


MEDICAL BILLING

It's a viable and lucrative business opportunity, But don't get hooked by a "SPG"

So, you are looking into starting your own medical billing business, and everywhere you look SPG's are lurking! What is a SPG you might ask? They are the Self-Proclaimed Gurus of medical billing whom are *instructing* you to "research, research, and research". Often these are the people who've failed at operating their own venture. And what are you supposed to be "researching" anyway? What are you supposed to be looking for? If you've never seen or used a medical billing software application, you could explore hundreds, and become overwhelmed, during your "researching". And more than likely you will end up just as confused – or more so – than when you started. So, why then do they send you away to "research, research, and research?"

It is a common ploy for those trying to sell you something of an inferior value, to operate under the guise of an impartial teacher/instructor – usually with a *paid subscription or educational* website. The home page proclaims scores of highly successful billers gathering and sharing information of the utmost importance to your future success. They are supposedly, anxiously waiting to help you behind the "send" button of the credit card order of your subscription. Will you really find the Great and Mysterious Oz of Medical Billing behind the website curtain?? Or, will it just be a master *salesperson*.

Sending you away to "research" is meant to give the appearance of someone who is ***NOT trying to sell you something***. It makes them appear to be teachers rather than salespeople.

And we all trust teachers more than salespeople, don't we?  These masters of self-promotion will also overuse the words "we" and "simply" within their materials. The latter word is usually in bold or italics to entice you to subscribe to their websites or courses, for a price. And then **WHAM!** You are then instructed on the need, importance of purchasing various items they are selling. "*We simply know what you need to know.*" "*There simply isn't anything better.*"

Another sales tactic of a SPG is to tell you what they are ***not***. "*We are not a software vendor.*" This is to give a negative, unflattering connotation, to true software vendors. Whenever you are being told what SPGs' are ***not***, do not assume that what they are ***not*** is actually *bad*. The SPG's objective is to make you believe he/she is not a salesperson, a vendor, nor developer/producer of the same item(s) they sell.

Please allow me to save you some time, trouble, disappointment, and money with this fact: Most SPGs are ***simply*** those that don't have the right stuff to operate a successful billing business. But, hey, they collected a little information along the way. You know the old saying... "If you can't do it, teach it." And they might as well make some money by selling you out-dated information and inferior products while they're at it.

Most successful billing business owners do not have the time, or inclination, to host websites. If a SPG tells you they currently operate a successful billing business, ask for the name and Google it. Also search the BBB database for that company. If you don't see it – it doesn't exist! If they tell you they *used to* have a successful billing business but sold it, gave it away, or turned it over to their cousin's sister-in-law's best friend because they felt the higher calling to teach you how to do it instead.... RUN, don't walk!

I know people who are incredibly good at self-promotion; “*Learn from me (‘us’) because I (‘we’) are simply the most knowledgeable and successful in the industry.*” The “we” behind that statement is meant to make the SPG's operation look like a team of gurus ready to assist you, when truly it is the self-promoter, only, running the show. They are great at self-promotion but not much else – except getting your hard-earned money. Just remember when you see a statement on a SPG website such as “**15 years medical billing industry experience**” it does not necessarily mean *current experience*. More often than not, it more accurately means, “**3 years of initial experience, plus 12 more years selling stuff**” for the SPG.

Yes, it is definitely good to research – but you must know exactly **what** to research. Here is a checklist of items you need to know:

1. Make sure the company/organization/course are accredited by the Better Business Bureau. If so, you will see the BBB Accredited logo on their websites and materials.
2. Make sure the company has a good standing record with the Better Business Bureau. You can check this on your own at <http://welcome.bbb.org/>
3. Does the company/organization/course promote a singular person as a “guru”? Is there a nice, big photograph of a smiling “professional guru” next to a, so-called, “factual” bio of lifetime successes? Don't *follow* a self-proclaimed guru. They've most likely failed at what you want to do! They want to sell you a subscription to their website or “learning center”. So while you are in their website, they can give you *undisputed* information and opinions which will lead you to buy several other items they're selling! You're inside, you're isolated, and you're being fed one-sided information. TRUE medical billing professionals do not hang out all day on websites teaching you, or disputing the one-sided statements of SPG owners.
4. Does the company develop, maintain and support its own software technology? If not, they are simply resellers of someone else's product(s), and have no control over the functionality, costs, or future of the products they're selling to you.

5. Does the company/organization/course presently *do what you want to do*? If not, you're definitely dealing with someone with old, stale information! A company or SPG offering marketing support or coaching cannot teach you what to say to get your foot into the door of a doctor's office if they're not presently going out and marketing themselves. Words that would get you a face-to-face with a decision maker 3 years ago are no longer useful today. If the person(s) you're relying on to assist, support, and teach you are not presently successful at it, then don't waste your money OR your time. This industry changes rapidly, technology changes rapidly. Do not trust anyone who is not successful at or presently doing what you want to do.
6. Do the company/ organization/ course give you many references to call? And don't use email to contact references! Make phone calls and ask detailed information about how the company assisted in their professional success. Also, don't settle on calling just one or two references off the top of the list. Call several! Many scams use "singers" rather than true clients as references. Do a Google search on their references. If these references truly have a billing company, they should at least have a phone listing for their organization. If not, don't count them as a reliable reference.
7. Are the SPG's successful clients easily visible? You should be able to interact with successful clients in a discussion-forum setting. Don't be fooled by someone that tells you that their successful clients network and congregate in a "private" area only. Usually there's no one in there!
8. **READ EVERYTHING CAREFULLY!** If a company or website says "We will help you sign new clients", look more deeply into that statement. Usually it means they will speak to a prospective client/physician that you're presenting your services to -in order to **orientate them with the software! And charge you for that orientation!** And what is to say this "company" will not call the doctor the next day and sell them on buying software from them, or on using their billing services instead! Having the company speak to your prospective client is not going to help you!! The doctor will wonder why someone else has to explain your most important basic tool to him or her, and why you can't explain it yourself. If you have to have someone else explain your services for you, it can't be too user-friendly to begin with. When you see "we will help you sign new clients", you naturally think that company is going to help you **get** clients. They won't... and this wording is very highly deceptive!! Do you really want to count on support from a company/organization/course, which

purposefully misleads or deceives you? I didn't think so. CLICK! Time to close that web browser.

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“The industry leader in Medical Billing & Practice Management Solutions”



A vertical advertisement for Synergy Medical Information Systems. At the top, the Synergy logo is on the left, and contact information (Company: www.synergymis.com, Software: www.pmx3.com, Toll Free: 800.652.3500) is on the right. Below this are three circular portraits of a man, a group of people, and a woman, labeled 'Single Physician Practice', 'Group Physician Practice', and 'Medical Billing Company' respectively. A central banner reads 'Offering You A Medical Billing Turn-Key Software Solution!'. Below the banner are images of software boxes for 'PRACTICE MANAGER X3' and 'PRACTICE MANAGER X3'. At the bottom, a man in a white lab coat is shown, and text reads 'Readers choice award Rated #10 by over 500 BC Advantage readers 2006 BC Advantage software survey'. The website www.pmx3.com is also visible.