

Responding to reviews is an essential step in creating and maintaining loyal customers. Consumers need to see responses that are courteous and that offer direct methods of contacting them. Even a negative review is often looked at more favorably if the business responded.

78 percent of consumers say that seeing management respond to online reviews makes them believe that the business cares more about them.

Increasing your response rate is something you can do immediately to improve your online reputation score. Strive to respond to **100% of negative reviews** and **at least 20% response of positive reviews**. Over time, set goals for maintaining these rates consistently and improving upon them.

General Best Practices

No matter the rating, there are several best practices for responding to reviews.

1. Respond promptly but not hastily.

Set a goal to respond to reviews within a designated time frame (e.g., 48 hours). Responding thoughtfully shows that you are listening and that you care. The Retail Consumer Report found that 33 percent of consumers who received a prompt response to a negative review subsequently posted a positive one.

2. Be polite and courteous.

Remember that you are not responding to one person. Your other customers or potential customers will be able to see your responses. Always be respectful, even if the customer review was unfavorable or unfair.

3. Decide who responds to reviews.

Depending on the number of reviews you receive, you may need to designate a person at your business to respond to reviews, or split up the task equally among your employees. Ideally anyone responding should have excellent writing skills.

Take advantage of the approval workflow, especially if customer information is sensitive. For example, Healthcare businesses must be careful not to violate HIPPA regulations when reviews contain Personal Health Information (PHI). An approval workflow empowers more employees to craft responses, while relying on a trained gatekeeper to spot-check all reviews before they are published.

4. Check for typos.

Some review sites do not allow changes to be made once a review or response is posted. Take the time to double-check spelling and grammar.

Responding to Positive Reviews

Customers who write positive reviews are some of your best. To keep these customers coming back, you should acknowledge the value of their feedback. A response is an opportunity to thank the customer—not only for their business, but for taking time to share their experiences.

1. Within the response, reiterate what the customer found positive.

Including some detail shows them and future customers that someone is actually reading the reviews:

image not found or type unknown



“Thank you for sharing your experience with us! The fact that you mention our customer service means a lot to us. It was our pleasure serving you, and we hope to see you again soon.”

?

2. For reviewers who don't leave comments (or comments are minimal), ask them what you can do better.

Find out what will make their next experience with you truly exceptional or consider asking them what it will take to earn those missing star(s).

image not found or type unknown



“Thanks for the positive review! Please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve your experience during your next visit.”

Responding to Negative Reviews

There it is. The dreaded one-star review that you don't deserve. While you can't control exactly what people say about you online, you can (and should) take part in the conversation and own your reputation. A few low ratings sprinkled in actually adds legitimacy to your business when they're viewed by potential customers. Even if the review was harsh or unfair, take the high road to show the customer (and future customers) that you are respectful and professional in any situation.

1. Don't take negative reviews personally!

By being defensive, you may inadvertently write something that could be worse than the actual review. For most negative reviews, invite the customer to contact you (or if you know who the person is, contact him/her directly). This technique shows that you are committed to resolving the issue while keeping details private:

image not found or type unknown



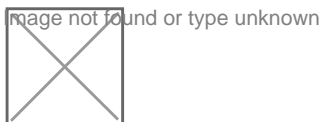
“We regret to hear that you had a negative experience with us

but would appreciate the chance to turn your experience around. A customer experience manager will be in touch with you directly, to help you resolve your issue. Or, feel free to reach our Service Manager directly at or .”

After you reach the customer offline and have agreed upon a resolution, ask the customer to modify or remove the review. However, never provide incentives in exchange for writing or altering their reviews. Simply explain how valuable the feedback is to you personally. If the customer does not modify the review after you’ve provided resolution, return to the original online conversation and thank them for the chance to fix the issue. In doing so, you allow other customers to see that you’ve closed the loop.

2. Research facts before responding to a review.

Determine if there are reasonable steps that can be taken to resolve the situation without having to settle or reward a customer:

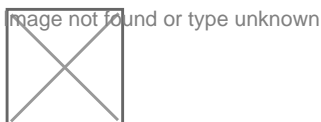


“Thank you for alerting us to an important training issue. We have corrected the problem and hope you will give us another chance.”

A customer will typically tolerate a problem not being fully fixed as long as the underlying process is seen as fair. Do not take on or look to assign blame, but own up to honest mistakes when you make them.

3. Don’t ignore threatening or abusive reviews.

If reviewer comments become threatening, respond quickly and respectfully. If necessary, depending on the content, you may consider alerting your legal team for assistance. It’s in your best interest to squelch antagonistic situations before it gets out of hand.



“Thank you for taking the time to leave us this detailed feedback with your experience with our service department. If you’re willing, please contact us at or so that we may discuss this issue further.”

If a particular review was mistakenly attributed (i.e., meant for another company) or contains slander/inappropriate language, you can work within the review site directly to request that the review be

Best Practices for Responding to Reviews

<https://help.reputation.com/knowledgebase/best-practices-for-responding-to-reviews/> | Last Updated: September 22, 2020



removed. However, request a review removal **ONLY** if the review meets the site's terms of service and violation policies. Do not request a review removal just because you don't like what was said.

In the end, if you can't resolve a customer's issue and turn a negative review into a positive one, let it go. Attempting to remove a negative review can aggravate the situation and lead to additional comments. Instead, focus on building a wealth of positive reviews.