



# Consumer review API

This document will take you (the web developer) through simple steps on how to use the TrustATrader consumer reviews API to add a trader's consumer reviews to a website.

## USING AN IFRAME

The simplest way to add consumer reviews to your website is to use an IFRAME. By adding the following code to your website's HTML you can have a pre-formatted listing on your website within seconds.

```
<iframe
  height="400"
  id="consumer-reviews"
  name="consumer-reviews"
  src="http://www.trustatrader.com/api/consumer-reviews/"
  width="400"
  >
  Consumer Reviews
</iframe>
```

In addition to adding the above code you need to provide a set of parameters with the website URL. These parameters allow you to specify which trader reviews you would like to access as well as providing some basic formatting for your listing. The only required parameter is the trader's 'username'. This identifies the Trader you want and will provide your website with a full list of their consumer reviews.

You pass parameters to a web page simply by adding a question mark to the end of the URL. After the question mark you add the parameter name (which in this case is 'username') and the parameter value (your trader's username). So for example if the trader's username was 'getmeweb', the HTML code would look like this:

```
<iframe
  height="400"
  id="consumer-reviews"
  name="consumer-reviews"
  src="http://www.trustatrader.com/api/consumer-reviews/?username=getmeweb"
  width="400"
  >
  Consumer Reviews
</iframe>
```

For the above example, simply replace the word 'getmeweb' with your TrustATrader username to make it work for you.

By default the consumer listing is shown in a very similar format to that shown on the trader's profile page. However, by sending some additional (optional) parameters you can change the look and feel of your consumer review listing to suit your website. These parameters and their value options have been listed below.

- username - Specify the trader's username. (Required)
- reviews\_per\_page=[2, 5, 10, 20] - Specify how many reviews appear per page. Defaults to '5'.
- size=[normal, compact, small] - Specify a pre-formatted listing size. Defaults to 'normal'.
- colour=[white, black] - Specify if the listing has a white or black background. Defaults to 'white'.
- allow\_expand=[yes, no] - Specify whether individual reviews can be fully expanded to see more information about the review or not. Defaults to 'yes'.



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So for example, if I wanted my listing to return 20 reviews per page, have a black background colour to match my website, and be as small as possible in order to save space on my web page, I might use the following code:

```
src="http://www.trustatrader.com/api/consumer-reviews/?  
username=my_trader&reviews_per_page=20&size=small&colour=black&allow_expand=no"
```

As you can see from the above example each additional parameter must be separated by an ampersand (&).

Another parameter that some may wish to use is 'stylesheet'. This parameter allows you to override the default CSS stylesheet that is used and specify your own. This could be used to fully transform the contents of the IFRAME into a completely different style, or could be used to copy the current stylesheet making a few adjustments to better suit your website. For example:

```
src="http://www.trustatrader.com/api/consumer-reviews/?  
username=my_trader&stylesheet=http://www.my-trader.co.uk/my-custom-reviews.css"
```

Obviously using an IFRAME has its limitations. You can't customise the HTML, it adds no SEO benefit to your website, and they require a fixed width and height (potentially causing scrollbars). That said, it is a quick and easy way to add consumer reviews to your website.

### USING XML OR JSON

If you don't like using IFRAMEs then you may want to consider using XML or JSON to pull in a list of a trader's consumer reviews on to your website. Using a JSON/XML feed allows you to take the review data and display it on your website as if it was your own. This allows you to do anything you want with the consumer reviews without the limitations of an IFRAME.

Trader reviews can be accessed from the same URL (<http://www.trustatrader.com/api/consumer-reviews/>). Within the URL parameters you must specify a valid trader 'username' as well as specifying the 'format' (either 'xml' or 'json'). You should also provide the parameters 'reviews\_per\_page' and 'page' as these allow you to control the paging for your reviews. These parameters and an example have been listed below:

- username - Specify the trader's username. (Required)
- format=[xml, json] - Specify the format that you want consumer review data to be outputted in. (Required)
- reviews\_per\_page=[2, 5, 10, 20] - Specify how many reviews appear per page. Defaults to '5'.
- page - Specify what page you are currently on. Defaults to '1'.

```
http://www.trustatrader.com/api/consumer-reviews/?  
username=my_trader&format=xml&reviews_per_page=5&page=1
```

Please note that in order to access TrustAtTrader's reviews using XML or JSON you must first be granted access. We do this as a way to prevent other websites from abusing the facility. In order to gain access you need to provide your website's IP address. To do this, first login to the trader's account on TrustAtTrader and click on the 'Consumer reviews API' link (bottom right). This will take you to a page with a form called 'IP address list'. Simply enter your IP address(es) into the form shown. This will then give you access to that trader's consumer reviews.

### CACHING

Please note that in order to speed up the consumer review listing we cache all of our reviews every hour. This means that any changes to a trader's review may take up to an hour for it to appear on your website. If you are using an IFRAME, please also note that this caching effects the 'stylesheet' parameter. So if you define a new stylesheet within the parameters, you may need to wait **up to 1 hour** before your change takes effect.