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Just as your reputation in the real world is important, your company's ONLINE reputation is equally important to ensure you remain trusted and respected by consumers.

If your business has a bad reputation online, your ability to generate new leads will grow stagnant. In fact, your online reputation could become a liability instead of the asset it needs to be.

Consumers today rely a lot on the reviews, comments, and posts from other consumers about companies they are considering doing business with.

Yet, many businesses still seem to neglect their overall online image, which is seriously impacting their ability to grow and profit.

There are many reasons companies quickly gain poor online reputations, including fake or inaccurate information, unhappy customers, lack of interaction with customers, and poor customer service.

However, regardless of the reason, your reputation should not be ignored.

But.... are you wondering how you will fit this into your already busy daily business operations?

The good news is that online reputation management does not have to be the time-suck you're probably thinking it is...

In this report, we will discuss several ways you can check, monitor, and maintain a positive brand image without letting it dictate your time.

Tip #1:

Check things out first and then start planning. When it comes to starting a reputation marketing, management, or repair initiative, the first thing you need to do is find out exactly what people are saying about your business.

You can do this by Googling your company and reading customer reviews and feedback on sites such as Yelp, Google My Business, and similar sites.

You can also look through comments left on your blog and social media sites to get a general sense of how people are reacting to your content and your online behavior.

Once you have a sense of what your online reputation looks like, you can start repairing, building, and maintaining it in a strategic, effective manner.

Having an online crisis management team is also a good idea. This team can monitor the feedback you receive from your audience, decide how to handle specific situations, and develop a plan of action to address any and all concerns.

Responding to negative feedback quickly and diplomatically is important because it demonstrates that you are paying attention to what people are saying, and that you acknowledge everyone has a right to their own opinion.

The trick in dealing with negative comments is to acknowledge them and do what you can to fix the situation without sounding angry or upset. Negative comments are a part of online life, and it is up to you or your crisis management team to deal with them in a cool and professional manner.

Tip #2:

Start focusing on content marketing. The best way to ensure that your company's online reputation continues to grow in a positive direction is to publish content.

If your content is keyword-focused, you can ultimately dominate the top pages of the search engines results with it; meaning your target market will see it – pushing down any potential negativity that would normally show up.

Of course, the content you publish needs to offer something to your readers, whether it is information, humor, or advice. Without quality and original content, your online reputation will flounder, and you will miss out on the biggest market in the world.

Creating content can be very time-consuming, which is why it is necessary to have a content publishing plan.

Decide what type of content you will create, whether it's blog posts, videos, visual graphics/images, etc. Then, decide where you will post this content – and how often.

Websites and social media accounts that regularly add new content have a much better online reputation than those blogs and social media accounts that are sporadically updated. Like everything else in business, consistency is the key.

Tip #3:

Use social media. Search engines love great content and social media accounts, which is why after you have written your relevant and useful post, you should upload it to LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and any other social media sites you use.

The more places you post, the more likely it is that search engines and people will find your content, which will increase your online reputation.

For your social media sites you should post your own original content at least once or twice per day and you should also share the content of others; this demonstrates that you are willing to engage with other people and not just using your social media platform to simply sell your own products.

Finding ideas for status updates and blog posts can be difficult, which is why you should keep a notebook or voice recorder on hand. When an idea for a blog post or status update comes to you and you do not have time to write it, jot some notes down. That way, when you do sit down to post, you will have a wealth of options to choose from and never run out of ideas for content.

You can encourage visitors to your website to leave comments and other feedback about what they would like to see from your company.

This demonstrates that you want to engage with them, and care about their opinions. Of course, you then have to consistently engage with those visitors who leave comments. If you do not, you run the risk of doing more harm to your reputation than good.

Interacting with those who have taken the time to leave a comment is essential to building online relationships and increasing your business' reputation.

If your company has a blog, you should post links to specific blog posts on your social media accounts. Linking to specific content rather than to the blog's homepage is better for your reputation because it points potential readers to specific content instead of making them choose which post to read.

The idea is that once they have read the post you linked to, they will be interested enough to explore your site on their own.

Tip #4:

Use social monitoring tools to cut down on time. Due to the size and scope of the Internet, it can be difficult to get an accurate sense of how people feel about your business.

For this reason it is recommended that you use tools such as Google Alerts, Social Mention, Tweet Alarm, and Pin Alerts as they can all help you gauge and monitor your company's online reputation.

You can set up Google Alerts to notify you of any mention of your business, your products and services, as well as your own name. These email notifications will give you a sense of how much your company is written about, as well as provide you with the opportunity to see what people are saying about you.

Social Mention is a real time social media search engine that allows people to search for specific topics on social media sites. It searches various types of media such as blogs, microblogs, videos, images, and more. Plug in your company's name and see what comes up.

Tweet Alarm is useful for staying up date about topics that interest you. It sends you a notification whenever something listed in your field of keywords is tweeted. So, set up alarms related to your company name to stay on top of the buzz surrounding your brand.

Pin Alerts notifies you whenever someone pins something from your website onto their Pinterest account. This is a useful tool to see what content of yours people are pinning the most, which in turn gives you the chance to

create more similar content and increase your online reputation. The more you create content that people want to share, the better reputation your company will have.

There are also many other advanced tools, such as Hootsuite, that allow you to monitor and manage your social media accounts all from within one platform. So it is definitely worth comparing these tools and finding the ones that meet your specific.

Tip #5:

Pay attention to your competition; they are a great source of ideas to increase your online reputation. By watching how they handle their online presence, you can get an idea of what does and does not work in your industry. You do not want to copy their strategies exactly, but you do want to take note of them.

If you notice that they are doing something that generates lots of positive feedback for them, try and implement something similar. If they are doing something that seems to be getting a lot of negative responses, you know to avoid it.

There is nothing wrong with taking ideas from your competitors and adjusting them to suit your own needs. Chances are they are doing the same thing to you.

Tip #6:

Don't let your reputation get out of hand. If your online reputation takes a big hit, it can take you a long time to build it back up again, which is why you should continuously monitor it before something like that happens.

If you fail to keep a vigilant eye on your online reputation, things can take a serious turn for the worse if you are met with a barrage (or even a few) negative reviews, comments, or press.

So it's better to be proactive and try to eliminate any damage than to wait until something terrible happens and be reactive.

By setting up alerts and establishing an online management team to oversee your online life, you will be able to address and resolve any potential problems with your reputation quickly and effectively.

As a result, you will not have to spend a lot of time and money down the road fixing any damage your reputation has incurred.

Tip #7:

If managing your online reputation seems daunting, ask for help. Hire an online reputation manager. There are only so many hours in a day and quite honestly, it takes a lot of time to accurately monitor and manage your online image.

However, you run a great risk of hurting your ability to generate new leads and customers online if you do not keep it intact. If you have a good reputation, you have to implement strategies to keep it that way. If you have a negative reputation, you have to implement strategies to clean it up and maintain that positive image going forward.

Getting help from a professional is a great choice if you have the budget for it. Then, you can have a peace of mind that your online reputation is in the hands of someone who knows what to do and when to do it.

As an Online Reputation Management specialist, I help local businesses in the area save time by taking their reputations under my wing. If you would like to discuss ways I can help you, contact me at 855-943-8736 for a free consultation.

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