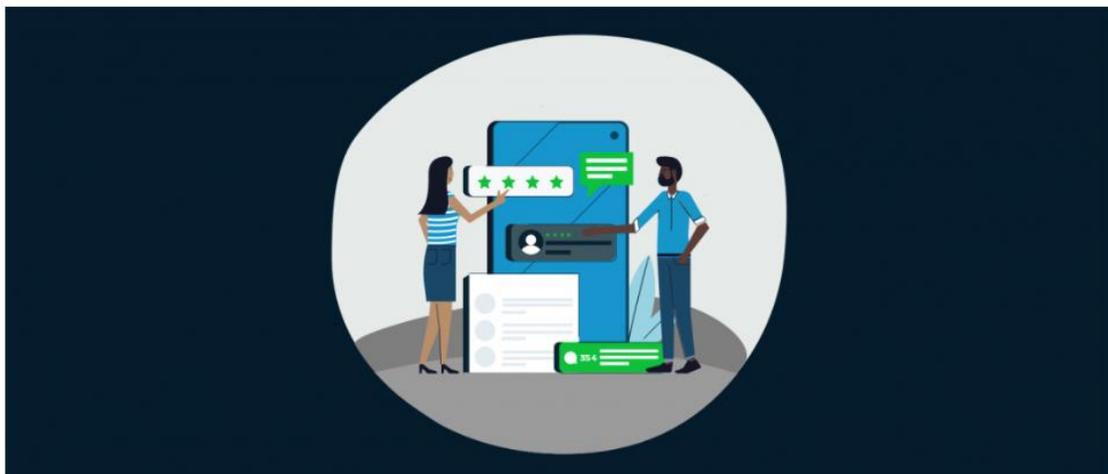


Ghostwritten blog post for field service management software company Dispatch



Five Tips for Handling Negative Customer Reviews

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Negative customer reviews can make any service-oriented brand sweat. Handle them wrong and you might find your business going viral—in a bad way.

That kind of discord can have a serious impact on your brand reputation, not to mention your bottom line. HubSpot reporting on customer service shows that it takes [12 positive](#) customer experiences to make up for just one negative experience.

So You Got a Poor Review: Now What?

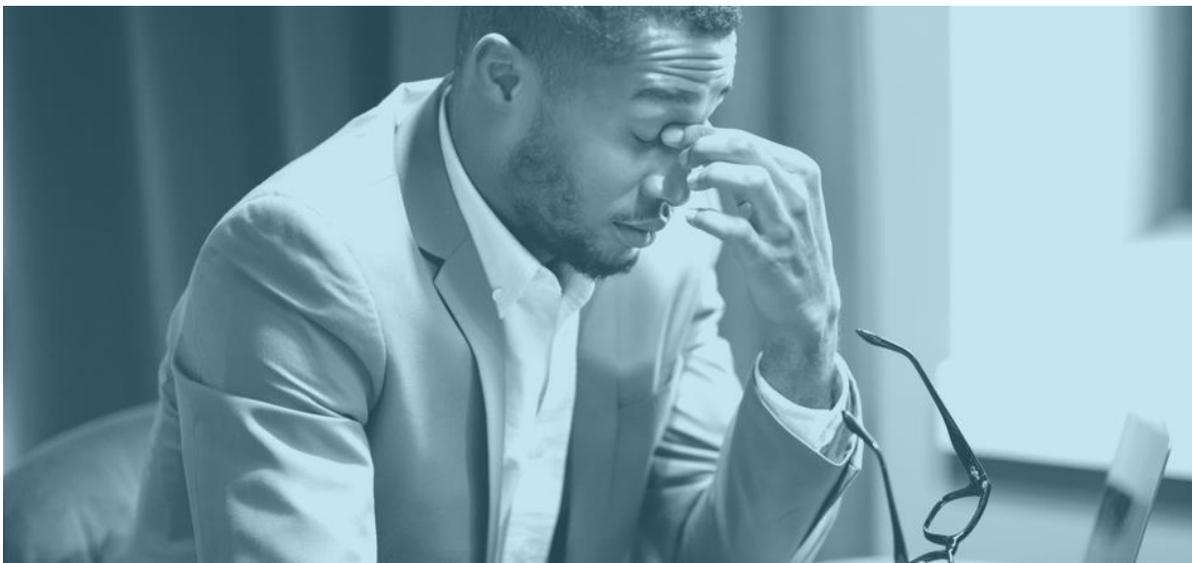
Turning someone who has left a negative review into a satisfied customer may sound like magic, but it isn't. It just takes a few important steps:

1. **Respond quickly.** This helps the customer feel heard.
2. **Offer a solution.** Don't get into online debates with customers.
3. **Show appreciation.** An apology isn't enough. Your customer wants to feel valued.
4. **Follow up with your customer.** Make sure they're satisfied with the resolution of their complaint.
5. **Track customer complaints.** This will help you spot potential problem areas so you can prevent similar issues for future customers.

Here's how to keep complaints from turning into disasters using stellar customer support:

Customer Support Tip #1: Respond Quickly

Today's fast-paced world requires fast-paced customer support. If someone has left a bad review, the sooner you know about it, the sooner you can address it. The sooner you address it, the more likely the customer will feel heard, which goes a long way toward helping smooth ruffled feathers.



Responding promptly to negative feedback does more than just appease one disgruntled customer. People tend to tell everyone they know when they've had a bad experience with a company—and the longer you wait to respond to an unhappy customer, the more opportunity they have to tell their friends, family, and social media all about it. And the whole time, that customer is getting more upset by your radio silence. This means responding quickly can stop a wave of negativity before it starts.

Customer Support Tip #2: Offer a Solution

Upset customers may say all kinds of negative things about your business in their review—even things that aren't true or are only partly true. Resist the temptation to rush in and defend your brand or your service provider. Instead of meeting frustration with more frustration, focus on resolving the problem by finding a solution.

[Check your service provider's notes](#) for why things broke down with this customer. Then look to the review to see what you can do to make things right; the customer may describe what result they're looking for, making your job easier.

If they don't, leave a reply asking them to provide further information on the review site, or to get in touch with your company directly. And if they ask for something you can't give, look for an alternative solution. Even if it's not exactly what the customer wants, it may satisfy them that you're trying to fix the issue.

Above all, don't make promises you can't keep, and don't leave a public reply with a solution for one customer that you're not willing to provide for all customers. From your customer's point of view, the problem they're steamed about might already be a case of over-promising and under-delivering, so you don't want to cement that image of your company in their mind. Whatever solutions you offer, make sure you can deliver on them—for *everyone* if yours is a public response!

Customer Support Tip #3: Show Appreciation

New Voice Media says the number one reason customers switch to a new brand is that [they feel underappreciated](#). And for many customers, the way you handle their complaints has a huge impact on whether they feel valued—or ignored.

Don't just say, "I'm sorry" to a customer who has left a bad review. Use your apology as another chance to show you understand their issue, and to show appreciation for their business. Here's a better way to apologize: "I'm sorry you were inconvenienced when the service provider didn't arrive as scheduled. Thank you for giving me a chance to come up with a solution for you."

Customer Support Tip #4: Follow Up

Remember how important it is to make your customers feel appreciated? One way to do that is to follow up with them a day or two after you've responded to their review to make sure they're still satisfied with the solution you offered (and that the solution has been delivered).

This extra step shows your customer you haven't washed your hands of them as soon as you responded to their complaint. Even those who weren't entirely satisfied with the solution you were able to offer may think of you more charitably if you show you're still thinking of their experience.



Customer Support Tip #5: Track Complaints

To reduce the number of negative reviews you receive, you need to address problems before they become widespread. Document every customer complaint you receive and compile that data so you can look for patterns and trouble spots.

For example, if a certain part of the buying process tends to result in more customer complaints than others, look for ways to streamline the process or make it easier for customers to navigate. Or maybe your customers have trouble communicating with your third-party service providers. [Facilitate that communication](#) so your providers can better serve customers.

Negative customer feedback is one of the more stressful parts of running a business. But with the right tools and a customer service-oriented attitude, you can resolve those complaints—and keep your customers from searching for a new brand.