

CRISIS COMMUNICATION in the AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Using Social Media in a Crisis

Rick J. Kaufman, APR
Emergency Management Trainor and Consultant
rrkaufman154@gmail.com

Keys to Successful Implementation

1. Establish a trusted presence early
 - Stakeholders want to hear you are aware and in charge
 - “We’re aware of the situation, you can expect to hear from us as soon as we learn more ...” (add a gentle word of sympathy if aware of any victims or injuries, or as a general statement)
2. Post timely content
 - First Response: 5-10 minutes, or sooner
 - The longer you wait to respond, the more you lose control, the more speculation and rumors grow
3. Social media efforts should be message driven, not channel driven
4. Keep messages brief and pertinent (people aren’t reading, they are scanning)
5. Use social media to support a unified message
6. Monitor social media networks (focus on top 3) to develop understanding of stakeholders’ needs
7. Engage stakeholders (they are your key communicators)
8. Rely on advocates and allies (they are often more effective in responding)
9. Rule of 3: Never send a third reply when responding online. A third reply is an argument, not an answer. On the third reply, go offline.
10. Think before you speak
11. Fight a social media fire with social media water; be prepared to respond in forums where the conversation is taking place
12. Evaluate and adjust