

FAT BRAIN INTERACTIVE

**Reputation Management
The Prism Approach**

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Imagine this: You're having lunch in a five-star restaurant. But instead of focusing on the incredible food, you are distracted, even fascinated by a flicker of light. You notice the crystal chandelier. As it catches the sunlight, the rays are re-launched in multiple directions and colors, magnifying from different angles. You see the results on the walls, the ceiling, and the windows - no object is spared from its dispersion. Now, the chandelier's illuminations are intensified far beyond what the electric bulbs project. It is no longer just a light. It is transformed into a magnificent, multifaceted display of energy. But the real magic is in the prisms. Each prism captures the light as you know it, but releases it as a display of spectacular radiance. The prisms project a rainbow of influence in every route. The light that was always there becomes so much more and is seen so differently.

What is the prism approach to Reputation Management? It is a multifaceted, positive projection of you and your company. With the prism approach, the goal is to re-build every path of online information in order for others to view you "in the best light". How? By putting out new, viable information.

True, accurate information which reflects well on you and/or your company. Whether you have business related concerns, or have endured personal speed bumps, the prism approach is the most comprehensive way to bring about change. And change the way you are seen online.

In most cases, there is much more positive information than negative. However, the negative content may be the first thing that comes up when doing a Google search. For companies and their executives, it's increasingly necessary to take charge of reputation through the prism of search engine results.

Just think, one error in judgment can result in multiple listings of your lapse of discernment. In mere seconds, postings can be at the fingertips of anyone using an online search engine. Public opinion can change as fast as the speed of the Internet.

Gone are the days when an individual could make reparation for momentary indiscretions and move forward in the business world as if nothing had ever happened. Senior executives with considerable corporate responsibility must keep a careful eye on their online reputations. Those looking to advance in business must monitor what first impression they make when some does a Google search.

Certainly you want to put your best foot forward and insure that your many successes and achievements pop up ahead of any missteps.

Back to the prism approach. Much like a 12-step program toward recovery, the prism approach aims to re-build your online standing one step at a time. But on Google, as in life, there is no room for phonies. The only authentic, lasting way to build a good reputation is to create news about other positive aspects of your business, or even, your life. The recompense you make personally or professionally, and the other worthwhile things you do, can be optimized to eventually replace the negative story.

Recovery from reputational crisis must be allowed to happen naturally. Good results must be generated organically to 'push down' the bad in the Google results list. Some operators use what are known as 'black hat' tactics, but these won't stick because they are illegitimate and Google is constantly changing its algorithms to pick up any unethical entries.

For the client, performance is key— they must have sincere, good activity to show. Online reputation management (ORM) is about ensuring that the client is not hounded forever by a single event. ORM is not just for those in reputation crisis. Even if you don't have anything you'd rather see ranked further down the Google results; you may simply want to propel your online reputation to greater prominence.

Whatever your unique situation, if you need to manage your or your company's online reputation, or recover from some serious damage,

don't place all of your eggs in one basket. The prism approach can help.

Here are the steps to take:

1. Search the internet to find the best quality ORM Company. Online Reputation Management (ORM) works similarly to a good quality Search Engine Optimization (SEO) company. An SEO company is skilled at improving the rankings of client websites and promoting positive news to page one, and ORM works to achieve the greatest results.
2. Once you have found a company that seems reliable, ask about its methods of implementing ORM. Make certain they use legitimate means for its level of service and the sustainability of the results.
3. If you have selected an international company, continue your research and consider a local firm. A local SEO/ORM company is likely to have a more thorough knowledge of local rankings – this is critical.
4. High quality ORM for a corporate client must involve a reputable, knowledgeable PR agency versed in crisis management. If the SEO Company is handling everything in-house, this should be a big caution.
5. High quality original content creation should be part of the ORM strategy. A lot of ORM companies will just create oodles of profile pages for the client. This is a short-term solution which cannot achieve sustainable results.

6. There is no long term fix that can happen immediately. High quality ORM that lasts takes time. A minimum of six months is a reasonable target; 12 months is more realistic.
7. Make sure the company you have chosen does not use automated tools. If it does, continue your search. It is worth taking the time to find the right company.
8. A comprehensive monthly reporting package that charts your progress should be conveyed by the ORM once the due diligence has been completed.
9. Tangible benefits are rarely seen within the first three months of the campaign. It takes time for the real work to begin to take effect.
10. An integral aspect of the campaign is content creation. A specialist PR agency will work with you to produce it. Authenticity is crucial. Nothing should be published without client approval.
11. Don't get hung-up on timelines. According to the amount of repair or restoration, some timelines are ongoing.

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