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Organic SEO Industry Benchmarks

An overview of organic SEO traffic & SERP trends across industry websites in 2023

Report Contents

Executive Summary

Website traffic comes varios channels, including organic, direct, paid, referral, and social. **Organic is arguably the most crucial form of traffic** since it connects the right audience—with the right search intent at the right funnel stage—to your site via SERPs and helps you answer the questions your customers are asking. It's also the only channel that produces reliable, long-term traffic. Unlike paid campaigns, there is no end date for the lifespan of a piece of content. An effective piece of keyword-based, value-driven content can continue to rank well for years.

However, identifying organic KPIs and evaluating your organic traffic's performance often poses a challenge. Industry-wide organic benchmarks are hard to come by given the wide range of fluctuation in organic traffic due to Google's algorithm updates and limited access from publishers to back-end performance analytics for hundreds of websites.

That's where Conductor comes in.

As the leading enterprise SEO platform provider, Conductor knows the value of organic traffic and the impact effective SEO has on business and revenue growth. We took on the challenge of identifying industry-specific benchmarks for organic search in 2023 to help enterprise organizations better evaluate the effectiveness of their organic SEO and learn how to adapt accordingly.

Conductor **analyzed over 600 enterprise domains** from leading brands. Each domain was **categorized into six industries** and then further broken down by subindustries to identify traffic trends, top content providers, and more at a granular level.

The following research adds a layer of industry-specific benchmark data to the information provided by integrated website analytics like Google Analytics. It also provides key context for evaluating your efforts, identifying accurate KPIs, and implementing the right strategies to drive results.

Caveats and Considerations

The data is split into six industries: finance, healthcare, retail, technology, travel & hospitality, and professional services. When deciding which industries—and corresponding subindustries—to feature, we considered a variety of factors. The industries selected were identified as top economic drivers; they are expected to drive significant revenue growth over the next 5-10 years.

The 20 subindustries selected were the most competitive sectors among the core industries listed. Certain subindustries, like car rentals, were not included due to the limited competition within the grouping (e.g., three primary parent companies owned all major car rental brands).

Additionally, department stores and online retailers like Walmart, Amazon, and Target **were excluded from the retail industry data**. This was done to provide a more accurate look at organic SEO and traffic trends for an average enterprise domain rather than skewing the data with abnormally high rates from eCommerce giants that specialize across nearly all retail departments.

The initial findings in this report on organic website traffic, branded vs. non-branded breakdowns, and average organic traffic values are **based on global website traffic data for desktop devices**. The top content providers by subindustry data and the strategic insights that can be gained from it are **based on U.S.-specific search data in Google**.

Organic benchmark data and the SEO and SERP insights data within this analysis are **based on April 2023 data sourced from Conductor and Semrush**, one of our certified platform partners.

This report is a snapshot of the SEO landscape and organic benchmarks by industry for 2023. It will be interesting to see how generative AI integration (see Google's SGE) on SERPs impacts organic traffic rates, organic visibility, and top content providers moving forward.

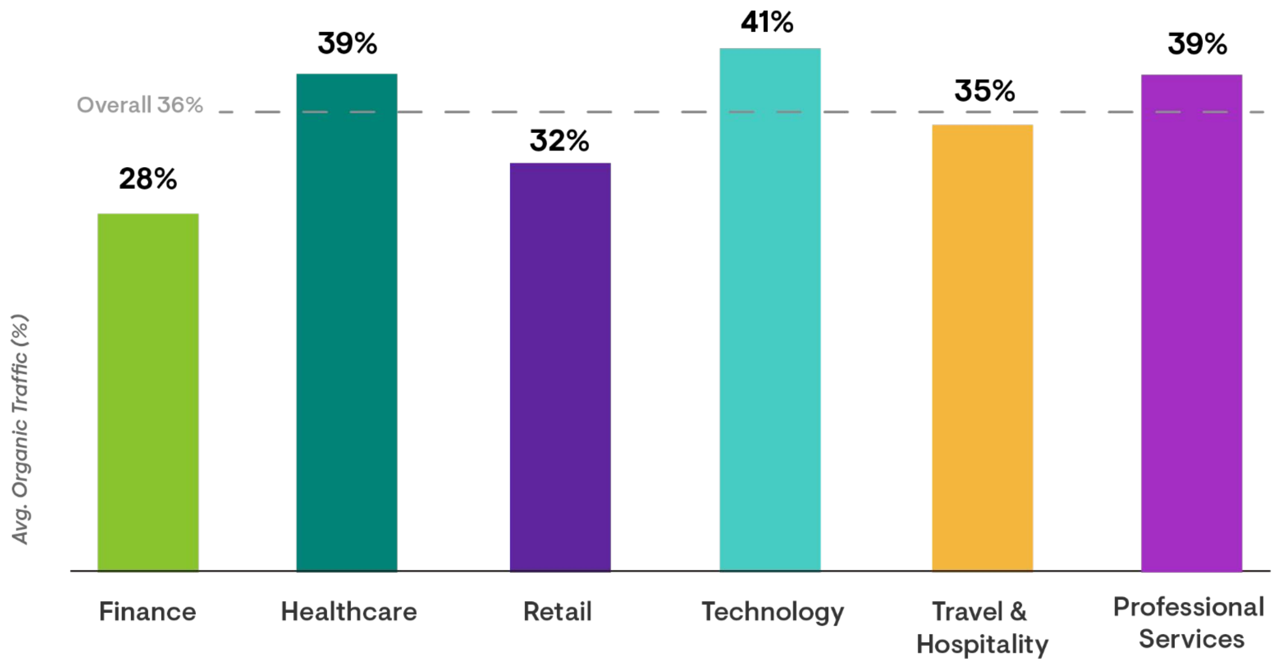
Stay tuned for our 2024 report in 12 months to see how this data evolves with the advancement of AI.

Global Analysis

Organic Traffic Overview

On average, organic search produces 36% of overall website traffic for these 6 key industries

Average organic website traffic by industry



On average, **1 in 3 website visitors to a domain come from organic search** for these six industries.

From social to email, paid, video, and organic marketing, today's marketers are tasked with staying on top of a growing number of traffic-driving channels. **However, organic search remains the most cost-effective and impactful channel in the long term**. Users have come to trust Google. When they see your domain appearing within the top 10 organic search results, they trust your site provides the best solution for what they are searching for.

Further in this analysis, we dive deeper into these six industries to better understand these averages and discuss what could be playing a role in the traffic disparity between industries and subindustries.

Organic Traffic Insights by Industry

We analyzed each industry's organic search traffic benchmarks by focusing on the corresponding subindustries. Then we evaluated April 2023 organic traffic data to get an average for each subindustry. The average organic traffic value is based on each industry's overall benchmark and determined by the corresponding PPC costs for that traffic.

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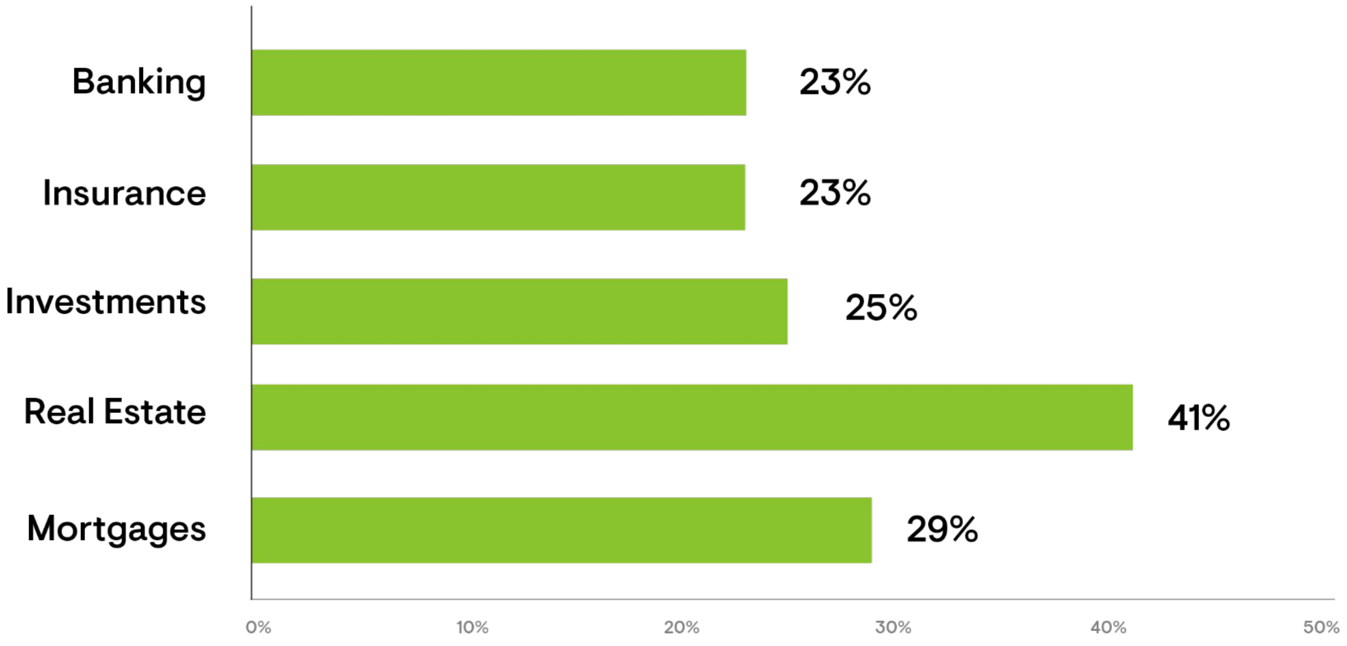
Organic traffic benchmark for financial services: 28%

Average organic traffic benchmarks for finance subindustries

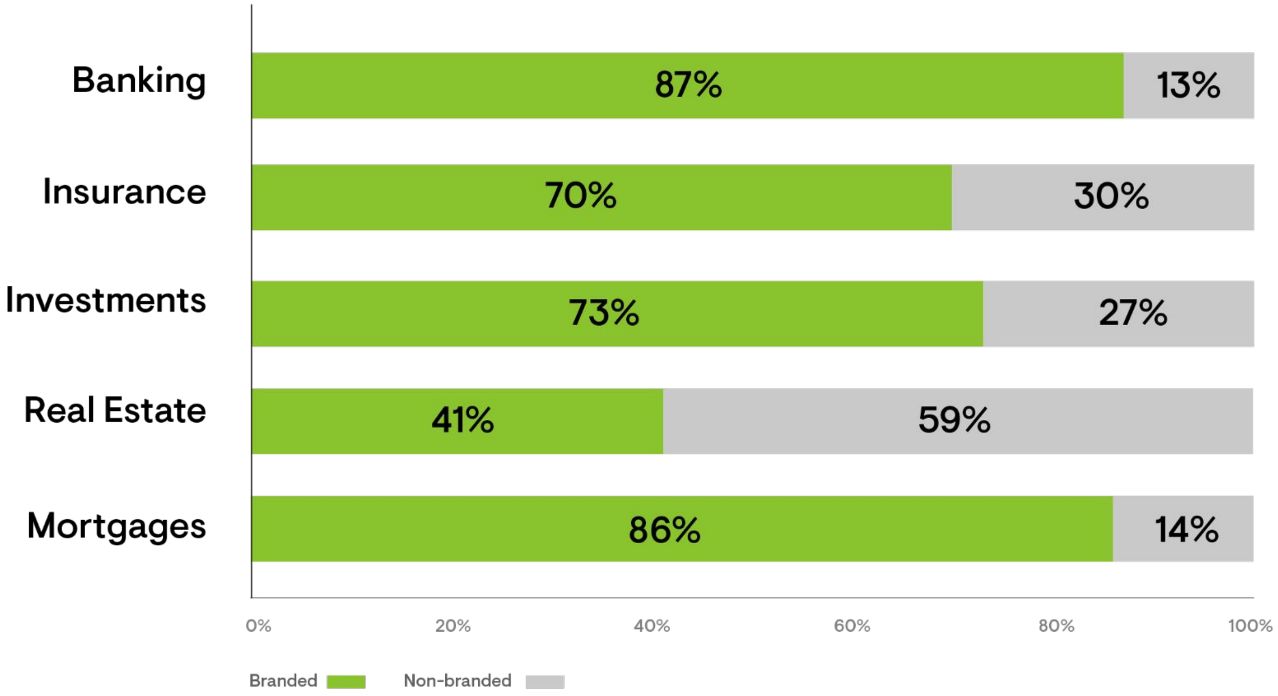


Average organic traffic value for finance: $8.2M

Real estate had the highest monthly organic traffic on average among the subindustries. These sites tend to rank very well on SERPs because they leverage programmatic SEO to automatically generate landing pages for states, cities, and neighborhoods. Additionally, searchers looking into real estate are most likely not tied to a brand. **This makes investing in SEO and the website experience more crucial** since the ROI could be significant if your site provides the desired property solution.

Conversely, banking portal URLs inflate the overall traffic amount to each domain as users log in to their accounts daily. As a result, organic traffic constitutes a smaller piece of the pie. Similarly, direct traffic is more likely to be a leading channel for insurance providers as users navigate to these websites most often when checking a claim status or reviewing their policies. Despite the high volume of direct traffic for both industries, **organic search is the most effective way to capture searchers still deciding between banking or insurance solutions.**

Branded vs. non-branded organic traffic benchmarks for finance



The best way to contextualize a domain's organic performance is to look at the breakdown of branded vs. non-branded organic traffic.

As highlighted in the previous slide, real estate should have the highest non-branded organic traffic, as users are less likely to be tied to a brand when searching for a specific property opportunity.

For all other finance subindustries, the organic traffic breakdown leans heavily towards branded. This could be the result of a few different user behaviors. **One likely factor is that a significant portion of searches within the finance industry are navigational**, like "capital one login" or "chase online banking," leading to a substantial increase in branded traffic for subindustries like banking.

Average branded organic traffic benchmark: 71%
Average non-branded organic traffic benchmark: 29%

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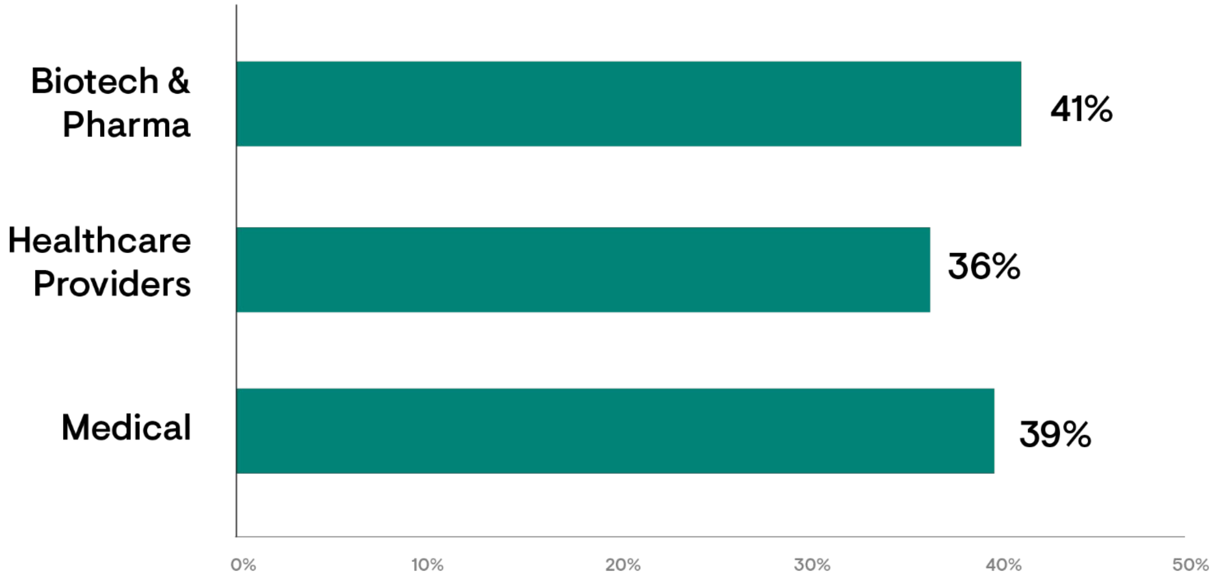
Organic traffic benchmark for healthcare: 39%

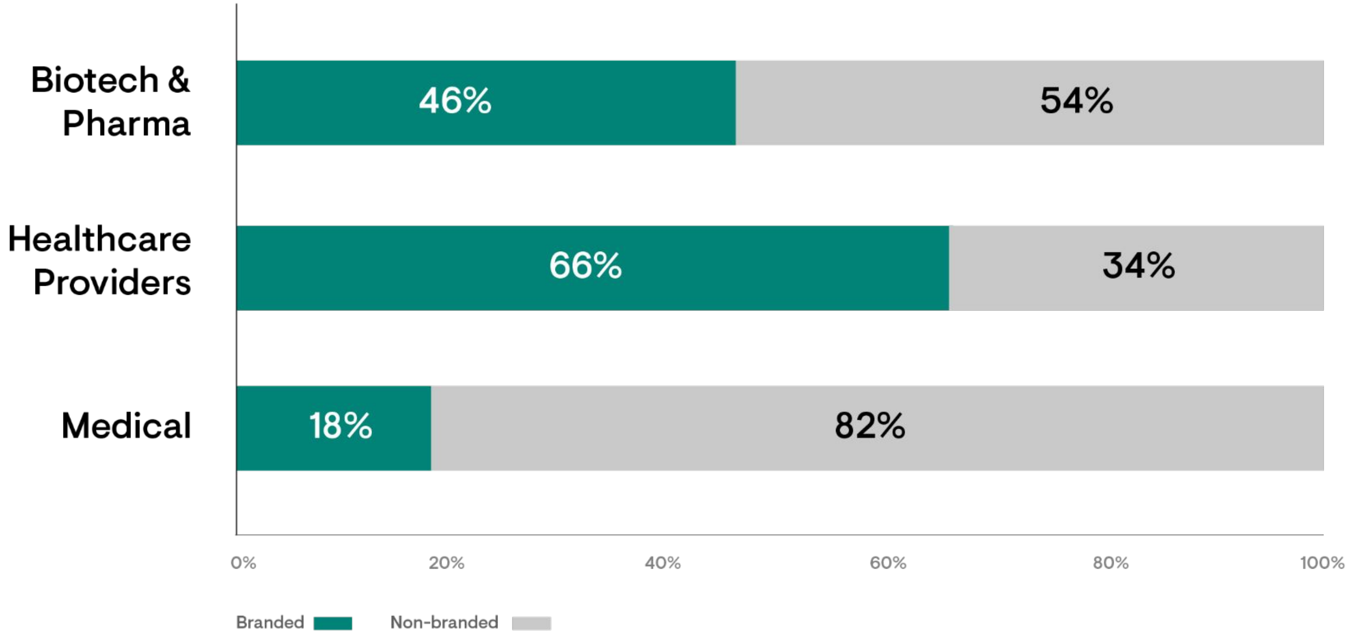
Average organic traffic benchmarks for healthcare subindustries



Average organic traffic value for healthcare: $3.2M

Many companies in the healthcare industry see a **significant portion of organic traffic coming from informational searches**. Building a content strategy centered around defining medical terms, conditions, medications, new research findings, or common healthcare coverage questions in the form of glossary-style content can be a valuable driver of organic traffic that will produce sustainable long-term ROI.

Branded vs. non-branded organic benchmarks for healthcare



When reviewing the average branded vs. non-branded benchmarks for the healthcare industry overall, it seems like a relatively even split.

A closer look shows this is only the case for the biotech & pharma subindustry, where there are some well-known brand names, but searches are more equally split between informational and navigational as users are often looking for recent developments in experimental treatments.

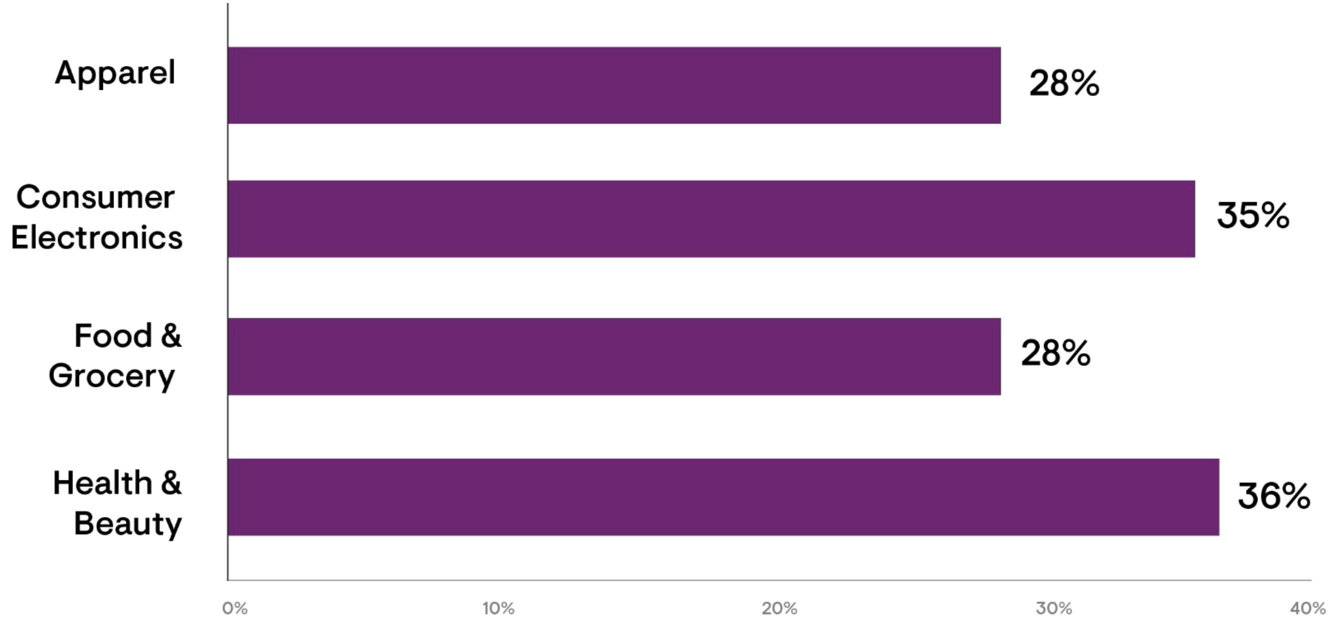
There is a drastic uptick in non-branded organic traffic for the medical subindustry. This category constitutes hospitals, labs, and urgent care centers. Searches are primarily informational for this subindustry. Forward-thinking brands in the industry capitalize on this through glossary-style content covering an expansive list of diseases, procedures, symptoms, and more with dedicated landing pages.

Average branded organic traffic benchmark: 43%

Average non-branded organic traffic benchmark: 57%

Organic traffic benchmark for retail: 32%

Average organic traffic benchmarks for retail subindustries



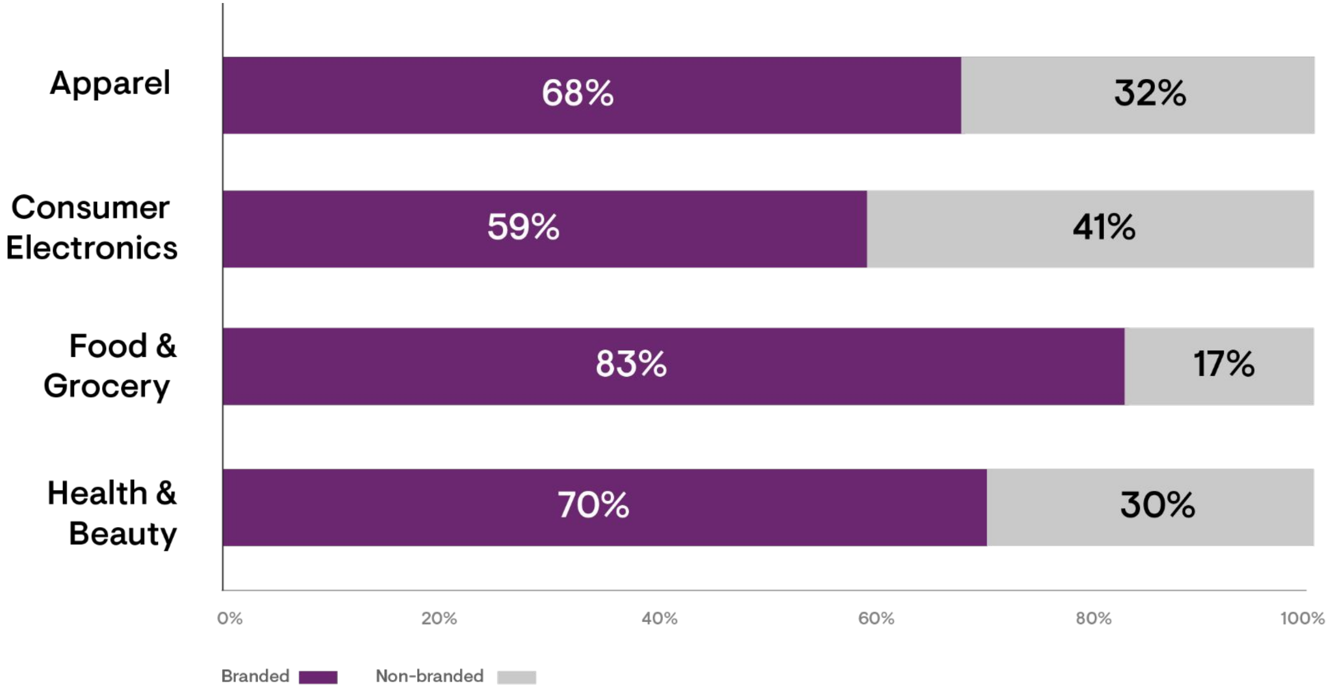
Average organic traffic value for retail: $21.8M

It's not surprising to see lower average benchmarks for the retail industry given how much real estate sponsored posts (read: paid search ads) take up on the first page of Google for apparel, consumer electronics, and beauty searches.

But despite having lower overall organic traffic, **the average organic traffic value sits at an astounding $21.8M—the highest amount of any industry in this report**. This cost estimate speaks to the highly competitive CPC for retail keywords.

Retailers can reduce paid spend and increase organic traffic by investing in innovative content strategies. One missed opportunity for most apparel sites was capitalizing on the 1.3K MSV (monthly search volume) for the search term "eras tour outfits" and related phrases. As Taylor Swift's 2023 tour continues to dominate social and search trends, only a few forward-thinking brands created an Eras-specific grouping of apparel and accessories for fans to wear to the show. This is one example of how keeping a pulse on search trends can increase organic traffic and revenue generation.

Branded vs. non-branded organic benchmarks for retail



The branded vs. non-branded organic benchmarks for retail tell an interesting story. The consumer electronics subindustry sits nine points ahead of the closest subindustry for non-branded organic traffic.

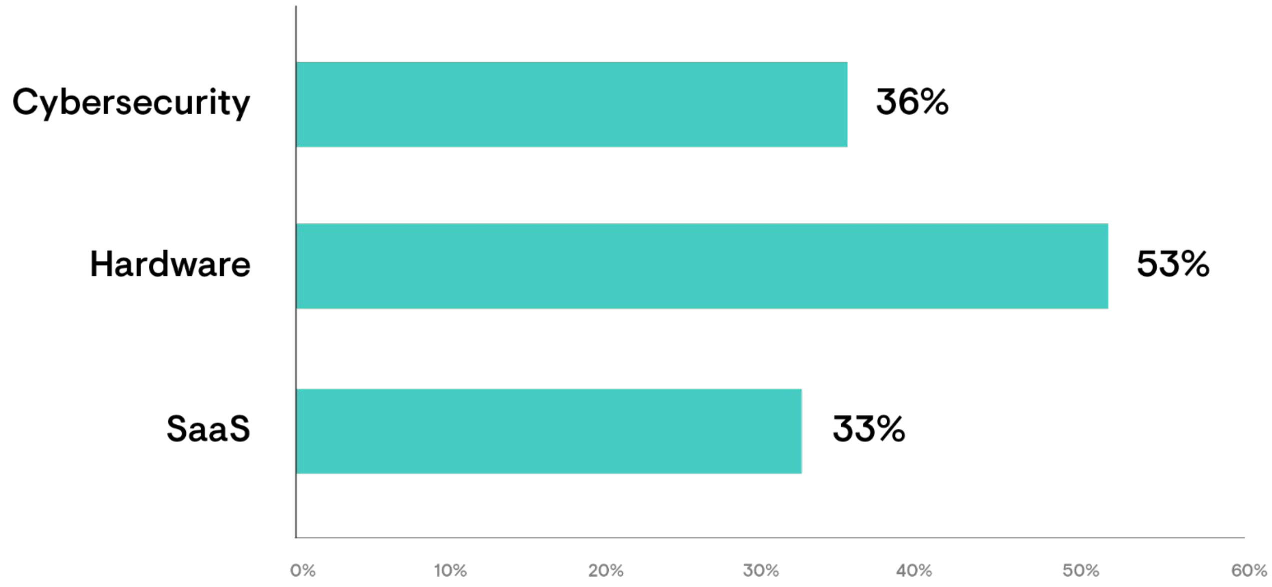
Consumer electronics product offerings are sold at a wide variety of retailers. Since they are the same product regardless of where they are purchased, users could be inclined to find the best cost savings by shopping around online rather than typing in a branded phrase for a particular retailer (e.g., “best buy beats headphones”).

Average branded organic traffic benchmark: 70%

Average non-branded organic traffic benchmark: 30%

Organic traffic benchmark for technology: 41%

Average organic traffic benchmarks for tech subindustries



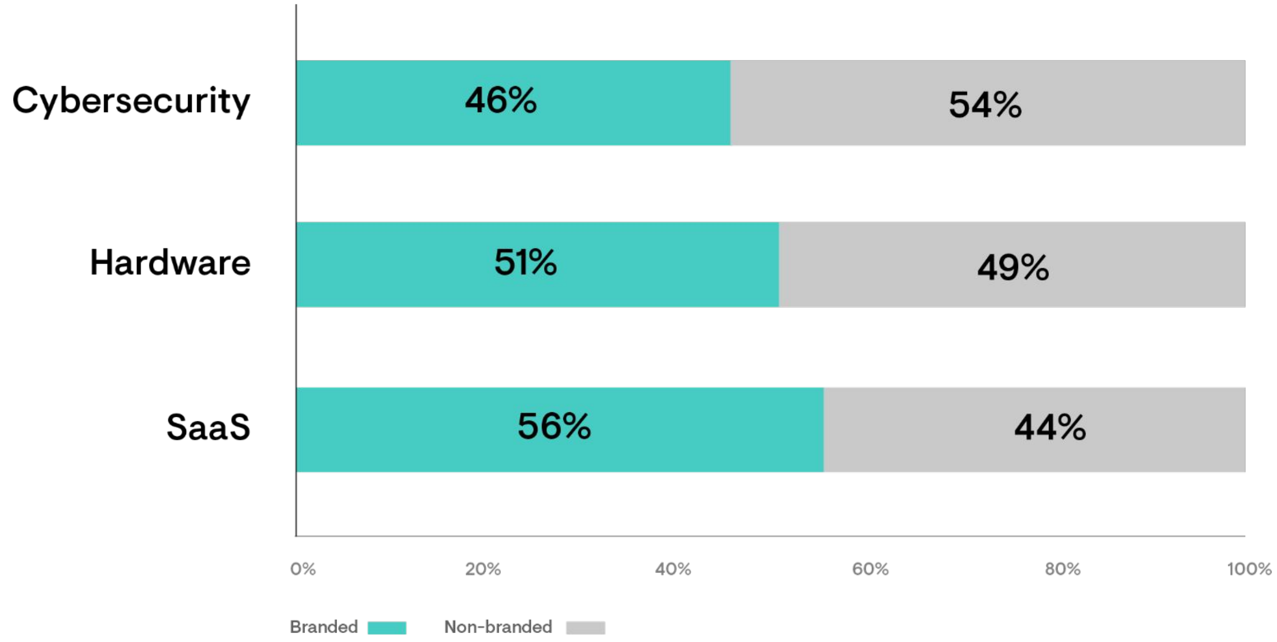
The technology industry has the highest overall organic traffic benchmark out of all the industries we analyzed.

An increased organic traffic benchmark is expected for the hardware subindustry due to the sheer amount of hardware product offerings and types. **Cybersecurity and SaaS rely more on brand recognition via direct, referral, and paid traffic.**

It pays to get as granular as possible when identifying your organic KPIs. Use the subindustry-specific benchmarks here to evaluate whether you're on par with other enterprise domains. The hardware subindustry is around a 20-point increase compared to cybersecurity or SaaS, which is a significant difference to account for when setting realistic goals.

Average organic traffic value for technology: $5.8M

Branded vs. non-branded organic benchmarks for technology



Average branded organic traffic benchmark: 51%
Average non-branded organic traffic benchmark: 49%

The tech industry is the only industry in this report that follows a near 50/50 split down to the subindustry level for branded and non-branded organic traffic.

This almost equal split across the board speaks to the even balance between effective brand recognition efforts by major players and the desire from users to do their own commercial searches to investigate the best offering or service for their needs.

Emerging brands should maximize this opportunity by investing primarily in **value-based content creation to answer the target audience's top needs.** Another effective SEO strategy to increase organic traffic is creating detailed comparison articles that provide the full scope of benefits of your service compared to fellow competitors. **Prioritize a neutral, fair, and fact-based approach in these articles to build trust with readers, as that should be the primary goal.**

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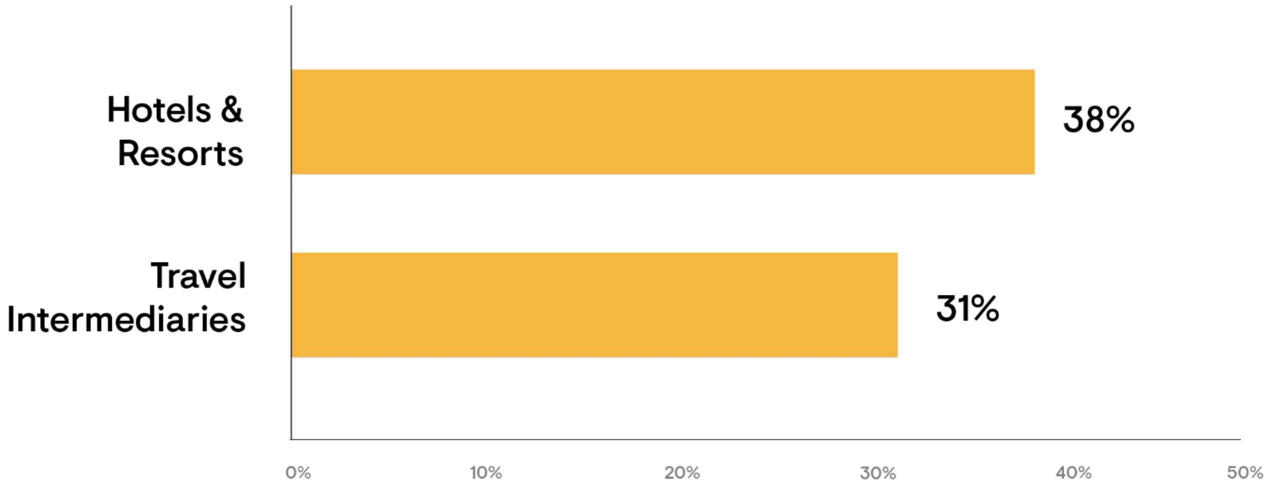
Organic traffic benchmark for travel & hospitality: 35%

Average organic traffic benchmarks for travel subindustries



Organic traffic is extremely valuable for the travel & hospitality industry, with an average value of $13.4M, as the related paid keywords for this industry are highly competitive and expensive.

The travel industry has suffered significant traffic fluctuations over the last three years since COVID brought the industry to a standstill. **Travel interest is now at an all-time high post-COVID as travelers want to make up for lost time.**

The best time for travel & hospitality brands to invest in and adopt a proactive SEO strategy is now. Take the time to implement a scalable content strategy focused on answering your audience’s top and trending searches, and watch as these pages accrue authority and increase traffic over time.

Average organic traffic value for travel: $13.4M

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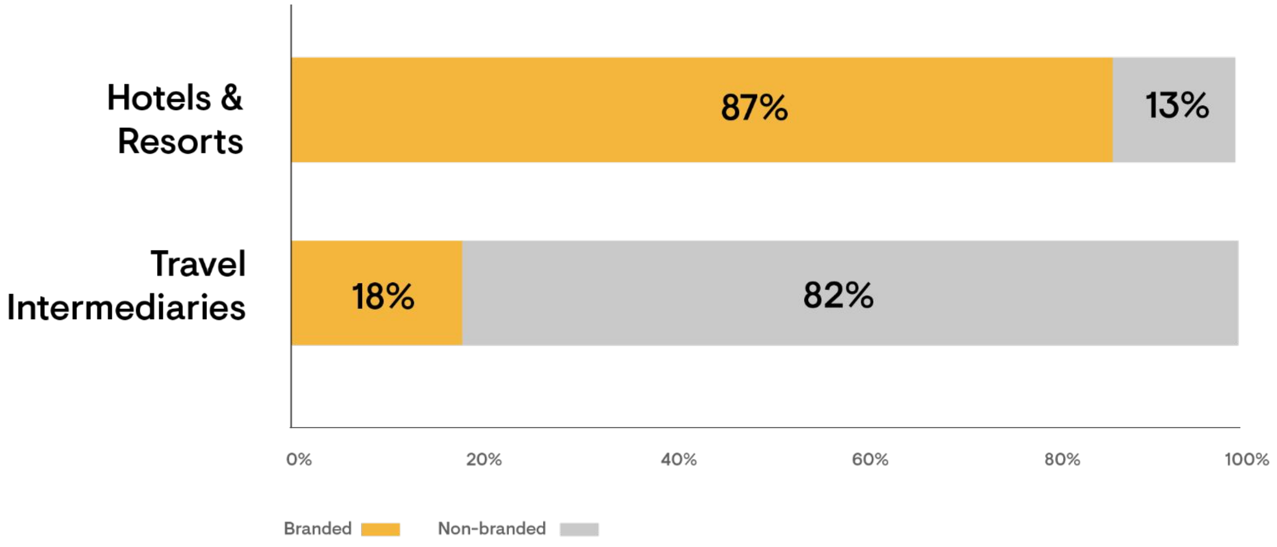
Branded vs. non-branded organic benchmarks for travel



The branded and non-branded organic traffic breakdown for travel subindustries looks at odds with unusually high branded traffic for hotels & resorts but the opposite for travel intermediaries.

Travel intermediaries like Booking.com and Expedia invest heavily in SEO, while hotels tend to budget less for SEO and prioritize more traditional marketing efforts.

As a result, hotels get significantly more branded traffic as visitors are likely to return to a brand they had a good experience with. However, when looking for a hotel in a different city or country, most users will navigate to Google instead of going to a hotel website directly. These types of searches tend to lead users to travel intermediary sites to compare different hotel options and costs, leading to a larger share of non-branded traffic.

Average branded organic traffic benchmark: 52%
Average non-branded organic traffic benchmark: 48%

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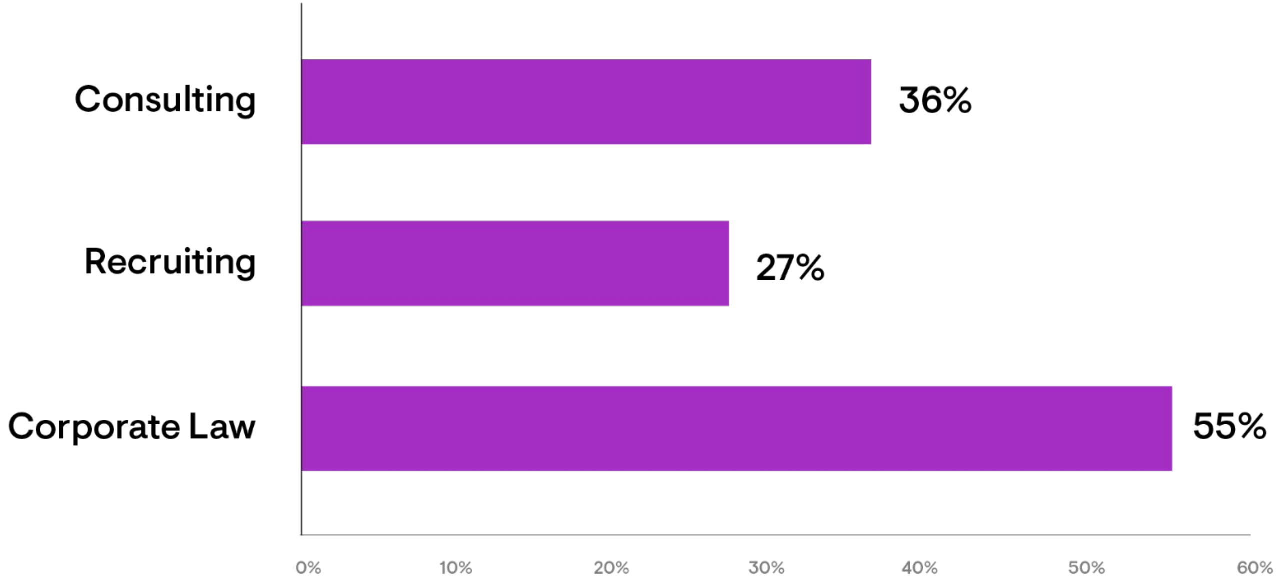
Organic traffic benchmark for professional services: 39%

Average organic traffic benchmarks for professional services subindustries



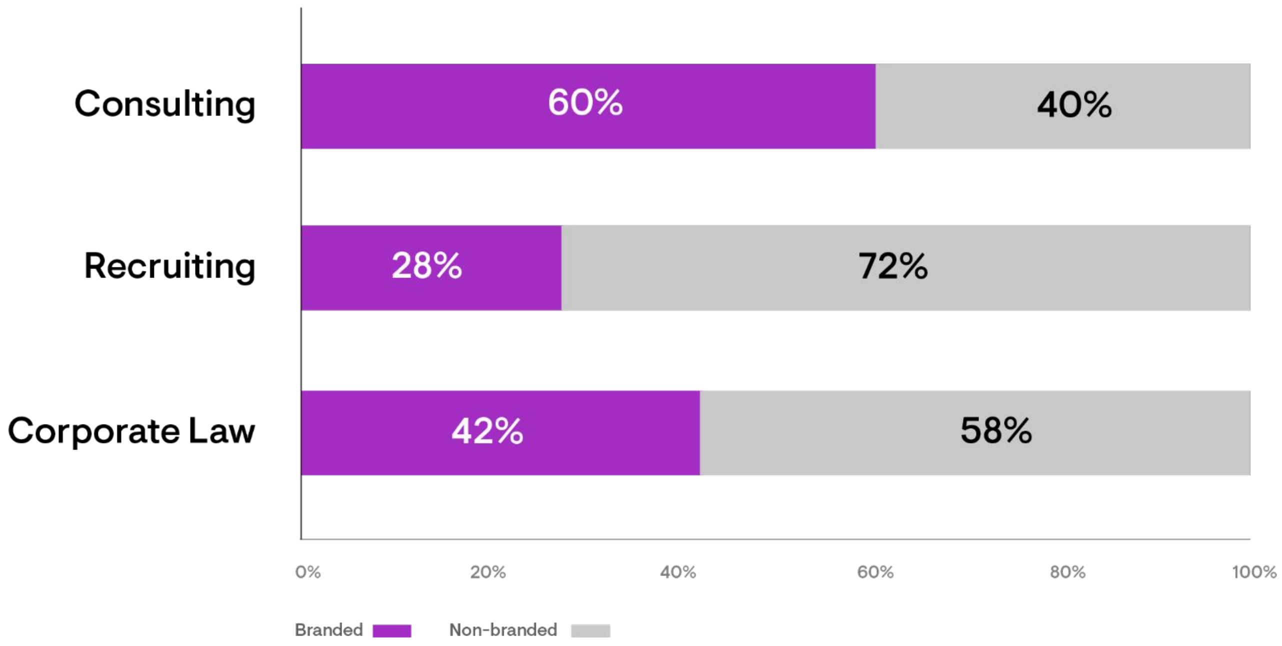
You have two stark differences in average organic traffic among the recruiting and corporate law professional service subindustries.

Recruiting has a significantly lower organic traffic benchmark at 27%, which could be linked to the brand recognition of major recruiting agencies and effective paid campaigns for more tech-based solutions like ZipRecruiter leading to more direct traffic.

Corporate law sits at an average organic traffic benchmark of 55% because users are most interested in informational searches for answers to corporate law-related questions or situations. By targeting these types of search terms and prioritizing value-based content creation, y**ou can build trust with users who land on your content and implement strategies to convert them to potential customers down the line**.

Average organic traffic value for professional services: $1.2M

Branded vs. non-branded organic benchmarks for professional services



The high non-branded organic benchmarks across all professional services subindustries highlight the opportunity for any company in these sectors to increase organic traffic.

One of the most effective ways to do this is by implementing a **keyword research-intensive content strategy to win undecided users** over to your offering or service through authentic, value-driven content.

Average branded organic traffic benchmark: 43%
Average non-branded organic traffic benchmark: 57%

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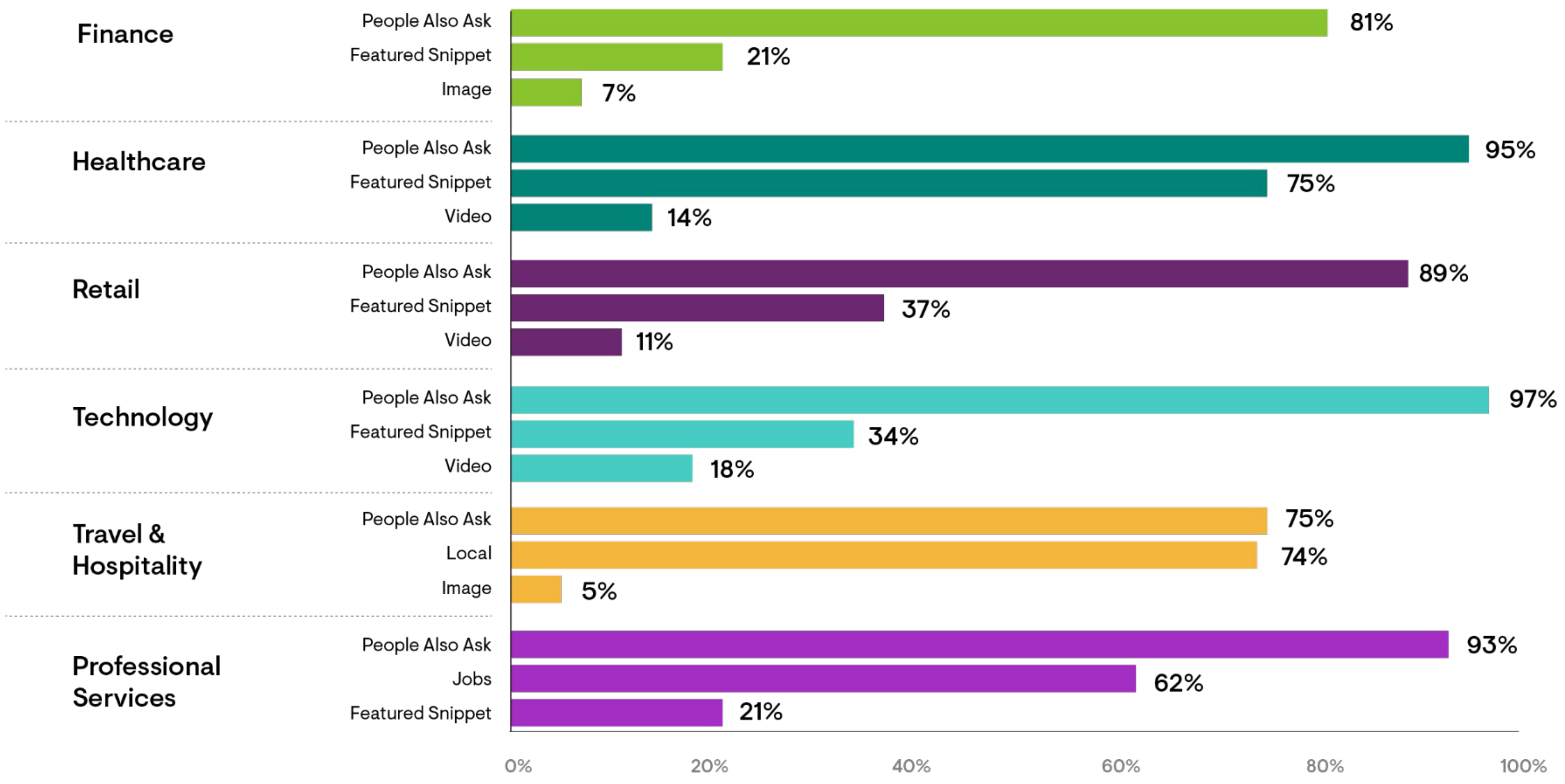
U.S.-Specific Analysis

SEO & SERP Insights

We compiled and analyzed **over 82K searches** to determine which rich search result types appear most often per industry and which domains were the top content providers during April 2023.

Top 3 rich search result types by industry



Understanding the latest ranks and trends for the top rich search result types by industry can be one of the best ways to gauge if you're providing the best information—in the right format—for your target audience. We analyzed the prevalence of rich search result types for each primary industry within Conductor to identify the top three.

The dominance of People Also Ask and Featured Snippets for the healthcare industry reinforces the effectiveness of investing in a FAQ/glossary-style content strategy to increase organic visibility and discoverability within this sector.

The fact that People Also Ask is the most common rich search result type across all six industries should not be taken lightly. This is why in-depth keyword research is vital to ensure you answer your target audience's most common questions and related follow-up questions in your content.

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Top content providers by subindustry for finance

	Banking	Insurance	Investments	Mortgages	Real Estate
N°1	Investopedia	Coverfox	nerdwallet	Bankrate	RENTCafé
N°2	nerdwallet	WalletHub	TheStandard	Investopedia	Investopedia
N°3	Bankrate	nerdwallet	Bankrate	cfpb Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	MYMOVE
N°4	WalletHub	Investopedia	smartasset	ROCKET	Apartment List
N°5	Forbes	Allstate	Investopedia	THE MORTGAGE REPORTS	Rent.

Despite updates from Google signaling the People Also Ask (PAA) result type would appear about 30% less often starting in mid-2022, **Semrush data showed PAA was still appearing 57% of the time in April 2023.** PAA and Featured Snippets are also the two primary organic content-focused result types.

Reviewing your subindustry's top content providers helps uncover **indirect competitors,** who may not sell your product but outrank your site for core search phrases, like Investopedia for banking. **As you can see within finance, indirect competitors like Forbes make up most of the top content providers as these domains are more focused on informational vs. transactional keywords.**

SEO Tip: Stop viewing your direct competitors as your only competition. Identify the top indirect competitors for your domain and analyze their sites for content strategy opportunities.

Based on the percentage of weighted market share on page 1 for People Also Ask and Featured Snippet result types.

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Top content providers by subindustry for healthcare

	Biotech & Pharma	Healthcare Providers	Medical
N°1	Mayo Clinic	Mayo Clinic	Mayo Clinic
N°2	WebMD	Cleveland Clinic	Cleveland Clinic
N°3	NIH National Cancer Institute	MedlinePlus Trusted Health Information for You	NIH National Institute of Mental Health
N°4	CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Humana	CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
N°5	NIH National Institute of Mental Health	ValuePenguin	MNT

Mayo Clinic is the clear winner across all three healthcare subindustries, followed closely by Cleveland Clinic for healthcare providers and medical.

Both of these domains provide robust and comprehensive "Health Libraries," which function as the FAQ/glossary content strategy we recommend as it drives the most reliable, long-term content ROI for this industry in particular. The effectiveness of that strategy is evident given the prevalence of rich result types Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic secured with their content.

The CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) also benefits from a similar glossary content strategy. While the CDC is not a direct healthcare competitor, it is an expansive institution viewed with high authority by search engines like Google, making it a challenging indirect competitor to outrank.

Based on the percentage of weighted market share on page 1 for People Also Ask and Featured Snippet result types.

Top content providers by subindustry for retail

	Apparel	Consumer Electronics	Food & Grocery	Health & Beauty
N°1	LANDS' END	RTINGS.com	allrecipes	healthline
N°2	MasterClass	CR Consumer Reports	food network	InStyle
N°3	H&M	CNET	healthline	BYRDIE
N°4	FASHIONBEANS	MUO MAKE USE OF	delish	WebMD
N°5	NORDSTROM	techradar	the spruce	GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Product review and publisher sites dominate the PAA and Featured Snippet results for the consumer electronics subindustry. This is also true for the health & beauty subindustry. Review sites focus primarily on answering the most common product questions in the most direct language and format possible. This content type performs very well for these types of rich search result types, which is why you don't see any leading electronics retailers listed, given their product specification copy tends to be more technical and isn't provided in the conversational language users search with.

Similarly, publisher sites make up the top content providers for food & grocery. Allrecipes.com shows up in that coveted first organic spot most often on SERPs, because the site is built entirely around creating an extensive recipe glossary. Major food & grocery retailer like Wegmans will have a harder time winning rich result types for recipe-related searches.

Based on the percentage of weighted market share on page 1 for People Also Ask and Featured Snippet result types.

Top content providers by subindustry for technology

	Cybersecurity	Hardware	SaaS
N°1	TechTarget	TechTarget	salesforce
N°2	DIGITALGUARDIAN	CHECK POINT	Microsoft
N°3	norton	ANALOG DEVICES	TechTarget
N°4	tableau	Square	ORACLE
N°5	okta	paloalto NETWORKS	SAP

It's not surprising to see Tech Target securing the top spot for both cybersecurity and hardware as publishing sites perform well, given the vast amount of content they produce on a variety of topics.

What's interesting is the direct service providers securing the remaining spots. **Outperforming indirect competitors like publishing sites is possible through a targeted and strategic content strategy** powered by in-depth keyword research for your target audience. The key is to speak their language in your content and identify the keyword opportunities with enough MSV where you can compete with the right piece of content.

Based on the percentage of weighted market share on page 1 for People Also Ask and Featured Snippet result types.

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Top content providers by subindustry for travel

	Hotels & Resorts	Travel Intermediaries
N°1	Booking.com	luggagepros.com
N°2	TRAVEL LEMMING	TRAVEL+ LEISURE
N°3	Tripadvisor	Travelpro®
N°4	Budget Your Trip	WORLD AIRLINE SKYTRAX AWARDS 2023
N°5	Frommer's®	OneTravel

A look at the top content providers across the analyzed travel & hospitality subindustries highlights a significant opportunity for hotel brands and leading travel intermediaries to step up their content creation efforts.

It's no surprise to see Booking.com and Tripadvisor ranking well in the hotels & resorts subindustry.

To compete with these SEO powerhouses, hotels and resorts should adopt an SEO and content strategy focused on hyper-local niches where they can win. For example, a keyword like "hotel new york" has a high MSV but very little chance for a hotel chain to win a rich result type for when Booking.com has 1,000 hotel listings available vs. a hotel brand with 10 listings at most.

Based on the percentage of weighted market share on page 1 for People Also Ask and Featured Snippet result types.

Top content providers by subindustry for pro services

	Consulting	Recruiting	Corporate Law
N°1	indeed	indeed	CONTRACTSCOUNSEL
N°2	TechTarget	TechTarget	Wolters Kluwer
N°3	HubSpot	SmartRecruiters	FindLaw
N°4	caseinterview.com	ZipRecruiter	upcounsel
N°5	Investopedia	NETSUITE	HG.org LEGAL RESOURCES

One of the most surprising inclusions in this industry breakdown of top content providers is HubSpot. Hubspot is a marketing software provider, so it's unusual to see them outranking major players in the consulting industry.

HubSpot adopted a comprehensive and hyper-targeted content strategy around critical consulting search terms (e.g., "what is a consulting firm," "what is tech consulting") and built informative, detailed landing pages to address them. By developing a value-based and comprehensive content strategy with dedicated long-form pieces, HubSpot does an excellent job at satisfying user intent, which helps secure these rich result types more often. When a user lands on one of these pages, their question is answered, and they have found what they were looking for.

Additionally, many major consulting firms, like Deloitte and McKinsey, have achieved household name status, so they are focused primarily on in-depth, data-driven global and industry reports and thought leadership rather than this type of informational content.

Based on the percentage of weighted market share on page 1 for People Also Ask and Featured Snippet result types.

Conclusion

Benchmarks are the best way to evaluate whether your organic traffic goals align with your industry's top competitors. Having informed, data-driven KPIs enable digital marketers to assess and report on the effectiveness of their strategies and adapt accordingly.

Leverage the industry and subindustry benchmarks featured in the report to understand how your domain performs compared to the enterprise search market. Find out which pages on your site may not line up with these benchmarks and determine what could be the cause. Certain rich result types, like People Also Ask, reliably appear on the first page of Google so focus efforts on optimizing and creating new content to secure these result types to drive immediate impact and ROI via organic traffic. Remember, change is coming to SEO and SERPs with generative AI. Now is the time to secure organic market share to ensure you show up first—and keep showing up first.

Sign up for a free SEO analysis from Conductor to get a glimpse of where you have the best opportunities to rank and start driving increased organic traffic to your site today.

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