

Michael Evans, National Billing Institute

Medical Billing Service Grows from \$10,000 Loan to \$100,000 Growth Per Year

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Michael Evans, owner and founder of **National Billing Institute** (<http://www.nationalbilling.com/default.aspx>), is a medical billing service success story. After achieving growth of \$100,000 per year over the last three years, Michael expects to see even greater growth this year.

Michael attributes the growth he's achieved to two key strategies:

1. An ongoing focus on customer service
2. Good software

Customer service, the "personal touch," is very important to his clients, Michael says.

"I give new clients my cell phone number and they know they can reach me when they have a question or a problem," he said. "In the beginning phases of a new account, especially, I stay involved. Doctors like to know they can talk to the CEO, and then I'll go out and tell my billers, 'work the aging,' and it will get done right away."

Having just hired a new salesperson from another medical billing company, in addition to hearing from his customers, Michael knows the flip side of good customer service as well.

"My new salesguy told me he worked for a company where they brought in new software they thought would take care of everything, and then everyone went on vacation. Of course, problems will occur and then you need someone to talk to. I always make sure my customers have someone to talk to."

As one of Kareo's oldest customers, National Billing Institute has grown with Kareo over the last six years, and Michael says that his growth "started with Kareo."

"I think I was one of your first clients," Michael says. "I started with Kareo before you had ERAs—we still had to print them out. I knew Kareo had been developed for medical billing companies, and it met our needs."

Michael found Kareo after trying two other medical software packages and finding them unworkable, either due to cost or difficulty or both. He loves the ease of use that Kareo provides, along with the way Kareo tracks claims. He said his billers like the same features, along with the speed of Kareo.

"We'll do some data entry to get new clients set up," Michael said, "and we've found that with Kareo we can enter a new customer in 45 seconds. With Lytec it took 3-4 minutes. That speed is essential to what we do."

Michael founded National Billing Institute after being fired from another job, a classic case of a window opening when a door closes. He had been trying to start a medical billing company while working at a full time job, but found it too difficult.

"I borrowed \$10,000 from my dad, answered an ad in the paper for training in what was then 'transmitting claims' and today we do much more than that—we offer full service medical billing," Michael explained. "We now have 30 practices in 20 different specialties in 17 different states. We want to be in half the country, so we're close to our goal."

National Billing promotes its services primarily through Internet marketing and sales staff, according to Michael. The company also offers a guarantee on its website that is a strong draw for practices:

"National Billing can collect on 100% of all payable claims"

Michael says that he can offer this guarantee because, first, National will doggedly pursue every payable claim until it is paid, and second, that Kareo helps National Billing achieve a high rate of payment with the way it updates patient records and the aging reports it provides.

When asked what tips he had on medical billing for physician practices, Michael laughed. "Outsource it to me," he said. But he quickly followed that up with the calculations he encourages practices to do on his website: Of the 30 practices he serves, each would have hired 1-2 billers. He has replaced that group of potentially up to 60 staff with the 8-10 staff he has.

"Each of my billers handles 5 accounts," he says. "That's much more cost-effective than handling it inhouse. And when calculating the cost of handling billing inhouse, practices mostly just add in the salary of their billers, but there

are a lot of hidden costs they need to take into account. That's why I developed the **Savings Calculator** (<http://www.nationalbilling.com/pages/289/default.aspx>) on our site—so doctors could calculate what having their billing inhouse was really costing them."

Another tip Michael offered for physician practices was to look at their aging.

"Too many practices just look at their monthly revenue, and as long as it's stable or trending upward, they think they're doing well," Michael says. "They don't look at their aging and realize that they could be making \$35,000 a month instead of \$30,000. They don't realize how much they **could be** making by better working their denials, etc. Practices need to do this on a regular basis."

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