Google Maps Lets Users Post Reviews With Nicknames via @sejournal, @MattGSouthern

Google Maps now lets users leave business reviews under a custom nickname instead of their real name. The feature is part of a four-feature Maps update and is rolling out globally on Android, iOS, and desktop.

Local SEO agency Whitespark was among the first to document the change in detail, describing it as one of the more notable shifts to Google's review system in years.

What Changed

Google's support documentation outlines the new setting. Users can enable a custom display name and picture for posting through their Maps or Google profile. Once enabled, that identity appears on reviews, photos, videos, and Q&A posts across Maps.

The feature works retroactively. If you edit your nickname later, past contributions update to show the new name.

Whitespark notes that people have long created Google accounts with aliases. This is the first time Google has offered a dedicated posting identity separate from your main account profile and documented it officially.

How It Affects Spam Detection

Google's blog post says its existing review protections remain in place. Reviews written under a nickname are still tied to

an account and its history. Businesses can still report reviews they believe violate policies.

Whitespark calls this “pseudonymous rather than truly anonymous.” The public display name differs, but Google still sees the underlying account and contribution history.

Why This Matters

Expect to see more nicknames and illustration-based profile pictures in review feeds. Whitespark highlights industries like legal, medical, and financial services where clients often hesitate to post under their real name. This could increase review volume in those categories.

If you work with businesses in privacy-sensitive categories, you may want to update review request templates to mention the nickname option.

Looking Ahead

The nickname feature is live or rolling out for most users, though some local SEOs, such as Joy Hawkins, report they don’t yet see it in their own profiles.

Featured Image: Roman Samborskyi/Shutterstock

https://www.searchenginejournal.com/google-maps-lets-users-post-reviews-with-nicknames/562551/