

The FTC Fosters Fake Reviews, Its Own Commissioners Say | WIRED

By Paris Martineau

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Like much of the internet, online reviews are often fake. No matter the platform—Amazon, TripAdvisor, Yelp, or another—no matter the subject, where user reviews are public, fakery usually follows.

The practice has surged in popularity in recent years as retailers scramble to capitalize on consumers' love of ecommerce. Saoud Khalifah, CEO of the fraudulent-review tracking company FakeSpot, says the number of companies [padding their online ratings](#) using reviews generated by bots, ghostwriters, or other schemes has increased dramatically over the past four years.

"When I started [looking into] this in 2015, it wasn't as big as it is today," said Khalifah. "Today, it has reached epidemic proportions—whether you're looking at Sephora, Walmart, Amazon—it's like a plague right now."

[...]

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