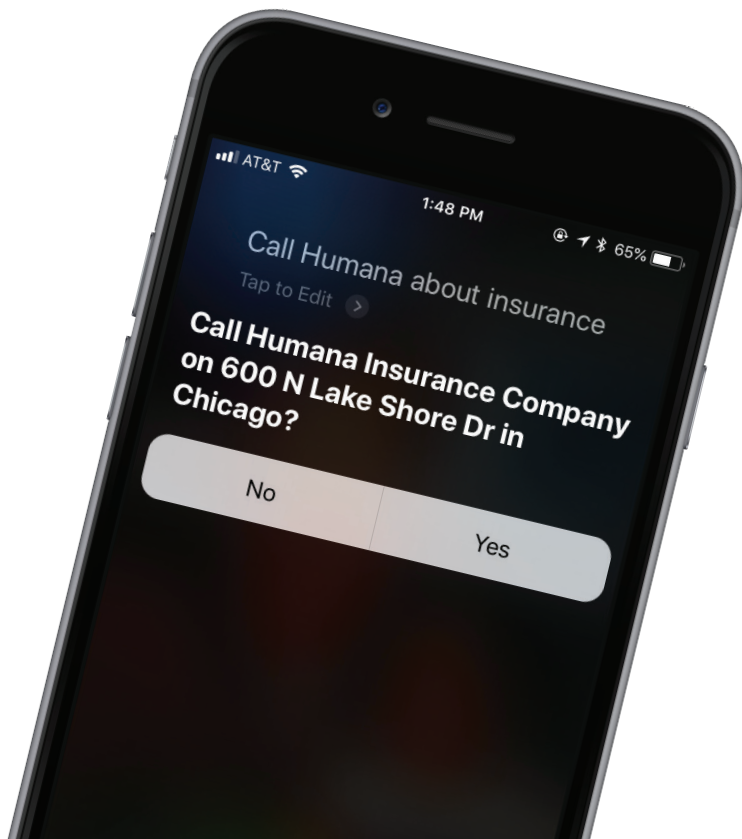


# THE DIGITAL MARKETER'S GUIDE TO VOICE SEARCH

# THE VOICE SEARCH REVOLUTION IS CALLING



Voice search is dramatically altering the customer journey. People of all ages are utilizing voice search in growing numbers to perform search engine queries, find local businesses, make purchase decisions, and more.

Experts project that the adoption of voice technology will increase exponentially in the coming years. In fact, comScore predicts that by 2020, 50% of all searches will be voice searches. Additionally, PwC predicts that, as the technology becomes more sophisticated, consumers will begin to entrust their voice-enabled devices with complex purchases like clothing and travel reservations.

And when consumers search for local businesses with their voices, they usually engage with those businesses by calling: studies show that 28% of people who perform a local voice search go on to call the business. Calls are the most popular next action following a voice search.

Marketers who are proactive about optimizing for voice search and call conversions will have a major advantage over their competitors. However, when surveyed two-thirds of marketers said they do not have a concrete plan for voice search.

To monetize the voice search revolution, digital marketers should take steps to optimize their site for voice search. They should also capture the right analytics on calls to their locations for the marketing insights to generate more callers that convert to customers.

This eBook will break down the current state of voice search technology, provide future projections, and explain the marketing best practices to drive more calls and customers from voice search.

*Sources: comScore, PwC, BrightLocal, BrightEdge*



# WHAT IS VOICE SEARCH?

# 1 | WHAT IS VOICE SEARCH?

Voice search is a speech recognition technology—it allows users to perform a search by saying the terms out loud, rather than typing them in a search field. Voice search can be used for the following tasks:

- Making search engine queries
- Launching programs
- Selecting options
- Searching for content or files
- Requesting specific information such as the weather or a sports score


This technology became mainstream in 2008 when Google launched its voice search app for mobile devices. Apple followed suit in 2011 with Siri, its voice-enabled assistant for the iPhone. Since then, a host of companies have launched similar assistants—Amazon’s Alexa, Microsoft’s Cortana, and Google Assistant.

Voice queries are more conversational in nature than web searches. Rather than simply prompting “weather,” users are asking questions like “do I need an umbrella today?” Almost 70% of requests to the Google Assistant are expressed in natural language, and not the typical keywords people type into a web search. This has already begun to increase the importance of “long-tail” keywords—search terms or phrases that are longer than the typical search query (for example: “best live chat support software,” rather than “support chat”).

## Voice queries are becoming more conversational in nature





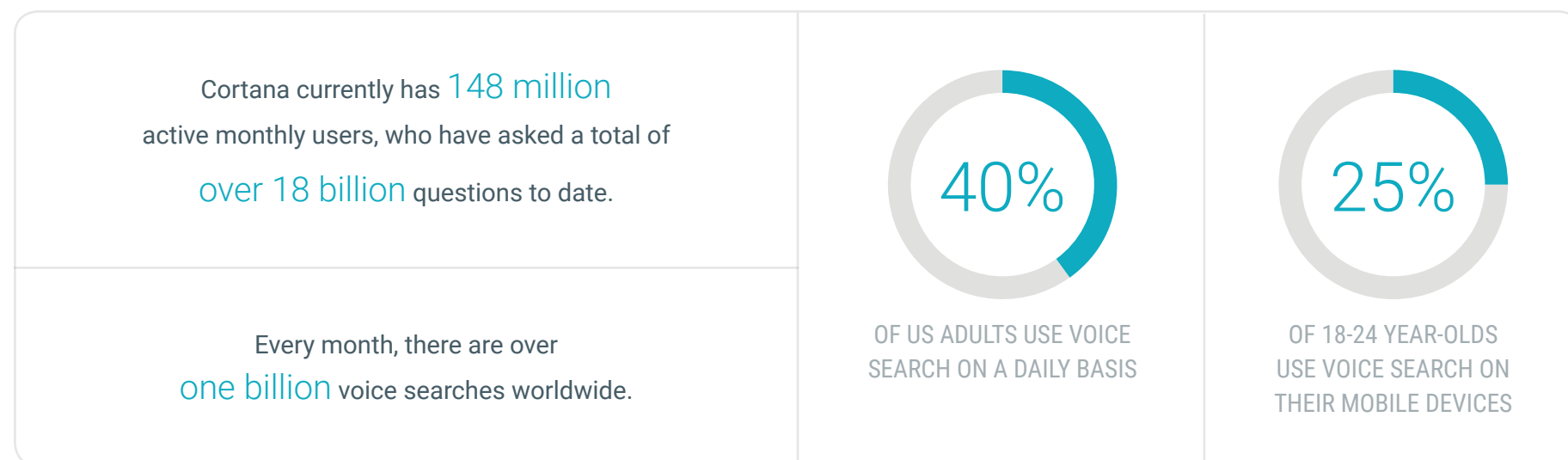


# **THE STATE OF VOICE SEARCH ADOPTION**

## 2 | THE STATE OF VOICE SEARCH ADOPTION

### Voice Search Adoption

Below are some quick stats to illustrate the prevalence of voice search:



In 2016, 20% of all searches were conducted via voice—this figure is expected to rise to 50% in 2020. Voice search usage is increasing at an exponential rate, and a slew of major technology companies are investing in its growth. The competition for search keywords will heat up, since voice-enabled devices only read the first result to the user, unless prompted otherwise.

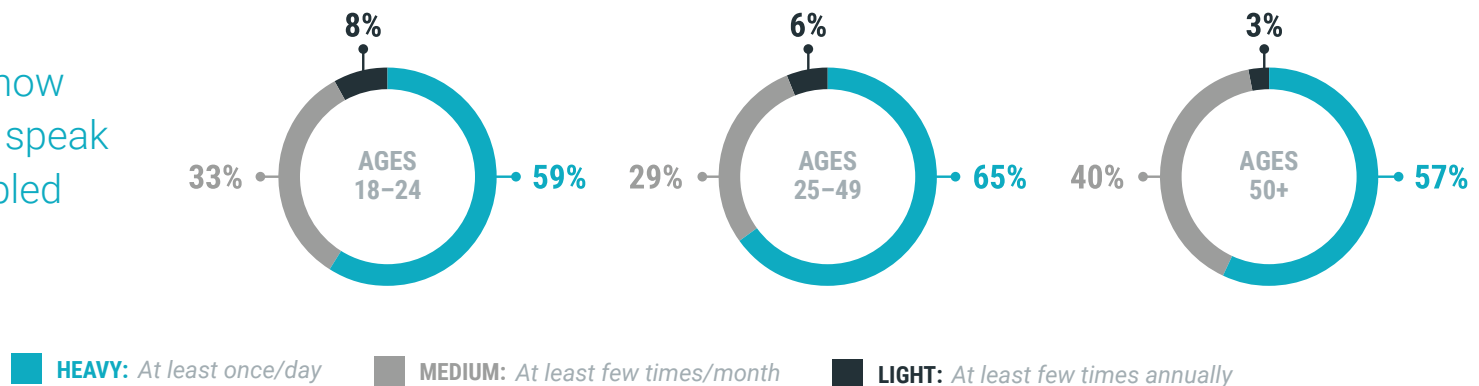
## 2 | THE STATE OF VOICE SEARCH ADOPTION

### Voice Search Adoption by Age

Contrary to popular belief, 18- to 24-year-olds are not the heaviest voice search users (though one could definitely credit them for helping to drive adoption). Surprisingly, 25 to 49 year-olds lead the pack in voice search usage—65% of users in this demographic talk to their devices on a daily basis, 29% do so a few times a month, and 6% do so a few times annually. The oldest demographic—50 year-olds and above—use their devices almost as frequently as 18 to 24 year-olds.

#### QUESTION:

On average, how often do you speak to voice-enabled devices?





## 2 | THE STATE OF VOICE SEARCH ADOPTION

### Voice Search Adoption by Device

In a recent survey conducted by PwC, 90% of respondents stated that they had basic familiarity with voice-enabled devices. Below are the most common products users engage with voice search:

#### QUESTION:

Have you spoken to or issued commands to any of the following technology devices?



57%

SMARTPHONE



29%

TABLET



29%

LAPTOP



29%

DESKTOP



27%

SPEAKER



21%

TV REMOTE



20%

CAR NAVIGATION



14%

WEARABLE

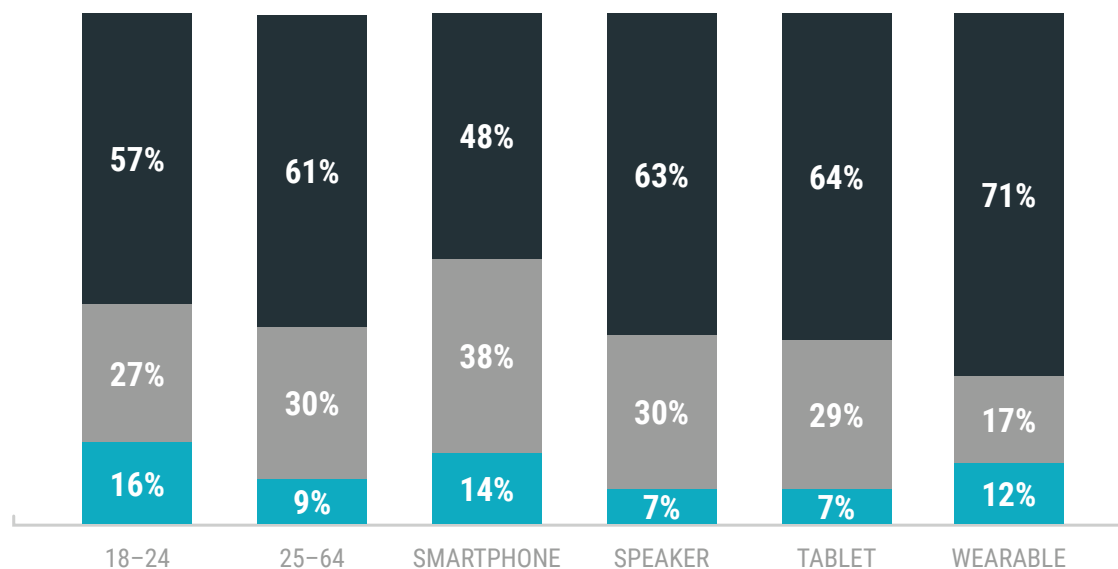
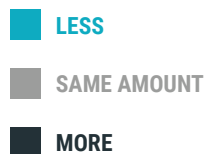
## 2 | THE STATE OF VOICE SEARCH ADOPTION

It's not surprising that people tend to use voice commands most on their smartphones, since this was one of the first devices to incorporate this technology. Smart speakers like Amazon Echo and Google Home are lagging behind for now—but TechCrunch predicts these devices will be in 55% of American homes by 2022.

Over half of all surveyed 18-24 year-olds and 25-64 year-olds expect their voice search usage to increase in the coming years. The vast majority of consumers also expect their voice usage to increase across every device—smartphones, speakers, tablets, and wearables.

### QUESTION:

How often will you use your voice devices in the future?





# **HOW VOICE SEARCHES DRIVE PURCHASES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES**



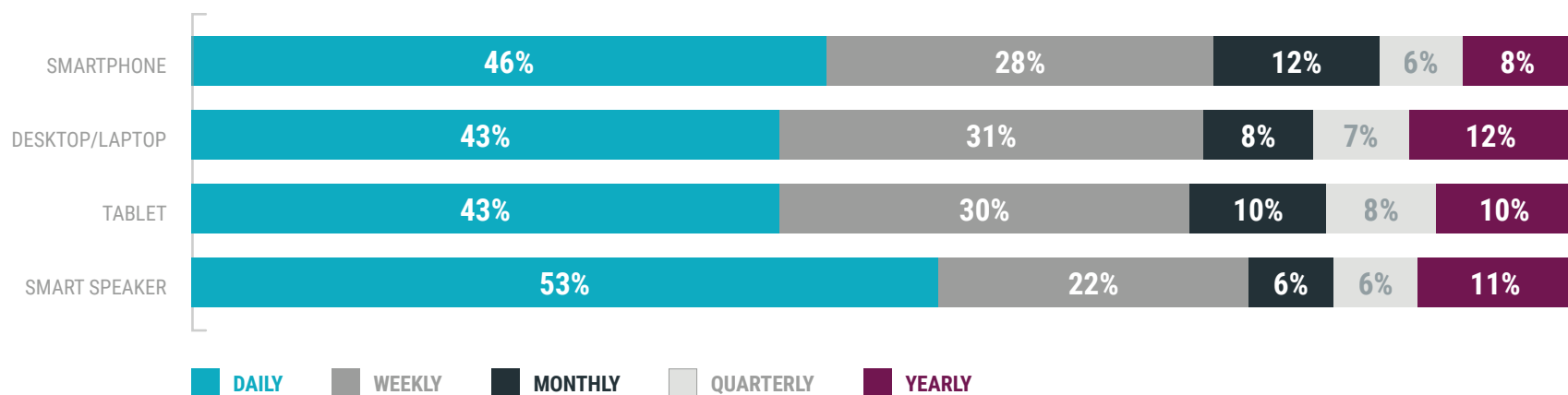
### 3 | HOW VOICE SEARCHES DRIVE PURCHASES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

## The Prevalence of Local Voice Searches

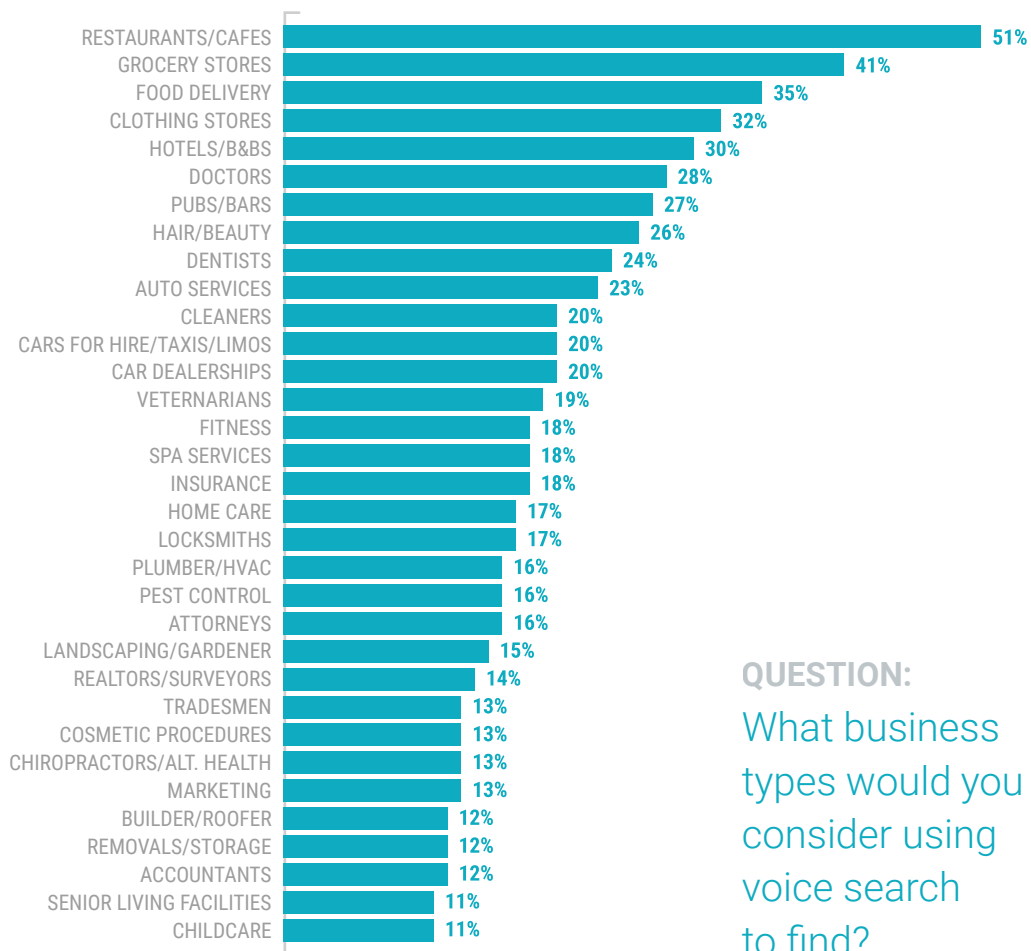
Voice searches are three times more likely to be local-based than text searches. In the past year, over 40% of smartphone, desktop, tablet, and smart speaker users performed local voice searches on a daily basis.

#### QUESTION:

How frequently do you use voice search to find information on local businesses?



### 3 | HOW VOICE SEARCHES DRIVE PURCHASES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES



**QUESTION:**  
What business types would you consider using voice search to find?

### The Types of Local Businesses Voice Searchers Are Looking For

Consumers are most likely to use voice search to find local businesses with less considered services—restaurants, grocery stores, food delivery, and clothing services. However, a significant percentage are using voice search to investigate more considered services, including childcare services, roofers, accountants, senior living facilities, etc. No matter the type of business, organizations risk missing out on customers if they aren't showing up in local voice searches.

Source: BrightLocal

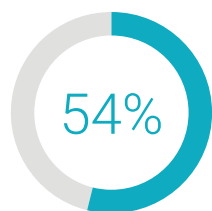
### 3 | HOW VOICE SEARCHES DRIVE PURCHASES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

#### Voice Search Intent for Local Businesses

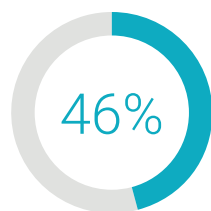
Researching businesses and booking restaurant reservations are the most common reasons consumers engage in a voice search for a local business. For now, users prefer to use voice search to accelerate low-risk activities they engage in regularly. However, a significant portion of people still use voice search to perform high-cost, low-frequency actions like making appointments.

##### QUESTION:

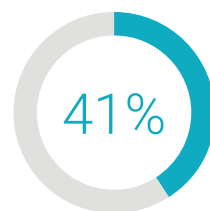
In which circumstances would you like to use voice search for local businesses?



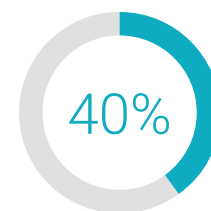
TO MAKE A  
RESTAURANT/  
PUB/BAR RESERVATION



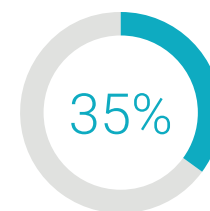
TO FIND OUT PRICES OF  
A LOCAL BUSINESS'S  
PRODUCTS/SERVICES



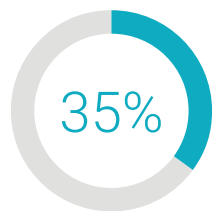
TO FIND OUT WHICH PRODUCTS  
OR SERVICES A LOCAL  
BUSINESS SELLS OR OFFERS



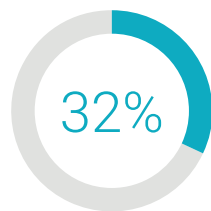
TO FIND OUT WHICH  
PRODUCTS A LOCAL  
BUSINESS HAS IN STOCK



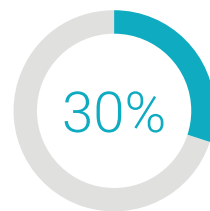
TO BOOK A BEAUTY  
APPOINTMENT



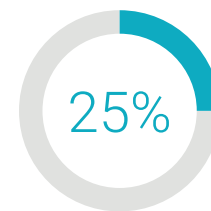
TO BOOK A MEDICAL  
APPOINTMENT



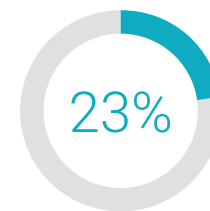
TO BUY DIRECTLY  
FROM A BUSINESS



TO SPEAK TO A MEDICAL  
PROFESSIONAL



TO RESERVE A  
PRODUCT



TO GET A TRADESMAN  
TO COME TO YOU



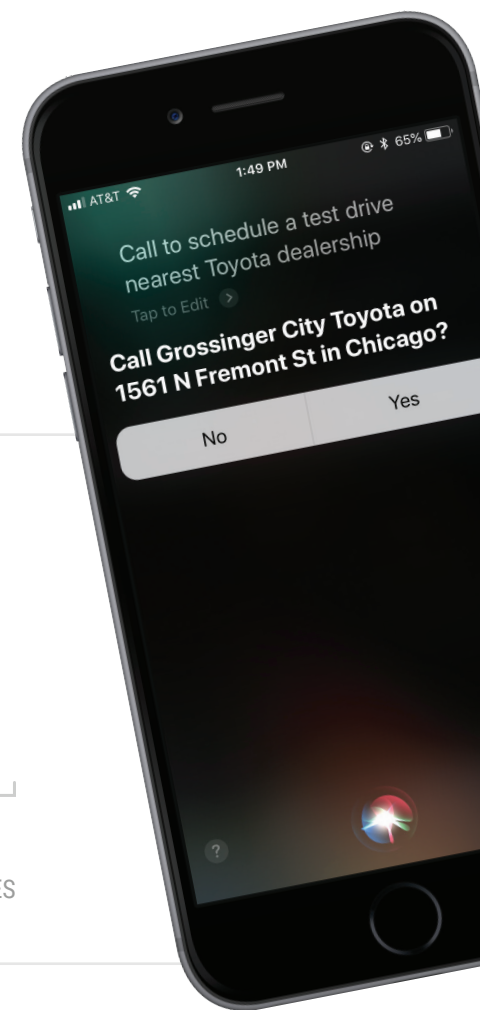
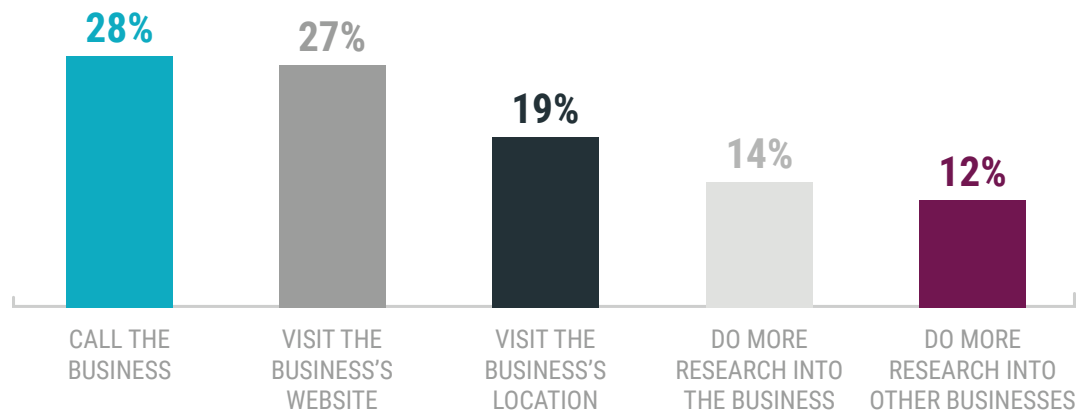
### 3 | HOW VOICE SEARCHES DRIVE PURCHASES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

#### Consumers Call After Voice Searches

The most common action users take after performing a voice search is calling the business. The seamless transition from voice search to phone call—whether on a smartphone or smart speaker—makes this option especially desirable. It makes sense that someone using their voice to search would want to use their voice to engage with a business. Additionally, many users place voice searches while they are preoccupied and unable to type—placing a call is the natural next step for these multitaskers.

##### QUESTION:

What is the typical next step you take after making a voice search for a local business?

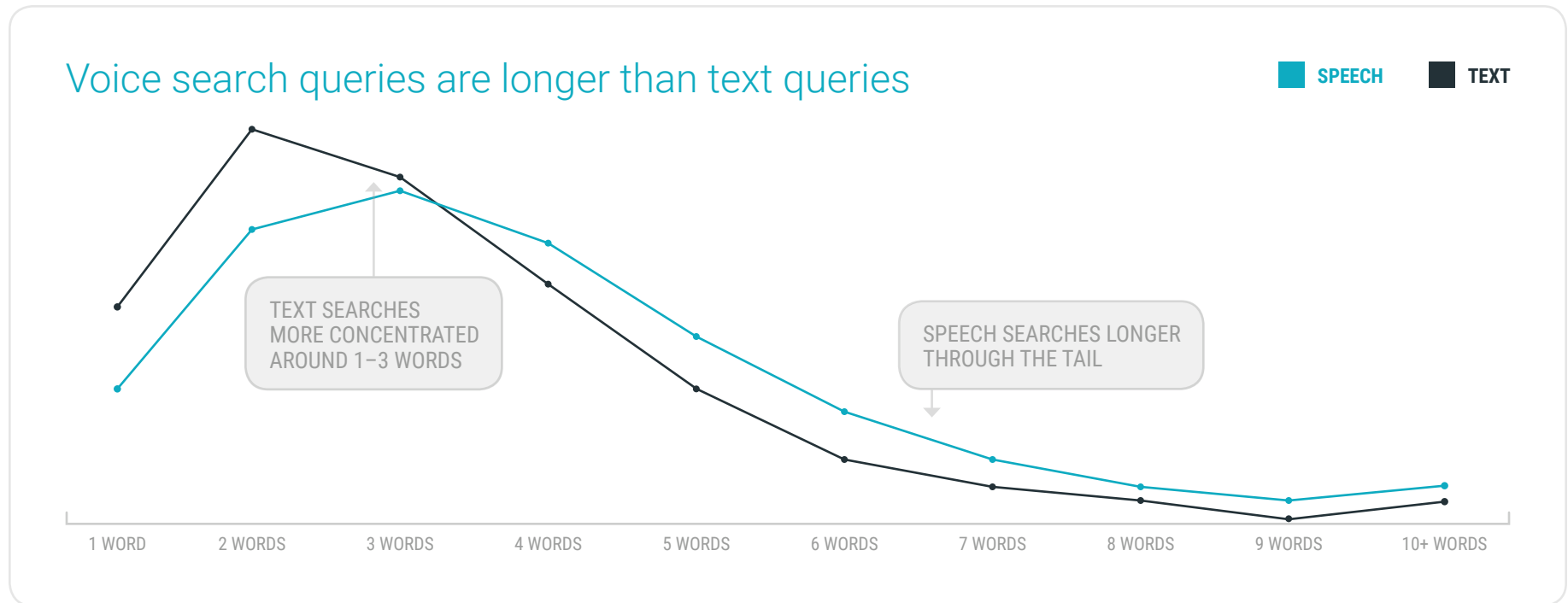


# HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

### 1. Optimize Your Content for Long-Tail Keywords and Queries

Due to the conversational way users address their voice-enabled devices, the average voice search query is 3 to 5 words longer than the average text query:



Source: Bing



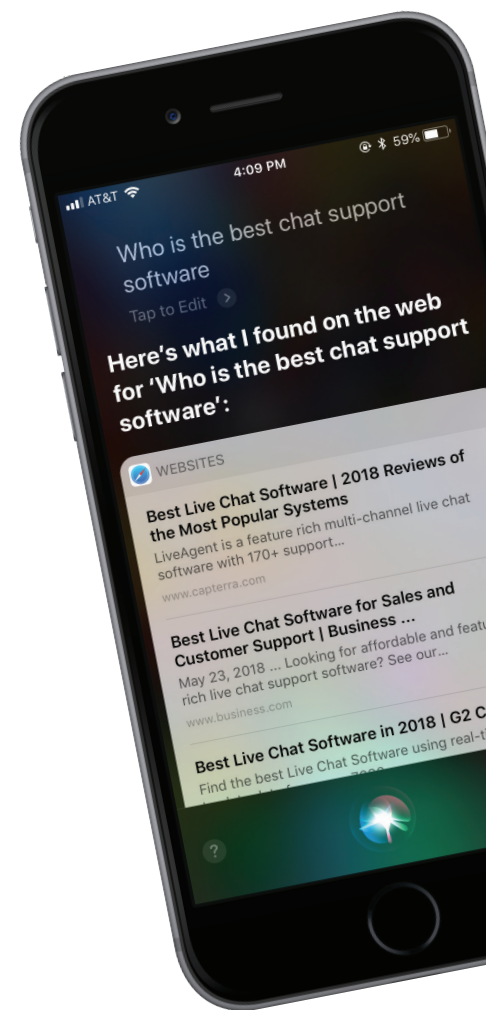
## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

TRIGGER WORDS	COUNT	% OF TOTAL
how	658,976	8.64%
what	382,224	5.01%
best	200,206	2.63%
the	75,025	0.98%
is	53,496	0.70%
where	43,178	0.57%
can	42,757	0.56%
top	42,277	0.55%
easy	31,178	0.41%
when	27,571	0.36%
why	25,980	0.34%
who	24,930	0.33%
new	24,779	0.33%
recipe	22,967	0.30%
good	22,807	0.30%
homes	21,132	0.28%
make	19,774	0.26%
does	19,449	0.26%
define	19,375	0.25%
free	18,315	0.24%
i	18,245	0.24%
list	17,136	0.22%
home	17,118	0.22%
types	16,575	0.22%
do	16,448	0.22%

This means when you write website content, you should include the long-tail keywords and phrases you find with your keyword research tools. Additionally, you should consider bidding on long-tail keywords for paid search—e.g. “best live chat support software,” rather than “support chat.” For now, long-tail keywords are less expensive and less competitive than traditional keywords, however that will change as voice search continues to become more prevalent.

In addition to long-tail keywords, voice searches also tend to contain more question-oriented words like “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” “how,” “can,” “top” and “best.” To further optimize your content, include these words as well as common questions users are asking about your products (more on this later).

Sources: Search Engine Land, SEOClarity



## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

### 2. Adhere to SEO Best Practices

Though voice search keywords and queries differ from traditional text searches, the same underlying SEO principles apply. In order to rank high in voice search, you should do the following:



Ensure your website loads in 3 seconds or less



Build a solid site hierarchy



Create intuitive navigation



Establish site authority with credible backlinks



Make an XML sitemap



Include alt tags for all images



Create quality content that answers people's questions and solves problems



Write in concise, natural language designed to answer user questions



Secure your website by installing an SSL certification



Design your website responsively for mobile device compliance



Use schema markup so search engines can quickly identify the contents of your website

## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

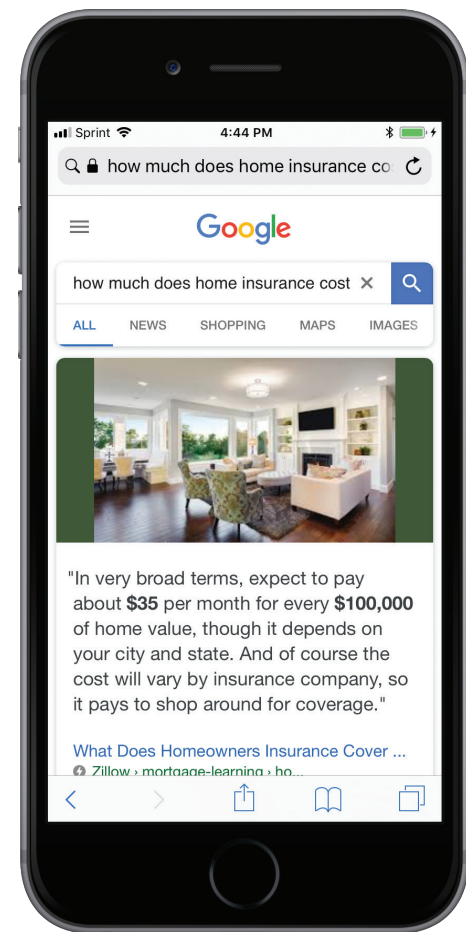
### 3. Optimize for Featured Snippets

If you organically rank in the top 10 for a Google search term, your content has a chance to become a “featured snippet” (shown to the right).

Featured snippets are the most coveted placement for voice search marketing—Google Assistant will read them aloud automatically when the user asks the corresponding question. Below are some tips to help your chances of securing a featured snippet:

1. Understand common questions your audience is asking (more on this later).
2. Aim to answer questions concisely. The average featured snippet is 45 words (the max is 97 words).
3. Address numerous questions in one post. Once Google features a page, it's likely to be featured in similar queries—this strategy will increase your chances.
4. Tightly organize your content. Google snippets frequently feature tables and step-by-step lists.
5. Use question-and-answer pages. A Q&A page can be a great place for you to write a wide variety of content that addresses your audience's common search queries.
6. Use eye-catching images. Google frequently includes images in featured snippets. However, keep in mind that all images are automatically dated in WordPress. Since Google prefers recent content, it's important to update the images in your old posts.

Source: Moz



## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

### 4. Optimize for Local Searches

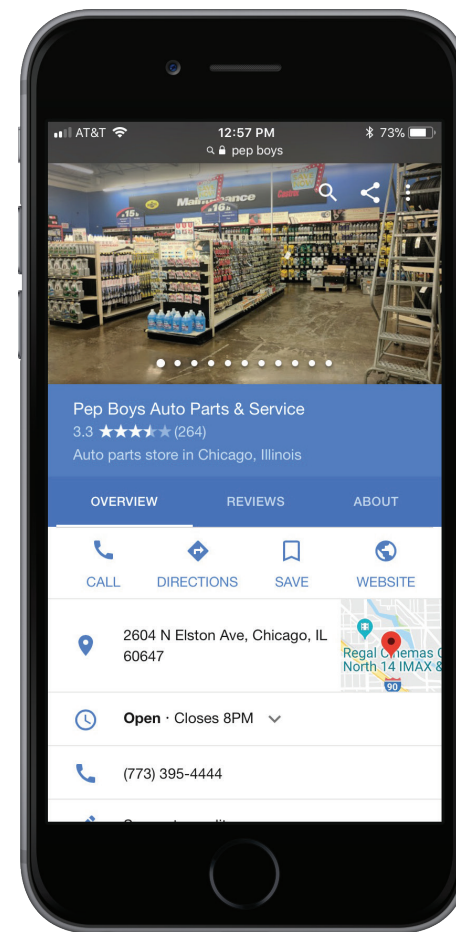
As voice searches continue to become more localized, it's important to cater to local customers by:

1. Providing easily accessible phone numbers and addresses.
2. Updating your Google business listing. Since voice search is often used as a hands-free alternative for on-the-go customers, you should assume many will scan the Google business listings without actually clicking your site link.
3. Ensuring your company has positive reviews on Google and other common third-party review sites. One bad Yelp review can cost your business 30 potential customers, while a bad review on Google search results can cost you 70% of potential customers.
4. Adding “near me” in the title tags, meta description, and anchor text.

### 5. Embrace Branding

Each voice search only returns the top result to the user's query, unless prompted otherwise. This will be especially relevant in five or so years, when Forrester estimates intelligent agents (like Siri, Alexa, and Google Home) will be executing purchases for their users. One of the top criteria that intelligent agents consider is the brand that the user prefers. For instance, if a user typically purchases Dove shampoo and they ask the intelligent agent to purchase conditioner, it would likely buy Dove conditioner based on that purchase history. It's important to invest in branding campaigns as voice search grows more prevalent—if your brand doesn't have great affinity with your customer base, you may be weeded out of the search results.

Source: RevLocal



## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

### 6. Mine Calls for FAQs to Revamp Your SEO

As we discussed earlier, people place longer, more conversational queries with a voice search than with a traditional keyboard search. But how can you determine the most common queries and long-tail keywords that your audience uses when speaking verbally? Perhaps the most accurate way is by collecting FAQs from what callers actually say in inbound phone calls.

Marketers are doing this now by either manually reviewing call recordings and transcriptions themselves or by automating the process using AI (artificial intelligence).

For example, Central Restaurant Products, the leading wholesale distributor of foodservice equipment, mines their calls for these insights. With inbound calls making up 56% of orders and 81% of their total revenue, they have a wealth of conversations to pull from. “We can analyze calls from a specific product’s webpage to see what questions callers are asking, then have our content team update the details on that page to answer them,” said Nathan Smith, Marketing Database Analyst at Central.

By understanding the common questions customers ask about this products, Central is:

1.

Optimizing their content for SEO so that users can discover their product more easily from search engine queries.

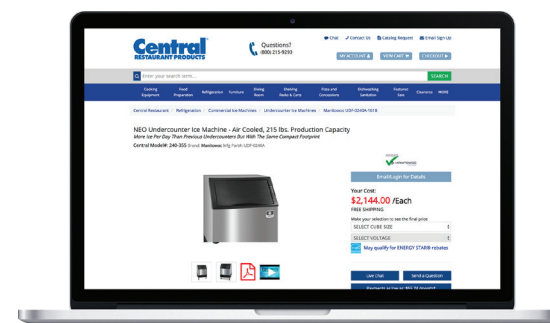
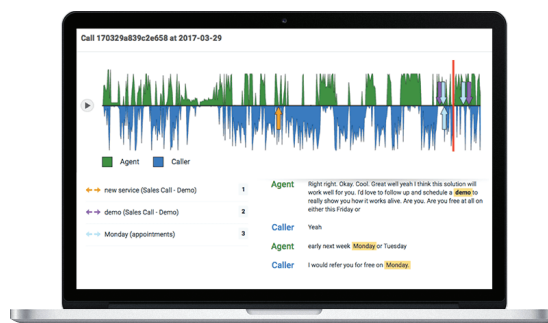
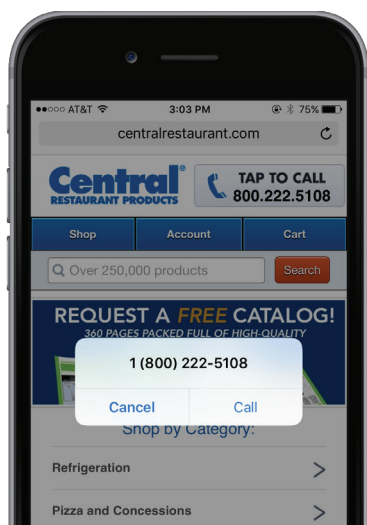
2.

Alleviating customer concerns before they place a phone call, so the sales team can focus less on education and more on driving conversions.

As a result, Central is able to create a seamless end-to-end customer experience that significantly boosts conversion rates. “We’ve increased calls by 23% and new customers by 13% year over year,” said Smith.

## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

Mine calls for insights to improve the online experience



*Central analyzes calls from a specific product's webpage to see what questions callers ask*

*They then update the details on that page to answer those questions and improve conversion rates*

Once you provide answers to the FAQs in blog posts or on your website pages, make sure to monitor your SEO ranking and optimize accordingly.

If you have a budget at your disposal, consider investing in paid search campaigns to target these FAQs. Since the FAQs were verbally generated, they'll likely contain many long-tail keywords, which are less expensive and less competitive to bid on than traditional keywords. It's important to track the clicks and phone calls these campaigns generate—and how many result in conversions (appointments, customers, revenue). You can then A/B test different long-tail keywords and manage your budget accordingly.

## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

### 7. Analyze Calls from Voice Search to Determine Next Best Actions

When consumers call your business locations, as marketers it's important to know who the caller is, if they are a quality sales lead (vs. a non-sales call), and if they converted to an appointment or customer. You can then use that data to determine how to market to them next across search, social, and display.

#### Put Callers into the Right Audience Segments



Put callers who didn't convert into **retargeting** campaigns



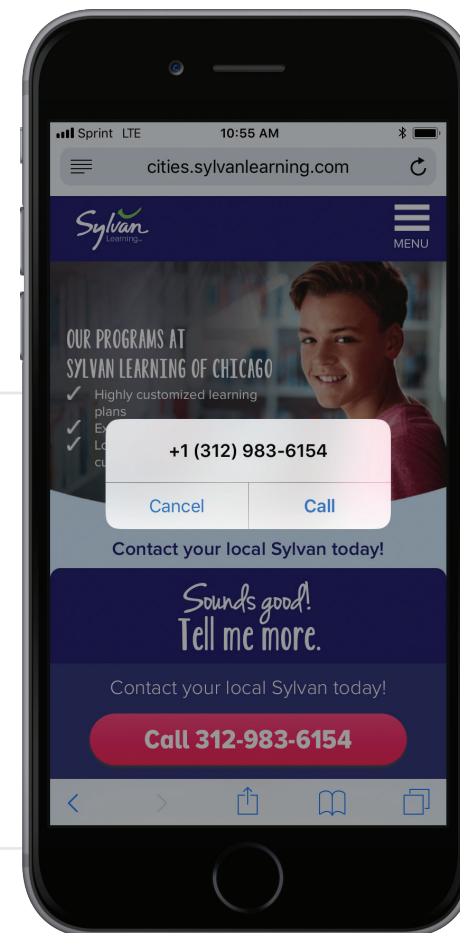
Put callers who bought products into **upsell** or **cross-sell** campaigns



Use your best callers to find more valuable **lookalike** audiences



**Suppress** callers from seeing ads that aren't relevant to them





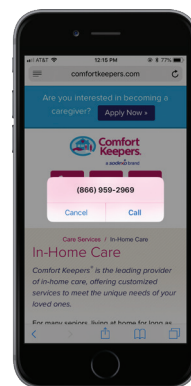
## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH

Comfort Keepers, one of the nation's leading providers of in-home care for seniors, analyzes what happens on calls to each of their 450+ franchisee locations to assess the success of their marketing efforts and determine what targeting campaigns to place each caller in. Since phone calls make up 70% of their marketing conversions, they analyze the calls they drive to each franchisee to determine lead quality. Rather than simply saying "We drove 2,000 calls this week," they're able to quantify how many of those calls are potential new customers versus current customers.

They can then determine if they should:

1. Retarget that caller with the most relevant search, social, and display ads
2. Expand their reach by using that caller to improve their lookalike campaigns
3. Exclude that callers from seeing their ads

### AI and machine learning analyzes call for intent



*AI analyzes conversations from 3,000+ calls a week to classify each one*

*Type of Call*

NEW  
CUSTOMER

CURRENT  
CUSTOMER

OTHER

*Lead Quality*

GOOD LEAD

OR

BAD LEAD

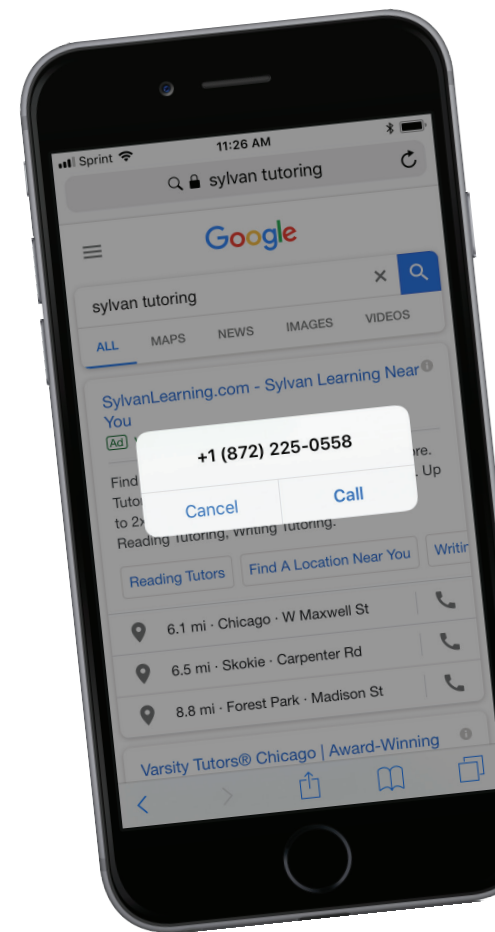
## 4 | HOW TO ACQUIRE MORE CALLS AND CUSTOMERS FROM VOICE SEARCH


### 8. Identify Which Locations Convert Callers to Customers—And Which Don't

When someone calls one of your local brick-and-mortar locations after performing a paid search, that call experience will determine whether or not they become customers. Analyzing how calls are handled at each location helps marketers detect and correct issues that negatively impact conversion rates and ROI.

You should know what percentage of calls aren't being answered at each location and which locations/agents are best (and worst) at converting callers to customers. Correcting issues with how locations and agents handle calls—and having agents call good leads back after a bad call experience—helps improve lead-to-customer conversion rates, which in turn improves the impact of your marketing on the business.

Sylvan Learning, the leading supplemental education provider for children in grades K-12, monitors what happens on the inbound calls their marketers drive to their 750 locations. If a certain brick-and-mortar location is underperforming, Sylvan will dig into the call data to look if they are seeing more calls than normal going to voicemail or if the location is failing to promote the latest national offers during the call. Sylvan can also view the lead quality of the calls to gain further insights into whether their marketing is generating the right leads. Sylvan's national marketing team can then reach out to underperforming locations and providing additional coaching, which helps increase enrollments from calls.





# **ON THE HORIZON: FUTURE INNOVATIONS IN VOICE SEARCH**

## 5 | ON THE HORIZON: FUTURE INNOVATIONS IN VOICE SEARCH

### Voice Search Radio-Style Ads

As voice search continues to grow in popularity, advertisers will begin to monetize it with digital audio advertisements. In 2017 Adobe Advertising Cloud launched automated, data-driven digital audio ad buying with TuneIn, the leading live audio streaming service with 75 million listeners and 120,000 stations. Adobe recently announced that marketers can use Adobe Advertising Cloud to deliver ads to customers who are listening to TuneIn stations on their smart speakers. Marketers will be able to buy 90-second audio ads that run twice hourly on any of TuneIn's hundreds of owned-and-operated stations. They can target these ads by station type, device, and multi-cultural segment.

For marketers, the key to mastering this channel will be the ability to target individuals based on their characteristics, preferences, and past interactions with your brand. Then being able to measure the impact of those ads on influencing conversions—both online and over the phone—similar to what marketers do now for display ads.

*Publishers will begin producing content that is specifically designed for voice-enabled devices. Intriguing voices and new ways of drawing in the user (without visuals) will bring us back to the radio glory days, but with a digital twist.*

**AdAge**

Sources: Adobe, Google



## 5 | ON THE HORIZON: FUTURE INNOVATIONS IN VOICE SEARCH

### Paid Search and Martech Integrations

In addition to radio-style ads, there is the potential for paid search ads to target voice searches. Google hasn't yet determined how this would play into its strategy, since voice searches return only the top result to the user. There is the potential to sell the top result, giving a company a 100% impression share for that search when consumers run voice searches. Another option is for devices to play the ad after the top voice search result.

But no matter how a future voice search-targeted Google Ads ad format might work, marketers investing in these ads will still need measure the keywords and ads driving conversions and customers—whether online or over the phone. This will require attribution and analytics data on calls and callers, so marketers can allocate spend, messaging, and targeting strategies for what is driving the most customers. What's more, marketers will need to integrate that call analytics data with the other tools they use for paid search—including their Google Ads/Bing account, CRM system, bid management tool, and web analytics platform.

#### Integrate Calls from Voice Searches into Your Martech Stack

##### CALL ANALYTICS



##### PAID SEARCH PLATFORMS



##### CRMs



##### OPTIMIZATION TOOLS



Adobe Experience Cloud



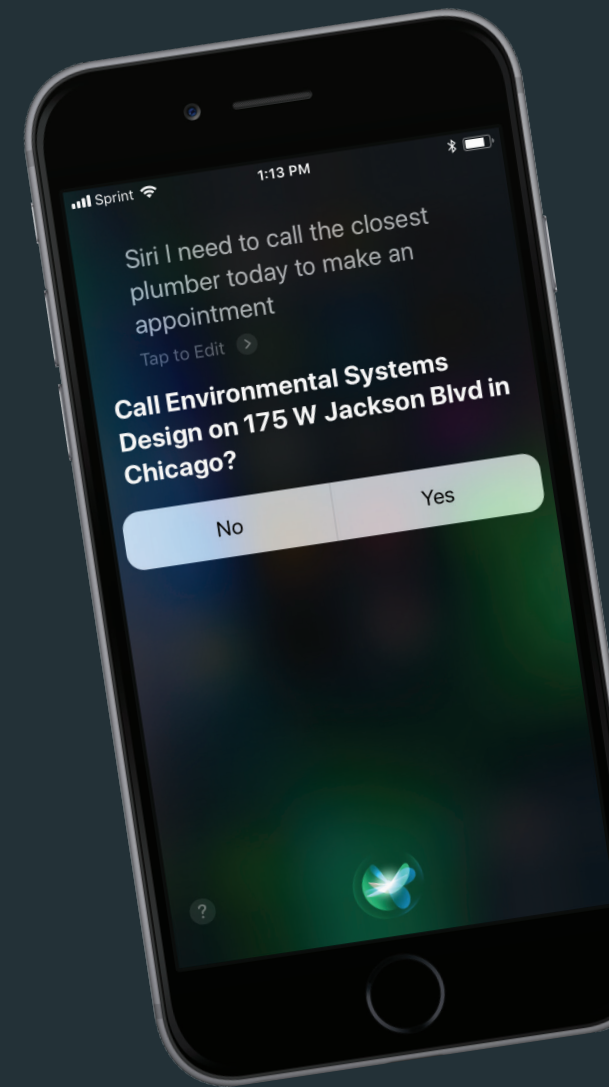
# Marketers Should Prepare for the Voice Search Revolution

Already, we're seeing a widespread adoption of voice search—40% of US adults use it on a daily basis. And experts predict that voice search queries will match traditional search queries by 2020. With nearly 30% of local voice searches resulting in an inbound call to a business, marketers should not ignore this potentially powerful avenue for revenue generation.

One of the best marketing assets in the voice search revolution is analytics on who the caller is and what happens on the call—insights that a call analytics solution can provide. Knowing the lead quality and outcome of the call enables marketers to target those callers with the right ads via search, social, and display ads. And having insight into the common questions prospects and customers ask on phone calls enables you to enhance your website content and optimize your SEO for those questions and appear in a wider range of voice searches.

Finally, once tools like Google Analytics offer statistics on voice search queries and platforms like Google Ads, Bing, and Amazon enable marketers to run voice ads to target specific voice searches, it will be important to track the calls voice searches are driving to your business locations so you can optimize for what garners the best results.

The voice revolution is coming. Experts predict it could be a game changer for brands and agencies making the right optimizations. Hopefully this guide can give you a head start.





# DialogTech Is the World Leader in AI-Driven Conversation Analytics

DialogTech is a powerful marketing analytics tool that shows you how your digital advertising, webpages, and offline marketing drive calls and customers. It works for calls from any marketing source to any store, office, call center, or agent — regardless of the phone system. DialogTech also provides tools to personalize the caller experience to help businesses convert more calls to customers.

## KEYWORD-LEVEL TRACKING

Dynamic number insertion (DNI) captures the channel, ad, and search keywords that drove each call.

## WEBSITE TRACKING

Capture each caller's complete interaction with your website, including the webpage they called from.

## CALLER PROFILE DATA

Know the caller's name, geographic location, and OS/device, if they are a new or repeat caller, and more.

## RECORDINGS & TRANSCRIPTIONS

Review and share recordings and transcriptions of every inbound call to every store, office, call center, or agent.

## CONVERSATION ANALYTICS

Filter calls by location, marketing source, spoken words, and more — drill into recordings and transcriptions for deeper analysis.

## AI & MACHINE LEARNING

Have AI analyze calls for you to measure intent, score lead quality, detect problems, and automate best actions.

## INTEGRATIONS

Pass call data to your CRM, marketing tools, digital ad platforms, and call center solutions.

## AD TARGETING

Target past callers and new audiences likely to call with the right search, social, and display ads.

## CALLER INSIGHTS

When calls come in, arm agents with marketing insights on who each caller is and why they are calling.

## IVR

Answer, assist, and qualify callers 24/7 with professional IVRs that you can build yourself without IT.

## CONTEXTUAL CALL ROUTING

Route calls based on the caller's geographic location, day and time, marketing source, caller history, and much more.

## CALL FORWARDING

Ring multiple phones at once or in any order — if no one answers, send calls to another person, group, or voicemail.

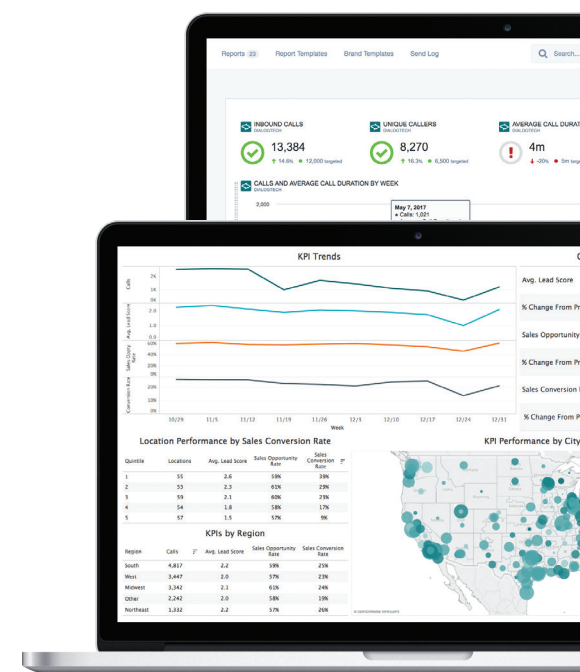
**THE WORLD'S  
BEST BRANDS USE  
DIALOGTECH**

Angie's list  **TOYOTA**

COMCAST  **Comfort Keepers.**

sears **Humana.**

Sylvan Learning  **T-Mobile**





# Next Steps

I hope you found this guide helpful as you consider optimizing your voice search strategy to generate more calls, appointments, and revenue. To stay on top of the latest news and best practices around call analytics and optimization, visit the DialogTech website at **[dialogtech.com](https://dialogtech.com)**.

If you are interested in evaluating the DialogTech call analytics solution, please call us at 866.912.8541 or schedule a call and a personal walkthrough of the platform at **[dialogtech.com/request-demo](https://dialogtech.com/request-demo)**.

## About DialogTech

DialogTech's platform provides marketers with transparency into the voice of their consumers through AI-driven conversation insights. DialogTech's analytics suite helps marketers identify key behaviors that lead to conversion events, deliver deeply personalized consumer experiences, and improve effectiveness across channels by linking every consumer activity from click to conversion and loyalty. Consistently recognized as the leader and pioneer in call analytics, DialogTech is the trusted voice management platform for leading brands and agencies. Visit [www.dialogtech.com](https://www.dialogtech.com) for more information.

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