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GOOGLE
REVIEW
PITFALLS



TO AVOID



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Around 90% of people read reviews before deciding on what business to go to. If you don't have any reviews, you can't build trust with potential customers, and people buy and book with people they trust. However, just having reviews isn't enough. If Google's algorithms don't find your reviews trustworthy, they won't rank you high on their search engine, and people are less likely to see your business. Here are four common pitfalls to avoid when trying to rank high on Google Maps.



AVOID A LOW FREQUENCY OF REVIEWS

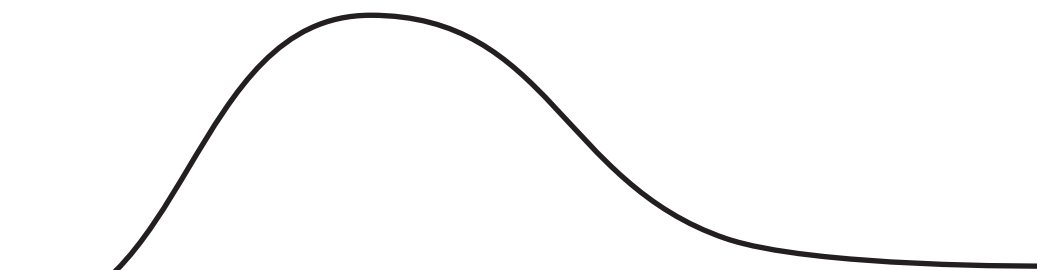
Many businesses figure out that Google reviews are a good thing, but what they don't know is that Google pays attention to the frequency of reviews, not just the number of reviews. A company that starts asking for reviews might suddenly get 50 reviews in one day, stop, and say that's enough. But that looks unnatural. Google Maps looks at the reviews and looks to see if it's natural. If it doesn't look natural, you'll rank lower on Google Maps even if you have a good number of reviews.

ONCE YOU START GETTING INTO THE GAME (OF REVIEWS), YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO BE IN THE GAME.

You always have to be getting reviews. You cannot get 50 reviews in a couple days and then say you're done. With our clients, yes, they get a lot of reviews at the beginning and then the number drops, but it doesn't stop. They continue to get reviews. The review curve scoops up, drops down, and then becomes steady.

What you don't want to do is get a lot of reviews one day and then suddenly get none. Google's smart. It's looking for natural review patterns to determine what businesses to rank higher on its search results.

REVIEWS



TIME

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AVOID HAVING YOUR REVIEWERS CONNECTED TO YOUR WI-FI

Google's review policies state, "If you're a business owner, don't set up review stations or kiosks at your place of business just to ask for reviews written at your place of business." The reason for this is because it looks like you're using the kiosk to write reviews that aren't authentic. However, there's more to this policy. What Google isn't telling you is to avoid having all of your reviews come from the same IP address. Each Wi-Fi access point comes with one IP address, and if all reviews are coming from that one access point, then Google sees them as unnatural. Even if all of your reviews are coming from different devices, Google still doesn't like it. If your customers are connected to a company's Wi-Fi and they leave reviews, Google doesn't think those reviews are authentic.

THE MOST NATURAL REVIEW WILL BE FROM SOMEONE WHO WRITES IT FROM THEIR PHONE, USING THEIR OWN DATA.]

We had a client that passed around an ipad that was connected to the company's Wi-Fi. Before they handed the ipad to the customer, they had already walked through the steps to leave a review and left it at the "choose the stars" screen to make the process faster for their customers. It worked really well. They were getting a lot of reviews. But they lost their Google Maps ranking and fell out of the top three. It hurt their company. Yes, they had the most reviews, but it doesn't matter if you have a lot of reviews if your company doesn't show up on the first page of Google.



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AVOID NON-DESCRIPTIVE REVIEWS

While having reviews is great, you want to encourage the reviews you receive to be descriptive. This is because the most recent review doesn't always float to the top. Instead, descriptive reviews tend to rise to the top.

You may be asking, why do all my negative reviews float to the top? Well, it's because they're descriptive. When people are mad, they're motivated. They are motivated to type more and be more descriptive. So, the question is, how do we get our customers (not just the negative ones) to be descriptive? We ask them! When asking for reviews, ask a potential reviewer to talk about their experience. Ask them to talk about the exact service they received there, who did it, and how the experience was. By asking for descriptive reviews, you help potential customers and your keyword ranking. Here's how:

POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS LIKE DESCRIPTIVE REVIEWS.

It gives them good context about the business. That context also allows you to rank higher with keywords. Here's an example of how descriptive reviews work. If you're a beauty school and you asked someone to review your school about their experience, you might get a review from them that says something like this:

"I love this school! I'm getting a great education and I can't wait to start my beauty career..., etc. etc. etc."

DESCRIPTIVE REVIEWS GENERATE KEYWORD RANKINGS.

In that one sentence above, that beauty school is now more relevant for keywords such as "school," "beauty," and "education." These are all keywords that Google will pick up on and give you more authority towards the search term "beauty school."

HOW DO YOU GET THOSE DESCRIPTIVE REVIEWS?

Ask for a review as an individual, not a company. Most businesses offer an incentive, and the reviews they receive aren't as descriptive, sincere, or genuine. Use phrases such as, "It would mean a lot to me to get feedback," or "If you left me a review and mentioned my name, that would mean a lot. Would you do that for me?"

THE KEY TO GETTING THE BEST AND MOST DESCRIPTIVE REVIEWS IS TO PUT THE EMPHASIS ON YOU, AS AN INDIVIDUAL, WHO'S ASKING FOR THE REVIEW.

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AVOID ALL POSITIVE OR ALL NEGATIVE REVIEWS

If a business has all negative or all positive reviews, that's not natural in Google's eyes. It also doesn't look good in a customer's eyes. Around 90% of people read reviews before deciding on which business to go to. People become suspicious of all positive or all negative reviews. If the reviews are all positive, people don't know what the company will do if something goes wrong.

A variety of reviews, including negative reviews, can build a potential customer's trust with a company. If a potential customer sees a negative review but also sees a response, that customer now knows what the company will do if something goes wrong. It's kind of like a warranty. People like to purchase warranties in general because it gives them a sense of trust. If potential customers see all positive reviews or negative reviews without responses, they don't know what will happen if something goes wrong.

PEOPLE BUY AND BOOK WITH PEOPLE THEY TRUST.

If your reviews don't create that trust, people won't buy or book your products or services. How do you gain that trust? Embrace all types of reviews, positive or negative. Do not delete negative reviews. Instead, respond to them, and respond to them properly. A good response builds trust. When people are looking through reviews, they are likely to read the first review, scan it, and then go straight to the negative ones. People will see those negative reviews, but you won't necessarily lose those potential customers' business.

A response to a negative review shows the world that you take care of your customers. The more trust you build with your customers, the more customers you'll have.

If you feel like you need help implementing a reputation management program at your business, give us a call or click on the button below to set up a time to speak with a reputation management expert!

SCHEDULE MY CALL NOW!



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