



GUIDE

The Complete Guide to Reputation Score and Online Reputation Management

Contents

Introduction	3
What is Online Reputation Management?	7
Who Needs Online Reputation Management?	17
Key Components of Your Reputation Score	27
How to Launch an ORM Program in Your Organization	39
Buyers Guide — What to Look For in an ORM Platform	48
Resources	54

Introduction

Who is this guide for?

Online reputation management (ORM) is the practice of engaging with the community of people who use a search engine to find you, rate and review your company, comment on your social media pages or otherwise interact with your company online. A strong ORM program ensures that online business listings are accurate, so people can find you. It enables you to harness the power of the conversations happening about you online to reinforce your brand promise.

Before the internet and social media, consumers learned about companies and products by asking friends, family members, neighbors and colleagues. Advertising, print directories, word of mouth and celebrity endorsements helped companies attract business. Corporate websites were digital renditions of the traditional media world in which companies talked, consumers listened and Information flowed one way. This meant companies could easily control complaints and negative sentiment.



The balance of power has shifted

Today, the power rests with consumers, who are co-creating brands online via star ratings and reviews on search engines, social media and review sites.

That balance of power shifted with the rise of Google, Facebook, Twitter and review sites that favor the voice of customers over the call of brand marketers. Corporate websites no longer dominate the conversation, and a company's marketing team and sales reps aren't the only ones doing the talking.

5.0 ★★★★★

Auto shop is totally reliable. I wouldn't go anywhere else

What is Reputation Score?

Reputation Score is an indispensable index for every business and the true measure of how your business is found, chosen and experienced online and onsite.

Measured on a scale of 100 to 1,000 and calculated using 9 unique factors, your Reputation Score helps you understand how your business and locations stand relative to competitors and best-in-class benchmarks.



Here are the components of your Reputation Score:

- Star ratings
- Review volume
- Review spread
- Review recency
- Review length
- Search impressions
- Listing accuracy

Why Should You Care About Your Reputation Score?

Reviews, comments and social media posts are everywhere you turn when looking for information about a business on the web — and they have a significant influence on buyer perception and behavior.

The impact of such awareness cannot be overstated. Your online reputation is a reflection of your overall brand and business health, and a leading indicator of future growth — or lack thereof.

For example, recent [research](#) on U.S. auto dealerships revealed that:

$$+150^{\text{PTS}} = +6\%$$

Reputation Score Avg. seasonally-adjusted sales

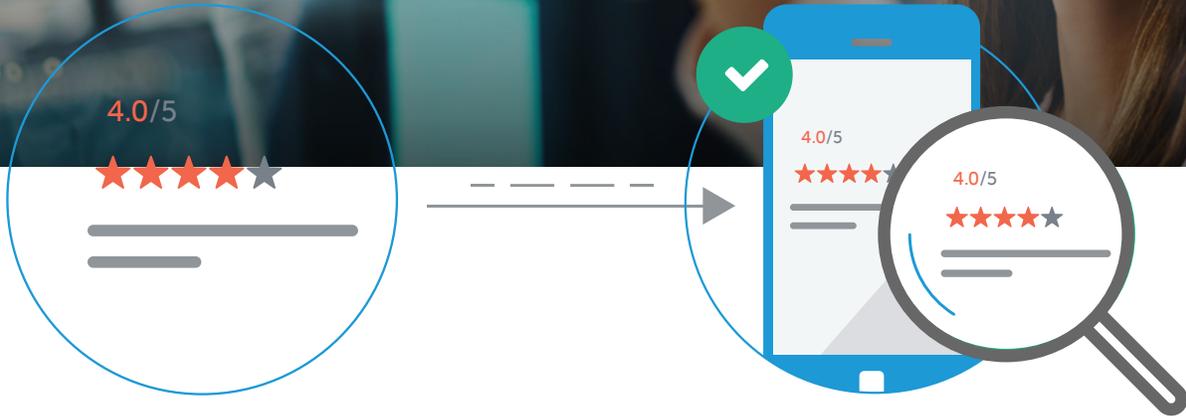
$$-150^{\text{PTS}} = -13\%$$

Reputation Score Revenue

Similar findings apply in other industries, such as healthcare, where sentiment about your brand on social media is a leading indicator of CAHPS scores, which affect reimbursement rates.

Connection Between Reputation and Revenue

This direct connection between reputation and revenue, combined with the viral nature of today's information flow, means a reputation can be created or destroyed in a micro-moment, and the impact on business can be profound.



What's Inside This Guide?

This guide provides a comprehensive foundation for managing your company's online reputation and improving your Reputation Score. It's an essential resource to help you learn how to fully leverage ORM to:

- Improve your online visibility
- Attract new customers
- Increase customer conversion and retention
- Cultivate a loyal base of advocates
- Improve quality and efficiency of operations
- Drive revenue

Who Should Read This Guide?

Professionals in the fields of marketing, customer service, operations, compliance and risk, product development or any line of work that necessitates an understanding of how their company's online reputation can help or hurt business performance — will find this guide valuable.

What is Online Reputation Management?

Background and Drivers

The internet has reinvented the way most people read, learn, shop, research and communicate. The dominance of online search (especially Google), the ubiquity of mobile devices, consumer impatience and the need for companies to more effectively engage in online conversations have combined forces to completely transform the relationship between brands and customers.

Mobile Search

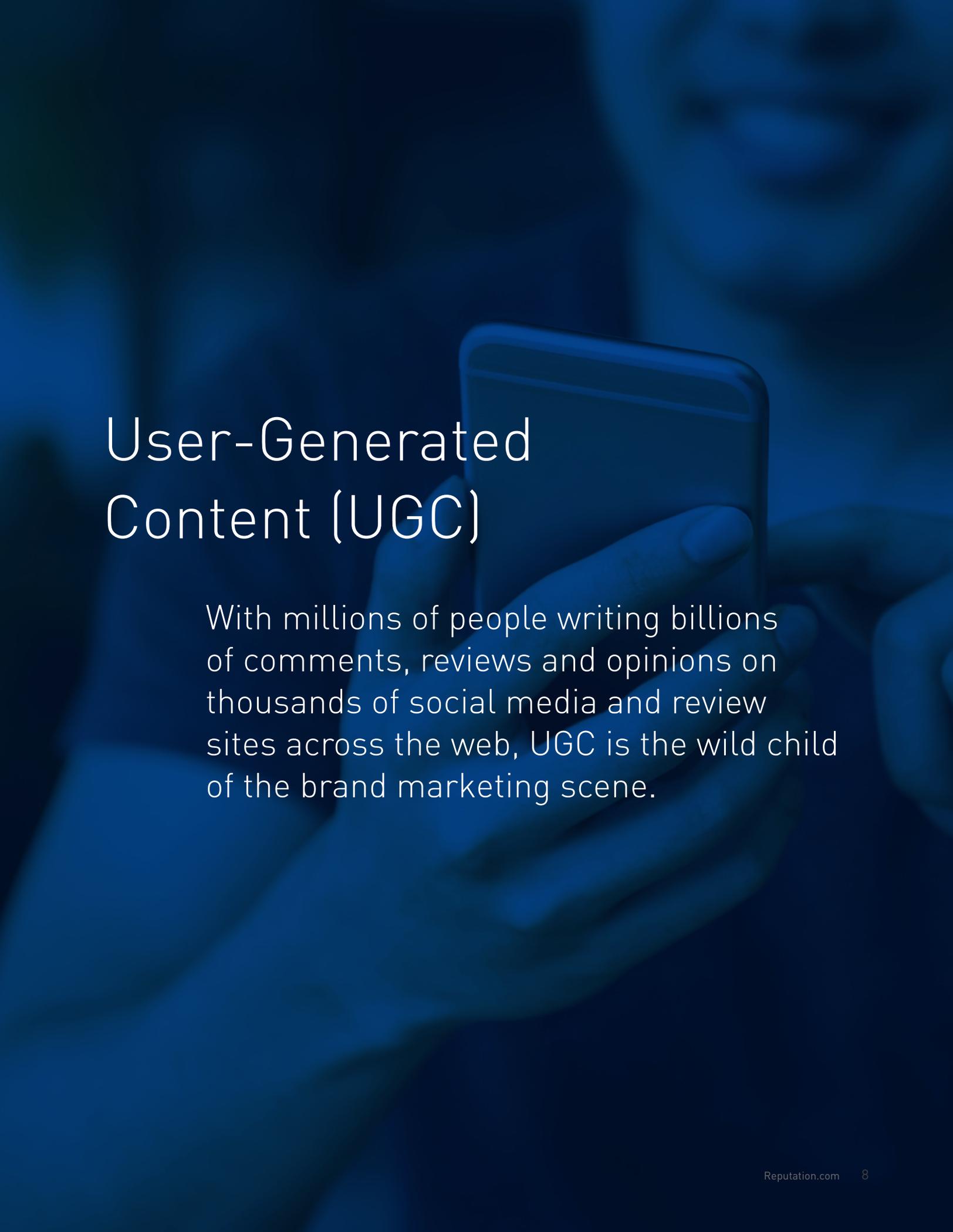
Perhaps even more significant than the evolution of search engines is the role played by smartphones in daily life. Between search and mobile, consumers constantly seek faster access to whatever they're looking for, with the minimum amount of effort.



User-Generated Content

The most potent — and complex — new player in the brand marketing game, is user-generated content (UGC). With millions of people writing billions of comments, reviews and opinions on thousands of social media and review sites across the globe, UGC is the wild child of the brand marketing scene.

With little to no control over what people post, businesses of all types and sizes have been forced to come up with new strategies and tools to tame the fast-growing child — or ignore at their peril.

A person is holding a smartphone, looking at the screen. The image is overlaid with a blue tint and contains text. The text is white and reads: "User-Generated Content (UGC)" followed by a paragraph: "With millions of people writing billions of comments, reviews and opinions on thousands of social media and review sites across the web, UGC is the wild child of the brand marketing scene." The background is a blurred image of a person's face and hands holding a phone.

User-Generated Content (UGC)

With millions of people writing billions of comments, reviews and opinions on thousands of social media and review sites across the web, UGC is the wild child of the brand marketing scene.



“Hey Siri, bring up directions to the closest gas station.”

Google [reports](#) that “near me” searches on mobile have increased 34-fold since 2011.

First Impressions Count

Chances are, the first time potential customers are introduced to you, they’re not looking at your strategically placed ads or your keyword-rich website, or even your beautiful product images.

They’re looking at a search engine results page (SERP). If you happen to appear toward the top of the page, searchers will see your basic company information, such as location, phone number, hours and a short description of your business.

Buyers are self-directed, highly informed and comfortable making fast decisions based on the first thing they see online. If they don’t like what they see, they move on — and you’ve missed your best chance to draw them in.

Now more than ever, you don’t get a second chance to make a first impression.

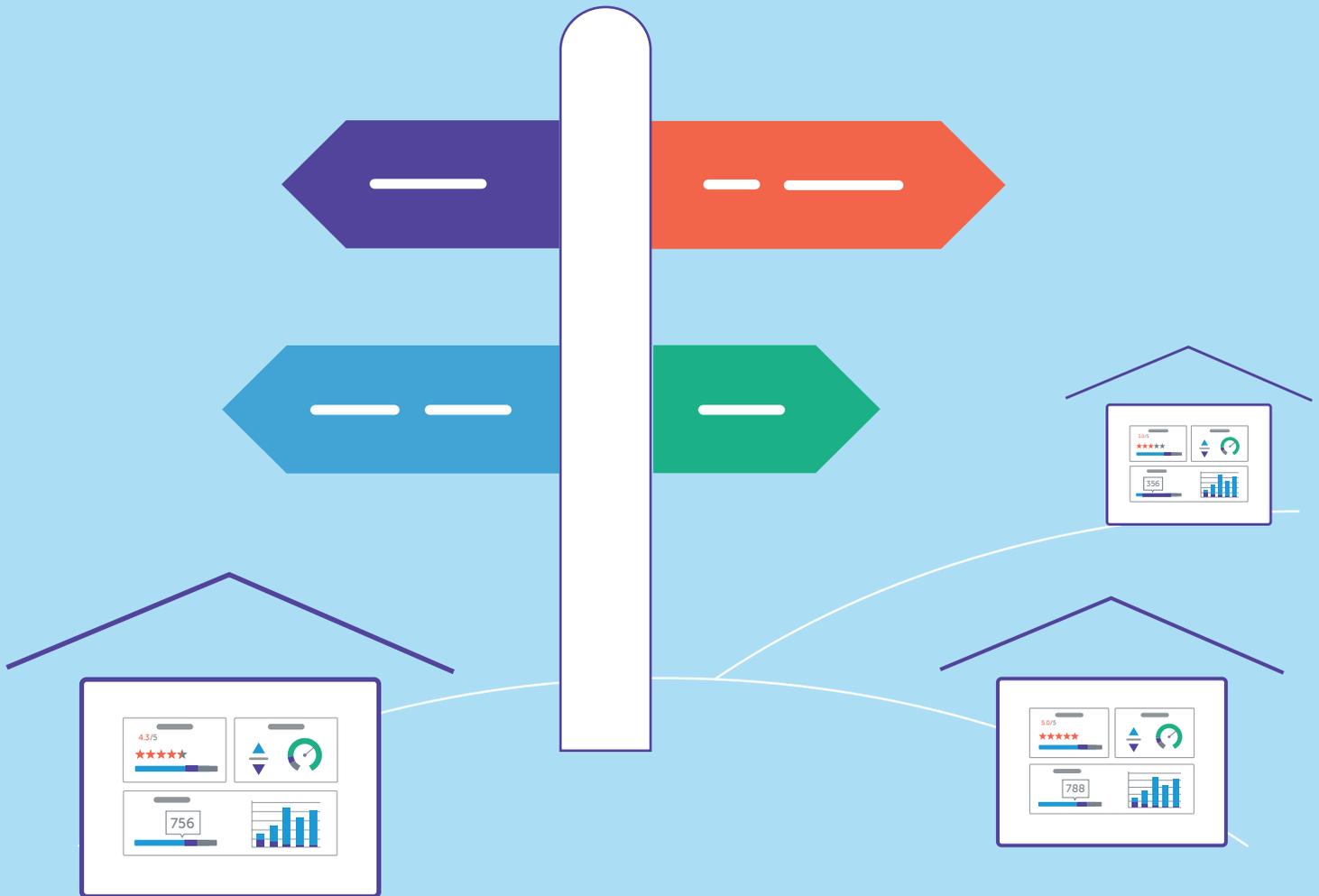
Brand Management and Online Reputation Management — What’s the Difference?

Brand management focuses on shaping a perspective — influencing the way customers think of a brand in isolation. Online reputation management focuses on driving business performance based on customers’ real-life experiences.

The table below describes some specific and important differences between the two disciplines.

Brand Management	Online Reputation Management
<p>Brand management tends to be guided by a historical point of view. “How do we look compared to a year or five years ago?” is a common question in brand management. It’s a slow-moving and low-engagement process, and brand value is typically measured in retrospect, annually or semi-annually.</p>	<p>Reputation management is very much “here and now,” measuring and responding to actual customer feedback in near real-time.</p>
<p>Brand management is distanced from specific customer actions and experiences, except when tied to a crisis or halo event — such as a new CEO with an unpopular agenda, or a customer issue that makes national headlines.</p>	<p>Reputation management is driven exclusively by customer feedback on specific events and experiences.</p>
<p>Brand management uses a limited set of data to establish brand value, typically based off surveys, cold-calling or emailing a random sample of the public and asking for opinions of a brand — or corporate data such as earnings reports.</p>	<p>Reputation management uses millions of data points from real-time customer feedback from surveys and on ubiquitous, non-exclusive review sites and social media platforms (Google, Facebook, Yahoo and industry-specific sites) to capture sentiment from thousands of individuals that have recent, real-world experiences with a brand.</p>
<p>Brand management is optimized for very large organization with broad public “mindshare” and existing brand recognition. It’s significantly less effective for smaller brands that don’t have a large profile in mainstream media or are not publicly traded.</p>	<p>Reputation management can be applied to organizations of any size and type, from small auto dealerships and specialized medical practices to global retail and hospitality brands.</p>

ORM Provides Detailed Roadmap



Online reputation management gives companies a highly-detailed roadmap — down to the individual store or rooftop — enabling customer experience enhancements that drive brand value and more business.



4.0 ★★★★★
Jupiter Center
Open. Closes 7PM.

How Do Consumers Find You?

- Appear on Page 1 of search engine results pages (SERPs)
- Have a high star rating
- Have a large volume of recent, positive customer reviews across multiple sites
- Have relevant and engaging information in the rich snippet

If you meet these criteria, consumers may do one of three things:



Click to your website

Does the link take them to the most relevant section based on their inquiry?



Call you

Is your phone number correct on your location's business listing?



Get directions

Is your address correct? What about your hours of business?

This combination of elements — your reputation as expressed quantitatively in search results, and qualitatively in the accuracy and relevance of information returned to the user — can dramatically impact your business outcomes. And unlike many other aspects of the buyer's journey, this is entirely within your control.

What is the Rich Snippet?

The rich snippet is the colorful row of information that sits between the URL and the meta description in search results. It displays supplemental information about your business that can include your star rating, reviews, pricing, product details and even recipe information.

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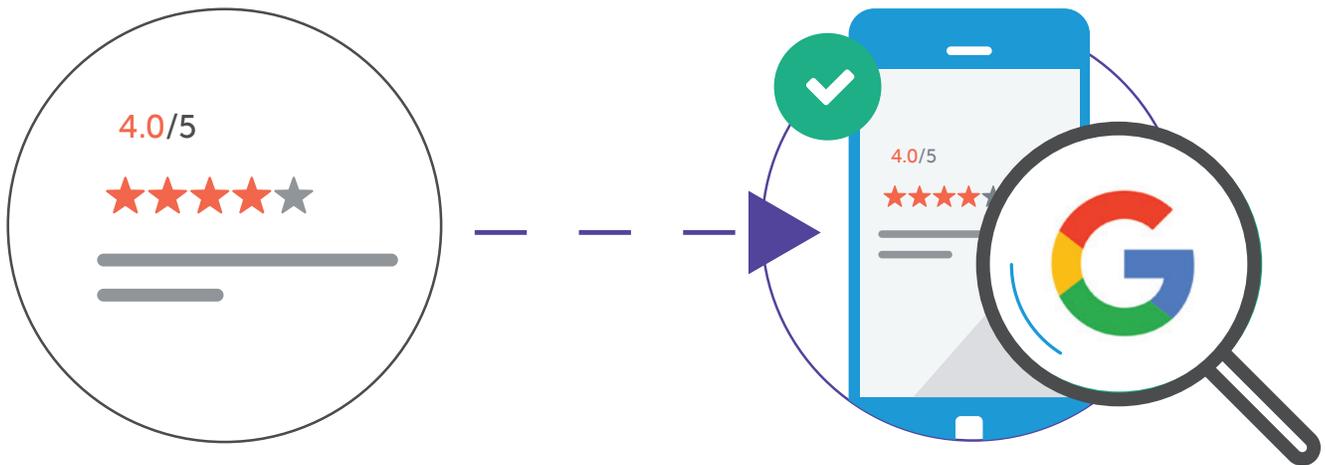
Open until 10:00 PM

Principle 1

You have significant control over your online reputation expressed through where you rank, what customers see and how they respond online.

What's Important to Google

The obvious impact of online reviews is that everyone can see your all-important star ratings and what your customers think of you. What's not as well-known is how much online reviews affect your visibility in search results, regardless of how well you perform in all other areas of SEO.



How Google Rates

Every user-generated review is treated by Google as new, relevant content and is a critical factor in Google's search ranking algorithm. But unlike an editorial calendar or content strategy, companies can't plan for what people will post about them online. This underscores the need for companies to actively engage in online conversations, ensuring that the content out there contributes positively to their brand image.

You Don't Have To Go It Alone

There are multiple ORM vendors, platforms and service providers who can help you create and implement a program tailored to your business size, needs, and budget.



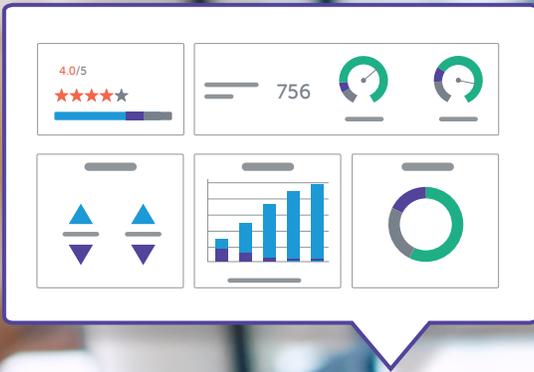
Millennials Rule

Guess who checks their mobile devices more than [150 times a day](#), and is the fastest-growing group of consumers, accounting for [\\$170 billion](#) in purchases each year? That's right: Millennials — the 91 million people born [between 1982 and 2003](#). They are also the most active participants in the consumer feedback game, more likely than any other group to share their experiences on Google, social media and review sites. Fifty-nine percent make product recommendations to share highly positive or negative experiences, and 41 percent pass those recommendations to friends and family through social networking.

A whopping 83% of them say they don't trust advertising and they aren't impressed by celebrity endorsements. Instead, they rely on referrals from friends and [online reviews](#) as their primary sources of information about products and services.

Principle 2

Reviews and star ratings are critical to your business today, and increasing in relevance as purchasing power shifts to digital natives.



You've Been Found and Chosen. Now What?

Star ratings, SERP results and online listings are just the public face of hundreds, thousands or possibly even millions of data points about your business on the social web — consumers commenting on everything from the speed of your website to the cleanliness of your bathrooms to the efficiency of your staff.

That underlying data set, when organized within an ORM platform, provides metrics and details about how your business is performing location to location, across your organization and relative to your competition. Most critically, it provides a comprehensive, specific blueprint for business improvement.

Listen, Connect, Act

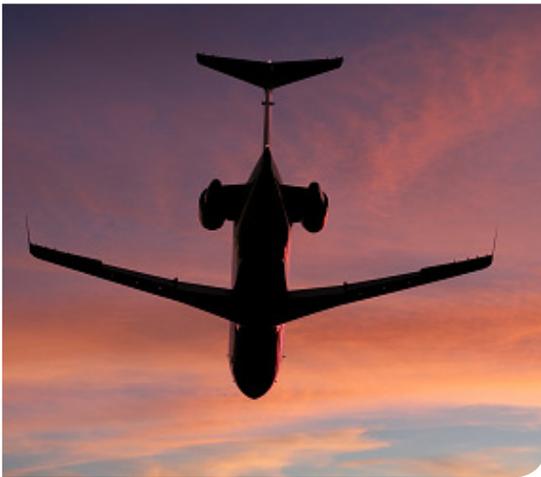
If you listen to your customers, take their input to heart and adapt your business based on what they're telling you, you'll cultivate happier customers, reduce churn and build advocacy and loyalty.

Who Needs Online Reputation Management?

Every Business Has a Reputation to Protect and Develop

Reputation risk is tangible and directly impacts the bottom line of every single business. Harvard Business School research indicates a measurable revenue variance of 9% per reputation star.

Considering that most retail and services businesses operate at a net profit margin below 10%, your online reputation could be the single biggest element that governs financial success or failure.

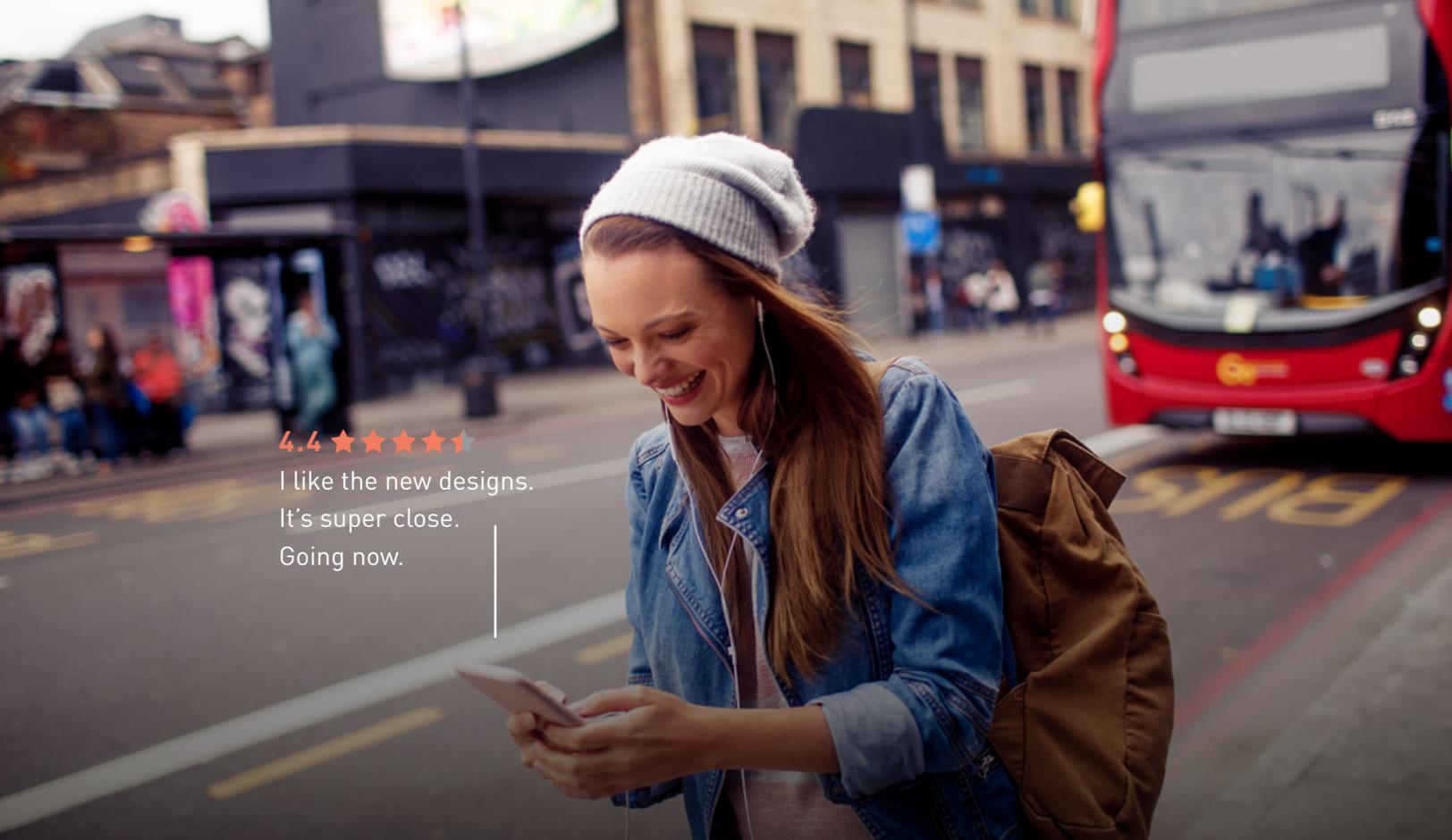


Stock plummets due to negative viral social media

Case in point: In 2017, United Airlines' reputation plummeted, its stock falling [1.1%](#) and its market cap taking a [\\$1.4 Billion](#) nosedive overnight, following the forcible removal of a passenger that was captured on video and went viral on social media. The \$1.4Bn haircut on April 11, 2017, followed a 20X surge in (negative) brand mentions the previous day.

The tangible value of a company's reputation

For example, many sources have shown that enterprise value — both present share price value and future underlying commercial value — is heavily correlated to corporate reputation. [The Economist Intelligence Unit](#) has said that as much as 75% of a company's value is based on its reputation.



4.4 ★★★★★

I like the new designs.
It's super close.
Going now.

While every business or government entity can benefit from ORM, it is particularly important for B2C, service- and experience-focused industries that include retail, hospitality, healthcare, automotive, financial services and property management.



Retail

Retailers Gain or Lose Customers in Micro-Moments

In 2016, Google coined the term “[real-time, intent-driven micro-moments](#)” to describe those split-second decisions to search for something online. Consumers grab their phones and type in or speak a search term because they want to know something, go somewhere, buy something or do something — right now.

These are the moments during which brands must now battle it out for consumers’ attention and dollars.

Be found at key micro-moments across the customer journey when customers want to:

Know

66% of smartphone users turn to their phones to learn more about something they saw in an ad.

Go

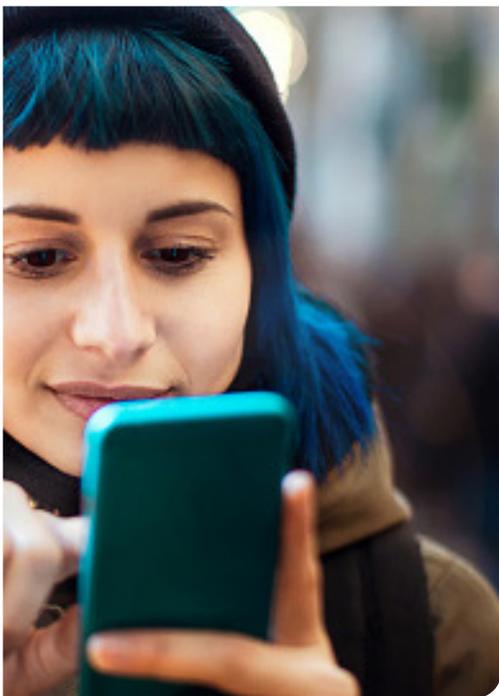
2X “Near me” searches have grown 2X (between 2017 and 2018).

Do

70% Searches related to “how to” on YouTube are growing 70% year-over-year.

Buy

82% of smartphone users consult their phone while in a store. Mobile assist in purchases across channels.



But search results pages are brutally unforgiving

Results pages are especially unforgiving on the small screens of mobile devices. With limited space to present results — and limited motivation by shoppers to click or scroll — the top three businesses may be the only things people see. So if you don't show up in the 3-pack of search results, you've lost the micro-moment battle.

If retailers hope to cash in on the millions of micro-moments that now govern consumer behavior, an online reputation management solution is essential to get them to the top of those search results and gain new customers.

- Yes, I would recommend this location to a friend. I wish there were more dressing rooms though.

CASE STUDY: Retail

National Retailer Uses Surveys to Boost Response Rates, Positive Reviews and Search Rankings

+67%
Positive reviews



After implementing a new, integrated survey system across its 1,200 stores in the U.S., a national retailer experienced a 67% increase in positive reviews and a huge boost in average star ratings in just one year.

80%
of locations rank in top three in Google search results.



Now that this retailer is fully tuned in to its customers' voices, almost 80% of its locations rank among the top three in Google Search results, and 99% of them rank in the top ten, beating its main competitor in the all-important online search game.



Healthcare

Healthcare consumers shop around too — and have even higher expectations of your digital presence.

The rise of the empowered healthcare consumer has transformed the way providers attract and serve patients. Consumers now have a voice — and it's powerful. Awards and accreditations don't mean much without a strong reputation to back them up; only organizations who improve their providers' online reputation will thrive in this new marketplace.



Most healthcare seekers start their search online

Pew Research found that 77% of online health seekers start at search engines — and what they find in their search often helps them decide where to go for care. They don't just look at star ratings; they pore over online reviews to gain as many perspectives as possible before making their choice.

Savvy healthcare marketers are taking advantage of this unprecedented opportunity to listen to consumer concerns, take action to correct them, improve the overall patient experience and, most importantly, turn patients into their best advocates and marketers. For providers it doesn't end there. Healthcare is as competitive a business as any other, and it's heavily dependent on consumers being able to book appointments with physicians and specialists.

Comprehensive, fast-loading doctors' pages may seem like a no-brainer, but most healthcare providers' websites are not optimized for "closing the deal." Smart providers have invested in listing management and page optimization software — ideally as part of their ORM platform — to make the customer experience seamless from first click to appointment.



CASE STUDY: Healthcare

What One Fortune 500 Healthcare Provider Did When Patients Were Looking Online and Walking Away

Read how a large healthcare organization turned around their online presence with a structured ORM program that, in just two years, produced dramatic results:

Admissions

+100%

Exceeded goals

Clinical Quality Index

+450%

Improvement

Employee Turnover

-15%

Reduction by almost 15%

Earnings

+200%

Over their target



Automotive

Auto Dealers Get a Measurable Sales Boost

In the automotive industry, the car buyer’s journey to a dealership showroom begins with an online search. In fact, 90% of new car buyers do a majority of their research online. By the time they physically walk into a showroom, research is largely complete, and they’re ready to buy.

Step one for dealerships is getting to the top of online search results to ensure they’re visible when customers are in buying mode. But even then, a high search result or clever advertising strategy is no longer enough to persuade searchers to click on a link.



Car Buyers Focus on Online Reviews

Car buyers seek out dealerships with strong positive comments about the buying and closing experience. For auto dealers, it’s essential to improve the overall experience for customers — and the best source of information for opportunity areas is the free-form text in online reviews and social media posts.

Deep Insights for OEMs

The best online reputation management platforms combine social listening with review management and customer surveys to provide dealers, dealer groups and OEMs with deep insight into customer sentiment and brand satisfaction.



CASE STUDY: Automotive

A Big Three Automaker Wins Big with Online Reputation Management

A Big Three automaker was looking to improve sales by raising the visibility and online reputation of its dealerships across the U.S. Reputation.com worked with them to increase review volume, improve star ratings and boost dealer prominence in local search. As a result:

Reviews

+325%

Increase in review volume

Negative reviews

-30%

Decrease in negative reviews

Positive reviews

+7%

Increase in positive reviews

Star rating

3.5 → 4.5

Average star rating rose to 4.5

Reputation Score

+250^{PT} = +6%

An increase in Reputation Score of 150 points led to a 6% increase in average seasonally-adjusted sales



Property Management Firms Increase Occupancy and Renewal Rates, Maximize Net Operating Income

Apartment seekers start their research online, and 98% of them read online reviews during their search. They won't visit your property without proof that the amenities and pictures on your site match what tenants say it's like to live there. And accurate business listings are a must, especially for property managers with multiple locations.



Conventional wisdom states renters will only post online reviews when they have a complaint. But the Reputation.com 2018 Property Management Research Report reveals that, in fact, tenants are twice as likely to make a positive comment about customer service as they are a negative comment. Inviting current tenants to post reviews has multiple benefits, including a more representative picture of overall tenant experience, better visibility and search results and higher star ratings. It requires a proactive effort on the part of property managers. Implementing a process for constantly requesting reviews from prospective, current and past tenants at all locations is critical.

24/7/365 relationship

Unlike many other transactions, property rental is a 24/7/365 relationship. Retail shoppers don't throw a fit (or write scathing reviews) if they find your store is closed at 7:00 pm the day before Thanksgiving — especially if you've updated your holiday hours on your Google My Business and Maps pages. For a property manager, there is no "come back later" option. The more effective you are at responding to customer requests, the fewer will turn into complaints and negative reviews.

By integrating your social listening, review management and customer survey tool with a customer service and ticketing system, you can track specific issues and ensure they're addressed before they negatively impact occupancy rates.

Online Reputation Success in Property Management

With multiple communities to manage in five different states, a U.S. property management firm had outgrown their manual process of managing online tenant sentiment. They needed a solution that would automate their manual processes and improve their ability to collect and respond to tenant feedback in a timely manner, encourage residents to share their positive living experiences online, and manage what others were saying about their properties.

After implementing Reputation.com's ORM platform, the firm:

- Increased positive reviews by +400%
- Decreased negative reviews by 10%
- Increased average star ratings by 26%

Most importantly, they're now able to listen to and engage with residents and provide a superior living experience.

Key Components of Your Reputation Score

Your Reputation Score represents your ability to do three things: Be found, get chosen and improve experience. Each of those imperatives are impacted by how well you manage the various components of ORM:



Be Found

Optimize search with accurate listings data, more positive reviews and higher rankings.



Improve Experience

Enhance service quality with insights from reviews, social media and surveys.



Get Chosen

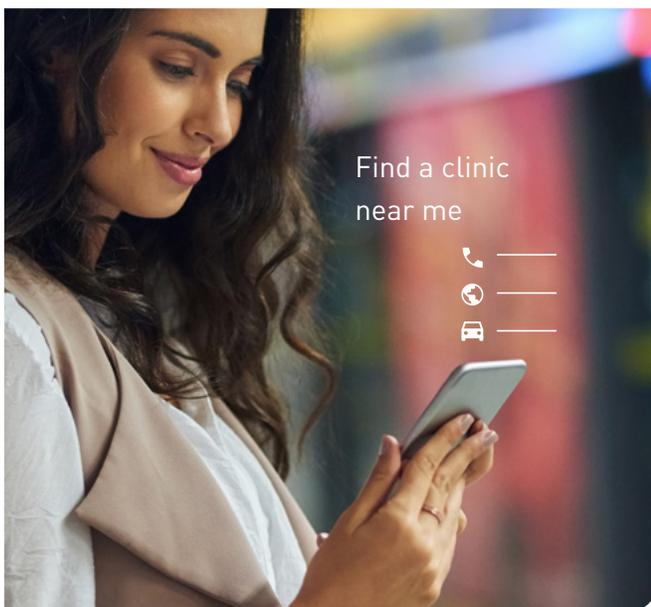
Drive conversion with better location pages, directories and social advertising.



Be Found:

Help People Find You with Accurate Business Listings

With four out of five consumers using search engines such as Google to find businesses, accurate business listings are essential. Inaccurate listings erode trust and credibility, affect search results and ratings, and can deliver your customers right into the hands of your competitors.



Accurate business listings drive consumer behavior that increases revenue

It's essential that you audit, claim and correct all your online locations' business listings. Google My Business is critical, but your locations are listed on many other sites, as well. Implementing a process for auditing and correcting your listings at scale helps ensure consistency and accuracy.

Drive Conversions with Directory Management

The larger your organization, the more important it is to establish a single source of truth so that information about your locations (address, hours, appointments, availability and so on) and the people who work there (credentials, reviews, schedules) is always updated and accurate. This is particularly critical for healthcare organizations and the physicians and other providers who work there.

Directory management gives you the power to easily centralize, update, and share this data from one place. By pulling data from internal sources and external sites, directory management ensures that clean data populates your website, search engines (Google, Bing) and industry specific sites (such as Doctor Finder, Find a Dealer or Store Locator).



Enable Fast Website Searching with Finder/Locator

Finder/Locator leverages autocomplete and customizable filters against your categorically organized directory information, to drive site visitors to your locations and professionals specific to their needs — while also providing real-time referral management and appointment scheduling — in one solution.

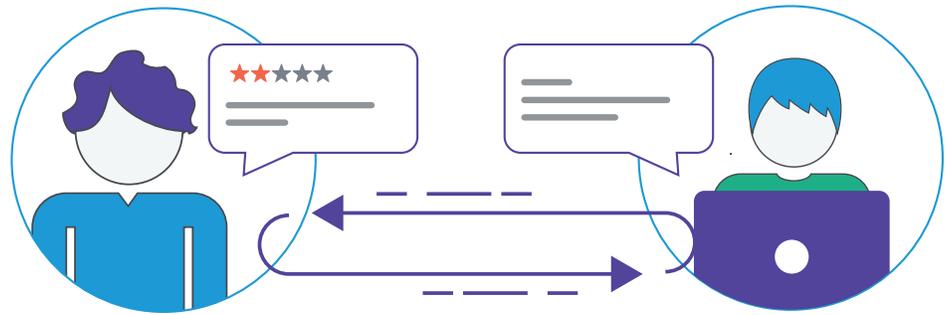


Get Chosen:

Monitor, Request and Respond to Reviews

The search experts at [Moz](#) report that review signals, such as the recency and number of your reviews are top-ranking factors in Google's algorithm. And 69% of consumers say reviews [older than three months](#) don't count. You can't afford to wait for reviews to roll in — you have to [ask for them](#).

Make sure your strategy for review requesting includes mobile/SMS as well as email. If you're relying on paper surveys or point-of-sale placards asking customers to review you, you're not going to generate enough review volume to significantly improve your online reputation.



Best Practices For Responding To Reviews

- Be sure to respond promptly — preferably within 48 hours of receiving a review.
- Address negative reviews quickly and thoroughly. Don't risk letting a negative review go viral by letting it fester.
- If the review is negative but legitimate, own up to it and offer to discuss the problem one-on-one. Avoid getting into arguments online.
- If the review contains false information or is unnecessarily insulting, take the opportunity to correct the information — without returning the insult. You may be able to win over an unsatisfied customer.



Be Active on Social Media

Social media, by definition, is a communications channel that enables users to post and share their own content. For any company to simply have a social media presence and use it as an additional advertising channel is wasting the unique opportunity to connect with its audience at a human level.

Actively engaging with your followers — which means listening to their feedback, responding thoughtfully to it, and, if necessary, acting on it — creates avid fans, drives site traffic and gets the word out about positive reviews and feedback. Strategic, targeted social advertisements can help raise brand awareness, as well.

Create Transparency and Trust: Livestream Your Reviews Right to Your Website



What's the best way to create transparency and build trust between you and potential customers? Livestream your reviews right on your website, using a widget. Take advantage of the additional opportunity to showcase positive reviews and attract new customers.



Improve Experience

Use Surveys to Identify and Address Issues

Surveys help you collect information about how customers experience your products or services, identify what you're doing right and uncover problem areas, so you can fix them.

An automated survey solution helps you gain insight into the customer experience with deep analytics and benchmarking tools. It also helps you build review volume with integrated review requesting. Once you build review volume, you can amplify its impact even more by streaming reviews to your website and showcasing them on social media.



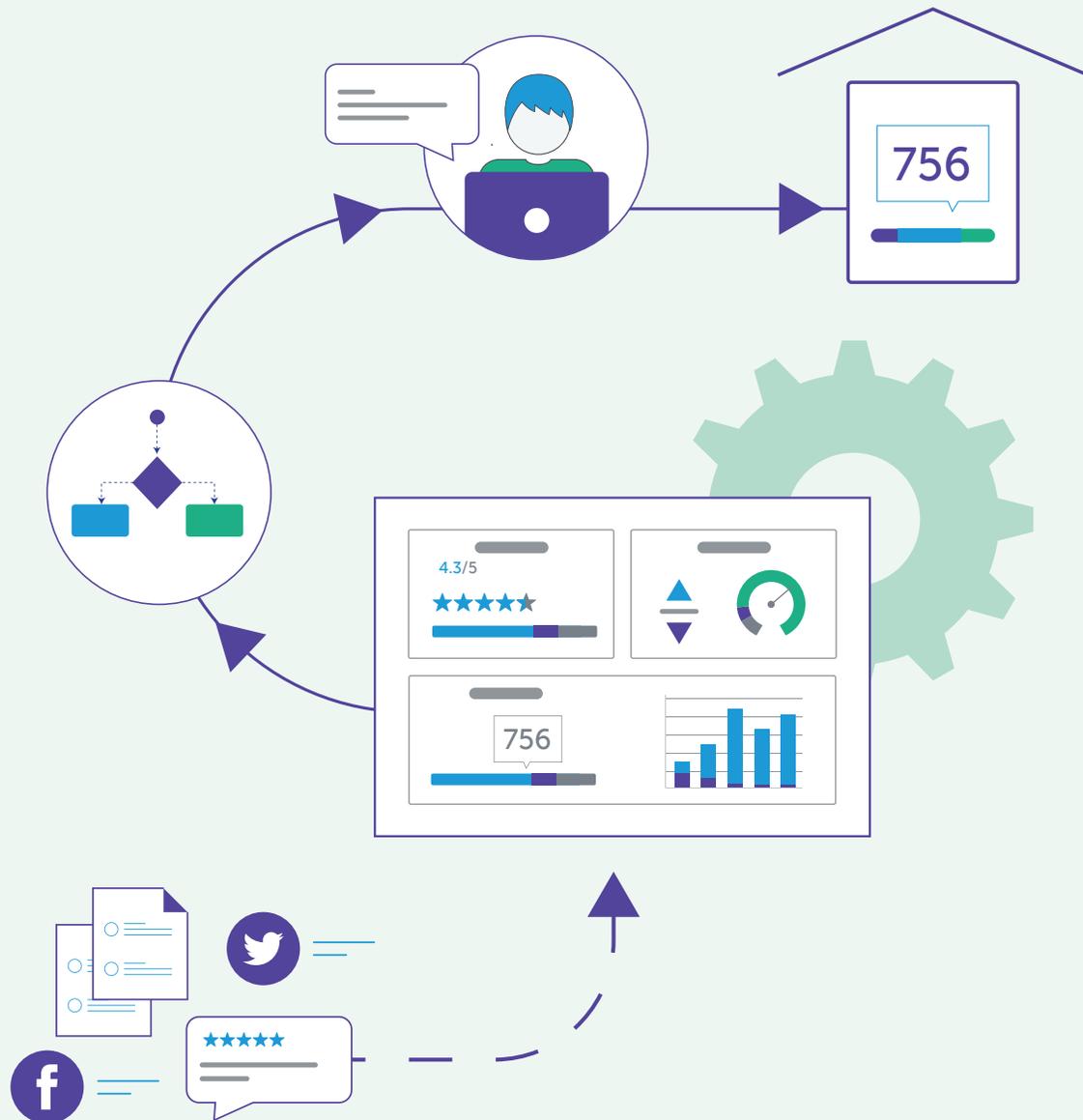
Gain Actionable Insights from Reviews and Social Media

Reviews and social media posts can alert you to recurring issues — such as long wait times or bad customer service at a specific location. But manually sifting through hundreds or thousands of reviews, deciphering what's real and what's noise, and culling that information into a report wastes consumers precious time and resources and is inefficient.

A proficient ORM platform makes it easy to analyze feedback and data from reviews, surveys and social media in a single dashboard, to easily identify areas for operational improvements at the national and local level.

You can use this information to make decisions about needed changes and prevent similar issues from happening in the future. These insights, which might not otherwise come to your attention, can help you hone everything from supply chain management to employee training.

Gain Insights and Improve User Experience



An ORM platform enables you to capture and analyze feedback and comments in unstructured text captured from reviews and social media. You can then ward off potential crises and quickly address problem areas.

It also helps you identify what's working well so you can standardize those practices across your organization.

Flexible Reporting

Your C-suite needs to see and understand important metrics about how the business is perceived online, and how your locations rank with respect to each other and your competitors. The ability to create custom reports is essential for demonstrating the impact of your reputation management efforts.





Connect ORM to Your Customer Ticket System

Large enterprises often connect their review response tools to their help desk ticket systems, so they can quickly respond to and resolve customer issues raised through online reviews or surveys.

Complete Visibility

An efficient ticketing system gives a company complete visibility into an issue, from the customer's initial post, through the ticket assignment, to ticket resolution.

Platform or Point Solution — Which is Right for You?

Many players in the ORM industry offer point solutions that promise to help improve online reputation, but actually only address one aspect of online reputation effectively.

However, the problem with this approach is complexity. Companies find themselves managing dozens of products and vendors. And with every supplemental product comes additional costs in fees and administrative efforts — stretching budgets and resources thin and dragging ROI down.

Enter unified platforms, built to handle all of your ORM needs in one system, and offering important advantages over multiple point solutions:

1. Reduced Total Cost of Ownership

The costs to implement and maintain multiple point solutions can very quickly exceed the cost of an all-in-one platform in licensing and service fees alone. Each solution requires you train staff and manage a new vendor and support agreement.

Integrating multiple point systems also introduces complexity and increases the risks of data loss, downtime and incompatibility issues, and involves even more internal resources, such as your IT department.

With a unified ORM solution, licensing and service fees are predictable: staff only needs to train on one interface and manage one vendor, and cross-application integration and training requirements are simplified.

2. Streamlined, Real-Time Reporting

Perhaps the biggest drawback with multiple point systems is that data is siloed, making it difficult to accurately measure results across all segments of customer sentiment in real time.

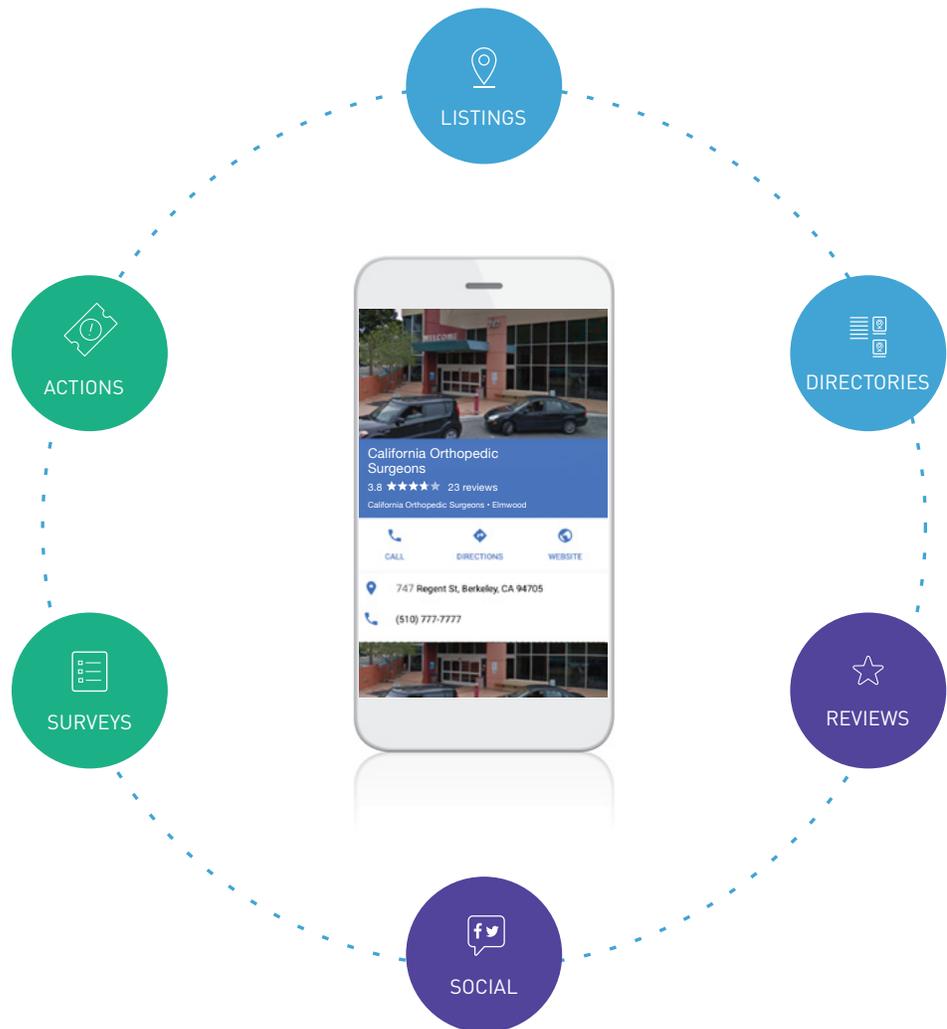
A unified platform eliminates the silos and often includes built-in analytics and reporting, to help identify trends and potential issues or problem areas — all from one dashboard.



3. 360-degree View of Your Online Reputation

No one point solution can accurately measure customer sentiment without the data from all touchpoints of the customer journey — from surveys to third-party review sites and social media.

A unified platform gives you the ability to effectively orchestrate all the moving parts of the complex online reputation management ecosystem from one dashboard.



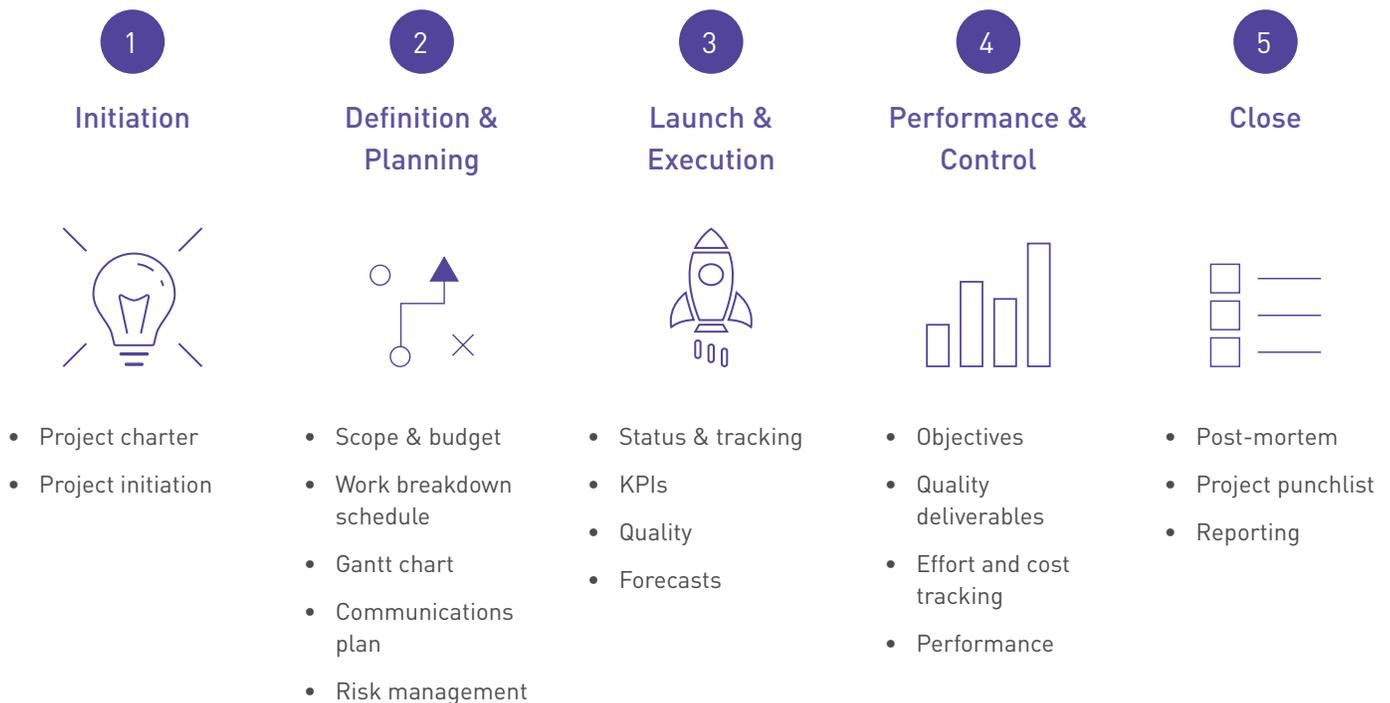
How to Launch an Online Reputation Management Program in Your Organization

For many large, multi-location businesses, online reputation management is a true greenfield opportunity to drive operational efficiency, cost reduction, customer satisfaction and topline revenue growth.

Given the scale of the opportunity, getting started with ORM is considerably easier than many other cross-organizational initiatives. But it does require planning, resources, buy-in and follow-through.

Steps to Success

You'll have greatest success if you adopt a classic [PMI 5-stage project management](#) methodology, but adapt it to suit your business's unique level of requirements:





Stage 1: Initiation

Develop Broad Objectives

If you're reading this, you probably already know you have a business challenge, and may even have some metrics that quantify the problem — inaccurate business listings, poor search results, low star rating, very few recent reviews. At this stage, you just need to put your problem statement and metrics in a document and move on to...

Building the Business Case

There are many ways to measure success from ORM, but the best approach up-front is to focus on topline revenue opportunity, and bottom-line cost savings.

Topline Revenue Growth

The most reliable and defensible metric for topline revenue growth uses a classic marketing and sales conversion funnel model, starting with increased visibility (impressions) on Google search and maps. Develop high and low range targets, and map out the estimated revenue. You'll quickly see that ORM has an incredibly high ROI; our Big 3 Auto manufactured experienced a 40X ROI per participating dealership, not counting additional service revenue.

Metric	Current (Monthly)	Target-Low	Target-High
GMB Page Views	1,500,000	2,250,000	3,500,000
Clicks to Website	22,000	30,000	45,000
Clicks to Call	24,000	30,000	40,000
Get Directions	32,000	36,000	42,000
Incremental Customer Visits		760	2,030
Avg. Revenue per Visit		150	150
Total Incremental Revenue per Month		114,000	304,500



Bottom-Line Cost Savings

A good generalized cost-saving model revolves around the human capital investment in repetitive tasks related to reputation — managing your business listings across multiple locations, for example.

Metric	Current (Monthly)
Locations Managed	900
# Resources (dedicated staff) per Location	6
Total # Data Points per Location	78,000
Total # Hours Spent Updating Listings	12,800
Hourly Wage	\$7.25
Total Annual Cost	\$92,800

There are many other metrics you can use or add to your business case, including the cost offset of replacing legacy point products or the risk reduction/lower liability from a comprehensive solution, for example. Work through several scenarios with your stakeholders to come up with the business case that's right for your organization.

Engage the Right Stakeholders

Online reputation management will touch every part of the organization, so it's essential to gain broad buy-in beyond marketing.

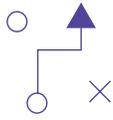
- **Executive Management:** An executive advocate should be a well-respected leader in your organization who understands the importance of an ORM program and will serve as an advocate to company leadership and staff.
- **Operations and Customer Service:** As operations leaders set the bar for customer experience, they stand to gain the most from the insights generated by ORM and can use them to catalyze improvements that impact all customer interactions.
- **Legal/Compliance:** Be sure to involve legal and compliance teams in creating or reviewing templates for responding to reviews. This is especially critical for companies in industries that are heavily regulated, such as financial services and healthcare.

For companies with multiple locations, local management teams should be active participants in the project.



Concurrence on The Plan

A critical step in Stage 1 is to ensure concurrence on the plan. You've done a lot of work to gather information, build the business case, and get people onboard. Now make sure you've got their commitment in writing. Too often, projects advance based on an assumption of agreement, only to be derailed later when a key stakeholder revisits the scope or claims they never agreed on the project. The best way to uncover hidden issues or reluctance is to get people to sign off on the plan. Problems are much easier to address at this stage, especially if they're now in the open!



Stage 2: Definition and Planning

The next step is to lay out the specifics of how you will solve the problem — the primary tasks and sub-tasks, assigned to owners with due dates and dependencies called out. At this point you've got a decision to make: how much of this will you take on yourself, versus how much of the definition and planning will you outsource to the ORM vendor you plan to work with.



Manage It Yourself

If you've got very robust and seasoned marketing, customer service, operations and compliance teams, you may opt to scope and manage the entire project yourself.

Or Partner With An Expert

If you're stepping into online reputation management for the first time, it makes a lot of business sense to leverage the knowledge of your ORM partner. An experienced vendor such as Reputation.com can help you understand the challenges and opportunity areas, so you make the best decisions based on your organization and business objectives.

In either scenario, you need to manage the project using the best tools, resources and methodology you can afford. There are literally thousands of resources available to help with project management — a quick Google search will likely take you to something that works perfectly for you. The Project Management Institute's [Body of Knowledge book](#) may be overkill, but don't shy away from process and methodology, even if you're just rolling out a pilot. It'll save you hours of headache down the road.



Stage 3: Execution

In this phase, execute on the plans you laid out in Stage 2. Although there may be refinement and revisions to your plans based on new information, shifting schedules or diminishing budgets, taking into consideration the key details ahead of time will result in a well-defined plan and smoother rollout.

Don't forget training! This step often gets overlooked or cut out of the schedule due to timing issues. But in the case of reputation management — with your brand value, customer experience and future revenue streams at stake — you can't skimp on training. Create separate training tracks for your field staff who are interacting with customers every day, and your administrative and head office staff tasked with reporting, analytics and administration.



Reduce Risk and Save Time

Sounds unnecessarily dramatic? Many organizations outsource program execution and training to online reputation experts such as Reputation.com. Doing so saves significant effort, reduces risk and provides a quicker return on investment due to faster implementation. Most importantly, it keeps your company at the forefront of the ever-changing online reputation industry, where guidelines and best practices can change overnight.

Think of some of the recent policy changes implemented by Facebook and Google to stamp out fake user accounts and information. Most organizations are still just trying to figure out the specifics of the change, let alone know how to adjust their policies and actions to comply.



Stage 4: Project Performance and Monitoring

Once you've rolled out the platform and trained your resources, it's time to focus on measurement and refinement. Nothing is ever perfect right out of the box — that's another reason why it's good to run a pilot before going full-bore with an integrated ORM plan that covers reviews, surveys, social, ticketing, listings and all the associated reporting and analytics.

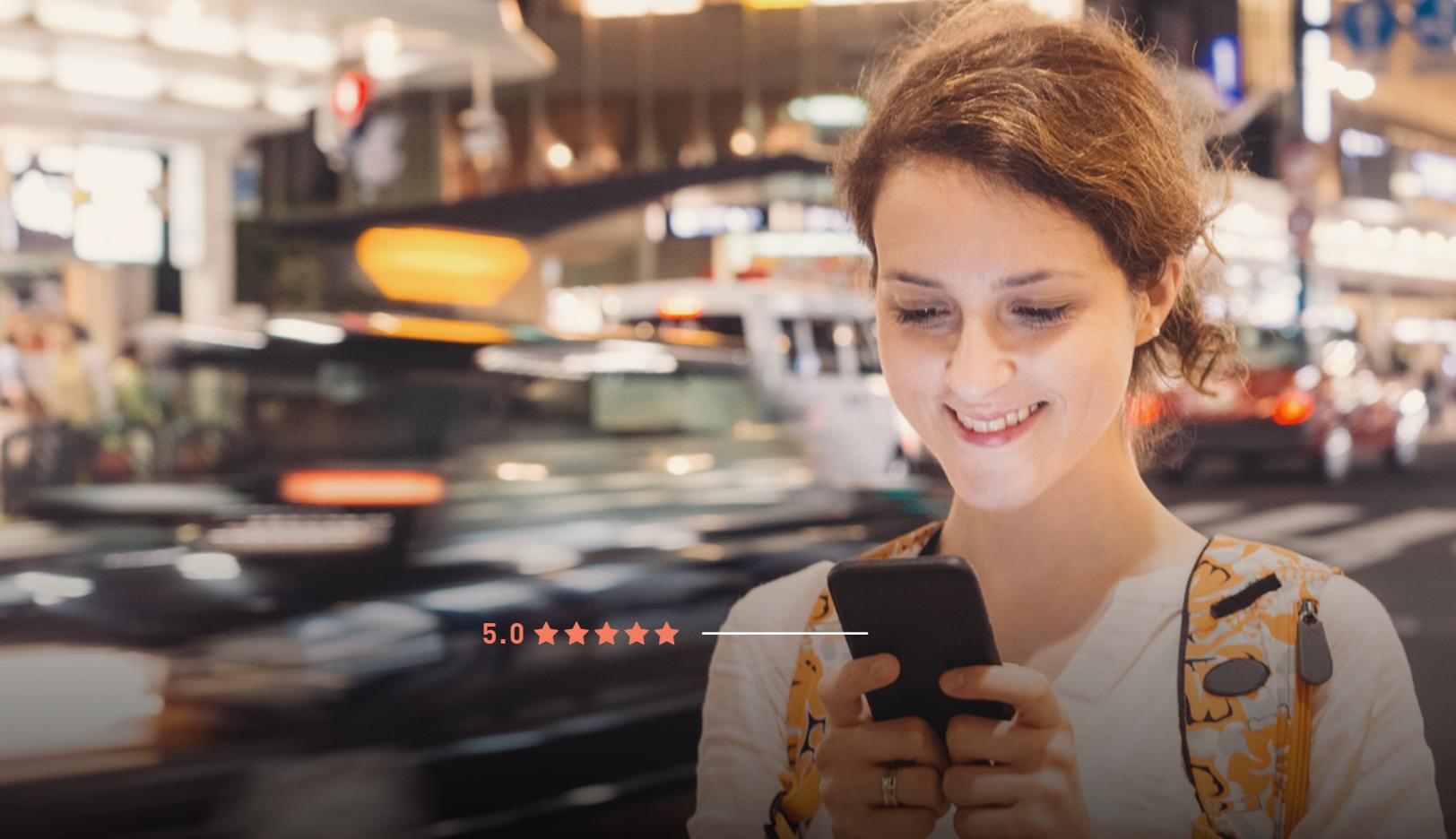
But the great thing about a well-done ORM project — complete with reporting and analytics — is you immediately start capturing data to test against your KPIs and business goals. Most Reputation.com customers see business performance improvements within the first month, and many exceed their KPIs within six months.

No other marketing or customer experience initiative can deliver the level of insight and actionable data that ORM delivers — you can optimize tactics down to the location level or roll out fresh initiatives across thousands of rooftops with just a few months of data.

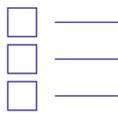
Going One Step Beyond — Benefits of Managed Services

Leaner marketing teams can benefit from outsourcing ORM activities to a managed services provider, when in-house expertise or resources are limited. Managed services providers hand-pick talent based on their experiences in digital marketing, and they've likely helped many other businesses establish their online presence.

Hiring experts to manage all aspects of your online reputation (online review monitoring, requesting and responding; social media engagement, posting and advertising; survey development and distribution; and business listings) eliminates the costs and resource drain of managing multiple point solutions, and ensures that your company can focus on your core business and reassign resources to more high-value tasks.



5.0 ★★★★★



Stage 5 — Project Closure

This is where we and the Project Management Institute differ — there is no “closure” to online reputation management.

ORM is an ongoing process of analysis, assessment, testing, rollout, refinement and adaptation. Just when it seems like the world is stable, Google or Facebook throws us another curveball. Or government regulations get updated — GDPR, anyone?

But the biggest wild card is consumer behavior. It’s a cautionary note that, in 2017, [18 major retailers filed for bankruptcy](#) and closed over 8,000 retail outlets in the U.S., with an additional [13 brands filing for bankruptcy in the first half of 2018.](#)

A man and a woman are smiling and looking at a computer screen in an office setting. The man is leaning over the desk, pointing at the screen, while the woman sits at the desk. The entire image has a blue tint.

Partner with an ORM Expert

If you're stepping into online reputation management for the first time, it makes a lot of business sense to leverage the knowledge of your ORM partner.



Buyers Guide — What to Look For in an ORM Platform

Meta Description:

Compare features and services of online reputation management providers, including Reputation.com.

Your online reputation affects not only how people perceive your business when they encounter it online, but also how people perceive your brick-and-mortar business.

Online reputation management encompasses many dimensions, including what shows up at the top of search engine results, social media presence, online reviews and overall sentiment analysis.

Many companies address certain aspects of total online reputation management, but Reputation.com is the only provider that offers comprehensive management, with the most complete set of tools for managing every dimension of online reputation.

The table you see below compares service offerings of several online reputation companies and Reputation.com.

Features and services comparison of online reputation management providers, including Reputation.com.

Company	Reviews Management	Analytics and Insights	Social Media Advertising	Business Listings Management	Social Media Management	Surveys	Mobile Apps	Sentiment Analysis	Complete ORM Solutions
Podium									
BirdEye									
Kyruss									
Qualtrics									
Chatmeter									
Medallia									
Yext									
Reputation.com									

Table Key:

- = Does not offer this feature
- = Offers limited capabilities
- = Offers some capabilities
- = Offers more extensive, but not comprehensive capabilities
- = Offers comprehensive capabilities

Company Descriptions:

Podium is a customer communication platform for local businesses offering simple messaging, reviews and insights. It offers review management and basic reporting. However, it does not offer review syndication, text or sentiment analysis or traffic insights, and back-end data management doesn't scale for the client with thousands of locations. The mobile app is primarily designed for private text messaging with customers.



Company
Descriptions
Continued:

BirdEye is customer experience software offering reviews and social media services, and converting all feedback into actionable insights. It offers basic review management and business listings services. Surveys are an option, but customization is limited. They also offer basic social media publishing and community management, but no campaign or automated content curation, limited firehose listening, and no Instagram publishing. Reporting is suitable for SMB-class businesses, but there is no self-service for custom reports without purchasing additional managed services.

Kyruus is a point solution for healthcare systems, mainly offering search and scheduling solutions to help patients find the right providers. It provides nearly-comprehensive analytics and insights, but a lack of review capabilities means operational insights are limited. It does not offer social listening and publishing capabilities.

Qualtrics offers experience management services covering customer, product, employee and brand experiences. It provides survey execution and reporting, but its volume-based pricing isn't beneficial to smaller or location-based businesses. Survey reporting does not analyze feedback from third-party review sites, social media or surveys in a centralized platform.

Chatmeter is a brand management platform for local brands. Primarily geared toward the SMB space, it covers reviews, social media and search rankings. It provides very limited reviews, survey and social media services. Analytics and insights do not include industry-level competitive benchmarking or benchmarking for overall online reputation. Business listings lack an API, and thus are not a flexible enough management solution for larger organizations.

Company Descriptions Continued:

Medallia offers customer experience management, capturing feedback from phone, in-person encounters, online and mobile. Its survey execution and reporting do not offer the self-service features many businesses want, like custom reports or extensive location-based analytics. The company's review monitoring and responding is limited only to TripAdvisor, and there's no provision for review requesting.

Yext is a digital knowledge management platform, providing services to help companies control brand experiences across maps, apps, search engine and other digital properties. Its business listings are published to listing sites' presentation layer, which can leave the database layer potentially incorrect. Most sites in the Yext PowerListings Network are owned by Yext and are irrelevant to Google's ranking algorithms. Yext provides only the most basic social media management capabilities, with no support for social publishing, marketing or firehose listening.

Reputation.com is an integrated reputation and customer experience solution that can be tailored to industry — to help customers find, choose and recommend client businesses. As you can see from the table, Reputation.com offers all of the following services:

- **Review Management** – enabling clients to ensure their reviews are accurate and representative, with tools for monitoring, requesting, responding to and publishing reviews





**Company
Descriptions
Continued:**

- **Analytics and Insights** – helping clients view key metrics and insights, create comprehensive reports, share feedback with the organization and monitor their Reputation Score
- **Social Media Advertising** – empowering clients to create, scale and optimize advertising across multiple locations and multiple platforms, with tools for targeting, execution, fine-tuning and monitoring campaigns
- **Business Listing Management** – ensuring customers find clients easily on search engines, maps, and business directories, with tools for claiming, auditing, optimizing, and distributing data for each business location
- **Social Media Management** – facilitating full engagement with local communities across social media channels, with tools for listening, responding, collaborating, publishing, and advertising
- **Surveys** – creation and deployment of tailored surveys to assess performance, with tools for building, monitoring, responding, and sharing of results
- **Mobile Apps** – including Reputation Live mobile app that allows employees to invite customers to share experiences on major review sites, an app that also gamifies the process of requesting reviews
- **Sentiment Analysis** – advanced insights into clients’ online reputation that uses unstructured and structured review data to understand what customers are talking about and how happy they are with key aspects of client businesses
- **Complete Online Reputation Management (ORM) Solution** – a unified reputation management solution that eliminates data silos and assists clients with defining goals and focusing reputation management efforts optimally

Conclusion

Effective marketers are integrating online reputation management into their overall digital strategy to ensure continued business growth and success. Understanding how to influence the purchasing decisions of today's highly informed consumers — and optimizing their experiences — requires the right blend of people, process and technology for building and maintaining a strong online reputation. An effective ORM program will:

- Establish an accurate online presence by auditing and correcting business listings on all major directory and review sites — especially Google.
- Monitor and respond to reviews on major third-party review sites.
- Request reviews from all of your customers to build a representative and accurate picture of the service you deliver.
- Use advanced analytics and reporting to uncover and share valuable insights in the unstructured text from online reviews and social media.
- Take action on candid customer feedback in reviews, social comments and other data sources to improve customer experience.

With so many opportunities for customers to express their opinions about your company online and have a direct impact on your company's success, protecting your online reputation has never been more important. Review sites are proliferating at lightning speed. The mobile generation is here to stay and growing in influence — and the impact of social media in our daily lives is undeniable.

Don't wait for a crisis to start managing your online reputation. [Get started today.](#)

Resources:

Videos

[Online Reputation Management from Reputation.com](#)

[Watch how Banner Health Uses ORM to Give Patients a Voice and Improve Patient Experiences](#)

Download

[Online Reputation Management Starter Series: Getting Started with ORM](#)

[Online Reputation Management Starter Series: What Online Review Sites Should I Monitor?](#)

[2017 Retail Reputation Report](#)

[Turn Your Customers into Brand Champions](#)

Quick Reads

[The 6 Pillars of Online Reputation Management](#)

[Michael Fertik Explores the New Reputational Risk for Banking Institutions](#)

[Retailers: Here's Why Millennials Matter](#)

[Capture Business from Mobile Search with These ORM Tactics](#)

[Reputation Management \(Wikipedia\)](#)

[How Online Reviews Are Transforming Marketing](#)

[How Patients Use Online Reviews](#)

[Risk Landscape Review - European Risk Management Council](#)

[New Research Highlights Pivotal Role of Online Reviews in Patient Acquisition](#)

[3 Reasons Urgent Care Facilities Should Care About Online Reviews](#)



Reputation.com delivers the category-leading online reputation management (ORM) platform for large, multi-location enterprises. We help companies monitor and improve online ratings and reviews, improve customer experience, and drive traffic, visits and revenue.

To learn more, contact us at sales@reputation.com or visit us at www.reputation.com.

