

Managing Google Reviews: How to Get More (and Remove Them)

Your guide to taking your Google review management strategy up a notch

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Why Google Reviews Are Important

Like it or not, Google plays a major role in business success. If you have a local business and want to be found by potential new customers doing local searches, it's a requirement to have a Google Business Profile.

This is where you can display key information on the search results page about your location, hours of operation, products and services, website, and more. Just as important, your profile also displays customer reviews of your business, which help people decide if they want to buy from or hire you.



Your Google Business Profile isn't something you set up once and never have to worry about again. If you want it to work well for you, you need to actively manage and monitor it. This means making sure your business information is always up-to-date and building up a body of quality reviews—which takes a little effort and strategy.

In this guide, we'll talk about how you can:

- ▶ Get more reviews by optimizing your Google Business Profile and implementing a review strategy focused on results.
- ▶ Optimize your review management practices to help you get found by the customers you want, grow your business, and enhance your online reputation.

How to Get More Google Reviews

If you haven't already done so, first **set up your business listing on Google**. Once you have a business listing, you can go after your first Google review. If you've gotten this far and you want to increase your volume of reviews, here's what you can do:

If you have a brand-new business, download the New Business Guide to Google Reviews and learn how to launch a successful review strategy on Google from the get-go—and avoid traps along the way.



[Get the Guide](#)

Optimize your Google Business Profile

When you have a strong, updated Google Business Profile, people searching for local businesses in your category are far more likely to find you. Getting found is the first step in converting new customers. And every customer is someone who could potentially leave you a positive review.

To optimize your profile:

Make sure the information is accurate

Do you have a new location, phone number, or website? Have there been any changes in your products or services? Whatever the case, ensure your profile reflects it so you can avoid sending people on a wild goose chase trying to track down your business or a product you don't actually sell. Remember: an irritated person is often more motivated to complain online about their experience with a business.



Share Updates and Announcements

Tell people things about your business in Google Posts that are exciting or helpful using the Updates section of your profile. You can highlight new products, FAQs, events you're hosting, and other content.



Include Photos



Share images of the inside and outside of your business, and your product, whether that be menus and food (if you have a restaurant), vehicles and tools, etc. Images show people that your business is legitimate and well-maintained. And consumers use images to get a feel for your atmosphere and service and to help them know what to expect before visiting your establishment.

Use the Right Keywords



Make sure to include relevant location-based keywords and the product and service keywords that apply to your business. Make sure to get specific with them too. For example, if you're a car dealership, don't just target "new cars" try more specific ones like "the best car for a family of four." When the keywords on your profile match the search terms people may use to find you, your profile can rank higher in local search.

Turn on Google Business Message



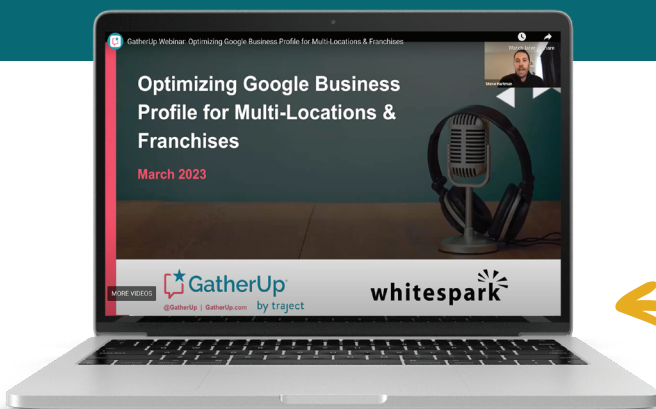
Give people a way to chat with you directly from your profile when they do a search. They can ask about your business and learn more about your products and services—and it's a great way for your business to make a good first impression.

Integrate Appointment Settings



Fast-track appointments by enabling booking capabilities on your profile. Instead of having to book and confirm over the phone, customers can book right from your profile—seriously boosting the convenience factor.

A targeted, accurate, and engaging business profile shows potential customers that you want them to have a positive experience before they ever set foot in your store.



There is a ton you can do to **optimize your Google Business Profile**. For more information, tips, and recommendations, watch the webinar.

[Watch the Webinar](#)

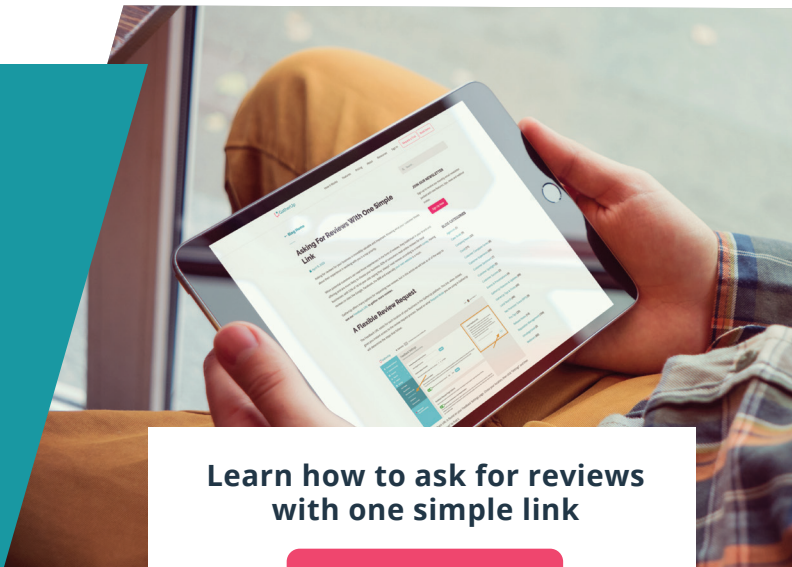
Implement a next-level review strategy

When those first reviews trickle in, it feels incredibly rewarding. But to really get a return on your review efforts, you need a solid review strategy that's focused on regularly getting reviews. Here's what you can do:

1

Ask for Reviews

You'll find that if you simply ask customers for reviews, someone is sure to step up. But the process of posting a review needs to be super easy, otherwise you'll lose folks if they have to jump through hoops or spend too much time on it.



Learn how to ask for reviews
with one simple link

[Read the Blog](#)

To increase your chances of review request success:

- ▶ Share links where customers can leave a review—in your emails, on your website, social media, and in-store signage, and at the bottom of receipts.
- ▶ Ensure the process is quick, easy, and doesn't require extra steps.
- ▶ Have salespeople or the business owner (if that's you) ask customers for reviews, especially if you have good relationships and regular interactions with them.
- ▶ Use an online reputation management tool like GatherUp where you can request reviews and gather, track, and respond to them—all in one place.

2

Respond to Reviews

Responding to reviews is critical to reputation management. It helps assure anyone who's watching that you value your customers, take their feedback seriously, and are willing to resolve any complaints—all which foster trustworthiness and credibility.



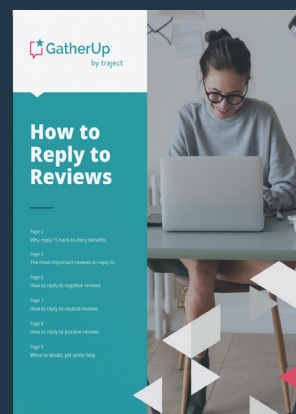
At the same time, replying to reviews shows the human side of your business—which is foundational to creating emotional, loyal connections with customers. Loyal customers want to recommend your business to others. And when people see proof that you're willing to engage with reviews, it inspires them to join in and leave a review, too, helping you build the body of quality reviews you're after.

88%

of consumers are fairly or highly likely to use a business that responds to all reviews, positive or negative.⁵

How you reply to reviews matters. You may not always know what to say—especially if the review is negative or even neutral in tone. You don't want to say the wrong thing and make a bad situation worse. Nor do you want to miss an opportunity to engage with an indifferent customer and turn them into an interested one.

One way a review management platform can help manage replying to reviews is through a feature like **GatherUp's SmartReply**, which uses artificial intelligence (AI) to generate personalized, customized, human-like responses that identify and match customer sentiment and reference specific products that were mentioned in the review. AI-generated review replies are especially helpful for teams with limited time and resources that don't want to fall behind on replies—from agencies to franchises to small businesses.



Learn more about how to reply to reviews

Download the Guide

3

Set Some Goals

Another key part of your review strategy is to figure out what you're aiming for. What do you want to achieve? How many reviews do you want to get per month? What kind of conversion rates—click-throughs, sales, etc.—do you want to see?



The average consumer reads
10 REVIEWS
before they can say they trust a business.⁶

The optimal number or reviews to give consumers confidence in a product is between
20 and 50.⁷

39%
of people filter reviews to see the most recent reviews first.¹¹

New businesses that are less than a year old can realistically aim for one new review per month for the first three to four months—in part to avoid tripping Google’s spam and fake-review filters.¹¹ Slow and steady when you’re just starting out is the best approach, and then you can re-evaluate.

If you already have some customer reviews, don’t leave it at that—because the recency of reviews matters when it comes to ranking and credibility too.

That’s why it’s best to aim for a monthly target of new reviews. For example, you could decide you want to bring in 50 new customers per month, and of those 50 customers, you want to get reviews from 20% of them. That amounts to 10 new reviews per month, or 120 per year. This may seem like a lot, but the more reviews

you have, the more your entire body of reviews will accurately represent your overall customer sentiment.

Keep in mind, your conversion rates could vary. But since some studies show that 12% of customers will leave a review every time they’re asked, you may want to start by asking 80 customers per month to hit that 10 new reviews mark until you can determine what your actual conversion rate is for your types of business.⁶

One important factor to consider in your monthly or numerical targets is conversion rates based on the method of asking for a review. **If you want to get 10 new reviews, for example, you would need to send an average of 200 email requests based on the average email open rate, feedback rate, and clicks to review sites, as illustrated on the next page.**

⁶ Local Consumer Review Survey 2023. brightlocal. Feb. 7, 2023.

⁷ Pesce, Nicole Lyn. “This is exactly how many reviews it takes to get someone to buy something.” MarketWatch. Oct. 22, 2019.

⁸ Blumenthal, Mike. “Google’s New Review Algo: What We Know.” NearMedia. Dec. 8, 2022.

¹¹ Moz. “The Impact of Local Business Reviews on Consumer Behavior.” SEO Industry Report, 2021.

How to get 10 new reviews

To get 10 new 3rd-party reviews, you need to send 200 requests on average.*



**Numbers in each step based on GatherUp conversion rates. Numbers can vary based on Request Mode and location's NPS score.*

There are a few different ways to arrive at the numbers you're looking for—you just need to choose a method that works for your specific goals and in-house resources.

One caveat to any review strategy is that you may need to scale your efforts up or down to find that sweet spot of volume and velocity. You want enough reviews to meet your goals but not so many pouring in that you can't adequately manage them with the tools and resources you have.

Why & How to Remove Google Reviews

There may be situations when a wildly inappropriate review shows up on your business profile. Maybe someone harassed an employee or another customer. Maybe the review included someone's personal information. Or maybe the review is from someone who was never a customer, or includes false information.

In these instances, removing the review is a good idea so it doesn't hang out there for the world to see, harming your business reputation and sinking your ratings.

Google has a clear breakdown of the types of review content it prohibits or restricts, which is worth understanding so you know when review removal is necessary and possible. **The categories of content are:**



⁹ Ross, Lisa. The State of Fake Reviews - Statistics and Trends. Invesp. April 18, 2022.

- ✔ **Civil discourse** that includes harassment, hate speech, offensive content, and personal information
- ✔ **Deceptive content** that includes fake engagement, impersonation, misinformation, and misrepresentation
- ✔ **Mature content** that includes obscenity and profanity, sexually explicit content, adult-themed content, and violence and gore
- ✔ **Regulated, dangerous, and illegal content** that includes restricted and dangerous content, illegal content, child safety considerations, and terrorist content
- ✔ **Off-topic content** that impacts the information quality such as advertising and solicitation, and gibberish and repetitive content

For more details about Google's prohibited and restricted content, [read about them here](#).

In many cases, Google is able to detect reviews that violate their policies and remove them automatically. But you can still ask for a removal if you come across an inappropriate review that made it past Google's filters. Two of the quickest ways are through Google Search or Google Maps, using your smartphone or tablet. It can take several days for the team at Google to look at your request and take action. [Go here](#) for additional ways to report reviews and check their status.

Request removal in Google Search

- 1 Find your business profile on Google
- 2 Click Reviews
- 3 Find the review you want to report
- 4 Click More > Report review

Request removal in Google Maps

- 1 In the Google Maps app, open your Business Profile by clicking your profile picture or initial (at top right)
- 2 Click Reviews
- 3 Find the review or user you want to report
- 4 Click More > Report review
- 5 Or click the name of the user, then click More > Report profile

Negative reviews can serve a purpose

Removing inappropriate reviews is completely justifiable. But understand this doesn't include removing reviews you just don't like. Though it's true that negative reviews can impact people's opinions of your business, it's almost inevitable that you'll get a negative review at some point. And provided it's from a real customer, of course, a negative review isn't the end of the world. Here's why:



If the problem mentioned in the review is actually pretty minor, potential customers may be more than willing to shrug it off and not let it stand in the way of buying from you.



No business is perfect 100% of the time; in fact, a near-perfect rating can make your business seem less credible.¹⁰ So a negative review here or there is a good thing.



If the negative review is legitimate, it's an opportunity for your business to publicly show empathy, clear up misunderstandings, and make things right with a disgruntled customer—all which help to shape your online reputation in a more positive way.



Customer feedback is critical to identify ways to improve your product or service. Negative reviews are also the first indication that there is a problem in your business. So take note of what customers are saying and if you start to identify common themes you know it's time to take action.

Benefits of Managing Your Google Reviews

Your Google Business Profile acts as a single source of truth so that anyone doing a local search can quickly and accurately learn about your business. The positive reviews connected with your profile contribute in a big way to those first impressions. That's why managing your Google reviews is a critical part of managing your overall online presence and giving your business a greater chance at success.

When you put the time and effort into managing your Google reviews, you can:



Show Up Higher in Search Results

When Google sees that you have a growing body of quality reviews, it assumes that your business and—by extension—your products and services are legitimate and valued by your customer base. And the higher you appear in local search, the more likely new customers will find you.



Boost Your Business Credibility

Since Google reviews are so ubiquitous and universally trusted, when potential customers see a significant number of customer reviews associated with your business, they get the social proof they're looking for that your company is real and credible.



Increase Conversions and Sales

Positive reviews and high star ratings inspire potential customers to click through to your website or call you—all which can lead to the next step of making a purchase and even becoming a repeat customer.



Expand Your Review Efforts with GatherUp

Paying attention to your Google reviews is critical. In reality, though, **all customer reviews are important**, including first-party reviews from customers who post them directly to your website and third-party reviews on other review sites like Yelp or industry-specific sites like TripAdvisor.

Using GatherUp's review management platform, you can expand your review efforts by gathering reviews from a variety of places—not just Google—so you can use them to effectively market your business and win more customers.

With GatherUp, you can:

- ✓ Request reviews from customers to build up a solid body of positive reviews and help convert even more customers
- ✓ Manage and monitor your reviews across multiple sites so you know what customers are saying and can respond appropriately
- ✓ Reply to reviews in your own words or with AI-generated responses
- ✓ Use the customer feedback you get to identify insights that improve your products and services and the overall customer experience

Learn more about how GatherUp can help you get more reviews

Request a Free Trial Today



gatherup.com

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