



Maximize the Power of Client Reviews

Consumers are seeing stars these days when it comes to choosing a business or product. But it's not A-list celebrity endorsements they're seeing; it's star ratings given by their fellow consumers.

Thanks to sites like Amazon® and eBay®, most people won't even consider a non-rated item for purchase. And now reviews are also becoming more important for brick and mortar businesses. A recent [survey found that 91 percent of consumers](#) read reviews to determine the quality of a local business.¹

While these ratings may have started with contractors and restaurants, they are now used by every type of business, including law firms. Client reviews are a tremendous way to not only get customers but also to improve your service.

Here are a few things to consider as you decide when, where and how to dip your toe into the client review waters.

Familiarize yourself with rules related to client reviews.

Although many industries don't regulate client reviews, the legal industry does. Each attorney/firm is responsible for ensuring the use of ratings and information provided in client feedback is compliant with the ethics rules effective in its state. These rules can be complex and vary from state to state. Reach out to your local bar association to learn the most recent ethics and advertising rules related to usage of client feedback and ratings.

Collect honest reviews.

You're in the business of helping people with complex and highly emotional legal matters. It's a given that, in addition to your positive reviews, you'll have a more critical review

now and then. As long as these reviews are exceptions to the rule, don't worry too much about them. Instead, focus on amassing as many positive reviews as you can and let your stellar service do the talking.

Think before responding to reviews.

If you do receive a critical review, don't respond to it right away. It's human nature to defend ourselves when we feel we're being attacked. But take a step back and look at how you want to respond from a customer service perspective. Is the issue being raised something that could be improved or changed? If so, make the change and let the reviewers know their feedback is appreciated and you have worked to fix the issue. If not, respond to them with a sincere apology. Many times, customers will reply in a positive manner or even alter their initial comments.

Note: Use your discretion when replying publicly to reviews, but never respond with any confidential information to support your reply.

Consider that some may be better handled by contacting the reviewer privately, if possible.

Diversify options for where clients can share reviews.

Different sites appeal to different people, so expanding your business and customer base requires the broadest reach. There are so many effective review sites; register on one site and then add other sites as you become more comfortable. One way to keep track of multiple sites is to set up a schedule. Check reviews on certain sites the same day of each week and things become more manageable. (This is a nice tip for updating social media sites, too!)



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Ready to get started?

Here are several traditional sites for attorneys that are very effective:

- [Avvo.com®](#)
- [BestLawyers.com](#)
- [LawyerReviews.com](#)
- [Lawyers.com](#)
- [SuperLawyers.com](#)
- [Martindale.com](#)

Most potential clients may not start their review search with these sites, though, so be sure to use some non-traditional sites like:

- [Yelp®](#)
- [Google Reviews](#)
- [Yahoo! Local Listings](#)
- [Angie's List](#)

In some cases, you may be the ONLY attorney in your area to use one of these sites. Can you think of a better way to stand out?

In addition to review sites, consider using social media sites like Facebook®, LinkedIn® and Twitter®. Many consumers use social media to connect with businesses and share reviews and comments. Before using social media sites for your business, be sure to check your state ethics rules to ensure you are in compliance. Your local bar association may also have social media guidelines to follow.

And, last but not least, don't forget to use your own business's website. In accordance with your state ethics rules, install a review option or create a reviews page on the site that showcases reviews from other sites.



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About the Author

Will Petersen oversees attorney advocates at ARAG®. He also develops and maintains relationships with attorneys through ongoing education, process enhancements and program offerings to help them manage their business.

Will received a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications and broadcasting from Brown College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Will is also licensed in Property & Casualty Insurance in Iowa.

1 "Local Consumer Review Survey 2016." BrightLight. September 2016. <https://www.brightlocal.com/learn/local-consumer-review-survey/>



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