



# Everything You *MUST* *Know* About Managing Your Online Reputation

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## **Who We Are**

At [Media Spotlight Marketing](#), our mission is to help businesses just like yours, improve and manage their online reputation. We deliver this through full-service solutions that are transparent, efficient, and cost-effective.

We partner with you to help you build your business by creating and maintaining reputations that are of the highest quality, authentic and convincing.

## **What We Do**

Our goal is a simple one - to ensure that when customers search for your company, they will always encounter a positive, 5-star image that leads to sales/conversions. We do this by listening to you, and understanding your business and specific market needs.

Based on our knowledge and rigorous analysis we create customized winning strategies that address your specific needs.

## **Our biggest success story?**

It's YOUR business! We are proud to say that we have helped hundreds of local businesses in Nevada achieve their objectives.

## **Our Expertise**

As a recognized industry innovator, we have proven over and over again with every satisfied client, Media Spotlight Marketing's leadership position in the field of online reputation management.

# What Is Your Online Reputation?

It's not very complicated to see what your online reputation is, simply put, it is how your customers and potential customers see you when they search for you online. Try it yourself, do a simple search - look at the results, you will see these includes everything that can be found online about your business, whether you purposefully published it or not. Photographs, videos, reviews, news articles, blog posts, social media profiles, "people search" sites, public tax or property records, basically—anything.

The sites that list you company and your reputation are called "Local Directories". These sites combined represent millions of potential customers for local businesses like yours. Here are some of the popular sites that display your reputation and you might not even know what reviews are on them.

For example, Google, Yelp, YellowBot, InsiderPages are all top listing directories

Google dentists dallas tx

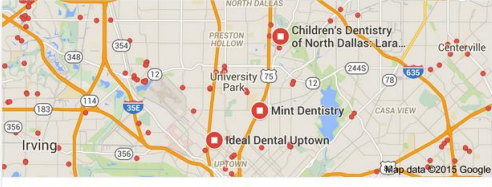
Web Maps Shopping News Images More Search tools

About 3,020,000 results (0.71 seconds)

**Dentist Dallas TX - dossett dental dallas.com**  
[www.dossett dental dallas.com/](http://www.dossett dental dallas.com/)  
 Free Exam and X-Rays - \$198 value! Same day appointments - Call Now.

**Warren Timothy M DDS - warrendentistry.net**  
[www.warrendentistry.net/](http://www.warrendentistry.net/)  
 Sedation Dentistry for the apprehensive patient

**Same Day Dental Care - EmergencyDental.com**  
[www.emergencydental.com/Dallas](http://www.emergencydental.com/Dallas)  
 No Insurance? No Problem. Flexible payment and financing.



**Mint Dentistry**  
 4.6 ★★★★★ (161) · Dentist  
 5330 E Mockingbird Ln #120 · (214) 821-5011  
 Open until 5:00 pm

**Dentist Dallas, TX**  
[www.prestonmodern dentistry.com/](http://www.prestonmodern dentistry.com/)  
 Need an Affordable Dentist? Schedule Your Appointment Today!  
 14891 Preston Rd #200, Dallas, TX  
 4.4 ★★★★★ 9 reviews

**Cosmetic Dentistry Dentist**  
[www.dentalworks.com/](http://www.dentalworks.com/)  
 Offering Quality Care & The Smile You Deserve. Book an Appt Today!  
 2306 Guthrie Rd #180, Garland, TX  
 (972) 226-1003

**Root Canal Dentist**  
[www.northdallasendo.com/RootCanal](http://www.northdallasendo.com/RootCanal)  
 Dallas Most Popular Endo Clinic. Pain Free, Single Visit Treatment

**Dentist Dallas, TX**  
[www.arborsmodern dentistry.com/](http://www.arborsmodern dentistry.com/)  
 Comprehensive Dental Services. \$59 Exam, Cleaning, Digital X-Rays.  
 18152 Preston Rd, Ste I-2, Dallas, TX  
 4.3 ★★★★★ 6 reviews

**Smiles at Galleria**  
[www.smilesatgalleria.com/Local+Dentist](http://www.smilesatgalleria.com/Local+Dentist)

## Your Online Reputation Is NOT what you think it is...

So here is an interesting fact - your online reputation is determined by mathematical algorithms, which are machine driven complex calculations, and automated reasoning that actually guesses what people will find interesting. So these searches, while impartial are actually an incorrect measure of your “real” offline reputation. Many times they can include irrelevant but intriguing items, and because search results are arranged by popularity not chronologically, older items and outdated information can show up first if enough people click on them.

## Yelp Example

Yelp uses a filtering algorithm that removes good reviews or even bad based on the popularity of the profile and review. Which means dozens of your 5 star ratings are buried and bad ratings might be the only ones showing.



Why Does Yelp Recommend Reviews?

RECOMMENDATION SOFTWARE

We use automated software to recommend the reviews we think will be the most helpful to the Yelp community based primarily on quality, reliability and the reviewer's activity on Yelp. **Advertisers get no special treatment.** The reviews below didn't make the cut and are therefore not factored into this business's overall star rating. Watch the video above or check out our [FAQ](#) for more details.



# Why is Your Local Online Reputation Important?

Now that you know what your online reputation is, and hopefully you have taken the time to do a little searching on your own, why should it matter to your business?

## Why is your reputation important?

Any business of any size knows that word of mouth is a very powerful way to grow your market share, perhaps the most important to a small business. Your business flourishes with good recommendations from your customers and friends and conversely suffers without them. In fact, studies have shown that positive and negative reviews on sites such as Yelp have a direct impact on your sales. Now imagine amplifying your reputation online in a multitude of channels and sites.

## Do you think you *really* know what your customers are saying about your product or service?

There are many ways for customers to communicate and talk to each other online. Without your knowledge, anyone could be posting comments about your

company, giving negative reviews - this is called eWOM, or Electronic Word of Mouth. Do you know how to protect your online reputation from being tarnished?

### How does this affect you?

#### WAYS THIS COULD AFFECT YOUR BUSINESS

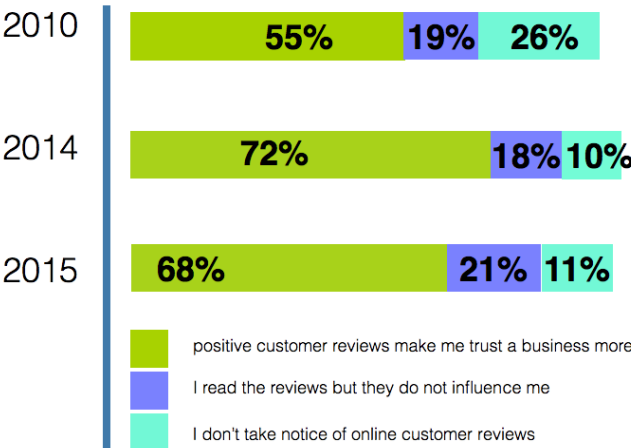
	Outdated or incorrect information online can be confusing to customers.
Potential business partner could see a post that alleges bad business practices	
	Prospective employees decide not to apply because of negative posts by an employees.
No reviews good or bad affect your visibility and ranking in search engines and directories.	

The truth is that, consumers research online before you even know that they are considering using your service or buying your product. And because reviews and information about a company can be found so easily online, those customers will be seeing *all* the information that's out there about your company.

Ultimately, eWOM reviews have a strong influence in consumer choices when purchasing products or services<sup>1</sup>. Based on a 2015 study, more than two-thirds of US Internet users trust businesses more because of positive online reviews.<sup>2</sup>

### Effect of online Customer Reviews on Their Opinion of a Local Business According to US Internet Users.

2010 / 2014 / 2015  
% of respondents



Brightlocal - Local Consumer Review Survey - August 2015

<sup>1</sup> No one and McGuire 2013

<sup>2</sup> 2015 Bright Local Consumer Review Survey

# Still wondering about the importance of your online reputation?

Reviews Give You Pre-Qualified Presold Leads  
Because Buyers Trust Reviews...  
As Much As Family And Personal Recommendations

**88% Of Buyers Trust Reviews As Much As Personal Recommendations.**”  
~ Bright Local



<sup>3</sup> 2014 Bright Local Consumer Review Survey

<sup>2</sup> 2014 Bright Local Consumer Review Survey

<sup>4</sup> 2014 Edelman Trust Barometer

# The Case of Yelp

**Reputation Marketing**

**“Reputation Marketing Has Proven To Increase Business By 19% By Increasing ½ Star Rating Online”**

**Positive Yelp Ratings Can Boost a Restaurant’s Nightly Reservations by 19%**

Economists at the University of California, Berkeley published the results of a study, examining the effects of Yelp’s online ratings in this month’s *Economic Journal*. The study shows a slight half-star improvement in ratings can increase a restaurant’s business during peak dining hours by 19%.

Berkeley professors Michael Anderson and Jeremy Magruder found that “Yelp ratings affect both customer flows and the probability of a reservation.” The researchers compared the digital data from Yelp of 328 San Francisco eateries with the frequency of reservations at each establishment.



You can appreciate the impact that an online review can have on your business, but do you know the effect on your bottom line? Peer to peer review sites like Yelp, Angie’s List and Tripadvisor are more important than ever to consumers when selecting goods and services. This is especially true for local businesses.

The findings of a study by a group of economists from UC Berkeley, CA conclusively indicate that as little as a half-star difference in a restaurant’s average rating on Yelp can greatly impact an establishment’s reservations, pushing numbers up. The results of this study clearly show the correlation between positive Internet reviews and consumers behavior.

This is how Yelp ratings work: Yelp aggregates star ratings from each review to create an average rating for a restaurant. Then, it rounds that average rating to the half-star level. So restaurants are displayed with 3, 3.5, or 4 stars.

The true average rating, is continuous and could be any number between 1 and 5. For example, there are some restaurants that have true ratings of 3.74, while others have a true rating of 3.76. We might think these restaurants are pretty similar in terms of food quality, service, etc. - whatever people take into consideration when making a review, they've ultimately reviewed these two restaurants almost exactly the same. But because Yelp rounds its ratings, the 3.74 restaurant will be displayed as 3.5 stars, while the 3.76 restaurant will be displayed as 4 stars. By making comparisons like that, we can see where there are differences in reservation availability between two restaurants which are almost exactly the same in terms of how customers review them, but which look very different on Yelp. It's these types of comparisons which let us say that the only "real" difference between these two restaurants is Yelp - and when we compare restaurants like these, we see that the restaurants which just barely get 4 stars sell out about 19% more frequently than restaurants which almost get 4 stars. This is what lets us infer causality.

# Assessing your Online Reputation

Before you can start doing anything with your online reputation – Manage, Market or Building it, you first need to determine what your online reputation is, and to do this correctly you will need to either take a deep dive on your own, or hire a consultant.

## How exactly do you assess your reputation?

It used to be easy - with one Google search you could uncover pretty much anything that was out there about your company. However, today there are a multitude of peer-to-peer review sites, complaint websites, many social media platforms, wikis and forums. The growing number of these platforms and reputation touch points has increased to a very large number. Ultimately, monitoring all of these sites for the purpose of protecting your image can be overwhelming to a business owner, after all aren't you already wearing many hats?

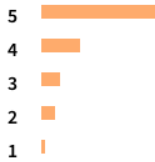
## Local Businesses Cannot Monitor Their Reputation

If you are brave enough to take it on, a good exercise is to search for your company, brand, products, and even employee names - and see what results you find. Use different search engines, as these provide different ways to search for information and make sure you go beyond the first page of results. What you

want to find is all of the information that is out there about your business. Most importantly, search all of the review sites such as Yelp, Amazon, TripAdvisor, Angie's List and Glassdoor. Yelp, Angie's List and TripAdvisor are especially important to local businesses. There are also specialized sites per industry, for example OpenTable is very important to the restaurant business, determine which review sites are most important to your industry. The more platforms you search, the more information you will find.



## Chart House Restaurant - Daytona Beach Ratings and Reviews



4.3

Overall Rating

★★★★★ based on recent ratings

FOOD	SERVICE	AMBIENCE	NOISE LEVEL
4.3	4.4	4.5	Moderate

👍 87% would recommend it to a friend



Great Bday dinner!

FOOD 5  
AMBIENCE 5  
SERVICE 5

KDBday Dined 4 days ago

Our food was excellent; prime rib & filet cooked exactly to order. Baked potato was huge & salad bar had lots of items. View is gorgeous!

Tags: great for outdoor dining, romantic, special occasion, scenic view, neighborhood gem



Wonderful

FOOD 5  
AMBIENCE 5  
SERVICE 5

OpenTable Diner Since 2015 Dined 7 days ago

We had a wonderful dinner at Chart House. It was a gift from our children. Our server Cory was fantastic down to noticing that I love oranges with my beer. I usually take them from my husband but when I ordered a second beer Cory brought me my own little tray of oranges. That is a very observant server. He answered all of our questions and gave helpful hints. Our food was great. We definitely will recommend this restaurant to anyone we know who will be in this area and will come back again for sure.

Tags: fit for foodies, good for groups, great for outdoor dining, romantic, special occasion, scenic view, neighborhood gem



Chart House Daytona Beach

FOOD 5  
AMBIENCE 5  
SERVICE 5

OpenTable Diner Since 2009 Dined on September 22, 2015

This was a perfect choice for anniversary dinner! Our waiter, Billy, was most pleasant and helpful for dinner selections!

Tags: fit for foodies, romantic, special occasion, scenic view, notable wine list

## Type in your company name >



## Look at your results >

About 107,000 results (0.49 seconds)

- 1 Wedding Videography & Photography, Portraits - Michael's ...  
[www.michaelsphotography.co/](http://www.michaelsphotography.co/) ▼  
Wedding Videography & Photography, Portraits - Michael's Photography & Video - Daytona Beach, FL.  
970 N Clyde Morris Blvd #136, Daytona Beach, FL 32117  
(386) 255-0555
- 2 Michael's Photography & Video - Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/michaelsphotographyandvideo> ▼  
Michael's Photography & Video added 41 new photos. ....  
shipping out today to Adam & Julia who were married at Plaza Resort & Spa Daytona Beach FL.
- 3 Michael's Photography & Video - WeddingWire.com  
[www.weddingwire.com/.../michaels-photography-video-d...](http://www.weddingwire.com/.../michaels-photography-video-d...) ▼ WeddingWire ▼  
★★★★★ Rating: 5 - 65 reviews  
Michael's Photography & Video provides Wedding Photography, Wedding Videography in Florida - Orlando, Daytona Beach, and surrounding areas. We allow ...
- 4 Michael's Photography & Video - Daytona Beach, FL - Yelp  
[www.yelp.com](http://www.yelp.com) > ... > Photographers > Event Photography ▼ Yelp ▼  
Specialties: Michael's Photography & Video is Daytona Beach's full service photography studio that provides all of your imaging needs, since 1982. Weddings ...
- 5 Michael's Photography & Video Daytona Beach FL ... - Manta  
[www.manta.com](http://www.manta.com) > ... > Portrait Photographers ▼  
Get information, directions, products, services, phone numbers, and reviews on Michael's Photography & Video in Daytona Beach, FL. Discover more ...

See photos See outside

### Michael's Photography and Video ★

4.8 ★★★★★ 5 Google reviews  
Portrait Studio

Address: 970 N Clyde Morris Blvd #136, Daytona Beach, FL 32117  
Phone: (386) 255-0555  
Hours: Closed today · Hours ▼

Reviews Write a review

"I am so happy and grateful for Michael and his staff!"

"He was so nice to me, and made a great deal for me."

View all Google reviews

People also search for View 15+ more

- Jan Spisar Photogra... and Videogra...
- Mark Dickinson Photogra...
- Lyndsey Roberts Photogra... & Events
- Cooper Photogra...
- GotYaPhoto Photogra...

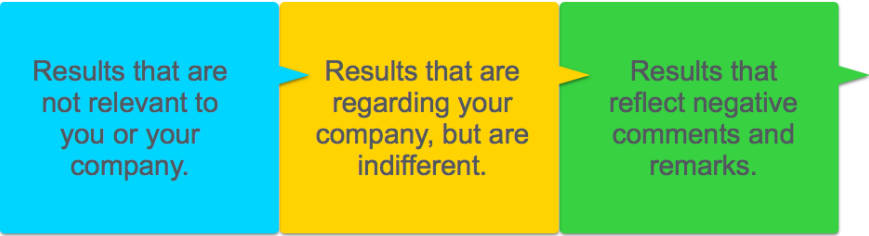
## You are going to see mostly directory results

Once you've found results, you need to keep track of them. Create a spreadsheet that you can reference at any time and put the following information on it, in this order:

1. Position in the search engines (was it the first, second, fourth, etc. result);
2. URL that has the publicity; the type of publicity (whether it's good, bad, indifferent, or not about you);
3. General sentiment behind the posting.

### 3 Important Issues To Look at That Will Kill Your online Reputation

Once you've assessed your online reputation, review your results and determine the overall outlook of your reputation. What you'll be looking for during your research are these issues:



While this latter problem is an obvious one, why does it matter if there are indifferent results about your company or if the results are not about you?



**44%** of online shoppers begin by using a search engine.



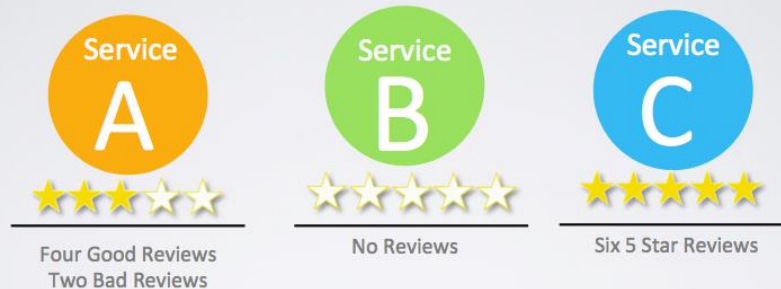
**60%** of all organic clicks go to the organic top 3 search results<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Hubspot.com, 2014

# Question?

Three Services Are Virtually Identical



**Which One Would You Choose To Buy?**

Why is this a problem? It means that people don't think anything about you, good or bad, because they may not even know that your company exists! And that's a problem.

## Positive reviews are social signals

This means that people are engaging with you in a positive way - and that's what you want!

Not being found on search engines indicates that you have no SEO strategy or social presence - this means when an average consumer is searching for a company like yours - yours doesn't come up - but your competitors might. Whether your reputation assessment is positive or negative, it is of utmost importance that your company keeps a strong presence and is diligent in improving search engine rankings with a solid SEO strategy.

## **Positive Reviews Can Help Your Business Rank Higher Online**

Reviews deliver more value, at a lower cost, than other marketing activities, it is a gold mine for local businesses. If your business isn't currently collecting new, positive reviews, you run the risk of losing potential customers to nearby competitors.

The big problem with not having an online reputation is that when other people want to post something negative about your company, they can quickly climb to the top of the page rankings in the search engines. This means that when anyone searches for your company, the first thing they'll see is something negative. Most online reviews exist in perpetuity. In short, if you don't build your own online reputation yourself, someone will do it for you.

## **Tell Consumers about your business**

Consumers who are searching for your company need to see a 5 star rating. A simple directory listing or a map to your place of business isn't telling the customer enough. It's not telling them why they should shop with you, what you have to offer, or how your product or service will help them. Without any real concrete reason to even click on your name, the chances are that they'll move on to your competition that has glowing testimonials, reviews, and comments.

## **How do you go about managing, building and marketing your reputation?**

The first step is to hire a professional marketing consultant who is an expert in online reputation management. The skills and experience needed to manage your reputation effectively go far beyond traditional Brand Management and Marketing.

# How to Hire a Reputation Marketing Consultant

Managing and marketing your online reputation, let alone all the many other things that go along with your company's online marketing strategies, can take much more time than you, as a business owner, might have. You should hire a professional to handle this very important dimension of your business; after all it can have a tremendous impact on your business.

Hiring the right professional can make a huge difference to your business; these are the key areas that you should be looking at.

## Look For Expertise In These Three Key Areas

1. **Managing Reputation** - Is the practice of monitoring the reputation of your business, addressing content and customer feedback. Most reputation management is focused on managing and pushing down negative search results.

Examples are:

- ✓ Monitoring reviews that customers leave on review sites or social media
- ✓ Interpret analytic data and reporting
- ✓ Create management responses to customer reviews

- ✓ Respond and manage expectation of customers
- ✓ Using feedback manage staff service levels to provide the best customer service

## 2. **Building your business reputation**

Asking For Reviews and customer feedback

- ✓ Manage feedback review pages
- ✓ Create and manage customer surveys, analyze results
- ✓ Encourage customers to leave a review onsite via tablet
- ✓ Direct mail strategy through cards and postcard to ask for reviews
- ✓ Email customers within 48 hours of receiving products or services

## 3. **Marketing Reputation**

- ✓ Display positive reviews on Website
- ✓ Communicate reviews with potential and existing customers through emails and newsletters
- ✓ Publish reviews in sales materials
- ✓ Post social media - posting on your social media
- ✓ Video marketing - creating video review commercials

- ✓ Create graphics from your reviews and share them online
- ✓ Monitor and share user generated content, photos on social media

## A Few Terms You Should Understand



**Monitoring** - Do you know what people are saying about your company online? You should.



**Alerts** - Using a monitoring system, alerts are like a flag that lets you know instantly when there has been a mention of your company



**Building your online reputation** - This is the methodical work involved in creating a positive online reputation, step by step.



**Asking for online reviews** - This is perhaps one of the most important thing to understand. Make it easy for customers to submit their positive reviews.





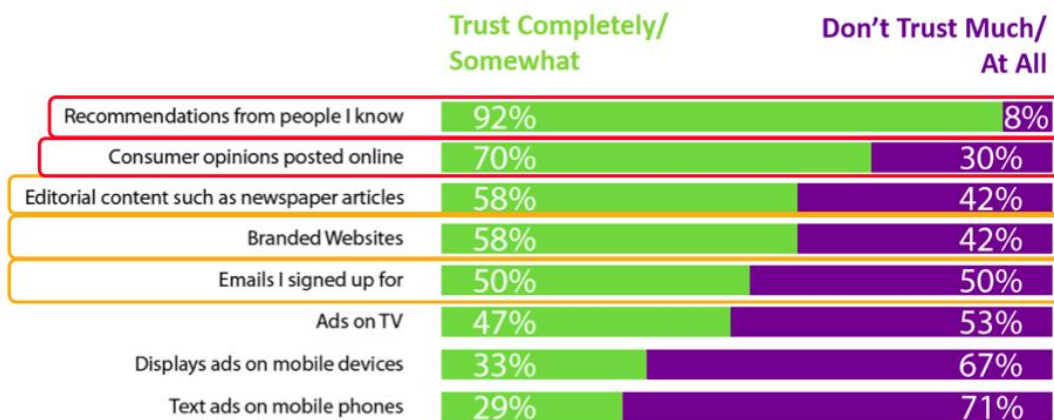
**Response management** - The discipline of responding to inquiries for information in timely, continual, and consistent fashion to optimize your contact.



**Leveraging your positive reviews** - Translating the positive reviews and comments into business opportunity.

## Biggest Shift In Marketing In 10 Years

To What Extent Do You Trust The Following Forms Of Advertising?



Source: Nielsen Global Trust in Advertising Survey, Q3 2011

Here are a few tips on what to look for when hiring a professional:

### ✓ Digital savvy

The world of Internet marketing and, more specifically, managing your online reputation, requires an in-depth knowledge of: SEO, page rankings, review sites, and where to look for comments. The nature of the digital world is fast paced and changing quickly from day to day, hire someone who is up on trends and has access to the latest and greatest research and tools.

## ✓ Analytical

Consultants must have in-depth knowledge and understanding of tracking tools and analytics - and more importantly how to employ these, and what does it mean to the bottom line of your business. How many people are visiting your site? Where are they coming from? How many people are leaving comments on your site and third-party sites, what are the responses to those reviews.

## Expert Insights On Reputation Management

Choosing The Right Strategy

## ✓ Manage

Manage Reputation

Build Reputation

Market Reputation

- Team Monitors Your Listings
- Send You Review Alerts
- Respond To Bad Reviews
- Detailed Reptuation Reporting
- Monthly Marketing Analysis
- Inspire Your Your Staff

Marketing Analysis

26 Review Shared On Your Social Networks

887 Combined Social Reach

Reviews Posted To Your Social Networks

facebook twitter LinkedIn foursquare

1 Business Shared 177 Social Reach

1 Review Shared

Reviews Posted To Your Other Sites

YouTube Dailymotion metacafe

Alert Staff

✓ Build

The image is a composite graphic illustrating reputation management services. On the left, a pie chart is divided into three segments: 'Manage Reputation' (grey), 'Build Reputation' (yellow, highlighted), and 'Market Reputation' (grey). Below the chart is a list of services, each preceded by a yellow folder icon:

- Train Team **Create A 5 Star Culture**
- Build **Employee Training Center**
- Feedback Survey **Pages**
- Custom Print **Media Center**
- Custom Mobile **Review App**
- Proprietary **Posting System**

To the right of the list is a collage of promotional materials. At the top, a photo shows a group of people in a meeting. Below it is a review snippet: "★★★★★ Review ... them. They are always on time." followed by "Recommend". A red arrow points from the 'Build Reputation' segment of the pie chart to a central video player. The video player displays the title "REPUTATION MARKETING TRAINING" and "Your Role In Reputation Marketing". Below the video, the text reads "4: Your Role In Reputation Marketing" and "In this training discover the secrets to creating a Reputation Marketing culture in your business! Whether you're support, sales, customer service, accounts receivable, or the business owner it's vital that everyone on the team engage with".

## ✓ Market



## ✓ Reviews Are The New World Of Mouth

87% of consumers go online after referral

## ✓ Your Website Role In Reputation

Video Reviews

The screenshot shows a video player interface. On the left, a hand holds a tablet displaying a Google search result for 'Tiffany & Co.' by Amanda T., featuring a five-star rating and a text review. On the right, a video player shows a review for 'Anderson Air' by Linda C., also with a five-star rating. The review text reads: 'Sean was very informative and timely as we gathered information and quotes to replace our AC system in our townhouse in Navarre. The installation team members were not only skilled, but truly a...more ...'. Below the review, it says 'Another 5 Star Customer'.

When customers land on your website they need to instantly see that you are the market leader not by what you say but by what your customers say.

**SUMMARY**

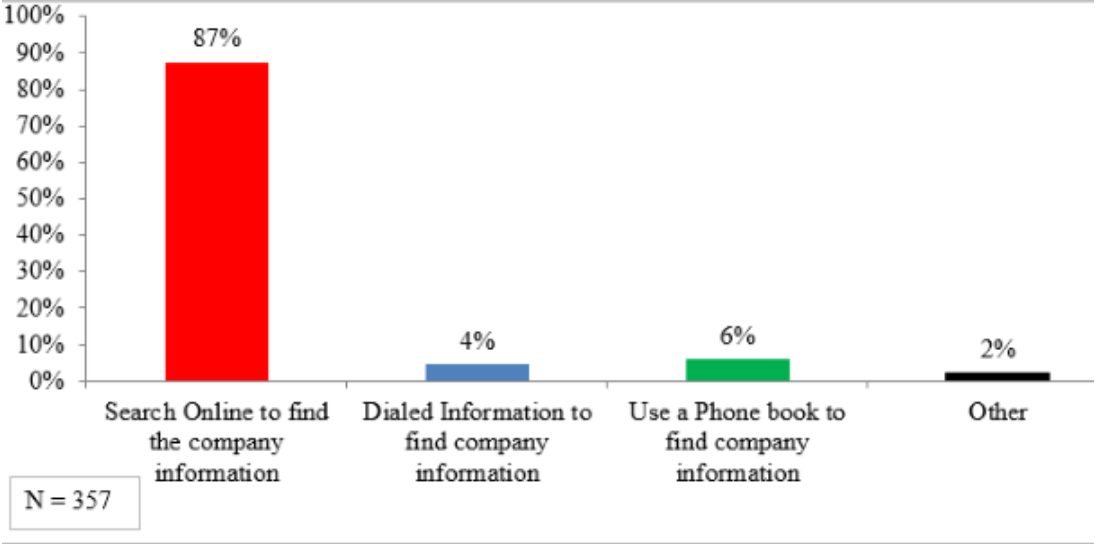


Figure 1, highlights that a majority (87%) of respondents searched online to find information on a company after they were referred to it by a friend or family member.

With effort and the guidance of a solid online reputation management company as your partner, there are a number of ways that you can build your online reputation. Ultimately, you want an engaged target audience that views your business as providing a 5 star product or service. With work, you will only be able to find a predominance of glowing reviews and comments about your business when searching the Web, and that is all your customers are going to find about you too.

# Create a System that Continually receives Feedback from Your Customers

**Let Us Know How We Did.. Leave Us A Review**

Full Name

Email

Phone

**Leave Us a Review**

Please Rate Your Experience :       Loved it

Please Leave Us A Review :

**SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK**

63% of consumers need to hear something at least three times before they believe it. Reputation.com, 2014<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Reputation.com, 2014

We've already discussed the process of searching for your company's name and all relevant information including employees, but here are some more tips to use when doing so.

Here are the critical steps that you must take in order to build your online reputation:



### **Monitoring search engine results**



### **Assessment and Benchmark**

- ✓ Try searching with quotes around your name and then without quotes
- ✓ Turn your location on and off.

This is how you assess your reputation rather than actually building it, but it is important to benchmark your starting point in order to measure your results moving forward.



### **Ongoing Assessment**

Continue to monitor search engine results so that you'll be able to see how your strategies and tactics are working and if they're having any effect. If you have year over year, month over month data use it to compare results.

### **Own your results**

Ideally, you want to own every search result, which means you want to be in control of the information that is available about your company online.

One way to do that is to build your company profiles – and lots of them! Whether it's a social networking site, a sharing site, your own website, or your blog. Making sure that all information, language, images and videos are consistent is a critical part of controlling the information about your company. And it's easy, you don't even need to spend a ton of money *buying* many of those addresses, you just need to create profiles. They'll be one of the first things that come up in the search results.

## **Set expectations for staff and for customers**

When building your online reputation, you need to have thought thru a plan on how you will respond to comments, it is also important to assign responsibility internally to who will be responsible for doing so. It's a good idea because it will help build your reputation. You need to let your staff know that every comment gets a response and you need to let your customers know that they'll get a response if they leave a question or a comment.

You will also need to set expectations and develop guidelines and policies for your staff. Anyone who works for your company at any of the consumer touch point needs to know how to handle a comment or complaint to make sure it does not wind up on a review site. They must know how to respond to comments, and what is considered an acceptable resolution.

## **Evaluate your website**

So it's your website, right? You know everything that's up there and what could you possibly learn from spending a few hours looking over every link, every category, comments, and such? If you're looking carefully, you'll probably learn a lot! Are there link opportunities that are being missed? Is the information current and up to date? Or has the technology and information in your field changed but your website content doesn't reflect that?

The most important thing about your website is that it reflects who you are and has that personal touch customers are now looking for online. Tell them the story of how your company came to be, add links to the personal LinkedIn profiles of



your staff members and include testimonials from past customers talking about how much your business helped them. All of this goes towards building your online reputation and one is just as important as the next.

### **Find negative comments and have them removed**

After finding negative mentions, ask the sites to remove them. Serious and established review sites like Yelp and Angie's List have strict guidelines about removing defamatory information and you should consult directly with their teams.

# How to Protect Your Online Reputation

Protecting your online reputation is important not just because of all the time and money that you have invested to build it up, but more importantly because you don't want anyone damaging it.

Here are some steps you can take to make sure that once you've built an online reputation for yourself, no one takes it away from you.

## ✓ Identify and prevent problems before they occur

As you build your online reputation you will have to keep track of more sites, profiles and domain names. Make sure that you have a plan in place to regularly schedule Using different social media management systems (outlined next) to make sure that if there's a problem, you know about it and you can address it in a timely manner.

## ✓ Listen to constructive criticism - Get Feed back from customers

Monitor and address your customer's complaints, listen to what customers have to say and respond to them kindly with a well thought out resolution to the issue. The chances are if you can resolve a problem, you'll win over a lifelong customer who will become your brand ambassador!

## ✓ Build credibility - Getting Reviews

online

website

social media

text image and video formats

# Best Business Practices

**58% of consumers said they have recently begun leaving more online reviews based on customer service.<sup>7</sup>**

Even though there's been a great deal about online reputation management covered in this report, chances are that you still have many questions about your online reputation management.

**Here are a few of the most common questions – and the answers to them:**

✓ **how important is customer privacy when it comes to my own online reputation?**

This really goes without saying and it's brought up just to prove the point that you must always, protect your customer's privacy. This means never selling or giving away their information, whether it's their credit card number or their email address. You are **never** to give out information about your customers without their permission.

✓ **what policies should I have in place regarding managing my online reputation and social networking sites?**

As mentioned earlier, you need to have policies and procedures in place for yourself and anyone else that work for your company. This will not only allow for regular, consistent content to be published, but it will also allow you to make sure that no offensive content is going up that could be damaging to your online reputation. Along with content policies, also make sure that your staff knows how to handle the privacy of friends and followers on those sites, as well as how to treat reviews, retweets, comments, videos, and images posted.

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<sup>7</sup> Loadspark.com, 2015

### ✓ how do I deal with a negative review?

If during your assessment of your online reputation you find negative reviews or comments, address them immediately. Ask for details on the problem, and assure them that you will research it, and also ask if there is anything you can do to help immediately. Whatever you do, make sure that you follow through. Negative reviews don't have to be a terrible thing – they are an opportunity to make positive changes.

**Secret: Respond to negative reviews not based on the person that left the review but for the potential prospect that is reading your response that might be your future customer.**

### ✓ is it unethical to ask someone to remove a negative review?

Once you have taken care of the situation it's completely understandable and acceptable to ask the individual to remove the negative comment or review. They may surprise you and not only remove it, but write a positive review on how your company is willing to go above and beyond when it comes to customer satisfaction!

### ✓ What if it's not? Is legal action ever required?

Defamation is serious and some of it can be illegal. If you've done everything you can to cease, it might be worth your while to hire a lawyer and take legal action. Keep in mind though, that this should only be done in the most severe cases when slanderous things are being said and someone is doing a great deal of damage to your company's reputation. If the website owner won't remove the content and you don't feel as though legal action is necessary, remember that you can always write a review outlining that website and that false information.

### ✓ Can I write reviews on behalf of others?

## **NO No no**

Why is this **BAD** - Because it violates the terms of service of all sites, and the FTC and more importantly it breaks your customers TRUST.

### ✓ **Rule of thumb: the person that has experienced your product or service must leave all reviews.**

There is something wrong with writing your own reviews and saying that they were written by somebody else. If you write a review on your own product, be sure to acknowledge that this is a company review and make sure that the language used reflects it. Never be misleading in your review, it is simply unethical and there's nothing that will damage your credibility or your reputation more than when customers find out that you lied in a review – and they will.

### ✓ **is it possible to have too many reviews?**

Lots of people wonder if there can be too many reviews online about their company or product. There really is no such thing as too many positive reviews and you'll know if you're getting in too deep and in too much trouble with too many negative reviews. Generally, as long as you have four positive reviews for every one negative, you'll be fine.

### ✓ **Can I incentivize to leave a review?**

The answer is simple, No, No

Some companies have done contests and others have plainly given discounts or other incentives for customers to leave positive reviews. No matter how small the incentive **YOU SHOULD NEVER INCENTIVISE ANYONE TO LEAVE REVIEWS.**

Incentivizing is bribing. And any company that suggests this to you can get you into serious legal trouble, and more importantly break the trust of your customers - something you never want to do.

# Questions to ask an Internet Marketing Consultant

There will be many questions that you're going to want to ask your Internet marketing consultant. These are some of the questions you should ask before you hire them. You specifically want to ask how they intend to manage your online reputation. Here are a few important ones to get you started.

## **What will you do to assess, build, manage and market my online reputation?**

- ✓ Searching for your company online
- ✓ Tracking results
- ✓ Tactics to address negative or indifferent results.

## **What sites would you use to post reviews and articles about my company and product?**

The various requirements for these sites differ, understanding this will help to get the best results and the most positive online reputation.

## **Track my online reputation**

Just like comments on social media, blogs offer the ability for you to have a 2-way conversation with your audience, and comments can be screened prior to publishing. Your consultant needs to know not only how to do this, but also how to track those results so that you can easily see and understand them.

- ✓ How will you get reviews from my customers?
- ✓ Do you have a CRM or system you give me access to see all my reviews?
- ✓ Where do you market my reviews?
- ✓ What do you charge to create Videos to market my reviews?
- ✓ Do you provide training for my staff in how to ask for reviews?

### **What analytics will you use to measure results and will you provide a monthly report?**

Analytics tell you the story of who, what when and where you are getting activity in a quantitative manner. Monthly reports allow for benchmarking to see what is working in your favor and what is not.

### **What are your fees and what do those include?**

Ask for a detailed proposal that outlines each and every service, hourly rates, and time assigned to each task, how many hours does this include and what is the fee schedule if the allotted hours are exceeded.

This will help you understand how much time the consultant managing your online reputation, will spend, and how much you'll be charged.

### **Do you have references?**

The consultant should be prepared to provide you with verifiable references. Make sure that you contact the references to find out how happy they were the consultant's services.



# Questions to Ask an Internet Marketing Consultant Checklist

- ✓ What are the main things you will do to assess and build my online reputation?
- ✓ What social networking sites do you use, and will you use, to help build my online reputation?
- ✓ What sites would you be using to post reviews and articles about my company and product?
- ✓ Will you write my content for me?
- ✓ How will you track my online reputation?
- ✓ If those strategies don't work, will there be any compensation?
- ✓ What digital news do you subscribe to?
- ✓ What fees do you charge and what do those include? Will it include my online reputation management?
- ✓ Do you have references?

# Best Business Practices Checklist

- ✓ How important is customer privacy when it comes to my online reputation?
- ✓ What policies should I have in place regarding managing my online reputation and social networking sites?
- ✓ How do I deal with a negative review?
- ✓ Is it unethical to ask someone to remove a negative review?
- ✓ Is it ethical to buy Facebook fans?
- ✓ Where can I post reviews?
- ✓ Should I mention competitors in my reviews?



Lets Put A Strategic Proposal Together  
To Help You Build A 5 Star Reputation  
And Market That Reputation To  
Get More Customers...

**When Can We Meet So I Can  
Show You Your Personalized  
Reputation Marketing Proposal?**

## Next Steps

We hope that you found this free report useful and that it has given you the information you need to help you better understand the importance of managing your online reputation and the strategies to employ to help you do just that.

**Please contact us today at for a free review of your Online Reputation.  
Schedule you meeting here: [Reputation Marketing Consult](#)**

# Recommended Resources

We know that managing your online reputation can be very stressful. While we hope this guide has provided you with everything you need to give you the confidence in managing your online reputation, we understand you may need further information and assistance. You can always contact us directly at:

## Media Spotlight Marketing

[www.MediaSpotlightMarketing.com](http://www.MediaSpotlightMarketing.com)

9900 Wilbur May Pkwy Ste 706

Reno, NV 89521

[info@MediaSpotlightMarketing.com](mailto:info@MediaSpotlightMarketing.com)

Find out what your reputation is today



**Additional Resources:**

**In 2009, the FTC rewrote its guidelines governing endorsements:**

**<http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2009/10/endortest.shtm>**

Read them for yourself, the guidelines are quite explicit as to the transparency needed when any type of money, gifts, etc. change hands in any type of endorsement.

**In 2010, Google included this line in their review guidelines:**

“Do not accept reviews written for money or other incentives”