

## 4 reasons why and 4 easy ways to stay on top of your online reputation

By Laurie Morgan  
August 4, 2020

*You need to keep tabs on how you're viewed online, even if you're not actively marketing for growth.*

By now, few of us need convincing that the web is indispensable for researching just about any topic. It's the first resource most of us turn to.

It follows that your online reputation is a powerful tool for reaching new patients who are searching for a physician. In fact, investing time in verifying and enhancing your online information may be the most cost-effective forms of marketing ever.

But new patient marketing is only one of many ways your online reputation affects the health of your practice business. There are other reasons why you should keep tabs on how you're viewed online, even if you're not actively marketing for growth. Here are four that you may not have thought of - plus four easy ways to fit online reputation management into your workflow.

### **4 reasons why you need to monitor online reviews**

#### **Patients aren't the only ones finding your reviews**

Physician reviews sites are designed with patients in mind, but patients aren't the only people who see them. Your referral partners can also see what patients say about you-and how your reviews compare with a competing physician who just moved into town. Reviews can also influence job seekers and even potential business associates such as landlords, lenders and payers. Basically, anyone with access to a browser and a search engine can potentially be influenced by what's said about you on a ratings site.

#### **You might miss something you need to see**

Unless you're keeping an eye on what's being said about your practice, you may not notice that a patient has posted a damaging review.

But, if you don't see it, you can't respond to it. (Remember to follow proper HIPAA guidance when responding. Sometimes, patients make mistakes and post their reviews alongside the wrong physician name. In those cases, try working through the site to have it corrected first.) More commonly, a negative review might call out an administrative or workflow problem you were unaware of. This can be priceless feedback that allows you to take action before other patients are inconvenienced.

## **Directory errors can be like a game of whack-a-mole**

Keeping directories updated and accurate seems as though it should be easy, in theory. But in practice, it's not uncommon for correct information to be overwritten by outdated or incorrect data. An error in any one of the sources that directories rely on can propagate itself all over the internet (sometimes even coming back from the dead).

Remember that when even one directory publishes incorrect details about you, such as your address or subspecialty, that information may turn patients away before they even have a chance to call you. Avoiding this may be the single most effective, yet simplest thing you can do to ensure you don't miss out on prospective new patients.

## **Reputation sites come and go**

Just like any other, the market for physician rating sites evolves. When it changes, your reputation may be affected.

For example, a few years back, Avvo.com started offering physician ratings. Several of our clients were thrilled because they'd attracted excellent reviews on the site, and it ranked highly on Google. But then Avvo decided to sell its physician data. The site was no more, and the physicians who had benefitted from exposure on it had to cultivate reviews on other outlets. Sometimes, even sites unrelated to medicine start offering ratings that can affect your reputation. For example, job sites like Indeed now let employees anonymously review their employers. These reviews can have a powerful effect on your ability to recruit the people you need, so you need to know what they say.

Staying on top of your reputation has value, even when you're not in "marketing mode." Thankfully, it's getting easier to do it all the time.

## **4 ways to improve your online reputation**

### **Set up review alerts**

When you claim your listings at a reviews site, some will automatically email you when new reviews are posted. Make sure at least one person in your office is responsible for keeping track of these emails.

### **Register for Google alerts**

Google alerts are free ([google.com/alerts](http://google.com/alerts)). Set them up to email you any time new information is published about yourself or your practice.

### **Ensure information is up to date**

Set a reminder for slow periods (e.g., the deductible reset in January or summer) and divide up the work of checking directories and checking online reputation.

### **Invest in reputation management software**

Reputation management software tools are easy to implement. Besides making it much easier to ask patients for new reviews, most offer other bells and whistles (e.g., text reminders), and often give you updates when new reviews are posted on key sites.

*Laurie Morgan, MBA is a partner and senior consultant for [Capko & Morgan](#). Her consulting focuses on practice management effectiveness and practice profitability. She is the author of the book *People, Technology, Profit: Practical Ideas for a Happier, Healthier Practice Business* as well as the *Management Rx* series of e-books and blogs at [capko.com/blog](http://capko.com/blog).*

Original Article Link: <https://www.physicianspractice.com/view/4-reasons-why-and-4-easy-ways-stay-top-your-online-reputation>