

CUSTOMER REVIEWS

**The Secret Weapon
Every Business Needs**



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Introduction

Imagine this.

You're doing some online shopping. Specifically, you're looking for new shoes. After hours of research and browsing, you've narrowed your choices to three that you like the look of. But then, you notice that one of the

options has significantly more positive reviews than the others.

Which one are you more likely to purchase?

You're almost always going to go with the one with the most positive reviews. The same goes for choosing which restaurant to eat at, which hotel to stay at, or which service provider to hire.

Customer reviews can be the difference between someone gladly purchasing from you and someone trying to get as far away from you as possible.

In this guide, we're going to dive deep into the world of customer reviews. We're going to talk about why they're so important and how you can get more positive reviews. We're also going to talk about strategies for dealing with negative reviews.

Ready?

Let's go.



Chapter 1: The Value of Customer Reviews

You may be thinking, *are customer reviews really all that important?*

Short answer: YES!

Longer answer: Definitely YES!

Customer reviews can provide a huge marketing boost for your business. They can convince reluctant customers to buy and overcome objections customers might have. Without being overly dramatic, reviews truly can make or break your business.

Think about it. When you search for a new business, what is one of the first things you look at? The reviews! And you're not alone, **studies show that reviews impact the buying decisions of 93% of customers.**

93%!

That's a huge portion of potential customers who are heavily influenced by what others have to say about your business. So it's safe to say that customer reviews are pretty important.

But why exactly are they so important? Let's dive into the value of customer reviews for your business.

What Kind of Business Reviews Are We Talking About?

First, let's make sure we're all on the same page when we say "business reviews." We're not talking about word-of-mouth reviews, like when your friend tells you about an awesome restaurant they went to the other night. We're talking about reviews on review websites like:

- Yelp
- Google
- Trustpilot
- Angie
- Capterra
- And many more...

These reviews are public and can be seen by anyone searching for your business. They provide a platform for customers to share their

experiences (good or bad) with potential customers.

And here's the important thing: all the reviews matter, regardless of what platform they're on. Google and other review websites regularly serve up reviews in search result snippets. So whether it's a 5-star review on Yelp or a positive comment on your Google Business Profile, they all contribute to the overall impression of your business.

The Psychology of Social Proof

We all instinctively know that reviews are important. But there's a psychological reason behind it. It's called "social proof."

Social proof is the idea that people tend to follow the actions and opinions of others, especially in uncertain situations. Remember when your mom would ask you whether you would jump off a bridge if your friends did? The real answer to that question is yes, you probably would!

Each friend that jumps off the bridge is, in a sense, leaving a review of their experience. If they have fun doing it, surely you will have fun doing it, right?

The same thing applies to your business.

When we see others positively reviewing or recommending a business, we're more likely to trust and try out that business ourselves.

In other words, reviews provide social proof for potential customers that your business is reputable and worth their time and money.

Bad reviews are also social proof.

If someone sees a bad review of your business, that will impact what they think about it. However, if they also see a lot of positive reviews, that one bad review might not hold as much weight.

The Economic Power of Reviews

We've already touched on this but we need to dwell here a bit longer so that you understand how reviews impact your bottom line.

Check out these stats:

- 95% of consumers read online reviews before making a purchase decision, and 93% state reviews influence their buying decisions.
- Businesses with positive reviews experience an average revenue increase of 31%.
- A one-star increase in a company's average review rating correlates with a 5-9% revenue boost.
- Around 60% of consumers are more likely to buy repeatedly from businesses with high ratings and positive feedback.

The simple truth is that revenue follows reviews. People are more likely to trust and spend money with businesses that have positive reviews. And, on the flip side, people are much less likely to spend their money on a business that has lots of negative reviews.

So where does your business sit in this? Do you have a lot of reviews, positive or negative? If not, it's time to start actively seeking them out and responding to them.

Building Trust and Credibility

Reviews aren't just about money, although that's certainly a huge part of it. **They are also a way for potential customers to gauge the trustworthiness and credibility of your business.**

What kind of gut reaction do you have when you see a business with a low rating? You instinctively think something like, *Woah that's not good. Lots of people must have had a really bad experience with that company. I'm going to stay as far away as I can from this company.*

Positive reviews, on the other hand, form an immediate positive impression on people. People make the following assumptions about your business:

- Your product or service works
- You're a pleasure to do business with
- Your business is run by professionals

Seeing positive reviews from real people can help alleviate any doubts or hesitations they may have about doing business with you.

See, here's the thing. **Almost everyone has had a terrible experience with a business.** These are the kinds of experiences that no one wants to relive. Because of that, we're more cautious about where we spend our money.

To put it another way, **trust and credibility matter.**

Most likely, your business sits in the midst of a crowded, competitive marketplace. Everyone is fighting for customers and trying to stand out

from the pack. If your business is seen as trustworthy, it gives you a competitive edge. People are much more likely to do business with you than with your competitors.

It's not just about getting new customers either. **Building trust and credibility with existing customers is just as important.** When your customers feel like they can trust you, they are more likely to continue doing business with you and even refer their friends and family to your business.

The New Word of Mouth

We all know how powerful word-of-mouth marketing is. When you have a great experience with a business, you're likely to share it with your friends and family. You want them to also have a similar experience with this business.

When you have a bad experience with a business, you probably tell even *more* people about it. You want your friends and family to avoid this business at all costs.

Today, word-of-mouth has taken on a whole new meaning. With the rise of social media and online review platforms, people can easily share their experiences with a business to a wider audience.

This means that not only are they sharing their experience with those close to them, but also with potential customers who may come across these reviews online.

This is why it's so important to get good reviews for your business. Reviews have the potential to go viral. You've probably read some of the epic rants that people have written against businesses that provided a bad experience.

And on the flip side, you've probably seen some glowing reviews that make you want to try out a business for yourself.

L.L. Bean is an example of the power of positive reviews. For years, they had a policy that anyone could return any L.L. Bean product for any reason. They didn't fight with customers

over returns, and they refunded the full price of the product with no questions asked.

As a result, customers raved about L.L. Bean's customer service and return policy. And, as you would expect, they got loads of positive reviews for their business. These positive reviews, in turn, were seen by millions of people, which led to more sales for L.L. Bean, which led to more reviews, and on and on.

You get the point. **Positive reviews can have a huge impact on the success of a business, while negative reviews can bring it crashing down.**

Positive Reviews Equals Positive SEO

One final benefit of positive reviews is that they can majorly boost your business in terms of Google search results.

In fact, Google takes reviews into account when ranking businesses in search results.

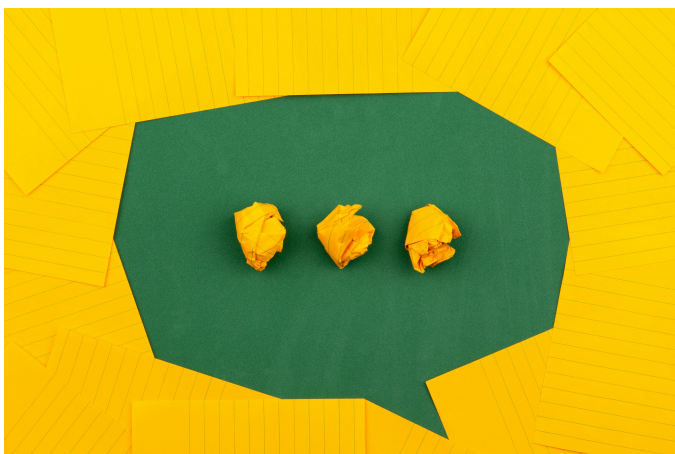
For example, if you run a coffee shop and have numerous positive reviews with keywords like "best coffee" or "great atmosphere," your business is more likely to show up at the top of search results for those keywords.

This means more visibility and potential customers for your business.

Also, positive reviews signal to Google that you are a trustworthy business and that they should show you in search results more often.

This not only helps with SEO, but it also builds credibility and trust with potential customers who are searching for businesses like yours.

So, don't underestimate the power of reviews when it comes to boosting your business's online presence and visibility.



Chapter 2: How to Get More Reviews for Your Business

Hopefully, by this point, you are convinced of the need for reviews for your business. If you're not convinced go read the previous chapter until you are.

Now let's talk about strategies for getting reviews for your business.

There are many, many ways to get reviews for your business. Here are some of the best.

Make It as Easy as Possible

The biggest thing is that no matter what you do, make it as easy as humanly possible for people to leave reviews for your business. Hold people's hands and take them step-by-step through the process.

If you want people to leave reviews on Google, give them a direct link to your Google business page.

If you want people to leave reviews on Yelp, make sure they know how to navigate to your business page and leave a review.

Make sure that wherever people are encountering your business online - whether it's on social media, your website, or a directory listing - there is always an easily accessible way for them to leave a review.

Ask Satisfied Customers

One of the most effective ways to get more reviews is simply by asking satisfied customers.

Depending on your business, you may have a list of customers that you've served over the years. **That list is gold when it comes to reviews.** Ask each of these customers if they'd be willing to leave a review for your business.

If the list is relatively small, call or text them.

If it's a large list, create an email that goes out to your entire list, thanking them for being loyal customers over the years and asking them to leave a review.

However, you do it, just make sure that you do it! Because those satisfied customers could translate into an immediate surge of positive business reviews.

Highlight Positive Reviews

As much as possible, highlight existing positive reviews. Highlight them everywhere you can like on your web pages and social media. Let your happy customers' voices be heard. **This encourages more customers to leave reviews and shows the reviewers that you are grateful for the time they took to do it.**

Direct Requests

The most obvious way to get reviews from customers is to ask them directly. In fact, this is probably the most effective way to get reviews.

Because the reality is that most people are willing to review your business if they've had a good experience with it. They just need to be nudged in the right direction. You could ask for reviews via:

Email

Send a personalized email to your customers after they have made a purchase or used your services. Ask them about their experience and

kindly request them to leave a review on Google, Yelp, or any other relevant review site. Make it as easy as possible for them to leave the review. Provide links to the exact place where you want them to do it.

Text Message

If you have a customer's phone number, consider reaching out to them via text to ask if they would be willing to leave a review for your business. Keep the message short and to the point, and make sure to include a link to the review site.

In-Person

If you have a physical location for your business, train your staff to kindly ask customers for reviews after they've completed their transaction or service. This personal touch can go a long way in encouraging customers to leave a review.

In this instance, it can be helpful to have little cards on hand that instruct people how to

leave a review for your business. The cards should include the names of relevant review sites and a short URL or QR code that leads directly to your business's review page.

Additionally, you can also have signs displayed in your store or office promoting leaving reviews. This serves as a gentle reminder for customers to leave a review if they had a good experience.

Social Media

Leverage the power of social media to reach out to your customers and ask for reviews. **You can post about your business and include a call-to-action asking followers to leave a review on their preferred review site.**

You can also share positive reviews from other customers on your social media platforms, showcasing customer satisfaction with your business.

Another way to utilize social media is by reaching out directly to people who are talking about your business.

For example, say someone leaves a comment on your Facebook page about a great experience they had with your business. Don't miss out on that opportunity! **Ask that person if they would be willing to leave a review for you.** Take advantage of their goodwill toward your business.

Incentives and Rewards

Another effective way to encourage customers to leave reviews is by offering incentives or rewards. For example, you might offer:

Discounts on Future Purchases

Consider offering a discount on a customer's next purchase in exchange for leaving a review. This not only motivates customers to leave a review, but it also encourages them to come back and make another purchase.

Exclusive Offers

People love to feel like they're getting something exclusive that no one else gets. You can offer

exclusive rewards that people can only get if they review your business. For example, you might give them early access to a new product or promotion that lots of people want in on.

Freebies or Samples

Customers love getting something for free, so why not offer a small freebie or sample in exchange for leaving a review? This can be especially effective for businesses that sell physical products.

Contests or Giveaways

You can also run contests or giveaways on your social media platforms or website. Ask followers to leave reviews and enter them into a drawing to win a prize. This encourages reviews and also helps spread the word about your business through social media shares.

Thank-You Notes

Don't underestimate the power of a simple thank-you note. Send a handwritten thank-you note to customers who leave reviews and

mention their names in it. This personal touch can go a long way in building customer loyalty and encouraging them to continue supporting your business.

Through Your Website

Your website is a perfect place to ask people to review your product or service. They're already on your site, which means they're thinking about you. Capture that attention and funnel it into having them leave a review.

There are a couple of ways you can do this.

Display Existing Reviews

Prime the pump by displaying existing reviews on your website. **People are more likely to leave a review if they see others have done the same.** Plus, it's a great way to showcase positive feedback and build trust with potential customers.

Include a Pop-Up or CTA

You could also include a pop-up or call-to-action (CTA) on your website asking visitors to leave a review. This can be done through a chatbot, notification bar, or even as part of the checkout process. These targeted prompts can help guide customers toward leaving reviews while they're already engaged with your business.

Printed Materials

Printed materials also offer a way to get more reviews for your business. These types of materials work best when used in conjunction with an in-person ask for a review. Here are a few options to consider:

Receipts

Include a note on your receipts thanking customers for their purchase and asking them to leave a review. **This is a prime opportunity, as they've just had a positive experience with your business.** Be sure to include a QR code or

URL that they can use immediately on their mobile phone.

Business Cards

If you're in a service business, consider having business cards printed that include a QR code or URL that leads directly to your review site of preference. After you've completed a job for a person, hand them one of your business cards and ask them if they'd be willing to leave a review.

Product Packaging

If you sell products, you can also include a note inside the packaging asking for a review. This is especially effective for online purchases, as customers will have already received the product and can provide an accurate review.

Live Events

If you regularly host events of any kind, you should survey attendees and ask them to review your business. Whether it's a

conference, workshop, or networking event, this is a great opportunity to get feedback and reviews from engaged customers. Here are a few ways you can do this:

Email Follow-Up

After the event, send out a follow-up email thanking attendees for coming and asking them to leave a review. Be sure to include a link or QR code that leads directly to your preferred review site.

Social Media Shoutouts

During the event, encourage attendees to share their experiences on social media using your business's designated hashtag. This will not only help spread the word about your event but also provide an easy way for attendees to leave reviews on their social media platforms.

Other Creative Ideas

Don't hesitate to get creative when it comes to asking people for reviews. Here are a few ideas that don't fit into any standard category.

Gamification

Consider adding a fun and interactive element to your review process. For example, you could create a leaderboard of top reviewers or offer "badges" that people unlock when they review your business. Anything to turn the review process into a game.

Review Contests

Another fun idea is to do a review of the month (or week or year) contest. Ask people to submit reviews that are both true and entertaining and award the best one something free. This can be a great way to generate buzz and excitement around your business.



Chapter 3: Dealing With Negative Reviews

You will inevitably get some negative reviews. That's just the way that things work. For some reason or another, someone won't be happy with your product or service and will leave a negative review.

So what should you do when you get a negative review?

Stay Calm

Don't freak out when you get a negative review. It's not the end of the world. Take a deep breath and try to remain calm.

Remember that negative reviews can actually be a learning experience for you.

You can gain insights into what your customers like and don't like about your product. Plus, if you handle the review properly, you can turn a negative experience into a positive one for your customers.

So try to embrace negative reviews as much as possible. Even use negative reviews to your advantage.

Respond Professionally

It's important to respond to negative reviews in a polite and professional manner. Acknowledge the customer's feelings, apologize for their negative experience, and offer a solution if possible. This shows that you value their feedback and are willing to make things right.

If possible, answer the negative review publicly so that everyone sees you addressing the issue. This also shows potential customers that you take customer satisfaction seriously.

Don't Delete or Ignore

Whatever you do, don't delete or ignore the reviews. This doesn't help in any way and can actually make things much worse. **Customers will notice if you delete negative reviews and it can damage your credibility.**

Ignoring reviews also sends a message that you don't care about your customers' opinions. This can lead to further negative reviews and a bad reputation for your business.

Learn From the Experience

As we noted, negative reviews can provide valuable insights into areas where your product or service may need improvement. Take note of any recurring issues or complaints and use them to make necessary changes in your business.

Also, use negative reviews as an opportunity to reach out to unhappy customers and try to resolve their issues. This shows that you are dedicated to providing excellent customer service and can turn a dissatisfied customer into a loyal one.



Conclusion

We've covered a lot of ground in this guide. We've talked reviews from just about every angle possible. Specifically, we've covered:

- The psychology of social proof
- The economic power of reviews
- The need to build trust and credibility

- Why reviews are the new word-of-mouth
- How positive reviews impact your SEO
- Making it as easy as possible for people to give reviews
- Asking your satisfied customers
- Highlighting positive reviews
- Directly requesting reviews
- Offering incentives and rewards for reviews
- Using your website to get reviews
- Getting reviews via printed materials
- Using live events for reviews
- Dealing with negative reviews

So here's the good news. If you already offer a great product or service, you should already have some good reviews in place. Use these as a foundation to build upon.

Start with one or two of the techniques we talked about in the guide. Experiment until you find what works best for you and your business.

Once you find an effective strategy for getting reviews, double down on that. Keep doing it until you've got as many good reviews as you possibly can.

If you get some bad reviews, tackle them head-on. Don't be intimidated by them. Turn them around and use them to show off how good your customer service is.

And if you don't have any reviews at all, you've got a clean slate to start with. Get out there and start getting as many as you can!