

DECEMBER 2022

# NEWSLETTER



**1. BUSINESSES ARE LOSING ALL OF THEIR REVIEWS DUE TO A NEW GBP BUG**

**2. ARE REVIEWS DECIDING THE SUCCESS OF BUSINESS?**

**3. GBP POSTS & UPDATES PICTURES CAN NOW BE CROPPED!**

## 1

## BUSINESSES ARE LOSING ALL OF THEIR REVIEWS DUE TO A NEW GBP BUG

Last month it was reported that a new bug caused businesses to lose all of their reviews after their Google listings were auto-updated. Mike Blumenthal has issued a detailed report.

According to the Blumenthal report:

### What is the New GBP bug?

A lot of businesses are saying they lost all of their reviews after their listings were auto-updated. Here are some representative posts on the Google Business Profile Help:

- **Change in Profile and lost reviews** : Suddenly I woke up to see that the details about my profile were changed and all the reviews were deleted. I am confused about how to approach this situation. Do guide me..
- **All Reviews Gone** : On Friday (11/4) I got an email from Google that my business profile was updated. Much of the information changed was changed to incorrect information or just removed entirely. I went to review and undo many of the changes. Today I noticed that all my reviews are now gone. I had 18+ reviews on my profile and I need to get them restored but I don't know how to go about getting them restored.
- **My genuine reviews have all been removed, 95 of them** : 95 reviews have all been removed, even 5-6 1-star reviews. They also slightly changed my business; I was able to instate [sic] though. But I haven't had no luck getting my reviews. Please help.
- **Customer reviews disappeared** : [105] reviews were lost all at once. Google had automatically updated my business information. They had shortened the business name to (Sydney Steemer) without the carpet cleaner. And changed my website information to a different link that also went to my website. This when I realized all the reviews had VANISHED!
- **All reviews are gone** : We had 170+ all 5-star reviews. One day they were all gone. In the settings it showed that google changed the name and phone number and short name for our business. After trying to contact them with the issue for over a week we still are not able to get reviews back or any answer. Also, some changes that google made we are not able to accept or decline.

The report further says after running through the typical scenarios where one might expect to lose reviews, it is clear that, in every instance, reviews disappeared immediately after the Suggested Edits update.

Mike discovered that in each case, Google had changed the Customer ID Number (CID), the identifier Google uses to tie all relevant information to a business, including reviews. But this is unusual because CID only changes when two listings merge or Google has hard-suspended a listing for guidelines violations and then reinstated it.

Mike's report goes on to say, "Changing the CID and losing reviews with -----a Suggested Edit update is a new and disturbing bug. It could happen to almost anyone for no reason or no apparent reason. Yet, in Google's infinite wisdom, it could also be working as intended."

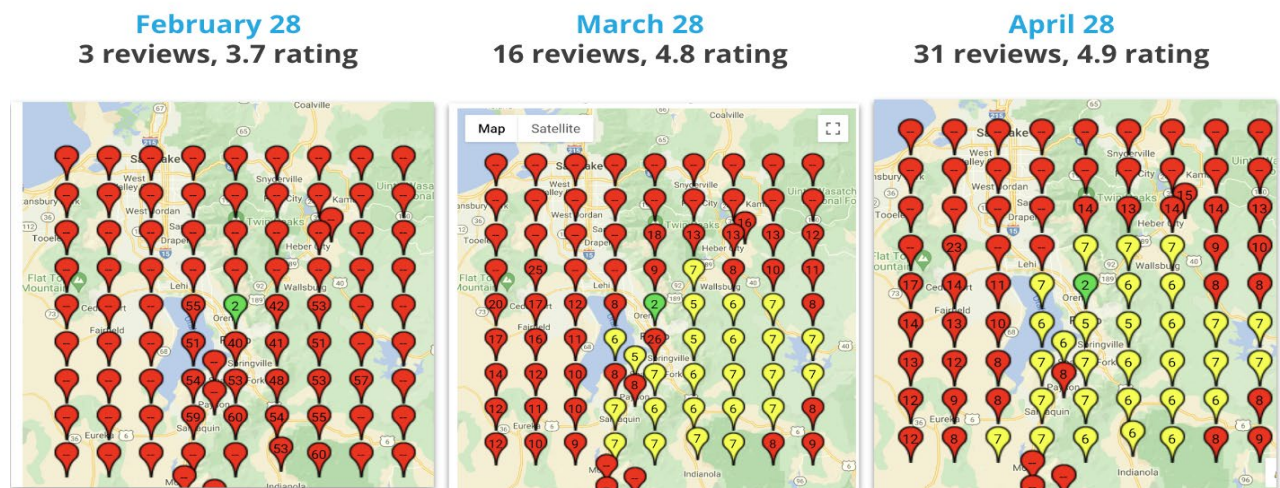
We would suggest reading Mike's report to learn what you need to do to recover from such an event if/when it happens to you.

# 2

## ARE REVIEWS DECIDING THE SUCCESS OF BUSINESS?

It is a well-observed fact that reviews affect your business's rankings in local searches. But nobody has told you how or in what manner. And you may believe that the more reviews your business has, the higher its ranking gets. But is it actually the case? Well, Google has cooked up some algorithms for it, and we have uncovered everything for you!

In a recent study by SterlingSky on local ranking, we found that once a business or practitioner garners **10 reviews on listings**, Google's algorithms **boost its ranking in local search results**. But that's not all there is to it. After some time, **the boost does not continue** as you get or pump in more reviews. Reminds us of the law of diminishing returns, and in this case, it is there. To help you with an example, here's an image for you.



As you can see in the image above, when the reviews went from 3 to 16, there was a ranking increase. But when the reviews increased to 31, not much happened there.

Many business founders stated that **10 could be a "magic number,"** as they observed a sudden increase in ranking but not much later.

### Rankings Are More Than Just Reviews:

Reviews are just one piece of the puzzle. Getting a ton of them does not mean you are going to rank well. What's important is that you have to have at least 10 reviews for a better listing. And having them also helps in building trust and getting conversions.

### Recency Matters:

While numbers tell their own story, the recency of reviews also matter. We found that when businesses got reviews from time to time, their rankings surged. But as the stagnancy settled, there was a decline. Therefore, by setting up a system that regularly updates your ratings, you can enjoy being on top for a longer time.

## **Length Can Make All The Difference**

The above-mentioned scenarios, lead us to the third one – Length matters! The more genuine, longer, and wordier reviews your business gets, the better it will perform in search rankings. So encourage your customers to express their opinions freely. Haven't you noticed that one-star reviews are longer because the customer is genuinely writing about something that he didn't like? Persuade you customers to do the same for positive reviews.

### **Key Takeaway**

The bottom line here is that reviews can make or break your rankings. No matter how many or how long they are, reviews matter for your business – to become a trusted brand, a company that people genuinely talk about and a reflection of how well it is doing. Businesses that listen to their customers will always stay among them. And you can do so by asking your customers to express themselves!

## 3

**GBP POSTS & UPDATES PICTURES CAN NOW BE CROPPED!**

It's good news all around for those who've always wished to be able to crop the photos uploaded to their Google Business Profile posts!

Last month, a user spotted a cropping tool overlaid on the pictures she uploaded to her Google Business Profile and took to Twitter to inform the world about this latest development. It seems like the tool has been added to enable businesses to make their GBP posts and updates as effective and presentable as they wish.

**Why This is Important**

Images play a major role in promoting products and services to prospective customers and/or clients. Any tool that can help enhance these images to make them more appealing is always welcome!