



Reputation Studio



State of Reviews and Q&A 2021

3 Key Trends to Watch for This Year



Impact of UGC on Your Bottom Line

How can User Generated Content (UGC) like ratings, reviews and Q&A positively impact your bottom line?

95% OF SHOPPERS

read online reviews before making a purchase.

Spiegel Research Center, Northwestern University

31% MORE

the amount consumers are likely to spend on products and services from businesses that have excellent reviews.

Bright Local, The Impact of Online Reviews

7 OUT OF 10

consumers who changed their minds about a brand after the company replied to a review.

Bazaarvoice, Conversation Index



Shape Your Review and Q&A Strategy in 2021

Chances are, you're already leveraging Review and Q&A management tools today to engage and convert shoppers. But consumer needs and preferences change over time. Your review and Q&A strategy must evolve to keep up.

The start of the new year is the perfect time to revisit your strategy and make necessary adjustments to ensure you're meeting shopper expectations.

With that in mind, let's explore three key trends that should shape your review and Q&A strategy in the year ahead.



Trend #1 Reviews are More Important Than Ever.

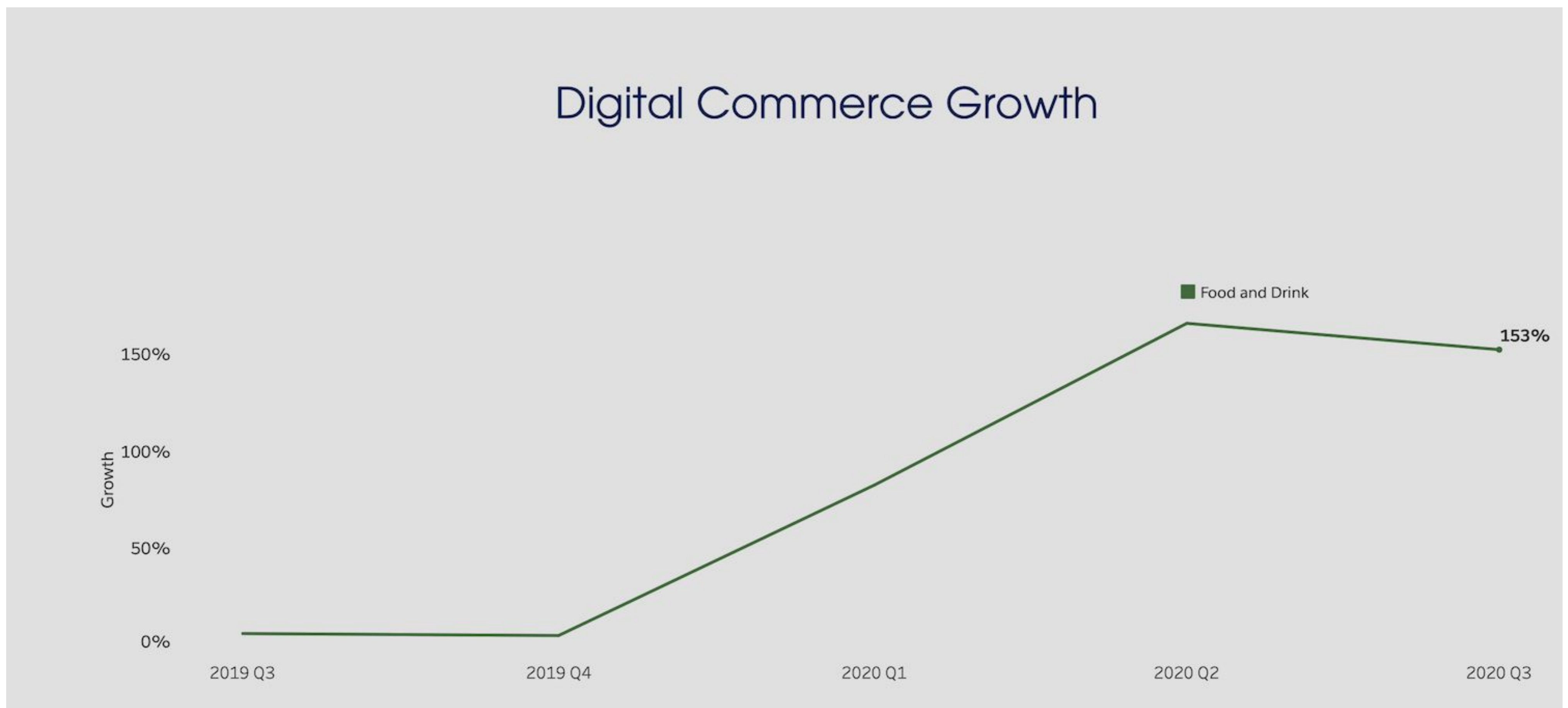


The fact that consumers read reviews isn't exactly news. But here's the thing: data tells us that reviews are even *more* important in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Trend #1: Reviews are More Important Than Ever

Consumers are shopping online more than before. According to [Salesforce data](#), in Q3 2020, global digital sales grew 55% year-over-year. And certain product categories have experienced even larger growth. For example, in Q3 2020, online food and drink sales were up 150% year-over-year.



When a customer is shopping online, they don't have the opportunity to touch, experience and try out a product before making a purchase. That's where reviews come in.

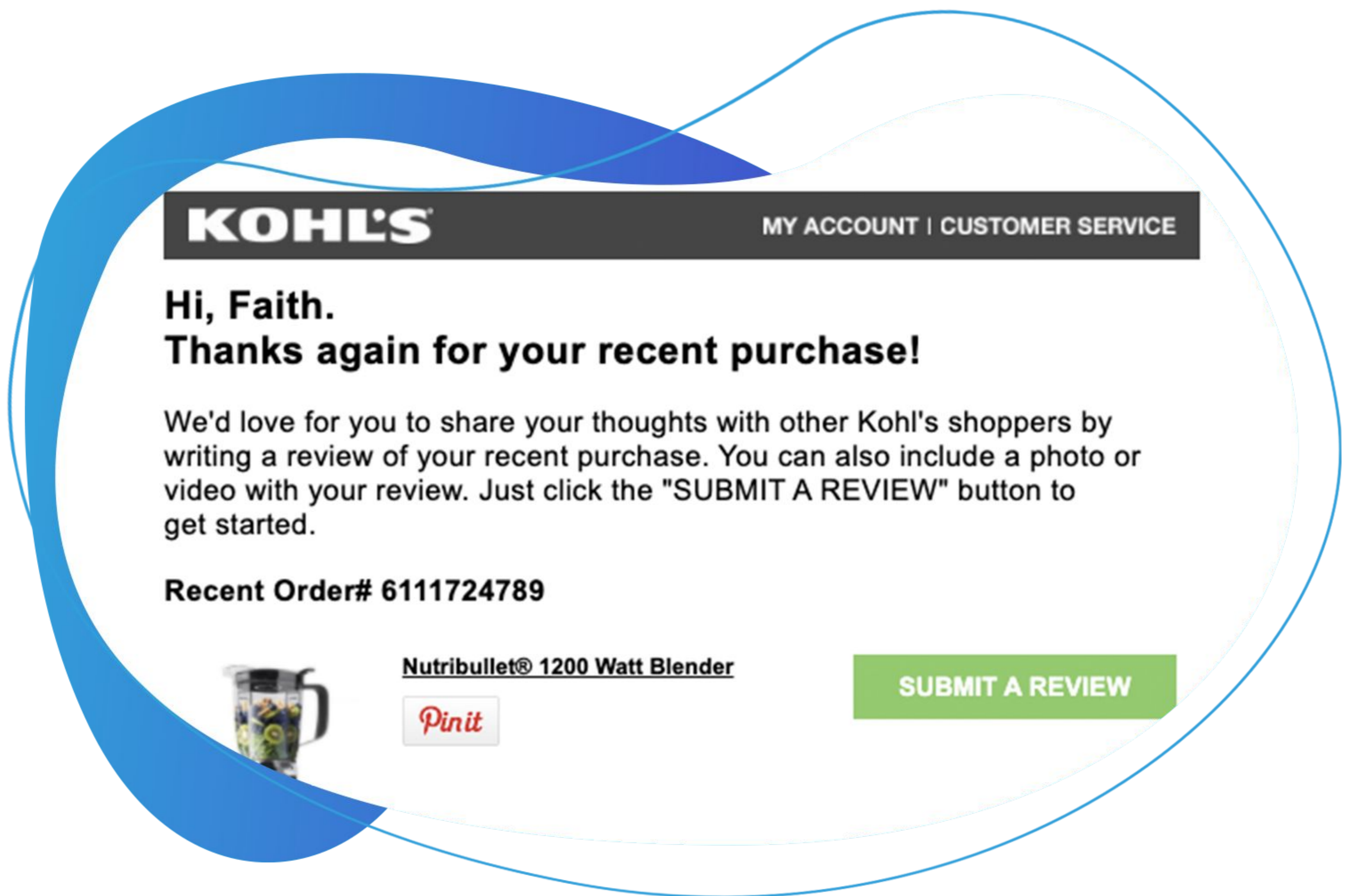
Reviews allow online shoppers to hear about the experiences of others like that. That authentic, unfiltered information gives them the confidence they need to make a purchase -- even when they can't experience the product in person first. According to PowerReviews' [Market Trends Snapshot](#) from November 2020, consumers who interact with reviews convert at a 25% higher rate than last year.

Of course, there are still consumers who visit brick-and-mortar stores, hotels and restaurants. These shoppers also depend on reviews as this content helps them determine which locations to visit -- and which to avoid. BrightLocal found that 31% of consumers read more reviews for local businesses in 2020 compared to the prior year because of COVID. And 67% say they won't use a business if reviews indicate it doesn't have safety measures in place.



Trend #1: Reviews are More Important Than Ever

Take Action on This Trend: Collect and Display Reviews



Today's shoppers expect to find reviews for the products, locations and mobile apps they're considering. According to research from [Deloitte & Touche LLP](#) (commissioned by Bazaarvoice) 46% of consumers indicate a high number of reviews was the biggest factor in their purchasing decisions.

Reviews are more important than ever before. And in 2021, shoppers won't hesitate to pass up businesses that don't have any (or enough) of this content.

But how much is enough? As it turns out, the more reviews you collect, the bigger the impact. According to [Bazaarvoice data](#), one review can increase purchases by 10%. But 100 reviews can drive a 37% increase in orders. And as an added bonus, just eight reviews can result in SEO benefits and more site traffic.



Trend #1: Reviews are More Important Than Ever

Take Action on This Trend: Collect and Display Reviews

So be sure you're consistently collecting reviews for your products, locations and apps. An effective way to do that is to send emails or SMS messages to customers after they've purchased a product, visited a location or downloaded an app.

Sites like Amazon allow brands to get even more granular by collecting ratings on product features. For example, a shopper writing a review for this children's toy is asked to provide an overall rating -- as well as rate the product's sturdiness, value for money and "giftability."

Create Review



BRIO 33757 Lifting Bridge | Toy Train Accessory with Wooden Track for Kids Age 3 and Up

Overall rating



Rate features

Giftable



Add a photo or video

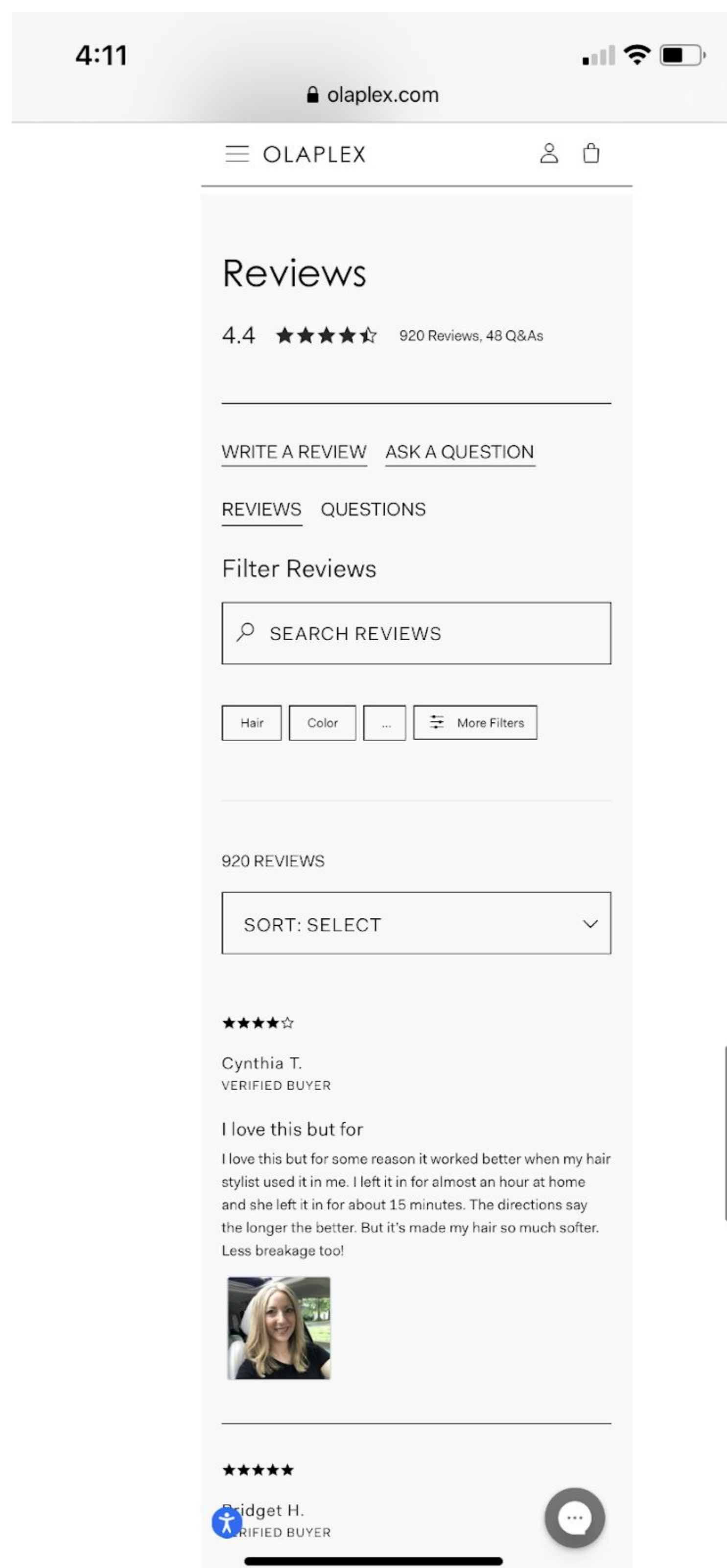
Shoppers find images and videos more helpful than text alone.



Trend #1: Reviews are More Important Than Ever

Take Action on This Trend: Collect and Display Reviews

Once you've started collecting reviews, showcase this content so your shoppers can find it -- regardless of the device they're using. For example, let's say a consumer is shopping for shampoo. They come across the product page for Olaplex Hair Perfector and can quickly see that the product has 922 reviews and an average star rating of about 4.5. They're intrigued, so they jump to the reviews section of the product page, where they can search and filter to find the content most relevant to them -- and gain the confidence they need to convert.





Trend #2 Review Engagement is Important but Not Always Possible



It's not practical (or even advisable) to respond to each single review that's submitted for your products, locations and apps. But in some cases, it makes sense to engage with a review. In fact, a simple response can have a big impact.



Trend #2: Review Engagement is Important, but Not Always Possible



Responding to negative reviews can help you turn bad situations around. It's an important way to provide great post-sale service. According to data cited in an article for [MyCustomer.com](https://www.mycustomer.com), over half of customers that write negative reviews expect a response in seven days or less.

On the other hand, responding to positive reviews allows you to make authentic connections with your happy shoppers -- which can boost loyalty. This is especially important now, when, in the midst of the pandemic, consumers often find themselves feeling isolated and craving connection.

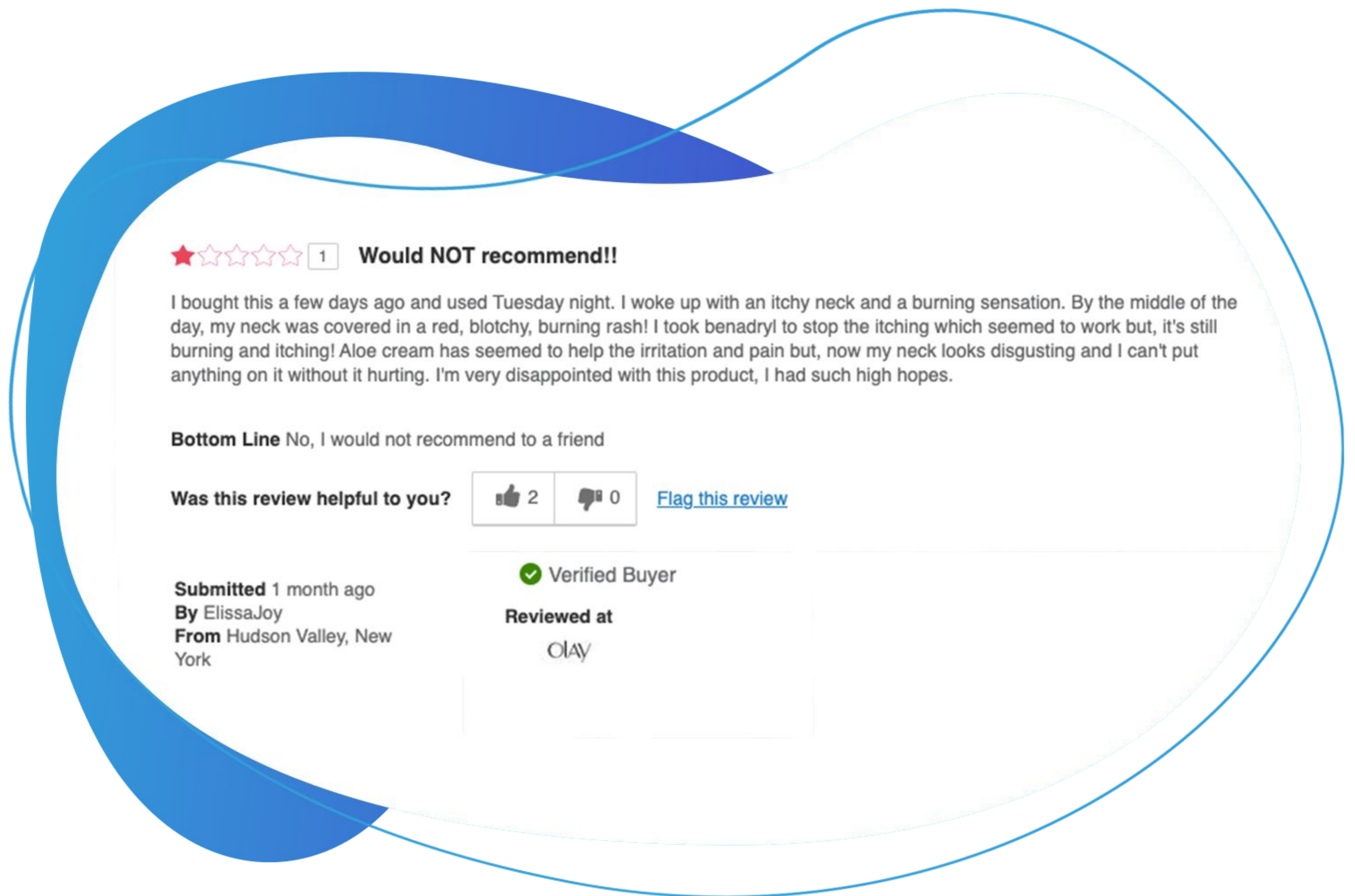
What's more, when responses to reviews are publicly displayed, they impact how future shoppers view your brand. According to [Bazaarvoice](https://www.bazaarvoice.com), 41% of consumers say that when brands reply to reviews, it makes them believe the company really cares about its customers. And when a brand has a great reputation for responding to reviews, it boosts their revenue. An analysis from [Womply](https://www.womply.com) found that businesses that reply to reviews at least a quarter of the time generate 35% more revenue, on average.

But engaging with customer reviews isn't always straightforward. Different eCommerce platforms offer different response capabilities -- and features and functionality are always changing. For example, as of this writing Amazon has removed the ability for brands to respond to customer reviews altogether. And while Walmart allows brands to respond to reviews written about their products, these responses aren't displayed for the public to see.



Trend #2: Review Engagement is Important, but Not Always Possible

Take Action on This Trend: Understand and Make a Plan to Engage



There are some instances when it makes sense to respond to a review. For example, it's considered a best practice to respond to reviews like the one below that mention health or safety issues. It's also a good idea to respond to reviews that suggest a shopper is using a product incorrectly, and as a result, is having a bad experience.

But unfortunately, not all platforms allow you to respond publicly to reviews.

So take inventory of the websites where your products are sold, and be sure you have an understanding of the current review response capabilities for each. For example, you can most likely post a public response to a negative review on your own eCommerce site.

Engage on Reviews & Questions with Reputation Studio

Zero in on the functions important to your role with a customizable workspace.

✓ Respond to reviews directly from a customizable workspace or from Service Cloud cases

✓ Create rules & templates to automatically respond to specified customer reviews

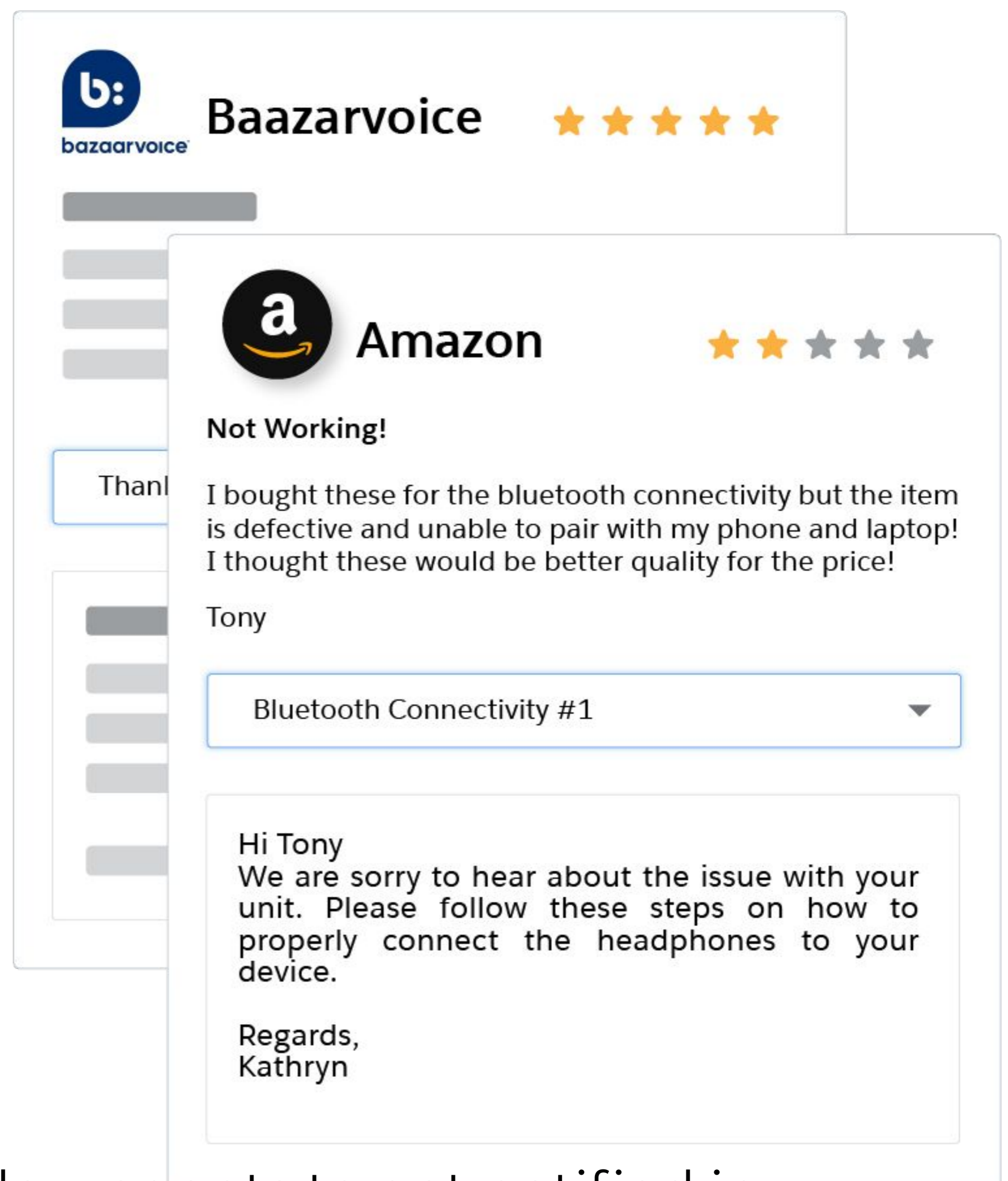
✓ Configure approval process to provide a consistent customer experience

✓ Create custom alerts that allow agents to get notified in real-time as soon as a new review is posted that meets filter criteria.

✓ Prioritize categories of keywords and tags to trigger urgency around top-of-mind issues and responses.

✓ Make responding faster and more consistent by starting with templates and customizing them to each unique review or question.

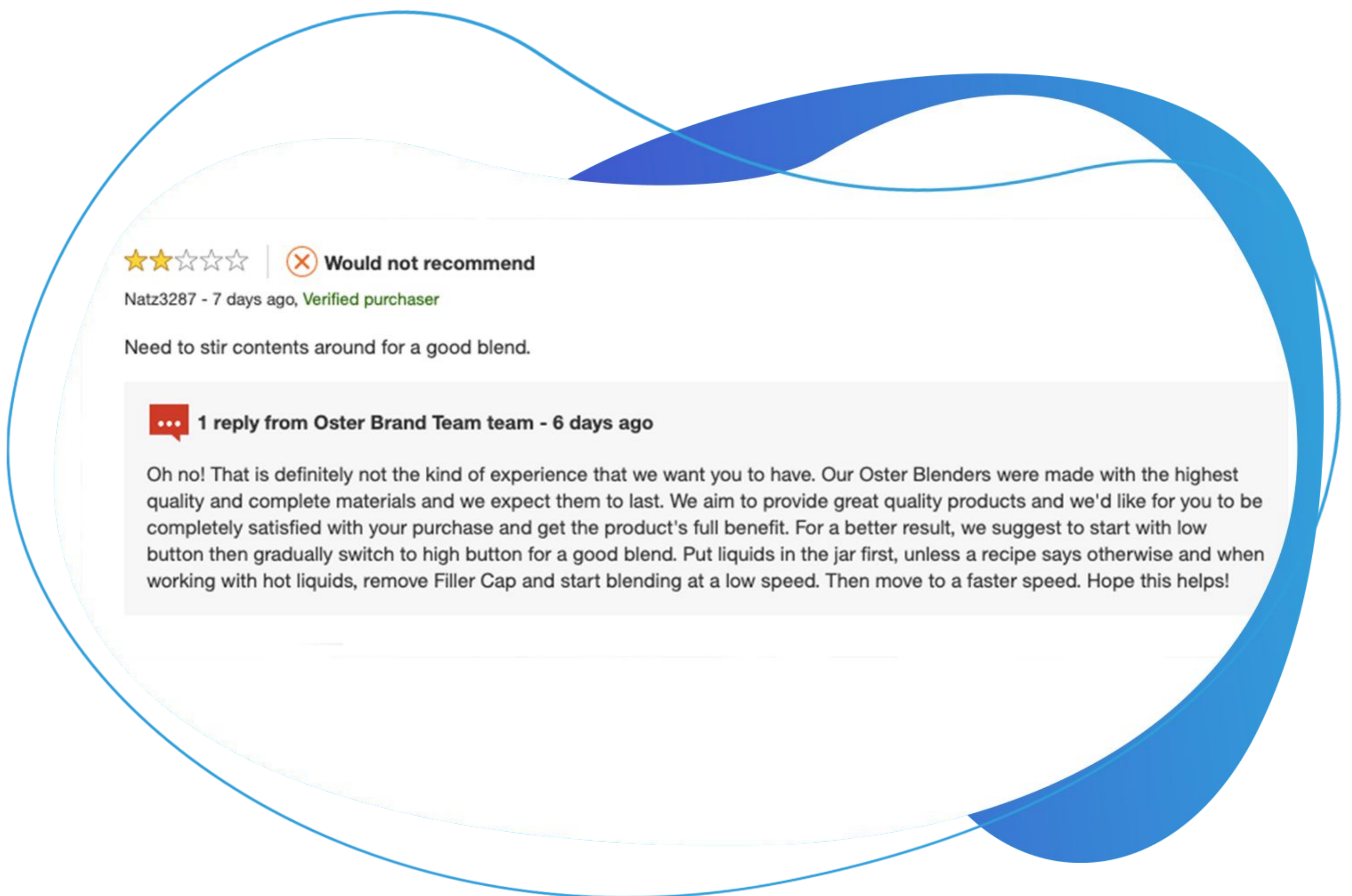
✓ Ensure responses are on-brand and accurate by setting up an approval process for managers.





Trend #2: Review Engagement is Important, but Not Always Possible

Take Action on This Trend: Understand and Make a Plan to Engage



Note that the way in which brands can respond to reviews on Amazon is changing, and Reputation Studio will be the first to notify you of the new process.

Once you have a solid understanding of where you can respond to reviews, make a plan to do so.

There are many factors to consider when determining which reviews to respond to -- including star rating, sentiment and length. It can be difficult to prioritize reviews (and then respond to them), especially if you sell your products on a number of different websites. However, if you're a Reputation Studio customer, you can manage and respond to all reviews from a single platform. You can also set up keyword alerts so reviews with specific words are automatically escalated to the right teams to resolve. That way, you can be sure you're prioritizing the most important reviews.



Trend #3 For Online Shoppers, Q&A Takes the Place of In-Store Associates



When a customer is shopping in a store and has a question about a product, they're likely to turn to a sales associate to get an answer. Of course, this isn't possible when people are shopping online. And as we mentioned earlier, consumers are doing a whole lot more online shopping these days.



Trend #3: Q&A Takes the Place of In-Store Associates Online



When a customer is shopping in a store and has a question about a product, they're likely to turn to a sales associate to get an answer. Of course, this isn't possible when people are shopping online. And as we mentioned earlier, consumers are doing a whole lot more online shopping these days.

When an online shopper can't get an answer to their question, they probably won't purchase your product. Or if they do, it might not meet their expectations when it arrives -- and they'll decide to return it. Neither scenario is ideal.

It's essential to provide online shoppers with tools to ask their questions -- and get quick answers. Doing so helps shoppers make smarter purchase decisions -- which means fewer returns for you. What's more, these questions and answers can serve as an FAQ that'll help future shoppers make informed purchase decisions, while driving sales. After all, our friends at [PowerReviews](#) have found that shoppers who engage with Q&A content convert at 153% the rate of overall site traffic.

The cherry on top? Q&A is great for SEO as it provides Google with the fresh, relevant content it loves.

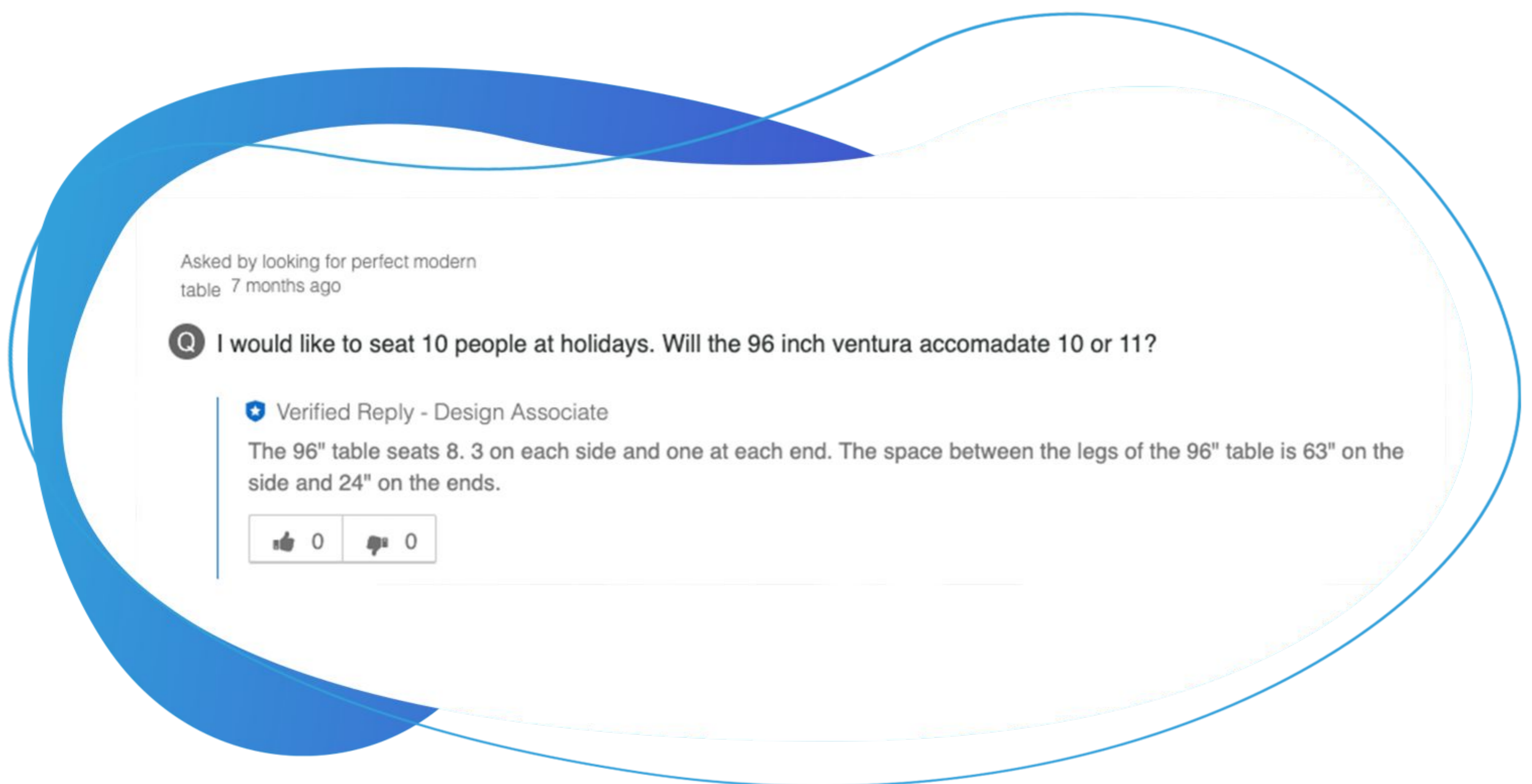


Trend #3: Q&A Takes the Place of In-Store Associates Online

Take Action on This Trend: Leverage Q&A Software and Engage

It's critical to provide your online shoppers with tools to ask questions. One way to do that is to add Q&A software to your product pages.

For example, this shopper is in the market for a new dining table. She's read the full product description for this particular table -- but she's still not sure if the table will accommodate the 10 people she plans to host for the holidays. So, she posts a question on the product page using the Q&A feature. The brand responds, letting her know the table only accommodates eight. So she continues her search.



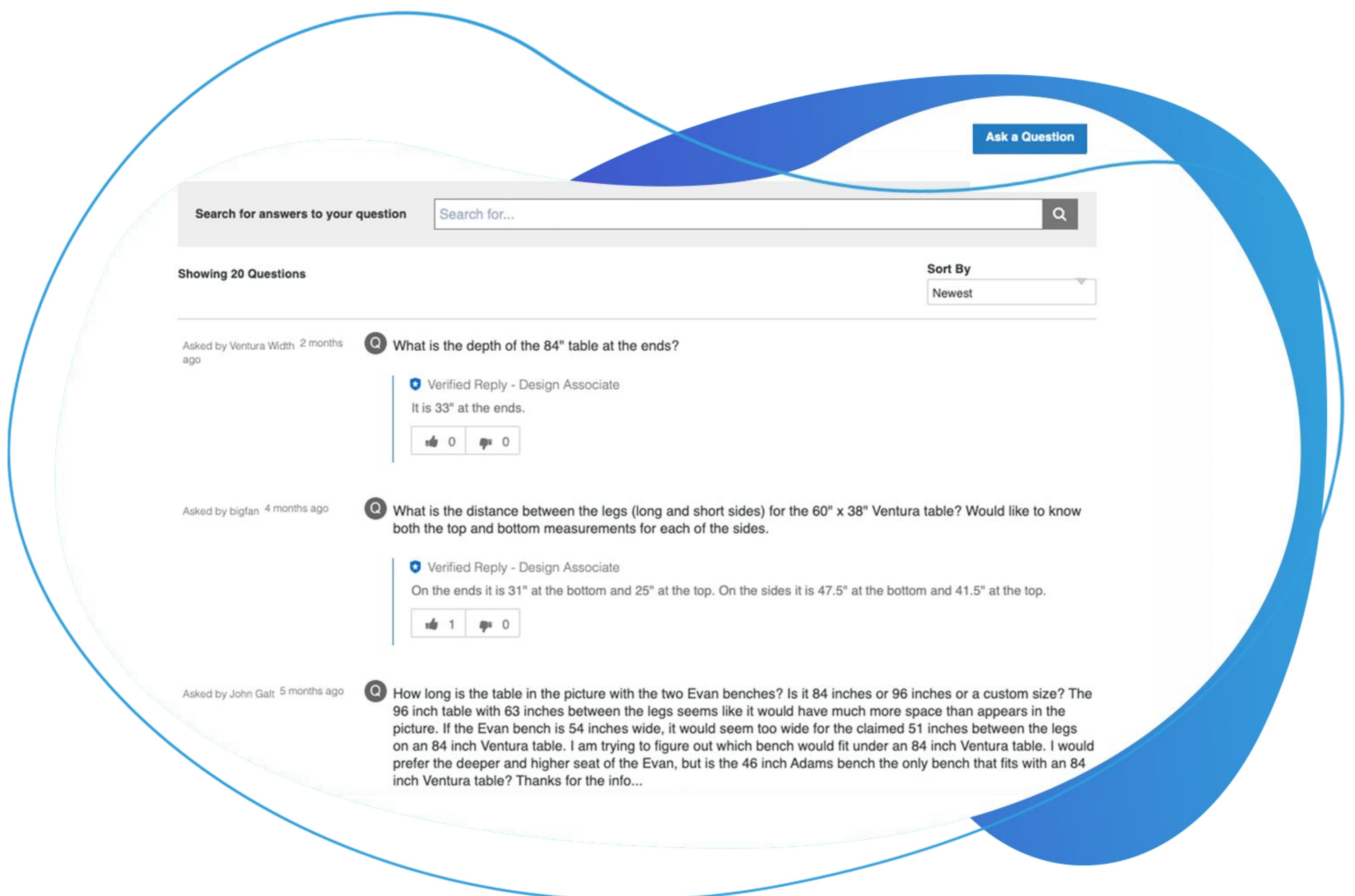
When it comes to responding to customer questions, time is of the essence. In fact, Amazon's goal is for their brand partners to respond to questions in real time -- when the shopper is still on the product page. That might sound impossible -- but it's not. If you're a Reputation Studio customer, you can get alerts any time a question comes in from any platform where you sell your products. Then, you can provide an accurate, timely answer -- before the shopper gets distracted by something else.



Trend #3: Q&A Takes the Place of In-Store Associates Online

Take Action on This Trend: Leverage Q&A Software and Engage

Remember: one shopper's question might help a dozen others. So be sure to display all of the questions already asked by your customers, alongside the answers. Make your Q&A sortable and searchable so future shoppers can see if you've already provided an answer to a question that's similar to theirs. For example, Room & Board allows shoppers to sort questions by age. And they can also search questions that have already been asked by other customers.

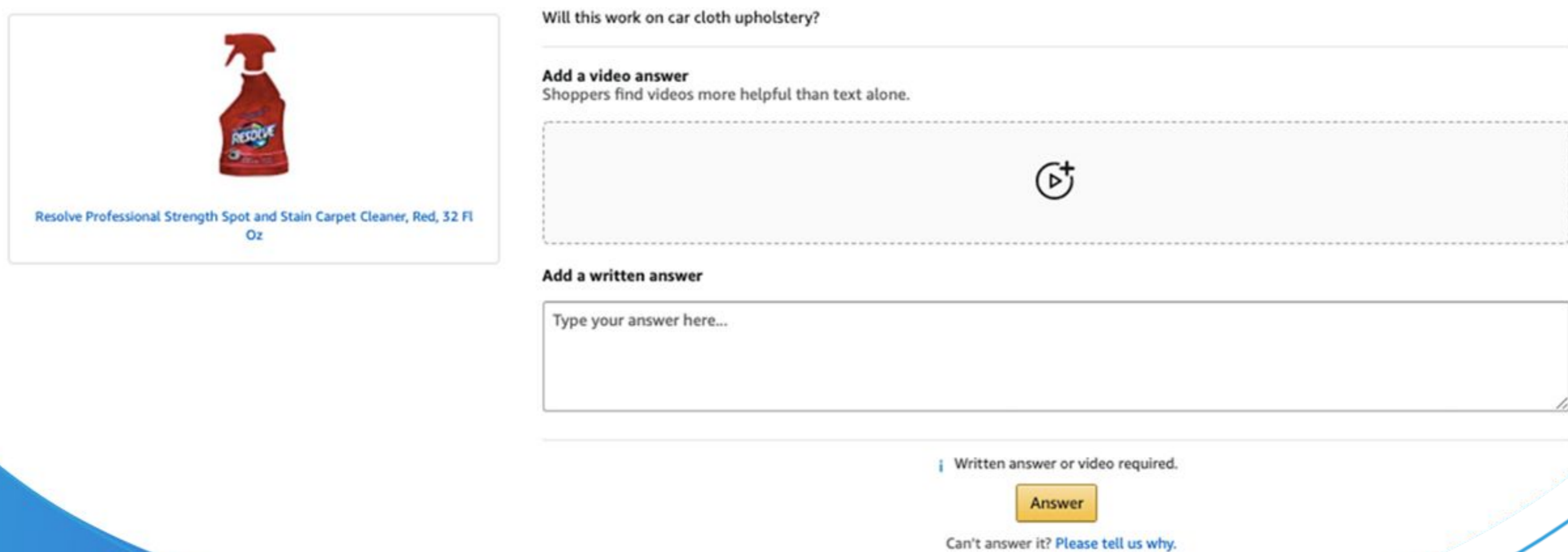




Trend #3: Q&A Takes the Place of In-Store Associates Online

Take Action on This Trend: Leverage Q&A Software and Engage

Again, it's important to understand the Q&A capabilities of each platform where you sell your products. For example, most platforms only allow text responses to questions. But Amazon also allows brands to post video responses to customer questions.





Optimize your **Review** and **Q&A** Strategy This Year.

Shoppers depend on Reviews and Q&A to make informed purchase decisions. This is especially true today when the COVID-19 pandemic has led to massive growth in online shopping.

Now's the time to understand how today's online shoppers are using reviews and Q&A -- and adjust your strategy accordingly. That way, you'll be well positioned to see the biggest impact from your efforts.

Reputation Studio helps companies drive incremental revenue and cost efficiencies by aggregating data siloed across digital touchpoints, enabling efficiencies in capturing the voice of your customers & addressing feedback.

Monitor Reviews & Q&A with Reputation Studio

Consolidate reviews from hundreds of sources and manage them efficiently.

- ✓ Aggregate Reviews and Q&A from key digital review platforms, marketplaces, app stores, UGC platforms, employee review and other sources
- ✓ Automatically create and track Service Cloud cases from reviews and questions
- ✓ Prioritize Reviews based on rule-based criteria you define



Analyze Reviews & Questions with Reputation Studio

Measure and visualize customer sentiment and intent with analytics that go beyond the star rating.

- ✓ Competitive intelligence includes competing brands and products in your review collection at scale.
- ✓ Keyword tagging with advanced child and parent models lets you watch trends surface as reviews come in.
- ✓ 200+ report types including internal tracking of agent productivity and response time SLAs.





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More *Success* / Minute