

# A simple guide to showcasing your business online.





**Since 2004**, Yelp has been connecting people with great local businesses. Every month, Yelp welcomes millions of visitors from all over the world.

But, Yelp doesn't just serve consumers. Our mission is to help businesses harness the power of word-of-mouth marketing to connect with our community.

We created this ebook specifically for business owners and managers. We'll explore the value of user reviews and review websites, provide some best practices for social media, and share how to put your best foot forward when engaging with Yelp users.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### 04

---

BEST PRACTICES FOR PUTTING YOUR  
BUSINESS ONLINE

### 06

---

UNDERSTANDING USER REVIEW WEBSITES

### 09

---

CLAIMING YOUR BUSINESS ON YELP

### 11

---

PORTRAIT OF A "YELPER"

### 13

---

PERSONALIZING YOUR ONLINE STOREFRONT

### 15

---

MANAGING YOUR ONLINE REPUTATION

### 18

---

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT  
YELP REVIEWS

### 19

---

HOW TO GET YELP REVIEWS WITHOUT ASKING

### 20

---

YELP IN YOUR WORDS

# Best practices for putting your business online.

*Launching an online presence for your business doesn't have to be overwhelming. To help you get started, we put together the top 5 best practices for putting your business online.*

**01**

---

## **UPDATE YOUR BUSINESS INFORMATION**

When people search for your business, the information they find should be up-to-date and accurate. Ensure your address, phone number, and website are correct wherever your business is listed. You can use a website such as [Moz](#) to see how your business looks on different search engines and websites.



## 02

---

### BE CONSISTENT WITH YOUR NAME

If you haven't already, create a profile on major social media networks with your business name. You can check username availability with sites such as [Namechk](#) or [Namecheckr](#). Try to choose a consistent username (or handle) across social media sites so your customers can easily find you.

## 03

---

### LISTEN AND LEARN

You don't have to post a lot to be useful to your customers. Think of social media sites like Twitter and Facebook as an extension of your customer service department. Social media allows you to have conversations with your customers and provides them with another avenue to talk about your business.

## 04

---

### SET UP A GOOGLE ALERT

Google Alerts sends you an email notification when a particular search term or topic is found online. A barbershop in San Francisco could set up a Google Alert for "haircuts San Francisco" to give them an idea of what prospective customers are looking for and to stay on top of trends.

It's also a smart idea to create a Google Alert for your own business name, too. You'll be alerted to any mentions of your business so you're always on top of what's being said about your business online.

## 05

---

### CLAIM YOUR BUSINESS PAGE ON USER REVIEW SITES

Chances are, your business is already listed on a user review site. Most of these sites will allow you to claim your business page to make sure the information displayed is accurate and up-to-date. Some even offer free tools to help you make the most of your listing. **On average, businesses with complete profiles on Yelp receive 5x more page views.**<sup>1</sup>

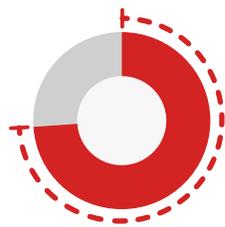
# Understanding user review websites.

Consumers want recommendations from people they can trust, so they increasingly rely on word-of-mouth to cut through the noise of the internet to find authentic answers to the problems they face daily.

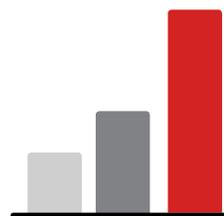
On review sites, users can search for, rate, and write reviews of local businesses. These reviews attract potential customers who are seeking the opinion of people like themselves.

User review websites amplify the authentic conversations people are having about your business. This authenticity is one of the unique ways that review sites influence purchase decisions. In fact, **review sites drive higher conversion than search engines or the leading social network.**<sup>2</sup>

Getting feedback is a tremendous opportunity to learn from actual customers about what you're doing right and how you can improve. Whether you run a hair salon, a Michelin star restaurant, or a clothing boutique, you can connect with new customers, engage with your loyal ones, and target new audiences—all through user review sites.



**74%**  
of the consumers  
searching online for  
a **local business**  
turn to review sites



**Review sites drive  
higher conversion**  
than search engines or  
the leading social network

## Before spending, Yelp users take action on your page:

**82%**  
read reviews

**57%**  
view hours

**50%**  
visit your website

**48%**  
view photos

## Consumers rank Yelp as the #1 review site for finding local businesses

 Most trusted

 Most useful for making a final purchase decision

 Most influential



**79%**

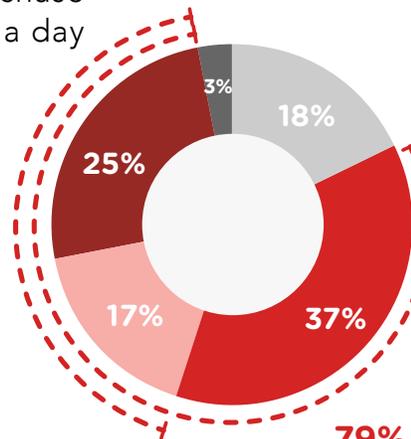
of Yelp users are looking for a business they can **visit multiple times**



**85%**

of Yelp users **share the businesses** they find on Yelp with friends

**42%** purchase within a day



-  within a few hours
-  within a day
-  within a week
-  within a month
-  longer than a month

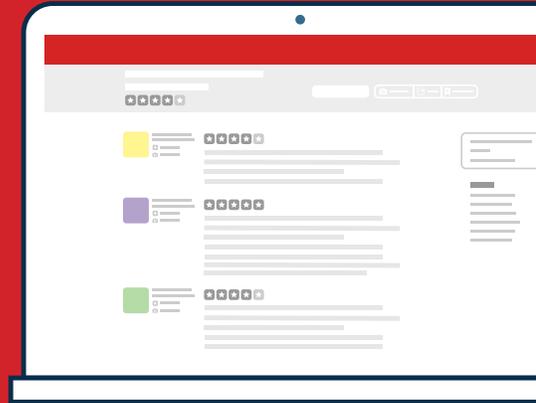
**79%** purchase within a week

Methodology: Based on online consumer survey fielded by Nielsen for Yelp, 9/2016. Total sample 2,007 adults 18+ in the US who searched for a local business online between 8/2016-9/2016. Online Review Site User sample=745: Reported use of a dedicated online review site, excluding search engines and social media sites. Yelp User sample=587: Reported use of Yelp to find local business (6/2016-9/2016). Data weighted demographically to be representative of US online population.

**nielsen**  
.....

## MYTHS ABOUT USER REVIEW SITES

User review sites are frequently misunderstood. Here are a few of the most common myths.



### PEOPLE ONLY WRITE REVIEWS WHEN THEY ARE ANGRY OR UPSET

On Yelp, 78% of the reviews on the site are 3 stars or higher. Consumers are more likely to share their satisfactory experiences with the community at large.

### PEOPLE ONLY WRITE ABOUT RESTAURANTS

Restaurants represent a small percentage of the reviewed businesses on Yelp. While restaurants are a popular category, there are millions of reviews for dentists, plumbers, hair stylists, and thousands of other kinds of businesses on Yelp.

### REVIEWERS ARE ANONYMOUS

Many consumers treat user review sites like another form of social media, and build real profiles that reflect their personalities. Yelp encourages reviewers to use their real name and photo. Additionally, many Yelp users (or “Yelpers”) connect with friends, comment on reviews, and make public check-ins at local businesses.

# Claiming your business on Yelp.

The best way to manage your business on Yelp is to claim your Yelp Business Page and create a business login at [biz.yelp.com](https://biz.yelp.com). It's free, and it's an excellent way to engage with the Yelp community. Claiming your Yelp Business Page also allows you to:

- 01 ADD PHOTOS
- 02 RECEIVE MESSAGES OR QUOTE REQUESTS FROM USERS
- 03 UPDATE IMPORTANT BUSINESS INFORMATION
- 04 RESPOND TO REVIEWS
- 05 TRACK ACTIVITY ON YOUR PAGE

**Get started now at [biz.yelp.com](https://biz.yelp.com)**



A light blue rounded rectangular form containing two input fields and a button. The first input field is labeled "Business name" and the second is labeled "City". To the right of the "City" field is a red button with a white magnifying glass icon and the text "Get Started".

One of the first things you'll see after you log in is the Activity Feed. You can see how Yelp users have

- 01 RECENTLY CALLED YOUR BUSINESS FROM A MOBILE PHONE
- 02 MAPPED DIRECTIONS TO YOUR LOCATION
- 03 CLICKED THROUGH TO YOUR WEBSITE

## Activity Feed



A man in his 30s from Chicago, IL **clicked on your website.**

Today, March 6, 2017, 7:23 pm via Yelp website



A Yelp user **got directions to your business.**

Today, March 6, 2017, 2:41 pm via Yelp



A Yelp user **checked in to your business.**

Today, March 6, 2017 8:15 pm via Yelp app



A woman in her 40s from Auburn Park, IL **clicked your Call to Action Button.**

Today, March 6, 2017, 11:23 am via Yelp iPhone app



A woman from Evanston, IL **wrote a 5 star review of your business**

Today, March 6, 9:05 am via Yelp website



A Yelp user from Chicago, IL **viewed the map for your business.**

Sunday, March 5, 2017, 10:32 am via Yelp



A Yelp user in Lake Forest, IL **had a 5 minute call with your business.**

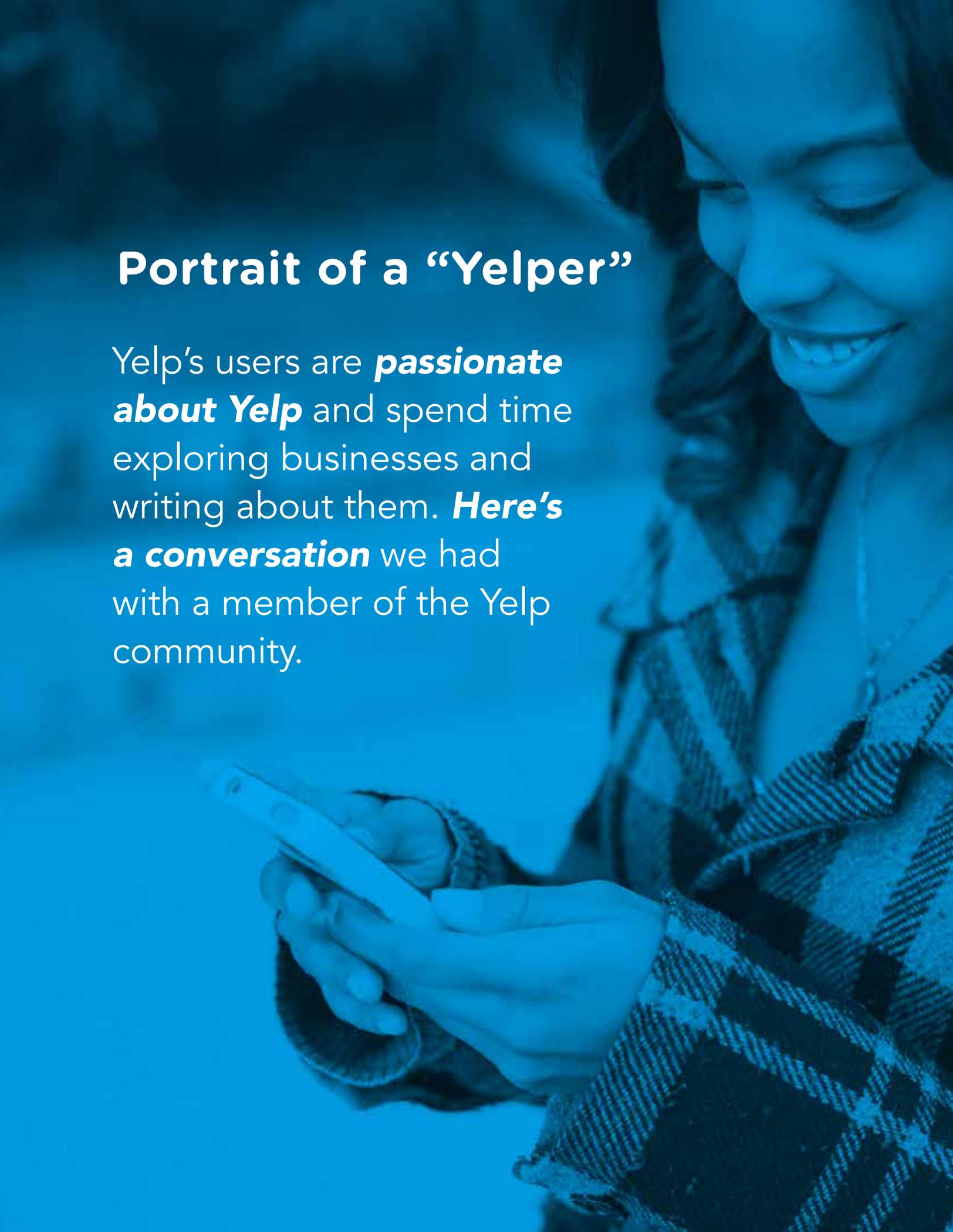
Sunday, March 5, 2017, 3:50 pm via Yelp website



A woman in her 30s from Chicago, IL **bookmarked your business.**

Saturday March 5, 2017, 4:11 pm via Yelp iPhone app

When a customer from Yelp calls your business from a smart phone, you'll see the actual time the call was made. You also see the user's current city, demographics, and profile information.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a plaid shirt, is smiling and looking down at her smartphone. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

## Portrait of a “Yelper”

Yelp’s users are ***passionate about Yelp*** and spend time exploring businesses and writing about them. ***Here’s a conversation*** we had with a member of the Yelp community.



## A CONVERSATION WITH NIKKI M

San Francisco, California

### ***TELL US ABOUT YOUR FIRST EXPERIENCE AS A YELPER***

Toward the end of 2005 a friend told me about a site where I could share my experiences at local businesses. I love writing and I love trying new places so it was right up my alley! I soon became hooked both on writing reviews and using Yelp to find new hot spots.

### ***YOU'RE A BUSY GAL, HOW DO YOU FIND THE TIME FOR THAT?***

I keep track of the places I want to review with bookmarks and check-ins. After I visit a place I want to review I add a "to review" bookmark so I don't forget. I also "check-in" because when I get back to my computer and pull up Yelp I'll get a reminder to write that review. Then I sit down and knock out a big batch of reviews all at once.

### ***WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR WHEN READING OTHER REVIEWS ON YELP?***

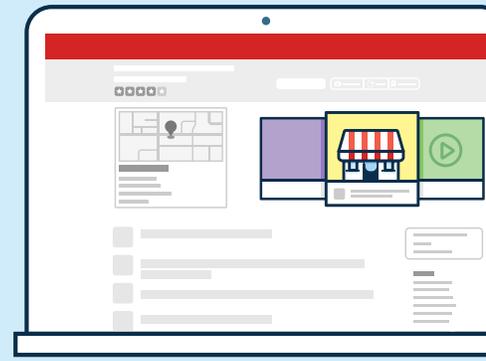
I look for the review highlights to figure out what people seem to like best. I more thoroughly read reviews from folks I trust or who seem to have the same taste as me. If someone is particularly negative I check out their other reviews. If they're constantly giving out only 1-stars I'm not as likely to trust their opinion and would look at a more fair and balanced reviewer.

### ***HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHEN TO LEAVE A REVIEW?***

Usually it's one of three things motivating me:

- The humblebrag where I get to tell my friends about a cool new spot or great experience
- A positive interaction with an employee or product that deserves recognition
- A not-so-great thing that could be easily corrected if it was brought to the business owner's attention. Often times a business owner will respond back with how they plan to correct the issue and I'll revisit them to see how they've improved. I get a better experience, they get a happier customer (and an updated review). Win-win.

# Personalizing your online storefront.



*A review website is like an online storefront, a place where consumers can get a feel for your business and see what sets you apart. Here are a few easy (and free) ways to personalize your Yelp Business Page:*

## **COMPLETE YOUR BUSINESS INFORMATION**

Add or update your hours, contact information, and address on your business page so consumers searching Yelp know how to get in touch.

## **ADD PHOTOS**

People shop with their eyes. Businesses with at least one photo receive an average of 12x the customer leads on Yelp as a business with no photos.<sup>3</sup> Uploading relevant photos gives people a reason to get excited about your business, and gives you an edge over the competition.

## **MANAGE YOUR MESSAGING REQUESTS**

Depending on your business category, users may see a prompt to request a quote, consultation, or other action from your business. Users who submit requests are motivated and interested, so responding quickly to messaging requests can lead to higher conversion.

## ADD SPECIALTIES

What sets your business apart from your competitors? Use the specialties section of your business page to showcase the type of goods or services you offer.

## ADD SPECIAL HOURS

Yelp's Special Hours tool allows you to adjust your hours for special occasions or holidays. So if you're opening early for holiday shopping, or taking a weekend off for a much needed vacation, let your customers know.

## ADD BUSINESS HISTORY

Everyone loves a good story, and Business History is the place to tell yours! Whether you run a family business that has been passed down from generation to generation, or you built the business from the ground up, share your story with users looking to shop locally.

**Check out these examples of businesses using the free Yelp tools at their disposal to make their business pages stand out.**



Beauty and Spa:  
[Glynn Jones Spa Lamar](#)



Bar/Nightlife:  
[Gilt Bar](#)



Restaurant:  
[Franklin Barbecue](#)



Florist:  
[Halsted Flowers](#)



Home Services:  
[Mr. Roofing](#)



Shopping:  
[Fuego 718](#)



Local Services:  
[Roscoe Village Bikes](#)

# Managing your online reputation.

It sounds obvious, but it's worth saying: you can't please all of your customers 100% of the time, no matter how hard you try.

While it's important to look for patterns (e.g., several people making similar comments about a particular customer service issue), you shouldn't read too much into any particular review. Readers tend to look for the broad consensus of a business' reviews rather than focus on any single review.

*Businesses that respond to reviews experience a 10% upgrade in average star rating.*

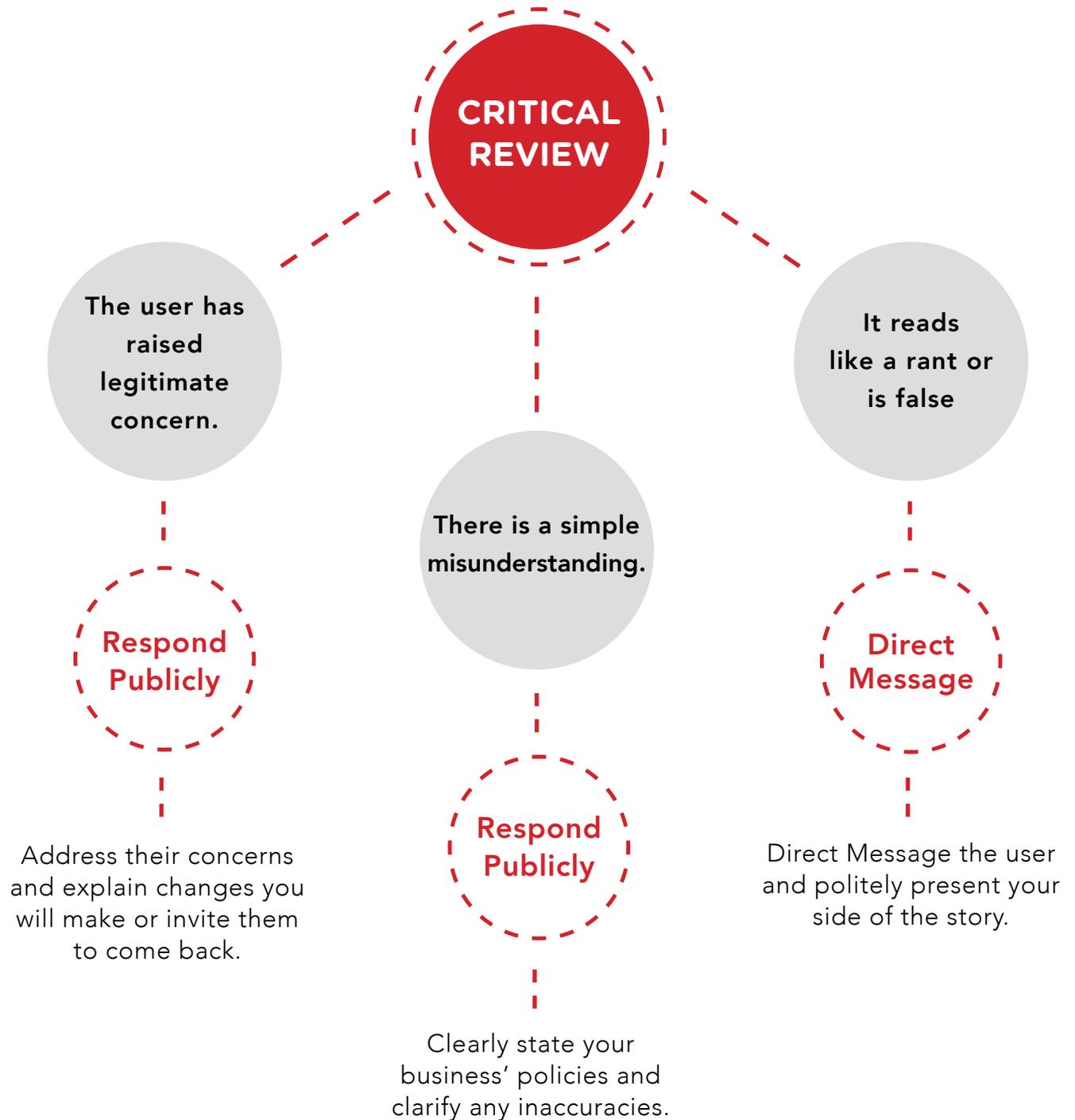
Responding to your online reviews is a great way to learn from and build goodwill with your most vocal customers. Yelp's free suite of tools for business owners will let you respond publicly or directly to a review. For additional tips on responding to reviews, check out the video below or head to the [Yelp Support Center](#).

## WHY YOU SHOULD RESPOND TO **REVIEWS**



You can respond to reviews with a direct message or a public comment. Read on to learn the best way to reach out based on the type of review they leave.

## HOW TO RESPOND TO A CRITICAL REVIEW



## 🚩 HOW TO RESPOND TO A POSITIVE REVIEW

### POSITIVE REVIEW

```
graph TD; A((POSITIVE REVIEW)) --> B((You can add to the user's review.)); A --> C((You can't add to the user's review.)); B --> D((Respond Publicly)); C --> E((Direct Message)); D --> F[Add color to a user's review or deliver a human thank you.]; E --> G[Simply thank the user via direct message.]
```

You can add  
to the  
user's review.

Respond  
Publicly

Add color to a user's  
review or deliver a human  
thank you.

You can't add  
to the  
user's review.

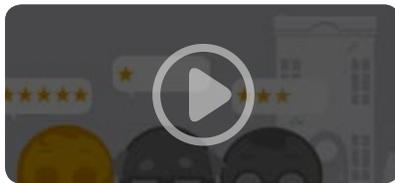
Direct  
Message

Simply thank the user  
via direct message.

# Frequently asked questions about Yelp reviews.

## WHAT IS THE RECOMMENDATION SOFTWARE?

We use automated software to recommend reviews from the Yelp community. The software looks at dozens of different signals, including measures of quality, reliability, and activity on Yelp. On average, our software recommends about three quarters of the reviews that are submitted to the site.



[Learn more about the Yelp recommendation software.](#)

## WHY ARE SOME REVIEWS NOT RECOMMENDED?

There are a number of reasons why a review might not be recommended.

Some of these reviews are fakes (like several reviews that originate from the same computer) and some suggest a bias (like ones written by a friend of the business owner), but many are real reviews from real customers who we just don't know much about and therefore can't recommend.

Reviews that are not recommended are not deleted from the site; customers can access them by clicking on the "not currently recommended" section below the last recommended review on your business page.

## SHOULD I ASK MY CUSTOMERS FOR REVIEWS?

This might surprise you but no, you shouldn't ask your customers to post reviews on Yelp.

Consumers trust Yelp because the reviews and content are authentic experiences. We would much rather hear from members of the Yelp community who are inspired to talk about their experiences without a business owner's encouragement.

# How to get Yelp reviews without asking.

**Your best bet to get high quality and unbiased reviews** about your business is to provide a memorable and amazing customer experience—not by asking your customers to post on Yelp. Here are some ways to encourage reviews for your business without specifically asking anyone to write a review:

## 01

---

### REMIND THEM YOU'RE ON YELP

Request a free "[Find Us On Yelp](#)" sticker to display on your door, window or vehicle. This shows that you value customer feedback.

## 02

---

### SET UP A CHECK-IN OFFER

Check-in offers make your business look more appealing to a customer searching on Yelp. Users are prompted to review businesses they've visited online or checked into. Watch this [video](#) to learn more.

## 03

---

### PUT A LINK TO YELP ON YOUR WEBSITE

You can put a [badge and link](#) to your Yelp listing on your own website. We provide the code; you just need to copy and paste it. The review averages and counts even update automatically as new reviews come in!

## 04

---

### ENGAGE WITH YELPERS

Having an active profile shows customers that you want to hear about their experience with your business. You can do this by responding to reviews and messaging requests, verifying your business information, and displaying your specialties. If your hours are different for holidays or special occasions, let Yelpers know by using the "Special Hours" feature.

*Getting great reviews online starts with giving great service offline. Keep doing what you do best and the reviews will come organically.*

# Yelp in your words.

**People share their stories** about local independent heroes every day on Yelp, so we asked a couple of fantastic independent business owners to share theirs. Check out these incredible stories below to get an inside look at how some of the best businesses on Yelp were built.

## PEACHES SMOKEHOUSE, LOS ANGELES, CA



"We regularly have customers come to our truck because they saw a photo on Yelp."

—Brenda B

## PRESS CLUB, SAN FRANCISCO, CA



"Most people use Yelp as their primary source of information."

—Andrew C

## THE TULSA RIB COMPANY, ORANGE, CA



"Yelp revolutionized our advertising program."

—Liz P

**SEASONED VEGAN, NEW YORK, NY**



"Yelp is how a lot of people with special diets find out about us."

—Brenda B

**SALON D'SHAYN, PHOENIX, AZ**



"Yelp allows consumers to make an educated decision on how to spend their money."

—D'Lisa S

**CALOZZI'S CHEESESTEAKS, SEATTLE, WA**



"Seeing positive feedback was definitely a motivating factor."

—Al C

Now that you know the ins and outs of showcasing your business online, you're ready to join the millions of business owners who have claimed their Yelp Business Page. For more resources on how to use Yelp for your business, check out the [Yelp for Business Blog](#) or attend an upcoming [webinar](#). You can also send an email to [business@yelp.com](mailto:business@yelp.com) or call (877) 767-9357 to talk to a representative. We're happy to help!

See you on

