



Reputation Management Checklist

Doing – *Building a reputation in the first place*

- Watch out for defamatory material, in other words information that may tend to discredit or malign your company or brand
- Be aware of the fact that belittling or demeaning your competitors could be seen as unlawful competition, particularly where there is no real justification for your comments
- Always ensure that any content you use is yours or licensed for use to eliminate the risk of being portrayed as a content thief
- Be credible in what you say online
- Make sure that if someone is writing or posting on your behalf that they are 100% clear on how to represent you and your brand. If not they can bring you and your brand into disrepute or even land you in court.
- Authenticity is vital and much too often underrated and completely ignored. It can mean the difference between credibility and ridicule.

Listening – *Listening to what the marketplace is saying about you or your brand*

- Track mentions of your brand, products, company and key personnel to ensure that anything you need to act upon reaches your attention in good time
- The decision to listen to customers online must be accompanied by a serious commitment if it is going to be effective
- The more you listen the more potential pitfalls and legal potholes are avoidable
- Keep records



- If you do pick up defamatory postings, capture them as screenshots or PDF screen captures along with the date and time of mention.
- Make a note of defamers' profile information on services they defame you/your brand/your company on and capture any personal information which may have been published, it might not be there later.
- Capture copies of any discussion about defamatory material (for example, discussions on forums, comments, re-tweets and other re-postings)

Engaging – *Engaging with the marketplace*

- Give meaningful and sincere feedback, even it is just to say you'll get back to a customer (then do it)
- Lawyers are not your first port of call, they should be your second or third (lawyers very rarely understand social media well enough to effectively guide you when an issue first arises)
- Pick a lawyer who understands social media and your goals on the social Web and involve your lawyer in your campaign and engagement initiatives (these initiatives have legal ramifications so you should make sure you understand and cater for them in advance)
- Consider the consequences of your responses, particularly the disproportionate responses
- Be prepared for your communication with your customer to become public and tailor your communications accordingly
- Maintain detailed records of all interactions with customers, they may become litigious
- Develop and implement appropriate and effective policies to help guide how you and your business engages with customers, critics and other stakeholders.