

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR BUSINESS ATTRACTS NEGATIVE ATTENTION ONLINE

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1

Do not react with emotion.

Allow yourself time to cool off and approach the situation rationally. Emotions are normal, but they rarely make good decisions.

2

Document and research.

Take screenshots of the comments. Look into who posted them: was it a troll, or was it someone that has had an encounter with your business?

3

Stop and listen.

There is an important difference between being attacked online and being held accountable. Does the commenter have a valid point? Are you being called in or called out for a legitimate reason?

4

Assess whether it's an issue or a crisis.

A crisis is when the negative attention or problem will have a big impact on your business. An issue can be managed, but an issue that is ignored or improperly dealt with can become a crisis for your brand or business.

5

Use your response matrix.

Once you have collected all of the facts, you can refer to your response matrix on how to respond to the negative comment or message.

HOW TO CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE MATRIX

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1

Brainstorm.

Think about the kinds of comments you might get on social media. This includes positive comments, frequently asked questions, incorrect information, and potential negative comments or trolling.

2

Determine how your brand would respond to each.

Your brand voice will determine how each type of comment will be responded to. Be factual, polite, clear, and firm in your responses. Develop a social media commenting policy regarding harmful or trolling comments.

3

Develop a chain of command for issues.

Consider the following: Who in your organization needs to be made aware of the issue at hand? Who is responsible for responding to it? What is your internal follow up procedure? What are your risks?

4

Create your response matrix document.

Record your sample responses in a document such as a spreadsheet or word document. This is a living document, and it's important to refer back to this matrix often to ensure it is always up to date and relevant.

5

Build a flow chart.

Develop a decision tree or flow chart that visualizes the steps that the social media manager should take in response to any comments.