



Online **Reputation Management**

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

86%

**of consumers read reviews for
local businesses (including 95%
of people aged 18-34)**

[\(Bright Local, 2018\)](#)



WHAT IS REPUTATION MANAGEMENT?

Whether your business is a small local café or a large corporation, whether it has two staff members or two hundred, and whether your business has one location or several, your customers are talking about your business online. In the world we live in today, information can rapidly be disseminated and thoughts about your business can become viral. These thoughts and commentary from your customers have serious potential to either create or destroy the reputation of your business within minutes.

Having a strong online reputation has a serious impact on the bottom line of your business. Research indicates that businesses that have secured Online Reputation Management programs are likely to grow significantly faster than businesses that do not actively engage with Online Reputation Management exercises.

Engaging in Online Reputation Management activities can significantly assist in ensuring your business' success in the online world. Some key Online Reputation Management activities include:

- Effectively utilising social media platforms to engage with local communities as well as your business' target audience;
- Managing and responding to online reviews, including offering suitable solutions when complaints occur;
- Ensuring that your business listings, information and contact details are accurate and up to date;
- Using social media and other platforms to conduct consumer surveys and utilising such feedback to implement better business practices.



WHAT IS REPUTATION MANAGEMENT?

Overall, Online Reputation Management refers to the controlling and influencing of your business' reputation. These services help to implement strategies that will influence and shape the way that consumers view your business, which in turn promotes public opinion about the business' reputation, products and services. In turn, this leads to a better online reputation for your business and a greater likelihood that your sales will increase, resulting in more revenue.



WHY DO MY BUSINESS REVIEWS MATTER?

1. Statistics indicate that approximately 85% of consumers research a product or service online prior to engaging with the business, booking a service or purchasing a product. 88% of these consumers trust the online reviews that they find for a business and this influences their decision as to whether or not they will engage ([Anderson, 2014](#)).
2. Word of mouth has always been a significant influencer of a business' success; the advance in technology gives consumers access to thousands of other people's opinions instantly. 7 out of 10 consumers trust the reviews they read online just as much as they trust word of mouth ([Anderson, 2014](#)).
3. Your average rating online can significantly affect your revenue. The difference between a five star and a four star rating, or even a four star and a three star rating, can be up to 5-9% variations in revenue. 72% of consumers have said that positive reviews make them more trustworthy of a local business and more likely to engage with the products and services on offer ([Anderson, 2014](#)).

89%

**of consumers read businesses'
responses to reviews**

(Bright Local, 2018)



WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT MAKE?

Online Reputation Management can make a significant difference to the way consumers view your business, as well as the revenue your business generates. A simple way to improve the overall reputation of a business is to focus on managing and responding to consumer reviews. Here are some ways that Online Reputation Management can assist:

1. Requesting reviews from consumers to generate positive reviews – asking consumers to review a product or service can significantly boost the number of positive reviews that your business experiences. It is a commonly known fact that most consumers will talk about a negative experience with a business more than they will talk about a positive one. If a consumer has a negative experience with your business, he or she is likely to go out of his or her way to tell people, whereas a positive experience may not spark them to share feedback or a review. Actively asking consumers to review your business can increase the number of positive reviews significantly with active ongoing management. The bottom line is, your consumers need to be prompted to give you positive feedback, and this can be done by actively requesting reviews from consumers.
2. Requesting reviews from consumers to reduce the proportion of negative reviews – Online Reputation Management services that specifically request reviews from consumers are significantly likely to boost the number of positive reviews that a business receives, which in turn reduces the proportion of negative reviews that have been given to a business online. Statistics indicate that Online Reputation Management services that actively seek reviews from consumers can cause the proportion of negative reviews to reduce by up to 60% ([Anderson, 2014](#)). In a sense, the influx of positive reviews from active requests help to increase the average rating of the business, leading to a better overall online reputation.



WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT MAKE?

3. Sending emails following a sale or service to generate reviews – the best time to request a review from a consumer is shortly after they have experienced the product or service from the business. This is when the consumer will have the most information to contribute to the review and thus an accurate review of the business will be provided. Statistics indicate that there is a higher response rate when emails are sent to consumers the day after the purchase of a product or use of a service; consumers are 9% more likely to open the email and twice as likely to leave a review when emails are sent the following day as opposed to weeks or months later (Local Consumer Survey).
4. Posting content on different social media platforms – social media is used by a large number of consumers around the world, and for many target audiences, this is one of the first ways a consumer will interact with a business' product or service. Regular posting on social media platforms demonstrates to the consumer that the business is active and is actively engaging with the target audience to promote their products and services. Active social media accounts generate a greater volume of friendly consumer interactions and also encourages more positive reviews. Furthermore, it is common for people to place a 'comment' or review on a social media post; this gives valuable feedback and insight from consumers about a business' activities and is a good source of business intelligence, which can be used to influence business operations, products and services. Online Reputation Management services can assist in helping you grow your business online and can help advertise your products and services to your target audience.