

SUCCESS KIT: Online Reputation Management

HOW BETTER REVIEWS DRIVE REVENUE





Introduction

Do you know what customers are saying about your locations? If not, it's time to find out. Neglecting your online reputation costs you customers. In fact, 70 percent of Americans read online reviews before making a purchase, according to market intelligence agency Mintel Group.

Now that consumers shape brands as much as companies do, it's critical to understand how positive online reviews attract potential customers, how negative ones drive them away and what you can do to turn satisfied customers into online advocates.

This guide will give you the fundamentals of Online Reputation Management, to help you:

- Earn more positive reviews
- Raise your search ranking
- Improve operations
- Enlist social communities to drive revenue

Let's get started...

“ 80 percent of Americans read online reviews before they choose a new doctor. ”

~ Software Advice

Chapter 1: Want Better Reviews? Just Ask — the Right Way

Positive online reviews from customers contribute significantly to your company's reputation and revenue. The Harvard Business Review has reported that one additional star in an average online rating generates a 5- to 9-percent increase in revenue.

If a location only has a handful of reviews, or an abundance of negative ones, it's losing business. In fact, nearly 90 percent of consumers read up to 10 reviews before forming their opinion about a company, according to a Vendasta report. And, over 85 percent will hesitate to purchase from a company with negative reviews.

To create a more balanced view of customer sentiment, you must ask customers for feedback consistently. Here are five tips to launch a review requesting system:

TIP 1: Target All of Your Customers

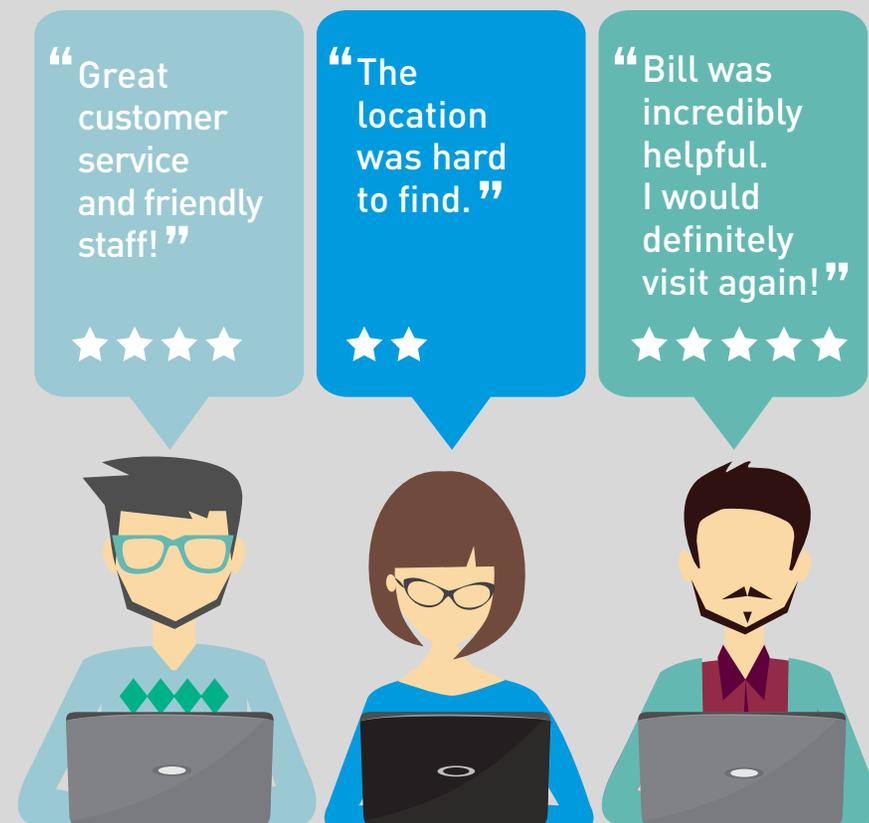
Ask them immediately after a visit, or send a review request email. Simple, graphical templates deliver high response rates.

TIP 2: Ask for an Honest Account

Let customers provide their honest opinion. Don't try to coax or manipulate them into providing a review that's counter to their actual customer experience. Never compensate anyone — customers or employees — for positive reviews. Show customers that you value their feedback — good or bad — and will use it to improve service quality and customer support.

TIP 3: Never Spam

Timing is everything. If you send too many emails requesting a review, you risk irritating your loyal customers. To get a good response, send occasional and brief email messages that politely request an honest review, and leave it at that.



TIP 4: Roll Out Positive Reviews Over Time

Consumers are savvy and may see an influx of positive reviews over a short period of time as being fake.

If too many positive reviews show up all at once, you risk losing your audience's trust before they even have a chance to visit your location. Time posting your requests carefully and regularly.

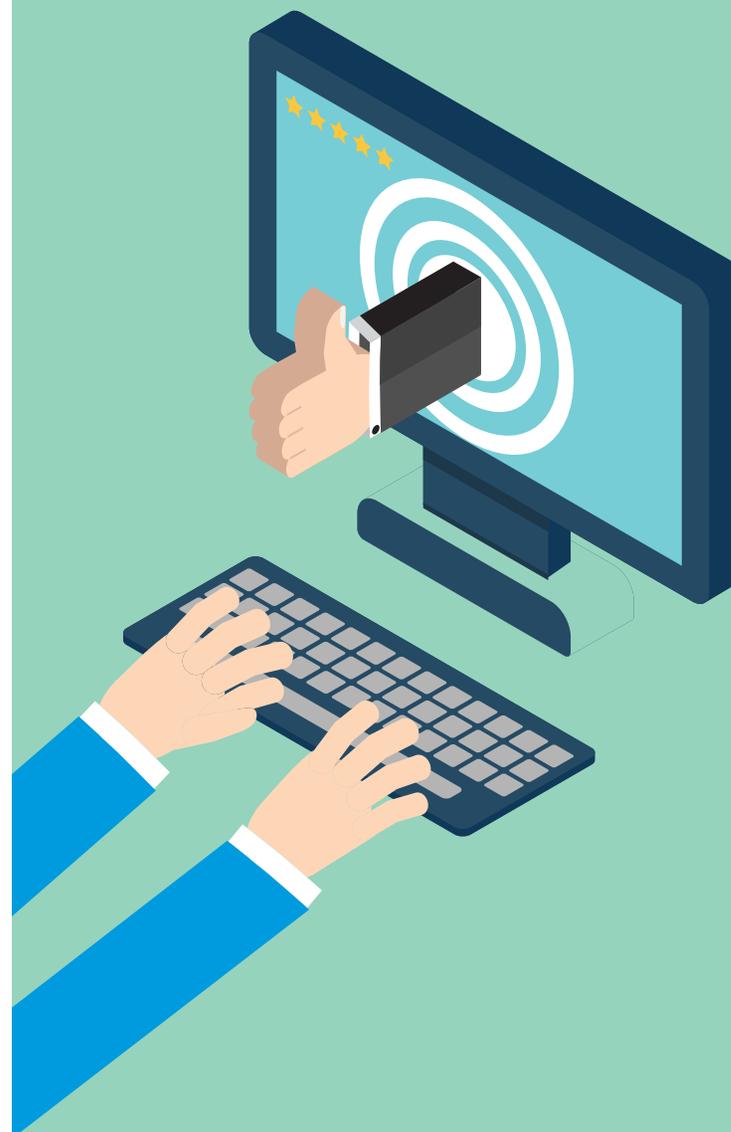
TIP 5: Showcase Positive Reviews on Your Website and Social Media

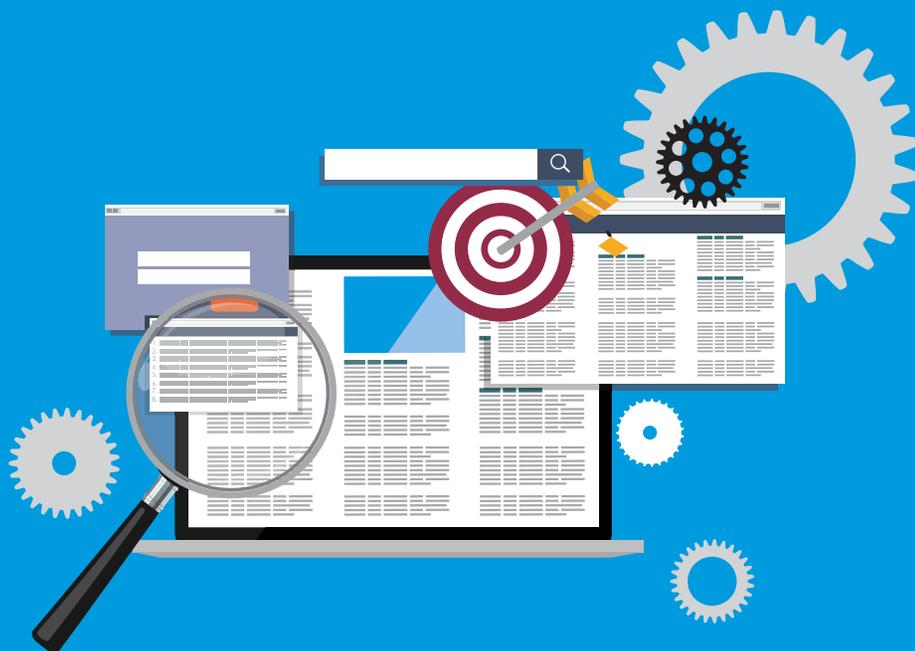
Once you notice customers posting positive reviews, use those reviews to attract more customers. Syndicate them on your social media channels — such as Facebook — and stream them on your locations' websites.

Syndicating your endorsements will encourage other customers to submit feedback as well as earn you a position as a trusted leader in your space.

PRO TIP:

If you receive negative reviews, don't try to have them removed. Instead, focus on creating more positive customer experiences and continue your outreach to all customers — the silent majority that might not have thought to review you — perpetuating a cycle of positive reviews to share.





Chapter 2: Improve Your Online Reputation to Boost Your SEO

When you search for your company's name on Google, how far do you have to scroll before you see your location's website? If you're not on the first page of search results, you might as well be invisible.

Discoverability is a powerful component of revenue building, and online reputation plays a big part in how high your locations rank in search.

Here's how to elevate online ratings and search rankings:

TIP 1: Rev Up Review Volume

Organization's with low review volume don't rank very high. Recent research shows that page rankings are directly driven by the quality and quantity of reviews. A location's first 10 reviews can move it from page two to page one, and 50 reviews deliver a 266-percent increase in click rate.

To boost your rankings and reviews, request reviews from your customer base and ensure that they're posted on specialty sites relevant to your industry.

For example, if you're a healthcare organization, look to build your online reviews on sites such as Healthgrades and RateMDs. If you're an auto dealer group, it's important for you to build review volume on sites such as Cars.com and Edmunds.

Research the specialty sites that generate reviews in your industry, and make them part of your program.



TIP 2: Raise Your Star Ratings

To improve your star ratings, work on generating more positive reviews on Google. In fact, Google requires that you have at least five reviews before they'll show a star rating for your business, according to WebpageFX. Always include a link to Google+ in your review requests.

TIP 3: Manage Your Business Listings

One easy and effective way to boost your locations' web presence is to secure accurate business listings. If you see listings that have already been generated, make it a point to claim and complete your listing by including up-to-date info on your business name, address, local phone number (not an 800 number), website, hours of operation and photos — for each location.

Google prioritizes companies that maintain consistent and precise location information across multiple listings sites, so be sure to audit your listings regularly.

“Google requires that you have at least five reviews before they'll show a star rating for your organization.”

~ WebpageFX

Chapter 3: Improve Operations

When your locations notice negative reviews, make sure they're not ignored. Coach your team to use that feedback to improve how they run their business. Here's how you can use negative online feedback to make to help drive operational improvements:

STEP 1: Analyze Sentiment

Online reviews are the best way to gain valuable data about what's working for customers and what isn't. Reviews can reveal recurring issues that locations can promptly address. Routinely and systematically monitoring review sites eliminates a major customer experience blind spot.

By using thematic analysis tools, you can spot recurring issues in negative reviews, such as long wait times or unfriendly staff, and solve those problems quickly.

Once you've analyzed this data, respond to both old and new negative reviews, acknowledge the issues, and let them know that their feedback is an essential part of your plan to improve.

You can impress potential customers and motivate unsatisfied customers to upgrade their reviews by demonstrating that you care about their experience and are willing to publicly address ways to improve it.

STEP 2: Improve the Quality of Service

Customer feedback is the most powerful tool your locations can use to make better business decisions. For example, they may decide to address long wait times by adding additional staff during peak periods, provide more training to staff or make organizational changes. Good sentiment analysis tools help location managers ensure they're making the right decisions.



“ When your locations notice negative reviews, make sure they're not ignored. ”

~ WebpageFX

Excellent service is a process of continuous improvement. Online reviews provide essential intelligence to streamline and sharpen the quality of care as well as the caliber of your communications with valued patients.

STEP 3: Close the Gap

Create a feedback loop that allows you to close the gap between your locations' online reputation and the type of quality customer service you know they're capable of.

Effective Online Reputation Management means monitoring review sites, responding to reviewers if necessary, recording feedback, and coming up with actionable plans to maintain high standards at each location. Without a continuous feedback loop, a location's negative online reputation will drive its business results into a death spiral.

But improving quality of service and operations delivers better reviews, more traffic, more customers and ultimately, an increase in revenue — a virtuous cycle that pays real dividends.



Chapter 4: Build Advocacy and Drive Revenue

When locations' online reputations are well-managed, the positive reviewers they've accumulated become fans and followers on social channels and are now full-throated local advocates. Once your locations have generated a firm following, here's how they can use social media to turn their fans into brand ambassadors.

STEP 1: Maintain Consistency

Just like business listings, it's crucial to keep your company's key information — address, phone number, etc. — updated on social channels, too. Out-of-date phone numbers and addresses cost your locations customers and potential brand ambassadors. Fans can't promote a company they can't find.

STEP 2: Target Your Ad Spend

Advertise where your advocates spend most of their time online — Facebook. Facebook Advertising lets you “boost” your posts, allowing you to serve targeted content to your fans and their friends. Develop a Facebook Advertising strategy that enables you to promote positive reviews, drive traffic to your website and brick-and-mortar locations, increase awareness, foster engagement and create a sense of community among advocates.

As for the negative reviews and reactions, the same rules mentioned earlier still apply — respond by authentically acknowledging concerns and improving operations wherever necessary.

STEP 3: Engage Your Community

Now that you have a pool of positive reviewers, fans and followers, engage them! Keep the momentum going by cross-promoting your review content throughout your social channels. Encourage social sharing by providing buttons and social engagement widgets. You might even get a few more shares, likes and retweets by using the mention feature to engage your biggest fans.



It's Time to Get Started!

A strong Online Reputation Management program doesn't have to happen all at once. Identify one or two of the steps suggested here to take immediately — and use this guide to sketch out your longer-term roadmap for success.

Consistent focus over time will help your marketing team and practice office managers take full ownership of their online reputation — sharpening their focus on driving better service, more positive reviews, higher search rankings and better business results.



A difference of one star in an online rating generates a

5 to 9% difference in revenue

~ Harvard Business Review



About Reputation.com

Reputation.com delivers the category-leading Online Reputation Management platform for large organizations with hundreds of thousands of locations.

We help companies monitor review sites, generate more representative ratings, and drive recurring visits, foot traffic and revenue.

For more information, visit us at reputation.com or contact us at sales@reputation.com.