

# All About Google Questions and Answers

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Google Questions and Answers, a service the tech giant has recently rolled out, acts as an open-forum FAQ for your business. Displayed on the Google Knowledge Panel, users can post questions such as “What are your hours” and “Do you accept walk-ins,” allowing anyone, including the business owner, employees or even the general public to respond. The posts are organized according to popularity, which is determined by a thumbs up (which you can give if you have a Google account), meaning the ones that live at the top have been deemed the most helpful.

While this is great for Google and for patrons looking for answers, the open-forum concept of this feature can be

potentially detrimental to business owners who are not interacting with their Google Listing.

As we stated in our 2017 State of the Industry report, 90 percent of veterinary hospitals have claimed their Google Listing, but less than two percent of these practices were actively using Google Posts. This discrepancy is severe—along with claiming your hospital on Google, you must be engaged with its features—otherwise your online reputation could grow inaccurate depending on what is posted.

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You can, therefore, expect Google Questions and Answers to be used for feedback and opinions, much like Yelp and Facebook. However, like Yelp and Facebook, users will have the ability to leave posts that are unfair and misleading, and these comments are unable to be manually removed by the business, minimizing the options on monitoring the content.

There is also no limit to the number of questions and answers that can be published—someone may post an answer to a question only to have that answer contradicted immediately after it, creating inconsistent and garbled information.

When these scenarios occur, the company must then respond and set the record straight, adding another task—reputation management—to their ongoing job duties.

There are, however, steps you can take to help maintain your Google reputation:

- Pay attention to your listing and stay active on the Questions and Answers section. Be the first person to respond to prompts about your business while establishing the tone for future discussions.
- Come up with your own questions and answers so that the information is coming out of your mouth. By controlling the content, you can ensure that it is truthful and relevant.
- Use your thumbs. Anyone with a Google account can give a thumbs up to any question or answer, so raise those digital thumbs (and encourage your staff to do the same) for the accurate and relevant questions and answers.

- Use this opportunity to your advantage and highlight information that will help your business. If you're the only hospital in your area that can give treatment to an iguana or snake, a question such as "Is this the only hospital nearby that specializes in exotic animals?" can be used as an informative marketing tactic.

At iVET360, one of our specialties is reputation management, where we will maintain your web presence and make sure it stays accurate. We can also assist your practice in coming up with helpful questions for your staff to answer, which will then be posted on Google Questions and Answers for the public to see.

For additional information and more details about our suite of services, contact us today at <https://ivet360.com>.



Justin Vandenberghe is managing director of marketing at iVET360, which he co-founded in 2013. Under his leadership, iVET360 has developed veterinary marketing initiatives that reach millions of people each year. iVET360 provides private practice, primary-care veterinary hospitals with management services, including staff development trainings, marketing campaigns and financial, operational and customer care analytics. In addition to 17 percent growth in revenue, iVET360's clients saw a 24 percent increase in new client growth on average in 2015.

