

Google cracks down on fake reviews for UK businesses

Article

The news: Google will start cracking down on fake reviews in the UK following an investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

The details: Google committed to taking “rigorous steps to detect and remove fake reviews,” including punitive measures for both individuals and businesses.

- **Users who repeatedly post fake or misleading testimonials on behalf of UK businesses will be banned** from posting new reviews and will have their existing reviews deleted—regardless of that person’s location.
- **Businesses that rely on fake reviews to boost their ratings will be flagged with prominent “warning” labels** on their Google profiles to let consumers know suspicious activity has been detected. These companies will be unable to receive any new reviews, and repeat offenders will have all reviews deleted for at least six months.
- **Google will also make it easier for consumers to report suspicious review activity** and whether businesses are offering incentives in exchange for positive reviews.

Why it matters: Online [reviews are critical to the customer journey](#), as the majority of shoppers rely on them when deciding whether to purchase a product or service.

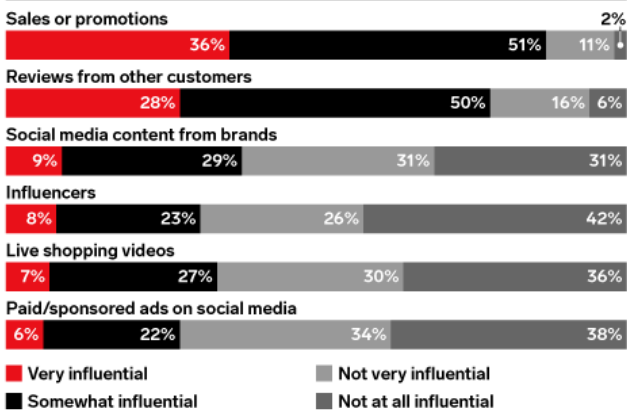
Fake reviews muddy the waters by pushing people to inferior products, which wastes consumers’ time and money.

Those reviews also penalize legitimate businesses and reduce trust in retailers—particularly online platforms like Google and **Amazon**, where such activity tends to proliferate.

While Google has taken steps to [crack down on fake reviews](#), stricter oversight from the CMA and a recent [ban on such activity from the Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) could force it—as well as Amazon, **Walmart**, and any online marketplace—to impose stricter safeguards to keep such fraudulent activity to a minimum.

Factors Influencing Online Purchase Decisions Among US Consumers, Sep 2024

% of respondents



Note: n=962 ages 18+

Source: AfterShip, "Shopper Sentiment Report 2024" conducted by Ipsos, Oct 28, 2024

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