



The Online Experience

College Chronicle
Newsletter

June 25, 2021



Australian College
of Professionals

RTO 91513



The Online Experience

The world we live in today is centred around the online experience. Clients have the ability to check out your business without having to even walk through your doors and have a chat with you.

If your online presence is positive then this can obviously go in your favour. However, one too many disgruntled or even slightly dissatisfied clients making some noise online can be detrimental to your business.

One of the most crucial times in an agent's relationship with their client is the end of the contract, be that the settlement of a sale or the termination of an agency agreement or lease. At this point, it is essential to remember that the tenant can always become a buyer at some stage in the future and can be just as important as the landlord in the "experience of the agency".

How you end that relationship will always be how the client remembers the service they were provided. Too often we hear tales of "the agent pretty much disappeared once the sales contract was signed" or "the agent tried to claim my whole bond when I left the house better than when I started renting it."

Google reviews, product review sites, community noticeboards and even Facebook pages dedicated to defaming a business, are all avenues that clients, happy or not so, can share their view of their

experience with your business, and all can cause significant upset for your existing client base.

Recently we spoke with an agent who has been on the receiving end of such negative reviews by an unhappy client. Negative Facebook reviews led to a page being set up with the sole intention of providing a platform for ex-clients to leave horrendous reviews and defame the business and business owners. Most of the reviews were made up of unfounded allegations of neglectful business practices and potentially illegal activity. The agency has attempted to take legal action against the page "owners" with little success.

So what is the best way to deal with this type of situation? Western Australia's Government has put together a comprehensive list of steps to follow in the negative review space:

1. Respond promptly

The online world operates 24/7 and people expect a quick response. It is important to deal with negative reviews promptly before they escalate and more potential customers read the review.

2. Be polite and professional

Don't react personally to a negative review. Respond in a polite, professional manner and do not blame other people for the problem or create excuses.

3. Take the issue offline

After acknowledging the problem, offer to handle the matter off-line, out of public view. Provide your email or contact



details so you can discuss and resolve the matter.

4. Request that fake or misleading reviews be removed

If you know that reviews are fake or misleading they must be removed. Businesses and review platforms that do not remove reviews they know to be fake risk breaching the Competition and Consumer Act 2010.

5. Encourage your customers to write a review

You can encourage customers who are happy with your product or service to write a review. Be careful not to influence them by asking that they leave only positive reviews.

Rosy Sullivan
Director | College Principal

From the office

And just like that, Sydney CBD is back to a ghost town.

We were just seeing some real activity for businesses in the CBD and lots of people. And now we have the opposite. Just before us Sydney people were confined to our own backyard, over the past fortnight our trainers have been in Tweed Heads, Ballina, Batemans Bay and whilst they've been out on the road facilitating training, they've also been conducting compliance audits for agencies on the far north coast and the south regions of NSW. Meanwhile in Sydney, we've had a heavy strata fortnight with a Certificate of Registration Assistant Agent course and also

one of the main licensing modules for the Strata licence being conducted over the past fortnight. With the new Covid restrictions now upon us, our face-to-face courses for Sydney and our outer metropolitan and regional courses, have been transitioned into interactive webinars for the next few weeks – so if you are in any of the webinars, please interact with our trainers – otherwise they get really lonely.

From a staff activity perspective, over the past month we have had a few new staff join the ACOP team – starting with Richard Partington into the role of supporting students through the RPL Assessment process, Alisha Daniel who is Rosy's new Executive Assistant (Rosy hasn't stopped smiling since Alisha started), and Priscilla Mirkovic has joined us with extensive retail and customer service experience. We are all so excited to have some new team members joining us – particularly as we are losing two of our more senior staff members who are commencing maternity leave. Rachele had her final day with the office this week and is now in that calm(ish) period before her bundle of joy arrives and Megan has transitioned to working from home until her bundle arrives. They are not escaping permanently – they will both be coming back after maternity leave (we are not giving them any choice in this matter). Naturally, all these new commencements and transitions to maternity leave has meant many, many cakes and celebrations, particularly as the fortnight commenced with the Queen's birthday long weekend.

Here's to the next fortnight being less restrictive and dare we say – a few less cakes.

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