

Cyber Bullying and Reputation Attacks Counter Measures

 siteprone.com/2015/05/26/cyber-bullying-and-reputation-attacks-counter-measures/

By Koz Khosravani in Security Social Media Technology

May 26, 2015



Your teenage daughter receives an anonymous e-mail from someone containing hateful language that brings her to tears (or worse, potential thoughts of suicide). Your younger son gets bullied online by a bunch of technology-savvy schoolmates who make life miserable for him. Your husband's firm dives into bankruptcy due to an online reputation attack by ruthless competitors or even anonymous jealous 'friends.'

What do all these cases have in common? The answer is the use of the Internet to attack your character, business and life. While the rate of attacks online is increasing, cyber-laws are progressing too slowly to respond to the ever-changing Internet world. You need help to protect your family.

Luckily, it is possible to build an online reputation barrier to shield from such attacks. It takes going through the four steps outlined below:

Dealing with psychological and emotional hurt: Understand that many people are attacked online every day. You are not alone. Remember that these attacks are malicious, but almost never have any factual basis, so don't let them get to you. Tools exist to fight back.

Monitor your online reputation. Check the top three pages of search engines such as Google, and look for anything negative about your family or your firm. You can use online tools such as Google alerts to be notified of anything said about you online and decide to get such alerts routinely.

Check all your social media sites such as Facebook to see what is being said about you. To make life easier for yourself, use online tools such as socialmention.com that will monitor any keywords including your name.

Claim virtual real estate about your family online. Purchase various domain names containing your name such as JohnDoe.com, JohnDoe.Org, etc. You will need these domain names to represent many mini sites and blogs built for your online brand and reputation. Then, use some of the free sites such as sites.Google.com, blogger.com, wix.com, weebly.com and WordPress.com to showcase positive information about you (or your children) with appropriate pictures.

The site content can be family-oriented facts, biographies or anything else that you feel is positive in nature and builds your brand. Once you have set up these domain names and websites, when someone uses a browser and types for example JohnDoe.Info, they will see the positive site you created. Even if you don't want to link the domain names to the sites, as long as the sites you created use your name as part of the original site (<http://Sites.Google.com>), you will be noticed by search engines. An example of one of the many free sites I personally have that still maintains search engine exposure through the use of my name is: <https://sites.google.com/site/kozkhosravanibio>.

Expand your virtual real-estate beyond creating websites, into the realm of the social media landscape. Take time and create great profiles, including your name, pictures and other relevant and positive information to major social sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram and others. These sites are ranked very high on search engines so your profiles on them will rate highly as well.

Now you might be intimidated and not sure how to manage all these new sites, simply adding your basic information, biography, fun facts and pictures once is a great start. To get them ranked even higher, you must add weekly content to them. Thankfully, there are tools such as Hootsuite and WordPress that you can use to link to other social sites you own, so by writing a blog post once, you can, in effect, have the same article automatically posted on Facebook, Twitter and many other social sites. Let machines fight for your family's reputation and not just you.

Neutralize the negative attacks: The final step to protecting yourself is by neutralizing, or even having certain sites deleted from search results through the rule of law as well as through negotiations. If you need a quick way to deal with damaging information, you can hire an attorney who specializes in virtual slander. In some cases, an attorney can gain a court order to find your attackers and sue them. Your hired attorney may also negotiate with the webmaster of various sites to directly eliminate the negative information.

No matter the route you take, it's important to remember you have ways to fight back and you can take charge of your online reputation.

Koz Khosravani has taught web technologies at Harvard and UCLA and manages [DigiFusion Media](#) in downtown Laguna Beach.

