The Definitive Guide to B2B Reviews

Everything you need to know to launch a 5-star review program

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TR TrustRadius

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About Us

TrustRadius is the most trusted review platform for business technology. We help buyers make confident decisions with in-depth reviews and ratings from real users. We also help vendors engage and convert buyers by putting their customer's voice to work, authentically and at scale.

Why Reviews Matter

84%

of buyers said they seek input
from peers and existing users

67%

of buyers said reviews were a
very important consideration

The B2B buyer's journey has changed.

Buyers are doing more independent research than ever, consulting
a wide range of sources beyond vendor marketing and information
supplied by sales reps. They especially want recommendations
and insights from their peers. In the 2017 B2B Buyer's Survey from
Demand Gen Report, 84% of buyers said they seek input from peers
and existing users during the purchasing process.

Buyers want to hear from customers.

Reviews in particular have an increasing influence on buyers — 67%
of buyers said reviews were a "very important" consideration, up
from 55% last year. Case studies ticked up as well, from 38% to 41%,
but lagged behind reviews in terms of their influence on purchasing
decisions. It is clear that buyers prioritize the uniquely authentic and
unbiased insights they get from user reviews.

Reviews are not just for review sites.

Technology is still largely sold, not bought. Unlike transactional
B2C purchases, B2B purchases often include targeted demand
generation, extended lead nurturing, and consultative deal cycles.
Proactively including reviews in this process, rather than expecting
your prospects to find them on their own, can lift conversion and
accelerate deal cycles.

This is your playbook for launching a strategic review program.

We will walk you through planning and execution, step by step, from getting your executives on board to responding to reviews. Along the way, we'll share insights into buyer behavior as well as what we've learned from helping hundreds of B2B marketers, across a wide range of roles and verticals, build out their review programs. Starting with the right foundation will allow you to maximize the value of your review program and contribute to broader customer-centric initiatives.

TrustRadius is here to help.

If any of the steps outlined in this ebook sound overwhelming, we offer a variety of services and products to help vendors efficiently get customers on the record and use reviews across their organizations. Get in touch if there is anything we can do to help you build an effective review program.

This ebook will help you answer these important questions so you can successfully launch your program:

1. What are my goals for the review program?

2. Who will manage the day-to-day execution of the program, and what other stakeholders need to be involved?

3. Do I have enough resources to manage my review program in-house, or should I work with a third party?

4. Based on my goals, what is the minimum number of reviews I need, and how will I continue to expand my review base and keep that content fresh?

5. Once I have my customers on the record, how will I use the content? Who will I send it to internally, and where can the voice of my customers have the biggest impact externally?

Set the Stage for a Successful Review Program

Identify the goals of your review program.

First things first, decide what you want to achieve so that you can justify your approach, prioritize your resources, and present the outcomes clearly. Here are seven of the most common review program goals we hear from vendors:

1. **Reputation Management:** "I'm already on review sites and my scores don't seem accurate. I need to take action!"

2. **Awareness & Consideration:** "Buyers are using review sites to learn about my category and competitors. Get me in front of those buyers."

3. **Buying Leads:** "Buyers who are looking at my product and/or category on review sites are probably pretty good leads. Sell me some of those leads, please."

4. **Third-Party Validation:** "I know buyers are doing independent research about my product. I'd love to make sure they can find the information they're looking for, and that it's trustworthy and accurate."

5. **Social Proof:** "My product is amazing, but my prospects don't take my word for it. I need authentic content, directly from my customers, that I can use on my site and in my marketing campaigns to boost conversion."

6. **Sales Enablement:** "My sales reps keep asking for references and testimonials. I want to arm them with as much customer evidence as possible, without imposing excessively on our customers."

7. **Customer Focus:** "My company lives and breathes customer-centricity. We want candid feedback from our customers. We want our customers to know we're listening and that they're driving our roadmap, and we want prospects to know we listen to customers."
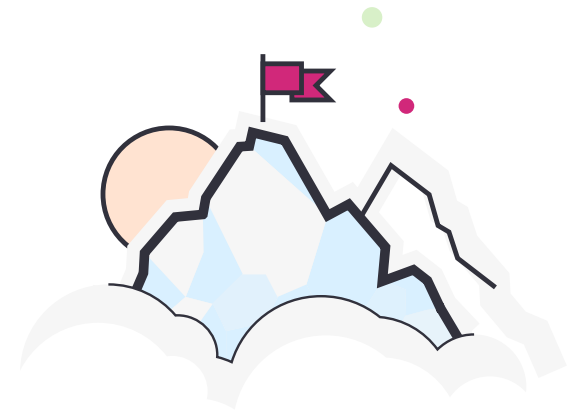
Get buy-in from your team and executives early on.

Your entire organization can benefit from the content and insights that come from reviews. Engaging an executive sponsor is the best way to spread that value across multiple departments, as well as ensuring you can get the resources and access needed to successfully run a program.

Common misconceptions about reviews, and how you can overcome them:

» **Review sites are just a fancy software directory.** Early review sites were product directories designed to capture leads. More recently, a few robust review sites have emerged as indispensable resources for buyers. In-depth perspectives from their peer perspectives, and not a simple listing, are what prospects find valuable. Reviews are an unbiased way to get those insights.

» **Reviews aren't relevant for our buyers.** While this movement started in B2C, those consumer behaviors have been fully embraced in all facets of B2B. According the latest B2B Buyer's Survey from Demand Gen Report, 67% of buyers rank reviews as a "very important" consideration when it comes to evaluating solution providers. Based on our buyer research, this is true across personas and company size, from executives to end-users and enterprises to startups.

» **Reviews will open us to negative criticism.** The truth is customers are writing reviews and sharing their opinion with peers, whether or not the vendor is involved. By having a formal review program, you can ensure that a few negative voices don't dominate the conversation, and prove your organization cares about customer concerns.

» **All that matters on review sites is ratings.** Buyers actually care more about qualitative feedback than your product's overall score. In a recent survey, buyers ranked review content as the most important factor when using reviews to evaluate products. Building a library of in-depth reviews from real users is incredibly valuable for vendors as well — in addition to influencing buyers on the review site, it can be used to drive results in marketing and sales, as well as provide up-to-date insights into your product and customer base.

Start thinking about how you will measure ROI.

Based on your initial goals, identify what success will look like and how you can measure it. We recommend you take a holistic approach to determining ROI. Some of the metrics you can measure include:

» **Content Acquisition:** Number of reviews, number of segments and use cases represented, quality of reviews

» **Social Proof & References:** Number of quotes you can leverage in other channels, number of compelling customer stories, new references identified

» **Visibility:** Traffic to and from your product page, brands that visit your product page

» **Pipeline Impact:** Leads driven from and influenced by reviews, increased conversion on landing pages due to social proof

» **Sales Enablement:** Deals influenced by reviews, reduction in sales cycle, increased win rate, reduction in reference requests

» **Customer Success:** Improvement in NPS, reduction in churn

"Everyone in the company can benefit from the content that comes out of customer reviews. For sales: industry or topic-specific quotes. For marketing: middle of funnel evaluation content. For customer success: valuable soundbites for how your product can improve. Everyone wins."

- Mitch Holt, Demand Generation Manager | Lifesize

Read the full review on TrustRadius

Implement & Scale Your Review Program

1. Kickoff your review program internally

Your review program needs a leader to succeed.

It is not unusual to see stakeholders from multiple departments come together to strategize — and benefit from — a review program. It is also important to have an executive sponsor to help guide the program and ensure support across various departments. However, you should select one person to manage the project on a day-to-day basis.

Which team should run your review program?

» **Customer Marketing** or **Customer Advocacy** if your primary goals are social proof, reference management or identifying advocates.

» **Product Marketing** if your ultimate goal is sales enablement or product strategy.

» **Content Marketing** if your focus is acquiring and using authentic content.

» **Corporate Communications** if you are most concerned about reputation management and brand awareness.

» **Demand Generation** if your focus is driving and converting more leads.

Rally your internal resources.

If this is your first review initiative, you'll need to set expectations with your peers regarding timelines and support as well as results. If you already have some presence on review sites, less education may be required, but you should still make sure everyone is on the same page and ready to help.

Here are some of the steps required to launch your first campaign, which we'll cover in detail in the following chapters:

1. **Get a customer list.** At a minimum, you will need their name and email address. This list should represent a wide range of roles, industries, and use cases for your product.

2. **De-dupe and clean up your list.** Make sure you have permission to contact all the customers on your final list.

3. **Get budget and prepare incentives** if you decide to use them.

4. **Build your emails and set up your campaign** in a marketing automation tool.

5. **Read, share, and respond** to reviews as they are published.

6. **If you use incentives, you'll need to fulfill them according to Federal Trade Commission guidelines**, which can be time consuming depending on the type of incentive you offer and reviewer anonymity.

Consider working with a third-party like TrustRadius.

Launching and maintaining a successful review program can be hard — and require a significant amount of time — if you don't have help. We partner with vendors to make reviews easy and efficient. Our experts can run and optimize review acquisition campaigns, keep your content fresh with renewal campaigns, implement custom question to ensure your reviews tell your narrative, and more.

We also offer tools to help you use your reviews, such as a curation platform to extract and tag interesting quotes, a syndication platform to stream review quotes to widgets on your website and landing pages, and an integration to automatically push approved customer quotes into Salesforce.

"We sell software to companies of all sizes and all industries, so it's critical for us to have social proof from as many customers as possible. It's also impossible to do just with case studies, etc… TrustRadius has helped drive over 250 new ratings and reviews in under 6 months, and has contributed more than 20 new customers to our customer reference program."

**- Davin Wilfrid,** Senior Marketing Manager | QuickBase
Read the full review on TrustRadius

2. Establish your presence on review sites

Vendors should aim for a minimum viable presence on all relevant B2B review sites.

That doesn't mean you need to heavily invest in multiple sites, but make sure your products are represented everywhere your prospects might be looking. Buyers often start their research with a Google search for product reviews, and they check several sites, so you will want some social proof on each. At the very least, you should have your products listed with accurate product details and a handful of reviews.
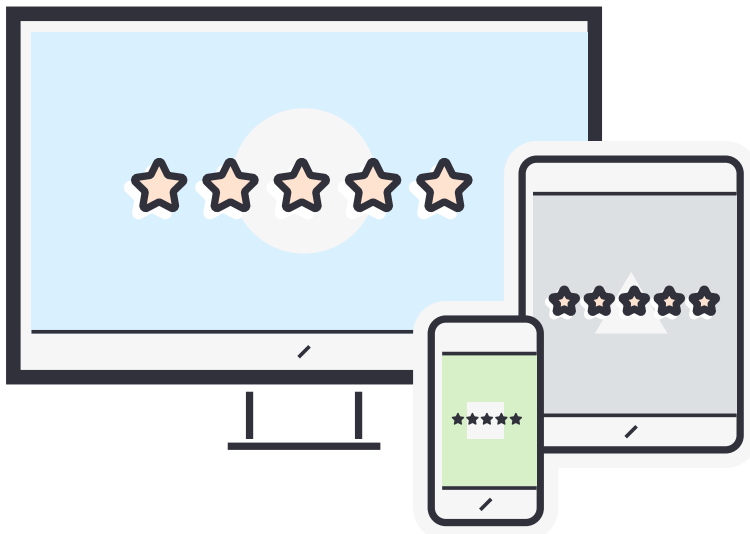
Characteristics of a reputable review site:

» **Reviewers are authenticated.** The site should have steps in place to ensure reviewers are real users and have no conflicts of interest. Most do this with LinkedIn authentication.

» **Reviews are moderated.** Someone should read every single review before it is published to ensure feedback is valid and objective.

» **Standings are not pay-for-play.** Product placement, feedback or recommendations should not be driven by whether or not a vendor is a customer of the site. End of story.

» **Federal Trade Commission guidelines are followed.** The site should not allow incentives to be tied to a particular response, and all incentives should be disclosed on the review.

Most B2B review sites allow vendors to submit and update their product listings.

Some sites charge a fee to be listed, while others are free. The degree of control vendors have over their product listings varies from site to site as well.

On TrustRadius, managing your product listing is free, but there are some requirements to be listed or get access to an existing listing. Once you've been approved, you can build out your company and product profiles. The most important pieces of your profile are your logo, your company and product name, your product categorization, and your company and product descriptions. Make sure you update these elements whenever there is a significant change, such as rebranding or adding a new module.

Tips for creating strong company and product profiles:

» **Keep your descriptions straightforward and factual**, rather than duplicating brand copy from your website or LinkedIn profile. Buyers don't trust marketing fluff, and some review sites will edit or reject descriptions that are too promotional.

» **Include contextual information that your buyers won't get from reviewers**, such as pricing, feature list, integrations, competitors, and customer base breakdown. These elements can help them interpret reviewer feedback.

» **Make sure you are listed in the same neighborhood as your competitors**, even if the category name doesn't perfectly match your branding. Being in a well-populated space lends your solution more credibility than appearing in a category of your own. Plus it helps buyers discover you via competitor searches, comparisons, and category research.

Pick one platform to focus on.

In order to use reviews strategically, you need to think like your buyers, who want more from reviews than just a star rating or general brand awareness. Here are some questions that can help you choose where to invest the most energy:

1. What will happen to your buyers when they visit the review site?

2. Is the content detailed and organized so your buyers can find the answers they are looking for?

3. How does the review site ensure all their content is authentic and high quality? Is the overall experience trustworthy?

4. Will you be able to use your review content, and does the review site provide tools to help you do so?

5. What other ways can you work with the review site to meet your goals?

As you think through each of these questions, you may be surprised at how different B2B review sites really are. Their business models will range from pay-for-play placements to selling leads. How each site makes money has a direct impact on the buyer experience, as well as the experience for vendors who want to work with them.

At TrustRadius, our approach aligns the best interests of buyers and vendors on a level playing field. The way we make money actually builds trust between you, your prospects, and your customers. Instead of selling leads or paid placements, we offer services that help you get more high-quality reviews as well as tools that help you use review content in your own sales and marketing programs. We believe in driving authentic value for your organization while ensuring your buyers get the most trusted, in-depth, relevant insights into your products.

"There are a number of review sites out there; however, most pale in comparison to the depth and use cases provided by TrustRadius. Most of them are extremely simple in the questions asked surrounding products which offers very little value to companies and can be misleading to prospective users doing research. From experience, TrustRadius is most concerned with providing authentic product reviews that benefit researchers and vendors alike."

- Michael Beahm, Senior Marketing Manager | Blackbaud
Read the full review on TrustRadius

3. Invite your customers to review you

Building your list is a critical step, and often one of the most challenging.

You will likely need to work with multiple stakeholders to decide which customers to ask for reviews and when you should send them invites, as well as getting the list itself created. As you coordinate this effort, remind the team the goal is to get authentic and diverse feedback — that is what buyers are looking for, and it also has the greatest benefits to the rest of the organization. You don't have to ask every single user for a review right out of the gate, but you need to make sure you have a representative sample of your customer base.

Here are some guidelines to help you prepare your list:

» **Do target a broad set of customers.** Buyers often look for reviews from reviewers like them, so it's important to have reviews that represent your different target personas, use cases, user roles, experience levels, industries, and company sizes.

» **Don't limit yourself to your known advocates.** Buyers are looking for balanced insights from your everyday users. In fact, they are skeptical of products with only positive reviews, and use negative reviews as a way to determine how trustworthy and relevant the positive feedback is. Casting a wider net will also help you identify new advocates.

» **Do ask for reviews when your product is top-of-mind.** The best time to ask for a review is once users are up and running with your product, and have had time to start seeing value, but while the reasons they bought as well as the onboarding experience are still fresh in their minds. For most vendors, that sweet spot is around 90 days after implementation. Other prime opportunities include right after quarterly business reviews and during or after user conferences.

Email outreach is the most efficient way to get reviews.

Create an invitation email that provides specific instructions on how to leave a review. You should also provide context for the broader program, and convey that you are looking for honest and constructive feedback.

You can request a custom TrustRadius landing page by emailing research@trustradius.com. We will send you a direct link to a page that's specific to your product, making it easy for your customers to start writing a review. Our custom landing pages combined with our simple authentication process result in higher response rates.

Don't forget the reminders.

If your first email is ignored, it doesn't mean that customers aren't open to writing a review. Create a nurture stream to ask again. For customers who opened the email but didn't take action, reinforce that you are genuinely interested in their constructive feedback. For those who didn't open the first email, a simple trick is to resend the same email with a new subject line.

Hi [customer name],

I have a quick request. Could you please leave an honest review of [your product name] on TrustRadius, a third-party review site for business software?

Just register with TrustRadius via LinkedIn, answer a few key questions, and in about 15 minutes you're done. Your review can be anonymous or public.

Here's the link to get started: [link to your custom TrustRadius landing page]

Reviews help us gather and respond to customer feedback, and help prospective buyers make an informed decision about our product.

Thanks, and if there is anything at all that I can do to help you, don't hesitate to let me know.

Consider using incentives.

One option to boost response rates is to offer a small incentive to thank customers for their time. But this can be a tricky topic to navigate on a few levels. Here are some things to keep in mind when it comes to rewarding reviews.

» **Think about the right incentive.** Offers with a broad appeal, such as a nominal gift card to Amazon or Starbucks, tend to be the most effective at striking a balance between high quality reviews and high participation rates. Test a few gift card levels to optimize the number of reviews you can get out of your budget.

» **Follow the government regulations regarding review incentives.** The Federal Trade Commission requires the disclosure of reviewer incentives to buyers reading the reviews. TrustRadius asks all reviewers whether they have been offered an incentive to write the review, and we include that incentive information on every published review.

» **Review sites often have additional guidelines for vendor incentives.** At TrustRadius, reviewers are required to confirm that any incentive they received is not contingent upon their rating or using certain language in their review. We do not publish reviews unless they meet these standards.

» **Know that buyers may take vendor-incentivized reviews with a grain of salt.** Even if you follow the rules, buyers get suspicious when vendors provide incentives for reviews. They are worried that the incentive itself might have swayed reviewers to review you more positively, especially since "paid reviews" in the B2C space have earned a reputation for being fake or untrustworthy.

Used correctly, incentives create balance.

TrustRadius offers incentives as part of our independent outreach, as well as when we work with vendors to drive new reviews and update or expand current reviews. We have found that using incentives leads to more comprehensive reviews and a more accurate distribution of ratings. Incentives motivate users to take the time to really reflect on products and share more detailed feedback. Incentives also increase participation by users who are neither strong advocates nor detractors — these users often have an opinion on the pros as well as the cons of a product, but might not have the initiative to review it on their own. Their perspectives are especially useful and trustworthy to buyers, who look for balanced feedback over viewpoints that are too positive or too negative. While some buyers are suspicious of incentives even when they come from neutral third parties, most recognize the difference between vendors offering incentives versus review sites offering incentives.

"We work with very large and well-recognized brands who are not always able to participate in public customer advocacy activities. TrustRadius reviews are a great way to get our customers to provide honest feedback because TrustRadius is an independent vendor. I think customers are more receptive to rewards and incentives from an independent vendor rather than from us directly. If we were to offer rewards and incentives, they might feel more pressured to give only positive feedback and then may be less likely to provide a review at all."

- **Sherry Arnold,** Customer Advocacy Manager | Workfront
 Read the full review on TrustRadius

4. Scale your review base

The number of reviews you need depends on your product and your goals for the program.

When we surveyed active buyers using TrustRadius.com, around half said they need 10 or more reviews per product to meet their needs. A product listing with less than 5 reviews is going to fall short for 79% of buyers. While you only need one review to get indexed for SEO purposes, we recommend driving at least 10 reviews to establish a minimum viable presence.

Buyers don't always agree on this threshold, partially because quantity means different things to different people. Buyers tell us that number of reviews:

» Can indicate product relevance, with quantity itself equating to social proof

» Can indicate data relevance, since a higher number of reviews means higher confidence in the feedback

» Is a good predictor of whether there is enough information in the reviews to accomplish their goals

To meet your needs, a product must have:
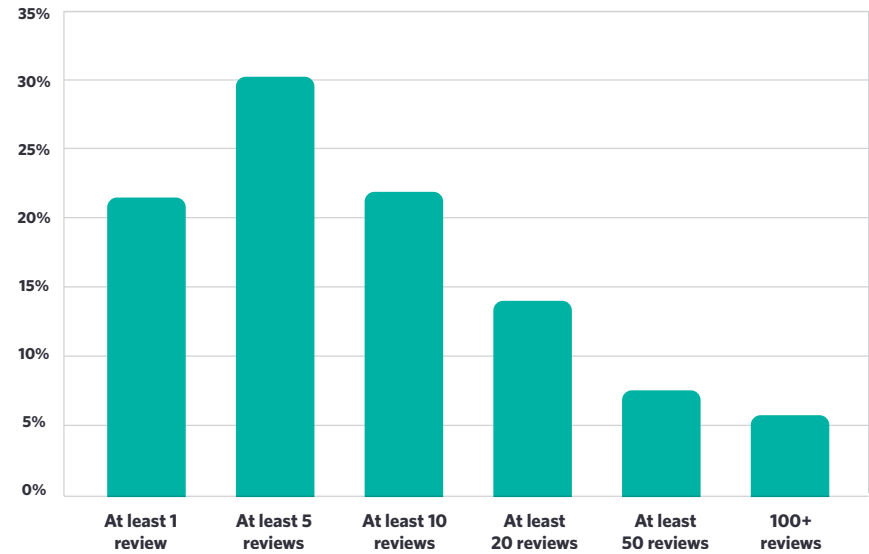
Source: June 2017 poll of 635 buyers on trustradius.com

However, what buyers are really looking for is a substantial number of reviews from users like them. As one buyer put it, "I want the experience of peers in my same role who were trying to solve a similar problem. I find that is the most effective way to find how well a product would work for my company." Depending on the range of use cases, industries, and company sizes in your target market, you may need to gather more than 20 reviews in order to have enough relevant data to meet their needs.

You also need to look at your product category and competition when setting a review goal. How many other products are listed there, and how many reviews does each product have? If there is a comparison visual for your category, such as a map or chart, how many reviews do you need to be included? Buyers consider your number of reviews, compared to other products in the space, as a proxy for relevance. Aim to meet or exceed the average number of reviews in your category.

Finally, consider how you want to use all the content and feedback you get to determine how many reviews you need. For example, if you want to build a library of testimonial quotes for sales enablement, you will want enough reviews to cover the full range of use cases and customer segments that your reps are selling to. Scale is also helpful when it comes to getting enough content for marketing campaigns, identifying advocates and references, having a critical mass of product feedback, and more.

"One of my biggest challenges was finding customers in larger organizations and getting the correct quotes to show value as we were trying to move up market. TrustRadius's flexible and powerful site allowed me to collect reviews from the right people and then ask the right questions to get the content I needed."

- **Megan Roth,** Marketing Manager | Insightly
Read the full review on TrustRadius

Optimize campaigns to meet your goal.

When vendors follow the best practices laid out here — invite a representative customer list, send reminders, and offer a small incentive — they should be able to get 2 to 5% of invited customers to write a review. When TrustRadius works with vendors to invite customers on their behalf, our yield is typically higher than that of vendors working alone, averaging upwards of 10%.

Based on the yield you expect, you can back into the number of customers you need to invite. You will likely need to send multiple campaigns, widen the pool of users you ask, and continue to optimize your program in order to achieve your goals.

Go beyond dedicated email campaigns and build reviews into multiple touch points.

Embed CTAs to review your product in multiple places so it is easy for users to review your product whenever they are ready. We offer a "Review us on TrustRadius" badge which can be placed in support communications, on help desk pages, within your customer portal, in customer success and account management communications, newsletters, email footers, and more.

Tips on expanding your campaigns:

» **Don't restrict yourself to the primary point of contact at each account.** Reaching out to a variety of end users is a great way to scale and ensure buyers find the wide range of viewpoints they are looking for. Just make sure those users are highly engaged with the product.

» **Do think of additional times during the customer lifecycle when it makes sense to ask for reviews.** In addition to 90 days post implementation, following account reviews, and during events, we recommend asking for reviews when new users are onboarded to existing accounts, in a newsletter or customer marketing drip, after new features are released, and at other key milestones.
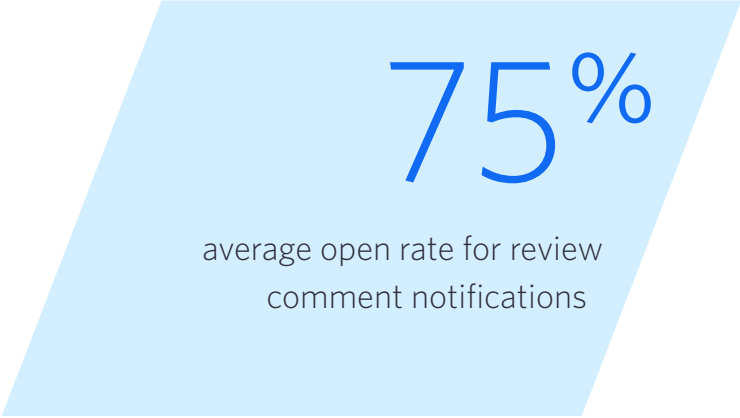
5. Respond to reviews

Reviews are an opportunity to show you're engaged and care about what your customers have to say.

You don't need to comment on every single review, but you should comment fairly regularly, on both positive and negative reviews. It shows customers and prospects alike that you are listening and genuinely interested in their success.

Customers pay attention to your responses, whether you're sharing resources that will fix a problem or simply thanking them for taking the time to write a review. On TrustRadius, every reviewer is notified immediately when a new comment is posted on their review. The average open rate for these message is 75%. And even though the comment is included in the email, we also see a 16% click rate to get back into their review, which means they are returning to re-evaluate or update their review.

Comments have a big impact on buyers as well. In the B2C space, a Cornell University study based on TripAdvisor data found a connection between review comments and revenue. The sweet spot was when hotels responded to about 40% of their reviews, and responses to negative reviews had a bigger impact than responses to positive reviews.

75%
average open rate for review comment notifications

40%
review response rate yields the best results for vendors

TrustRadius

Here are some best practices to guide your response strategy:

» **Identify yourself as a vendor representative.** Transparency is your friend, and if buyers don't know the vendor is responding, they won't fully appreciate how much your company cares about customer experience.

» **Make sure each comment is substantive.** Your goal is to add value for the reviewer as well as add context for a buyer reading the review.

» **For positive reviews, thank them** and make the response personalized to each reviewer. It is better to not comment than to comment in a way customers and prospects might interpret as insincere.

by Bob Lee **(IBM Ustream Representative)**   👍 0   👎 0

Hi Bryan. Bob from the Voice of the Customer team at Ustream here. Thanks so much for your review. We really appreciate your insights and your business and we're thrilled that we can help you share your content without worrying about the technical side of things. All three of your channels are amazing and the Jellies LIVE channel is absolutely mesmerizing. And this comes from a guy who had multiple close encounters with jellyfish growing up on the east coast of Florida. Watching your video makes me long to don a wetsuit and mask again.

IBM Cloud Video does this well, with personal thank-yous that recognize what's most important to the reviewer and let them know that IBM is invested in their specific goals, while also adding context for readers about the reviewers' industry or use case.

» **For reviews that are critical but generally positive, show empathy and acknowledge the product shortcomings that you are already addressing or planning to address.** These customers are on your side, and are likely to be understanding and open to your suggestions, so point to existing resources that might help if applicable.

by Daniel Waas **(LogMeIn, Inc. Representative)**   👍 0   👎 0

Thanks for the positive feedback. I'm glad to hear you've found GoToWebinar to be both reliable and easy-to-use.

I noticed you're looking to set up custom registration links. We've recently made that process a lot easier. Within GoToWebinar it's called Source Tracking and this help article has all the details: https://support.citrixonline.com/en_US/Webinar/help_files/G2W090114

1 reply ▾

by Review Author

This is fantastic, thanks Daniel. I'm sure we'll be able to put this to good use :)

This reviewer rated the product a 9/10, but had some specific challenges. LogMeIn responded by sharing recent product updates and a how-to article, engaging the reviewer in conversation even though they were anonymous.

by Skylar Talley **(AlienVault Representative)**   👍 0   👎 0

Hi Steve! Really appreciate the feedback. Glad to hear you've had success with the tool so far. If you'd like to jump on the phone with the Product Team to discuss where you're running into issues in the UI, how we might improve the Administrator experience and/or the types of customizations that you're looking for around Alarms, I'd love to chat! Feel free to reach out to me at stalley@alienvault.com.

AlienVault did a great job in their response to this reviewer, who shared some specific frustrations and rated them 6/10. Remember, they've taken the time to share their feedback because they want the product to work for them, so your main goal is to show you're listening.

» **For particularly critical reviews, take the conversation offline.** You don't want to ignore these reviews, but they likely bring up sensitive issues for your company and the reviewer. Do not make excuses or get too confrontational in the comments thread. Instead of smoothing things over, it may prompt them to vent even more frustration, especially if they feel like you're more concerned about your reputation than their concerns. The best way to de-escalate is to frankly acknowledge their concerns in a comment, and hope the reviewer is willing to accept your extra help and attention to solve the problem. It really warrants a broader conversation to get them back on your side.

by Nicole Frisbee **(HireVue Representative)**   👍 0   👎 0

Hi Dave! We're glad to have Paylocity on board and using HireVue. Thanks for your support and feedback. We've added the CodeVue screen sharing request to our product roadmap with a target release of next quarter. You can add and track new product ideas and requests anytime, as well as view and vote on other customers request too in The Hub (our customer community): http://hir.vu/1n6m0sU.

I looked at the connection issues you mentioned. We realize that technology isn't always perfect and we apologize for the inconvenience. The best fix for dropped interviews and poor video quality is to have a stable web connection and we have some admin tools on our side that can help diagnose the bottleneck. Next time you're experiencing this, please call me personally (801) 231-5146 or you can contact our support team 24/7 available through phone, email or chat: http://try.hirevue.com/contact/

- Nicole

For example, HireVue responded to this reviewer, who rated them 3/10, by suggesting a solution and describing plans for product development. But, the representative also shared her own contact information and some options for support, letting the reviewer know that HireVue understands the importance of the problem and has a personal stake in helping them solve it.

» **Commenting is the best (and often only) way to contact anonymous reviewers.** If the review was written anonymously, include your contact information in your response so that the reviewer can follow up with any additional questions or feedback. They may be more open to discussing their organization's specific needs if it is private/offline.

by Micole Kaye **(Ultimate Software Representative)**   👍 0   👎 0

Hi!

Thank you so much for your feedback. We take every review seriously and appreciate any opportunity to improve. I'm really sorry to hear about your experience with us. If you're willing to give us a chance, I'd love to work with you to alleviate some of your concerns. If you email me with your information, we can come up with a plan to improve our customer service for you, see if we can reconfigure your settings to meet your current needs, and have our Development Team look into some of the other matters you mentioned. Please let me know how I can help.

Thank you,

Micole Kaye, Ultimate Software

email: micole_kaye@ultimatesoftware.com

Since this reviewer was anonymous, Ultimate Software gave them all the contact information they would need to get in touch. They also set the stage for a friendly and helpful dialogue to ensure the reviewer would feel comfortable reaching out. Remember, in addition to engaging customers, your comments also shape how prospects' view your customer experience.

6. Share reviews internally

Once your customers are on the record, don't keep it to yourself.

Reviews shouldn't stay siloed in your department. Part of running your review program is distributing reviews to the other stakeholders who can benefit from them.

Send new review notifications via email or Slack.

Sharing reviews internally can help triage customer issues more effectively by surfacing the issue to the team who has the information and power to address them. Reviews can also provide customer intelligence and public proof points to help shape better product, marketing, sales, and account management strategies. And of course, kudos always feel good — we encourage vendors to email positive reviewer feedback to the team that deserves it, with your leadership copied. Sharing will also give your efforts more visibility, since folks across the company will be reminded of the review program, and see value in the insights that are relevant to them.

Re-introduce your review program when you share.

When you send reviews to your colleagues, remind them of the initiative and highlight how your review program benefits them specifically. Give them some context— that you asked your customers to share authentic feedback, why it's important for reviews to be posted publicly, why the specific review site is relevant to customers and prospects — so that they will read the review and take the insights seriously.

Call out what's interesting about the feedback.

You want to show that your program is relevant to your peers' priorities, and establish motivation for them to care about the content of the reviews you're sharing. Here's who should be on your distribution list, and ideas about which reviews or excerpts to send them:

» Send notable wins and concerns to **Leadership**, who can celebrate excellent outcomes or intervene where necessary.

» Send strong testimonial quotes to **Marketing**, who can promote them and use them as a pipeline for case studies.

» Send product questions to **Product Marketing**, who will be able to answer questions about current capabilities and can also act as a liaison with **Product Management** for roadmap input.

» Send technical and training questions to **Support**, since they field these inquiries via more traditional help channels as well.

» Send comments about customer experience to **Customer Success**, who can address current issue and leverage them for future account management.

» Send comments about purchasing experience and competitive advantage to **Sales**, who can use them to back up their claims, deflect reference calls, and overcome objections.

As your review program scales, organizing the content can become a challenge. Our TrustQuotes Library makes it easy for vendors to identify key quotes in each review, then tag the reviews and quotes with metadata. In addition to offering a streamlined way to share insights internally, the platform can be used to syndicate your best quotes and reviews to your website and into your CRM.

"TrustQuotes Library gives us a centralized place to tag and review customer feedback. When we need a quote on a certain product attribute, or from a particular industry, it's an easy place to look. It makes developing industry-specific collateral much easier. It also helps avoid days of work that it would take to assemble this volume of customer feedback."

- **Alan Drummer,** Content Marketing Manager, IBM
Read the full review on TrustRadius

7. Ask customers to update their reviews

Keeping your reviews fresh is important.

Buyers pay attention to the publication date when reading reviews and discount feedback that feels outdated or "expired." In a recent survey, 76% of buyers said they use the review date as a measure of relevance, both for the content and the product itself. They know that products change, from features and capabilities, to level of service. Therefore they want to make sure the information they're using to make purchase decisions is up to date and still applicable.

Most buyers want reviews from the past year.

Some buyers consider reviews relevant for up to 18 months, while others only want to see reviews from the last six months. A smaller number of buyers prefer even more recent reviews.

What happens when there are no recent reviews? Buyers say the three most common outcomes are:

» They won't buy the product

» They have to do more work

» They proceed with less confidence

For a review to be relevant, it must have been written:
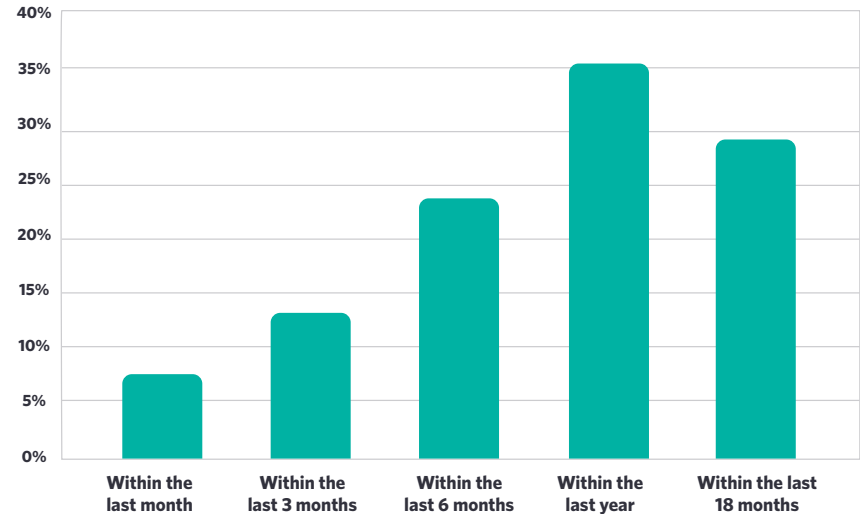
Source: May 2017 poll of 550 buyers on trustradius.com

Refreshing current reviews while also adding new reviews is the best way to meet buyer expectations.

Your products and services are constantly changing, which means users' feedback is evolving as well. Periodically go back to your reviewers and ask them to update their reviews. Review updates tend to add a lot of value for you and for buyers. Over time, as users become experts, they'll have finer-grained measurements on ROI, more innovative use cases to share, and better insights for your product development team.

Compared to writing a brand new review, augmenting an existing review is a much smaller ask. It is a great way to keep your reviews fresh without the pressure of constantly finding new reviewers. We recommend asking for review updates once every three to six months, to ensure that the review base you've worked to build never goes stale. Reaching out after a major product update or the launch of new features is another way to ensure your reviews are relevant to current buyers.

While getting users to update their review is extremely valuable for your reputation as well as for buyers, there is a lot to juggle for this kind of ask. Between timing the campaign, getting reviewers back into their review, making sure they focus on the right questions or topics, tracking how their answers change and who to send a thank you incentive to — not to mention dealing with anonymous reviewers who didn't share their contact info — getting meaningful update results will be challenging. That is why we offer refresh campaigns as part of our review management program. We can work with you to determine the most effective refresh strategy, implement campaigns to different segments at different intervals, and embed the specific questions that need updating right into the email invitation to help increase response rates. We can also track incentives and results efficiently, as well as reach out to anonymous reviewers on your behalf.

"TrustRadius helps us get honest and comprehensive feedback on how customers use Marketo today. This feedback is critical and utilized across our organization from product, marketing, sales and support and more… The ability to refresh reviews once a reviewer has posted feedback — this is extremely helpful for analyzing our products over time and the feedback clients have year to year."

- **Kevin Lau,** Senior Manager, Customer Marketing | Marketo
Read the full review on TrustRadius

Maximize Your Investment in Reviews

Soon you will have a successful review program up and running. Your customers will be leaving authentic feedback, and prospects who are researching your product will be able to read that feedback on a trusted third-party site. But instead of leaving all that great customer content in one channel, what if you could use it in all the other places you are engaging with buyers?

At TrustRadius, we believe getting reviews is important, but putting reviews to work in your own channels is how you can build a true competitive advantage. Our next ebook will focus on how to strategically use your reviews in marketing, sales, product, and beyond. We will share how vendors ranging from TIBCO to TrendKite have used their reviews in creative ways to drive results.

In the meantime, visit our blog and sign up to have posts sent straight to your inbox every week.

Our customers have used reviews to tackle some of these common pain points in marketing and sales:

» Ensuring visibility in initial buyer research

» Adding third-party credibility to marketing claims

» Informing message development

» Scaling authentic customer content

» Identifying case study and advocate opportunities

» Increasing conversion rates with social proof

» Getting targeted quotes for PPC and ABM campaigns

» Providing customer proof for prospecting and outreach

» Accelerating deals without taxing customer references

» Reducing churn with product and account insights

» Building a customer-centric organization

Supercharge your review engine

Whether you want to convert more top-of-funnel leads or reduce the time to closed-won, reviews can help. But let's face it — even with this guide, getting customers on the record is tough. That is why TrustRadius offers a full-service Review Management Program.

» We have a proven track record of getting big brands, tough industries and C-level executives to write reviews.

» We do the heavy lifting, sharing our expertise as well as executing outreach and renewal campaigns on your behalf.

» We help you get the content you want with custom questions, then help you use that content in your own channels.

And that's just the beginning. Ready to learn more?

Request Demo

"B2B is a tough beast. You're not selling in one day, you're selling over months. People have never done so much research, often times before they even reach out to you, and during that process they want to hear from real customers. To the extent you can provide that to them, you are going to build trust."

- Bill Macaitis, former CMO at Slack & Zendesk
Read the full interview