

Winning the Ratings Game

A Playbook for Customer Reviews & Social Media Sites

A 7-MINUTE READ



User Reviews

Customer 1 ★★★★★
"This restaurant is in a great location, just for a few minutes walk from the metro station. The staff is really friendly and the food is amazing. Homey atmosphere. I'll be back for sure..."

Customer 2 ★★★★★
"I'll be back for sure. This is one of the best places to taste mediterranean food. Salads, fish and vegetables at an idilic place by the sea..."

[Read all 324 reviews >](#)

Contents

Introduction: The Buzz You Can't Ignore.....	3
Everyone's a Critic.....	4
A Few Bad Apples Ruin the Whole Orchard.....	5
One Star Away from Profitability.....	6
4 Ways Expert Vendor Partners Can Help.....	7
The Ball is In Your Court.....	10
Social Media Checklist.....	11
About Ecolab.....	12



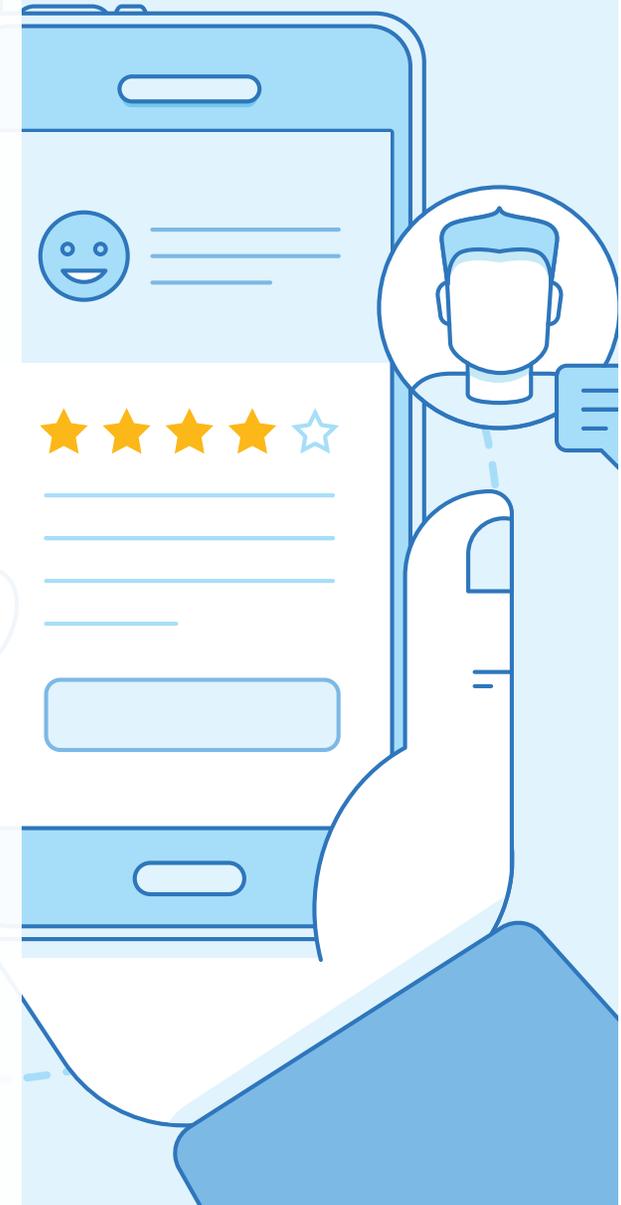
The Buzz You Can't Ignore

Why online reviews are now the name of the game

Humans are social creatures. Sharing our collective intelligence is our instinct. Word of mouth has always played a major role in shaping a business' reputation, bringing customers in the door (or driving them away) and driving business success. But the internet, social media and our current state of constant digital connectivity radically up the stakes. Customers post more reviews than ever—and these online ratings and reviews now frequently play the biggest role in where consumers choose to shop, eat, stay or get services. Businesses can't afford not to be tuned into the conversations happening online and on social media.

97% of consumers
find local businesses online.¹

Online reviews directly impact
TWO-THIRDS
of consumer decisions.²



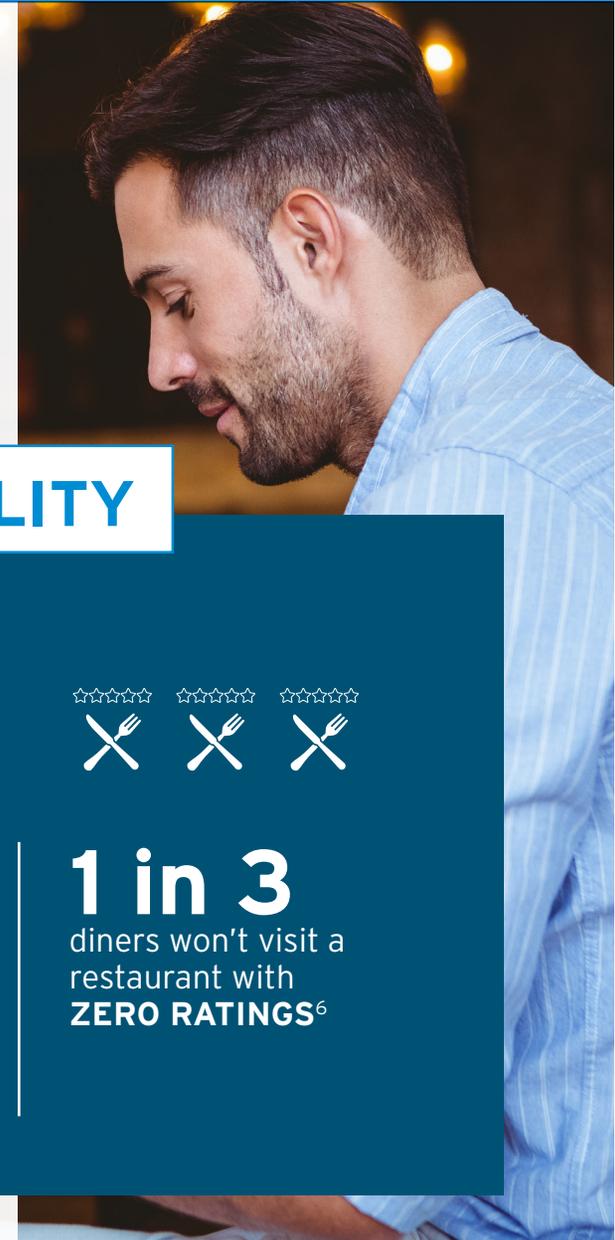
1 BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey, 2017

2 <https://moz.com/blog/new-data-reveals-67-of-consumers-are-influenced-by-online-reviews>

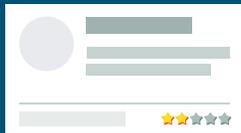


Everyone's a Critic—and a Health Inspector

An amazing **93 percent of Americans are active social media users**, and nearly as many actively post reviews to sites like TripAdvisor, Google and Yelp.¹ Armed with a smartphone (and its built-in camera), every customer is now an expert: a business analyst, dining critic, travel writer and health inspector all in one. They instantly push their judgments out to the entire world with a few taps of the finger. **In the last 60 seconds, consumers posted more than 26,000 new Yelp reviews.**¹



WE TRUST THE HIVE MENTALITY



HALF
of consumers won't visit a business with less than a **4-STAR RATING**³



Consumers read an average of **7 REVIEWS** before choosing a business⁵



1 in 2 travelers won't book a hotel with **ZERO RATINGS**⁴



1 in 3 diners won't visit a restaurant with **ZERO RATINGS**⁶

1 Mintel Research

2 Yelp

3 BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2017

4 BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2017

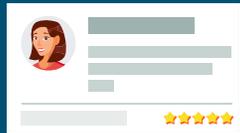
5 BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2017

6 BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2017



A Few Bad Apples Ruin the Whole Orchard

Business owners know that one small mistake or misstep can overshadow years of diligence and success. Nowhere is this more true than in the realm of digital reputation.



85%

of consumers trust **online reviews** as much as **personal recommendations**¹

“It takes **20 years** to build a reputation and **5 minutes** to ruin it.”

- Warren Buffet



1 BAD REVIEW turns away

2 of 10 potential customers²

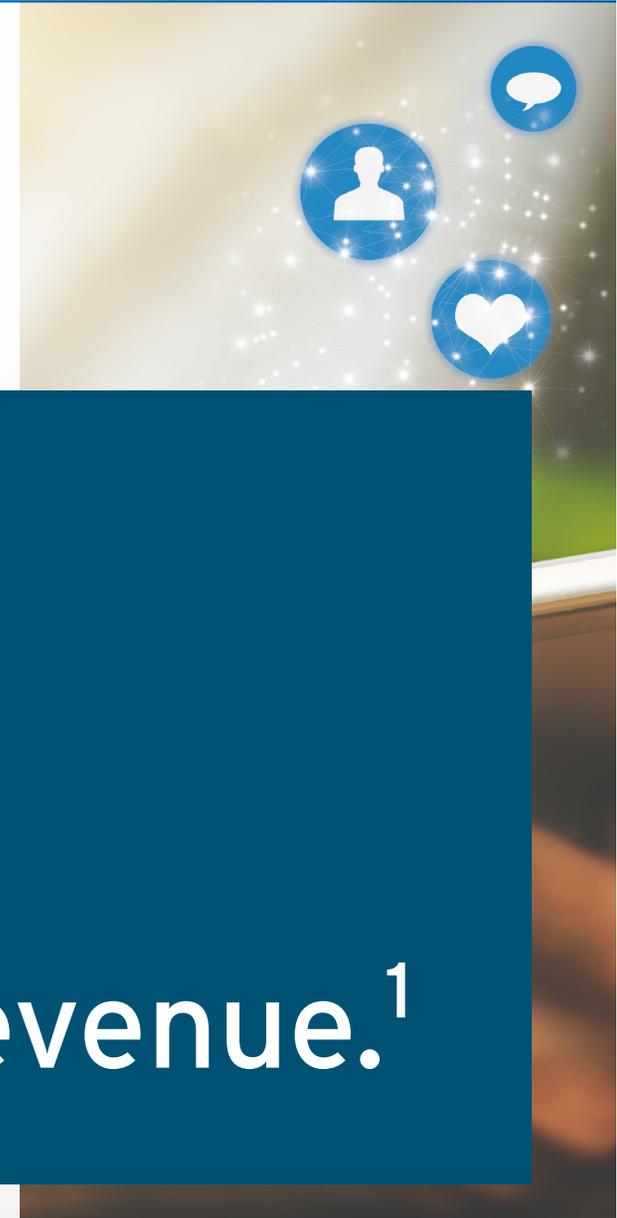


¹ BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2017

² <https://moz.com/blog/new-data-reveals-67-of-consumers-are-influenced-by-online-reviews>

One Star Away from Profitability

The good news is that research shows even small improvements in a business' online reviews and ratings can directly and significantly increase revenue. As margins tighten for businesses in all sectors, this makes "winning" the online review and social media game a huge opportunity.



Every

1-star increase

in a Yelp rating means a

5-9% increase in revenue.¹

LEAN ON PARTNERS TO SET THE STAGE FOR SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

With your primary goal of running a business, it's natural to focus on the core elements of your customer experience and digital reputation—and pay less attention to monotonous details like cleaning and sanitation. Fortunately, best-in-class vendor partners—including cleaning chemical vendors, pest management providers, and public health and food safety experts—can help alleviate the burden of managing these small details and proactively identify risk areas.

4 Ways Expert Vendor Partners Can Help

- ① Unbiased Evaluation
- ② Identify the Right Tools
- ③ Help Staff Work Smarter
- ④ Be Proactive





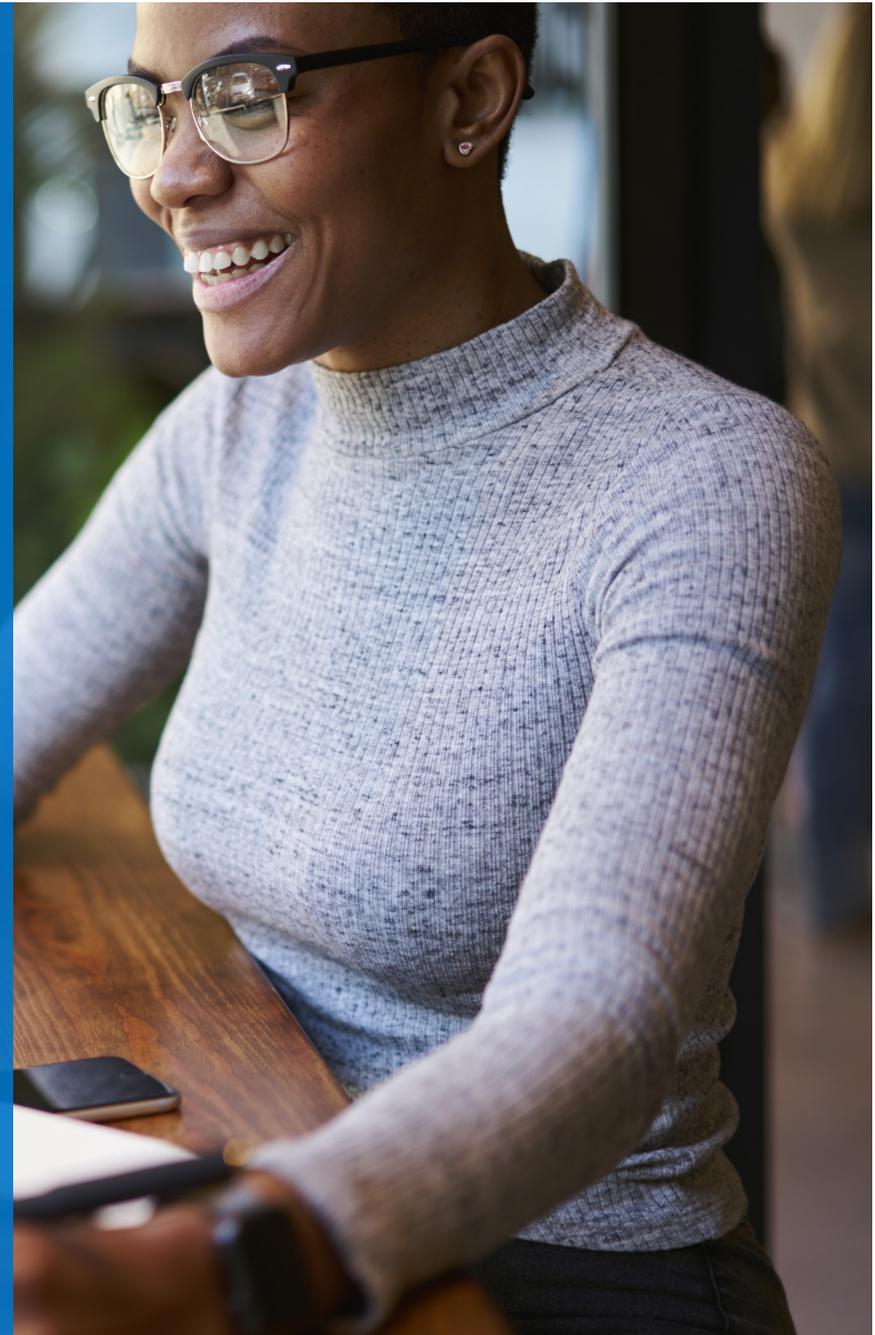
1. Unbiased Evaluation

Leading vendor partners go well beyond providing products, offering expertise and actionable insights to help you. Their expertise brings unique knowledge of common problem areas, hidden risks and proven best practices for your specific type of business. Your partner will come in and identify things you could be doing better—whether it's aesthetic cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation, pest prevention or food safety.



2. Identify the Right Tools

Little things make a big difference. It's a recurring theme in social media success stories. When it comes to keeping your space clean and healthy, sometimes you're doing everything you should—but you're not using the best products and tools for the job. Leading cleaning, sanitation, pest management and food safety partners can provide a full portfolio of best-in-class products and equipment—from multi-purpose cleaner/disinfectants, to high-efficiency dispensing solutions, to proven pest prevention tools like rodent stations and fly – that make your staff more effective and more efficient in keeping your space looking its very best.





3. Help Staff Work Smarter

Partner with vendors that offer on-going training and support to help your staff work smarter. Training your staff makes them feel empowered to do the job right each and every time. With the right products, tools and procedures, you can deliver consistently outstanding guest experiences and drive higher star ratings.

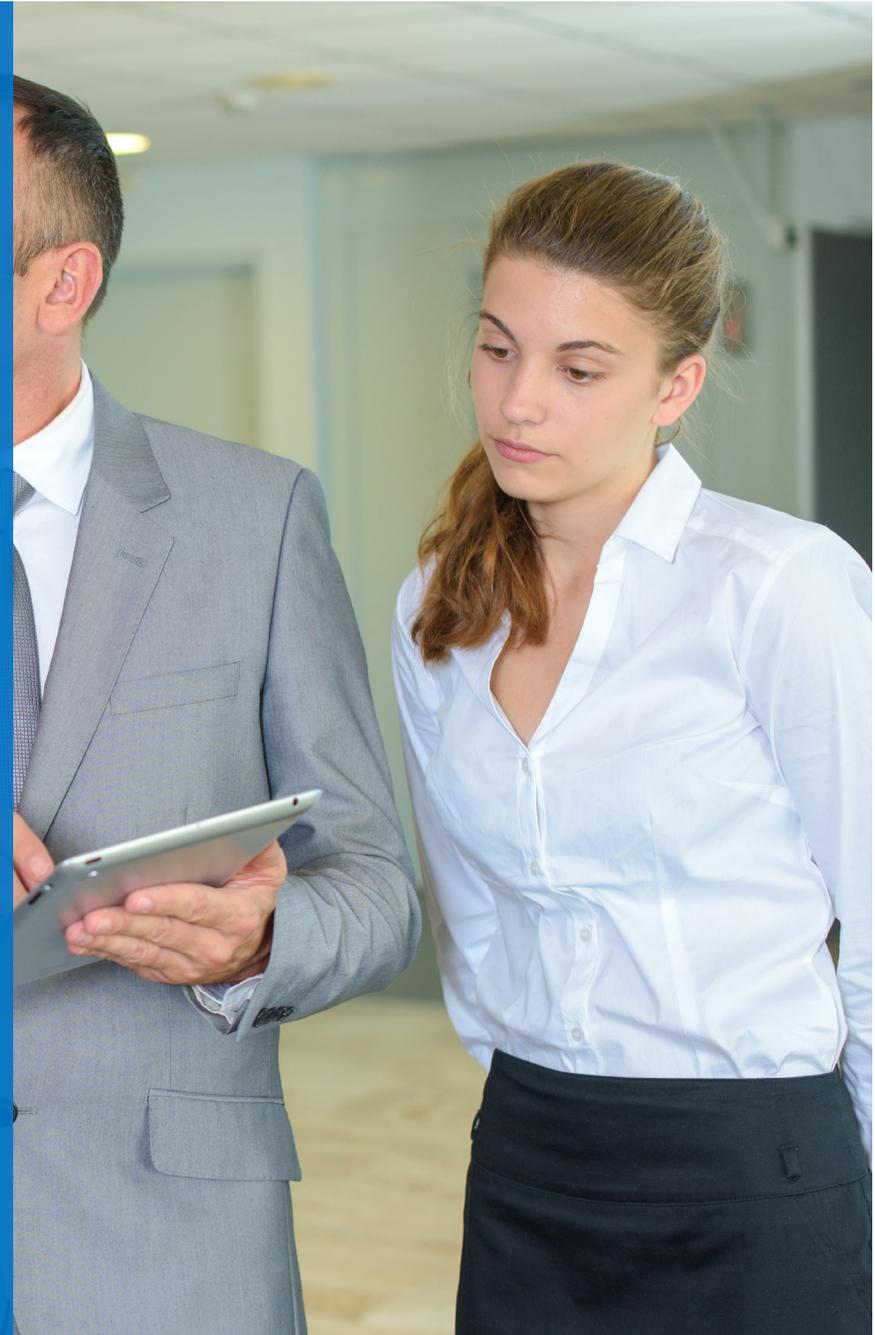


4. Be Proactive

The three most devastating things for a business' digital reputation:

1. A health issue or outbreak
2. A foodborne illness incident
3. A pest sighting

Savvy business owners and operators know that just because you're not having an issue today, doesn't mean you won't discover one tomorrow. Find ways to be proactive about cleaning and pest management. Partners that take a science-driven and risk-based approach give you greater value in delivering consistency and excellence in your guest experience..





The Ball is In Your Court

The growing world of online reviews and social media leaves many businesses feeling like they have no control over their reputation. They feel like they're spectators to a game, the outcome of which largely determines the success of their business. But the reality is that any organization can easily become active players in the ratings game. Better still, it doesn't take years of practice to start winning. By following the simple tips included in this playbook, hotels and restaurants can take both an offensive and defensive approach to the ratings game—actively influencing more positive reviews while mitigating the risk and damage from negative reviews. It takes time, sure—and no business can expect 100-percent 5-star reviews. But in a world of tight margins and intense competition, every single customer and every single star counts.

Next Step: Avoid the Biggest Social Media Pitfalls

You know that every detail counts, but what parts of your hotel or restaurant do your customers pay the most attention to?

Check out these two short tipbooks to see where you get the biggest “bang for your buck” in preventing customer complaints and negative reviews >



Restaurant & Food Service
THE 5 BIGGEST SOURCES OF
CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS



Hotel & Lodging
THE 5 BIGGEST SOCIAL MEDIA
PITFALLS...AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

We can help.

Every day, Ecolab helps businesses big and small create and maintain exceptional spaces that wow customers and keep them coming back. From proven products to unmatched expertise and service excellence, see what a powerful partnership with Ecolab can do for your business.

Social Media Checklist

One of the most challenging things about the ratings game is that it never ends. There's never a point where a business can look at its 5-star rating and think, "We've made it—now we don't have to worry." Maintaining your business' online reputation requires diligence. The following is a simple checklist that you can use as a guide today—and as a gut-check in the future. Revisit the checklist frequently to ensure you're doing all you can to ensure outstanding customer reviews.

YOUR SPACE

- Spot-clean "first impression" spaces at least 3x/day.**
 - Parking lot
 - Entryway/vestibule
 - Host stand/check-in desk
 - Lobby
 - Restrooms

- Re-evaluate your cleaning program—products and process.**
 - Define cleaning protocol for all spaces (HOW to clean).
 - Define cleaning products for all spaces (WHAT to use).
 - Define staff responsibilities for all cleaning tasks (WHO cleans—and WHEN).

- Implement/re-evaluate key customer experience programs:**
 - Food safety program: proper practices to prevent risk of foodborne illness
 - Public health program: proper cleaning & sanitation to prevent customer health issues
 - Pest management program: prevention & elimination for all relevant pests

About Ecolab

A trusted partner at nearly 3 million customer locations, Ecolab is the global leader in water, hygiene and energy technologies and services that protect people and vital resources. When you partner with Ecolab you can be confident you are getting comprehensive solutions, data-driven insights and on-site service to promote safe food, maintain clean environments, optimize water and energy use, and improve operational efficiencies for customers in the food and hospitality markets in more than 170 countries around the world.

Helping protect you top to bottom

From the basement to the rooftop and everywhere in between, we partner with you to offer services and solutions designed to help your property improve customer satisfaction and operational efficiency.

We understand the importance of keeping pests out of your business. Our program gives you comprehensive protection against your most common pests. Additionally, we have products that meet your needs – providing a superior clean for your customers that ensure the best reputation for your business. Our products help improve employee/customer hygiene practices, sanitize equipment used to prepare or serve food, and clean a variety of surfaces with a spot free shine.

It's about making an impact everywhere it counts. Drive customer satisfaction, safeguard your brand, and achieve your sustainability goals with our programs that keep your property clean, sanitized and pest-free. Together, we protect success.

For more information about how Ecolab can help your property, visit:
www.ecolab.com/pest

