

MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT · SAMPLE

Kelpwood Animal Hospital

Reputation · Customer voice · Competitors · Online visibility

Marisol Bay, California

Competitive radius: 15 miles (15 practices within 11 miles)

Part of a national veterinary group

Prepared October 13, 2026

Sample report. Business, people and place names are fictional and some identifying details were changed; the findings come from a real local market analysis based on public web sources gathered October 13, 2026.

Executive summary

Kelpwood Animal Hospital is well liked by its clients but is losing the visibility and convenience battle to The Holloway Center, a stronger-branded practice 0.3 miles up the same road. Clients rate Kelpwood **4.7 on Google (276 reviews)** and **4.3 on Yelp (161 reviews)**. They praise its doctors by name, its thoroughness, and its willingness to see rabbits, guinea pigs and birds.

The five things that matter most

1. Its own listings disagree about when it is open.

Google and Yelp show Sunday closed; Pets Best, Vety and a Yelp answer from the business manager say it is open Sunday. Nothing loses a sick-pet visit faster than a locked door or a client who doesn't call.

2. Exotic pets are its best opening, and it is not telling anyone.

Among the nearby practices reviewed, only one other general practice (Feather & Fur Hospital, Northbluff) leads its marketing with exotic care; Tidewater ER sees exotics, but for emergencies only. The regional House Rabbit Society chapter's vet list names no Marisol Bay general practice. Kelpwood's web page mentions "exotics and pocket pets" in a single line.

3. Cost is the top fear of pet owners right now.

San Diego dog owners spend about 38% more on vet care than the national average, and nationally 52% of owners have skipped or declined care. Kelpwood already has the answer, the Bellwether Plus membership with unlimited free exams, but its pages barely explain it.

4. Corporate ownership is a trust risk.

Kelpwood is part of Bellwether Pet Health, a national veterinary group, and "private equity vet" complaints about price hikes and upselling are common online. Its nearby rivals win reviews by being called "honest" and "no upsell."

5. AI search tools can barely read its page.

The location page delivers almost no readable text unless a browser runs its scripts. AI assistants that answer "best vet in Marisol Bay" are likely to cite Holloway, whose site has dozens of service pages, awards and FAQs.

TOP THREE MOVES Fix hours on every listing this week; build a real "Exotic & Pocket Pet Vet in Marisol Bay" page and get listed with local rabbit and bird groups; lead with transparent pricing and the membership, delivered by doctors clients already know by name.

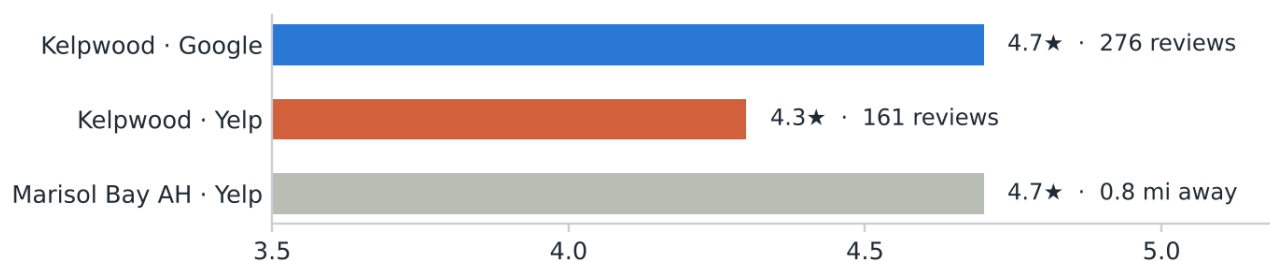
SECTION 1

Where Kelpwood stands today

A loyal, long-tenured client base and strong doctor reputations, but a weaker Yelp score and messy listings show the gaps.

Source	Rating	Reviews	What it says
Google	4.7	276	Clients praise Dr. Lane, Dr. Cole and Dr. Ortiz-Grant, thorough write-ups, and last-minute help
Yelp	4.3	161	Top highlight (in 20 reviews): Dr. Lane emailing to check in on a cat after GI issues
Nextdoor	Recommended	—	Praised for caring staff and birds and rabbits; some pricing concerns, but clients say it is worth it
Fresh Chalk	#2 of 26 local vets	11 votes	90% like it

Yelp trails Google by 0.4 stars



What clients love (from Google and Yelp)

- **Long relationships.** One Google reviewer has used Kelpwood for over 30 years; a Yelp reviewer since 1987.
- **Thorough doctors who solve problems other vets missed,** such as a skin condition other clinics couldn't figure out.
- **Exotic and pocket pet care.** Yelp reviewers mention a guinea pig cyst removal and a rabbit treated after a bad experience elsewhere. One is grateful Kelpwood still takes pet rabbits.
- **Fitting in urgent cases.** A dog attacked by another dog was seen at closing time because the front desk caught the doctor before she left.
- **No judgment about budget,** mentioned directly in a recent Google review.

Where it is weaker

- Yelp sits 0.4 stars below Google (4.3 vs 4.7). Marisol Bay Animal Hospital, 0.8 miles away, holds 4.7 on Yelp.
- Hours are inconsistent across the web (see Online visibility).
- Old details still circulate: Fresh Chalk lists an outdated phone number instead of the current one.
- The parent group is hiring an associate veterinarian for this hospital. That signals growth or turnover; either way, new doctors need introducing to clients who choose vets by name.

WHAT RIVALS DON'T ADVERTISE The Bellwether Plus membership: unlimited free exams, 10% off services and \$5 nail trims, marketed at under \$25 a month. Plus an in-house cancer-screening blood test, CareCredit and Scratchpay financing.

SECTION 2

What customers are saying

Pet owners want four things: a vet they trust not to upsell, a straight answer on cost, a fast appointment, and a doctor who explains. Hyper-local Reddit discussion of area vets is thin, so this combines hundreds of local Google and Yelp reviews with national surveys and forums.

1. Cost and value anxiety (the biggest driver)

Cost is the top fear, and most owners who walk away were never given options



Sources: Hoodline citing KPBS; Gallup / PetSmart Charities State of Pet Care.

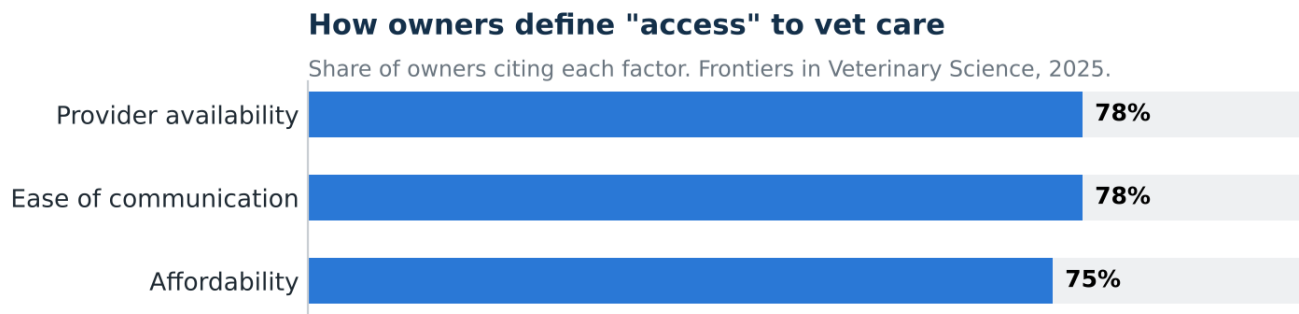
- San Diego dog owners spend about \$1,100 a year on vet care, roughly 38% above the national average; local dental cleanings are estimated near \$700, up from about \$320 in 2021 (Hoodline, citing KPBS).
- Nationally, 52% of pet owners skipped or declined needed care in the past year. Even one in three households earning \$90,000+ did so because of cost (Gallup / PetSmart Charities).
- **The opportunity:** 73% of owners who turned down care for cost were never offered a cheaper option, and 46% were not given a plan that fit their pet's practical needs (same Gallup study).

YOUR MOVE Offer a "good / better / best" estimate. It is a simple way to keep the clients who would otherwise walk.

2. Trust and "no upsell"

- The local reviews that sell competitors most often mention honesty: Marisol Bay Animal Hospital clients cite "no upsell" and one moved there for about a third of the price.
- Feather & Fur Hospital and Northbluff Veterinary Hospital reviewers praise vets who skipped unneeded tests.
- Corporate ownership is a live sore spot. Private equity firms own nearly 30% of US vet clinics, and vet prices rose 32% from March 2020 to March 2024 (Fortune). On Reddit, owners talk about leaving "private equity vets" after small charges stack up.
- Surprise bills hurt the strongest brand nearby: a Holloway Center reviewer complained a surgery quote rose 50% after pre-op labs.

3. Access: same-day and weekend



- Holloway Center reviewers repeatedly praise same-day appointments, Sunday availability and follow-up calls.
- Feather & Fur Hospital reviewers highlight being open on Sunday and seeing pets within a day or two.
- A 2025 peer-reviewed study found owners define "access" mainly as provider availability (78%), ease of communication (78%) and affordability (75%).

4. Communication and follow-up

- Kelpwood's best Yelp highlight is a doctor emailing to check on a cat. Driftline Animal Hospital and Holloway reviewers praise the same thing.
- An industry survey of 2,000+ US owners found communication was the most powerful driver of satisfaction (Today's Veterinary Business, on the HABRI / Chewy Health study).
- PetDesk's survey of 1,000 North American owners found more than half have had trouble booking appointments; younger owners are most likely to switch vets.

5. Exotic pet owners feel underserved

- Rabbit and guinea pig owners describe calling several vets before finding one who will see their pet, and a San Diego rabbit owner was surprised a spay was quoted at \$500 (BinkyBunny forum).
- The regional House Rabbit Society chapter's vet directory lists only emergency hospitals for the area; no Marisol Bay primary-care vet appears.
- Kelpwood's own reviewers are grateful it still takes rabbits. That gratitude is a sign of scarcity.

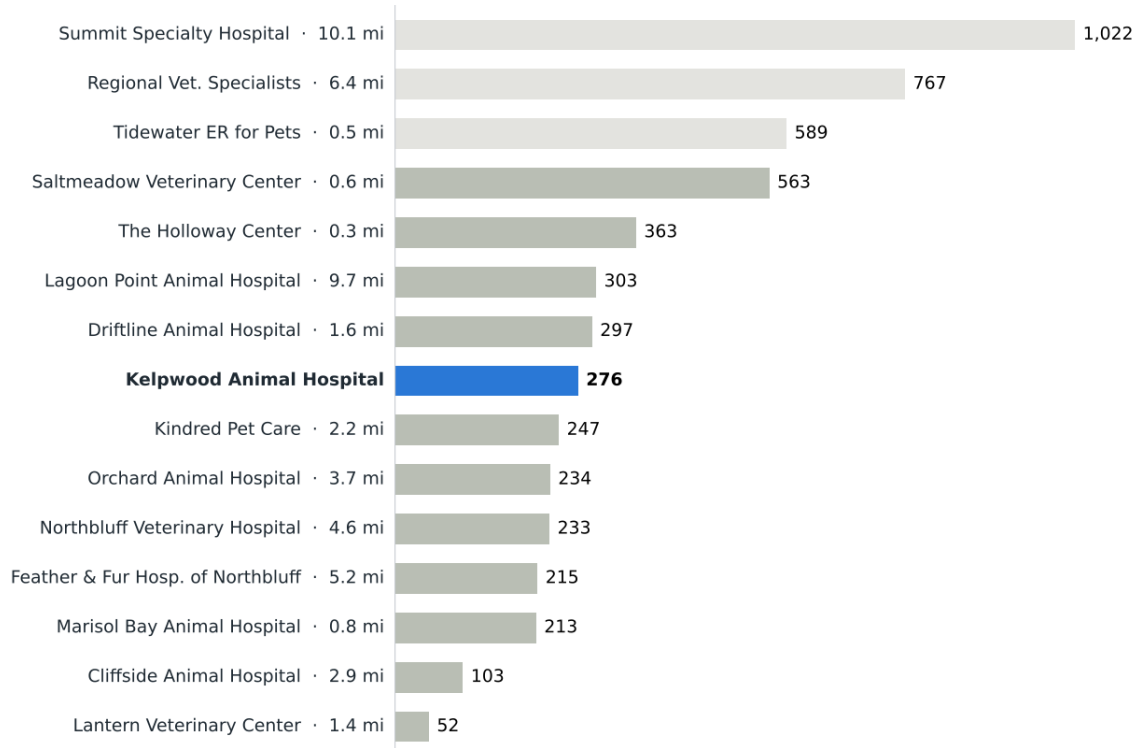
SECTION 3

Competitive landscape (within 15 miles)

The Holloway Center matters most: 0.3 miles away, open seven days, with more reviews and awards than anyone nearby. Four general practices lie within a mile, and 24-hour emergency care is next door.

Kelpwood sits mid-pack on Google review volume

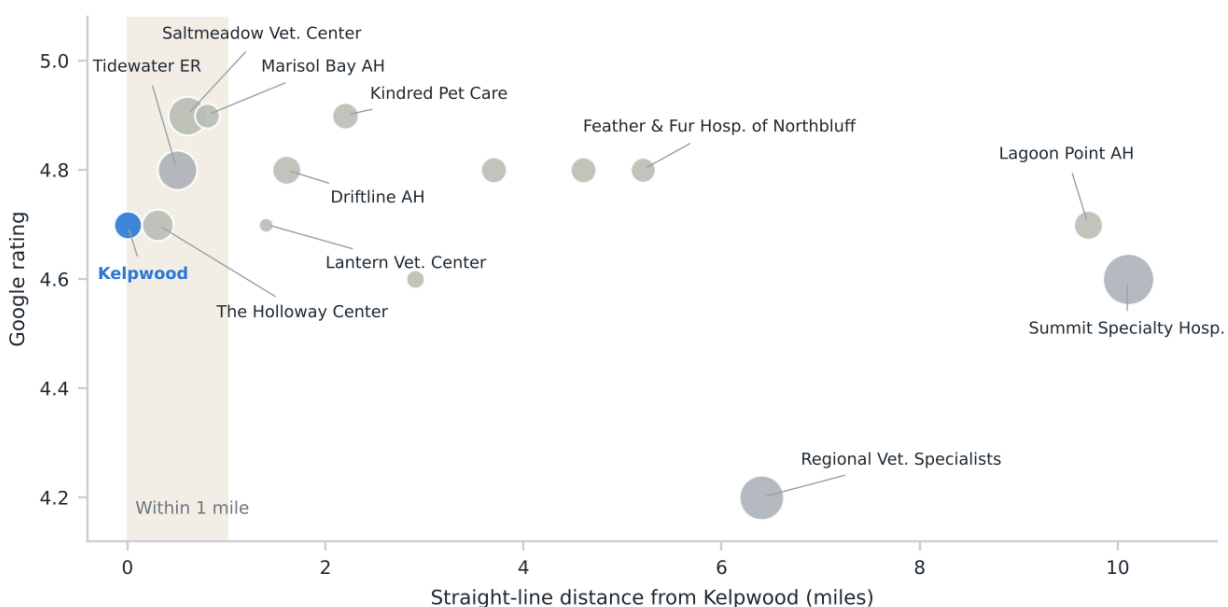
#5 of 12 general practices. Lighter bars: 24/7 emergency or specialty hospitals.



Star ratings are nearly tied, so review count is what sets practices apart in Google's local results. Kelpwood trails Holloway by about 90 reviews and every high-volume competitor nearby.

Ratings are nearly tied; four practices sit within a mile

Bubble size = Google review count. Grey = 24/7 emergency or specialty.



Weekend primary care is rare, and Kelpwood's Sunday status is unclear

	Weekdays	Saturday	Sunday
Kelpwood Animal Hospital	Open	Open	Unclear
The Holloway Center	Open	Open	Open
Feather & Fur Hosp. of Northbluff	Open	Open	Open
Lagoon Point Animal Hospital	Open	Open	Open
Orchard Animal Hospital	Open	Open	Closed
Northbluff Veterinary Hospital	Open	Open	Closed
Lantern Vet. Center (to 9 pm)	Open	Closed	Closed
Marisol Bay Animal Hospital	Open	Closed	Closed
Driftline Animal Hospital	Open	Closed	Closed
Kindred Pet Care	Open	Closed	Closed
Cliffside Animal Hospital	Open	Closed	Closed
Saltmeadow (Mon–Thu)	Open	Closed	Closed
Tidewater ER · Regional · Summit	24/7 ER	24/7 ER	24/7 ER

All 15 practices at a glance

Practice	Distance	Google	Hours edge	Known for
Kelpwood Animal Hospital	—	4.7	Mon-Fri to 7 pm; Sun unclear	Exotics, long-tenured doctors, Bellwether Plus
The Holloway Center	0.3 mi	4.7	7 days, to 7 pm weekdays	AAHA, Cat Friendly Gold, awards, boarding, urgent care
Tidewater ER for Pets	0.5 mi	4.8	24/7, walk-in	Emergency for dogs, cats, birds, exotics
Saltmeadow Veterinary Center	0.6 mi	4.9	Mon-Thu	Nonprofit, lower-cost surgery
Marisol Bay Animal Hospital	0.8 mi	4.9	Weekdays 9-5	One-doctor, "no upsell," on time
Lantern Veterinary Center	1.4 mi	4.7	Weekdays to 9 pm	Walk-in urgent care, senior pets
Driftline Animal Hospital	1.6 mi	4.8	Weekdays	Laparoscopic ("LOVE") spays, dentistry
Kindred Pet Care	2.2 mi	4.9	Weekdays	Fear Free, long-term doctors
Cliffside Animal Hospital	2.9 mi	4.6	Weekdays	Mixed reviews of one doctor
Orchard Animal Hospital	3.7 mi	4.8	Mon-Sat	Calm visits, waived first exam fee
Northbluff Veterinary Hospital	4.6 mi	4.8	Mon-Sat	Minimally invasive spays, conservative testing
Feather & Fur Hospital of Northbluff	5.2 mi	4.8	7 days	Birds and exotics, Sunday hours
Regional Veterinary Specialists	6.4 mi	4.2	24/7	Specialty referral and ER
Lagoon Point Animal Hospital	9.7 mi	4.7	7 days	Primary care, Sunday hours
Summit Specialty Hospital (Inland Valley)	10.1 mi	4.6	24/7	Specialty surgery, oncology, ER

Distances are straight-line from Kelpwood. Ratings and hours from Google Maps listings pulled October 13, 2026.

The Holloway Center for Veterinary Care (0.3 mi)

- **Position:** Premium, award-heavy "pets are family" practice; founder-led for 30+ years; listed in a 2026 national "best animal hospitals" ranking, 2025 gold in a regional readers' poll, AAHA since 2005, Cat Friendly Gold.
- **Recent moves:** October \$50-off dental promotion on its homepage; 12 veterinarians listed plus visiting board-certified radiology and cardiology.
- **Winning:** Same-day and Sunday visits come up again and again. One reviewer tried two other places before Holloway could see their dog on a Sunday.
- **Losing:** Price. Reviews call it more expensive than most, and one client left after a surgery estimate rose 50%. Yelp rating is 4.1 on Apple Maps' Yelp feed versus 4.7 on Google.

YOUR MOVE Don't out-award Holloway; out-honest it. Publish price ranges for common visits, offer tiered estimates, and push Bellwether Plus's free exams as the answer to Holloway's fees.

Tidewater ER for Pets (0.5 mi)

- **Position:** 24/7 emergency, no appointment, sees birds and exotics.
- **Winning:** 589 reviews at 4.8; clients describe life-saving urinary-blockage and toxin cases.
- **Why it matters:** Every after-hours and "can't get in today" visit goes here. Many of those pets then need a primary vet.

YOUR MOVE Build a referral loop. Ask Tidewater to send follow-up rechecks to Kelpwood, and promise same-week recheck slots.

Marisol Bay Animal Hospital (0.8 mi)

- **Position:** One-doctor practice (Dr. Sandy Weller); personal, on time, no upsell.
- **Winning:** 4.9 on Google, 4.7 on Yelp. A Yelp reviewer moved here for about a third of the price.
- **Losing:** Weekdays 9–5 only, closed weekends. One doctor means limited same-day capacity.

YOUR MOVE Own the hours it can't cover. Kelpwood is open until 7 pm on weekdays and on Saturdays; say so in the Google profile and ads.

Driftline Animal Hospital (1.6 mi)

- **Position:** Surgical and dental depth, known for laparoscopic spays; clients research and drive for Dr. Hale.
- **Winning:** 4.8 from 297 reviews; senior and end-of-life care praised.
- **Losing:** Closed weekends.

YOUR MOVE Market the in-house cancer-screening blood test and senior-pet care alongside weekend hours.

Kindred Pet Care (2.2 mi) and Lantern Veterinary Center (1.4 mi)

- **Kindred:** 4.9 from 247 reviews, Fear Free certified, clients drive from downtown San Diego. Closed weekends.
- **Lantern:** Walk-in urgent care until 9 pm weekdays plus primary care for seniors. Small (52 reviews) but fast-growing.

YOUR MOVE Fear Free or low-stress handling is now an expected promise. If Kelpwood's team practices it, put it on the page.

Feather & Fur Hospital of Northbluff (5.2 mi)

- **Position:** The only nearby general practice that leads with birds and exotics; open Sundays 9-5; AAHA.
- **Winning:** Reviewers praise not pushing unnecessary tests and getting seen within a day or two.
- **Why it matters:** It is Kelpwood's direct rival for exotic owners from Seagrove, Northbluff and Rancho Verde.

YOUR MOVE Be the exotic vet for Marisol Bay, Lagoon Point and Inland Valley, which Feather & Fur doesn't target.

Saltmeadow Veterinary Center (0.6 mi)

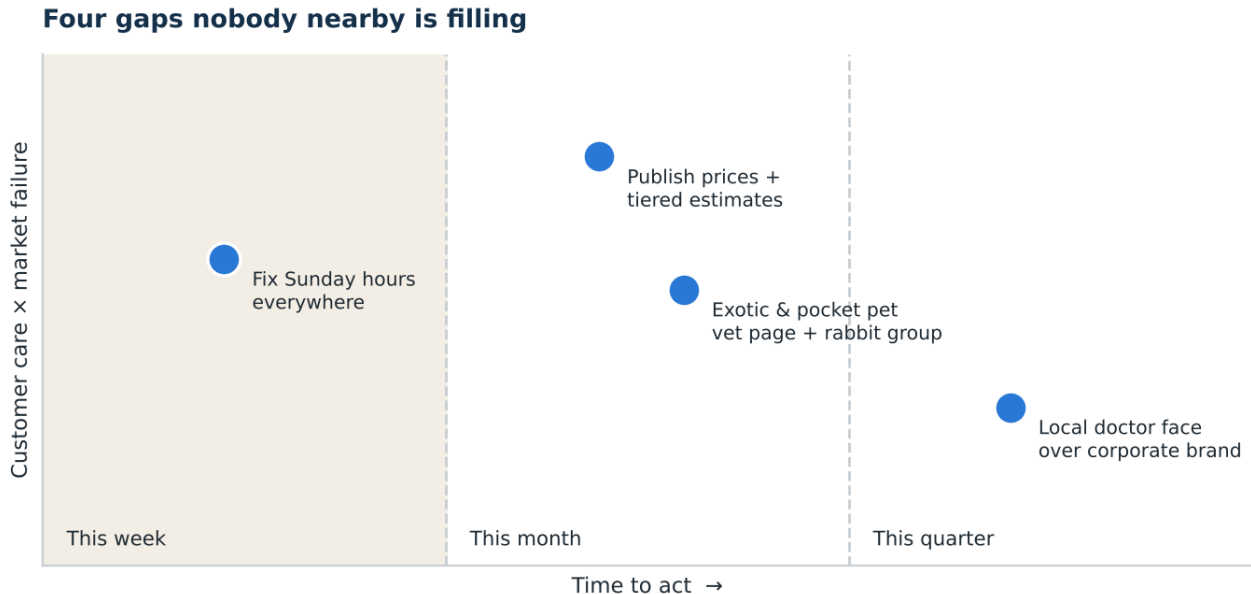
- **Position:** Nonprofit, surgery-only, praised for affordability and "no upselling."
- **Why it matters:** Price-sensitive spay, neuter and soft-tissue surgery clients go here.

YOUR MOVE Don't compete on price for surgery. Compete on continuity: one team before, during and after.

SECTION 4

Gaps nobody is filling

Ranked by how much customers care, how badly the market fails, and how fast Kelpwood can act.



Analyst assessment based on the report's evidence

1. Nobody tells you the price before you walk in

Speed: This month. The gap: Owners fear surprise bills. Holloway's website lists dozens of services but no prices, and the research turned up no published price list for any nearby practice.

The evidence: Holloway's 50%-higher surgery quote; Gallup's finding that 73% of owners who declined care were never offered a cheaper option; Marisol Bay Animal Hospital winning switchers on price.

YOUR MOVE Publish "starting at" prices for an exam, core vaccines, a dental cleaning and a spay. Train the team to offer two or three treatment options on every estimate.

2. No primary-care exotic vet in Marisol Bay says so out loud

Speed: This month. The gap: Rabbit, guinea pig, bird and reptile owners search hard for a vet; the nearest practice that markets exotics is in Northbluff, 5.2 miles south.

The evidence: Kelpwood's own reviews thank it for still seeing rabbits; forum posts describe calling vet after vet; the regional House Rabbit Society chapter lists no Marisol Bay primary-care vet.

YOUR MOVE Build a dedicated exotics page naming species and the doctors who see them. Apply to the House Rabbit Society chapter's vet list.

3. Sunday primary care is rare, and Kelpwood hides whether it has it

Speed: This week. The gap: Only Holloway, Feather & Fur and Lagoon Point Animal Hospital clearly offer Sunday primary-care hours.

The evidence: Holloway reviewers credit Sunday visits; Kelpwood's listings disagree about Sunday.

YOUR MOVE Decide the real Sunday hours and publish them everywhere. If open, make "open Sundays" a headline.

4. "Corporate" without a local face

Speed: This quarter. The gap: Owners are wary of corporate vets but loyal to individual doctors. None of the corporate-owned nearby practices tells a strong local-doctor story.

The evidence: Kelpwood's best reviews name doctors (Lane, Cole, Ortiz-Grant, Lowry); Holloway's whole brand is its founder.

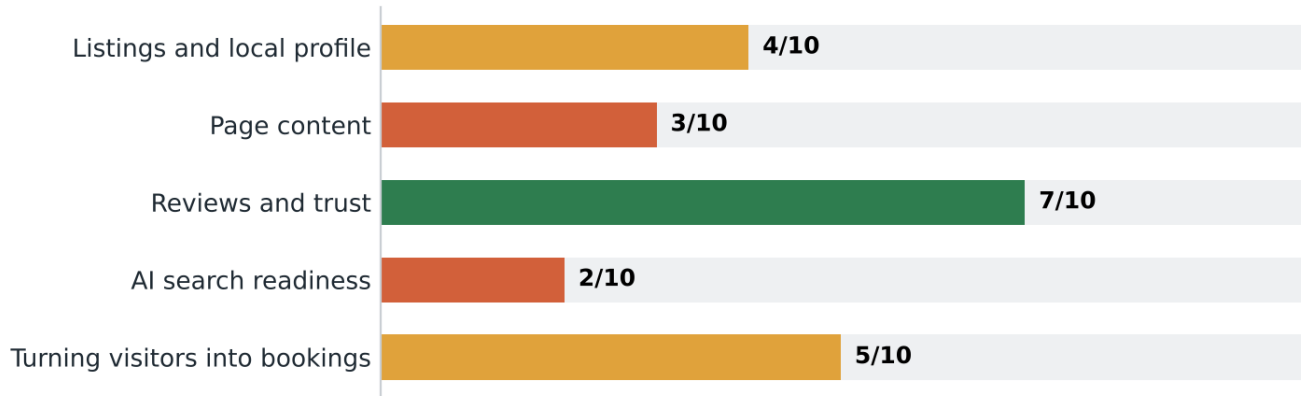
YOUR MOVE Put the doctors front and center: bios, photos and "20+ years in Marisol Bay" on every page. Use the parent group's backing as a quiet benefit (specialists to consult, membership savings), not the headline.

SECTION 5

Online visibility: Google search and AI search

Kelpwood ranks on its name and reviews, not its website: its single location page on the parent group's site is thin compared with Holloway's dozens of service pages, and AI assistants have little to quote from it.

Online visibility scorecard: overall 4 out of 10



Area	Score	Why
Listings and local profile	4	Hours and phone disagree across sites (observed)
Page content	3	One generic page; no species, doctor or price detail visible (observed)
Reviews and trust	7	4.7 Google rating, doctors named in reviews (observed)
AI search readiness	2	Page text loads only through scripts; no FAQs found (observed)
Turning visitors into bookings	5	"Book your vet appointment" in the description; membership barely explained (observed)

How it was checked: the Kelpwood page and Holloway's homepage were read; listings were compared across Google, Yelp, Pets Best, Vety, Fresh Chalk and Nextdoor; and local vet search results were reviewed. "Observed" means seen; "likely" means judgment.

What a pet owner sees when checking Sunday hours

Google

Closed

Yelp listing

Closed

Pets Best

Open 9-6

Vety

Open 8-5

Yelp answer from business manager

Open 8-5

5 sources,
3 different answers

What we found

Issue	Severity	Evidence	Fix
Sunday hours conflict	High	Google and Yelp: closed. Pets Best: 9–6. Vety: 8–5. Yelp answer from business manager: open 8–5	Set one truth; update Google, Yelp, Apple Maps, Pets Best, Vety, Nextdoor
Old phone and website still listed	Medium	Fresh Chalk shows an outdated phone number; Nextdoor and others link the hospital's old domain (it redirects)	Claim and correct those listings
Page text hidden from simple readers	High	A page fetch returned only the title and description, while Google's snippet shows the full text	Ask the parent group whether location pages can serve plain text in the page itself
Generic title and description	Medium	"Veterinarian Marisol Bay, CA Kelpwood Animal Hospital"; description says only "Book your vet appointment today"	Add "exotic pets," "open Saturdays," "20+ years"
No exotics page	High	Exotics mentioned in one sentence	Create a dedicated exotic and pocket pet page
No FAQs, prices or doctor bios	Medium	Not visible in what could be read	Add a short FAQ: hours, prices, membership, species
Holloway's lead in content	High (competitive)	Holloway has separate pages for about 60 services, a blog, awards and a local community page	Can't match quickly; focus on niches Holloway doesn't own (exotics, price clarity)

Why AI search matters here

When someone asks ChatGPT, Perplexity or Google's AI Overview "best vet in Marisol Bay" or "vet for rabbits near Marisol Bay," the answer is assembled from pages the AI can read and quote. Holloway's site gives it award names, doctor credentials and service pages to cite. Kelpwood's page, as read, gives it only a title. Directories describe Kelpwood inconsistently: Vety calls it a dog and cat vet while also saying it treats birds, rabbits and reptiles. An AI pulling from those sources may leave Kelpwood out or describe it wrongly.

LIKELY QUICK WINS A plain-text FAQ that answers the exact questions people ask; consistent facts (hours, species, phone) on every listing; and being named on trusted local lists such as the House Rabbit Society chapter's directory and the regional "Best of" readers' poll.

Pages worth creating (top 8)

Page	What people search	Why it can win
Exotic & pocket pet vet in Marisol Bay	"rabbit vet near me," "guinea pig vet Marisol Bay"	Little local competition; reviews already support it
Vet visit prices in Marisol Bay	"how much is a vet visit," "dog dental cost San Diego"	No nearby practice publishes prices; AI tools cite clear numbers
Bellwether Plus membership explained	"vet membership plan," "unlimited vet visits"	Unique local offer, currently unexplained
Saturday and Sunday vet hours	"vet open Sunday Marisol Bay"	Matches urgent searches; requires fixing hours first
Rabbit spay and neuter	"rabbit spay San Diego cost"	Forum owners ask this directly
Bird and reptile wellness exams	"avian vet near me"	Only Feather & Fur competes
Meet our doctors	Doctor names from reviews	People search vets by name
What to do after an ER visit	"follow-up after emergency vet"	Captures Tidewater's patients next door

SECTION 6

Action plan

The first week is about fixing what's broken; the first month about saying what Kelpwood already does well; the quarter about owning exotics and trust.

THIS WEEK

- Confirm real Sunday hours; update Google, Yelp, Apple Maps, Pets Best, Vety, Fresh Chalk and Nextdoor to match.
- Correct the old phone number on Fresh Chalk and claim any unclaimed listings.
- Rewrite the Google profile description: exotic and pocket pets, open until 7 pm weekdays and Saturdays, 20+ years in Marisol Bay, unlimited free exams with Bellwether Plus.
- Reply to every Yelp review from the last 12 months, starting with the negative ones.

THIS MONTH

- Publish "starting at" prices for an exam, core vaccines, dental cleaning and spay/neuter.
- Train front desk and doctors to give two or three options on every estimate, and confirm any change before it happens.
- Launch an exotic and pocket pet page; apply to the House Rabbit Society chapter's vet list.
- Add doctor bios and photos, especially for doctors named in reviews and any new associate.
- Ask happy clients for reviews by text after visits to close the Yelp gap.

THIS QUARTER

- Build a referral loop with Tidewater ER: same-week recheck slots for its patients who need a primary vet.
- Promote Bellwether Plus as the local answer to vet-cost worries: a simple page, a counter card, and a line in every estimate.
- Create the remaining pages from the content list, each with a short FAQ.
- Enter the regional "Best of" readers' poll (2026 voting ran late March to mid-April) and encourage clients to vote.
- Ask the parent group whether location pages can serve their text directly, so AI tools can read them.

What to watch in the next 30 days

Watch	Why it matters	Trigger to act
Holloway Center promotions	Its October \$50-off dental offer targets Kelpwood's dental clients	If Holloway extends the promo into November or adds a membership, match with a Bellwether Plus dental message
Kelpwood's Yelp rating	At 4.3 it trails its own 4.7 on Google and Marisol Bay Animal Hospital's 4.7 on Yelp	Any new 1–2 star review: respond within 48 hours
Lantern Veterinary Center	Young (founded 2023), open evenings, adding primary care	If it adds weekend hours, it competes directly on access
New associate veterinarian	Clients choose by doctor name	When hired, announce with a bio and photo
Local cost coverage	Regional public media keeps vet costs in the news	A new story is a chance to promote transparent pricing

Methodology and sources

Research ran October 13, 2026, using public web sources: Google Maps listings, Yelp, Nextdoor, directory sites, competitor websites, national surveys and pet-owner forums. Yelp pages could only be read through search snippets, so Yelp quotes are paraphrased. Nextdoor and private Facebook groups require a login and were not searched. Ratings change daily; figures are as of this date. Charts are drawn from the figures in this report; the gap map placement is an analyst assessment. **This is a sample:** all practice, people, group and local place names are fictional, and some identifying details have been changed. Any resemblance to a real business is coincidental.

- The client's location page on its parent group's website
- The client's listings on Yelp, Nextdoor, Fresh Chalk, Pets Best and Vety
- The parent group's membership page and associate veterinarian job post
- Competitor websites, Google Maps listings and reviews (Yelp, GeniusVets, thepets.net)
- Regional House Rabbit Society chapter vet directory
- Gallup / PetSmart Charities State of Pet Care
- Hoodline on KPBS San Diego vet costs
- Fortune on private equity in vet care
- Frontiers in Veterinary Science access study
- Today's Veterinary Business on HABRI / Chewy Health survey
- PetDesk Pet Parent Research Report
- BinkyBunny forum: rabbit spay in San Diego