

INFORMATION SHEET

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Responding to Comments on Social Media

The utilisation of social media by persons in the building industry is an effective means of broadening the awareness of your brand in the public domain and enlisting the interest of potential customers.

Often, clients will in turn use social media sources, such as Facebook and Google Reviews, to communicate their experiences with your business, whether it was a positive or negative one.

The following article outlines some practical tips on how to respond to feedback posted about your business on social media with a view to managing the public perception of your business through your online presence.

Responding to positive feedback

If you receive positive feedback on social media then it is important to acknowledge the feedback. You can do this by posting a response thanking them, “liking” their feedback on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and sharing or re-posting the feedback (with the consent of the customer) so that it can be viewed by a broader audience.

Taking this approach to responding will make the customer or client feel that they are valued and appreciated, and also encourage others to post positive feedback about your business in the future.

Addressing negative feedback

Receiving negative feedback on social media can cause harm to your brand if you do not provide a response, as the allegations contained in the feedback will essentially remain unanswered. In addition, posting a response on social media will demonstrate that your business is receptive to dealing with customer concerns and is interested in continual quality improvement. It will also be an opportunity to proactively address a concern that may be shared by other customers.

If negative feedback is posted about you on social media then it is recommended that you respond as soon as possible to address the feedback and any specific allegations contained therein, i.e. a concern about the level of customer service or issues experienced with workmanship. Ideally, you should post a response thanking the person for their feedback and inviting them to contact you directly to address their grievances with you.

In some cases, feedback may be disparaging of your business and its staff, or even defamatory, such as if offensive language is used or imputations are made about the character of you and your staff. In these circumstances it is recommended that you also send the customer a private message requesting further details of their grievance, and address the complaint privately with a view to avoiding further unproductive posts by them on social media.

Whilst customers are entitled to their opinion and to express that opinion, if the feedback posted on social media crosses the line and is defamatory then there are additional steps you may wish to take as part of your overall strategy for responding to the feedback. It may be appropriate to contact the social media host with a request that the feedback be redacted or deleted altogether such as if it breaches the terms of use of that social media host (e.g., it is defamatory or uses offensive language or raises issues that are irrelevant to the grievance with your business), and also issue them with a cease and desist letter if the feedback is such that it goes beyond an expression of opinion and constitutes defamation.

Should you require further information then please call HIA Workplace Services (Western Australia) on 9492 9200.