

# 10 Q&A regarding How to Manage a Reputation Crisis



We help you Build & Market your Reputation

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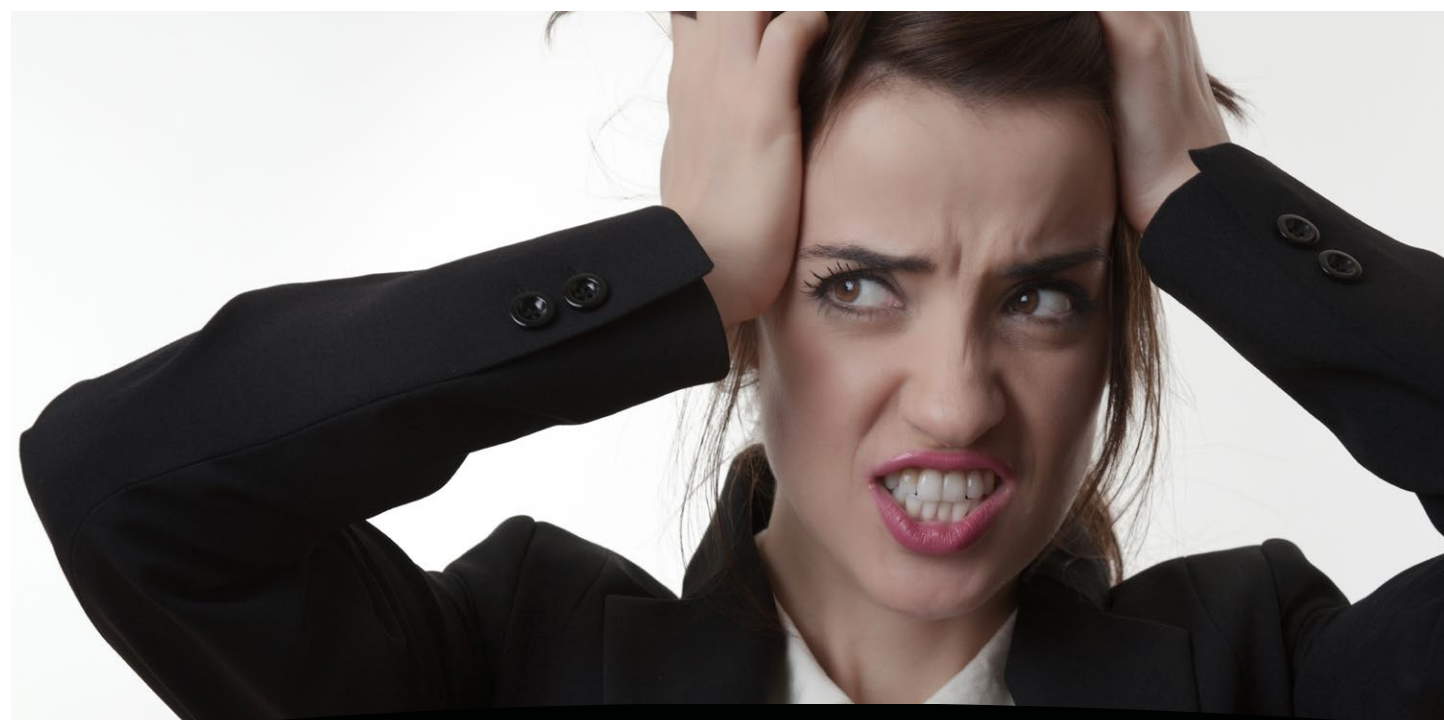
## How to Manage a Reputation Crisis?

As a business owner who is constantly looking for more customers to come through the door, your reputation has never mattered more.

Unprecedented amounts of commerce is happening on the Internet, which means companies that have poor reputations will be completely looked past by discerning consumers.

Repairing and suppressing negative comments and reviews should be an ongoing process at your company. Never let it get so bad that you have a bad reputation in the first place.

However, if that ship has already sailed, there are some questions you are likely to have about repairing your online reputation.



## 1. Bad Reputation: How to Fix it?

The first step in fixing your reputation is to assess the damage. You can't begin to fix your reputation if you don't know where your reputation currently stands.

**Almost every business will have something negative said about them online,** it is inevitable.

You can never please everyone. That being said, you shouldn't have a mostly negative reputation; and if you do, you should start to consider the best way to make it more positive.

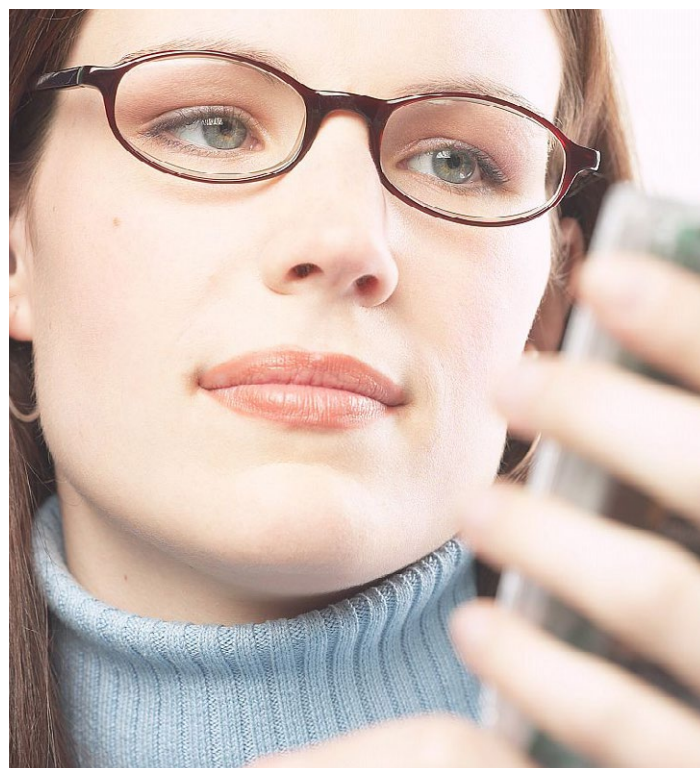
Finding out what people are saying about you is one of the things you should almost constantly be doing.

The reason why that is true, as you'll read in the questions that follow, is that you need to be there to counteract those negative words with positive ones. **Prevention is always the best step in addressing these kinds of issues.**

## 2. How Do We Find Out Exactly What is Being Said About Us Online?

The obvious answer to this question is to go search for your business name on major search engines like Google, Yahoo! and Bing. This is always a great first step. Simple as it seems, the most important things being said about you are the ones that rank highest in the search results.

This means that the first few items that show up in the search results will also be **the first thing all of your potential customers see** when they look up your business as well.



Obviously, websites aren't the only place people could be talking about you. There's social media to think about as well. The good news is that both Twitter and Facebook, the largest social networks, have excellent searching capabilities.

You can do a search on Twitter not only for your Twitter handle, but for people mentioning your business name, too.

A great way to monitor this is to **create a Twitter search** for your company, and make that search your primary Twitter feed; this will give you real-time knowledge of what is being said about you on Twitter.

On Facebook, the searching is a little more difficult. Most of the time people will leave their negative comments on your Facebook page.

If they leave it somewhere else on Facebook, searching for mentions can only be done through the regular search engine.



### 3. We Have a Lot of Negative Comments – Are We Doomed?

**Fixing your reputation can be done,** although it can be difficult to do without help. If you find yourself in the situation where your reputation is on the line, you should know that it does not have to be permanent and can be repaired.

The question you may be asking yourself is “why does it matter?” It matters because **negative mentions can significantly harm your business.**

Even if your business isn’t based online, people use the Internet to find out about everything they buy – and this includes scoping out local businesses before they choose to use their products and/or services.

If you are based on the Internet, a negative reputation could spell disaster for your business if you don’t do something about it.

The most important thing is that you do not expect things to change overnight. **Fixing a damaged online reputation takes a lot of time and work;** but it will be worth it in the end.

#### **So... What Can We Do To Get Rid of Negative Comments and Reviews?**

**There is no apparatus available for you to remove negative comments** published elsewhere on the web. If the comments are made on your Facebook account or directly on your website, you can remove those.

The best way to start the process of repairing your reputation is to **start publishing and promoting more positive content.** This will help drive down the flood of negative comments you may be getting in the search engine results.

You can begin to get yourself back in shape by focusing your efforts to get your new content higher in the search engines by using white hat SEO practices.

Hire a firm to help you get your SEO up to scratch so your content will be higher ranked than sites that contain the negativity.

When it comes to negative information floating around online about your company, **one of the best forms of defence is to respond to it in a positive way** so your potential customers can see that you care.



## 4. We don't have any Reviews about us, Does it Matter?

Yes! **The situation is serious and must be corrected as soon as possible...**

**You have no control:**

**One negative review posted tomorrow can tarnish your reputation.**

Put yourself for a few moments in a potential customer's shoes. To make his choice, he has no reference or reviews on you.

**Whereas if on your competitors' side, reviews were filed, particularly if they are positive, the balance will tip in their favour...**

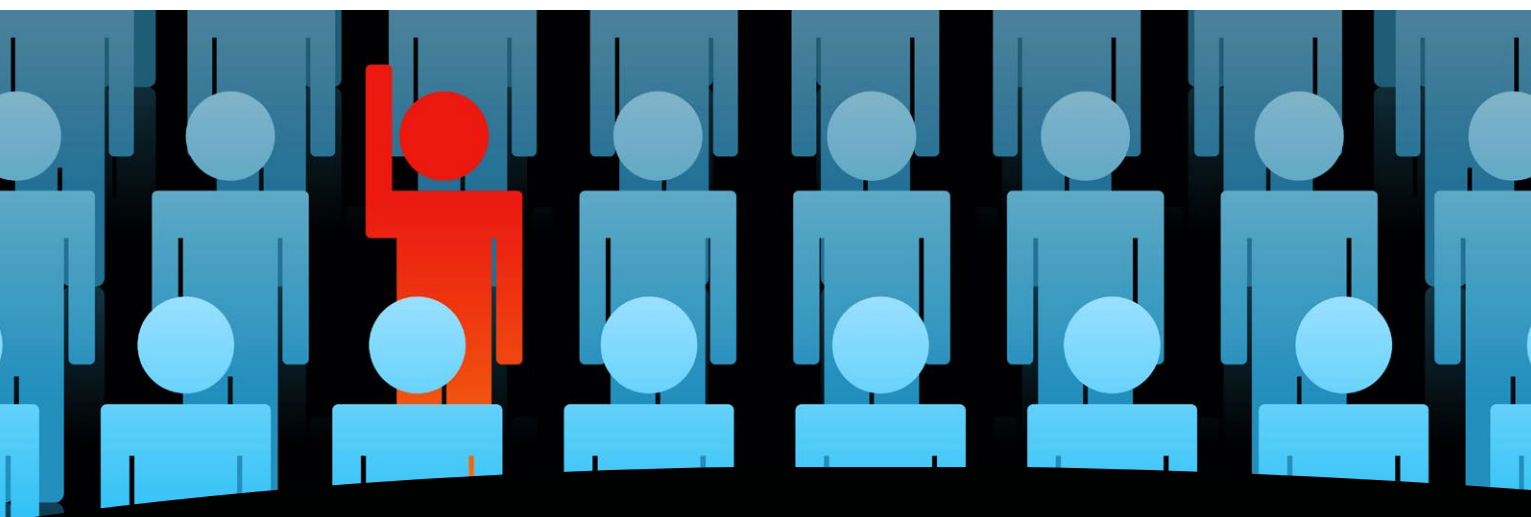
Without realizing it, you **may miss on many customers**. Therefore you must solicit feedback from your customers and publish systematically on all available media. Otherwise, **adverse effects could be similar to too many negative opinions (or even more devastating!).**



## 5. We Think One of Our Competitors Is Slamming Us Online – What Can We Do About it?

If you really think a competitor is the main source of the negative comments, chances are you have little recourse unless you can prove it. If you do have evidence, you might have a case for slander or libel. If you can't prove it, then you're stuck with combating the negative comments with more positive comments that are higher ranked.

Throw your resources behind **Reputation Marketing**. The one thing you don't want to do is get into a back and forth battle with your competitors. Don't sink to their level, especially if you don't have proof that they are the culprits of the bad things being said about you.



## 6. How Can We Prevent Further Negative Remarks from Customers?



Everyone is going to have a bad review crop up about them once in a while. There is little you can do about this. You can't impress or please everyone all of the time.

**What you can do is provide a way for your customers to vent their frustration in a non-public way.**

Things like surveys, polls, direct comment forms, and toll-free voicemail lines are great ways for your customers to let you know how you're doing without taking their grievances elsewhere. If you show that you're open to receive criticism, your customers are less likely to feel the need to let others know about the problems they had.

Granted, these methods won't stop all public negative comments. Some people, especially those who think they've had

a really bad experience, will take their negativity and post about it publicly. There is little you can do about this.



## 7. Should We Try to Reach Out to Negative Reviewers – or Leave Them Alone?

**This is a definite YES!** The best way to get a former customer to stop spreading their negative views is to **try to fix whatever went wrong.**

Not only does this show that **you care about their situation and experience,** but it allows you to fix whatever went wrong so it doesn't happen again.

Since their first impression wasn't the greatest, apparently, **you need to ensure that the impression you leave them with is a positive one.** It might not bring them back as a customer, but it might keep them from spreading more negativity about your business online. It might even **cause them to leave a follow up review telling about how you came to their aid, and fixed their problem.**

How can you do this?

If you find a review left in a forum or on a blog post, **reach out to the author via comments or directly in the thread.**

Private message them if you can to see how you can make the situation better. Ask how you can improve, this will let them know that their experience wasn't ignored.

Also ask them what the response to their solution meant to them.

This will let you know if you've made enough of a difference to make them happy. If all they want to do is scream and type in caps lock, chances are nothing you do will make a difference.



## 8. How Can We Get Our Happy Customers to Leave Reviews For Us?

The best way to encourage your happy customers to leave positive reviews for you is to **simply ask.** You should also make it as easy as possible to do so.

**Ask for testimonials and display them in a prominent place on your website.**

This will make new customers think more about the positive attributes of your business.

The problem with testimonials on your website is that people don't often believe they are genuine, even if they in fact are. Since that's the case, you should **ask for reviews on social media or 3rd party review sites.**

These usually come across as more trustworthy to potential new customers.

You can encourage people to give positive tweets and Facebook posts by making it easy to leave those types of posts. Tweet buttons prominently displayed by products and on the order completed page.

Access to a 'like' button and links to your Facebook page can make it easier and more probable that someone who has had a good experience will share those feelings on these popular social platforms where they can be seen by others.

## 9. How Much Time and Effort Goes Into Repairing Our Reputation?

A lot of times, no matter how you do it, **the best way is to not face a poor reputation on your own.**

All of the steps that are necessary to begin to repair your reputation can take months to propagate across the Internet, and that's if you do them all properly.

The one thing that is true about the Internet is that it never forgets. **You can't erase your reputation** from the Internet, so don't even try.

The thing to do is to start a **Reputation Marketing** campaign to increase your positives and reduce your negatives.

Also try to get your positive content to rank higher on the search engines so people come to your sites instead of the bad reviews first.

Finally, don't do it on your own. While technically possible, it can lead to more heart-ache than reward, in addition to countless hours of lost time that you could have spent running your business and making your customers happy.

This leads us on to the final question, which we've already practically answered:



## 10. Fixing Our Reputation Seems Like a Daunting Task – Should We Hire An Expert?

**The answer to this is depends.** Do you already have what it takes to repair your reputation?

Do you know all of the steps involved in making sure that positive reviews aren't

erased by review sites because they are all new?

Are you prepared to invest the hours, days and weeks learning and understanding how to properly restore your reputation?





If you have the spare time and nothing more important to do, then by all means go for it! But **doing a reputation repair on your own is dicey**, since it requires several steps that need to be done exactly right in order for it to succeed. Hiring someone who does these things professionally can shave months off of the process; it will also ensure that the job is going to be done efficiently.

**It is therefore advisable to delegate this task to an expert, who will know each step of reputation optimization by heart. Choose an agency that specializes in Reputation Marketing.**

You need to ensure that you have taken the proper steps to mitigate any negative comments or reviews you have found online surrounding your business, while constantly monitoring for any new negativity surrounding your brand.

In the end, **your reputation is everything. You need to protect it.** The best way to do this is to be vigilant and proactive when it comes to situations regarding unhappy customers.

Give them a way to vent that frustration to you in a non-public manner. If they do take their grievance and promote it publicly, do your best to contact them and make the situation better. Ask them questions, and do whatever it takes to make it right in their eyes (within reason, of course).

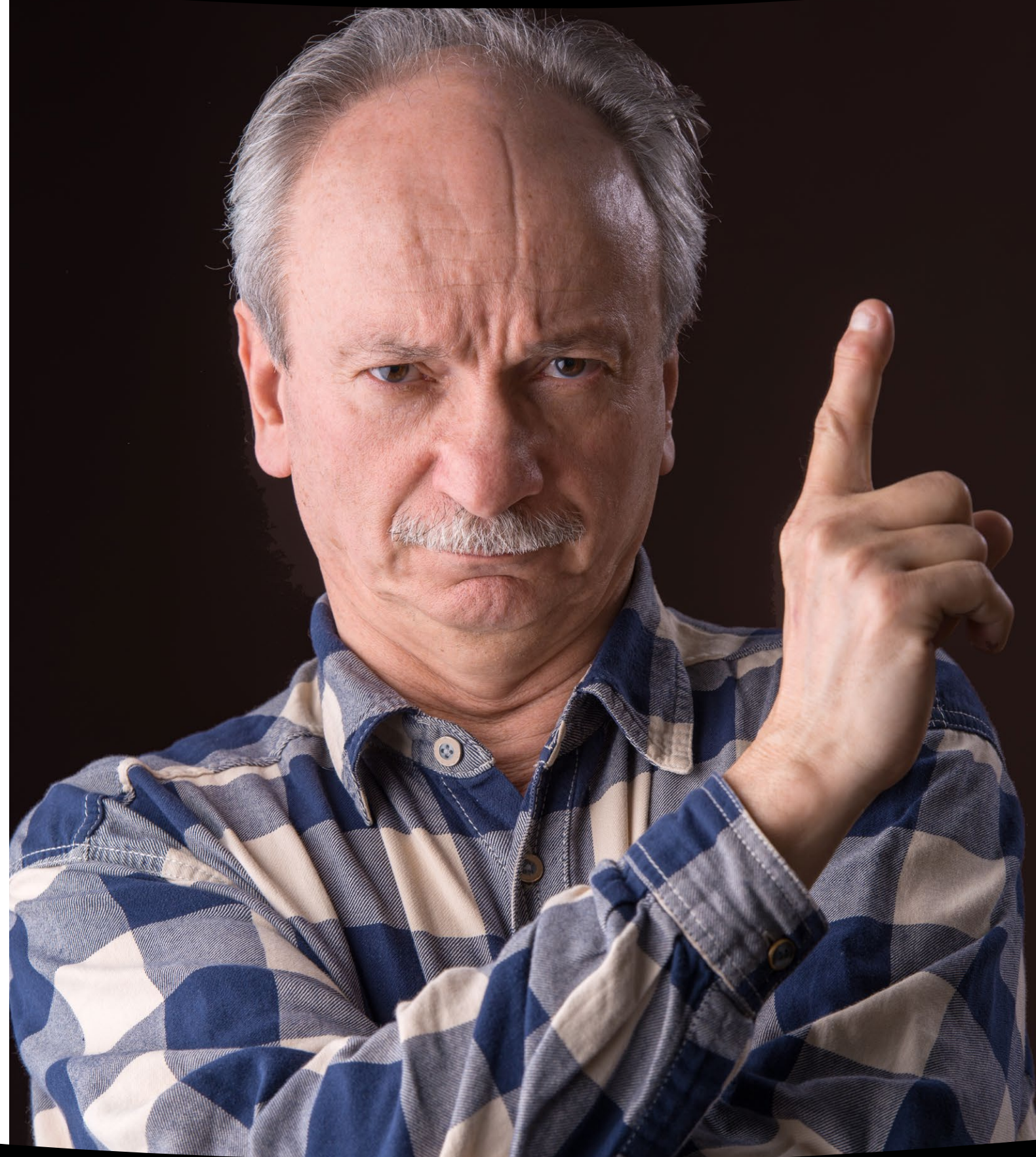
Learn from your mistakes. If you have a bad review that was really warranted, take it to heart and never let it happen again. Let that customer know that their experience has been taken seriously and that you'll take measures to improve. Never make promises you can't keep, however. Know your limits, and do your best to meet your customer's expectations.

**If your reputation needs a cleanup, hire a Reputation Marketing Agency to help you.** Don't do it on your own. Not only does this take too long, but there's a chance you might do something that only makes your online reputation worse.

Hiring someone at the outset of your problems could also save you time and money in the long run, since you'll be nipping some of those potential problems in the bud before they get any bigger and harder to handle.



**BEDANKT!** **GRAZIE!** **MERCI!**  
**KÖSZÖNJÜK!** **DANKE!** **OBGRIGADO!**  
**HVALA!** **TAKK!** **TACK!** **PALDIES!**  
**THANK YOU!**



# About Reputation Aegis:

The Aegis, as stated in the Iliad by Homer, is the shield of Athena and Zeus. The concept of doing something “under someone’s Aegis” means doing something under the protection of a powerful, knowledgeable source. We are that source!

Reputation Aegis is a full-featured reputation management platform designed to help businesses:

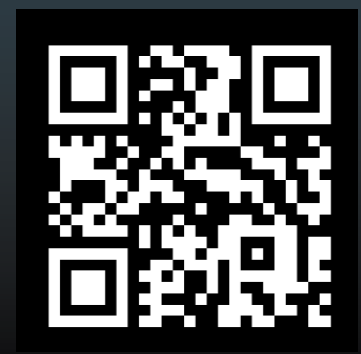
- establish a 5-star reputation,
- market it both online and off,
- and monitor any changes.

Your reputation is everything! Don't leave it to chance. Learn more by visiting us at: [www.reputationaegis.com](http://www.reputationaegis.com)



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[www.maxxcom.com](http://www.maxxcom.com)

MAXXCOM Internet  
2 Rue des Trois Mâts  
56260 LARMOR-PLAGE - FRANCE

DIRECT LINES:

U.S.A. : 240-949-4999  
CANADA : 514-613-2255  
UK : 020 3322 7199  
FRANCE : 09 50 43 43 55  
SPAIN : 911 43 65 99

OTHER COUNTRIES:  
+33 9 50 43 43 55