

Three Lines, Five Emails a Day, \$12K–\$18K a Month

John Bejakovic interviews online reputation specialist Shad Arab about the cold email system behind his business

This transcript has been lightly edited for readability. Filler words, false starts and repetition have been removed; the substance is unchanged.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

I'm here with Shad Arab. Shad is an online reputation specialist who helps business owners get featured in top media, as well as erase negative reviews, whether that's on social media, review sites, and so on.

A week or so ago, I sent out an email to my list asking people if they've had success with cold outreach. Shad responded that it works very well for him. He said: no fancy cold email stack, just a three-line email about a very relevant problem they'd want to get rid of, and it brings him \$12K to \$18K every month. I thought, okay, this is something people will want to hear about. So that's what we're here for. Shad, thank you for doing this.

SHAD ARAB

It's entirely my pleasure. To give you a bit of background, I've been dabbling in the online world since 2019. It essentially began in a NICU, where I was holding my daughter to my chest and wondering what it would have been like if I'd been stuck in a 9-to-5 and not been able to spend that time with her. She was born prematurely, at 860 grams. That moment turned everything for me, and that's when I started dabbling in the online world.

Of course, it wasn't easy in the beginning. I invested a lot of money into the wrong things, a lot of businesses that never took off. I even entered into business partnerships, and we all know how those can go. I was just trying to create a life where I controlled my time, instead of constantly trading my time for money for someone else. So I was searching and searching.

Then, in 2024, I was working for an online entrepreneur, and I was on a sales call. The lead took me to a Reddit thread about the entrepreneur I was working for and told me, "Looking at this thread, I don't trust you guys and I don't want to invest with you." And he hung up.

That was the starting point for me. I was making decent money as a closer, but my time was still tied up. Something piqued my interest, and I went down the rabbit hole. One thing after

another started clicking together. I ended up finding plugs — the right contacts for getting content removed — and that's how I got into the ORM [online reputation management] business.

Because I'd always been in the online world, I thought I'd use my old connections, since I already had credibility with them. I started with the coach I'd been working for. I worked for him for free and asked for a testimonial in exchange. I used that testimonial to bring in more online coaches, and things went well.

Then, towards the end of December 2024, I was relying only on referrals, and they started to run dry. So I had to come up with my own mechanism. Between January and June 2025, I tried cold email the traditional way, and it did not work for me. I burned through so much.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

Let me pause you there. When you say “traditional,” what do you mean by traditional cold email?

SHAD ARAB

The traditional way where you get a list, clean it up, and send thousands and thousands of cold emails, where a 1% reply rate is the standard goal. I did this for six months because I thought it was the only way. But I was burning money and burning domains. From March to June I was using Instantly as well, but it wasn't giving me the results I was hoping for.

So I sat down with myself and thought, let me do it my way. I created a system where, for each service I offer, there's a different cold email I send out. It's essentially three lines:

*Spotted this negative thread about you and your business hurting your credibility.
I help online entrepreneurs like you take control of your reputation. If I could get
rid of this, would you want me to?*

That's it. Those are the three lines. Yes, there's a website and there are testimonials on it, but everything has been anonymized, because this isn't the kind of service people want to be seen using.

The replies usually don't come from the first email. My money comes in with my follow-ups — and they're not the usual “Hey, did you get a chance to read my email?” Since we're using Reddit as the example: I pick the most damaging comment someone has posted about that entrepreneur in the thread, send it as a screenshot, and add one line, like: “I guess we can both agree this shouldn't be lingering for long.” That's it. And this usually does the trick.

If it doesn't, the third email is: “If I were to introduce you to this nine-figure entrepreneur, would you want me to?” There are five follow-up emails in total, and they're very specific to the situation. The fourth one is tied to the revenue they might be losing if the negative thread

stays online. There's a method behind the madness. That's what I do, essentially. Do you have any questions about it?

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

I do. This has been great. To me, the key thing sounds like you're in a niche where you can talk to a very real problem. And then you're “dimensionalizing” that problem — that's a copywriting term. You're not just saying, “Hey, you have a negative review.” It's, “You have a negative review, here's an even worse comment somebody left about you, here's how much money you could be losing,” and so on. I think that's brilliant, and I think that's why it works.

I'm curious about one thing. In that same follow-up sequence, you turn it into something positive and talk about something else entirely: “If I could introduce you to this nine-figure business owner.” How does that fit into the process?

SHAD ARAB

I use it because sometimes they might think I'm not credible enough. I've worked for online coaches, and they have big egos. They want to work with someone credible who has done this before for someone else. That's the reason I added that follow-up: “If I were to introduce you to this nine-figure entrepreneur I've worked with, would you want me to?”

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

I see. So it's positioned as, “Would you like me to introduce you so you can hear about his experience?”

SHAD ARAB

Exactly. His experience of working with me.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

Got it. That makes sense. So on the one hand, the brilliant thing is that you're in such a specific, pain-specific niche. People can see the problem. It's a reputation problem, and most likely a money problem too. So you don't need to sell a tremendous amount — you just highlight it and say, “If I could fix this for you...” What's your actual offer? Do you charge up front? After the thing is removed? How does your service work?

SHAD ARAB

It's pay-after-success only. That's one of the reasons I have a great conversion rate on my replies. My reply rate is usually between 60% and 70%, but my real strength is my conversion rate, which is between 50% and 60%.

And when I said \$12K to \$18K a month, I'm talking about profit, not the company's overall revenue. If I said my company does \$20K but my profit is only \$5K, that wouldn't mean much. That's why I mention profit.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

Out of that \$12K to \$18K, how much comes from cold email or cold outreach?

SHAD ARAB

Almost all of it — I'd say about 70%. Beyond that, I have some critical partnerships with ORM agencies. I offer them my services, and they use me as an affiliate, a behind-the-scenes guy.

I closed those with cold email too, but I used a sneaky approach. I reached out to them as a customer and got on a sales call. I learned their entire procedure and how it all works. Then I reached out to the director of content removal at those agencies. So I have some pretty big clients. Those agencies bring regular, everyday business to me, which is great.

Then there's my own cold email process, where I research an online entrepreneur down to the last detail before I reach out. I only send two to five emails a day. Five max. I've never been able to do more, because I need to research each person and write the specific email for them.

For example, not everyone is dealing with a negative Reddit thread. Some have a negative news article that's still online — maybe it's years old, the case has been settled, but the article still exists. There's a different cold email for that. When I say there's a method to the madness: I actually read the court judgments to see how the case ended. If someone was found not guilty, it becomes much easier for me.

I do this deep research because it makes it much easier to sell my services — for instance, knowing whether the removal can be permanent or only temporary. If someone had an out-of-court settlement, the Google algorithm keeps changing behind the scenes, so a removal may be temporary rather than permanent. In situations like that, I offer lifetime warranties on my services. That's why I need proper research on my prospects before I reach out.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

So how does this work? Do you have some automation feeding you negative reviews about people, and then you do the research? Or do you find people first and then search for negative reviews about them?

SHAD ARAB

I find people first, then I research them, then I reach out. That's how it was. But right now, since I've been doing this since 2024, the snowball effect of referrals is kicking in. A lot of my online friends and online coaches are now referring their friends who are dealing with these problems.

For example, a customer had a bad experience and ranted on the coach's Instagram. We remove that — a Reel, a carousel, a Facebook review the company has — wherever it's possible. Lately, a lot of referrals are coming from online coaches dealing with problems on Meta, not just on Reddit.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

You said you're sending five cold emails a day. Walk me through the numbers again. 60% to 70% reply, and 50% to 60% of those convert. So that means one to two new customers every day out of these?

SHAD ARAB

Yes, exactly.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

Very impressive. And I remembered the question we both lost track of earlier. Somebody responds, and you basically make them the pitch: "I'll take care of this problem for you, and you pay me after it's done." If you succeed, they pay. That's the agreement, right?

SHAD ARAB

Exactly. That's how the ORM industry is structured. Everyone in this industry uses the pay-after-success model, so I can't be any different.

With the ORM agencies I work with, there's trust, so I'm never worried about the money. And the online coaches know very well that if they didn't pay, there could be repercussions, because we have complete control over what we do. If we can make something disappear, we can also make sure it goes back to what it was. I have never had a customer not pay me. It just doesn't happen in this industry.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

Interesting. Sounds like a very reliable business. As long as there's business, there are going to be reviews. Shad, I think I have everything I wanted. I understand how you do what you do, how it's working for you, and the business and the offer you're making. Final question: if people want to follow you, connect with you, or hire you, where should they go?

SHAD ARAB

I have a website, which I can send over to you after our interview. It has my Telegram, my WhatsApp, my phone number, my email — everything is there. People can reach me on whichever channel they're comfortable with.

JOHN BEJAKOVIC

Great. Send it over and I'll include it when I post this. Thanks again, Shad. This has been really eye-opening about the power of finding a real problem people have and being very direct about being able to solve it.

SHAD ARAB

Thank you so much for lending me your platform to talk about my experience with cold email. I really appreciate it, John.