

# DESTINATION GOLDCOAST.

## HOW TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO ONLINE REVIEWS

### WHICH REVIEWS SHOULD I RESPOND TO?

Industry best practice suggests a reply to every negative review as well as a selection of positive reviews. This might turn out to be one positive each week for a business receiving only a handful of reviews. For larger companies, aim to respond to at least 10-25% of positive reviews and base your selection on those reviews where you can leverage further opportunities.

### DEALING WITH A POSITIVE REVIEW

When replying to a positive review be sure to take into account your key markets and demographics. Consider which market is spending the most money with your business or which market is likely to visit again. By identifying these demographics, you can highlight components of your business that are likely to interest new buyers.

#### The Review

“We love Park Beach shopping Centre! We have been visiting for over 25 years and love eating, relaxing and shopping here every year on our Gold Coast holiday! You can get everything you need here and more!” Jenni

#### A Poor Response

“Hi, thanks for your great review, we love it! Hope to see you again soon!” Centre Management

#### A Good Response

Hi Jenni, thank you for your kind review. It pleases me to hear about your positive experience at the centre and we must agree, that the nature of our centre is quite a relaxing experience. At Park Beach Shopping Centre we value our customers. We will have our new eatery opening in July which I am sure you will enjoy. Please come back and visit us soon.” Lisa, Park Beach Shopping Centre

### DEALING WITH A NEGATIVE REVIEW

When responding to a negative review it is important to remove your emotions from the response. Keep calm and do your best to resolve the issue. Remember, you are not only responding to the reviewer but to a host of potential customers also reading the review and your response to it.

#### The Review

“The worst customer service on the planet, parked at this shopping centre and left at 5 to 9pm as after 9pm they charge you. Got to an exit which already had a gate in front of it. By the time I got to the after hour exit it was just after 9pm and they wanted to charge me. I contacted them and explained. The lady just keeps reading the same answers and did not communicate at all (it might have been a robot thinking about it now). Won’t be going back.” Patrick

#### A Poor Response

“Hi, thanks for your feedback. Unfortunately, you should have observed the parking signs clearly outlining that you must pay for parking after 9pm. Please observe these upon entering our shopping centre next time you visit us. Thank you.” Centre Management

#### A Good Response

“Hi Patrick, thank you for taking the time to inform us of your experience at the centre. We pride ourselves on our great customer service and assure you that responses from our parking attendants are being actioned, based on your experience and feedback. We are working to improve our responses provided to visitors of the shopping centre and we hope to see you back at the centre again soon. Thank you for bringing this to our attention Patrick, it helps us to improve.” Mark, Park Beach Shopping Centre



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### 1. DON'T RUSH

Demonstrate the same thoughtfulness, attention to detail and professionalism that you would provide face-to-face.

### 2. BE BRIEF

Focus on the key issues pertinent to the review and avoid going off on a tangent. Consumers want real, authentic and genuine responses that get to the heart of the issue/concern or experience they have received.

### 3. BE CONVERSATIONAL

Communicate with your consumers as you would in-person. Avoid “corporate speak”, stiff formality and marketing babble. Personalise the response and include your name and business at the end of the review.

### 4. SHOW EMPATHY

Speak in a genuine manner to build trust and show your understanding. Personally acknowledge the reviewer. Empathetic communication demonstrates your desire to acknowledge and act on any issues raised in the review. Don't ever be defensive or patronising.

### 5. AVOID REPETITION

Take a fresh approach to each response relayed to the person writing a review. Consumers know when a reply has been taken from a pre-planned list of responses. Address each concern individually and assess each response based on the level of concern.

### 6. TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY

Don't just respond to a review. Take the opportunity to upsell the positives of your business, introduce something new that is being developed or reference a different aspect of the business. For a negative review, do your best to solve the problem. Not only does resolving the issue make that customer happier, other potential customers will see how important satisfying your customers is to your business.

#### Words to use...

- Can
- Will
- Assure you
- We strive to
- We pride ourselves on
- Feedback
- Experience
- Appreciate
- Sincere
- Rest assured

#### Words to avoid...

- Won't
- Shouldn't
- It's against our policy
- Unfortunately
- Problems
- Concerns
- Disappointed
- Unacceptable
- Sorry
- But