

ONLINE REVIEWS

Ultimate guide to get good reviews for your online business



ROQUEPRESS



Online reviews are one of the most influential ways to show potential customers your company's value. Since people now, more than ever, are turning to the Internet to find recommendations, generating online reviews has become integral to the success of businesses old and new. If you're not sure where to start, or what you're doing wrong, you've come to the right place. Keep reading to learn everything you need to know about online reviews.

01

The Importance of Getting Online Reviews



While most businesses understand the importance of having a strong online presence in today's world, many people still underestimate the power of online reviews. The reality of it is simple: online reviews can make or break your firm.

Prospective customers who hear your company's name, visit your site or even walk by your storefront will almost always head to a review site and read what other people have to say before taking any action. In fact, 90% of consumers say they read online reviews about a business before physically visiting them. Even Google has started to pay attention. Firms with more, higher rated reviews climb to the top of the search results. It's how the world works.

People put their trust in strangers' opinions because they believe them to be authentic and unbiased. This is why Angie's List has been so successful and why Yelp is almost always visited before anyone heads to a new restaurant. In fact, 85% of consumers place just as much trust in online reviews as they do personal recommendations. Positive reviews validate your business to new customers and negative reviews send people to your competition. The social proof of business validation is now more powerful than ever, which is why it's important to have a strong pool of reviews available for people to read. If you're still not convinced, keep reading.

Reviews increase sales

If prospective customers look at your business' reviews before making any purchase or finalizing a deal for services, it's no surprise that reviews influence sales. If your business has no reviews - that's 0 positive and 0 negative - it's likely you'll still lose business to someone who can show customer satisfaction through honest reviews. In fact, a 2015 study found that simply having product reviews for your prospective customers can boost online sales by as much as 62%. That's a huge increase. The truth is that people trust what others have to say and the more reviews something has, the more likely people are to choose that item / service with one company over another. Reviews make or break a sale. The higher average review rating that you have, the more your business revenue will increase. It is estimated that for every star your business gets, you will see a 5-9% increase in business revenue while reviews as a whole produce an average 18% uplift in sales.

If you don't believe it, do a quick survey with some family and friends about whether reviews matter. We have a pretty good idea how they'll respond.



Positive reviews increase trust

In addition to increasing the physical sales of your company, having more positive online reviews fosters trust and validity with prospective customers. Even though they've never done business with you, when prospects read positive reviews they get a better idea of how your business works and how you've helped others. 72% of people have stated that positive reviews have made them trust a business more than they originally had.



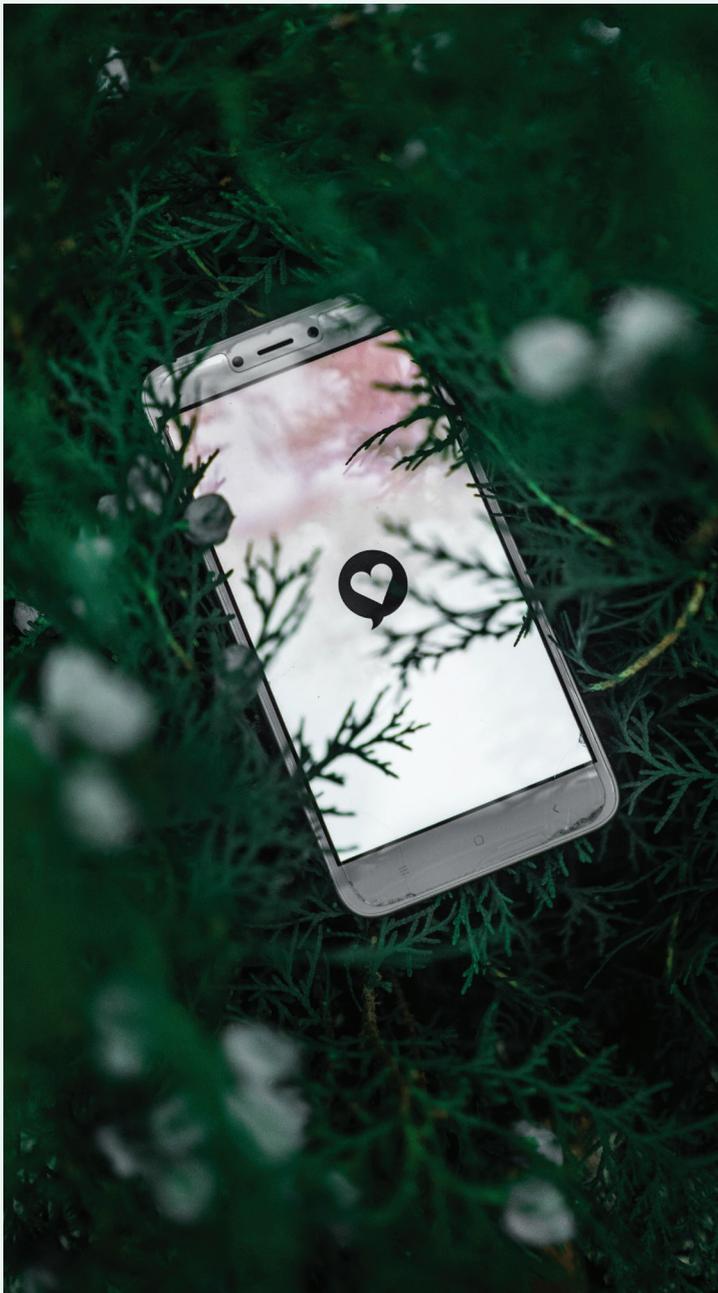
Reviews help influence opinions

It's important to have a strong public opinion if you want to foster a good reputation for your business. the more reviews you have, the more people will be apathetic to negative ones. The main areas that people tend to focus on when forming an opinion about your company are your reliability, professionalism, expertise and customer service. these all help to foster a strong reputation and decrease the impact of the occasional negative review.

Online reviews help your SEO

As we briefly mentioned above, online reviews help your SEO. Google has taken notice of the increasing importance of online reviews and factored it into their algorithm for search results rankings.

Companies with more reviews and higher ratings can expect to climb in the rankings.



Reviews are good for PR and visibility

Almost everyone that uses the internet reads online reviews at some point or another. Just having them available helps your Pr and visibility in the eyes of prospective customers. we've all seen the hilarious Facebook/twitter response to reviews from major companies (i.e., the reaction to ihop becoming ihob from other fast food chains). it's hard to deny the impact they make on us and your reviews/responses will do the same.

It's no secret that online reviews are important and it doesn't look like that'll be changing anytime soon. if you want to make the most out of your online efforts, make sure you're actively growing the number of reviews on your site and external sites. it's an effort that will not go unnoticed and your numbers are sure to reflect this.

02

How to get online reviews for your business

While most companies understand that online reviews are essential to the growth of their business, many don't know how to procure them. Business owners may be reserved or don't want to seem like a bother to their customers, so they avoid any direct asks or inquiries. Luckily, customers don't view it this way.

Reviews have transformed how we operate on social media and how we make recommendations. In fact, only 7% of people said that they don't read reviews when deciding whether a company is good or bad. That leaves 93% of the consumer market left reading reviews, often before they even visit your website.

If you take a look at the numbers and start to consider their impact, it's easy to understand why you need to increase the number of online reviews your company has. But where do you start?

Right Here



Ask for them

If your company currently has no online reviews, don't expect them to magically appear overnight. It takes effort to build a solid pool of reviews. The best way to increase your online reviews is to ask for them. That's right, asking will always get you more reviews than staying silent. In fact, 68% of customers left a review when the business asked them to do so.

Action is always better than inaction and that extends to reviews. However, there is a time and a place for everything. Make sure you time your ask correctly to get the best responses. The best time to ask someone for a review is immediately following a positive experience. This can be after a purchase/delivery, after a problem has been resolved, after a great customer service interaction, or even after you receive a positive email directly from the customer/client. The faster your response time is after these positive experiences, the better your reviews will be. This is why customer service is essential.

Make it easy

The next way to get more online reviews for your business is to make it easy. As obvious as this might be, many businesses don't practice it. While you might think something is easy and has clear instructions, a customer/client might not. Go above and beyond to minimize the effort that they have to take and you'll see a huge influx of reviews.

Some ways you can do this are:

- Sending emails right after positive communication
- Include a dedicated testimonial and review page on your website that has clear CTAs and is linked back to your homepage
- Create an email list that sends automated emails to previous customers / clients
- Take advantage of social media
- Conduct surveys that are easy to follow and that include an area for reviews
- Call your biggest customers for personalized asks

Use incentives

If you're still struggling to gain traction on your reviews, start incentivizing your requests. Offer something in return to customers that leave a review and encourage them to share with friends/family. These incentives don't have to be huge, but people appreciate the effort. You can use discounts, free shipping, coupons or even a % off of services on their next visit when they leave a review. Another great idea is to put together a monthly raffle that includes all of the customers who left a review in that month. The opportunities are endless. Get creative and find something that works best for you. Just remember that if you've offered an incentive, you need to award it to everyone who leaves a review - both positive and negative. As a side note, you can also incentivize your employees with review solicitation. Give out a prize to whoever gets the most each month as a motivational drive.



Make it a habit

Arguably, the most important thing about getting more online reviews is consistency. Take everything from above and practice it every day. Engrain it into your routine and make it a habit so you don't lose out on potential reviews.

Unfortunately, sending out constant personalized emails can take a toll on you and cause you to lose focus of more important tasks. To avoid redundancies, use a task management software to create templates that you can continue to use time and time again.

Give your reviewers attention

When customers take the time to give your business a review, acknowledge them! Show some gratitude, mention them on your featured testimonial page, create a fun video to thank reviewers, etc. Whatever you do, get creative and be authentic. When you show your reviewers attention it encourages others to follow suit. It also boosts loyalty and public relations.

Getting more online reviews will take some time, but if you ask for them, make it easy, use incentives, engrain it into your daily routine and show acknowledgment, they'll start pouring in left and right.

03

How to get more positive online reviews

After you understand the basics of getting more online reviews, it's time to kick it up a notch and focus on getting more positive reviews. receiving a strong overall rating is a numbers game, the more reviews you get, the more chances you'll create a balance with a strong average. The first thing you should do is take notice of characteristics that make up strong, positive reviews. when you start to understand them inside and out, it'll be easier for you to respond and generate more down the line.

Characteristics of a strong pool of reviews

For reviews to be relevant and valid, they need to uphold a specific set of characteristics. "Positive" reviews are too general. instead, you want reviews that are appealing and attractive to your prospective customers, ones that are authentic and relatable and form a strong representation of your company.



High average star rating

You should aim to have an average star rating of 4 or 5 (out of 5) to get more customers and increase your sales. People use star ratings to quickly judge the overall quality of a company and how they do business. The harsh reality of it is that 48% of people won't give you any business unless you have at least a 4-star rating. People expect a good business to have a high average rating and many of them won't take the risk with low-rated companies.

Substantial pool of reviews

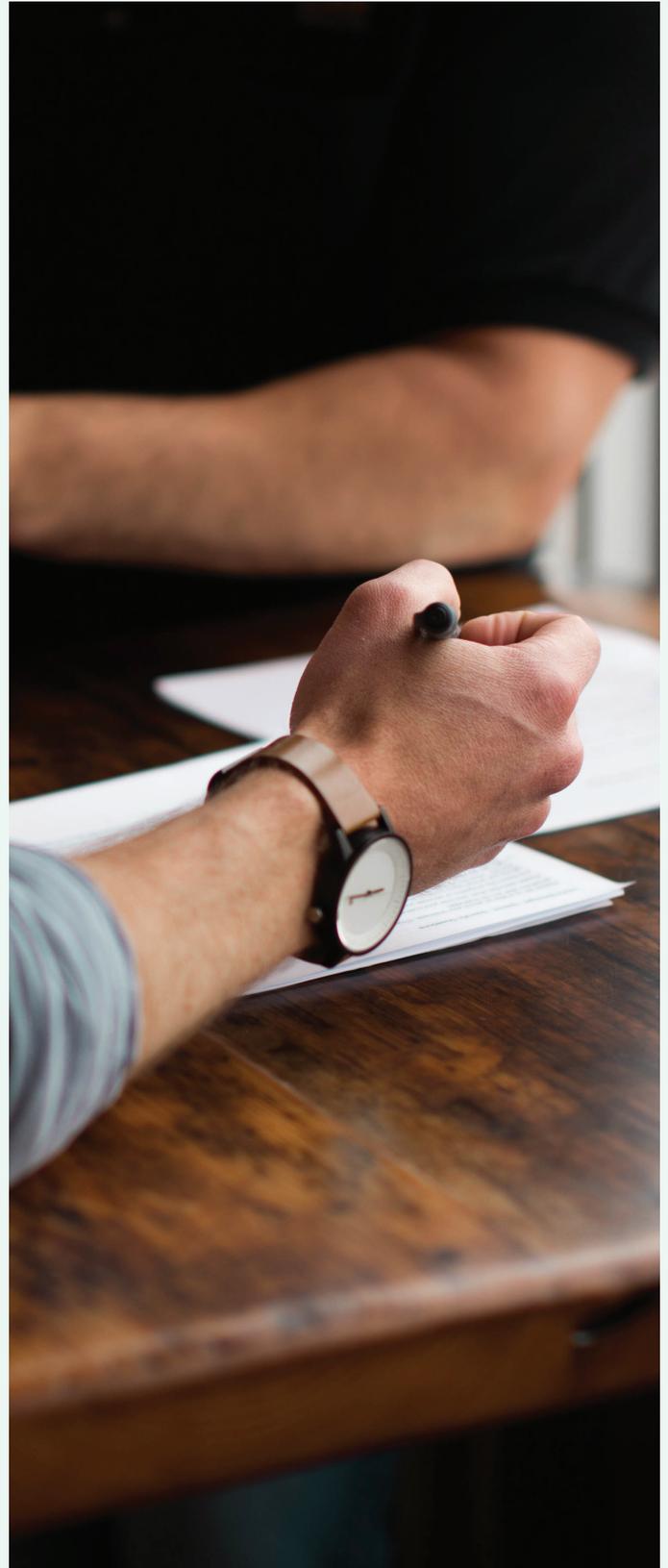
It's important to have a solid number of reviews. It doesn't need to be too crazy, but most people agree that before they trust the company, they need to have more than 5 reviews available to the public. The more reviews, the better. When you have more reviews, you can keep your rating high even if there are a few negative reviews here and there (it happens). Most people will read around 2-6 reviews before they form an opinion on a company, so try and elicit positive reviews whenever possible.

The more recent, The better

So, your company has 200 reviews... that's great! Unfortunately, they won't make a difference if they aren't recent. 77% of consumers think that reviews older than 3 months aren't relevant. Business changes every day, so make sure your reviews are continually following suit.

Authenticity matters

79% of consumers think they've read a fake review in the previous year. When they read these types of reviews, it causes them to be even more skeptical about a company than they would have been if there were no reviews at all. Ask real customers for real reviews; don't hire people to post reviews to get your numbers/ ratings up. It does more harm than good. Authenticity is important.



How to get more positive reviews

Pay attention

To start fostering more positive reviews, pay attention to what people are saying. take notice of happy customers and what they enjoyed about working with you. look through the reviews you already have and address anyone who seems less than 100% satisfied. Resolve any issues that may have gone unnoticed and make sure that you respond to negative reviews quickly.

Ask

Ask for reviews immediately following a positive customer experience to increase your positive responses. this is when your customer is happiest and most satisfied with the business you provided.

Increase your web presence

Make leaving a review as easy and accessible as possible. the lack of time and effort it takes to leave a review encourages feedback from even the busiest people. Another great way to increase the number of positive reviews online is by simply increasing your web presence. since people love to post everything nowadays, being active on social media helps engage with your younger customers and inspires them to share their experience online.

Respond fast

Responding to reviews, regardless of if they're positive or negative, is important in encouraging others to share their experiences. thanking customers shows that you're dedicated and that your customers are important enough for you to take the time to address directly. Positivity breeds positivity, and responding to reviews not only encourages others, but it also improves your SEO ranking in search results pages.

If you have a public negative review, it's crucial to respond quickly and with an authentic concern for wanting to help them resolve the issue.

Reach out personally

Arguably, the best way to get more positive online reviews is by reaching out personally to anyone who isn't 100% satisfied. If you receive a negative review, go above and beyond with personalized customer service to see exactly what you can do to help make their experience much better.





Generating more positive online reviews is an art. As long as you maintain high customer services and offer products /services that are honest and authentic, you'll do great. Practice generating online reviews on a daily basis and use these best practices to increase your positive responses.

04

How to respond to negative online reviews

It's no surprise that nobody wants a negative review. they're hard to read and can damage your company in the public eye. Unfortunately, every now and again, it happens. there are a few people that are dead set on making sure the rest of the world knows about their bad experience and they jump at the opportunity to post a review. the important thing to do in this situation is to respond and try and resolve.

Ignoring a bad review only makes things worse and personal responses go a long way. in fact, after you reach out people may even decide to change their review because of the outstanding customer service you displayed. if they don't change it, your response still makes a difference, in fact, 30% of people say that they judge local businesses based on whether or not they respond to these types of reviews. There is an art to responding to negative reviews in a way that will elicit a change of heart in your customers. remember, it's all about customer service and communication.

Consider the whole

While one person may have left you a negative review, you need to consider the whole when replying. if the review is already public your reply will be addressing not only the customer, but everyone who sees it and reads it online (including future potential customers). when you reply in a way that considers the whole, it allows you to show everyone that your company is dedicated to making sure that every customer is happy. it helps show that you aren't neglectful to your customers and that you want to actively make sure it doesn't happen again.

If you're responding in private, reply the same way. Make sure that your audience understand that you value their feedback and want to make changes to avoid the situation in the future. responding privately before having a review go live is highly encouraged as sometimes people will end up changing their reviews after your customer service.



Stay positive

During your response make sure that you take time to directly acknowledge your customer and give them a sincere apology about their experience or whatever the complaint is about. It doesn't matter how rude or downright hurtful their comment is, always stay positive. Losing your temper with a customer is never an acceptable answer, and when it happens during feedback for a negative review, you'll do way more harm than if you would have simply ignored it. In fact, people will be more impacted by the way you handle the situation than by what someone said in the first place, so stay upbeat regardless of their tone and potentially harsh words.

Verify the customer

If you don't know who the customer is that leaves the negative review, make sure you verify their information. This allows you to look at their customer history, verify that they indeed did do business with you, and address them personally and specifically to their situation. Knowing who a customer is will help you figure out the best course of action to take to resolve the problem.

Once you verify the customer, try to keep the conversation offline and in private while you resolve the issues.

Ask for more information

If verification doesn't give you all of the information you need to address the situation with expertise, ask the customer for more information. Getting more detail about why they feel the way they do is how you can further clarify exactly where things went wrong. Understanding the customer is the first step in responding genuinely. A lot of the times it's just a minor misunderstanding and can be easily resolved, but you won't find out without communicating.

Offer a solution

The most important step in the process of dealing with negative online reviews is offering a remedy to the problem. Your goal is to make sure that after your interaction, the customer leaves happy. Offer solutions based on the information that you've gathered about their specific case. You might consider providing an extra service, giving a discount on their next purchase or refunding a part of their costs. What you decide to do depends on your business, but taking a financial loss can be worth it if the customer is extremely upset/angry. When you offer a solution that the customer thinks is fair, it allows both of you to end your conversation on a good note and is the difference between an unhappy customer and a happy one.

Ask for updated review

If you're able to offer the customer a solution that they agree with, ask them if they wouldn't mind updating their review. When businesses go the extra mile in customer service, most people won't stick to their original review. If the company speaks to them with respect and concern, more often than not people will take the time to give you an updated review. Negative reviews have the potential to ruin a business. Don't risk this happening to you. Instead, put a system in place that allows you to handle negative reviews before they go public.



05

Why you should have a system in place to get online reviews

The internet is full of review sites. From yelp and google to Facebook Business Pages, there's nowhere you can turn without seeing what other people have to say. The internet is, in fact, starting to replace word of mouth business tactics. To increase the effectiveness of your business page reviews, you need to start implementing a system that complements the online review process.

Implementing a system is easier than ever to integrate into your customer service routine and comes with a huge list of benefits. Simply put, in today's world, you can't afford to go without a system that helps you get online reviews.



Why having a system works

Having a system in place to help you get more online reviews is a great way to ensure that your business page stays relevant and up to date for prospective customers. It streamlines the entire process by giving you and your business your very own review funnel website. All you need to do is email it to customers post-business or hand them an in-person review card that asks them to take action online.

This system helps foster more positive online reviews through a process that works to minimize the number of negative reviews people leave. It encourages valuable client input across a variety of different review sites that helps you organize where your efforts are focused.

How the system works

The system is an easy to use, user-friendly alternative to having your customers visit review sites to begin their process. It starts out by asking the customer to give a star rating to your company. If they rate you at a 4 or a 5, a window pops up with a customizable list of review websites. They can be turned on/off, new ones can be added, and old ones can be taken down. It all depends on the needs of your company and where you want to focus your efforts. After they click on their preferred place to leave a review, they're taken directly to that website where they can quickly and easily give you your 4 or 5-star rating. These ratings are immediate, public and go towards your average rating for that site. The easy integration of multiple different sites allows customers to choose where they want to leave a review without putting too much effort into the process. Now, if a customer rates your company a 3 star or lower, a different window pops up. This window allows the customer to fill in their name, contact information, and a detailed message about why they were unsatisfied with your company. It is paired with a statement about striving for 100% customer satisfaction and how you want to address their concerns to improve their experience.

If you meet your customer's concerns with authenticity and a genuine attempt to resolve their conflict, the likelihood that they'll move forward with a negative review decreases substantially.



While this helps to minimize any negative reviews being posted, your customers will still be able to go directly to the review site after posting their opinion on the private form. This is because Google has guidelines in place for reviews that businesses must adhere to. Without a system like this in place, negative reviews are instantly posted to any review site someone may be posting.

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hand holding a red pencil, writing on a white notepad. The notepad has some blue ink scribbles and text. In the background, a laptop is open on a wooden desk, and a white mouse is visible. The overall scene suggests a professional or creative workspace.

Whether you've been generating online reviews for years, just started, or need a little help, the best way to ensure that you're getting the reviews you deserve is by implementing a system. The Better. Reviews service is the perfect custom review funnel to add to your business today.

It's a simple way to integrate reputation management into your marketing and customer support routine and is sure to help you get more positive reviews. If you want to find out how you can start implementing this service today, contact the professionals at Roquepress today.

At Roquepress, clients come to us with a broad range of business problems and the solutions vary dramatically. What is constant is the importance we place on the upfront strategy, distribution and channel-neutral thinking to design and develop websites.

Get in touch with us for more information.



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