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# AUDTRENDS

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## WELCOME

We hope you enjoy all the useful and valuable information in AUDTRENDS Magazine!

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# President's Corner

DECEMBER 09, 2021 (Q4)

## Are you ready for the future?

That's the question every practice owner has been asking themselves moving into a new year headlined by OTCs and online options.

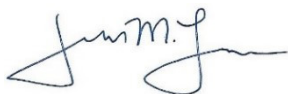
Looking back on 2021, we can see a year of transition. From coming to terms with COVID to understanding the impact of OTC legislation, the game has changed. Those who recognize and capitalize on this change will be the ones who succeed.

While no one can predict the future, there are some clear trends we see emerging. This includes greater e-commerce adoption, more accessible hearing care for patients, and AI-driven products that put the user in control. All of which adds up to one thing – a more virtual world.

As you read through this issue of AuDTrends, I challenge you to think outside the box on ways your business can make these new trends work for you. We've been. Which is why we've invested so heavily in solutions to place you in a winning position.

2022 is a new year of growth and opportunity. Are you ready to seize it?

Regards,



Joseph M. Luga  
CEO | AudiologyPlus

# AUDIOLOGYPLUS NEWS

Your  
Patients  
Want—and  
Need—to  
Know

More than ever before, your patients want—and need—to know that they can count on you for all their hearing needs. That trust comes from building and sustaining a relationship.



Renee, our Business Development Manager, was recently featured in The Hearing Review discussing this topic.

Read her article [Providing for Your Patients in a New Way, 5 Strategic Tips to Implement in Your Practice.](#)





# Digital Marketing

## 3 Keys to a Successful Online Practice in 2022

**2022 is right around the corner!** And you really should be preparing right now for the new year. There are so many big things coming for hearing professionals that you may feel overwhelmed by the potential changes. But here at AudiologyPlus, we are prepared to help you sift through the news and plan for your business needs. Here are 3 big things to be aware of and start working on now as you plan for your business in 2022:

### 1. Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids

The United States is inching closer and closer to **finally releasing over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids** to the general public. You may have mixed (or negative) feelings about this development. However, regardless of your personal or professional opinion on over-the-counter hearing aids, this is a great opportunity for your business.

It is time to start planning to offer OTC hearing aids. As a hearing professional, you should plan to incorporate OTCs into your practice and start addressing this topic online—on your website and elsewhere online, like on your social media pages. Helpful assets like FAQs and informational videos are very helpful to the patient audience. Plus, you are a professional who is making yourself available to the OTC audience. This can only grow your practice.

### 2. e-Commerce Is Key

If you think back to the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce was the be-all, end-all. Enabling customers to make their purchases online—without risking their health by going to a store or office in person—was a huge boon to businesses prepared with e-commerce options. Although the COVID pandemic may be waning (hopefully!), e-commerce will never become obsolete. In fact, business analysts are projecting that e-commerce will only continue to grow in importance.

If you want to make life easy for your patients (especially with over-the-counter hearing aids coming soon), e-commerce is a necessity. The accessibility and convenience of e-commerce for your patients will only boost their loyalty to you as a local practice.

### 3. Stand Out from the Crowd

The key to succeeding in business—both online and offline—is to show your patients how you are different from (and better than) your competitors. Brand differentiation will be crucial in 2022. As a practice owner, you should start to ask yourself what makes you different in such a competitive market.

Consider the following questions: Why should someone see you versus just buying a device from a huge retailer? What can you offer in-house that goes above and beyond? What do you provide that your local competitors do not? Reassess your goals and messaging to make sure your practice does not go unnoticed.

This can be boosted with online marketing tactics like pay-per-click (PPC) ads and other online efforts that work to target your ideal audience. Content marketing and a mobile-first experience are also key. Basically, you want to make it easy for a potential new patient to choose you and stay with you. Make your website and entire online presence appealing and professional and offer valuable information to your patients even before they come to your office.



## 3 Things to Focus on When It Comes to SEO in 2022

If you have been marketing your business online for several years now, you have seen many changes in SEO (search engine optimization). If you rewind the clock 10-15 years, the best practice was to optimize a page for a single keyword by simply using that keyword as frequently as possible—even at the risk of making your writing sound odd. Today, SEO strategies are much more advanced, and so are search engines. Looking toward 2022 and the years ahead, here are a few things to focus on when it comes to digital marketing:

### 1. Local Focus

In recent years, local SEO results have become very important. The “local pack” has become a coveted spot for Google search engine results, and searchers know they can search for businesses and services “near me.” So, when someone searches for an “audiologist near me” or “audiologist in [my city],” you want to appear in the top results.

Search engines like Google are expected to continue to place great emphasis on local results. Now, a local search brings up a Google Map with mapped search results, reviews, photos, and more. Customers rely on these types of results to help them find what they are looking for nearby, and that is not going to change.

To take advantage of what these potential new patients are looking for, you should focus on your local online presence.



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### 2. Answer the Question

Again, we have come a long way from the days of “keyword stuffing.” The aim is no longer to repeat a keyword as often as possible and hope that page would come up when people searched for that keyword online. Now, the goal is to answer the question asked by the searcher.

To do well in online search result rankings, you need to provide the best, most relevant answer to the question a searcher asks. You can do this by providing quality content that offers valuable information and seeks to truly provide the answer the searcher needs.

Google has been investing heavily in machine learning and artificial intelligence to ensure that their search results answer the question the searcher poses. If you want to do well in online searches in 2022 and moving forward, make sure you are answering the important questions. If you are not sure where to start, create a list of questions you are frequently asked about your services, products, and qualifications. Answer these questions on your website. Demonstrate that you are an expert in your field.



### 3. Seek Searcher Intent

As noted above, the key is to give the searcher what they are looking for. You need to consider who your searchers are (your audience), what they are looking for or asking about, and how you can deliver what they are looking for on your website. As we head into 2022 and beyond, it will become increasingly important to hone in on searcher intent and provide the best answer to their queries.



**By following these tips, you can get your online presence off to a strong start in 2022.**



# Audiology News

## The U.S. Food and Drug Administration Issued a Landmark Proposal Intended to Improve Access to and Reduce the Cost of Hearing Aid Technology for Millions of Americans

The agency proposed a **rule** to establish a new category of over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids. When finalized, the rule would allow hearing aids within this category to be sold directly to consumers in stores or online without a medical exam or a fitting by an audiologist. [You can read more about it here.](#)



## Should Hearing Tests Become Mandatory? The UK Thinks So.

You know how important it is for people to get their hearing tested, particularly once they are over the age of 55. But a **February 2020 study** of 2,000 UK adults found that those over the age of 55 believed they should have their hearing checked every three years, yet the average amount of time since they last had their hearing tested was nine years.

The reality—based on recommendations from audiologists and hearing professionals—is that adults over the age of 55 should have their hearing tested every year. In fact, the British and Irish Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (BIHIMA) **is calling for mandatory annual hearing tests** for adults aged 55+.

While regular hearing tests are important at all ages, they become even more important as people age. Age-related hearing loss is one of the most common conditions affecting older adults. Approximately **one in three** people in the United States between the ages of 65 and 74 has hearing loss, and **nearly half** of adults over the age of 75 have difficulty hearing. This means that as people approach the age where hearing loss commonly occurs, it is essential to have their hearing regularly tested so they can receive the treatment they need.

Some professionals believe that even 55 is too late to start annual hearing testing. Almost 30% of British and Irish audiologists surveyed by BIHIMA in **December 2020** said that they recommended adults begin annual hearing tests before the age of 55. Regular hearing tests are important because your hearing affects your daily life—including personal relationships, social life, career, and simple joys of life like listening to music or the sounds of nature. In addition, untreated hearing loss has been linked to a greater risk of other serious conditions, including **depression, social isolation and loneliness, anxiety, falls, and dementia**.

Based on the studies and work done by the British and Irish Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association, annual hearing tests over the age of 55 might become mandatory soon in the United Kingdom. Although it doesn't look like annual hearing tests will become mandatory in the United States in the immediate future, it does show that hearing loss is becoming a more recognized health concern.







# Digital Marketing

*AUDTRENDS magazine offers Audiology professionals like yourself a quarterly magazine full of information to update on all things audiology and digital marketing in the healthcare field.*

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