

# Reviews: A Key Tool for Enhancing Your Credibility

## Introduction

In today's digital world, people are increasingly using the internet for research prior to making purchases large and small. Reviews are critical now more than ever to **build trust** with potential clients and serve as **online referrals** to give you credibility.

Getting reviews on your profile can take time, but they're worth the effort. Reviews are your best tool for **closing new business** by showing that you met or exceeded the expectations of past clients. The more reviews you have, the more likely potential clients are to see your business as **credible and trustworthy**, giving them confidence to contact you when they're ready to start their project.

## Personalise your requests

The best way to get a review from a recent project is a **personalised message** requesting the review. Include your client's first name and project type in the subject line to stand out and signify that your message is intended for them rather than being a generic mass email.

Other things to remember to include:

- A personalised greeting with the client's name and a thank you for their business
- An explanation about how reviews can help attract new clients
- A link to your Houzz profile where they can leave a review

## Studies show:

### 83%

of homeowners said **reviews are** very important when deciding which professional to hire, winning out over cost or experience with a similar scope of work

### 13 Minutes

Consumers spend over 13 minutes on average **reading reviews** about businesses when making purchasing decisions

## Prompts to personalise your message:

Ask clients how they're enjoying a specific feature you worked on

If you got to know them on a personal level, ask them how their family is enjoying their new home

If their renovation project was for a specific reason, such as being able to entertain, ask them if they have been able to host guests

## Make reviews a part of your process

It's common to think about mentioning reviews after the project is completed, but bringing them up from the start and throughout the project can **keep reviews top of mind**.

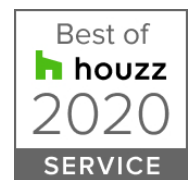
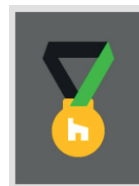
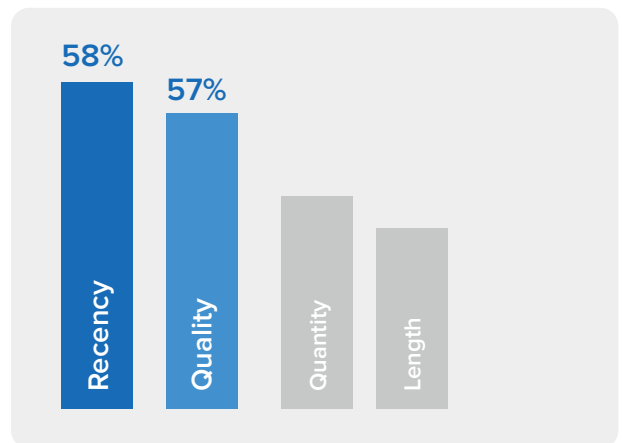
A study asked consumers what they pay attention to when they are reading reviews. The top responses?

**58% said recency** and **57% said quality**, beating quantity and length. So by consistently collecting reviews, you can be sure to always have recent reviews, and impress those potential clients checking out your profile.

In addition, reviews put you in the running for the annual **Best of Houzz: Service awards**. Winners of those awards collect new reviews each year and maintain a high average star rating, and it is a point of distinction. Making reviews part of your process can pay off if you win this award!

One way to make gathering reviews easier and more time efficient is to **send out requests in batches**. With the "Get Reviews" tool on your profile, add the client's email address and a personalised note and Houzz will send the client directions to fill out the review. Once it's approved, it will show up on your profile.

Once you receive a review, always make sure to **respond and thank** the client for taking time to fill out the review. You can also add in any extra details about the project if desired.



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I have an Excel doc that I use to keep track of projects I finish. Every couple of months, I'll send out a bunch of review requests. If they respond, I'll just check them off in my Excel doc. If they don't, I'll try again.

**Jennifer Howard**  
JWH Cabinetry

## Tap into your professional network

To increase the number and scope of your reviews, you can **reach out to your professional network** as well. On Houzz, members of the professional community can fill out reviews as “Colleagues.” These reviews from your industry peers will provide a different angle of your business, which will impress not only potential clients, but also other professionals who may be looking to include you on a job.

## Respond to negative reviews

Negative reviews are just as important to acknowledge and can actually be a **positive marketing opportunity**. Offering your side of the story or perhaps how you might improve the situation will allow potential clients to see how you handle situations that aren’t ideal.

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I try to get reviews from our contractors and subcontractors because that helps build credibility. As soon as the project wraps up, we tell them we can share photos with them so they can use it on their profile, but we ask them to review us first. It’s a win-win.

**Sharon Flatley**  
Sharon Flatley Design

Michaelson Homes, LLC received a one star review with a client claiming the quality of work and materials were below expectations. Rather than staying silent, they replied to the review with an **apology and an explanation**.



“In order to save cost, the client used many of his own subcontractors, therefore limiting our control over the quality of work,” a portion of their response states. “We at Michaelson Homes should have heeded the red flags that presented early on and have learned not to get involved in these types of projects in the future.”

This response is a professional but firm way to educate homeowners who are reviewing their profile, and looks much better than if the pro had left it unaddressed.



If you’d like assistance with getting new reviews, ensuring your profile is looking its best and simplifying your business management processes, Houzz Pro can help your business. Get in touch with the Houzz Team at **ukprocommunity@houzz.com** for more information on our comprehensive business growth and management system.