

Donald Russell
Scotland's Finest Butcher

Royal butcher Donald Russell uses Feefo reviews to prove it's a cut above



Donald Russell, an award-winning mail order butchery firm transformed customer engagement, winning 280,000 five-star reviews from customers after implementing the verified Feefo review platform

For more than 40 years, the Aberdeenshire-based Donald Russell has been a highly successful mail order butchery business, supplying frozen produce to thousands of UK consumers. The holder of a Royal Warrant and Online Butcher of the Year, it also supplies some of the most prestigious hotels and Michelin-starred restaurants in Britain, Europe and farther afield.

As well as the Royal Household, Donald Russell's customers include Loch Fyne, Le Gavroche, Jumeirah Hotels and Resorts and Chewton Glen Hotel and Spa. The company's excellence was recognised in the 2019 Butcher's Shop of the Year Awards when it was named winner of the award for Online Butchery Business.

The challenge

Donald Russell wanted to increase engagement with thousands of hugely loyal customers in its direct-to-consumer business. Some 60 per cent of business is conducted over the telephone with between 2,000 and 2,500 orders dispatched to consumers each week. Average order values are in excess of £65. Loyalty is high with the average consumer ordering 3.8 times per year.

Yet the business lacked any feedback or review platform where customers could post their opinions and ratings. Prospective customers visiting the website had no means of understanding just how successful the business is at meeting consumers' expectations. Without a review platform, senior managers were also unable to gauge satisfaction for individual products or quality of service, including deliveries.

The business, which is part of The Vestey Group, fully understood that consumer confidence is crucial in a mail order business delivering frozen meat and poultry to all corners of the UK. While wanting to embrace greater transparency, managers were also concerned the potentially damaging effect of negative feedback.



The solution

After considering the full range of review platforms, Donald Russell selected Feefo. Company managers were convinced Feefo's invitation-only review system dovetailed perfectly with Donald Russell's requirements and brand values.

The Feefo platform uses purchase details to ensure only genuine consumers can post. This gives consumers greater confidence about the truthfulness of the feedback they read, eliminating opportunities to post fake reviews – either negative or positive.

In just a few weeks, Donald Russell integrated Feefo reviews into its website and went live after a brief trial period. Ratings and reviews are now posted prominently next to the company's highly appetising products, giving all potential customers access to the full range of opinion. Reviews highlight outstanding or award-winning products, adding the credibility of the customer's voice to the plaudits.



The results

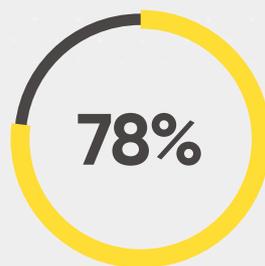
Six years on from initial implementation and Donald Russell has collected a stunning 280,000 five-star reviews, earning itself a Feefo Gold Trusted Service Award for the way it attracts and uses reviews.

Some 86 per cent of reviews about quality of service are at the five-star level, while 78 per cent of product reviews achieve the maximum five-star rating.

Concerns about negative feedback have disappeared, with the company's lasagne proving to be a stellar performer in attracting five-star approvals. Any online search for Donald Russell features the company's high volume of five-star ratings, boosting customer assurance and click-throughs.



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The Feefo review platform is also invaluable in the launch of new products, enabling managers to gauge early reaction and make any necessary changes.

"Feefo has given us a fantastic new channel of engagement," said Rob McFarlane, CEO, Donald Russell. **"There is actually a lot of emotion about what people order from us, which customers want to share.**

With 280,000 five-star reviews in six years, it's just amazing how engaged customers are. Feefo gives us a platform to show the world how good quality service and products have never gone out of fashion."

The future

In future Donald Russell intends using Feefo's many capabilities to explore the detail behind its five-star reviews along with other questions such as basket-abandonment and exit-points on the customer journey. It will also examine how it can use Feefo reviews in advertising, using tools such as Review Enhanced Ads.

"Our experience has been marvellous. We have the most convincing customer advocacy possible and our relationship with Feefo will certainly continue."

Rob McFarlane, CEO, Donald Russell