



# PowerReviews' Commitment to an Open Network

Open. Innovative. Trusted. Expanding.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ratings and reviews have become a key part of the purchase journey. In fact, 86% of consumers won't make a purchase without reading reviews.

In addition to helping consumers make better purchase decisions, ratings and reviews are critical to ecommerce success. Retailers typically see a **15% lift in site conversion**, and many brands see product page conversion rates double when adding reviews.

Reviews also drive traffic and repeat visits. User-generated content is the primary factor in Google rankings for product pages and as Amazon has shown, shoppers will visit your site in the future if they know you have good review coverage. **55% of consumers start their purchase journey on Amazon**, thanks in large part, to their excellent review coverage.

Optimizing review coverage (the number of products that have reviews) and review depth (the number of reviews per product) is essential for retailers and brands looking to better connect with consumers and compete and win against Amazon. A key way to do this is through review syndication. An open network will ensure better coverage for retailers, reduced costs for brands and more innovation for all.



## Syndication Increases Reach

Review syndication is the distribution of user-generated content, including ratings and reviews, collected on brand sites to retail ecommerce sites. Syndication is a key way for brands and retailers to achieve optimal review coverage and depth, while also empowering consumers to share their experiences with specific products using their own words, photos and videos.

Brands that syndicate content to retail ecommerce sites benefit from increased reach and sales, while their retail partners that accept syndicated brand content benefit from increased review coverage and depth. Many retailers, even the market leaders, receive more than half of their review content from syndication.

## Major Retailers and Brands are Committed to an Open Network

In March 2017, **PowerReviews announced** that 35 major retailers originally not using the PowerReviews platform had signed direct syndication agreements with PowerReviews to ensure continued syndication from hundreds of brands using the PowerReviews platform. These agreements came in addition to the hundreds of major retailers already using PowerReviews, as well as major retailers on their own in-house platforms including Sears, Wayfair, Zappos and Overstock.

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*“Brands and retailers should control what content appears on their site, not their vendors. PowerReviews is committed to expanding the Open Network to make more authentic content available to consumers on more ecommerce sites, regardless of their rating and review technology platform. Healthy competition will ensure an open and competitive market for both brands and retailers.*

*—Matt Moog, CEO, PowerReviews*

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## **ORIGINS OF REVIEW SYNDICATION**

PowerReviews has been syndicating review content from brands to retailers for eleven years. For the last six years, PowerReviews and Bazaarvoice have cross-syndicated content. The two companies briefly combined in 2012, and in July 2014, the Department of Justice (DOJ) declared the merger anticompetitive, ordered the divestiture of PowerReviews from Bazaarvoice and mandated the continuation of review syndication for four years. Since then, PowerReviews has added hundreds of brands and retailers to its platform. Today, PowerReviews brands syndicate millions of reviews to Bazaarvoice retailers, and PowerReviews retailers help Bazaarvoice reach hundreds of millions of shoppers as well.

## **EXPANDING ACCESS TO THE OPEN NETWORK**

Later this year the court order is expiring, and PowerReviews has pledged to continue sending and accepting syndicated review content. Under pressure from customers and the market, Bazaarvoice has agreed to continue to accept syndicated review content as well. However, they have yet to commit to eliminating the exorbitant access fees brands must pay in order to syndicate. PowerReviews is taking a different approach. We will continue to provide review content to retailers who are not using our platform, and will continue to accept content from brands not using our platform. Additionally, in an effort to further open the network, PowerReviews is eliminating access fees so that brands no longer need to pay a toll to appear on retailer sites.



## Core Principles of the Open Network

The Open Network is based on **four core principles**:

- 1 ACCESS:** Retailers determine what content they accept, and brands, not their technology vendors, determine where their content is syndicated to.
- 2 AUTHENTICITY:** PowerReviews will help brands and retailers ensure that the content they syndicate is authentic and free from spam, fraud, and manipulation.
- 3 AFFORDABILITY:** PowerReviews will eliminate the exorbitant access fees that make it prohibitively expensive for brand to syndicate their content onto retailer sites.
- 4 ACCOUNTABILITY:** PowerReviews will provide accountability; clear and transparent reporting so brands understand to which sites their reviews are being syndicated to and what the impact of that syndication is having on coverage and, where available, conversion.

## ANSWERING THE INDUSTRY'S DEMAND: AUTHENTIC CONTENT AND AN OPEN NETWORK

PowerReviews will continue to accept and distribute authentic content to and from all retailers and brands in order to make more reviews available to consumers on more ecommerce sites, regardless of their rating and review technology platform. With the Open Network supporting multiple technology platforms, including in-house solutions, PowerReviews is innovating to support the industry's demand for an open, expanded network.

PowerReviews ensures the authenticity of reviews through advanced anti-fraud technology, automated filters and 100% human moderation, including specialized moderation for regulated industries such as finance and pharmaceuticals. Furthermore, reviews are never rejected based on a negative star rating.

Brands and retailers also have access to SKU-specific data on user-generated content, impressions, conversion and shopping behavior. This helps businesses improve product descriptions, online and in-store shopping experiences, products and services.



## CONTENT, COVERAGE AND DEPTH MATTER

Half of shoppers begin their search on Amazon, and our most recent study of 1,000 American consumers found that 70% of shoppers were likely to browse on a retailer or brand site, then go to Amazon to purchase. Earlier PowerReviews research found that after variety and price, reviews were a key reason shoppers began on Amazon, with 55% citing reviews as a primary driver. Shoppers who can't find reviews for the product they are considering will leave a brand or retailer site; and 25% of them will go to Amazon to find reviews. Second only to Amazon, search engines are the starting point for 35% of shoppers.

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*25% of shoppers who can't find reviews on a brand or retailer site will go to Amazon to find reviews.*

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Reviews have a positive impact on search. When a product without reviews adds one or more reviews, traffic increases an average of 108%. The top 10% of customers see a lift of 239%.

When brands and retailers increase review coverage and depth, they also see a big impact on conversion. Mobile optimization and continuous innovative solutions such as Review Your Purchases, which is a way for consumers to rate several products at once, have more than doubled native review collection rates. And generating more reviews has a direct impact on sales. When a product without reviews adds one or more reviews, sales increase 92% and the conversion rate increases by 65%. The top 10% of customers see a 126% conversion lift.

Visual content has also become an integral part of the social lives of today's consumers, and is significantly impacting purchase behavior and the way consumers browse for and discover products on brand and retail sites. Nearly three quarters (72%) of shoppers say they are more likely to buy a product that has reviews that feature photos and videos in



addition to written text, with 20% saying they are very likely to purchase once they have found reviews—including user-submitted photos or videos.

## **REVIEW SYNDICATION: MAKING REVIEWS AVAILABLE TO SHOPPERS ON MORE ECOMMERCE SITES**

Collecting authentic reviews is the first step in driving traffic, sales and conversion. The next step is expanding the reach of that content so more shoppers can find the content they are looking for—regardless of where they shop.

Review syndication makes more reviews available to shoppers on more ecommerce sites. Syndication enables the distribution of reviews collected on brand sites to retail ecommerce sites to make that content visible to more shoppers. On average, retailers receive 58% of their review content from syndication.

To ensure consumers benefit from reviews throughout their shopping journey, PowerReviews also syndicates ratings and review content to Google for impact on organic search, Product Listing Ads and Seller Ratings.

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*Today, retailers get 58% of their review content from syndication.<sup>1</sup>*

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## **OUR COMMITMENT**

You can rest assured that PowerReviews has not only put steps in place to continue the syndication network, but we have also made it possible, for the first time, for brands retailers to reach their consumers in more places—and with more types of content—than ever before. Welcome to a new era in content syndication.

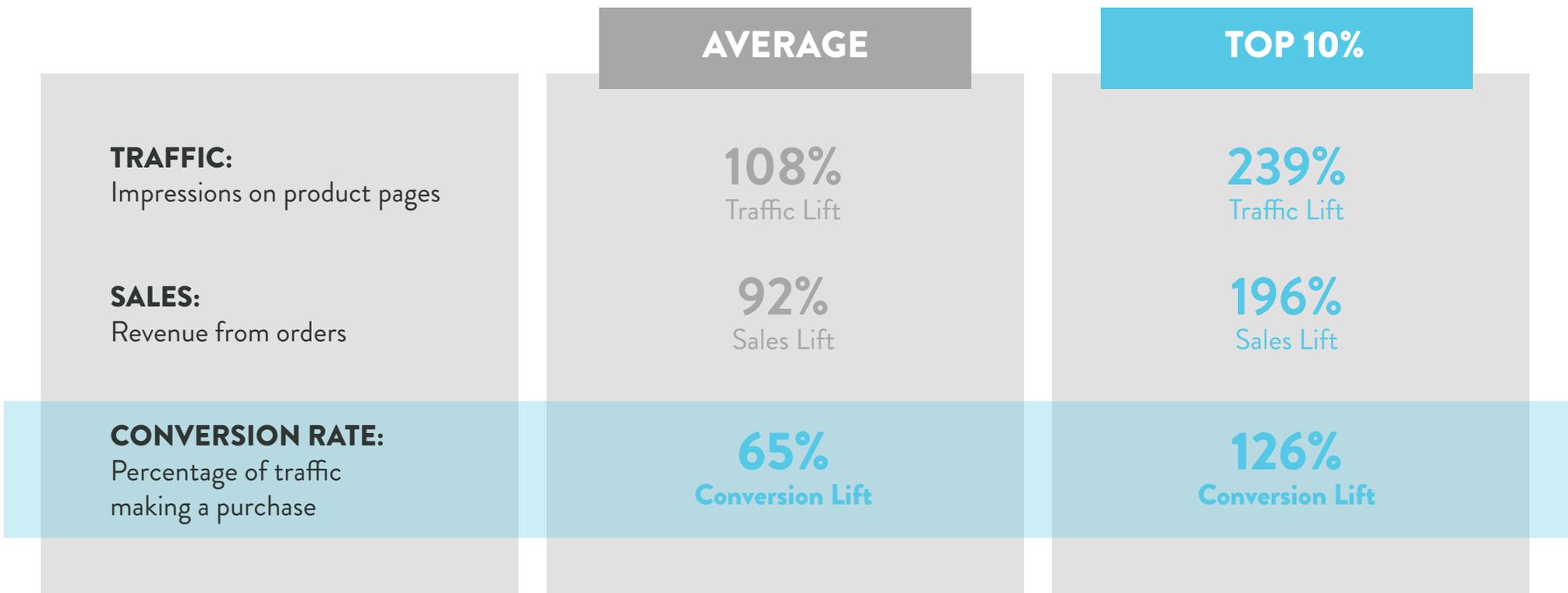
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<sup>1</sup> Average across PowerReviews retailers that receive syndicated content.



## ADDING REVIEWS TO A PRODUCT LIFTS TRAFFIC, SALES, CONVERSION

When the number of reviews increases from 0 to > 0 reviews



Based on a representative sample of 14,000+ products across 100+ retailers in the PowerReviews Network that went from 0 reviews (for a minimum of 30 days) to > 0 reviews (for a minimum of 30 days) over a 6-month period. Traffic (impressions), sales (dollar value of orders) and conversion were measured and averaged daily for each product, then averaged by merchant and across the network.



## ABOUT POWERREVIEWS

PowerReviews works with more than 1,000 global brands and retailers to deliver cloud-based software that collects and displays ratings and reviews and questions and answers on websites. PowerReviews unifies and amplifies the voice of the consumer throughout their journey, across all channels to help consumers make better purchase decisions and to help businesses drive conversion and improve products and services. Ratings and reviews solutions from PowerReviews are essential for consumers as they search and shop online and in-store, driving traffic on more than 5,000 websites, creating actionable insights to improve products and services, increasing conversion, and growing online site-wide sales. The Open Network reaches more than 1 billion in-market shoppers every month, giving retailers and brands the power to reach shoppers wherever they are.

| For more information, visit [www.powerreviews.com](http://www.powerreviews.com).