories are creating backlinks to your website. What happens when you bring more and more people to your website? It helps enhance your online presence. It's going to help enhance your SEO, your search engine optimization, through Google. Once you start enhancing your SEO through Google, guess what? Now it's going to help enhance your AI optimization. Same method. Every 60 to 90 days, Google scans your website. What they're looking for is brand new information. AI does the same exact thing. Every 60 to 90 days, they send what they call bots, B-O-T-S, to the website.

All they're looking for is new information. New information about who you are, what you do, who you treat. It's very, very important to ensure all that is consistent throughout your directories. These are my exact credentials, this is my exact address, this is my exact phone number, this is my exact email, ensuring that you're

having all that information. Every time that they scan these platforms, they're getting the same information that's going to help enhance your quality score. Obviously, monitoring online reviews. Show AI that you value patient feedback by continuously refining your practice operations based on what patients say in reviews.

Now, I'm not actively endorsing or asking, that's obviously a whole different territory, but we all know that people are going to do what they want to do regardless. If you have a Google Business Profile, they happen to see you, they had a great experience, people are going to feel obligated. They're going to want to go ahead and leave a review. In this field, it's a little bit more tricky. We've had webinars about this subject before, so it's a lot to manage and it's a lot harder for you than it would be like a chiropractor or a dentist or somebody that can just actively say, "Hey, here's a gift card, go fill out a Google review for me." It's not like owning a restaurant, where it's a very common thing.

It's still done. I see practices with hundreds of reviews. There's practices, solo practitioners that have almost triple digits in reviews. It can be done. It can be done safely and it can be done correctly without an active endorsing campaign, but staying on top of it is the most important thing that you can do. Just knowing what the general public perceives of the practice is step one. Then you can have a bit of a handle on when someone's like, "Oh, well, I saw this review about you," that sort of thing, and not being able to speak to it just doesn't seem all that professional. Just having an awareness of your online presence and your online-- What the general public perceives is important. Next slide, please.

How to optimize your website for AI. Building out your website creates-- What we traditionally would recommend is, create an individual service page for all of your specialties. There's two ways of going about information on your website, and both of them are right, in terms of how you're going to get recommended. What we want to do is we have to be very strategic and specific about the services that you provide. Your specialties, your areas of specialties. What does your ideal client look like? What does your ideal patient look like? What are they going to be searching for? What services do you provide that separates you from everybody else? What are your bread and butter services?

Those are the ones that you really want to focus on. What we would traditionally recommend is we want to create an individual page for said services, and be descriptive. To be blunt, we're not doing all this work for said patient that comes to your website. They're not going to read that. They don't really care. Nobody's going to go to your website to read a novel. It's not the late 2000s, where people actually did that. We want instant gratification now. It's 2026. We want bullet points. Bam, bam, bam, bam. "Okay, it checks all the boxes. Let's give them a phone call." Which is great.

I traditionally recommend dedicating half of your website to the people that are visiting your website. Bullet points, straight to the point, this is what we do. Also helps AI identify who you are. One big aspect of this is, the more descriptive and more detailed that you can be on who you are and who you treat and how you can help, they scan that information. Now they have that in their archive. When someone's looking specifically for what you do, guess what? Now you have a higher

likelihood of being recommended by the AI models because they grabbed it right off your website.

You literally talked about this exact symptom on your website. That's going to increase your likelihood by 60%. That's a huge jump just by getting the appropriate information on your website. Another way of doing this without cluttering up your website is starting a blog. Yes, the blog word. Big back 10, 15 years ago, everyone said, "Hey, do you want to be on Google? Yes, you got to have a blog." Then that disappeared for a long time. It's starting to make a comeback, because what we mentioned earlier, 60 to 90 days, they're going to crawl your website.

If they have no new information, guess what? [beeps] Moving right on. Nobody controls it other than Google and the AI models. We don't know when it happens, but we know it does happen traditionally every 60 to 90 days. It's not even asking every month. It used to be, "Three, four times a month, let's start a blog, let's update our website." Nobody's got time for that. We barely have time for that at TherapySites. I can't imagine a practitioner trying to run their business, trying to treat their patients, and then, "Hey, I got to write a blog on my website." It doesn't happen.

Ultimately, what we want to do is you can start a blog once every quarter, a hot topic, something that you're really passionate about, get it on the blog. Then you can add other resources that show you're credible, links and affiliates, accreditations, certifications that you got, all that's important to get on the website. Use skimmable formatting. This is going to be perfect for the searcher, using bullet points. FAQs is very, very big. I know the AI models specifically love FAQ sections.

Start thinking about some of the FAQs, the most frequently asked questions, that get asked to you during that first session, or that first consultation, that first phone call. What are some of the more popular questions? If we can get those on your website, when someone asks those questions on ChatGPT, guess what? Boom. They have that information from your website. Once again, you have that opportunity to be recommended because you answered that question through your website. Short paragraphs to break up your content so it's in digestible pieces and easy for AI to read.

Once again, it's a fine line between writing a huge book on your website and getting the important elements of each service on there. Equally important, but we also, at the same time, it's you don't want to clutter your website with a ton of information, a ton of content. It'll help you in the long run, but at the same time, it just creates a bad user experience. You want to find that happy medium in between them both. Next slide, please.

Keep your content fresh. 60 to 90 days, like I mentioned before, is usually going to be that sweet spot. Optimize for technical SEO. Make sure your website's fast loading pages. You don't have 50,000 videos on there, so if someone gets to their website, it doesn't load up. You want to make sure it operates on a cell phone. 60% to 80% of the people that are going to be visiting your website, they're going to be on a phone. It's going to be very important that it loads up on a phone. The buttons work on a phone.

They can navigate and scroll your website on a phone. If they have a bad user experience there, guess what? They're just going to go somewhere else. An example I always use is, for me, every time I go to a restaurant's website that I've never been to before, there's always a button. The menu doesn't pop up, something doesn't work, and it's just frustrating. Don't have that bad experience. Make sure your website's populating while on a phone.

Track AI visibility. Monitor which of your pages are getting cited by AI responses. You can test that yourself. You can literally go to AI, ChatGPT, type in some information that you found on one of your pages of your website to see if ChatGPT picks it up. Pretty cool tool. You can see where you're at on ChatGPT. Are you one of those four or five options, if you're looking-- Do that yourself. It's a great tool to use. Next slide, please.

Pretty much in conclusion, patients find mental health professionals in two different ways. Your traditional search and your AI search. Patients are tuning to AI search platforms more and more, especially ChatGPT, Gemini, AI Overviews, et cetera. Maintaining accurate directory information, monitoring your practice's online presence, and keeping your website current improves your visibility to all AI search platforms. Next slide.

I know we're going to be going into some Q&A here really quick. First, anytime we do one of these presentations, it's usually a ton of information. It's really hard to get it all out on a one hour platform. It can be daunting. I just scratched the surface of how AI works. I just tried to get you the main bullet points that you can do at home to focus on. There's far more technical elements out there that really need to help fine-tune and enhance the way that you're being recommended. This is hard. You're trying to run a business. You're trying to help people.

The last thing you want to do is probably spend an hour or two a day tinkering with a website, or tinkering with AI, tinkering with SEO, figuring out where you are and how to enhance it. At TherapySites, we try to take that work off of the practice's shoulders. If this is something you've been struggling with, something that you just cannot seem to help enhance your online presence, you can't use the internet as a resource, it's harder and harder to get new people coming in who are using the internet as a resource, why not let somebody else do that for you? Your patients should be your priority, not managing your online presence.

There's a little QR code here. If you guys decide that you want to talk to somebody about your current strategy, and what you're looking to accomplish, or just pass this off on a professional presence, by all means, go ahead and scan the QR code. That should get you to me directly. That is my phone number on the bottom. If you just want to talk, have questions, don't hesitate. We're not asking you to be a TherapySites subscriber in any way, shape, or form. It's more or less just here to help you out. Don't hesitate to scan the QR code. Give me a call or text. I'll do my best to get back to everybody. Let's go ahead and get to the next slide, please.

All right. I know you guys have been dropping some Q&A questions here at the bottom. I'm going to go ahead and get to some of those. See if I can get this to pull back up. Okay. How can AI help send private pay patients to me? Well, with that in particular, it's really hard to help enhance how to receive direct private pay. What you

have to do is you have to be very descriptive on your website, and indicate that this is the only option. You don't want to use any influences of insurances or anything like that. In full actuality, how that's going to help is someone's going to go-- They're going to utilize chat, and that's going to be one of their criteria.

They're either going to be looking to utilize said insurances, or they're going to be looking not to utilize said insurances. What I'm traditionally going to recommend is, you don't want to have any instances of insurances throughout any of your directories or profiles. You don't want to have any instances of insurances on your website. It's almost like a complete scrub. Very dangerous to do, because you're eliminating yourself from a lot of people that are searching, because they may strictly be relying on utilizing insurance handling through to get treatment.

At the end of the day, if that is exactly what you want, if that's the only people you're looking to treat, that's what you really have to do, is scrub the internet of any instances of insurances and make it very aware on your online presence profile, your Google Business Profile, so on and so forth, that you work strictly private pay individuals. All right, let's see here. Well, how much percentage of people still use traditional search? Majority. 70% of people are still using traditional searches.

It's not going away. It's just going to be shared. As AI starts to evolve and change over time, more and more people are going to start using AI. That doesn't mean Google is going to go away. They have Gemini for a reason. They knew they had to hop on that train. That traditional Google searches were going to be a thing of the past, so they themselves have an AI model. Let's see. I answered that. Answered that. Let's see. How and what info does ChatGPT gather about each counselor? Where does it get it from? Yes, I answered that through the presentation.

Ultimately, the AI models get this information from all resources available to them through the internet. That's not just your website, but it would be maybe a hospital affiliate that you're a part of, any directories that you're a part of, any groups that you potentially worked with before. That's essentially where they're getting this information. They're using the full scope of the internet to help determine who you are and what you do.

Should I tell potential clients to find me through AI instead of Google? No. Love and marriage. You can't have one without the other. If you have a strong Google presence, there's a higher likelihood that you're going to have a strong AI presence. If they're finding you through AI, that is the chef's kiss. You're doing the right things. You are only going to progress at that. Be more viable as technology evolves and progresses. Yes, I wouldn't say one or the other. Most people are still going to find you through a Google search. In the next five years, I'll probably be saying something different.

Let's see. This answers the same question. Is there an equivalent process for SEO in AI? With AI, there's a thing called AIO, artificial intelligence optimization, just like SEO, which is search engine optimization. It's the same algorithm. They still use the same methods that a traditional search would to help them provide responses. It's just built out a little bit differently. You can get pretty technical when it comes to their specific algorithm. It'd probably be a bad idea to try to get into that through a

webinar, because there's going to be a lot of terminology that I just scratched the surface on in most cases. Yes, it's called AIO, artificial intelligence optimization.

For us specifically through TherapySites, it became a pretty viable force early part of 2025 going into 2026. It's something that we've been really on top of, and that you really have to in the tech field. How to get yourself on more consistently through the AI models. AIO is very, very similar and consistent with SEO, but I can assure you having a strong AI presence doesn't necessarily mean you're going to have a strong SEO presence, but having a strong SEO presence means you will have a strong AIO presence.

How do I increase traffic to my website and Google listing? That, you're probably going to want to be more focused on search engine optimization if you're looking for direct traffic on a more consistent means. Updating your website consistently, new information on at least a quarterly basis, monitor your online reputation. Those are all big pieces of probably 60% of your quality score. The more organic traffic that you can bring to your website, the better. Having those directories and backlinks is fantastic. Make sure you have a link to your website in your signature of your email. That's also very important. Direct friends and family members to your website.

Natural, organic, self-brought traffic to your website does help overall. It's a fraction, but at the end of the day, it still helps bring in more traffic and something that Google is going to recognize. That is all the time right now we have. Sorry, there's about seven other questions I see in here that I want to get to. If I didn't get a chance to answer your question, shoot me a text, give me a call, I'll be more than happy to do so. I know we have to wrap up here. Thank you so very much. I greatly, greatly appreciate it. It's always a pleasure, always a blast. Hopefully, I didn't confuse anybody too badly. Thank you. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you so much for joining us, Mario. Thank you to all our listeners for your participation. We'd also like to thank TherapySites for making this webinar possible. A recording of this presentation will be emailed to everyone in two weeks time. The recording will include the presentation slides. As soon as the webinar has ended, a short survey will appear on your screen. Please take the survey and give us your feedback. We thank you for your attention and hope you have a great day.