

3 ways corporates can respond to a social media crisis

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Social media can be unpredictable at times. With more than 23 million users now spread across social platforms like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, it's more important than ever to know not only what's being said about your brand, but also where and how you should address it. This is something the business and branding world refers to as 'reputation management'.



Image source: Gallo/Getty Images.

Though social media is a great place to share love for your brand, followers can also bad mouth your company with a single comment, leaving you vulnerable to their harmful posts and tweets. It means nothing for a customer or user to make a quick statement online — but it means everything to the individual or brand they might be talking about.



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How you decide to handle the negative comments can mean the difference between going down in flames and moving forward graciously. You may even turn some of those negative voices into new brand advocates if you play your cards right.

1. Listen carefully

Stopping a problem in its tracks (and building lasting relationships) starts with social listening. Unfortunately, an angry customer won't always speak directly to you. To make sure you don't miss important feedback, if you haven't done so already, set up notifications on your various social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) to alert you when comments are made about your business. This way, you know instantly when someone has mentioned your business, favourably or not. The first place you'll hear about a problem is likely social media.

2. Respond quickly and honestly

Time is critical when managing negative reviews online. Keep in mind that customers will be engaging with the review during the time prior to your response and they will not come back to read your comments. Act quickly and be honest about the comment. Don't sound derogatory and don't be partial. Apologise and speak honestly about the situation. Respond quickly and do not engage in back and forth.

3. Go public first, private second

Digital marketing expert Jennifer Goff advises that "responding publicly is essential to showcasing your brand as transparent, attentive, and helpful." After you post a public response, Goff adds, you can "move the conversation into a private message in order to provide a solution of greater detail, or to ask for sensitive information, like an account number or identifying details" to solve a customer issue.

ABOUT MAMAHLATSE MAROKANE

I'm a creative and hardworking young woman, focused on growing professionally. I have proven success with implementation of marketing strategies and the creation and execution of event activations, marketing and PR campaigns.

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