

The Incredible Importance of Testimonials

by Ivana Katz

Testimonials are product/service reviews and comments from happy customers and are one of the best ways to build your credibility and to show potential customers that you are trustworthy, reliable and an expert in your field.

Your website visitors are not stupid and the majority will leave your site as soon as they feel you are trying to do the 'hard sell'. No matter what promises YOU make, your customers will believe others far more than you (unless, of course, you have already established yourself as an authority on a subject or have a solid relationship with them.)

If you don't have any testimonials right now, get them! Simply email your customers and ask for their feedback on your business and service. Most happy customers will gladly provide this.

If you are starting out and don't have any customers yet, volunteer your services or give away some of your products. Then ask your customers for feedback - if you've done a good job or your product is useful, they will be more than happy to do so.

Derek Gehl, CEO of Internet Marketing Centre (www.theinternetmarketingcenter.com) and world's leading internet marketing authority says:

"There are a few key ingredients to look for that make the difference between an ineffective testimonial and one that sells.

A good testimonial is filled with benefits.

A comment like, "This product is great!" is nice to hear, but it doesn't tell visitors what your product can actually do for them.

You want the benefits of what you

offer to be front and centre in every testimonial: "This product doubled our profits in a month!" or "This product made the pain in my back disappear completely - and did it fast!" or "We've never seen any product that could get the rust off our car without damaging the paint - until now."

A good testimonial substantiates your claims.

If you say your product can do something, your testimonials should back up your promises, complete with actual facts and figures. How much money did your customers save by using your product? How much time did they save by using your service? How did it solve their problems or improve their lives?

A good testimonial is from someone your audience can relate to.

You want your visitors to see that your product helped someone just like them. Make sure your testimonials come from someone with whom your target market can identify.

If you sell primarily to seniors, for example, ask your customers if you can include their age along with the testimonial. If you're selling to moms with children, ask if you can mention how many kids they have or include a photo of their family.

A good testimonial is credible.

Accompany each testimonial with the first name, last name and hometown of each testimonial-giver to show that your endorsements come from real people.



A good testimonial is comparative.

Did your customers try another product that didn't work before they found yours? You want your visitors to know what your product can do that other products can't. Choose testimonials that set your product apart from your competition."

Always try to include a photo as well.

And if you can, take it to the next level by including audio or video testimonials for maximum effect. Do anything you can to help your visitors connect with your testimonial-givers on a personal level.

A good testimonial endorses the key benefits of your product.

It's fun to hear that your super-duper floor cleaner smells nice or that the bottle doesn't drip - both things that matter to people who would consider using your product. But have you established that it cleans their floors well?

When people read testimonials they gain confidence in your products and services and are far more likely to buy from you. In fact, one of my clients recently told me her conversion rate from visitors to paying customers almost doubled when she added testimonials to her website!

Think about your own experiences - are you more likely to hire a plumber or a builder when you read their brochure or when a friend recommends them?

Make sure the testimonials are real and if possible provide contact details of the person who supplied you with the testimonial. For examples of effective testimonials, visit:

www.web4business.com.au/AboutUs.htm
www.ceremonieswithstyle.com.au/testimonials.htm

Ivana Katz makes it easy for you to get your business on the internet. If you're looking for a professional and affordable website designer, visit www.web4business.com.au and download a free website plan.