



Navigating the digital landscape

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators

May 30, 2017

A photograph of Barack Obama smiling and pointing towards the camera, set against a blue-tinted background of a large crowd.

Barack Obama elected President

A photograph of a protest during the 2008 financial crisis, with an orange tint. A man in the foreground holds a sign that says "SHAME", and another sign in the background says "CAP GREED".

Wall Street meltdown

2008

A photograph of Britney Spears smiling, with an orange tint. In the background, a sign for the "MTV AWARDS 2008" is visible.

Britney Spears tops music charts

A photograph of Stephen Harper celebrating with his arms raised, set against a blue-tinted background with falling confetti.

Stephen Harper majority government

2017

A man with a beard, wearing a grey sweater, is sitting at a wooden table outdoors. He is using a tablet computer with his right hand. To his right is a white cup of coffee on a saucer. The background shows some greenery and a stone wall. The entire image has a blue tint.



How things have changed in less than a decade.

88% of Canadians use the Internet and 82% use a mobile device (CIRA)

Of those, 63% use Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn every day
(RapidBoost)

Almost 40% of Canadian get their news online (Digital News Report)

The average Canadian spent 24.5 hours online, making us one of the
most connected countries in the world



Meet Andrea.

Andrea is my (imaginary) friend who will help us explore some of the concepts today.

She was recently hired by the (fictitious) Town of Greatness as the Manager of Digital Communications.

Andrea comes from the private sector, so they've now asked her to expand the Town's digital presence.

Today you're going to join her as she works through this challenging assignment.



Meet Joanne.

Her manager Joanne
choose Andrea to lead this
initiative because of her
proven experience to
digital communications.

Andrea's approach to digital strategy

1. Get internal buy-in
2. Work directly with the communications team
3. Post valuable content
4. Help create informed decisions
5. Analyze data and iterate



What are the benefits of maintaining a robust digital presence?
What approaches should we consider?
What is the best way to engage our citizens online?
How do we mitigate risk to the municipality and our employees?
Is there a recommended approach to online customer service?
How do we deal with trolls?

Benefits

Cost efficiencies

Informed decision

Improved transparency

Spreading information



Option A: Minimal Engagement

Register your social media accounts

No financial engagement, minimal staff time

Reactive, no promotion

Option B: Limited Regular Engagement

Regular (automated) social media updates

Minimal user response

Nominal staff time

Option C: Selective Full Engagement

Dedicated staff time

Promotion of current initiatives

Dynamic social media activity

Two-way communication



Option D: Full Engagement

Increased public engagement

Constantly available citizen input

Captive audience for new initiatives, polling



Its been a few weeks and Joanne is checking in with Andrea.

Andrea: "There is a strong business case for Greatness to maintain and strengthen its digital footprint"

Joanne: "Excellent. So where do we go from here?"

Andrea: "Now its important to set out the rules for staff and users"

Joanne: "My thoughts exactly."



Mitigating Risk



City of Vaughan

@City_of_Vaughan



Everyone on my street has double gararges...who are these ~~fucknuts~~ who don't put their car in the garage when we get 2 feet of snow? [#dumb](#)

2013-02-08 7:23 AM

66 RETWEETS **18** FAVORITES



Perceived Risk

Insufficient resources to run a successful program.

Mitigation Strategy

Pick channels with the highest impact.

Determine responsibilities for content generation and monitoring.

Perceived Risk

The public will expect more information and quicker responses than we are equipped to provide.

Mitigation Strategy

Assign roles and resources before you begin.

Post hours of operations on social channels.

Perceived Risk

Confidential, sensitive or erroneous information will be posted by mistake or without proper authorization.

Mitigation Strategy

Assign role of administrator to experienced communicator.

Create protocols for correcting mistakes.

Perceived Risk

We will receive public criticism in an open forum.

Mitigation Strategy

Be an active part of the conversation. View as an opportunity to respond.

Accept that some may criticize, because they probably already are doing so.

Perceived Risk

Employees could use work time to participate on social networks.

Mitigation Strategy

Set out clear policies on social media use.

Assign administration to dedicated staff.

A blurred image of an office interior with desks, computers, and people working, overlaid with a blue tint.

General policy for staff

A close-up image of a person's hands writing in a notebook next to a laptop and a tablet, overlaid with an orange tint.

Guide for spokespeople

A large crowd of people seen from behind, overlaid with an orange tint.

Terms of use

A large, modern conference room with a large circular table and a screen at the front, overlaid with a blue tint.

Code of conduct



City of Guelph, Ontario

Social media policy for employees

Set out response times

Conditions on when to and when not to respond

When to share content from other users

Social media guidelines for elected officials

Emphasize use of “sound judgment and common sense”

Maintain confidentiality, privacy

Refer service questions to the City’s official channels

Practical advice: “The Internet is permanent”

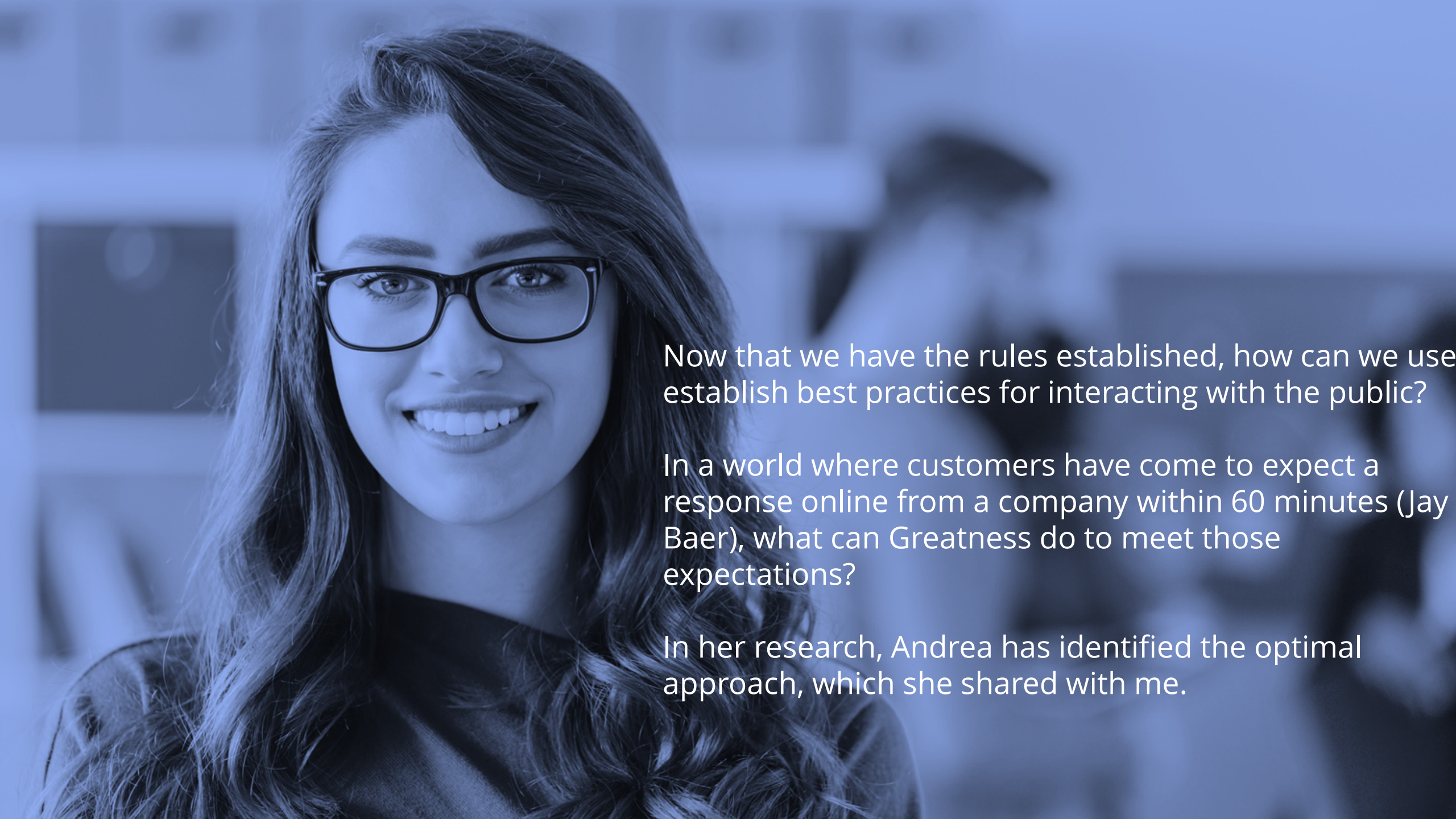
Social Media Commenting Guidelines

Abusive or libelous remarks will be removed

Will mute, block or ban users for violating rules

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a large, crowded public space, possibly a shopping mall or a transit hub. The floor is made of light-colored square tiles. Numerous people are seen walking in various directions. On the right side, there is a staircase with a metal railing. The entire image has a monochromatic blue tint. The text "A Culture of Customer Service" is overlaid in the center in a white, sans-serif font.

A Culture of Customer Service



Now that we have the rules established, how can we use establish best practices for interacting with the public?

In a world where customers have come to expect a response online from a company within 60 minutes (Jay Baer), what can Greatness do to meet those expectations?

In her research, Andrea has identified the optimal approach, which she shared with me.

Be

Positive
Transparent
Helpful
Timely
Honest

A conference room with a curved whiteboard on the left wall, several large monitors on the right wall displaying data and charts, and a FedEx logo on the wall. The room is furnished with a long table, chairs, and microphones. The text "You aren't FedEx." is overlaid in the center.

You aren't FedEx.



Resourcing

Staff Compliment

Required Hours Per Week

One content generator, one site administrator

5-10

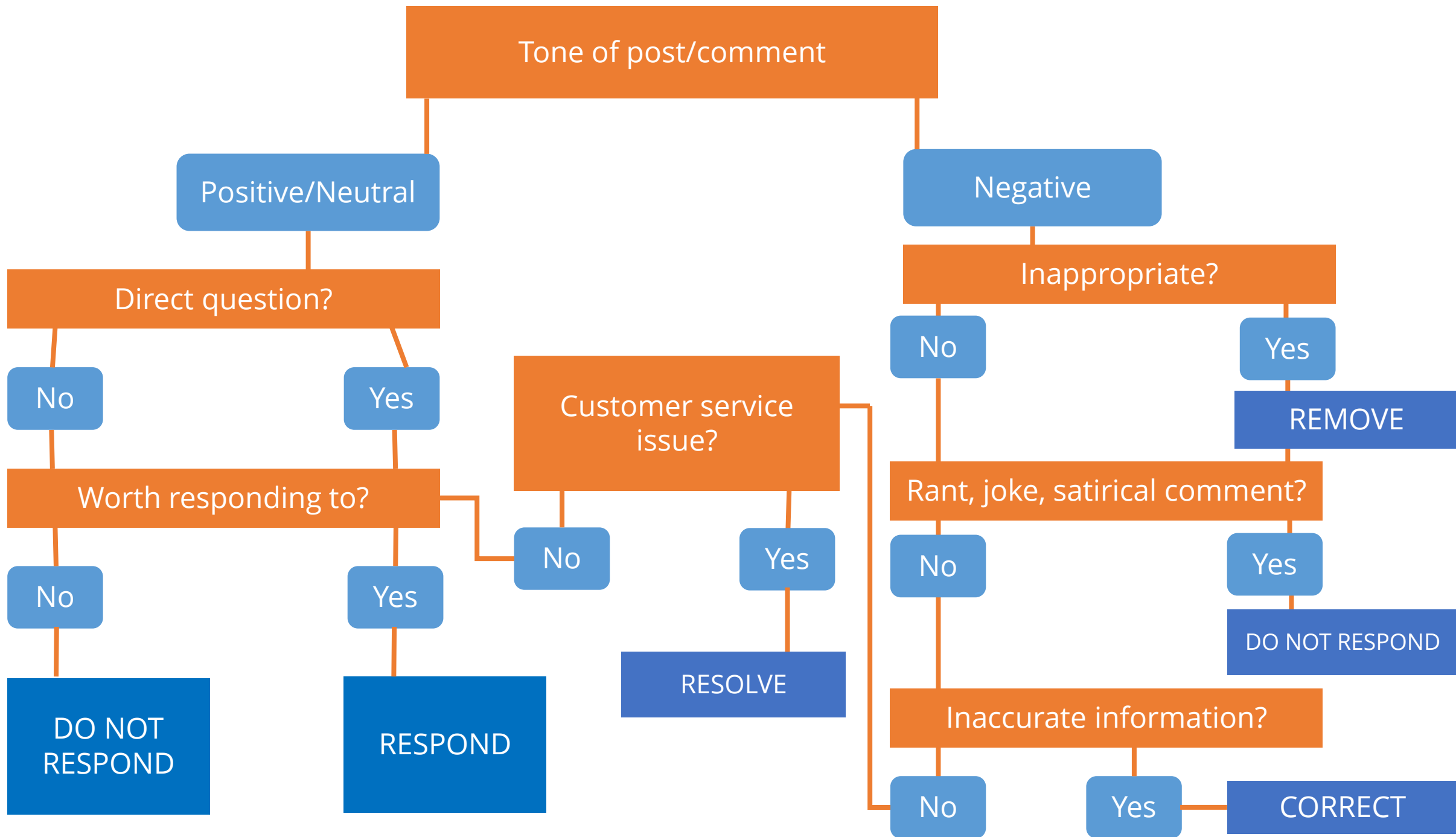
Multiple content generators, one site administrator

7-11

Multiple content generators, multiple site administrators

12-15

Source: East Gwillimbury





Increasing Level of Public Impact

Inform

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the issue

Consult

To obtain public feedback on analysis or decisions

Involve

To work directly with the public throughout process to ensure that public concerns are understood

Collaborate

To partner with the public including development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution

Empower

To place final decision-making power in the hands of the public

Benefits of public engagement

Improved service delivery

Increases and diversifies engagement

Wider reach

Cost savings

Improves internal collaboration



The image is a top-down, monochromatic photograph of a large, cluttered wooden desk. Several people's hands are visible, engaged in various tasks: typing on keyboards, using mice, and writing on papers. There are three large computer monitors, one in the upper left, one in the upper right, and one in the lower center. A laptop is open in the bottom right corner. The desk is covered with numerous papers, some of which contain charts and graphs. One chart in the bottom right shows a world map with percentages: 10.8%, 7.0%, and 2.7%. Another paper lists names: JOHN, SAM, LISA. There are also coffee cups, a small potted plant, a tape dispenser, and various other office supplies scattered across the surface. The overall scene conveys a sense of active, collaborative work.

Tools of the trade



Microsite or page
Email blasts
Social media comments
Infographics
Surveys
Video
Forum voting platforms

Talk Green Vancouver

City of Vancouver wanted to inform their sustainability plan, as part of Greenest City 2020 initiative

Created online hub TalkGreenToUs.ca

Used various online and offline tools to receive public input

730 unique ideas submitted

Impact: 28,000 votes on ideas

Markham Election Community Outreach

Wanted to proactively drive turnout

Engaged residents across all channels

Email blasts to ratepayers, associations, diversity organizations and businesses

Email reminders to registered Internet voters

Municipal voter view look up tool

Impact: increased voter turnout by 11%

AUGUST 29, 2016


TIME

Why we're losing the Internet to the culture of hate

By Joel Stein




time.com



27%

of Canadians have reported being
harassed online.



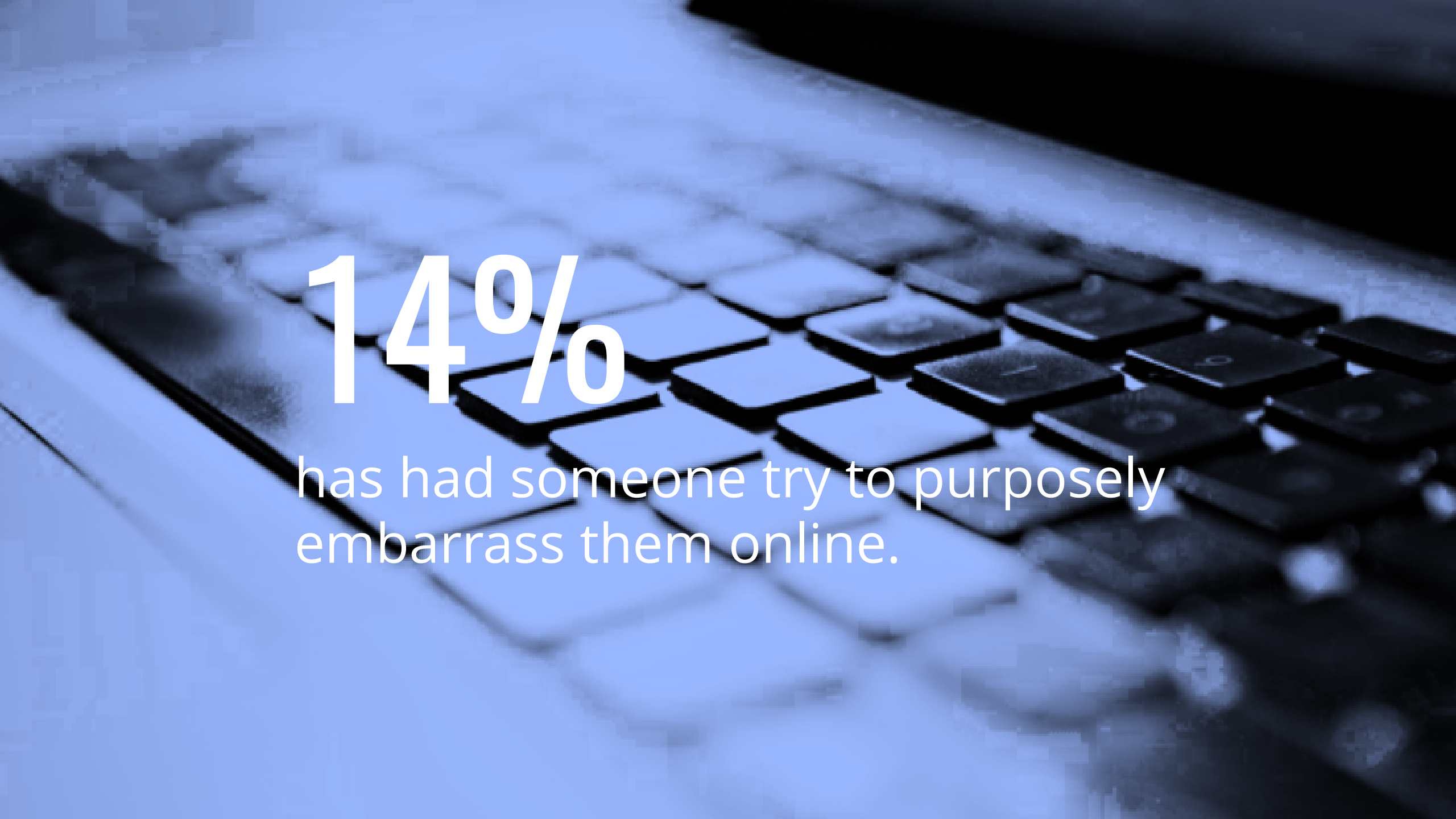
53%

say social media companies are “not doing enough” to address harassment on their platforms.



17%

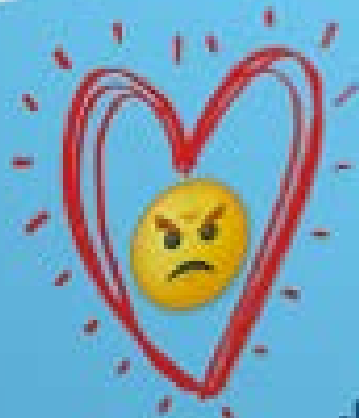
of Canadians have been called offensive names.



14%

has had someone try to purposely
embarrass them online.

HUG YOUR HATERS



How to Embrace Complaints
and Keep Your Customers


JAY BAER

New York Times bestselling author of *Real Happiness*



Offstage haters
go direct and complain less

Onstage haters
go public and are more outlandish



"If a customer calls you on the phone to complain, surely you wouldn't hang up on them. And not responding in social media is akin to hanging up on them, only worse, because there are actually other people watching."

Dave Kerpen, Likeable Media

Find all mentions

Display **E**mpathy

Answer publicly

Respond only twice

Switch channels



Andrea also proactively suggested a few other strategies.

Set public and clear rules for comments

Be open to other points of view and always respectful

Actively grow your community

Move quickly to remove any violations



What has Andrea accomplished?

Just weeks after being handed this assignment, Andrea has build out a solid plan to strengthen the digital offering for the Municipality of Greatness:

- 
- ✓ Presented the business case, secured proper buy-in
 - ✓ Developed rules of engagement
 - ✓ Identified risks and mitigation strategies
 - ✓ Built out a decision tree process
 - ✓ Developed approaches to facilitate online engagement
 - ✓ Trained her team on FEARS framework

A woman with curly hair, wearing a white blazer, is seated at a desk in an office. She is holding a pen in her right hand and looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background shows office windows and a blurred figure of another person in the foreground.

Her manager Joanne is pleased with her plan.

She has tasked Andrea with implementing and reporting back progress on a monthly basis.

A blue-tinted photograph of a rectangular sign with rounded corners and a white border. The sign is mounted on two wooden posts and features the words "Thank You" in a large, white, sans-serif font. The background is a sky filled with soft, white clouds.

Thank You