



**Case Study: Buffer Wins Even More Fans after
Facing a Social Media Crisis**

1. STATUS

Buffer's slogan says: "A better way to share on social media". That became a crisis after the platform was hacked on the 26th of October 2013. Around 2:20 pm EST Twitter got a ton of messages from people notifying them about spam Twitter and Facebook posts on behalf of some Buffer users. Fifteen minutes later the platform announced on Twitter that Buffer has been under hacking attacks.



From that point, Buffer's team has been constantly communicating with the world, answering questions, comments, etc.

2. ISSUES

The Buffer crisis case is a brilliant example of a company's crisis reputation management. Social media is a place where information can spread with the speed of light. There are millions of users commenting, retweeting and engaging with others in their network. The Buffer team did manage to answer the questions of customers who had been inconvenienced due to the hacking.

3. ACTIONS

From the point when Buffer sent the first Tweet that the platform has been attacked until the problem was resolved, the team was working hard at communicating with their audience. Blog posts, Facebook and Twitter – users were commenting and encouraging Buffer's team to continue their work. The social media startup encouraged users to check their official Facebook page and Twitter account to stay informed about the current status of the situation. The fact that the attack happened on Saturday and Buffer's office was empty didn't stop them from resolving the issue, using Google Hangouts to communicate with each other.



Jigme Datse Yli-Rasku · 7 minutes ago

You guys totally rock. From what I can see it looks like I wasn't affected. Other than the things you did to mitigate the damage. Cleaning that up now. Great job guys.

^ | v Reply Share ›



theirmind · 15 minutes ago

Thank you for your efforts.

^ | v Reply Share ›



LeoWid → theirmind · 12 minutes ago

thank you for hanging in there!

^ | v Reply Share ›



Janet Fouts · 34 minutes ago

WOW you guys really handled this gracefully. Thanks for being ON it and letting us all know so quickly. I was just writing up a blog post about the mobile app based on the email you sent out earlier. I'll wait until Tues or Weds to post so things have time to settle down. We <3 Buffer!

^ | v Reply Share ›



LeoWid → Janet Fouts · 33 minutes ago

Hi Janet, thanks so much for the kind words and for sticking with us! Yes, Tue/Weds everything should be running smoothly again!

1 ^ | v Reply Share ›

Buffer's user comments and reactions were absolutely compelling – there was a happy ending.

4. LESSONS LEARNED

✓ **Keep your audience posted**

Absolutely vital. In a situation – crisis or not, you always should be the first and most reliable source of information regarding the situation that has occurred.

✓ **Real-time talk**

If your audience truly supports you that's a great way to show your appreciation and communicate the situation with your followers. What a better way than using your brand's social media profiles?

✓ **Focus on fixing the issue**

Finding a solution instead of blaming somebody about it is the way to go. In times when social media helps the news to spread in no time, you don't have any for a wrong move or a bad decision.

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