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How often do you check your social media accounts? Or, Google your name? If you don't track them, you're missing out on important information about your online presence.

Your online reputation matters. And it's something you should take seriously. In today's society, where everyone seems connected, staying ahead of the game with your brand is essential. It could be the difference between a thriving business and one that struggles to get leads or sales.

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Why is your online reputation important?

[Online reputation](#) is essential, because it helps establish your business as a trusted brand. A good reputation speaks volumes about the products and services companies offer. Also, it conveys information about how well those businesses conduct themselves. An online reputation gives people insight into what others think about your business. This transparency allows consumers to decide where to spend their money.

A good reputation also makes life easier for consumers. They know they can trust you, so they are likely to buy from you. And, when it comes to customer service, a positive online reputation is like having a personal shopper on call 24/7. Consumers appreciate being able to ask questions directly.

A good reputation not only builds your business, but it adds stability for the long term. A solid reputation attracts new customers, keeps them long-term, and promotes strong referrals for years.



Here are five ways to improve your online reputation:

Track your online reputation and presence

Monitoring your brand online helps you know what your brand image looks like right now. Whether you are a local business or a multinational corporation, monitoring lets you see how others perceive your brand.

Monitoring is the first step – if you don't know what's working and what's not, it's tough to work trying to improve something. You have to start somewhere, though. So figure out what information you want to collect and set up a system.

What you check depends on where you are present. Are people talking about you on social media, or on forums or review platforms like TripAdvisor or Yelp? Do you even know? If you're a restaurant, bar, hotel, or tourist attraction, then you need to at least look into

monitoring reviews.

Have an online review strategy

People first see online reviews whenever they search for your business. But, while it seems like most customers do not leave reviews, [only 20% of customers have never left a review](#) for a business. So, we must always provide an excellent experience to have our customers consider reviewing us.

There are several ways to measure the impact of online reviews. Have you ever tried to sell something over the phone? You've likely noticed that the number of sales increased once you got a few glowing testimonials. This experience is called the [halo effect](#), and it's the same thing happening online. Reviews give us a glimpse into the experience of others, and when those reviews are positive, we tend to trust them even more.

But let's say you have a great product or service. What if no one writes a review? How does that affect your brand? Here's why you should care:

When people look up businesses online, they'll often type in keywords like "reviews" or "Google reviews" for local companies. If you don't have online reviews, potential customers will likely assume that no one uses your business, or even worse, it just doesn't exist. Guess what happens when that assumption becomes a reality? People stop searching for your business.

Luckily, [reputation software](#) exists that can make the capture of these reviews more effortless for you. Investing in software like this makes the review capture process simple. Apps and software help market those reviews to customers considering your product or service through social media and your website.



Work with influencers with an excellent online reputation

Influencer marketing is a powerful tool for building brand awareness. Influencer marketing involves partnering with individuals with a large social media following. These influential people often share content related to your product or services. As a result, they are a valuable resource for promoting your company and improving your brand's online reputation.

Here are a few things to consider when choosing influencers for your campaigns:

1. Reach

The number one thing to think about when selecting influencers is their reach. You want to choose someone whose audience aligns with yours. For example, if your target market is millennials, look for influencers with large millennial audiences. For women over 50, select influencers who appeal to older demographics.

2. Reputation

Another essential factor to consider is influence. Look for people who have built up a solid social media following. This following demonstrates that they're engaged and build relationships with their followers. They're likely to respond well to requests for collaboration.

Tools like [Upfluence](#) and [Grin](#) help connect you with influencers and help build relationships with them. These tools can positively impact your brand.

3. Relevancy

To ensure the best performance from influencer marketing, make sure the influencer is relevant to your company's products or services.

Be consistent and deliver on your promises.

Every day we hear stories of businesses that promised something and didn't deliver. Whether it's a product that doesn't work or poor service, people don't trust companies that aren't honest with what they say. If someone buys from you, they expect to receive what they purchased, and nothing less.

To build your online reputation, ensure you follow through on every commitment. You can start small by offering discounts to loyal customers, [free shipping](#), or giving away products as gifts. Whatever you do, make sure you keep your word.

Track your competitors' online reputation and strategies

Your online reputation is always going to be relative to your competitors. So you need to know what they're doing. This practice is called gathering '[competitive intelligence](#),' and it's crucial for your business. If they're doing well, you may want to copy their strategies. If they're struggling, you want to avoid making similar mistakes. But it's important to remember that most companies don't compete head-to-head; they work together. So while you might see similarities in how they present themselves online, there are many ways to approach a brand strategy.

There are three main reasons why you'd want to track your competition. First, you'll gain insight into what works for them. Second, you'll notice trends and patterns that you can use to make decisions about your marketing. Finally, you'll learn what doesn't work for them, and avoid those mistakes yourself.

The first step is deciding whether you want to focus on one or many competitors. Some businesses choose to look at ten different competitors. Others take a different approach and look at five. Regardless of your chosen method, you'll still need to identify what makes each competitor unique.



Long to build, quick to ruin

Warren Buffett said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it." Your online reputation is like a long-term relationship. You don't want to start on the wrong foot, so you do everything possible to ensure you're perceived positively. But if something goes wrong, you've got to act quickly to fix it.

▪ **Be Honest & Reliable**

You're probably aware that honesty and reliability go hand in hand. If someone says one thing, does another and lies about it, there's no way to trust them again. People are quick to judge, so you'd better be careful how you behave.

▪ **Don't Ignore Complaints**

It's easy to ignore negative feedback when it comes to your business. After all, you're busy running the show. But ignoring criticism will only hurt your reputation. Instead, when someone has an issue with your company, you should address it immediately.

▪ **Respond To Negative Feedback**

When you receive negative feedback, try to understand why it happened. Perhaps, you did something unintentionally or weren't as clear about your services as you thought. Either way, try to figure out why the customer took issue with what you posted. Then, address the situation appropriately.

In conclusion, someone has likely already written about you online if you have a business. Look up your business on Google, social media, and review websites. After monitoring:

- **Create an online review strategy**
- **Work with relevant influencers**
- **Always be consistent**
- **Track your competitors**

If you haven't taken action yet to improve your reputation, now might be the perfect time to start. Enhancing your reputation helps grow your business for years to come.



About the Author: Jamie Cohen is a professional content writer passionate about digital marketing and entrepreneurship. Jamie has been building online businesses for over the last decade. But, life

isn't all about internet marketing for Jamie. Instead, taking trips to the dog parks with his two Boston Terriers occupies most of his time.