

Our Proven Process to Acquire 5-Star Reviews

Are you struggling to improve your business's online rating despite providing exceptional service? Unsure of **how to acquire Google reviews**, or **how to increase your Google rating**? In this article, we'll discuss:

1. Why it is important to pay attention to Google reviews
2. How to implement a positive review solicitation process
3. How to address negative reviews

Pay Attention to Google Reviews

When it comes to online reviews, Google Reviews can have a drastic impact on your business. It's the online review platform that everyone is paying attention to. There are other review platforms out there, such as Yelp, Health Grades for healthcare, or Avvo for legal, but at the end of the day, Google trumps them all.

People are making decisions every day regarding who to do business with based on the online reviews of the companies that they are considering. If your company has less than four stars, you're losing business. If you're neglecting to respond to negative reviews, you are losing business. Even if you have satisfied customers — guess what — you're losing business by not soliciting them to leave positive reviews.

Implementing a Positive Review Solicitation Process

Generating positive reviews doesn't always have to require a complicated strategy. It can be as simple as asking a customer in person or by phone if they are satisfied with the service that you are providing. If they say "yes," ask if they could take a minute to leave a review for your business on Google; it's as simple as that. Ideally, you want to have a strategy or process in place to consistently solicit positive reviews from your clientele. But just getting started by asking for reviews is the best thing you can do right now so that you can begin accumulating those all-important five star reviews.

When you're ready to take the next step and implement a systematic process for reviews generation, you're going to need software to help automate the process. There are a lot of review management software options out there. The one we use at our agency with great success is Grade.us. This is by no means an endorsement of Grade.us, but it works great for us and our clients. Whether you use Grade.us or some other platform to automate your reviews management process, you're going to have to develop a process for soliciting reviews, and responding to them.

Our process for soliciting reviews consists of setting up three email solicitation templates that are sent in seven day increments. Each email politely asks the customer to provide feedback on their experience. If they indicate that they were satisfied, they're routed to our client's Google My Business page where they can leave a review publicly. If they indicate they were dissatisfied, they're routed to a private feedback form, where they can leave their feedback privately, and our client can follow up with them to address the customer's complaint.

This process does a couple important things. First, it ensures that only positive reviews see the light of day, while negative reviews don't. The combined effect of this is better Google reviews and a higher star rating. Second, it ensures our client becomes aware of any unhappy customers, which gives them the opportunity to reach out and attempt to resolve the issue, thus improving the customer relationship. It's a win-win for both our client and their customers.

Why three emails instead of just one, and why seven day increments? Follow up is key. We find that most of the reviews occur from the second and third emails. We spread the emails out over a seven day period to avoid becoming an annoyance to the recipient.

Address Negative Reviews

Your business should never have unaddressed negative Google reviews – this gives off the perception that you don't care about satisfying customers. If you have a negative review that has not been responded to, go ahead and address their concerns. Try to avoid engaging them in a negative manner. Just address the review and let them know that you hear their concerns and want to resolve the issue offline. This is ultimately the goal: take the conversation offline.

In my past experience, I've seen instances where we respond to negative reviews on behalf of a client which in turn helps with public perception and lets people know that they care about what customers think. In the interim, our client is communicating with that unhappy customer offline, which ultimately leads to that once bad review being changed from a one star review into a five star review. This is done by simply asking the customer what they were unhappy with and helping them resolve the issue. Often, upon seeing that the client cared, the customer will change their negative review all on their own.

In summary, if you're not already managing Google reviews or even paying attention to them, start doing so because it is affecting your business. If you do not have a procedure in place to attain positive reviews, start one by simply asking satisfied customers to leave a review for you on Google and build from that. Respond to any negative reviews you may have in a neutral fashion and take the conversation offline in the hope that they remove the review on their own or even change it to a higher rating.