Cheatography

Beating Bad Reviews Cheat Sheet

by [deleted] via cheatography.com/2754/cs/9330/

Introduction

Bad reviews can bite, wound and sting. Worst of all, a mountain of them can appear in a matter of seconds. Social media is a wonderful thing...until it turns against you.

So, what can an owner or manager do when their business' online reputation is suffering at the hands of others? Plenty. Here are 10 steps to repair and protect your business' online reputation:

Credit: Kate Zabriskie

http://www.securityinfowatch.com/article/12211862/beating-bad-reviews

Steps 1-6

Step 1: Take a deep breath. You can fix it. Not overnight, but you can fix it.

Step 2: Get over any hurt feelings or embarrassment, and do it quickly. The people who complain have done you a great favor — it is now up to you to decide if negative reviews are going to be the kiss of death or a wakeup call.

Step 3: Uncover everything that is being said about the business. If you found a bad review in one place, there are probably others. You will need to spend a few hours researching online. Start Googling, and take a notes of what you find and where. A word of caution:** resist the urge to respond to anything. Be strategic, not impulsive. You will need a game plan before typing a word.

Step 4: Automate. Sign yourself up for Google Alerts www.google.com/alerts. If new content mentioning your company shows up online and Google sees it, the search engine will send out an automatic alert letting you know. There are also a variety of free and paid services that will monitor online search terms and any major review sites for mentions who will quickly notify you if new information about the company is posted. If you are serious about managing your online reputation, these services are extremely valuable.. **Step 5: Address the Issue.** Once you have a good picture of your online grade, get ready to roll up your sleeves and start problem solving. If your employees are rude, train them. If your establishment is dirty, clean it. If people hate working for you, investigate. Unless you are the victim of competitor sabotage, what you are reading is probably based in truth. If needed, revisit Step two.

Step 6: Get Buy-in. Involve your team and communicate your improvement plan. You will reach your goal faster if everyone in your organization understands what it is and is working toward it.

Steps 7-10

Steps 7-10 (cont)

Step 8: Respond to the Reviews. Once you have a clear sense of what is going on with your business and are on the road to smoothing out the rough spots, get back to the reviews. It is time to answer them.

⬛**First, thank the reviewer for letting you know about a problem and include something good about yourself,** too, such as: "Thank you for your feedback, and I'm sorry your son's birthday experience with us wasn't what you expected. We've hosted over a thousand birthday parties for children in our five years of business, and we strive to delight each of our guests."

⬛**Second, describe what you have done to prevent the issue from occurring again:** "We've taken a few steps to prevent what happened to you from happening to another parent of a birthday boy or birthday girl. Since your visit, our staff has taken several classes to improve their service skills. They've focused specifically on techniques for positively engaging with children."

⬛**Third, ask the person to give you a second chance:** "Please celebrate with us again. I believe you will be pleasantly surprised. My name is Kate. If you ask for me when you make your reservation, I will take care of you personally."

⬛**Resist the urge to be snarky, judgmental or to correct your customers.** Yes, some customers are wrong; however, pointing that out will not help. Lots of people are going to be watching how you respond to others. Take advantage of the opportunity to be polite, helpful and solution-focused. People who rely on the reviews can often tell when other customers are being difficult. If you are gracious in your dealings with them, you will win in the long run.

Step 9: Engage with Happy Customers. Ask your satisfied customers to post reviews. Over time, your average will improve. Obviously this approach only works if you are indeed making changes and removing the causes of bad evaluations. If you are not, prepare for more of the same bad reviews, because they are coming. You simply cannot turn off the social media tap.

Step 10: Don't Cheat the System. As tempting as it may be, do not post fake reviews or go to a service to get others to do the same. Apart from the fact that it is dishonest, it is also dangerous. If you get caught, you will look even worse than you did before. Instead, get busy writing more content to post on your site, press release sites and other appropriate places. The more that is out there, the less visible bad comments can be.

Step 7: Talk to Customers. When you are interacting with people, ask them what they think. You already know some of them have no problem sharing their opinions with the world, so they will probably be willing to candidly tell you the good, bad and ugly. Asking your customers or clients for help can prove extremely beneficial. Here's a good way to open the conversation: "We are working hard to improve. Would you be willing to talk to me for a few minutes? Thank you. What two or three things could we have done differently in order to make you experience with us better?"If at all possible, have these conversations verbally. You may be surprised by the quantity and quality of information you are able to quickly gather..

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