



## **DON'T MAKE IT WORSE: Tips for Responding on Social Media Channels**

1. **Respond to complaints while guest is still on premise.** Empower employees. Show empathy. Could prevent a negative post or a TV news story from appearing.
2. **Respond within one hour in the social media channel where the comment first appears.** Shows you are listening, you care, and you are receptive to feedback. Also allows you to correct factually incorrect information. Provide updates. Don't insert yourself in a guest's Facebook page.
3. **Reply at highest level.** Use your real name. Provide a way to reach you directly.
4. **Admit mistakes.** Offer a heartfelt apology. Accept responsibility for employees because you hired and trained them.
5. **Keep it short.** Be specific, provide useful information, but don't overwhelm.
6. **Don't be defensive.** Don't overreact. Don't argue. Don't take it personally. No finger pointing or placing blame on someone else. Readers will give you credit for a courteous explanation. Remember: Everyone else is reading the response, not just the person who posted it.
7. **Don't get too personal.** Never identify a guest by name if they're posting on a travel review site.
8. **Watch your tone.** Avoid industry jargon and clichés. Stay away from ALL CAPS (you're shouting at them), sarcasm, attempts at humor.
9. **Don't be a salesperson.** Not the time or place to turn your reply into an ad. No gift certificates – bribery could encourage more complaints. Don't make promises you can't keep. Invite them back only if you want them back.
10. **Proofread.** Helps avoid grammatical errors and typos...and rants. Your writing is a reflection of your attention to detail and professionalism. Tip: Create in Word doc first, have colleague proof it, cut and paste, then click Submit.
11. **Be original.** Customers don't respond well to stock answers. They want to know you're addressing their particular concern.
12. **Don't delete negative posts.** Exception: Remove any post filled with vulgarity.
13. **Don't ask guests to remove negative posts.** Only opens the door for the guest to expose your request in a follow-up post.
14. **See it as free research.** Is there a pattern in dislikes? Use the feedback to improve.