

Social Media and Crises

Lecture 4

DGM 730

Crisis Communication & crises management
(Approaches & Theories)

Prepared by
Dr. Doaa Rady

Lecture outline

Crisis Communication & crises management: (Approaches & Theories)

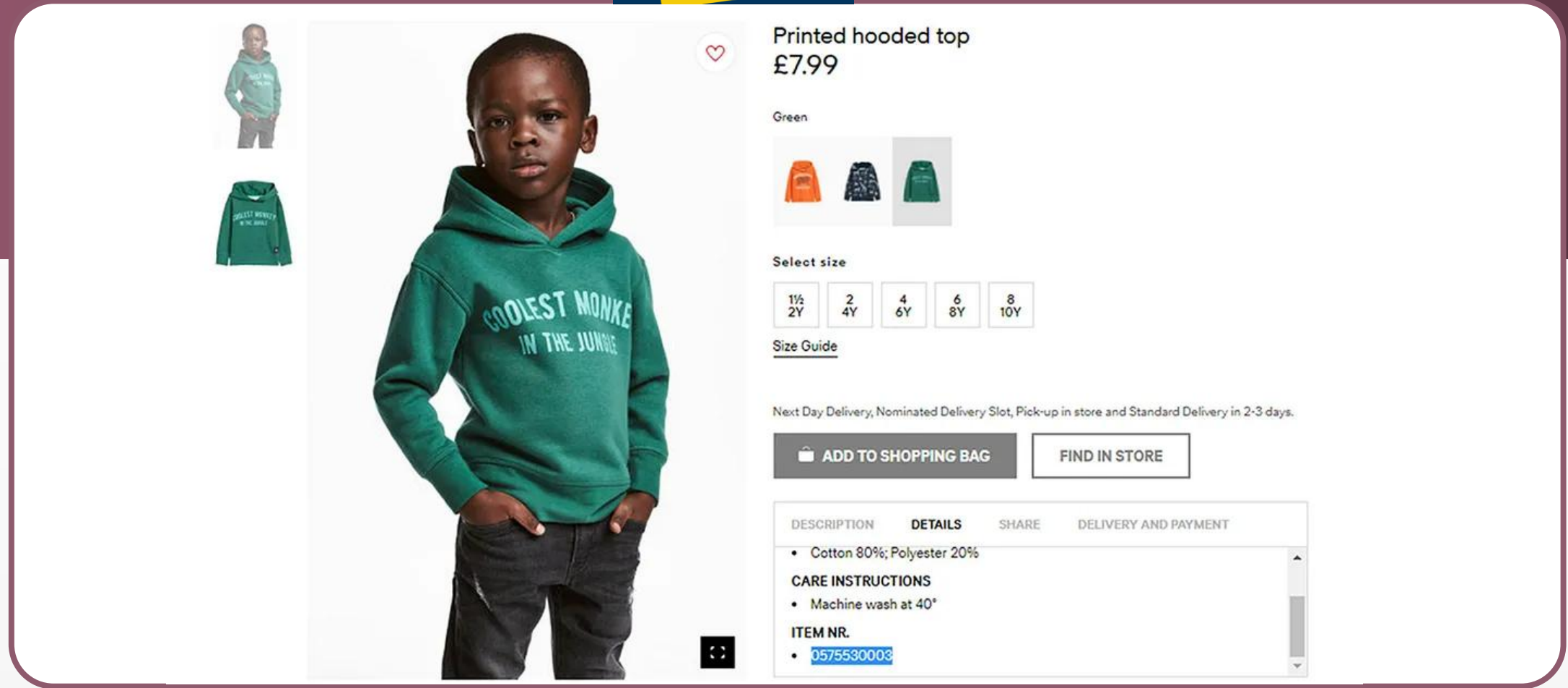
- **Crisis Communication and Crisis Management: Definitions**
 - Public Relations (PR)
 - Crisis Communication
 - Reputation
 - Crisis management
- **Social Media in Crisis Communication: opportunities and challenges**
- **PR Models:**
 - press agency/publicity,
 - public information,
 - two-way asymmetrical,
 - and two-way symmetrical
- **Crisis Communication Theories**
 - Image Restoration Theory
 - Situational Crisis Communication Theory
 - The Social-Mediated Crisis Communication (SMCC) model
 - The influencer impact on Social Media Crisis

H&M PR Crisis Case Study



Lecture
04

Case Study



Printed hooded top
£7.99

Green

Select size

1½ 2Y 2 4Y 4 6Y 6 8Y 8 10Y

[Size Guide](#)

Next Day Delivery, Nominated Delivery Slot, Pick-up in store and Standard Delivery in 2-3 days.

[ADD TO SHOPPING BAG](#) [FIND IN STORE](#)

DESCRIPTION	DETAILS	SHARE	DELIVERY AND PAYMENT
Cotton 80%; Polyester 20%			
CARE INSTRUCTIONS Machine wash at 40°			
ITEM NR. 0575530003			

<https://medium.com/@villa.naomi/h-m-pr-crisis-a-case-study-2ca2085255fe>



H&M's PR crisis was caused by a racist children's sweatshirt. The sweatshirt was modeled by an African American boy with the imprinted words **"Coolest Monkey in the Jungle."** **عليه عبارة "أروع قرد في الغابة"** To the millions that saw the image it was a "shocking admission that white companies still saw Black consumers as a degrading and ugly stereotype" (Wang, 2019). **"اعترافًا صادمًا بأن الشركات البيضاء لا تزال تنظر إلى المستهلكين السود على أنهم صورة نمطية مهينة وقبيحة"** Multiple factors contributed to fueling of the crisis. In the photo the child had a somber look on his face **كان للطفل نظرة حزينة على وجهه**, hands in his pockets **ويده في جيوبه**, and a stiff stance almost as if he were aware of the humiliation **ووقفه متصلبة كما لو كان على علم بالإهانة**.

Case Study

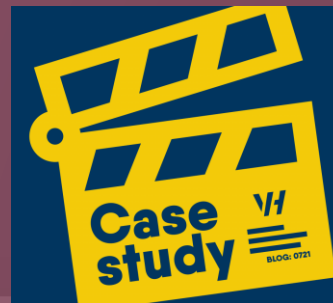


The child's mother also made comments about the issue that also inadvertently fueled the crisis. These comments were met with vicious backlash, even being called a "traitor to her own community."

كما أدلت والدة الطفل بتعليقات حول القضية التي أدت أيضًا إلى تأجيج الأزمة عن غير قصد. وقد قوبلت هذه التعليقات برد فعل عنيف، حتى أنها وصفت بأنها "خائنة لمجتمعها".

H&M Response

H&M reacted by removing the sweatshirt from stores, apologized on all of their social media accounts, and apologized through statements to the media.



They also promoted **Annie Wu**, a Taiwanese immigrant, to a new position as the global head of diversity and inclusivity based in Stockholm. This was their statement:



"نحن نفهم أن الكثير من الناس مستاءون من الصورة . نحن، الذين نعمل في H&M، لا يسعنا إلا أن نتفق مع ذلك. نأسف بشدة لالتقاط الصورة، ونأسف أيضاً للطباعة الفعلية. لذلك، لم نقوم بإزالة الصورة من قنواتنا فحسب، بل قمنا أيضاً بإزالة الملابس من عروض منتجاتنا. من الواضح أن إجراءاتنا الروتينية لم يتم اتباعها بشكل صحيح. وهذا بلا أدنى شك. سنحقق بدقة في سبب حدوث ذلك لمنع حدوث هذا النوع من الأخطاء مرة أخرى.

We understand that many people are upset about the image of the children's hoodie. We, who work at H&M, can only agree.

We're deeply sorry that the picture was taken, and we also regret the actual print. Therefore, we've not only removed the image from our channels, but also the garment from our product offering.

It's obvious that our routines haven't been followed properly. This is without any doubt. We'll thoroughly investigate why this happened to prevent this type of mistake from happening again.

Case Study



Even with efforts to fix the issue the fallout was severe. Petitions were made for global boycotts of H&M, demonstrations were held around the world, stores were vandalized by protestors, The Weeknd vowed to never work with the retailer again and other celebrities like LeBron James, Diddy, and G-Eazy condemned the brand.

Although H&M made efforts to manage the crisis not only was it not enough but the biggest issue was that garment of clothing should not of ever been created.

وحتى مع الجهود المبذولة لإصلاح المشكلة، كانت التداعيات شديدة. تم تقديم التماسات للمقاطعة العالمية لـ H&M، ونظمت مظاهرات في جميع أنحاء العالم، وتم تخريب المتاجر من قبل المتظاهرين، وتعهد The Weeknd بعدم العمل أبدًا مع بائع التجزئة مرة أخرى، وأدان مشاهير آخرون مثل LeBron James وDiddy وG-Eazy العلامة التجارية. على الرغم من أن شركة H&M بذلت جهودًا لإدارة الأزمة، إلا أن ذلك لم يكن كافيًا فحسب، بل كانت المشكلة الأكبر هي أنه لا ينبغي تصنيع الملابس على الإطلاق.

Case Study



There are many things that could have been done differently and many lessons that could be learned.

The first lesson is about diversity within the company. For something so blatantly racist to have been created shows the lack of diversity and attention to the importance of diversity within the company. To work to resolve this H&M has “decided that by 2025, 100% of their employees will feel that they have the same opportunity as the person sitting next to them,” that number will also be tracked by internal employee engagement surveys. H&M has also pledged that “by 2025, 100% of its employees can see visible diversity in those holding leadership positions, wherever they are” (Wang, 2019).

الدرس الأول يدور حول التنوع داخل الشركة. إن إنشاء شيء عنصري بشكل صارخ يدل على عدم وجود التنوع والاهتمام بأهمية التنوع داخل الشركة. للعمل على حل هذه المشكلة، "قررت شركة H&M أنه بحلول عام 2025، سيشعر 100٪ من موظفيها أن لديهم نفس الفرصة التي يتمتع بها الشخص الذي يجلس بجانبهم"، وسيتم تتبع هذا الرقم أيضًا من خلال استطلاعات مشاركة الموظفين الداخلية. وتعهدت H&M أيضًا بأنه "بحلول عام 2025، سيتمكن 100٪ من موظفيها من رؤية تنوع واضح في أولئك الذين يشغلون مناصب قيادية، أينما كانوا." (Wang, 2019)

Case Study



There are many things that could have been done differently and many lessons that could be learned.

The second lesson is about the system in which H&M uses for new clothing items. Although they had a seven step system there was still large room for error. To reduce this room for error “ there are now opportunities to flag garments at every stage of the process and make notes about particular sensitivities ranging from where it should (and shouldn't) be sold to how it should be styled to who should be wearing it on the site” (Wang, 2019).

الدرس الثاني يدور حول النظام الذي تستخدمه شركة H&M في الملابس الجديدة. على الرغم من أنه كان لديهم نظام من سبع خطوات، إلا أنه لا يزال هناك مجال كبير للخطأ. وللحد من هذه المساحة للخطأ "توجد الآن فرص لوضع علامة على الملابس في كل مرحلة من مراحل العملية وتدوين ملاحظات حول حساسيات معينة تتراوح بين المكان الذي ينبغي (أو لا ينبغي) بيعه فيه إلى كيفية تصميمه ومن يجب أن يرتديه". على الموقع" (وانغ، 2019).

Case Study



There are many things that could have been done differently and many lessons that could be learned.

They also have made a system where “any flagged items are now discussed in meetings that bring together various departments. There are email groups where anyone can submit a concern and weigh in on items. They’ve also increased the amount of people who do the final-round of quality checks, not only to prevent visual fatigue but also to establish objective distance between the checker and image” (Wang, 2019).

لقد أنشأوا أيضاً نظاماً حيث تتم الآن مناقشة أي عناصر تم وضع علامة عليها في الاجتماعات التي تجمع الأقسام المختلفة. هناك مجموعات بريد إلكتروني حيث يمكن لأي شخص تقديم مخاوفه والتعليق على العناصر. لقد قاموا أيضاً بزيادة عدد الأشخاص الذين يقومون بالجولة النهائية من فحوصات الجودة، ليس فقط لمنع الإرهاق البصري ولكن أيضاً لإنشاء مسافة موضوعية بين المدقق والصورة " (وانغ، 2019).

Crisis Communication and Crisis Management Definitions



Public relations (PR) has been the backbone of corporate relationships in society so that both parties may benefit in some way, whether it involves community relations, media relations, issues management or crisis communication.

تعتبر العلاقات العامة العمود الفقري لعلاقات الشركات في المجتمع بحيث يمكن للطرفين الاستفادة بطريقة ما، سواء كان ذلك يتعلق بالعلاقات المجتمعية، أو العلاقات الإعلامية أو إدارة القضايا أو التواصل في الأزمات.

PR is “the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends”

العلاقات العامة هي "الوظيفة الإدارية التي تنشئ وتحافظ على علاقات متبادلة المنفعة بين المنظمة والجمهور الذي يعتمد عليه نجاحها أو فشلها"

Definition of Crisis Communication

Crisis communication research mainly deals with the interrelationships between **crisis situations, communication strategies and crisis perceptions**. تتناول أبحاث الاتصال

أثناء الأزمات بشكل أساسي العلاقات المتبادلة بين مواقف الأزمات واستراتيجيات الاتصال وتصورات الأزمات.

Crisis communication, when done **successfully**, can help **mitigate negative media coverage** and manage perceptions both **during and after the crisis**.

Crisis communication has been broadly **defined as** “the collection, processing, and dissemination of information required to address a crisis situation”. "جمع ومعالجة"

ونشر المعلومات اللازمة لمعالجة موقف الأزمة".

Also, **crisis communication defined as** “the ongoing process of creating shared meaning among and between groups, communities, individuals and agencies, within the ecological context of a crisis, for the purpose of preparing for and reducing, limiting and responding to threats and harm”

"العملية المستمرة لخلق معنى مشترك بين المجموعات والمجتمعات والأفراد والوكالات، ضمن السياق البيئي للأزمة، بغرض الاستعداد للتهديدات والأضرار وتقليلها والحد منها والاستجابة لها"

Reputation is “a perceptual representation of a company’s past actions and future prospects آفاق that describe the firm’s appeal to all of its key constituents”.

السمعة هي "تمثيل إدراكي للإجراءات السابقة للشركة وآفاقها المستقبلية التي تصف قبول الشركة لجميع مكوناتها الرئيسية".

Crises are harmful to organizations and their stakeholders who might have conflicting interests and needs.

تعتبر الأزمات ضارة بالمنظمات وأصحاب المصلحة الذين قد يكون لديهم مصالح واحتياجات متضاربة.

Crisis management is the organizational actions and communication that are expected to lower the likelihood of a crisis, minimize the harm from a crisis, and re-establish orders after a crisis. إدارة الأزمات هي الإجراءات التنظيمية والاتصالات التي من المتوقع أن تقلل من احتمالية حدوث أزمة، وتقليل الضرر الناجم عن الأزمة، وإعادة تأسيس النظام بعد الأزمة.

Attribution is

a term used in psychology which deals with how individuals perceive the causes of everyday experience, as being either external or internal.

الإسناد هو مصطلح يستخدم في علم النفس ويتعامل مع كيفية إدراك الأفراد لأسباب التجربة اليومية، سواء كانت خارجية أو داخلية.

As a result, organizational research regarding crisis management usually addresses one or more of the event's three areas/stages: (a) pre-crisis preparedness, (b) proposal for handling midst crisis situations, and (c) post-crisis strategies to restore the corporate image. ونتيجة لذلك، فإن البحث التنظيمي المتعلق بإدارة الأزمات يتناول عادةً واحدًا أو أكثر من المجالات/المراحل. الثلاثة للحدث: (أ) الاستعداد قبل الأزمة، (ب) اقتراح للتعامل مع مواقف الأزمات، و (ج) استراتيجيات ما بعد الأزمة لاستعادة صورة الشركة.

Although reputation-attribution إسناد السمعة is a more straightforward psychological process, crisis communication strategies are more complicated but can influence cognitions and help lessen a crisis's negative impacts on an organization and its stakeholders

على الرغم من أن إسناد السمعة هو عملية نفسية أكثر وضوحًا، إلا أن استراتيجيات الاتصال في الأزمات أكثر تعقيدًا ولكنها يمكن أن تؤثر على الإدراك وتساعد في تقليل الآثار السلبية للأزمة على المنظمة وأصحاب المصلحة فيها

Social Media in Crisis Communication Opportunities and Challenges



Social Media in Crisis Communication

Social media provides both **opportunities and challenges** for crisis communication. With more than **three billion people around the globe using social media**. **By using social media effectively, crisis managers can ensure their communication is received by their intended audience at the time it needs to be received.**

Opportunities and challenges of social media crisis communication

Opportunities	Challenges
Real-time communication	Little-to-no time to prepare
Greater ability to reach intended audiences	May not reach all audiences (offline audiences)
Increased credibility – can share information directly from official sources	Platform limitations (e.g., need to have good presence/# of followers)
Crowdsourcing and citizen journalism التعهد الجماعي	Risk of misinformation spread معلومات مضللة
Tools are often for free	Risk of para-crisis
Enables two-way dialogue	Large quantity of data can cause cluttered networks شبكات مزدحمة
Can function as an alternative channel when traditional channels cannot be used	Dependent on connectivity تعتمد على الاتصال
Messages can be targeted	Para can mean “like” something. A para-crisis شبه الأزمة is like a crisis. It can “look like” a crisis and does require action from the organization.
Can humanize the organization	
Event detection and monitoring	
Live reporting through photo and video	
Accessible anywhere an Internet connection exists (independent from electricity availability, thus can be used even if electrical supply is unavailable)	

Social Media During Natural Disasters

Case Study



Case Study



- **Hurricane Harvey (2017):** Explore how platforms like Twitter and Facebook were utilized for rescue operations and information dissemination.
- **California Wildfires:** Investigate how social media was used to provide real-time updates and mobilize community support.



PR Models

FOUR MODELS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

01

PRESS AGENT/PUBLICITY

Categorized as one-way communication. Uses persuasion, half-truths, and manipulation to influence audiences to behave as the organization desires. Does not use formal research to guide communication tactics.

02

PUBLIC INFORMATION MODEL

Categorized as one-way communication. Uses press releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute organizational information. The public relations practitioner is referred to as the in-house journalist. Does not use formal research to guide communication tactics.

03

TWO-WAY ASYMMETRICAL MODEL

Categorized as two-way communication. Referred to as "scientific persuasion." Uses persuasion to influence audiences to behave as the organization desires. Conducts formal research and incorporates audience feedback in communication tactics.

04

TWO-WAY SYMMETRICAL MODEL

Categorized as two-way communication. Uses communication to negotiate with the public. Seeks to resolve conflict and promote mutual benefits, understanding and respect between the organization and key publics/stakeholders. Conducts formal research and incorporates audience feedback in communication tactics. Open and honest communication is important.

Models developed to explain the behavior of PR practitioners in 1970s. **Asymmetrical communication** التواصل غير المتماثل is unbalanced in that the organization tries to change the public and **symmetrical communication** التواصل المتماثل/المتكافئ is balanced in that there are adjustments by the organization and its stakeholders.

There are **four models** of public relations which includes press agency/publicity, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical.

1) The press agency/publicity model وكالة الصحف/الدعاية is characterized as a one-way asymmetrical model of communication, traveling from the organization to the public primarily through the mass media, used as a way of persuading and manipulating a desired audience to act as the organization wishes. (Pure Propaganda)

2)The public information model المعلومات العامة, developed as a reaction to attacks on large corporations and government agencies by journalists. Leaders of these organizations realized they needed more than the propaganda of press agents to counter the attacks in the media. The public information model is also a one-way asymmetrical model of communication, traveling from the organization to the audience, with mass media as its primary channel.

3) The two-way asymmetrical model نموذج الاتجاهين غير المتناسق/غير المتماثل some public relations practitioners began to base their work on the behavioral and social sciences, and, as a result, to give more credence to **examining audience behavior**: PR practitioners both sought information from and gave information to the public. Here, the key is to persuade publics to accept an organization's point of view. **Unlike the first two models, feedback was generated through scientific research to advance and secure the interests and needs of the organization ahead of its publics.**

4)The two-way symmetrical model نموذج الاتجاهين المتناسق/ المتماثل is to use communication to create and maintain a mutual understanding and respect between an organization and its publics. The two-way symmetrical model of public relations **focuses on a balanced dialogue**, where the organization **listens to the concerns of the public** to encourage an open and honest, mutually beneficial relationship.

This model is based on a **free exchange of information** that is used to alter **تغيير** attitudes in both the organization and its public rather than the public changing to suit the organization. Given that communication is a balance between senders and receivers, both the public and the organization can, in theory, be persuaded to shift their thinking and/or practice.

يعتمد هذا النموذج على التبادل الحر للمعلومات الذي يتم استخدامه لتغيير المواقف المتغيرة في كل من المنظمة وجمهورها بدلاً من تغيير الجمهور ليناسب المنظمة. وبالنظر إلى أن التواصل عبارة عن توازن بين المرسلين والمستقبلين، فمن الممكن، من الناحية النظرية، إقناع كل من الجمهور والمنظمة بتغيير تفكيرهم و/أو ممارساتهم.

Live

PR Models



واحد من (الأساطير الخمس) للعلاقات العامة
البروفيسور جيمس جرونج (1942) James E. Grunig
إن تحدثنا عن العلاقات العامة فلا بد أن نذكر الأيقونة صاحب الإضافة
وتطوير مجال العلاقات العامة من نظريات و أوراق علمية و خاصة
"النماذج الأربع لممارسات العلاقات العامة".

<https://konahpr.wixsite.com/konah/post/%D8%AC%D9%8A%D9%85%D8%B3-%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%86%D8%AC>

Crisis Communication Theories



Image Restoration Theory

نظرية استعادة الصورة

William Benoit (1995; 1997) developed a **theory of image restoration** نظرية استعادة الصورة to understand how corporations recover from crises. The **process of image repair** is most often **framed as apologia** اعتذار, or a genre of **public apologetic discourse** خطاب الاعتذار العام.

Image restoration theory is based on the **assumption** that **image and reputation** have both **symbolic and economic value**, that threats to an organization's image can occur (sometimes frequently), and that communication can help repair the damage.

An attack on one's image has two components: 1) an offensive act فعل مسيء and 2) an accusation الاثهام of responsibility for the act. If there is no offensive act or no accusations of responsibility for the act, there is no reputational threat.

Benoit's theory is founded on two key assumptions:

- 1) communication is a goal-directed activity; and
- 2) maintaining a positive reputation is one of the central goals of communication.

In his theory of image restoration, Benoit organizes **strategies into five distinct categories:**

Denial إنكار,

Evading التهرب responsibility,

reducing offensiveness,

corrective action, and

Mortification الإماتة. **tries to restore an image by asking forgiveness.**

These strategies are grounded in a belief that communication (words and actions) affects how stakeholders perceive the organization in crisis.

Coombs (2014) summarized 10 SCCT communication strategies under **four crisis response strategy clusters** as shown in the Table.

Organizations usually adopt different types of SCCT communication strategies, depending on their belongingness to the victim, accidental, or preventable clusters.

For example, organizations may choose the strategies in the 1) **denial posture** to avoid any connections with a crisis. They may also use the strategies in the 2) **diminishment تناقص cluster** to lower a crisis's negative effects. 3) **Rebuilding posture** allows organizations to re-establish relationships with the stakeholder through apologies or compensations. Strategies in the 4) **bolstering تعزيز posture** enable organizations to build a positive relationship with the stakeholders.

SCCT: Situational Crisis Communication Theory

النظرية الموقفية لاتصال الأزمات

Situational Crisis Communication Theory Crisis Response Strategies.

Crisis Response Cluster	Purpose/Description
Denial posture (cluster)	
1. Attack the accuser	To confront those claiming that the crisis exists
2. Denial	To deny the existence of the crisis
3. Scapegoating كبش فداء	To blame someone outside the organization for the crisis
Diminishment posture تناقص	
1. Excusing	To minimize the organization's responsibility for the crisis
2. Justification	To minimize the perceived damage associated with the crisis
Rebuilding posture	
1. Compensation	To compensate the victims
2. Apology	To apologize for the crisis
Bolstering posture تعزيز	
1. Reminding	To remind stakeholders about the organization's past good work
2. Ingratiation التكامل	To praise the stakeholders
3. Victimage ضحية	To explain how the organization is a victim of the crisis

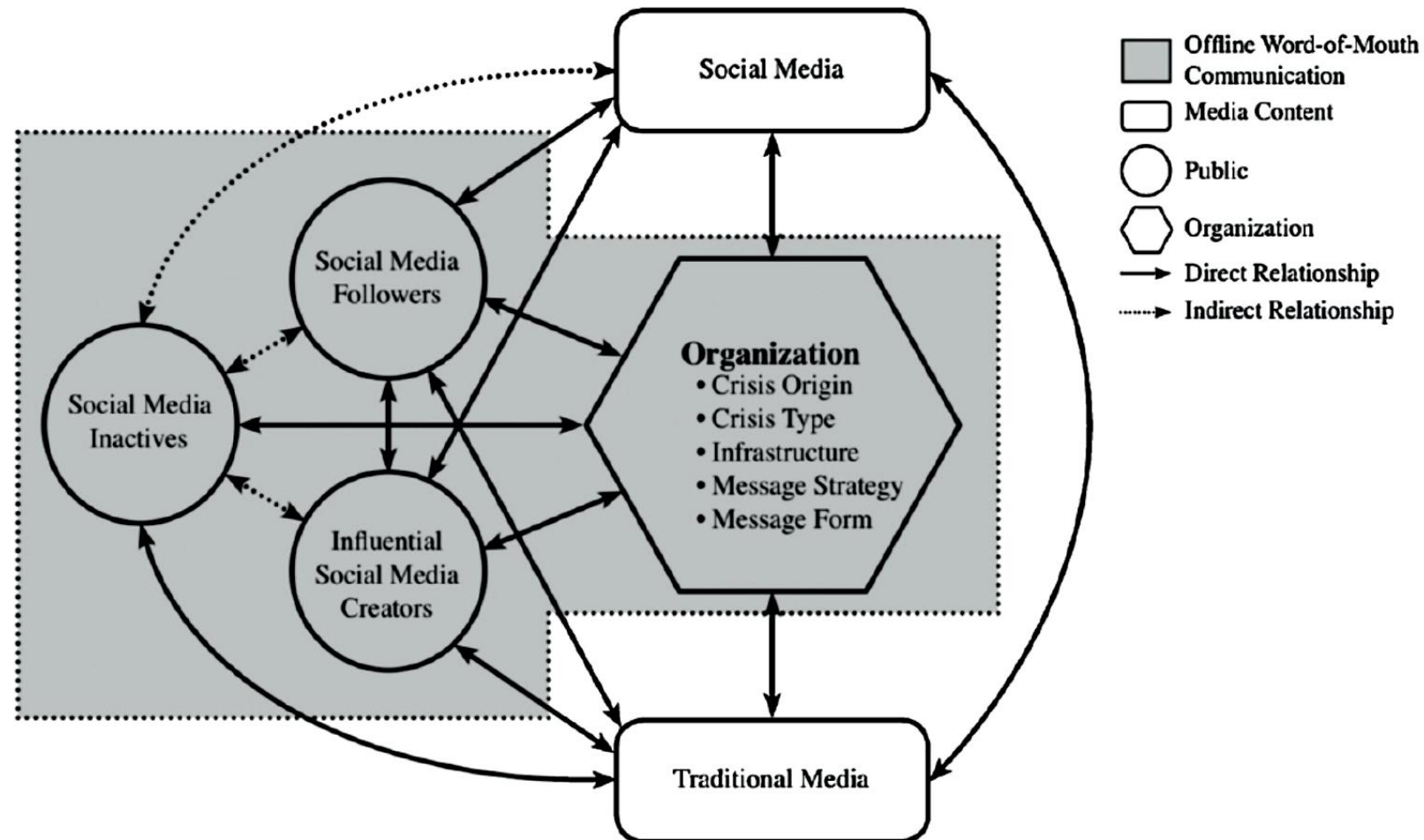
Source. Adopted from Coombs (2014) and Roshan et al. (2016).

Social-mediated crisis management (SMCM)

نموذج إدارة اتصالات الأزمة عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

Social media has the potential to one day contribute to agenda building for public relations practitioners so they must learn to adopt it into their practices.

Social-mediated Crisis Communication Model



Social-mediated crisis management (SMCM)

نموذج إدارة اتصالات الأزمة عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

The Social-Mediated Crisis Communication (SMCC) model is also known as the “**social-mediated dialogue**” between organizations and publics during crises.

This model is considered to be the first theoretical model to focus on relationships between online and offline audiences, organizations, social media platforms, and traditional media, before, during and after the crises.

In Social-Mediated Crisis Communication model, both the direct and indirect exchange of information on social media, as well as between traditional media and social media are significant .

Social-mediated crisis management (SMCM)

نموذج إدارة اتصالات الأزمة عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

This model is quite **useful for communication in emergency situations** for defining the at-risk population and how to reach these people in an effective way and timely manner.

Today's world is deeply connected via social media networks and the information circulated through social media platforms during emergencies has the potential to engage with multiple types of public audiences according to SMCC model.

It is to be noted that, **social media platforms can facilitate organizations to monitor crisis issues, cultivate critical relationships, and create transparency.**

On the other hand, misinformation is being circulated on social media managers and crisis managers may lose control of correct flow of messages under some circumstances.

The influencer impact on Social Media Crisis



How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Outlining a dialogic public relations theory, Kent and Taylor (2002) presented that public relations could enhance dialogue by creating channels for dialogic communication to occur.

في إطار توضيحهما لنظرية العلاقات العامة الحوارية، قدم كينت وتايلور (2002) أن العلاقات العامة يمكن أن تعزز الحوار من خلال إنشاء قنوات للتواصل الحواري.

They specifically identified **online communication** as an ideal **opportunity** for promoting **dialogue**.

They recommended that organizations have an opportunity to establish **dialogic relationships** with stakeholders through strategically **designed websites**.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

So, let's now go through the **five ways you can use influencers to help in a PR crisis on social media.**

1. Move conversations away from the crisis

Negative comments or news stories about your brand can dominate the headlines during a PR crisis. This tends to happen when you take too long to respond or don't take accountability and address the issue in good time.

By generating positive commentary about your brand and engaging your target audience, influencers can help **shift conversations.**

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

1. Move conversations away from the crisis

Influencers can help shift the attention and conversations. But that's not to say you shouldn't own up to your mistakes. Before recruiting influencers to change the conversation, address the issue and show your commitment to fixing it. Then, you can bring in influencers to add positive vibes.

يمكن أن يساعد المؤثرون في تحويل الاهتمام والمحادثات. لكن هذا لا يعني أنه لا ينبغي عليك الاعتراف بأخطائك. قبل توظيف الأشخاص المؤثرين لتغيير المحادثة، عالج المشكلة وأظهر التزامك بإصلاحها. بعد ذلك، يمكنك جلب المؤثرين لإضافة مشاعر إيجابية.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

2. Improve the search results for your brand

Even with an excellent website, good landing pages and a user-friendly app, you still need a way to **drive positive traffic to your most relevant web resources in times of crisis.**

That's because when you search for a particular term, Google will sometimes provide a "top stories" segment near the very top of their search results. If your brand has been on the news and is trending on social media for all the wrong reasons, those negative remarks are likely to appear here. You don't want that.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

2. Improve the search results for your brand

A timely and well-executed influencer marketing strategy can **improve positive mentions** and remarks about your brand. This increases social momentum as the influencer's audience engages with the positive content.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

2. Improve the search results for your brand

It's hard to believe that in late 2021, Britain's #1 breakfast cereal – Weetabix – was facing a significant PR crisis that made headlines. Workers at the food giant partly downed their tools across various factories, causing a shortage of Weetabix. As a result, significant negative sentiment erupted around the Weetabix brand.

من الصعب تصديق أنه في أواخر عام 2021، كانت حبوب الإفطار رقم 1 في بريطانيا – Weetabix – تواجه أزمة علاقات عامة كبيرة تصدرت عناوين الأخبار. قام العمال في شركة الأغذية العملاقة بإيقاف أدواتهم جزئيًا في العديد من المصانع، مما تسبب في نقص في Weetabix. ونتيجة لذلك، اندلعت مشاعر سلبية كبيرة حول العلامة التجارية Weetabix.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

2. Improve the search results for your brand

While the strike was resolved, Weetabix anticipated that negative conversations about the brand would still pervade **تنتشر** online search items and mentions in the days and weeks that followed.

By partnering with content creators and micro-influencers from the food and lifestyle niches, Weetabix managed to ignite **يشعل** several viral moments on social platforms including Instagram and TikTok. In particular, the #WeetabixCheesecake viral challenge generated **positive mentions for the brand**.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis



[View more on Instagram](#)



858 likes

jades_journey

Overnight Weetabix Strawb Cheesecake 🍓🍰

Couldn't resist jumping on the hype 🙌 honestly my feed & tiktok is just full of this!! It's no joke... this really does taste like cheesecake 😋😋

fab new breakfast or desert idea!!

To make:

- crush 2x weetabix in your tub with a splash of your chosen milk to make sure it sticks together for a base.
 - top with your chosen yogurt, you can use protein yoghurts also which will be thicker and give you that more cheesecake consistency
 - I used fat free greek yogurt and added some of my fave @myprotein flavdrops!! These things are zero calories, zero sugar and level up anything for extra flavaaaaa 🍓 strawberry drops this time of course!
- Mixed the drops through the yog
- top with some sliced strawberries and pop in the fridge overnight

This was so TASTY! I'm excited to make other flavours... sky is the limit with options 🙌 I'm thinking orange next 😊

This counts as HexB and honestly not even half an hexA and I used the tiniest splash of skimmed milk!

get on the hypeeeee guys SO GOOD 🍓❤️

#healthy #healthylifestyle #healthyfood #balance #balanceddiet #slimmingworld #slimmingworlduk #swuk #weightloss #myweightlossjourney #fitness #fitnessmotivation #motivational #selflove #selflovejourney #loveyourself #confidence #caloriecounting #overnightweetabix #weetabixcheesecake #support #bodyconfidence #healthymind #healthymindandbody #goals #ukfoodie #foodie #foodiesofinstagram #foodblogger

[View all 47 comments](#)

[Add a comment...](#)



How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

3. Boost your engagement

Writing better content for your brand and telling your stories organically is a key advantage of combining PR with influencer marketing. This, in turn, improves your **brand engagement rate**.

An influencer campaign effectively connects you with specific audiences on social media platforms during a PR crisis. Influencers can **increase your brand's likes, shares, reposts, comments, DMs, link clicks, hashtag engagements** – pretty much everything.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

3. Boost your engagement

High audience engagement rates generally mean that folks are interested in and interacting with your content. This is precisely what you want during a PR crisis; an engaged audience that's open to getting clarification on what's going on and provide feedback.

تعني معدلات مشاركة الجمهور المرتفعة عمومًا أن الأشخاص مهتمون بالمحتوى الخاص بك ويتفاعلون معه. هذا هو بالضبط ما تريده خلال أزمة العلاقات العامة؛ جمهور متفاعل ومنفتح للحصول على توضيح بشأن ما يحدث وتقديم التعليقات.

3. Boost your engagement

Walkers Crisps is an example of a brand that aimed to connect better with audiences on social media after a minor PR crisis. The brand's 2017 #WalkersWave ad campaign was intended in good humor, and it did amuse me quite a bit.

يعد Walkers Crisps مثالاً على علامة تجارية تهدف إلى التواصل بشكل أفضل مع الجماهير على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بعد أزمة علاقات عامة بسيطة. كانت الحملة الإعلانية #WalkersWave لعام 2017 للعلامة التجارية تهدف إلى روح الدعابة.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

3. Boost your engagement

However, the campaign, fronted by football legend Gary Lineker, backfired after it failed to consider how people on the internet might try and have fun with it, and it ended up showing the star holding portraits of questionable characters such as Joseph Stalin and Fred West doing the Mexican wave. All a tad embarrassing.

ومع ذلك، فإن الحملة، التي قادها أسطورة كرة القدم غاري لينيكير، جاءت بنتائج عكسية بعد أن فشلت في التفكير في كيفية محاولة الأشخاص على الإنترنت الاستمتاع بها، وانتهى الأمر بإظهار النجم وهو يحمل صوراً لشخصيات مشكوك فيها مثل جوزيف ستالين وفريد ويست. القيام بالموجة المكسيكية. كل صبي محرج.



TechnicallyRon

@TechnicallyRon · Follow

"Are you sure automated tweets are the way to go?"
"yes, people are sensible and will definitely not abuse it"

video. Here showing you bag those Champions League final tickets.

@WildState You've united with fans in the #WalkersWave for a chance to win Champions League final tickets. See it below.



You're now part of the #WalkersWave and could win Champions League final tickets. See your wave below.



You're now part of the #WalkersWave and could win Champions League final tickets. See your wave below.



5:08 PM · May 25, 2017



replies

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

https://vimeo.com/213405274?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=1356983

3. Boost your engagement

To quickly overcome the public relations backlash, Walkers' strategy was to rejuvenate customer perceptions and engagements with the brand through influencer partnerships. Walkers employed a multi-faceted approach. First, the brand, a darling of soccer fans in the UK, enlisted influencers from this circle. The most visible was influencer and journalist Reggie Yates, who fronted its #WalkersUnited and #SnapandShare campaigns across socials such as Snapchat.

للتغلب سريعاً على رد الفعل العكسي في العلاقات العامة، كانت استراتيجية ووكرز تتمثل في **تجديد تصورات العملاء وتفاعلاتهم مع العلامة التجارية من خلال الشراكات المؤثرة**. استخدم ووكرز نهجاً متعدد الأوجه. أولاً، قامت العلامة التجارية، المحبوبة من مشجعي كرة القدم في المملكة المتحدة، بتجنيد الشخصيات المؤثرة من هذه الدائرة. كان أبرزهم **هو المؤثر والصحفي ريجي بيتس**، الذي تصدر حملات #WalkersUnited و #SnapandShare عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مثل Snapchat.

3. Boost your engagement

The next strategy was for Walkers to enlist celebrity influencers, the Spice Girls, as the new face of the brand with the social media campaign #BestEverFan.

This campaign had a massive return on investment. A single live stream on Facebook generated an average engagement of 50%, with 36,000 comments, likes and shares, and hundreds of thousands of views.

كان لهذه الحملة عائد هائل على الاستثمار. حقق بث مباشر واحد على فيسبوك متوسط تفاعل بنسبة 50%، مع 36000 تعليق وإعجاب ومشاركة، ومئات الآلاف من المشاهدات.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

4. Improve brand awareness

When a public relations crisis hits, naturally, more people will look up your brand. And some of these people might not know anything about you. It's therefore possible that they'll view your brand negatively due to the PR crisis you're facing. **Any misinformation or negative press coming from the crisis will affect their attitude towards your brand.**

Influencers can help you counteract that. A good influencer marketing campaign will help shed some light on what your brand is all about. Besides showing the good work of your brand, influencers may also help people who have never heard about you discover what your company does.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

4. Improve brand awareness

Snapchat faced mounting criticism in 2018 when the company announced sweeping redesign changes. Among many things, they wanted to condense their Stories and Discover features on a single page. Snapchat users were less than impressed, with some describing the new design as cumbersome and hard to get used to.

Initially, Snapchat's CEO Evan Spiegel was bullish about the design changes and assured users that "they were here to stay". However, after increased backlash, competition from a revamped Instagram, and a single tweet from Kylie Jenner that sent Snapchat's shares tumbling, Snapchat backtracked.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

4. Improve brand awareness

Besides resolving some of the UX issues on the app, Snapchat also conducted promos with some of the most famous influencers on the app. That included Cyrene Quiamco (CyreneQ), a digital artist, creative and influencer with over 200k followers. The influencers promoted the new design and increased awareness about the new product rollouts.



How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

5. Build brand trust

Influencers will not make a bad product good. However, influencer relationships can help rebuild trust with people amid a bad PR outlay.

Influencers can help you rebuild trust and brand sentiment, generate positive search traffic and social signals, earn potential customers, and improve engagement. This is achieved through **sharing positive content** and directing conversations.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

5. Build brand trust

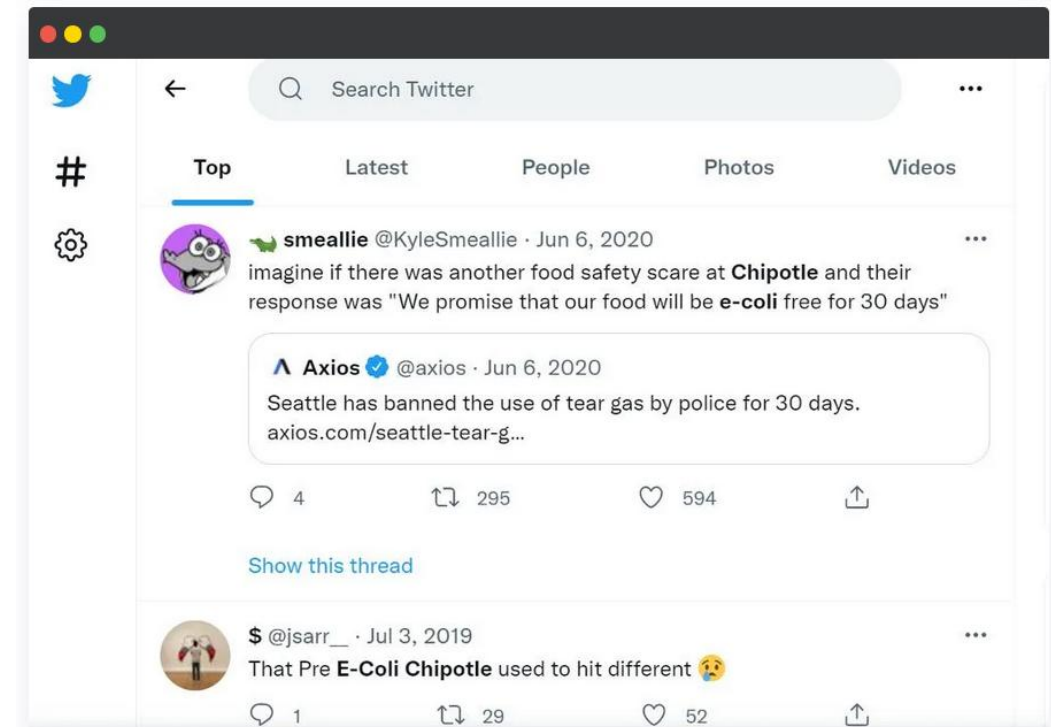
Chipotle has been in the news since 2015, when the first cases of E. coli outbreak were reported at the giant Mexican-themed food retailer. Negative sentiment about Chipotle rippled across the company's customer base of health-conscious food lovers. Lawsuits and sales slumps dogged the company through a rough couple of years.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

5. Build brand trust

A \$50million advertising campaign on TV and sites like YouTube did little to salvage Chipotle's image. Free coupons and giveaways didn't help either.



How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Live

5. Build brand trust

But then Chipotle released a video ad (the Behind the Foil campaign) that took cameras inside its elusive kitchens, showcasing its “safety first” approaches. Besides the video-ad campaign, Chipotle further engaged digital influencers in a move that saw the company target Gen-Z and millennials, who had fast become its main target segment.

Under the #chipotlecreator program, various influencers from Facebook and TikTok produced content for Chipotle that would resonate with the younger generations, aiming to rebuild lost trust and create relationships that would drive up market share and help shape the brand's future.

https://www.tiktok.com/@chipotle/video/7005949765573790981?embed_source=71223855%2C121331973%2C120811592%2C120810756%3Bnull%3Bembed_share&referrer=embed&referrer_url=www.prezly.com%2Facademy%2Fhow-influencers-can-help-you-manage-a-social-media-pr-crisis&referrer_video_id=7005949765573790981

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Influencers of social media usage

Interactive digital media platforms are changing the marketing scene.

These **platforms have empowered consumers to connect, share, and collaborate, creating spheres of influence** that have deeply distorted the way marketers engage in influencing activities.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Influencers of social media usage

Social network advertising offers an online marketing opportunity that **narrowing the gap between sales and advertising activities, which are obtained from tracing consumer reactions.**

Therefore, nearly every business is planning social media marketing activities.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Social Media Usage Benefits:

- Perform integrated marketing activities with much less effort and cost than before
- Enhance brand's reputation,
- Improve value,
- Improve relationship and brand equity,
- digital advertising and promotion,

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Social Media Usage Benefits:

- handle customer service issues,
- mine innovation ideas
- build and improve customer relations
- cost reduction in terms of marketing,
- enhance communication and customer service,
- improve brand image.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

Influencer marketing presents one of the best ways to reach out to and engage with consumers in real time during a crisis. Influencers are trusted, and research has shown the power of influencers over vital purchase decisions.

But influencer marketing isn't just about **going viral on social platforms**. It's about building an authentic relationship with your customers, connecting with a target audience, and telling your brand story. The PR and influencer marketing approach has also become an important part of most brands' **crisis management** planning, and it's proving to be quite effective.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

A good response to a crisis can show your brand's commitment to looking after its community. It can turn a bad situation into good PR, helping you solidify your bond with your existing fans by showing your brand's true colors.

But for that to happen, you'll need to have a solid PR crisis management plan in place.

And as it happens, influencers can play a critical role in that plan.

How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis

As PR crises are an almost inevitable part of business operations, staying one step ahead of the curve is crucial. Influencer strategies can turn the tide for your business or brand when facing a public relations crisis.

Social influencers are favorable due to their instant access and connection to audiences. The trust afforded to them and their ability to speak in a voice that resonates with both customers and brands make them extremely valuable comms assets.

Conclusion:

Crisis Communication & crises management: (Approaches & Theories)

- **Crisis Communication and Crisis Management: Definitions**
 - Public Relations (PR)
 - Definition of Crisis Communication
 - Reputation
 - Crisis management
- **Social Media in Crisis Communication: opportunities and challenges**
- **PR Models:**
 - press agency/publicity,
 - public information,
 - two-way asymmetrical,
 - and two-way symmetrical
- **Crisis Communication Theories**
 - Image Restoration Theory
 - Situational Crisis Communication Theory
 - The Social-Mediated Crisis Communication (SMCC) model
- **The influencer impact on Social Media Crisis**

Recommended Reference

- Norton, C. (2022, July). How influencers can help you manage a social media PR crisis: PR Academy. Prezly.com. <https://www.prezly.com/academy/how-influencers-can-help-you-manage-a-social-media-pr-crisis>
- Wedlock, B. C. (2012, May). (dissertation). The diffusion of social media in public relations: Use of social media in crisis response strategies. ProQuest. Retrieved May 2023, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295547824_The_Diffusion_of_Social_Media_in_Public_Relations_Use_of_Social_Media_In_Crisis_Response_Strategies.
- Barbe, D., & Pennington-Gray, L. (2020). Social Media and Crisis Communication in Tourism and Hospitality.
- Kwok, L., Lee, J., & Han, S. H. (2021). Crisis communication on social media: What types of covid-19 messages get the attention? *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 63(4), 528–543. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19389655211028143>
- Ward, C. A. (2011, June). *Social Media and Crisis Communication: Are organizations using social media in times of crisis?* (dissertation). *SOCIAL MEDIA AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION: ARE ORGANIZATIONS USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN TIMES OF CRISIS?* Retrieved May 2023, from https://cardinalscholar.bsu.edu/bitstream/handle/123456789/195041/WardC_2011-3_BODY.pdf?sequence=1.
- Burak, Begüm. (2021). RETHINKING THE SOCIAL-MEDIATED CRISIS COMMUNICATION MODEL: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

Thank You