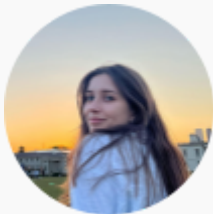Trustpilot Insights
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Research by:

Monika Faulkner
Lead Data Analyst

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Get in touch at:
data-solutions@trustpilot.com

Contents

INSIGHT REPORT

Rising Heat, Falling Ratings

Exploring How Customer Feedback Aligns with Demand Surges and Operational Weaknesses in Europe's Air Conditioning Sector

Key findings

- During the 2025 summer heatwaves, air conditioning page views on Trustpilot surged across Europe, peaking just before maximum temperatures. This suggests consumers anticipate needs in advance, making page traffic a leading demand indicator.

- France saw reviews more than double (92 to 194) and Italy quadrupled (61 to 333) in three weeks, signaling real purchases, not just increased research activity.

- Customer satisfaction declined under pressure. Average star ratings in France fell from 3.94 to 2.42 in less than a month, and the UK fell from 4.75 to 4.2, showcasing the operational strain businesses faced.

- Review text highlighted recurring issues with overwhelmed customer service, delivery delays, and product misrepresentation.

- Trustpilot data provides a timely lens into consumer behavior, sales momentum, and operational resilience during climate-driven demand shocks.

Introduction

The summer of 2025 brought severe heatwaves across Europe, with temperatures soaring above 40°C in several countries. Consumers turned to air conditioning solutions in record numbers, straining the operational capacity of many businesses in the sector. Trustpilot data provides a unique insight into this dynamic. Unlike sales data that is only available after quarterly reporting, page views, reviews, and ratings update in real time, revealing both shifts in consumer demand and the pressure points where businesses falter. This presents an opportunity to use consumer feedback data as an early signal of both revenue opportunities and operational vulnerabilities.

Early Demand Indicators

Air conditioning business page loads on Trustpilot surged across Europe in late June, peaking just before or during record temperatures:

- Italy: Max 38.2°C (June 26); page loads peaked at 6,317 on June 30.
- France: Max 41.4°C (July 1); peak loads 6,707 on June 30.
- UK: Max 35.8°C (July 1); peak loads 2,865 on June 30.
- Netherlands: Max 39.0°C (July 2); peak loads 2,840 on June 30.
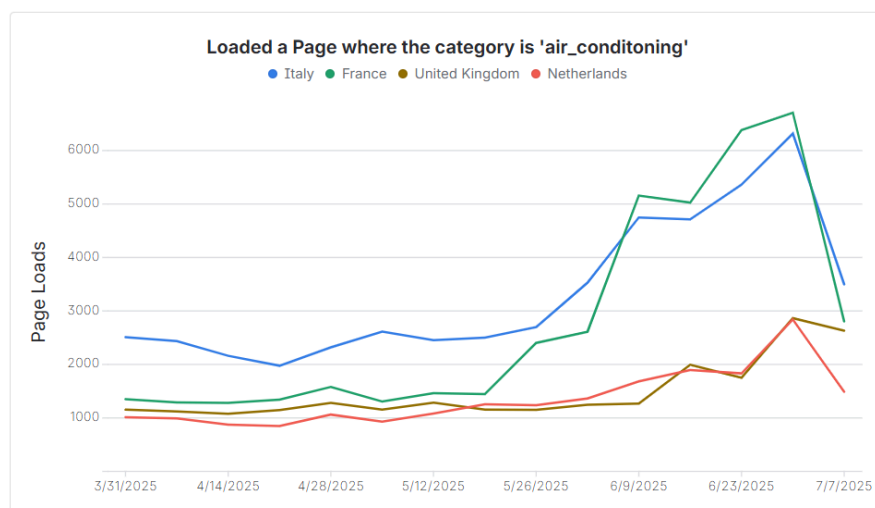
Loaded a Page where the category is 'air_conditoning'

There is a direct and strong positive correlation. As temperatures rise, people are clearly searching for and looking at air conditioning businesses, indicating increased demand or interest

This shows how page loads offer a leading indicator of consumer intent. It could be possible to anticipate demand surges days before official reporting or sales disclosures.

Transactions Reflected in Review Volume

The number of reviews for air conditioning businesses also mirrored the demand spike. This happened before or during the hottest day, rather than after.

- France: 92 reviews (June 9) to 194 (June 30).
- Italy: 61 to 333 reviews in the same period.
- UK: 57 to 91 reviews.
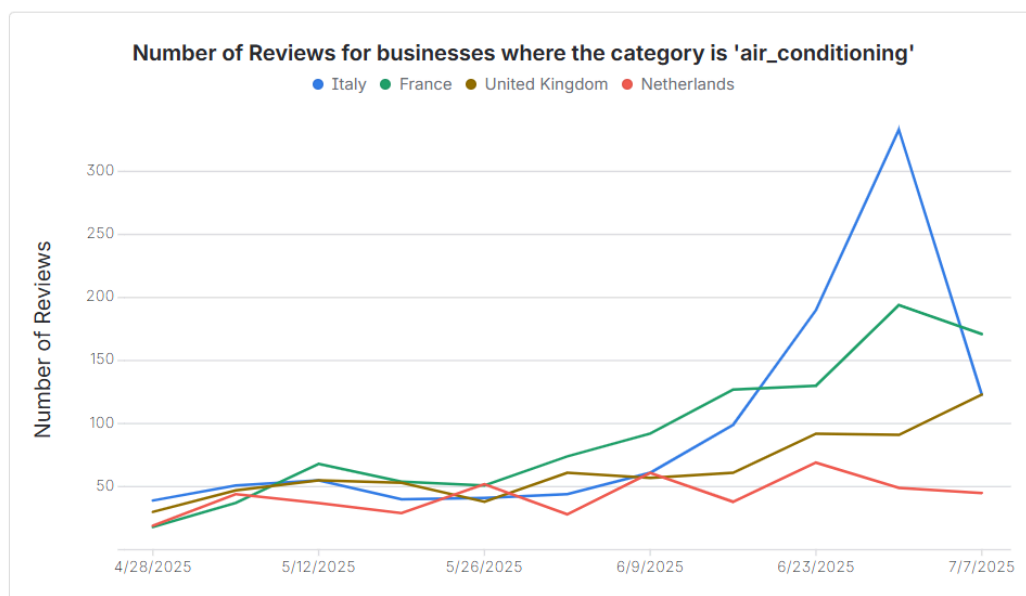
There's a positive correlation between heatwave intensity/duration and the volume of reviews. More people engaging with these businesses (likely for installations,

repairs, or inquiries) leads to more opportunities for reviews. This suggests an increase in actual transactions or service interactions, not just browsing.

Review Analysis

Overview

While page loads and review volume increased, the average star rating decreased in the countries during and after a heatwave. The drop in review rating was most noticeable in the reviews for the weeks ending June 30th and July 7th. It is likely consumers are purchasing from these businesses during the heatwave (but before the peak temperature) and leaving reviews after this.

- France: From 3.94 (June 9) to 2.42 (July 7).
- UK: From 4.75 to 4.2 in the same period.
- Italy & Netherlands: More volatility, but similar downward trend.
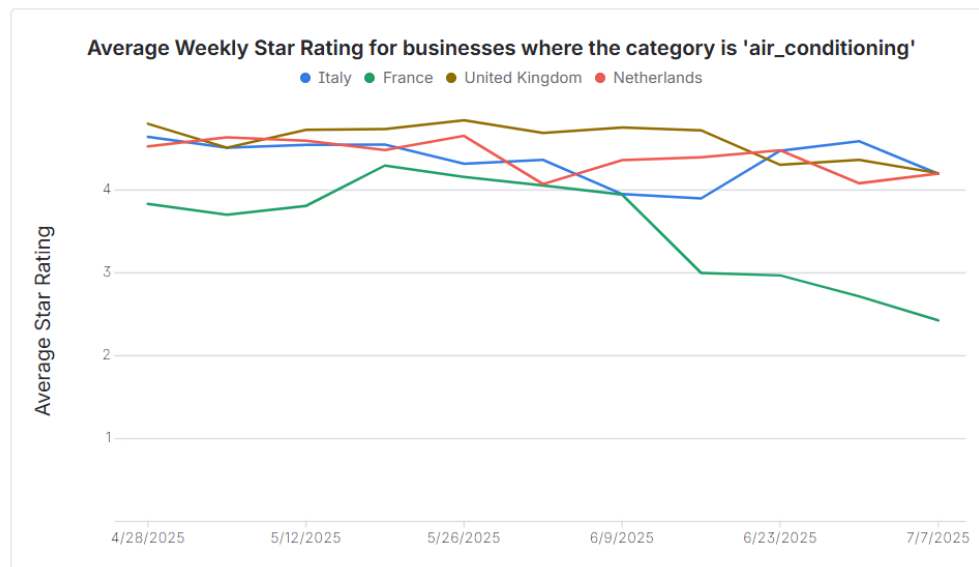
Themes

Analysis of review text highlights consistent pain points:

- **Poor Customer Service and Communication**: This was a recurring theme, with customers complaining about unresponsive customer service, difficulties reaching support, and lack of follow-up. This could be because businesses are overwhelmed with the sudden increase in demand.
    - This issue was most prominent in the UK.
    - Some reviews expressed a complete loss of trust in the businesses, describing them as "scammers" or lacking consideration for customers, especially when problems arose.
- **Delivery and Logistics Issues**: Many negative reviews highlighted problems with delivery, especially during the peak heatwave period.
    - Delayed deliveries, exceeding promised timelines (e.g. 'more than a month' instead of '7 to 10 days').
    - Incorrect or incomplete orders (e.g. missing parts, wrong wattage).
    - Difficulties with returns or exchanges, with customers being forced to pay for returns or experiencing lengthy reimbursement processes.
    - Lack of clarity on delivery fees or unexpected charges.
- **Product Misrepresentation and Functionality Issues**: A significant number of complaints revolved around the product itself, particularly with "air conditioning" units not performing as advertised.
    - Many customers felt that products marketed as "air conditioning" units were actually "air coolers" or "refreshers" that required water and ice packs, leading to disappointment and a sense of being scammed.
    - This theme was particularly pronounced in France. This mismatch between expectation and reality led to strong negative sentiment.

- This was much less of an issue in the UK, likely because central AC is less common in the UK, and consumers might have different expectations for portable cooling units.
- There were also reviews mentioning products not effectively cooling or not meeting expectations during the heatwave.
- **Difficulty in Installation/Repair**: Customers finding it hard to install the units themselves or to find external technicians willing to repair them due to the nature of the product (e.g. 'no airton technician will want to talk to you').

Conclusion

The 2025 European heatwave highlights the value of Trustpilot data as a real-time gauge of demand and operational performance. Page views surged ahead of peak temperatures, offering an early signal of consumer intent. Review volumes confirmed transaction activity, while declining star ratings and recurring negative themes revealed the strain businesses faced in meeting demand.

This creates a forward-looking view into consumer-facing companies. Trustpilot activity not only captures demand spikes before they appear in financial results but also exposes the structural weaknesses - logistics, customer service, and product failures - that can erode long-term brand value. By tracking these signals, organizations can predict surges, manage reputation, and understand exactly where customer experience breaks under pressure, helping to improve operations and service.