

Five Star State of Mind

Consumers trust reviews.

- 97% of consumers read online reviews for local businesses. 85% of consumers trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation (Source: 2017 Bright Local Consumer Review Survey)
- Word-of-mouth is free marketing! How can you effectively harness the power of customer feedback and use it to grow and differentiate your business?

Actively listen and join the conversation in order to gain consumer trust and stand out.

1. SET GOALS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE.

- Find where people are already talking about your business online.
- Identify trends and themes across your reviews.

2. DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH CUSTOMER FEEDBACK.

- Engagement on review sites impacts customer advocacy. According to Edison Research and author Jay Baer of the book, *Hug Your Haters*, businesses experience a 16% boost in customer advocacy from answered complaints on reviews. Meanwhile, ignored complaints on review sites experience a -37% decline in customer advocacy.

- **Respond to positive reviews two ways:**

- Something to add?** Use a public comment.

- Nothing to add?** Use a direct message.

- Amplify the positivity by sharing your great reviews on social media, collateral, signage, etc.

- **Respond to negative reviews:**

- Legitimate concerns?** Use a public comment.

- Inaccurate?** Use a public comment.

- Rant?** Use a direct message.

- Use the EAAT method when crafting your response:

- E - Empathy**

- A - Authenticity**

- A - Action**

- T - Timeliness**

- Finally, remember to take a minute, take the high road, and take comfort.

3. DON'T INTERFERE WITH THE NATURAL FLOW OF REVIEWS. INSPIRE GREAT REVIEWS ORGANICALLY.

- Uphold the integrity of your online reputation:
 - Don't post reviews of your business or of competitors.
 - Don't offer freebies, discounts, or payment in exchange for reviews.
 - Don't work with companies or third-party vendors offering to "fix your reviews."
 - Don't ask anyone to write reviews of your business including friends, family, and customers.
 - Don't pressure (or pay or sue) people into altering or removing critical reviews.