

# The WORST-CASE SCENARIO Survival Handbook: BUSINESS REPUTATION

Learn how to:

- ✓ Deal with trolls
- ✓ Disarm ticking bombs
- ✓ Turn haters into evangelists
- ✓ Turn your biggest fans into referral machines

 **REVIEWS UP**

# Dealing with Trolls

If you're in business, chances are you have a competitor. And those competitors have employees, and friends that will come out of the woodwork to flood your reviews with false and damaging comments. Yes, you have recourse with Google and Facebook to ask them to remove the baseless claims, but that's a long and cumbersome process and it doesn't guarantee removal. So what do you do? In short, expose them, but nicely. Getting into an online public shouting match is never advised, so be tactful and call them out with facts. Example: *"This business is the worst...horrible rude staff, terrible product, awful service, blah, blah, blah...."* – George P. Anytown, US

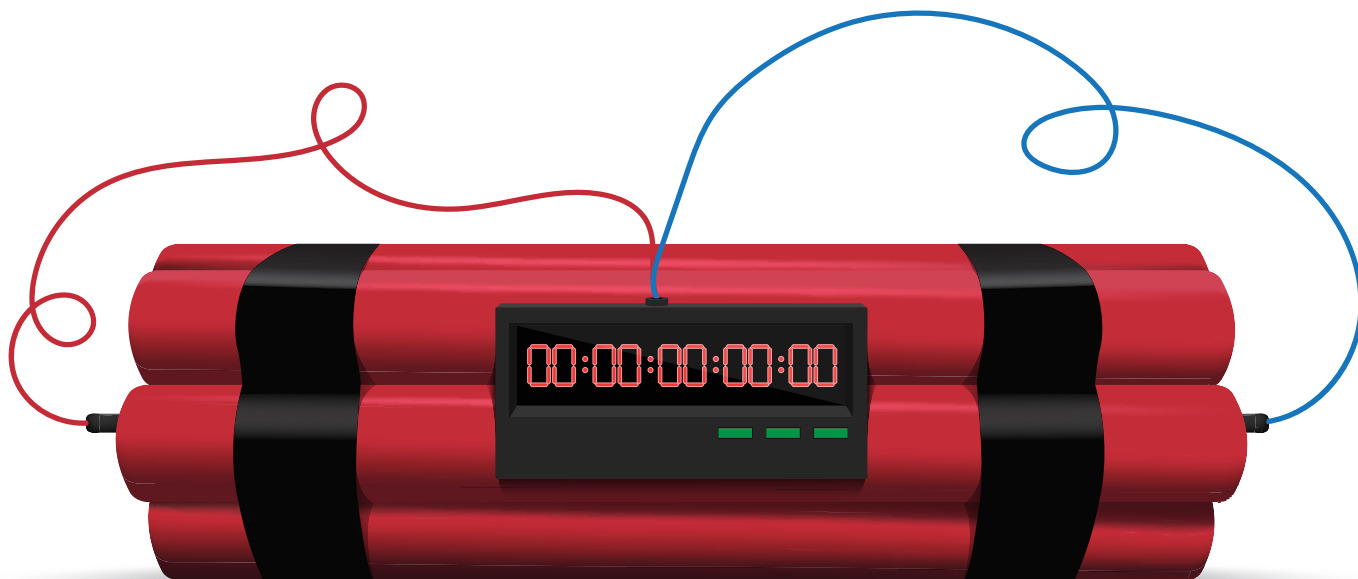


## **The RIGHT way to reply:**

*"George we take our reputation very seriously and would love to learn more about your experience so we can improve. We log all customers and have no record of your visit, so can you provide some more information? Our management team is always available to talk. Please reach out directly at (number) so we can be sure you are reviewing our store's performance accurately. We look forward to hearing from you so we can resolve your concerns."*

When people read the reviews this type of response offsets the trolls post, and it actually helps your reputation because people see that you take things seriously and respond promptly. Remember to resist the temptation to engage negatively and you'll be able to turn a negative into a positive.

# Disarm Ticking Bombs



You get a customer who is unhappy. It happens even to the best run businesses. Perhaps they complained to management in person, or online...perhaps they posted a negative review. Instead of dismissing them as a nutjob who will never be pleased, swallow your pride for a brief moment and apologize. Even if you did nothing wrong.

Instead of offering a refund, discount or anything else, ask this:

*"I'm very sorry you feel that way...please let us know what we can do to make it up to you."*

MOST times they only want an apology! Why offer something valuable when an apology will suffice? The key here is to act fast! Don't wait until they have time to go to social media or tell anyone who will listen how bad they think you are. Speed of action is everything, and will help you disarm the bomb before it detonates.

# Turn Haters Into Evangelists

The people who are the most likely to leave a bad review are also the most likely to tell everyone they know about a great experience. They are passionate, emotional people. They are also very active on social media and love to speak their minds. Follow our steps for disarming bombs, but take it a step further.

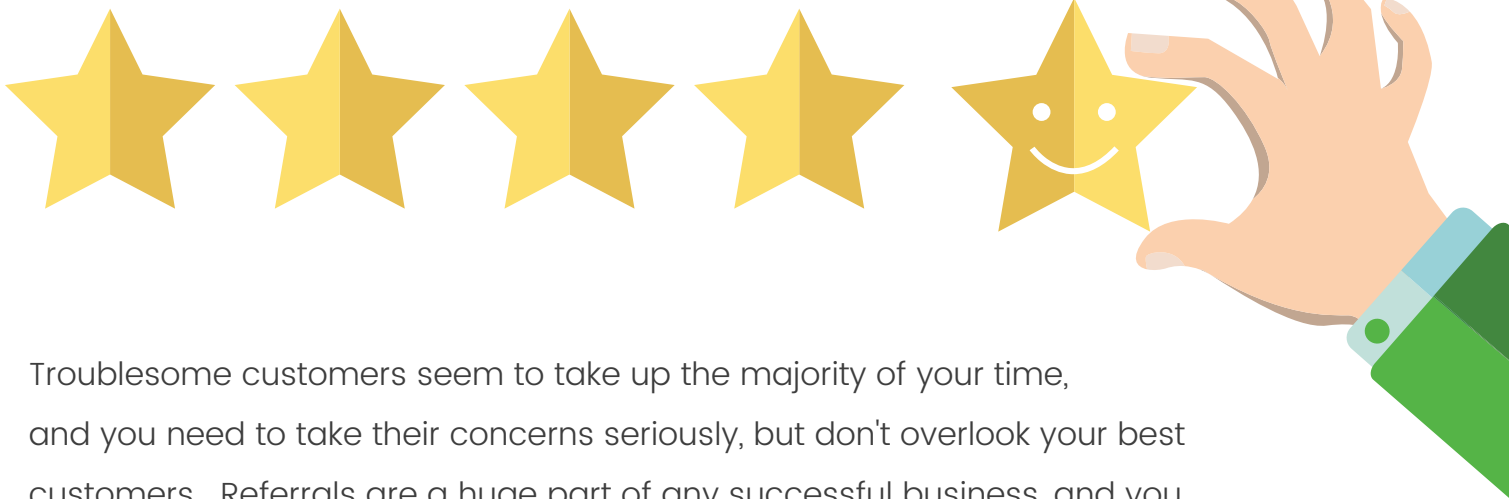


After you ask them what it will take to make them happy, go one step further.

*"I just want to apologize again for this little mistake, and I want to be 100% sure that you're satisfied. In fact, I want to go one step further and buy you dinner at (local restaurant). Here's a \$50 gift card for you to enjoy with our regards. (Contact a local restaurateur for discounts on gift cards). If we've done a good job, we only ask that you share your experience with your friends and social network. And if you have any family or friends that are in the market, we'd like to further reward you with an additional \$20 for any referral. We don't do this for everyone, but I will gladly do it for you."*

That \$50 gift card will pay for itself 100x over before you can imagine. Why? Because you gave them something they didn't even ask for. This creates a psychological debt that they will subliminally feel obliged to repay. Also, remember when I said these passionate people will be the easiest to turn? You'll see this in full effect in no time.

# Turn Your Biggest Fans Into Referral Machines



Troublesome customers seem to take up the majority of your time, and you need to take their concerns seriously, but don't overlook your best customers. Referrals are a huge part of any successful business, and you need to have strong plan to cultivate them.

Always have little cards or a pamphlet ready to hand to all customers. Make sure they see the payout big and bold. \$100 referrals! Get 6 months free! Want to make an easy \$200? Etc.

Ask them if you can put their picture on your business Facebook page. Tag them and mention the referral bonus in the text. Have them share with all of their friends. Then go through your CRM and make sure referral bonus is mentioned to all customers. Perhaps they aren't in the market right now...but they likely know people who are. Promote the referrals in emails, in service department communications, handouts, whatever. You'll never get a referral if you don't ask for one. Make it a priority in your efforts and you'll see immediate impact that will spread like wildfire.