



School Safety & Prevention Series
with Rick J. Kaufman, APR

CRISIS COMMUNICATION in the AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

What we'll cover...

- Social Media Impact in a Crisis
- Understanding Stakeholder Emotions
- Social Media Use in a Crisis
- Post-crisis Analysis



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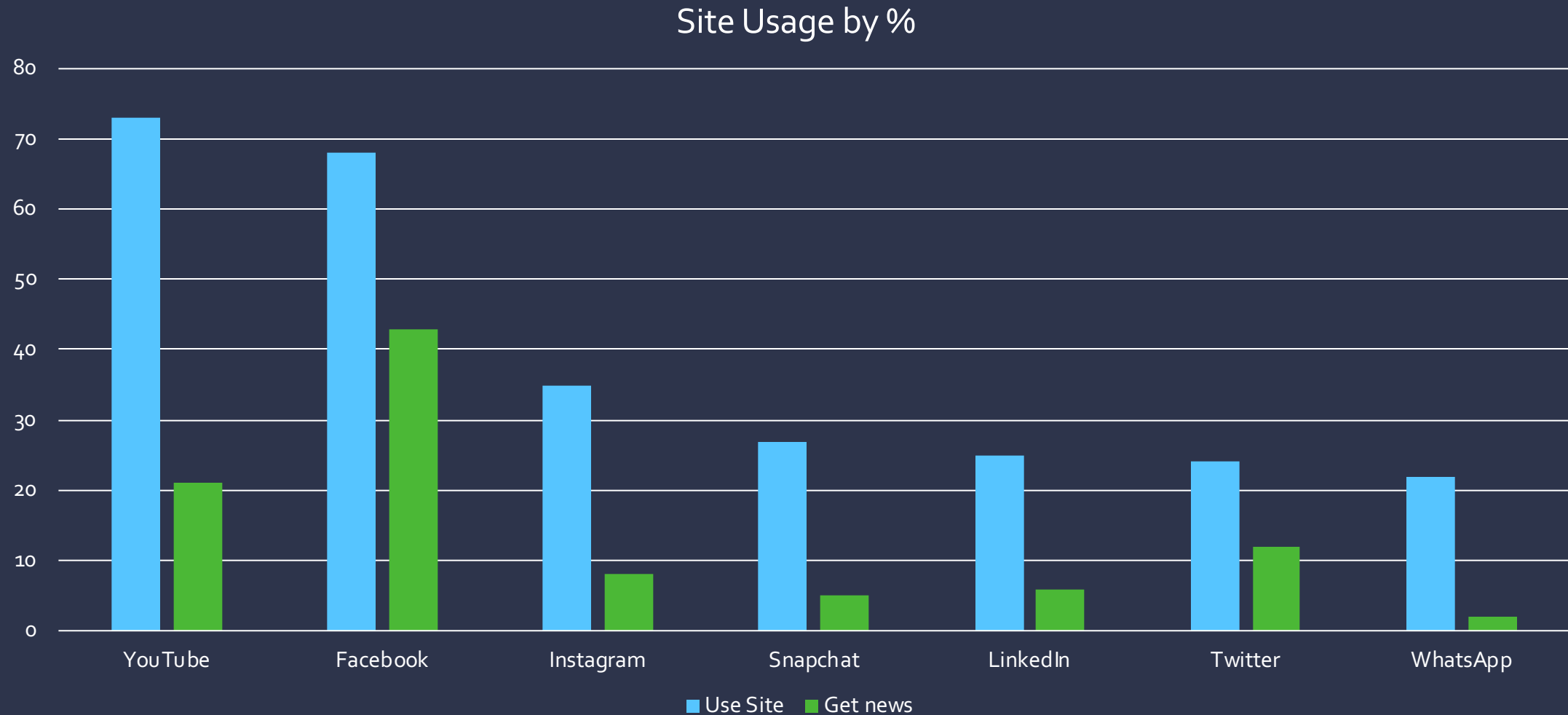


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Maintaining a robust crisis communication strategy demands the complete integration of social media into the organization's crisis management and crisis communication plan.

Who uses social media?



The flow of information via social media is of far greater velocity and volatility than most organizations previously experienced.



Social Media Impact on a Crisis

- News of incident breaks on social media first
- Information travels across geographic boundaries
- Details shared from first-hand, but unofficial sources
- Comments often from mis-informed, ill-informed & persons with an agenda

A Perfect Storm of Emotions

- Physiological, behavioral, cognitive
- Social sharing is a cathartic release of emotions, especially with persons most connected to incident
- Stakeholders seek info to gain a sense of personal control over a situation and restore personal balance

As crisis unfolds ...

- On-scene pictures, videocaps are now real-time
- Professionals forced to play catch-up to gather information



Lack of information + Short decision time

= UNCERTAINTY

- Stakeholders seek info to gain a sense of control over a situation and restore personal balance
- Motivated to reduce uncertainty
- Uncertainty avoidance leads to increased information seeking
- Information void is filled by someone

Social media trolls thrive on deliberately sharing misleading information to command an audience, or motivated to harm the organization



Planning is essential

Know exactly how you'll reach the highest number of stakeholders in the most efficient way



Social Media Use in a Crisis

- Communicate & engage
- Target influential online stakeholders
- Establish situational awareness
- Quickly respond to fill info void
- THE SOURCE for factual info



Social Media Use in a Crisis

- 1. Monitor:** Use your eyes and ears
- 2. Identify:** What's being said? Who's saying it? How often?
- 3. Consider:** Is there a need to respond?
- 4. Respond:** Transparency and frequent updates

Crisis Communication Plan: **RESPOND**

Using SM During a Crisis

- Stay on message
- Use existing key messages on ALL communication channels
- Frequent updates (brief & pertinent)
- Continue to monitor to understand stakeholder, community needs
- Engage in conversation to address misinformation, establish organization as THE credible source

Crisis Communication Plan: **RESPOND**

Using SM After a Crisis

- Reassure stakeholders, public by communicating ongoing response & recovery efforts
- Don't stop communicating (your stakeholders haven't ...)
- Re-engage to regain trust

Social Media Use in a Crisis

- 1. Monitor**
- 2. Identify**
- 3. Consider**
- 4. Respond**
- 5. Evaluate:** Post-crisis review & analysis

Post-crisis Analysis

- Pulse of organization
- Impact on reputation
- Handling of crisis
- Communication plan & activities

Creating a crisis communication plan is not a one-off task. It needs an annual systematic review (or after each crisis).

It's a living document. Needs updates to ensure it reflects your risk analysis, and internal and external changes.



Parting thought ...

Engaging stakeholders via social media must be focused on building social capital and trust long before a crisis occurs. When schools and districts reach out to and foster relationships with stakeholders, they are more likely to sustain the trust and support during a crisis.

We'd like to hear from you!





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Next Webinar: February 19th

“Crisis Communication Goal: Prevent Harm to Stakeholders”

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Thank you!