

Guest Relations

The Review Response Standard

Five steps for answering online reviews within 48 hours. Your reply is read by far more future guests than by the guest who wrote the review.

Who	When	You need
Guest relations manager; general manager for low scores	Every review on the main review sites, answered within 48 hours	Review alerts, the stay in the PMS, the complaint log
Measured by Every review answered within 48 hours · Each reply names one detail of the stay · Each issue logged with its department		

1 Read the stay

Before writing, find the stay in the PMS: dates, room, who served them, any complaint logged. Compare the review with what happened, so the reply answers this guest and not guests in general.

"Review 3★, 12 Oct, Mr Lindqvist, 3 nights. Logged: AC noise night 1, room not moved. Owner: Guest Relations."

Common mistake Replying from the review alone. You apologise again for a delay the guest was already looked after for, and reopen it.

2 Thank specifically

Open with thanks and one detail from the review in your own words. Use the first name only if the review is signed that way. Never paste the same sentence into more than one reply in a week.

"Thank you, Anna, for writing about the breakfast terrace and your mornings with Luca at the pastry station."

Common mistake "Thank you for your valuable feedback." Readers recognise a pasted line, and stop reading.

3 Answer the point

For each criticism, say in one sentence what you changed or checked. No excuses about staffing or the weather. Never confirm private details: room number, price, health, or who the guest travelled with.

"You were right about the noise from the air conditioning. We have replaced the unit on that floor."

Common mistake Defending the hotel line by line. Future guests side with the reviewer, and your reply becomes the story.

4 Take it private

If the issue is serious or the guest is angry, keep the public reply to four lines, sign it with your name and role, and send the guest a private message the same day. The conversation continues there.

"I would like to hear more, and I have sent you a private message today. Sara Conti, Guest Relations Manager."

Common mistake Arguing in public over three replies. Each one is read by more people than the original review.

5 Fix the cause

Log every criticism with its department. Each Monday, send the heads of department a summary: the issue, how many reviews named it, the fix and its date. Repeats go on the next managers' meeting agenda.

"Week 41: 4 reviews mention slow breakfast eggs. Second egg station from 20 Oct. Owner: Chef Rossi."

Common mistake Answering every review well and fixing nothing. The same sentence turns up in next month's reviews.

Reply Lines to Retire

Each of these appears in hotel replies every day, and each tells the next reader nobody is listening. Replace them this month.

Instead of	Write	Why
"Thank you for your valuable feedback."	"Thank you for writing about the terrace breakfast."	It shows a person read it.
"We were very busy that weekend."	"The wait was too long. We've added a second team."	A fix, not an excuse.
"Our records show you were offered..."	"I'm sorry the stay ended this way."	Never argue the facts in public.
"We hope to welcome you again."	"Ask for me next time; I'd like to show you the change."	An invitation with a name on it.
"Room 214 has since been repaired."	"The room has since been repaired."	Room numbers stay private.
"We are the top resort in the area."	Nothing. Let other guests say it.	Readers trust guests over hotels.

How to use this with your team

Brief one row a week to everyone who drafts replies. Before anything is posted, the guest relations manager reads the draft against the table. Once a month, read five replies aloud at the managers' meeting.

Part of the DolceVita Standards Library: free operating standards for every department of the hotel, at dolcevitahospitality.com/free-resources.