

Online Reputation Management in a Digital World

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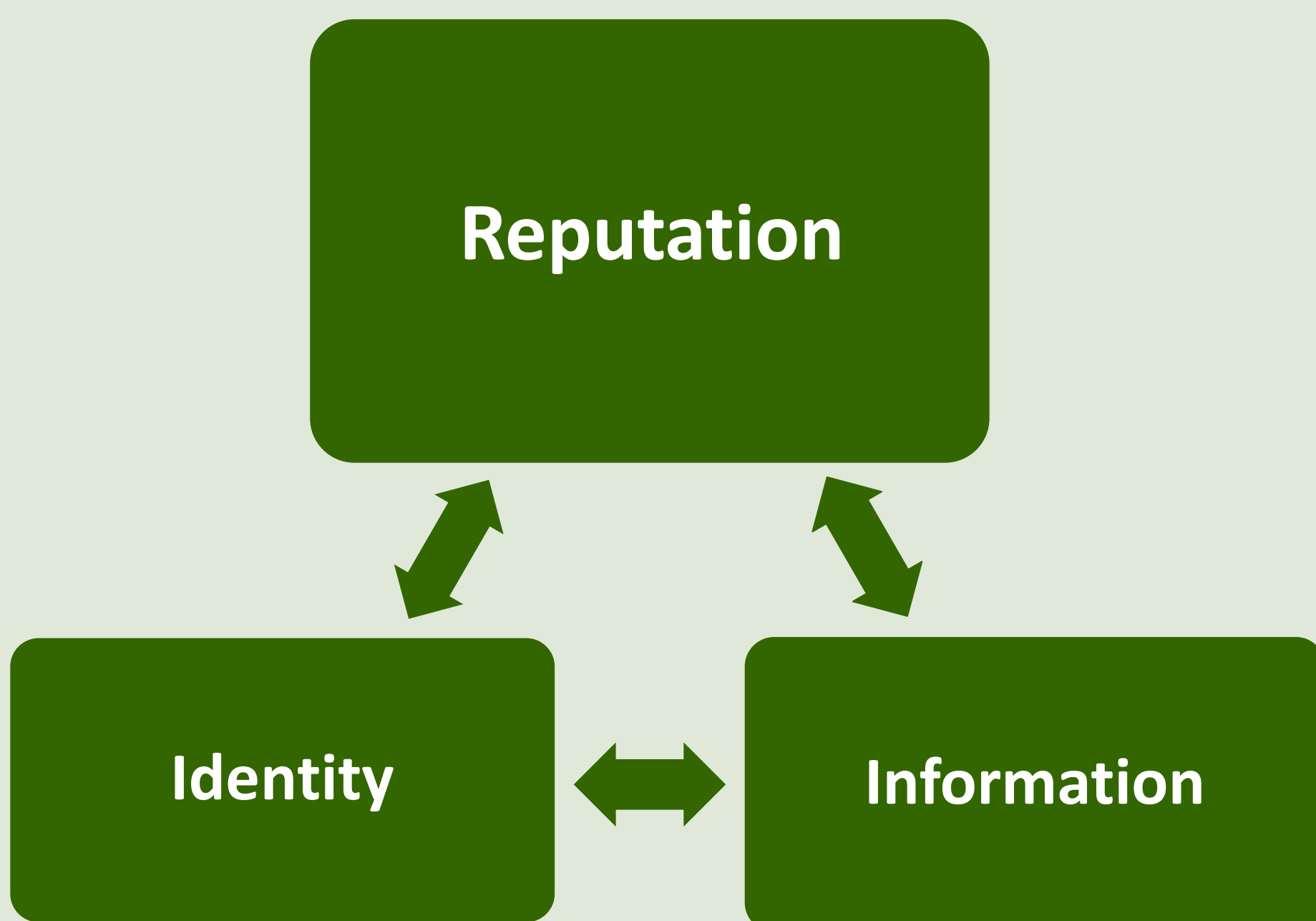
Research Questions:

This research will answer two questions regarding personal reputation management online:

1. How do people evaluate the reputations of others from the online evidence available to them?
2. How do people manage their own reputation through their online activities?

Context:

Reputation, identity, and information are key components to online environments. These environments may impact the offline reputations of individuals, even if they do not directly participate in them. This research will look at the relationship between these three concepts, with a focus on reputation, and how they impact individuals' online and offline worlds.



The research:

The research investigates issues of reputation management online. Highlights to include:

- Social informatics viewpoint
- Personal reputation; *not* corporate identity or brand
- Focus on how individuals decide what to share—or not to share
- Use of pseudonyms and anonymous accounts
- Opting to not use social media*
- How individuals evaluate the reputations of others
- Individuals' understandings of the networks and tools available
- How awareness of, and concerns related to, online reputation changes over time

Notes: *It should be recognised that it is possible to find information online for even those who have actively elected not to maintain an online presence.

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Why is it important?

Because the line between online and offline have blurred to the point that our online and offline worlds have combined to become our real world. We plan offline activities online, and we share offline activities online. In some ways, they're the same space now.

Methodology:

The methodology for this research has yet to be fixed. However, it is anticipated that a mixed-methods approach will be taken, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. A scoping survey will be conducted to help further frame the main study in Year Two. If determined appropriate, a small pilot study will be conducted at the beginning of Year Two to test that the methods chosen are appropriate for this investigation.

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