

Always Ask for Positive Online Reviews



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✖ Still aren't taking advantage of online reviews? Online reviews are shaping buying behavior.

Let's take a look at a few statistics:

- 72 percent of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations
- 93 percent of people who conduct research on review sites make purchases at the businesses for which they search
- studies show that 90 percent of Yelp users say that positive reviews affect their buying choices

So, if someone Googled the name of your company right now, what will they find? Are you listed anywhere online? Are there reviews that make someone want to pick up the phone to call you, or are your calls going to go to a local competitor?

Ryan Draving, the CEO of [CompeteLeap](#), an online marketing firm, offered these four best practice tips to get you started with online reviews:

1. Get listed in local directories and across social media channels. Claim your business name for your Google+ page and social media accounts as well as relevant local directory and review sites. For a list of sites to sign up on, Ryan recommends YEXT, a geo-location directory listing service.

"Even if you don't have the money in the budget to have them do it, you can take the listings of the sites and claim your listings yourselves." Make sure to fill out all of the corresponding fields with relevant, consistent information.

2. Ask happy clients for reviews. Simply having 10-20 reviews will make a huge impact in beating out your competition, Ryan says. When you wrap up a job, and the customer is thrilled, email them and ask them to leave a review.

Make the process as simple as possible.

You can write a short blurb saying something to the effect of, "We appreciate each and every review. We would love it if you wouldn't mind taking 2 minutes to let us know how you enjoyed working with us. We look forward to working with you again on your next project. Most people have Gmail accounts today, so simply insert a link to your Google+ page or other review sites where you would like them to leave a review.

3. Post your reviews on your site with pride. You have earned them, go ahead and let someone else brag about how wonderful it is to work with you. If someone goes directly to your site, having testimonials and reviews from happy customers dramatically increase the likelihood of someone picking up the phone to call.

4. Monitor your business name on Google Alerts and respond to negative reviews. If you have a negative review or two, don't panic! Calmly answer, and show your side of the story. If you can, try to take the conversation offline by giving them a phone number and name of a person, they can talk to resolve the issue.

Most likely, people are already talking about your business, applying these tactics to your advantage will help you to hopefully get more leads, and close more sales.