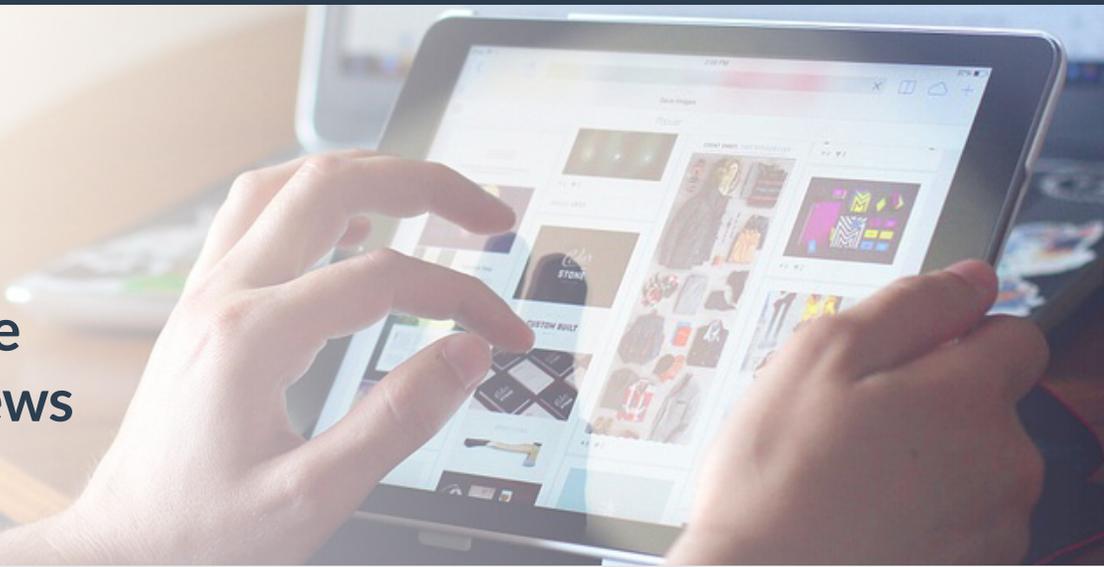




The Importance of Online Reviews



In today's competitive business landscape, establishing a strong online presence and reputation is essential in attracting new customers and differentiating from the competition. Today's consumers are increasingly relying on online resources to aid in purchasing decisions. **A recent study showed 90% of customers consult online reviews before transacting with a business¹.** With an increasing number of consumers finding services and transacting online, a business' reviews have become one of their most important assets to help generate new business.

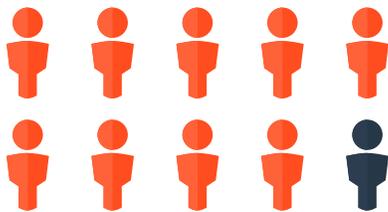


Review sites give existing customers the opportunity to provide objective feedback about products or services they have personal experience with, which in turn helps future customers make more informed decisions. **More than 7 in 10 shoppers say online reviews as the most useful source of information when making a purchasing decision².**

Customers are attracted to online review sites because it's an easily accessible source of credible information they can connect to on a personal level. Browsing reviews can be done on the go from a mobile device, which is more convenient than asking a network of peers for a personal recommendation, and in the case a customer doesn't personally know someone who has used a product or service, online reviews are the only source of information they have to hear from existing clients.

Earned sources of information of such as online reviews and personal recommendations are perceived as more credible and trustworthy than mediums such as paid marketing or advertising, which are owned and dictated by the business. **In a 2015 Consumer Trust Survey, online reviews ranked as the second most trustworthy source of information behind only friends and family and placing above third party experts, company websites, marketing material and advertising².**

There are a few aspects that customers look for when finding online reviews: overall rating, content of reviews, and the total number of reviews. A high rating and positive review content gives customers peace of mind and confirmation that they're making the right purchase decision, and a high number of reviews adds validity to the overall rating of a business. Having only a few reviews, or none at all can even be perceived negatively.



90% Of Consumers

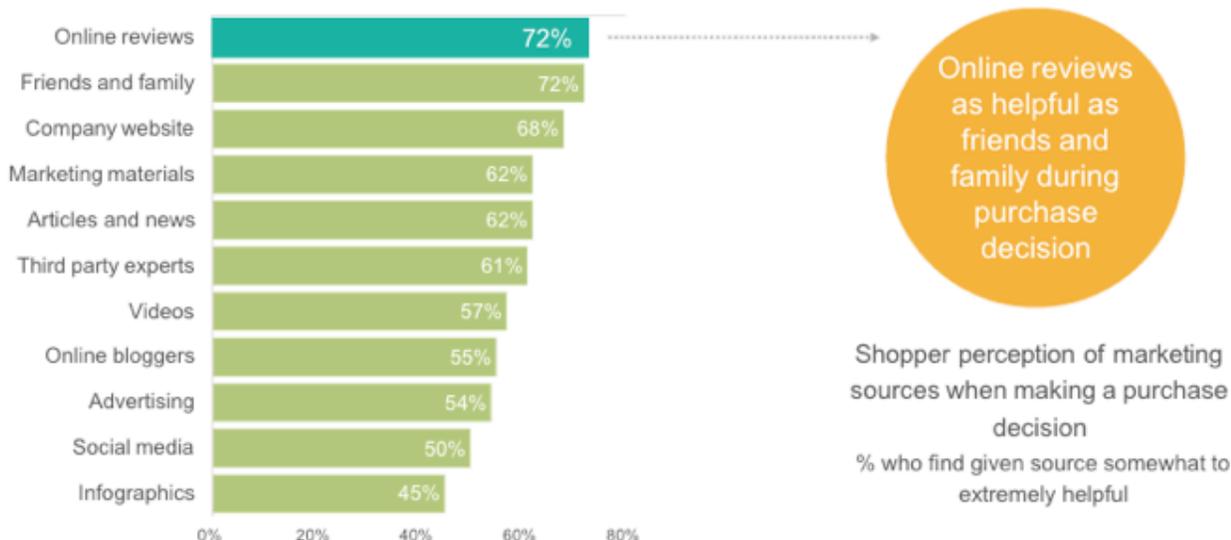
Read online reviews before visiting a business.



Contact Us For More Information

1.855.428.2669 ext. 1 | sales@onelocal.com | review-edge.com

Online reviews are the most helpful source of influence towards making a purchase decision



- ▶ More than 7 in 10 (72%) shoppers find online reviews helpful when making a purchase decision
- ▶ Company websites (68%) and marketing materials (62%) are the most helpful owned media sources
- ▶ Just over half find advertising (54%) and bloggers (55%) as helpful during the purchase process



Source: Experticity, 2015

www.reviewmonitoring.com

9



30% More Business

Customers will spend more at businesses with "Excellent" reviews.

As the price of a product or service increases, so does the importance of online reviews because there is more at stake if they make the wrong decision. This effect is even more pronounced for price sensitive customers.

Since online reviews are valuable to potential customers, they are valuable to the business itself. **Each one star increase in overall business rating can result in a 5-10% increase in revenue, and customers will spend up to 30% more at businesses with "Excellent" reviews¹.** Reviews are important to all customers. Both male and female consumers of all ages rely on reviews to make pre-purchase decisions.

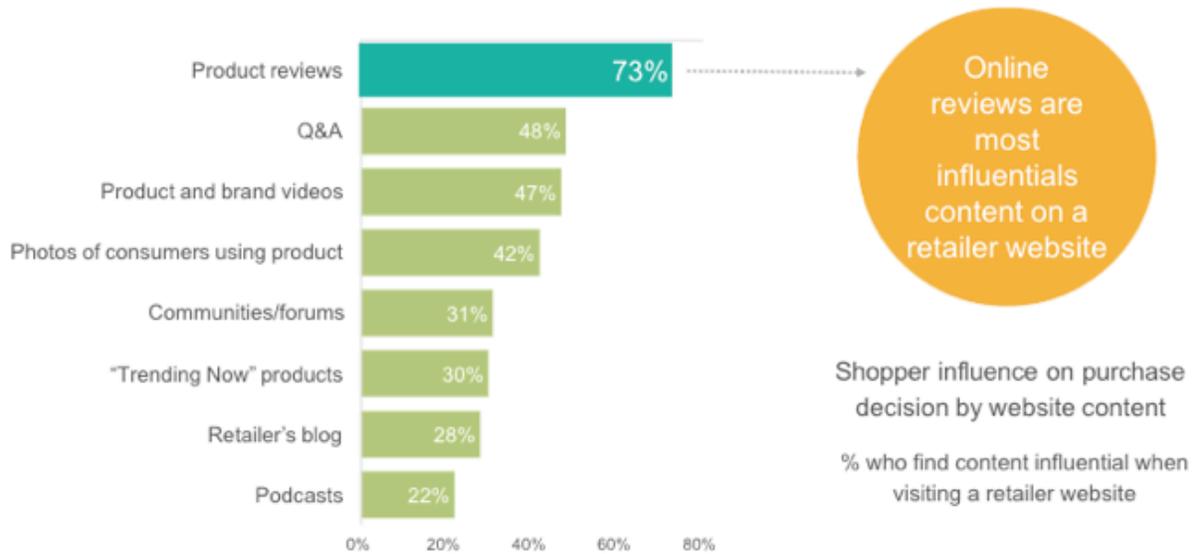
Companies that embrace review sites as an important medium for their potential customers and are proactive in building their reviews will establish an advantage in converting new customers.

Businesses should ensure that it is easy for existing customers to leave a review. This means creating profiles on popular review sites and encouraging existing customers to leave feedback. It's also important to monitor these review sites for negative reviews resolving issues promptly. **95% of customers who left negative reviews said they would return to the company if the issue was resolved quickly and effectively³.**

Providing an excellent service will result in positive reviews, assuming that it's easy for customers to leave a review. A business' existing customer base is their greatest resource for generating reviews, and as long as the merchant is not being seen as overbearing, reaching out to these customers can be very positive.



Reviews are the most influential online content on a retailer's website



- ▶ Nearly three in four (73%) shoppers are influenced by product reviews posted online ahead of all other online content
- ▶ Just under half of shoppers are influenced by online Q&A (48%) and videos about the product (47%)
- ▶ Images of other customers using the product influences more than two in five (42%) shoppers



Source: UPS and Comscore, 2015

www.reviewmonitoring.com

11



73% Of Shoppers

Trust online reviews rank above experts, bloggers, and advertising.

Companies can also leverage online reviews by incorporating them into their own website. **More than 7 in 10 shoppers said reviews were the most influential online content a retailer could include on their website².** This provides an opportunity to leverage positive online reviews by including them in websites and other marketing material.

Recap Of Key Findings

- 90% of consumers read online reviews before visiting a business¹
- 88% of consumers trust online reviews are much as personal recommendations⁴
- 73% of shoppers rank online reviews as the most influential content that leads to a purchase²
- 72% Say positive reviews increase their trust in a local business¹
- 73% Said online reviews are the most influential content on a companies website²
- Customers spend up to 30% more at a business with "Excellent" reviews¹
- On average a one-star increase in reviews leads to a 5-9% increase in revenue¹



For potential customers, online reviews can be the most important source of information when making a purchasing decision. Whether its selecting a new home service or deciding what restaurant to eat at, online reviews can provide the key tipping point towards selecting a business. To differentiate from the competition companies should embrace online review sites and encourage existing customers to provide feedback. Increasing online reputation directly impacts new customers, leading to new business and ultimately increasing revenue.

Sources

1. <http://www.business2community.com/infographics/impact-online-reviews-customers-buying-decisions-infographic-01280945#xJ5oI7soj1AAJYlv.97>
2. http://reviewmonitoring.com/reports.php?utm_source=pr
3. https://static.123-reg.co.uk/library/downloads/the_power_of_online_reviews.pdf
4. <http://searchengineland.com/88-consumers-trust-online-reviews-much-personal-recommendations-195803>

