



ACA FACT SHEET

Do You Know Your Better Business Bureau?



During ACA International's 2022 Fall Forum and Expo, Chicago's Better Business Bureau (BBB) President and CEO Steve Bernas presented with ACA members on the benefits of being a part of their local BBB, how it tracks consumer complaints and reviews and how it can help companies in the accounts receivable management (ARM) industry manage and improve their brand and reputation.

While the BBB has been seen by some as an adversary to the ARM industry, in many cases, there are opportunities to unite the organization and industry businesses.

Bernas discussed resources offered by the BBB with Tim Haag, president of State Collection Service, and George Buck, an ARM industry consultant, who have experience being a part of the BBB and seeing its benefits.

There have been more than 8 million consumer inquiries about the ARM industry through the BBB—meaning consumers were searching for information about the industry or a specific company on the BBB website or landed there through an internet search—in the last several years, and consumer complaints through the BBB are used in the [Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel Network reports](#).

Bernas encourages industry businesses to respond to consumer complaints, which helps to manage an agency's online reputation, and ask consumers to submit a review based on their experience, especially when they have positive feedback.

If you don't have a sense of your agency's online reputation, start by searching for your agency's name online through the [BBB's search tool](#). You can also set up a meeting with your [BBB chapter](#) to learn more about how to get involved, properly respond to complaints and the variety of resources the BBB has to offer.

Get Accredited

In an industry built on compliance and helping clients and consumers alike, [BBB Accreditation](#) is an important tool. Both the ARM industry and the BBB care about consumer protection and consumer trust.

By applying for and earning BBB accreditation, consumers will know your company operates honestly and with integrity, and in turn, you have access to business tools and creating a business profile page online.

Accredited businesses are listed as such on the BBB website, and having the accreditation seal on your website and customer-facing materials show your company is dedicated to the BBB standards for customer confidence. Even more, you will have access to tools and resources to help with company operations.

Businesses accredited by the BBB can build a business profile page with products, services and customer service results in the industry. Finally, consumers or clients can request a quote or more information from your business profile page.



Responding to BBB Complaints

In 2021, collection agencies received approximately 20,000 complaints, and just over 19,000, or 93% were settled, according to the BBB.

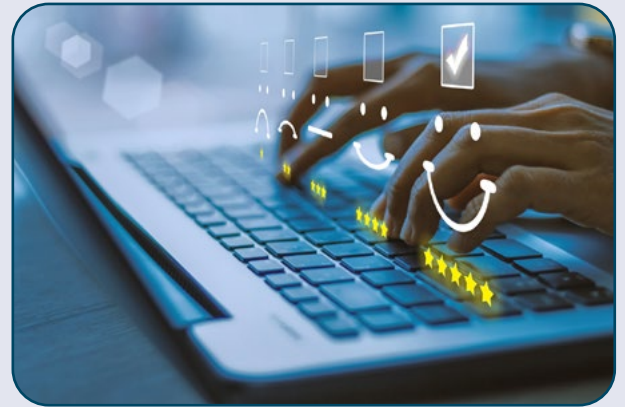
Reviewing and responding to complaints and inquiries is a chance to make sure they are accurate and to resolve any issues and restore loyalty for consumers or clients.

Customer complaints are also one of the most influential components of a BBB business rating, which is based on how frequently and successfully complaints are resolved. The BBB recommends focusing on those factors rather than just on the number of complaints.

As part of the BBB, you can also respond to customer reviews to clarify what happened in a certain situation, recognize the customer or client's experience and rectify any issues.

If the BBB accepts a customer's complaint, it is sent to the business for a response within 14 days. Customers are notified of a business's response, or if it did not respond, and complaints are typically closed within 30 days.

The BBB's top tips to respond to customer complaints are to respond professionally, sympathize with the customer to manage the situation and open up dialogue, apologize and reassure the customer, and get the facts or more information about their complaint. Find more information on responding to consumer complaints on the [BBB website](#).



Member Perspective

Megan Bryant, director of operations/client support for PayCourt, said sharing Better Business Bureau reviews with clients showcases collectors' skills and empathy.

"Clients can visit our website and see testimonials from consumers on their experience with us. Having consumers rate and review us in their own words is more powerful than anything. Being completely transparent with clients is the best way for them to understand the ethics and empathy your agency stands for."

More Resources

The BBB can help companies in the ARM industry manage and improve their brand and reputation, apply for BBB accreditation, get listed to update your business profile, and with dispute resolution.

Find more resources on business operations and managing customer relationships on the [BBB Business Resources website](#) and visit [ACA International's Advocacy Resource Center](#) for additional industry tools.