

We all know the value of a good one and the pitfalls of a bad one, but what is it? The Oxford English Dictionary defines reputation as...

- the beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something:

his reputation was tarnished by allegations of bribery

- a widespread belief that someone or something has a particular characteristic:

his knowledge of his subject earned him a reputation as an expert



So basically reputation is about trust. Do you trust this person or business to deliver on their promise?

Before the internet people relied on various sources such as gossip (some reliable some less so), shared experiences (person to person, aka word of mouth) and perhaps an individual's standing in the community.

The internet has opened up vast opportunities for businesses to operate on a **bigger scale** to a **wider market** than many local businesses previously dreamed possible. The trouble is, much of this online interaction is from people distant from the business and unable to gain access to the usual reputation sources.

So how does a small local business earn and share those extraordinarily valuable commodities online:



Positive reputation



Word of mouth recommendations

Simple, start using a "Reputation System". E-Bay or Trip Advisor are perhaps the best known examples where people who have used the services on offer, share their feedback and ratings to help others make a **more informed choice**.

Many small businesses are wary of such systems, worrying (probably unnecessarily) about the possibilities of negative feedback. This kind of thinking is a little misguided, as it is the very existence of the occasional; let's say less than positive response that generates trust.

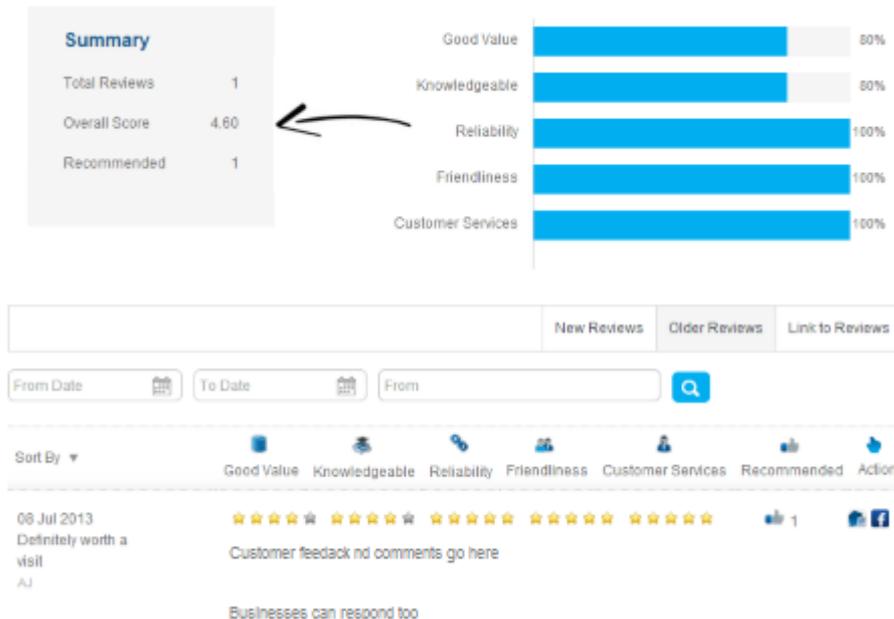
Think about it, when did you ever pay any attention to those glowing testimonials businesses put on their web sites to try and create trust, and does anyone really believe those Better/Best Business Guides where the 'recommended businesses' have all **paid for that privilege**.

Even better, if you do get a bit of negative feedback, at least you have the chance to respond publicly and share your version of events, unlike the bad word of mouth shared down the pub leaving you blissfully unaware of any problems.

So if you want to **broaden your customer base** via the internet, you should be open to using a Reputation or Ratings system, after all you don't have anything to hide do you?

Why not start building your reputation online today. **Every** business listed on MiQuando.com has access to a comprehensive and independent *Ratings and Reviews service* that is **completely free to use**.

The beauty of the MiQuando.com *Ratings and Reviews service* is the level of detail with the 5 star rating derived from ratings given for Value, Knowledge, Reliability, Friendliness and Service as shown below.



There is also the nice added feature where a reviewer can also say whether they “Recommend” this business. This is a very useful feature and something often missing from other review services.

The reviews can be quickly and easily sorted on any of the ratings, allowing people to instantly see the results for what is most important to them, whether that be value for money or reliability, or just sort on the Recommendations.

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