
Say WOW Marketing - Smarter Online Marketing Podcast With Vickie Siculiano, Online Marketing Coach Episode 80 – 3 Ways to Use Yelp for Your Online Marketing

Hey there, everybody. Thank you for joining me today. I am really excited to kick this episode off, my episode number 80 - *Three Ways That You Can Use Yelp For Your Online Marketing*. It's a breakdown of how you can use Yelp, a ratings system online that's a peer review website for your marketing. It's an awesome website. I've been using it for years now for clients and I got started using Yelp in the restaurant industry. Let me give you a little bit of background on today's episode. I've been getting back into restaurant marketing. It's something that I've wanted to do for a long time. I used to blog about restaurant marketing, I wanted to help business owners with it because it was something I was doing. I started up my restaurant blog again on my website, okay, it's at SayWowMarketing.com/Restaurant.

For now the website is not looking as I want it to look, but you can get a sneak peek if you want on the website at SayWowMarketing.com/Restaurant just to see some of the stuff that I've done in restaurants and what exciting stuff was happening at that time like the Zagat review that came in because of all the work I was doing. It's really awesome, so I just wanted to let you know that you can check that out if you have any interest in that particular industry. It's something that I have experience in and I wanted to let you know before we even get into today's episode on Yelp which, if you're a restaurant, is totally critical for your online marketing in particular.

If you're not in the restaurant industry, there are a lot more categories now that are existing. It grew and branched off from restaurants, but you can definitely take advantage of it if you're a local business and you want to have local people come in to your establishment based on people's reviews. Let's just get started with a couple of stats that are available on the web. I went to Quantcast, Q-u-a-n-t-c-a-s-t. It provides some real time profiles for you, check out this. For visitors for the website, so there are 6.5 million visits to this website every month, okay, that's unique visits. You can really see how the mobile web is much more useful to Yelp and also to people who want to use the website versus the web and I'll tell you why that is.

If you're looking for a business, you're out and about, you're in the car, you're not near your desktop and you want to find a local business based on certain criteria that you search for in the search bar maybe a restaurant. That's why it's so critical that all restaurants get on Yelp right away. The mobile web has 59.1 unique visits, it's a million, 59.1 million unique visits every month. This was last month, April 3rd, 2015 to May 2nd, 2015 and online it was 48.1 million unique visits, so it's a difference of about 10 million, say 11 million visits a month, but if you look at it overall it just shows you that you really

need to be mobile optimized if you're on the web and you also need to set up your profile on Yelp right away.

The first tip that I'm going to give you, three ways that you can take advantage of Yelp for your marketing is to claim your business on Yelp. If you haven't done this already, people may have been to your establishment, they may have been to your restaurant, to your local business and they may have set up a business for you, a business name, okay, but that doesn't mean that you have access to that account just because you exist on Yelp. Now unlocking your account on Yelp is going to give you free access and drive even more customers to your business because you're going to have even more control of your business listing. Yelp has this great mobile app that you can manage your Yelp account for free by responding to people.

We'll talk about more of that in this episode and how you're going to really take advantage of your online marketing and getting a presence. Okay, so that's what I'm here to do with you today is to make sure that you're setting yourself up right for success on Yelp and using it to your advantage for your online marketing. When you unlock your Yelp business account all you have to do is go to Biz, B-i-z.Yelp.com and then you claim your business. You'll be allowed to do a variety of activities including adding your photos, your business hours, and other important things that you will need for your listing.

You can also track your new customers and views and respond to any negative and positive reviews. One of the main advantages of having a Yelp business account is that you can create a Yelp deal or a check-in offer, so that you can convert people to paying customers once they go on the app. Now I've done it on Foursquare for clients, I've also done it on Yelp. I've had success with both of them, okay. Facebook also allows you to have it, but I will let you know Yelp is a very professional looking platform. I like that red popping in your face color and you create a deal and maybe for a free appetizer when you check in and it's a hit.

Now millions of people are visiting every month and you can totally get in front

of them for free, okay, so all you have to do is just claim that business. What you do is you click on claim my business on the Biz.Yelp.com URL and then you check to see if your business name is available. Now if you have duplicate names, maybe somebody created a business name for you and then another person created a business name because they didn't realize that the other person had created it as something slightly different. You can have those accounts merged, but you can also claim the business account that you want.

If you could put in key words in it, say you have a certain type of cuisine if you're a restaurant. If you have your restaurant name you could put Italian restaurant or Ethiopian restaurant which is something I have experience with, so it's just helpful to you. You go ahead, you make the choice, but just claim

that business account, okay. You're going to be able to really take your online marketing to another level because Yelp is really something that people are using to share their thoughts and reviews with their peers, okay. That's my first tip for you. Make sure that you get on and claim your business on Yelp and also get that Yelp app, so that you can get real time alerts and manage your account.

Now my next suggestion to you is to really listen. You want to check out your reviews on Yelp that people are posting for you on your business name and you want to see what they're saying, okay. You want to latch on to any themes that may appear. I'll tell you an example. I was doing work with this awesome Ethiopian restaurant in Montclair, New Jersey. People were just saying over and over again that they were vegan, they loved the vegan types of dishes that were offered at the restaurant. The restaurant offers fabulous food, vegan is only one of the options and it's only something that you would know if you know how they prepare their food.

It was just taking a look and listening to all of these reviews that were coming in and also they were coming in on Facebook and some of the other social media platforms that I was involved with, but it's really, really important to listen to see what people are saying about that food because it allows you to open up your marketing to maybe a whole new audience that you never even knew existed. If you didn't listen you wouldn't know that that was there, right. Maybe it's something that people are saying about your service. Maybe people really over and over again love your customer service. Maybe that's something that you might want to beef up a little bit in your marketing because it's something that your competitors may not be keen on.

They may not offer the customer service that your customers and those types of customers are looking for, but I really think that listening is very, very important for a couple of reasons, okay. This way you can see what is most important to your customers and you can keep delivering over and over again on what they're looking for, okay, and go above and beyond. If it's something that you didn't even know existed which is totally a possibility and it happened to me when I was helping out the restaurant then you will totally be able to jump on a new opportunity and use your online marketing to do so, okay.

Now my third tip for you is competition, okay. Here's something that people don't think about, I think enough, okay. You have the chance to really see how you're performing online, right. I'm giving you tips on how to go in and listen, see what people are saying about your service or product, restaurant, but also go in and respond to people who have things to say whether they're negative or positive and you can do the same for your competition, right. You already know how to go in and look for your own goings on.

You can go into your Yelp app or you can go onto yelp.com on the web directly and you can check to see what people are saying about you, but I guarantee you that if you go and check out your competitors, whether they're local or maybe a national competitor on some scale, then you'll be able

to see what those types of customers for that particular industry are looking for and what's most important to them. You'll be able to see what those customers value and seeing the difference between international reviews by U.S. tourists are very revealing, okay.

I'll give you an example. Recently I saw this documentary. It's on Netflix. I believe it's only on Netflix, right. It's Jiro, J-i-r-o Dreams of Sushi and it's this awesome documentary about this older gentleman, Jiro and he is an amazing sushi chef, okay. He has a restaurant in Tokyo called Sukiyabashi Jiro and this restaurant, okay, if you look it up on Yelp you will find it and in the U.S. Yelp app because I think Yelp has 22 different Yelp sites across the global playing field and you'll see it. If you look on the web you'll come to the U.S. Yelp platform if you're here in the United States where I am.

The language in these U.S. tourist reviews are absolutely fascinating. They speak as U.S. citizens and what they expect and there are these long reviews that are totally below the fold. If you go and check it out you'll see and very recently that people reviewed it on different qualities that were important to them. Here is a review from somebody actually in Honolulu that went to Tokyo to this restaurant and they based their review on different elements; atmosphere, service, the price, the sushi, and they also gave some food for thought. People that are absolutely devout Yelp fans will have many reviews on the platform. You can see how many friends they have and how many reviews they've given and you can see if you want to follow them and check out some of their other reviews, so you can see if they think along the same lines that you do.

It's incredible because at the end of this review it says food for thought. Did you know that many of the best restaurants in Japan will not allow Michelin to publish them in the yearly booklet? Here's a comment at the end of the review. It says Jiro is the absolute epitome of how powerful marketing can be. This review was a two-star review. It really wasn't a phenomenal review. They thought that the atmosphere was okay, the service not so hot, the price and they talked about the sushi and the rice having too much vinegar.

People who don't really know sushi ... I'm a big sushi fan, that's why I wanted to check out this review and I watched that documentary which was absolutely fascinating and shows you the real difference between western culture and eastern culture and how the restaurant industry and the owners are very different in their thinking style. I highly recommend that you check that out, but I wouldn't say that I agree with this review in that how powerful marketing can be because first of all the restaurant and the owners, right, he's 91 now, they don't really know about social media and the power of social media for restaurants and I would include Yelp in the social media activities that a restaurant should undertake and many other local businesses, but I don't think that Jiro, and the restaurant, are undertaking powerful marketing efforts, okay. They get a lot of their marketing through word of mouth and that's sometimes the best marketing, right? You don't pay for it, but again if you're not paying for

it you want to make sure that that word of mouth marketing is positive for you, so you always want to keep on top of your reviews and listen.

Make sure that your reviews are good. If they're not you can respond to those reviews and people like to know that you're listening at least. If you have a problem they're happy to let you know about that problem and see that you can fix it is even better for them, so that's just what I want to say about claiming your business on Yelp, listening, and also watching the competition and listening to all the types of customers whether they're your own or their competitor's customer, see what language they're using. Use the same language that they use, the same terms. If it's service or maybe it's a certain type of customer like vegan, speak their language. I totally, totally recommend you do that.

I'm actually going to throw another tip for you here. Now Yelp, you have to decide if it's for you or not, okay. It depends on your budget, but you also have the option of doing Yelp ads, okay, and with that you can appear at the top of the results when people are searching in their local area. That's why it's crucial to be on this platform if you're a local business where people are going to be searching on their phone when they're looking for your business, okay. Those ads will come up top. It's amazing when you're searching for a certain type of restaurant in a certain area that you're in and your GPS is being picked up by Yelp, the app, then you'll see that other restaurants or businesses are going to be in that area, too, and boom, they're served up just like Google ads.

Now I will tell you this. The restaurants aren't the biggest category anymore. Shopping became equal with restaurants back in September of 2011, but it's since surpassed that. People see that there's a real value of looking for peer reviews on this website and also on the websites of the businesses that they're looking for, okay. It's crucial that that perception is still there that restaurants have a natural advantage because people are out and about and they're looking for a restaurant and boom, it's totally a fit and it's a match.

Maybe they're not looking for a plastic surgeon in their car, right, and then they're looking up Yelp reviews for them. They may use Yelp to supplement the reviews for that particular service, but pretty much if you're looking for a place to eat you're probably going to see more people coming through the door from your Yelp business on Yelp than you will if you're a plastic surgeon or another type of business that really doesn't need to get business from Yelp because people need a little bit more than peer reviews for. They're looking for more information, they're going to dig in a little deeper, okay.

You can get some really cool tools on the Yelp website like brand logos and you can ask your customers to actually check you out on Yelp. They don't recommend that you just seek out reviews from people because they want it to be more honest, but I definitely say that you should get a logo from the Yelp website if you can and put it on your website and all that you do online, right. I highly recommend you check out Yelp. If you haven't yet make sure that you can make sure that you let your customers know

that you're listening to their reviews, you're responding to them and you're really opening up two-way communication and being social with them which is what social media is all about.

I hope that helps you today. I'm always fascinated with hearing what you have to say, but what I want to share with you and what I think is most important right now in online marketing and especially with social media., particularly restaurant marketing which is something, as I said, that I'm getting into a little bit more once again after all these years. 2011 was when I had a really big campaign that led to a Zagat review and national recognition. That was really, really cool, so I totally loved it, back here again, building this up, so I totally want to listen to what you have to say. I'm here to help you with whatever you want to know, the latest and greatest in online marketing, okay.

If you have any questions you can post them on this blog post which is going to be SayWowMarketing.com/episode80. That's going to be the show notes for this episode. Again that's SayWowMarketing.com/episode80 and you can also check me out on [Facebook.com/SayWow](https://www.facebook.com/SayWow) and on [Twitter@VickieSic](https://twitter.com/VickieSic), okay. Don't forget the E and I look forward to hearing from you and have a great, great week. See you next time.