

WebMD

WebMD

Type	Public (NASDAQ: WBMD ^[1])
Founded	1996
Headquarters	New York, New York, United States
Products	Health Information Services
Employees	1,400 (2009)
Website	WebMD.com ^[2]

WebMD (NASDAQ: WBMD ^[1]) is an American corporation which provides health information services. It was founded in 1996 by Jim Clark and Pavan Nigam as Healthscape, later Healthcon, and then acquired WebMD in 1999 to form Healthcon/WebMD. The name was later shortened to WebMD.

Services

It is primarily known for its public Internet site, which has information regarding health and health care, including a symptom checklist, pharmacy information, "drugs information" ^[3], blogs of physicians with specific topics and a place to store personal medical information.^[4] As of February 2011, WebMD's network of sites reaches an average of 86.4 million visitors per month^[5] and is the leading health portal in the United States.^[6]

URAC, the largest accrediting body for health care, has accredited WebMD's operations in everything from proper disclosures and health content to security and privacy continuously since 2001.^[7]

Service model

WebMD is financed by advertising, third-party contributions and sponsorships.^[8]

WebMD also offers services to physicians and private clients. For example, they publish *WebMD the Magazine*, a patient-directed publication distributed bimonthly to 85 percent of physician waiting rooms.^[9] Medscape is a professional portal for physicians with 30 medical specialty areas and over 30 physician discussion boards. WebMD Health Services provides private health management programs and benefit decision-support portals to employers and health plans.

WebMD operates other health-related sites besides WebMD including MedicineNet, Medscape, RxList, eMedicine and eMedicineHealth. These sites provide similar services to those of WebMD. MedicineNet is an online media publishing company.^[10] Medscape offers up-to-date information for physicians and other healthcare professionals.^[11] RxList offers detailed information about pharmaceutical information on generic and name-brand drugs.^[12] eMedicineHealth is a consumer site offering similar information to that of WebMD. It was first based on the site created for physicians and healthcare professionals called eMedicine.com.^[13]

Criticism

Allegations have been made that WebMD biases readers towards using drugs sold by their pharmaceutical sponsors in cases in which the drug is unnecessary.^[14]

In February 2010, WebMD's financial relationship with drug maker Eli Lilly was investigated by Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa.^[15]

References

- [1] <http://www.nasdaq.com/symbol/wbmd>
- [2] <http://www.webmd.com/>
- [3] <http://www.webmd.com/drugs/index-drugs.aspx>
- [4] "More turn to Internet for medical advice," (http://www.wwaytv3.com/more_turn_to_internet_for_medical_advice/09/2007) *WWAY News Channel 3*, September 7, 2007
- [5] (<http://investor.shareholder.com/wbmd/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=552196&CompanyID=WBMD>)
- [6] comScore Media Metrix (<http://sramanamitra.com/2007/08/21/web-30-online-health-part-2/>)
- [7] (<http://www.urac.org/directory/CompanyView.aspx?cid=C8700000F48&aid=1951&Type=Accreditnet>)
- [8] Some of the sponsors have influence over the content on Web.MD. "Web sites for medical information," (<http://www.newsobserver.com/105/story/702211.html>) *News and Observer*, September 13, 2007
- [9] "WebMD Corporation Launches Print Magazine," (http://www.writenews.com/2005/042205_webmd_magazine.htm) *The Write News*, April 22, 2005
- [10] About Us - Health and Medical Information Produced by Doctors - MedicineNet.com (<http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=12510>)
- [11] Medscape - About Us (<http://www.medscape.com/pages/public/about/about>)
- [12] RxList - The Internet Drug Index for prescription drugs and medications (<http://www.rxlist.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=64467>)
- [13] About Us - Overview - eMedicineHealth - Consumer First Aid and Health Information (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=60176>)
- [14] Heffernan, Virginia (4 February 2011). "A Prescription for Fear" (<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/06/magazine/06FOB-Medium-t.html>). *The New York Times*. .
- [15] <http://www.cchrint.org/2010/03/17/senator-grassley-investigates-webmd-links-to-eli-lilly-webmds-ad-for-people-to-undergo-a-lilly-depression-screening/>

External links

- WebMD (<http://www.wbmd.com>) (corporate website)
- WebMD Health (<http://www.webmd.com>) (consumer website)
- Medscape (<http://www.medscape.com>) (physician website)
- MedicineNet (<http://www.medicinenet.com>) (MedicineNet website)
- RxList (<http://www.rxlist.com>) (drugs and medications website)
- eMedicineHealth (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com>) (consumer first aid and health information website)
- Boots WebMD (<http://www.webmd.boots.com>) (UK consumer website)
- WebMD Health Services (<http://webmdhealthservices.com>) (private portal website)

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