BRANDIFY

" Guide to **Review Response** "

★★★☆☆

Overview

There are many reasons why a customer may choose to share their local experience with other customers on social review channels. Brands should be paying close attention to these reasons, aligning their response strategies to review sentiment in order to improve the customer experience.

The biggest review engines (Facebook, Google, Yelp and Foursquare) offer a wealth of insight into brand perception. For that reason, review moderation and response are both strategies that should be utilized to get the most out of positive, negative and neutral reviews.

Brandify's research shows that:

RETAIL

52% of retail reviews were negative

FOOD
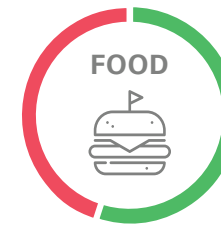
43% of restaurant reviews were negative

Whether you're a national retailer looking to deliver local reviews or a restaurant chain readily accepting constructive customer feedback, every review is an opportunity to develop customers into brand advocates.

This review response guide will walk you through flows of negative, positive and neutral customer sentiment, as well as tips for response and visibility.

Flows

The proceeding flows will help you maximize customer engagement and start building long-term relationships with local fans *and* haters.

Flow #1
Negative Review

💡 *perception-healing opportunity*

By receiving a negative review, you have allowed a customer to expose day-to-day ongoings in the worst light possible.

A bad local brand perception means that customers are more likely to tell their friends and family about the details (keywords) that gave them a bad impression. This also means that the details are exposed and available for others to view and take action on.

Individual words within a negative local review give the biggest opportunity for brand marketers and location managers to remedy the 1-1 experience and carry customers back into individual store locations.

Jane Doe | Los Angeles, CA

★☆☆☆☆

> " Severely pissed off! I came to this location very hungry around 8pm. I ordered the **wing lovers** with 2 side salads. I get home ready to devour my wings, and low and behold the wings are **cold, dry and brittle**. Utterly **disgusting**. I am so mad because I'm soo hungry. This location needs to close. Because of my overwhelming hunger I was forced to eat these dead ass wings, but I will never visit this location again. "

The above example is of a consumer review on Yelp expressing negative sentiment.

Negative Review Response Flow

The examples below depict how you can respond to a negative review based on the keywords within it. Note that there are times when a public response, a private response or both are appropriate.

"dry, cold, brittle"

The customer has experienced **low quality products/services** which is cause for concern. Reinforcing local - corporate connection will improve day-to-day.

Tips/Approach

1. Is this how most customers percieve this location?

2. What do other customers need to know? (isolated incident)

3. What steps are you taking? (changes you will make)

Respond Publicly

"worst place ever..."

The customer has an extremely negative brand perception and is **looking for public and private acknowledgement.** Turn your biggest hater into your biggest fan.

Tips/Approach

1. Find keywords to reinforce publicly.

2. Find keywords to reinforce privately through discount/coupon.

3. See who interacted with this review.

Respond Privately

Respond Publicly

"they ran out of tacos before 1pm"

The customer is voicing a valid occurance which can be alleviated by stating **business protocol/ location specifics** for others to also be aware of.

Tips/Approach

1. Are location managers able to handle situations?

2. Is localized customer information on hand? (signage)

3. State business policies and clarify inaccuracies.

Respond Publicly

5

There are three steps to take when responding to a negative review.

1. **Acknowledge the Problem**
Write a short, non-defensive reply to a review that owns the issue and shows your awareness of the situation in that store location. Your goal is to regain their trust.

2. **Apologize for Their Experience**
Your biggest haters could become your biggest fans. Avoid burning bridges with a sincere apology to ensure that even these customers consider coming back.

3. **Offer to Make Things Right**
Thank the customer for their patronage and feedback. Describe how the issue has been resolved *(or offer to fix the issue)* and earn the trust of your future customers.

Flow #2
Positive review

💡 *loyalty-building opportunity*

51% of consumers will select a local business if it has positive reviews. Generating these will build the long-term opportunity to build loyal and engaged customers.

By receiving a positive review, you have just identified a customer who was satisfied enough with their experience that they felt compelled to share their positive local brand perception with you and other local-social peers.

John Doe | Los Angeles, CA

★★★★★

" Everyone is helpful, attentive, Professional and honest! The store is clean and well stocked. Parking lot is clean and well kept! Most of all great prices for quality food! Can't say enough, love "Trader Joes"! "

The above example is a customer review on Facebook expressing positive sentiment.

Positive Review Response Flow

The examples below depict how you can respond to a positive review based on the keywords. With positive reviews, it's best to move forward with a private response if you are not planning to provide any additional information or promotions.

"Fast service, friendly, always delicious..."

The user's expectations were met and/or exceeded and they want to **affirm** this.

Tips/Approach
1. If you have no additional information, respond privately and thank the user.

2. Create a log of positive user responses.

Respond Privately

"Love this location... When is the next taco tuesday celebration"

The user genuinely wants to be involved and is looking **for opportunities to engage** both online and offline.

Tips/Approach
1. Add value by delivering exclusive location-based insights, giving promotions or plugging local-social deal redemptions.

Respond Privately

Respond Publicly

There are two steps to take when responding to a positive review:

1. **Thank Your Customer**
Show the customer that you appreciate the time they took to visit your location and to leave a review. Encourage them to check out other review channels so that they know to write reviews there, as well.

2. **Offer New Information**
If you are able to give the customer more details on upcoming events, sales and promotions, now is the time to do so publicly. If this is a customer who has historically shown loyalty and you see an opportunity to reward them, reach out privately with a redeemable offer.

Flow #3
Neutral review

💡 *nurturing opportunity*

On average, neutral reviews encompass 50% of total reviews received by retail brands and only a fraction of these brands actually respond to them.

If you get a three star review, treat it as a one star review. A one-star improvement on Yelp can translate to a 5-9% revenue increase. Neutral reviews give your brand the opportunity to nurture customers into revisiting store locations and engaging them in the long term. Pay attention to the sentiment expressed in these reviews in particular to find "the little things" and improve their overall experience.

Believe it or not, it is important to respond to all of your reviews, including neutral ones.

Jane Doe | Los Angeles, CA

★★★☆☆

" Got measured there for a bridesmaid dress, came in and picked up. This dress is huge, it's like the woman added 5 inches to every part of me measuered. One of the other girls got the same size dress and she is smaller than I am... "

The above example is of a retail brand that received a 3 star "neutral" Google review. The key words within the actual review indicates major opportunities for improvement.

10

Neutral Review Response Flow

The examples below explain how to handle responding both publicly and privately to neutral reviews. Consider any new, forward-looking information to provide in order to determine which approach works best.

"This place wasn't bad but..."

The customer is expressing that **something was lacking** in their experience.

Tips/Approach
1. If you have a solution thank the customer and ask for constructive feedback.

Respond Privately

"It was fine... Food was okay... Staff was fine...."

The customer is **looking for validation** of their experience and time both offline and online.

Tips/Approach
1. Thank the customer for their time and offer any new information for future campaigns, promotions and sales for which they may return.

Respond Publicly

11

There are three steps to take when responding
to a neutral review.

1. **Take the Time to Respond**
As simple as it may seem, showing customers that you took the time
to respond to a mediocre review shows them you are eager for their
approval. Express that you appreciate their business and feedback.

2. **Engage Them in Conversation**
Kindly ask the reviewer for feedback on how and what you can do to
improve their experience. Ask, "how can we be better?" and show
them you truly care about what they think.

3. **Direct Them Offline**
If there is an opportunity within your conversation to direct the customer
offline and assist them in a more personalized way, take it. Customers
appreciate 1-1 attention from corporate and from location managers.

Response Tips

Customer Service
Review response should show that you sincerely care about your customers' experience and feedback. Take each review as an opportunity to serve your customers and provide valuable, humanized interaction.

Review Length
Despite the review type, make sure your response is short and succinct. Make sure that the information you are providing is digestible and comprehensive for customers because 71 percent of online shoppers read customer reviews before making a purchase decision.

Review Speed and Frequency
Responding to reviews in real time tells customers that you are attentive to their feedback. Create a review-response strategy that details specific ways of responding to different types of reviews.

Offers
Develop a system for situations that may warrant special offers or responses. Identify different Reviewer Personas and scenarios in which a user would qualify for certain types of offers.

Visibility Tips

Keyword Research

For a public response, consider integrating SEO keywords into your responses for better visibility. Pages are indexed by search engines routinely, so taking the time to respond with keywords will improve the likelihood of your brand getting found online. Do research on revenue-generating keywords and queries that direct customers to your review channels.

Native Local Page Reviews

There is a major opportunity in boosting the value of the content on your brand's location pages through the inclusion of native local page reviews. Doing so can help brand surpass Google's Panda Algorithm when being crawled.

Website Signage

- Implement a Yelp Call to Action button on your location pages or website properties to drive users directly to this channel.

- Follow Facebook's Community Standards to ensure that your brand is following the rules. Note: if you are giving customers offers through this channel, be clear about the contents of that offer so there is no grey area or "false claims".

- Include website messaging that reminds customers to leave their feedback on Google. Also, ensure that your brand is verified to seamlessly respond to local customer reviews.

- You are able to integrate a button to your location pages or website properties. Follow Foursquare's Special Terms when implementing this.

# Manage Your Reviews with Brandify Social 👍
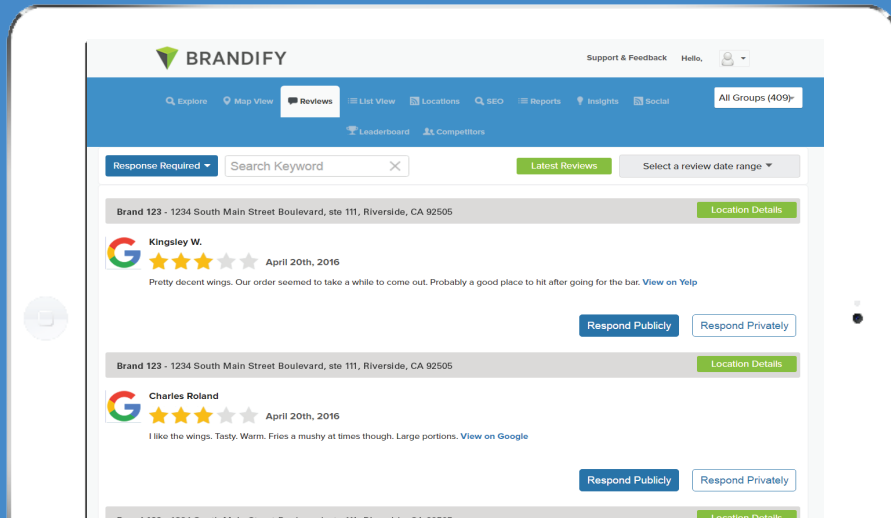
Public & Private Response

Respond to customers in real time on Google, Facebook, Foursquare and Yelp. Deliver customized or pre-written responses based on user sentiment and respond publicly or privately within one dashboard.

Try Brandify Social

Review Builder

Launch campaigns that encourage customers to leave feedback. Builder captures customer contact info, allowing brands to build a remarketing audience. Builder forms can be integrated on store locators, landing pages or third-party review sites. Brands choose configuration by star rating, sources or number of reviews.

Builder thanks customers for high-rated reviews and requests further information about a low-rated experience. Publish positive reviews on your store locator or landing pages using the Review Publisher widget.

15
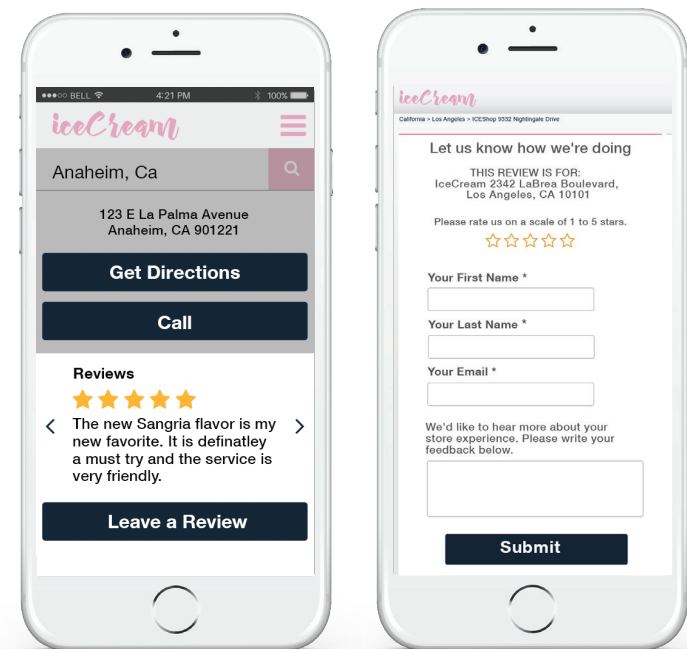
BRANDIFY

Brandify is the single answer to Local, connecting global brands with local consumers. Over 500 brands in over 4.5 million locations, including healthcare, finance, and retail, have been empowered by Brandify worldwide, since 1997. The company provides the multi-location digital marketing technology, services and intelligence needed to understand consumer intent. Marketers can simplify local decisioning with actionable recommendations, using its field-tested benchmarking metric, Brandscore.

Share the Love

Follow us **@GoBrandify | brandify.com**