make-simple.ai

FREE PLAYBOOK · GOOGLE REVIEWS

The Review Engine

Fresh 5-star reviews, every month.

The timing, wording and one-tap setup that gets happy customers to actually leave the review, plus reply templates for good and bad ones.

- → When to ask so people actually follow through
- → 8 review request texts that don't feel pushy
- → Reply templates for 5-star and 1-star reviews
- → How to stay inside Google's review rules

READ THIS FIRST

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How to use this

Start with the request texts on page 4. Send one to your last five happy customers today. Then set it up so it goes out after every job, to every customer.

THE RESEARCH

Recent beats total

74%
of consumers want to see reviews written in the last 3 months.

47%
won't use a business with fewer than 20 reviews.

89%
expect businesses to reply to their reviews.

All from BrightLocal's Local Consumer Review Survey 2026.

What this means

- [ ] A business with 40 reviews from this year can beat one with 300 reviews from 2021.
- [ ] A steady trickle (a few a week) beats a big push once a year.
- [ ] Replying is part of the review. People read your replies to see how you treat customers.
- [ ] BrightLocal also found AI tools are now a real source of local recommendations, and they read reviews too.

SEND TO EVERY CUSTOMER · DON'T TELL THEM WHAT TO WRITE

8 request texts

1 · RIGHT AFTER THE JOB
Thanks again for having us out today, [First name]! If you have a minute, would you share how it went on Google? [link]

2 · APPOINTMENT BUSINESS
Thanks for coming in today! We'd love to hear how your visit was: [link]

3 · PERSONAL FROM THE OWNER
Hey [First name], it's [Name]. Reviews really help a small business like ours. Would you mind leaving one? [link]

4 · AFTER A COMPLIMENT
That means a lot, thank you! Would you be up for sharing that on Google? [link]

5 · DAY 3 REMINDER (ONCE)
Hi [First name], just a quick reminder in case it got buried. Here's the review link: [link]. Thanks either way!

6 · EMAIL VERSION
Subject: Quick favor? · Thanks for choosing [Business]. Would you share your experience on Google? It takes about a minute: [link]

7 · LONG PROJECT
Now that everything's finished, would you share how the whole project went? [link]

8 · REGULARS
You've been with us a while now and we really appreciate it. If you've never left a review, we'd love one: [link]

TIMING IS MOST OF IT

When to ask

BUSINESS TYPE	BEST MOMENT TO ASK
Home services & trades	Same day, after the walkthrough when they've seen the finished work
Salons, spas, med spas	Within 2 hours of the visit, while they still feel good
Restaurants	That evening, or the next morning for catering
Gyms & studios	After a milestone: first month, a PR, a finished program
Professional services	After the result: the closing, the filed return, the signed deal

- [ ] Send it from a number or email they recognize.
- [ ] One request and one reminder. Never more than that.
- [ ] Ask every customer the same way. Not just the ones you think are happy (page 7 explains why).

SHORT · HUMAN · BY NAME

Reply templates

5 STARS

Thanks so much, [First name]! It was great working on your [project]. We'll be here whenever you need us.

5 STARS, NO TEXT

Thank you for the 5 stars, [First name]! Really appreciate you.

3 STARS

Thanks for the honest feedback, [First name]. We'd like to hear what we could have done better. Can you call or text us at [number]?

1 STAR, REAL PROBLEM

[First name], I'm sorry this happened. That's not the experience we want anyone to have. I'd like to make it right. Please call me directly at [number]. – [Owner name]

1 STAR, NOT A CUSTOMER YOU RECOGNIZE

We can't find a record of this visit, but we'd like to understand what happened. Please reach out at [number] so we can look into it.

AI can draft these. Give it the review and your template, then read it before you post. Never let a reply go out unread.

GOOGLE + FTC, AS OF 2026

Staying inside the rules

Do

- [ ] Ask every customer for an honest review.
- [ ] Reply to good and bad reviews.
- [ ] Report reviews that break Google's rules (spam, off-topic, conflicts of interest).

Don’t

- [ ] Offer anything in exchange for a review or for changing or removing one: no discounts, gift cards, free services or raffle entries.
- [ ] Only ask happy customers, or send unhappy ones somewhere private first. That's called review gating and Google bans it.
- [ ] Pressure people to leave a review while they're still at your location (like handing them a tablet at the counter).
- [ ] Give staff review quotas, or tell customers what to write.
- [ ] Write fake reviews, buy them, or have employees post without disclosing it. The FTC's rule, in effect since October 2024, allows civil penalties.

10 MINUTES, MONDAY MORNINGS

The weekly routine

1. **Check the automation ran**
   Did every completed job last week get a request? Spot-check 3.
2. **Reply to every new review**
   Use page 6. Two minutes, tops.
3. **Fix anything a review points to**
   If two people mention the same thing, that's not a review problem.
4. **Share one good review**
   Post it on social or add it to your website. Ask the customer first if you use their name.
5. **Write down your count**
   Reviews this month vs. last month. That's the only number that matters here.

NEXT STEP

Want this running for you?

WANT IT DONE FOR YOU?

Book a free 30-minute AI Audit.

We'll look at your review profile and set up requests that go out after every job automatically, inside Google's rules. You leave with a one-page plan showing the 3 places AI saves you the most time. Use it yourself or have us set it up.

make-simple.ai/book-a-call

SOURCES

1. BrightLocal, Local Consumer Review Survey 2026.
2. Google Maps user-generated content policy, Prohibited and restricted content (updated February 2026).
3. Federal Trade Commission, Trade Regulation Rule on the Use of Consumer Reviews and Testimonials, 16 CFR Part 465 (effective October 21, 2024).