It’s Not If, It’s When

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR WORKING WITH THE MEDIA DURING A CRISIS

JANUARY 28, 2020
Master Builder Association of Western PA
631 Iron City Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15205
We are a marketing communications agency with offices in Pittsburgh and Lancaster, PA.

We create and deliver stories via research and media planning; design and creative; print, social and digital communications; and public relations.
About me

Chris Martin

President/CEO of Altas Marketing since 2008

Served as spokesperson for
  PENNDOT, City of Pittsburgh, Zippo Manufacturing,
  Dow Chemical, Westinghouse, Flight 93 National Memorial

Managed crisis situations for clients in construction,
  nuclear, healthcare, natural gas and manufacturing
  industries
EXPECTATIONS

Communicating during a crisis offers opportunities for safety officers to strengthen corporate reputation and media relationships.

WHAT THIS MEANS

At the conclusion, you will feel confident in

- Preparing a response in the face of a crisis
- Speaking with the media with a goal in mind
- Managing the media conversation so your message is not misunderstood
What is a crisis?
A potential brand damaging incident that requires a media response.

CRISIS IS ...

Stressful, because it creates

A disruption to an organization’s daily operations

A potential brand damaging event

A media response, potentially
How many of you have experienced a crisis?
DURING CRISIS

01 Absorb information differently

02 Process information differently

03 Act on information differently

people
Why is this important?

INFORMATION IS CURRENCY
Understanding that people collect and review information differently allows for wider opportunities to inform and educate.

THAT CURRENCY AIDS DECISIONS
Decisions drive business and if you help your customers make easy decisions you are not only informing, but educating. This leads to opportunities that improve your corporate reputation.

CRISIS RESPONSE OFFERS
• Opportunities to strengthen our reputation
• Opportunity to share our messages/story
• Opportunity to influence the media coverage
• Opportunity to shape public perception
Corporate Reputation

Reputation has an impact on sales, revenues, the ability to attract better employees and increase profits.

HOW REPUTATIONS ARE MEASURED

Identity

Goodwill

Community leadership

Social media

Previous customers

Response to issues

EXAMPLES

Harvard University

Tylenol

The Catholic Church

The White House
Preparation

How to prepare your company for the inevitable

Ask yourself several basic questions:

- Do I have a safety program in place?
  - Is my safety program up-to-date?

- Do I know what to do when a crisis hits?
  - How will my team respond to a crisis?

- Can my business survive a crisis on the job site?
Preparation
How to prepare your company for the inevitable

Steps to prepare your business

• Establish a crisis communications plan

• Review, practice and update the plan regularly

• Research the business ramifications such as lowering insurance premiums, the impact on health plans
Preparation
What should you include?

Typical Crisis Communications Plans include

- Crisis definition specific to your company
- Crisis response team members
  - Roles and responsibilities
- Messaging
- Policies and procedures
- Resources
  - Checklists and guidelines
  - Spokesperson guidelines
MEDIA EXPECTATIONS
How many of you have granted a media interview?
How many of you have granted a media interview during a crisis?
Media Expectations

What the media expects

• Their job is to gather information
  • Interviews with multiple people, companies & entities
  • They will ask the same question in a variety of formats

Your expectations

• Protect your business
• Follow your crisis communications plan
• Share your side of the story
The Bill of Rights are useful tips to ensure your message is heard, understood and included in the coverage.

**Interview Bill of Rights**

**YOU OWN THE INFORMATION**
- Be confident
- Be concise and clear
- Be honest
- Establish credibility

**PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE TO SAY**
- I don’t know
- I’ll get back to you with an answer

**TO ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY**
- One message, One voice - **SINGLE VOICE**
- Repeat your message throughout - **SIMPLE MESSAGE**
- No such thing as **NO COMMENT**
- Be prepared!
SPEAKING WITH THE MEDIA
An interview is not an intellectual exercise; it is an OPPORTUNITY TO DELIVER SPECIFIC MESSAGES TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES with the reporter as the conduit.
Key to speaking with a reporter

SAY WHAT YOU WANT

THE AUDIENCE TO KNOW
Before the interview, ask yourself ...

**IF THE INTERVIEWER USES ONLY A 12-SECOND SOUND BITE, WHAT WOULD MY MESSAGE BE?**
Speaking with the Media

Packaged answers

This is done via packaged answers

• Lead with key message

• Reinforce message with facts, examples or statistics

• Close by reiterating key message
Speaking with the Media

Packaged answers

Packaged answers –

Challenge is to **ALWAYS**
close with key message

Reinforces what you want
the reporter to share with the audience

Ensures that the reporter
knows its importance
TO SUM IT UP

01 Establish your Crisis Communications Plan

02 Understand the media expectations

03 Know your rights
TO SUM IT UP

04 Package your answers for the media

05 PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE
“There is no harm in hoping for the best, as long as you are prepared for the worst.”

- Stephen King
Thank you

Feel free to reach out with questions.

Chris@AtlasStories.com
Or
Connect on LinkedIn

(412) 749-9299
AtlasStories.com