



The rise of third party reviews in retail

Filipe Pennacchio from GfK discusses the opportunities for retailers to provide shoppers with more information instore.

“We use other people’s brains to navigate the world” – Mark Earls, writer and marketing communications strategist.

Accessing information from third parties has never been easier. Given that 47% of the global population were connected to the Internet in 2016*, almost half of the global population could potentially share their experiences and opinions on an online platform.

When it comes to shopping, consumer opinions, experiences and reviews are of great (and rising) importance. Here are some facts from GfK FutureBuy Australian 2016 data, underlining the impact of third parties in the buying process:

- 38% said their social networks have become as important as other information sources, when making the best product choices (up 7% from 2015)
- 44% agreed that online reviews from shoppers/users were an important factor in making shopping decisions
- 42% of APAC participants stated that the opinions of family/friends are a very important factor in their shopping decisions (and 49% for 18-34 year olds).

These numbers are higher than the traditional methods stores use:

- 27% agreed that flyers/store circulars play an important role in a purchase
- 26% agreed that online advertising influences their purchase decisions.

The rise of third party influencers isn’t limited to online tools – physical word of mouth is by no means dead - however it did benefit significantly from them. Virtual channels such as video platforms, social media, instant messaging platforms, and blogs play a major role in increasing the reach of reviews from both opinion leaders and among peers.

WHAT CAN RETAILERS DO TO LEVERAGE 3RD PARTY REVIEWS?

By offering a space where consumers can rate and write feedback – Dan Murphy’s does this well online. But there’s opportunity to do it instore as well, as Best Buy in the USA do using QR codes on their at-shelf tickets. Scan the code and see a review of that product by a customer *of that store*.

Example: (Google Play movies)

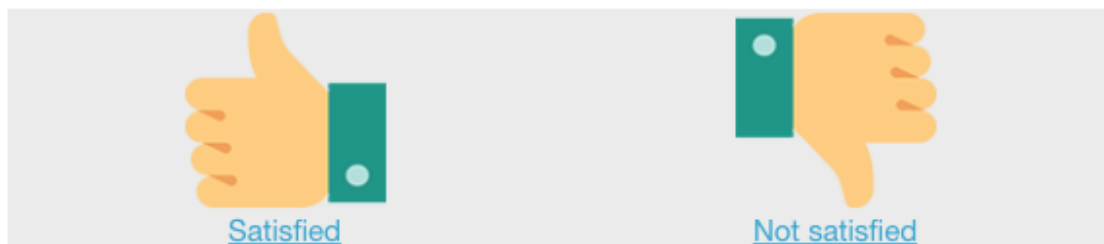


- Steve Drummond** ★★★★★
A good story worth telling. Some quibbles with historical accuracy, but hey, its Mel, and
- Thomas Crouch** ★★★★★
Wasn't bad, just didn't blow me away. Battle scenes looked very realistic, but main character
- Troy Tutai** ★★★★★
Wow... extraordinary portrait to this movie... felt the feeling of watching a horror movie... but
- ★★★★★
Stand up for God's Faith in saving souls for CHRIST no MATTER what STAND

Or by motivating feedback by offering discounts or free products.

Example: Blackhead Killer Facial Masks

I just wanted to follow up on whether you were satisfied with your recent purchase of BlackheadKiller?



Would you mind click satisfied / not satisfied and describe your experience with us?

I would like to return the favor by sending you a FREE package of 5x10 ml Blackhead Killer™ facial masks.

Just let me know your address by sending an email to jamie@luxstyleintl.com and it is coming your way as soon as possible :-)

Best regards,

Jamie Andrews, LuxStyle International



Or by developing questionnaires to stimulate responses that target topics related to the product/service.

Example: Booking.com

3,329 Guests Loved Their Stay

"Close to everything literally walking distance from the main street. Restaurants ,bottle store and a shop just outside of the hotel. Secure underground parking.Clean Spacious rooms. We have stayed here twice once with children so it is great for everyone. Great pools. Beach is 100m from the hotel. Will stay here again."

 Isabella
 Australia
Verified review

"Great room and view. Surprisingly quiet with comfy bed and all necessities. Good parking and security."

 Nick
 New Zealand
Verified review

Or by becoming an opinion leader via writing a blog.

3rd party reviews and word of mouth can be used to increase traffic, penetration and spend via upgrade.

How are you going to leverage this increasing trend?

*Source: ITC Facts and Figures 2016, Percentage of individuals using the internet.

** Source: GfK Futurebuy 2016, Australian data, sample n = 1,000

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ABOUT FILIPE BAKAJ PENNACCHIO & GfK

Filipe Bakaj Pennacchio is an Account Executive at retail research and datahouse GfK Australia. He focuses on point of sale tracking.

Contacts:

E filipe.pennacchio@gfk.com

For further information on FutureBuy, contact Norrelle Goldring: norrelle.goldring@gfk.com