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ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT (ORM)

Your branding is how people perceive or recall your business. With brands posting on social media as if they're people, businesses are increasingly humanizing themselves. As such, you should take advantage of the opportunities to monitor and respond to feedback, which is now expected behavior.

On platforms like Yelp or Google, regularly monitor for new reviews and respond (good and bad). If the reviews mention information/viewpoints you have not considered, then you can also make changes accordingly. If a review is exceedingly negative or inaccurate, you should publicly clear the air (without being combative). Offer to make things right if the reviewer seems open to returning - this doesn't have to be as heavy-handed as a free meal, but a personal invitation or a free appetizer/dessert can go a long way; just be sure to handle the specific details privately. People are surprisingly understanding once they experience a personal connection.

Local listings vendors and dedicated reputation monitoring services can help you stay abreast of new content related to your business. They can also help you set up a system where customers will receive emails or text messages after they visit your location to encourage them to leave feedback (see chapter 8 for more information on local SEO vendors).

At the very least, you should set up Google alerts to automatically receive new mentions of your business. You should also turn on your notifications across social media networks for

any mentions of your business name or profile handle. This will provide you with an ongoing temperature of customer perceptions over time.