In Case of Crisis
by RockDove Solutions

3rd EDITION

THE NEW RULES OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

ISSUES & CRISIS PLANNING AND RESPONSE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Edited by Ron Culp
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Published by RockDove Solutions
Creator of the award-winning crisis management platform,
In Case of Crisis

AWARD WINNING

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FOREWORD

CHRISTOPHER BRITTON
Chief Operating Officer of RockDove Solutions, developer of the In Case of Crisis, crisis management platform trusted by over 750 global brands.

The idea for this eBook was conceived during 2017, a tumultuous year for corporate and brand crises in the US. Since that time, we have all seen both the number of issues and the speed they escalate to a crisis steadily rise. Yet, a recent survey by Deloitte found that the gap between board member perceptions of readiness and companies actually having a crisis plan was substantial. The Deloitte study also found that, “Eighty percent of organizations worldwide have had to mobilize their crisis management teams at least once in the past two years.”

To combat these realities executives are increasingly moving beyond bulky plans. Opting to invest in technology platforms that provide scenario-based access to response protocols, combined with powerful communication services.

As the digital age has shaped the environment we operate in, the eBook continues to capture the aspects of crisis management that are evolving. This third edition brings four new chapters on some very timely topics.

Companies large and small, public and private, across all major market sectors use the In Case of Crisis platform. Through this work, we recognize our role in supporting executives and their company’s ability to thrive in the digital age. After reading this eBook we invite you to learn how we are helping clients today with our crisis management platform.

We hope you enjoy the eBook and the incredible work by the authors and editor.

CHRISTOPHER BRITTON

Washington, DC

September 2019

INTRODUCTION

DIGITAL AGE DEMANDS NEW APPROACH TO CRISIS MANAGEMENT

RON CULP *Professional in Residence, Public Relations & Advertising, DePaul University*

The dizzying speed of communication today coupled with the public skepticism it seems to produce is placing intense pressure on both businesses, governments and other institutions to re-evaluate their traditional crisis management strategies.

THE NEXT CRISIS CAN BE IGNITED SPONTANEOUSLY BY ANY OF THE WORLD'S 3.5 BILLION INTERNET USERS.

Long gone are the days when print media essentially dictated but two major news cycles in the form of morning and afternoon papers and news programs. Now, the next crisis can be ignited spontaneously by any of the world's 3.5 billion Internet users. In fewer than 280 Twitter characters or a cell phone video posted on Facebook, so-called "citizen journalists" are forcing brands and organizations to re-evaluate their crisis readiness.

Currently, 80% of all web users engage in some form of social media, according to We Are Social, a digital agency. Meanwhile, the fastest growing source of Internet engagement is coming through mobile devices, which are increasing by nearly a million new users a day. A staggering 69% of these users are spending most of their media time on smart phones, according to ComScore, an audience measurement firm.

With Google handling a staggering 40,000 searches a second, consumers increasingly seek and find answers to their questions or concerns about brands, products and services provided by business, government and nonprofit institutions. Refusing to wait for traditional media reporting, consumers expect and generally receive answers in real-time. And that information often colors their attitudes towards institutions providing those products and services.

SECTION ONE
WANING PUBLIC TRUST REQUIRES 24/7 VIGILANCE

Communications marketing firm Edelman has been tracking global attitudes towards institutions for the past 18 years. The 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer revealed for the second year in a row that trust is in crisis around the world. The general population's trust in all four key institutions — business, government, NGOs and media – has declined broadly. Unfortunately, of all countries surveyed, the U.S. suffers from the highest Trust Gap.

"Organizations now must recognize that brand perception and corporate reputation function more like a real-time global trading floor on which facts are optional and truth is selective. This 24/7 social media machine and online conversation shapes brand perception frequently without the participation of the organization itself," said Harlan Loeb, global head of Edelman's reputation risk management practice. Loeb says reputation risk management must be an active and ongoing strategic investment begun well before any risk or crisis erupts.

SOME CRISIS EXPERTS ESTIMATE THAT FEWER THAN HALF OF ALL ORGANIZATIONS HAVE UPDATED CRISIS PLANS.

Social media guru Carol Fowler agrees, adding: "Social media has upended traditional media, public relations and advertising to a degree that no one could have predicted when Facebook was created as a place where college kids could get to know one another."

"In today's on-the-go environment, it's more difficult than ever to control the 'message'," says Fowler who heads the digital media operations at the Chicago Sun-Times. "The most successful brands have recognized this and have elevated social media by dedicating top talent to the management of their Facebook, Twitter, Instagram presence. An intern should no longer be given the keys to manage these tools with little-to-no oversight. Brands, do so at their own peril!"

Corporations and other institutions are recognizing the "new normal" of crisis management—some are adapting faster than others. In fact, some crisis experts estimate that fewer than half of all organizations have updated crisis plans that address potential digital issues.

SECTION TWO
DON'T WAIT FOR A CRISIS: PLAN FOR IT

Jim Burke, Director of Global Public Relations at Harris Corporation, a $6 billion diversified international technology company, says some organizations still struggle to prioritize and establish the formal plans necessary to respond in near real-time. "They believe crises are too random, unlikely or impossible to plan for," Burke explains.

Some communications functions, including Harris Corporation's, believe that many aspects of a crisis response can indeed be planned for in advance. Though the crisis itself is most often unpredictable, the response process typically follows a general pattern – initial fact gathering, crisis team notifications, team meetings/strategizing, content creation/execution, and final resolution. Many of the steps may be repeated in a cyclical fashion, depending on the crisis type and duration – but the pattern remains.

Burke says Harris incorporates this approach into communications "playbooks," which covers multiple individual crisis scenarios. The company's scenarios align with its risk management priorities and the playbook ties to other functions' plans. It includes checklists of pre-approved processes, templates, procedures, roles/responsibilities, escalation thresholds, contacts, reference materials and even pre-prepared sample content. Creating, pressure testing and implementing the playbooks has helped reduce the normal churn and shortened the important "decision-to-communications" cycle time during recent crisis responses – including multiple hurricanes.

Harris and others continue to remain proactive – expanding the playbook scenarios, vetting and enhancing existing playbooks, and conducting exercises to help educate and better prepare team members. The hope is that they will never actually be involved in a crisis, but the planning and preparedness remain in place.

SECTION THREE
ENGAGE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION IN CRISIS PLANNING

INSTITUTIONS THAT HAVEN'T FACED SERIOUS CRISES CANNOT REST ON THEIR GOOD LUCK.

Institutions that haven't faced serious crises cannot rest on their good luck. "It's only a matter of time," says most crisis experts, so preparing a "what if" action plan is critically important for all organizations.

"Technological savvy – knowing how to communicate with the most effective tools – has always been an essential part of crises management," says Tilden Katz, Managing Director of the Crisis Communications and Issues Management Practice at FTI Consulting. "Organizations, of course, need to prepare for and respond to advances in technology."

While many institutions have tried to keep up with the speed, volume and variety of communications tools, many traditional crisis plans do not reflect these changes.

"Companies with the most comprehensive crisis management programs know that technological sophistication will not protect them, just as generic crisis plans will not prepare them," says Katz. "To really protect their reputation, companies must be willing to act more substantively, to deeply analyze their own operations, examine their industry, understand their environment, assess their specific vulnerabilities and take preemptive measures."

COMPREHENSIVE RISK MANAGEMENT REQUIRES PARTICIPATION FROM ALL STAKEHOLDERS AND PLAYERS IN A BUSINESS.

Katz admits this approach is not always easy to execute. Comprehensive risk management requires participation from all stakeholders and players in a business, and it can be uncomfortable for any organization to acknowledge potential weaknesses. Communicators – who are specifically charged with protecting a company's reputation – can only carry out their responsibilities when they have a full understanding of the potential threats posed to their organization.

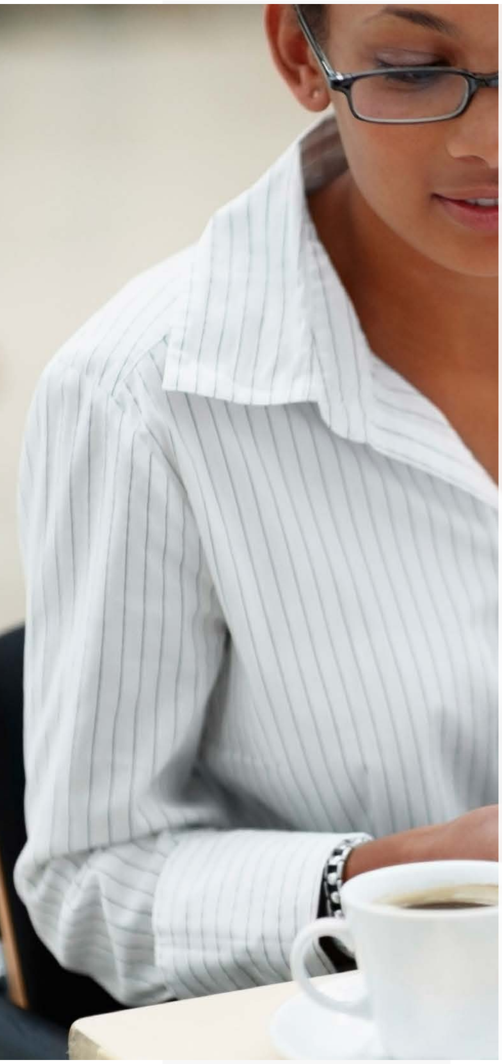
SECTION FOUR
NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

This e-book contains chapters by front-line experts from a cross-section of industries who have faced crisis situations. The consensus drawn from their insights supports Carol Fowler's recommendations for successful engagement in the digital world. Bottom line, Fowler believes that understanding the "rules" of engagement can head off most crisis situations. Here are her five top tips:

- Be present, be active. 24/7
- Brands don't have to be everywhere. Focus on two or three social accounts that reach the right audience.
- Keep promotional messaging to a minimum. A rule of thumb is no more than 5% of your total posts.
- Respond to the audience. Answer questions.
- Empower your social media team to respond to complaints or questions on the spot. When senior management insists on approving posts or replies, this defeats the purpose of being on social media. The conversation must be in real time.

Effective crisis management requires a sense of urgency—not just when the crisis erupts, but right now—in the anticipation and planning process. If you haven't done so already, form your crisis response team immediately and empower them with the responsibility and tools to create and execute a world-class crisis communication plan. Make sure every member reads and buys into these seven principles that guide the world's top communications professionals who are members of the Arthur W. Page Society:

1. **Tell the truth.** Let the public know what's happening with honest and good intention; provide an ethically accurate picture of the enterprise's character, values, ideals and actions.



2. Prove it with action. Public perception of an enterprise is determined 90 percent by what it does and 10 percent by what it says.

3. Listen to stakeholders. To serve the enterprise well, understand what the public wants and needs and advocate for engagement with all stakeholders. Keep top decision makers and other employees informed about stakeholder reaction to the enterprise's products, policies and practices. To listen effectively, engage a diverse range of stakeholders through inclusive dialogue.

4. Manage for tomorrow. Anticipate public reaction and eliminate practices that create difficulties. Generate goodwill.

5. Conduct public relations as if the whole enterprise depends on it. No strategy should be implemented without considering its impact on stakeholders. As a management and policymaking function, public relations should encourage the enterprise's decision making, policies and actions to consider its stakeholders' diverse range of views, values, experience, expectations and aspirations.

6. Realize an enterprise's true character is expressed by its people. The strongest opinions — good or bad — about an enterprise are shaped by the words and deeds of an increasingly diverse workforce. As a result, every employee — active or retired — is involved with public relations. It is the responsibility of corporate communications to advocate for respect, diversity and inclusion in the workforce and to support each employee's capability and desire to be an honest, knowledgeable ambassador to customers, friends, shareowners and public officials.

7. Remain calm, patient and good-humored. Lay the groundwork for public relations successes with consistent and reasoned attention to information and stakeholders. When a crisis arises, remember, cool heads communicate best.

The following chapters and resource links in the appendix are intended to provide you with guidance and moral support as you organize and activate your crisis communication action plan in this digital age.

Prior to joining DePaul and becoming an independent public relations consultant, Ron Culp held senior public relations positions at four Fortune 500 corporations and two major agencies. In 2006, Culp received the Distinguished Service Award from the Arthur W. Page Society, and in 2011 he was honored with the prestigious John W. Hill Award by the New York Chapter of PRSA. A year later, he was honored by the Chicago chapter of PRSA as PR Professional of the Year. He also is featured in the PRSSA book, "Legacies from Legends in Public Relations" (2007). In 2015 Ron received PRSA's highest individual honor, the Gold Anvil for lifetime achievement.

CHAPTER 1:

ADJUSTING YOUR CRISIS/REPUTATION MANAGEMENT APPROACH FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

JAMES DONNELLY *Director, Issues/Crisis Management for M Booth*

YOU SIMPLY CANNOT PRACTICE THE ART OF CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TODAY THE SAME WAY YOU DID 20, 10 OR EVEN 5 YEARS AGO.

It's true. In this hyper-connected digital age, everything has changed. You simply cannot practice the art of crisis communications today the same way you did 20, 10 or even 5 years ago. The need for speed is much greater today. Some tactics are new. Core crisis-team requirements and capabilities continue to evolve.

Yet, senior leaders and crisis specialists shouldn't toss old crisis playbooks on the pyre. Why? Because the core principles of good crisis/reputation management remain largely unchanged. In a crisis, organizations that convey an aligned sense of urgency, empathy, humility, context and resolve will still enjoy effective results. So what's new? The application and re-prioritization of some of those principles have required some tweaking.

I suppose if crisis/reputation management were sandlot football, today's playcall would be: "Let's run the same plays…a little differently."

There are dozens of digital-age factors that today's senior managers must consider when managing a crisis. Here, I'll illustrate only three key effects of the digital age and how each has required adaptations to crisis/reputation management approaches.

SECTION ONE
TODAY'S EMPOWERED AND ENTITLED PUBLIC

PEOPLE AND STAKEHOLDERS DEMAND TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SITUATION DIRECTLY FROM THE ORGANIZATION.

The digital age has put more power to the people. The public is no longer satisfied with the news media's summary of a situation. When a crisis strikes today, people and stakeholders demand to know more about the situation directly from the organization. They expect authentic answers, two-way engagement and some level of make-good. Many also turn to trusted influencers and pundits to cross-check whether the company/brand is taking the right steps. Some will then openly share their opinions with their digital networks. Some will get angry and inspired enough to post new opinions or engage in click-boycotts. The truly livid (or activist) among us will take things a step further and engage their networks to provoke change or tear-down the brand or the organization.

For decades, crisis plans have reminded us to "address all stakeholders with empathetic and authentic communications." This remains a core rule of good crisis/reputation management. However, the new dynamics we illustrated above require that we listen and engage differently. Here's how many organizations are shifting their communications approaches:

- **Monitoring and evaluation tools have grown more sophisticated.** Many organizations now have the ability to parse the online sentiment into different segments. Is there a group of truly concerned customers that would benefit from more information? Is a certain segment of the public relying on influencer voices on how we are managing this situation? Are activists fanning the flames simply to gain more attention to this situation – and would a response play into their strategy? Good analytics teams are now able to answer these types of questions. In turn, this helps to provide more situational awareness about the crisis. From this awareness, a senior leadership team may hone the crisis communications strategy and provide clues on which tactics might be most effective in this digital age.

- **Social media platforms can become effective two-way communications channels if there is the proper support in place to do this right.** That's a big if. Organizations that dialogue well on social media during a crisis are typically the same ones that "feel comfortable addressing the uncomfortable" through these platforms on an ongoing basis. Think of airlines or electronics retailers that now handle customer complaints through social media. These types of companies already have the fortitude and foreknowledge that angry posts and snark tend to drown out the more measured public questions and reactions. Additionally, these organizations that "do difficult" through social more regularly also enjoy a more robust support structure required to handle any requests for deeper information or remediation.

    - Unfortunately, there seems to be less success when organizations primarily use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the rest simply to extend marketing messages. When these teams try to jump the gap into more serious two-way dialogue, it often creates a path of frustration for a highly engaged public that wants specific answers.

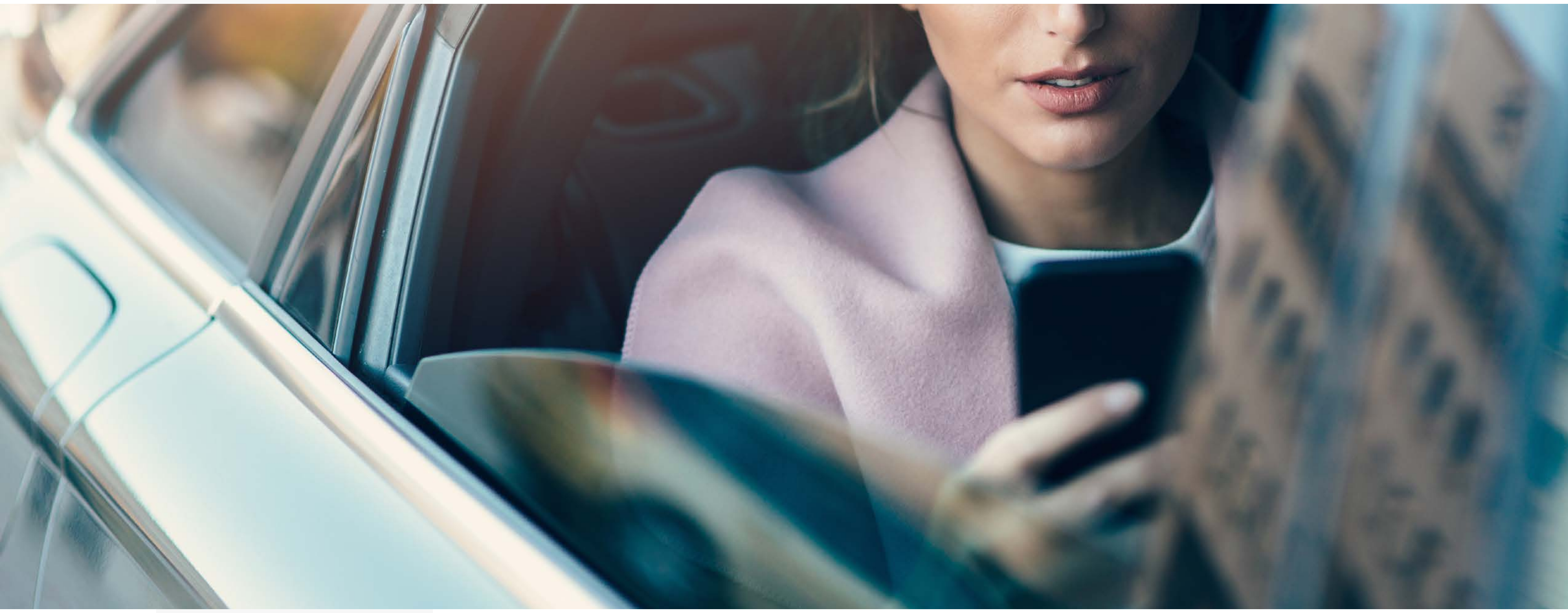
If the structure is just not there to support authentic dialogue, an organization must make a judgment call – try like heck to engage through social with the resources you have, or know your limitations and use social platforms as detour signs toward more static posts on the organization's specific "crisis website." (We see varied results of organizations that outsource to agencies the management of social media during a crisis. Success here seems to depend on the intensity and complexity of the crisis.)

SECTION TWO
FLEETING PUBLIC ATTENTION

THE FIRST 48 HOURS OF A CRISIS ARE MORE DEEPLY INTENSE NOW THAN ANY TIME IN HISTORY.

There is an emerging scientific debate over whether a human or goldfish has a greater attention span. I'm rooting for the home team on this one. Regardless, it's fairly clear that we are bombarded with more information and news (some fake) than any other preceding generation. News *finds you* today. It reaches your television, computer, mobile device, car dashboard, wrist, talking digital assistants and smart eyeglasses. For the foreseeable future, academics and pundits will continue to debate the benefits and detriments of the flood of real-time information. Common rhetorical questions: Are we really more informed as a public? Does this daily ticker of breaking news support critical thinking? Are journalistic gems getting lost in the detritus? Are we amusing ourselves to death?

Whew. Now I'm actually a little jealous of the goldfish.



There are two sides to this coin when organizations face a crisis. Experienced crisis/reputation managers can confirm that the first 48 hours of a crisis are more deeply intense now than any time in history. Within an instant, the world is aware of the problem and all eyes are on your organization's immediate response to the situation. However, it is equally true that crisis situations simply do not see the sustained level of outrage and attention as we used to see. The media and public attention spans quickly pivot to the next big event. Sure, there will be a pocket of interested stakeholders that will continue to hold an organization accountable, but the general population's watercooler crowd will have moved on.

This phenomenon has led to slight modifications of the old rules:

- **The sound bite has become even more important.** This saddens many of us in the business because we know how superficial this appears. However, these are the cards we are currently dealt. You can blame the sensationalism of today's mainstream media or the distracted public's inability to read beyond the first paragraph of a breaking story. Either way – capturing your side of the story concisely and in a compelling way has never been more important. If you truly succeed in providing an effective sound bite, you have a decent chance of whetting the public's appetite for more information on your side of the story. And that leads to the next modification.

INCREASINGLY, VISUAL STORYTELLING COUNTS, SO CONSIDER HOW TO SPICE UP YOUR VIDEOS ACCORDINGLY.

- **The nesting doll communications response has become more common.** Above, we shared that the public is more apt to want to hear from organizations directly when a crisis strikes. Even greater results occur when there are menu options of increasing depth and detail provided directly to the public during a crisis. There is nothing new about the development of these standard communications materials that we illustrate below. The delivery of the information has changed. Today many are trading in crisis media kit backgrounder folders in exchange for a more direct-to-public nesting doll approach to crisis communications, where you gradually reach smaller audiences with deeper information:

  - **Sound bite:** Flood the zone with a compelling and authentic sound bite that gets to the core of your organization's responsibility for managing the crisis. Use this in media statements, provide this to your call centers, and post it on your Facebook wall and Twitter. Get it out there to show you care and to fill the vacuum before others do. Entice the public to want to learn more.

  - **Deeper messages and support points:** These are usually delivered through an empathetic spokesperson, who provides a human touch to the situation. If media isn't willing to broadcast this coverage, companies can provide short videos through social media and/or post to their own website. Increasingly, visual storytelling counts, so consider how to spice up your videos accordingly.

  - **Stakeholder engagement:** Communications through direct mail, email, social (for those structured to succeed there) and customer care channels can be useful for stakeholders and members of the general public who want even deeper information.

  - **The deeper story:** A smaller segment of the public may want to sink their teeth into all of the deeper information that a company is willing to share. This can be provided through a dedicated "dark site" or – increasingly – through Facebook posts and YouTube recap videos. This is where companies can provide a level of strategic transparency by providing deeper backgrounders, fact sheets, timelines and other collateral, presented in an authentic yet compelling way.

SECTION THREE
DEEP CHANGES TO TRADITIONAL NEWS

Volumes have been written on the state of journalism today and the profound effects on crisis/reputation management. There seems to be universal agreement in our industry of the exceptional difficulty of providing facts and reason when today's traditional media is mostly seeking drama and sensational headlines (which lead to vital, revenue-producing click-through). Related to this, before *American Journalism Review* shuttered its doors in 2015, it lamented that today's newsrooms favored a "tolerance for speed above accuracy." Some newsrooms today would rather risk being wrong than being scooped by a citizen with a smartphone and a Twitter account. This puts *misinformation management* at the forefront of early crisis response. Perhaps owing to these first two factors, we are also seeing a rebirth in the media availability of junk scientists, pseudo-experts and insta-pundits. These talking heads seem to subsist by throwing gasoline on the fire of an emerging crisis situation, often without any first-hand knowledge of the complexity of a situation, nor the true credential to speak to a situation with any degree of professional depth. But, boy, can they deliver some entertaining sound bites!

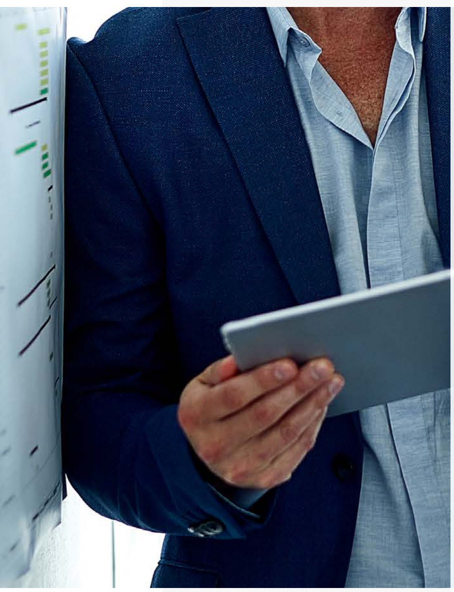
IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT FAKE NEWS HAS BEEN AROUND SINCE THE GUTENBERG PRESS.

And – then there's fake news. It's important to understand that fake news has been around since the Gutenberg press. *It ain't new*. Yet, the online mutation of fake news has certainly spawned many new crisis communications challenges. Be mindful that there are many different protagonists of fake news: click-baiters, ideologues, conspiracy theorists, lampoonists/satirists, citizen broadcasters, and biased documentarians. There's even the mainstream media bias that creeps into news reports and the emerging "post-truth effect" where the public seems less concerned about the facts in favor of bolstering one's personal emotions and beliefs. Therefore, fake news is difficult to define, but you might recognize it when you see it and it cannot be ignored.

Amid this swirl, many of the time-tested crisis media relations rules still apply. Regardless of the direct-to-public communications that is outlined above, a traditional media response is still very important. Organizations must still convey that it is responding in the public's interest through compelling media statements (okay…sound bites…), empathetic interviews and additional information that provides context and authenticity. However, there are a few new areas of focus for today's senior leader and crisis communicator that strives for media fairness:

- **Validating "truth and facts" have become more urgent.** We've all heard the quip that a lie can get halfway around the world before the truth is able put on its pants. Historians debate the original author of the quote, but many agree that this concept is more than 100 years old. Today, lies travel at lightspeed. Organizations must maintain strong monitoring and analysis systems that funnel to the central crisis management team as fast as possible. Myths, misunderstandings and fake news examples that damage your central crisis response strategies and goals should be flagged and actions to correct those narratives should launch as soon as possible.

  Additional tips:



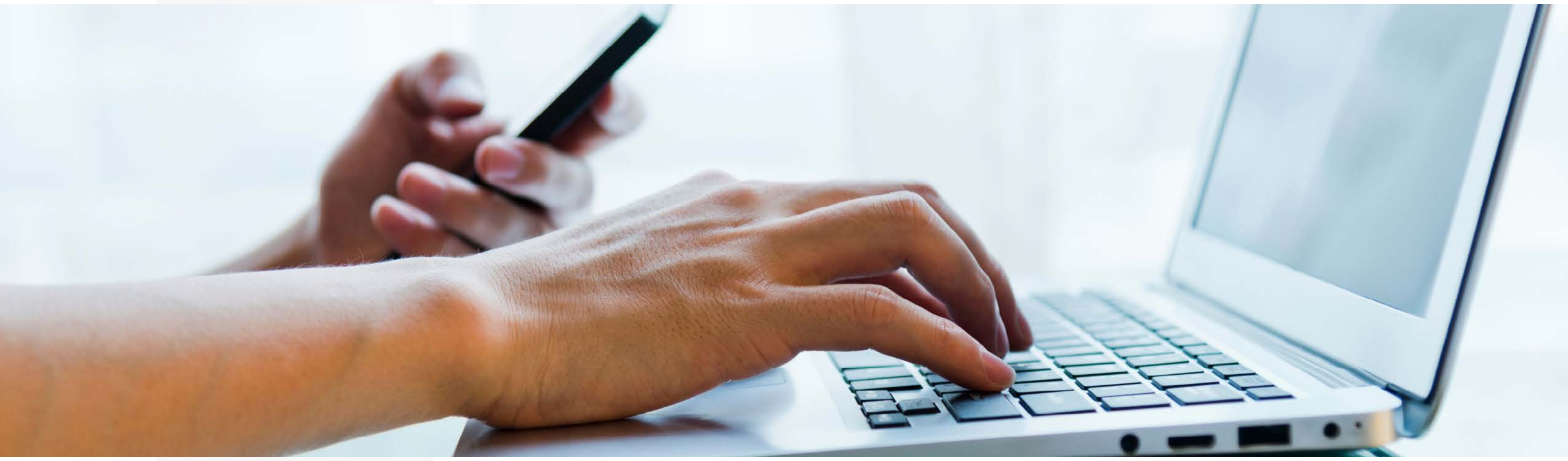
  - Misinformation floods that course through traditional media is now much more common. It is important to apply discipline to the efforts to correct these tides. It may be counterproductive to correct it all – just focus on the important ones. For example, if an organization is managing communications the day after an active-shooter tragedy, it would be okay to correct a media assertion that "no security systems were in place," but unwise to correct a report that wrongly asserts "it is believed the location will be shut down for at least three weeks." There's a time and place to correct the record on those false reports – usually not through the immediate and direct media swirl.

  - Remember that there are many ways to address myths directly with an organization's important audiences and stakeholders. Tactics may include direct media outreach for correction, owned and shared digital channels (sometimes augmented with search targeting), paid digital or traditional advertising, employee communications and advocacy, event speeches, direct meetings with business partners, etc.

- **Having allies has never been more critical.** When the talking-heads strike, it can be very helpful for an organization to ask its third-party allies to engage with media to help tell the other side of the story. This requires ample pre-planning and ongoing engagement to make sure that credible third-parties are updated on key topics in advance of a crisis flashpoint. For example, some companies have baked a "relationship matrix" straight into their crisis plans, with scheduled assignments for internal contacts to reach out to these allies at least once a year on a variety of subjects.

SOME COMPANIES HAVE BAKED A "RELATIONSHIP MATRIX" STRAIGHT INTO THEIR CRISIS PLANS.

- **Maintaining message consistency across all channels is important.** Today's media and public will scrutinize closely if you say one thing to media and say something a little different through your social media page, your internal communications to employees, your customer care channels, etc. The words may change, but the core sentiment must consistently reflect the organization's values, mission and resolve to address this crisis. As organizations get more complex, this becomes a difficult riddle to solve. However we have seen great success in a hub-and-spoke system that revolves around a "keystone document" with the top strategies and critical messages. Typically, the core multidisciplinary crisis team authors the keystone document and then it is shared with disciplines/departments outside of the core team, with instruction to modify the tactics and specific messaging according to stakeholder needs. All modifications are acceptable as long as they convey the commander's intent of the top strategy and critical messages. It is a "freedom within a framework" that drives action.



CRISIS SPECIALISTS MUST KEEP PACE AND HELP THEIR ORGANIZATIONS TO MAINTAIN AN ACTIVE READINESS CAPABILITY THAT IS EQUAL-PARTS EXPERIENCED AND NIMBLE.

In sum, the new rules of crisis/reputation management look much like the old rules. It is the application of the rules that have changed dramatically in concert with the changing speed and expectations of this digital age. We've only covered three key factors above and we could have covered at least a dozen more. This is why it is a very exciting time to be in the crisis/reputation management field. Senior leaders and serious issues/crisis specialists must keep pace and help their organizations to maintain an active readiness capability that is equal-parts experienced and nimble. This takes ongoing effort and attention, something that a plan-on-a-shelf (or a goldfish) simply can't match.

James Donnelly ("J.D.") is Director, Issues/Crisis Management for M Booth. He has led war rooms for some of the largest U.S. crises in the past two decades. J.D. and his M Booth team preparing brands and organizations to confront the new speed and nature of today's reputation threats. An avid but struggling golfer, J.D. has twice played 100 holes in one day to support an awareness and charity drive for a Charlotte-based domestic violence program, TurningPoint.

CHAPTER 2:

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRMS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

TIM BLAIR *Director of Corporate Communications for the global professional services firm, Navigant Consulting*

Let's face it, the pace of business and the flow of information (and misinformation) puts communicators in a bind during crisis episodes.

Sure, basic principles of effective crisis communications remain the bedrock, but the environment in which professional services firms operate now is far more mercurial and is exacerbated by the unique nature of how these firms operate. Muscle memory isn't enough.

SECTION ONE
CORRALLING THE DECISION-MAKERS

Professional services firms are often composed of decentralized fiefdoms representing individual practices, offerings or solution sets, oftentimes carryovers from acquisitions that failed to fully integrate into the new organization. Moreover, practitioners can rarely be expected to be on-site at a headquarters or even field office location, opting instead to serve clients in parts unknown in addition to pursuing new business opportunities.

Firms can be further hard-wired into silos based on client-related geography, where much of the work is completed, and compliance-related requirements. For example, consider the highly regulated and confidential nature of public-company auditing services relative to advisory services related to performance improvement strategies. These wildly different service lines might be provided to the same client by the same firm, but those teams will be staffed and managed separately.

THE RISK OF EXPOSURE AND CRISES GROWS EXPONENTIALLY IN ENVIRONMENTS WITH LOOSE FEDERATIONS OF EXPERTISE IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS.

Crisis management is challenging enough when employees are largely entrusted with their own well-being in alternate locations with siloed management chains, but with social media, the risk of exposure and crises grows exponentially in environments with loose federations of expertise in multiple locations.

Consequently, today crisis instances require levels of adaptability, speed, listening, tight coordination, and repeatedly quick decision-making inside any organization. Professional services firms, with populations embedded at client sites, complicate this even more, requiring mechanisms for feeding information about an episode back into the core crisis management team. This is, of course, where risk is difficult to source, manage, and solution against. The only way to address the accelerated velocity of modern crises is to prepare, prepare, and prepare some more.

SECTION TWO
INSTALL NEW ANTENNAE

As communicators, we must install new antennae. Standard sense and respond mechanisms like integrated functional crisis teams and coordinated management of office leads are not enough. Today, crisis communicators must be visible and credible across every level of the enterprise, not just at the most senior levels. Building deep, productive relationships with solutions leaders on-site with clients, business development executives, office managing partners, customer service representatives, and frontline administrative staff across multiple offices will pay dividends when crisis episodes arise.

Thankfully the core skill of any communicator is relationship building, but the shift now is to recalibrate one's thinking about where to find an emerging set of valuable relationships. Relying only on roles defined on standard crisis team outlines creates gaps, and decentralized, federated organizations are rarely hard-wired to execute a singular process anyway. Valuable relationships can short-circuit elongated sense and respond strategies.

Who will that engagement manager at a client site in Tulsa call if a workplace violence incident happens late on a Friday afternoon? Communicators want to take that first call, and need to build the network to make that happen.

COMMUNICATORS ALSO MUST PRESS THEIR ORGANIZATIONS TO INVEST IN CONTEMPORARY INTRANET PLATFORMS, COLLABORATION TOOLS, AND APPS.

Communicators also must press their organizations to invest in contemporary intranet platforms, collaboration tools, and apps. Externally, digital is the frontline for any crisis episode but internally these tools are the most effective way to track potential challenges in decentralized organization. It is imperative that communicators actively drive consideration of these tools, and are considered the resident experts in how to best use the technology.

These new tools provide a real-time window into the health and safety of employees, and can be quickly customized to address and inform during crisis episodes. Rather than relying on email -- which will be largely ignored during an acute crisis -- app suites allow companies to push vital information to an affected population. For example, the efficacy of reaching a population of morning commuters regarding an office closure due to a water main break is far higher with apps than a standard email.

SECTION THREE
KNOW YOUR BUSINESS

While bound by confidentiality covenants, client engagements typically require advanced notice to key functional leaders including additional research to ward off potential crisis-related developments. For example, consulting firms are often retained by local, state or even the Federal government to conduct performance improvement projects, serve as expert witnesses, and to conduct research on potentially controversial projects such as utility transformation, infrastructure improvements, tax policy recommendations, or even the establishment of insurance exchanges.

Understanding engagement milestones, deadlines, and disclosure requirements

are critical, particularly with material engagements at publicly-traded clients, and with public-sector work that offers comment periods and forums for debate. Engagement leaders need to consult closely with crisis teams, or those responsible to act on behalf of those teams, such as a communications executive before client work takes place.

It is incumbent on the communications leader on the crisis team to force a deep discussion on the role of social media in sound crisis management. This begins before an engagement is even accepted by the firm, through a standard conflict check process. The conflict check process must outline not only traditional requirements, but also the possible effects of the engagement with the media and on social media. This pre-notification helps the firm and the client to properly prepare for engagement milestones and public disclosure, particularly when the work is potentially sensitive or controversial. An enlightened conflict check process will link the communications team with the engagement team before work commences, creating an opportunity to evaluate crisis preparedness considerations.

SECTION FOUR
SITUATION ANALYSIS: DATA SECURITY INCIDENTS

A data breach is one of the most common concerns leading to full-scale crisis communications responses. Today, every company thrives on data, and strives to make informed business decisions based on information generated or collected. For professional services firms, however, crisis communications can take on an additional angle that defies the muscle memory communicators have built up over time.

A DATA BREACH AT A FIRM CAN IMPACT THAT ORGANIZATION AND CLIENTS SIMULTANEOUSLY.

Professional services firms often manage not only their own data and client data, but likely the data of client's clients in industries ranging from healthcare, financial services, retail, and more. In addition, these complex data sets are often held in multiple data centers located around the world. A data breach at a firm can impact that organization and clients simultaneously, as Deloitte revealed in late 2017.

One of the fastest growing sectors of consulting-related healthcare services is revenue cycle outsourcing, which generates a treasure-trove of data. In this category, hospital systems and physicians turn to professional services companies to track patient care from registration through the final payment for services rendered. It's a complex process that is often elongated based individual patient circumstances, and one that generates an incredible amount of data.

Those manila folders that used to clog up doctor's offices? Most are now sitting in the cloud, or in data centers scattered around the globe under the aegis of a third party the patient is typically unaware of. Data breaches can quickly result in thousands of compromised records which could include health status, social security numbers, medical record numbers, and more.

Is that data safe? Well, maybe. A 2017 Accenture report concluded that one in four consumers had their personal health information stolen from a technology system, and of those, one in two fell victim to identify theft. A recent KPMG study found that 47% of percent of healthcare providers and health plans reported HIPAA-related breaches (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) or other instances of cyber-related instances that comprised data.

One look at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR) breach report proves that healthcare-related data breaches create crises on a near-daily basis.

ONCE A BREACH EXCEEDS 500 INDIVIDUALS, DISCLOSURE BY THE BREACHED PROVIDER IS MANDATORY.

While you won't see many consulting companies on this list, know that many cited on the list have active engagements with these firms. Once a breach exceeds 500 individuals, disclosure by the breached provider is mandatory.

The reputation risk in these instances is unique, as the good name of the consulting firm can be tightly associated with a high-profile breach through word-of-mouth, potentially slipping into the digital or social media domain. While healthcare-related breaches are personal for the patient and embarrassing (and potentially expensive) for the healthcare provider, the crush of the revelation and subsequent investigation puts extraordinary pressure on the services provider. Handling these instances poorly can result in lost business.

Clients who have experienced a data security incident through a service provider breach will demand smart, swift action from the vendor. After all, the medical provider will remain the face of the incident to the affected patients but the breached party, in this case the service provider, will have to account for the timeline, related facts and resolution in concert with their client.

Once a professional services provider identifies a breach of client data, the firm must quickly convene its crisis team which would include the engagement lead, legal, communications, IT, and operations to determine the cause, scope, timing and depth of the incident. As with any data breach, the professional services firm must catalogue the facts, among them:

- When did the breach occur;
- When was the breach contained;
- What data was accessed;
- How many records were compromised

These questions are just the beginning, but as with any crisis incident a swift

WHETHER DISCLOSURE IS MANDATORY OR NOT, AN AGGRESSIVE DIGITAL MONITORING STRATEGY WILL HELP PROTECT CLIENT AND PATIENT INTERESTS.

and accurate accounting of the facts is paramount. Demonstrating a full grasp of the facts, the disclosure requirements, legal ramifications, the potential effect on the client's business, and the risks the clients face will go a long way toward rebuilding the trust lost during a cyber incident.

Once the facts are established a pragmatic program to determine the key messages and when, how and to whom to share them with will become clear. Whether disclosure is mandatory or not, an aggressive digital monitoring strategy will help protect client and patient interests and force tight coordination between the affected parties.

Despite the complex web of these incidents, clarity of voice and message can offer reassurance and a quieter resolution, though an affected individual patient can change the circumstances by shaming the offending provider across any number of digital platforms. Professional services firms, which are often not well-versed in consumer behavior, would do well to train and develop talent who can actively counsel and lead in these responses.

SECTION FIVE
KEEP IT SIMPLE

The exhausting pace of ever-shortening news cycles, the decrease in well-informed beat reporters, and the siloed, tribal nature of online dialogue create an opportunity for professional services firms to aggressively manage crisis issues into prompt resolution, into prompt resolution that mitigates attention.

Firms must remain authentic in good times and bad. Beating back or mitigating a digital brushfire or full-on crisis won't start on the day that crisis presents itself, but rather, in the years leading up to the event. The discipline of maintaining a consistent brand voice, social brand voice, discernable tone, and appropriate levels of engagement on digital platforms that matter for the firm become the connective tissue that holds together any crisis-related response.

THE NEW TOOLS SHOULD INCLUDE MONITORING, LISTENING, AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION ACROSS APPROPRIATE DIGITAL PLATFORMS CONSISTENTLY.

Doing so requires adherence to age-old bedrock principles of crisis management, along with a commitment to utilizing an updated toolkit. The new tools should include monitoring, listening, and active participation across appropriate digital platforms consistently – not simply when a crisis breaks. Bringing forth a deep understanding of the digital and social environment empowers communications professionals to inject sound crisis management principles into the daily effort to drive an organization forward.

Furthermore, for professional services firms, which are characterized by far-flung employee populations that do not understand risk in the digital age, it is vital that communications leadership consistently anticipates the needs of the firm and its clients.

Based in Denver, Tim Blair leads corporate communications at Navigant Consulting, Inc. He also served as the chief communications leader at Huron Consulting Group and Grant Thornton LLP following a long career at IBM.

CHAPTER 3:

LEVERAGING EMPLOYEES AS AMBASSADORS, ADVOCATES AND AUTHENTIC VOICES DURING A CRISIS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

NECOLE MERRITT *CMO, National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Adjunct Instructor, Gerogia State University*

OVERVIEW

Imagine how you would feel if you heard about a family secret from a third party on the Internet, or in the news? This is exactly how employees feel every time they learn about a significant announcement or a crisis from somewhere other than company leaders. In the energy sector, employees are often decentralized making it difficult to reach quickly a critical mass of employees, especially those that are technicians servicing customers, when a crisis occurs.

Technology has changed the world, and definitely changed the way that we communicate. It is a double-edge sword allowing information to travel at up to 50 megabits per second, and sometimes even faster, to an estimated half of the world that uses the Internet. At the same time, it also gives everyone a voice, and a right to publish their opinions, share information, or create something that goes viral in real-time.

This kind of technological progress requires a well-thought-out crisis communications strategy that gives a company the ability to communicate quickly, accurately, consistently and systematically to all of its stakeholders, especially to its employees.

Before the advent of online newspapers, digital wire services, Google alerts, streaming videos, and 24-hour cable news cycles, companies had a better chance of containing and segmenting their messages with each stakeholder.

In the haste to protect the company's reputation with external audiences, leaders often forget that employees are one of their most important audiences. A missed opportunity for most organizations is the order in which they communicate the bad news.

EMPLOYEES ARE THE BEST AMBASSADORS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A CRISIS.

A best practice for companies is to have a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy that is developed and tested well in advance of a crisis. Thanks to technology, information flow between channels and stakeholders is now seamless, and as a result, it is critical to align messages and to orchestrate information sequencing well in advance.

Employees are the best ambassadors before, during and after a crisis. Employees can serve as effective resources, supporting the company's business objectives, if they are equipped, well-informed and given clear direction.

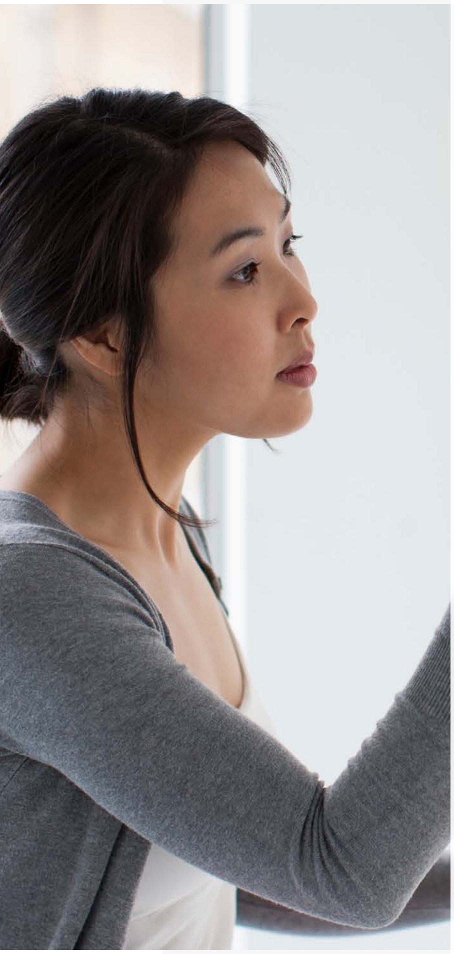
Utility companies like Georgia Power, and Florida Power & Light use employees as brand ambassadors in advertising about customer service. Companies showcase employees in advertising, according to advertising expert Chris Ray, CEO of the Ramey Agency, because they are more relatable, believable, and relevant than messages from large, faceless companies.

SECTION ONE

EXAMPLE; FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT LEVERAGING THE VOICE OF EMPLOYEES DURING A CRISIS

The power utility sector is prone, and equipped to handle, an interruption in service, commonly known as an outage. There are many causes of power failures ranging from weather related issues such as hurricanes like Harvey and Irma, or damage to any part of the distribution system.

On the afternoon of September 10, 2017, Hurricane Irma, gusting winds of up to 115 miles per hour or more made landfall in Naples, FL. It kept going inland from the West Coast of Florida, leaving considerable devastation in its path, including leaving two-thirds of the state — six million customers — without power, according to FP&L. To help tell the restoration story, FP&L leveraged multiple voices, from the president to the linemen restoring power, in social media channels.



Pictures and videos told the story of how linemen were working around the clock to safely restore power to customers. In addition, the company's president and senior vice president of the Power Delivery business, were featured in blog posts, and video interviews outlining the process and commitment to safe and timely restoration of power.

FP&L employees were also seen supporting the company's storytelling efforts through impromptu social media posts. These included a lineman restoring power and spouses who witnessed the dedication to their work. These spontaneous, authentic voices of employees and influencers engaging in social media reinforced the credibility of the company's efforts.

Below is a post from a lineman outlining steps in the power restoration process for a frustrated customer following a major storm. Listed below is the partial post.

> "I don't often post on facebook, ... I'm not doing this to get "thank you", but to let FB friends know how the power restoration process works. I do not speak for a company I work for or all lineman (SIC), just as a lineman who has worked many storms in the area. #1. The storm must clear out before we can get to work safely. #2. Damage assessment comes first. Power companies need to know what they are sending their crews into to get proper resources and equipment in. #3. Linemen live to get the power on. It's what we do. That being said, we have to do it as safely as possible. #4. We have the same protections as other first responders, such as police and firemen. Give us room to work. It's for your safety and ours. #5. We are only humans. We get tired, angry and hungry. We will need to take breaks, at times. #6. Thanks for your patience. This storm was massive and has caused a lot of damage. Stay safe." Posted on Facebook, September 14 at 6:53pm.

This message is further reinforced from influencers like the group, "Wives of Linemen", which quickly came to their husbands' defense.

> "My lineman traveled from Southwest Virginia to help out. We've not seen him for nearly two weeks. When he walks out the door, we don't know when he will return from going on storms like this. This means so much to see your gratitude!! These men are heroes in so many ways!!" Posted on Facebook, September 22, at 7:44 p.m.

Employees, either through formal company social media channels, or working independently with approved company messages, are important voices that bring a lot of credibility to storytelling during a crisis.

SECTION TWO
WHAT EMPLOYEES EXPECT AND DESERVE DURING A CRISIS

EMPLOYEES ARE LOOKING TO SEE IF AN ORGANIZATION'S RESPONSE TO A CRISIS IS CONSISTENT WITH COMPANY VALUES.

Are you walking the talk? Employees are looking to see if an organization's response to a crisis is consistent with company values. If among the corporate values are integrity, focus on customer service, and accountability like they are for many companies, then the crisis response should line up with those values.

Conroy Boxhill, a crisis communications expert who has successfully helped defend countless Fortune 500 brands during their most vulnerable moments, says employees expect the same thing in a crisis as external stakeholders. Tenets of crisis communications response for all audiences include:

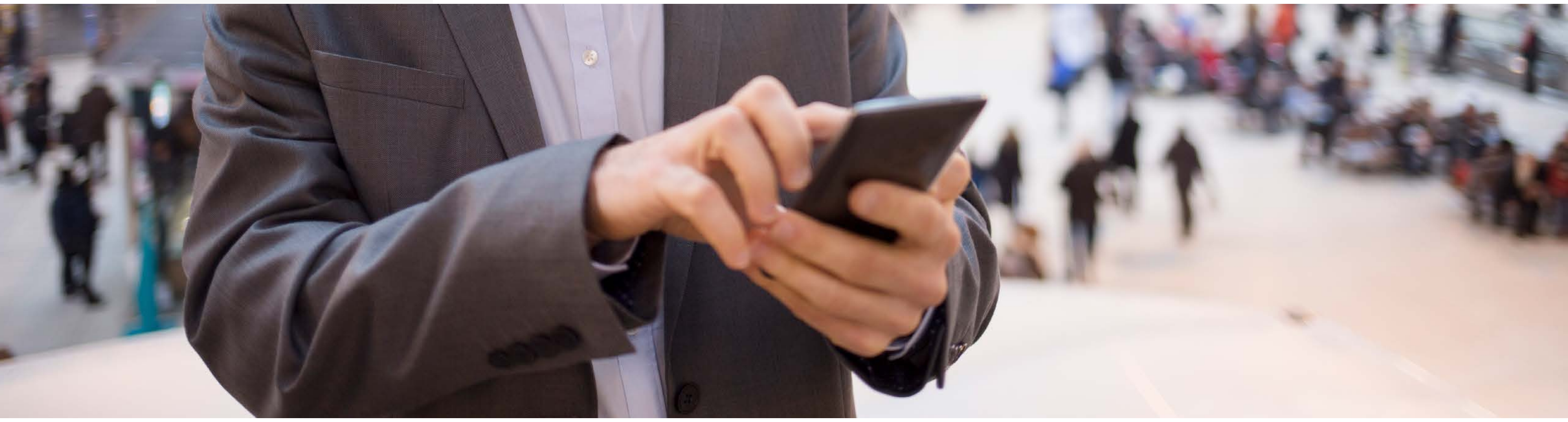
- **Context:** Context helps to frame the conversation and answers the questions of what is happening, why it is happening and what is the company doing about it.

- **Content:** Content is king, but only if it is relevant to the audience. In the age of social media, people expect to get information that is scaled intimacy, tailored to them to share in their personal social channels.

- **Authenticity:** Authenticity builds trust. Employees know the company's voice. Authenticity requires consistency in style, tone and even greater transparency from which employees are accustomed to hearing.

- **Speed:** In today's technology ecosystem, information travels at lightning speed. This requires that companies act quickly to share information. Employees expect to hear news about their company from their leaders, and when they do, it further solidifies the trust relationship between the two.

Employees do care about the company and their colleagues, therefore, they want a role in the crisis recovery process. Some of the ways employees can be helpful are: acting as the voice of authenticity in social media, acting as an advocate, and contributing to the hands-on solution.



SECTION THREE
HOW TO EQUIP AND LEVERAGE EMPLOYEES AS ADVOCATES AND AMBASSADORS DURING A CRISIS

EMPLOYEES DO CARE ABOUT THE COMPANY AND THEIR COLLEAGUES, THEREFORE, THEY WANT A ROLE IN THE CRISIS RECOVERY PROCESS.

Employees are customers, shareholders, and members of the community, thus their voices carry weight. The best time to equip employees as advocates is before you need them, not in the midst of a crisis.

William (Bill) Mohl, a former senior executive in the power industry, and former chairman of the communications advisory committee for the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), successfully employed a robust employee advocacy program to defend a company's position against a challenging political landscape and anti-nuclear groups.

"The strategic use of employees as part of a well-orchestrated advocacy program, can be the game changer for a company during a crisis situation," Mohl said. "When employees are briefed on the issues, understand the business objectives, and hear about a crisis from the company first, they are better positioned to be a supporter, and help to improve the trust in the community."

Mohl discovered this approach was so successful in his company that as chair of the communications committee for NEI, he encouraged other companies to apply this best practice industry-wide.

SECTION FOUR
CRITICAL ASPECTS OF AN EMPLOYEE AMBASSADOR OR ADVOCATES PROGRAM

Building an employee ambassador or advocates program takes time, discipline and training. Nuclear power is clean, reliable and efficient, according to NEI, but they also have their share of dissenters. The anti-nuclear organizations are vocal opponents to various nuclear policies, especially to building a new plant, like Rick White's former company was planning to do. White, a former power communications executive and now in higher education, used a six-month employee advocacy program to help educate the community, diffuse the political roadblocks and gain support to build the plant.

CLEARLY DEFINE THE EMPLOYEES' ROLES, GOALS AND BOUNDARIES.

"We launched a political-like campaign with a three-day training program with employee volunteers, block and precinct captains, going door-to-door to speak personally with approximately 20,000 neighbors of the plant about its benefits, to answer questions, and to allay concerns," White says. "As a result of employee engagement, and the robust campaign, nearby residents of the plant became vocally supportive and the company was successful in building the plant."

There are numerous components to include when building a program, but here are five essential elements to consider:

- **Pulse Check:** Take a pulse check to understand the level of employee engagement across the enterprise. If the engagement is low, chances are it will be difficult to recruit employees who are willing to serve as advocates.

- **Pilot Program:** Once you have a positive pulse check, develop a pilot program with some of your most engaged employees. These are usually easy to spot and can be nominated by their peers or managers.

- **Education:** Educate them on the business objectives, messaging, and business strategies and create a central repository of information like a web site where information is current, and easily accessible.

- **Role Clarity:** Clearly define the employees' roles, goals and boundaries.

- **Measurement:** Devise a method to measure the program's effectiveness and be willing to check and adjust the program based on the outcome of the findings.

SECTION FIVE
EMPLOYEES, THE VOICE OF AUTHENTICITY

The technology landscape has increased the need for speed, transparency, authenticity and a credible voice for information. As a result, companies are beginning to understand the need to proactively, quickly and accurately be a part of the conversation to help shape the story instead of allowing others to do so. One way they are doing this is by engaging in social media—using Twitter, Facebook, websites or their generated content to get ahead of a crisis.

A key benefit of social media is the ability for external audiences to connect with real people, in an authentic exchange of information. According to Jeff Hunt, a founding partner of PulsePoint Group, a communications and marketing digital communications firm, "People want to hear from real people, and social media allows just that. In today's world of technology, expertise is valued more than authority," he said.

The 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer, an annual trust and credibility survey conducted by Edelman, a global communications-marketing firm, echoes his sentiment and says that people are looking to hear from others like themselves. They consider peers more credible than a voice of authority. The study, which measures the public's trust and credibility in a series of categories, outlines that for the first time, 60% of respondents see "a person like yourself as a credible source for information about the company as a technical and academic expert."

Ensuring employees are informed early, accurately, and often in a structured process makes them authentic voices that external audiences want to connect with. It also gives them the opportunity to reshape negative dialogue in their sphere of influence whether on social channels or at a community event.

Employees are powerful ambassadors within their sphere of influence: friends, family members and other external audiences. Creating and disseminating easily digestible messaging, and unique hash tags for employee use is critical. Employees come in contact with a critical mass of people and have the opportunity to influence their perspectives or set straight the misinformation in the public domain.

Employees serve as conduits to the company and external audiences. They can help disseminate and gather information through their social channels. By doing this, they are positioning the company and gathering useful information to help further shape and strengthen the company's messaging.

SECTION SIX
TRAINING EMPLOYEES FOR SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

TRAINING EMPLOYEES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA IS PARAMOUNT.

Training employees for social media engagement is paramount. Social media spreads fast, and company's can use formal and informal support in engaging and monitoring in social channels. Today, companies have sophisticated social media listening tools, but can also benefit greatly from accessing employees' social channels. The company's reach expands exponentially when its cadre of employees are also engaging their networks.

Well-trained employees who understand their roles, along with having the appropriate content and tools, can augment the official company efforts by serving as conduits to disseminate and gather information. Clarity can come with the following:

- **Role:** Clearly define the employee's role as either an advocate, an influencer or a customer service representative. The role of employees during a crisis has to be clearly-defined and may differ than their regular personal social media engagement.

- **Behavior:** Guardrails are critical for employees during a crisis. There are at least two critical questions that need to be outlined: What do you want employees to do? What style and tone do you want them to use?

- **Content:** Scaled intimacy is the name of the game. If they are going to be effective, the public is expecting authentic voices, and not corporate speak, when dealing with real people inside of a company. And, one of the best ways to tell a story is using compelling visual content like graphics, videos, and pictures.

- **Tools:** Since about one-third of the world uses social media tools, it is likely that employees understand how to engage in social media, but do they know how to maximize the tools to help the company or give you the ability to track the effectiveness of their voices in social media?

The use of social media in our daily lives has become second nature to many people, but when they are engaging on behalf of a company, it is critical that they are following the rules that will successfully lead to meeting the business objectives.

CONCLUSION
IMPORTANCE OF ALIGNMENT WITH EXTERNAL STRATEGIES

A well-choreographed crisis strategy, where employees are seen as insiders and authentic voices to engage in storytelling, helps to support the company's position during a crisis. Employees can be powerful advocates when they are equipped with the appropriate tools, and are acting in concert with the overall crisis strategy, while regarding their boundaries.

Engaging employees as insiders, and leveraging them as storytellers, during a crisis takes a paradigm shift from leaders, the right infrastructure, and a game plan to make it work. A successful model is flexible and designed to keep pace with the ever-changing technology landscape.

Necole Merritt is a veteran communications and business executive who has worked across the automotive, telecommunications, cable, academic healthcare and electric utility industries. Necole is a strategic communications advisor and has been an adjunct instructor at Georgia State University where she taught business communications in the J. Mack Robinson College of Business. Most recently, she is Chief Marketing Officer in the non-profit sector for National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Association.

CHAPTER 4:

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATORS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

ROBERT WINDON *Principal at the small business, non-profit and political consulting firm, Windon Strategies LLC*

The crisis communication team wants, and often needs, their message pushed out as soon as possible. Due to the enormous power of social media, this need to push a message quickly in a 24/7 news cycle is stronger than ever before. But for years the legal team's first priority has been to protect their client from legal trouble and leave the public relations issues to somebody else. Faced with a crisis, the legal team's only acceptable response was to not comment at all. But defaulting to "no comment," while possibly the best legal strategy, can be disastrous in the court of public opinion. This has often left the communication and legal teams at odds with each other. As a result, it has become imperative for the legal and communication teams to learn to work together when a crisis arises. For that to happen, communication teams need to be aware of legal issues that may arise during a crisis, especially as it pertains to digital media platforms.

SECTION ONE
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS DURING A CRISIS

The list of potential legal issues that can arise during a crisis seems never-ending and is more complicated with the rise of digital media. One of the first calls by the crisis team must be to discuss the potential legal issues at hand. In fact, it is important for the crisis team to understand some legal considerations that will often be present in a crisis.

Due to the increased reliance on digital media platforms, there are a growing number of legal implications that are not fully fleshed out and, therefore, caution should be used. While optics are often the first concern of the social media team, it is imperative that all legal ramifications are considered before any posts are made. When the crisis hits, everyone needs to consider the potential lawsuits that could arise, either from the original crisis or the response.

Social Media Implications During Trial

ORGANIZATIONS MUST CONSIDER HOW ANY COMMUNICATION COULD BE DISCOVERABLE IN A LAWSUIT.

Organizations must consider how any communication could be discoverable in a lawsuit. This applies to any tweet or post an organization makes just as it does to any press release, internal memo, or email sent. While social media posts cannot always be admitted as evidence in litigation, the door has been opened. As far back as 2014, courts have been willing to treat a tweet as evidence. In June of that year, in *Kind L.L.C. v. Clif Bar & Company* a New York Federal Court used a tweet by a consumer about product packaging confusion in a trade dress case. And in June of 2017, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals cited President Trump's tweets in their ruling striking down his "travel ban."

It is also important to consider how courts would handle a retweet. When an organization is in crisis, they are often not the only ones defending their reputation. For example, when United Airlines faced a public relations firestorm for forcibly removing a passenger from an aircraft in April 2017, social media exploded. Both United Airlines and the removed passenger were attacked on social media for their actions and past behavior. Had United Airlines retweeted one of these attacks, they might have opened themselves up to legal action whether for defamation or something else. Republication of a libelous statement is generally treated the same as the original statement, though retweets are afforded some protections in the U.S. by the Communications Decency Act. However, if it can be shown that the retweeter had control over some or all of the content of the tweet (possibly by adding a comment with the retweet), the retweeter increases likelihood of liability.

Companies should also have guidelines concerning personal social media accounts, especially for executives and in times of a crisis. While courts will not generally attribute an employee's personal statements to the company, it is possible. Politicians have long known to keep personal, official, and campaign accounts separate and distinct. When they don't, problems arise. In October 2017, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) reprimanded U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley for a violation of the Hatch Act based for a retweet from her personal

WITHIN JUST ONE DAY OF EQUIFAX'S DISCLOSURE, THEY FOUND THEMSELVES DEFENDING NUMEROUS LAWSUITS.

account endorsing a political candidate. The OSC reasoned that because her personal account used the same profile picture as her official account, referenced her official title, and linked to the U.S. mission to the United Nations, it gave the impression that she was acting in her official capacity. Although, generally, employers will not be held liable for what their employees say, if an account gives the impression that it speaks for the company, the court might see things differently. Therefore, employees, most of all high rankings executives, need to be aware of what not to say on social media, even if they are not speaking officially for the organization.

Timing of Disclosure

A crisis team always has two very important decisions to make quickly: what message should be pushed as well as how and when to push it. While there are numerous public relations factors that must be weighed, it is important to remember that getting the timing wrong can also bring legal troubles.

On July 29, 2017, Equifax discovered that they had been hacked and sensitive information of approximately 143 million Americans had been compromised. But Equifax did not publicly disclose this information until September 7, over a month later. Undoubtedly, Equifax faced a complex situation with no easy solution, and it is likely that they did not have enough facts to go public immediately. But when deciding the best timing for disclosure Equifax needed to not only consider whether the public relations situation would be better by disclosing immediately, even with limited facts, but also what the legal ramifications could be by delaying disclosure. In fact, within just one day of Equifax's disclosure, they found themselves defending numerous lawsuits.

Nothing in the law states a precise timeframe for such disclosure, but the SEC has issued guidelines to companies about timing of a disclosure for numerous situations; organizations must be cognizant of relevant regulations in their industry. Also, in this case, Equifax's customers would potentially have a cause of action due to the duty of care Equifax owed to them. The delay in reporting also caused a delay in the drop of their stock value. Any benefit to the company during this time period could have put Equifax in legal trouble. Furthermore, Equifax has reported that multiple employees with knowledge of the breach sold company shares during this period, which has opened both Equifax and the employees up to both criminal and civil action. While the breadth and scope of their legal problems are vast and infinitely complex, one thing is clear: the sooner the public knew about the breach, the sooner they could take steps to mitigate their damages.

Accuracy of Statements

While delaying communication with the public in times of crisis can hinder the effectiveness of your response, hastily informing the public can also serve to inflame a tense situation. But releasing accurate information is even more important when the legal ramifications are considered. Inaccurate statements, whether due hasty disclosure or any other reason, can also open an organization to whole host of legal problem. Therefore, while Equifax needed to consider potential legal ramifications of waiting to disclose the security breach they suffered, they also needed to consider the legal ramifications if they had released incomplete or inaccurate information about the breach.

DEFAMATION LAWS APPLY TO THE INTERNET JUST AS THEY DO TO PRESS RELEASES, NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, AND MORE.

While many people would like to believe that social media posts, especially tweets, cannot be the basis for lawsuit like defamation of character based on the difficulty naming the actor and the brevity of the 'life' of the post or tweet, this is simply not the case. Defamation laws apply to the internet just as they do to press releases, newspaper articles, and more.

Additionally, there is no reason to believe that information posted on Twitter, or another social media platform, is not as legally binding as a press release or information stated in an interview. In February 2015 Kanye West tweeted that his new album, *The Life of Pablo*, would only be available on Tidal, a subscription based music streaming service. But, the album was later available other places. Kanye quickly found himself on the wrong end of numerous lawsuits as many claimed they only joined Tidal so that they could get *The Life of Pablo*. Kanye found himself in hot water after his tweet was perceived by many to contain false information. Interestingly enough, Kanye has pointed to another tweet stating that the album continued to evolve after it was released on Tidal to defend the veracity of his original statement and, thus, the original composition was actually only available on Tidal.

Digital Media's Reach Beyond our Borders

It is important for every company to understand that digital media, from online publishing to social media platforms allow their content to be seen just about anywhere in the world. Any company, from United Airlines with employees and customers in virtually every country around the globe to a small privately held company that operates solely within the borders of one state, can subject itself to the jurisdiction of another country.

The introduction of online publishing allowed content to be available worldwide, which exposed publishers to legal implications outside of the U.S. In fact, in January 2011, Joseph Weiler, a professor at NYU, stood trial for criminal libel in France due to a book review he published. He was ultimately found not guilty. While legal scholars debated if France was the right place for the case to be heard, the case underscored the far reach the internet has and the need to recognize something published in the U.S. may have implications across the world.

With the introduction of social media, just about everyone has become an online publisher. Even if your organization only operates within the U.S., your tweets or posts likely reach other parts of the world and could cause legal trouble. In fact, that improper tweet or post can cause you even more trouble in many parts of the world compared to the United States.

Areas of Asia and Latin America are notoriously hostile to free speech. But even areas like Europe that are generally strong protectors of free speech and the media have more conservative defamation laws that the United States. In fact, there are numerous European Union member states where people can go to prison for defamation. Even though that is an unlikely scenario, many European Union member states do not have caps on pecuniary damages, which allow plaintiffs to collect excessive judgments. Furthermore, judges in other parts of the world have taken a harder line stance on whether a retweeter is liable for a tweet drafted by someone else.

Attorney-Client Privilege

One of the most important aspects of the relationship between a lawyer and the client is attorney-client privilege. In fact, violating this privilege would be one of the most damaging things that can happen during any litigation. Due to the increased collaboration in recent times between the legal and communication teams, care needs to be taken to avoid violation of the attorney- client privilege. It could subject an outside crisis management team as well as outside counsel to its own set of legal troubles. But, more importantly to the client, it could compromise their legal position as sensitive information may become public or, at least, discoverable in concurrent or future litigation.

IN GENERAL, ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE DOES NOT APPLY TO THE CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM.

In general, attorney-client privilege does not apply to the crisis communication team. In fact, it does not apply to a lawyer just because they are part of the crisis team, which can limit information available to the communication team. But, communication with non-legal professionals may be protected where the retention of those professionals is done to give advice that assists the attorneys. The application of the privilege varies from court to court and, therefore, all organizations and attorneys must use extreme caution when sharing information throughout the planning and response to any crisis. Furthermore, it is imperative for all organizations to work with their legal team, whether inside or outside counsel, to structure any crisis communication plan in a way that extends the attorney-client privilege to the communication team. And to then make sure the crisis team knows how to protect the privilege.

SECTION TWO
MAKE A PLAN

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT LEGAL AND COMMUNICATION TEAMS WORK TOGETHER BEFORE AND AFTER A CRISIS ARISES

The most effective way to handle the legal issues that may arise in any particular crisis is the same as the overall crisis strategy: have a plan that can implemented at a moment's notice. This plan should identify a pre-selected group of people who will meet and identify the legal issues in play with the identified crisis. The individual(s) identified as a spokesperson for the organization, whether through typical means or social media, must have a direct line to the legal team and understands basic issues of confidentiality, privacy, and any potential legal issues identified in the crisis plan before a crisis arrives.

Increasingly, organizations are realizing the need for lawyers to be involved in the strategic planning and execution of any crisis communication. Communication departments should follow the model of human resources and compliance departments and incorporate lawyers into their ranks. This should come in both the form of litigation counsel being embedded with the communication team as well as hiring communications team members who have a legal background. The litigation team is often uniquely aware of critical information, which would be beneficial in crafting a crisis response. Placing lawyers within these departments and keeping them involved in the process helps organizations avoid achieving a public relations benefit only to realize that they have opened themselves up to legal liability.

Due to the explosion of digital media platforms over the past couple of decades, anyone with a cell phone and an internet connection can shape the public narrative. Therefore, the need for communication teams to respond and shape the message quickly and effectively is more important than ever. To do so, it is imperative that legal and communication teams work together before and after a crisis arises. If this is done effectively it will enhance the chances of both the communication and legal objectives be reached.

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CHAPTER 5:

THE NEED FOR SPEED IN THE DIGITAL AGE

GERARD BRAUD *International expert, coach, trainer, author and professional speaker on crisis management*

Speed. One word. Let it sink in.

Everything I know about speed in crisis communications comes from a guy named Bubba in 1989, when I was a television reporter.

Live television news began putting pressure on companies to respond quickly in the 1970's with the advent of live coverage from disasters.

As a reporter, I placed my desk near the door, adjacent to the live truck, increasing the likelihood that I'd be out of the door first when news is breaking.

LIVE TELEVISION NEWS BEGAN PUTTING PRESSURE ON COMPANIES TO RESPOND QUICKLY IN THE 1970'S.

So on this pivotal day, I am the first reporter out of the door, heading to a chemical plant explosion. Time: 9 a.m. With traffic, it will take 30 minutes to reach the explosion and 30 minutes more before we can be live on the air. One hour. That is the amount of time the public relations person has, before saying something intelligent to me on live TV.

Despite repeated calls to the PR guy, upon arriving, no spokesperson is there. At 10 a.m. I air my first live report, narrating what I see, emphasizing that I called the company with no response. Without a spokesperson, I am forced to speculate on the possible causes of the explosion.

Pause. Some of you are saying, "The fog of war has everyone responding to the crisis."

Bull. The public relations guy is not fighting the fire.

Pause. Some of you are saying, “They don’t know everything yet so they can’t say anything.”

Bull. A perfect, first statement would be, “Our teams are fighting the fire. At this time we do not know the cause. The fire is in our Polyvinyl Chloride unit. As soon as we have more information we will share it with you. I’ll have more for you within the hour.”

It is accurate and fast. There is no speculation. It contains limited factual information. Additionally, 1) it strategically fills 30 seconds of air time so I’m not speculating, 2) it assures the public that the company is responding and 3) it shows that the company is open and transparent

But no. That didn’t happen.

As 11 a.m. approaches, the news director wants a second live report. Again, I narrate what I see, speculate about the cause, and mention that the initial explosion was around 9 a.m. and that in the past two hours the company has given us no information, despite the many phone calls we have made to them.

As soon as I am off the air, the news director asks for a “package” for the noon newscast. A package is a recorded report with fire video, narrated by me and introduced with a live standup. The package needed interviews, of which I have none up until now.

“Braud, knock on some doors and ask the neighbors what happened,” the news director said over our two-way radio.

Pause. Let me set the scene. This is in rural Louisiana. I grew up in rural Louisiana. I know the people I’m likely to encounter. Just down the road is a trailer park. Not to be pejorative, and pardon me if I’m stereotyping the people I grew up with in my small town, but I’m about to interview the first person willing to talk. I’m on a deadline. I have 35 minutes to shoot, write, and edit a report for the noon news.

Cue Bubba. I knock on the door of a mobile home. Bubba answers. He is wearing navy work trousers, an unbuttoned navy shirt that exposes his white, ribbed undershirt. He agrees to step out for an interview.

“What did you see?” I ask, with camera rolling.

“It blow’d up real good,” he says, pointing to the chemical facility.

“Has this ever happened before?” I ask.

“It blows up all the time,” he says.

...and cut.

We have our sound bite with a guy from a trailer park named Bubba who just said, “It blow’d up real good.”

“Am I really going to put this on the air?” I’m thinking.

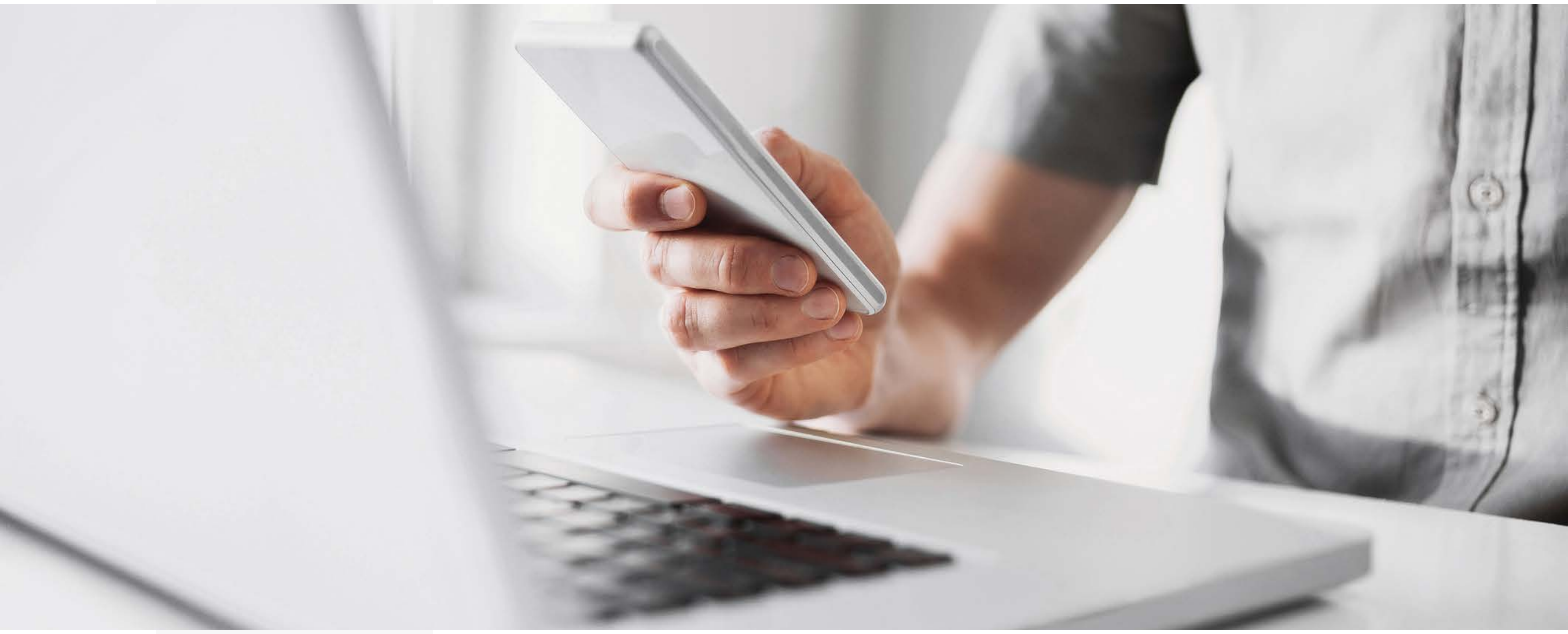
THE COMPANY IS TRUSTING ITS REVENUE AND REPUTATION TO BUBBA. WHO WOULD DO THAT? WHY WOULD ANY ORGANIZATION DO THAT?

Time: 11:15 a.m.

Bubba, saying, "It blow'd up real good," would never have happened if the company spokesperson had come out to do an interview. By not responding in a timely manner, the company is trusting its revenue and reputation to Bubba. Who would do that? Why would any organization do that?

My live shot leads the noon newscast. No, I'm not proud that I'm putting Bubba on the air saying, "It blow'd up real good." But, he is a fair representation of the demographics of his community. And he summed up what happened succinctly, poor grammar aside. Oh, and in a subtle way, I am flipping my middle finger to the public relations guy who hasn't returned my calls in the past three hours. Yea, reporters do that kind of stuff to people who should speak but don't.

Guess what happens next? In the distance I see a cloud of dust heading my way down a gravel road. The scene is reminiscent of an old Road Runner cartoon. Heading toward us is a silver Pontiac Firebird with the large firebird decal on the hood. The driver is speeding. As the car approaches, the breaks lock, dust and gravel fly. The car skids to a stop inches from the cameraman's tripod.



"Gerard Braud, why do you always interview people with no teeth who live in trailers?" the driver shouts as he exits the car. It was the company spokesperson; the one we had been calling since 9 a.m. Apparently he saw Bubba's interview.

My reply? "He was willing to talk to us and you weren't."

"I'll do an interview now," the spokesperson shouts. "Let's go live right now," he insists.

"We're finished for the noon show," I say. "You're too late."

That was the day I set an important standard for all of the many Crisis Communications Plans I have written. Each plan directs that a statement MUST be issued within one hour or less of a crisis going public. It is also why every plan includes a collection of boilerplate statements called, The First Critical Statement. Each can be edited in 3 minutes. It includes basic details, avoids speculation about the cause of the crisis, it indicates that the organization is on the ball and responding, and it promises more information when more facts are known.

Admittedly, in a Twitter world, that one hour directive is 59 minutes too late. But, in a world of corporate lawyers and decision paralysis by executives, the one hour or less rule remains my plausible standard.

A WORKER, RUNNING FROM THE EXPLOSION STOPS, TURNS, AND TAKES A CELL PHONE PHOTO AS THE FIREBALL RISES INTO THE SKY.

Fast forward - April 16, 2007; that horrible day at Virginia Tech when 32 people are slaughtered by a gunman. It was more than five hours before the university calls a news conference. Meanwhile, student Jamal Albarghouti, uses his Nokia mobile phone to record police storming the campus with the sounds of the shooter's gun in the background. Albarghouti emails the video to CNN's iReport platform. Within minutes, CNN is airing the footage. By default, network news, with no reporter and no million dollar satellite truck, is on the frontline of breaking news. By default, Albarghouti becomes the university's spokesperson.

Fast forward to January 15, 2009 and the Miracle on the Hudson. U.S. Airways Flight 1549 makes an emergency landing on the Hudson River in New York City. Despite being the media capitol of the world, with news crews and cameras everywhere, the first image of the plane is captured by Janis Krums, a 23 year old passenger on a ferry. He snaps a photo and posts it to Twitter. Within minutes, media around the world are using the image. Krums becomes the airline's default spokesperson.

On June 13, 2013, a chemical plant in Geismar, Louisiana explodes at 8:37 a.m. Two people are killed and 114 are injured. A worker, running from the explosion stops, turns, and takes a cell phone photo as the fireball rises into the sky. Within minutes, the worker creates a Facebook page with the image. More than 4,000 people "Like" the page before the company issues their first news release at approximately noon, according to our research. By default, the worker is the official source of information.

On April 17, 2015, someone digging with a backhoe in California hits a natural gas line. A Twitter user with the handle @Shroomy0021 captures the flames with his cell phone and tweets the video to @ABC30, his local television station. Within minutes media around the world are tweeting to @Shroomy0021 asking permission to use the video. Shroomy, by default, is the official source of information.

At 9 a.m. on Sunday, July 17, 2016, a gunman opens fire killing three police officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. One eyewitness is streaming on Facebook Live while another is live on Periscope. It is 2 p.m. before the first news conference is held. Yes, five hours pass without a news conference. Some police agencies involved post nothing to their websites, nothing to social media, and issue no statements, as far as our research can tell.

Finally, In April 2017, United Airlines pulled a passenger off of an airplane. Other passengers took video. It went viral. At the time of the incident, research indicates United spent nearly $200 million per year on advertising and had pre-tax earnings of $4.5 billion per year. According to Fortune, United's stock dropped by $1.4 billion dollars in short order of the video going public. It damaged reputation and revenue.

Here are the lessons every company, non-profit, and government agency must recognize:

ACCORDING TO FORTUNE, UNITED'S STOCK DROPPED BY $1.4 BILLION DOLLARS IN SHORT ORDER OF THE VIDEO GOING PUBLIC.

- When you are slow to communicate, you damage your reputation and revenue.

- You must make decisions on a clear sunny day that dictate how you will respond on your darkest day.

- You must write news release templates on a clear sunny day so they can be quickly edited and used on your darkest day.

Every crisis communications plan I write has three First Critical Statements and a library of at least 100 pre-written, detailed news releases that can be posted to the web, read as a news conference script, shared with employees, shared with stakeholders, and posted to social media.

Knowing the pain, problem and predicaments that cause organizations to respond slowly, I invented a work-around for all of my plans.

- My news releases/public statements contain strategically placed fill-in-the-blanks and multiple choice options.
- Each statement anticipates and strategically answers every question a reporter might ask. Many of the answers are non-speculative responses to speculative questions, i.e. “It would be inappropriate for us to speculate on the cause. We will wait for an investigation to tell us what happened, how it happened, and how to keep it from happening again.”
- Rather than ever looking at a blank computer screen and writing a news release from scratch, the template statements are fast. The average statement takes 10 minutes to edit.
- Lawyers delay news releases. The pre-written language in my releases can be pre-approved. No lawyer has ever changed a word I’ve written since my first Crisis Communications Plan in 1996.
- Corporate executives delay news releases because they fight over commas and semantics. My statements are written with short, staccato sentences, that are void of commas.
- One statement serves all audiences, i.e. the news conference script, a web post, an all-employee email, and all social media.

We live in the age social media. News is instantaneous. Mobile phones are prolific. You need to begin communicating at least the basic facts fast. Anything over one hour is unacceptable.

If you fail to provide a spokesperson, by default you have ordained an eyewitness as your spokesperson.

Ultimately, the reputation and revenue of your organization hangs in the balance when you are slow to communicate.

Crisis communications expert Gerard Braud, CSP, Fellow IEC, has served clients on five continents with crisis communications plans and media training since 1994. Prior to that, he had a distinguished 15-year career as and award winning television reporter.

CHAPTER 6:

THE IMPORTANCE OF DATA AND ANALYTICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

JEFF BODZEWSKI *Leader of Data & Analytics at the Award-Winning PR agency, M Booth*

Data has become fundamental to marketing and communications programs, yet few professionals think of the readily available options to identify, monitor and adapt to issues that can affect their organizations. I see organizations that limit their issue preparedness and response to social listening alone, which is a tremendous mistake given how many real consumer behaviors we can watch in near real-time. Doing remains more powerful than posting alone.

THE SAVVY PROFESSIONAL WILL USE DATA TO ALSO ADVANCE IDEAS

My intent in the following chapter is to show the countless digital signals that can be tracked to better inform your strategy for when an issue emerges. An increasing body of academic and third-party research alike shows that online behavior, particularly around higher consideration events, is a strong indicator of offline behavior. Going to a website and hunting the FAQs around a particular issue or searching for customer care's contact number is a very strong indicator of the offline behavior likely to happen. This chapter will help.

Yes, marketers and communicators are learning to use data to better reach their audiences to sell them something, but the savvy professional will use data to also advance ideas and sway opinions.

The pain-reliever Motrin was arguably the first brand to find itself embroiled in a "modern" crisis sparked by social media in 2008 when its print campaign implying motherhood is a fashion statement was pulled after a mommy bloggers began criticizing the brand. More recently, the crisis involving Entertainment Art's "Loot Boxes" that began as a thread on Reddit, the self-described "front page of the

Internet," vividly underscores how social crises have now grown in magnitude in their ability to impact sales, market cap and a company's own business operations.

"Our research shows an average of 35.9 million negative posts voicing dissatisfaction about brands each day on topics from the mundane to those that require an urgent response," said John Mumford, COO of Infegy, a leading social analytics platform focused on linguistics. "This is where context, particularly around emotions and themes in a crisis, becomes crucial in any social intelligence practice."

While not each of these nearly 36 million posts represents a crisis for a brand, choosing to ignore the bubbling audience complaints risks a manageable customer care issue exploding into a full crisis. Most organizations are aware of the basic crisis channels to watch, including traditional media, social media and organic search, so this chapter explores the often over looked signals and tools that can benefit communicators in organizations of all sizes.

SECTION ONE
WEB ANALYTICS: THE HIDDEN (FREE!) GEM

One of the single best sources for data to track the progression of a crisis is actually free for most organizations that use web analytics for their website. While many view web analytics, such as Google Analytics, IBM Customer Analytics and Adobe's Omniture, solely for measurement but their real value in a crises situation is the real-time visitor data that shows who is actively looking for more information, what information is most valuable to them and the catalyst organizations who are motivating them to action. These three elements can all impact a response strategy not only in digital, but in all aspects of communication from customer care scripts to which media to target first for interviews.

Web Analytics Intelligence: Four to Closely Monitor		
Name	**What It Is**	**What to Look For**
Referral Traffic	Tiered list of all the external websites, including media, influencer and brand sites, where visitors are coming from.	Don't be fooled by estimated reach or impressions on where to focus a crisis response. Referral traffic will provide intelligence into the media outlets, influencers and other organizations whose message is successfully resonating with readers/viewers. These often are different than media with the highest UVM and a crisis response should change accordingly.
Search Traffic	Complete list of the organic search terms that are taking people to the website and can be sorted or batched by branded, unbranded and even questions.	Reviewing the list of organic search terms driving traffic to an organizations site will provide clarity on what elements of an issue are driving people to action. Organizations often find that different elements, whether safety, class action lawsuit, specific product recalls or other crises with multiple facets quickly prioritize themselves in order of importance to the end audience, not the organization, to shape messaging.
Outgoing Links	List of all websites that people next visit after the organization's website including social, e-commerce, media, law firms and other relevant organizations.	Few think to check outbound links to see what happens after a visitor leaves the site, yet this is some of the most meaningful information that can be gleaned in web analytics as its shows the audience's mindset. Going to social sites means they are spreading the word or looking for others affected. Media means they are either looking for more information or perhaps want to tell their story. Law firms and NGOs mean the visitor is highly motivated to take action against the organization.
Site Visitors	Demographic, geographic and, depending on the web analytics structure, some interest data about the visitors coming to the site.	Segmenting the site visitors coming not only in overall, but through various channels, such as referrals, search and social, will provide clarity on who feels they are most affected by the issue. Understanding the age, ethnicity, city and even passions of visitors can help shape both a messaging and targeting strategy in the response by matching media responses and buys against those actively interested in the emerging issue or crisis.
Other web analytics areas to monitor in times of crisis: *Behavior (Pages Viewed), Bounce Rate, Mobile v. Desktop Visits, Sessions v. Unique Sessions and Time on Site*		

SECTION TWO
ADDITIONAL FREE RESOURCES FOR ORGANIZATIONS OF ALL SIZES

FREE DATA OFTEN COMES AT A COST OF TIME

The democratization of data and the myriad tools available with a freemium model has exploded in recent years so that organizations of any size, from Fortune 100s to local non-profits, can have the data in times of crisis to implement informed strategies throughout its lifecycle. The trade-off is that the "free" data often comes at a cost in time and sophistication of searching versus tools that can cost thousands of dollars each month to do much the same thing in a far easier way. Regardless, these free tools will keep organizations current on how the issue is evolving and what response is warranted.

LOOK FOR QUALITATIVE INFORMATION THAT CAN BETTER GUIDE A RESPONSE

Free Tools: Five to Know		
Name	**What It Is**	**What to Look For**
Google Alerts	Automated alerts whenever a phrase, name or word to create a free monitoring tool of tens of thousands of unique media outlets.	Communicators should already have Google Alerts set-up for larger topics, such as the organization name, key executives and notable products. Also consider creating alerts dedicated to potential, if not likely, issues, such as "company AND lawsuit" or "executive AND harassment" as an early warning system. New Google Alerts can be created throughout a crisis to track media coverage around individual elements to understand how it is being covered and focus on the most important elements.
Google Trends	Near real-time intelligence on the top and the top trending queries related to an organization. Google Trend data can be isolated down from a global level all the way to a single city and can updated every hour with new intelligence.	Many PR professionals and content creators use Google Trends to identify trends that can become the basis for everything from media pitches to a Facebook post. This free tool is invaluable during a crisis to see the specific ways people are searching for information before taking action. It also can be easily embedded into a crisis dashboard or microsite so that all parties of the response team have this intelligence as it updates throughout the day
Social Mention	The leading free social listening tool available today is able to track thousands of social media channels through Boolean Search terms and other variables. Social Mention differs from more costly social tools because it takes notably more time to narrow down on an individual topic.	Volume of social posts is certainly informative to see the relative traction an issue is getting when compared to an "average" day for an organization. Look for qualitative information that can better guide a response and message strategy, such as if anyone is coming to the organization's defense. The tonality: are they disgusted? Afraid? What words are being most used to describe the crisis and organization and how does those match against the messaging?
Tone Analyzer	A linguistic analytics tool that uses AI to analyze different forms of content, ranging from emails to online reviews, to understand the emotion behind the content.	Issues and crises are often highly emotional times for those possibly affected as they think about their own well-being as well as that of friends and family. Tone Analyzer will provide both the tone of the communication as well as the magnitude. For instance, a high index of "Anger" will warrant a very different messaging strategy than if the predominant tone is "Sadness."
Trendsmap	A powerful tool that filters through location-specific data to display the topics and hashtags that are trending in each market based on Twitter posts.	Issues that seem national or larger in scope can often be traced to one or more individual markets. Trendsmap allows users to search topics and individual markets to better understand where the potential flashpoint is located and greatly inform the response strategy for which markets and outlets to prioritize when it comes time to get the organization's side of the story out.
Other useful tools in times of crisis: Gram Feed, Hashtagify, Keyhole, Reddit Comment Analyzer and TagCrowd		

All tools, accessibility of data and even costs are constantly changing in these areas and should be revisited at least once a quarter to make sure they are right for each organization's unique crisis and issues needs.

Jeff Bodzewski has been an officer at some of the world's largest digital, advertising and communications agencies in roles ranging from leading account teams, digital shared services and the data horizontal as a counselor to brands such as Microsoft, AT&T, Infiniti, Discover, Sprint and Carnival.The Harvard Business Review profiled his team's analytics work at M Booth alongside companies such as eBay, KPMG and Clorox, and he has recently spoken at various conferences, such as IBM's signature Chief Data Officer Symposium, Marketing to Women and New York Social Media Week. He currently leads data and analytics for M Booth working with partners including American Express, Godiva, GM, Brooks Running and Tinder to build a culture of data that delivers the right message to the right person at the right time with data at the center.

CHAPTER 7:

CRISIS IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

BRIAN KELLY *President & Founder brian brands*

Brands are more important than ever because consumers are more perceptive, informed and exacting and yet mass aspirational communication is no longer sufficient to win consideration let alone loyalty. Brands are expected to act with purpose and integrity, creating genuine relevant value in every engagement. Transgression is punished swiftly while good behavior is loudly celebrated.

Digital and new assistive technology is driving consumers forward. Marketing will never return to its top-down, command-and-control golden age. Marketers must accept this shift, and master it to compete and win. Digital disruption is a gift to brands. Properly used it will build stronger and lasting relationships with powerfully empowered consumers.

BRANDS ARE EXPECTED TO ACT WITH PURPOSE AND INTEGRITY

Therefore, organizations that manage successful brands will be in an enterprise-wide, ever-vigilant state to convert the challenge of constant crisis and enhance engagements that assist the consumer.

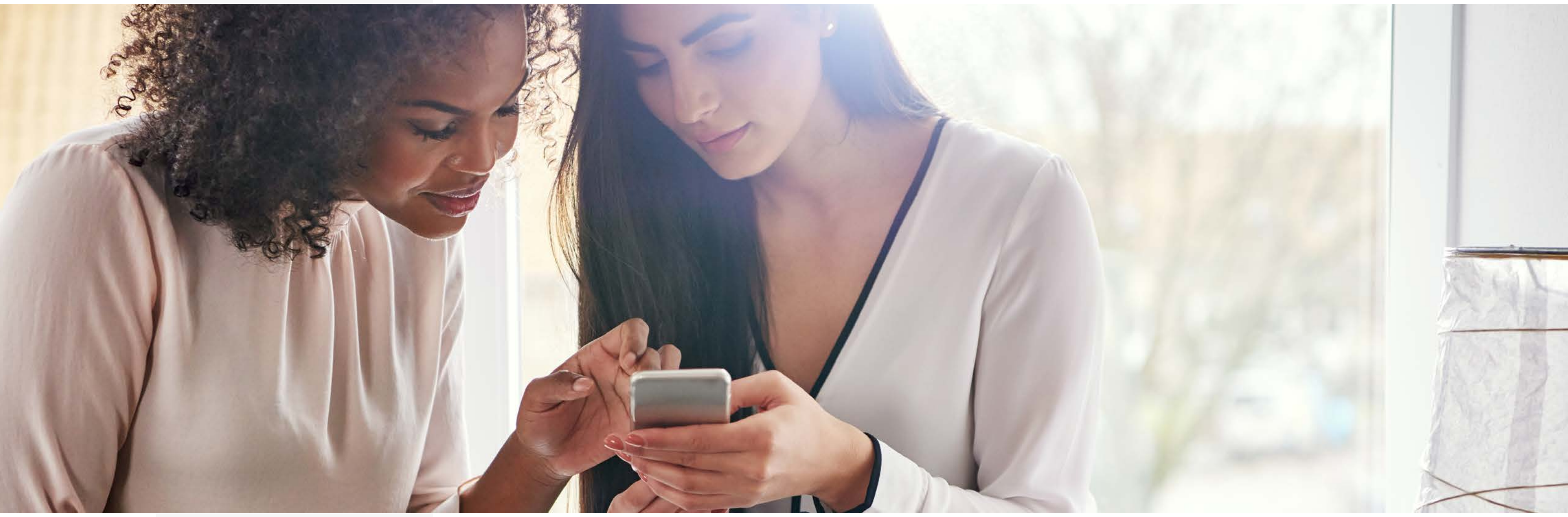
It isn't whether your brand and will be challenged by a crisis, it is just a matter of when. In the current environment, crisis communications anticipation and planning must be an "all hands-on deck" exercise. Crisis communications must flow naturally from the Brand Plan so that the brand is consistently represented.

While crisis communications are historically a sub-specialty of the Public Relations team, it must be owned by the entire enterprise because reactive behaviors of the enterprise must remain on brand. All members the Executive Cadre must own a portion of the Crisis Plan. All communications must reinforce the brand position in the mind of all constituents, both external and internal.

SECTION ONE
CONSUMER SITUATION

Consumers depend on their smartphones and mobile computing in ways few industry experts or brands could have anticipated, and mobile is no longer a category limited to a smartphone or a tablet. Today, internet-connected devices (such as smart home systems/Alexa, Siri, Google), screen less interfaces (such as AI-driven personal assistant apps), and virtual reality offerings are proliferating as consumers buy more devices and spend more time online. Holiday '17 Electronic Category retail sales were up 7.5% versus total retail up 4.5%, confirming robust consumer interest.

While these advancements have created massive opportunities for brands to increase customer touch points and forge deeper consumer connections, they've also created challenges.



Immediacy

Although brands have more ways than ever before to reach consumers, the window to sell them is shrinking. In fact, 55% of all consumers will spend 15 seconds or less on a website before leaving. If brands cannot deliver answers or experiences on a timeline that is expected by users, they risk relevance.

In addition to maintaining a fast, mobile-optimized web site, brands also need to rethink customer service to support the new immediacy standards. When they have individualized questions, they want answers immediately. More companies are transforming their approaches to customer service to be social-first. When customers have questions they can tweet, comment, or DM, and brands should expect to deliver results within a timely fashion. In fact, 84% of customers expect a response within 24 hours after they've posed a question on a social media network.

SECTION TWO
BRAND AND CONSUMER ACTIVISM

All-time low level of public trust in corporate and governmental institutions coupled with enabling technology to reach audiences both mass and discrete, has democratized response.

The Activist Economy

Many brands have recently found themselves in the middle of these social and political debates, and even if a brand isn't taking a side—its consumers are. And it's not limited to consumers of brands, but also a brand's employees, shareholders, CEOs, representatives, media channels and even the brand itself. Within this environment, crises have the potential to occur regularly and frequently. In The Activist Economy, these societal issues will continue to penetrate the consumer consciousness in six key areas:

1. Consumer Activism
Empowered by social media, enabled by mobile and fueled by social and political issues—consumers possess the power to quickly organize, assemble, vocalize support or express dissent. For brands, these actions can help in the form of positive sentiment or harm in the form of protests from the purse. These can take either "pro" or "con" form. Supporting a cause or expressing displeasure.

2. Employee Activism
Employees are engaging issues they care about. In an era when your people are your brand, executive cadre recognize that a positively engaged workforce is critical. In their quest to build brand champions at every level and within every silo, savvy leaders will foster clear internal communication, where transparency is fundamental and required.

CEOs ARE WEIGHING IN ON CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS

3. CEO Activism
CEOs are weighing in on controversial topics for several reasons. Some point to their corporate values or a higher purpose beyond maximizing shareholder value to explain their advocacy, as BOA CEO's Brian Moynihan and PayPal CEO Dan Schulman of PayPal did when taking a stand against a North Carolina law requiring people to use the bathrooms corresponding with the gender on their birth certificates, which became a referendum on transgender rights. As Salesforce Benioff told Time, "Today CEOs need to stand up not just for their shareholders, but their employees, their customers, their partners, the community, the environment, schools, everybody."

4. Representative Activism
From paid celebrities to influencers to corporate executives, today's disrupted environment heightens the scrutiny of people who act as the face of a brand in any capacity. YouTube and Disney both recently dropped deals with PewDiePie, the internet's highest paid YouTuber, due to a controversy involving anti-Semitic rhetoric. In The Activist Economy, if you

are compensated by a brand, consumers will hold you accountable. Equally, those representing the brand will hold the brand accountable when values are at odds.

5. Media Activism

Polarization is reflected in the increasingly complex media landscape where we can find outlets and voices that reflect the brand world view and sensibilities, whether it's The New York Times, Washington Post, Fox News, or Breitbart. Increasingly, this "self-selection" by consumers of media they agree with is indicative of trust issues with the media.

HAVING A CRISIS PLAN IN ADVANCE IS NO LONGER A 'NICE TO DO'

A contentious media landscape will force brands to revisit their brand values and actions. Further all media strategies: paid, earned, shared, owned, must also remain synchronized with the brand.

A brand's value proposition and ethos must be in lockstep now more than ever. Brands must be prepared to weigh in on a societal issue before it becomes a flashpoint. Having a crisis plan in advance is no longer be a "nice to do."

6. Brand activism

Much like consumer dynamics, societal and political issues are forcing brands to evaluate where they stand or risk leaving their position as ambiguous and open to interpretation by consumers. The increase in brands grappling with this emerging reality, either proactively or reactively, is symptomatic of larger societal shifts and realities including the re-emergence of populism, distrust in key institutions such as government and media, and community-shaping political events whether local or global.

The Burden of Big Data – A Single View of the Customer

Though the big data opportunity is growing rapidly, the top two big data challenges that organizations face are

1. **determining how to get value out of big data**
2. **defining a big data strategy**

The collection of data and analysis of it are fundamental to enterprise alignment and brand success. Data silos are a major issue, leading to miscommunication and missed opportunities, failure to identify overarching problems, and ultimately, poor customer experience. Some data silos are political, with certain groups within an organization preferring to keep "their" data close to the vest. Others start more innocently, a result of snowballing structural issues. The sales, marketing and finance departments all have their own individual goals and objectives, which means that within an organization, there are different, potentially contradictory, KPIs and measures of success.

SECTION THREE
BRAND CRISIS SCENARIOS & ACTION PLAN

Emergencies → Crisis (EMS Solutions)

Brands exist within what some describe as the Age of Doubt. Therefore, brand emergencies have increased in frequency and an increase in emergencies has resulted in an increase of crisis. Plus, the escalation from emergency evolves more quickly than ever. These can be segmented to aid action.

Three types of Emergencies:

1. **Routine Emergencies**
2. **Crisis Emergencies**
3. **Emergent Crises**

Routine Emergencies

- Routine refers to the relative predictability of the situation, it does not mean easy or simple
- Take advantage of lessons learned from prior experience
- Likely to have thought about:
    - Plan for the expected
    - Amass the required tools
    - Train the organization and team in preparation

Crisis Emergencies

- Distinguished by significant element of a new or unexpected novelty:
    - Threats never encountered before
    - Familiar even occurring at unprecedented speed
    - Confluence of forces, which, while not new, in combination pose unique challenges
- Because of the novelty, plan on behavior that work well in routine situation are frequently grossly inadequate or even counterproductive.

1. Diagnose the elements of the novelty, break it down for action
2. Improvise response measures adequate to cope with the unanticipated aspects of the emergency
    - Born of necessity, these may be actions quire different than ever done before. The response must be creative and extremely adaptable to execute improvised solutions.

Emergency Crises

- Pose special challenges in terms of recognizing novelty because they look familiar much like "routine emergencies", already experienced emergencies, in their early stages
    - Only later do they reveal their unusual characteristics

Leaders may be slow to see the new features that require a different response. They become "wed" to their original solution.

SECTION FOUR
TARGET AUDIENCES

Internal

Crisis communication certainly includes how you communicate a consistent message to the media and external audiences, but it also covers how you communicate and handle such matters internally. An informed and empowered staff can be among your greatest assets during this challenging time. Let's look at five best practices for executing an internal communication strategy should your business experience a crisis.

1. Keep an updated contact list of staff emails, phone numbers and addresses.
2. Establish a quick and efficient means of communication.

3. Set a policy for social media sharing in a crisis situation.

4. Share with them the news you plan to share with the media and community.

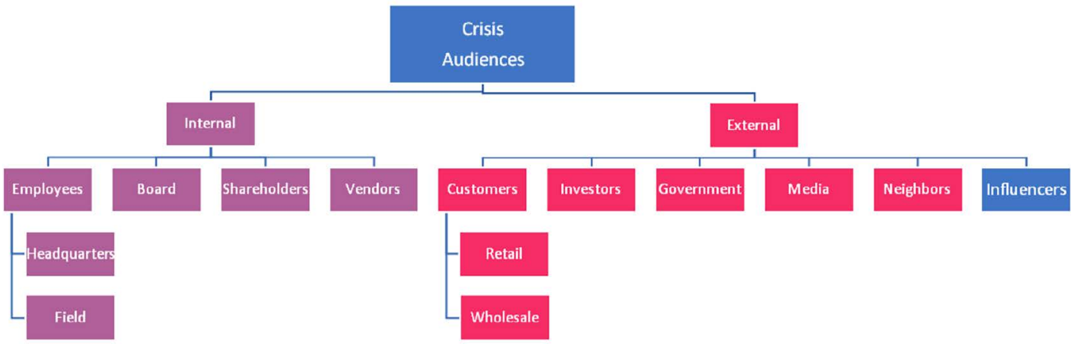
5. Empower staff as your advocates by equipping them with the appropriate facts and planned-out media responses.

External

1. Be transparent and sincere

2. Demonstrate empathy

3. Be concise, without being in code, easily understood, protect against being misconstrued.



SECTION FIVE
PLAN, ADAPT, DEAL

There are three consistent rules that separate success and failure, each involving basic behavioral tendencies that can dramatically alter the course of a crisis:

Plan.

"Plans are worthless, but Planning is everything"

Brands must have a plan to serve them in both the short and long term. Brand Plans come from the business plan to ensure the balance of the executive team are on the same page. Planning trains the team to understand the consumer within the context of the marketplace and the brand place within it. Some on your team will feel threatened; they will feel fear in part because they will have to break out of the routine. This is where scenario planning has tested the team and prepared them for making informed and rapid decisions.

Adapt.

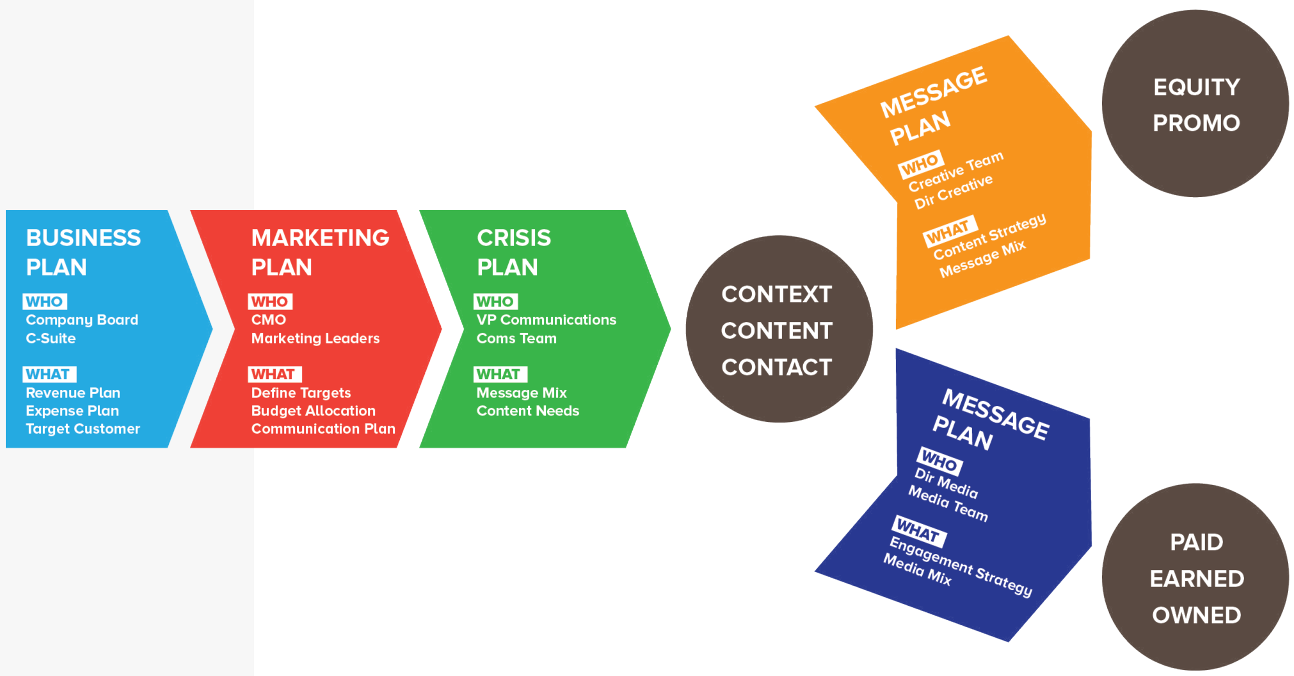
"The only person who likes change is a wet baby"

When crisis emerges, whether suddenly or over a period, a time of change is thrust upon the brand. At that time, it is crucial to remember Mark Twain's quote. Folks will assume that the planning will prepare the organization for a crisis. However, in some cases, all the rules change. Depending upon the crisis, the entire organization might be required to adjust. Many egos, personal plans and points of view will come under siege. Buoying spirits and inflating attitudes will be crucial.

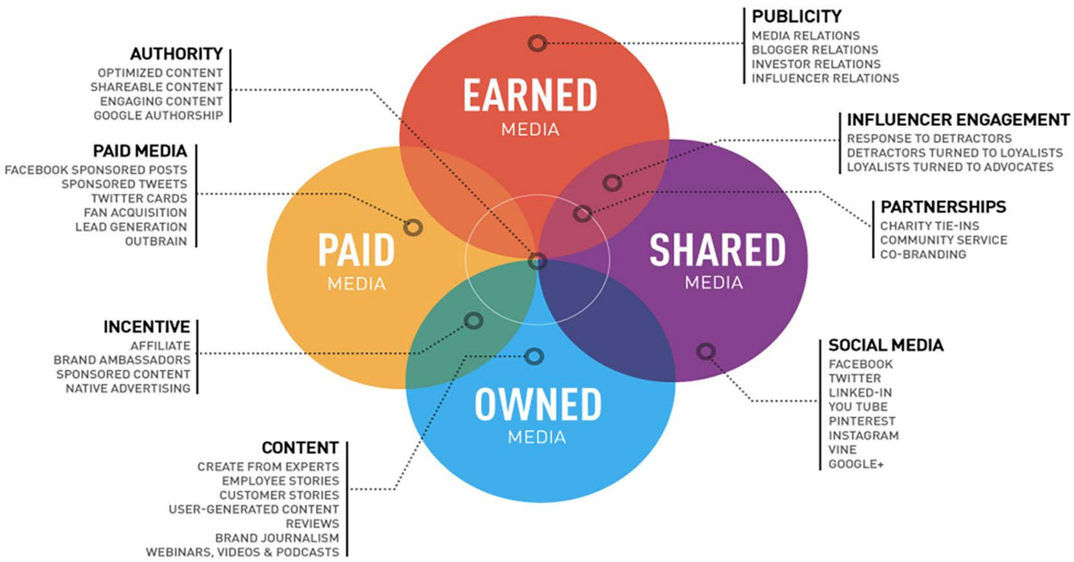
Deal.

"Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate."

In any large organization, there will be resistance to deviating from standard operating procedure. Whether it be HR or Legal or PR, resistance to the solution to the crisis will occur. At some point an apology, generosity, or a sacrifice will address the crisis. It might occur as a fleeting moment of opportunity. Being prepared to negotiate both inside the organization and outside with the market place will be critical.



SECTION SIX
PAID, EARNED, SHARED AND OWNED MEDIA



Prior to launching brian brands, an independent brand consultancy, Brian Kelly served as CMO for four retailers: Western Auto, sears.com, Sears Auto Group and Lane Bryant.

Brian held senior executive positions at Initiative and Ogilvy. He is a regular guest lecturer at Chicago area universities and a frequently quoted media expert on matters of retail branding.

CHAPTER 8:

HOW TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE CRISIS PREPAREDNESS PLAN IN THE DIGITAL AGE

KEVIN ELLIOTT *Managing Director, Risk + Crisis Communications, Hill + Knowlton Strategies US*

SECTION ONE

A NEW REALITY REQUIRES A NEW PLAN – 21ST CENTURY PLANNING AND PREPARATION

AMERICANS DID NOT KNOW ABOUT THE ACCIDENT UNTIL A DAY OR TWO LATER

On July 17, 1996, it was still daylight at 8:30 p.m. in New York. A minute later and only 12 minutes after it took off from the runway at John F. Kennedy International Airport, TWA flight 800 exploded and crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off the southeastern shore of Long Island, NY. The crash site was not far from the town of East Moriches, a town of about 5,000 people and only a two-hour drive from Midtown Manhattan. There was coverage of the crash on the evening news both locally and nationally.

But most Americans didn't know about the accident until a day or two later.

Just over 24 hours after the plane crash, the New York Times reflected on the day-one media coverage:

> "The crash offered the first lens-to-lens matchup between CNN and the new all-news cable channel, MSNBC. CNN demonstrated its experience by picking up fast on the story, bringing in witnesses, aviation experts, Coast Guard spokesmen, former safety officials and so forth, while the MSNBC man, Brian Williams, was still depending somewhat distractedly on wire-

service copy and vamping with a display of his knowledge of airplanes."

New York Times, July 19, 1996

Cable news – still a relatively new phenomenon in news coverage – was changing the way news moved. The story was moving fast by the standards of the day. In less than 24 hours after a catastrophic explosion brought down the Boeing 747, there were reportedly journalists from more than 44 media outlets near the scene. The Coast Guard and the National Transportation Safety Board were providing regular updates to the assembled press (as they were more commonly known). And they were reporting it to the rest of us, mostly in the daily newspapers as well as on the evening news. Cable news outlets were running the story wall-to-wall.

NO-ONE WAS SHARING MOBILE PHONE IMAGES OF THE RECOVERY OPERATION

What was not part of the early story of TWA 800 were any measurements of the way the story was trending. There were no tweets. No one was sharing mobile phone images of the recovery operation. Residents of East Moriches were interviewed by journalists and they talked about seeing the shoes of children washing up onto the shores. But there were no posts of those shoes on Instagram.

The world is different today than it was in 1996. And the pace of an incident like TWA 800 in 2018 is entirely different.

In 2017, the revised guidelines from the NTSB suggested that an airline is expected to publicly acknowledge an accident involving one of their aircraft within 15 minutes. The guidelines specify a tweet with basic information like We can confirm flight XX from XX to XX has been involved in an accident at XXX. Or We are aware of reports of XXX...

Twenty-one years after the crash of TWA 800, the government agency that investigates plane crashes is setting its expectations of the pace of communication based on how quickly an organization can get a tweet out. It takes more than 15 minutes to walk to the local coffee shop on the corner and get a latte in most places.

If your organization doesn't have a plan and the ability to get a tweet out in 15 minutes, you're not ready to operate in the new reality.

SECTION TWO
THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING AND PREPARATION

SPEED AND AGILITY IN A RESPONSE ARE EVERYTHING

The mother of all great crisis response plans was created in the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez spill in 1989, seven years before TWA 800. The U.S. Congress passed a law that was commonly referred to as OPA 90 – the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. It was the first time a law had been enacted that specifically considered communication as a component of an effective and acceptable response.

And that makes sense. The public had, even by then, an appetite for great transparency in communication surrounding an event that had wide consequences. In the case of an oil spill, they want to know that the responsible parties are cleaning up their mess and that the appropriate government agencies are holding the responsible parties to an appropriate standard of compliance. Most importantly, the public wants to know that they can feel safe – whether they need to know that the water is clean or that travel is safe, ambiguity is the enemy.

So, OPA 90 proscribed the “right” way to plan for a response and the guidance there is comprehensive and useful, especially if you’re planning for the communication environment of the 1990s.

Today, speed and agility in a response are everything. The process described in OPA 90 was useful for helping the enterprise think through the structure that is required of an effective response but the world has evolved so completely. The implications to planning and preparation are considerable.

Essential Considerations For Any Crisis Response Plan

1. Plans need to be based on solid, fundamental structures but based in the time in which we live.

2. In the first 12 hours of an incident today, social channels will drive everything. Therefore, the incident response plan needs to be social centric.

3. Be ready and able to move fast. Being in the conversation at the outset will change the equation for a company responding to a crisis. If you’re not driving the story, someone else will be.

SECTION THREE
PLANNING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT WE LIVE IN TODAY: CONTENT IS KING

OPA 90, and the plans that sprung from it, didn't even contemplate content as a component of an effective response. But the enterprise that is prepared well today needs content and this is a case when more is usually better. Still images, video, graphics are all the fodder of the story we're going to tell today about the incident and the organization behind it. This is not pushing out stills and b-roll with a wire distribution service, this is a fully accessible content library that is both passive and active. We want a controlled yet extensive library of content that journalists, influencers and the public can access so that these stakeholders that need to know and understand our story can.

Only 20 years ago, the best plans had reference to a dark site that could be turned on in short order. A good dark site typically earned the satisfied admiration of senior executives to whom our clients answered. Today, the plan needs to outline specific access to that content library and the social channels that are likely going to be the first means of pushing it out. We won't likely need a dark site but we will need access to make simple modifications to the web site so that we can host content where it will be found. We will almost certainly need a larger team to the content than we had even five years ago and the plan will need to contemplate whether the company's web site is hosted locally or through an offsite service.

The last thing you want to do is struggle to get new content up onto the web site or to push it out on social channels while the incident is still live. Timing is everything.

The plan today needs to be accessible anywhere, anytime. Incidents just don't happen at a convenient time for the response team. They never have. But the speed of communication has changed the expectation of public. Back to 1996, TWA didn't even provide a passenger manifest for more than 20 hours after the plane crash, according to both the NTSB and the Mayor of New York City. The speed of mainstream media and social channels has massively reset that expectation today.

THE SPEED OF COMMUNICATION HAS CHANGED THE EXPECTATION OF THE PUBLIC

Companies today need a crisis response tool that will provide the means to move fast. We're advising clients to use a mobile app to connect the team, to give them anywhere anytime access to their tools; the emphasis is on activating quickly so that you can get into the narrative immediately.

Communication abhors a vacuum and as Warren Buffet has famously said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently." It's a plain truth that simply cannot be ignored.

What Every Great Response Team Needs

1. A content library – images and video – accessible to the response team and ultimately the public.

2. Have access to social channels and the web site so that changes can be made fast and content can be pushed out.

3. The plan needs to give the team the right people resources to manage the web site and social channels.

4. The response team needs the ability to connect wherever and whenever. That includes assigning the right roles and responsibilities to the right people and then making sure they have access to the tools they will need.

5. The response team needs a comprehensive plan with the tools and process to be in the narrative immediately.

SECTION FOUR
THERE'S AN ADVANTAGE TO THOSE WHO GET IT

Emirates Airline gets it. Aviation incidents provide good fodder for this discussion. So, when Emirates had an incident at their home base back in the summer of 2016, it provided a useful learning opportunity.

EK521 was an Emirates flight traveling from India to Dubai on August 3, 2016. The Boeing 777 had what is often called a hard landing on its arrival in Dubai at 12:37p local time. It caught fire and the event was being broadcast live on social media by passengers in the terminal who had a clear view of the runway.

Emirates had clearly prepared themselves to move quickly. Within 29 minutes, they issued a statement, posted on Twitter, acknowledging the incident and identifying their aircraft. They had a banner on their home page at about the 30 minute mark to provide a place for information about the flight and the incident. At just over an hour they confirmed the number of passengers and crew on the flight and firefighters were still fighting a fire on the plane just off the runway.

EMIRATES WAS OWNING THE NARRATIVE AND IT WORKED

The chairman and CEO of Emirates Airline had a statement up on YouTube in English and then again in Arabic within about four hours – well before the first news conference. Emirates was owning the narrative and it worked. That first tweet acknowledging the incident received over a thousand likes and three thousand retweets in the early minutes after the plane came down. "Likes" for a tweet with a statement acknowledging a plane crash – it sounds a little oxymoronic but it's the golden ticket at a time like this.

By being prepared to move quickly; by having control of their channels and having the will to move, Emirates controlled the narrative around that accident in a way that we had never seen previously. The coverage of the incident in the early hours was largely based on what was posted on social channels. By being in those places with useful and substantial content as well as their own voice, Emirates had effectively given their voice and their content to looping coverage so the story that they were telling was the story that was being told. And the good news was that all of the passengers and crew escaped safely (albeit with some injuries) and the one fatality was a firefighter on the ground who died battling the blaze.

There are a million ways to measure the effectiveness of good communication after an incident like this but for management and investors at Emirates, share price is a good one. Apart from a quick selloff when the plane crashed, the Emirates share price has stayed on par with the rest of the industry. And their passenger growth has continued on a steady upward trend. The combination of those two measures suggests that their communication in the wake of EK521 has helped the business. You can't ask for much more than that from a crisis communication episode.

A Few Closing Reminders

1. Be first. Or at least be really fast and get into the conversation as quickly as possible.

2. Have the ability and the will to use all of your channels.

3. Measure the conversation. How much of your voice is in it? What does the sentiment and the arc look like?

4. Engage influencers to amplify your own voice. You're winning when others are telling your story.

Kevin is the director of the firm's risk and crisis communication practice for the United States. Kevin served as public affairs manager and spokesman for a multinational energy company where he developed and implemented strategic programs in response to specific threats and crises as well as general programs focused on labor relations and issues management. Kevin was previously vice president for public affairs for a California-based defense contractor. He handled the company's government and public affairs initiatives, represented the company on Capitol Hill, managed a political action committee and coordinated labor relations. At the beginning of his career, Kevin worked in the United States Senate where he was involved in policy and community outreach and coordinated media and other communication projects.

CHAPTER 9:

BALANCE TECHNOLOGY WITH THE HUMAN ELEMENT FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT SUCCESS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

SCOTT FARRELL *President, Global Corporate Communications, Golin*

It's been nearly 40 years since seven people died after using Tylenol capsules criminally laced with potassium cyanide. For days, the Tylenol tampering story became international headline news, and people abandoned the brand out of fear for their own safety.

In 1982, there was no Twitter or Facebook. And few if any tools, outside of the media itself, for Tylenol to interact with consumers. But because

Johnson & Johnson CEO James Burke understood the humanity of the situation (and because he made decisions for the brand based on the humanity of the situation) the brand ultimately recovered and continues to thrive today.

IN 1982 THERE WAS NO TWITTER OR FACEBOOK

Many in the public relations field consider the Tylenol case as the birth of the modern approach to crisis management. And even today, in an era where information (and misinformation) are ever-present and readily available through social and traditional media, where stakeholder engagement can be as simple as a few keystrokes, and where data and analytics provide deep insights, these cannot replace the human element that Burke and J&J relied on to save the Tylenol brand from extinction.

It's not difficult to argue that social media and powerful data and analytics tools have ushered in yet another new era of crisis management. But we have to be mindful that it is people who write the plans and activate them, who read the data and interpret it, and who must move swiftly and decisively at every turn of a crisis on order to save an individual, a product, a brand or an enterprise from peril. In a time where technology provides powerful tools for crisis management professionals, they should not let overlook what is still arguably the most powerful determinant of success – the human element.

There are three areas where focused attention on the human element can yield significant benefits and substantial dividends in preparing for and managing a crisis.

SECTION ONE
PLAN DEVELOPMENT

MAXIMIZE THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN THE PLANNING

Maximize the human element in the planning process by going beyond the risk management or communications departments to identify and prioritize threats. Ask functional experts across the company to imagine and share their worst-case scenarios. The key word here is "experts," not leaders. Sometimes the richest views of threats come from those who work closer to the front lines than do those in the C-Suite.

Interview these people individually. Doing so eliminates group-think and the fear of openly sharing with peers and leaders the dangers that potentially lurk in the shadows of every organization. After compiling a list of the threats, gather all who were interviewed and ask them to evaluate and prioritize the risks on two five-point scales: likelihood of occurrence and impact on the organization. Mapping the risks on a grid will create a prioritized look at the threats for which the organization needs to be best prepared to address. Doing this exercise as a group invariably leads to some very interesting connecting of dots (e.g. a threat mentioned by supply chain may never have occurred to manufacturing), helps add texture and context to the threats and helps optimize the human element by creating shared ownership of the foundation for the crisis operating system and event-specific playbooks.

In one-on-one interviews with a medical device and supplies company to identify potential risks, one individual opined that his greatest fear was the possibility that one of the company's devices could be hacked or become a gateway to a larger cyber-intrusion into a health care facility. In the subsequent group exercise, individuals from various disciplines who previously had not considered the possibility of an event like this, saw how various functions contributed to and would be impacted by this risk. As a result, this particular risk rose from an individual concern to one of the top five the company felt required priority attention in terms of preparedness.

SECTION TWO
TEAM STRUCTURE

Maximize the value and impact of the human element by harnessing the power of diversity in appointing members to the teams charged with evaluating the crisis and leading the response. It's not enough to say having representatives from key company functions make a team diverse. Go beyond functional diversity and build cultural- and gender-diverse teams. Over the past two years, there has been no shortage of corporate faux pas that can be attributed to cultural and gender insensitivity. Crisis management team members who see the world through diverse cultural and gender lenses can help ensure responses that are resonant and in some instances, even prevent crises from even occurring.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF DIVERSITY

Also look at appointing members who are diverse in the way they perceive the world around them and make decisions (e.g. different Myers-Briggs or True Colors typologies). Bringing together diverse personality types, which may force the abandonment of appointing people to teams based on title or seniority, yields the ability to discover and exploit nuances in the way the organization identifies and manages crises. It also ensures that the approach and response consistently match the needs of the situation at hand, rather than having every response look, feel and sound the same.

There is an abundance of academic and real-world proof that diverse teams consistently solve problems more effectively than homogenous teams and the solutions are typically richer in terms of context and practicality. While there is some evidence that diversity can initially slow the decision-making process, that can improve over time as the individuals and team learn to embrace and navigate the differences that exist.

SECTION THREE
TRAINING

The human element is potentially the most variable factor in an organization's crisis management approach. Some of the variability comes from basic human nature, while some comes from the fact that members of crisis management team don't work together as a team except in the most critical of situations. Proper training overcomes those challenges and maximizes the value of the human element by creating strong team behaviors and consistency in the way plans and teams are used to evaluate and manage a crisis.

Properly developed scenario-based crisis simulations are the best way to ensure team members' familiarity with the operating system and playbook and their respective roles and responsibilities, and build collaboration skills. Scenario-based training reveals individual and team instincts, helps develop "mental muscle memory" and identifies gaps and needs in the plan, playbooks and teams.

One scenario-based training session for a food company revealed a glaring gap in the company's business continuity plans. If an event similar to the scenario were to occur in real life (a distinct possibility since the scenario was developed in conjunction with subject matter experts inside the company), there was no other manufacturing facility in the region that could accommodate the shift of processes and manufacturing equipment in order to resume production while the original facility was being restored to active status.

In another training session, the CEO of a produce company observed his team flagrantly ignoring the company's core values when making decisions under pressure. The CEO halted the session for an unscripted reminder of the inviolate nature of the company's values and insisted that the crisis plan and playbooks be revised to reference the necessity of evaluating options and making decisions in the context of the company's values.

DECISIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF COMPANY VALUES

The most effective training sessions feature a realistic and detailed scenario developed with experts from within the organization. Obviously, those individuals should not be members of the crisis management team nor part of the exercise. While the simulation must be within the realm of possibility, it should have a few extreme elements to make the exercise challenging and memorable. Finally, the simulation should engage every member of the team at various points in the exercise.

Scenario-based training sessions can be a brief as two hours, focusing on specific elements of the plan and playbook. Full-scale sessions can be as long as a full day with the crisis unfolding over the course of several chapters.

Full-scale sessions should be done at least once every 12-18 months, with consideration given to doing smaller, more focused sessions more frequently. And sessions should be done anytime there is a significant change in the human element of the crisis management approach (new team members, new executive leadership), when there are significant structural or operational changes in the organization or when circumstances require significant changes to the operating system or playbook.

CONCLUSION

TECHNOLOGY CANNOT REPLACE THE HUMAN ELEMENT

No one can deny the value that technology has created for the crisis management professional. Social media today enables direct conversations with (and among) those affected by a crisis. And big data and powerful analytics packages tell us not only what has happened and what is happening in real time, but in many cases, can telegraph what may happen next. Every organization needs to understand how to make the best of these tools and others to prepare for and navigate crisis. But the most successful organizations understand technology can't replace the human element in evaluating and responding to crises. People should harness the power of technology, not abdicate their responsibility to it. People – not machines – think and strategize within the context of the situation and make split-second decisions. Understanding and optimizing the value of the human element can be the ultimate determinant of failure or success in the way an organization prepare for and manages a crisis.

Scott has directed issues and crisis engagements in more than 20 countries around the world. His portfolio includes cybersecurity, product tampering and contamination, product recalls, product liability, EEOC and DOJ investigations/litigation, trade dress/patent litigation, NGO/activist engagement, bioterrorism preparedness, environmental contamination and spills, workplace disasters, executive misconduct, and labor relations/workforce reductions. Industries in which Scott has led crisis or issues management engagements include technology, food, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, professional services, retail, biotechnology and consumer packaged goods.

CHAPTER 10:

STRATEGIES FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATORS AND ATTORNEYS TO WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

TILDEN KATZ *Managing Director – Issues and Litigation, Strategic Communications, FTI Consulting*

Can We All Get Along?

Several years ago, a CEO sent me to meet with inside counsel and outside lawyers to talk about corporate communications strategy in advance of a high-profile trial. I over-prepared a multi-stakeholder approach and walked into the conference room ready for a detailed discussion. Before I could begin the substance of the presentation, one of the lawyers growled, “Let me tell you something…I sure don’t need a publicist screwing up my case.”

ATTORNEYS OFTEN PLAY A KEY ROLE

Irritated, but outwardly calm (I hope), I recognized it as another situation where the attorney didn’t understand my role, would be initially opposed to my involvement, and with whom I would need to develop a better understanding to do my job effectively.

Attorneys often play a key role in crisis management and can be strong supporters – or powerful opponents – of efforts to develop a detailed communications strategy. The changing social/digital landscape has increased the speed at which crisis management teams, including lawyers, must operate.

In this new environment, communications professionals are often urged to work closely with attorneys, for the benefit of the client during a crisis and for their own benefit in developing future professional opportunities. That sounds like a terrific strategy – but how do you actually turn attorneys into advocates of effective crisis communications rather than implacable foes? This chapter will describe specific ways to better understand and work with attorneys during crisis (and issues management) situations.

SECTION ONE
UNDERSTAND INSIDE COUNSEL'S ROLE AND VALUE

There is often a misconception about corporate counsel and lawyers in general: that they are self-serious, programmed to say "no" to any idea, and focused narrowly on legal issues. Some of that reputation may result from their use of obscure Latin phrases or the tendency to talk in legalese. The truth, however, is much richer and more useful to communications professionals and clients seeking to think and work their way through perilous situations.

Strictly speaking, attorneys' assigned role is to represent the legal interests of the company. However, in a crisis lawyers bring many usefulcharacteristics to planning and execution.

CRISIS LAWYERS BRING MANY USEFUL CHARACTERISTICS

- Lawyers' responsibility for a range of legal issues often make them among the least-siloed players. They tend to know more about what is going on across the entire company and can bring some unique knowledge and relationships to bear.

- Attorneys can be a repository for the history of a company and can advise on how previous situations were addressed and what actions might be useful in the future.

- Lawyers, by training, question everything. While this can be a maddening characteristic in some situations (as a lawyer, I recognize that quality in myself), it can be an asset during a crisis, when there's a need to analyze conflicting scenarios and determine a course of action.

In addition to better understanding lawyers' general role and skills in a crisis, communications professionals can educate themselves on the substantive legal issues facing a client. Just as Matt Ragas and Ron Culp's book "Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators" is a vital resource for communications teams seeking to understand business operations, there are useful tools for non-lawyers trying to understand legal matters.

GOAL FOR LAWYERS IS NOT TO BECOME PSEUDO-LAWYERS

For example, longtime GE General Counsel Ben Heineman, Jr. has provided his perspective about the challenges facing corporate counsel, including his recent book "The Inside Counsel Revolution". There are other resources as well: for those working with public companies, communications counsel should review companies' litigation and regulatory issues as outlined in 10-Q filings to the SEC; for those involved with companies of other sizes there are daily outlets and journals that analyze trends and important legal issues facing organizations in different industries. The goal for communicators is not to become pseudo-lawyers, but to better understand the perspective and talents that many attorneys possess – and to use that knowledge to be better crisis managers themselves.

SECTION TWO
HELP INSIDE COUNSEL BETTER UNDERSTAND THE ORGANIZATION'S RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS

In old movies and television shows about law school, there would often be a weathered, bow-tied law professor telling terrified first-year students that, if they listened and studied very hard, they would leave school "thinking like a lawyer."

It was always very dramatic, but the meaning of the phrase has been changing in recent years. Lawyers today – especially corporate counsels – are expected to be advisors to the business, not simply legal technicians. “Risk management is a prime requirement of board oversight and general counsels are now key advisers to the board regarding the total compliance program,” says Stephen F. Gates former general counsel of ConocoPhillips. Responsibility for risk management often goes hand-in hand with some responsibility for corporate reputation – the area of focus for crisis communicators.

THE FINAL QUESTION IS ‘WHAT IS RIGHT?’

This expanding scope of a lawyer’s responsibilities is reflected in several highprofile cases (current and recent CEOs at Goldman Sachs, American Express, Merck, MetLife, and Bank of America were all attorneys) and in white-papers and studies. David Wilkins, a professor at Harvard Law School writes that as attorneys move up inside organizations, the skills they will need will expand beyond technical expertise. For a great general counsel, “The first question is ‘What is legal?’ The final question is ‘What is right?’” for the company.

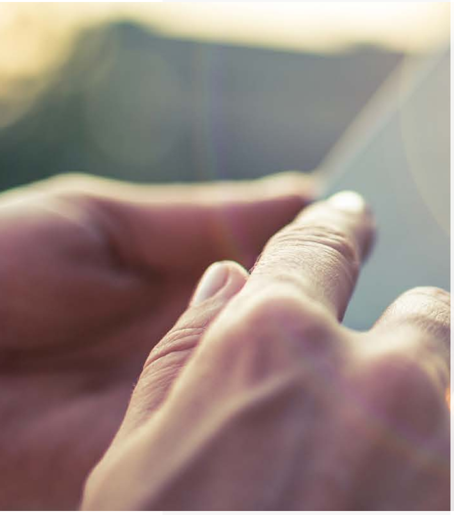
There are usually many paths for an organization to consider when confronted with a difficult issue. Our work in communications puts us in close contact with a broad spectrum of an organization’s stakeholders, the ones whose opinions need to be analyzed before a company can decide what course is the right one. We are the ones tracking and influencing the views of employees, investors, the media, regulatory officials, community leaders, industry experts, elected representatives and other key audiences.

During a crisis, each of these groups will be expressing themselves, positioning and petitioning for their own interests. As translators of that communication and predictors of stakeholder behavior, communicators can help inside counsel understand the views of key constituencies that might influence the advice they provide. Similarly, communicators can work with counsel before a crisis hits to explain the sensitivities and nuances of stakeholder sentiment on an issue or series of potential concerns. Where lawyers have a defined body of legal knowledge, communicators are generalists who have a sense of what multiple constituencies are thinking. That can be a powerful combination in helping companies choose the best course in a crisis.

SECTION THREE
CRITICAL ASPECTS OF AN EMPLOYEE AMBASSADOR OR ADVOCATES PROGRAM

In the story that opened this chapter, the lawyer had a misunderstanding of the role communicators can play during a crisis. While the company’s crisis had a significant legal component, the CEO had hired us because he was concerned about the perception of that crisis by non-legal audiences (media, investors, employees, analysts and others). We weren’t being asked to publicize the legal case (as the lawyer believed), we were responsible for communicating the company’s messaging and broader perspective to all those following the case who would not be in the courtroom eight hours a day hearing evidence.

As communicators, we must take some responsibility for that lawyer’s initial confusion. To improve the chances that clients, communicators and counsel work effectively together, we include the following principles of crisis communication in our proposals:



- Crisis communication, like all elements of corporate communication, must be measured and strategic;
- We always align our strategy with the client's legal strategy, using counsel-approved messaging and tactics;
- We believe in stakeholder engagement, under the client's direction, to educate and persuade important audiences;
- We carefully consider all methods of communication – traditional, social and digital media; written communication; microsites; face-to-face meetings; town halls, etc. – to accomplish a client's goals; and
- Crisis communicators want to help clients win: the legal outcome, the reputational battle, the desired business objectives.

Ultimately, all members of the crisis management team should be focused on that last point – "helping clients win". By following the approach outlined in this essay, two important parts of that team, lawyers and communicators, can work together more effectively.

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A former practicing attorney, Mr. Katz brings specialized expertise in issues management and litigation communications, having counseled both plaintiffs and defendants in high-profile matters. He has worked with the nation's leading law firms on some of their most sensitive matters, designing and executing crisis, litigation and media-relations communication programs for market-leading organizations, such as Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, ExxonMobil, Lyric Opera, NCAA, OfficeMax, Tribune Publishing, United Airlines and Walgreen Co.

Prior to joining FTI Consulting, Mr. Katz served as a senior vice president at APCO Worldwide, and led its Chicago office. He also worked as a corporate spokesperson for varied clients and as a litigation attorney at Seyfarth Shaw LLP, a top-ranked international law firm.

Mr. Katz holds a bachelor's degree with honors in the College of Social Studies from Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn. and a law degree from Northwestern University School of Law.

CHAPTER 11:

SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING HIGHER ED CRISES & ISSUES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

HARLAN R. TELLER *Chief Marketing Officer, Northern Arizona University*

These are challenging, dynamic and unpredictable times for an industry that has prided itself on tradition, continuity and steadfastness of purpose for centuries. I'm speaking about higher education, a sector whose health and vitality is absolutely critical to enriching our nation's intellectual capital, driving economic progress and stimulating civic engagement.

More than ever before, leaders in higher ed face issues that represent a microcosm of society at large, but with several nuances that are unique to the sector. This is particularly true if the higher educational institution is a public university or college, and therefore subject to the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), dropping decision making into a more expansive and deeper fish bowl than might otherwise be the case, even in this era of extreme corporate transparency. The “fishbowl’ effect has been accelerated by the pervasive use of digital and social media on and off campus by both staff and students as a means of virally spreading their concerns and issues.

To wit, here are some of the issues that colleges and universities are grappling with, with varying degrees of effectiveness:

- **Title IX and handling sexual harassment allegations**—colleges and universities are working through their position on new guidance being provided by the US Department of Education (DOE) for adjudicating sexual abuse allegations. The DOE is directing colleges and universities to provide greater safeguards for due process and ensuring the rights of the accused, while allowing university administrators to maintain their current “preponderance of evidence” standard as directed previously by the Obama Administration. Addressing these DOE concerns for due process while maintaining their “zero tolerance” approach to sexual abuse and sensitivity to victims represents a major balancing act.

- **Free expression on campus.** Other than Title IX, there is no more fraught issue on campus than the controversy over free speech- how far it should go, how absolute the university’s administration’s commitment to it should be and how to address advocacy by some students for prohibitions on speech that they claim makes them feel unsafe. Universities find themselves again doing a balancing act, this time between demonstrating their concern for their students’ feelings and maintaining constitutional safeguards for free speech so crucial to enriching campus life.

- **Senior leadership positioning and transitioning.** The job of a university president, given all the competing and countervailing interests, is becoming increasingly nerve wracking and challenging, and presidential tenures are falling accordingly. According to a survey by the American Council on Education in 2017, the average tenure of a university president dropped over the previous five years, from eight and a half years to six and a half years. What’s more, the survey finds that fully half of respondents expect to be looking for another job within the next five years. While presidential continuity may not be as important in university branding than it is in the corporate world, continuity in decision making and strategic direction is equally essential to both roles. Aggressive and ongoing stakeholder management, particularly when it comes to communicating and relating to faculty, can be critically important in enhancing presidential longevity.

- **Attracting international students**—in an era when high school graduates are trending flat to down in many states and discounting from the “sticker” price of a university has become a way of life, attracting international students who can pay full sticker price has become increasingly important. More than ever, university administrations are having to strongly advocate for public policy positions that encourage international students to come to study in the US. In essence, issues management has become a market expansion strategy for higher ed.

- **Town-gown relations**—Some colleges and universities have “frenemy”-type relationships with their college towns—they know that things are always better when they work together, but sometimes competing interests get in the way of letting that happen. Universities work best when they are able to instill in their hometown the sense that they are an ally and partner and that collaborating on shared goals means progress for both parties...

DIFFERENTIATION IN AN INTENSELY CLUTTERED ENVIRONMENT

- **Diversity and inclusion.** Again, another significant issue on most campuses, as many universities now have diversity and inclusion officers who operate at the cabinet level and often have their own budgets. Those universities do best in this area when they infuse the entire campus with a diversity and inclusion ethos, rather than delegating the issue to one or more administrators and assuming the job is done.

This is just a partial list of issues, any one of which can cause a major headache for a higher ed institution, but handled wisely can conversely be the source of competitive differentiation in an intensely cluttered environment.

How can a university communications officer help to turn these challenges into opportunities? Here are some principles:

- **Remember that it starts with the faculty.** Students come to the university to learn, and the faculty is there to deliver what they're looking for. Maintaining the confidence of the faculty is job one for a university administration, and communications people can help in this endeavor. That means participating in department events, faculty senate meetings and other venues, to share communications plans and solicit feedback. It also involves showcasing faculty in marketing and communications efforts-highlighting their thought leadership and integrating them into the university's value proposition. Treat them as the thought leaders, ambassadors and key assets that they are in building brand and reputation and they can be a huge help when challenging issues arise.

- **Counsel leaders to show respect and openness but not cede control.** When dealing with conflicts involving students, counsel your senior administrators that there is a difference between showing respect and openness to concerns, perspectives and feelings, and simply conceding to demands to avoid conflict or difficult conversations. If free speech is on the table for example, encourage your leadership to act as educators, teaching students why free speech and hearing diverse perspectives helps prepare them for life beyond the campus.

- **Sometimes it's all about just showing up.** University communicators are doing public relations for what is tantamount to a small city, so making the rounds to keep your "ear to the ground" is vitally important. You're part of the administration, but you're also considered an educator. Teach a PR or communications class from time to time, or lecture in one. Show up for extracurricular activities on campus, or participate in activities in town. There is always something to be picked up in interactions on and off campus, and sometimes it can be an early warning system for issues and crises yet unborn. Showing up also means engaging digitally, especially in reaching out to students, who get most of their information- and share the information they glean- on social and digital channels.

- **Heed the canaries in the coal mines- otherwise known as FOIA.** There's a reason why many public universities assign the responsibility for fulfilling Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests to the chief communications officer. FOIA requests take on all shapes and sizes, but when you see a critical mass of requests coalesce around an issue or set of issues, it's time to sit down with university administration to determine how that issue may play out and how to address it and hopefully get ahead of the curve.

- **Integrate brand and reputation in one place.** Any issue that seeps out beyond campus is bound to have an impact on parents, counselors and prospective students and can dramatically their "buying behavior". Marketing generally has a finger on the pulse of these stakeholders, so its vitally important that there be real integration of planning and messaging as well as intelligence gathering and sharing between the communications and marketing functions. That tends to be best accomplished when both functions are overseen by the same leader.

In managing issues on a college campus, it's all about balancing competing stakeholder interests, while demonstrating respect for all stakeholders and an openness to dialogue, engagement and active participation. University communicators can use the above principles to make sure their senior administrators keep things on an even keel.

Harlan Teller has been a public relations counselor for more than 40 years, working for several major global firms in senior general management and corporate practice development positions and working on behalf of some of the largest, most recognized names in Corporate America. He also spent three years as Interim Vice President for Marketing and Communications for his alma mater, Northern Illinois University, from 2014-2017, and was responsible for issues management, brand strategy development and building the university's approach to institutional reputation management. ***He was most recently an Executive Director for APCO Worldwide, a global, independent public relations and public affairs firm, prior to taking on his current position as Chief Marketing officer for Northern Arizona University.***

CHAPTER 12:

THE CYBERSECURITY THREAT AND MANAGING REPUTATION RISK IN THE DIGITAL AGE

SARAH TYRE *Executive Vice President, Crisis & Corporate Issues for leading global communications agency, Weber Shandwick*

CYBERSECURITY CROSSES ALL BOUNDARIES

Many of the prior chapters in this book have explored how digital technologies have transformed the "how" of crisis communications. These same technologies also have given rise to a new risk category altogether that tops the list of most enterprise risk assessments and is on the minds of most Board directors - cybersecurity.

Cybersecurity is unique in that it crosses all boundaries within the corporate structure and it applies to almost any company, regardless of industry.

And it presents more than just the risk of stolen, compromised, manipulated or exposed data. Ransomware, denial of service and other types of cyberattacks present very real business continuity challenges, as they have the potential to cripple the systems upon which business depends to operate – including the networks we rely upon for communications.

As more companies leverage data to enhance their competitive position and streamline their operations, we can expect bad actors will exploit the vulnerabilities of an increasingly connected world, making a cybersecurity incident a matter of "when, not if."

Given the inevitability of a cyber-attack, how can a company anticipate and manage the associated reputation risk? And what elements does a company need to have in place in order to be prepared from a communications perspective?

SECTION ONE
CYBERSECURITY AND REPUTATION RISK

As we've seen from some of the most high-profile events – the Sony hack (2014), the Equifax data breach (2017), the WannaCry and NotPetya attacks (2017), the Marriott data breach (2018) – cyber incidents have the potential to affect an organization's:

- Customers, employees, partners and suppliers
- Brand and reputation
- Business operations
- Competitive standing
- Ability to be trusted with sensitive information
- Regulatory risk and litigation exposure
- Time and money

When it comes specifically to assessing reputation risk posed by cybersecurity incidents, there is no one-size-fits-all conclusion. With each check of the news, social media or our email inboxes, we are confronted with an endless stream of data breach notifications and other warnings about risks to our personal data, leading many to think this is just par for the course. "Data breach fatigue" is real and having a measurable impact on the level of public concern, which might suggest less of a risk to corporate reputation.

'DATA BREACH FATIGUE' IS REAL

In a 2018 survey by WSJ Pro Cybersecurity and ESI Thoughtlab of 1,300 companies, respondents rated cybersecurity primarily as a financial risk (70%), with reputation risk coming in fifth on the list (28%) behind IT/ technology risk (62%), operational risk (55%), and strategic risk (50%). However, a 2016 Economist Intelligence Unit survey asked C-suite members the single most important asset in your company that needs to be protected from cyber-attacks, and the top answer (25%) was "our reputation with our customers."

So how does one determine whether a cyber incident will pose a reputation risk to the organization?

At this stage, it is reasonable to think that if a company detects the intrusion, mitigates the problem, notifies those affected within an acceptable timeframe and provides them measures to protect their information, there is the potential to contain the announcement to a singleday news cycle.

Nevertheless, headlines decrying bad behavior by companies following a data breach continue to dominate the news. Why do some companies suffer more significant reputation damage than others after a cyber incident?

Here is a look at some contributing factors that are more likely to result in reputation damage associated with a cyber incident:

- **Lack of preparedness** — cybersecurity is now recognized as a top risk facing companies, so the companies who appear not to have been caught by surprise have been judged harshly in the court of public opinion; companies need to have well-designed, well-rehearsed incident response plans to mitigate the breach or intrusion quickly and notify those affected

- **Waiting too long to disclose the incident** — with GDPR in effect as of May 2018 and more legislation likely at the state or federal level, companies can face significant financial penalties and reputation damage for waiting months (years) to disclose an intrusion or breach

- **Insufficient or poorly-executed breach response** — companies need to anticipate and be ready to manage the post-announcement influx of customer and/or employee concerns and questions (e.g., an increase in call volume to customer care centers, increased traffic to the company website); failure to prepare these channels results in compounded frustration and criticism; companies also need to consider offering an appropriate remedy to those affected by an incident (e.g., credit monitoring)

- **Not getting the data security fundamentals right** — many breaches have made headlines because the company failed to follow the basic guidelines of cyber hygiene in terms of patching software vulnerabilities quickly, having a strong password management program and other practices

- **Lack of transparency around data collection and retention practices** — some data breaches have served to be the first public revelation of exactly what data companies have collected and stored; companies need to be transparent and forthcoming with stakeholders about their data privacy and data retention policies

- **Representing a "first"** — being the largest, the first breach reported in a specific industry sector, the first breach involving a certain type of data, or the first attack to result in a new type of harm naturally will generate more negative attention than a breach that resembles something that's happened previously

A data breach does not always present substantial reputation risk, but not being prepared to manage one does.

SECTION TWO
PREPARING FOR CYBERSECURITY INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

A RISK TO BE MANAGED ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION

One of the now-debunked myths of cybersecurity is that it is solely the responsibility of the Information Technology team. Cybersecurity is now well recognized as a business risk to be managed across the organization by numerous business functions, including Corporate Communications. Among other responsibilities, Corporate Communications may be responsible for:

- Data breach notification (in coordination with other business functions)
- Reputation management
- Crisis communications and preparedness
- External & internal communications around the company's data privacy policies
- Employee cybersecurity awareness and training

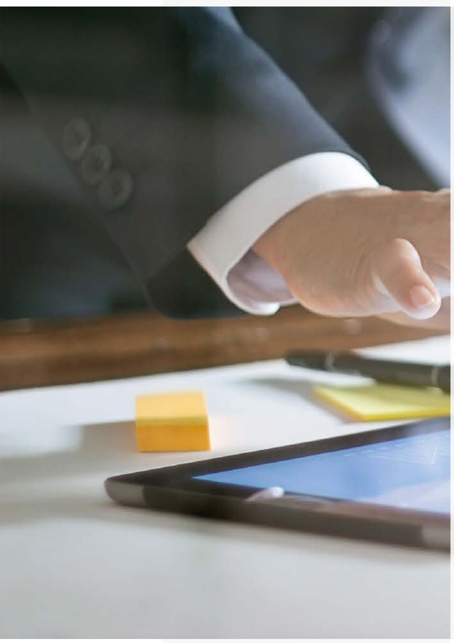
One of the complicating factors in cybersecurity is that the bad actor only needs to be successful once to penetrate corporate networks, whereas companies need to get it right 24/7/365.

BUILD IN ADVANCE A RESILIENT ORGANIZATION

If we understand that a cyber incident is inevitable, the goal should be to build in advance a resilient organization – one that can manage an event, mitigate the impact and recover quickly. For Corporate Communications, that includes the following key elements that strengthen the overall cyber resilience of the company:

- **Gap Analysis** — conduct gap analyses of existing cybersecurity communications planning and response protocols and messaging; this includes reviewing communications materials, analyzing past incident responses from peer companies and conducting internal stakeholder interviews to understand the roles and needs of various departments in incident response

- **Cyber Communications Plan** — review, expand and/or create a cybersecurity communications plan or playbook that includes, at minimum:



    - Cyber communications considerations
    - Escalation process
    - Roles and responsibilities definitions, including who has the ultimate decision-making authority in a cyber incident
    - Cyber-specific fact-gathering questions
    - Pre-approved process for message approval
    - Stakeholder considerations, questions and who owns outreach to each
    - Pre-approved messages and materials (e.g., press releases, employee emails, notification letters, call center Q&A, website FAQ)
    - Layout for a dedicated web page on the corporate website to house incident information

- **Simulations** — conduct periodic crisis simulations and desktop exercises focused on the different types of cyber incidents that would pose a threat to the organization; for example, it's important to talk through how the organization would respond to a ransomware attack – are there any circumstances in which the company would consider paying the ransom?

- **Leadership Training** — present the cyber incident communications process to the Board of Directors and conduct training sessions with the senior executive team

- **Spokesperson Training** — designate a spokesperson/spokespeople

- **Relationship Development** — identify those influencers and other key stakeholders who might engage if there were a cyber incident at your organization; solidify relationships and conduct periodic check-ins or briefings with them

- **Trend Monitoring** — maintain an ongoing familiarity of how media cover cyber incidents within your industry and the types of questions or criticisms that are reported

- **Internal Education** — share information with employees to help mitigate cyber risk (e.g., how to spot phishing emails, etc.) and also instruct them where to get information if the network is unavailable

- **Ongoing Internal Coordination** — maintain ongoing coordination and communication among the business functions engaged in cybersecurity to discuss new developments, threats and readiness activities

We may not know when or where the next cyber attack will occur, but having thought through the reputation implications and communications needs in advance will greatly improve a company's chances to respond effectively and recover swiftly.

Based in New York, Sarah is Executive Vice President, Crisis & Corporate Issues for Weber Shandwick. A veteran of three global communications agencies, Sarah advises companies facing their worstcase scenarios, including data breaches and other cyber incidents, product safety recalls, executive misconduct, discrimination lawsuits, critic group attacks, active shooter incidents, boycotts, Congressional investigations, intellectual property disputes, marketing campaign backlash and natural disasters.

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http://www.instituteforpr.org/crisis-management-and-communications/

Six Steps to Preparing a Rudimentary Crisis Communication Plan
https://www.nku.edu/~turney/prclass/tips/crisis_planning.pdf

8 Steps to Create the Ultimate Crisis Communication Plan
https://www.cision.com/us/2015/06/8-steps-for-creating-a-crisis-communication-plan/

Crisis Communication Plan: A PR Blue Print
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http://www.memphis.edu/crisis/pdf/crisis_mgmt_plan.pdf

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http://blog.ketchum.com/as-universities-evolve-so-must-university-communications/

Tips to Mitigate and Respond to Workplace Violence
http://blog.ketchum.com/tips-mitigate-and-respond-workplace-violence-d176/

Superstorm Sandy: Approaches to Consider for Emergency and Citizenship Communications
http://blog.ketchum.com/superstorm-sandy-approaches-to-consider-for-emergency-and-citizenship-communications/

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
FROM ROCKDOVE SOLUTIONS & IN CASE OF CRISIS

RockdDove Solutions website
www.rockdovesolutions.com

In Case of Crisis product video
https://www.rockdovesolutions.com/in-case-of-crisis-by-rockdove-solutions

In Case of Crisis Solution Highlights
https://www.rockdovesolutions.com/hubfs/PDFs/Solution%20Highlights%202018.pdf

Interested in learning more about In Case of Crisis?
https://www.rockdovesolutions.com/schedule-a-demo-of-in-case-of-crisis