

How can entrepreneurs handle negative reviews?

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Receiving a negative review is not a pleasing thing for many entrepreneurs, and despite several articles talking about the positive effect of negative reviews, it still does not justify that negative reviews are good for business. Negative reviews are not only for businesses, but it's also had an impact on the reputation of the healthcare sector and even doctors are now getting reviews.

A customer's opinion goes a long way and should never be underestimated. The one thing that is definite is that customers are most likely to give a review for a product or service which they have used. This review can either come via social media, text, consumer report platforms or word of mouth. A statistical report being conducted by Bright Local shows the results.



Reviews can either be positive or negative, but we choose to look at the positive. What if you are given a negative review? What effect will this have on your business?

Negative reviews have the ability to bring down a business. Taking a deep dive into how it hurts business, here are a few statistics supporting that claim.

- Only 13% of consumers will consider using a business that has a 1 or 2-star rating.
- Businesses risk losing as many as 22% of customers when just one negative article is found by users considering buying their product. If three negative articles pop up in a search query, the potential for lost customers increases to 59.2%.
- When choosing a healthcare provider, 69.9% consider a positive online reputation to be very or extremely important
- Four out of five consumers have changed their minds about a recommended purchase after reading negative online reviews.
- 94% say an online review has convinced them to avoid a business.

After much has been said about negative reviews and how it affects business, how then can entrepreneurs handle it in the digital age?

Pursue improvement and innovation

One mistake most entrepreneurs make when they see a negative review is to look for who to put the blame on. Meanwhile, they ought to focus on how to improve the service/product. Also seeking innovative ways of delivering such service/products should in case of a repeat purchase.

Also, seeking tools that help monitor reviews about your service should be imbibed. This will help easily track all reviews been made about the business. For every negative review given, an entrepreneur should put prior attention to ways they can improve such service and creating a chance for a positive review of the same products from another customer.

Establish trust and authenticity with your customers

One vital tool in business is trust. The level of trust an entrepreneur builds with his customers goes a long way as to how they can help with negative reviews. A trusted customer can go any length to protect a negative review of a product/service for your company. Often time its more efficient for a customer to speak on your defence than a member of your company putting up the defense.

Ensuring originality and transparency with your customers will go a long way. This happens when you maintain a high conversation rate with your customers. Simply seeking how well the services are meeting the reason for the purchase goes a long way in building trust and strong relationship with your client.

Charge/motivate your customer to leave a review

A completed sale isn't just about offering a service and receiving a price. There are many more things needed to be done if you want a repeat purchase and want new customers. Keeping up with your customers about their take on the product should be done. Charge your customers to drop a review for your products and express their opinion on what they think about the products and how it has helped them positively.

Customer reviews can be done on social media and consumer reports platforms. Motivating your customer to give reviews about your products will assist you in pushing down bad reviews which make them less valid for a customer in making their judgment.

Run a customer satisfaction survey of your products/services

Not all customers will want to share a review after the first purchase. They sometimes want to have a repeated purchase before drawing their opinion about your services. You can simply send a survey form to your customers after their first purchase. This simply makes reviews done secretly between you and the customer. Should there in any be a need for adjustment and upgrades, you are the first to be aware, instead of the public review been made.

Running a survey is not as costly as we think, more so, there are some platforms that offer little or no amount to do a questionnaire survey about your service/products. Questions that can be included in the survey are:

- Rate our services?
- Did you like the product?
- Will you give us a referral?
- What will you like us to improve on?
- Will you make a repeat purchase?



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However, when making questions, avoid long and unnecessary questions. This simply makes it easy for your customers to fill in due time.

Invest in SEO

One might be wondering, how can SEO help negative reviews about my company? A negative review can simply put an adverse effect on your company's reputation. For every negative review received, it simply limits your company appearance in SERPs. Companies need to invest in SEO in the following ways:

- **Product Reviews** - Companies should ensure they have reviews of their products on top purchasing websites which simply gives them an edge in SERPs.
- **Brand Features** - Entrepreneurs should try to get their company's brand features on top publications about their services and more importantly their correct website and social media pages because of impostors who can create a fake website under the disguise of your company name.
- **Press Release** - For a case whereby the negative review of a company is very excessive. Such a company should switch to press releases to maintain their online reputation so as to clear the air about the reason for the excessive negative review and tender a well-crafted apology in the press release.

Much has been spoken about negative reviews, but an entrepreneur can't be 100% perfect. There are still negative reviews that are helpful to business. Amidst all, businesses should strive to maintain a high level of positive review but if the case turns otherwise. Companies can imbibe the above ways in tackling it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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