



10 **Proven** Automation Strategies To Get A 5-Star Review On Every Job



While we might live in the 21st century, our brains work remarkably similarly to that of our ancestors thousands of years ago. When a member of your tribe told you that a certain food was poisonous, you better listen to him.

The same is true for today's world of sales and marketing. Consumers care deeply about other people's opinions. **Online reviews might be the most important factor for any kind of buying decision and can make the difference in hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue.**

You already know this. So **the question is not why, but how** you can get more 5 star reviews than your competitors.

Everything starts with great customer service. You might think that Amazon is just selling goods online. But as Amazon's founder Jeff Bezos puts it:

"We are in the customer service business."

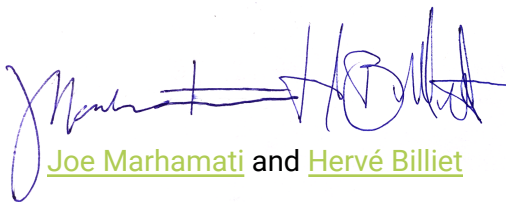
After reading through thousands of solar reviews and talking with hundreds of solar companies ourselves, we discovered that the same is true for solar installers.

More than that:

We speak from experience. We grew [Ipsun Solar](#), a 60+ employee and \$10m+ in annual sales, Top 100 residential solar installer, from zero to a successful [acquisition](#).

Last year, we set out on a journey to find **the best and proven strategies for better customer service, avoiding bad reviews, and receiving more 5 star reviews without increasing the workload of our employees.**

Within this short but value packed report, we will show you the exact steps we took so you can drive similar or better results for your own solar business.



[Joe Marhamati](#) and [Hervé Billiet](#)
Sunvoy Co-Founders



1. Catch potential problems ahead of time

“How to deal with negative reviews” is not by accident a very popular search term on Google. And while there are certainly things you can do after the fact (*go check out point 9 of this free checklist*), once you get a bad review, it might already be too late. Even a single 1-star review [can drive away as many as 22%](#) of potential customers.

You need a **reliable process in place that catches potential problems and unhappy customers ahead of time.**

At Sunvoy, we ensure that by using our own tailor-made app specifically built for managing this problem.

As soon as a customer signs a contract, they automatically receive a welcome email that gives them access to our app.

Within the app, they can not only see the progress of their construction project like a pizza tracker (*more on that in just a minute*), but also receive push notifications and text messages a handful of times.

We proactively (and automatically) ask them at key inflection points if there is anything wrong or if they need help.

This helps tremendously in troubleshooting customer problems ahead of time, catching bad reviews way before they get published, and even quickly identifying more fundamental organizational issues that require our attention as company founders.



2. Offer multiple ways to get in touch with you

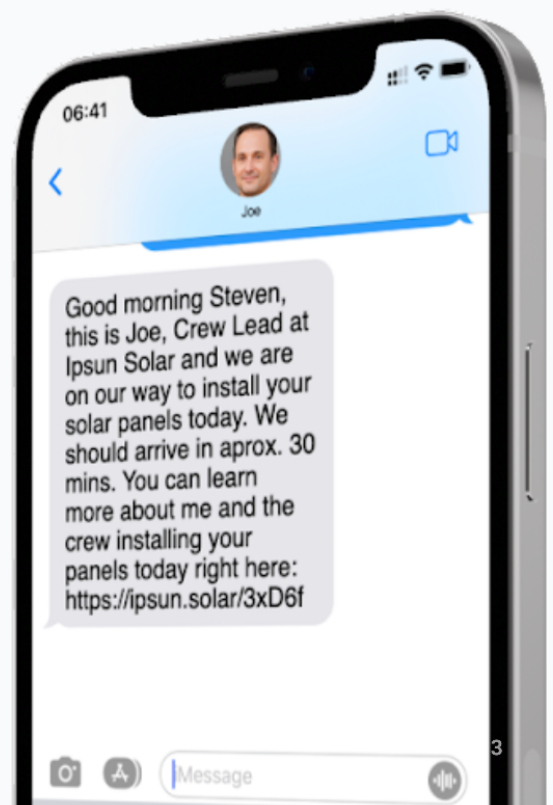
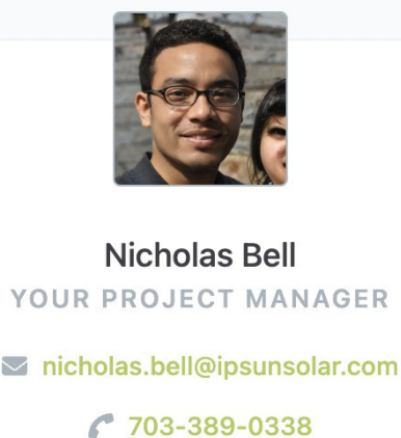
There is nothing worse than having to “hunt down” a faceless company because they make themselves intentionally hard to reach. *(Yes, I am thinking about your favorite telecommunication company...)*

Besides offering easy to reach methods on your website, you should also give your customers **personal points of contact**.

Fostering personal connections makes you be seen as a business run by humans that does good and gives you better chances for a good review.

For us at Sunvoy, this means that we display Project Managers' & Sales Managers' Contact Information, along with their full names and actual photos throughout the app.

We also send personalized text messages that contain links to crew information and team members' biographies before they do a site visit.



3. Keep customers up to date

Take a look at this bad review:

Disorganized, confused and no communication



Bottom line first: What was supposed to take 1 week to install took over 2 months before my system finally went online. Everyone was nice and friendly, but it was obvious early on that nobody knew what they were doing. Delays after delays and having stuff stored in my garage for weeks only to discover that no one ever did an inventory on what was brought onsite. When they did they had to order more missing parts. And maybe the worst: Workers showed up at random and no one seemed in charge. Information was never conveyed to me. I had to constantly track down the so called project manager (whom I never met in person) just to found out what was going on.

The problem mostly boils down to **bad communication**.

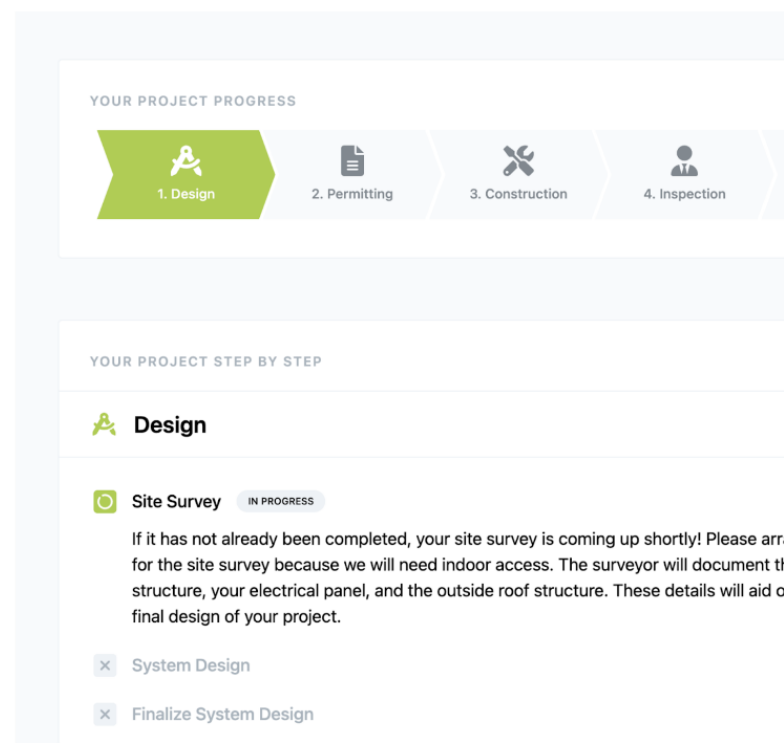
That's why we made an effort to let our customers know exactly at what step they are at in the process at any given time.

They can not only log into our own branded app and see for themselves, but also **receive automatic emails as their solar project is progressing**.

This makes sure their expectations are managed, as they know exactly where they are in the process, can understand and read about what lies ahead, and we can provide detailed information on which steps might be influenced by external factors completely outside our company's control.

Even better:

This frees time and headspace for our project managers to actually grab the phone and call a customer that needs reassurance or additional troubleshooting.



4. Ask when they are the happiest

Did you know that customers are actually more likely to write a review when they have a bad experience than when they have a good one?

Nobody is perfect. Running a solar business ourselves, we know that firsthand. Many times the responsibility for delays and problems actually lies with the permitting office, difficult or unexpected on-site conditions or even supply chain issues.

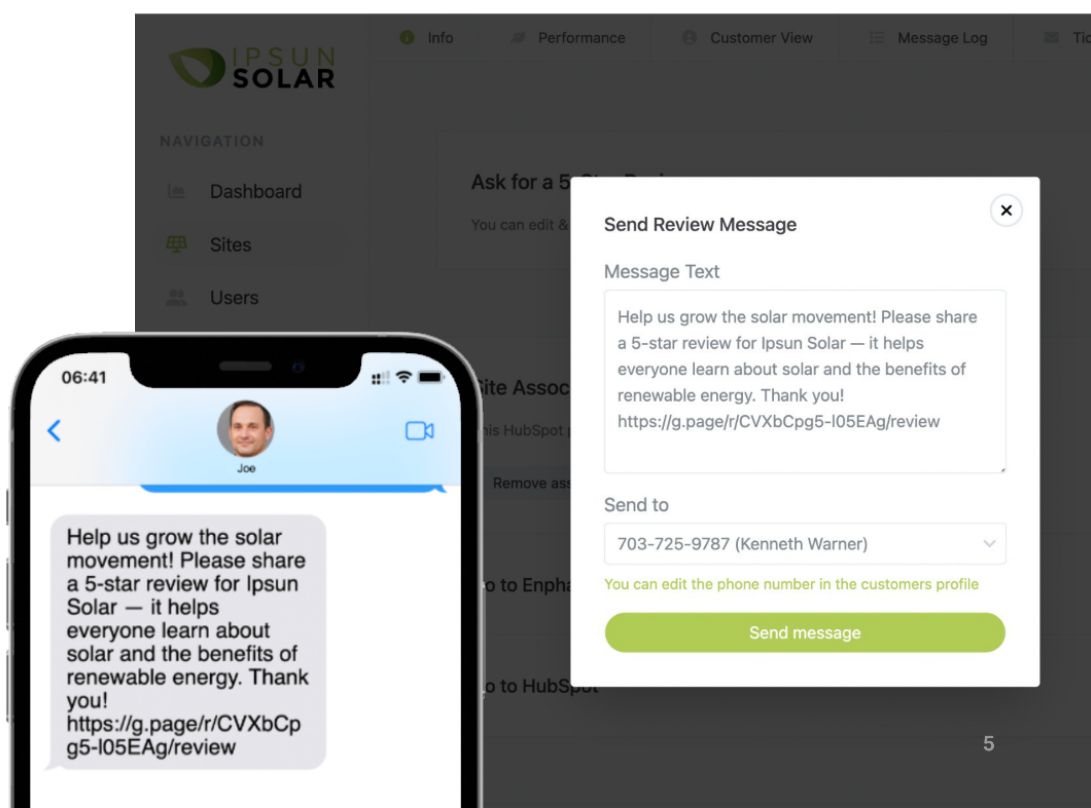
So while certain delays are unavoidable, you should capitalize on the precise moment your customer will be **guaranteed to be the happiest:**

Immediately after you have finished installing their system.

Our crew members send a personalized text message with the click of a button directly from our app while they are talking to the customer in person or on site.

The message includes an easy to reach link to leave a 5-star review, and as it's coming from an actual crew member, which makes it more likely to bring results.

Doing this in person closes the mental loop for the customer from the moment they signed, to the moment the system has been installed and eventually turned on.



5. Repetition is key

Everybody is busy with their own life. If you are doing a good job, your company will actually not be constantly on your customers mind.

That's why it's important to ask them multiple times through different channels, as life inevitably gets in the way the first time around.

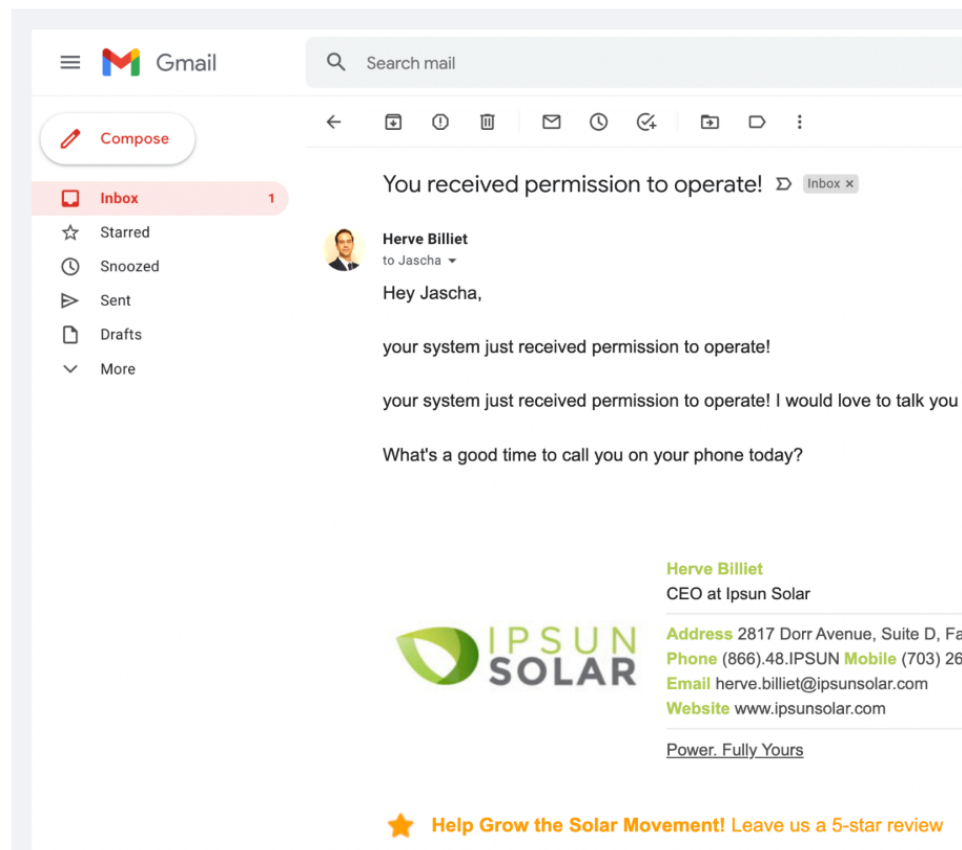
At Sunvoy, we are not just asking customers through a personalized text message, but have a whole area within our app dedicated to **why reviews are the best way to support our mission of fighting climate change, and make it extremely easy to actually leave a review.**

We carefully engineered the app as well to bring the customer back, even months after their system has been successfully installed.

They can not just check their energy production, consumption, and dollar savings, but also get notifications when they have reached important milestones of being a clean energy producer.

We also ask for 5-star reviews in the email signature of all our employees and email communications.

Think about the amount of emails your team sends out on a daily basis and how some of the most valuable screen real estate goes to waste by not asking for a review in such a prominent place.



6. Create a conversion optimized landing page

Conversion optimization is a strategy that aims to increase the percentage of visitors who take a desired action (*like writing a review*) while decreasing the secondary information that just distracts from that goal.

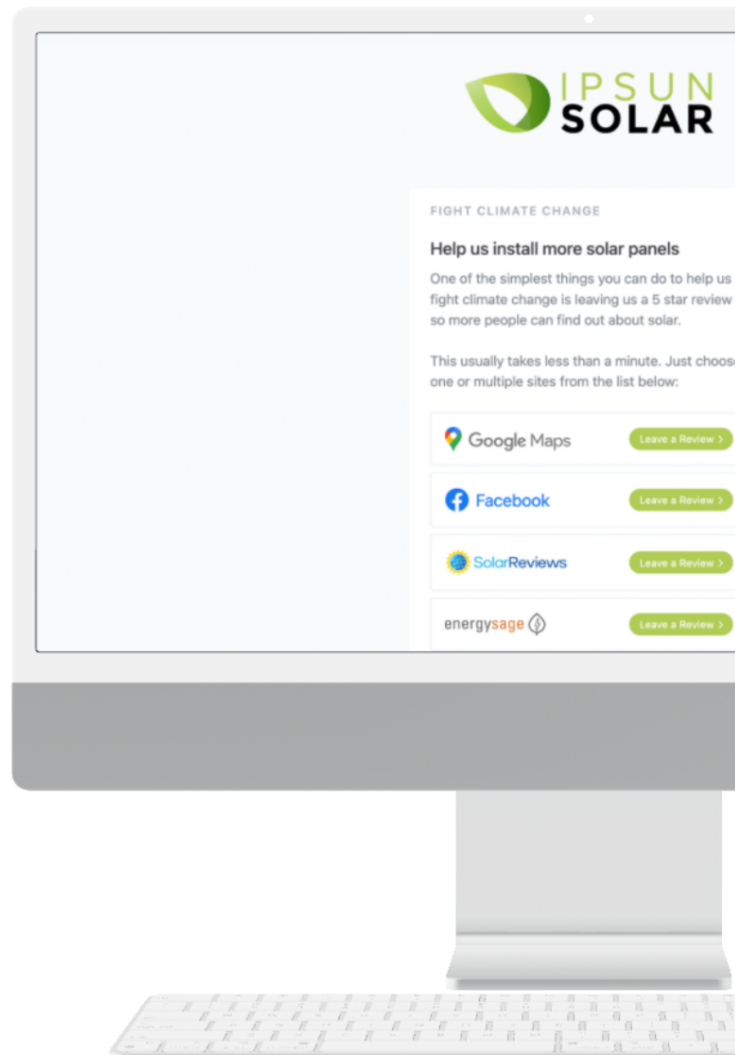
You might have noticed how Amazon removes all irrelevant links and distractions once you are in the checkout process. (*Pay careful attention the next time you buy something from Amazon.*)

What matters for you is that if you ask customers for a review, **you need to give them a single place to take action without distracting them with unrelated things.**

The reason this works is a psychological bias called the paradox of choice: **the more choices and distractions we face, the less likely we are to actually take any action.**

Doing this actually helps driving reviews on multiple sites and office locations as well. Why Google maps might be the most important portal for our business, your focus might be on a different portal such as Yelp, Angis, Solar Reviews, or EnergySage and that focus might change over time.

With a conversion optimized landing page that is only focused on receiving 5-star reviews, you can prioritize things differently at any given point in time and even track which customers have visited it and given a review.



7. Go the extra mile

It is **one thing to install a PV system**, and a completely different thing to actually monitor and support that system for the lifetime of the customer.

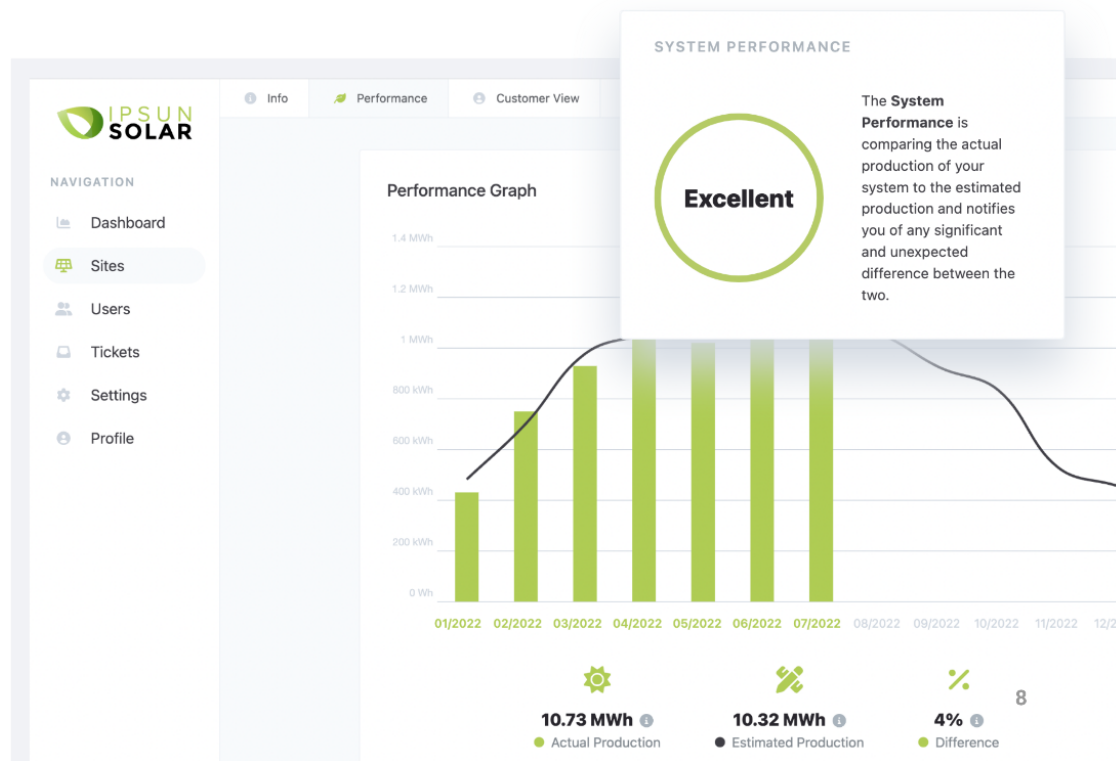
What would happen if you actually started to follow through on the production estimates you promised within your proposals, and actively monitor if a customer system deviates too far from your estimates?

While there are whole companies charging top dollar and just dedicated to this topic, we simply have our O&M department actively monitor all systems in our fleet with the help of our app.

They proactively reach out to customers that fall short of their production estimates and offer help, troubleshooting, or even a complimentary site visit if necessary.

Then, if a problem is identified and solved without the customer ever having to reach out to us, **we ask them again for a positive review if they haven't done it yet.**

This doesn't just help with more and better reviews, and differentiation from other low quality competitors but also **increases our revenue by adding additional high margin services to all of our contracts.**



8. Stop playing catch-up

Similar to the previous point of active performance monitoring, **our O&M team also reviews daily a list of systems that require their attention.**

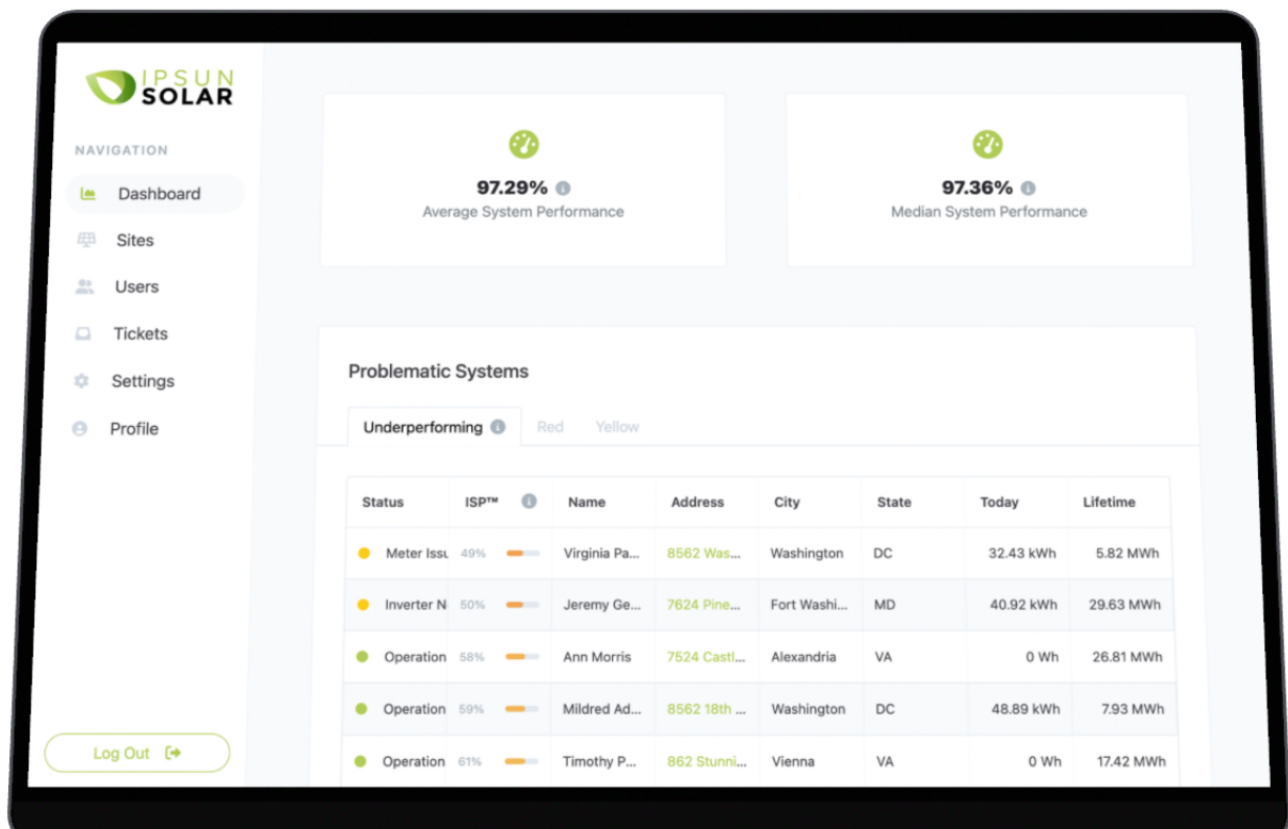
They get that list **completely automated by the fleet management part** of our customer facing app.

Customers are blown away if for once a company doesn't try to cover up their mess but reaches out proactively for solving problems they weren't even aware of yet.

The best time to ask for a review is when a system was installed.

The second best time after it went online.

And if you still haven't received a review from a particular customer, **then the next best time is right when you just solved a problem for them they didn't even know about yet.**



9. Deal with negative reviews

Getting a negative review will eventually happen to even the best of companies. As you can't avoid it, you should make the best out of it.

Studies have shown that responding to negative reviews **can still have a positive effect on your overall business reputation, as 100% positive reviews might look suspicious.**

Make sure that you are actively monitoring your review sites so that you can respond to an occasional bad review as quickly as possible while all the facts are still present.

You should aim to write the response in the name of management or you as the owner to signal that you take any bad review seriously.

Avoid business jargon like *"we apologize for the inconvenience"* or *"it's of deep concern that our service was not satisfactory"*, but try to write in everyday language, acknowledging and emphasizing the actual feeling, situation and point of view of your customer.

Take full responsibility instead of excusing yourself or getting defensive. Make it clear that, as shown by the majority of 5-star reviews, this was an exception, and be specific on where things went wrong and how you will prevent it and do better in the future.

Whenever possible, offer a direct line of communication or reach out proactively if you have the contact details to make things right. In the best case, this could actually help in taking the negative review offline, while in the worst case, **it still signals to potential customers how you react when not everything goes according to plan.**



10. Now what?

After reading through all this material you might be overwhelmed and wondering: **How can I implement this and achieve similar or better results for my own company?**

Truth to be told:

The first urge of just grabbing this white paper and handing it to your marketing and sales department will not achieve anything. *(We know from our own painful experience that knowledge alone doesn't cut it).*

Nor should you just toss this aside and get back to the day to day craziness of putting out fires while running your business.

The good news is that we have already done the work for you.

We eat, sleep and breathe this stuff every day.

And we actually decided to offer **free audits** to any solar installer that wants to see for themselves **how they can completely transform their business over the next 12 months without any extra spend on marketing or hiring new employees.**

[Click here to book a free call](#) with our principal Co-Founder and **COO Joe Marhamati**. He will help you personally uncover your biggest opportunities and blind spots. And if it's a fit, he will show you what it would look like to have our team working alongside yours and **use our tailor made software** to implement some of these strategies and more you'll discuss on the call.

We aim to make it the best 40 minutes you spend at work this week.

Book your free audit right now →



Checklist

- ☒ ~~Read this free white paper~~
- ☐ Book your free audit
- ☐ Reach out proactively to customers and ask if they need help ahead of time Create a customer portal that displays the customers progress
- ☐ Send automated progress updates to customers
- ☐ Offer multiple ways to get in touch with your company
- ☐ Communicate the full name, photo, phone number and email of your employees Send personal text messages before site visits
- ☐ Ask for a review right after the system is installed
- ☐ Ask again after a system went online
- ☐ Ask again after you have solved a problem for the customer
- ☐ Create a personalized & conversion optimized landing page for reviews Actively monitor your fleet for performance issues
- ☐ Actively monitor your fleet for other issues
- ☐ Monitor your review sites for bad reviews
- ☐ Respond quickly and like a human to bad reviews

