

ILLUSTRATIVE SAMPLE: PREPARED FOR DEMONSTRATION PURPOSES

Sample Review-Risk Brief

The standard Core Defense deliverable, prepared for each flagged review.

VENUE [Venue Name Withheld]	PLATFORM Google Reviews	CASE ID KG-SAMPLE-01	DATE FLAGGED July 2026
REVIEW AGE 2 days	CASE STATUS Action Recommended	RISK TIER Moderate, 5 / 10	PREPARED BY KluGuard

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Executive Summary: What You Need To Know In 30 Seconds

A new 1-star Google review is currently visible to prospective guests researching this venue. It scores **5 out of 10** on the KluGuard risk scale, placing it in the **Moderate** tier: a credible, specific complaint, but one with limited spread risk given the reviewer's lack of history and the absence of an established pattern at this venue.

Platform removal is unlikely to succeed, because the review does not appear to breach Google's policies. The appropriate move is a considered public reply paired with an internal operational fix. We recommend replying within a few days of receiving this brief, using the drafted language in Section 6, and briefing front-of-house staff on the prevention step in Section 9. Nothing beyond reading this brief is required from you right now.

01 The Flagged Review

GOOGLE / 1 OUT OF 5 STARS / POSTED 2 DAYS AGO

"We booked a table for dinner and were seated almost 40 minutes after our reservation time. Nobody explained what was happening, and when we finally asked, the server seemed annoyed. The food was fine, but the whole experience felt disorganized and like our time did not matter. We will not be back."

Fictional review composed for illustration. Not a real customer, review, or venue. KluGuard does not independently confirm a reviewer's identity or whether they visited the business; where that matters to a reply, it appears in Section 5 as a fact for the venue to confirm from its own records.

02 Risk Score: 5 out of 10, Moderate

5/10

MODERATE RISK

Legitimate, credible complaint with limited spread risk. Recommended reply window: within a few days of receiving this brief.

The complaint is credible and specific, and a detailed, plausible timeline carries more weight with readers than a vague one-line rant. What holds the score down is spread risk: this is a first-time reviewer with no posting history, and the underlying issue has not yet established itself as a pattern at this venue. That combination keeps the case in Moderate rather than Elevated territory.

HOW THE SCORE WAS CALCULATED

DIMENSION	SCORE	REASONING
A. Allegation Severity	1	Service and communication failure. No safety, discrimination, health, or legal dimension.
B. Credibility	2	Specific, plausible and internally consistent timeline, offset by an unverifiable first-time account.
C. Visibility	2	Google, recent, high-intent surface; currently prominent in the recent-reviews feed.
D. Pattern	0	One comparable occurrence in the last 90 days, below the three-occurrence escalation threshold. Logged, not escalated.
Total	5 / 10	Sum of the four dimension scores, capped at 10.

WHERE 5/10 SITS ON THE SCALE

SCORE	TIER	WHAT IT MEANS
0-3	Low	Minor, vague, or unverifiable complaint. Monitor only; no reply required.
4-6	Moderate (this case)	Legitimate, credible complaint with limited spread risk. Reply within a few days.
7-8	Elevated	Credible, specific, and likely to influence booking decisions if left unanswered. Reply within 24 hours.
9-10	Severe	Legal, safety, or discrimination exposure. Escalate to management immediately; involve legal counsel where warranted.

REMOVAL LIKELIHOOD: LOW

This review reads as a plausible account of a service experience rather than a platform-policy breach: no hate speech, no indication of non-patronage, no solicitation, no off-topic content. Google's published removal criteria address policy breaches, not whether an opinion is accurate or fair, so a takedown request here would most likely be declined. Reporting is not recommended as the primary strategy; a well-judged public response is.

03 What Is At Stake If This Goes Unanswered

KluGuard does not attach a dollar figure to a single review. Any such number would depend on assumptions about your covers, average check, and conversion that KluGuard is not in a position to measure. What the brief does instead is set out the factors that make this particular review worth your attention, so you can weigh it against your own knowledge of the business.

FACTOR	WHY IT WEIGHS ON THIS CASE
Prominence at the point of decision	The review sits in the recent-reviews feed on the platform where prospective guests most often look immediately before booking.
Subject matter	Reservation reliability and staff manner are decision-relevant to someone choosing between venues, in a way that a complaint about, say, background music volume is not.
Readability of the claim	A concrete, specific timeline is easy for a reader to picture and harder to discount than an unspecific complaint.
The cost of silence	An unanswered complaint gives a reader nothing to weigh it against. A visible, accountable reply gives them the venue's side and evidence that management pays attention.

This section identifies factors relevant to prioritization. It is not a measurement, forecast, or estimate of revenue, bookings, or any other outcome for this or any venue.

04 Recommended Action

Reply publicly within a few days, counted from when you receive this brief rather than from when the review was posted. Do not dispute the guest's account, and do not promise a remedy management has not yet confirmed it can deliver. Confirm the operational facts internally first (Section 5), then acknowledge the delay, take ownership of the communication failure, and move the specifics into a private channel with management. That sequence protects the venue's public tone while leaving room to reply accurately once the facts are known.

ESCALATION THRESHOLD

Escalate internally to the general manager if this becomes the third or more seating-delay complaint within a rolling 90-day window. At that point the issue is better treated as an operational gap than as an isolated bad evening.

The reply window above is the venue's recommended timeline, set by this review's risk tier. It is a separate matter from KluGuard's own service level for preparing and delivering a brief after a review is flagged, which is set out in your service agreement.

05 Facts To Secure Internally Before Replying

This is a checklist for the venue's own use. These are your records, gathered by your team, and KluGuard neither requests nor collects them on your behalf. Confirming them internally is what allows a reply to be accurate rather than merely apologetic.

Reservation record Booked time, party size, table assignment, and the actual seating time from your reservation system.	Operational cause Walk-in volume, tables running longer than expected, staffing gaps, or a booking-system error that evening.
Service notes Which staff member spoke with the guest, what was communicated, and whether any recovery gesture was offered on-site.	Comparable occurrences Whether any other guest that night, or within the past 90 days, raised a similar seating delay.

06 Drafted Public Response: Two Options, and Why They Work

THE REPLY IS NOT WRITTEN FOR THE REVIEWER

They have gone, and little in a public reply brings them back. Every draft below is written for the next several hundred people who read this review while deciding whether to book. The reviewer is simply who it is addressed to.

The reader's question is never "did this venue have a bad night?" Every venue has bad nights. It is: **"if that happens to me, will anyone here actually deal with it?"** The reply exists to answer that, in public, in under eighty words.

Option A: Concede, then show the change **RECOMMENDED**

"We're sorry. That wait should never have gone 40 minutes without an update, and you deserved a real answer when you asked. Both are on us. Hosts now confirm wait times at the 10-minute mark, and any table past 20 minutes gets a manager. Send me the booking name and I'll call you myself."*

[Name], General Manager / 54 words

TWO CONDITIONS BEFORE OPTION A GOES PUBLIC

*** The number is a variable, not a script.** "Forty minutes" is the guest's account, not yet the venue's fact. Check it against the reservation log pulled in Section 5. If the log shows a materially different figure, publish that figure, never the guest's unverified number. A public concession of a specific number is not one you can quietly revise later; if the log and the review disagree, that gap is worth understanding before anything goes up, not after.

The standard has to be real. Post this draft only once the check-in standard in Section 9 is actually in place. Its strength is that every claim in it is verifiable; posting it before the change exists converts your best asset into a misrepresentation a returning guest can disprove in a sentence.

THE FOUR MOVES INSIDE OPTION A

MOVE	WHY IT IS THERE
1. Apologize in two words, at the very start	"We're sorry," said once and immediately, does more than a paragraph of sympathetic phrasing. Put it first so the reader isn't scanning for it, then never repeat it since a reply that keeps apologizing reads as a business worried about itself.
2. Concede both failures, not just the obvious one	"Both are on us" is the load-bearing line. The delay is forgivable to a reader who has waited for a table before. Being given a short answer when they asked is the part they haven't forgiven, and most replies never mention it at all.
3. Give the numbers of the fix, and no cause for the failure	10 minutes, 20 minutes, a manager. Specific enough that a reader can check it against their own next visit, which is what turns an apology into evidence. Note what is absent: no explanation. Every reason reads as an excuse and warns the reader the same night may be waiting for them.
4. Take the follow-up work off the guest	Almost every reply ends by asking the guest to chase the business: "please contact us." This one asks for a booking name and puts the manager on the phone. It reverses who is responsible for the next step, and it is the line most owners have never thought to write.

Option B: The short line

"We're sorry. 40 minutes without an update, and a short answer when you asked. Both are on us. Hosts now confirm wait times at 10 minutes, and a manager steps in at 20. Send me the booking name and I'll call."*

[Name], General Manager / 41 words

* Same condition as Option A: confirm the figure against the reservation log before posting, and use your own record if it differs. For operators who won't sustain longer replies across a whole feed. Keeps the two things that matter, the concession and the specific change. A short reply posted consistently beats a considered one posted twice.

WHY THERE IS NO "LET ME LOOK INTO IT" OPTION HERE

A holding reply exists for exactly one situation: a review spreading faster than the facts can be confirmed: picked up elsewhere, drawing pile-on comments, moving before you can check the record. This isn't that. It's a first-time reviewer, no visible pattern, and a few-day reply window that gives you room to confirm the facts in Section 5 before saying anything public. A placeholder reply here would do exactly what this brief tells you to avoid two pages on. It would concede nothing, resolve nothing, and read as "we're looking into it" with better punctuation. Where a review genuinely is moving faster than the facts, that is a different situation with a different draft, built for that case rather than offered here as padding.

06 Drafted Public Response *continued*

tone guardrails applied to every draft

- Never state or imply the guest is wrong, exaggerating, or lying, even where internal notes suggest otherwise.
- Concede once, cleanly, and stop. Three apologies read as guilt; one unhedged concession reads as authority.
- Never promise a remedy management has not confirmed it can deliver. Commit to attention, not to an outcome.
- Keep staff names, the internal cause, and any compensation out of the public reply and in the private channel.
- Never offer a discount, meal, or credit publicly: it advertises that a one-star review is worth money, and anything offered in exchange for changing a review breaches platform policy.
- Sign with a real name and title, and stay under eighty words.

phrases these drafts deliberately avoid

phrase	what it costs you
"Thank you for bringing this to our attention"	The most-used opener on the platform. A reader has seen it a hundred times and stops reading, spending your strongest line on nothing.
"Not the experience we aim to provide" / "doesn't reflect our standards"	Centres the venue's self-image rather than the guest's evening, and frames the failure as an aberration instead of something owned.
"We're sorry you feel that way"	Concedes nothing. Readers parse it accurately, as a denial with manners.
"We were short-staffed that night"	Reads as an excuse, and warns the next reader the same conditions may be waiting for them.
"We'd love the chance to make it right"	Vague and unenforceable. Asks the guest for a favour before anything has been earned.
"Please reach out to us," with no name	Moves the work onto the guest and reads as deflection. A named person costs nothing.
"Our team is passionate about hospitality"	Marketing language in a complaint reply reads as tone-deaf, and invites the reader to test it against the review above.

07 Pattern and Trend Context (90-Day Lookback)

No flagged review is assessed in isolation. Each one is checked against the venue's rolling 90-day review history to establish whether it is a one-off or a symptom of something repeatable. The internal escalation threshold is three or more occurrences of the same complaint type inside that window; below the threshold, an occurrence is logged for trend tracking rather than escalated.

For this case, comparable seating-delay language has appeared once in the last 90 days. That keeps the D dimension at 0 and the case below the escalation threshold, but it is logged, and a further occurrence inside the window raises an escalation flag automatically.

Under Core Defense, this section also carries the venue's full 90-day complaint log and the month-over-month movement behind the finding above.

08 Staff and Training Note

The review specifically flags the server's manner as "annoyed" when the guest asked about the wait. Separately from the public reply, that is worth a short, non-punitive coaching conversation with front-of-house staff: guests forgive a delay far more readily than they forgive feeling dismissed when they ask about one.

Suggested acknowledgment script: *"I hear you, let me get you an update right now."* It closes the gap at the point of contact, before it ever becomes a review.

WHY THIS SITS OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC REPLY

The manner is conceded publicly as a management failure, never as an individual's. Naming or implying a specific staff member in a public reply exposes the venue on the employment side and reads to the audience as a business that shifts blame downward.

09 Prevention Recommendation

Introduce a delayed-seating check-in standard, so that a wait is acknowledged by staff before a guest has to ask about it. The trigger behind a complaint like this one is rarely the wait on its own; it is the silence during it. A standard turns that silence into visible attention, and it is what makes the specific claim in Option A true.

Under Core Defense, this section specifies the full standard: check-in timing thresholds, host and manager scripting, recovery-gesture guidance, and how to brief it to staff.

10 Follow-Up Timeline

All days are counted from when you receive this brief.

Days 1-3	Brief the check-in standard to host staff, then approve and post the public reply. In that order, so the reply is accurate on the day it goes up.
Day 7	Check whether the guest made private contact, or edited or removed the review.
Day 14	Confirm the standard is holding in practice, not just briefed.
Day 30	Reassess the rolling 90-day seating-delay count in the monthly report.

11 What Ongoing Coverage Looks Like

This brief covers one review. Under Core Defense, every review flagged at your monitored platforms is put through the same sequence: scored against the same A/B/C/D rubric, checked against your 90-day pattern history, and returned with drafted responses and, where relevant, a prevention step. The value is in the consistency: the same standard applied to a quiet Tuesday complaint as to the one that arrives the week you are trying to fill a room.

EVERY FLAGGED REVIEW IS ROUTED TO ONE OF FOUR DECISIONS

MONITOR	REPLY	REPORT	ESCALATE
SCORE 0-3 Logged and tracked. No public reply, because replying would give a weak complaint more visibility than it earns.	SCORE 4-8 Facts confirmed internally, then drafted, tone-guarded public responses for your approval.	ANY SCORE Considered only where there is an apparent platform-policy ground. Never presented as a likely outcome.	SCORE 9-10 Straight to management, with a recommendation to involve legal counsel before anything is posted.

The four routes are not mutually exclusive; a single review can be replied to and logged for pattern tracking at the same time.

WHAT IS INCLUDED EVERY MONTH

DELIVERABLE	WHAT YOU GET
Review monitoring and triage	Ongoing monitoring of your agreed platforms, with each flagged review scored 0-10 against the A/B/C/D rubric.
Full Review-Risk Brief	A brief in this format, all twelve sections, for each flagged review that warrants one.
Drafted responses	Two drafted response options with tone guardrails and the annotated rationale behind them, unlimited across the reviews flagged under your plan.
Removal-likelihood assessment	An honest read on whether a review is a legitimate candidate for platform reporting, so you are not spending time chasing removals that will not happen.
Fact-gathering guidance	A structured checklist of the facts to confirm internally before replying. Yours to run; never something KluGuard requests or collects on your behalf.
Pattern tracking and escalation flags	Rolling 90-day tracking by complaint type, with an automatic flag when a type crosses the three-occurrence threshold.
Monthly reputation report	One page per location: top risks, actions taken, patterns detected, and two to three concrete fixes aimed at recurring causes.
Assessment service level	Flagged reviews assessed within one business day of KluGuard receiving the review and the information needed to assess it.

Standard coverage is defined in your service agreement. High-volume, multi-location, urgent, complex, legal, media, and on-site matters are quoted separately.

12 Frequently Asked Questions

Can you guarantee this review gets removed?

No, and we will not tell you we can. Removal likelihood is assessed against published platform policy, and we say so plainly when removal is not realistic, as in this case. The value is in the response and the prevention, not in a promise no provider can keep.

Do I have to write anything myself?

No. You confirm the internal facts, then approve one of the drafted replies. You keep control of what is posted and when.

Does KluGuard investigate the incident or contact the reviewer?

No. KluGuard assesses the review itself, scores it against a fixed rubric, and drafts the response. The internal facts are confirmed by your own team from your own records. KluGuard does not conduct investigations, does not gather facts on your behalf, and does not contact reviewers, guests, or staff.

What if a review involves a legal or safety issue?

Those score 9-10 and are flagged for immediate escalation, with a recommendation to involve your own legal counsel before any public reply is posted. KluGuard is not a law firm, does not provide legal advice, and is not a private investigation agency.

How is this different from a generic reputation management agency?

Most agencies post a templated reply and move on. Compare Section 6 against the last reply you saw on a competitor's profile: every KluGuard draft is scored against a fixed rubric, written for the audience rather than the complainant, stripped of the phrases readers have learned to skip, and paired with a prevention step that makes its central claim true. You see the reasoning, not just the output.

How quickly do I need to respond once you receive a brief?

Every brief states an exact reply window based on its risk tier, from monitor-only at the low end to within 24 hours at the high end. This case is Moderate: reply within a few days.

That is what Core Defense produces for every flagged review, every month: a score against a fixed rubric, an honest removal-likelihood assessment, a structured checklist of the facts to confirm internally, two drafted response options with tone guardrails and the reasoning behind each line, 90-day pattern tracking, a staff-coaching note, a concrete prevention step, and a defined follow-up timeline. One bad review becomes a documented, deliberate decision instead of a guess made under pressure.

KluGuard Core Defense
\$250 / month per location

Important: Illustrative scenario only. The venue, review, case reference, and findings in this document are fictional and prepared solely to demonstrate the format of a KluGuard Review-Risk Brief. This is not a client case study, testimonial, or claimed outcome, and no part of it describes work performed for an actual business. The drafted responses in Section 6 are illustrative templates requiring the venue's own confirmed facts before use, and the operational change referred to in them must be genuinely in place before the draft is posted. Section 3 identifies factors relevant to prioritization and is not a measurement, forecast, or estimate of revenue, bookings, or any other result. KluGuard does not guarantee review removal, rating improvement, platform action, or any commercial outcome; removal-likelihood assessments reflect apparent platform-policy grounds and the information available, and all removal decisions rest with the platform. KluGuard assesses reviews and drafts responses; it does not conduct investigations, collect facts on a client's behalf, or contact reviewers, guests, or staff. KluGuard is not a law firm and does not provide legal advice; independent legal advice should be obtained for matters involving legal risk. Scope, service levels, and cancellation terms are set out in the service agreement.