Online Reputation Management- Guest Post

[Editor's Note and disclosure: This is a guest post from Liz Becker, who works for an online reputation management firm called reputation.com. I hear their ads all the time on my way to work and have wondered about the value of engaging their services. If you are in an area where your practice is not full and there is significant competition with other

practices, it may be worth engaging the services of a firm like reputation.com. Like her, I've been surprised to see that most doctors don't have a website and that the online review companies are the top listings on a Google search for any given physician. I first accepted the post as a typical, non-paid guest post, although she later sent me a few bucks to persuade me to run it a couple weeks earlier than I was planning so she could meet her deadline. Obviously part of her job is getting the word out about reputation.com and guest posts are one of her methods.]

Doctors Lose Fortunes Due to Online Reputation Management Issues

As a reputation marketing professional, I often assume that everyone from the local carpenter to the chiropractor has a website. I needed to find a physician for a family member, so as usual, I turned to the Internet to look for doctors in my area that worked with my insurance company. But what I was surprised to find, was that out of the 50 doctors in my area only 4 or 5 of these had a website where I could see their

profile, hours, services, and educational accomplishments.

Really, could this be true? These are professionals who have spent thousands of dollars (and hours) training, and yet they couldn't even afford a basic website (not even a blog)? More importantly, these 50 doctors were exposing themselves to [online negative reputations](#) and reviews. Without a website or social media profile, they had no control over what their patients said and their prospective patients read about them on online review sites and through social media.

Negative Online Reviews

You don't have to have any serious problem with a patient to get a negative online review. These are just too easy to post. Anyone can leave a negative review on any of the public review websites such as [vitals.com](#), [angieslist.com](#), [yelp.com](#), or [healthgrades.com](#). *[Editor's note: Don't think these are a big deal? Google "your name physician your state" and see what pops up.]* All it takes is a patient who is a little upset at a long wait, a rude nurse, *[or the fact that you wouldn't give them any Percocet.]*

Why Does this Affect My Medical Practice?

Marketing statistics show that most people [believe all the reviews](#) they find online. These same statistics show that a person who finds negative reviews, no website, and nothing positive about a medical practice is about 50% more likely to have a change of heart and refrain from seeking an appointment with that medical practitioner.

Reviews are Important

Similar to most other researchers, I read all the reviews. I found one doctor who had a couple of bad reviews on Yelp, and just because of that I chose another physician. What does this mean for doctors who receive bad reviews and don't have any

positive information to compensate for the negative reviews? Well, loss of revenue of course! For every new patient lost, a medical practice could lose as much as $10,000 per year.

The Solution

Whether you have a website or not, you need to consider professional Physician Online Reputation & Review Management services. These professional services offer you a professional online presence with a space for positive patient reviews, articles, and positive information that gives you credibility in the online world. *[Services can be engaged both proactively and after a "negative online event" occurs. You should probably also consider starting your own website so that when someone Googles your name, your site shows up at the top of the search results. -ed]*

Have you been "attacked" online? Have you used any of these online reputation management services? What did you think? Comment below!