

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

4 ways to boost business outcomes with online reputation management



service
management
group®



Optimize ratings + reviews to build stronger customer relationships

With 95% of shoppers reading online reviews before making a purchase,¹ many companies have already implemented a review management system — but the secret to success is knowing how to best leverage this fast-paced, high-volume feedback.

Brands with an online reputation management system **that integrates their other CX data and allows for easy access to reviews, seamless engagement with customers, and swift problem resolution** have a huge advantage over those that don't.

These brands know how they stack up against competitors, armed with insight to drive meaningful change and rise to the top of their industry. They are able to quantify ROI by demonstrating the connection between customer experience and sales growth. And, most importantly, they are able to easily engage with customers—resolving their issues, building stronger relationships, and increasing business volume without wasting time navigating multiple channels.

To help you get started optimizing ratings + reviews, this best practice guide provides 4 ways online reputation management will inspire customer loyalty and drive positive outcomes.



What's inside

With an intuitive online reputation management solution, users can:

1

Combine ratings + reviews with solicited and unsolicited location-level data for the richest CX insights

2

Engage with customers quickly + seamlessly with an in-platform response system

3

Gain insight on market position with location-level competitive benchmarks

4

Leverage online engagement to increase search engine visibility, drive traffic, + establish ROI

Take action on customer reviews

Online reviews are a foundational part of your brand's presence and reputation. Download this infographic for 5 steps that will help keep you ahead of the competition, and drive more new and repeat customers to your business.



1

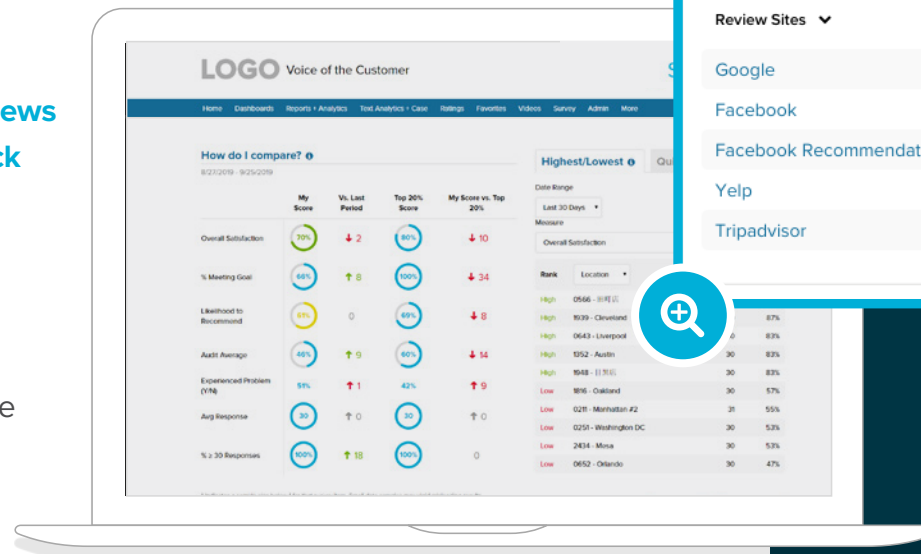
Combine ratings + reviews with other solicited and unsolicited location-level data for the richest CX insights

Unsolicited customer feedback provides a unique perspective of your brand and is an important piece of the customer journey. But brands that measure ratings + reviews alone are just getting part of the picture and missing out on a holistic view of the complete experience.

Actionable insight comes from integrating rich, social ratings + reviews with solicited location-level feedback into one single platform.

Why? Because structured CX survey data provides measurable aspects of a customer's interaction with your brand, and collecting that quantitative feedback is vital to understanding location-level performance.

Unsolicited social ratings + reviews unveil context to the customer experience—sharing insight on parts of the interaction that perhaps aren't covered in the survey or offering an alternate view of the experience.





FORRESTER®

“Ratings and reviews are a rich repository of individual customer experiences across specific products. Mine this data for insights that impact multiple aspects of your brand.”²

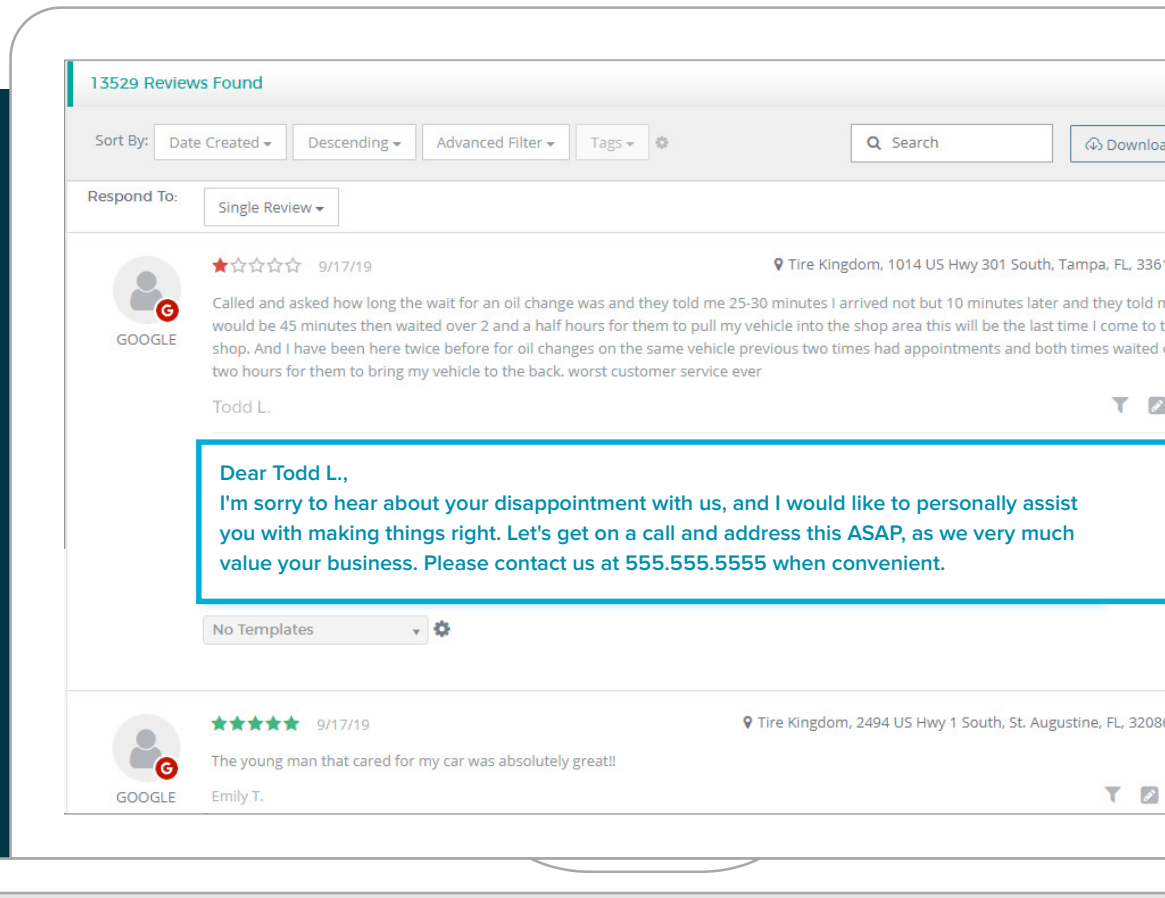
Unsolicited data without solicited data means this information is siloed — so you either won’t get the advantage of seeing the feedback side by side or you’ll waste time with a more manual integration process.

You require an online reputation management solution that pulls all the relevant information you need from the most important sources and puts it alongside your other CX data in one platform—providing a single source of cross-channel insights.

Key takeaway

Structured survey data measures what the brand wants to know about the customer experience, while unsolicited social feedback provides candid context the customer wants the brand to know. Combining the two uncovers the most actionable insights—driving loyalty and sales.

2 Engage with customers quickly + seamlessly with an in-platform response system



Once you've got your online reputation management solution set up, it's time to just sit back and let the feedback roll in, right? **Wrong.**

41% of consumers say when brands reply to reviews, it shows the company really cares about their customers.³ So if they're taking the time to leave a rating or review on their experience, customers expect you to also show some effort and respond—in a timely manner.

A prompt response is especially important if the feedback is negative. If you can respond to a one- or two-star review within 24 hours, you have 33% higher probability of that person coming back and upgrading that review—sometimes by as much as 3 stars.⁴ Unfortunately, with many social listening platforms, there's a lag between reviews and reporting.

Short on time?

Follow these tips to optimize your responses:



Respond to reviews with no comments or 1- and 5-star reviews without context; it's a way to engage with minimal effort—creating loyalty/engagement by increasing interactions + improving SEO



Reply to multiple reviews using prebuilt, corporate-approved templates to ensure consistent brand voice + variety of responses in the public domain



Follow Google My Business recommendations and keep responses nice but not personal, short + sweet, and appreciative (say “thank you!”)

Best-in-class online reputation management technology provides real-time, role-based alerts, which means you can be notified immediately on reviews with specific star ratings or comments containing keywords. And with an in-platform response system, you can save precious time by replying to customer comments using scripted response templates equipped with dynamic tagging.

Another time-saving tool is a bulk reply feature. Let's say you want to send a quick “thank you” to a group of positive customer comments. You can reply to all of them using versioned messaging templates that make it look like the replies are coming from a real person, rather than an automated system.

Since your responses will be public and highly visible, it's important that all your communication is professional and drives consistent, on-brand messaging.

Key takeaway

Social *listening* is not enough—for real impact, engagement is key. You need an online reputation management solution that makes it faster and easier to respond to as many ratings + reviews as possible.

3

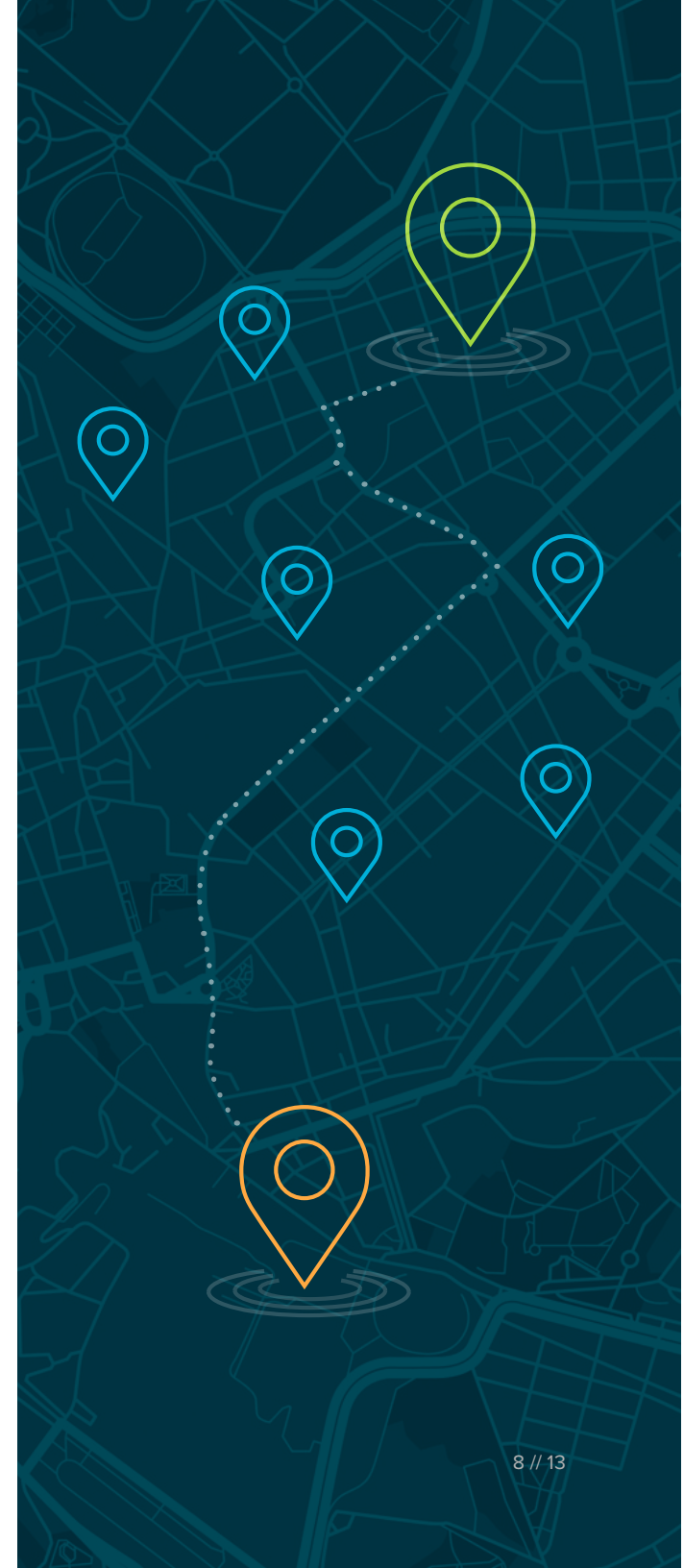
Gain insight on your market position with location-level competitive benchmarks

One of the best ways for brands to get ahead and win customer loyalty is to understand how they stack up against the competition. With competitive benchmarking, you gain a clearer picture of where you are and what you have to do to beat your biggest competitors in local search rankings.

Many online reputation management solutions provide insight on a brand level—which is helpful, but limiting. In order to really understand where you're winning and where you're coming up short, you need to know how each individual location is doing relative to its local competitors.

With access to best-in-class location-level benchmarks, you get:

- ▶ An overall rating compared to local competitors
- ▶ Drill-down functions + selection of specific competitors of interest
- ▶ Volume of reviews you have from the most important review sites
- ▶ Competitors' performance across top platforms like Yelp, Facebook, and Google (including response rates, review volume, and individual review site volume)
- ▶ Snapshot overviews providing a high-level view of how locations have performed in customizable date ranges



The right online reputation management solution helps brands find answers to their most critical questions:

How many reviews do I receive?

What specific region challenges/trends are locations seeing?

How does my performance vary across review sites?

How are my response rates?

Who are my best/worst performing locations?

Key takeaway

Location-level competitive benchmarks uncover rich customer feedback that drive intelligent interactions—setting the bar for the minimum number of reviews a brand should respond to and shedding light on how to lead your industry in exceptional customer service.

| Review Details | You | | Local Competitors Average | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|
| | Last 3 Months | All Time | Last 3 Months | All Time |
| Overall Rating | 3.6 | 3.5 | 4.4 | 4.2 |
| Number of Reviews | 13,529 | 129,178 | 14,487 | 163,754 |
| Reviews Responded To | 12,670 | 65,670 | | |
| Review Response Rate ? | 98% | 54% | | |
| 1 star Reviews | 3,209 | 34,340 | | |
| 5 star Reviews | 6,968 | 63,574 | 9,837 | 109,104 |

| Provider Summary | You | | Local Competitors Average | |
|------------------|---------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Site ↕ | Count ▼ | Rating ↕ | Count ↕ | Rating ↕ |
| GOOGLE | 11,483 | 3.8 ★★★★☆ | 12,998 | 4.4 ★★★★☆ |
| YELP | 949 | 2.5 ★★★☆☆ | 40 | 3.3 ★★★☆☆ |
| YAHOO | 551 | 2.6 ★★★☆☆ | 5 | 3.6 ★★★★☆ |
| BING | 66 | 2.7 ★★★☆☆ | 35 | 3.6 ★★★★☆ |
| YELLOWPAGES | 7 | 3.1 ★★★★☆ | 2 | 4.3 ★★★★☆ |
| FACEBOOK | 2 | 1.1 ★☆☆☆☆ | 1,397 | 3.9 ★★★★☆ |

How are we performing compared to our competition?

4

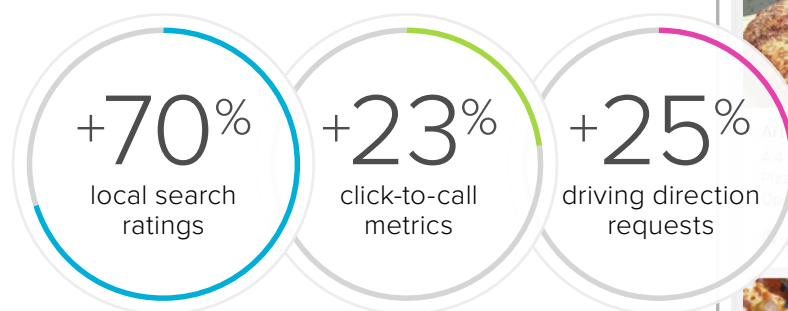
Leverage online engagement to increase search engine visibility, drive store traffic, + prove ROI

Engaging with reviews isn't just a way to win customer loyalty—it also helps you win the long game with Google search. It's a huge benefit to be one of the first to show up in review listings because it's going to lead to more traffic to your business.

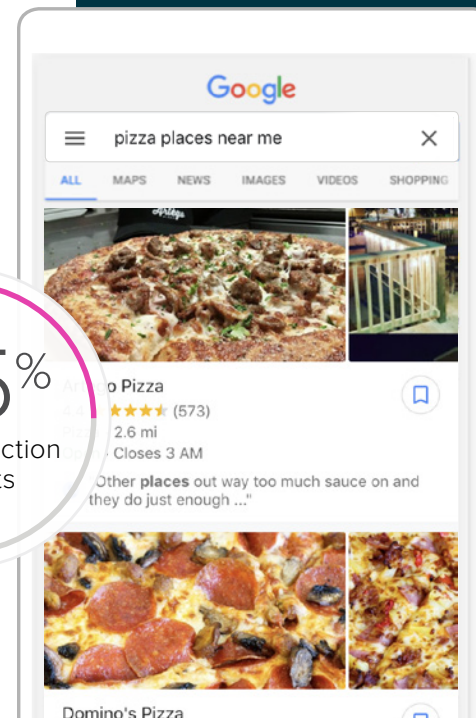
When Google sees that you're responding to customers, they'll reward you with a nudge toward the top. And with more than 90% of consumers saying they're likely to click on the first set of search results,⁵ that placement is a huge advantage.

After the first 12 months of tracking and responding to consumer reviews, brands who implement a comprehensive online reputation management system typically see increased search engine placement and greater mobile engagement.⁶

These improved metrics—which are accessible through a Google My Business account—include:



By increasing these metrics—and increasing exposure, store traffic, and ultimately, sales growth—brands can demonstrate the customer experience directly corresponds with real business results.



Key takeaway

When it comes to the Google game, you have to play to win. Engaging with and responding to customers impacts search volume—leading to increased clicks, traffic, and ROI.

⁵ Survey: 82 percent of smartphone shoppers conduct 'near me' searches | searchengineland.com | 2018

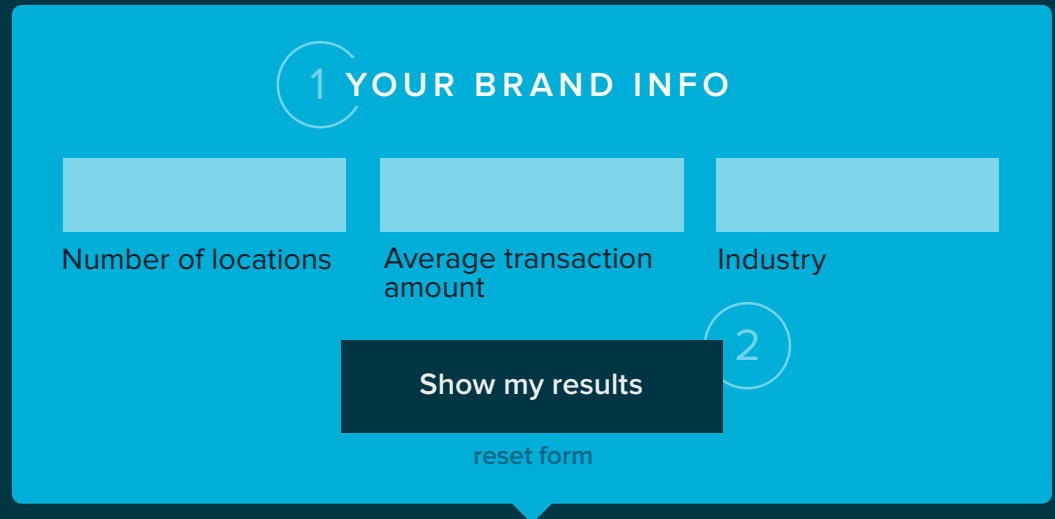
⁶ Average local SEO improvements after 1 year | Chatmeter | 2019

Interactive ROI calculator

Need another reason to believe an online reputation management solution helps quantify ROI? Use the calculator to plug in your brand's information and instantly see the real business results you'd get from prioritizing ratings + reviews. It's as easy as 1-2-3.

HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Enter your brand's number of locations and average transaction amount, then select your industry from the drop-down list
- 2 Click "Show my results"
- 3 See your industry's average increase for:
 - Store traffic
 - Clicks to customer conversion
 - Revenue per location
 - Annual revenue



The form is titled "1 YOUR BRAND INFO" and is set against a blue background. It contains three input fields: "Number of locations", "Average transaction amount", and "Industry". Below these fields is a dark blue button labeled "Show my results" and a smaller link labeled "reset form". A circled "2" is positioned to the right of the "Show my results" button.

3 ESTIMATED INCREASE

Total traffic across locations

Clicks to customer conversion

Revenue per location

TOTAL ANNUAL REVENUE



For a deeper ROI analysis on how an online reputation management solution can boost your business, [**contact us**](#) for more information.

Combine ratings + reviews with CX data to see what's important to all customers—in all channels

Online reputation management offerings don't all look the same. In order to drive meaningful change, brands need a solution that provides best-in-class, time-saving features like in-platform response, competitive benchmarks, and intuitive reporting. They need a clear-cut strategy to drive online engagement and problem resolution with customers. And they require a customer experience management (CEM) provider that is capable of integrating rich, social ratings + reviews with solicited CX feedback into one single platform—making it easier to maintain a single source of cross-channel insights.

SMG RatingsTrack helps brands build stronger customer relationships and improve business outcomes by providing:

- ▶ An aggregated view of CX data in one single platform
- ▶ Localized feedback from multiple review sites
- ▶ Performance summary maps
- ▶ Location-specific summary reports
- ▶ Advanced filters, search functionality, + reporting
- ▶ Best-in-class competitive benchmarking
- ▶ In-platform + bulk response with customizable templates
- ▶ Close-the-loop capabilities that improve customer recovery efforts
- ▶ A Yelp Knowledge Partnership that provides in-platform access + more control over brand reputation
- ▶ Google My Business data aggregation for ROI analysis
- ▶ Technology + professional services that provide targeted and actionable insights



Harness the power of ratings + reviews

It's not just star ratings and social chatter floating around online — ratings + reviews are an opportunity to improve your brand's reputation and build customer connections.

Consumers read an average of 10 online reviews before they trust a business.⁷

If they see you're not engaging with these reviews, they won't trust you. If consumers don't trust you, they won't buy from you. So if you haven't made online reputation management a top priority, you're losing customers.

7 Local Consumer Review Survey | BrightLocal | 2018

But integrating ratings + reviews into your CEM program doesn't just drive customer loyalty. It also provides:

- Insight on operational efficiency
- Competitor monitoring
- Ability to identify problematic trends + proactively resolve systemic issues
- Program success management
- Demonstrable ROI

With SMG RatingsTrack, we deliver a simple, intuitive way to get the data you need from the top ratings + review sites to stay ahead, inspire customer loyalty, and drive business outcomes.

About Service Management Group

SMG inspires experiences that improve people's lives. We are a catalyst for change, providing actionable customer, patient, and employee insights that boost loyalty and drive business outcomes. Our unique model puts a dual focus on platform technology and professional services—making it easier to collect, analyze, and share feedback and behavioral data across the enterprise. To learn more about our customer experience management, employee experience, and brand research solutions, visit www.smg.com.

smg.com

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