

HOW TO

GROW YOUR BUSINESS BY LETTING YOUR CUSTOMERS BE THE JUDGE

ENCOURAGE CUSTOMERS TO SHARE THEIR OPINIONS WITH REVIEWS AND RATINGS

Whether your products are award-winning, buzz-generating, loved by all, or hated by a few, reviews help sell products. In fact, 84 percent of Americans say online customer evaluations have an influence on their decision to purchase a product or service. Given that number, cultivating customer reviews can be a useful strategy to create company awareness and increase sales. Here's a quick review of reviews:

User reviews

Years ago, the assumption was that only a few people were qualified to review products. The Internet has changed that and recent studies have concluded that a healthy mix of positive and negative ratings helps consumers believe the authenticity of the reviews, actually helping to encourage sales. You can work with your Web site developer to implement technology that will allow your customers to talk about your products or services on your site. If hosting customer reviews at your own site seems too daunting, you can also register your business with a community-based review site like [Yelp](#).

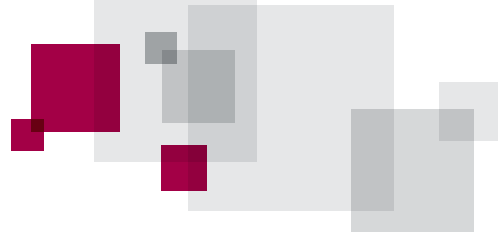
User ratings

User ratings are a popular way for customers to indicate how they feel about products or services quickly and easily. Ratings are often based on a star scale—one star for a bad rating, five stars for an excellent rating—and some may also include user reviews to explain the reasons behind the rating. Not all small businesses can afford on-site ratings engines, but there are free sites and subscription models that can be used to enable ratings on your site. If you're interested in allowing your customers to rate your products or services, [RatePoint](#) is one alternative you may want to look at.

Blogger reviews

It seems like everyone has a blog, and many people are using their blogs as a platform for reviewing products and services. When a blogger reviews your site, get permission to use their quote on your site and a link back to their blog (or provide a link to your own blog from theirs). Bloggers welcome the traffic, and your customers will welcome your transparency.





VERISIGN STRATEGIES FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Awards

Earning an award can validate your products and services, as well as increase consumers' faith in what they're purchasing. Check with your local chamber of commerce, small business association, or industry groups to see if there are any awards you may want to compete for, and don't be shy about putting your hat into the ring—you can submit your own name or ask a loyal customer to nominate you. If you've already been honored with an award, consider creating a section on your Web site to highlight your achievements.

REMEMBER—HONESTY IS KEY TO SUCCESS

No matter how you decide to nurture customer feedback, encouraging an open and honest discussion about your products and services is vital to establishing credibility. When you listen to what your customers and clients have to say about your company, always remember to stay positive, offer solutions if customers are experiencing problems, and use any negative feedback to refine your business and improve your dispute resolution.

Letting customers have their say about your company is an important part of building strong business relationships, but don't forget that helping people understand that your site is trustworthy also creates customer loyalty and trust. VeriSign Trust Seal can help you establish that trust and give you an edge over your competition. To learn more, visit the VeriSign Trust Seal Web site at www.verisign.com/trust-seal.

LEARN MORE

For more information about how VeriSign Trust™ Seal can bring trust to your business online, please call: 866-878-7847, 650-426-5333 or email: trustteam@verisign.com. Visit us at www.verisign.com/trust-seal for more information.

ABOUT VERISIGN

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