

APPFOLLOW

Dealing with negative app reviews



I hate this app! Developers what's wrong with you...

Hello, thanks for your review! Enjoy the app and stay with us!



It's a fact that when it comes to the app stores, one-star reviews have a powerfully negative effect on your average rating. The reality is that its influence is so significant that it would take 10 positive reviews to balance out 1 one-star review.

But equally important is the damage to your reputation that a negative review has. Research has shown that consumers trust negative reviews more than positive ones. Firstly, when an app is 5.0, visitors will be automatically suspicious — after all, no app is perfect or right for everyone.

85% of consumers seek a negative review to help them decide whether to install or not. This is because it helps them balance the pros & cons while also confirming that your product and brand is trustworthy & authentic. They'll be looking to see how you treat current users and if you effectively resolve issues.

Current users who've left a negative review will be waiting for a response to their complaint, request or problem — the longer they wait, the higher likelihood that they'll churn. The more unhappy users you end up successfully helping to improve their experience will contribute to an increase in your app's rating, conversion rate, and customer lifetime value.

So, with that in mind, you'll need to build an effective review response strategy to tackle negative reviews. This handy checklist ensures you'll have everything covered when formulating this strategy.

1. Monitor negative reviews & organize feedback



Choose your most suitable reputation management tools.

We suggest using whatever variety suits your team: Zendesk, AppFollow, Slack, Intercom, or Helpshift. This means you can segment & easily monitor negative reviews as they come in without needing to go through Console or Connect.



Activate notification automation to stay up to date with new or updated negative reviews.

You can do this through AppFollow using our Smart alerts function. By setting 'rules', you can trigger notification to appear in your integrated communication channel whenever a low rated new review appears or it's updated.



Keep tabs on what customers are complaining about.

Begin a spreadsheet of the most mentioned topics or phrases that commonly turn up in negative reviews. To further enhance this, you can use tools like Semantic analysis to help you define what your users are complaining about and automatically categorize them using 'tags'.



Assess CSAT and the reply effect of your support agents.

You need to know how well your support team is responding to reviews as they come in. How many have changed ratings after a response? How long does it take for an agent to respond to a review? How satisfied are customers with their experience after support?



Make sure you keep track of fake, spammy, or inappropriate reviews.

Make sure you keep track of fake, spammy, or inappropriate reviews. They not only have a detrimental effect on your app's rating but also presents a negative reputation to visitors. You can easily see the share of reviews in this category by using AppFollow's 'Report a concern' tab and automate reporting them to the app stores for deletion.

2. Respond promptly & find resolutions



Set bulk actions for efficiency at scale —

Examples of this are auto-tags & auto-replies. By including automation in your response strategy, short negative reviews, not connected with your app's experience, or lacking useful information will receive a reply quickly using a well-written template without you having to tackle them manually.



Respond personally to long or featured negative reviews.

You must treat these reviewers with the most priority & care. They are often from very engaged, but currently disappointed users — their feedback is a valuable source for finding areas in the user experience that need improvement.



Experiment using templates & personalized responses —

Figure out what's most effective when it comes to your replies. What templates are positively changing reviews after being used? What is having the opposite effect or none at all? You can do this via tracking the review updates.



Tackle ALL of your negative reviews —

Crucial for retention, preventing churn, and creating a positive online reputation for your brand.



Personalize your responses.

No matter if it's from a template or agent, every response to a negative review should include the username of the reviewer. It shows that you care about their issues. Especially if they're already frustrated or annoyed, you don't want to make that worse by coming off as disingenuous. You may also benefit from replying to negative reviews in the same language. This will ensure they understand your explanation or solution with clarity.



Update your responses when the issue has been resolved.

This is crucial to prevent churn. By updating them, you're not only indicating the problem is fixed, but you're showing you have listened to that user personally & care enough to get back to them to inform them of the improvement.



Make sure you request more information

Include this in your response templates for shorter negative reviews. This might help you receive more valuable feedback from the user & a higher chance of helping them resolve the issue, leading to them increasing the rating of their review.

Request reviewers to update their negative reviews whenever the related issue has been resolved. Not all users will remember to do so, even if they're more than willing to. You won't know until you ask.