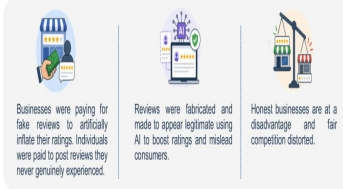


CAN YOU TRUST THAT 5-STAR REVIEW?

Probably not always. CCS investigated a series of cases involving the buying and selling of fake reviews.



HERE IS WHAT WE FOUND:



CCS makes 45 businesses apologise for buying fake reviews: how the fakes were built

Description

Forty-five businesses must take down fake online reviews they paid for and post a public apology for six months, after an investigation into a provider that wrote the reviews with generative AI and paid Telegram recruits to post them. The Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (CCS) [announced the action on Wednesday 30 September](#) and called it its largest fake reviews case by number of businesses.

The provider is Julian Tung Yan Kai, sole director of Reputifly Pte Ltd, who ran the websites BuyReviewSG and GetReviewSG. From 2023 or earlier he supplied fake reviews to about 100 businesses, posted on platforms including Google, Facebook, Tripadvisor, Carousell, Yelp and Trustpilot.

How the fake reviews were made

Businesses bought packages of reviews that went up on a schedule. BuyReviewSG's weekly plans ran from S\$139 for 21 reviews, three a day for seven days, to S\$179 for 28 and S\$219 for 35. A rating calculator told a business how many five-star reviews it needed to reach the Google rating it wanted.

← Catalogue



Weekly Review Plans

[See all](#)



Pro Package ★★★★★

To Overtake Your Competitors: Receive Consistent Rev...
\$219.00



Starter Package ★★

For Very New Businesses: Receive Consistent Reviews...
\$139.00



Growth Package ★★★

To Scale Rapidly: Receive Consistent Reviews Daily To...
\$179.00



BuyReviewSG sold weekly plans of 21 to 35 fake reviews for S\$139 to S\$219. Image: CCS, Annex A

Generative AI wrote reviews meant to read like real customer accounts. It varied writing style and sentence structure, worked in Singapore details and added natural imperfections, and clients could edit the text before it was posted. An online dashboard could draw on a business's existing four- and five-star Google reviews to produce new ones with matching details. Some reviews opened with the writer's doubts before describing a good experience, to make them look genuine.

People were recruited through Telegram channels and paid to post the prepared text and ratings, with instructions to avoid duplicate reviews so the posts would not be detected. The provider also promised to replace reviews that platforms removed, capped at 30 per cent of an order.

GET PAID
for doing **Google** reviews!

1. Simply click the text to automatically copy it.
2. Click the link (you must sign in to leave a review).
3. Post the 5-star review and send us your Paynow/ Paylah to **earn your money**.

Google Review Tasks are Available!

Simply ask for a review, copy paste the content, upload and get paid!

❤️ 2 2.3K 7:20 PM

Google Reviews SG
We will have Spotify, Netflix, Disney+ subscription giveaways at 1k members to 5 lucky members.

Make sure to invite your friends to the group

Share link => <https://t.me/grsgreview>

Recruits were paid to copy prepared text and post five-star Google reviews. Image: CCS, Annex D

What the case means for reading reviews

The case shows how little a polished review proves on its own. Singapore detail, small imperfections in the writing and a reviewer who was doubtful at first were all built into the fakes on purpose, and a steady run of new five-star reviews is what the weekly packages were sold to deliver.

CCS advises consumers to weigh information that matters for the purchase, such as price, features, warranty, delivery terms and refund or cancellation policies, rather than reviews alone. Credible information about fake reviews can be reported to [CCS](#) with supporting evidence.



CCS advises consumers to weigh price, warranty, delivery and refund terms, not reviews alone. Image: CCS

The 45 businesses and what they must do

The first phase of the investigation covered the provider and 47 businesses. Forty-five admitted buying fake reviews, some or all of which were posted. They have given undertakings to stop buying or posting

fake reviews, find and remove the ones about their business, report their progress to CCS and tighten compliance. Each must also publish a prominent public apology for six months on its website, official social media accounts and at its premises or outlets.

By registered name, [the businesses](#) are Apax Medical Kovan, Apax Medical, Aqua Luxe, Atop Aesthetic, Bavarian Capital, BrandLoom Digital, Certified Translation Services, Chrysalis Spa, Data Savers, Dots â??nâ?? Tots Interior, FAS Auto Services, First Security & Private Investigation (S), For the Love of Laundry, Forest Darts Bishan, Groupasia Hospitality, Harmony Essentials, Harmony Funeral Care, Haven Enterprises, Haven Tech, Hiremop, Integral Facilities Management (IFM), J & S Management, Kuisine Concepts, L E Autoshop, Label-Line Corporation, Le Wave Art of Hair, Le Wave Hair, Le Wave Hair Studio, Martin Luxury, MB Karaoke Solution, Meso Ceramics, Nails In Dulge, Nanyang Brew Coffee, Picasso Hair Boutique, Play! Ball, Play! Tennis Now, Print Scream, Sanook Group, SBLab Beauty, The Hamper Story, TM Designers, Torio Japanese Restaurant, TT8 Logistics, UniWise Admissions Consulting, and Yeo & Associates.

The provider admitted aiding and abetting the unfair practices by generating fake review content, recruiting and paying reviewers and making the reviews look authentic. It has committed to stop, to post a public apology on Reputifyâ??s website for six months, and to donate the proceeds of the service to an Institution of a Public Character of its choice, without claiming any tax deduction.

â??Fake reviews deceive consumers, distort competition and disadvantage businesses that compete honestly,â?? said Mr Alvin Koh, Chief Executive of CCS. â??Businesses should be under no illusion that paying for fake reviews is acceptable.â??

Two businesses declined to give undertakings on the required terms, and CCS will keep investigating them and take firmer action if the facts support it. A second phase now covers the remaining businesses and others that may have bought from the provider. Providers and businesses that come forward before formal investigations start against them will have their cooperation viewed favourably.

Date Created

01/10/2026

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