SHOOT FOR THE “STARS”: How to Keep Customers Coming Back for More
For Company Owned & Operated

Shoot for the “Stars”: How to Keep Customers Coming Back for More

Monitoring your online reputation on GasBuddy is critical for the fuel and convenience retail industry. In a 100-year old industry, online reviews are a relatively new form of customer feedback. Our research shows that increasingly your customers are trained to share and be influenced by others’ reviews. Here are some helpful suggestions for taking advantage of your customers’ online and in-app feedback to make the perfect pit stop possible.

Taking Advantage of the Power of GasBuddy Reviews

Prioritize Monitoring your GasBuddy Presence

Customers who take time to rate you online are your most vocal fans (and occasional critics). GasBuddies looking for your products and services see your star rating and reviews in the app and many take them into account when making decisions on where to stop.

Beyond the 12 million drivers who use the GasBuddy app every month and can view your star rating as they search for gas station and convenience stores, your star ratings are prominently featured in results on search engines such as Google. In fact, having a star rating associated with your location elevates your brand to the first page of search results, so it’s especially important to keep that rating strong.

The feedback provided in these ratings and reviews is your low-hanging fruit.

Positive reviews enable you to capitalize on what’s working well. At the same time, negative reviews provide tangible suggestions for improvement.
Create the Ultimate Focus Group
What if you could ask ALL customers who visit your station for feedback on factors that are most important to you? Harness the impact provided by your most vocal customer by adding a custom rating on anything from store appearance, merchandise selection or the quality of your fresh food offerings.

Designate a Team Member to Track Ratings and Reviews
The negative review could be as simple as “no toilet paper in the restroom” or “trash on the sidewalk was gross.” Both present problems that are quick fixes, but in the meantime, potential customers could be turned off by the prospect of a less-than stellar customer experience and go elsewhere.

By designating someone (or multiple people) to frequently monitor reviews, these deficiencies can be quickly addressed. At the same time, compliments in reviews can be used advantageously. “I loved the attitude of the cashier” can be a powerful employee reinforcer, motivating them to keep up their positive demeanor and earn 5-star reviews for your business.

Who should do this in your business? The team or team member responsible for customer contacts like your 800 number, email or social media presence.

Go the Extra Mile
Don’t be afraid to respond directly to dissatisfied customers. Often a response from the company goes a long way toward getting the customer to give you a second chance. A recent survey of GasBuddy users revealed that a personal response to a review would influence their decision to return, and 72% would consider revisiting a station or store if their complaints were resolved quickly.

A response from the company that includes a practical solution can also go a long way in negating the content of negative reviews, but don’t be defensive. Remember the old adage, “the customer is always right”. You can even go so far as to offer the unhappy customer a special incentive to get them back into your store, providing another chance at a 5-star review.
What if you don’t have a dedicated person assigned to managing reviews?
Your station and store reviews are public, and it’s critical to be in tune and engaged (even without responding) because this feedback is actively shaping your brand.

GasBuddy Business Pages also allows you to automate responses to your customers, enabling you to maintain an active presence and share feedback with the right people in your organization without having to directly address specific comments.

**POSITIVE FEEDBACK**

- **Automated Response for Praise**

  We’re glad you had good experience. Thank you for being a loyal customer. Your feedback is appreciated and we value your continued business.

- **Automated Response for Suggestions**

  Thank you for your suggestion. Your input will help us better serve you in the future. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

**NEGATIVE FEEDBACK**

- **Automated Response for Poor Customer Service Complaint**

  Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Great customer service is a top priority for us, and we apologize that you had a poor experience. Your feedback helps us to improve, and it is appreciated.

- **Automated Response for Actionable Issue**

  Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We’re glad to have the opportunity to take action based on your feedback. We hope to see you again soon.

**Build Your Brand Around Good Reviews**

Remember the great customer service delivered in the example above? GasBuddy retail partners have told us they’ve rebranded their stores around their service delivery after receiving so many 5-star reviews that complimented their staff. Another GasBuddy retail partner using Business Pages consistently received kudos for the high quality of their food so they started emphasizing their use of local ingredients in their advertising. Reviews are a fantastic source for marketing campaigns and branding/rebranding strategies.
It’s All About the Stars
Here are GasBuddy reviews from two convenience store/fuel retailers within a few blocks of each other in Denver, PA.

Same basic location, same fuel price, similar amenities, but the number of stars is the differentiator. The 5-star-rated retailer prides itself on providing great service in a clean environment, while the 1.5-star rated retailer has some work to do.
A recent survey of GasBuddy users revealed that 69% of respondents would not visit a station if it has fewer than three stars.

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Beyond the 12 million drivers who use the GasBuddy app every month, your star ratings are delivered in the GasBuddy app, at the top of search engine results. GasBuddy app users will see the same ratings and reviews when they search the app for fuel retailers.

Prioritize Monitoring your GasBuddy Presence

You don’t own your brand, consumers do. As fuel retailers, your direct customers are your distributors, but ultimately, consumers are interacting with your brand at the pumps and even inside the store.

If, as a fuel retailer, you are unable to respond to consumer reviews that are posted to individual station locations, there are other steps you can take to ensure a positive consumer experience. The first step is often just monitoring and listening to feedback and passing actionable items along to the station owners or managers to remedy problems.
Business Pages also allows you to automate responses to reviews, enabling you to present your brand in the best light—maintaining an active presence without having to directly address specific comments.

**TIP:** Maintain a Bird’s Eye View of Your Stations’ Health

As a fuel retailer, you may not have direct contact with the owners or managers of the locations selling your fuel, so it can be difficult to ensure the stations are compliant with brand standards. GasBuddy Business Pages’ robust station watching and reporting capabilities allow you to extract ratings and reviews information down to the station level to provide insight into which stations are doing well, which need improvement, and to determine what may be impacting your KPIs. Share this information with your sales and operations teams to maintain a high-performing location inventory and take care of any fuel-related operational issues.

**TIP:** Have your station owners and managers take on the important and appropriate role of keeping business information, including station amenities, up to date through the free tool provided within the GasBuddy app.

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Enhance Your Mystery Shopping Program

Consumer feedback can be helpful in illustrating whether stations are in brand compliance. A benefit to GasBuddy’s ratings and reviews feature is that you can use the real-time feedback as complimentary info to validate or invalidate the findings of your mystery shopping program. If locations earn and maintain a 4.5 star rating, reward them; this location is also important to keep in your station inventory as it conveys positive brand recognition. Locations that are not within brand compliance or that have negative brand perception can be coached toward success.

Create the ultimate focus group. What if you could ask ALL of your consumers who visit your station for feedback on factors that are most important to you? Enhance your existing mystery shopping program and harness the impact provided by your most vocal consumers by adding a custom rating on anything from the speed or ease of fueling to the cleanliness of the fueling area.

TIP:
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