



## **EVC Marketing: Reputation Management & Marketing Checklist**

This checklist provides a starting point for you to review what your customers and potential customers are saying about your brand, products and services.

EVC Marketing can provide a more comprehensive review assessment and provide added support with an action plan and strategy to enhance your reputation or where needed, address immediate problems or concerns.

### **1 Introduction to Reputation Marketing**

Let us begin with some truths.

**Truth One:** Search engines and social media platforms are NOT interested in your reputation. Their business process is to return results based on relevance to the search terms. They do not deliver any preference based on positive or negative tone or content.

**Truth Two:** Poor reviews, negative comments, dislikes, derogatory posts and material have a considerable impact on the potential client perception of your brand and future client contact or lead generation opportunities.

Think about how you use search to find and buy online.

- Would you book an apartment with 1-star negative reviews or the 5-star glowing testimonial?
- Would you buy online where other purchasers have placed negative feedback?
- Would you dine in a restaurant with multiple social media posts about poor service or food?

***Reputation Marketing is no longer a nice-to-have option. It is a pre-requisite of every business regardless of your business size, industry sector, location, product or service.***

**What is the difference between Reputation Management & Reputation Marketing?**

## 2 Reputation Management

Is there a difference? Absolutely.

In simple terms, **Reputation Management** is digital or online crisis management.

These are often reactive campaigns that take place after an event that negatively impacts your brand such as poor reviews, comments or social posts.

Where you have a crisis or frequent negative feedback, Reputation Management can work to improve your status, increase your positive visibility and counter any negativity.

You are required to manage the situation with positive actions to make any negativity less visible.

We live in a digital world which, sadly, includes trolls and cyber-bullying and where it is all too easy to be negative – often hidden behind persona anonymity. Such reviews, posts and comments can often mean the difference between success and failure for many businesses – regardless of size.

Reputation Management can involve countering negative or harmful content or, at worst, implementation of a full crisis campaign. Serious brand damage control must include every element that influences the public perception of your brand product and business.

There are numerous processes and options to implement a crisis campaign. Reputation Management is all about accentuating the positive – and the need to act quickly, where a positive and professional brand content response is paramount.

A common misconception is that Reputation Management is only necessary when there is a crisis. But rather than waiting for a catastrophe, companies should be working proactively to create the kind of robust and trustworthy reputation that will help them deal with potential problems should they occur.

That is where **Reputation Marketing** presents a more planned prevention strategy.

## 3 Reputation Marketing

How is Reputation Marketing different?

Without doubt, the ability to prevent negative digital situation in the first place is by far a more efficient way to spend your time and effort.

Reputation Marketing is all about a sustained strategy of positive content, images, video, comments, reviews, likes, share, mentions and testimonials.

Being positive can help prevent the need for Reputation Management. And a higher review rating WILL attract more business and profit!

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**Digital Reputation Marketing benefits from a multitude of techniques, tools and strategies. The data available can help you to develop strategies, promote and share positive content and increase your AUTHORITY and TRUST.**

#### **4 Your Reputation Marketing Checklist**

##### **Your Customer Perspective**

Do your research

##### **What do your customers REALLY think about you?**

The ease of social media anonymity (keyboard warriors) often means clients find it more comfortable to comment and post without direct or face-to-face interaction.

##### **What do they say?**

Do not focus on the negative!

Many clients will post positive reviews, comments and posts. These are not only great to receive but are also a source of excellent content to use within your marketing promotion.

Yes, there will be occasions when the negative feedback outweighs positive commentary.

The key here is that you MUST respond:

##### **As quickly as possible.**

Respond on the same platform the comment was written highlighting to other viewers that you have done so and can help nullify any negative impression.

##### **As professionally as possible.**

Do not argue, even if you disagree with the comment. Try to move to a direct conversation via phone or email.

##### **As clearly and concise as possible.**

A simple thank you for your feedback, we will look into the matter and respond directly as soon as possible, is an excellent way to react and, if the resolution is positive post the details (without confidential information) on the same platform.

##### **Where do they say it?**

Focus responses on the originating platform but do not forget to check additional social media and review channels where the comment or post could be shared and visible.

## **When and how often?**

Timing is critical to ensure a successful resolution. It is one reason why you need a Reputation Management and Marketing plan. If you have a persistent stream of same or similar issues, consider how you can address the problem and post details on the relevant platforms of your actions.

## **Why have they said it?**

Do not just dismiss their comments. They might be valid. You may enjoy some quick wins by acknowledging the issue. Pay attention and listen to their feedback, improve your processes and customer service and then, with some humility, thank them for their feedback and confirm you will now do better.

Consider what you want people to say about you, create a planned vision and support your staff to make it happen.

***Remember: A poor reputation can lead to the exclusion of future sales opportunities from the client you did not even know existed. They are already with your competitors!***

## **Listen to the conversation**

Whatever resources, tools, software or systems you elect to use, you need to listen to the conversations about your brand, your product and business sector. Indeed, you need to be part of that conversation.

Post advice, educational and informative content, answer reviewers' questions and be visible.

## **5 Where are you now? A Reputation Audit**

You need to conduct an audit.

Consider search optimisation/search engines, social media channels and review sites. What keywords or phrases would your potential clients use to find your product or services?

Search Google – are you visible? Are your competitors more visible than you?

## **Audit Steps**

1. Search for your brand name
2. Search for your brand name and your main product or service keyword
3. Search for your brand name and a wide range of product and service keywords
4. Search brand name with location
5. Search again using 2, 3 & 4 WITHOUT your brand name
6. Repeat the above using your competitors brand name
7. Collate the good and bad for all of the above
8. Review your website and content
9. Audit all marketing content you both own and control
10. Review your social profiles: Do you deliver a concise and consistent brand and message?
11. Review all your content and images for quality and pre-post moderation processes
12. Review your content creation, calendars, messaging and tone of voice/brand persona
13. Do you have on-site Frequently Asked Questions section delivering comprehensive answers to commonplace feedback posts or complaints?
14. Review and align your marketing, reputation and SEO strategies
15. Create a crisis plan and team for Reputation Management responses
16. Are your staff trained, up-to-date or informed of brand campaigns?
17. Do you have a process for addressing issues that require legal intervention?
18. Do you have the right resources, tools, software or systems to identify and monitor your brand performance?

## **6 Is your brand a search authority?**

Developing a positive brand reputation takes work. Countering negative perceptions takes even more work.

Be prepared. Take action now.

Undertake a comprehensive audit of your digital authority.

Include your brand, keywords and competitors.

Assess negative and positive sentiments.

Own the perception of your digital assets and be part of the conversation.

Develop a strategy that includes your website, new quality content, video, social media, email, PR and search.

Have a team in place to listen, monitor, manage, respond and repair. And they need to have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and management moderation.

## **7 How EVC Marketing can help**

EVC Marketing can help you address the planning and strategy required to succeed in today's fast-paced, always-on digital world.

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