

# Yelp Reviews are Worth \$1000+ for a Hand Surgeon

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**Background:** Positive online physician reviews (ie: Yelp, Google Reviews, Healthgrades) are frequently cited as relevant and important towards managing a surgeon's online reputation. However, no study has ever measured the tangible impact of positive reviews for a medical practice. This study set to quantify the financial benefit from online reviews in an early-career hand surgery practice.

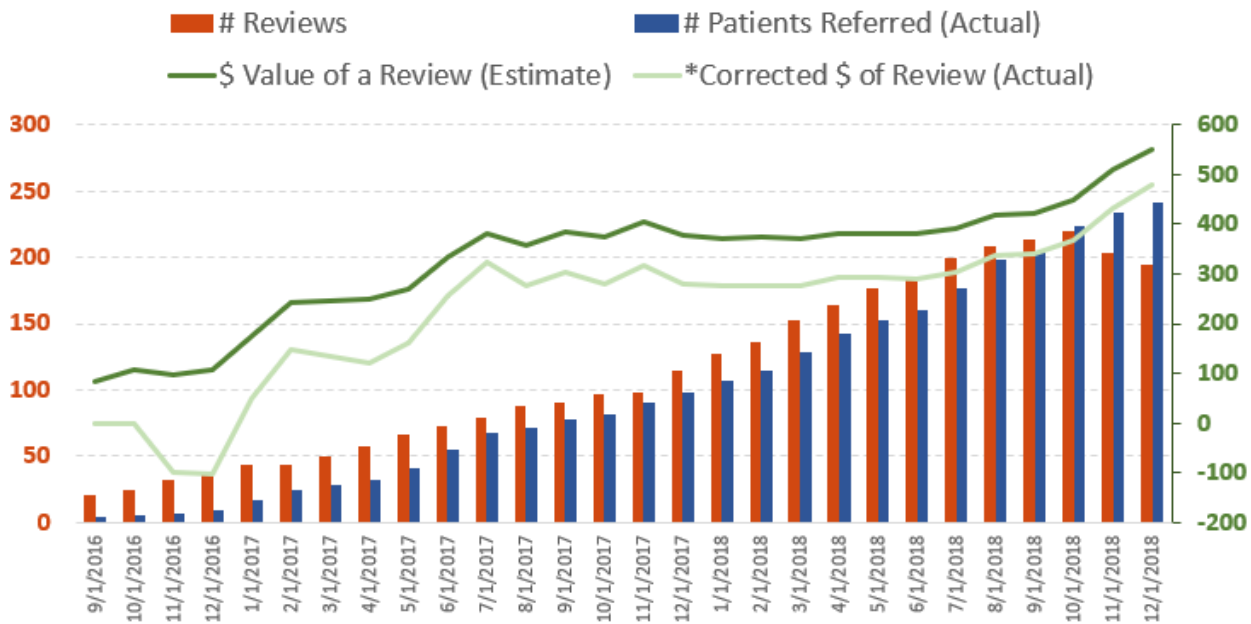
**Methodology:** In September, 2016 we instituted a practice protocol to encourage satisfied patients to leave online reviews. Over a consecutive 28-month period, all patients presenting to our hand surgery clinic were queried regarding how they were referred to the office with special attention towards online review sites, which review sites they visited, and analyzed for the financial gain (total dollars collected) during their course of treatment. Simultaneously, online reviews for all hand surgeons in the practice were quantified monthly during the same period. A control period was established during the first 3 months prior, to any measurable change in online reviews. This allowed us to determine the added value of patients referred online relative to the number of total reviews during the same period.

**Results:** We found that Yelp and Google Reviews accounted for >90% of all online review referrals. At 2 years, a total of 146 reviews were acquired above the control acquisition rate. During the same period, we identified 158 patients referred to the office after reading positive online reviews, and those patients had a total calculated collection amount of \$442/patient. This amounted to a total practice collection of \$69,836 from 146 reviews, averaging to a review value of \$478 per review (Figure 1). When including patients who were unable to complete referral data, the estimated total practice collection increased to \$155,584 with a review value of \$1,065 (Figure 2).

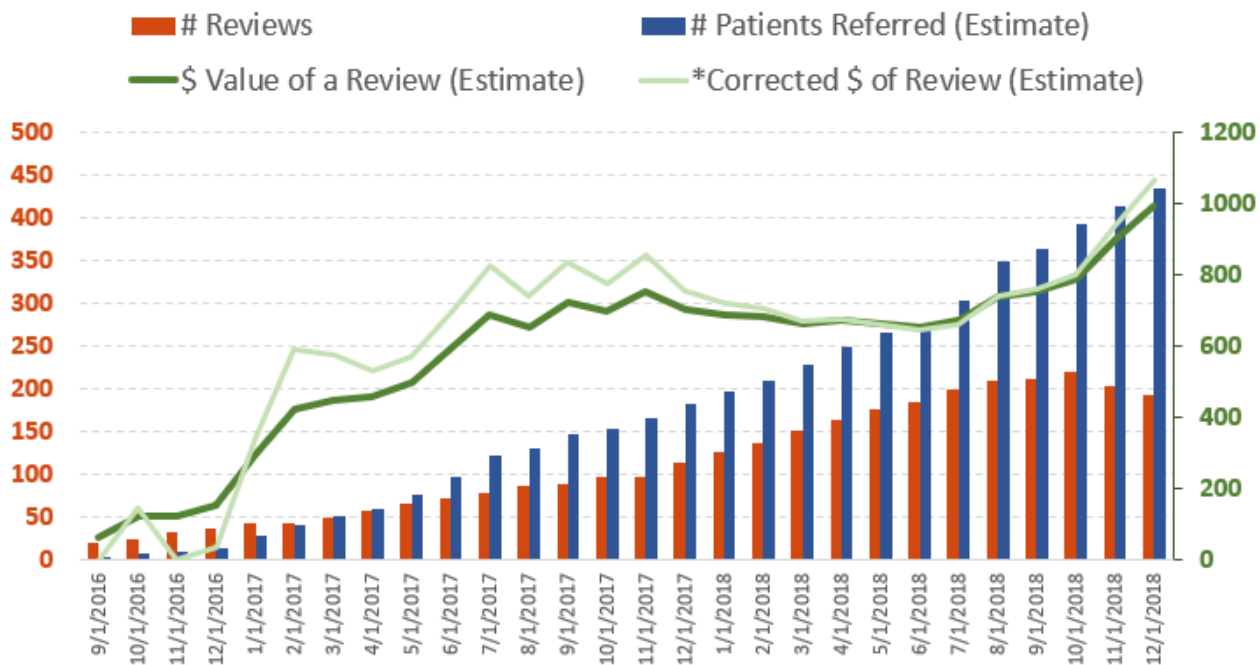
**Conclusion:**

- Online physician reviews can help refer patients to a hand surgery practice
- A single Yelp or Google review is worth between \$442 and \$1,065 in practice revenue
- In a two-person orthopedic hand practice, introducing an online review protocol yielded up to \$155,000 in additional revenue over 28 months

## The Monetary Value of a Single Online Review Over 28 Consecutive Months (Actual)



## The Monetary Value of a Single Online Review Over 28 Consecutive Months (Estimate)



\*A subsequent analysis incorporating automated email review requests in conjunction with handing out review card requests further increased the rate of online review responses as shown below at month 16.

