

# Winning with Online Reviews

-George Nenni, Generations Digital

What is the most popular search term for a car dealership? Its name, of course!

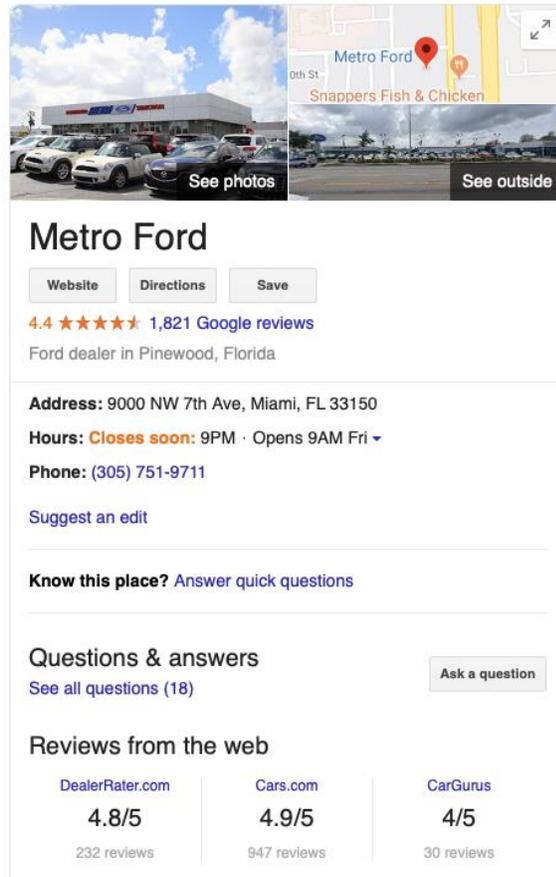
What happens 100 percent of the time a person performs a Google search for a dealership name? The dealership's Google My Business (GMB) listing displays front and center, along with the dealership's online reputation star-rating.

GMB listings also display when a consumer searches for a vehicle make followed by a geographic location, for instance, "Ford dealer near me," or "Jeep dealer in Chicago." You get the idea, the dealership's GMB listing has become the internet white or yellow pages and a dealership's most important secondary website.

Few discount the importance of online reviews. For any of us who are buying products online, we know our confidence level is higher when we're buying from a highly-rated buyer. Since most car shopping journeys start online using Google Search, we know that most consumers are seeing dealer reviews on Google.

We know there are many other automotive review sites on the web, but for the purposes of this article, our goal is to help dealers win with Google reviews.

If a dealership truly wants to win with online reputation, the best advice is to contract with one of the top providers such as Podium or Reputation.com. These companies will contact variable and fixed operations customers in an effort to drive more reviews across Google and other review sites. However, these reputation companies will only be able to influence a certain percentage of buyers to leave a review, so dealers shouldn't stop there.



**Metro Ford**

Website Directions Save

4.4 ★★★★★ 1,821 Google reviews

Ford dealer in Pinewood, Florida

**Address:** 9000 NW 7th Ave, Miami, FL 33150

**Hours:** Closes soon: 9PM · Opens 9AM Fri

**Phone:** (305) 751-9711

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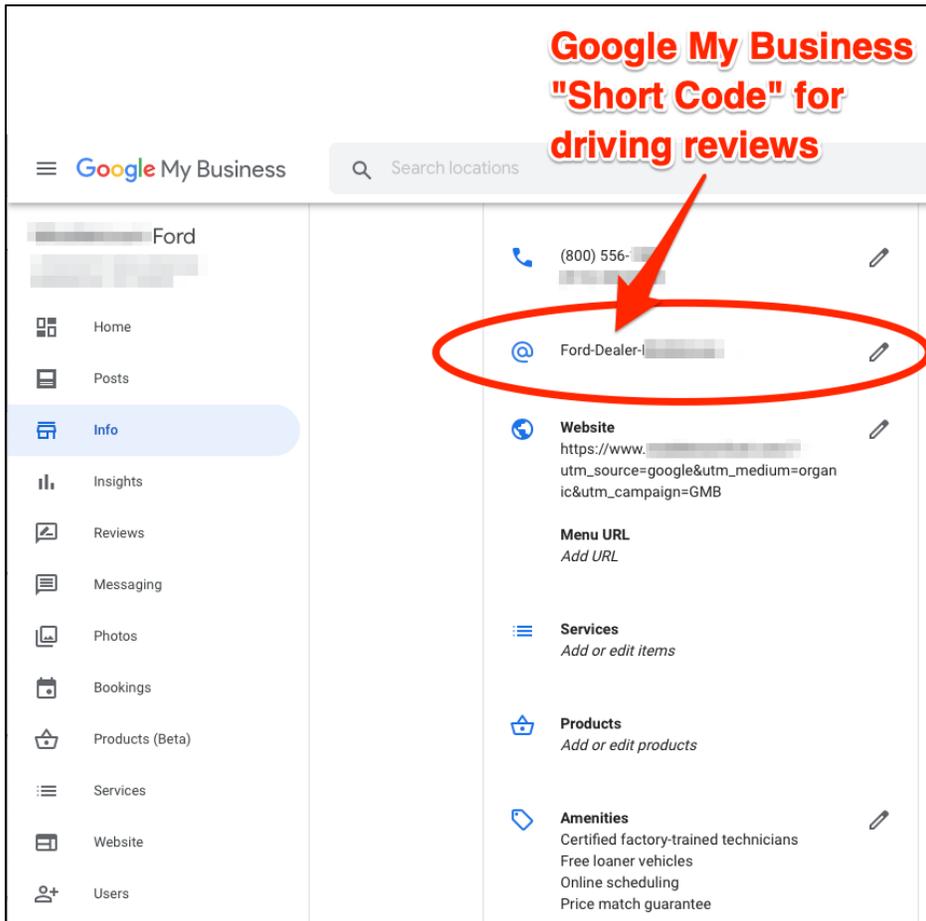
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**Reviews from the web**

DealerRater.com	Cars.com	CarGurus
4.8/5	4.9/5	4/5
232 reviews	947 reviews	30 reviews

- MORE -

## Google My Business "Short Code" for driving reviews



To further this effort, dealers should also take it upon themselves to drive additional reviews through one-on-one engagement.

What does that mean? The idea is for a car salesperson or service writer who has just successfully helped a customer purchase a vehicle or complete a repair to drive a review from a one-on-one request while the customer is still at the dealership. Best practice would be to target the customers who are very happy with their purchase process and are in the final stages before leaving the dealership.

The salesperson or service writer simply offers to text a GMB short-code that will allow the customer to leave a Google review.

The short-code is a new feature from Google that creates a direct link to a business's GMB page. This one-on-one engagement and review request is far more likely to deliver a positive review.

This approach has worked incredibly well in dealerships, especially when salespeople are incentivized (i.e. pay plans) to drive online reviews that mention the salespersons' name. Dealers are driving about 10-15 new reviews per week, with most of them being 5.0 stars.

The key is targeting the best customers and messaging them by text (instead of email).

More about GMBs and digital initiatives is available at [generationsdigital.com](http://generationsdigital.com).

George Nenni and Digital Generations team also share ideas and news through LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/georgenenni](https://www.linkedin.com/in/georgenenni), Facebook: [facebook.com/generationsdigital/](https://www.facebook.com/generationsdigital/) and Twitter: [twitter.com/generationsdig](https://twitter.com/generationsdig).