It Just Got Worse: Crisis Management at the intersection Of Social and Conventional Media
Ahh, the way it used to be…

Event happens 00:00:00
You find out 00:10:00
Gather facts, prepare response 00:45:00
First Media Contact 01:00:00
Gather more facts, update 02:00:00
Regional and national media calls 03:00:00
Oy vey, the way it is now...

Event happens 00:00:00
Eyewitness(es) tweet it 00:04:00
You find out 00:10:00
Retweets hit 500 00:12:00
First reporter calls 00:15:00
Your $#!+ is finally together 01:15:00
JoeTheTravelin'Guy
@Simitator

Holy crap! I was just in a plane crash!

Reply Retweet Favorite More

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Time

Fact
Twitter is now where stories go to break, and reputations go to die.
This is what 144 characters and spaces looks like. This is what 144 characters and spaces looks like. This is what 144 characters and spaces looks like.
Control the story in phase

Resolve the story when things calm down
If you can envision a bad event, take the operational steps necessary to minimize the likelihood of it happening in the first place.
The best way to manage bad news is to not have any.
The one that bites you in the ass is likely to be the one you didn’t think of.
That Sinking Feeling
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- Early April 2010 – Halliburton notes numerous concerns about the way BP is running the drilling operation. Corners are cut, recommended tests are not done
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- March 2010 – blowout preventer is damaged in an accident
- Early April 2010 – Halliburton notes numerous concerns about the way BP is running the drilling operation. Corners are cut, recommended tests are not done
- April 20 2010 – The explosion and fire.
The Cascade Effect in Major Events

Decision/Event 1
Desirable Outcome?
Yes  No

Decision/Event 2
Desirable Outcome?
Yes  No

Decision/Event 3
Desirable Outcome?
Yes  No

Decision/Event 4
Desirable Outcome?
Yes  No

Risk of Negative Public Exposure
Key Concept #1:

Put as many decisions on autopilot as you can.
If the kitchen is on fire, get everyone the hell out of the dining room.
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Put as many decisions on autopilot as you can.

- Who is your....
  - Spokesperson?
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- Who is your....
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  - Family liaison lead?
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- Who is your....
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  - Staff liaison lead?
Key Concept #1:

Put as many decisions on autopilot as you can.

- Who is your....
  - Spokesperson?
  - Social media lead?
  - Family liaison lead?
  - Staff liaison lead?
  - Customer/Client liaison lead?
Key Concept #1:

Put as many decisions on autopilot as you can.

- Who/where/what is/are your……
- Press conference locations?
Key Concept #1:

Put as many decisions on autopilot as you can.

- Who/where/what is/are your....
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  - Experts?
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- Who/where/what is/are your....
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  - Experts?
  - Associations?
Key Concept #1:

Put as many decisions on autopilot as you can.

- Who/where/what is/are your….
  - Press conference locations?
  - Experts?
  - Associations?
  - Outside resources – legal, insurance, communications, etc.?
Key Concept #2:

Use a systems approach to managing communications.
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- Think of the required roles. Then think of the people to fill them.
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- Think tools – ones that will allow you to run your crisis from anywhere in the world.
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Use a systems approach to managing communications.

- Think of the required roles. Then think of the people to fill them.
- Think tools – ones that will allow you to run your crisis from anywhere in the world.
- Establish an emergency media list – and other lists for those who NEED to know.
The Buy Time Statement

Components:
The Buy Time Statement

Components:

- “This is what happened.”
The Buy Time Statement

Components:

- “This is what happened.”
- “This is what we’re doing about it.”
The Buy Time Statement

Components:

- “This is what happened.”
- “This is what we’re doing about it.”
- “We’ll let you know more when we do.”
The Buy Time Statement

What to do with it:

- You can transmit it (or speak it) to media outlets in response to specific queries.
The Buy Time Statement

What to do with it:

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- You can transmit it PROACTIVELY to all relevant media outlets on your emergency media list.
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- You can transmit it (or speak it) to media outlets in response to specific queries.
- You can transmit it PROACTIVELY to all relevant media outlets on your emergency media list.
- You can wait until one outlet queries, then proactively send it to everyone else.
Watch yo’ mouf!

Every statement you publish, everything you’re quoted as saying (or not saying), is grist for the social media mill.
Social media is used by people to both propagate and react to news stories.
“Here’s what we currently know [link to release on your website]. We’ll update you when we know more. In the meantime, we ask you to refrain from speculating, and to respect the privacy of those involved. Please keep them in your thoughts.”
Shutting down social in a crisis…

- Makes people think you’re hiding something
Shutting down social in a crisis...

- Makes people think you’re hiding something
- Makes your most valuable fans think you don’t trust them
Shutting down social in a crisis…

- Makes people think you’re hiding something
- Makes your most valuable fans think you don’t trust them
- Simply sends people to other pages and channels that can be hard to track and are impossible to control
“We’ve had a significant incident involving [five or six word description]. We’re focused entirely on managing the situation. We’re a small team and we can’t respond to you as we’d like to right now. For now, certain functions on this page are disabled. We’ll reinstate them as fast as we can. ‘Til then, we’ll keep you informed right here as we learn more. Please bear with us.”
These people are IDIOTS.
Never argue with idiots. They wear you down to their level, then beat you with experience.
If you MUST chime in…

“There’s a lot of speculation and misinformation here. For the latest information on what’s happening and what we’re doing about it, please go to [link to official information on your website].”
Our Business
@OurBiz

Latest information on Our Business ropes course accident: http://www.ourbiz.com/accident #ourbiz #ropescourseaccident

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Let’s try an exercise!

Group ONE: News Media
Group TWO: Social Media
Group THREE: Staff
Group FOUR: Customers (current and future)
Group FIVE: Families of people involved

Tasks:
- Key Message Points (“Must Air” Points)
- Tools/tactics for delivering them
Let’s try an exercise!

It’s mid-August, and it’s been a hot, dry summer. Fire danger is high – and the number of fires is alarming. There are six major fires within a 40 mile radius of your base – including one which threatens the main route between the base and the airport.

You have stayed on top of the situation and have moved courses out of apparent harm’s way. The closest fire to the base – as of now – was contained three miles from your property.

Although the fires have been a local story for five days, the national news media picked up on it last night and are playing them for all they’re worth (it is August, after all – most of the world’s more reliable newsmakers go on vacation in August).

Three courses are scheduled to end in three days, and two others are scheduled to start the day after that. You received several calls this morning from parents – two from parents with kids the field, one from the parent of a kid due to arrive later in the week.
This morning, you received a letter from John and Sally Smith, whose 15 year old son Jackie completed a 21-day course approximately one month ago.

The letter alleges that Jackie was bullied on his course, that the course instructors were aware of (or should have been aware of) the bullying and did nothing about it, and that Jackie has been sullen since returning home, is having trouble sleeping and is acting out in other ways – including at school.

The letter doesn’t explicitly say so, but reading between the lines you have reason to believe that the Smiths are considering legal action and taking their story to news and social media.
Takeaways – What you need

- Trained spokespeople
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- Trained spokespeople
- Social media personnel
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- Trained spokespeople
- Social media personnel
- Other personnel
Takeaways – What you need

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- A comprehensive Emergency Communications Plan – Autopilot and Systems – blessed by your lawyer
Takeaways – What you need

- Trained spokespeople
- Social media personnel
- Other personnel

- A comprehensive Emergency Communications Plan – Autopilot and Systems – blessed by your lawyer
- Regular practice
Anyone wanna share a cab to ATL tomorrow?

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