**Review site**

**Introduction:**

A review site is a [website](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Website) on which reviews can be posted about people, businesses, products, or services. These sites may use [Web 2.0](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0) techniques to gather reviews from site users or may employ [professional writers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_writer) to author reviews on the topic of concern for the site. Early review sites included [Epinions.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epinions.com) and [Amazon.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon.com).

## Criticism:

## Most review sites make little or no attempt to restrict postings, or to verify the information in the reviews. Critics point out that positive reviews are sometimes written by the businesses or individuals being reviewed, while negative reviews may be written by competitors, disgruntled employees, or anyone with a grudge against the business being reviewed. So called "reputation management" firms may also submit false positive reviews on behalf of businesses. In 2011, [RateMDs.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RateMDs.com) and [Yelp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yelp) detected dozens of positive reviews of doctors, submitted from the same IP addresses by a firm called Medical Justice.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Review_site#cite_note-5)

## Furthermore, studies of research methodology have shown that in forums where people are able to post opinions publicly, group polarization often occurs, and the result is very positive comments, very negative comments, and little in between, meaning that those who would have been in the middle are either silent or pulled to one extreme or the other.Another criticism against sites that rely on income from businesses is that they are reluctant to post negative reviews since that undermines their business model. This leads to a conflict of interest.

## Response to criticism:

## Operators of most review sites acknowledge that reviews may not be objective, and that ratings may not be statistically valid. A [FAQ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FAQ) on the Ratingz Inc websites states that, although the ratings are not statistically valid, “They are a listing of opinions and should be judged as such. However, we often receive emails stating that the ratings are uncannily accurate, especially for businesses with over 100 ratings. Bob Nicholson, a co-founder of Ratingz Inc, goes on to state that "If you get useful information from the ratings, great. That's what we hope happens. If you look at a rating and say, 'Boy, these were obviously all written by the staff in this guy's office', then take it for what it's worth." HowTask.com founder Arpit Gupta echoes this sentiment, advising site users to "take a person ratings profile with a grain of salt."Rating sites have also put in place algorithms to detect patterns of false reviews; it was one of these algorithms that allowed RateMDs' founder John Swapceinski to detect the phoney reviews posted by Medical Justice.

## Professional review site:

Aside from sites that enable users to post reviews of products and services, there are also those that work on a "professional" or "expert" basis. Some of these sites commission, and pay for, named individuals or bodies with expertise in a particular field to provide their review material, while others hire in-house editorial staff to perform these reviews. By endeavoring to maintain independence and objectivity and allowing their writers' credentials and site ethos to be scrutinized, such sites avoid many of the above-mentioned criticisms aimed at user-review sites. For example, the UK consumer advocacy organization, the Consumers' Association, offers ‘Which?’, a site that carries no advertising but covers all manner of products and services, with reviews and ratings often based on exhaustive independent testing. Another type of review site does not provide free-form text reviews, but instead evaluates a particular class of products, services, or businesses using a set of pre-defined criteria.

**Rating sites**

**Introduction:**

A rating siteis a [website](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Website) designed for [users](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_(computing)) to vote on or rate people, [content](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_content), or other things. Rating sites are typically organized around attributes such as physical appearance, body parts, voice, personality, etc. They may also be devoted to the subjects' occupational ability, for example teachers, professors, lawyers, doctors, etc.

**Features:**

Rating sites typically show a series of images (or other content) in random fashion, or chosen by computer algorithm, rather than allowing users to choose. They then ask users for a rating or assessment, which is generally done quickly and without great deliberation. Users score items on a scale of 1 to 10, yes or no. Others, such as BabeVsBabe.com, ask users to [choose between two pictures](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pairwise_comparison). Typically, the site gives instant feedback in terms of the item's running score, or the percentage of other users who agree with the assessment. They sometimes offer aggregate statistics or "best" and "worst" lists. Most allow users to submit their own image, sample, or other relevant content for others to rate. Some require the submission as a condition of membership.

Rating sites usually provide some features of [social network services](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network_service) and [online communities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_communities) such as [discussion forums](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_forum) [messaging](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instant_messaging), and [private messaging](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_message). Many social networks and other sites include rating features. For example, [MySpace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MySpace) and TradePics have optional "rank" features for users to be rated by other users.

**Criticism:**

Some looks-based sites have come under criticism for promoting vanity and self-consciousness. Most rating sites suffer from similar [self-selection bias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-selection_bias) since only highly motivated individuals devote their time to completing these rankings, and not a fair sampling of the population. Additionally, individuals can post multiple comments, thereby skewing the ranking.