

The Best Candidates for Reputation Management Are Those Who Don't "Need" It



When agencies pitch “reputation management,” they’re typically pitching “crisis management.” The reality is that most businesses aren’t in a reputation crisis, but they can certainly benefit from building brand reputation, winning more customer reviews, and leveraging the marketing value of third-party review sites like Google and Yelp.

Ironically, the value proposition of these activities resonates most with those who are *already doing them*. So why would you try to sell this kind of service to a customer who doesn’t need it? Isn’t that a bit like “selling ice to an Eskimo”?

In this article, we've rounded up some expert advice, and it comes down to helping customer-centric businesses be more efficient and successful at leveraging the "voice" of their customers by helping them...

- Save Time and Resources Through Automation
- Realize SEO Benefits From Reviews and Review Site Listings
- Utilize Review Content for Marketing and SEO
- Diversify Attention to Review Sites to Increase Customers
- Improve Visibility With Optimized Review Site Listings

Just ask your clients who are already doing well with online reviews: *Are they using automated software to ask for and monitor their online reviews? Are they covering both major and niche review sites? Are they leveraging reviews as content for their website and social media profiles? Are they able to track and respond to reviews efficiently?*

I think you'll find that you can help them quite a bit. Learn more below how the experts are doing it.

Save Time and Resources

Question to ask:

How many hours per week do your employees spend on reputation management?

Reputation Management is a significant time investment, even if your clients are already using automation software. When I reached out to a variety of agencies and marketers, saving time was many of their greatest value proposition for clients.

Justin Herring Head of Digital Marketing for [Yeah! Local](#) explains the value his agency provides when selling to new reputation management clients:

“The biggest selling point for us is setting up an automated system. We’ll set it up to send out an email to a client’s customer every time they visit or purchase something. We make sure to ask them to review on the right review sites. Sending these emails also combats negative reviews by letting our clients receive an alert and respond to the customer quickly, defusing an unpleasant situation.”

~ Justin Herring - Head of Digital Marketing for Yeah! Local

Cliff Robbins Co-Founder & CEO of [Cohlab](#) takes the importance of automation software a step further. Your agency can provide value even if they already have software in place.

“When we pitch Cohlab.Reviews to companies, we’ve found that firms may have a basic policy in place, yet they don’t have any type of automation. We pitch to them that having management software is key

to managing their reviews. Then to take it a step further, we notice that even when there is management in place most firms don't use it. They

have 50 other things that they need to manage (like their business) or getting materials for sales and tend to drop the entire reputation piece.

If they are not getting, at a bare minimum, 1-2 reviews a month, then something is wrong. This type of approach normally hits home or they call back 3 months later."

~ Cliff Robbins - Co-Founder & CEO of Cohlab

By providing reputation management services, your client can delegate other responsibilities to their marketing employees and sleep well knowing that your agency is handling any required heavy lifting.

Benefits of Increasing the Frequency of Reviews

Question to ask:

How often does your business receive online reviews?

Remember that time that Lucy was working with chocolate on the assembly line? All of a sudden the belt was accelerated, and Lucy wasn't prepared.

When new reviews start coming in more frequently, you don't want to end up unprepared like Lucy.



Aside from being prepared for an influx of reviews, review frequency is important for your client's business to rank high on review sites, but Peter Bissette, Chief Reviews Officer of [Review Me Marketing](#), breaks it down really well:

“Even when you have good reviews in the past about your company, your product, your service or you, how does the potential customer know that you are still that good?”

Yes you were clearly good at some point in time. However, what have you done lately? Are you still performing today like you were back when you received that review.

Long term thinking is very important in this space. Capturing regular reviews is critically important to the long term success of what your potential customers think about you."

~ Peter Bissette - Chief Reviews Officer of Review Me Marketing

Phil Singleton Founder & CEO of [Kansas City SEO](#) and [Kansas City Web Design](#) explains how once that frequency picks up, you have to be prepared:

"If you already have a good online reputation, you know how beneficial it is for Google rankings and conversion optimization. You must protect and preserve this asset.

The more successful you are online and the more your business grows as a result, the more likely you are to accumulate negative reviews.

This is why companies with good online reputation need professional reputation management services to help preserve and continually improve their online reputation – because the stakes get higher and they have more to lose."

~ Phil Singleton - Founder & CEO of Kansas City SEO and Kansas City Web Design

SEO Benefits of Review Content

Question to ask:

How are you using your reviews to benefit the SEO of your website?

Having frequent incoming reviews can be a boon for your content marketing strategy. Each review offers the opportunity to add fresh content to your own website and online assets.

Using a widget for streaming review content on your client's website that is presented in structured data markup and is indexed by Google will help boost your SEO. This is an underused white hat SEO practice.

And as part of our Agency plan, [Grade.us](#) offers a [widget](#) that highlights these capabilities. The stream assembles genuinely *original* content, re-publishing only snippets of each review pulled from disparate sources. In fact, we have not seen it penalized, and it can often yield benefits like rich-snippet stars in the SERPs.

In fact, when review site users are searching for a product or service, the review sites value the reviewers' keyword use as well.

So if your potential clients are not [prompting their customers to be specific](#), they could be missing out on valuable review content that will rank them higher on those review sites.

Garry Meldrum, Founder of [Business Value Creation](#), reveals how he helps his clients use their reviews for marketing:

“Which is more valuable online?

My telling the world what a great business I have and why, or customers telling the world how great a business I have with specific services or products mentioned.

A business has got to have a standard operating procedure for soliciting reviews and to know overnight when a new review comes in, so that review might be used as part of a case study on the website or in social media.”

~Garry Meldrum - Founder of Business Value Creation

Essmat Barazi, CEO of [Unique Dental Marketing](#), also sees the importance in using reviews as content, but acknowledges the challenges of manually applying them to websites:

“Manually transferring reviews that you have from various review websites to your personal website is inefficient and loses authenticity. Having an automated review streaming service to showcase your many verified 3rd party reviews directly onto your website saves you time and gives your reputation instant credibility.”

~Essmat Barazi, CEO of Unique Dental Marketing

Increase Customers by Diversifying Review Sites

Question to ask:

On which review sites do you currently have a company listing?

Some clients may think that, because their Yelp listing is hopping, that's all they need to have a great online reputation.

However, we know that if they're only relying on one review site, they're missing out. They're limiting their own visibility and not getting their business in front of more eyeballs. They may not even know about the niche sites in their own industry.

Maria Elena Duron, Strategist and Coach of [Know Like + Ignite](#), explains the perspective of her clients and how she helps:

"Clients typically know one or two sites where there's a lot of reviews already being logged or where they've heard about people mentioning them. While other owners are not always aware that there's anywhere else reviews might show up, other than their Facebook page. It's important to meet customers where they're at and on the sites that they spend time on and that they look to for recommendations and reviews. Often those places are not the same places that are typically on a busy business owners radar.

Business owners are busy focused at being experts on their business and delivering the best customer experience. They are already having

to be the 'butcher, baker, candlestick maker' in their business. It's helpful when they can harness the expertise of someone else."

~ Maria Elena Duron - Strategist and Coach of Know Like + Ignite

Darren Clifford, President and Co-Founder of [Locallogy](#), helps his clients by getting them diversified on the appropriate review sites:

"We include easy-to-follow instructions and direct them to review websites that will benefit your specific business."

~ Darren Clifford - President and Co-Founder of Locallogy

SEO Benefits of Optimizing Review Site Listings

Question to ask:

Do you feel like your review listings are fully completed and what type of keyword research did you do to complete them?

Asking clients about keyword research for their online review listings might evoke a deer in headlights moment. Remember that online review sites are basically social search engines that crawl your listing and reviews for similar factors as major search engines.

By optimizing your client's review site listings with relevant keywords, their business will appear higher in search results both on review sites and big search engines. In fact, with Google's Panda algorithm update, review content is increasingly important for search engines, both generally and locally.

Optimizing the listing isn't limited to keywords though.

Say your potential client created a great listing. If their business information has changed, but has not been updated on their listings, search engines penalize the business in their rankings. If their business is listed on many directories and review sites, it can be cumbersome to make business info changes.

When the client doesn't have a listing review process in place, it's hard for them to keep track of their online reputation. This is where your agency can come in and save the day. Your agency's expertise in optimizing their listing will pay dividends for the client's SEO.

Takeaways

Your clients may think that they don't need professional reputation management services, due to a positive online reputation, but that shouldn't inhibit your team from pitching the increased value that your agency offers.

- Time saved, money saved, resources saved.
- By explaining the importance of frequent incoming reviews, you'll impress upon your prospects how your ongoing efforts will help their reputation and SEO with fresh content.
- Put their review content to good use. Explain how they can make the most of their reviews by streaming them to their website (boosting SEO), as well as using them in advertising and user generated marketing campaigns.
- The more review sites and directories your prospects are on, the more visibility they'll have to their targeted audience.
- Optimizing their listing with keywords and having someone maintain those listings over time to include correct business info will aid in visibility.

Next time a prospect tells you that they don't need your agency's reputation management services, you'll feel prepared to explain the value of having a pro in their corner and how it will be worth their money.