



**Reviewflowz**



**cartelis**

# Google does not target reviews that name your staff.

## We checked 2.7 million reviews.

We tracked 4.9 million reviews on 9,048 Google Maps profiles every day for two weeks and watched 4,590 disappear. Here is what gets deleted, and what does not.

### ALSO IN THIS REPORT

**1.8x**

Reviews posted on a spike day are deleted 1.8 times more often

**0.5x**

A positive review with an owner reply is half as likely to be deleted

**7 days**

A new review's deletion risk peaks on day 6 and 7, then falls tenfold

**5.7%**

New one-star reviews deleted within a week

**5.6x**

First reviews are deleted 5.6 times more often than top Local Guides'

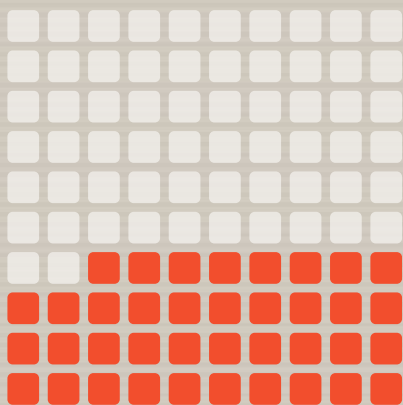
# Reviews that name your staff are deleted as often as any other

# 1.01x

deletion rate of reviews naming a person compared with reviews that do not, inside the same business at the same age

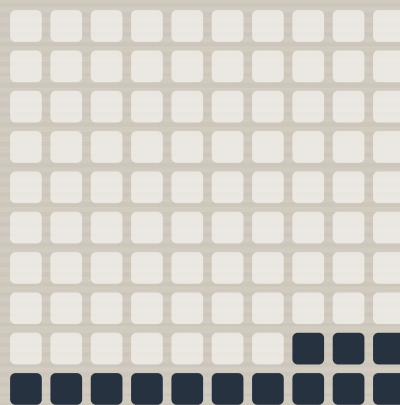
Out of 100 positive reviews, how many name someone

38%



US

13%



Europe

28% of positive reviews name a person. Since April 2026, Google's rule says businesses must not have staff request reviews that identify a staff member. Google does not enforce it.

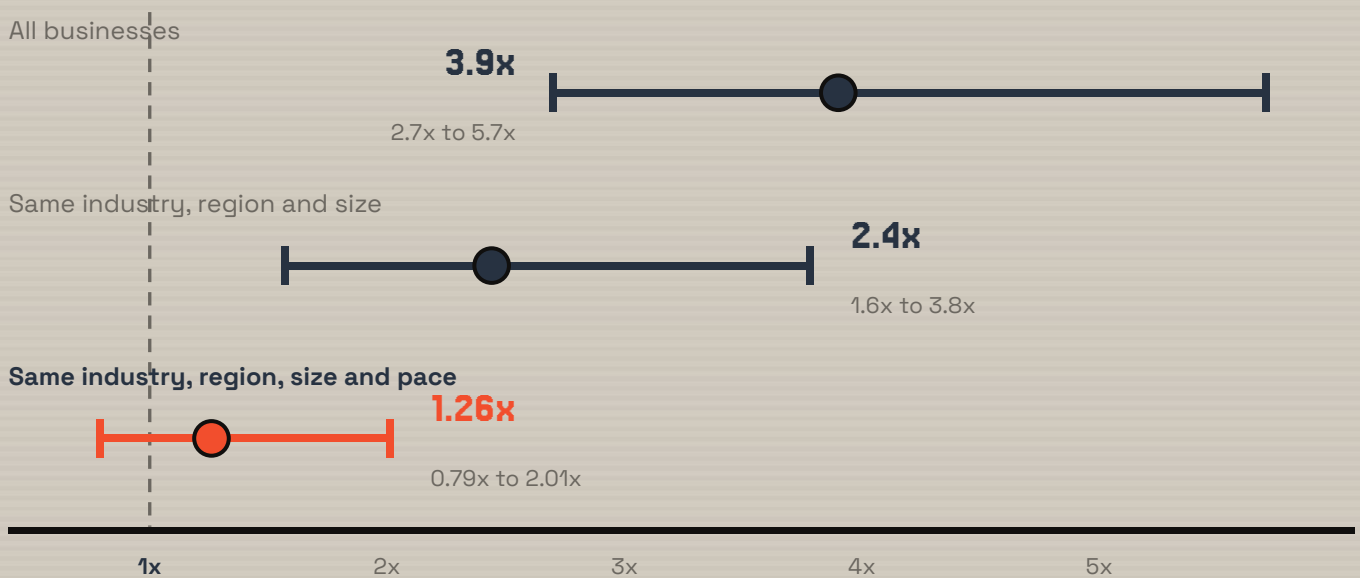
We compared 2.7 million positive reviews, those naming a person against those that do not, business by business, in every sector and both regions. In no test were named reviews deleted measurably more often.

The biggest purge we watched, four pest-control chains losing 1,199 reviews in two weeks, removed named reviews **slightly less often** than unnamed ones.

Name shares measured on 2.7 million positive reviews with text. Figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# Name-heavy businesses look like they lose more reviews at first. But factor in how fast they collect, and the difference disappears.

How many more reviews name-heavy businesses lose than businesses where names are rare



Each dot is the estimate, each line its margin of error. 1x = no difference: only the last one reaches it.

**Both rates are tiny.** The most name-heavy businesses lose 13 reviews in 10,000 over two weeks; the least name-heavy lose 3.

**Half of the gap is the sector:** home services, healthcare and automotive, where naming the technician is normal, are also where Google deletes most.

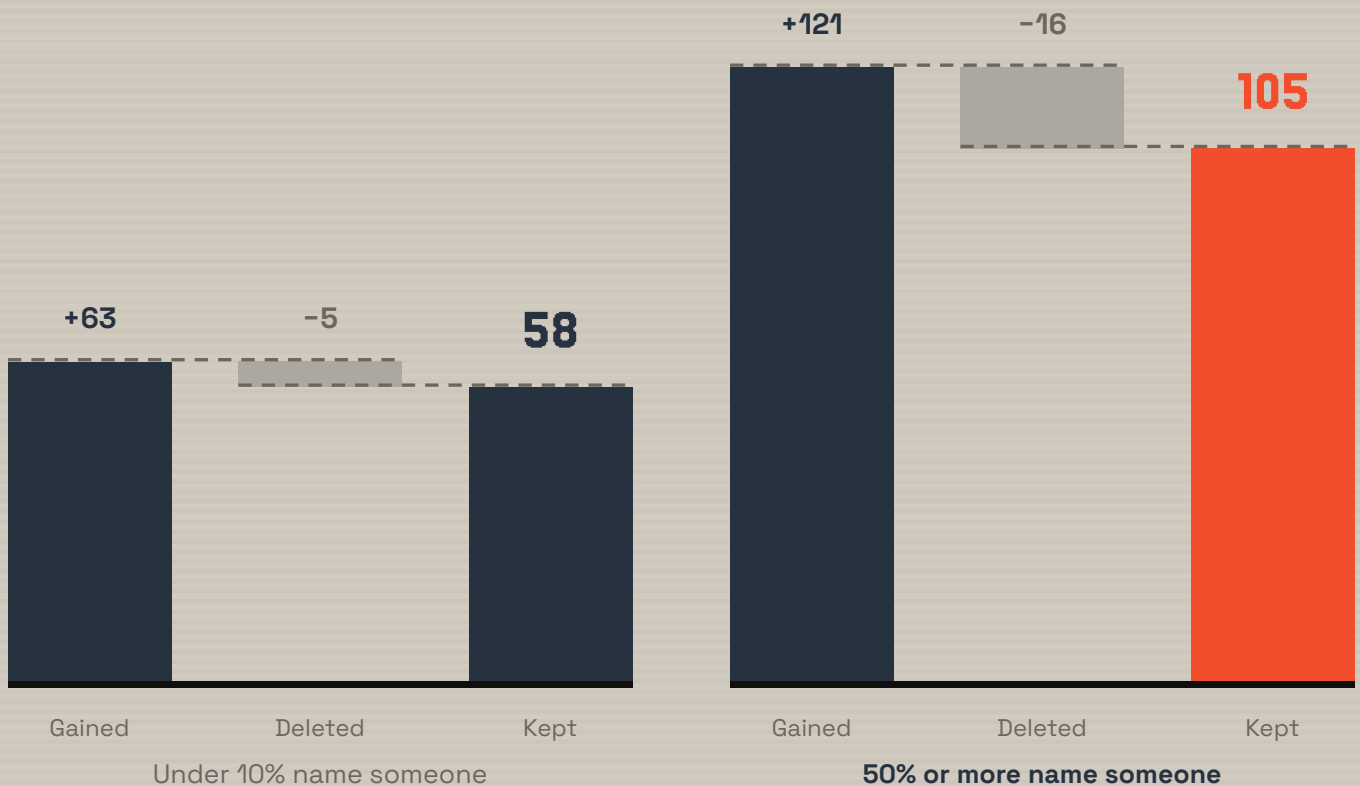
**The rest is speed and freshness.** Name-heavy businesses collect twice as fast (10 reviews a month against 5) and their reviews are twice as young, and a review under two weeks old is about 100 times more likely to be deleted than a three-year-old one. At equal speed and freshness, the difference is not measurable.

**Named reviews are not the ones Google removes. The gap comes from pace and freshness.**

Positive reviews live on August 11, followed for two weeks; name share measured per business with a person-name tagger; six brands hit by mass removals excluded.

# Those businesses collect 2.7 times more reviews and end the year twice as far ahead

From reviews gained to reviews kept, per business per year



Gained 2.7x at equal sector, region and size. Lost 2.4x. Net 2.0x.

**Even if they lose 2.4 times more, they gain 2.7 times more:** for every 100 reviews gained, 13 are lost against 8 for the others, and they end the year with **twice the net reviews**.

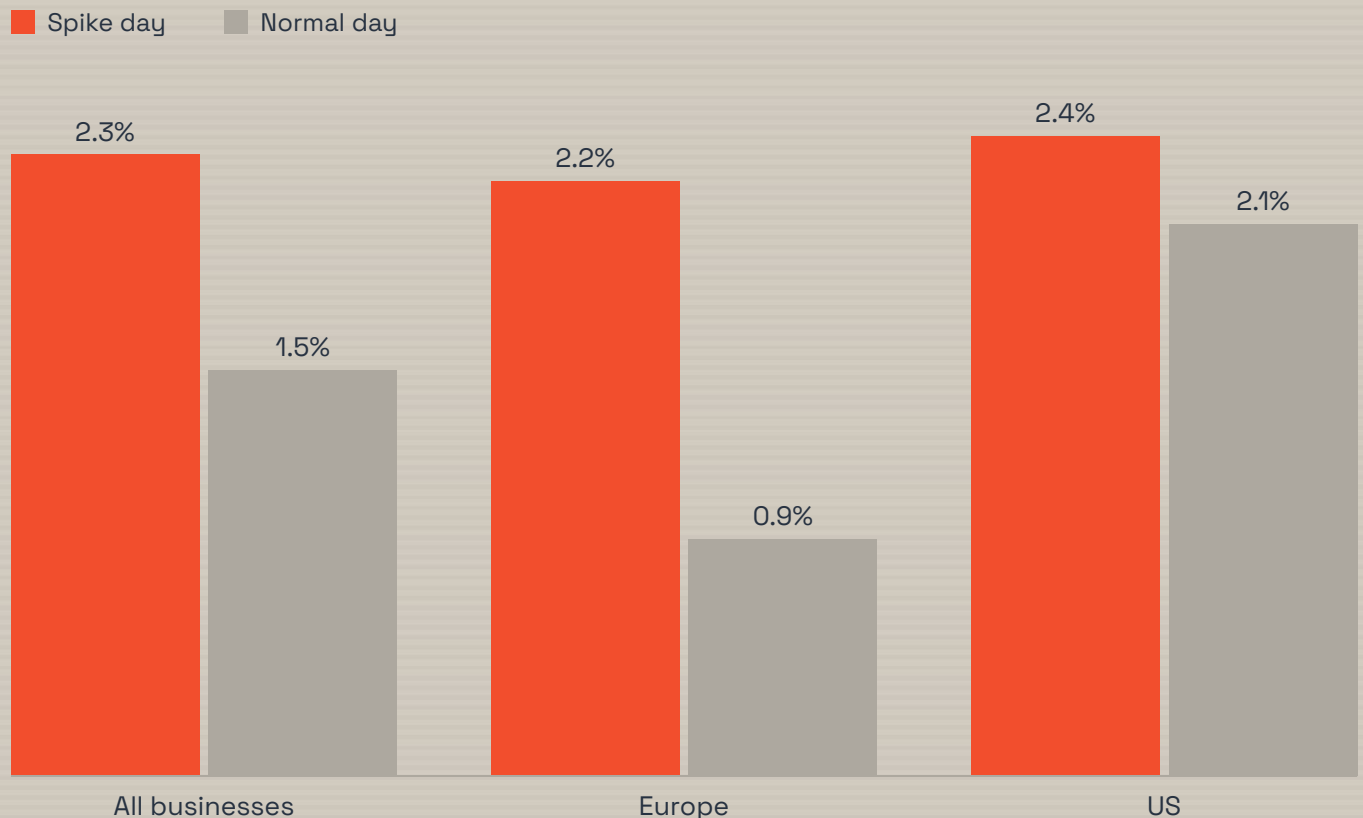
The typical business in the group collects **30% to 80% more reviews**, and a business whose own reviews start naming people collects more in those months.

**A review that names your staff is as safe as any other, and the businesses that get them end the year twice as far ahead.**

Reviews gained per year from the twelve months before the study; reviews lost per year from the two weeks observed, scaled to a year. Figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# A review posted on a spike day is deleted 1.8 times more often

Share of new positive reviews deleted within 7 days, posted on a spike day against a normal day



A **spike day** is a day the business receives at least 3 positive reviews and at least 4 times its daily average of the previous year.

At equal sector and size **the risk is 1.8x** (between 1.1x and 2.8x): 2.75x in Europe, 1.3x in the US, where the gap is within the margin of error.

A 3x busier month changes nothing: 1.1% of its recent reviews lost against 1.9% for a normal month. **Google reacts to the day, not the month.**

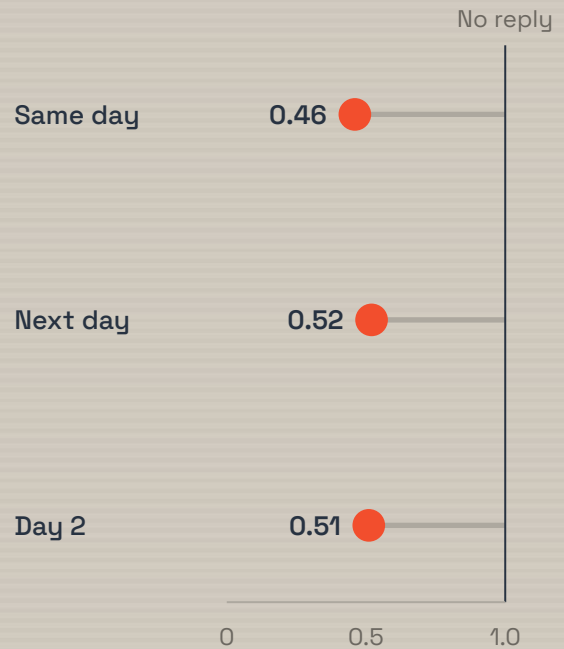
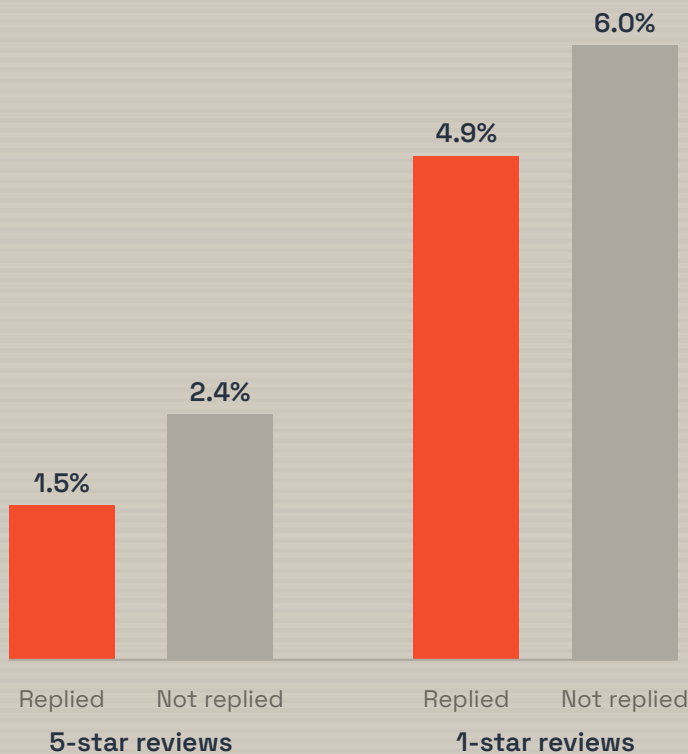
**Spread review requests over time. Follow up automatically after key moments in the customer lifecycle rather than sending requests in bulk every few weeks or months.**

Reviews posted August 7 to 17, followed for seven days; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# A positive review with an owner reply in its first two days is half as likely to be deleted

Share of new reviews deleted between day 3 and day 7, replied to by day 2 against not

Deletion odds by reply timing, 1.0 = no reply



**All well below 1.0:** the reply counts, its timing does not.

At equal sector and size, a replied positive review has **half the deletion risk** (between 0.3x and 0.8x).

A business' overall reply habit makes no difference; **the reply on that review does.**

**No measurable effect** on 1-star reviews.

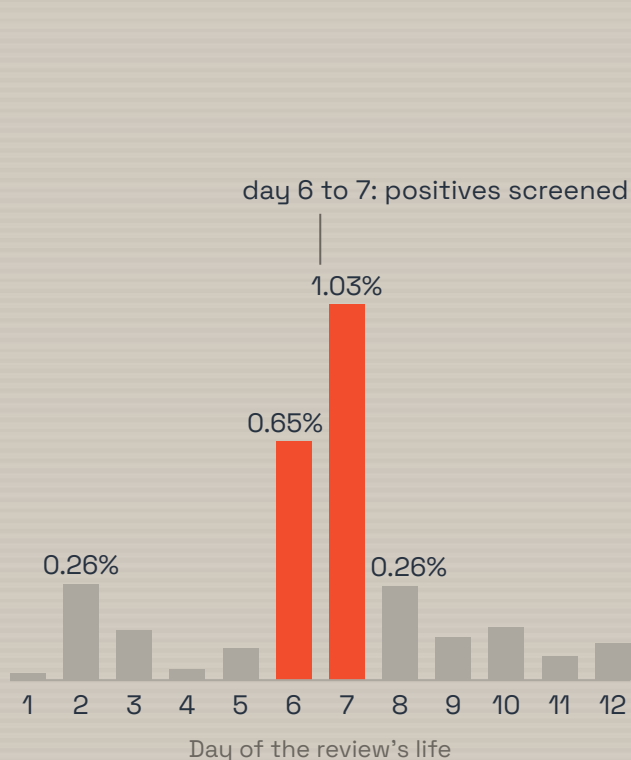
**Reply to every positive review within two days, before the day 6 screening pass.**

Association, not proven cause: flags and reply content are not observed. Figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

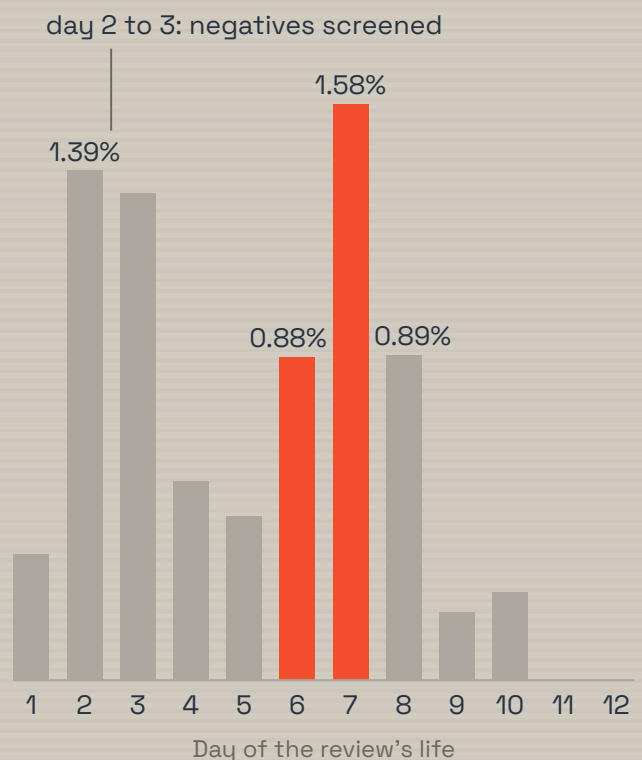
# A new review is on probation for seven days

Share of reviews still online that were deleted on each day of their life

## 4 and 5 stars



## 1 and 2 stars



After day 8 the daily risk **falls to about 0.1%**, a tenth of day 7.

**1.7% of positive reviews are gone by day 7, 2.5% by the end of the study;**  
**4.7% and 6.1% of negative ones.**

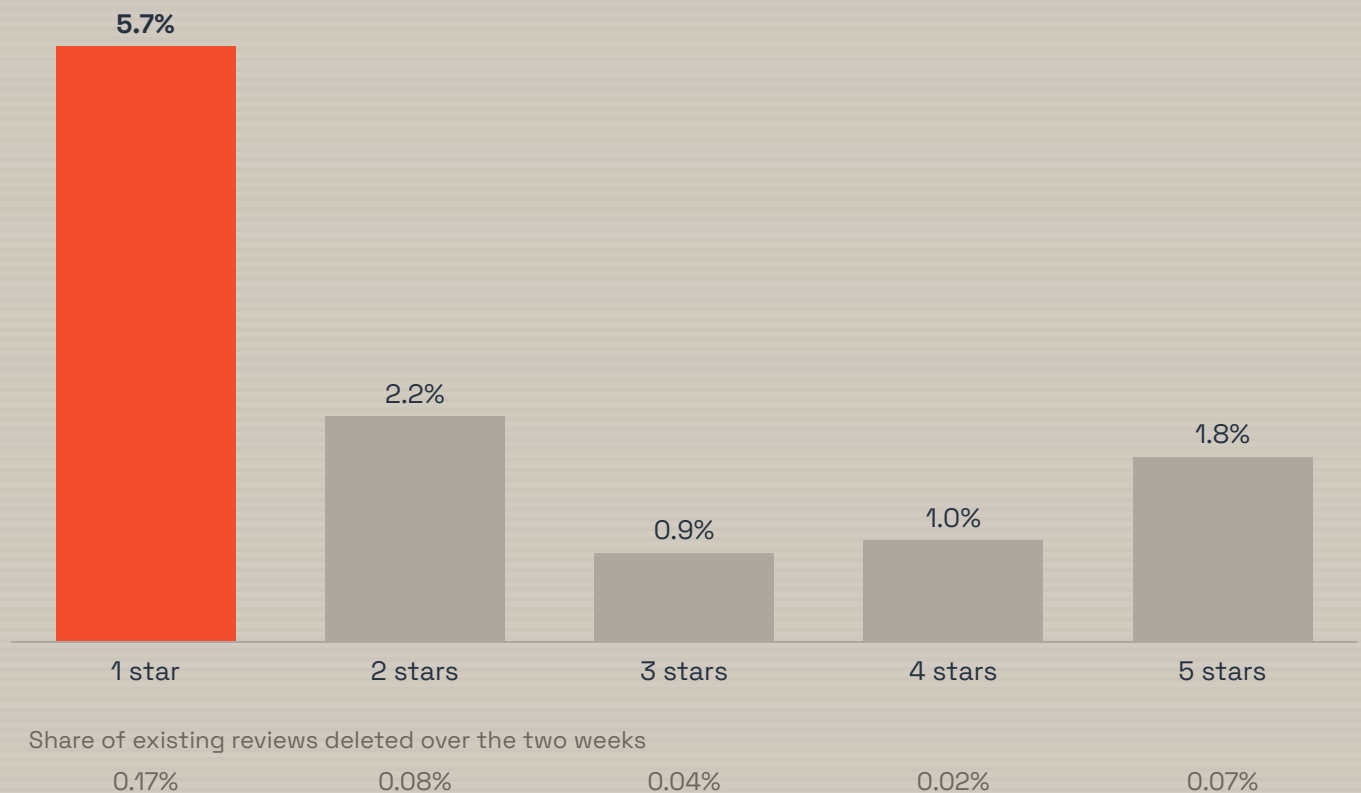
The peak sits on day 6 and 7 whatever the weekday of posting: **an age trigger, not a weekly batch.**

**Judge a review campaign on day 8, not on day 1.**

Reviews posted during the study, followed from their first day; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# Google deletes the extremes, and 1-star reviews most

Share of new reviews deleted within 7 days, by star rating



Inside the same business, a 1-star review is deleted **3.9 times more often** than a 4-star one; a 5-star 1.15 times, within the margin of error.

1 and 2 star reviews are **9% of all reviews and 20% of deletions**. In the US, 6.3% of new ones are gone within a week.

**Deletions barely move your rating.**

**For businesses that lost 5 or more reviews, it changed by 0.01 star on average.**

Reviews posted August 7 to 17, followed for seven days; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

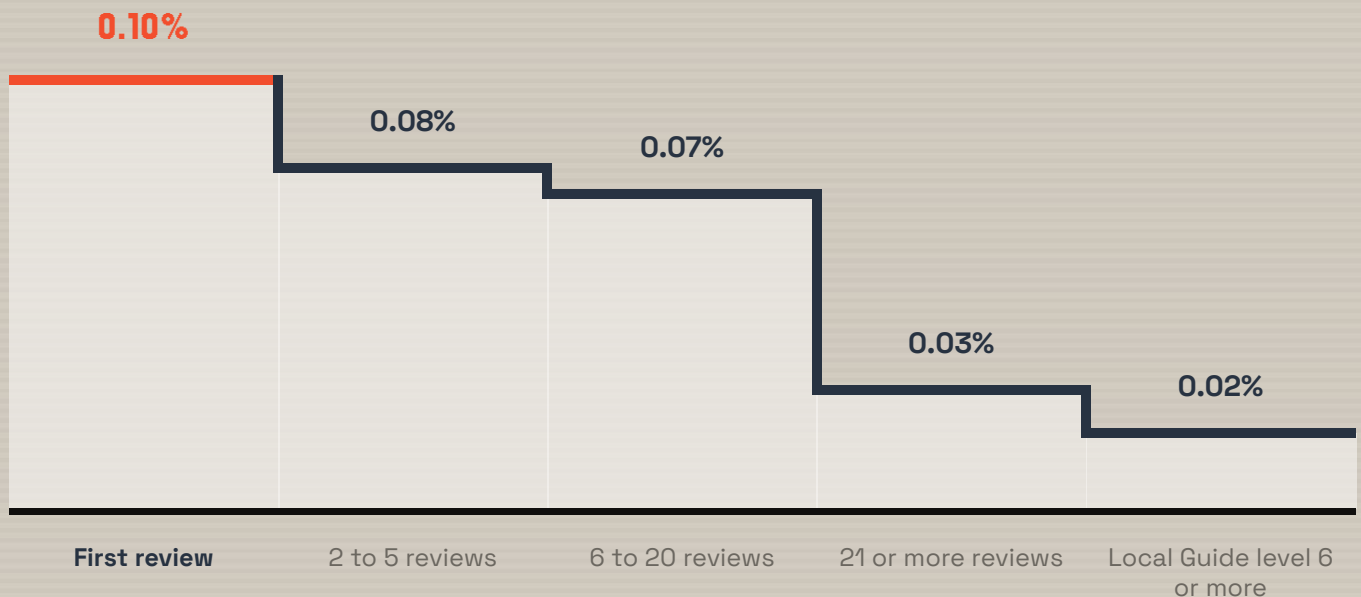
# Who wrote the review matters more than what it says

**5.6x**

**more deletions for a first review than for a top Local Guide's**

0.10% of first reviews were deleted in two weeks, against 0.02% for Local Guides of level 6 or more.

Share of existing reviews deleted over the two weeks, by the reviewer's history



First-review accounts write **14% of reviews** and take 22% of deletions. Inside the same business a first review is 1.4 times more likely to go, a Local Guide level 6 review 0.6 times.

**Where the author could be traced, one deletion in five was Google removing a whole account.**

**Ask customers who already review on Google Maps.**

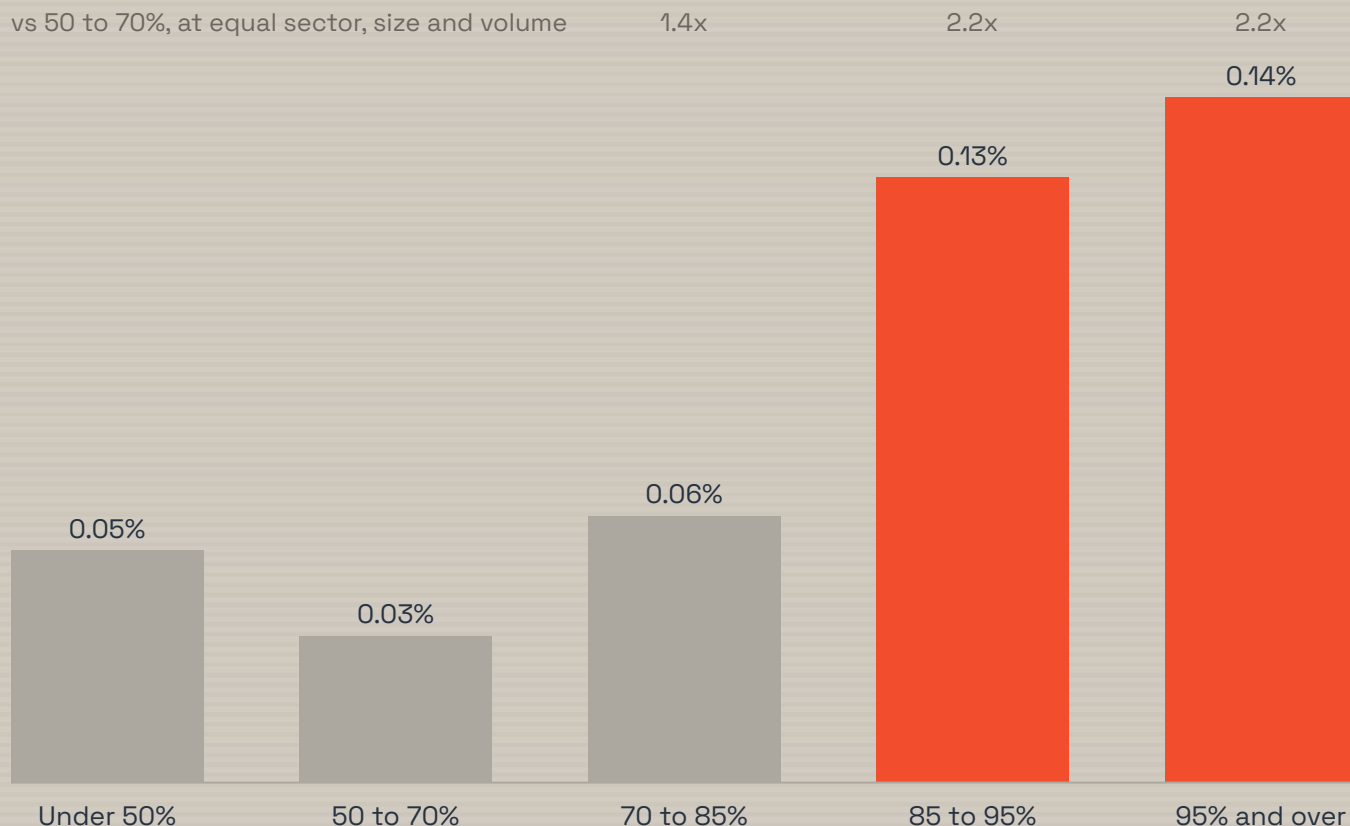
**A top Local Guide's review is deleted 5.6 times less often than a first review.**

Reviews live on August 11, followed for two weeks; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# Profiles with more than 85% of five stars lose twice as many reviews

Share of existing reviews deleted over the two weeks, by the business' share of 5-star reviews

vs 50 to 70%, at equal sector, size and volume



In profiles rated 4.8 and above, even a 4-star review is deleted **9 times more often** than in profiles under 4.5.

**The gap holds** when the most-hit 1% of businesses are set aside (1.5x to 1.7x).

**A 4.9 built on 97% five-stars is a risk profile.**  
**Mixed ratings, replies and photos read as authentic.**

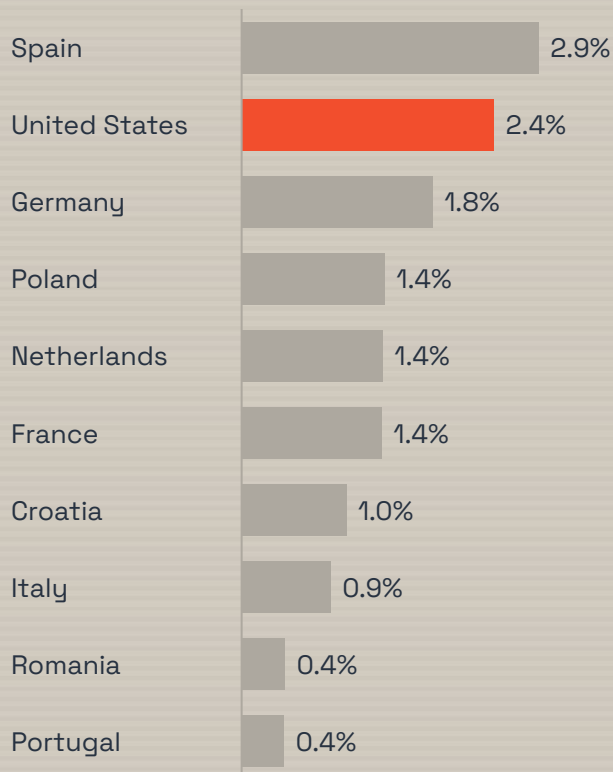
Reviews live on August 11, followed for two weeks; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# Home services and healthcare in the US lose five times more than hotels and restaurants

Share of new positive reviews deleted within 7 days, by sector and region

|                      | Europe | US   |
|----------------------|--------|------|
| Home services        | 3.3%   | 4.1% |
| Healthcare           | 0.6%   | 3.4% |
| Wellness and fitness | 1.6%   | 3.0% |
| Travel               | 1.0%   | 2.5% |
| Automotive           | 1.9%   | 1.1% |
| Food and beverage    | 0.7%   | 1.0% |
| Hospitality          | 0.9%   | 0.4% |

Share of new reviews deleted within 7 days



13% of businesses lost a review in two weeks;  
the top 1% of businesses carry **half of all deletions**.

A business hit in week one had a **33% chance of being hit again**  
in week two, against 6.5% otherwise.

Reviews posted August 7 to 17, followed for seven days; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# Five moves that keep reviews on your profile

1

## **Judge campaigns on day 8**

The day 6 to 7 pass is where positive reviews go; after it the daily risk falls tenfold.

2

## **Reply to every positive review within two days**

Same day or day 2, a reply halves the deletion risk.

3

## **Never let a campaign land on one day**

A spike day is 1.8 times the risk; a busy month is fine.

4

## **Ask customers who already review on Google Maps**

A first review is deleted 5.6 times more often than a top Local Guide's.

5

## **Ask customers to name who served them**

Google's rule says not to, but it does not enforce it: named reviews are as safe as any other.

# 9,048 businesses, half in the US and half in Europe, sampled by brand so no chain is cherry-picked

Businesses by industry

|                      | Europe | US  |
|----------------------|--------|-----|
| Automotive           | 717    | 711 |
| Food and beverage    | 713    | 715 |
| Healthcare           | 714    | 714 |
| Home services        | 714    | 714 |
| Hospitality          | 726    | 702 |
| Travel               | 240    | 240 |
| Wellness and fitness | 716    | 712 |

By group size

|                   | Europe | US    |
|-------------------|--------|-------|
| Single location   | 1,668  | 1,668 |
| Group of 4 to 10  | 1,427  | 1,429 |
| Group of 20 to 50 | 1,445  | 1,411 |

Locations by country

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| United States      | 4,508 |
| France             | 961   |
| Germany            | 904   |
| Spain              | 551   |
| Italy              | 522   |
| Netherlands        | 196   |
| Denmark            | 134   |
| Greece             | 116   |
| Norway             | 112   |
| Poland             | 107   |
| Switzerland        | 101   |
| Portugal           | 97    |
| 29 other countries | 739   |

231

median reviews per business

532

mean

4.9M

reviews tracked

41

countries

Businesses were drawn from open map data in seven industries and three group sizes, **a brand entering with every location it operates**, then matched to their Google profile. Every review of every profile was re-crawled daily from August 11 to 24, 2026.

Travel has single locations only; the UK is excluded; six brands hit by mass removals are shown separately.

# US profiles lose twice as many reviews as European ones, and US home services six times more

Share of existing reviews deleted over the two weeks, by industry, region and group size

|                                 | Europe          |                   |                    | US              |                   |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|                                 | Single location | 4 to 10 locations | 20 to 50 locations | Single location | 4 to 10 locations | 20 to 50 locations |
| Automotive                      | 0.05%           | 0.04%             | 0.04%              | 0.05%           | 0.07%             | 0.08%              |
| Food and beverage               | 0.05%           | 0.03%             | 0.03%              | 0.02%           | 0.06%             | 0.02%              |
| Healthcare                      | 0.05%           | 0.07%             | 0.04%              | 0.11%           | 0.14%             | 0.11%              |
| Home services                   | 0.04%           | 0.08%             | 0.02%              | 0.16%           | 0.34%             | 0.24%              |
| Hospitality                     | 0.03%           | 0.03%             | 0.05%              | 0.03%           | 0.03%             | 0.03%              |
| Travel<br>single locations only | 0.11%           |                   |                    | 0.09%           |                   |                    |
| Wellness and fitness            | 0.06%           | 0.06%             | 0.07%              | 0.16%           | 0.08%             | 0.10%              |

**0.04%**

Europe, all profiles

**0.09%**

US, all profiles

**0.11%**

US, 4 to 10 locations

**13% of businesses lost a review in two weeks:** 12% in Europe, 14% in the US.

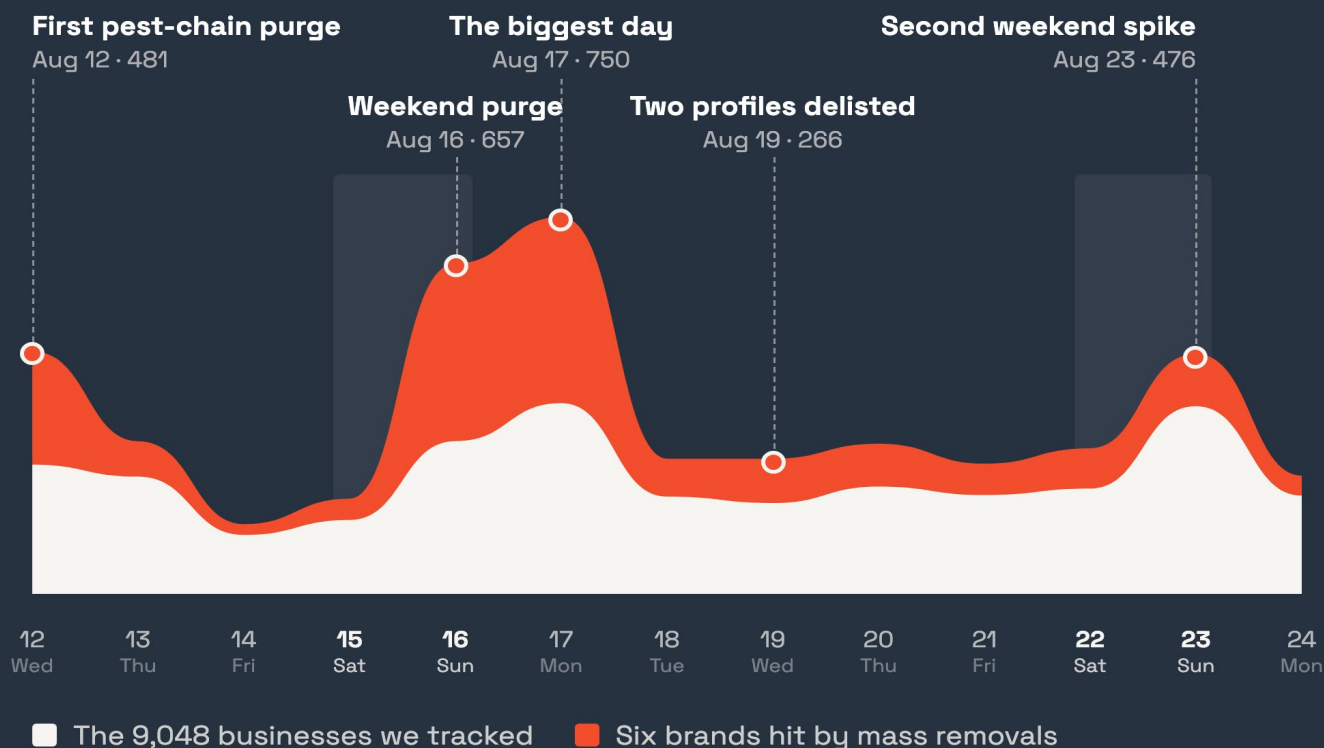
The top 1% of businesses carry **half of all deletions**. **US groups of 4 to 10 locations** are the most exposed segment; European food and beverage groups and US hotels the least.

Reviews live on August 11, followed for two weeks; figures exclude six brands hit by mass removals.

# Two weeks inside Google's machine

**4,590** deletions caught

Aug 12 to Aug 24



**A review bomb cleaned up:** 297 one-star reviews posted on two Spanish gyms on August 1 and 2; 295 removed by August 16.

**A decade of negatives wiped:** a German bus tour operator lost 46 one-star reviews from 2018 to 2026 in four days.

**The chains Google purged:** 4 US pest-control chains lost 1,199 positive reviews in 2 weeks, about 1/4 of them one week after they were posted (310)

**Profiles that vanished:** 2 of 9,048 businesses were delisted entirely.

**9,048**  
profiles

**4.9M**  
reviews

**14**  
daily crawls

**4,590**  
deletions

**7**  
industries

**2**  
regions

**Method:** businesses drawn from open map data and matched to Google; every review re-crawled daily; a deletion is a review gone from a complete listing; six brands with mass removals shown separately; rates compared inside the same business and at equal sector, size and volume; associations, not proven causes; flags, reports and author self-deletions are not observed. Data preparation and analysis with Cartelis.

Reviewflowz tracks, replies to and protects your reviews. [reviewflowz.com](https://reviewflowz.com)

# What Google deletes: the full report

Reviewflowz ran this study with Cartelis, a Paris data and CRM consultancy. The first part of this document showed what we found. This part shows how we found it: how the panel was built, how a deletion is measured, every result with its size and its margin of error, the tests that came back empty, and what this study cannot tell you.

## Findings at a glance

1. **1.95% of new reviews are gone within seven days.** Existing reviews lose about 1.4% a year. Deletions of reviews of every age equalled 10% of the new reviews published.
2. **A new review is on probation for seven days.** Negatives are screened on days 2 and 3, positives on days 6 and 7; after day 8 the daily risk falls tenfold.
3. **Google removes the extremes, negatives first.** 5.7% of new one-star reviews are gone within a week, against 1.8% of five-star and 0.9% of three-star reviews.
4. **The account matters more than the text.** First reviews are deleted 5.6 times more often than those of top Local Guides; where the author could be traced, one deletion in five was Google removing a whole account.
5. **A reply in the first two days halves the risk of a positive review, whatever the day.**
6. **Spike days nearly double the risk; busy months do not.**
7. **Near-perfect profiles lose twice as many reviews** at equal sector, size and volume.
8. **Naming staff is not a deletion risk.** Inside the same business, a review naming a person is deleted at the same rate as one that does not (1.01x), and name-heavy businesses end the year with twice the net reviews.
9. **Deletions are concentrated.** 13% of businesses lost a review in two weeks; 1% of businesses carry half of all deletions.
10. **The US loses twice as much as Europe,** and US home services six times more than the least affected segments.

## Contents

1. How we built the study, 2. The state of deletions, 3. When: the first seven days, 4. What: star ratings and content, 5. Who: reviewers and accounts, 6. What the business does: replies and pace, 7. Names in reviews: the rule and the review-level evidence, 8. Names in reviews: the business level, 9. Where: sectors, countries and concentration, 10. What did not hold up, and the limits of this study, 11. Methods and definitions, About Reviewflowz and Cartelis.

# 1. How we built the study

**The panel.** 9,048 Google Maps profiles: 4,508 in the United States and 4,540 in 40 European countries (the United Kingdom is excluded). Seven industries (automotive, food and beverage, healthcare, home services, hospitality, travel, wellness and fitness), three group sizes (single locations, groups of 4 to 10, groups of 20 to 50), about 238 profiles per cell.

**Sampled by brand, not by location.** Candidates come from open map data (Overture Maps). Locations are grouped into brands by their Wikidata id, website domain or name. A brand is drawn at random and enters with every location it operates in the US and Europe, so no chain is cherry-picked and no chain is partly sampled. Groups of 2 to 3 and 11 to 19 locations are left out to keep the size buckets clean; groups over 50 locations are excluded.

**Matched to Google strictly.** Each location is resolved on Google Places by name and address and kept only if the match sits under 100 metres from the map coordinates, with a name similarity above 0.8, on an operational business. A brand enters only if its first resolved location has between 100 and 10,000 reviews; its other locations stay in whatever their count.

**Measured every day for two weeks.** Every review of every profile was collected each morning from 11 to 24 August 2026: 14 complete crawls, 4,876,933 reviews. A deletion is a review present in one complete listing and absent from the next complete one. A crawl that did not reach the end of a listing does not count, so a missing page is never mistaken for a deletion. 4,590 deletions were observed.

**Two ways to count.** New reviews: the 25,895 reviews published from 7 to 17 August, each followed for seven days, which gives first-week rates. Existing reviews: every review online on 11 August, followed to 24 August, which gives two-week rates on the whole stock.

**Six brands set apart.** Four US pest-control chains (102 locations) and two Spanish gyms were hit by mass removals during the study: 1,568 deletions, a third of the total. Left in, they would drive every average. They are excluded from every figure unless stated, and described as cases in section 9. Of the 8,997 profiles crawled completely, 104 belong to the six brands and 3 dropped out: the base is 8,890 businesses, 4.59 million reviews, 3,022 deletions.

|                            | Europe             | US    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Profiles                   | 4,540              | 4,508 |
| Single locations           | 1,668              | 1,668 |
| Groups of 4 to 10          | 1,427              | 1,429 |
| Groups of 20 to 50         | 1,445              | 1,411 |
| Median reviews per profile | 231 (both regions) |       |

Travel has single locations only: groups of travel operators are too rare to fill the larger cells.

## 2. The state of deletions

**Deletions equal to 10% of new reviews.** Over the two weeks, the panel published new reviews and Google removed reviews of every age. Removals equal 9.9% of what was published (13.9% with the six brands). For positive reviews the figure is 11.6% in the US and 5.3% in Europe; for negative reviews 22.9% and 19.0%. This ratio sets deletions of every age against new reviews: it is not the share of new reviews deleted, which is 1.95%.

**New reviews: 1.95% gone within a week.** 1.69% of new positive reviews are gone by day 7 and 2.50% by the end of the study; for negative reviews, 4.73% and 6.12%.

**Existing reviews: about 1.4% a year.** Over two weeks Google removed 0.055% of the reviews online on 11 August. If that pace held, a profile would lose about 1.4% of its reviews a year, and about 0.75% of those older than three months.

**Most deletions hit young reviews, but not all.** Half of all deletions (48.6%) hit reviews under 30 days old. A third hit reviews over a year old, only some of them through whole accounts being removed (section 5). The median deleted review is about a month old.

**Your rating does not move.** Google removes more one-star than five-star reviews, so deletions mostly cancel out on the average. Among the 116 businesses that lost 5 or more reviews, the average rating moved by 0.01 star.

**Two profiles vanished.** 2 of the 9,048 profiles were delisted entirely during the study.

| Age of the review       | Share of all deletions | Share of reviews of that age deleted |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Posted during the study | 17.6%                  | 1.89%                                |
| 0 to 7 days             | 15.4%                  | 2.46%                                |
| 8 to 14 days            | 9.2%                   | 1.71%                                |
| 15 to 30 days           | 6.4%                   | 0.53%                                |
| 31 to 90 days           | 9.8%                   | 0.24%                                |
| 91 days to 1 year       | 9.9%                   | 0.06%                                |
| 1 to 3 years            | 15.5%                  | 0.04%                                |
| Over 3 years            | 16.2%                  | 0.02%                                |

A review under two weeks old is about 100 times more likely to be deleted than a review over three years old.

### 3. When: the first seven days

**The probation window.** We followed every review published during the study from its first day and counted, for each day of its life, the share of reviews still online that were deleted that day. The risk is low on day 1, rises on days 2 and 3, dips, then peaks on days 6 and 7. After day 8 it falls to about 0.1% a day, a tenth of the day-7 peak.

**Two passes, two targets.** Negative reviews are screened first: 1.39% and 1.33% of the one and two-star reviews still online are deleted on days 2 and 3. Positive reviews are screened later: 0.65% on day 6 and 1.03% on day 7. Negatives get a second look at the same time (0.88% and 1.58%).

**An age trigger, not a weekly batch.** If Google ran a weekly clean-up, reviews posted on a Monday and on a Friday would be deleted on the same weekday. They are not: the peak follows the age of the review. Reviews posted on a Monday peak on day 6, those posted on a Friday on day 7 or 8. Without the six brands, 47% of the positive reviews deleted in their first 13 days go on day 6 or 7 (56% with them).

**What it means.** A campaign looks better on day 1 than it is. Count what is still online on day 8. A reply has to land before day 6 to be in place for the main pass (section 6).

#### Share of reviews still online deleted on each day of their life

| Day     | Positive (4 and 5 stars) | Negative (1 and 2 stars) | Reviews followed that day |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1       | 0.02%                    | 0.35%                    | 30,376                    |
| 2       | 0.26%                    | 1.39%                    | 28,341                    |
| 3       | 0.14%                    | 1.33%                    | 26,000                    |
| 4       | 0.03%                    | 0.55%                    | 23,454                    |
| 5       | 0.09%                    | 0.45%                    | 21,150                    |
| 6       | 0.65%                    | 0.88%                    | 18,731                    |
| 7       | 1.03%                    | 1.58%                    | 16,296                    |
| 8       | 0.26%                    | 0.89%                    | 13,896                    |
| 9 to 12 | 0.07% to 0.15%           | 0% to 0.24%              | 4,509 to 11,728           |

Fewer reviews are followed each day because reviews posted late in the study have fewer days left to observe. Days 11 and 12 rest on few negative reviews.

## 4. What: star ratings and review content

**A U-shape.** Google deletes the extremes. In their first week, 5.7% of new one-star reviews are gone, 2.2% of two-star, 0.85% of three-star, 0.97% of four-star and 1.8% of five-star reviews. The same shape holds on existing reviews over two weeks.

**Inside the same business, four and five stars are equally safe.** Comparing reviews of the same business at the same age, a one-star review is deleted 3.9 times more often than a four-star one (3.1x to 5.0x), a two-star 2.9 times, a three-star 1.9 times. A five-star review is deleted 1.15 times as often as a four-star one, within the margin of error (0.95x to 1.38x). The extra five-star deletions in the raw numbers come from which businesses get hit (section 9), not from the five stars themselves.

**Negatives are a bigger share of what goes.** One and two-star reviews are 9% of all reviews and 20% of deletions. In the US, 6.3% of new negative reviews are gone within a week; in US automotive, 10.2%.

**The text itself barely matters.** Inside the same business, review length makes no difference (1.04x). Long reviews are deleted more often in the raw numbers only because they are typical of the businesses that solicit reviews. Phrases like “highly recommend” look twice as risky in the raw numbers and make no difference inside a business (0.97x): they mark solicited reviews, they do not trigger deletions. Reviews with a photo are deleted less often (1.1% against 1.8% in the first week), but the gap shrinks to 0.76x to 0.83x with controls and stays within the margin of error.

### New reviews deleted within seven days, by star rating

| Stars | Share deleted within 7 days | Ratio to a 4-star review, same business and age |
|-------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1     | 5.7%                        | 3.9x (3.1x to 5.0x)                             |
| 2     | 2.2%                        | 2.9x (2.2x to 3.8x)                             |
| 3     | 0.85%                       | 1.9x (1.4x to 2.5x)                             |
| 4     | 0.97%                       | 1.0x (reference)                                |
| 5     | 1.8%                        | 1.15x (0.95x to 1.38x)                          |

## 5. Who: reviewers and accounts

**First reviews.** Accounts writing their first review produce 14% of reviews and 22% of deletions. In the first week, 1.7% of new positive first reviews are gone, against 0.5% for reviewers with 100 reviews or more. Inside the same business, a first review is 1.44 times more likely to go than one from a reviewer with 21 or more reviews (1.22x to 1.70x).

**Experienced reviewers last.** Reviews from Local Guides of level 6 or more are deleted 0.59 times as often as those from levels 1 to 3, inside the same business (0.50x to 0.70x). They are safer, not untouchable.

**Whole accounts go at once.** Among the 334 deleted reviews whose author had other reviews in the panel, 64 (19%) disappeared together with every other review of that author, 52 of them on the same day across different businesses. About one in five of these deletions is Google removing an account, not judging a review: only 0.1% of authors with two or more reviews in the panel lost any review at all. Some old reviews go this way: 39 of the 958 deleted reviews older than a year left together with every other review of their author.

**What it means.** There isn't much point telling your customers to create a Google account to leave a review. It's often best to ask them to review you on another platform

### Existing reviews deleted over the two weeks, by the reviewer's history

| Reviewer                    | Share of reviews deleted | Reviews   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| First review                | 0.10%                    | 625,995   |
| 2 to 5 reviews              | 0.08%                    | 1,012,831 |
| 6 to 20 reviews             | 0.07%                    | 1,232,274 |
| 21 or more reviews          | 0.03%                    | 1,700,466 |
| Local Guide level 6 or more | 0.02%                    | 1,067,709 |

## 6. What the business does: replies and pace

**A reply halves the risk of a positive review.** Among new five-star reviews, 1.5% of those with an owner reply by day 2 were deleted between day 3 and day 7, against 2.4% of those without. At equal sector and size the odds are halved (0.51x, 0.31x to 0.84x). Within those two days the timing does not matter: same day 0.46x, next day 0.52x, day 2 0.51x. Later replies cannot be compared fairly, since a review has to survive to receive one. On the whole stock, inside the same business, a replied review is deleted 0.72 times as often (0.60x to 0.87x).

**The reply on the review counts, not the habit.** A business that replies to everything is not protected as such: comparing businesses that reply to none of their reviews with those that reply to three quarters or more gives 1.0x. What matters is the reply on that review. Replies make no measurable difference on one-star reviews (4.9% against 6.0%, within the margin of error).

**Spike days nearly double the risk.** We call a spike day a day on which a business receives at least 3 positive reviews and at least 4 times its daily average of the previous year. Reviews posted on a spike day are deleted 2.3% of the time within a week, against 1.5% on other days; at equal sector and size, 1.8x (1.1x to 2.8x). The effect is strongest in Europe (2.2% against 0.9%); in the US the gap is small (2.4% against 2.1%).

**It is the count on the day, not the ratio.** The risk rises with the number of reviews a business gets on the same day: 1.15% for a lone review, 1.65% for two, 1.9% for three or four, 3.1% for five to nine. Large chains with ten or more reviews a day (1.8%) have a high natural flow and are not penalised for it.

**Busy months do not count.** Businesses whose monthly volume tripled lost 1.1% of their recent reviews, against 1.9% in normal months. Google reacts to the day, not the month.

### New positive reviews deleted within seven days, by the number of positive reviews the business

| Reviews that day | Share deleted within 7 days | Reviews |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 1                | 1.15%                       | 9,110   |
| 2                | 1.65%                       | 4,300   |
| 3 or 4           | 1.89%                       | 3,867   |
| 5 to 9           | 3.08%                       | 2,921   |
| 10 or more       | 1.79%                       | 2,233   |

Replies and pace are associations: we do not observe flags or what a reply says.

## 7. Names in reviews: the rule and the review-level evidence

**The rule.** Since April 2026, Google’s review policy says businesses must not direct staff to request reviews that include specific content, “including content that identifies a staff member”. Customers naming staff on their own remains allowed. How a review was requested is invisible from outside; what is visible is whether reviews that name people survive.

**How common they are.** We detected person names in 2,675,861 positive reviews with text, using a name-recognition model tested blind on 1,000 reviews (0.66% false detections, 93% of names found). 28% of positive reviews name a person: 38% in the US, 13% in Europe, from about 7% in hospitality to 66% in US home services. Three quarters of those names recur in three or more reviews of the same business: they are staff.

**The test.** Named reviews look riskier in raw numbers, 1.32 times more often deleted, because they sit in businesses and periods that lose more reviews. The fair comparison is inside the same business, at the same age. We ran it fifteen ways; twelve are shown below.

**The result.** Every estimate is close to 1.0, and none is significant. The tightest one is 1.01x (0.91x to 1.11x): it rules out any increase above 11%. A staff-like name, a brand-new review, the US alone, Europe alone, the most name-heavy sectors: no difference. In the biggest purge we observed, four pest-control chains losing 1,199 positive reviews in two weeks, named reviews were removed slightly less often than unnamed ones (0.87x).

| Comparison                                       | Ratio | 95% interval   |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| All reviews, no controls                         | 1.32x | 1.23x to 1.42x |
| Same business, same age, same length (main test) | 1.01x | 0.91x to 1.11x |
| Same, on the cleaned study base                  | 1.07x | 0.95x to 1.21x |
| Staff-like name (recurs in 3+ reviews)           | 1.09x | 0.96x to 1.24x |
| One-off name                                     | 1.01x | 0.85x to 1.20x |
| Reviews under 30 days old, staff-like name       | 1.02x | 0.86x to 1.21x |
| First week, same business                        | 1.01x | 0.85x to 1.21x |
| First week, staff-like name                      | 1.02x | 0.79x to 1.32x |
| United States only                               | 1.08x | 0.94x to 1.23x |
| Europe only                                      | 1.10x | 0.84x to 1.46x |
| Home services and healthcare                     | 1.02x | 0.87x to 1.21x |
| Inside the four purged pest-control chains       | 0.87x | 0.74x to 1.03x |

## 8. Names in reviews: the business level

**What it looks like.** Businesses whose reviews mostly name staff lose more reviews: 0.13% of their reviews over two weeks when half or more of their positive reviews name a person, against 0.03% when fewer than 10% do (3.9x, 2.7x to 5.7x). Both rates are tiny: do the names explain the gap?

**What explains it.** Half of the raw gap is the sector: home services, healthcare and automotive, where naming the technician is normal, are also where Google deletes most. At equal sector, region and group size the gap is 2.4x (1.6x to 3.8x). The rest is speed and freshness: name-heavy businesses collect twice as fast (10 reviews a month against 5) and their reviews are twice as young, and a review under 30 days old is far more likely to be deleted than an old one. At equal volume, pace and freshness, the difference is no longer measurable (1.26x, 0.79x to 2.01x), and it stays there when star mix, review length, replies, photos and the share of first-time reviewers are added.

**Where the remaining losses sit.** When Google hits a name-heavy business, it removes named and unnamed reviews alike (0.98x inside the same business). In the US, 6.4% of name-heavy businesses lost at least one recent positive review, against 1.3% of those under 10%; about half of that gap is their higher review volume. None lost all their recent reviews, and only 8 lost a quarter or more. In Europe the difference is not measurable (3.3% against 2.3%). Nothing in the reviews themselves explains which businesses were hit: not the names, the stars, the share of first-time reviewers or the wording.

**What names are worth.** Businesses whose reviews name staff collect far more reviews. At equal sector, region and size they gain 2.7 times more reviews a year (2.2x to 3.2x), lose more, and end the year with twice the net reviews. For every 100 reviews gained they lose 13, against 8 for the others. The typical business in the group collects 30% to 80% more reviews, and a business whose own reviews start naming people collects more in those months: +36% year on year for the median business whose name share rose by 25 points. Healthcare is the exception, where name-heavy businesses collect fewer reviews.

### Reviews per business per year, by the share of positive reviews naming a person

| Share naming a person | Gained | Lost | Net | Lost per 100 gained |
|-----------------------|--------|------|-----|---------------------|
| Under 10%             | 63     | 5    | 58  | 8                   |
| 10% to 25%            | 84     | 8    | 76  | 10                  |
| 25% to 50%            | 111    | 23   | 88  | 20                  |
| 50% or more           | 121    | 16   | 105 | 13                  |

Gained: reviews of the twelve months before the study. Lost: deletions of the two weeks, scaled to a year. Averages per business.

## 9. Where: sectors, countries and concentration

**Sectors.** In their first week, 3.9% of new positive reviews in home services are deleted, 2.6% in healthcare, 2.1% in wellness and fitness, 1.8% in travel, 1.3% in automotive, 0.85% in food and beverage and 0.75% in hospitality. At equal region and size, home services lose 3.3 times and healthcare 2.6 times more than automotive.

**Regions and countries.** The US loses almost twice as much as Europe: 2.1% of new positive reviews within a week against 1.2%, and 6.3% of negative reviews against 3.6%. Spain is the most affected European country (2.9% of new reviews within a week), ahead of the US (2.4%), Germany (1.8%) and France (1.4%); Italy (0.9%), Romania and Portugal (0.4%) the least. Countries with fewer reviews are less precise: one purged business can move them.

**Group size.** US groups of 4 to 10 locations are the most exposed segment: 0.11% of their reviews deleted over two weeks, against 0.09% for the US as a whole and 0.04% for Europe.

**Concentration.** 13% of businesses lost at least one review in two weeks. 810 lost exactly one. The top 1% of businesses carry half of all deletions and the top 5% three quarters. Exposure grows with volume: 4% of businesses collecting under 2 reviews a month were hit, 67% of those collecting 50 or more. A business hit in the first week had a 33% chance of being hit again in the second, against 6.5% for the others: a first deletion is a signal worth acting on.

### Cases we watched.

- Two Spanish gyms received 297 one-star reviews on 1 and 2 August; 295 were gone by 16 August. A review bomb, cleaned in about two weeks.
- A German bus tour operator with 156 reviews lost 46 one-star reviews, posted between 2018 and 2026, in four days. Old negatives can go all at once.
- Four US pest-control chains lost 1,199 positive reviews across 102 locations in two weeks, 26% of all deletions in the panel, in purges on 12, 16 and 17 August and a steady removal of fresh reviews.
- A US balloon operator lost 38 five-star reviews in three days on a profile of 1,295.

### New positive reviews deleted within seven days, by sector and region

| Sector               | Europe | US   |
|----------------------|--------|------|
| Home services        | 3.3%   | 4.1% |
| Healthcare           | 0.6%   | 3.4% |
| Wellness and fitness | 1.6%   | 3.0% |
| Travel               | 1.0%   | 2.5% |
| Automotive           | 1.9%   | 1.1% |
| Food and beverage    | 0.7%   | 1.0% |
| Hospitality          | 0.9%   | 0.4% |

## 10. What did not hold up, and the limits of this study

**Tests that came back empty.** We looked for many effects and report the ones that did not survive a fair comparison, so nobody builds a practice on them.

- **Naming staff:** no measurable effect on the review (section 7), and no measurable effect on the business at equal pace and freshness (section 8).
- **Review length:** no effect inside a business (1.04x).
- **“Highly recommend” and similar phrases:** a marker of solicited reviews, no effect inside a business (0.97x).
- **Photos:** slightly protective in the raw numbers, within the margin of error once controlled.
- **Reply timing:** within the first two days, replying faster adds nothing measurable; later replies cannot be tested fairly.
- **A business’ reply habit:** replying to every review does not protect a profile as such; the reply on each review does.
- **Busy months:** a month with three times the usual volume is not riskier; a single busy day is.
- **Weekly clean-ups:** the deletion peak follows the age of the review, not the day of the week.
- **Rating damage:** deletions moved the average rating of the most-hit businesses by 0.01 star.

**Readings that shrank once the six brands were set apart.** With the pest-control chains included, home services seem to lose 9.8% of new reviews against 1.0% in restaurants; without them it is 3.9% against 0.85%. The share of positive deletions falling on days 6 and 7 drops from 56% to 47%. Figures that mix purges with ordinary deletions overstate everything.

### Limits.

- **Two weeks in August.** Seasonality and longer cycles are not covered; a second wave will test them.
- **Associations, not causes.** We see what was deleted, not why. Flags, reports, legal requests and authors deleting their own reviews are invisible to us and counted as deletions.
- **One look a day.** A deletion is dated to the morning after it happened; a review posted and removed within the same day is never seen.
- **The panel’s scope.** Seven sectors, the US and Europe without the UK, businesses whose first location had 100 to 10,000 reviews, groups of 1, 4 to 10 and 20 to 50 locations. Results may differ for very small profiles, the UK and other sectors.
- **How reviews were requested is unknown.** The names results describe what Google does with named reviews, not whether a given business asked for them.
- **Many tests.** With dozens of comparisons, a few look significant by chance. We report results that hold across designs, and label single subgroup findings as exploratory.
- **A late first look.** Reviews removed before our first crawl on 11 August are never seen, so first-week rates for reviews posted 7 to 10 August are a floor.

# 11. Methods and definitions

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## Definitions.

- **Deletion:** a review present in one complete daily listing and absent from the next complete one.
- **New reviews:** reviews published from 7 to 17 August 2026, each followed for seven days (“deleted within seven days”). Those posted before 11 August are seen from that day only, so first-week rates are a lower bound.
- **Existing reviews:** every review online on 11 August, followed to 24 August (“deleted over the two weeks”).
- **Spike day:** a day on which a business receives at least 3 positive reviews and at least 4 times its daily average of the previous year.
- **Name-heavy business:** half or more of its positive reviews name a person. **Staff-like name:** a first name appearing in three or more reviews of the same business.
- **The six brands:** four US pest-control chains and two Spanish gyms hit by mass removals during the study, excluded from every figure unless stated.

## Statistics.

- Rates are shares of reviews, with 95% intervals.
- **Inside the same business:** Poisson regression with one term per business and controls for review age, length and star rating, errors clustered by business. This removes everything that differs between businesses and compares reviews that share a profile.
- **New reviews:** logistic regression on first-week outcomes, errors clustered by business, with sector, region, group size, reviewer and spike-day controls.
- **Between businesses:** Poisson regression on deletions with the number of reviews as exposure, controls added one group at a time (sector and region, group size, volume and pace, share of fresh reviews, star mix, length, replies, photos, reviewer mix), robust errors. Purges hit brands, so brand-level results use errors clustered by brand and a brand bootstrap.
- **Daily risk:** deletions on each day of a review’s life divided by the reviews still online that day.
- **Names:** a person-name recognition model (GLiNER) applied to every positive review with text; rule validated on 600 reviews and tested blind on 1,000.

**Data.** 9,048 profiles, 4,876,933 reviews, 14 daily crawls from 11 to 24 August 2026, 4,590 deletions, of which 3,022 outside the six brands. Data preparation and analysis by Reviewflowz and Cartelis, in Python, BigQuery and DuckDB. The analysis scripts and aggregated tables are available on request.

**About this study.** Run by Reviewflowz with Cartelis; more about both on the next page.

# About Reviewflowz and Cartelis

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## About Reviewflowz

**Everything you need to manage reviews, with nothing you don't.**

Gather, reply, attribute and report on customer feedback with one tool: full review lifecycle automation, without the bloat.

**Auto-request reviews triggered by purchases.** A sale in Stripe, Square, Shopify, HubSpot, Salesforce or Clio sends the request, and each customer is routed to the platform that needs new reviews most.

**Auto-monitor every review platform.** Deep connections to 200+ platforms catch new reviews, flipped ratings and deleted reviews as they happen.

**Auto-reply or flag reviews to escalate.** Agents trained on your own reply history answer within the hour, or alert you when you want to reply personally.

**Auto-attribute reviews to your team.** Nicknames and typos included, with team leaderboards.

**Auto-sync or export your data your way.** Tags, translation into any language, BI tools, the API or MCP.

**Auto-refresh sales and marketing material.** Fresh, genuine reviews where they sell.

**In use today:** 4,500 locations monitored for a luggage storage network, 100,000 reviews across 97 tours for a tour operator in Iceland.

**Why this study.** Reviewflowz catches deleted reviews as they happen. This study measures how often Google deletes them, and why.

**Start free, onboard fast: 14 days, no credit card, at [reviewflowz.com](https://reviewflowz.com)**

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## About Cartelis

Cartelis is a data and CRM consultancy based in Paris. Its consultants combine technical and business skills and help marketing and sales teams put their customer data to work, from framing the method to running it day to day: CRM and relationship marketing, analytics and BI, data engineering, customer data platforms and AI.

**[cartelis.com](https://cartelis.com)**