

Executive Brief:

First Investors Corp. Case Study

An 80-year-old financial services company faced a reputational crisis when disgruntled employees labeled it a 'scam' online. Recruitment collapsed, valuation was at risk, and an acquisition was on the horizon. This brief outlines the challenge, response, and results.

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| Company | First Investors Corporation (FIC) |
| Industry | Financial Services |
| Offices | 46 in 26 states |
| Crisis Trigger | Online 'scam' accusations amplified by Google AutoComplete |
| Impact | 63% decline in recruitment, acquisition risk |

# Challenge

FIC’s reputation was hijacked by online detractors, amplified by search algorithms. Recruitment collapsed, internal morale faltered, and acquisition prospects were threatened.

# Strategy

Adopted a 'ready, shoot, aim' approach with three goals: triage online reputation, establish legitimacy, and restore confidence among stakeholders.

# Key Actions

* Launched FirstInvestorsScam.com to redirect negative searches
* Produced authentic testimonial videos (15,000+ views)
* Negotiated removal of damaging posts from Glassdoor
* Expanded presence on LinkedIn and Glassdoor
* Direct outreach to placement officers and internal staff
* Initiated recruitment process improvements

# Results

* Recruitment rebounded by 54%
* Negative search results neutralized
* Campus restrictions lifted
* Branch morale restored
* Acquisition by Foresters Insurance completed successfully (2011)

# Lessons Learned

1. Algorithms amplify brand risks
2. Silence creates a vacuum for detractors
3. Speed is critical in crisis
4. Authentic voices build trust
5. Root causes must be addressed