

Online Reviews in the Client Acquisition Cycle

Awareness

Connection

Evaluation

Acquisitions

Throughput

Managing online reviews is part of the client acquisition cycle. Online reviews straddle the Awareness and Connection steps of the acquisition cycle.

Awareness

Marketing your business by creating awareness and positive brand identity is the core of managing online reviews.

Prospects may learn of your services by scrolling through review sites, or they may research reviews after receiving a marketing effort.

Review sites are viewed as the voice of the public, making them a fundamental part of the today's business landscape. 90% of consumers read reviews, and 88% of consumers trust what they read, according to Forbes.

Although some may consider reviews as organic expressions of consumers, the truth is more complicated. Consumers who have experienced what they perceived as a negative business service are two to three times more likely to leave a review than those who have enjoyed a positive experience.

While only a small portion of your clients may hold a negative opinion of your services, their voice, speaking louder than all others, is the risk. This threatens the likelihood of prospects calling for an appointment and ultimately becoming a satisfied client.

The good news is asking for reviews yields results. 70% of clients are more likely to leave a review if requested. Managing an online review marketing strategy not only counters potential negativity but creates an accurate brand reputation.

A well-managed online reputation yields prospect calls and client acquisitions.

Connection

Responding to reviews, both positive and negative, provides an opportunity to connect with clients.

A client dialogue strengthens bonds. Businesses invest hard-earned dollars into client acquisition. Connecting with clients increases the likelihood of maintaining the relationship and avoids the costs of replacing churned accounts.

Responding to negative reviewers holds the potential to save potentially adverse relationships. Most people want to be heard and have their opinions validated. Your response demonstrates your willingness to listen even if the opinion is critical.

In rare cases, providing your defense to the public is necessary to ensure all information is available. Otherwise, potential new clients will only hear from the disaffected individual. That is not representative of the business you have built, your work or your values.

Your willingness to listen to feedback and take it seriously, successfully demonstrates your values. Responding to reviews positively affects your SEO ranking, allowing your business to be seen by more people.

Reference: Forbes October 9, 2017
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2017/10/09/the-power-of-review-sites-for-brands/#6bedc6469d51>

