

WOMM and the Moving Industry: Are You Ready?

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*“Change is difficult but not changing can be fatal.”
—William Pollard*

Word-of-mouth marketing: Why you should care

Word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM for short) is essentially getting your happy customers to promote your business and do your marketing work for you. It’s also the new-age conversation between corporation and customer.

WOMM has been identified as the most valuable form of marketing—the one that consumers trust above all others and the one that is most likely to drive sales for your company. It’s powerful, easy, indirect and usually free.

Let’s look at the facts. According to Nielsen, 92 percent of consumers believe recommendations from friends and family over all forms of advertising. So if you want to win the marketing race in 2015 and beyond, you need to unleash the power of word of mouth and start engaging your customers.

What are you doing to trigger word of mouth?

In the digital era, ever-expanding social media channels make word-of-mouth marketing incredibly easy, allowing imag-

es, articles, videos, comments and other great pieces of content to fly across the globe every second.

Digital evolution has amplified and accelerated its reach to the point where word of mouth is no longer an act of intimate, one-on-one communication. Today, it also operates on a one-to-many basis, where product and service reviews are posted online and opinions disseminated through social networks.

While these changes can make certain marketing tactics easier, it also creates new expectations from consumers. Today potential customers are much more likely to seek out reviews from your past customers prior to purchasing your services. This is precisely why you will need a WOMM strategy such as online reviews—the best endorsement a company can have.

Why you need a strong WOMM strategy like online reviews *Reason #1: They help you build trust and confidence with your customers*

You provide an excellent service and most of your reviews are going to show this. This builds confidence and trust in customers who haven’t used you before and the more three- to five-star



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ratings you have, the more likely they are to believe all those people can't be wrong. The more reviews you publish, the more credible you will be.

Reason #2: They help you improve conversion rates

When potential customers read your positive reviews, they become familiar with the quality of your service and are more ready to commit when they get to you.

Reason #3: They give you great unique content to share on social media

With 92 percent of people trusting recommendations from people they know, an online review system that lets your customers share their reviews easily on their personal Facebook, Twitter and Google+ will enable your customers to spread the good word among their peers, increasing your potential customer base.

Reason #4: The SEO (Search Engine Optimization) benefit

Search engine spiders like unique content that is updated regularly, and customer reviews fall right into this category. They are a great way to attract and "renew" your content. Reviews are an increasingly important part of the decisionmaking process for customers. This also means that more and more customers will be searching for the keywords "mover reviews" or "ratings" when they are looking for a moving or relocation service.

Reason #5: It's a perfect place for those negative reviews

Yes, the perfect place. These days you can't hide or run from negative reviews. One negative review on its own can be damaging; however, one negative review among many other positive ones won't have much impact at all. Putting your few negative reviews together with a majority of positive ones is the best way to neutralize any effects from less-than-stellar feedback and demonstrate authenticity. Contrary to popular belief, it is a myth that people are more prone to posting negative reviews. Based on MoveAide.com's reviews collected over the past year, only 5 percent of them were negative.

Consumers are buying differently but are you selling to them differently? How do you engage them and put your company right where they're looking?

How can you get started?

So now that you know the importance of online reviews for your business and how you can use them to win more customers, how do you get started with online reviews?

1. You will need to incorporate online reviews in your process flows, embrace the change and learn how to leverage them to increase business. Appoint key team members to kickstart this project and ensure that they understand the importance of online reviews.
2. Review your online platform options: third party or own website? How convincing will the reviews on your own website be? Can you respond to the reviews published on independent sites? Are they verifiable? Are you in control, or can your customers post and publish anything they want?
3. Get your online platform up and running really quickly so you can start collecting reviews from your existing customers. The more reviews you collect, the more credible they will look, and the more it helps put you on Google search.
4. Respond to all your reviews, both good and bad, and share, share, share wherever you can.

Choosing a good online review platform

In an era where word-of-mouth marketing has evolved quite a bit from one-on-one conversations, you must guide your customers along, making it easy for them to share their reviews on social media. So start building up your arsenal of reviews now; invite your customers to review your services on an industry-specific site platform such as MoveAide.com that can help you collect, showcase and manage your customer reviews.

You will want to be able to respond to every review posted. A less positive review should trigger an immediate alert so you can jump on the service recovery process and respond to the published comments, engaging your customers and demonstrating that you value their business. This kind of mechanism makes it easy for your customers to post their reviews on your services, and powerful real-time analytics will help you measure service quality and provide quick snapshots of your team's performance.

The bottom line: It's time to harness the power of online reviews and let your customers do the talking for you.



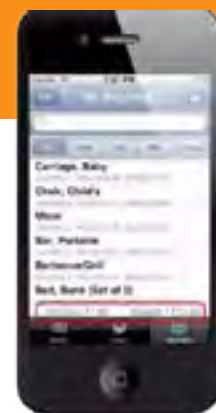
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