

# 10 Expert Tips For Managing Your Brand Reputation Online



While first impressions used to be made over a handshake, making a good impression now means managing your online brand reputation. What's the first thing you do when you hear about a new product or service? You probably type it into Google to see what others are saying. If you have a poor online reputation, you're going to find it difficult to succeed in the 21st century. Check out these top 10 tips on managing your brand online.

## **Keep Your Branding Consistent**

First things first: Make sure your branding is consistent on all the platforms you use. Use the same capitalization, punctuation, and spacing in all of your business-related social media accounts, your website, and on any forums you participate in. This will help differentiate you from anyone else who is using a name that is like yours.

## **Monitor Your Own Online Presence**

Google yourself and note what comes up on the first page of results. This might be an eye-opener, particularly if nothing comes up or if you see comments that don't put you in the best light. Don't panic; you can fix this situation. While you're at it, set up a Google Alert so you get emailed when something new about you comes up in search results.

## **Make Your Social Media Profiles Private**

Your potential customers and clients don't need to see photos of you partying on the beach or know where you stand on the controversial political spectrum (unless, of course, it pertains to your business!). Make your social media accounts and personal blog private to keep this type of information under wraps.

## **Contribute Your Expertise On Web Forums....**

Join industry-specific web forums (using your brand name) and contribute your knowledge. If you're selling alternative health supplements, go ahead and help people with their health-related questions without spamming your products. Over time, the users of the forums, as well as people Googling for answers and seeing those posts in their search results, will begin to see you as an expert in your niche.

## **...But Watch What Else You Contribute**

While you're logged in on these forums, stay out of the controversial threads. Those looking to you for thought leadership in your niche might not agree with your feelings on the President of the United States or on whether cats should be declawed. If you must talk about these topics, log out and set up a private account with a name that no one will recognize.

## **Build A Website**

Anyone searching for your business is going to want to check out your website. If you don't have web-design skills, hire a designer to create a professional site for your business. A poorly made, unattractive, user-unfriendly site is going to do more harm than having no website at all, so work with your designer to choose the right features for your home on the World Wide Web.

## **Remember That Spelling And Grammar Count**

Even if you're not a grammar whiz, it's vital that you come across to your potential customers as someone who knows the difference between "your" and "you're" and "then" and "than." Use a spellchecker and grammar-checker to avoid common errors. Try installing either the free or paid version of Grammarly as your backup proofreader.

## **Ask Customers For Reviews**

At the bottom of your invoices, include a line asking customers to leave you a review on Yelp, Google Reviews, or your Facebook page. You can also offer a monthly drawing for a product, service, or gift certificate; pull from all the customers who have left a review for you. Having many positive reviews is a great way to boost your authority and image.

## **Follow Up With Unhappy Customers**

Not every customer is going to be happy with your product or service; that's just one of the basic rules of doing business. You can follow up with each unhappy customer to try to make it right, though. Be diplomatic and swallow your pride. If others see that you are willing to stand behind your work, they're more likely to give you a shot.

## **Be A Nice Guy (Or Gal)**

The best way to develop and protect your online brand reputation is really just to refrain from being a jerk. That's what it all comes down to, for the most part. Work hard to keep your customers happy, honor your word, and take criticism with grace and a sense of humility. When people know that you're a good person, that boosts your brand significantly.