

ORM:  
Online Reputation Management  
for Resorts

Presented by The Resort Developers Association  
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**“97% of people will research you online before doing business with you.” Do you like what they’re saying about you?**

It’s no longer a question of *if* someone will say something bad about you online, but a matter of *when*. Good or bad, every single resort in the Resorts of Distinction network has feedback out there on the internet.

As a business, it’s impossible to please 100% of the people 100% of the time. Some people are just complainers and will actively search for things to complain about. It’s important to have a plan for when this happens. It’s even better to have a plan and system in place to preempt this.

Any time you run outbound marketing you invite people to search you out online. Especially when your marketing is effective and drives people to action. Every time you send out a mailer, hand out flyers at a show, or have a member refer their friends, someone is going to go online to make a decision about whether or not they want to take the next step with you.

Using a few key principles we can manage what we call your “Online Reputation.” Your online reputation is the general state of opinion about your business as averaged across different platforms on the internet. Managing this is the best possible chance you’ve got of influencing people that search you out online in a positive way.

We’ve created a model to make it easy for you to remember how to tackle online reputation management:

**“ARM yourself and go CAMPing”**

The two parts of this model ARM and CAMP represent the three stages of ORM. A, R, and M each stand for one of three necessary steps. CAMP is an acronym that lays out how to approach the last step in ARM, M.

Let’s look at ARM first. A.R.M. defines the three steps to manage your reputation. It stands for Alerts, Results, Management.

**A: Alerts**

Setting up alerts is the first and most important step to managing your reputation. Having real-time alerts gives you the benefit of awareness. They allow you to keep your fingers on the pulse of the public, to monitor the general consensus, and to keep an eye out for any disgruntled individuals hell bent on destroying you.

You must set up alerts to ensure that you're the first one to know when new content hits the web. When a member, guest, or otherwise leaves a comment on a forum, review site, blog, or personal website, you'll get a notification in your email inbox.

Setting up alerts is easy. Start with Google Alerts. Once you get comfortable with Google alerts and are ready to create a comprehensive early warning network you can create additional alerts through other services. Yahoo offers an alert service, there's one for Twitter, another site called Social Mention, and there are more. You can additionally set up custom RSS feeds or other content aggregators to directly monitor blogs, review sites, and what not. But for starters just get your feet wet with Google Alerts. They will get you about 85% of what you need anyway. Go to [www.Google.com/Alerts](http://www.Google.com/Alerts). You'll have five data fields.

The first data field is the Search Query. This is the term you want to monitor and be alerted of once it appears. The first term you should enter is your resort name. Put that here in quotation marks. The quotation marks ensure that the entire name must be present in the content and not just pieces. For example if you enter Lake Side Resort with no quotation marks you may get an alert for Disneyland regarding an article discussing the Resort's new Lake by the Side of space mountain. By entering "Lake Side Resort" in quotation marks you ensure that "Lake Side Resort" appears exactly that way in the content.

Second is the result type. Select 'Everything'. Third you've got frequency. I select 'Daily' here. This prevents email overwhelm. You may even select 'Weekly' if you're setting this up strictly for preventative measures. Fourth is quality. You want to select 'Only the Best Results'. The fifth field is your email address. If you're logged into your Google account it will already be populated with that email address. Then click "Create Alert." You'll start regular alerts as new content is indexed online

## **R: Results**

Track your results so that you can measure your progress. When we say Results we mean the placement of the feedback in the search results and the progress you make in pushing the negative results down while bringing the positive results up.

The easiest way to do this is with screenshots. To start this just open up a new search engine window (Google). Type your resorts name in search bar and take a screenshot of the results. On a Mac you do this with the keyboard command Cmd+Shift+3. On a PC you simply press the Print Screen button. You can also print to PDF or copy/paste the results to an excel spreadsheet. Repeat this process with a search for your resort plus the word 'Reviews'. For example you may type "Lakeside Resort Reviews" in the search bar. Another good variation of this appends your resort name with Complaints. I.E. "Lakeside Resort Complaints."

Do this every other week as you complete the next step of the process to measure your progress. If you have negative feedback above the fold on the front page of Google, Yahoo, or Bing, this is the best way to keep track of where that negative feedback stands in the SERP's (search engine result pages). If you're being extremely thorough, record the results from ALL three search engines (Google Yahoo, and Bing).

## **M: Management**

Manage the feedback. This is where the rubber hits the road. If you've got negative reviews out there, you've got to take action and start responding to it. There is a lot to this step so we've created the second part of this process (CAMP) to remind you the best way to handle this process.

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## **CAMP: Content Across Multiple Platforms**

CAMP is how you manage the feedback you've received online.

Creating new content across multiple platforms is a simplification of course. But it's really all you need to do. Negative content is a real thing in a digital world. It takes up space, it has weight, it has limited relevancy, and it can be moved. If you create new content with a greater relevancy and stronger weight it will eventually surpass the negative content and push it down in the search results.

What does it mean to put content across multiple platforms? There are two approaches to it: proactive and reactive. Reactive CAMP would be if someone leaves a bad review for you somewhere, you respond to it. That response is a piece of content you've created on that platform.

An example of proactive CAMP in that same situation would be to have other, happy, members go on to the same review site to leave positive reviews above that negative review.

## **Examples Of How To Create CAMP:**

- Create a blog on a platform like Wordpress.com or Blogger.com. Have members or staff go onto the blog on a regular basis, weekly is good, and write a new blog post. This creates new content to displace the negative feedback.
- Use a Flip Cam to record some videos around the resort and upload them to all the different video sites on the web. There are about a dozen video sites with great page rank on Google. YouTube, Vimeo, and Metacafe are a few great examples. By distributing the videos across many different platforms you are increasing your chances of displacing the negative feedback.
- Publish a press release. There are dozens of excellent sites online that allow you to submit press releases. There are also a couple great paid services that will do it for you. By distributing the press release across the web you are, again, introducing new fresh pieces of content to displace the negative feedback.
- By far though, the most effective way to CAMP is to set up an online terminal in your office. Pull up your Google Places page, then as people come through the office, ask them if they'd take forty seconds to log into their account and leave you a review. Most people will be happy to oblige. And if even if you only get one person per week you'll be far ahead of the pack.

To make this method even more effective, rotate review sites every week. Do Google Places one week, Yelp the next, Trip Advisor the week after that, and Yahoo Local the fourth week. Then start back at Google Places the next month. This will benefit your online reputation more than nearly any other method.

## Content Creation

Content creation is the easiest part of the whole process. Your resort is a content generating machine. You just may not know it yet. Every time you have an event at your resort you have an opportunity for massive content creation. You can capture photos and videos and create posts and articles about it to last for months. Just make sure that the visual media you capture is of happy, smiling people. You manage your reputation by projecting this positive image. When you create posts and articles about it, sprinkle them with reputation based keywords like “reviews” and “complaints.” For example in a blog post talking about your big 4<sup>th</sup> of July party you may have a sentence that reads like this: “The only *complaints* about our 4<sup>th</sup> of July bash was that it only comes once a year.” Or “Lakeside Resort reviews over a hundred contestants every year for it’s annual freedom decoration contest.” Just be creative and be light on the keywords. If you add too many keywords it will do more harm than good. Try to keep it between one and three keywords per article or post.

Let’s say you don’t have any large events on the horizon. Do you have members in the park? Every time you have someone check in or out you’ve got the opportunity for content creation. Get them to do a video testimonial for you in the office. When your staff at the front desk has some extra time on their hands have them upload the video to different platforms online. Then have them transcribe the video testimonials to be used on mediums like blog pages.

What if you don’t have any events on the horizon *and* your resort is empty? This is an even better time for content creation. If you’ve got staff sitting around because no members or guests are there have them get on and start creating content. A very easy way to do this to brainstorm the ten most frequently asked questions about your resort. When you’ve finished with those, brainstorm the ten questions people should be asking more frequently about your resort. Then use a video camera to record yourself or someone on your team reading and answering each one of these questions. Transcribe each of these videos and post the transcription on different blog and article platforms across the web.

## Conversation Cards

If you do have a slew of members in the park and if you are doing regular mailings to members, you should be distributing Conversation Cards. Conversation Cards are a tool we created to help spur the online conversation amongst members. They’re simple business card sized pieces of cardstock with your resort logo printed on the front. They have your

social accounts, like Facebook and YouTube, listed across the bottom, and they have a call to action for members to go online and share their experience. On the back they have your Google Places account and your Yelp account. If you order them in bulk online you can get over two thousand for under forty dollars. Then just start handing them out to every member. Pass them out at the front gate as they come in, at the front desk in the office, add them in their newsletter or bill as you mail them out.

## **Conclusion**

Online reputation management is about influencing the overall online tone and opinion of your resort. By setting up Alerts you can monitor the conversation. By documenting your search Results you can track your progress. And by creating Content Across Multiple Platforms you can Manage the search results that appear when people search your resort.

As always, the sooner you take action the better.