Google Business Profile and Review Guide

South African Business Edition

Serve with integrity and build lasting trust

A practical guide to helping people find your business, inviting honest feedback and caring for your reputation.

At Eliyah Reviews, we see business as an opportunity to serve. A Kingdom-minded approach means honouring people, keeping our word and stewarding the trust placed in us. Reviews are one expression of that trust; they are never a substitute for good service.

Start with a truthful profile, make feedback easy and use what you learn to serve the next customer better. You do not need a perfect score to practise this well.

Prepared for South African businesses | October 2026

Profile essentials | Fair invitations | Thoughtful replies | Review cards | A 30-day plan

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01 Start with a truthful profile

Your Google Business Profile helps people decide whether your business can meet their needs. Give them clear, current information before asking them to take the next step.

Make the basics dependable

Check your business name, phone number, website, main category and opening hours. Keep public holiday hours current. Use an address or service area that accurately reflects how you operate, and follow Google's eligibility and address rules. Add useful photos that show the real business.

Write a short description in plain South African English: who you help, what you do and where you serve. A Durban maintenance business might say: "We help local property owners look after their homes, with clear quotes and dependable communication from enquiry to completion." Adapt that example to your actual service and area.

Give people a confident next step

Open the profile as a customer. Can you find the right phone number, understand the service and reach the correct page? Check it on a phone as well as a computer. Ask a colleague to repeat the check without coaching.

Use the language your customers understand. If you offer help in more than one language, say so accurately and make sure your team can provide it. Keep profile ownership with trusted people in the business and share access through appropriate account roles rather than passwords.

Understand what reviews can do

Google describes local results in terms of relevance, distance and how well known a business is. Complete information and helpful reviews support a useful profile, but no supplier can guarantee a particular position or sell you a better Google ranking.

First action: correct one detail that could confuse a new customer today.

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02 Invite honest feedback

Build a consistent invitation into the end of your service. Ask eligible customers fairly, without first checking whether they are happy. The aim is an accurate picture of the business, not a manufactured score.

Make the invitation easy to accept or decline

Ask once at a natural point, such as after the work is completed. Keep the wording brief and leave the choice with the customer. Do not watch over them, ask for a particular rating or tell them what to write.

In person

"Thank you for supporting our business. If you would like to share your experience, this card opens our Google review page. An honest review helps others know what to expect."

In a follow up message

"Hi [first name], thank you for choosing [business]. If you would like to leave an honest review of your experience, here is our Google review link: [link]. We appreciate your time. Kind regards, [name]."

Use the customer's agreed contact channel, whether email, SMS or WhatsApp. Respect their privacy and requests to stop. Keep any reminder restrained and relevant. A review request should feel like an invitation, not another obligation.

Create and check your review link

On a computer, open your Business Profile, select Read reviews, then Get more reviews. Copy the review link or save the QR image. Google may change these labels; use its current help instructions if your screen differs.

Open the link on a phone and scan the QR code before sharing it. Confirm it reaches the correct business. Customers need to sign in to a Google Account to review; the account does not have to use a Gmail address.

Good habit: offer the same fair invitation after a completed customer journey.

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03 Earn trust without filtering

An honest reputation leaves room for praise, disappointment and growth. Treat feedback as a chance to listen, not a test your customer must pass.

Keep the public invitation fair

Do not route satisfied customers to Google while directing dissatisfied customers only to a private form. Do not discourage negative reviews or offer money, discounts, gifts or prize entries for posting, changing or removing a review. Never buy reviews or arrange feedback that does not reflect a genuine customer experience.

You can offer a private way to get help alongside a public review invitation. Keep both options available to everyone. Resolving a concern must not depend on the customer removing or improving their review.

Do not ask for particular keywords or staff names, pressure people to post while on the premises, or set staff quotas for collecting reviews. Avoid reviews involving conflicts of interest, including staff or family.

A service first invitation

"We welcome honest feedback. You can leave a Google review here: [link]. If you need help with your order or service, please contact us at [business contact] so we can assist."

Offer support because the person matters. Keep it available whether the customer leaves a review or not.

Let feedback improve the work

Notice repeated themes. Were expectations unclear? Was a handover missed? Choose one practical improvement, give it an owner and check whether it helped. Share compliments with the people who earned them.

Kingdom-minded leadership welcomes accountability. Humility allows us to acknowledge a mistake. Stewardship asks us to improve the system that allowed it, while care keeps the person ahead of the score.

Team check: could we explain our review process openly to every customer?

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04 Respond with care

A reply speaks to the reviewer and to the next person reading. Be clear, courteous and human. A thoughtful response matters more than a polished sales pitch.

When the feedback is positive

"Thank you, Thandi. We are glad the team made the process straightforward. We appreciate you taking the time to share your experience."

Use a real detail when it is appropriate and safe to do so. Avoid repeating the same script under every review or turning a thank you into an advertisement.

When something has gone wrong

"Thank you for letting us know, Sipho. We are sorry the communication fell short. We would like to understand what happened and help resolve it. Please contact [business contact] so we can follow up with you directly."

Acknowledge the concern without arguing or guessing. Do not publish private order details, phone numbers, health information or internal correspondence. Move the investigation to a suitable private channel and follow through on what you promise.

Use the native review controls

For a verified profile, open Read reviews and choose Reply beneath the relevant review. Check the wording before posting: replies are public. If a review appears to breach Google's policies, use the reporting process. An unfavourable opinion alone is not a policy breach.

Keep a simple response rhythm

Nominate someone to check for new reviews on working days. Escalate sensitive issues to the person best placed to help. Keep a short internal record of action taken, with access limited to the people who need it.

Before posting: is it true, kind, useful and respectful of the customer's privacy?

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05 Keep trust visible

Your profile should reflect the business people will actually experience. Consistent, modest updates are more useful than bursts of promotional noise.

Share real evidence

Use current photos of your work, team or premises where appropriate. Obtain permission before sharing identifiable customers, private locations or sensitive details. If you reuse a customer's review in marketing, seek permission and preserve its meaning and context.

Choose helpful updates: a change of hours, a genuinely new service or a practical answer to a common question. Keep dates and offers accurate. Do not promise that posting regularly will secure a particular search position.

A manageable weekly rhythm

Monday: check the profile details and any changed hours, including public holidays.

Midweek: review new feedback, reply where useful and follow up unresolved concerns.

Friday: share one service lesson with the team and acknowledge good work.

Measure what helps you serve

Track whether invitations are offered fairly, links work and concerns receive a response. Review recurring themes and whether service improvements are completed. You may monitor review numbers and ratings, but neither should become a target that encourages pressure or shortcuts.

Keep the promise within reach

Start with a routine your team can sustain. A small business owner can begin with a shared checklist and a regular diary reminder. Add tools only when they support a clear need and you understand what they do.

The strongest reputation work happens before the review: clear expectations, reliable delivery and a generous response when someone needs help.

This guide makes no promise of a particular rating, ranking or number of new customers.

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06 Eliyah Reviews cards

A physical review card gives customers a convenient route to your review page. Where supported by the phone, they can tap an NFC card; alternatively, they can scan its QR code. Keep the invitation warm and let the customer decide whether to review.

Use the card well

Check the destination on a compatible phone before using the card with customers. Keep a card accessible at the appropriate handover point. Explain what it opens; do not assume everyone is familiar with NFC. If tapping does not work, offer the QR option or your verified review link.

Customers need an internet connection to open the destination. If they cannot connect at that moment, let them come back to the link in their own time. Do not ask them to use your staff account or write a review on their behalf.

A card makes access easier. It does not create a review automatically, guarantee five stars or replace the service that earns trust.

Plan around your business

Think about where a fair invitation fits: a reception desk, a till or the handover after a completed job. A business with several staff members or service points may need more cards than a sole trader. Start with the routine rather than buying more than you need.

Show your team what a tap or scan opens. Practise a short invitation in the language that suits the customer, while leaving the content and rating entirely to them.

Confirm local details before ordering

Ask Eliyah Reviews for current South African availability and pricing. Confirm what is included, VAT treatment, setup arrangements and delivery costs and timing before placing an order. This guide does not state a South African offer or delivery promise.

Enquire with Eliyah Reviews

Choose the next faithful step: test the destination, make a fair invitation and keep listening.

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07 Put it into practice

Your first 30 days

Days 1-7: check your profile, verify your review link and agree who owns the routine.

Days 8-14: introduce one fair invitation at the end of your service. Practise the wording with the team.

Days 15-21: review replies and unresolved concerns. Choose one service improvement.

Days 22-30: check what is working, thank the team and keep the habits you can sustain.

Quick answers

Can I promise a five-star outcome? No. Customers decide what to write and how to rate their experience.

Can I remove a review I dislike? Use Google's reporting process for a policy breach; disagreement alone is not grounds for removal.

Do customers need Gmail? They need a Google Account, which can use another email address.

Google help and policies

These official sources support the practical guidance in this edition. Google's interfaces, policies and feature availability may change.

Google Maps content policies

Tips to get more reviews

Create a review link or QR code

Manage customer reviews and replies

Tips to improve local ranking

Represent your business accurately

Report reviews that breach policy

Official Google guidance checked 28 October 2026. Independent guide by Eliyah Reviews; not affiliated with or endorsed by Google.

Serve well and listen honestly

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