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## **Level 5**

# **Online shoppers fooled by fake reviews**

**21st June, 2015**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1506/150621-online-reviews-5.html>

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**Please try Level 4 (easier) and the 26-page Level 6 (harder).**

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# THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1506/150621-online-reviews-5.html>

A consumer group in the UK has reported that many Internet sites are full of fake reviews. The Competition and Market Authority (CMA) believes there are millions of reviews on sites for hotels, restaurants, online stores, etc. that are there to trick shoppers. At least 25 million Britons read reviews on websites such as Amazon and TripAdvisor before booking holidays or shopping online. Writing fake reviews for companies is now big business. Many companies write fake reviews to market themselves. Others offer money, free samples or upgrades in exchange for five-star reviews.

Online reviews are very important to businesses. Estimates are that in Britain alone, \$36 billion a year of consumer spending could be influenced by online reviews. The CMA said: "Millions of people look at online reviews and endorsements before making decisions such as where to stay on holiday." It added: "We have found that consumers who use online reviews...find them valuable, but we have also heard about some practices that may be unlawful." Illegal activity includes rival companies posting negative remarks about each other. Bosses could face prison for doing this.

Sources: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/shopping-and-consumer-news/11685060/Shoppers-duped-by-millions-of-fake-online-reviews.html>  
<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/paid-online-reviews-probed-230216331.html#zsuRkqJ>  
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3130647/Probe-fake-online-reviews-Watchdog-acts-fears-thousands-duped.html>

# MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1506/150621-online-reviews-5.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A consumer                   | a. of fake reviews       |
| 2. sites are full               | b. business              |
| 3. millions of reviews on sites | c. shoppers              |
| 4. there to trick               | d. shopping online       |
| 5. At least                     | e. group                 |
| 6. booking holidays or          | f. for five-star reviews |
| 7. big                          | g. for hotels            |
| 8. in exchange                  | h. 25 million Britons    |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Online reviews are very | a. where to stay on holiday |
| 2. in Britain              | b. spending                 |
| 3. consumer                | c. companies                |
| 4. could be influenced     | d. prison for doing this    |
| 5. decisions such as       | e. important to businesses  |
| 6. rival                   | f. remarks about each other |
| 7. posting negative        | g. alone                    |
| 8. Bosses could face       | h. by online reviews        |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1506/150621-online-reviews-5.html>

A consumer group in the UK (1) \_\_\_\_\_ many Internet sites are full of fake reviews. The Competition and Market Authority (CMA) (2) \_\_\_\_\_ millions of reviews on sites for hotels, restaurants, online stores, etc. that (3) \_\_\_\_\_ shoppers. At least 25 million Britons read reviews on websites such as Amazon and TripAdvisor before booking holidays or shopping online. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ for companies is (5) \_\_\_\_\_. Many companies write fake reviews to market themselves. Others offer money, free samples or upgrades in (6) \_\_\_\_\_ reviews.

Online reviews (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to businesses. Estimates are that in Britain alone, \$36 billion a year of consumer spending (8) \_\_\_\_\_ by online reviews. The CMA said: "Millions of people look at online reviews and endorsements before making decisions (9) \_\_\_\_\_ stay on holiday." It added: "We have found that consumers who use online reviews...(10) \_\_\_\_\_, but we have also heard about some practices that (11) \_\_\_\_\_." Illegal activity includes rival companies posting negative remarks about each other. Bosses (12) \_\_\_\_\_ doing this.

# ONLINE REVIEWS SURVEY

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1506/150621-online-reviews-5.html>

Write five GOOD questions about online reviews in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

*Online shoppers fooled by fake reviews – 21st June, 2015*  
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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

