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**BLOG 3**

**Let Your Customers Do The Talking! Even though they are not always right.**

Another summer is coming to an end and I hope it will leave you with many great stories to tell.

My summer was mostly about business, and even when it wasn’t, it was. I did manage to visit a few gems along the spectacular Croatian coastline. And, as my company, Fast Review, provides solutions, in good part, for the hospitality industry, I found myself talking to quite a few hospitality managers.

**And there was one theme that kept repeating, or better to say, one issue.**

A lot of the managers reported that their overall ratings on platforms like Google, TripAdvisor, and Booking.com declined due to guests leaving bad reviews based on experiences that had absolutely nothing to do with the actual accommodation units they stayed in.

Or even worse, on social pages, the guests would post negative reviews that were clearly unrelated to the rooms and apartments they had booked, rather, the negative feedback was meant for neighboring villas or hotels.

One person was very unhappy about minor construction work just outside a resort they were visiting. Another one was angry that their drone got entangled in tree branches. Some even went so far as to complain about the weather!

And this is all fine. It’s part of the business. Statistics show, and we’ve seen it in practice, that only about 12% of satisfied guests will make the effort to leave a positive review. Unsatisfied guests, on the other hand, will do it in almost 100% of the time! Which, in my experience, is a recipe for disaster that will unjustly affect the online ratings and reputation of any property you are managing.

**Especially if you are still blindly following the good old „the customer is always right“ mantra.**

If you have failed your guests, you will own it, and will go above and beyond to rectify the issue. If you have surpassed all their expectations, you will be hoping for stellar reviews! But, those rave reviews will never come in numbers that will truly reflect the high quality of your service. Moreover, you will often be publicly blamed for things that are completely outside of your scope of responsibility, and way out of your control, such as bad weather or some nasty tree branches. And when I say publicly, I mean, you will read it in the very public online reviews your customers are leaving on your business pages.

**So, do you throw in the white towel?**

**Of course NOT!**

Anyone who has ever directly tended to the needs of customers, their opinions, complaints, or praises, knows it can be a tricky path to thread. Nonetheless, it can be a source of enormous value for any business.

As the saying goes, people will talk. Your customers will talk. Let them do the talking, even if they are not always right ;).

If their feedback is negative, based on actual events or not, it will be a great source of learning and improvement.

If the feedback is positive, your business can seriously capitalize on positive customer reviews and testimonials. And this is exactly what you should be putting your focus on!

Positive online reviews will inevitably increase your sales revenue. You only have to make sure to get as many as possible!

As a former hotel GM, I was in the same boat, so to speak. Instead of shrugging my shoulders, throwing in the towel, and succumbing to the whims of “very opinionated people of the internet”, I put my “thinking hat” on and found a way to get a positive review out of every single satisfied guest.

**That is how Fast Review was born, a solution that allowed, first me, and then many of my clients around the globe, to collect tons of positive online reviews, improve online reputation and get more business their way.**

Initially, the solution came in the form of a card and easy-to-use software that enabled my clients to grab positive reviews on the spot, before their customers even leave the premises and return to their daily rutine.

Presently, it’s a tad more sophisticated, with many new features, one of which makes it possible for you to track how your competition is doing. And recently, as a signal that we are a good path, we have struck a global deal with Tripadvisor, which was a neat thing to conclude this season with.

Now, as another summer draws to a close, and the memories of coastal beauty blend with the ebb and flow of hospitality industry challenges, one truth stands clear: our customers will talk. They'll voice their opinions, share their experiences, and sometimes, their perspectives may not align with reality. While the mantra "the customer is always right" might not hold absolute sway, the insights gained from their feedback, be it positive or negative, remain invaluable.

Embrace the symphony of opinions, but make sure you focus on gathering as many of the positive ones as possible!

Thank you for reading!

Petar Aračić, CEO of Fast Review