



Cash in on your hard work: 7 steps for getting more online reviews

Online reviews and recommendations are key to building credibility with potential customers and growing your business. Don't know where to start? Here are a few strategies to get your clients talking about you

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Aug. 13, 2021

You've spent the past year in a fever pitch helping clients on clients on clients. Now that things are starting to show signs of the seasonal slowdown — and we'll see exactly how slow — this is the time to really cash in on all that hard work by getting those reviews and leveraging them into a full pipeline come 2022.

After all, nothing speeds up the process of growing your business more than online reviews and testimonials. [Bright Local's](#) 2020 local consumer review survey revealed that 87 percent of consumers read online reviews in 2020, influencing their buying decisions.

Think of your real estate reviews and recommendations this way: If I travel to a new city, and I search for new restaurants to visit, I'll look at the reviews. If one restaurant has 50 five-star reviews and another has only one, I'll choose one with the most great reviews.

Real estate customers do the same. In this article, we will go through where to start and seven strategies to help you generate more online reviews and testimonials.

Where should I start?

Deciding where you want your reviews to appear is the first step in compiling online reviews. Options include, but are not limited to, your [Google My Business](#) page, Facebook, realtor.com, Zillow, your website or anywhere else you prefer.

My suggestion is to make sure you focus a large percentage of your reviews on the place where most people start their search — Google.

If you haven't already done it, you'll want to start by setting up your Google My Business page because it's the first thing people will see if they search for you on Google. It provides [reviews](#) and

recommendations along with all your contact information, photos and other information that will be helpful to your potential clients.

Google My Business, like Facebook, allows users to provide recommendations that aren't based on verified sales, meaning that people who have never conducted a real estate transaction with you — but who know, like and trust you — can provide a testimonial.

Other platforms like realtor.com and Zillow will verify any submitted sales recommendations by matching the reviewer with the property address to ensure that the information is based on an actual sale. Ultimately, you'll want to have both kinds of testimonials across the internet.

1. Compound your existing recommendations

If a customer has already provided a review for you, maybe on a site like realtor.com, you can add that review to other sites as well so that more [potential customers](#) will see it.

One option is to take a screenshot of the review on realtor.com and post that image to your Google My Business profile. Another option is to reach out to them about providing a recommendation on another site of your choosing by emailing them a message like this one:

I truly appreciate the trust you have extended to me, as well as your willingness to provide a recommendation on Realtor.com. That same feedback will help me on [name a platform] as well, and I've provided a link that will allow you to share the exact same review for me there.

All you have to do is copy this review you left me on Realtor.com and paste it in the recommendation section at the link above. Again, thank you so much for the opportunity to work with you in the past and thank you in advance for helping me out with the additional review.

This process will allow you to multiply your recommendations by spreading them across multiple [platforms](#).

2. Systematically ask for reviews after each closing

Most people would love to support your business, but they're waiting for *you* to ask. Set up a system that includes an automatic email requesting a review from your clients a few hours after closing. Most clients are excited when closings happen, and by asking them within a few hours, the likelihood of them following through goes up dramatically.

Another option for automating this process is a provider like Testimonial Tree. We have Testimonial Tree set up to automatically email a review request when we close out a file through our transaction management program (SkySlope). By automating the process, the requests don't fall through the cracks.

Whether it be a part of your checklist for closing out a file or you use an [automated system](#) like Testimonial Tree. Systematically asking for reviews and testimonials right after closings works.

3. Include a link for reviews in your email signature block

The things you focus on will expand, so include an opportunity to provide a review in every single email you send. Include a line similar to this one:

The highest honor you could give me is to leave a review for me at the following link.

The compounding effect of seeing that line repeatedly increases the chances that you'll catch the recipient at a moment when they're thankful for the help you're providing — and they'll take the time to provide a recommendation.

4. Reach out to past customers

Your past [buyers and sellers](#) are a sort of low-hanging fruit when you're looking to generate recommendations. Think of the people who have bought or sold with you but who haven't provided a review. Reach out to them to see if they'll provide one for you.

Make it as easy as possible for your reviewers to submit their responses, and focus on one platform at a time to avoid overwhelming your customers. You should also help them understand how the review will help you.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to assist you in the purchase of your home. My business is built on my reputation, and more than ever, online reviews and recommendations are extremely valuable because customers begin their search for an agent online.

If you could take a few minutes to provide a recommendation, it would be incredibly helpful to me and the growth of my business. Again, thank you for entrusting me with assisting on the purchase of your home and thank you in advance for your willingness to help me out.

This step is an easy way to generate fresh new reviews on your various platforms.

5. Leave reviews for other agents

Because Google My Business and Facebook aren't limited to verified transactions, you can help other agents by leaving recommendations for them. If you've [referred a customer](#) to an agent in another city, and that person did a great job, consider leaving a recommendation on one of their platforms.

Realize that it would be somewhat distasteful to offer to write a review for another agent in exchange for them writing one for you. Instead, leave a review for the other agent, and then let the agent know what you've done.

Hey, I know that your business, like mine, is built on reviews, so I left you a recommendation on your Google My Business page based on our experience working together. I've included a link to my Google My Business page in hopes that you can leave me a review based on our work together as well.

You can lead by providing these recommendations, not just for other agents but for the people you work with, like lenders, inspectors or title companies. The law of reciprocity is that they'll likely return the favor and provide a review for you as well.

6. Run a review campaign

This campaign allows you to really focus on generating reviews using [social media](#), email or any form of contact that works well for you. The message will sound something like this:

My business is growing and online recommendations and reviews are critical to help people know more about me and establish trust in my abilities as they decide who to work with.

I'm holding a contest for the next 30 days for anyone who leaves me an online rating or review. I'll make a \$10 donation (or whatever amount works for you) to the "local charity" for each review I receive during this campaign.

By doing so, you give them the ability to do two things: to support a local [charity](#) and support your business as well. You may be surprised how many people want to support your business, and if you turn the focus to giving to others, you'll generate goodwill among your reviewers.

Share the reviews as they come in on social media along with the fact that you made a donation to the “local charity” you chose to support. End each post with:

I love making these donations in the name of anyone who writes a review for me during this campaign. To leave your review, and to help me and “local charity” at the same time, go to the link in the comments.

There is a specific reason for leaving the link in the comments versus the post. The Facebook algorithm does not like posts that have links to other sites. By placing the link in the comments versus the post, you will be able to maximize the organic reach of your post.

Once the reviews and recommendations start coming in and you share them on social media, the number of reviews you receive will grow.

7. Turn favorable emails into reviews

When you receive complimentary emails from people thanking you for the way you handled their transaction, you can turn that into an online recommendation by responding to the email and asking them to share that same information online. You can say something like:

Thank you so much for the kind words. It would be great if you could take the very thing you just wrote and share the review with other people. I’m doing everything I can to show people how much I value taking care of clients, and if you’re willing to spend just a couple of minutes to share it, you’ll help me do that. I’ve included a link, and I’d really appreciate your help.

If you do this, you can turn an email that makes you feel good into a long-standing online review that will exist for years to come and that will help potential customers learn more about you.

Online reviews and recommendations are extremely important if you are looking to grow your business. These reviews will help you build credibility with potential customers, so work hard to generate as many of them as you can across multiple platforms.

People will begin their search on the internet, so make sure the information they find helps them have complete confidence that you are the *perfect* agent for their transaction.

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