

# Social Media Crisis Management (Infographic)



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Social Media Crisis Management (Infographic) Hopefully you're reading this before you need it. Life is so much easier when you're prepared isn't it? This post is intended to help you see a crisis coming and have the tools in place to assist.

## **Monitor first, last and always**

A well informed team can react before things get out of hand. Set up monitoring tools for reputation management. At a very minimum set up Google alerts, but we recommend setting up additional social listening tools as well to be sure to get timely reporting. The more the better in this case. If you need some free or low-cost listening tools here's a list of [social media listening tools](#) to get you started.

## **Have a plan**

The middle of a crisis is no time to be deciding what needs to be done and who's gonna do it. A good crisis strategy lets everybody know who is responsible and for what and adds a sense of security when something does happen. Create a crisis flow chart so everyone knows what to do when. Needless to say, you should have a corporate [social media plan](#) and everyone in the company should know what's in it.

## **Who is responsible**

Establish a clear chain of command. Who is the first person to go to for information? If they're not available who's next on the list? Make sure all contact information is readily available and if someone is on vacation there is someone else to pick up the responsibilities.

## **Procedures in place**

What is deemed a crisis and what is not? Lay out the worst-case scenarios and then address what steps should be taken. Who has decision making approval? How will you let everyone know action has been taken? How will you know the plan has been executed?

## **Take appropriate action**

Obviously this depends on what the crisis is. Were you wrong? Don't be arrogant. Apologise, correct the situation if possible and show that you care. Yes, legal may weigh in on this and tell you not to, but if it's brand reputation issue you're going to need to find a way to put the fires out

AND respond in a positive way. Don't let what happened to [Applebee's](#), [JC Penney](#) and countless others happen to you.

### **Let it breathe**

Trying to smother a social media crisis is like gas on a fire. You can't just shut people up and you can't ignore it. If things flare up, don't try to squelch the discussion. Join in and in a very positive manner solve the issues. Give people a constructive way to interact with you and resolve the issues. Give them a forum on your Facebook page or community pages, a number to call, an email address, anything they can use to contact you directly for information. If you've built up a strong community your community will often rally to your support when you are wronged. Make sure you let them know you appreciate them.

### **Get to the source**

If the whole thing blew up on Twitter first, find the source and address them directly in a positive manner. Creating a Facebook campaign to deal with a crisis that started on Twitter is not going to be nearly as effective. Remember too that sometimes they're really trolls. Don't feed the trolls!

### **Do NOT fight back**

You'll look like the bad guy every time. Instruct staff to be positive or say nothing at all until the responsible parties have had time to address the issue. Don't be flip either. It may sound cute coming out of your mouth, but taken out of context you could just really look like an ass.

### **When it's over**

Go back and review. Collate all of the social media posts, the news stories and website traffic patterns. When did it all start? Did you act quickly enough? How did your plan work? What could have been done better? What worked and who came up with that? Did clients or members of your community come to your aid? Be sure to thank them. Now take all that and plan for the next one.