



A Case Study of Digital PR and Online Reputation Management of Zomato's Pure Veg Fleet and Prada's Kolhapuri Sandals Controversy

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Abstract

This research examines the importance of Digital Public Relations (PR) and Online Reputation Management (ORM) through the cases of Zomato and Prada. In the current digital era, where social media and online platforms shape public opinion instantly, a single decision can quickly grow into a major brand crisis. The study focuses on two key incidents: Zomato's launch of its "Pure Veg Fleet," which drew criticism for encouraging social division, and Prada's branding of traditional Indian Kolhapuri sandals, which was seen as cultural appropriation.

These cases were selected because they reflect how cultural sensitivity and communication choices can strongly affect public trust. Along with these two central incidents, five other PR crises of each brand were also studied to understand recurring patterns in crisis handling and response strategies. By analysing these examples, the research highlights the power of online platforms in shaping narratives and the urgent need for brands to manage digital reputation with care.

The findings show that quick response, respect for cultural identity, and transparency in communication are critical for protecting a brand's image. While digital PR gives brands direct access to consumers, it also increases exposure to criticism. Therefore, effective online reputation management is essential for building long-term credibility and trust.

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