How to turn your customer feedback into a driving force for your product

30-second summary:

- Customer reviews are a powerful tool that helps businesses understand what they are doing right and where there’s room for improvement.
- To efficiently collect client reviews, use multiple channels to encourage users to share their feedback both internally and on third-party platforms.
- Negative customer feedback is especially precious as, if handled properly, it helps businesses grow and offer better service.
- Social media can help you build a positive brand image, you just need to engage with people mentioning your brand and start building relationships with influential figures in your field.

Businesses tend to think that it’s better to get no reviews than to get bad ones. We at SE Ranking, have an opposing view – for us, customer feedback is always a blessing, be it positive or negative. We have developed a system of collecting, processing, and responding to user reviews that is beneficial both for us and our customers.

Over the years, we’ve built an engaged and motivated community of clients who help us shape our product. They are not just people who happen to use our platform, but also our consultants, partners, and friends who know that their feedback is always appreciated.

I’m Maria Kazakova, reputation manager at SE Ranking, and in this article, I’ll share our experience of gathering user

feedback and using it for the product’s sake. The guide will be especially useful for SaaS products.

How to encourage users to share their feedback through different channels

Leaving reviews takes time, so normally users don’t rush to your contact us page or review platforms unless they had a remarkably positive or exceptionally poor experience. Our task as a business is to provide users with opportunities to easily share their feedback across different channels. This is how we do it at SE Ranking.

1. On-site communication

We have a live chat widget on our website, where users can ask their questions and get assistance at any time. The chat is available for both our website visitors and customers with the only difference: our clients are asked to rate their experience on a three-point scale when the chat ends. Then our customer success team works with every feedback approaching both happy and disappointed clients.

When the feedback is negative, our agents’ task is to figure out what went wrong and how we can solve the problem. If the client is happy, we ask them to review our product on a third-party platform. In most cases, they won’t leave a review straight away but will agree to write one sometime later. We add such customers to the list of potential reviewers and later send them a follow-up email once again asking them to leave a review.

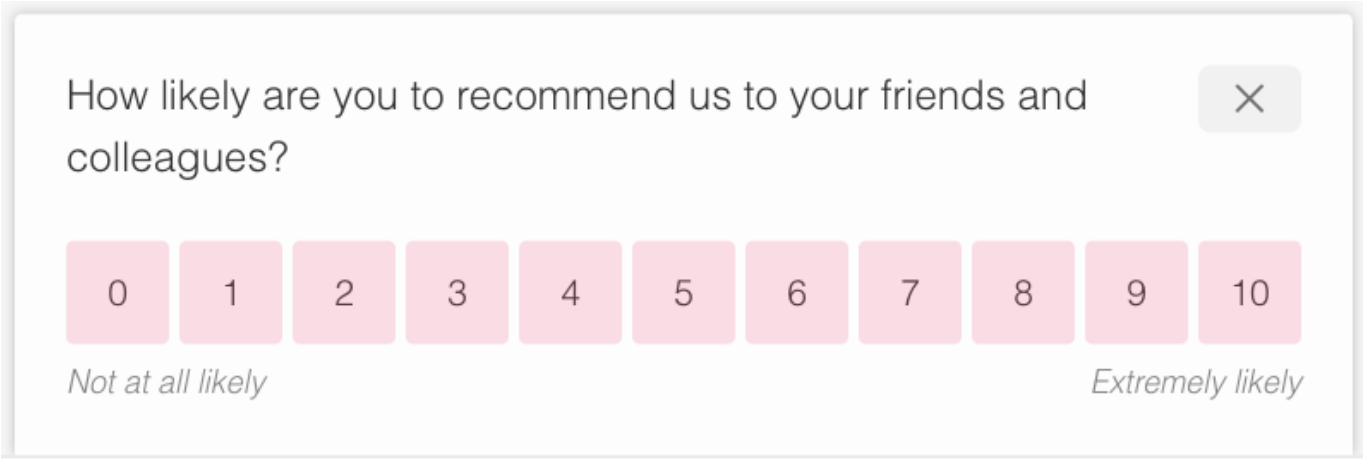
What helps us streamline the whole process is our customer communication software by HelpCrunch. It automatically sends the rate-us chat message I mentioned earlier, it keeps all the

chat histories, so we can analyze them when necessary. Finally, it provides us with statistics on the number of highly and poorly-rated chats.

Needless, to say that we strive to keep our satisfaction rate high. Our customer success team's KPI is getting 98% of positive feedback, and they do their best to deliver outstanding service and reach this goal.

2. Net promoter score survey

SE Ranking users who have no reason to contact our customer service also get a chance to share their feedback. After using SE Ranking for a few weeks every customer is asked to rate their experience on a scale of 1-10 – a window with a survey pops up after a user signs in to the platform.



If the client is not ready to rate us immediately, they can close the window and get back to the survey at any time by clicking the 'Rate us" button. It is accessible across the platform and only disappears when a user completes the survey. At the same time, we made the button absolutely unintrusive so that users could keep using the platform without any inconvenience.

Once a user rates their experience, another window pops up inviting them to leave detailed feedback on how we can further improve our product. Just like with feedbacks we get via chat,

we contact every unhappy customer to learn what we can do to provide them with a better experience. Customers who gave us a nine or a ten automatically get an email with a request to review our platform on G2.

3. Wishes

Every year before Christmas holidays we ask our users to make a wish—tell us which new features they want us to add to the platform in the year that comes.



We get hundreds of wishes from our customers all over the world which we then carefully analyze. Many customers actually ask for the same things, so we group all the similar ideas and forward them to our CTO who decides which suggestions to take on. And once we have a clear plan to follow, sometime around January we share all the details with our customers committing to fulfill the wishes that made it to our roadmap.

Such an approach is a win-win strategy because through wishes we get to understand what our clients lack the most and users can help us transform the platform in a way that speaks to their needs. We get lots of encouraging comments from users whose wishes were included in our roadmap. These users keep track of our updates become a part of what we call “customer development”—testing new features together with our clients.

For example, last year we implemented the new reporting system. Interested customers were granted early access to the test version of the new tool. We asked them to share their suggestions and report any possible bugs, and once we polished the tool and followed the customer’s most relevant recommendations, the new version replaced the old one.

4. Review platforms

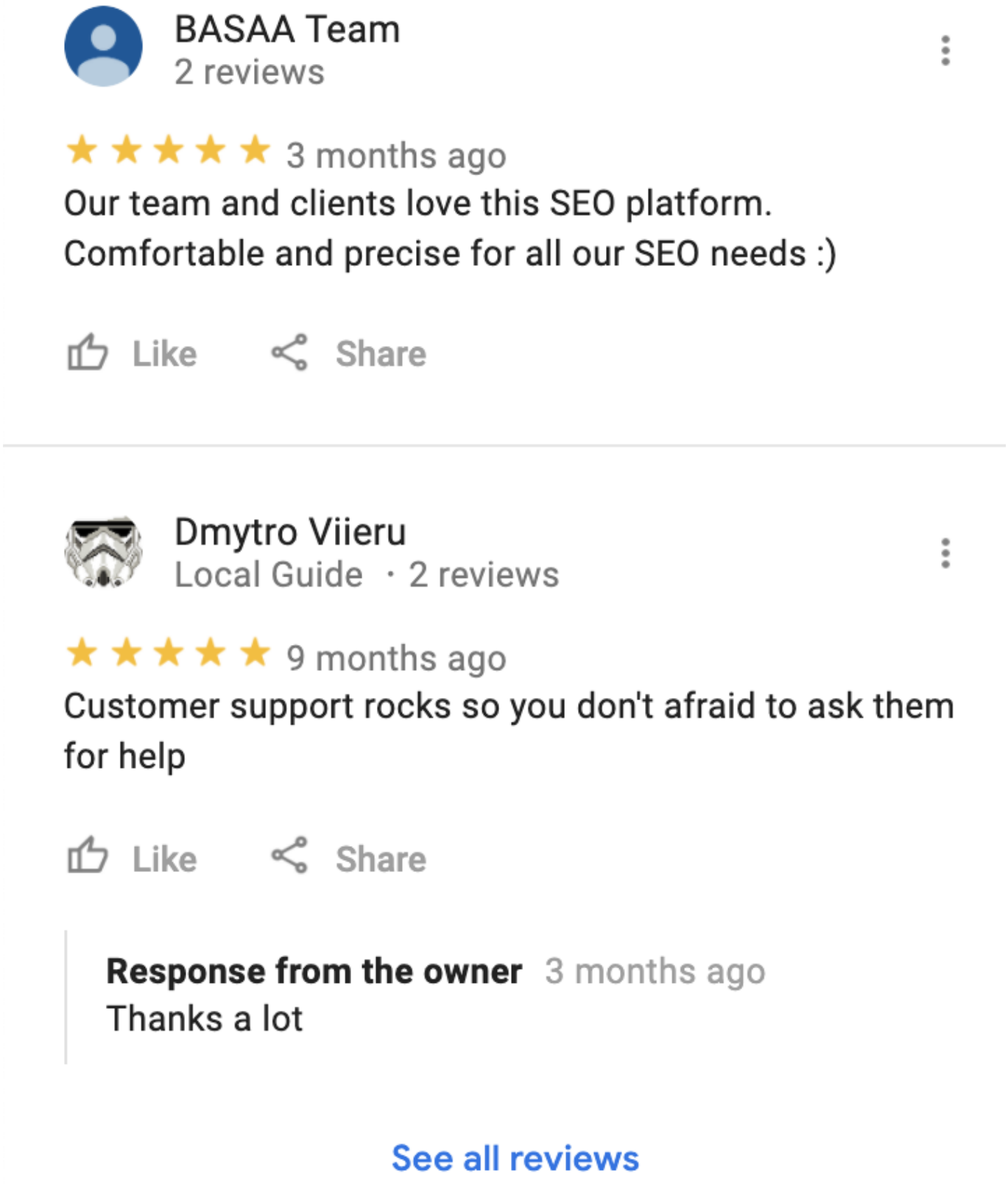
Often, review platforms are considered to be the most important channel of user feedback. For us, it’s rather secondary. Before users leave comments elsewhere they most like have already shared their opinion with us through live chat, surveys, emails, or wishes.

However, reviews on third-party platforms work as rumor mills—more people get to know about our product and its advantages. So, for sure, it’s important to keep an eye on the reviews across different platforms and encourage loyal customers to share their feedback.

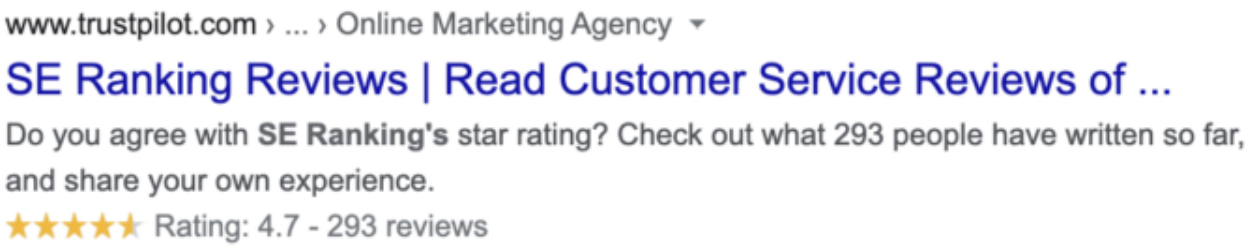
Keeping track of the reviews

We at SE Ranking monitor over 20 websites where people can write reviews about us. We realize that users can leave reviews at any time with no push from our end. So, even though monitoring all these platforms is a bit time-consuming, we still want to be sure not a single review goes unnoticed.

My recommendation is to pay special attention to Google reviews. They are a part of a company’s Google My Business profile. It can be seen when the business is searched for on Google Maps, but also often makes its way to the brand SERP as a panel to the right of the blue links. For brick and mortar businesses, Google reviews is the primary platform for working with customer feedback. As we are a SaaS product, Google reviews are not as important for us. However, it’s crucial to monitor and answer reviews and questions on Google, so users won’t get a feeling that you ignore your clients.



Also, keep a close eye on Trustpilot. It is one of the review platforms whose little stars are likely to appear in your brand SERP.



The good and, at the same time, the bad thing about Trustpilot is that there's no moderation procedure. Nobody checks where the reviews come from, so anybody can write anything about your product here including sneaky competitors trying to manipulate your rating. On the other hand, users find it easy to leave feedback here, so you may get plenty of "organic" reviews.

Encouraging users to leave reviews

When asking your users to share their feedback, you can't embrace every platform where your business has a profile. To get tangible results, you have to choose one platform to focus on along with one or two supplementary review websites.

Important note: Don't offer users to leave a review on several platforms at once. If you ask them to "write a review on G2, Capterra, Trustpilot, or Google", you'll probably get none. Pick one platform to focus on (we've chosen G2). Over time, you can approach the same users and ask them to leave another review on a different platform (on Capterra in our case).

Just like Trustpilot, G2, and Capterra ratings often make their way to the brand SERPs. But the reason that made us choose these two platforms is their excellent reputation.

G2

Unlike Trustpilot, G2 has a complex moderation system in place: every profile needs to be validated and it takes up to a week for a review to be approved and published. To leave a

review a user has to spend up to 40 minutes answering 30 questions and sharing detailed feedback. Naturally, such a complex process puts off some customers but this is what makes every review so valuable and the platform so reputable.

So how one can convince clients to review their product on G2?

- First of all, provide a service that is worth talking about.
- Second, use both manual and automated ways of collecting reviews.

I've already mentioned how we collect reviews automatically—we target users who shared their feedback in the live chat or through the NPS survey. If a user is happy with your product, or if they were unhappy with it but you solved their problems, they will most likely be up for writing a review for you. Besides, we collect reviews manually by emailing our most loyal customers.

Such an approach has proved efficient as we've managed to collect over 500 G2 reviews. Thanks to the amazing feedback of our happy customers, SE Ranking was named the second-best SEO Software among 66 other tools listed. Besides, we were listed among the 50 best software solutions in line with HubSpot, Zoom, and Grammarly.

The big advantage of G2 is that it asks users whether we can use their review elsewhere. This means that we can use G2 reviews on our website without spending time on gathering new ones.

Capterra

Capterra is another reputable review platform that also has a complex moderation procedure. Among others, they verify the reviewer's identity, check if they are in any way affiliated with the product or on the contrary work for the competitors. For this platform, we only encourage users to leave a review

manually. For example, if a user has already shared their feedback on G2 Crowd, we ask them to share one on Capterra as well. Naturally, some users review us on Capterra out of their own initiative.

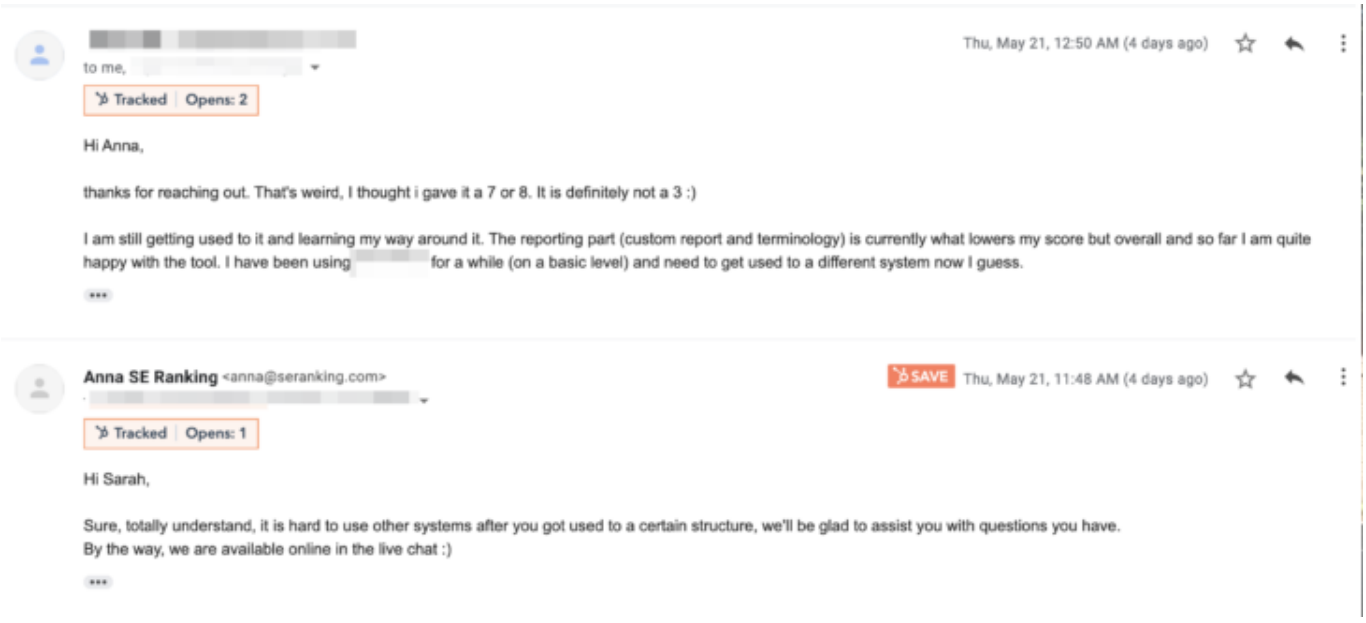
How we work with negative feedback

We insist that negative reviews are very important for brand self-reflection.

Most of the time, users write such reviews on the spur of the moment, after having a short unpleasant episode with your product or your staff.

However, sometimes, even a loyal customer with long-lasting relationships with you can still be unsatisfied with some aspects of your work. Negative feedback from such clients shows that you've been doing something wrong systematically, so they should be treated as a signal to start fixing things up immediately.

It also happens that users rate you badly by mistake. A misclick can result in a negative review—an actual case we had with our NPS survey.



In any case, you should reach out to the clients, figure out what the problem was, and make things right.

- First, thank them for sharing their feedback and letting you know that something was off.
- Second, say that whatever is the reason for their negative impression, you are sorry for that and ready to make up for it.
- Third, try to figure out what exactly went wrong and how you can help to remedy the situation. At this stage, we can offer our users a demo session, extended trial access, or a prolonged subscription.
- Finally, if you solved the problem and you feel that the user is happy with your efforts, ask them to change the review.

You shouldn’t really care too much about the bad review themselves, but you should feel concerned about providing poor service. Your task here is to do your best to turn the negative experience a user had with your brand into a positive one.

How to build your reputation through monitoring mentions and working with influencers

In addition to internal feedback and review on third-party platforms, we also track our brand mentions as they have a tremendous impact on business online reputation.

Social media brand mentions

People often use social media to share their experiences and exchange recommendations, so we track all social media mentions of our brand to be able to engage with our audience. It helps us build a positive image in social networks.

We have configured Awario to send daily notifications to our “Brand mentions Chat”. Our outreach managers and customer success team try to respond to every post either offering a solution to a problem or simply leaving a thank-you message.

We have Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn public pages that people tag when mentioning us.



On top of that, we have a special private community on Facebook, where our users seek advice and share their feedback about our tools and marketing activities. We go through every message, and depending on the nature of a post, it can be answered by our support managers, SMM specialists, content, or

tech team members.

Working with influencers

Every now and then SEO specialists and marketers publish reviews of our platform.

Such reviews are especially valuable for two reasons. First, as they are written by the experts in our field such reviews can give us precious insights into the capabilities of our tools. On the other hand, these professionals usually have an audience of people working in the same industry. So, if an influencer recommends our service, lots of potential customers get to know about our platform.

Expert reviews come in all shapes and sizes: blog articles, YouTube videos, social media posts, and other forms of content. We tend to share them on our social pages—provided that they are positive :). We also normally reward reviewers with discounts, presents, or by promoting their blogs to our community.

Most of the reviews come organically, however, it’s always a good idea to boost this process.

To find influencers who could review SE Ranking we use two approaches:

1. We find experts with a large following among our clients and ask them to review the platform;
2. We find influencers in the field of SEO, offer them an extended trial, run a demo and guide them around our platform. Then, we ask them to share their opinion about the platform.

If you are a happy customer of any

business, leave a review

I’d like to round up this post by addressing the clients of any businesses.

Choose to be an active, contributing client.

Reach out to the support team of the company that you have any trouble with. Don’t hesitate to complain—it helps businesses get better.

If there are some online services or products you use daily—share your feedback through any channel you find convenient. Your review can be a decisive factor for someone trying to make the right choice.

We at SE Ranking are thankful for every review and mention from our clients, as we strongly believe that review culture is a driving force that helps businesses grow and provide an outstanding user experience.

Maria Kazakova is the Reputation Manager at SE Ranking.

More about:

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