

Below is an unpublished sample of a case study I wrote for PowerReviews—the Internet’s most innovative provider of outsourced customer reviews and social merchandising solutions. As of 2009, PowerReviews’ market-proven technology for collecting, structuring and moderating customer reviews had been implemented by more than 350 leading merchants across 3,000 websites—making PowerReviews the most deployed enterprise reviews solution on the web today. Working with merchants of all sizes and verticals, PowerReviews has processed and moderated more than 4.7-million reviews on more than 650,000 unique products.

Discgear.com sees 74% surge in product conversion rates since implementing customer reviews solution

Discgear.com Case Study – June 2009
By John Bagley | Freelance Writer/Editor, iwritewell.com

OVERVIEW

User-generated content is one of the most powerful tools that any business has in its arsenal. The ability to access and review customer feedback on a particular product is vital in the quest to drive revenue, forecast sales, jump-start innovation, remain fluid, maximize customer satisfaction and unlock untapped revenue streams.

In today’s Internet-driven world, such feedback plays an even greater role in shopping research—an area of study that has seen online retail sales skyrocket. Without the ability to extensively examine an item of interest on a computer screen, customer reviews have moved to the forefront in the list of resources that shoppers seek when making their final decision with enough confidence to complete their transactions. Currently, 70% of online shoppers actively seek out customer reviews before they buy; 92% of those shoppers find customer reviews “extremely helpful” or “very helpful” in making informed purchase decisions.

This case study shows how Discgear.com was able to use PowerReviews’ Express solution to generate customer reviews while increasing same-product conversion rates by 74%, just five months after adopting the tag-based solution.

CHALLENGE

CD3 is an 18-year-old company in Austin, TX, that manufactures and sells CD and DVD storage cases under the brand name Discgear. After seeing a dramatic increase in the desire of its distributors, independent retailers and the general public to purchase its products online, the company adapted its business model and launched Discgear.com. In shifting its focus to online sales, the company soon recognized that it was now lacking the hands-on, face-to-face feedback from its customers that it had relied on for years—feedback that was vital to shaping

company policy, direction and innovation. As an e-Commerce site, Discgear was in need of a cost-effective, easily deployable solution that would work to drive sales while providing its customers with a forum to seamlessly review, comment and provide unbiased feedback on its various products and overall product line. Discgear recognized the importance of such customer reviews and how those reviews—both good and bad—would become the driving force behind a complete, trusted shopping research experience for all of its website users. Discgear understood that such an amenity was necessary for the company’s long-term viability, especially in today’s highly competitive marketplace. Discgear understood that without such an option, its customers’ online shopping experience would be trivialized, resulting in substandard customer satisfaction rates—both significant factors in building lasting customer relationships, repeat business and maximizing revenue potential.

“People want to trust a company, but a company can be biased in what it says about its own products. Having a customer tell you the good and sometimes the bad about a product is a very beneficial thing to have. It became obvious that we needed to have something like this added to our site.”

Michael Brown – IT Director, Discgear.com

SOLUTION

Discgear.com adopted PowerReviews’ Express solution, enabling them to increase the number of customer reviews on their website. PowerReviews’ Express solution allowed for a simple, easy-to-use, tag-based approach that met Discgear’s needs by capturing the reviewer’s needs and overall “buying personality.” PowerReviews captured all product “pros,” “cons” and “best uses” in a structured form that provided Discgear’s customers with input at each stage in the shopping process—from **finding** to **narrowing** to **comparing** and **deciding** on the right product to buy. With PowerReviews, Discgear was granted valuable insight into the reviewer’s affinity group, so that other shoppers would then be able to attain product advice from “people just like them.”

The PowerReviews Express solution offered Discgear additional features not found elsewhere in the small- and medium-sized business market, including:

- Review Snapshot® – an at-a-glance review summary that streamlines the research process for consumers
- Verified Buyer – a feature that builds consumer confidence with more credible reviews
- SEO Mini-site – an SEO-optimized version of the reviews that drives a significant increase in natural search traffic to your site
- Content Moderation Services – Each review is read by a PowerReviews moderator and screened for inflammatory and non-product-related content, saving the retailer significant time while leaving full control in their hands for which reviews are displayed on their site.

RESULTS

Within five months of implementing PowerReviews Express, Discgear increased its same-product conversion rates by an average of 74% while generating, on average, 20 product reviews per product—and those numbers continue to climb. Discgear discovered that allowing customer feedback on its website not only generated additional sales revenue but also provided valuable insight into additional ways to make improvements to its overall business model and strategies. With customer reviews on its site, customer satisfaction, overall trust and company perception was also significantly enhanced.

“Since implementing this solution, we are able to get real feedback—in real time—on all of our products, which, in turn, helps us to make products that best meet the needs of our rapidly expanding customer base. With this solution, we had 100 customer reviews on our site in the first month alone—and we have seen our revenues climb as a direct result of this product’s deployment.”

Michael Brown – IT Director, Discgear.com