

Improving Patient Service for Increased Productivity and Profit

**DON'T
PANIC**

Clinic Guide So You Got A Bad Review



WhatClinic.com

Where patients find the right clinic

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So You Got A Bad Review?

Nobody's perfect! What's important to know is that even a bad review can have some good points. WhatClinic.com reviews are from genuine patients who have made an enquiry to your clinic. Whenever one of our users has made an enquiry, or contacted a clinic, we follow up with them. We ask our users to give us feedback and reviews on how they were treated by the clinics they contacted. In order to ensure reviews on WhatClinic.com are fair and genuine, we moderate all feedback, and independently verify every review, with an email and a phone call.

“Negative reviews only have real power if they stand alone. Believe it or not one single negative review in a sea of positive reviews actually adds authenticity to the positive reviews!”

Caelen King, CEO of WhatClinic.com has been advising clinics on how to handle reviews for the past six years.

Reviews

All our reviews are validated... What does that really mean?

In order to submit a review, we take a phone number and email address from the person doing so. Then we call or email that person back to validate the contact details that are left with the review. This is our process for ensuring that reviews are legitimate. By identifying review authors, we encourage genuine reviews.

This Review Stinks!

You may feel annoyance if you've had a bad review. You might feel that the person is being unreasonable, difficult or just plain unfair, but that's not really the point. The point is everyone is entitled to their opinion. And if you get enough reviews, the majority will win out. That's why we take an average score of all reviews – to give a balanced average score that's harder to undermine. Most people reading a review can read between the lines if someone is unreasonable. What matters most is how you respond.

In Fact:
*A good response to a bad review can
actually win new customers.*



Average of all reviews = Clinic rating

But it REALLY Stinks. Delete it. And ban that person from the internet!

OK, OK – we hear you. First of all, we won't publish a review if you feel strongly that it is unfair or inaccurate. However, we won't take their score from your average. And we will tell our users that you have chosen to hide a bad review. Our mission is to help patients find the right clinic, and we don't think it's fair to delete bad reviews entirely. We have processes in place that help to avoid internet trolls, or particularly malicious reviewers, such as link validation. We also insist that any review be original content. This is just one way to cut down on someone posting a negative review on a multitude of sites, in behaviour we would classify as unfair.

Four Types Of Reviewer

There are Four Types Of Reviewer

1. **Members Of A Review Community** (Yelp, Qype, etc) – They have reviewed large numbers of businesses and services and their review style can be easily profiled. Looking back at their previous reviews it is easy to see if they are fair and reasonable, and their reputation is built upon being consistently unbiased. Their reputation in turn adds considerable weight to the strength of their reviews. Some doctors have over 100 reviews on Yelp.
2. **People Who Are Encouraged To Write A Review** – Businesses often ask previous customers to review the product or service delivered. For instance WhatClinic.com asks patients to review their treatment experience. As you'd expect there is a fairly normal distribution between positive, neutral and negative reviews.
3. **Superfans** – They have had such a great experience that they actively want to share their experience with other people online. These people are very rare and are usually created when a clinic far exceeds the patients' expectations.
4. **The Very Unhappy** – People who for one reason or another feel they have had an exceptionally bad experience. Thankfully these are also very rare, but in many instances they will try and post their review on as many sites as possible. Unfortunately this means their negative review can affect you and your clinic's reputation disproportionately.



How To Deal With Bad Reviews

Here's how we think you should deal with bad reviews.



1. **Actually read the review.**

Try and be impartial. Criticism is always hard to take, but is there anything you can learn from this review? Now don't bite our heads off, we had to ask. Is there a grain of truth or more in what was said? Remember that every review is written by a real person, who came to you seeking help with an important treatment decision.



2. **Respond. And Don't Hang About.**

There's a fine line here! We're all human, and we can sometimes let our natural defensiveness play out. If you feel very strongly about a review, think before you respond. Wait until the next morning, and try and respond in a professional manner – and as calmly as possible. Or if you can't trust yourself to be calm, get someone else to sense-check your response before you post it online. A moment of anger can leave a lifetime of regret.



3. **Never, ever, ever include private patient data in your response.**

An obvious one, you'd think. But most clinics are caught out by what is actually classified as 'private'. Any information relating to the individual's visit, including the date, time, gender, and treatment choice– anything that is specific to that patient might be considered confidential information. 'When you visited our clinic last Tuesday' is an excellent example – this very general sentence is personal, because it refers to the specific individual. Keep public answers general, and offer within your response to call the patient directly to discuss. Never refer to gender, time, date, location, or treatment details. Speak only on general policy and practice in your public answers.



4. **Take it off line.**

This is the first and recommended action for any disgruntled patient. There are times when email conversation can make a bad situation worse. Sometimes email has a dehumanising effect, and it's easier to be irate in email dialogue. By picking up the phone and making the effort to reach out to the customer, and with the effort of simply listening to them, many frustrations and miscommunications can blow away easily.



5. **Take time to listen.**

As we all know, in any complaints process, having someone listen to us and empathise is the first step to resolving any dispute. In your online comments – show that you are really listening and empathising with the patient who has taken the time to provide feedback, before inviting the person to contact you directly.



6. **Don't fob them off.**

Referring the user to information on your website or brochure page is a good idea if and only if the specific issue is clearly and succinctly dealt with in your website. Let's face it. Very few websites are as well laid out as they should be, and it may be harder than you'd imagine to find the one little nugget of information that is relevant or important. Add someone's irritation to a bad website and you only add fuel to the fire.



7. **Don't be surprised if...**

People post up your private responses to them. That's ok – they have the right to broadcast their responses. Unfortunately, you don't have the same privilege. Don't be surprised if irate customers say things that aren't true, are framed negatively, or are downright offensive. Don't be surprised if someone who is very irate doesn't bother responding to your carefully crafted comments, or polite invitations to discuss the issue. In these cases, let your last word be the ones to remember. Remain calm, be pleasant, utterly professional and always well mannered. This is what will last in the mind of the reader – no matter what the initial complaint.

Avoid These Common Mistakes

- Never break patient confidentiality. Even if the patient publishes personal medical information online, you may not.
- Do not be aggressive or confrontational. Maintain professional standards at all times.
- Never suggest or imply that the person making the review is lying. Do not call into doubt any aspect of their review. It is not the best approach and can make issues even more difficult to resolve.
- Do not engage in an online conversation. Reply to the review once and contact the patient directly. Remember, you should not discuss the issue with the individual in a public forum even if they want to.
- Don't avoid responsibility!



Examples

Here's a bad review that was answered well:

Review:

"My treatment was done by inexperience young lady who was very rude and arrogant. Never again, not qualified and had an allergic reaction!!!"

Reply:

Dear Reviewer,

I am deeply dismayed that you were unhappy with the treatment you received at our clinic. We pride ourselves on our warm welcome and professionalism at all times. Can I please extend my sincere apologies for any rudeness you might have experienced. Each and every staff member on our team is fully accredited and trained in the latest techniques - and for all new patients we complete a thorough questionnaire to highlight any known allergies.

If you would like to contact myself, the General Manager directly we would be happy to conduct a patch test to confirm what product caused the irritation, so that you can avoid it in the future and we would very much like the opportunity to show you the best side of our clinic by welcoming you back at your convenience.

Kind regards,
John Smith, GM, Clinic

Key analysis

- 1) Tackled the negatives politely
- 2) Took responsibility 'sincere apologies for any rudeness you may have experienced'
- 3) Highlighted full staff accreditation and due diligence to prevent similar issues
- 4) Took conversation offline
- 5) Gave name and number - honest and transparent

Examples

Here's a bad review that was answered poorly (please note this is not a real response, it is for teaching purposes only). Can you find the classic mistakes?

Review:

"Appauling service, no communication, rude and lost letters and request fot repear perscriptions on several occasions, rude staff and one doctor."

Reply:

Dear Mr. Brown,

Thank you for your review, which is about as correct as your spelling. As we have told you on a number of occasions, you are not entitled to use our clinic as a prescription service without first seeing the doctor. It is highly dangerous to take that much viagra without medical supervision. So we don't need people like you walking in demanding to be seen without an appointment. By the way, when you see your next doctor, please enquire about treatment for your halitosis. It's terrible. We are a small clinic, with only one doctor. There is no crime in this - so the fact you chose to point this out is rather stupid. Please go away.

Key analysis

- 1) Personal information used 'Mr. Brown' 'viagra treatment'
- 2) Commenting on the reviewer's breath - is both rude, and personal details.
- 3) Unprofessional & inflammatory.

Summary & Takeaways

- What's important to know is that **even a bad review can have some good points**. In fact: A good response to a bad review can actually win new customers.
- **There are four types of reviewer:** Members of a review community, people who are encouraged to write a review, superfans, and the very unhappy. It's important to be able to identify the type of reviewer and respond with the appropriate tone and language.
- **We will hide a review if it is unfair or inaccurate.** However, we won't take their score from your average. Our mission is to help clinics find the right clinic, and we don't think it's fair to delete bad reviews entirely.
- How to deal with reviews: **Read carefully, respond appropriately**, and never, ever use personal details in a response.
- **Difficult customers should be dealt with on the phone**, or face to face, not in a public forum.



About WhatClinic.com

WhatClinic.com's mission is to help the patient by providing access to all the information they need to make an informed decision about the treatment they want.

WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007, with its global headquarters in Dublin, Ireland and has grown to a busy team of 40 technologists who put the patient first. We are constantly striving to bring more choice, more information and better treatment to the patient.

With over 100,000 clinics listed on our site, and more than a million visitors every single month, WhatClinic.com is the best place online to find and compare up to date information, pricing and reviews for clinics around the world.

For more insights on patients, and global news about clinic growth, sign up for instant notifications to our blog.

