MANAGING NEGATIVE MENTIONS

Social Media Strategies for Effective Management of Negative Comments and Reviews

In today's digital age, social media has become a powerful tool for businesses to connect with their audience, build their brand, and increase their online presence.

However, with the benefits of social media come its pitfalls. Negative comments and reviews on social media can damage business reputation, discourage potential customers, and ultimately hurt an organisations bottom line.

In this article, we will explore the prevalence of negative online mentions and provide practical tips on how organisations can effectively deal with negative comments and reviews on social media to protect their brand and maintain their online reputation.

Social media marketing has become an essential tool for businesses across all industries, including manufacturing, engineering and heavy industries. Social media platforms offer numerous benefits, such as increased brand awareness, website traffic, lead generation, sales, and the promotion of content, which can help these businesses to showcase their work, achievements, products, projects, employees and to attract new audiences (for more information on these benefits read our article 'Leveraging the Power of Social Media in Manufacturing, Engineering and Heavy Industries' (1)).

However, negative comments and reviews on social media are a common barrier to adoption.

According to a survey conducted by Yellow (2), 22% of small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) listed negative comments and reviews as their greatest frustration with social media. This concern is not unfounded, as Review Trackers found, in their 2022 report, that 94% of consumers say a bad review has convinced them to avoid a business (3).
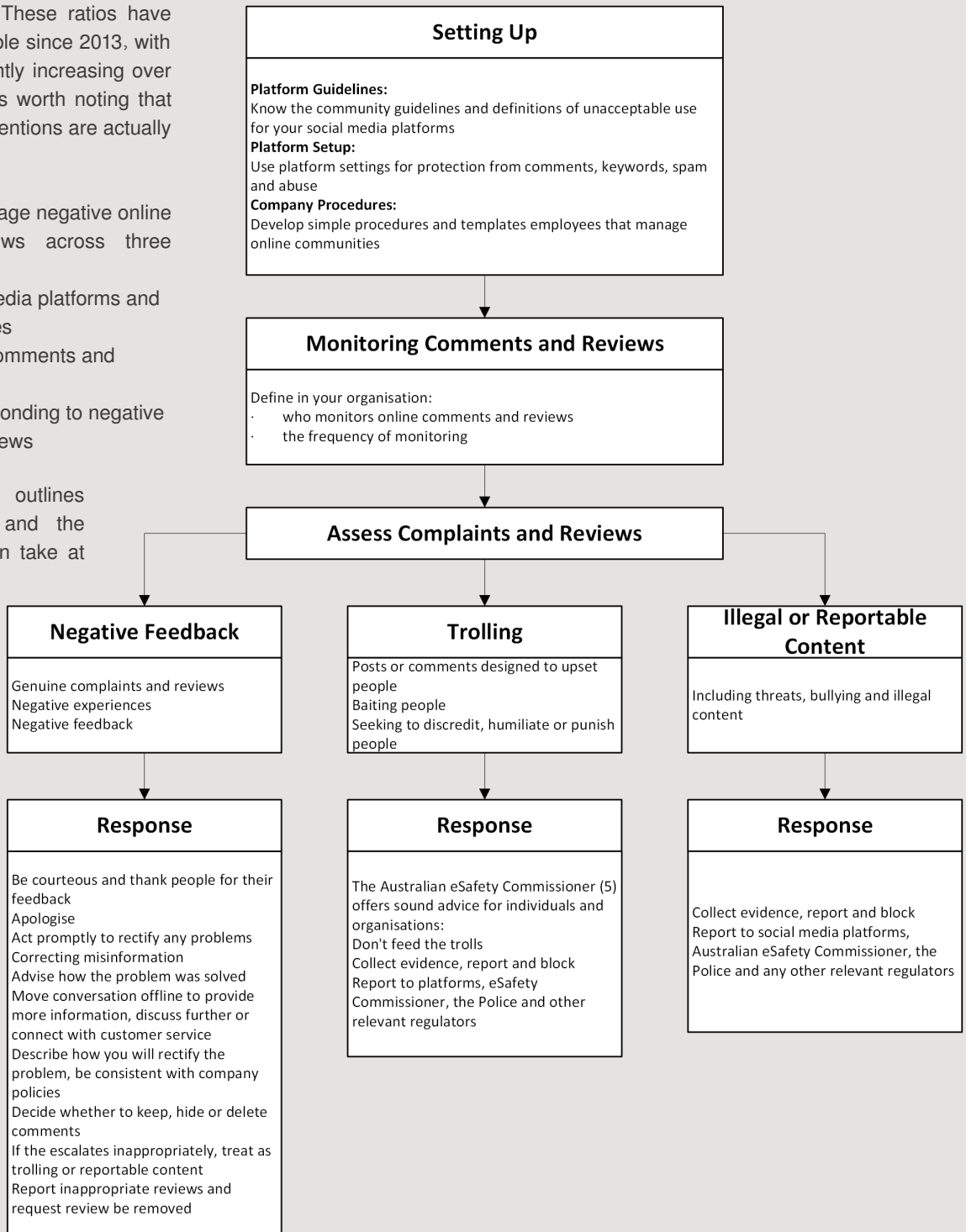
According to Mention (4), a social monitoring and listening software provider, out of over 2 billion mentions analysed on behalf of their clients, only 6.4% were negative, 6.51% were positive, and 87.09% were neutral. These ratios have remained relatively stable since 2013, with negative mentions slightly increasing over time. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the majority of online mentions are actually neutral.

Organisations can manage negative online comments and reviews across three phases:

1. Setting up social media platforms and company procedures
2. Monitoring online comments and reviews
3. Assessing and responding to negative complaints and reviews

The flowchart below outlines these three phases and the steps organisations can take at each phase.

Setting Up

Platform Guidelines:
Know the community guidelines and definitions of unacceptable use for your social media platforms
Platform Setup:
Use platform settings for protection from comments, keywords, spam and abuse
Company Procedures:
Develop simple procedures and templates employees that manage online communities

Monitoring Comments and Reviews

Define in your organisation:
· who monitors online comments and reviews
· the frequency of monitoring

Assess Complaints and Reviews

Negative Feedback

Genuine complaints and reviews
Negative experiences
Negative feedback

Trolling

Posts or comments designed to upset people
Baiting people
Seeking to discredit, humiliate or punish people

Illegal or Reportable Content

Including threats, bullying and illegal content

Response

Be courteous and thank people for their feedback
Apologise
Act promptly to rectify any problems
Correcting misinformation
Advise how the problem was solved
Move conversation offline to provide more information, discuss further or connect with customer service
Describe how you will rectify the problem, be consistent with company policies
Decide whether to keep, hide or delete comments
If the escalates inappropriately, treat as trolling or reportable content
Report inappropriate reviews and request review be removed

Response

The Australian eSafety Commissioner (5) offers sound advice for individuals and organisations:
Don't feed the trolls
Collect evidence, report and block
Report to platforms, eSafety Commissioner, the Police and other relevant regulators

Response

Collect evidence, report and block
Report to social media platforms, Australian eSafety Commissioner, the Police and any other relevant regulators

Negative online reviews

are treated similarly to negative comments, although you may not be able to delete a negative review. According to Review Trackers (3), 88% of online reviews come from four sites: Google (73%), Yelp (6%), Facebook (3%), and Tripadvisor (3%). You can respond to reviews using the same principles as negative comments or, if needed, you can ask these sites to remove negative, fake or inappropriate reviews. You will need to report the review to the platform in the first instance. Not all platforms will agree to take down a negative review. If that is the case, third party organisations such as netreputation.com (6) may be able to assist.

Data from Review Trackers (3) found that '53% of customers expect businesses to respond to negative reviews within a week'.

They also found that 'responsive industry leaders get higher ratings and that faster review response times are closely linked to having a positive reputation'.

At the end of this document is a table highlighting social media channel features for managing negative mentions including relevant links to each platform.

There are benefits from handling complaints and negative reviews well. Nick Nunley sums it up well in his article '5 Do's When Responding to Negative Comments'(7), 'When you deal with complaints effectively, disgruntled customers will tell their friends how awesome your company is and what great customer service you offer. And they'll encourage their friends to buy from you. They have now become an evangelist for your brand. Talk about powerful (and don't forget, free) marketing! You've established brand loyalty and trust to a greater degree than you would've had if there had never been a complaint.

Just remember that no matter how perfect you try making your brand look, mistakes happen, customers get upset and complain. With the growth of social media nowadays your customers now expect to be able to lodge these complaints and get

resolutions via social media. Think of it as an opportunity to prove how great your company is – or not. The choice is yours.'

By implementing effective social media strategies and taking a proactive approach to managing negative comments and reviews, businesses can protect their reputation and increase their online presence. By promptly addressing negative feedback with transparency and professionalism, organisations can demonstrate their commitment to customer satisfaction and build trust with their audience. Don't let negative comments hold you back from reaping the benefits of social media marketing – take action and establish a strong online presence today.

Social Media Channel	Features for Managing Negative Mentions
YouTube	- Comment permissions include: allow all comments, hold potentially inappropriate comments for review, hold all comments for review and disable comments - You can hide comments from specific commentators - Words can be blocked - These can be set for your whole YouTube channel or for an individual video - Spam and abuse can be reported - Click here for more help from YouTube
TikTok	- Comment settings can be set to everyone, followers, followers that follow you back or no one. - Comments can be filtered which will hide comments until you release them - Spam, offensive comments and keywords - Comments can be deleted either individually or in bulk up to 100 comments - Users can be blocked - Click here for guidelines on managing comments - Click here for TIkTok's options to report inappropriate behaviour
SnapChat	- Owners of public stories can preview, respond and share comments on their public story - Users can be blocked - Click here to adjust privacy settings for your account - A range of abuses can be reported in the app - click here
Meta (Facebook and Instagram)	- Comment moderation is set at the page level - Enable the 'Strong' profanity filter and keep the 'Hide offensive comments' filter on - Comment moderation can block posts, comments or specific words and emojis - Use the manual filter to block keywords, phrases and emojis - Comments can be hidden or deleted. Comments can also be turned off in Advanced settings - Users can be reported. - Other accounts can be restricted, blocked or removed as followers - Click here for Meta's best practice guide on comment moderation
Google Reviews	- Inappropriate Google reviews can be reported to Google. You will need to outline how the review is in breach of Google's policy - You can report anonymous negative reviews to Google - Click here to request a review be removed from Google
LinkedIn	- Inappropriate content, messages or safety concerns can be reported to LinkedIn here - You can unfollow, mute, remove group members and block members - Comments can be deleted, turned off and reported here

Sources

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6. https://www.netreputation.com/negative-review-online/
7. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-dos-when-responding-negative-comments-nick-nunley/

About Shirley Gray Social:

Shirley Gray Social specialises in helping businesses of all sizes achieve their marketing goals through effective social media strategies.
Our services include social media marketing strategy development, auditing, consulting, and training. With our help, you can enhance your social media presence and confidently use social media marketing to achieve your objectives.
To learn more about how we can help you with your social media marketing, visit our website or contact us today.

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