

The Yelpification of Society

I was watching an interview between author, Dan Pink, and Hubspot CEO, Brian Halligan and Brian used the phrase the “yelpification” of society to describe how people buy goods and services.

I started thinking about how whenever I’m traveling I pull open Yelp and look for the best rated Mexican restaurants within a quick uber shot of the hotel I’m staying at. I even use the Yelp maps or “melps” as I affectionately call them to do this. I started thinking about how we use a Yelp-like tool for every situation in our lives.

So I looked up the word “yelpification” and found it in [urban dictionary](#):

The process by which a place of business is reviewed by an online community. Can also be used to describe the phenomenon of people becoming more aware of a business, area, or region through online reviews.

I then found multiple articles citing the “yelpification” of different industries and it made me think about how this phenomenon affects businesses. Long before Yelp, our parents trusted the word of their friends over advertisements when looking for service people. Further, if you wanted to buy a new vacuum cleaner or a television, you’d reach for a copy of *Consumer Reports*. Now I wouldn’t buy any electronics without checking CNET. If you were interested in finding a new restaurant, you’d look for reviews in the local paper or maybe spring for a Zagat guidebook. Now, you just click on Yelp.

The web has literally changed the game. People everywhere can post their own reviews about anything, and anyone can read them — instantly.

Where else do we see yelpification? Everywhere! Some examples:

- TripAdvisor (which I actively use and participate in) for travel reviews
- CNET for electronics
- Avvo for lawyers (that’s right even we get rated)
- Glassdoor for employees
- Angie’s List for contractors

Net Effect of Yelpification

This phenomenon started in B2C but B2B is seeing a huge uptick in yelp-like reviews. So what’s the net effect of yelpification?

- Increases market efficiency: Consumers as a collective will provide a more complete information profile of any particular thing than a professional critical. The result is a more accurate correlation between price and quality.
- Increases transparency: Consumers gain real-world insights from other customers.
- Increase quality: poor quality cannot survive in an on demand ratings world.

What can you do?

What can you do in a yelpified world to promote your business?

- As always, be consistent in your branding and messaging
- Mobilize your advocates to help create a strong, positive presence online.
- Manage your brand on social media like LinkedIn and Twitter and Glassdoor.
- Show you are an influencer and engage with influencers in your industry.
- Publish content that shows you know your world

Conclusions

On a side note, one funny Yelp lesson I learned over the years - never trust the melps, next thing you know you're walking down a center lane median of a divided highway in Georgetown.....

The on demand generation, as I like to call it, combined with the yelpification phenomenon creates a B2C and B2B world of vigilant brand management and studies in encouraging good reviews of your goods and services.