Check for accuracy STAT

The other night, I heard a loud, scratching noise in my chimney. It sounded as if an animal had gotten in. My first thought (and fear) was that a small bat was in there and it would then come into the house. Since it was close to midnight, there was nothing I could do except check the website for the local animal trapping company that I've see working in my neighborhood. According to Google results, their office opened at 7:00 a.m. The website listed an 800 number, and four local-area numbers. I decided to call first thing to see if they would send someone right away.

At 7:00 the next morning I called up the company. I got a message saying their offices opened at 8:00 a.m. Their Google My Business listing was wrong and their website did not list hours at all.

Sometimes companies spend more time and money on developing new marketing or on sales pitches, and they forget to check the basics. So, before you do anything else marketing-related, check your current stuff for accuracy. Do it now. Seriously.

What to check:

- Business name (is it complete, spelled correctly?)
- Address/es (accurate, current?)
- Telephone number/s (accurate, current?)
- Website URL
- Hours/days of operation
- Staff names/positions/contact information
- Email addresses
- Pricing information

Where to check:

- Your website
- Your social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.)
- Google results/Google maps/Google My Business
- Yelp and other review or listing sites (e.g., Angie's List) you appear in
- Printed materials (business cards, brochures, letterhead, postcards, etc.)

In the end, I was able to get the animal trapping company to come to my house later in the day. They checked the chimney and nothing was there (thank goodness!). They put some mesh on the chimney cap to prevent bats or birds from getting in.

This company has plenty of business around here. I've seen their trucks before as squirrels are constantly getting into attics (and bats are always in the belfry). They certainly have developed brand recognition. But you only call them when you need them and it is usually an urgent situation. Having multiple phone numbers and inaccurate hours is not helpful for anybody needing their services.

Any organization needs to consider what information potential users/customers/donors need to have, and then make sure that information is easily *available and accurate*. It just makes good marketing/communications sense.