

BEYOND UPTIME

**How Discoverability & EV Driver Trust
Decide your Charging Network's Growth**





INTRODUCTION

Marketing leaders at public charging networks: *How much revenue are you losing when EV drivers can't find or trust your charging stations?*

For emerging networks, the first challenge is not just uptime, but attracting those initial EV drivers to give you a try. If drivers encounter locked garages, confusing gates, outdated hours, or find no reviews validating charger reliability, they often skip the stop altogether and may never return.

In a market dominated by established brands like IONNA, Electrify America, and EVgo with strong brand name recognition and thousands of ratings, middle-market and emerging charge point operators (CPOs) can't rely solely on their reputation to attract EV drivers.

Discoverability and driver trust are the true equalizers that enable emerging networks to compete with larger incumbents. It's also a quick way to increase your utilization.

5 QUESTIONS EVERY CMO SHOULD ASK

1. Do drivers have proof your chargers are worth visiting?

For unknown networks, reviews build trust. New sites with nascent ratings are often skipped for highly rated ones. Positive reviews and photos on Google Maps or PlugShare often encourage first visits.

2. When's the last time you checked your access instructions?

Parkopedia reported that 92% of EV drivers struggle to locate public chargers, and 1 in 3 encounter physical access issues like gates.¹ One confusing arrival can kill repeat visits.

¹ Parkopedia Global Driver Survey, 2024.

5 KEY QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

3. Do your sites' operating hours match reality?

Drivers often report that local parking rules or posted hours don't reflect actual access limitations.

68% of U.S. EV owners have received unexpected parking fines while charging, many due to mismatches between listed and actual parking.² Regardless if it's *your* fault, drivers churn.

4. Are your directions and photos consistent across platforms?

Accurate addresses and real-time information matter more today than ever. Yet fewer than 40% of DC fast charging stations along key interstates provide real-time status updates on PlugShare.³

Inconsistencies across platforms - photos, directions, or real-time status - actively erode driver trust and utilization.

5. Who's replying to your public reviews?

A bad experience without a public resolution says "don't trust this station" to future drivers scrolling PlugShare or Google Maps. A quick, thoughtful reply can turn a potential churned customer into a loyal one.

LOW-HANGING FRUIT TO BOOST UTILIZATION

- Seed and respond to reviews for new and underperforming sites.
- Standardize access instructions and update them everywhere.
- Refresh photos and way-finding details after any site changes.
- Keep garage hours, pricing, and access codes in sync across platforms and in collaboration with your site host partners.

Maintaining a high operational uptime is a foundational requirement – but discoverability, trust, and first impressions decide which charging networks win loyal EV drivers. For newer and growing CPOs, these are some of the levers that close the gap with the big players.

² Parkopedia Global Driver Survey, 2024.

³ NBER Working Paper 33342: Charging Uncertainty: Real-Time Charging Data and Electric Vehicle Adoption, 2024.

WHY DRIVER REVIEWS MATTER



"First Try" Confidence

EV drivers are more likely to visit a new charging site if they see recent, positive reviews that confirm the station is working, accessible, and easy to find. Without reviews, a new site often gets skipped in favor of a known, "proven" location — even if it's farther away.



Mapping Platform Rankings

Google Maps: Star ratings and review count influence local search visibility (i.e., "EV charging near me").

PlugShare or ChargeHub: Highly-rated stations are more likely to appear in driver filters and "highest rated" lists.



Setting Expectations

Reviews often provide the details your CPMS can't: Exact garage entrance, best time to charge, nearby amenities. This reduces failed charging attempts and ensures EV drivers have a great first impression of your network.

Case in Point: One ChargeMate CPO partner improved their Plugscore by over 5 points and increased site traffic by following up with users one-on-one who encountered an issue.



The Business Case for Discoverability

Your marketing dollars bring drivers to your brand – but without discoverability, trust, and a strong first impression, you're inviting them to try the competition. Networks that actively manage discoverability and reviews often see:

- Faster ramp-up for new sites as drivers route to your sites.
- Higher repeat visits from drivers with a great first experience.
- Lower "session abandonment" due to access issues.
- Faster operational improvements from customer experience insights.

Every failed fast charge can mean \$25–\$50 in lost charging revenue. Across 1,000+ ports, that's millions of dollars in losses.

BOOST UTILIZATION ON NEW CHARGERS

1. Claim your listings on Google, Plugshare, Chargehub, etc.

On Google Business Profile, add each charger location (not just HQ). On PlugShare, claim your network and confirm site details (photos, amenities, open hours).

2. Seed early reviews to build trust.

Ask early drivers (staff, installers, fleet partners) to leave honest reviews describing access, charge speed, etc. Aim for 5+ reviews in the first month.

3. Add signage & QR codes for new users.

"Help the next driver find us — leave a review" with a direct link to Google and/or PlugShare. Consider adding QR codes on the front of the charger or payment screen.

4. Survey after a successful charge.

In-app: Push a quick post-session notification with a review link.


No app: Email follow-up for drivers who opt in.

5. Engage with your EV drivers!

Thank positive reviewers and address issues in negative comments. Public responses signal to drivers (and algorithms) that you're invested in a reliable experience.

AUDIT YOUR DRIVER EXPERIENCE NOW

For a limited time, request a complimentary Driver Experience Audit from ChargeMate. We'll show you where drivers are getting stuck, how it's impacting revenue, and identify minor updates that can make a big difference in your utilization and customer retention.

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