Care Rocket

HOME CARE GROWTH ACADEMY

Google Reviews

The evidence, the psychology, the system and the scripts behind a 5-star reputation.

Module 2 · Getting Found Online

WHAT THIS MODULE COVERS

1. The highest-return marketing activity you have
2. What Google reviews actually do
3. Why families trust reviews
4. How reviews boost your local SEO
5. Building reviews systematically
6. Responding to reviews well
7. Your 12-month review roadmap

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The Fuel Behind Your Growth

The Single Highest-Return Marketing Activity Available to a Home Care Agency

If you had one hour to spend on marketing this week and you could only do one thing, getting a new Google review would almost certainly generate more revenue over the next 12 months than anything else you could do in that hour. This is not an exaggeration.

Google reviews are the first thing a private pay family reads when they find your agency. They are the primary trust signal at the most critical moment of the buyer journey. They directly influence your Google ranking. They convert enquiries into assessments and assessments into clients. They are free to generate. And most of your competitors are not building them systematically.

This module covers everything: why reviews matter as deeply as the evidence shows, what the psychology is behind why families trust them, how to build a review generation system that consistently adds new reviews, how to respond to every review in a way that builds trust rather than destroying it, and how reviews interact with your SEO and private pay conversion rate.

93%	88%	3.3★	72%
of consumers say online reviews influence their purchase decision	of people trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation	minimum rating consumers need to consider engaging a business	of consumers will only use a business if it has 4+ stars

PART 1 **Why Google Reviews Matter**

The evidence, the psychology, and the home care specific case

What Google Reviews Actually Do

Google reviews do four distinct things for a home care agency. Understanding all four helps you treat them as the serious strategic asset they are, rather than a nice-to-have.

1. They Win You Private Pay Clients Directly

A family searching for home care will read your reviews before they call. Not after. Before. They are making a judgment about whether to trust you with their parent based on what other families have said. A strong review profile converts searchers into callers. A weak one, or a non-existent one, sends them to your competitors.

★★★★★

"We called five agencies. Two had almost no reviews, two had a handful of old ones. Only one had recent, detailed reviews from families talking about specific carers and how well the communication was. We called them first and never looked at the others."

Adult daughter arranging care for her mother, Cheshire

2. They Rank You Higher on Google

Google uses reviews as a significant local ranking signal. The Map Pack, the three agencies that appear at the top of Google for local searches, consistently shows agencies with higher review counts and higher ratings. A competitor with 50 reviews and a 4.7 rating will almost always outrank you with 5 reviews and a 4.8 rating.

Review factor	Impact on ranking	What to do
Total review count	High, more reviews = stronger signal	Set a target of 25 minimum, then keep building
Average star rating	High, 4.5+ is the threshold for Map Pack competitiveness	Focus on generating reviews from your happiest families
Recency of reviews	High, recent reviews outweigh old ones	Build an ongoing system, not a one-off push
Review response rate	Medium, responding signals an active business	Respond to every review within 48 hours
Keywords in reviews	Medium, reviews mentioning your services and location help	Cannot control but can encourage through your request process

3. They Convert Enquiries Into Assessments

A family that has already called you will read your reviews again before the assessment. They are looking for reassurance that they made the right choice. Detailed reviews from families in similar situations, mentioning specific carers, specific conditions, specific moments of above-and-beyond care, do this job better than any brochure or website copy you could write.

4. They Are Your Most Credible Marketing

Every claim you make about your own agency, however true, is marketing. A review from a family saying the same thing is social proof. Families weight third-party validation infinitely higher than self-promotion. A family who sees 40 reviews all mentioning that your carers are consistent and your communication is excellent will believe it completely. The same claim on your website will be noted and immediately discounted.

The compound effect of reviews

Reviews build on each other. A profile with 10 reviews attracts more reviews than one with 2.

A high average rating attracts enquiries who are already pre-sold on your quality.

The agencies that start building reviews seriously today will have an almost unassailable advantage in 12 months.

In most UK towns the bar is surprisingly low, 25 reviews with a 4.5+ rating puts you ahead of the majority of local competitors.

The Psychology of Why Families Trust Reviews

Understanding the psychological mechanisms behind review trust helps you write better review requests and understand what makes a review powerful.

Social Proof

When people are uncertain about a decision, and choosing home care for a parent is one of the most uncertain decisions a family makes, they look at what other people in a similar situation have done. A review from an adult daughter who was in exactly the same position three months ago is enormously reassuring. It says: someone else was where you are, they made this decision, and it was the right one.

Specificity Equals Credibility

Generic reviews (“Very good service”) are almost worthless. Specific reviews (“Our carer [Name] has been coming every morning for six months. She knows exactly how Mum likes her tea and always notices if something is not quite right. The office team calls us every Friday to check in. We could not manage without them”) are enormously powerful. Specificity signals authenticity. Vagueness signals fabrication, even when the review is genuine.

Recency Signals Ongoing Quality

A family reading your reviews notices immediately whether the most recent one was last week or two years ago. Old reviews suggest that either you have stopped generating them (which implies declining quality) or that you had a one-off push and gave up. Recent reviews, spread consistently over time, signal a business that is continuously delivering excellent care.

How You Respond Matters As Much As the Reviews Themselves

Research consistently shows that how a business responds to reviews, particularly negative ones, is as influential as the reviews themselves in a family's decision. An agency that responds to a negative review with empathy, acknowledgement, and a genuine offer to resolve the issue converts more families than one with a perfect rating and no responses.

> ★★★★★
> ***"They had one 2-star review from about a year ago. But the way they responded to it, so professional, so caring, offering to talk directlyactually made me trust them more than the agencies with only 5-star reviews. It felt real."***
> **Family member, selecting a home care agency online**

PART 2 **How Reviews Affect SEO and Private Pay Conversion**

The data behind why reviews are your most powerful marketing asset

Reviews and Local SEO: The Direct Connection

Reviews are one of the top three factors in Google's local ranking algorithm alongside relevance and proximity. For home care, where you cannot change your proximity to the searcher, reviews are one of the most controllable ranking levers you have.

What Google's algorithm looks for in reviews

Volume: how many reviews do you have compared to local competitors?

Velocity: how quickly are you accumulating new reviews? A steady flow signals an active, quality business.

Rating: 4.5+ is the threshold where your Map Pack competitiveness starts. Below 4.0 is a serious handicap.

Recency: reviews from the last 90 days carry more weight than reviews from 2 years ago.

Responses: a business that responds to its reviews is treated as more active and engaged.

Reviews and Private Pay Conversion: The Numbers

Review profile	Conversion rate impact	What families do
0–5 reviews	Very low	Most families move straight to a competitor. You are unproven.
6–15 reviews, 4.0+	Low–medium	Some families call. Most still shortlist a competitor with more reviews.
16–30 reviews, 4.5+	Medium–high	Families regularly call you first. You win most comparisons.
30+ reviews, 4.7+	Very high	You are the obvious first choice. Families arrive pre-sold.
50+ reviews, 4.8+	Market-leading	Competitors struggle to win against you regardless of price.

The Rating Threshold That Matters

Research from BrightLocal and others consistently shows that 3.3 stars is the minimum rating consumers will consider. But for a high-trust service like home care, where families are

making a decision about their parent's safety, the effective threshold is higher. Aim for 4.5+ as a minimum and 4.7+ as a sustained target.

What a one-star rating difference means in practice

An agency moving from 4.0 to 4.5 stars typically sees a 25–30% increase in clicks from search results.

An agency moving from 4.5 to 4.8 stars typically sees a 10–15% additional increase.

Every star matters. Every review matters. Every response matters.

PART 3 **How to Get More Google Reviews**

Building a systematic process that generates reviews consistently

Why Most Agencies Fail at Getting Reviews

Most home care agencies get reviews the same way, by accident. A satisfied family happens to leave one without being asked. The owner occasionally remembers to ask someone. Reviews trickle in at one or two per year and the profile stays permanently thin.

The agencies with 50, 80, or 100 reviews did not get lucky. They built a system. They ask consistently, make it easy, and follow up. The difference between a thin review profile and a dominant one is almost entirely a process difference, not a quality difference.

The four elements of a review generation system

1. Know when to ask, timing is everything
2. Know who to ask, target your happiest families first
3. Make it effortless, send a direct link that opens the review box in one tap
4. Follow up once, most people mean to do it and forget

How to Get Your Google Review Link

1. Log into business.google.com
2. Click on your business profile
3. Click ‘Ask for reviews’ or look for ‘Share review form’ in your dashboard
4. Copy the short link provided, this takes families directly to the review box with one tap
5. Save this link in your phone, your email signature, and your WhatsApp quick-reply messages

Test your link right now

Open the link on your own phone. It should open Google Maps and show a review box immediately.

If it asks the family to sign into Google first, that is normal. They need a Google account to leave a review.

If the link takes more than 2 taps to reach the review box, simplify it, every extra step loses you a review.

The Best Moments to Ask for a Review

Moment	Why it works	How to ask
After unsolicited positive feedback	Family is at peak satisfaction. They are already telling you it is good.	In the same conversation: 'That's so lovely to hear, would you be willing to leave us a Google review? I can send you the link right now.'
30-day care review	Satisfaction is confirmed and the relationship is established.	At the end of the review: 'If you've been happy with the care, a Google review makes a real difference to other families.'
90-day care review	Long-term satisfaction builds the most powerful review advocates.	Same approach as 30-day. Families who stay 90 days write the best reviews.
When a client's condition improves	Family feels relief and genuine gratitude at this moment.	Acknowledge the progress first. Then ask gently: 'If you'd be happy to share your experience...'
After a problem is successfully resolved	A family whose complaint was handled well is an unusually loyal advocate.	Give it a week after resolution, then ask: 'We're so glad we got that sorted, would you be willing to share your experience?'
When a care arrangement ends positively	If a client moves to a care home or passes away peacefully, the family may want to acknowledge the care given.	A personal card or call. Never a mass message. Sensitively and only when the relationship warrants it.

Who to Ask First

Do not ask everyone at once. Start with your warmest advocates and build from there.

6. Families who have given you positive feedback verbally or in writing in the last 6 months
7. Families of clients who have been with you for 3+ months, long tenure indicates satisfaction
8. Families you know personally or have a particularly warm relationship with
9. Professional contacts who have referred clients to you and seen the outcomes
10. Then widen to all active client families systematically

Review Request Scripts: Multiple Channels

WhatsApp message (most effective, highest open and response rate):

> *Hi [Name], I just wanted to say how much we appreciate having [Mum/Dad] with us. It genuinely means a lot to our whole team.*

If you've been happy with the care, a Google review makes a real difference to other families trying to find trusted support in [your town]. It only takes about 60 seconds and here's the direct link: [YOUR REVIEW LINK]

No pressure at all, but we'd be so grateful if you felt able to. Thank you, [Your Name]

Phone call ask, after positive feedback:

"That's so lovely to hear, [Name], I'll make sure I pass that on to [carer name], it will mean so much to them.

Can I ask, would you be willing to leave us a quick Google review? Other families who are trying to find good home care really rely on reviews like yours. I can send you the direct link by WhatsApp right now, it takes about 60 seconds.

[Wait for response. If yes:] Brilliant, sending it over now. Thank you so much, it genuinely makes a difference."

Email request:

Subject: A small favour, if you've been happy with our care

Hi [Name],

I wanted to take a moment to say how much we value having [client name] with us. Our team genuinely cares about the people they support and it means a great deal to us to be trusted with [his/her] care.

If you've been happy with the care so far, I have a small favour to ask. A Google review from you would make a real difference to other families in [your town] who are trying to find trusted home care. It takes about 60 seconds using this direct link: [LINK]

Absolutely no obligation, but if you feel able to, we would be so grateful.

With thanks, [Your Name], [Agency Name]

In-person ask, at a care review:

"Before I go, we grow almost entirely through recommendations from families like yours. If you've been happy with the care, would you be willing to leave us a Google review? I can send you the link on WhatsApp before I leave so you have it when you get

a moment."

Follow-up if no response after 7 days:

Hi [Name], I sent a Google review link last week, just wanted to check it came through okay. Absolutely no pressure if it's not something you'd like to do, I just wanted to make sure you had it. Here it is again: [LINK]. Thank you so much either way.

The rules on review requests

Never offer incentives for reviews, this violates Google's policies and can get your profile suspended.

Never ask staff to leave reviews, Google detects this and it can trigger a review removal.

Never use a third-party service that posts fake reviews, the consequences are severe and permanent.

Never pressure someone to change a negative review, acknowledge it, offer to resolve it privately.

Two contacts maximum for any one review request, the initial ask and one follow-up.

⚒️ ACTION STEPS

- ☐ Find and save your Google review link from your GBP dashboard right now
- ☐ Save the WhatsApp template in your phone as a quick reply
- ☐ Identify your 5 warmest current client families and send review requests this week
- ☐ Add a review request step to your 30-day and 90-day care review process
- ☐ Set a monthly reminder to send review requests to any new satisfied families

PART 4 **How to Respond to Reviews**

Turning every review into a trust-building opportunity

Why Responding to Reviews Is Non-Negotiable

Google explicitly states that responding to reviews shows that your business values its customers and their feedback. It is a direct ranking signal. More importantly, a response to a review is read by every future family who reads that review. It is public marketing, not private correspondence.

The three things a review response does

It signals to Google that your business is active and engaged, improving your local ranking.

It shows future families reading the review that you are responsive, caring, and professional.

It gives you the opportunity to add relevant keywords naturally (your location, your services) which helps SEO.

The Golden Rules of Review Responses

- Respond to every single review, positive and negative. No exceptions.
- Respond within 48 hours. Speed signals attentiveness.
- Use the reviewer's first name where given.
- Never use a generic template verbatim, vary your responses so they do not all read identically.
- Include your location and a service reference naturally, helps with local SEO.
- For negative reviews: never be defensive, never argue publicly, always invite offline resolution.
- Keep responses under 150 words, longer responses can feel over-explained or defensive.

Responding to Positive Reviews

The goal of a positive review response is to thank genuinely, personalise meaningfully, and reinforce trust for future readers.

Positive response template 1, when a carer is mentioned:

Thank you so much for taking the time to leave this review, [Name]. It genuinely means the world to our team. I'll make sure [carer name] sees this, I know how much it will mean to [him/her]. We feel very lucky to support [client name] and your family. If there is ever anything we can do better, please do not hesitate to let us know., [Your Name],

[Agency Name], [Your Town]

Positive response template 2, general satisfaction:

This is so kind of you to share, [Name], thank you. Knowing that our care is making a real difference to [client name] and your family is exactly why we do what we do. Our whole team in [your town] will be delighted to hear this. We really appreciate your trust in us., [Your Name], [Agency Name]

Positive response template 3, when specific service is mentioned:

Thank you so much, [Name]. We're so glad the [dementia care / personal care / companionship] has been working so well for [client name]. That consistent, specialist support is something we feel very strongly about across all our care in [your area]. Your kind words mean a great deal to every member of our team., [Your Name]

Responding to Negative Reviews

How you handle a negative review in public is one of the most powerful trust signals you can send to future families. A defensive, dismissive, or aggressive response to a negative review is worse than the review itself. A calm, empathetic, resolution-focused response can actually convert future readers who are reassured by how you handle criticism.

The four-step negative review response formula

Step 1: Acknowledge, thank them for the feedback and acknowledge their experience without immediate defence

Step 2: Apologise, express genuine regret that their experience did not meet your standards

Step 3: Invite offline resolution, ask them to contact you directly to discuss and resolve

Step 4: Commit, state clearly that you take all feedback seriously and use it to improve

Negative review response template 1, general complaint:

Thank you for taking the time to share this, [Name]. We are genuinely sorry to hear that your experience with us did not meet the standard we set for ourselves and that every family deserves. We would very much welcome the chance to speak with you directly about this, please call us on [number] or email [email] and we will do everything we can to put this right. We take all feedback seriously and will be reviewing what happened., [Your Name], [Agency Name]

Negative review response template 2, when the complaint is about a specific incident:

Thank you for letting us know about this, [Name]. I am very sorry that this happened, this is not the standard we hold ourselves to and I completely understand your frustration. I would really value the opportunity to speak with you personally about your experience. Please contact me directly on [number] so we can have a proper conversation and make sure this is fully resolved. I am sorry again., [Your Name], [Agency Name]

Negative review response template 3, when the reviewer is unknown or the complaint is unclear:

Thank you for this feedback. I am sorry that your experience was not what you hoped for. I want to make sure I understand exactly what happened and address it properly. Could you please get in touch with me directly on [number] or [email]? I take all feedback very seriously and would welcome the chance to speak with you., [Your Name], [Agency Name]

What NOT to Do With a Negative Review

✘ Never do this	✓ Do this instead
• Argue with the reviewer publicly • Deny that the incident happened • Blame the client or their family • Use legal threats • Post a long, defensive explanation • Ignore it and hope it goes away • Ask Google to remove it (unless it violates guidelines)	• Acknowledge calmly and without defence • Express genuine regret • Invite offline resolution with direct contact • Keep it under 100 words • Focus on resolution not explanation • Respond within 48 hours • Use it as a genuine improvement opportunity

PART 5 **Building Your Review System**

The ongoing process that makes reviews a consistent competitive advantage

From Occasional to Systematic

The difference between an agency with 8 reviews and one with 80 is almost never quality of care. It is consistency of asking. Agencies with 80 reviews have built asking into their routine. It happens at every care review, every positive feedback moment, every client milestone. It is not an occasional campaign, it is a way of operating.

Your Monthly Review Target

Current reviews	Monthly target	Why
0–5 reviews	5 per month minimum	Urgency, you need social proof immediately
6–15 reviews	3–4 per month	Build momentum and recency
16–30 reviews	2–3 per month	Maintain recency signal and grow profile
30+ reviews	1–2 per month	Maintain recency. Protect your rating.

The Monthly Review System: What to Do Every Month

- ☐ After every 30-day care review, ask the family for a Google review before the call ends
- ☐ After every 90-day care review, ask again. Long-term clients write the best reviews.
- ☐ After any unsolicited positive feedback by phone, WhatsApp, or email, ask immediately
- ☐ Review your active client list, identify any families you have not yet asked
- ☐ Check your review count and rating, are you on track against your monthly target?
- ☐ Respond to every review received this month within 48 hours
- ☐ Note any themes in new reviews, what are families consistently praising? Use it in your marketing.

What to Do When You Get a Bad Review

One bad review will not destroy your reputation. How you respond to it might. Follow these steps immediately:

11. Do not respond immediately if you are emotional about it. Wait 24 hours.
12. Investigate internally, find out what happened before you respond publicly
13. Respond using the negative review template above, calm, empathetic, resolution-focused
14. Contact the reviewer directly if you have their details, offer to resolve it

15. If the review violates Google's policies (fake, spam, irrelevant, offensive), report it through your GBP dashboard
16. Use it as a genuine quality improvement opportunity, if the complaint has merit, fix what caused it
17. The best response to a bad review is ten more good ones, double your review request efforts this month

How to Monitor Your Review Profile

- Set up Google Business Profile notifications for new reviews, go to your GBP dashboard and enable email alerts
- Check your review profile weekly, takes 2 minutes
- Track your review count and rating monthly in a simple spreadsheet
- Compare your profile to your top 3 local competitors monthly, are you ahead or behind?
- Note any keywords appearing frequently in your reviews and use them in your GBP description and website

⚒️ ACTION STEPS

- ☐ Respond to every existing unanswered review on your profile today
- ☐ Set up GBP notifications so you are alerted immediately when a new review comes in
- ☐ Create a WhatsApp quick-reply with your review request message and link
- ☐ Identify the 5 families most likely to leave you a positive review and contact them this week
- ☐ Add a review request step to your care review template so it never gets forgotten

PART 6 **Agency Guide & Action Plan**

Audit, 12-month targets, and measuring your review performance

Google Reviews Audit: Where Are You Now?

Be completely honest. This is your baseline, everything improves from here.

	Area	What 'excellent' looks like	Score (1–5)	Pri.
1	**Total review count**	25+ reviews. If below 10, this is your single most urgent marketing priority.	/ 5	
2	**Average star rating**	4.5 or above. Every review request should come from a satisfied family.	/ 5	
3	**Recency of reviews**	At least one new review in the last 30 days. Reviews coming in consistently.	/ 5	
4	**Google review link saved**	Direct link saved in your phone, email signature, and WhatsApp quick replies.	/ 5	
5	**Review request process**	A documented, consistent process for asking at 30-day and 90-day care reviews.	/ 5	
6	**Response rate**	Every review responded to within 48 hours. Zero unanswered reviews on your profile.	/ 5	
7	**Response quality**	Personalised responses. No identical copy-paste. Location and service keywords included.	/ 5	
8	**Negative review handling**	Any negative reviews have a calm, professional, resolution-focused response.	/ 5	
9	**Monthly tracking**	Review count and rating tracked monthly. Target set and progress monitored.	/ 5	
10	**Competitor comparison**	You know how your review profile compares to your top 3 local competitors.	/ 5	

Your 12-Month Review Building Roadmap

Period	Target	Focus
Month 1	5 new reviews	Find and save your review link. Contact your 5 warmest families this week. Respond to all existing reviews.

Period	Target	Focus
Month 2	5 new reviews	Add review request to your 30-day care review process. Set up WhatsApp quick-reply template.
Month 3	5 new reviews	Review your 90-day care review list. Ask every family you have not yet asked.
Months 4–6	3 per month	Maintain momentum. System is now running. Focus on quality of responses.
Months 7–12	2 per month	Sustain. Monitor competitors. Bring numbers to every Growth Academy day.
End of Month 12	25–50+ reviews, 4.5+	Dominant local review profile. Competitors struggle to match it.

The bottom line

Google reviews are the most powerful, most credible, and most cost-effective marketing asset available to a home care agency.

They cannot be bought. They cannot be faked sustainably. They can only be earned, by delivering excellent care and asking consistently.

You are already delivering excellent care. All you need to add is the asking.

Start this week. Ask your five happiest families. Build from there. In 12 months your review profile will be one of the best in your area, and the private pay enquiries will reflect it.

Care Rocket

You've reached the end of

Google Reviews

You're not doing this alone

Work through the actions at your own pace, and bring your questions to the community and your coaching sessions. That is where the real progress happens.

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The Fuel Behind Your Growth