

Does ORM spell the end of Devastating Online Attacks? RepSpert explain.

RepSpert Co-founders Discuss the importance of Online Reputation Management

In an age where the Internet dictates everything from personal interactions through to business ventures, many feel the pressure to cultivate an impeccable online presence. The process of maintaining a clean digital identity can be fraught with unforeseeable road blocks, especially when removing unwanted content from the Internet which poses a plethora of problems. In an effort to combat unpredictability in the online space, we are experiencing an emergence of a new service: Online Reputation Management (ORM).

Pictured: Ed Butcher and Ed Godfrey, founders of Online Reputation Management service, Repspert.

Ed Butcher and Ed Godfrey, have teamed up to create their own ORM offering. After experiencing the damage that undeserving negative online content can cause, the duo's venture, Repspert, aims to eliminate negative online content ranging from reviews through to news articles and more. They have identified a unique need to provide ORM services for personal brands and organisations who have fallen victim to negative online coverage that has ultimately damaged countless reputations and bottom lines.

The founders sat down to answer some questions and shed light into the importance of Online Reputation Management in the current digital climate. Before we dive into the world of ORM and your work with Repspert, let's talk about how you both met.

EG: Of all places, we met in hotel quarantine in Darwin. We arrived on the same day. Both involved in business, we had 14 days to flirt with new business ideas. Two like minded people, same name, of all things, a few mutual connections, and that's where it began.

As ORM is a relatively new term, can you briefly explain what it stands for?

EB: ORM is essentially whatever people can find when they look you up online. Whether that be on a social media platform or on the first page of Google. The term can include an array of services but we keep it simple. From a reactive sense, we work to eliminate negative content where possible. From here we take proactive measures, assisting with enhancing brand image through positive content creation. Our suite of services covers all bases.

How did the idea come about for Repspert?

EB: I woke up the day after my 25th birthday celebrations had wrapped up and found three negative reviews on my company online. The reviews had no comment in the body and were names that had never been clients of ours. I assessed what kind of options were available to me in the marketplace already. It was going to be very costly to remove these three reviews, for simply what was a random attack. I explored alternative methods and found a way to get the reviews down myself. Following that, 6 months later Ed and myself decided to start the business based on the idea.

EG: I delved deep into the idea and very quickly uncovered that the competition was overcomplicating the service, as to what was involved. Immediately, I began brainstorming ways to bring transparency to the industry and offer a strategy that could be leveraged by any brand, small or large.

Why is ORM so important in 2021?

EG: The search results are now the face of your reputation. On a personal level it serves as a digital resume. From a commercial perspective, the first page of google is what influences purchasing decisions.

What sorts of situations do you see regularly?

EB: The internet has given everyone a voice, regardless of what is factual or not. This can quickly find its way to many online media outlets, spreading like wildfire. Regularly we see great brand's online images destroyed from outsiders' overreactions and uninformed opinions. We have seen many organisations topline consequently suffer. What difference are you bringing to the ORM industry?

EG: It's our approach. We've refined a proprietary strategy that removes the guesswork from ORM, appealing to organisations and brands of any size. We bring full transparency to a misunderstood industry, attempting to remove all negative content where possible and eliminating any remaining content through alternative methods. In most situations we will be able to repair a damaged online reputation within 120 days. If we exceed the quoted timeframe, we will complete the work for free. Our strategy boasts a proactive approach to ORM, creating and distributing positive content to further enhance our clients brand image. This also protects from any future attacks. Finally, our clients receive reputation monitoring that scans every corner of the web, allowing them to act quickly in the event of a future online crisis.

What would be a piece of advice you would offer to individuals or businesses looking to improve their ORM?

EG: Our company repairs online reputations not businesses. It's about separating what is unfair and what might be constructive criticism - rather than becoming defensive and believing there is a magic bullet to delete the 'bad stuff'. We assist individuals and organisations who have been unfairly targeted to repair an undeserving attack, or those subject to criticism. If there is a pre-existing and legitimate issue, the unflattering content will be an ongoing concern.

EB: It's important to be proactive and ensure basic metrics such as asking satisfied customers for reviews, so you're catching them when they're finishing the buying cycle and they are very satisfied with their purchase. You see a lot of the large corporations doing it, but not SMEs. You'll ask them, "how many clients do you have per year?", and their answer will be in the thousands, and you look at their Google reviews and they'll have single digits. So, it's very important for businesses of all sizes to understand the importance that this plays.

What direction do you see ORM heading in the future?

EG & EB: to the moon.

What are your main strategic plans for future growth?

EG: ORM is becoming very mainstream, so we are constantly researching and developing technology that will allow ORM to be accessible by everyone, this is with respect to cost and efficiency. ORM has so many different pillars, and we want to have a simple yet effective solution to each.

EB: My perspective is that an online reputation is the equivalent to your credit history, yet its exposed to the general public and not just exclusive to credit reporting bodies. It's the equivalent to the public having visibility to years of your AMEX transactions. This is what we seek to resolve.

To find out more information about Repspert's Online Reputation Management suite, you can visit the Repspert website.

Credit: Interview By Rachel Gallagher

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