Tripadvisor Content Moderation Transparency Report Reveals New Data In Fight Against Fake Reviews

October 27, 2021

-- 2021 Review Transparency Report analyzes a full year of traveler contributions -- over 26 million reviews -- to examine how review trends shifted during the pandemic

-- A total of 3.6% of all review submissions in 2020 were identified as fake - Tripadvisor's robust platform protections ensured the vast majority never made it onto the platform

-- In-depth report findings coincide with launch of new Trust and Safety information center on Tripadvisor

NEEDHAM, Mass., Oct. 27, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Tripadvisor, the travel platform trusted by hundreds of millions of consumers worldwide for its traveler reviews, has today published its 2021 Review Transparency Report, revealing in detail the volume of review contributions to the platform in 2020, the impact of COVID-19 on user-generated travel guidance, and the multi-layered approach Tripadvisor takes to ensure reviews posted on its pages comply with the platform's community standards. It follows the inaugural report published in 2019 - an industry first. No other global review platform had produced such a level of detail into their moderation and fraud detection practices.

The report, which analyzed a full year's worth of data on reviews submitted by the global travel community, reveals that in 2020 Tripadvisor rejected or removed over two million reviews* that did not comply with the platform's community standards. In total, 3.6% of all review submissions last year were identified as fake, with the majority being rejected before they were posted to the Tripadvisor site.

The report also highlights the important steps Tripadvisor is taking to protect travelers, diners and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the introduction of new community standards designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 misinformation and protect businesses that have been keeping customers safe. As a result of these measures, Tripadvisor removed nearly 50,000 reviews that did not adhere to the platform's COVID-19 posting guidelines.

"Knowing that you can rely on trusted guidance from travelers who have been there before has never been more important. As we continue the work to earn the trust travelers place in our business, we take the enforcement of our community standards incredibly seriously as we use the best in technology and human moderation practices to fight fraud. Today's report demonstrates how effective our team, tactics and technology are at maintaining those standards," said Becky Foley, head of Trust and Safety at Tripadvisor.

Key report findings at a glance

- Travelers submitted **over 26,000,000 reviews** to the site in 2020.
- The average rating submitted by reviewers for businesses and locations listed on Tripadvisor was **4.30 out of 5.0**, up from 4.22 out of 5.0 in 2018**.
- In 2020, **more than two million review** submissions (representing 8.6% of all submissions) were **rejected** or **removed** from the Tripadvisor platform, either by Tripadvisor's advanced **review analysis system or manually** by a member of the content moderation team. There are a number of reasons why Tripadvisor rejects or removes reviews, ranging from community standards violations (such as the use of profanity) to fake review activity.
- Travelers or businesses flagged **only 1.0% of reviews** for potentially violating Tripadvisor guidelines. 85% of those

community reports were assessed by our moderation team within four hours of being submitted, and 43% of all reviews reported by the community were removed following that assessment.
- Only a small fraction of all review submissions — 3.6% — were determined to be fraudulen**totaling nearly 1 million reviews**. Of those, Tripadvisor prevented **67.1% of all fake review submissions** from ever making it onto the platform.
- In total, Tripadvisor penalized 34,605 properties for fraudulent activity and banned 20,299 members for failing to abide by the platform's community standards in 2020. Tripadvisor fraud investigators also identified 65 new paid review sites and blocked paid review submissions from a total of 372 different paid review sites last year.
- Tripadvisor removed 46,145 reviews that did not comply with the platform's new COVID-19 posting guidelines.

"Over the years consumer reviews have become an important resource for millions in helping them to make informed decisions and never more so than now." Said Marie Audren, HOTREC CEO. "On the other hand, fake reviews harm businesses and mislead consumers. We urge all platforms to behave transparently and diligently; this is why we highly value Tripadvisor's latest report that shows the work that goes on behind the scenes to protect travellers from fake reviews."

Tripadvisor calls on major review platforms to work together in fight against fakes

"Two years ago, we were the first major review platform to issue a transparency report that detailed the 'what, why and how' behind our work to protect travelers from fake reviews. We said then that our industry must work together to fight fake reviews. Other review platforms have since followed our lead, sharing more information on their own efforts to moderate reviews; but there is still more that can be achieved through collaboration," said Becky Foley, head of Trust and Safety at Tripadvisor. "We know from our investigations that if a fraudster is trying to infiltrate Tripadvisor with fake reviews, then they are targeting other platforms as well - and they will always follow the path of least resistance. We must stay committed, working together and in cooperation with law enforcement agencies, to stop fake reviewers and protect travelers."

Tripadvisor launches new dedicated Trust & Safety information center

In addition to the release of the 2021 Review Transparency Report, Tripadvisor has launched a new, dedicated information center within its platform designed to provide more details on the company's efforts to prioritize Trust and Safety, for the benefit of travelers and businesses.

Tripadvisor's Trust & Safety information center provides greater transparency around the platform's expanded content and community guidelines - giving travelers and hospitality businesses more detail than ever before about the company's review posting guidelines.

The new Trust and Safety website can be found here: https://www.tripadvisor.com/Trust

The 2021 Tripadvisor Review Transparency report can be viewed in full at this link: http://tripadvisor.com/TransparencyReport2021

A PDF version of the report can be downloaded here.

Notes to editor

*All references in the report to 2020 data refer specifically to the period January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020, unless otherwise specified.
**2018 data sourced from the 2019 Review Transparency Report.

For more information on the report methodology, see here.

About Tripadvisor

Tripadvisor, the world's largest travel guidance platform*, helps hundreds of millions of people each month** become better travelers, from planning to booking to taking a trip. Travelers across the globe use the Tripadvisor site and app to discover where to stay, what to do and where to eat based on guidance from those who have been there before. With more than 934 million reviews and opinions of nearly 8 million businesses, travelers turn to Tripadvisor to find deals on accommodations, book experiences, reserve tables at delicious restaurants and discover great places nearby. As a travel guidance company available in 43 markets and 22 languages, Tripadvisor makes planning easy no matter the trip type.

The subsidiaries of Tripadvisor, Inc. (NASDAQ:TRIP), own and operate a portfolio of travel media brands and businesses, operating under various websites and apps, including the following websites:

www.bokun.io, www.cruisecritic.com, www.flipkey.com, www.thefork.com, www.helloreco.com, www.holidaylettings.co.uk, www.housetrip.com, www.jetsetter.com, www.niumba.com, www.seatguru.com, www.singleplatform.com, www.vacationhomerentals.com, and www.viator.com.

* Source: SimilarWeb, unique users de-duplicated monthly, June 2021
** Source: Tripadvisor internal log files

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