5 Steps
to **5 Stars**

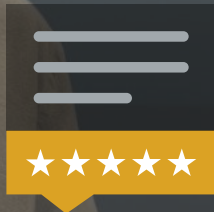## Managing your local business's online reputation

GOBYCREATIVE

Your online reputation has never been more important

Years ago, your business would have survived with just a website and an email address for customer support.

But the rise of more and more communication platforms has led to a drastic change in the face of digital marketing. In this day and age, you need to adapt and adjust to consumer tech habits if you want your business to thrive.

Online reputation management (ORM) is becoming a more business-critical issue than ever before. And as a business owner this means you have to keep a handle on social networks and communication channels.

Billy Malesky
Owner, Weber River Kayak

I am very happy with the service that Goby has provided me. My Kayak School did pretty ok for my first summer. 70% of my business came from my website.

This eBook will outline 5 steps you can follow to:

- Help customers find you
- Improve your rating scores
- Enhance customer experience and satisfaction
- Increase dealerships' walk-in traffic, unit sales and service revenue

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www.gobycreative.com

Step 1
Choose the right listings

With everything moving online, the days of looking up businesses in hard copies of the Yellow Pages and trade journals are just about over. Today's searchers use Google and trusted online business directories to find businesses they want to buy from - which is why adding your organization to these lists is often crucial for being noticed in the digital era. With 46% of all Google searches being location specific, this is especially for local businesses.

There are often dozens of different online directories for specific niches, industries, and regions, and the more your organization's name appears on those lists, the more opportunity you have to be noticed and contacted. However, it can be difficult to manage your information on all of them and respond to reviews on each one individually, so identifying the best ones for you is important.

It is important to ensure that your business can at least be found on the following online directories:

- Google My Business
- Yelp
- Facebook

Bonus Tip:

Make sure your business is on at least 3-5 location and niche-specific online directories.

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of all Google searches are location specific

Step 2
Develop a system

An abundance of good reviews gives potential customers a positive perception of your local business and helps ensure you get a fair chance online where you're competing with national brands.

It's important to gather great reviews in a scalable and scheduled manner. You do not want to get tons a reviews at once and then no reviews for a long time. Search engines, like Google and Bing, want to see that your business is continuously providing quality products and services to your customers. Additionally, 73% of consumers think that reviews older than 3 months are irrelevant.

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Bonus Tip:

The way you ask customers to write reviews makes a big difference. You want to generate a few reviews each week by sending requests on a steady schedule. Request reviews from customers who are in a position to say something meaningful.

Example:

After a US based auto retailer (with over 290 new vehicle franchises in 15 states) began a comprehensive review generation program, they were able to more than triple their review volume from 1,200 per month to 4,000 per month - and enjoyed a 65% increase in their overall reputation score.

Step 3
Monitor your mentions

Online review sites can be a great listening resource. Regularly monitoring your brand online gives you quality insights into your sales, service, and common concerns. By not continuously monitoring your brand online, you are running your business with a blindfold on.

Reviews contain a wealth of customer experience data which can help you uncover and address recurring issues in a timely manner.

There are several online systems that can help you monitor your brand across the internet. In fact, we have software that actually scours the internet and tracks keywords that you set up so that you'll have insight into conversations about your business on directories even if you don't have a listing set up with them.

Bonus Tip:

You should consider all feedback as constructive and valuable advice. Sometimes, even negative comments are warranted and you can use the information to improve your business operations. Even though getting great reviews is the primary object in reputation management, the ultimate goal is to enhance the customer experience. Focusing on this will improve the bottom line.

Step 4
Respond to reviews

Don't feel like you have to respond to every positive review you get, but you should respond to every negative review. Promptly addressing customer concerns can go a long way toward improving your online reputation.

People post complaints for 3 reasons:

1. They are unhappy with your product / service
2. They want you to fix what they see as broken
3. They want to see how you handle the situation

The best way to deflect a bad review is to approach the customer, politely acknowledge their input, and show appreciation for their candor. Timely responses make the customer feel valued, but ignoring it will only alienate your customer more. Responding quickly can turn a negative situation into a positive one.

Example:

When an unsatisfied restaurant customer left a one-star review along with a long narrative on Yelp, the owner of Samovar Tea Lounge in San Francisco quickly stepped up and addressed each and every one of her issues, taking every complaint into consideration. He owned up to every mistake and assured her they were working to make necessary improvements for the customer experience.

95%
of unhappy customers return to a business if it resolves negative reviews quickly and efficiently

Step 5
Use reviews to get reviews

Many people like to see what others have written before writing their own reviews. Plus, often loyal customers who see positive reviews are inspired to leave their own.

You should publicize your good online reviews on your social media channels and website.

Most online review sites let you quote the reviews you receive as long as you reference the original source. When you quote reviews online, link back to the originals because this will drive prospects to the review sites where they can see more positive reviews. Linking back to the originals also add authority and authenticity to your review.

Bonus Tip:

Consider asking for reviews during the customer's checkout process while the experience is fresh on their mind. This also allows you to publish them instantly to your website or social media pages. Customers can also be directed to share their review on specific review sites such as Google and Facebook.

Example:

After integrating review generation into the buying experience, a car retailer saw significant improvements in each of its dealerships. In several locations their star rating went from 3.1 to 4.5 stars. Positive review volume increased by 1564% in another location.

Conclusion

Customer reviews can make or break your online reputation. Unfortunately, the majority of customers that are motivated to leave reviews often had a negative experience.

With our Reputation Management Software, you can get more positive reviews on ANY site of your choice, and privately handle unfavorable reviews!

FREE CONSULT   **FREE DEMO**

A difference of one "star" in the average rating can lead to an increase in revenue by 5-9%

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