



2025 Yelp Trust & Safety Report

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How Yelp safeguards content integrity

Yelp's mission is to connect consumers with great local businesses by giving them access to reliable and useful information. Consumer trust is one of our top priorities, which is why Yelp uses advanced technology and human moderation to protect the integrity and quality of content on our platform. This approach is driven by our [automated recommendation software](#), reporting by Yelp's community of users and business owners, and [human moderation efforts](#) focused on investigating content and platform activity. [Economists, industry experts, the media](#), and [regulators](#) have acknowledged that among online review platforms, Yelp is one of the most aggressive and successful at identifying and weeding out unhelpful and unreliable reviews.

What's new from 2025

As AI becomes more accessible, it's not only transforming how people engage online but also how bad actors attempt to manipulate platforms. Our longstanding content policies require all reviews and photos to reflect genuine, firsthand experiences. At Yelp, AI-generated reviews and photos submitted by users violate our [content policies](#), and reviewers are prohibited from using third-party AI tools to write their reviews. While using tools to correct spelling and grammar are permitted, reviews that appear to be drafted or revised using third-party AI tools are not allowed, as content must be authentically created by the reviewer to keep Yelp helpful and reliable. Instead, to make review writing easier, we provide helpful features like [interactive review topics](#) that remind reviewers of helpful points to address—like “service,” “value,” or “ambiance.” As reviewers address each topic, it's checked off, helping to capture meaningful details in their reviews.

With the rise in consumer adoption of AI tools, Yelp continues to significantly invest in methods to better detect and mitigate AI-generated reviews, including rolling out several new AI detection technologies. In 2025, Yelp's automated systems identified and **filtered out nearly half a million reviews that exhibited characteristics of AI-generated content**.^{*} Our systems also prevented scams that disrupted other platforms—most notably, the review extortion incidents that impacted businesses on Google in major metros like [Las Vegas](#), [Philadelphia](#), and [New York](#) in 2025. In nearly all cases, businesses on Yelp were not affected, and in the rare instances where similar attempts surfaced, our systems thwarted suspicious activity before it could appear on business pages.

Beyond our automated systems, our User Operations team proactively audited and investigated suspicious business pages in 2025, uncovering review exchange rings and suspicious activity that led to a **49% increase in related account closures** from 2024.[†] Meanwhile, media coverage and social platforms drove a surge in abnormal review activity, resulting in a **58% increase in [Media Attention Alerts](#)** placed on business pages.[‡] Our team responded by temporarily disabling the ability to publish content on affected pages and **removing over 80,000 reviews that did not reflect firsthand consumer experiences**.[‡]

As technology and tactics evolve, so does our approach. Our efforts to detect new deceptive tactics led to **more than twice as many account closures** compared to 2024, many of these closures were tied to large-scale [airline phone support scams](#).^{*1} By combining advanced detection methods with hands-on human moderation and our robust content policies, Yelp continues to put user trust first by prioritizing authentic content—even as other platforms [deprioritize trust and safety](#).

^{*} Data is sourced globally.

[†] Data is sourced from the U.S. and Canada.

[‡] Data is sourced from the U.S. only.

¹ These account closures stem from both user reports and proactive investigations. When an account is closed due to suspected deceptive or abusive behaviors, the associated reviews are removed as well.



2025 by the numbers

All metrics reflect activity from January 1 to December 31, 2025, unless otherwise noted

Reviews

Yelp prioritizes high-quality content by requiring users to include written reviews with every star rating, so each rating is supported by helpful details about their experience with a business. In fact, a 2025 [YouGov survey](#) found that **88% of review readers are more likely to trust reviews that include written text**, even though platforms like Google allow star ratings without it. Yelp reviews are also generally more comprehensive than Google reviews with text. A [2024 study](#) found that only 2% of Yelp reviews contain fewer than 100 characters, compared to 50% on Google (32% of Google “reviews” lacked text entirely).

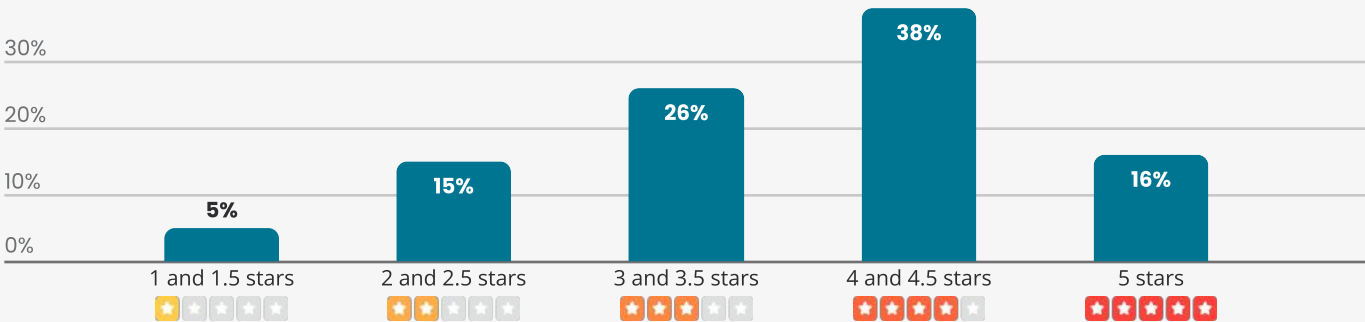
As of December 31, 2025, the average length of **recommended reviews contributed to Yelp was approximately 446 characters**, underscoring the value of Yelp to consumers and businesses seeking detailed insights.* The **average star rating submitted by users was approximately 3.9 stars** in 2025.*

330M+

cumulative reviews contributed to the Yelp platform as of December 31, 2025 since our inception in 2004*¹

Distribution of average business ratings

as of December 31, 2025 for U.S. businesses across all categories on Yelp with five or more reviews.^{†3}



A [2024 study](#) compared business review platforms and **found that average business ratings on Yelp** have a more uniform distribution, with most businesses in the study's sample having an average rating between two and four stars. In contrast, **other platforms showed skewed distributions favoring four- to five-star ratings**: HomeAdvisor had 64% more businesses with at least a four-star rating than Yelp, Facebook had 47% more, and Google had 27% more.

Yelp’s automated recommendation software

Yelp’s [automated recommendation software](#) evaluates all reviews on our platform using hundreds of signals related to quality, reliability, and user activity on Yelp. The system is entirely automated, applying the same objective rules to every business, and no Yelp employee, business owner, or reviewer can influence or override the software’s decisions for any individual business—this approach is deliberate to avoid conflicts of interest.

22M

reviews were contributed to Yelp in 2025^{‡1}

* Data is sourced globally.

† Data is sourced from the U.S. only.

‡ Data is sourced globally and reflects reviews from January 1 to December 31, 2025.

¹ This number has been rounded and includes reviews that are currently recommended, not recommended, or that have been removed.

² Yelp only uses recommended reviews to calculate average rating.

³ Yelp only uses recommended reviews to calculate the average star rating of a business rounded to the nearest half star.



The reviews recommended for any business can change over time, and may move between recommended and not recommended as the software learns more about the reviewer and the business. Reviews identified as less reliable or useful are displayed in a “not currently recommended” section and do not factor into a business’s overall star rating.

In 2025, we enhanced the software to better identify and not recommend reviews lacking sufficient details about the consumer experience or containing potential conflicts of interest—such as those written by individuals with undisclosed ties to the business or who received discounts or other incentives in exchange for their review. This helps us surface the most useful and reliable content, maintain the integrity of our platform, and protect both consumers and businesses from misleading information. To learn more, [visit our website](#).

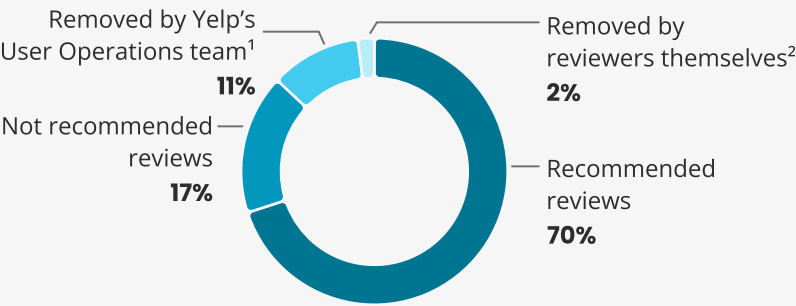
Content moderation at Yelp

Yelp’s User Operations team maintains the reliability and integrity of content on Yelp by protecting data quality, investigating potential fraud, and moderating content. They actively identify, investigate, and stop deceptive activity through a variety of measures, including removing bad actors from our platform.

The team conducts proactive investigations, as well as relies on consumers and businesses to report content or suspicious behaviors that violate our [Terms of Service](#) and [Content Guidelines](#). Yelp’s User Operations team reviews flagged content and, if they determine that content violates our policies, will remove it from our platform. In 2025, **41% of reviews reported by our community were removed for content policy violations.**[†] Learn more about how Yelp moderates content [here](#).

Breakdown of reviews contributed in 2025*

as of December 31, 2025

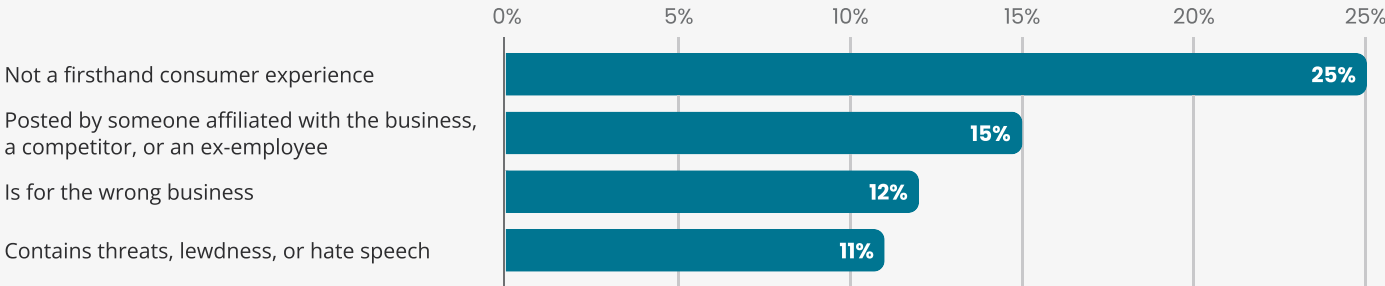


193,700+

reported reviews removed

by Yelp’s User Operations team in 2025[†]

Leading reasons we removed reported reviews in 2025^{†1}



The remaining **36%** were removed for issues like lack of relevance, duplicate content, privacy violations, or promotional material.

* Data is sourced globally and reflects reviews from January 1 to December 31, 2025.

† Data is sourced from the U.S. only.

¹ Reviews removed by Yelp’s User Operations team or reviews removed as a result of account closures for content policy violations.

² Yelp users can remove their own individual reviews or remove all their reviews by closing or deleting their accounts.

³ Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



Maintaining accurate information on Yelp business pages

Tackling airline customer support scams

In August 2024, Yelp's robust detection systems began identifying a surge in **airline travel scams** promoting fraudulent customer service numbers. Throughout 2025, our systems and User Operations team continued to respond to these incidents by **removing more than 889,800 fake phone support accounts**—the primary driver behind the **138% increase in total account closures**.*

This wave of spam also significantly impacted **photo removals**, which **increased 25%** compared to 2024.* The majority of removed photos promoted fake contact numbers intended to mislead consumers. These targeted efforts demonstrate Yelp's commitment to maintaining platform integrity and addressing emerging threats as they evolve.

1.3M+

user accounts closed

for violating Yelp's Terms of Service, a **138% increase** from 2024, driven primarily by a continued influx of airline phone support scams*¹

3.6M+

photos removed

for violating our content policies in 2025*

50,700+ potential new business pages rejected

for being associated with spammy behaviors, violating Yelp's policies[†]

Our User Operations team thoroughly verifies new business page submissions to prevent fake, duplicate, or multiple listings intended to deceive consumers, generate leads, or gain unfair advantages. This represented a **29% increase in business page rejections** from 2024, driven by improved moderation processes that more effectively identify and reject suspicious submissions in high-risk emergency service business categories—such as locksmiths, garage door repairs, roadside assistance, and plumbing—where vulnerable consumers in urgent need of assistance are especially susceptible to scams.[‡]

1,340+ business pages removed

for being associated with lead generators, violating Yelp's policies*

Deceitful lead generators attempt to create fake business pages to sell leads to the highest bidder, often engaging in undisclosed charges, providing inaccurate information about their services, or impersonating reputable companies. Our User Operations team regularly detects and blocks these bad actors from targeting vulnerable consumers across services categories, with emergency services being especially susceptible to these scams. **Business page removals increased by 29%** compared to 2024, driven in part by expanding our investigation tactics to remove pages associated with lead generators.*

46,200+ reviews containing inappropriate content removed

through proactive and reactive measures in 2025[‡]

Yelp uses AI models to flag reviews for further evaluation when potential hate speech, lewd language, or threats are detected. This proactive approach **prevented more than 24,200 reviews from being published** in 2025.[‡] Additionally, we relied on reports from our community, **leading our User Operations team to remove over 22,000 reported reviews** for containing threats, lewdness, hate speech, or other inappropriate content.[‡]

* Data is sourced globally.

† Data is sourced from the U.S. and Canada.

‡ Data is sourced from the U.S. only.

¹ These account closures stem from both user reports and proactive investigations. When an account is closed due to suspected deceptive or abusive behaviors, the associated reviews are removed as well.



Yelp’s Consumer Alerts program

In 2012, we introduced our [Consumer Alerts program](#) to warn consumers when we find evidence of extreme attempts to manipulate a business’s ratings and reviews.

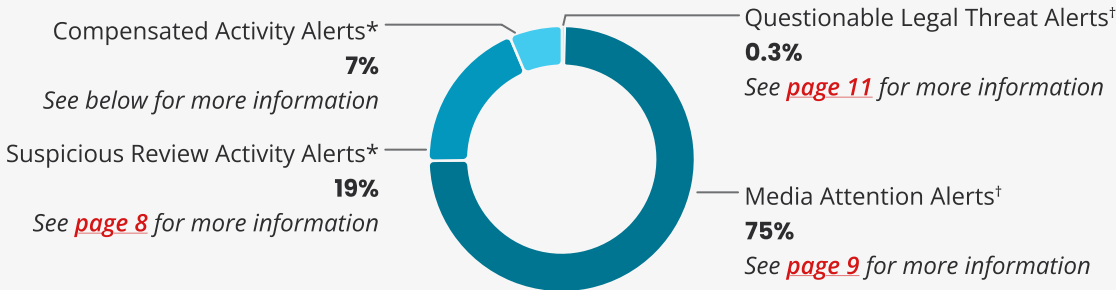
A Consumer Alert is a warning message displayed over the reviews of a business’s Yelp page that informs users of violations to our policies and provides a link to view evidence when available. Before placing an alert, our User Operations team conducts a thorough investigation to determine whether the reviews of a business meet the criteria for an alert. In 2024, we made it even easier to find a business’s Consumer Alerts History through a [new section](#) on Yelp business pages on desktop, detailing any prior Compensated Activity Alerts, Suspicious Review Activity Alerts, or Questionable Legal Threat Alerts placed on impacted businesses. Learn more [here](#).

1,955

total Consumer Alerts
placed on Yelp business
pages in 2025, a **32%** increase
from 2024*

Distribution of Consumer Alerts on Yelp

from January 1 to December 31, 2025. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



Combating compensated and incentivized reviews

Yelp strictly prohibits compensated and incentivized reviews, which can mislead consumers and hurt businesses. Our approach not only aligns with the [Federal Trade Commission’s \(FTC\) rule against fake reviews](#), but goes even further to address additional deceptive review behaviors. Additionally, our proactive measures—such as Compensated Activity Alerts, Suspicious Review Activity Alerts, and the [public indexing of these alerts](#) on our Trust & Safety site—help inform consumers about potential attempts of review manipulation and deceptive practices.

6,050+

**Compensated Activity and
Suspicious Review Activity Alerts**
have been placed on business pages
since 2012*

Compensated Activity Alerts

Compensated Activity Alerts indicate that we’ve caught someone offering payment in the form of cash, discounts, gift certificates, or other incentives in exchange for writing, changing, preventing, or removing reviews.

128

Compensated Activity Alerts
placed on business pages in 2025*

527

warnings issued to businesses
for suspected one-time compensated or incentivized
review behavior*

* Data is sourced globally.

† Data is sourced from the U.S. only.



Suspicious Review Activity Alerts

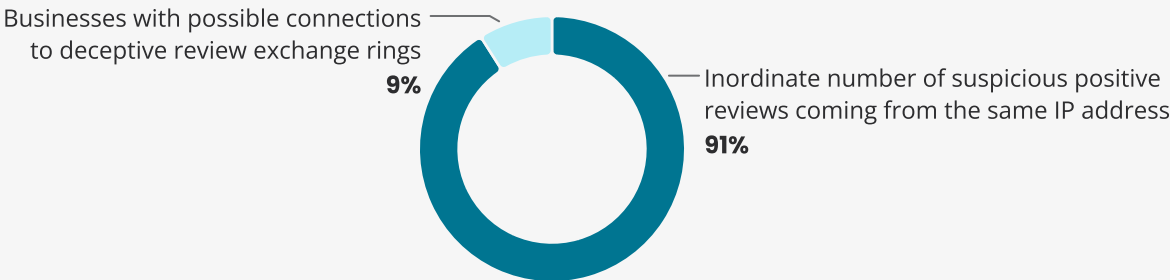
Suspicious Review Activity Alerts warn consumers when we've detected a large number of suspicious positive reviews coming from a single IP address, or reviews from users who may be connected to a group that coordinates the buying or selling of online reviews—otherwise known as a review exchange ring.

363

Suspicious Review Activity Alerts

placed on business pages in 2025*

Suspicious Review Activity Alerts in 2025*



In 2025, **alerts tied to review exchange rings declined 62%** compared to 2024*. One reason for this decrease is the enhancements to Yelp's automated recommendation software that better detect and mitigate coordinated review ring activity that would have otherwise impacted a business's recommended reviews.

In 2025, Yelp's User Operations team leveraged new investigation tactics to more effectively identify emerging suspicious patterns and behavior. This resulted in a **49% increase in user account closures related to review exchange rings and other suspicious activity** compared to 2024, demonstrating Yelp's commitment to proactive investigations.†

Uncovering and reporting deceptive review groups on other platforms

Yelp actively investigates deceptive review practices both on our platform and third-party sites like Instagram, Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Reddit, TikTok, and Craigslist. Our User Operations team monitors and infiltrates online groups on these platforms where people may attempt to trade or pay for reviews, reporting any groups, posts, or individuals involved. We also flag instances of review selling or removal services originating from other sites.

We have successfully worked with these platforms to address such deceptive behaviors and, in some cases, even improved their ability to prevent future occurrences. However, the final decision on addressing Yelp's reports rests with each respective platform. Collaborating with these sites, as well as sharing leads on deceptive review conduct with the FTC and other regulators, is essential **to better protect consumers** from misleading content. In 2025, we saw a **62% increase in action taken** compared to 2024, underscoring Yelp's proactive reporting and growing cooperation among platforms to combat deceptive review practices.*

1,991

user accounts closed

for being associated with review exchange rings or other suspicious review activity in 2025†

1,020+

reports made by Yelp to other online platforms

to warn them of content from **1,100+ suspicious groups, posts, or individuals** we found on their sites, a **45% increase** in suspicious content from 2024*

60%

of Yelp's reports resulted in action being taken

by online platforms to remove deceptive content in 2025*

* Data is sourced globally.

† Data is sourced from the U.S. and Canada.



Reining in reputation management companies

Yelp strictly prohibits review gating and other review suppression tactics that disproportionately promote positive reviews, while diverting criticisms to private channels. These behaviors can result in misleading ratings and reviews about a business. We routinely investigate reputation management companies that offer these services, and if warranted, we take action against them, including reporting them to consumer protection agencies like the FTC. At times, Yelp also pursues legal action to disrupt these harmful markets.

Yelp supports the FTC's enforcement of its [rule on consumer reviews and testimonials](#), which prohibits businesses from suppressing or manipulating reviews. As the FTC [continues to crack down on review manipulation](#), Yelp remains a proactive partner in helping to identify and report bad actors that undermine trust in online reviews.

Moderating Yelp business pages that gain public attention

When a business gains public attention, its Yelp page may experience increased review activity. However, when people express their opinions about the matter through reviews in an attempt to artificially inflate or deflate a business's star rating, they can potentially mislead consumers or harm the business. Yelp's policies require that all reviews be based on actual, firsthand consumer experiences with a business. A [YouGov survey](#) found that **94% of review readers agree reviews should reflect actual customer experiences**, not what someone saw on the news or social media.

As part of our [Consumer Alerts program](#), we have signals in place that prompt our User Operations team to investigate unusual spikes in activity on business pages. If warranted, they may temporarily disable the ability to post content and place the appropriate Media Attention Alert on the business page. Once the activity on the business page dramatically decreases or stops, we will clean up the page so that it reflects firsthand consumer experiences.

1,450+

total alerts

placed on business pages related to a business gaining public attention—a **58%** increase from 2024—resulting in the removal of **80,000+** reviews, a **40%** increase from 2024*

Unusual Activity Alerts

Unusual Activity Alerts are placed when a business, after gaining public attention, receives an influx of Yelp reviews that do not reflect firsthand experiences, even if we may agree with the points of view expressed in them.

1,190+

Unusual Activity Alerts

placed on business pages in 2025—a **48%** increase from 2024—resulting in the removal of **66,200+** associated reviews, a **68%** increase from 2024*

Public Attention Alerts

Public Attention Alerts are placed to inform consumers when a business receives an influx of Yelp reviews related to the business gaining public attention for either being accused of, or the target of, discriminatory behavior.

266

Public Attention Alerts

placed on business pages in 2025—a **135%** increase from 2024—resulting in the removal of **13,800+** associated reviews, a **19%** increase from 2024*



Social media-fueled incidents in 2025

All data in this section is sourced from the U.S. only.

In 2025, media coverage and social platforms continued to play an extraordinary role in driving abnormal review activity on Yelp, resulting in a **58% increase in Media Attention Alerts** placed on business pages compared to 2024. Of this increase, approximately **75% of incidents stemmed from viral social media posts**, while **25% originated from news coverage**. Alerts tied to social media incidents alone **resulted in the removal of more than 63,100 reviews**.

1,100+

business pages

received an Unusual Activity Alert or Public Attention Alert in 2025 tied to incidents on social media (TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)

429 business pages

received an Unusual Activity Alert in 2025 tied to incidents related to politics or political figures*

This represents a **96% increase from 2024 in Unusual Activity Alerts tied to incidents related to politics or political figures**. Approximately **75% of these alerts stemmed from viral social media posts**, largely in response to the murder of Charlie Kirk and controversies related to immigration or ICE enforcement activities. These alerts resulted in the **removal of more than 27,900 reviews**.

367 business pages

received an Unusual Activity Alert or Public Attention Alert in 2025 tied to incidents related to alleged discrimination (including racism, antisemitism, anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment, ableism, etc.)*

This was a **95% increase from 2024 in Unusual Activity Alerts or Public Attention Alerts related to incidents of alleged discrimination**. Approximately **82% of these incidents originated from social media**, such as viral posts about businesses denying service to customers based on **race** or **disability**, or business owners **using slurs** during public incidents. These alerts resulted in the **removal of more than 23,300 reviews**.

Protecting consumers from abuse of the legal system

Reviewers have a First Amendment right to share their opinions, whether positive or critical. We evaluate each legal demand for legitimacy and to confirm it is legally sound. We also defend our users by often objecting to demands that seek personal information about their accounts. In fact, we have **gone to court** in some circumstances to protect users' personal information from **litigious business owners**.

Overall, we protected **96% of user accounts that were the subject of legal demands from law enforcement and government agencies**, and **99% from private parties** in 2025.*

When we are required by law to disclose user account information, we notify users of the legal demand beforehand, unless Yelp is prohibited by law from doing so or in other exceptional situations.

99%

of all user accounts

that were the subject of legal demands did not have their personal information produced in 2025*



Defending free speech and consumer reviews

Yelp supports laws that enable consumers to quickly and easily defeat meritless lawsuits that intend to silence or intimidate them for expressing their views—also known as Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs). Yelp remains **committed to advocating** for strong, broad anti-SLAPP protections, which empower individuals targeted by these lawsuits to seek early dismissal of baseless claims against them and recover their attorneys' fees. We also support laws safeguarding the free speech rights of all consumers, even in cases that do not directly involve Yelp or our users.

In 2024, we submitted an **amicus brief** in *Lind-Barnett v. Tender Care*, an anti-SLAPP case where a veterinary clinic sued clients over critical online reviews. We argued that businesses shouldn't be able to suppress critical feedback by simply alleging improper motives. In December 2025, **the Colorado Supreme Court agreed**, ruling that a speaker's alleged motive can't undermine anti-SLAPP protections at the outset. This decision helps safeguard public debate from meritless lawsuits that seek to stifle consumers' opinions.

Questionable Legal Threat Alerts

When we have evidence that a business may be misusing the legal system to intimidate or silence a reviewer, we may display a Questionable Legal Threat Alert on its Yelp page as part of our **Consumer Alerts program**.

In 2025, **83% of these alerts stemmed from legal action and threats** businesses made to consumers to suppress their reviews, while **17% were due to gag clauses**, which are contractual terms attempting to prohibit customers from posting feedback and are largely illegal under **federal and state law**.*

6

Questionable Legal Threat Alerts

placed on business pages in 2025*

Conclusion

In 2025, protecting consumers from inauthentic reviews and misinformation became more challenging as AI-generated content and coordinated bad actors proliferated across the internet. While other tech companies scaled back their trust and safety initiatives, Yelp remained committed—**filtering out nearly half a million suspected AI-generated reviews**,[†] **shutting down over a million policy-violating accounts**,[†] and **moderating nearly 1,500 business pages from an influx of reviews that didn't reflect firsthand experiences**.^{*} Our approach combines advanced AI detection with hands-on human moderation, transparent warnings for consumers, and consistent advocacy for free speech rights. Looking ahead, as technology continues to evolve in the AI era, our commitment remains the same. Building on more than two decades of rigorous moderation efforts, our authentic, high-quality, human-generated content is what continues to set Yelp apart.

To learn more about how we maintain the integrity and quality of our content, visit **trust.yelp.com**.

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For media inquiries, email **press@yelp.com**.

* Data is sourced from the U.S. only.

† Data is sourced globally.