



Google Business Reviews

How to gather and manage your
Google Reviews

Excel with Google.

Chances are, almost every business decision you make is influenced by Google. The same goes for your customers, and that's why your business needs glowing Google Reviews.

Google dominates the internet as the most popular review platform. When you stand among the other business listings on Google, your star rating pleads your case. Your Google Review score is one of the most telling data points for your brand.

You can't miss out on Google Reviews.

Why Should I Use Google Reviews?

You may have read our blog and learned that 57% of consumers use Google to read reviews.¹ And you can't toggle your Google Reviews off — if you want to be listed on Google, you have to accept reviews. An average business is found on Google over a thousand times a month.² That can spell disaster if you aren't watching your star rating.

With that in mind, you should be on top of your Google reviews. Lean into Google and expect a better online reputation that leaves customers with a good impression of your business.



TIP:

You need to be a verified business before getting reviews. See [Google's guide to verification](#)





Rake in the ratings: Gathering your Google reviews

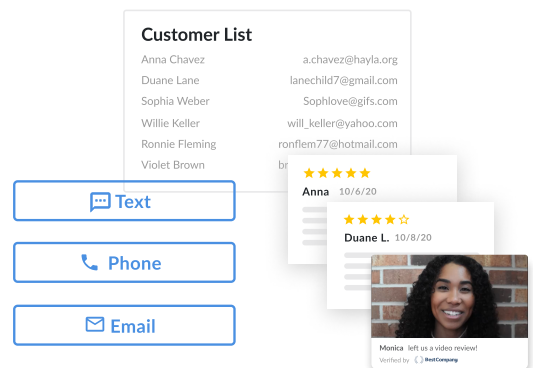
Google has a lot of reviews to sift through. That's why they've outlawed many practices that make their reviews difficult to moderate. You can't incentivize your way to a review, you can't review-gate to keep unhappy customers out, and you can't ask your friends, employees, and family to give you a boost.

But don't worry! You can still try several more methods to proactively gather reviews and see great success.

Use Best Company's program.

We use our Review Campaigns to email or text your customers to leave reviews. That used to be exclusive to Best Company. But now we offer the same program for Google Reviews.

Leverage our program to earn verified customer reviews. We've helped Business Suite users get 8.5 times more reviews through our Review Campaigns, and now we can help you earn more reviews with Google. Ask a growth consultant for more information.



Leave a calling card.

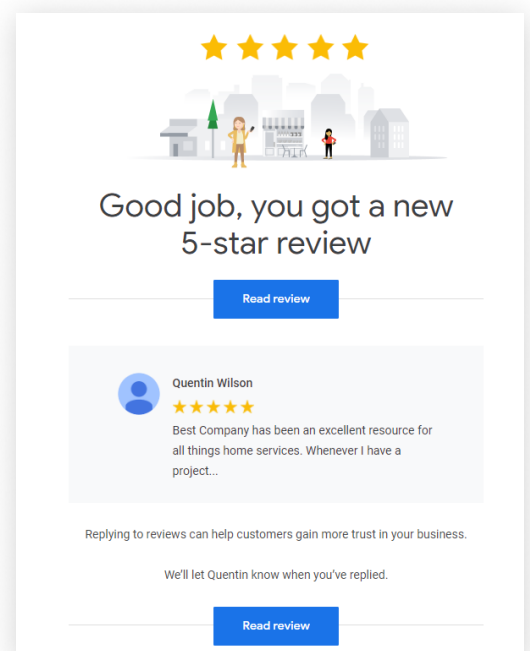
Many customers will leave a review if you just ask, but they have to know you want their feedback. Add a CTA for Google reviews on your business cards, or include it on a thank-you message when you package a customer's order.

Ask on the receipt.

Of course, you want to ask for reviews after a customer has used your product or service. That's why the receipt can be a good place for a CTA. Include a link to your Google Reviews in a post-transaction email or in subscription renewal notifications.

Respond to your feedback.

This best practice lets future customers see how you handle complaints, but it also encourages more reviewers to leave their own ratings. If customers see that you respond to reviews, they're more likely to comment, too. Google encourages responses, even on your positive reviews.



Follow up over text.

Text is gaining popularity for scheduling appointments, reminding customers about important dates, and following up with their receipts. You can also automate the process by following up with a review request after a transaction.

Texts have a 98 percent open rate, compared to 20-30 percent for emails.³ Shoot your customer a text next time you want them to take notice.



TIP:

Best Company recently released a service to let you text your customers instantly for a review. [Learn more about Instant Text here.](#)

Give a personal invite.

Your employees on the frontlines shouldn't be afraid to ask for a review when they've solved a tough issue or finished a big project for a client.

Asking for a review from one human to another is more effective than an automated service. This is difficult to scale for larger companies, but try to keep a personal touch when you're in the early stages of gathering reviews.

Share your positive feedback.

Let everybody who follows you or subscribes to your email know that you're open to reviews. Here's where you can highlight your Google Reviews:

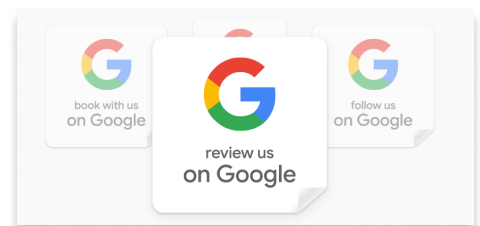
- On social media
- In email newsletters
- On your websites and landing pages
- In videos
- In brochures
- At company headquarters
- By your review CTAs

This is a win-win, showing off your positive reviews to curious shoppers and reminding your customers that you'd like their star ratings, too.



TIP:

Google already gives its users a [marketing kit with free assets to share your reviews](#). But you need permission from your reviewer before you can share their feedback. Read all about [Google's rules on sharing user reviews here](#).



Inside the machine: Features that make Google Reviews tick

Google is a complex service. Having many great reviews is one piece of the puzzle. But what else can you do to make your reviews shine and highlight your business in Google's results?

Here are some features that make Google Reviews special and can impact your strategy:

Google sorts by relevance by default.

Google serves reviews to readers by relevance. Users can choose another filter, but people rarely will.

4.9  1,420 reviews 

Sort by: Most relevant 

Of course, Google's secret sauce for relevance is under wraps. But researchers theorize some of the factors that lead to a relevant review:⁴

- Spelling, grammar, and formatting
- Length (not too short, not too long)
- Use of high-value keywords relevant to the industry reviewed
- Star ratings representative of your review average (a mix of positive and negative reviews)
- Age of the review (older reviews are considered less relevant).

It looks like your quest for recent, high-quality reviews will never be done. Keep up the review gen so Google can pull your results as the most relevant reviews.

Google adds tags.

Google sorts reviews by relevant tags for readers. A reader can click on the tag and see all the reviews that mention it. Check out these keywords for an aquarium:

All

otters 469

octopus 409

seals 218

city pass 119

volunteers 84

tide pools 73

jellyfish 71

anemones 53

puffins 29

salmon 25

This helps readers find the features that a reader cares about most. Google automatically creates tags based on their mentions in reviews. These tags are helpful for learning what's best about your business and which keywords you might include in your content strategy.

Google uses a combination of AI and human moderation.

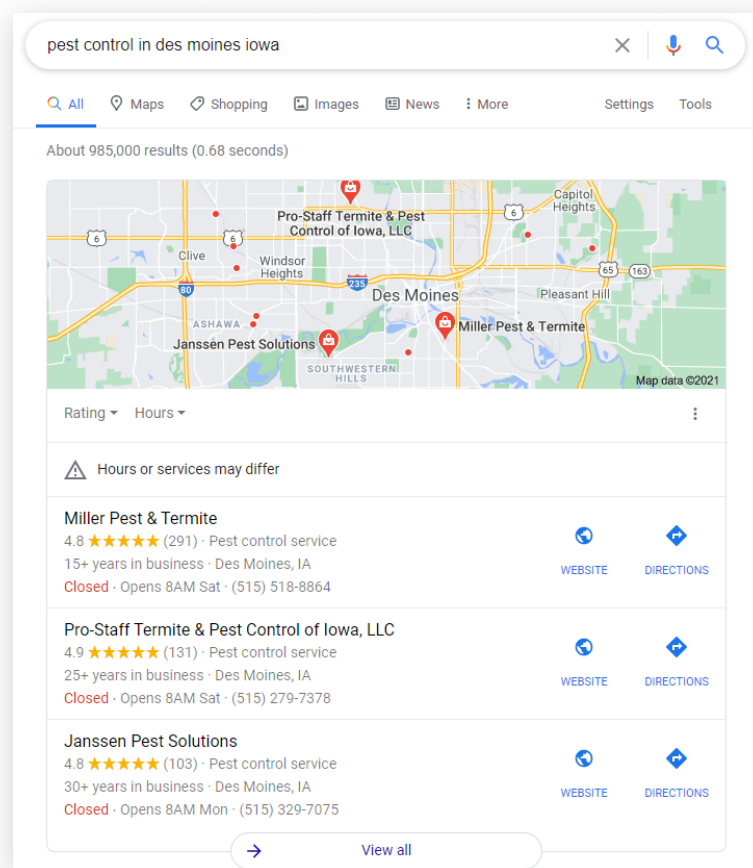
Machine learning is Google's not-so-secret weapon. These automated tools are what moderate reviews before they go live. But humans guide the AI and step in when automated moderation fails.

The director of Maps affirms that less than one percent of reviews violate their policies, but journalists have previously reported otherwise and alleged that millions of Google reviews are fake. That's why Google has been ramping up its moderation and removed over 75 million reviews in 2019 with human and machine help.⁵

Clearly, machine learning has a long way to go before it can replace human moderators. Be aware that when a dubious review appears on your profile, it's possible the machine slipped up.

High-quality, high-volume reviews make you more prominent in search.

Ever wondered how Google chooses the top three local businesses listed in its Local Pack?



They use these three factors: relevance, prominence, and distance.⁶

Check out those three listings above. Notice that they all have hundreds of positive reviews? That's prominence.

In fact, a study on local restaurants found that businesses with less than 100 reviews had a 1 percent chance of ranking in a Local Pack. The first listing in Local Pack averages 893 reviews.⁷

Reviews aren't the only factor at play, but they can significantly boost your chances of being featured more often. Don't forget to trick out your My Business profile with all the information Google wants, though, otherwise no amount of reviews can help you.

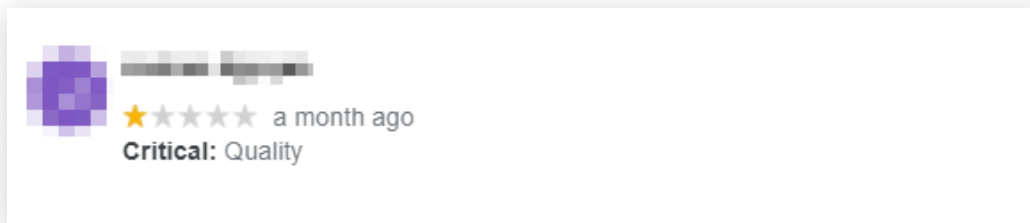
Turning lemons into lemonade: Responding to your Google Reviews

If you've been reading our series on review platforms, you've probably already seen our advice on responding to reviews with Facebook. Most of that advice holds true: [you can catch a good recap here](#).

But there's something we didn't cover with Facebook that's an even bigger problem for Google: star ratings with no feedback.

How to respond to reviews with no comments

Star ratings with no comment aren't as helpful as detailed feedback. Review readers don't know what your business did right or wrong, and you don't have glowing reviews to share or feedback to learn from.



Try these quick tips for giving the best response to a review like this:

- **Start with gratitude** — Lead by thanking the reviewer for their response and offering apologies if they gave a low rating.
- **Ask for more information** — Tell the reviewer you'd love to hear about what made their visit good or bad.
- **Conclude with your contact information** — If the reviewer sees your response, they can reach out and tell you more about their experience. That's when you can resolve their issues or ask them to add their points to their review.

Responding to your reviews is key because most customers will read your comments. Show them that your customer service is dignified!



TIP: You can learn more about Facebook Reviews through [our guide here](#).

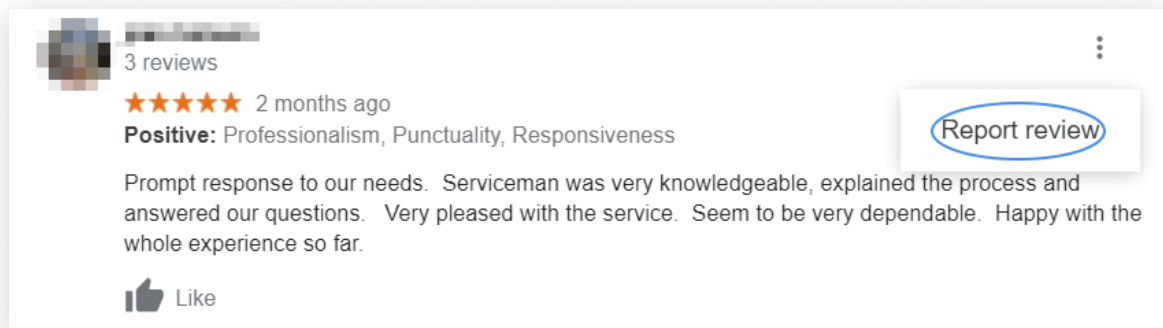
Writing off the bad ones: Removing fake, spammy reviews

Google takes their reputation seriously. They take yours seriously, too.

Here are the reasons you can report a Google review:

- Irrelevance (reviews for other companies)
- Conflict of interest (i.e. employee reviews)
- Offensiveness
- Privacy issues (i.e. full names of guests and employees)
- Legal issues (i.e. false information)

Flagging a review is simple. Click the three dots beside a review and choose “Report review.”



Select your reason for reporting.

What's wrong with this review?

- This review is not relevant to this place
- Conflict of interest
- Offensive or sexually explicit
- Privacy concern
- Legal issue

Report

You can also do this through your Google My Business account.

What's next?



Google Reviews are essential. We hope you're planning your review gen strategy for Google as you read this, because Google's reviews impact how visible you are to your customers, and that matters.

But Google Reviews can't do everything. Customers typically read multiple review sites before making a purchasing decision. You need to stay on top of the review platforms that rank for your keywords and check out platforms that cater to your industry's niche. Create a comprehensive reputation strategy that gathers reviews on sites with high value per review, Google included.

Reach out to us if you're interested in starting a Review Campaign for Google.

Our partners are boosting their reputation with Business Suite.

“Best Company is a recognizable source and it’s only going to get better. The things they can do for SEO and online reputation have helped us compete in the marketplace.”

Kathryn Hyer, Affiliate Marketing Brand Associate, Vivint

“We’re sending out **more requests for reviews than any other consumer insights platform**, and the fact that many are gathered by phone drives up our conversion.”

Nathan Dodd, Reputation Marketing Specialist, Guardian Protection

“When [our reps] are pitching a customer, the customer wants reviews from a homeowner that we’ve installed in their area. **We’re able to filter within Best Company based on the city – we can pull a review and use that.**”

Rainier de Ocampo, VP of Marketing, Solar Optimum

“We can compare ourselves to other companies’ profiles and see where we stack up in the Business Suite. The additional personalization of our page makes the profile extremely attractive to our potential customers.”

Amanda Purpura, Manager, Lead Generation and Partnerships, Guardian Protection

“Prospects who come to use through Best Company convert **better than any other leads we could get.**”

Geoff Gross, CEO, Medical Guardian

So can you.

Schedule A Demo With



Sources



<https://www.oberlo.com/blog/online-review-statistics>

<https://www.searchenginejournal.com/5-of-google-my-business-listing-views-result-in-a-customer-action/316723/>

<https://blog.adobe.com/en/2015/07/27/marketing-with-98-percent-read-rate-and-10-more-compelling-stats.html#gs.t9sy80>

<https://www.seobythesea.com/2011/05/how-google-might-choose-high-quality-reviews-to-display-for-products-and-businesses/>

<https://venturebeat.com/2020/02/19/google-used-ai-and-human-moderation-to-take-down-more-than-75-million-policy-violating-google-maps-reviews/>

<https://seranking.com/blog/google-local-pack/>

<https://moz.com/blog/restaurant-local-seo>