

# 4 STEPS

to Building and Maintaining Your  
Billing Company's Online Reputation



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## Your Online Reputation Matters



Whether you know it or not, you have an online presence. And it may be growing without any input from you. As a billing company, it's important to understand how to take care of your online presence, engage with clients online and manage your company reputation.

Your current and future clients are online, and they are listening to what others have to say. Review sites such as Yelp and others are making more of an impact on business owners' perceptions of service vendors such as billing companies so if your company has little to no presence online, you are most likely losing out on many new clients.

A recent study, conducted by TripAdvisor, and Ipsos MORI, asked nearly 3,000 travel-related businesses listed on TripAdvisor what they thought of top industry trends for their businesses. The resulting 2018 Hospitality Sector Report revealed that the U.S. travel industry is increasingly moving toward a more mobile marketplace and businesses are responding by placing greater importance on maintaining positive online reputations and engaging with their current and potential customers. The data showed that:

- **97% believe online reputation management is important to their business.**
- **98% believe online reviews are important to their business.**
- **92% believe social presence is important to their business.**

While looking at online reviews and a company's social media platforms are important to buyers of travel-related services, it is also important to buyers looking to purchase goods and services in other industries, including B2B customers. Engaging in these online activities as a business owner can help your billing company attract the right customers.

For your billing company to stay competitive, you need to be online, listening to what people are saying and engaging in the conversation. By following the four steps in this guide, you will help successfully build, enhance and manage your online presence and reputation.

1. Enhance website
2. Engage with clients on social media
3. Own online listings, rankings, and reviews
4. Be responsive to comments and reviews

Potential clients are increasingly looking online for services to benefit their practice. People are more inclined to spread the word on social media the businesses that are helpful to them. You don't want to be left in the cold while other billing companies are active on social media, providing accurate information and connecting with potential clients as well as strengthening their relationships with current clients.

A top-down view of a wooden desk. In the upper left, a tablet displays a dashboard with various charts and graphs. Next to it, a smartphone shows a social media profile. In the lower left, a white computer mouse sits on the desk. To its right is a white mug filled with dark coffee. At the bottom center, a small green succulent in a pot is visible. The desk surface is a light-colored wood with a prominent grain.

**247 million internet users in US as of 2019** –in 2019 only 10 percent of US adults said that they do not use the internet.

(Source: Statista)

## Step 1: Enhance Website

Your website is an excellent way to establish your online brand and build trust for your billing company. It can help you tell your branding story, which can set your billing company apart from your competitors. If it has been awhile since you refreshed your website or if you don't have one yet, we have listed some website tips in this guide to help. The tips are provided by Create180design.com, a website branding company. Here are some best practices for enhancing your billing company website:

- Make sure the look of your website design is fresh, modern and easy for visitors to navigate. You want your website to convey a positive and professional image of your brand.



- Share your mission, philosophy about the billing industry, how you approach your work and personal information about your passion for serving clients and what you do. Clients like to know who they are doing business with so share more about yourself.
- Include all information that establishes your credibility as a billing company. This can include any awards, recognitions, education and degrees relevant to your business.
- Showcase anything unique about your billing practice such as special services or a niche that can be of interest to potential clients.
- Provide links to rating sites like Yelp as well as your social media platforms.
- If you have positive testimonials from satisfied clients – be sure to include those on the home page.
- Invest in having professional photos taken of you, your staff, and your office. Try to avoid using stock photos because patients like to see the real people who are working in the practice.
- Hire someone to write a blog on relevant topics on billing that speak to current and potential clients. If you have time and enjoy writing, you can do it yourself. If writing a blog is too difficult, write or have your freelance writer publish a few white papers on relevant billing topics and have them available for download on your website. A good resource for background information is the Kareo Resource Library - sort for billing-related articles.
- Create some short videos blogs of you talking about your practice.

Nearly **80 percent** of Americans own smartphones. In 2018, more than half of all website traffic worldwide was generated through mobile phones. (Source: Statista)

## Website Best Practices

- 1. Keep it fresh.** You'll need a content management system (CMS) so you can make updates and add new content once the site is done. A dynamic website improves search engine optimization (SEO) and is more engaging for clients.
- 2. Market your site.** There is no point in having a website if no one can find it. Market your site via emails to clients, referral sources, and vendors and by adding your URL to all advertising and forms. Make sure all of your social media landing pages link to your website.

### Source

<https://www.create180design.com/15-web-design-best-practices-for-medical-practice-websites>

## Step 2: Engage Clients on Social Media

For the past 15 years, social media has continued to build in popularity and shows no signs of dying down among Americans. According to the 2019 Social Habit study, Americans differ in their social media usage particularly among gender and age groups. This is what the study found:

- Younger population, ages 12-34 have declined in Facebook usage from nearly 80% in 2017 to 62% in 2019. All other social media platforms are down such as Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn. The only social network that is growing among young Americans is Instagram – up to 66% from 64% two years ago.
- The age and gender that is dominating social media usage in 2019 is middle-aged women, 34-54 years old. For Facebook and Instagram, nearly six out of 10 users are women.
- Facebook is less popular in 2019 than in 2015 and hasn't moved much since its peak popularity in 2013. There is an estimated 15 million fewer Facebook users in the U.S. 2019 as compared to two years prior.
- Seniors 55+ is the only age group that has increased its usage in Facebook since prior years.
- Twitter is the sixth largest social network in the U.S. and is also losing steam in recent years.

### Social Media Platforms - Deciding Which Ones to Use

To help you decide what social media platforms would be best, we have compiled a list on the next page of the top social media sites that are used by businesses today and their current statistics.

#### Source

<https://www.edisonresearch.com/the-social-habit-2019/>



Social Media	Active Users	Largest Demographic	Advantages for Billing Companies	Disadvantages	Key Takeaway
Facebook	1.3 billion	60% are female, 25-54.	Great for increasing website traffic, building brand loyalty, finding new clients, receiving reviews, and boosting engagement. Good for all medical and healthcare specialties.	Followers won't see your posts unless you buy FB ads or have a large following.	Facebook is good to purchase ads that target your local audience for new clients and engage with current clients.
Instagram	800+ million	59% in US are under 30 years old, 89% of users follow a business on Instagram.	Good platform to engage with clients and show behind the scenes of your billing practice. Use for finding new clients and publicizing events you are hosting or trade shows you are participating in.	Time and resource-intensive to be successful – posting, photos, interactions, ads, building an engaged audience.	Instagram is visual and a better fit for surgeons, cosmetic surgery, dentistry, dermatology, weight loss, ob/gyn, PTs.
Twitter	600 million	18-29	Good to share relevant billing information with other billing partners and clients. Hashtags help followers to find related content by topic. If you invest time and share a lot of content to engage with your followers, Twitter can be successful for your billing company.	You are limited in words per tweet – must get straight to the point.	Twitter is going down in popularity but can be good for your company if you invest the time for regular participation.
LinkedIn	600 million	30-49. 57% of all LinkedIn traffic is mobile. 44% of users make more than 75k a year.	Helps you to share related billing industry news, articles, and build professional relationships. You can use platform to search for new hires and review backgrounds and resumes. Build networking communities within your specialty and industry.	Personal profile needs to be of the billing company owner. If others are managing the platform, they will need to use a personal voice. Which can be tricky.	Most businesses in general can benefit from having a LinkedIn page.
YouTube	1 billion, 2nd largest search engine behind Google	All ages	Good for billing company owners who want to share and create videos that showcase special billing services, testimonials are more. Great way to market services with short videos, education pieces and create a video-blog, which is quicker to produce than writing a long blog.	Can be time consuming and expensive to film quality videos.	Good for billing companies to share educational information such as a video tip, staff highlights, or other information that showcases your business.
Pinterest	291 million	More than 80% are female Medium Pinterest user age is 40 but those younger are also using platform. 72% of pinners use Pinterest to decide what to buy offline.	May help you find new billing clients by sharing billing information that helps their practices and any local business events you are hosting or participating in. You can create quote art on billing-related topics that can be shared on Pinterest or other social platforms..	Need to create pins that pinners want to share with others.	Good for a primarily female-based audience, so information needs to be presented in a way that appeals to that demographic.



## Social Media Checklist:

- ☒ Use social media sites to help establish and promote your brand. Be consistent across your website and social channels with your look and feel.
- ☒ Once you create your pages, send out an email to your clients encouraging them to “like” and “follow” you on Facebook and Twitter. You can also put links to your Facebook and Twitter pages on your website, business cards, and in your email signature. Encourage your staff to “like” and “follow” your billing company and share content.
- ☒ Build your presence by liking and following influencers in the billing community and groups that relate to your industry.
- ☒ Post regularly and provide useful, informative, and actionable content for clients. Having a blog (or other dynamic content) on your website can make this easier. Including tools on your social media sites that allow people to do things like request an appointment and write or view reviews is also a great way to engage people.
- ☒ Interact with your social media followers. Reply to their comments and like their posts. If someone brings up personal information, take it offline as quickly as possible.
- ☒ Make your posts both professional and social—clients want to be able to connect on a personal level with your business, so don't be afraid to share accomplishments of staff members or pictures of the business. But also don't forget that you are a business owner, so always keep it professional!

## Step 3: Own Online Listings

By you keeping track of your online reputation, it gives you the knowledge and the power to celebrate the good, clear up any misunderstandings, and fix the bad.

### Manage online listings

You need to find and own every listing you can. You need to gather all the information about your billing company and make sure it is accurate and up-to-date as possible. And, you want to be able to add your website and social pages if you can.

**HOW:** The best way for you to find all the sites where they are listed is to conduct Google searches several times over the course of two to four weeks. You should create a spreadsheet to track the sites, links, available information, and current reviews or rankings. Repeat the process to find them all. Once you have collected

them, you need to go to each one and follow the instructions to confirm the listing information or make any changes. Don't forget about other billing-related directories and online communities. There might already have listings that should be updates or they may want to add one.

**WHY:** Accurate listings, particularly prominent ones like those in Google Places, help improve your ranking on search engines, which, in turn, raises your placement in online searches. In this way, by you taking ownership of your listings is about more than accuracy; it's about visibility and credibility.

## Step 4: Be Responsive and Current

Nearly 82% of smartphone users do an internet search on their phones before making an online purchase, according to a 2018 survey conducted by BazaarVoice, a tech-based company that connects shoppers to online brand content. Their report, Research Online-Buy Offline, stated that 45% of American consumers read an online review before making a purchase.

In other consumer research, the annual PwC's Global Consumer Insights Survey reported that in 2017, nearly 40% of consumers globally rely on social media to make a purchasing decision. The opinions of friends and strangers on social media was the top purchasing influence, followed by the business' website and price comparison.



Whether it is a comment on your social media page or a third-party site, there are three things you need to do to effectively manage your online reputation:

1. Stay aware of online reviews
2. Respond to reviews and ratings whenever you can—good and bad
3. Encourage clients to post reviews

Once you own your listings, you need to regularly check back for new reviews or ratings. It's important to know what people think of your billing company. You need to keep track of what people are saying on a spreadsheet and share the reviews at regular staff meetings so everyone else is aware, too. You can use these meetings to discuss any pending issues or challenges as well as celebrate their successes and good work.

## Tips on Getting and Keeping a New Client

- ✓ Client journey starts online
- ✓ Establish a strong online presence
- ✓ Secure client trust
- ✓ Successful acquisition relies on good customer experience
- ✓ Use digital to secure loyalty



## How to Respond—for Better or for Worse

It's important for you to respond to what people have to say. A simple thank you for a positive review is enough. But if the review is negative here are some options:

1. **It's a general complaint or constructive criticism about a process or procedure in your company:**
  - a. If it is a simple fix, do it and respond to the review by saying something like, "Thanks for letting us know about this problem. We value our clients' feedback and have addressed the issue in the following ways: [be specific]. We hope you'll give us another chance to deliver great service."
  - b. If it is more complex, simply say, "Thank you for letting us know. We are looking at how we can address this issue." If you are able to make changes, let them know.
2. **Someone is angry because of a legitimately bad experience. Respond quickly, apologize, keep the lines of communication open and offer to talk more about how to fix it and avoid having it happen again.**
3. **If it is inaccurate or inflammatory, many sites will allow you to appeal the review. If it is found to be inappropriate or unsubstantiated, you may be able to get it removed.**

Encourage your clients to post reviews on sites, which list only verified reviews—making them more representative and trustworthy than other review sites. More often than not, your clients have good things to say about your billing company and just need a reminder to do so.

And their feedback can improve overall ratings. For example, a billing company with one negative review and three positives listed on a business review site will receive a 66% recommendation score, while a billing company with one negative and nine positives gets a 90% recommendation score. That's a big difference, and it's just because there are six more reviews posted for the second billing company.

Encourage your clients to write reviews to protect your overall business review score.



## Final Thoughts

In summary, using social media for your marketing efforts can offer many benefits to your billing company. Social media participation can help increase client engagement, drive new clients to your business, and give you exposure as a billing expert to drive positive relationships with your clients. Here are some final tips to help you with your online marketing efforts:

- Understand the different social media channels and which are the best fit for your billing company (see chart on page 8).
- Make sure your social media sites are properly optimized, consistent and organized.
- Hire or appoint someone from your office to help with regular interaction with followers and posting valuable content on social media to help grow your audience. Regularly posting of unique images and content for your company will create consistent brand continuity.
- Provide links on your social media platforms that encourages client engagement and helps clients give referrals to their business contacts.

In 2019, nearly 80 percent of the population in the U.S. had a social networking profile – a two percent increase from the year before.

(Source: Statista)

## About Kareo

Kareo is the only cloud-based and complete medical technology platform purpose-built to meet the unique needs of independent practices and their billing partners. Today we help over 1,600 billing companies and 50,000 providers across all 50 states run a more efficient and profitable business, while setting them up to deliver outstanding patient care. With offices across the country, our mission is to help independent practices—and the billing companies that support them—succeed in an ever-changing healthcare market.

For more information, visit [www.kareo.com](http://www.kareo.com).



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