

REPUTATION BENCHMARKS & PERFORMANCE REPORT

 widewail



Widewail Invite vs. Automotive Industry Benchmarks



2023

Widewail Invite, Auto's “Best Kept Secret”

West Herr, Herb Chambers, Koons, Lexus, BMW, MINI & thousands of dealers consider Widewail the “best kept secret” in the auto industry. Its standout review solicitation tool, **Invite**, effectively generates new dealership reviews using SMS. The reviews and Google star ratings of dealers utilizing this tool consistently outperform industry averages.

This report analyzes the efficacy of Widewail Invite, as used by dealerships, in comparison to automotive industry benchmarks for reviews and ratings **on Google only** in the first half of 2023.

“Widewail has been a tremendous tool for all of our dealerships.”

— **Brian Bush**, Vice President of eCommerce,
Tom Bush Family of Dealerships

Report Highlights

- The average star rating of Invite clients is higher than the automotive industry average: **4.67 vs 4.44**
- The average Widewail Invite client generates **42 new reviews per month**, while the industry average is 9 reviews per month
- Invite clients generate **4.5x more reviews** than the average dealership
- Invite clients are **225% more likely to generate 20+ Google reviews per month**
- **93%** of Invite client Google reviews are **positive**
- Invite clients are **33% more likely to have a 4.5+ Google star rating**
- Higher ratings are correlated with higher review activity

Auto Industry Benchmarks

4.44

Average Google Rating

Invite Clients Benchmarks

4.67

Average Monthly Review Volume

9

42

Methodology



To determine today's auto industry review benchmarks, we looked at **16,644 new car dealerships** across the U.S. and analyzed the **1,620,323 new Google reviews** from February to June of 2023. From this data, we calculated the average review volume and Google star rating for automotive dealerships today.

We assessed the **performance of Widewail's Invite** by studying the Google reviews of Invite clients during the same time period, February to June, 2023.

Then, we compared **Invite clients' performance to 2023 industry benchmarks** to determine Invite's efficacy in generating more and better reviews for automotive dealerships.



A Note From Widewail Data Scientist, Mitch Joseph:

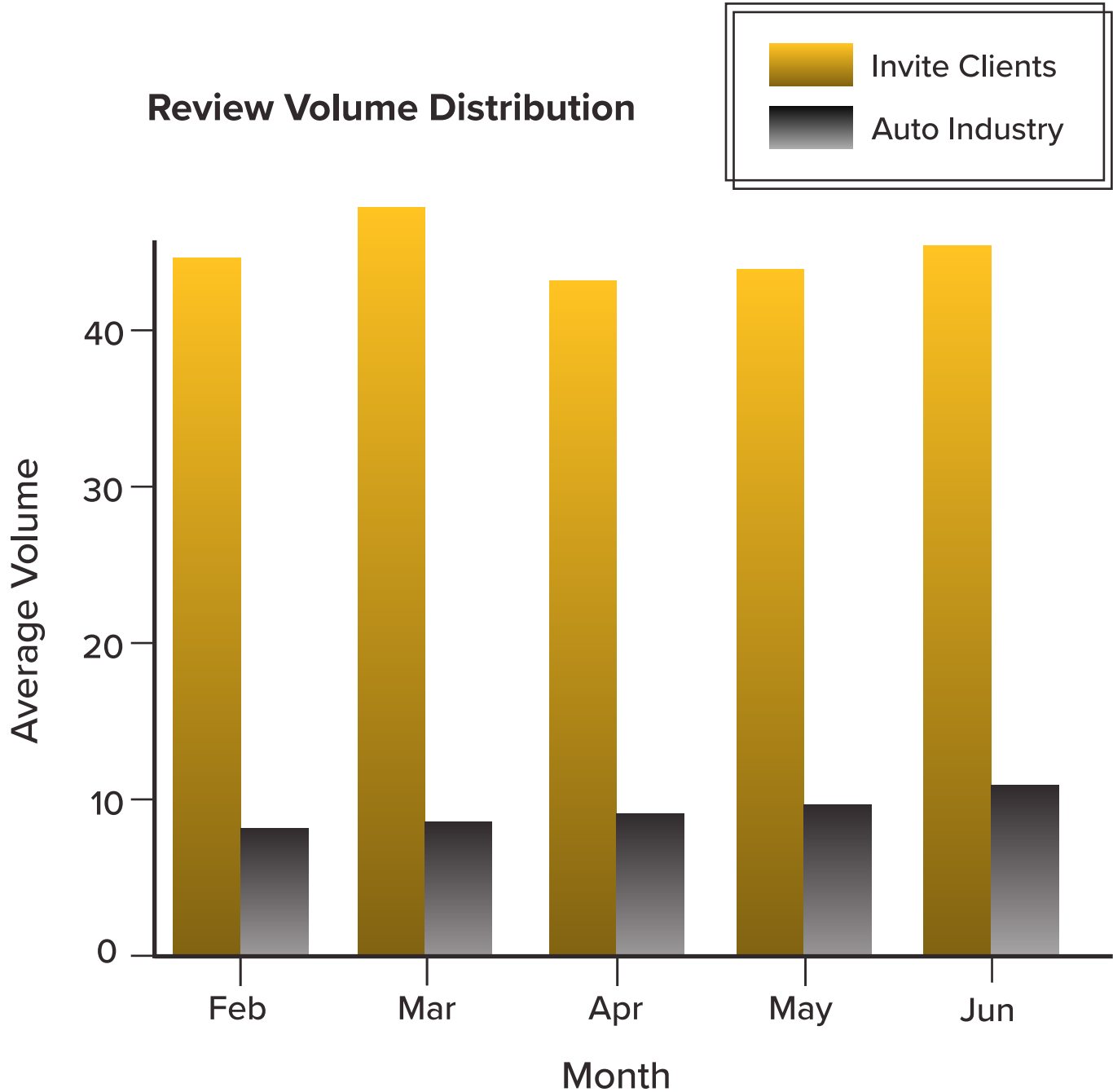
We calculated “average” in this report two ways, depending on the context. When we talk about average star rating, we’re referring to the mean star rating. On the other hand, we calculated average volume of reviews by determining the median. We did this because the volume of reviews each dealership receives month-to-month is highly skewed, with over 50% of dealerships receiving fewer than 10 reviews per month while a handful of dealerships see several hundred. Because of this, median is a more appropriate metric to evaluate review volume performance. Median is naturally more resistant to outliers and more accurately captures how many Google reviews the typical dealership generates monthly in the U.S.

Invite Clients Generate 4.5x The Monthly Review Volume Average

As demonstrated in the chart below, Widewail Invite clients receive an average of **42 new reviews monthly** while the industry average is just 9 new reviews per month.

This means **Widewail Invite clients receive 4.5x more reviews per month** than the average dealership. That equates to a massive advantage in local search results, given reviews are the #2 local search ranking factor on Google.

We believe a substantial reason why Invite outperforms industry averages is because Invite seamlessly enables generating reviews from service customers, with service reviews accounting for 59% of all Invite clients' reviews.



**Average monthly
review volume:**

Invite Clients **42**

Auto Industry **9**

Invite Clients are **225% More** Likely to Generate **20+ Google Reviews Per Month**

As a baseline, we advise clients to initially target getting 20 new Google reviews per month. 20 reviews per month demonstrates popularity and consistency to Google's ranking algorithm and prospective customers looking at a dealership's Google Business Profile. This level of monthly review volume will start to drive positive local search ranking outcomes that we aim to achieve for all clients. It is also an attainable volume for many dealerships, given the majority of Widewail automotive clients complete hundreds, if not thousands, of sales & service transactions monthly.

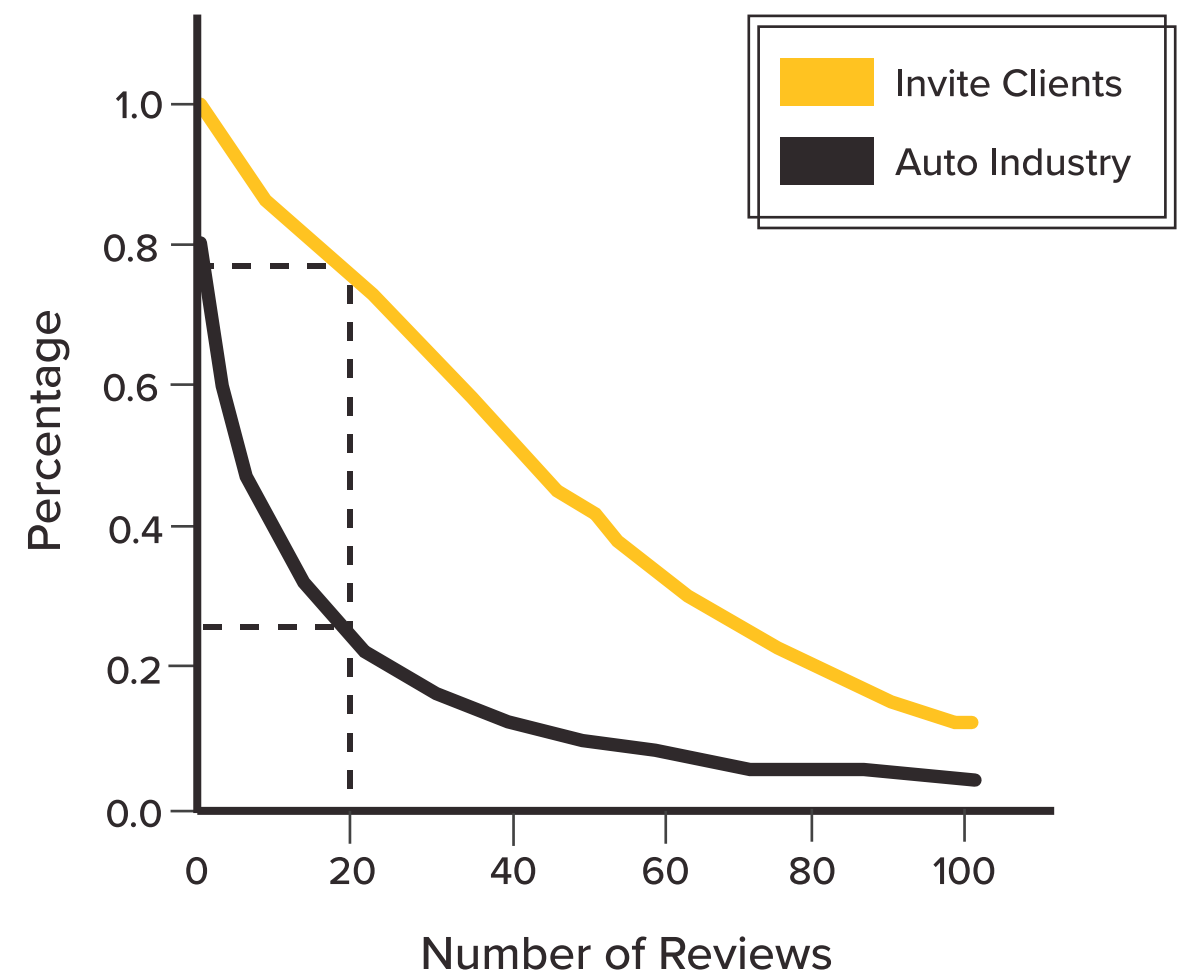
“

Looking back at Invite's performance since launch, the monthly percentage increase and sustained volume of reviews over the last year and a half has been remarkable. The internal resource efficiency gains have been nothing but impressive.

— **Jake Barron, Marketing Director, Koons Automotive Group**

”

New Reviews Per Month



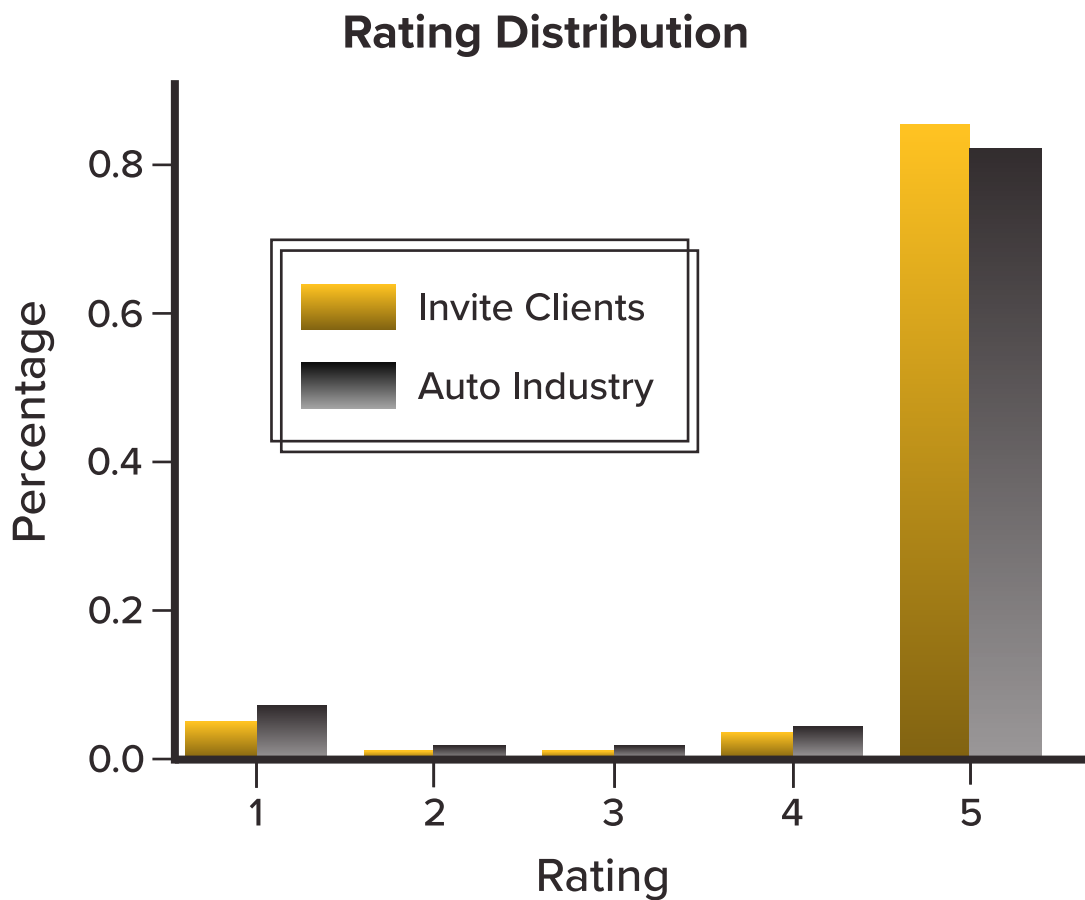
Visualizing Invite clients (yellow) vs. the industry (black), we see that **78% of Widewail Invite clients receive 20 or more reviews per month**, while only 24% of non-Invite dealers receive 20 or more monthly reviews.

The average number of reviews Widewail Invite clients receive is 42. Nearly **20% of Widewail clients are generating 100 reviews a month**, representing an elite cohort of dealerships.

93% of Invite Client Reviews Are Positive

We broke things down by star rating to see how reviews generated through Widewail Invite compare to industry averages in 2023. Widewail defines 4 and 5 star reviews as positive, while 1, 2 and 3 star reviews are negative.

The bar chart below illustrates the breakdown of star rating distribution for Widewail Invite clients and the industry average. The shape of the graph, with a small bump in 1-star reviews and a majority 5-star reviews, is a common “J-curve” shape.



“The benefit of Invite was undeniable - right out of the gate. Not only did our monthly review volume numbers shoot up, but it was also hard to believe how well the text messages converted.”

— GM of a Baltimore-area Lexus dealership

Invite clients receive 3.3% more 5-star reviews and 2.6% fewer 1-star reviews than the industry overall.

Combining 4 and 5 star reviews, **93% of Invite client reviews are positive.**

The fact that Invite clients have higher average star ratings than the industry average is correlated to the higher volume of reviews they receive by using Invite.

Rating Distribution		
Rating	Invite	Auto
1	4.73%	7.30%
2	1.04%	1.40%
3	1.20%	1.53%
4	3.95%	4.04%
5	89.06%	85.71%

Invite Clients Average Only 6.9% Negative Reviews

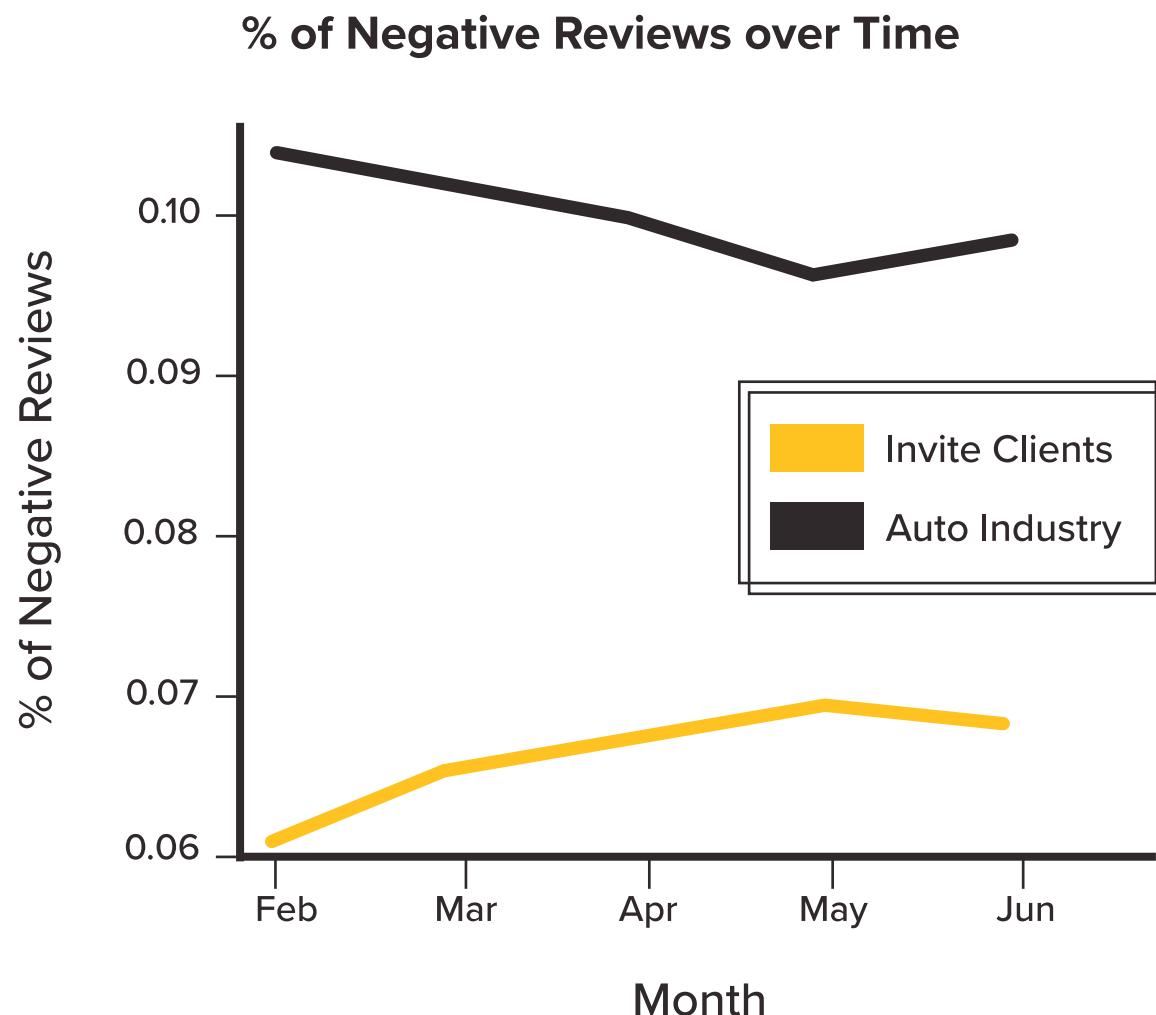
As noted on the previous page, Widewail considers positive reviews to be 4 and 5 star reviews, while negatives are 1, 2 and 3 star reviews. When we say a dealership has a “negative percentage of 10%” it means 10% of its reviews are 1, 2, or 3 stars.

The chart below compares the percent of negative reviews for Invite clients to the industry average across five months in 2023.

Widewail Invite clients (yellow line) have a 30% lower percentage of negative reviews than the other dealerships (black line).

Specifically, the industry average percentage of negative reviews in the first half of 2023 was 10% —meaning, **10% of the reviews for the average dealership were 1, 2 or 3 stars.**

For Widewail Invite, the average negative percentage was 6.9%.



Average Google Rating:

4.67 Invite Clients

VS.

4.44 Auto Industry

Invite Clients **33% More Likely** to Have a **4.5+ Star Rating**

A 4.5 star rating or higher is a strong indication of a high-achieving dealership and will drive competitive rankings in local search.

Using our data set, we calculated the percentage of Invite clients that have a 4.5 average star rating or above. We compared this to the percent of other dealerships with a 4.5 average star rating. To eliminate outliers, we only looked at dealerships with 10 or more reviews.

81% of Widewail clients are rated 4.5 stars or higher, outperforming the industry by 33%.

We believe Widewail Invite clients have such high ratings because of the correlation between high ratings and high review volumes. In straightforward terms, the more customers you have participating in your reputation, the more representative it becomes of actual experience on the ground, which, for the vast majority of automotive customers, is positive. **The key is activating your happy majority of customers.** Many of them wouldn't think to leave a review if unprompted, but are happy to when asked.

As we discuss in the next section, review volume has a significant impact on the average rating.

Probability of Having a Star Rating of 4.5 or Above

Invite Clients	Auto Industry
81.00%	61.11%

“Widewail has really allowed our **positive** customer reviews to shine through. The Invite product tripled the volume of positive reviews just by automatically asking our customers to leave feedback!”

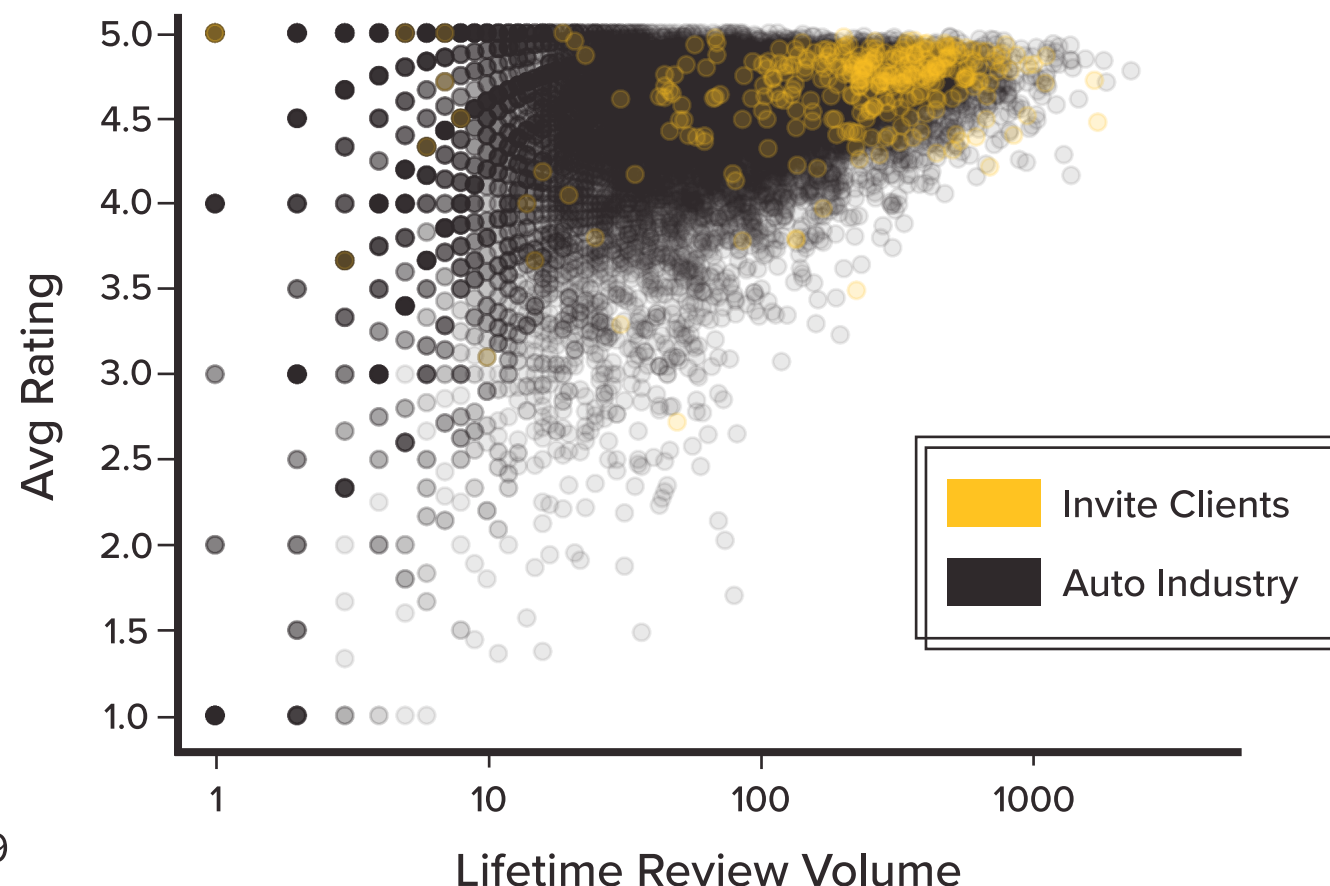
— Charles Paul, Information Services Director, BMW Northwest

Higher Ratings Correlated With Higher Review Activity

Our hypothesis has long been: *the secret to increasing ratings is increasing review volume*. Our view hinges upon the difference between a dealership's entire customer base and the subset that is actively represented in Google reviews.

Without proactively soliciting for reviews, unhappy customers will naturally be more motivated to leave reviews than happy customers, depressing ratings. When a dealership increases review volume by actively soliciting reviews, it is effectively activating more of its customer base, which trends positively.

The Impact of Review Volume on Average Star Rating



“None of it would be possible without the vision and work of Widewail. They are everything we could ever ask for in a team and product.”

— Lucas Neiderer, Senior Marketing Manager, Dolan Auto Group

Our Google reviews data clearly shows this to be true, with ratings consistently increasing as volume goes up.

The scatterplot maps review volume (x-axis) and average star rating (y-axis). Color strength increases with frequency. We've drawn a line at the 4.5 star rating mark, as a dealership with 4.5 stars or more is typically considered a high-achieving location.

Dealerships using Widewail Invite are shown in yellow and the industry in black. Across all dealerships, it is clear that there's a slight, **positive correlation between a higher volume of reviews and an increased rating**, demonstrated by the upward trend of the points as review volume increases.

In Automotive, Widewail Invite is the Advantage

Auto Industry Benchmarks

4.44

Average Google Rating

9

Average Monthly Review Volume

24%

Probability of 20+ Reviews/Month

Invite Client Benchmarks

4.67

42

78%

Select Clients:



Bud Brown
Volkswagen



Herb
Chambers



DOLAN
AUTO GROUP



Widewail is the trusted reputation management partner for small businesses, regional groups and enterprise organizations alike, supporting notable names like Lexus, BMW, Herb Chambers and Jim Koons Automotive Companies. Specializing in review generation and review response, Widewail helps local businesses grow by boosting search visibility and influencing prospects at a pivotal decision-making moment in the buyer's journey.

To learn more, contact:



(844) 259-9238

info@widewail.com

widewail.com/connect

Featured Integrations:

