

Consumers are vetting their doctors online via apps like Sesame Health, Google

Article

The news: Doctor search and appointment booking platform **Sesame** raised **\$27 million** in Series B funding. This round was led by GV (formerly **Google Ventures**).

How Sesame works: Consumers can search and shop for a physician on the platform. They can also read reviews, book appointments, and pay for their services in cash.

Sesame's cash-pay model sidesteps insurance. Plus, the company has its own network of 16,000+ healthcare providers. This helps Sesame keep operating margins low. For example, it doesn't have to spend on all the administrative functions traditional insurers do (like negotiating prices with providers and processing claims).

Since it doesn't have to deal with middlemen like insurers, Sesame can also be transparent about appointment prices.

- **Many consumers (51%) enrolled in high-deductible plans say they avoided care in the past year due to high cost concerns, [per](#) a 2022 HealthSparq [survey](#).**

A competitive edge: Upfront prices.

Zocdoc offers many of the same features as Sesame (like appointment booking and provider search), but it has yet to offer transparent prices to customers. That's likely because it works directly with insurers.

It's all about reviews: Besides upfront pricing, health consumers also want to vet their care teams online based on reviews from other patients.

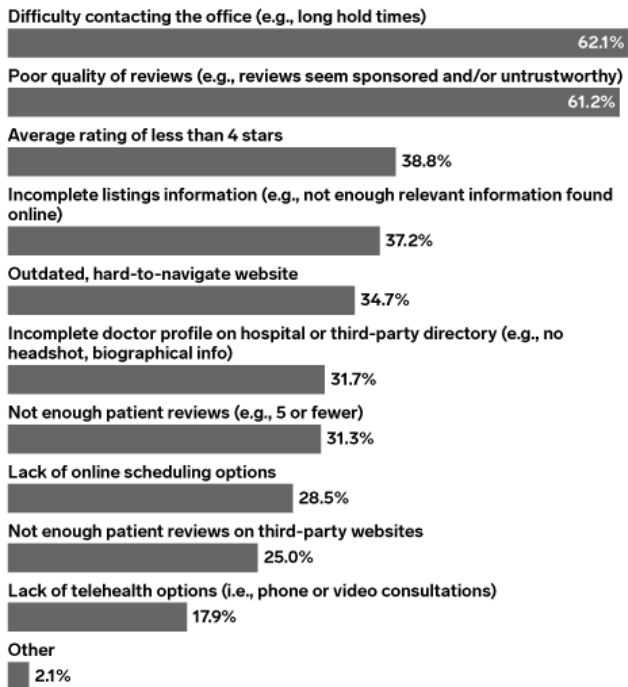
- **Most (72%) US adults view online reviews to consider booking an appointment with a new physician, [per](#) a 2022 Reputation and YouGov report.**
- **The number of stars matter, too. 72% of adults said they prefer selecting providers with four out of five stars or higher.**

New physicians or private practice doctors could grow their patient rosters based on positive online reviews on platforms like Google Reviews, Sesame, and Zocdoc.

- **It's especially important for physicians to earn positive feedback online since many consumers are no longer loyal to certain health systems or clinics.**
- **Only 30% of patients say a hospital's brand is a factor in their decision to choose a physician, [according to](#) Reputation.**

What Would Discourage US Adults From Booking an Appointment After Searching for a Healthcare Provider Online?

% of respondents, Sep 2021



Note: ages 18+
Source: Press Ganey, "Consumer Experience Trends in Healthcare 2021," Dec 1, 2021

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