

2025 REPORT

The ROI of guest review management for short-term rentals

600 European short-term rental guests reveal the impact of review management on bookings and revenue

After reading this report, you'll understand how to turn guest reviews into revenue drivers for your short-term rental business

Our findings reveal:

The business cost of neglecting review management

How reviews directly impact pricing power

How reviews help win bookings in competitive markets

The business value of responding to reviews

How guests evaluate negative reviews

How to generate more reviews from guests

Each insight is supported by concrete data, as well as actionable strategies to maximise the revenue potential of your guest reviews.

Methodology

In January 2025, we collected responses from 600 English-speaking short-term rental guests (200 each from Germany, France, and Italy) through Pollfish, an external market research provider.

All respondents had stayed in a short-term rental property within the past 12 months.

Table of contents

1. The essential role of reviews in driving guest bookings	04
2. The hidden cost of neglecting review management	10
3. How guest reviews help you command higher rates	14
4. How review management helps you win more bookings in crowded markets	18
5. Host responses to reviews influence booking decisions	21
6. What motivates guests to leave reviews	27

1.

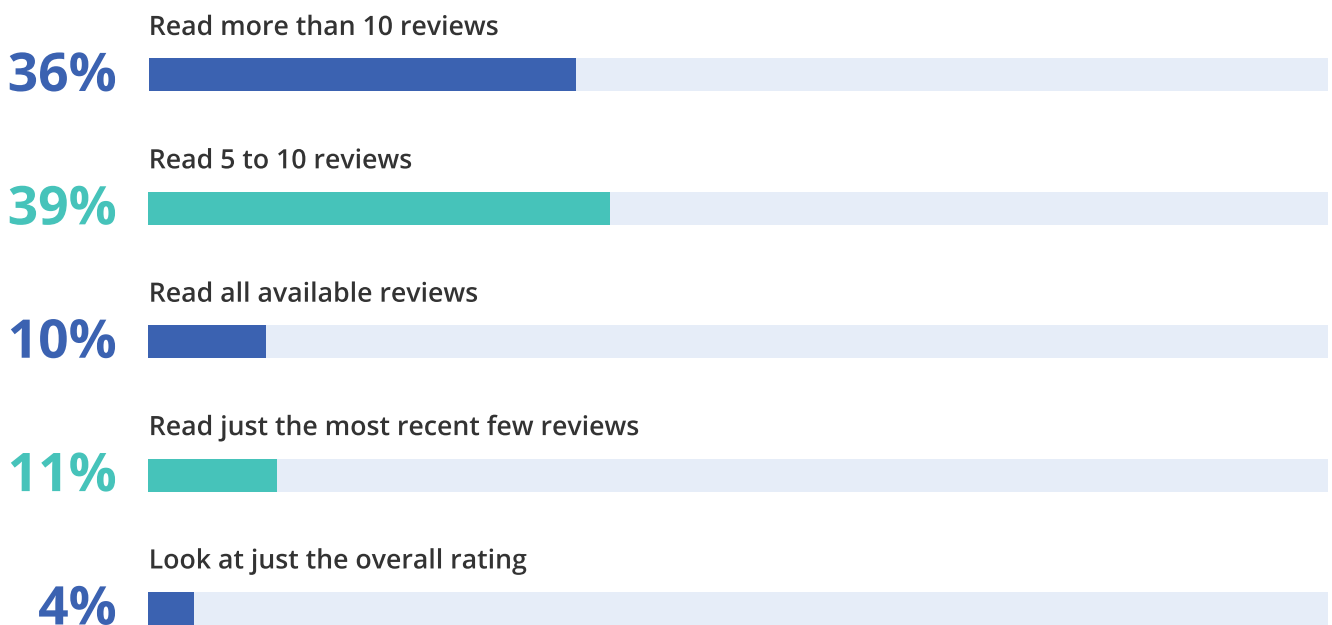
The essential role of reviews in driving guest bookings

Reviews aren't just "nice to have" if you want guests to choose you

KEY FINDING

85% of guests read at least five reviews before making a booking decision

When evaluating properties, guests don't just glance at one or two reviews. Our research shows that reading multiple reviews is standard practice:



Review volume and recency build confidence in booking decisions

KEY FINDING

Only 6% of guests say the number of reviews a property has doesn't affect their confidence to book

Knowing how others experienced your property helps potential guests feel more confident in their booking decisions. Here's how review volume and recency play a role:

37%

of guests say both volume and recency are equally important

32%

prefer a large number of reviews from any time period

26%

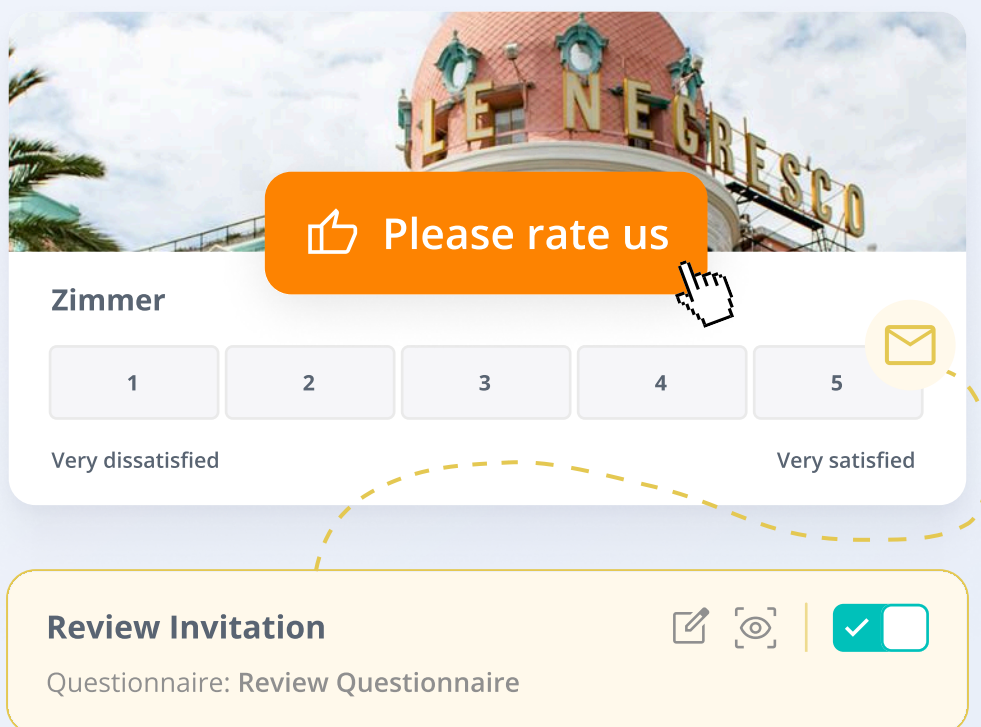
favor a smaller number of recent reviews

6%

say the number of reviews doesn't affect their decision

Get an average of 30% more reviews year on year with Customer Alliance

Send automated review requests with a personal touch. Our platform allows you to personalise review invitation emails and choose exactly when they're sent. So you can build your online presence with the effectiveness of personal outreach but without the manual work.



Guests prioritise mentions of cleanliness and location when reading reviews

KEY FINDING

Cleanliness (73%) and location (54%) are by far the most influential aspects of reviews

When reading reviews, guests focus on specific aspects of the property experience. These are the topics that matter most:





Key takeaways

These findings emphasise the **critical importance of consistently collecting new guest reviews**. Simply having a few positive reviews isn't enough. Guests want to see a high number of reviews, recent reviews, or both. They use previous reviews to not only guide their decision, but feel confident that they've chosen the best short-term rental for their needs.

This makes systematic review collection through dedicated software essential. Manually collecting guest reviews, either through comment cards or individual emails, is time-consuming and unreliable. By having a system in place, you can ensure you get reviews from as many guests as possible.

For review content, the data shows that **mentions of cleanliness are your top priority**, scrutinised by nearly three-quarters of guests. Consider specifically **mentioning cleanliness in your review invitations**. For example, add a line saying "We'd love to hear your thoughts on the cleanliness of the property."

While location feedback is largely outside your control, **you can influence how guests perceive and review it by providing accurate descriptions and helpful local information in your property listings**. Make it easy for satisfied guests to reference these details in their reviews.

2.

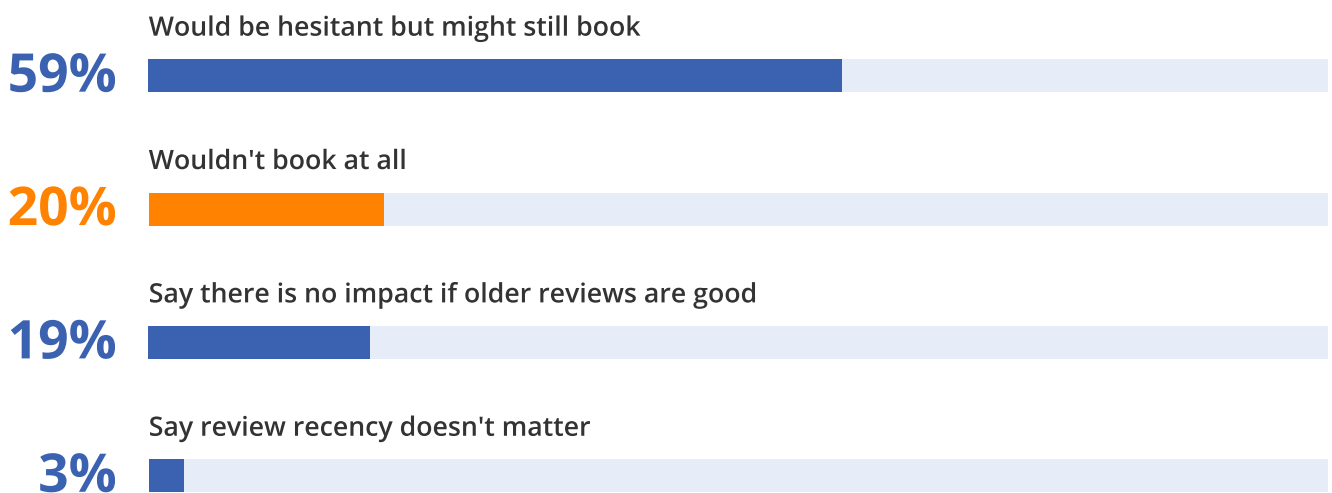
The hidden cost of neglecting review management

Properties without recent reviews miss out on bookings

KEY FINDING

20% of guests won't even consider properties without recent reviews

Recent reviews let guests know a property is still delivering great experiences, giving them an accurate picture of what to expect. Our research shows how the absence of reviews in the past 6 months affects booking decisions:

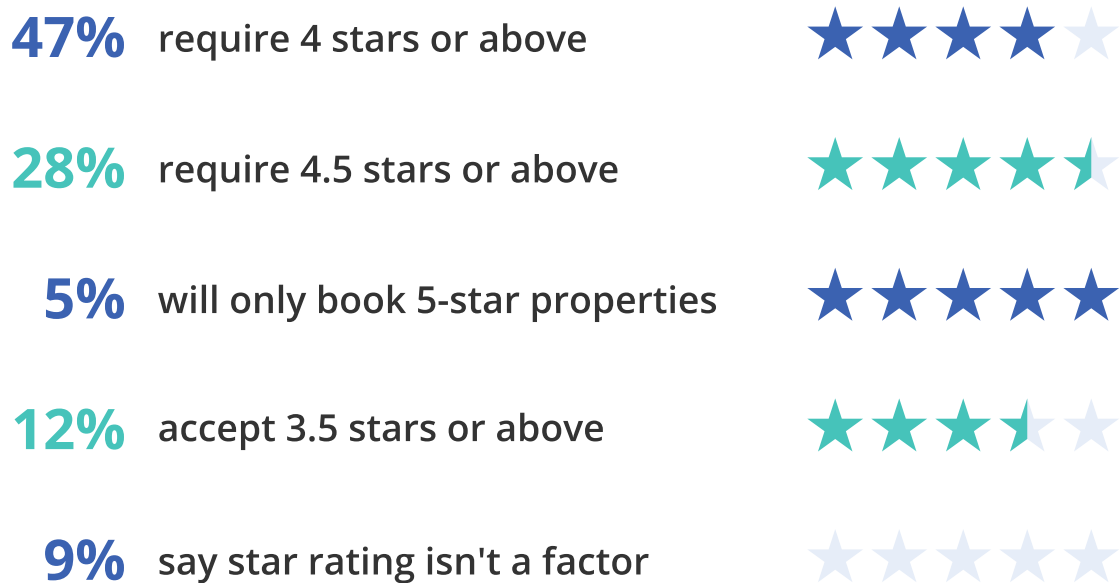


Average review ratings aren't good enough for most guests

KEY FINDING

80% of guests require properties to have at least 4-star review ratings before considering a booking.

When guests have countless options at their fingertips, expectations for quality and service are high. Our research shows how review ratings affect whether guests will consider a property:



Key takeaways

These findings reveal two unforgiving thresholds that directly impact revenue. The cost of neglecting review management isn't theoretical—it's measurable in lost bookings and decreased visibility.

When guests can't find recent feedback about your property, a significant portion will simply move on to alternatives with fresher reviews. Similarly, even a small slip in your overall rating puts your property below the consideration threshold for most potential guests.

These insights highlight why **proactive review management is essential**. Implementing a consistent strategy to collect recent reviews keeps your property visible to hesitant guests.

Meanwhile, **focusing on the guest experience aspects that drive higher ratings helps ensure you stay above the critical 4-star threshold**. A survey sent during the guest's stay is a great way to address potential issues during stays before they translate to lower ratings.

CASE STUDY

See how [Relais Castello di Casiglio uses during-stay surveys to help maintain their no.1 ranking on Booking.com](#)

3.

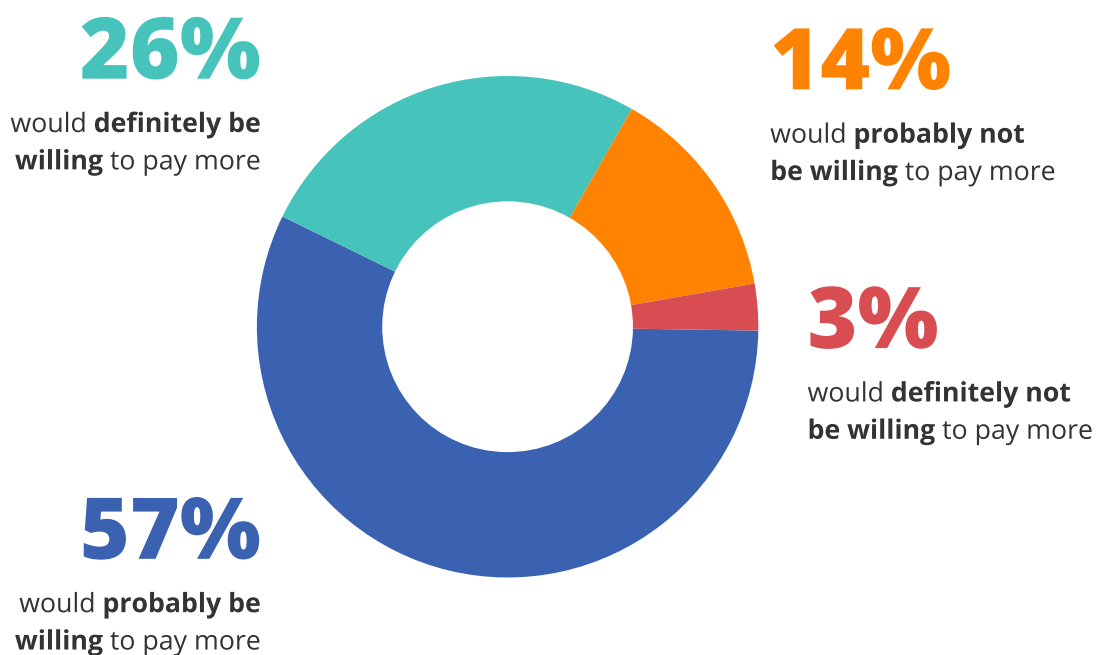
How guest reviews help you command higher rates

More reviews justify higher rates than competitors

KEY FINDING

When comparing similar properties, 83% of guests would be willing to pay more for the one with a higher number of positive reviews

The sheer number of positive reviews creates a perception of reliability and quality that guests are willing to pay for:



Guests are willing to pay more for properties with 5-star review ratings

KEY FINDING

45% of guests would pay 5-10% more for a property rated 5-stars in reviews versus a similar 4-star rated property

Taking your review ratings from very good to exceptional translates to revenue opportunities, even when your competitors have similar amenities:

45%

would be willing to
pay 5-10% more

25%

would be willing to
pay 11-20% more

6%

would be willing to
pay 21-30% more

3%

would be willing to
pay over 30% more

Key takeaways

These findings reveal a direct link between review management and revenue optimisation. **Rather than just competing on price or amenities, reviews give you two distinct advantages:**

First, focus on building review volume.

Property listings with more positive reviews create a perception of reliability that **83% of guests are willing to pay for**. This means actively requesting reviews from every guest and making the process as seamless as possible.

Second, prioritize service excellence to achieve that crucial 5-star threshold.

The difference between 4 and 5 stars isn't just bragging rights—it represents a concrete pricing opportunity. With **79% of guests willing to pay more for 5-star properties, and 45% willing to pay at least 5-10% more**, this translates to substantial revenue potential across your entire property portfolio.

To capitalise on these opportunities, **implement a pricing strategy that reflects your review advantages**. When your property has more reviews or higher ratings than similar listings, don't be afraid to position your rates accordingly. The data shows guests expect to pay more for proven quality and are prepared to do so.

4.

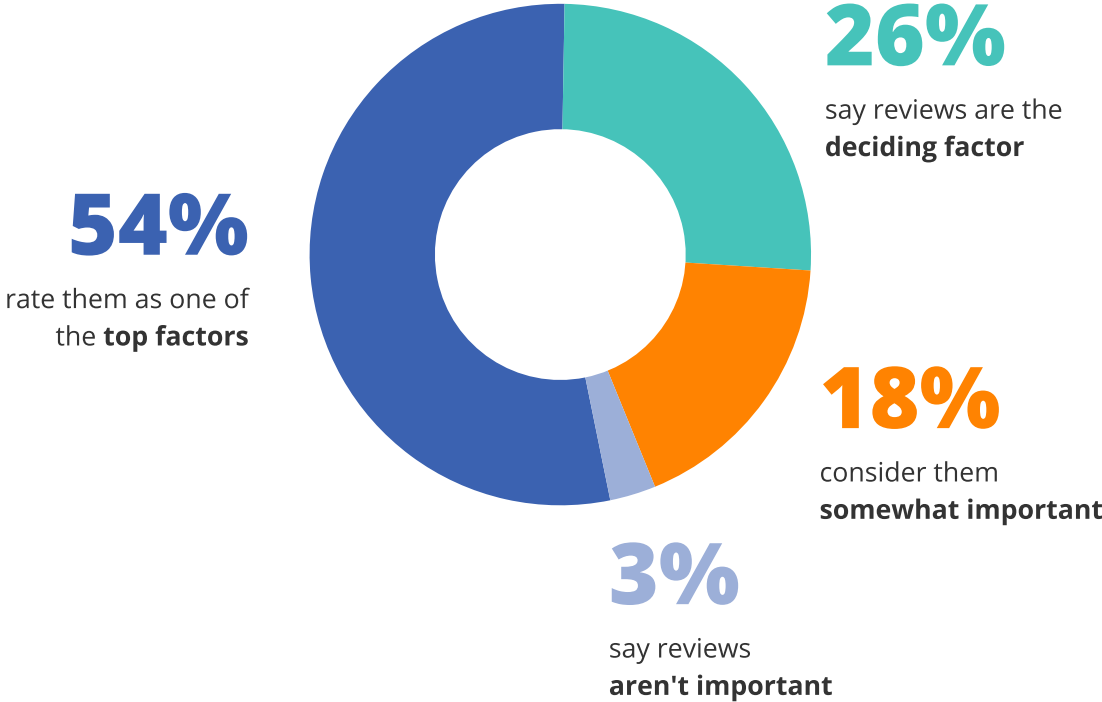
How review management helps you win more bookings in crowded markets

When prices are similar, reviews give you the edge

KEY FINDING

80% of guests say reviews are extremely or very important when choosing between similarly priced properties

When guests compare properties at similar price points, the battle for bookings shifts from price competition to online reputation:





Key takeaways

With 8 out of 10 guests citing reviews as extremely or very important when comparing similarly priced properties, **the data clearly shows the use of reviews as a key decision-making tool.**

Guests rely on reviews because they offer authentic, firsthand insights into a property's quality, service, and guest experience—details that can't be fully conveyed through photos or descriptions alone. Reviews help guests minimise risk, reassuring guests that they're making the right choice.

Reviews become even more critical in saturated markets like major cities and popular tourist destinations where guests face abundant choices. Proactive review management in these markets is essential for maintaining visibility, building trust and ultimately securing bookings.

5.

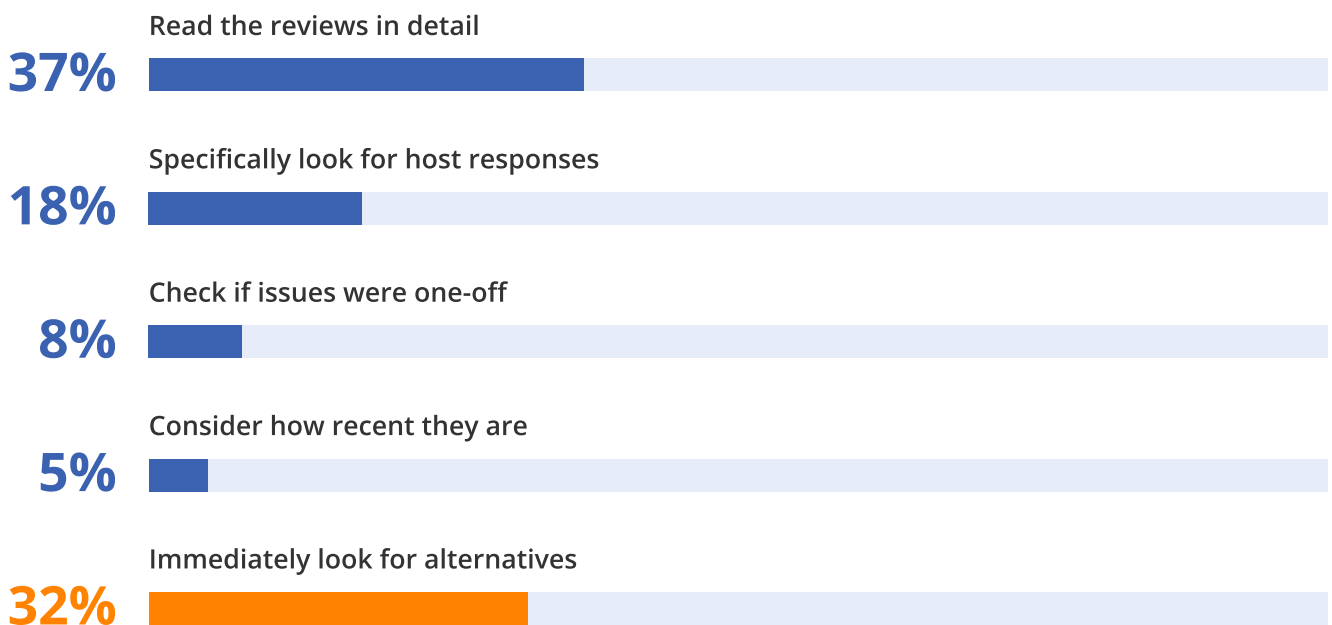
Host responses to reviews influence booking decisions

Negative reviews aren't instant red flags

KEY FINDING

68% of guests take time to evaluate negative reviews rather than immediately rejecting properties

The occasional bad review doesn't necessarily mean lost bookings. Guest behaviour shows a nuanced approach to negative feedback:

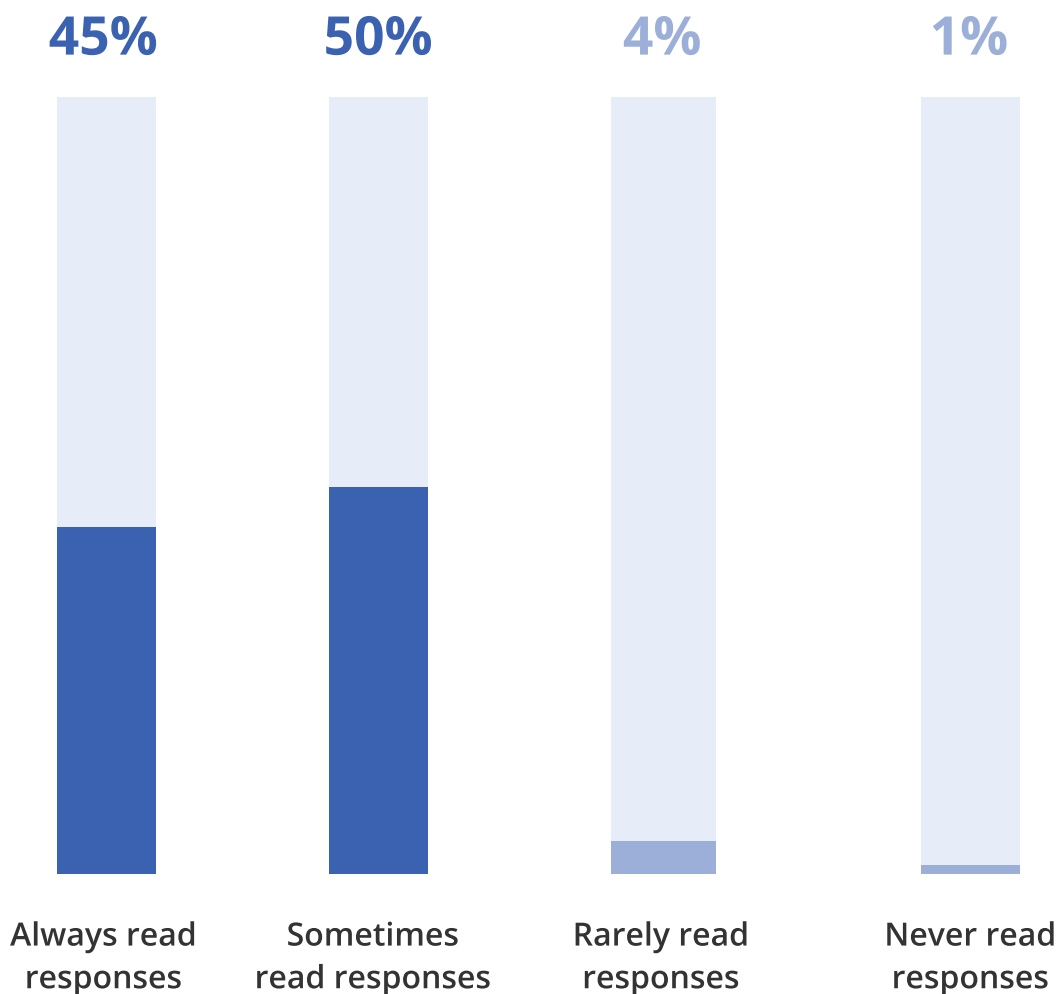


Host replies to reviews don't go unnoticed

KEY FINDING

95% of guests always or sometimes read host responses to reviews

Replying to your reviews isn't just a courtesy or a box-ticking exercise. Potential guests are taking notice:



Host replies can make or break a booking

KEY FINDING

87% of guests say host responses influence their booking decisions

The way you reply to reviews doesn't only influence the guest you're responding to:

61%

say responses somewhat influence their decision

26%

say responses significantly influence their decision

12%

say responses don't really influence their decision

1%

say responses don't influence their decision at all



Generate personalised review replies with just one click

Save hours each week and give guests the response they deserve. Our AI Reply Assistant instantly identifies the topic and sentiment of each review to craft a unique, tailored reply straight from your dashboard.

The screenshot displays a user interface for managing guest reviews. At the top left, a purple button with a speaker icon is labeled "Reply using AI". To its right is a teal button with a translate icon labeled "Translate". Below these is a white dropdown menu titled "Templates" with a downward arrow. The menu is open, showing a sample reply: "Dear Viktor, Thank you for taking the time to share your experience...". To the right of the template is a light blue button with a left-pointing arrow and the word "Reply". At the bottom left is an orange button with a document icon labeled "Duplicate". At the bottom right is a blue button with a paper plane icon labeled "Send", which has a hand cursor icon pointing at it.



Key takeaways

The data reveals that **responding to reviews—both positive and negative—can be a revenue-driving activity.** Your responses function as public demonstrations of your management style that 95% of potential guests usually evaluate when making booking decisions. Each thoughtful reply serves as free marketing that builds trust with future guests.

To make replying to reviews part of your workflow without taking too much time, set up templates or use AI tools to create a first draft.

These solutions allow you to maintain a personal touch while significantly reducing the time investment, ensuring consistency across all responses and **helping maintain a 100% response rate.**

By responding professionally and constructively to all reviews, especially negative ones, you can demonstrate your commitment to guest satisfaction and potentially convert hesitant browsers into confident bookers.

6.

What motivates guests to leave reviews

If you want more reviews, focus on creating exceptional experiences

KEY FINDING

Almost half of guests (48%) are most motivated to leave reviews by the experience itself

Asking for reviews from guests isn't so much about how you ask, but how much your short-term rental exceeded expectations:

48% are motivated by exceptional experiences

22% respond to personal requests from hosts

10% write reviews after issues during their stay

9% respond to automated reminders

6% are motivated by incentives/rewards

5% never leave reviews

Key takeaways

These findings reveal several paths to generating more reviews. While exceptional experiences are clearly the strongest motivator, personal requests from hosts are significantly more effective than automated reminders or incentives.

This suggests a dual strategy: **focus on delivering memorable stays while also making personal review requests.** The fact that automated reminders and incentives perform poorly (9% and 6% respectively) indicates that genuine engagement matters more than automated solutions or rewards.

Creating exceptional experiences means identifying and delivering meaningful moments that exceed expectations. **Use feedback management software like Customer Alliance to find specific elements of your short-term rental that you can improve,** or the aspects guests rave about so you can amplify your strengths.

To maximize review generation, combine automation with personalisation. Set up automated review requests that still feel personal by customising the message content and tone. Sign off with your name rather than your business to stand apart from generic platform reminders.

This approach helps you **stay efficient while maintaining the personal touch that drives response rates.**

FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT GUESTS LOVE (AND WHAT THEY DON'T) WITH TEXT ANALYTICS

Unlock powerful insights from your reviews in seconds. **Text Analytics** helps you instantly identify key themes and pinpoint areas for improvement—at scale. Understand what matters most to your guests and drive more exceptional experiences.

Conclusion: Reviews drive revenue in short-term rentals

Our research demonstrates the clear business value of effective review management. Properties with **more positive, recent reviews consistently attract more guests, command higher rates, and outperform competitors in crowded markets.**

Conversely, neglecting reviews carries a tangible cost. A lack of recent feedback deters 20% of potential guests, while properties rated below 4 stars are eliminated by 80% of guests.

In contrast, a **strong review profile builds trust and allows property managers to justify premium pricing,** with the majority of guests willing to pay more for highly rated stays.

To fully capture these benefits, property managers must take a proactive approach:

Encourage more guest feedback by delivering exceptional stays and making review requests personal and seamless.






Maintain a steady flow of fresh reviews to maximize visibility and reassure potential guests.

Engage with guest feedback by responding thoughtfully—host replies influence 87% of guests and serve as a powerful trust signal.

The data shows that review management isn't just about reputation - it's a fundamental driver of revenue and competitive advantage in today's short-term rental market. By **prioritising review management, property managers can drive more bookings, strengthen guest confidence, and unlock greater profitability.**

Make reviews work harder for your business

Customer Alliance helps short-term rental managers:

-  Collect up to 30% more reviews through automated, personalised requests
-  Monitor guest satisfaction across all major platforms
-  Identify areas for improvement through review analysis
-  Respond efficiently with AI-powered suggestions
-  Build a consistent, professional review profile

See how better review management can boost your property's performance.



[Get your 15-minute intro call](#)