Crisis Communications
Sample Checklist for Small Brands Negative Coverage (Media or Social Media)

1. Scope and Volume

- What is the total volume of mentions/posts/articles?
- Which platforms is it happening on?
- Is it growing, stabilizing, or declining?

2. Key Messages and Themes

- What exactly are people upset about? (product, service, comment, behavior, perceived value, etc.)
- Are there recurring words, hashtags, or slogans being used?
- What misinformation (if any) is spreading?
- What true problems are being surfaced?

3. Audience Analysis

- Who is driving the conversation? (customers, influencers, activists, media, competitors?)
- Are verified or influential accounts involved?
- Is the backlash coming from your target audience—or from people outside your usual market?

4. Media Analysis

- Which media outlets have covered it (if any)?
- Tone of articles: balanced, critical, sensationalized?
- Are reporters reaching out for comment? (Track each outreach.)
- Are headlines and framing factual—or editorialized?

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5. Impact Assessment

- Have you lost customers, orders, partners, or key followers?
- Any new or pending legal threats or regulatory risks?
- Impact on brand sentiment (use simple positive/neutral/negative scoring if needed)

6. Internal Awareness

- Have leaders/employees been updated on what's happening and what to say (or not say)?
- Is there a draft FAQ or guidance for customer support teams?

7. Documentation

- Save screenshots and links of major posts, comments, articles.
- Consider keeping a log of developments (what was posted, when, who posted it).