

Improve search engine performance with rating & reviews

Feedback you can trust to help you obtain organic stars, improve click-through rate and boost conversion

About this white paper

No matter what industry you're in, appearing at the top of search engines, above your competitors, is vital for driving more potential customers to your website.

To boost your position, good Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is required. SEO is the process of improving a website's visibility within a Search Engine's Results Page (SERP). It only impacts your position within a search engine's natural or 'organic' results.

Customer reviews play an important role within SEO, as collecting and displaying them on your website can improve its visibility within a search engine.

SEO benefits

- ✓ Obtaining organic stars
- ✓ Improving click-through rate (CTR)
- ✓ Enhancing Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO)
- ✓ Building brand reputation
- ✓ Increasing website trust and authority
- ✓ Content marketing and user-generated content (UGC)
- ✓ Social signals

Why Feefo?

Feefo is the number one consumer ratings and reviews platform in the UK, enabling both online and offline companies to collect and utilise customer feedback.

As an invite-only feedback platform, reviews and ratings from Feefo are trusted, as they are collected from genuine customers. Only those who have made a purchase or transaction can leave a review.

How does Feefo work?

Easy Setup

We offer seamless integration of both service and product reviews directly on to your website.

Collect Trusted Reviews

Only genuine customers can leave reviews. We'll automatically email your customers after they have made a purchase through your website.

Increase Traffic

As an official Google Content Partner, all Feefo reviews are 100% verified and sent directly to Google. Reviews can appear as Seller Ratings within search adverts and as product ratings within Google Shopping. According to Google, ratings can increase CTR by an average of 17%, but our own studies show an increase of up to 29% [2].

Improve Sales & Cost Efficiency

Displaying ratings on product and service pages can increase conversion rates and sales. For example, a Feefo client experienced an increased conversion rate of 7% [9] with improved sales of 3% [10]. Improved traffic and conversions helps to reduce bounce rates, which can have a positive impact on QualityScore. One client experienced a reduced bounce rate of 8% and a reduced cost-per-click (CPC) by 12% year-on-year [2].

Gain Business Insights

Learn and improve, safe in the knowledge that your reviews, collected by Feefo, are 100% authentic and reliable...

Obtaining organic stars



Introduction to Google's organic star rating

Google works with independent feedback platforms to gather ratings and reviews for businesses and the associated products/services they sell.

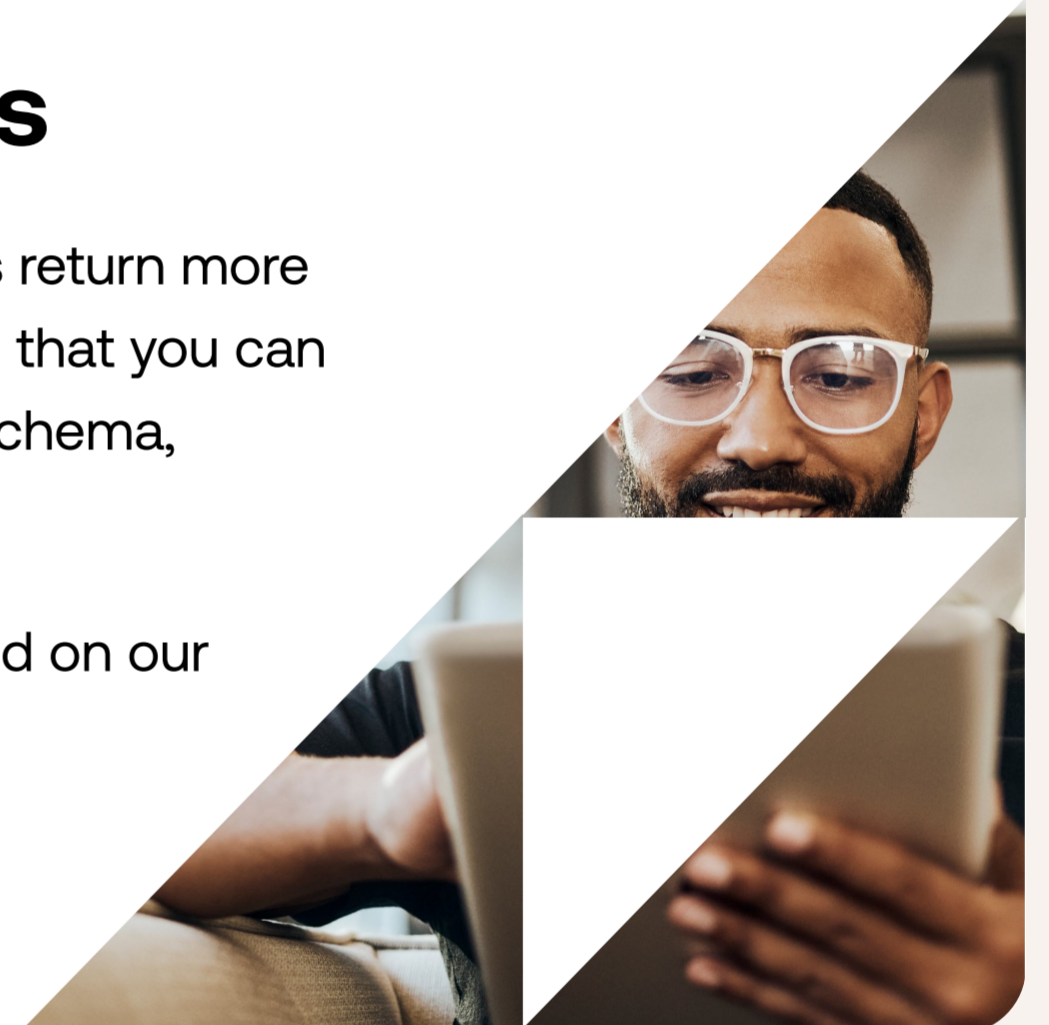
Reviews can be displayed in the form of a star rating, a numerical equivalent out of five, and the total number of reviews collected to date.

Displaying organic stars can be achieved if you are collecting reviews through a source trusted by Google, like Feefo, and if your website is marked-up appropriately using the correct schema

Using schema to display organic stars

Schema markup is code that is added to a website to help search engines return more informative results for its users. There are several types of schema markup that you can use to achieve organic stars. 'Organisation', 'product' and 'local business' schema, combined with aggregate rating information will help you achieve these.

More information on our integration with Google organic stars can be found on our [support hub at support.feefo.com](https://support.feefo.com)



Knowledge Panel

An additional benefit of using schema markup to showcase reviews within search engines, specifically Google, is having your reviews displayed within Google's Knowledge Panel.

The Knowledge Panel, also known as the 'Knowledge Graph', is a box that appears on the right-hand side of the search results which highlights key information (if relevant) to the search you have made. This usually includes a business name, telephone number and address along with any other information such as social channels. The Knowledge Graph appears for brand-related searches and is a great way for you to build on your brand reputation and stand out in the search results.

Google have updated this, see 'Reviews from the web' in this box. Companies working with Feefo, with schema markup correctly implemented on their websites, are eligible for this feature.


Markup for organisation schema

Organisation schema is ideal for the home page of your website, or your main reviews page, as it gives a quick snapshot of how people rank your business. The schema contains the service score of the overall business, general business information, such as contact details, and review information, including aggregate rating. To the right is an example of organic stars in the search results. As you can see, the right image has specific fields that need to be filled with your business information, such as your phone number and website URL. It also requires you to specify your reviews core out of 5, and the number of reviews you have collected. This can be dynamically loaded using Feefo's API.

```
<div itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/Organization">
  <meta itemprop="name" content="Company Name">
  <meta itemprop="url" content="URL">
  <meta itemprop="telephone" content="Telephone number"/>
  <div itemprop="address" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/PostalAddress">
    <meta itemprop="streetAddress" content="Address Line 1"/>
    <meta itemprop="addressLocality" content="Address Line 2"/>
    <meta itemprop="addressLocality" content="Address Line 3"/>
    <meta itemprop="addressCountry" content="Country"/>
  </div>
  <div itemprop="aggregateRating" itemscope itemtype="http://schema.org/AggregateRating">
    <meta itemprop="ratingValue" content="Aggregate score out of 5"/> [this needs to dynamically
    served)
    <meta itemprop="bestRating" content="5"/>
    <meta itemprop="worstRating" content="0"/>
    <meta itemprop="ratingCount" content="number of reviews"/> [this needs to dynamically
    served)
  </div> </div>
```

Insurance | AXA UK
www.axa.co.uk/insurance/business/ 
 Rating: 4.8 - 4,231 votes
Our **business insurance** is designed to keep your **business** running, whatever lies ahead
Choose us and save 10% when you buy online.



Camera Insurance | Specialist cover from under £20
www.eversure.com/camera/
 Rating: 99% - 154 reviews
Eversure Camera Insurance - Cover available for up to £25000. ... Cover from £19.99 a year. For amateur and professional photographers and use by their ...

Markup for product schema

Product schema is for individual product reviews. This is ideal because it allows the consumer to see reviews of the actual product that they're interested in before buying. Product schema will contain information on the individual product, as well as the aggregate rating for the business. You may find that the name of the reviewer and the source are also available.

Self Storage Units in Central Manchester - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/storage/manchester/central/>
Rating: 94% - 18 reviews
Safestore offers safe, secure business self storage units & household storage facilities in Central Manchester with a lowest price guarantee. Get a Quote.

Self Storage Units in Old Trafford, Manchester - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/self-storage/manchester/old-trafford/>
Rating: 100% - 32 reviews
Safestore provide secure self storage units in Manchester Old Trafford with flexible spaces for business or domestic use with our price guarantee. Get a quote.

Self Storage Units in Manchester - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/self-storage/manchester/>
Safestore provides local self storage around Manchester. With our price promise we will beat any cheaper comparable quote by 10%. Call us today.

Self Storage Units in Manchester, Worsley - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/storage/manchester/worsley/>
Rating: 96% - 27 reviews
Safestore self storage offers flexible, secure personal & business storage units in Manchester Worsley with a lowest price guarantee. Get a quote.

Self Storage Units in Salford, Manchester - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/storage/salford/>
Self Storage near salford. Located in Greater Manchester, Salford is a town within the City of Salford, the home of the University of Salford, Manchester, since ...

Self Storage Units in Oldham - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/storage/oldham/>
Rating: 100% - 34 reviews
Safestore is located off M60, junction 22 and is a five minute drive from Oldham on Manchester Road by the Chambers Business Centre. It is opposite Enterprise ...

Self Storage Units in Altrincham, Manchester - Safestore
<https://www.safestore.co.uk/storage/manchester/altrincham/>
Rating: 96% - 311 reviews
Safestore provides local self storage around Manchester. With our price promise we will beat any ...

Markup for local business schema

Local business schema will show reviews for different company branches and locations. It will include information such as branch name, contact details, opening times and payment methods, as well as the aggregate, best and worst rating and rating count.

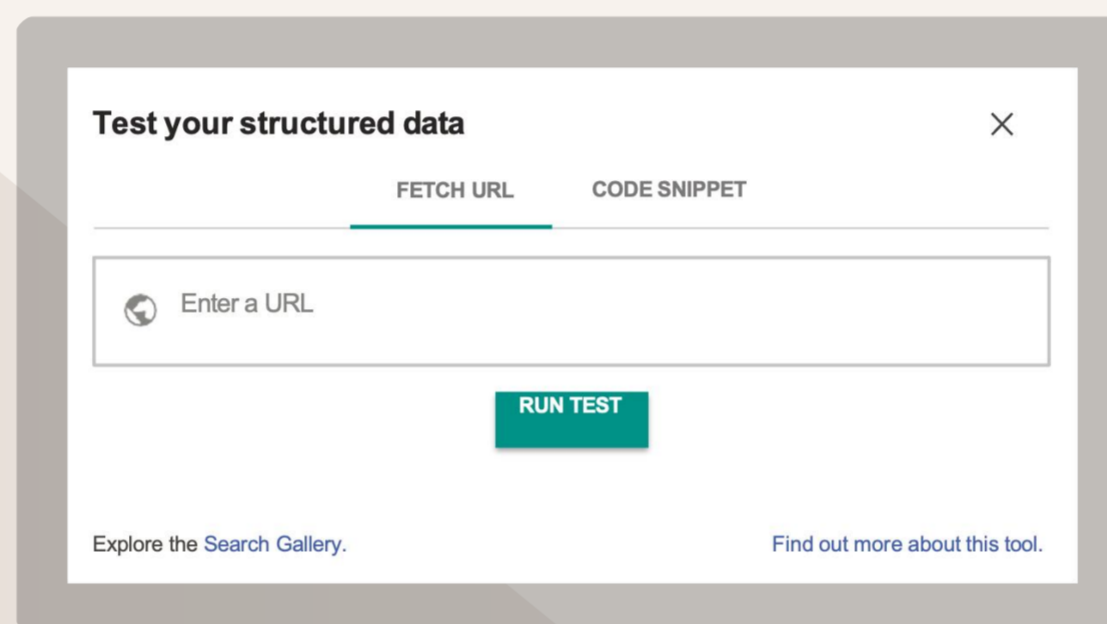
This is best suited for companies with multiple locations or franchises. For example, searching for Safestore Manchester gives an instance of the Local Business Schema.

All their branches have organic stars. Each one shows the individual review score for the branch and uses schema to achieve the results.

Structured data testing tool

Once you've chosen the right structured data and you have the code ready, it is always a good idea to run it through the [Google Structured Data Testing Tool](#). The tool will tell you if there are any errors in your structured data, giving you a chance to correct them. This avoids any frustrations you may come across when trying to figure out why the code isn't working.

All you need to do is copy and paste the URL of your page with the schema on it into the testing tool. It will then show you the results, including any errors (if there are any), so you can amend your code where necessary.



Detected	11 ERRORS	6 WARNINGS	8 ITEMS
hcard	0 ERRORS	0 WARNINGS	1 ITEM
InsuranceAgency	3 ERRORS	4 WARNINGS	2 ITEM
VideoObject	8 ERRORS	2 WARNINGS	1 ITEM
BreadcrumbList	0 ERRORS	0 WARNINGS	1 ITEM
Service	0 ERRORS	0 WARNINGS	1 ITEM

Improving Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO)

Conversion rate is a metric used to determine the proportion of website visitors who achieve a pre-defined goal, for example making an online purchase or completing an enquiry form.

Boosting the quality of the traffic heading to your website via rich snippets can positively impact your sales and, coupled with clever integration, you can see a dramatic increase in conversion rate.

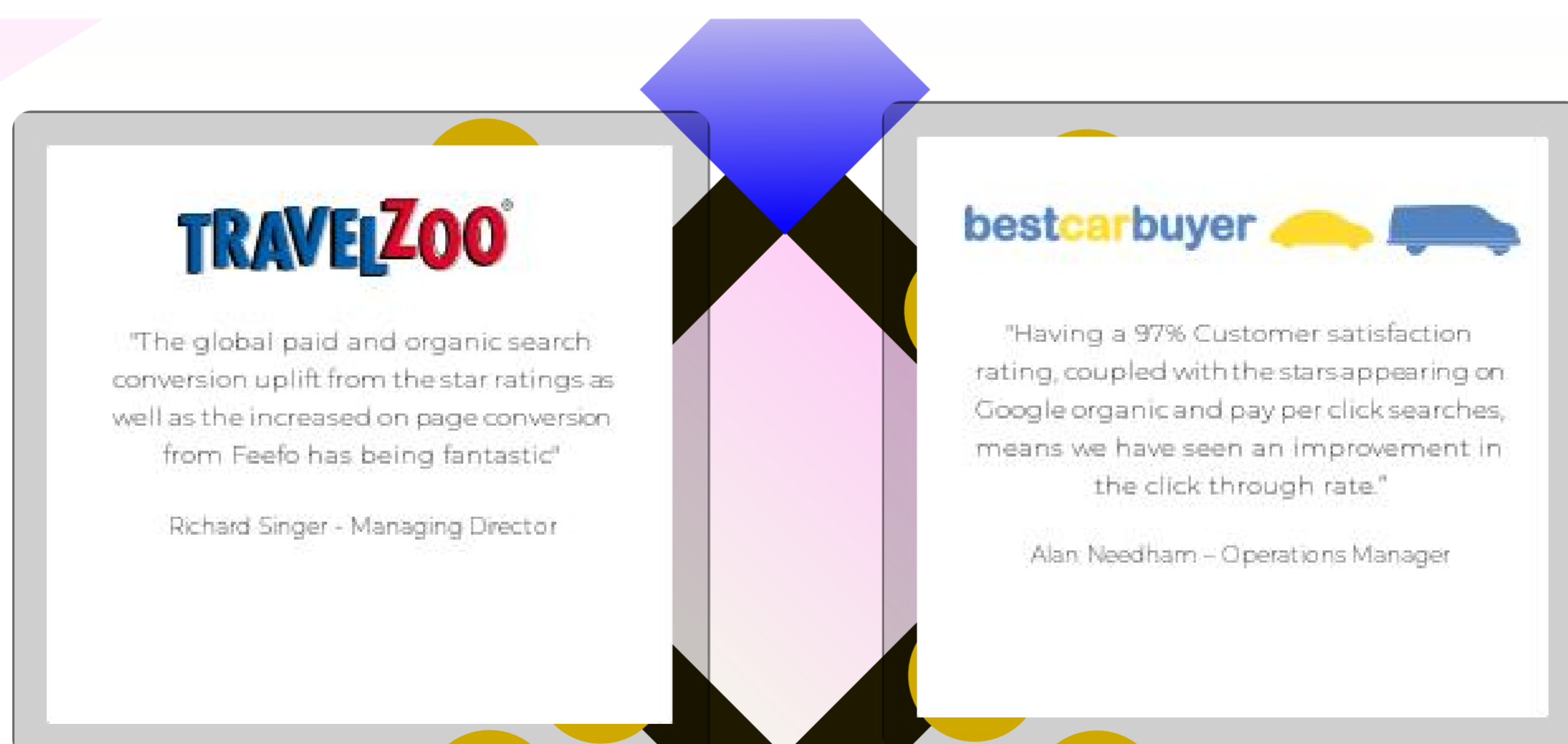
Rich snippets are additional pieces of information that allow search engines to better determine the relevancy and value of the page to which they are added. Product reviews, prices and stock availability are typical examples of ecommerce rich snippets.

Consider the different stages of the buying cycle. Increasing consumer confidence during these phases will help a customer's decision-making process – after all, 74% of customers say the reviews influence them to some extent. Feefo client, Monarch Airlines, investigated the impact that showcasing reviews had on bookings, with website A/B testing. During the split test, some website customers were presented with Monarch's Feefo service rating, located close to the basket summary. Other website customers were just presented with a basket summary. Results showed that by adding the Feefo service rating close to the basket summary leading to a 3.01% uplift in revenue per visitor and a 2.94% increase in total flight bookings.

Click Through Rate

Click-through rate (CTR) is a metric used to determine the ratio of link clicks to the number of total users who viewed the search listing. For example, if 100 users see the same Search Engine Results Page (SERP) and ten of those 100 click through to your website – your CTR will be 10%.

If your search listing does not feature rich snippets, such as organic stars, they become less prominent to potential customers. Studies show that having rich snippets in your search results can increase your CTR by up to 30%. This type of rich snippet gives your consumers more information about your business and products without them needing to look elsewhere. [1]

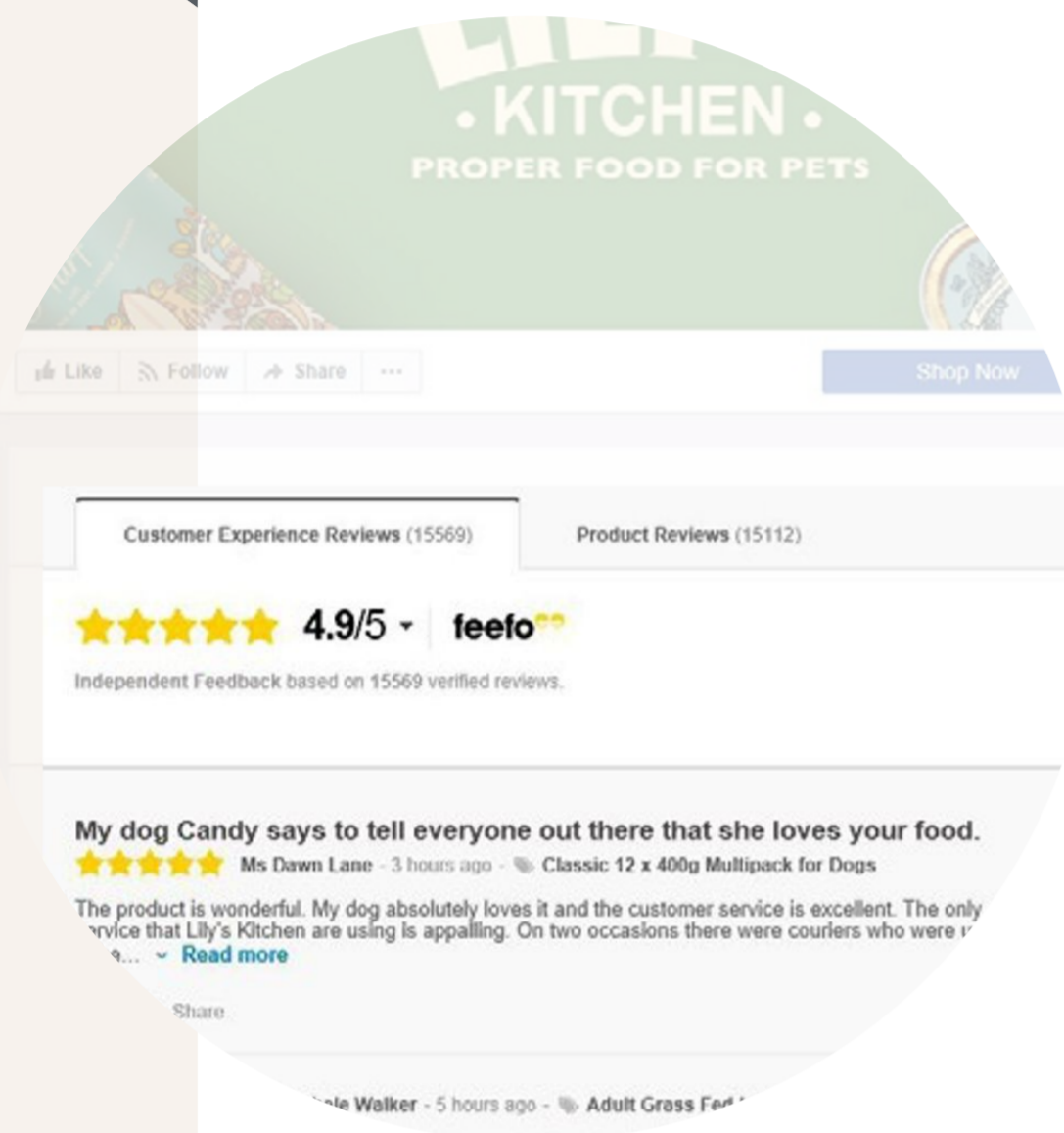


Technical integration

Technical integration is the way in which you implement your reviews onto your website with code. There are different ways to display your reviews and it depends on how your website is set up, and your visual preferences.

Integration comes in the form of XML or JavaScript Object Notation (JSON)

The advantages and disadvantages of both integrations are listed below:



XML integration

When using the XML integration, new reviews will be added directly to your businesses' web pages on a regular basis. This minimises the amount of effort you need to put in and ensures that your site is regularly updated and has fresh content.

Pro's

- New reviews added directly on a regular basis
- Minimises effort
- Your site always has fresh content

Cons

- More complex to integrate

JSON integration

JSON is a piece of code that integrates your Feefo reviews onto your website in a pre-styled format. When compared with XML, JSON uses a lot less code, making it the simpler option. It also means that your website speed will not be affected, as there is less for the browser to read.

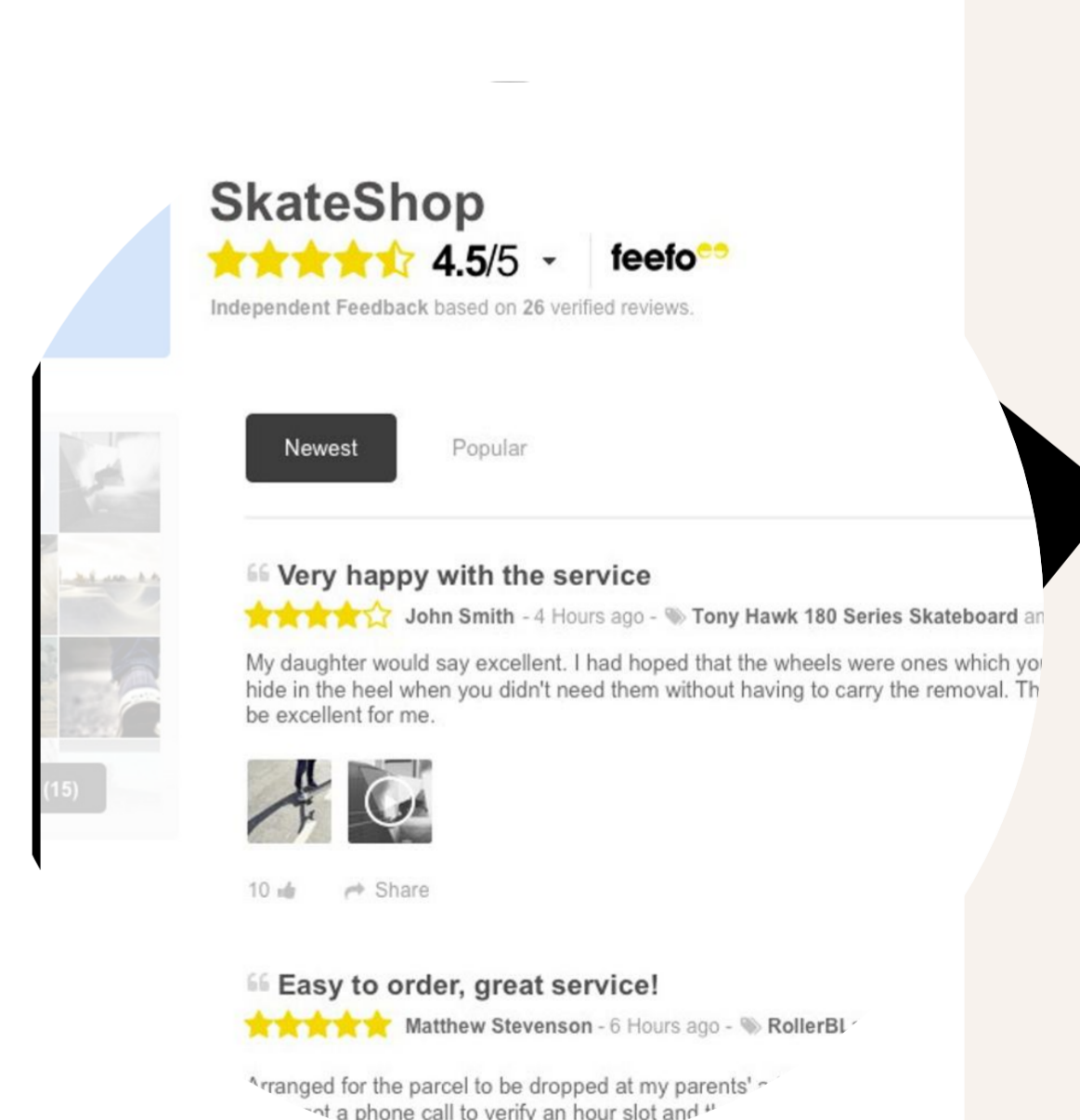
This type of integration means that you can display your reviews on your website quickly and easily. It will provide your website with fresh content each time someone leaves a review on your merchant page - something that Google favours, so this again will benefit your SEO.

Pro's

- Simple to integrate
- Everything you need is pre-coded
- Won't slow your website down

Cons

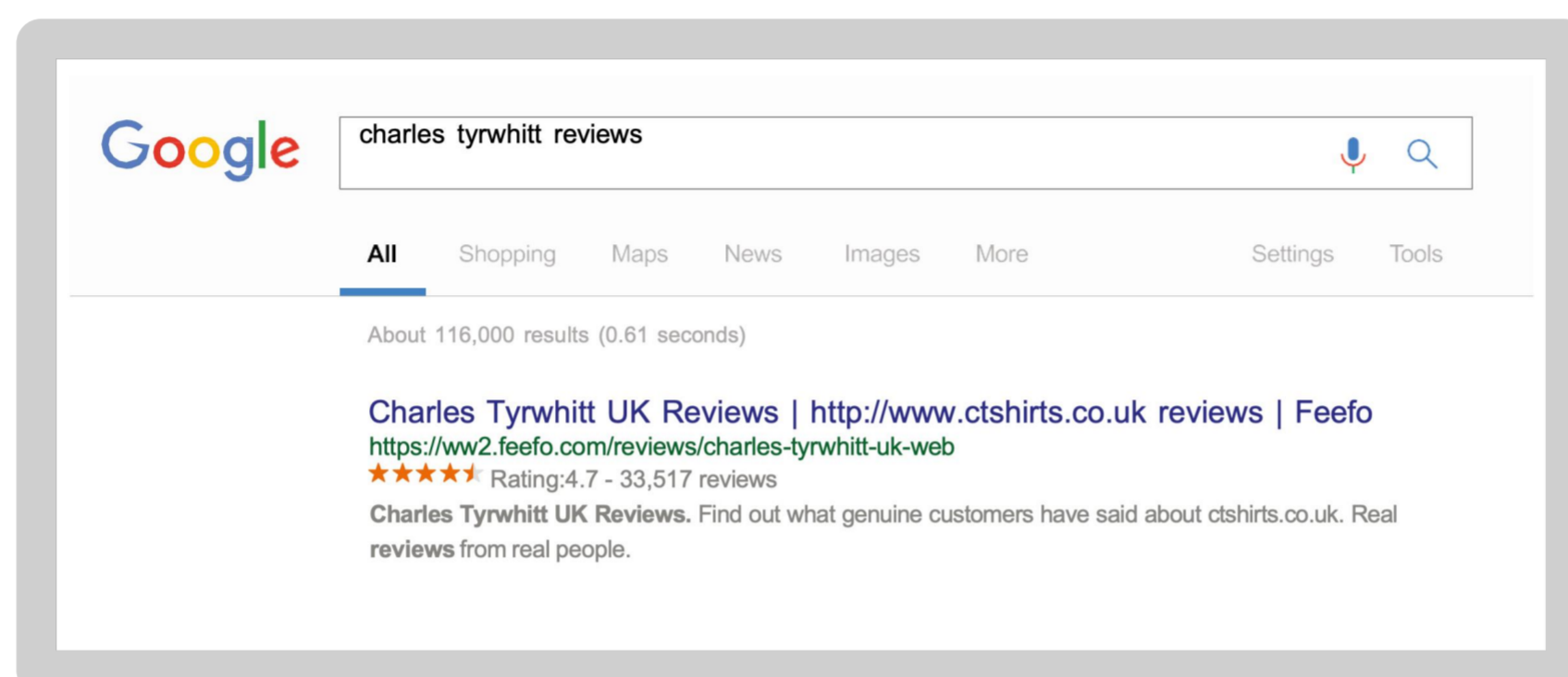
- Pre-styled, so customisation is limited



Google stars

Added to this list of high-ranking platforms is Feefo. According to Majestic SEO, the Feefo Domain has a Trust Flow of 62 and Open Site Explorer says the Feefo domain has a Domain Authority of 71 [correct as of January 2017].

All of this is good news for your businesses' reputation – and by proxy – customer acquisition and retention. When customers search for your brand name, especially if they search for ****brand name + reviews****, your Feefo page profile will rank high within the SERPs. This will showcase your reviews and ultimately help with buyer confidence amongst new and existing customers. See the example below:



Domain authority

When reviews come from a high Domain Authority, they instantly have a more trustworthy reputation.

In 2012, Google released an update to its algorithm called 'Penguin', which it used to help rank websites within the search results. Now part of the core algorithm, Penguin looks at a website's backlinks (the hyperlinks pointing to your site) to determine how authoritative and relevant it is. These types of backlinks will lead to your site achieving a better Domain Authority - this is a score given to determine how trustworthy a site is and will help you rank higher.

Domain Authority is important when it comes to reviews. When reviews come from a high Domain Authority, they instantly have a more trustworthy reputation. This in turn means that your website will become more trustworthy as well as achieve a higher Domain Authority.

Trust Flow

Trust Flow is a metric determined by [Majestic SEO](#). This is a number showcasing how trustworthy a page is, based on a score of 0 – 100. Majestic calculates Trust Flow by collating many trusted ‘seed sites’. The closer a site is linked to a trusted ‘seed site’, the higher the score. Put simply, the better the quality of the backlink pointed towards your site, the more trusted your site will be. For companies looking to collect reviews, this means that any link received from Feefo will enhance their own Trust Flow – resulting in better rankings within the search engines.

NoFollow links

Nofollow links are still identified by Google, so you will still gain the SEO benefits of acquiring these types of links.

By contrast, all feedback collated by a reviews company and displayed on a dedicated page can include a link directed back to your site. At Feefo, these review links include a ‘nofollow’ tag.

In light of Google’s Penguin update, sites with unnatural link patterns are algorithmically penalised within the search results e.g. they don’t rank as high. An unnatural link pattern, for example, would be where a site had thousands of links pointed towards it from one single domain.

As Feefo collates and publishes reviews, which are linked back to a client’s website, it is therefore also possible that thousands of links can be directed towards a site from our single domain. Therefore, all links include a ‘nofollow’ tag to prevent any algorithmic penalty. Nofollow links are still identified by Google, so you will still gain the SEO benefits of acquiring these types of links.

Social signal

Sharing your reviews on social media is a good way to build trustworthy backlinks to your site as well as to gain your customers’ attention.

is a widely-held belief that social signals, e.g. shares and likes, can improve your search ranking, both directly and indirectly [8].

Sharing your reviews on social media is a good way to build trustworthy backlinks to your site, as well as to gain your customers’ attention. Social sites, such as Facebook and Twitter have high Domain Authorities, which means links from these sites can be strong. Having these sites in your backlink profile can aid your ranking positions.

Furthermore, sharing content such as reviews on your social pages can provoke discussion and other interactions. With people talking about your service and products, Google will identify that it is of interest to the relevant audience and will also take this into account with your rankings.

Mobile-friendly

Google's mobile-first index means that it will rank its search results based on the mobile experience of your site before considering the desktop version. This means if the mobile user-experience is poor, you won't rank as well. These 'mobile-first' listings will be presented to users on all types of devices, including desktop.

It is therefore important for your site's content to be designed, first and foremost, for mobile, as it will help it achieve a better rank in search engines. This is also the case for any site linking to you and third-party sites that you use or on which you have a presence e.g. Feefo.

When looking to choose a third-party platform for your digital marketing campaigns, ensure that it is optimised for mobile. Our latest software update, Feefo 3.0, is mobile-optimised. Regardless of device, Feefo 3.0 has been built with streamlined code to ensure fast loading times, simple navigation, and a mobile-friendly user experience.



Quality of content

It is more important than ever to ensure the content on, or linked to, your site is of good quality.

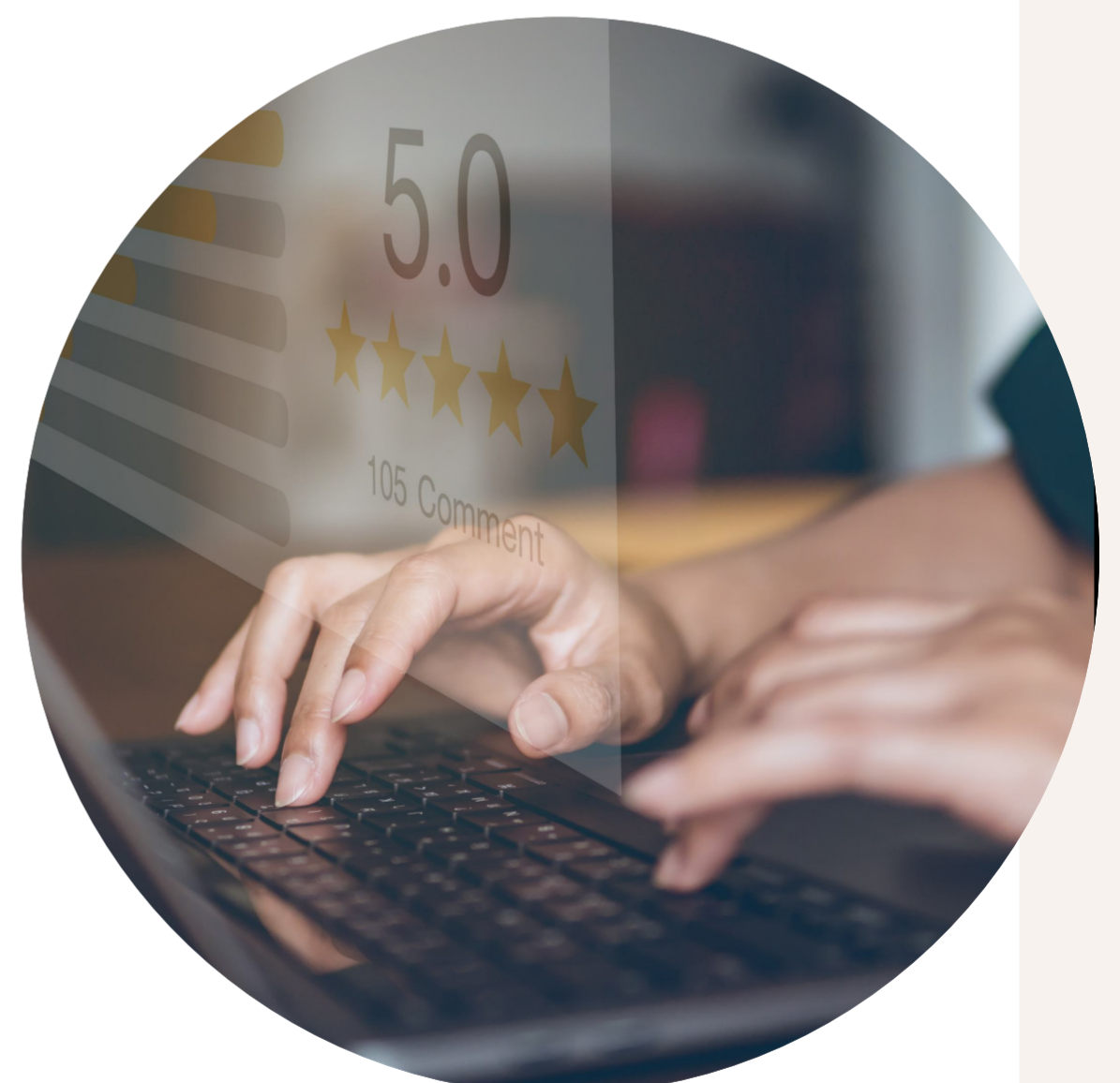
In 2011, Google released an update to its algorithm called Panda. Targeting the quality of content on, or linked to, a site, Panda was designed to prevent sites with poor content from ranking well in Google. Now part of Google's core algorithm, it is more important than ever to ensure the content on, or linked to, your site is of good quality [9].

Google also released a 'freshness update' as a ranking signal, which means sites which are regularly updated with new content will rank better. Customers with an XML or JSON integration on their site can benefit from this [10].

According to Google, website content needs "to be more valuable or high-quality".

This means content should be [11]:

- Useful & informative
- Credible
- High quality
- Engaging



User Generated Content

A fresh supply of content helps to keep a website crawled and indexed, and unique quality content can result in mentions, links and shares.

UGC can play a significant role in your businesses' SEO campaign. Search engines thrive on a steady stream of unique, searchable content.

UGC in the form of customer and/or product reviews give web crawlers the content they need to evaluate and contextualise the website. Additionally, this content informs search engines that your site is active, and provides a valuable service to online customers [12].

A fresh supply of content helps to keep a website crawled and indexed, and unique quality content can result in mentions, links and shares. Coupled together, this can facilitate higher website rankings.

Video reviews

Not only are video reviews more engaging for potential customers, they can also boost your search engine rankings.



On-page SEO for video reviews

Using rich snippets, your video reviews can stand out on a results page. This means that when your customers are searching, they may be more inclined to click your result, potentially increasing traffic to your website or branded video hosting platform.

This guide from Google explains how you can enable rich snippets for videos.

Engaging content such as videos can help to reduce bounce rate - this is the percentage of visitors who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page. A reduced bounce rate is believed to assist with the ranking of a website [4].

Off-page SEO for video reviews

Video acts as a powerful form of content marketing, which can facilitate the SEO process by earning links and social shares. These are believed to be ranking factors as search engines place increasing prominence on the quality and quantity of links generated to a site, as well as the social signals (likes, shares) generated [6, 7].

To generate links and social shares, select your most sharable video review based on emotional connection e.g. humorous, sad, interesting, enlightening, etc. [3]. Feature this video review as part of your social media and/or content marketing strategy.

Duplicate Content

One of the main concerns in the SEO industry is duplicate content. Google takes duplicate content seriously for the following reasons [14]:

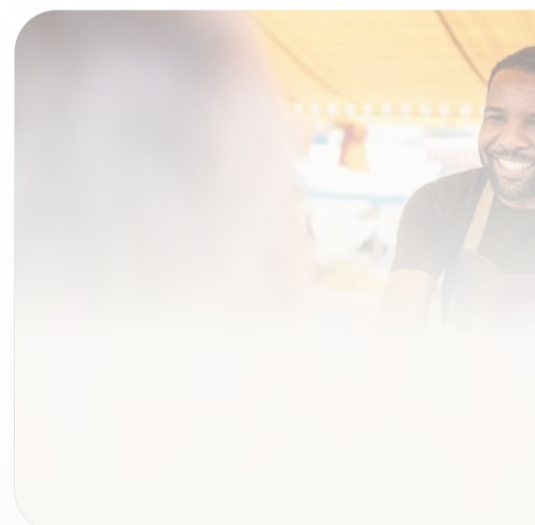
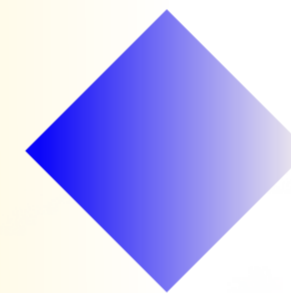
- Search engines don't know which version(s) to include/exclude from their indexes
- Search engines don't know whether to direct the link metrics(trust, authority, anchor text, etc.) to one page, or keep it separated between multiple versions
- Search engines don't know which version(s) to rank for query results

When duplicate content is present, site owners suffer ranking and traffic losses, and search engines provide less relevant results.

This can damage both the original source's website, and the site which has duplicated the content. With Feefo being a third-party website, but still offering on-page integration, we often get asked whether this sparks duplicate content issues as content is hosted on both ours and the merchant's site.

To avoid duplicate content issues, canonical tags can be placed onto your Feefo reviews page. Canonical tags let Google know which site (or page) is the original content, and which should be de-valued by crawlers.

So, for instance, if you have full integration with us and your reviews are displayed on your website, you can add a canonical URL into the Feefo dashboard, which will let Google know your site is the main source.



Key takeaways and action points

Reviews can have a huge impact on the effectiveness of your SEO, and you don't need to be an expert to reap the rewards. Here are the key takeaways to remember:

- Rich snippets can help you stand out in the search results, improving your CTR
- XML and JavaScript integration makes it easy to display unique content on your website, helping your rankings and conversion rate
- Video reviews will decrease bounce rate and can increase landing page conversion rates by up to 800%
- Socially sharing your reviews will help build your website's backlink profile, improving your Domain Authority and ranking positions
- Reviews can act as a great form of content marketing, helping to deliver quality, fresh content which can assist with better search engine rankings
- Adding canonical tags to Feefo will allow you to display reviews on your website, without being punished for duplicate content

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