

How to Make Every Single Mistake in the History of Social Media Marketing and Still Have Everyone and His Brother Talking About You

I don't know what's more sadly amusing - the outright "PT Barnumism" of the press or the utter stupidity of business owners who think they can insult our intelligence through social media and get away with it.

Despite the best efforts of intelligent people like you and I, somebody somewhere will take the recent actions of Samy and Amy Bouzaglo, use them as a blueprint and become the next village idiot everyone in America is talking about. Yes, some business owners are this desperate for publicity. And remember, there's no such thing as bad publicity. Sort of...

In case you've been building your business and haven't had the time to watch TV or read the latest entertainment news on the web, allow me to introduce you to the train wreck otherwise known as Amy's Baking Company in Scottsdale, AZ.

The Little Bakery That Could...Make an Ass out of Itself

On the May 10th season finale of the popular Fox reality show "Kitchen Nightmares", celebrity chef and restaurateur Gordon Ramsay took control of the bakery and bistro in an attempt to bring it back to life. After two days of observing, advising and often arguing with the owners, the aforementioned Bouzaglo's, Chef Ramsay told them, "I think you're too far gone," and left. This was the first time in over 60 episodes that Ramsay walked away.

What followed demonstrates the power of social media in today's society - or the horrors of social media in the hands of people who have a serious chip on their shoulder.

A couple days after the episode aired, [Reddit](#) discovered it and launched a thread lashing out at the restaurant. Users were directed to the restaurant's Facebook page where the negative comments began pouring in. Meanwhile, negative reviews were spiraling out of control over at [Yelp](#) as well. But what happened from there...

Samy and Amy took to their [Facebook](#) page to defend themselves. They also created multiple Reddit accounts, according to Forbes, and began lashing out at their detractors. Their defense of their restaurant turned into a digital Pier 6 brawl with insults and threats being hurled from one end of the information superhighway to the other. Reddit eventually closed down the thread, stating it had turned into a "witch hunt".

I wish I could say this was the pair's first social media faux pas but, unfortunately, I can't. Back on August 1, 2010 a web developer and foodie named Joel LaTondress posted a negative review of Amy's Baking Company on Yelp. The next day, Amy published a 450 word insult-laden response. The Phoenix New Times' Chow Bella section reported on the review which prompted Amy to post additional comments and spar with readers. From there, a Twitter account with the hashtag 'Crazy Amy' appeared. The seeds of disaster were sown.

The next night, Samy and Amy declared their social media accounts had been hacked. "We are working with the local authorities...", they announced. From there, they hired local PR

wizard and damage control specialist Jason Rose. Less than a week later, his firm ended their relationship with Amy's but not before announcing a planned "Grand Reopening Week" starting May 21st. The people would decide who was right - Gordon Ramsay or Amy's Baking Company. Supposedly 1000 reservations had been made for the event.

So what happened during the "Grand Re-opening Week"?

Well, according to this [article](#), not much on the first night. There may have been more on-lookers, hoping to see some drama unfold, than actual patrons. A couple nights later, things got a bit more interesting. A group of employees from the Phoenix Business Journal sat down to enjoy a Friday night meal. After receiving a succession of vodka martinis, each containing one or more fruit flies, the discussion with Samy got a bit tense. It ended with Samy melting down and throwing the group out of the restaurant. Of course, the story appeared on the [Phoenix Business Journal Blog](#) the next day.

Oh, it gets better...

The same day of the grand-reopening, numerous news outlets broke the story of Samy Bouzaglo's immigration issues. He's being investigated by ICE regarding the time he spent in prison prior to immigrating to the United States. (Samy was born in Morocco and is an Israeli citizen). Looks like he's not the only Bouzaglo who's done time. Amy pleaded guilty to bank fraud in 2003 and served 14 months in federal prison for Social Security number fraud.

And to top it all off...

On May 30th, [RadarOnline.com](#) reported Samy and Amy were "entertaining several offers" for their own reality TV show with Cineflix, producers of American Pickers and Property Brothers, being the front runners. So that's all you gotta do to get your own TV show, huh? Give customers bad food and service, berate them when they complain, steal tips from your servers, and attack just about everybody who says "boo" on your Facebook page. What have I been doing wrong all these years?

When Opportunity Knocks - Take a Flame Thrower to the Door!

I mentioned the concept of "Barnumism" earlier. Here's a definition...

"Showmanship or any activity taking advantage of people's credulity or desire for sensational entertainment, as practiced by P. T. Barnum"

Amy's Baking Company already had a reputation in the Greater Phoenix area, due to Amy's 2010 Yelp outburst. When news sources learned Kitchen Nightmares would be taping there, editors jumped for joy over the new fodder. They literally licked their lips once they learned of a 911 call to the restaurant during the taping. Samy and Amy were at it again, arguing with customers and ejecting them from the premises during the taping. ([Watch the episode](#), I'm not kidding.) Oh, these are the stories careers are made of, they thought...

Once the episode aired and the Reddit thread appeared it was on like Donkey Kong! The media went into overdrive looking for different angles. Of course they were going to learn about Samy and Amy's criminal records. Of course they were going to blitz the Grand Re-Opening like it was the trial of the century. Of course they were going to be all over the Phoenix Business Journal crew's unceremonious exit. Of course a reality TV deal was in the offing.

Using social media in business is a lot like playing with fire. The bad thing is someone else usually starts the fire with a negative comment or complaint. The good thing is you, as the business owner, have a choice. You can throw gasoline on the flames, like our friends the Bouzaglo's, or you can put out the fire by saying the right thing at the right time - or just keeping quiet. So why couldn't these pillars of the community just keep their damn mouths shut?

Everybody's Got Needs

When you watch the episode (Oh that's right, you're too busy doing what we teach here at VQ Success so thank you for that.) you definitely get a sense that the Bouzaglo's have something to prove. They're not going to be pushed around by the haters. They know their food is good, despite what "those people" say. Anybody who says it isn't is gonna have to deal with them.

Case in point, check out Amy's [missive directed back at Mr. LaTondress](#). Are you kidding me??!!?? In fact, even with all the controversy, this is what I found in the About section of their Facebook page on June 9, 2013...

About

Perfect food all day every day. Pizza is perfect, burgers never soggy, salmon wet AND dry! No complaints ever because our food is perfections. Haters can check your comments at the door and stop your online bullyiing and lies!

Description

Pizza better then CHEF RAMSEY CAN COOK! Our raviolis are fresh and hand made by our finest cook, ME. Come on down and have some food, its well worth the wait. Its delicious, healthy and made with the finest ingredients and ANYONE WHO WANTS TO SPREAD FILTHY INTERNET LIES THAT SAY OTHERWISE WILL HERE FROM THE FBI! Try our specialty cakes and desserts and WET AND DRY salmon burger.

If we pull out our VDT tool kit to analyze Samy and Amy, two basic emotional needs rise to the surface...validation and excitement. They just want to be told how great they are. Is that so wrong? So many of us thrive on the praise of others and when the opposite comes our way - condemnation, that is - we can get pretty darn worked up. Combine their insatiable need for validation with the need for variety and to take risks and you get the Molotov cocktail we've been witnessing in the press and online.

Breaking the law must be very exciting to some. Getting caught and thrown in the slam? Thrill of a lifetime. Being on national TV throwing a hissyfit with the "king of hissyfits" watching? Orgasmic, of course. Samy and Amy have a massive emotional need for

excitement. They love living on the edge - it's obvious! They better get that reality TV deal because I can't imagine what would happen if things went back to "normal" around Amy's Baking Company.

The personality of the owner shining through into everything the business does is essential for success. However, that personality must come from an owner who is emotionally mature, not suffering from such low self-esteem that they lash out at anyone who finds fault with them. The public needs your best self and what you've read above is the most extreme example of what happens when they don't get it.

How Not to Be Like Samy and Amy

I suppose I could write one sentence to sum up this section nicely. **Don't do what they did.** But I like you and you deserve better. Follow these steps in your social media customer interactions in order to avoid what happened to the Bouzaglos.

1. Don't respond to every comment. There are trolls everywhere. Leave them be.
1. Don't respond immediately to comments that upset you. A little time and space is what's needed. Do be prompt, though. A whole day cooling off is bit much and sends the wrong message to that customer and all the others visiting your profile.
1. Delegate this responsibility but be available for consultation. Remember, the object is to build systems in order to remove yourself from the equation. Some blowups will require your involvement but they're few and far between.
1. Apologize and offer a solution. No platitudes. No canned bullshit. Listen to the concern, say you're sorry and make it right.

Do this right and you can turn complainers into loyal customers who sing your praises far and wide. There's data to support this. According to a study done by [The Retail Consumer Report](#) in 2011, 68% of consumers who complained or made negative comments on social media networking sites about their experience got a response from the retailer. Of those folks, 18% turned into loyal customers and bought even more. Now check this out... 33% of them later posted a positive review and 34% of them deleted their earlier negative review.

So you can make a laughing stock of yourself like Samy and Amy or you can reach out to legitimately unhappy customers, apologize, fix the problem and earn customers for life. The best thing about doing this on social media is everybody sees it. It's like tooting your own horn without actually tooting your own horn.

Impactful content marketing will make the difference between moderate success and outstanding success in the modern marketplace. Enter your email address below for access to a free webinar that shows you why.