



# GOOD REVIEWS

AND HOW TO

# GET THEM





## Introduction

Online customer reviews are very important for the growth of small businesses and have a direct impact on ranking in local search results. Hate them or like them, you need a strategy for getting reviews and a response plan in place. Reviews and ratings are just a fact of life now in the digital marketing world. No business owner should ignore them.

Here we will offer information that will help you understand:

- The importance of reviews & ratings.
- How reviews affect customer's purchase decisions.
- When negative is positive – consumer trust factors.
- The danger of fake reviews.
- Who writes real reviews?
- How to get reviews and how to respond to them.

Understanding how consumers use reviews, the factors that influence them, and how to manage them will help you to get better reviews.



## The Importance of Reviews & Ratings

The number of consumers who read and trust online reviews has grown year by year. The following statistics lend support to the importance of reviews:

- 92% of consumers now read online reviews
- 40% of consumers form an opinion by reading just one to three reviews
- Star rating is the **NUMBER ONE FACTOR** used by consumers to judge a business.
- 74% say positive reviews make them trust a local business more.
- 80% of consumers have searched a business at least six times per year.
- Word of mouth (34%) and Facebook (17%) are the top ways that people recommend businesses to others.
- Online reviews have been shown to impact 67.7% of purchasing decisions.
- 84% of people trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation.

Customer reviews can have a positive effect on your reputation and organic search rankings. Many small business owners just aren't doing enough to encourage online reviews. With few or no reviews, they get passed over in favor of businesses with more customer feedback. Beat your competition, drive more customers to your business, and grow your sales by making reviews an important part of your marketing strategy.

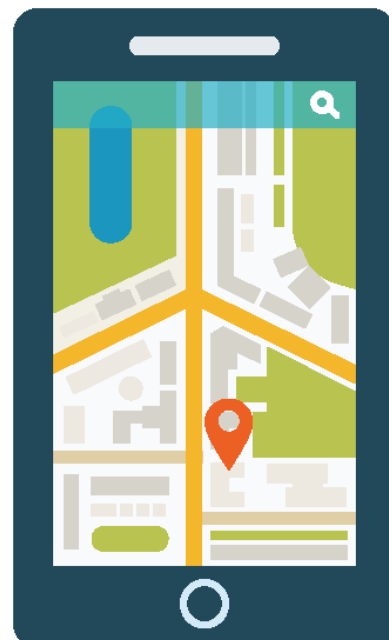


## Mobile Trends

Most consumers search for a local business on their mobile devices with close to 70% of all searches. Every local businesses should have a good online presence with a website that is engaging and helpful – but also mobile friendly and fast loading. Mobile devices mean that consumers can search online for local businesses while they are on the move using an internet browser, or mobile apps such as Yelp, Foursquare, and TripAdvisor.

**Tip: Make sure you have a map and address displayed on your review site.**

Many consumers are impressed when a local business has a website designed for mobile, and are 61% more likely to contact a local business if they have a mobile optimised site (and that was in 2015).



## How do reviews affect customers' purchase decisions?

A survey done by BrightLocal shows that online customer's reviews don't influence customer's decision to purchase.

Some consumers say that they read reviews, but the review doesn't influence their decision on which local business to favor. For more customers, factors such as location and price influence purchase decisions, but the majority of people selects a local business based on POSITIVE REVIEWS.

## When Negative is Positive – Trust Factors

While positive reviews are a great thing to have, it has been found that if a business has reviews that are all positive, readers will trust them less. This makes sense, as no one is perfect, and to have no negative reviews gives consumers the impression that either the reviews have been censored, or worse, they are FAKE reviews. This is why we say “negative is positive”: you definitely need to have some realistic scores.

### Ratings

Star rating is the number one factor used by consumers to judge a business. It offers a visual reference that is very effective. Only 13% of consumers consider using a business that has a one- or two-star rating, but having a perfect score of 5 stars for all of your reviews just creates suspicion that the reviews are unreliable.

### 360-degree view

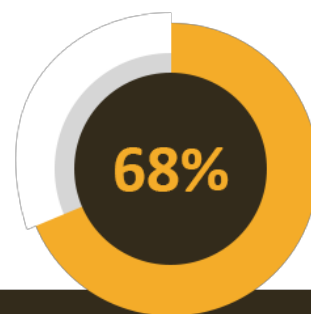
Consumers are strongly influenced by positive reviews and star ratings. However, keep in mind that consumers take a holistic view and consider other aspects of a business’s reviews. The second most important factor is the quantity of reviews. The more the better, but it has been found that after around 10 reviews, 88% of readers will look no further. Another factor is how recent the review is. 84% say a review must be written within three to six months to be relevant.

Your business doesn’t just have to have perfect reviews and five-star ratings to convert customers. There needs to be a number of factors that come together to win over a customer, providing superior service or products being one of the most important!

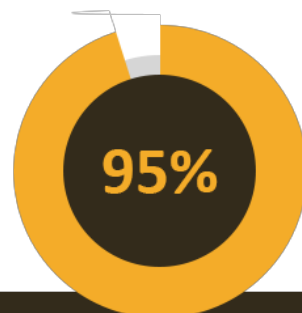
### Keep your Listings up to date

It is important to keep your listings up to date especially with your address and phone number. Continually refresh with new images and encourage your customers to add photos where possible.

With Google My Business you can also add a short blog and image but you will need to add a new one every month as they are removed after that time.



trust reviews more when they see both good and bad scores



suspect censorship or faked reviews when they don't see bad scores

## Fake Reviews

While reviews and review sites have become increasingly popular, fraudulent consumer reviews are also on the rise, of which the public is becoming more aware.

The increase in bogus reviews and the awareness of them is one possible reason the number of consumers who said that positive reviews make them more likely to use a local business has gone down from 68% to 61% in recent years. More people are beginning to wonder when they read a positive review and are losing faith in reviews as a measure of a company's value.

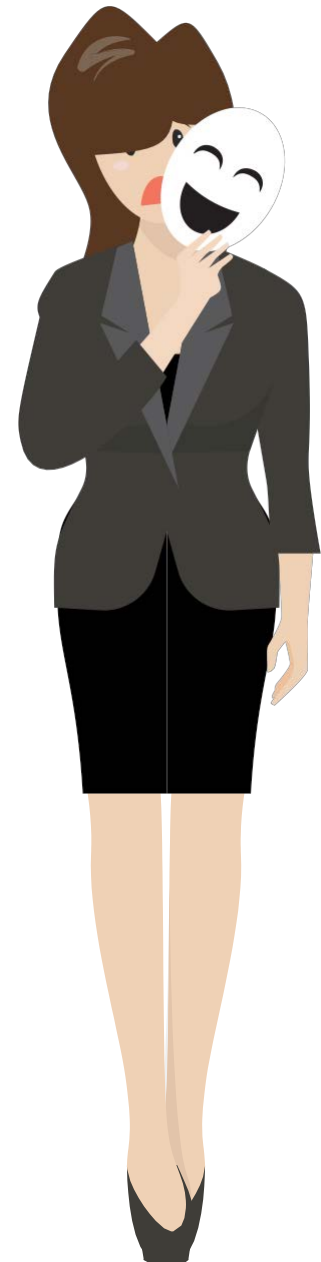
Sure you can purchase fake reviews, but it is ill-advised if you want to maintain the trust of customers.

### Types of "fake" reviews

Fake reviews can be in several forms:

- Businesses write them themselves.
- Rivals post negative reviews.
- Cherry-picking positive reviews.
- Negative reviews that are buried or unpublished.
- Paid reviews.

Paid reviews are not necessarily fake. Often you will see the word "Honest Reviews," which usually means that they were paid for. Consumers are less likely to believe these, and they are often not really "honest."



## Never consider purchasing fake reviews!

Kami Huyse | CEO | Zoetica

Amazon has been taking legal action and suing its own merchants. Sellers that post or buy fake reviews for their own products may find themselves in court.

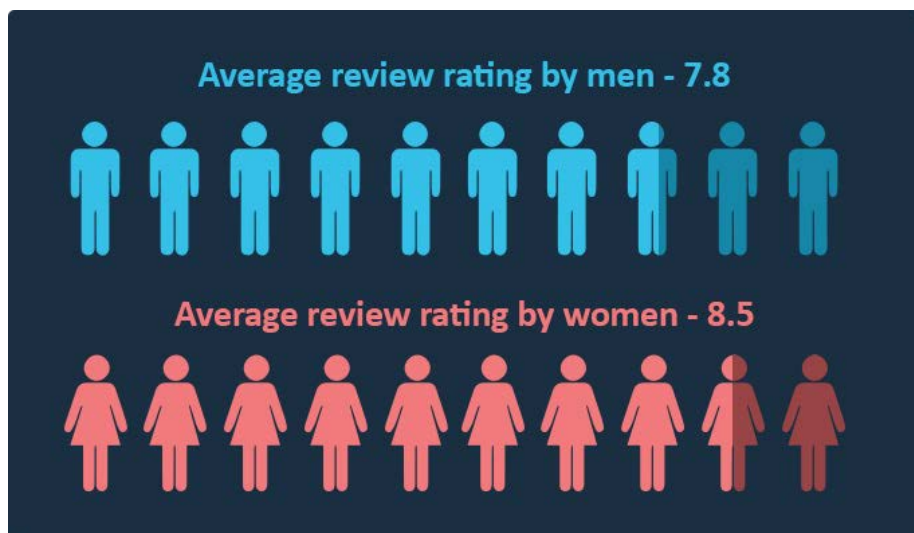




## Who writes real reviews?

Overall, the majority of reviews are written by ordinary people who actually want to share their experience with other consumers to help them make better decisions and a variety of other altruistic reasons.

Men tend to write more negative reviews than women do. Women write more reviews and seem to be of the mind that “if you don’t have something good to say, don’t say it.”



The good news is that most men and women write positive reviews. By far the most common next step for consumers after reading positive reviews is to visit the business website (48%). So make sure that you have a good website to showcase your business, or you will be missing a lot of potential customers.



## How to get reviews

The first thing you need to do is start listening to them. There are many review sites such as Yelp, Google My Business, True Local, WOMO, and many more. Claim your listings on sites that are the most impactful for your industry and your business, and then begin to monitor your reviews.

### Monitor your reviews

Bad or negative reviews can damage your reputation. To manage your online reputation, you need to monitor what consumers are writing about your business. Doing the job manually is time-consuming. There are automated services for reputation management or agencies like [Visual Marketing](#) that can manage your reputation for you.

## How to respond to reviews

All businesses have common issues that will come up from time to time. If you have a home remodeling company, some customers may complain that your workers left a mess or a job was not completed to their satisfaction. Anticipate these common issues and make sure you have responses.



What are you going to say? Respond, don't react. Usually, the first thing that you do when someone says something negative about your business is get angry, stressed, and defensive. Take a deep breath and try to find a middle ground between you and the unhappy customer.

### Embrace the negative

Embrace the negative and fix the problem. Whether the complaint has merit or it is just that some people are overly critical and picky, realise that the responses you give are not just for the person who has a complaint. Your response is also for readers who come later to read the reviews. Let them see that you are a reasonable person.

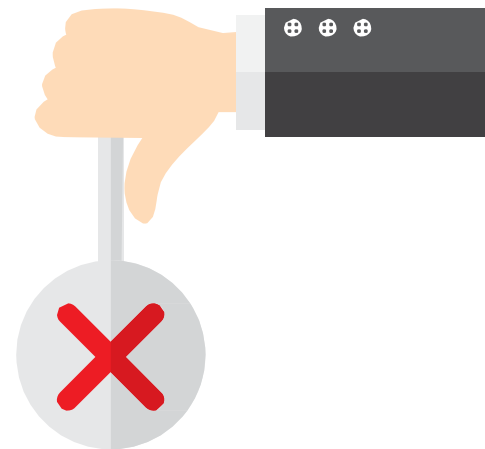
Angry customers can sometimes be turned around by fixing the problem, and then they will be your biggest supporters. Just look at it as part of the cost of doing business and marketing and use the feedback to improve your service or product.

A few bad reviews won't ruin your business. Not everyone will love you and no matter how good you are, there will always be haters. Encourage customers to review you. Because most people write positive reviews, the impact of negative reviews diminishes as you receive more feedback.

### Empower your happy customers

You don't need to focus just on complaints and negative reviews. Use your satisfied customers to help get the word out about your business. Ask them to review you and tell them that you really want to know what they think. Direct them to the review platforms you would like them to use.

Suppose a client says to you in person – “You did a great job. The new siding looks fantastic!” You can ask them – “Do you mind writing that on Yelp and let other homeowners know about our company?” Say “thank you” and interact with them online. Remember, review sites are social media. Take advantage of these sites just as you would Facebook.



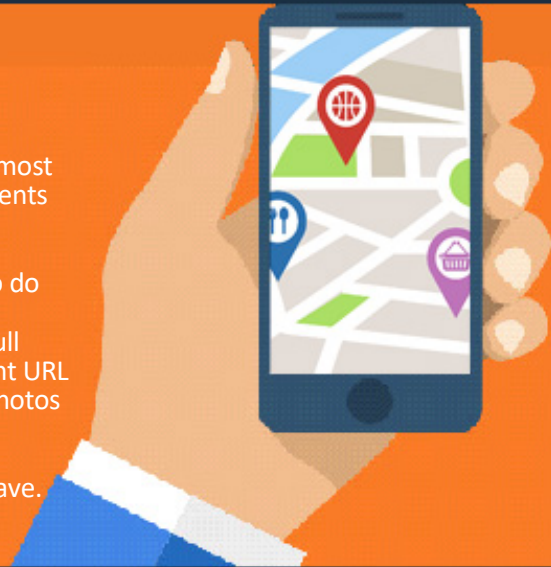
## Getting Found in Google

Getting found in Google My Business is one of the most Important factors when it comes to gaining new clients and getting more business.

If you don't know how to do it yourself then get a trustworthy [marketing agency](#) or [web developer](#) to do it for you.

Make sure your listing is complete including your full address, phone details, opening hours, appointment URL and as many categories as you can plus plenty of photos and other useful information.

Your address should be the same format as used across your website and all other listing you may have.



### Summary of key points:

- Positive reviews make consumers more likely to support a business.
- 74% say that they trust reviews more when they see both good and bad scores.
- It is important to complete a business profile, because 38% of consumers are put off if there's no map / address displayed and 52% say a physical address is the most important info.
- A majority of the reviewers post online reviews to be altruistic and help other consumers.
- Craft responses that you can be proud of.
- Lead with compassion and passion when you respond to reviews.
- Respond promptly.
- Take the conversation offline by reaching out.
- Increase retention of your customers by having a review strategy.
- Make it easy for people to give reviews.

Visual Marketing Australia is a full service Digital Marketing Agency specialising in all your online marketing needs including Web Design & Development, SEO, AdWords, Social Media, CRM integration, Sales and Marketing Automation incl. Inbound Marketing Solutions. We are Local Search specialists and can assist you in all your digital marketing needs.

Visit: <https://www.VisualMarketing.com.au> today for a free consultation.



**1300 158 708**

Suite 17,  
42 Bundall Rd.  
Bundall, QLD  
4217 Australia