



ERIC CACCIATORE

How to Use Reviews to Write The End of The Story



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Few would consider receiving a bad review online a good thing, but is that the end of the story? The wonders of the web and social media give us the capacity to turn a bad review into a positive promotional opportunity. If done right.

I recently had the great pleasure to talk with Eric Cacciatore on the That Bad Review podcast. Eric is the host and founder of one of the world's top, if not *the* top, podcast for current and aspiring restaurateurs. It's called Restaurant Unstoppable. At last count, he's picked the brains of some 535 of the world's top restaurateurs to find out the secrets of their success and the lessons they've learned along the way. This is why, when Eric talks reviews, it's well worth a listen.

Eric's perspective on bad reviews is a positive one for two reasons. One, it gives you the ability to collect data. And two, it gives you the opportunity to write the end of the story – and to do it to your benefit.

The Ultimate Feedback Data Collection System

The beauty of the web and social media, in particular, is that it is the ultimate feedback collection system. "People are telling you exactly what their experience is," says Eric. But as he points out, this requires you to "detach yourself from the emotional side of the review and pull out the data," he says.

Eric also puts an important caveat on this. The ease and anonymity of online communication mean that you need to take any review with a pinch of salt. First take a step back and make a careful, honest and impartial appraisal of the review's legitimacy. "Nine times out of 10 the people who write these reviews don't even know what they're talking about, they're making a fool of themselves," is how Eric puts it.

Write The End of The Story Your Way

If you've determined that the review is legitimate, this is your opportunity to write the end of the story your way. What will make or break their experience is how you react to the review. As Eric says, "at that moment you can change the end of the story." Think about it in terms of "what can I do to make things right?"

Online communication is a two-way street. It gives you the capacity to respond in a public forum. Think of it as a promotional opportunity. Others, perhaps many, many others, will see how you respond to a bad review. Respond in a way that resolves the reviewer's grievances satisfactorily and in a timely, polite and considerate way, and you're much more likely to win customers than lose them.

Eric sums it up nicely. "Do whatever it takes to make it right and let them know you're on their side." And that's a key factor. Letting them know you're on their side. Keep in mind that they can reply in turn. Do it right and you'll not only turn a bad review into a good one but also gain a valuable repeat customer.

Listen to the entire conversation with Eric Cacciatore [here](#).