



inTouch

The Veterinary Guide to **Online Reviews**



Responding to reviews

Receiving reviews is important, but responding to them is even more important. It shows that you care about your clients' experiences, and it makes them feel heard and appreciated. Electing not to respond signifies indifference on your end and this could harm your reputation.

Here are some examples of how you can respond to both positive and negative client reviews:

Bad Review Response Examples:

“ Hello [insert name], thank you for your feedback. A manager will be reaching out to you to follow up on the concerns you have and for more details regarding your experience. We value your input on this experience as this is not the level of care we aim to provide.

Hello [insert name], we are sorry to hear about the frustrations you have encountered as this is not the level of care we aim to provide. Our highest priority is always the care of your pet. We are unable to find your name as displayed here but would like to hear more from you. We take our reviews and your concerns seriously and hope you reach out. Please give us a call at [practice phone number] and ask for a manager.



Good Review Response Examples:

“ Thank you so much for your review [insert name]! We are so pleased to hear that you and [insert pet name] enjoyed the experience with our team! We hope to see you both again.

Thank you so much for your review [insert name]! We are so happy to hear that you were happy with your visit. We look forward to continuing to provide you and your pet with the best care!”



How to handle negative spam reviews

Are you getting spammed with negative reviews that are inflammatory and misleading? It's possible to contest these and even have them removed, whether they are posted on Google or Facebook. There are several steps you'll need to follow to flag/report reviews and, if possible, have them taken down. Another option we discuss below is to work on getting more positive reviews added to Google and Facebook to "bump" the negative review(s) down and make them less visible to the public.

How to Respond to a Negative Google Review

- Log into your Google My Business account and respond to the client review. Ask the client to reach out to your practice directly to address their problem. Done effectively, this could result in the person editing or removing their negative review.
- You can also flag the review, and if possible, have several other people flag it as well. This can increase awareness and move Google to take action.
- If you think the review in question violates Google's Content Policy, you can follow the steps provided by Google here: https://support.google.com/business/answer/4596773?hl=en&ref_topic=6109360
- Encourage more satisfied clients to leave a positive Google review for your practice. As we mentioned earlier, these positive reviews will help to push the negative review out of sight.





How to handle negative spam reviews

How to Respond to a Negative Facebook Review

The etiquette for responding to negative reviews on Facebook isn't much different from how you would respond on Google. However, we would recommend limiting the number of times you choose to respond to the unhappy client. If they respond to your first comment acknowledging the issue, reply back just once more if needed, then step back to avoid getting into a war of words. Going back and forth in the comments on Facebook can make you look argumentative to people reading your reviews, which can affect your reputation.

If you believe that the review/recommendation left on your Facebook page is false or a spam post, you can report it. From there, you may have the option of banning the user from your Facebook page entirely, or you can hide all comments made by the user.

PLEASE NOTE: If you delete a person's comment, this could stir up more problems. On the other hand, a hidden comment will still be visible to the person who made it.

In the event of an attack on your Facebook page, you can temporarily unpublish your page.

As with Google, an effective strategy for dealing with negative reviews is to crowd them out with positive reviews. Don't let one or even a small handful of negative comments discourage you from asking for reviews—they can offer a learning experience in some cases, and may be an opportunity for your practice to rethink certain strategies. What's more, a negative comment or review doesn't necessarily mean a lost client. If you respond with genuine concern for the issues raised and do all you can to set things right, you can hold onto the client and potentially win over prospective clients. People care when you care!



A step-by-step guide to more reviews for vets



Even if you deliver great customer service, practice exceptional medicine, and run an overall amazing veterinary practice, there is no guarantee you'll get a steady flow of positive reviews.

At InTouch, we recommend making it a daily habit to ask your clients for reviews. It's the best way to get an uptick in reviews, especially positive, high-quality reviews. You can work this process into the daily routines of doctors, techs, receptionists, and anyone else on the team that speaks with clients regularly.

In this section, you'll find more tips on how to generate a steady flow of positive reviews from clients.





Request a review **while talking face-to-face**

Step

Every client's experience at your practice should involve your team thanking them for their visit, whether their pet came in for a simple nail trim or extensive treatment.

The key when asking for a review is to be genuine. Explain to your client why reviews are important; most clients will want to help but they don't always know how.

If asking a client for a review feels awkward, never fear. **The following are some dialogue examples to help you start the conversation.** The most natural time to ask for a review is while you're thanking your client for coming in...

Example 1



Thanks for bringing Piper in today, Sarah. We really appreciate you picking us as your vet. We hope you had a good experience here and would love to know your thoughts. Have you ever written a review on Facebook, Google, or Yelp?

(Depending on the answer, you can walk your client through the process or give them a handout with the information if available to you.)

Reviews can be extremely helpful to pet owners who are looking for a trusted vet, so if you are able, please share your experience with us online! We look forward to seeing you and Piper again for her next checkup! Thanks again, and enjoy the rest of your day!”

Example 2



Erica, thanks for bringing in Phoebe for her bath. Look how squeaky-clean she is now! I can check you out right over here. While I pull up your account, I wanted to ask if you’ve ever written a review online? We’d love to hear your feedback and we want to make sure you’re satisfied with your experiences here. Phoebe was such an angel during her bath; we loved taking care of her!”



How to handle reviews for emergency visits

If you’re an emergency vet practice or your client came in as a result of an emergency with their pet, asking for reviews can be a bit tricky. The client may be stressed out or upset. Always be tactful! Consider the situation--remember to only ask for a review once the client and their pet have been seen, and you’re sure that they had an overall positive experience.



Step

2



Hand out postcards

(5"x7" or smaller)

Slip a postcard into your client's checkout bag when applicable. Any time a client is leaving with a bag or bill in hand, a postcard asking for a review should go with it.

You can either choose to create the postcards from scratch, or you can save time by going to <https://marketingkit.withgoogle.com/> to create eye-catching postcards and other marketing materials your practice might need for Google Reviews. The Support Us - Postcard 5x7 is your best choice for putting into clients' bags or handing over with an invoice, given its compact size. Through the above link, you can also download print-ready posters and signs, social media posts, stickers, and more (for free!).

Bonus tip, you can also include a message at the bottom of each invoice asking for a review.

Ask for a review **during follow-up calls or emails**

3 Step

After your client has left their appointment, you should follow up with them within a day or two of their visit.

Follow-up calls

If your practice does follow-up calls, this is a great time to ask for a review. Summarize their appointment, reiterate any care instructions, then ask the client if they'd be willing to write a review about their experience.

Follow-up emails

If you're communicating to your client via email, be sure to include a brief request for a review in your email. A simple one sentence request can be effective as long as you include a link to your preferred review platform: "Please help other pet owners in the area find a trusted vet for their four-legged family members. Leave us a review here: (link)."

Instructions for creating a **Google Reviews link**

- Go to your Google My Business profile and click on your star rating.
- Next, click on "Write a Review"
- Copy the URL at the top of the page. This is your Google Reviews Link.

Your link will be very long. Shorten your reviews link by:

- Pasting your Google Reviews Link into an email (or document)
- Right click on the link and select "edit hyperlink"
- In the "display text" box, type the text you'd like to appear in your email





Step

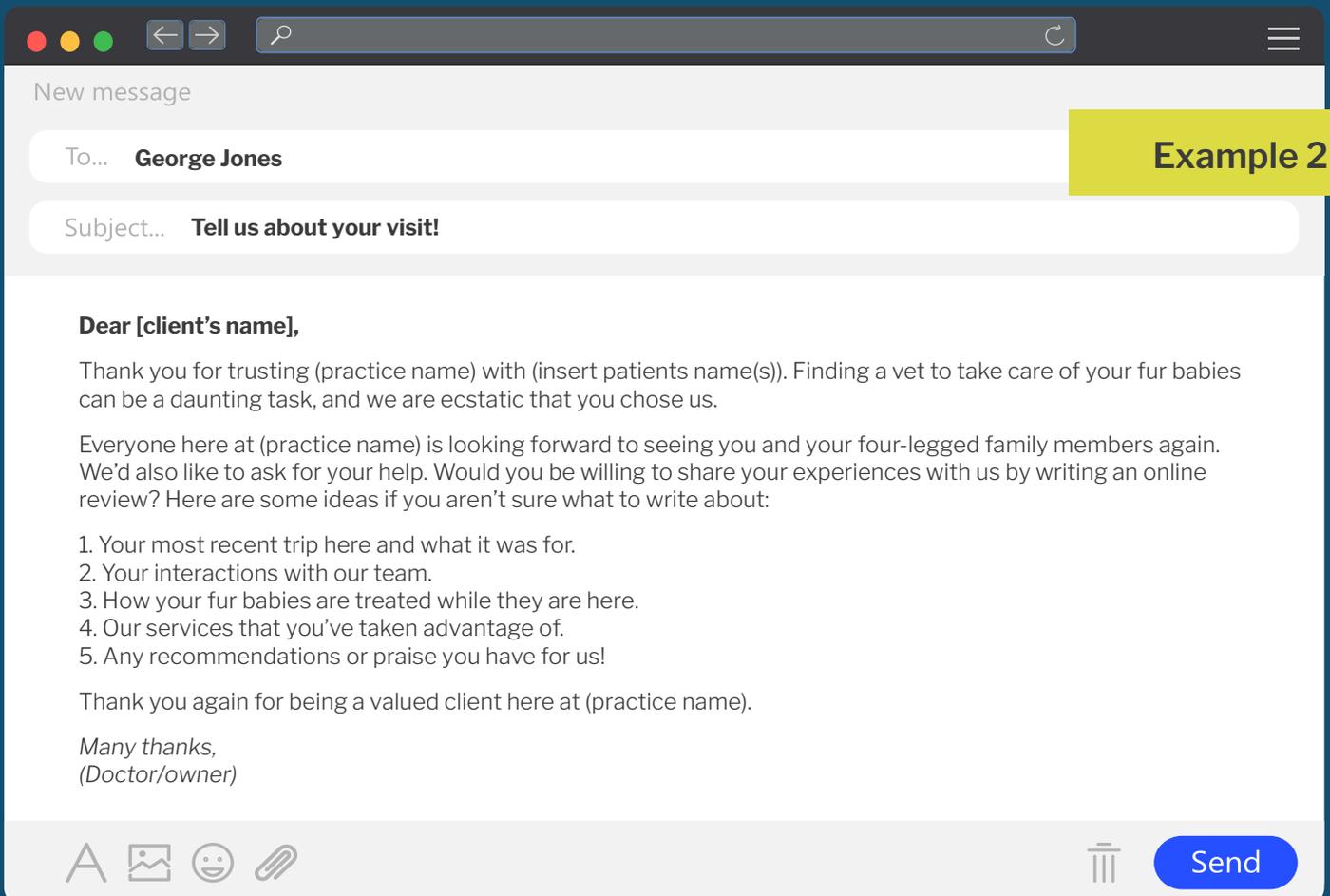
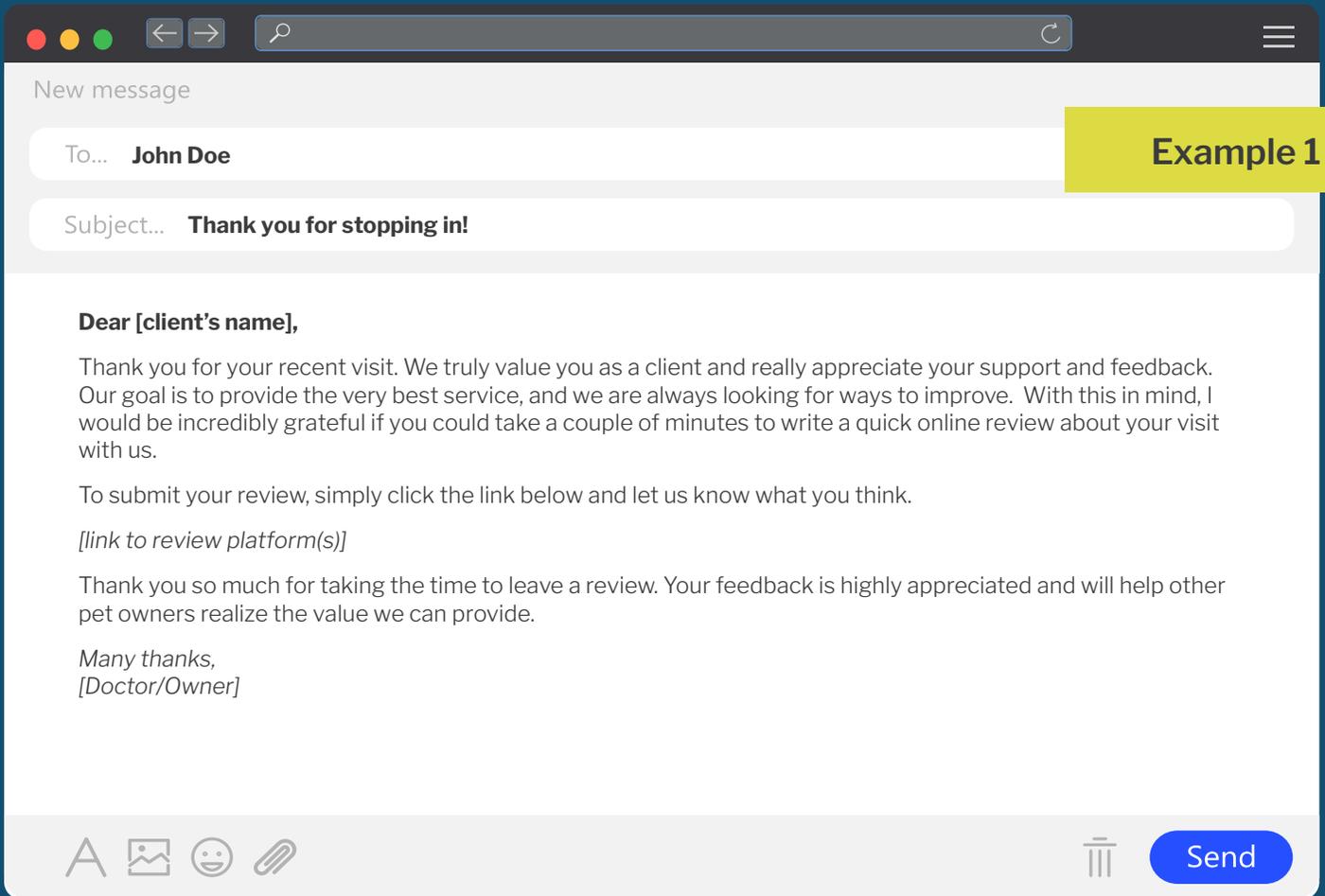
4

Send out an email **asking for a review**

In addition to follow-up emails, we recommend sending out an email that is geared solely towards obtaining reviews from all clients. The best way to do this is by creating groups of 100 clients and sending a batch of 100 emails each week until every client has received a request for a review.

Note: Do NOT send an email out to all of your clients at once. Review platforms will pick up on the unusual influx of reviews on your profile and possibly deem some (or all) of them as fake.

Check out a few email examples on the next page...



5 Step

Include a reviews link in your email signature

We recommend adding a link to your review submissions on one or all of the platforms in your clinic's email signature. This gives your clients a convenient access point to your review profile page(s) where they can leave a review. Add a call to action (CTA) in front of the link such as: "Leave us a review here."

Promote your positive reviews

Getting reviews is essential. Promoting them to other clients is important, too. One way to do this is by creating your own graphics and quoting a review. Another way to do so is by using Google's marketing kit to print and display posters or table tops of glowing reviews around your practice. The marketing kit also offers templates for promoting reviews on social media, which always draws in more positive responses! You can find the kit here:

<https://marketingkit.withgoogle.com/>

6 Step

A hand holding a smartphone, with a large stylized number 7 in the background. The number 7 is composed of a yellow top bar and a red bottom section, with a yellow teardrop shape extending from the bottom right of the red section. The word "Step" is written in white serif font inside the red section of the number 7.

Step

Ask for reviews **through** **your practice's mobile app**

If your practice uses a mobile app that employs push notifications, you can easily pull in online reviews from clients. Simply use those push notifications to send clients a message after a positive appointment that requests they leave you an online review. By providing clients a link to your preferred review platform profile directly to their phone, you're providing a convenient, unobtrusive means for them to leave you a positive review.



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