

Social Media and Crises

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DGM 730

Lecture 6

**The Social Media Crisis Plan
(Issues & Risks)**



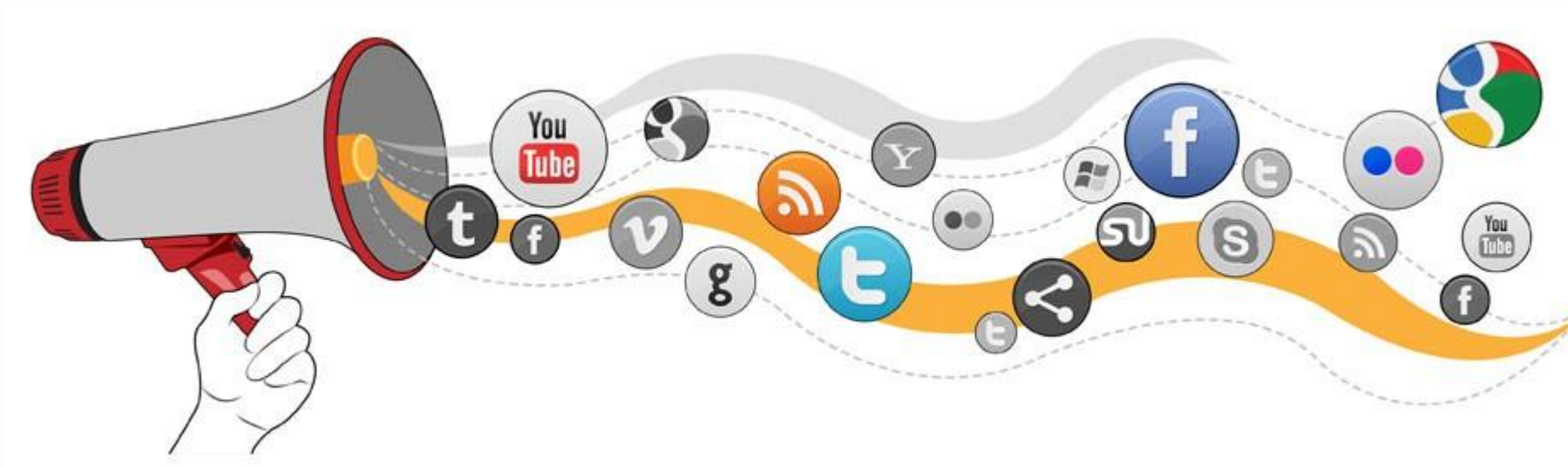
Lec. 6 **Lecture outline**

The Social Media Crisis Plan (Issues & Risks)

- **The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media**
- **How to appear transparent, visible and accessible**
- **Managing accessibility**
- **Managing a 24/7 information stream**
- **Best practices in risk and crisis communication**
- **Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks**
- **Preventing Social Media Risk**

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The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media



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The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media

There are **seven functional blocks of social media** that apply to all users across any given platform:

1) Identity, (Identity deals with how users reveal themselves in a social media setting. Most of the information disclosed in this block is personal characteristics of the users such as age, name, gender, profession, and other information that represents them. This identity that is formed, generally happens through expression of what a person likes, dislikes, feels and thinks whether it is done consciously or unconsciously.)

2) Conversations, (This refers to the way in which users' communication in a social media setting, either as a group user or an individual. People communicate daily, using social media for a variety of purposes, often to, obtain information on important topics or to stay in touch with friends and family.)

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The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media

3) sharing, (The dissemination of information by the users and groups based on what each think is relevant. Sharing is one of the key facets of social media, but each medium has a different intention. **For example, Facebook** is based on status updates of users and groups whereas **Twitter** is for short bits of information and links to information or video. **YouTube** on the other hand, presents video representation of information.)

4) presence, (Social media allows for constant connectivity even when individuals are nowhere near each other. This gives ease of access to users to know when others are accessible and when they are not. In Facebook, users know if someone is online if a green dot appears next to their name stating “available”. Constant connectivity allows for constant communication on the go, thus users can access and converse about information at anytime during the day with each other or as a group community.)

5) relationships, (The relationship means “two or more users have some form of association that leads them to converse, share objects of sociality, encounter, or simply just list each other as a friend or fan. E.G.: Twitter and YouTube do not value relationships as much as other sites do.)

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The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media

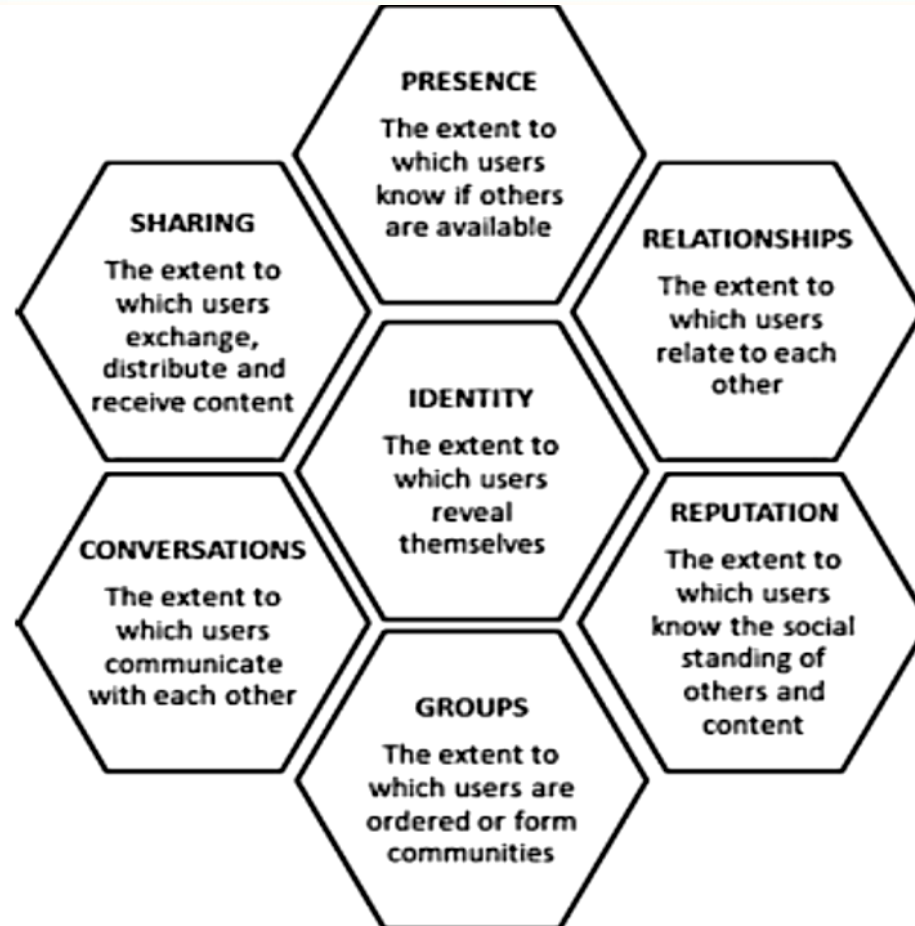
6) reputation, (Organizations need to always keep the public aware of what channels are official, so that information is not misconstrued. If an unofficial page is perceived to be official by the public and disseminates false or skewed information, this could aid in the damage of an organization's image.)

7) groups, (This function allows for users to come together as a community for a common goal or purpose. Facebook and Flickr for example have the ability to create two different kinds of groups that people can be a part of.)

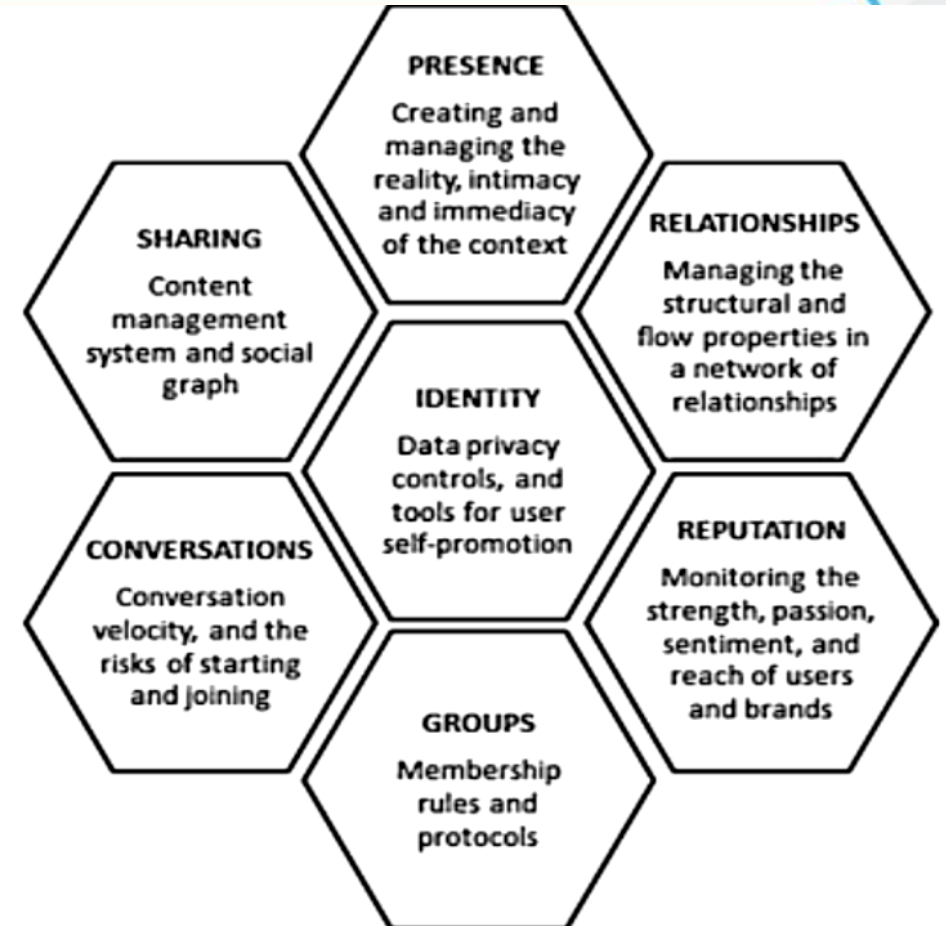
The following figure shows the functions of social media along with the implication of each function. With the growth and expansion of social media in society in particular fields such as public relations, it is necessary for the academic community to analyze them for patterns that could emerge to help predict future of certain channels of social media in the professional world.

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The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media



Social Media Functionality



Implications of the Functionality

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The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media

- ❑ Social media creates a media of the masses.
- ❑ **Social media** have been classified into these **categories**: Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video.
- ❑ From a public relations perspective, blogs and other forms of social networking are excellent ways to segment the public as groups of individuals who read the same blog or visit the same social networking site as those who share common interests.
- ❑ This **interaction** has resulted in a participatory culture where ordinary citizens can have their voices be heard by the general public and large organizations, if they are listening.
- ❑ Because of these reasons it is time **organizations and public relations** practitioners to pay attention to the online conversations taking part without them and learn ways **to get involved with their online publics**.

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How to appear transparent, visible and accessible



Lec. 6**How to appear transparent, visible and accessible****How to use social insights to inform decision-making**

Social media is a powerful source of inspiration and data that can inform the best approach for your business during a crisis—both in terms of new ideas to serve customers and strategic discussions to have within your organization.

While social can certainly fuel a crisis, it can also be used to manage one.

What challenges are top of mind for your brand right now? Use social to look at:

- What your target audience has to say about related topics

- How competitors are responding

- What the local community is searching for

Lec. 6**How to appear transparent, visible and accessible****How to use social insights to inform decision-making (Cont'd)**

You can use social listening tools to evaluate a wide spectrum of global social media messages, or you can simply search for keywords or hashtags to find examples to inspire your next steps.

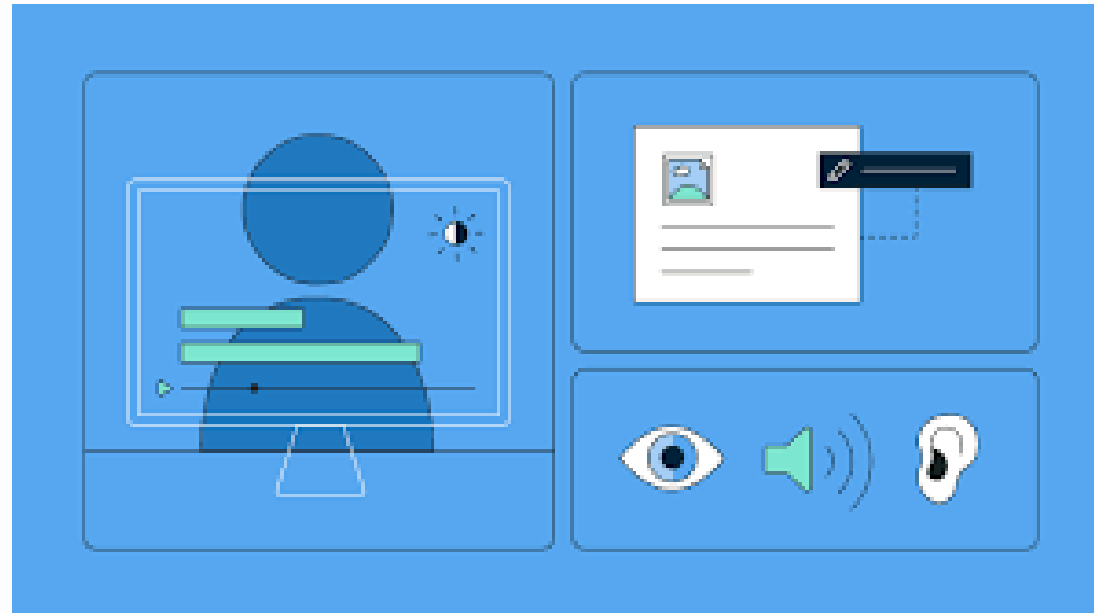
Listening can help you mitigate a crisis by catching it early. When a popular Twitter account unearthed insensitive Tweets written by a tenured Indiana University professor, IU used Listening tools to monitor the topic. Within almost 24 hours of the conversation escalating, IU was able to present their listening data, quickly put out a statement from the provost condemning the professor's Tweets and get ahead of a potential PR nightmare.

Lec. 6**How to appear transparent, visible and accessible****How to use social insights to inform decision-making (Cont'd)**

Package these insights into a report that you can share with the rest of your team. Include high-level takeaways about the social conversation as well as examples of messages so your team members who aren't on the social front lines can hear from people in their own words. Make sure to share this report along with your own recommendations.

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Managing accessibility



Lec. 6 Managing accessibility

What is social media accessibility?

Social media accessibility is the practice of designing and developing social media content and posts that provide a smooth, inclusive experience for everyone—including the marketer.

Non-accessible content can cause all sorts of annoying, disruptive experiences—like videos with a lot of background noise that don't use captions. Creating more accessible social content is truly a win-win for everyone involved—from you, to your audience.

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Here are **8 social media accessibility best practices and tips** that you can start implementing:

- Add alt text to images (Short Image description)

- Make your text accessible

- Be mindful of emojis

- Add closed captions and subtitles to videos

- Make your visual content accessible

- Use inclusive language

- Prioritize inclusivity in your images

- Make accessibility and inclusion part of your routine

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Managing a 24/7 information stream



Lec. 6**Managing a 24/7 information stream**

Social media for business is important—particularly when your brand is managing a crisis. When an emergency strikes, your social feeds should help mitigate the problem, serve as a way to stay in touch with customers, and help create a feeling of consistency. But it takes some finesse. After all, we've all seen how badly a mismanaged crisis can play out on social media.

Monitor Social Media 24/7

One of the best ways to ensure a quick response? Have employees monitor your social media feeds at all times. You need dedicated resources for 24/7 monitoring of crises, customer questions and complaints, and opportunities—because you never know when your organization might actually benefit from an unexpected incident.

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Managing a 24/7 information stream

What is **social media monitoring** (and analytics)?

Social media monitoring is keyword monitoring on social media platforms to search for mentions of predefined keywords. What keywords are worth tracking? In business, they could be connected to:

- Brand

- Product

- Service

- Industry

- CEO

- Competitors

- Marketing campaigns

- Hashtags

- Anything business-related

Lec. 6 Managing a 24/7 information stream

Furthermore, social media monitoring tools have plenty of analytical features that get you heaps of data and insights about monitored keywords.

Some of them include:

- Metrics of volume

- Metrics of engagement

- Metrics of sentiment

- Metrics of influence

- Metrics of reach and online presence

Lec. 6 Managing a 24/7 information stream

There are **three main aspects to social listening**:

Setting-up. First of all, it starts with setting up a project. You need to provide the keywords you want to track across social media. There's often an advanced set-up with required and excluded keywords that can be used to make your query even more specific.

Collecting. Secondly, the tool collects mentions into a dashboard. There's usually plenty of filters you can use to clean up, group, mark, delete collected mentions. Apart from the dashboard, you can receive mentions directly to your inbox in various shapes and quantities: daily, weekly, or real-time reports.

Analyzing. Thirdly, there's the analytics. It depends on a tool, as different tools analyze different data. Some tools analyze metrics of volume, engagement, reach, sentiment, and influence of social media mentions.

Lec. 6 Managing a 24/7 information stream

What can you do with your monitoring data?

Here are a few things you can do by monitoring different terms:

Monitoring your brand or company name – Find out where your audience is talking about you and distribute more content and ads there. Learn more about the type of audience that you have. See what your audience is saying about you and manage your reputation.

Monitoring your product – Measure what the public thinks about your product. See how it's being used. This will help you find the right angle to promote your product or reposition it on the market if necessary.

Tracking hashtags – A social media marketing campaign is incomplete without a #hashtag. Monitor your #hashtag to see how often it's being used and what the conversations are about.

Lec. 6 Managing a 24/7 information stream

Investigate similar products – See what people are saying about products similar to yours. Are they better? Are they worse? These are key insights that your R&D team needs to see.

Find key influencers – There are people who set trends and people who follow them. If you're not a trendsetter (yet), at least stay up to date by following important industry influencers.

Analyze competitors – See where they fall short, and this may be something that you can cover with your own company.

Key execs at your company – It's likely that your CEO or Public Relations specialist talks about your company... a lot. Monitor what they're saying and see how people are reacting.

Manage a social media crisis – You can detect crises early thanks to sentiment analysis, storm alerts, and daily mentions monitoring.

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Best practices in risk and crisis communication



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Best practices in risk and crisis communication

Tying into traditional tactics used by PR practitioners, Veil, Buehner, & Palenchar (2011) review **ten of the best practices used in risk and crisis communication:**

- establish risk and crisis management policies and process approaches;
- plan pre-event logistics;
- partner with the public;
- listen to the public's concerns and understand the audience;
- communicate with honesty, candor, and openness;
- collaborate and coordinate with credible sources;
- meet the needs of the media and remain accessible;
- communicate with compassion, concerns, and empathy;
- accept uncertainty and ambiguity;
- provide messages of self-efficacy.

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Best practices in risk and crisis communication

Best practices for crisis communication through social media

1. Fully integrate social media into decision making and policy Development
2. Actively engage in dialogue online
3. Use media affordances to provide credible sources of information
4. Be cautious about message update speed
5. Own the hashtag
6. Cooperate with the public and similar organizations
7. Monitor misinformation

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Best practices in risk and crisis communication

Affordances for internalizing allow organizations to access resources – primarily information and knowledge – shared by non organizational users (e.g., community members, volunteers, media representatives, and responders from other organizations or organizational sub-units).

The following tables are an overview of these affordances, with definitions and selected references.

In particular, social media enable users to observe digital content that non-organizational users have contributed to social media presences, such as their digital profiles or community or collaborative spaces (monitoring the information stream). They can, for instance, keep track of digital content that features event-related markers, such as hashtags, watch updates contributed to wikis, forums, and collaborative maps, follow contributions to digital profiles or other presences, join relevant groups, and establish relational ties to relevant users to receive automatic notifications of recent activities.

Lec. 6**Best practices in risk and crisis communication**

Review findings on organizational learning affordances provided by social media

Based on the systematic literature review, we identified affordances of social media – five each pertaining to internalizing, externalizing, and collaborating processes.

Lec. 6 Best practices in risk and crisis communication

Affordances	Definitions
(1) Monitoring the information stream	Observing crisis-related digital content contributed to social media
(2) Automatically processing big (social media) data	Utilizing technological artifacts for collecting, analyzing, and displaying crisis-related digital content contributed to social media
(3) Tapping collective intelligence	Harnessing the outcomes of users' joint efforts to make sense of crises
(4) Accessing information providers	Identifying and consulting presumably knowledgeable users
(5) Evaluating crisis response	Analyzing experiences gained from prior uses of social media in response to crises

Overview of social media affordances for internalizing

Lec. 6 Best practices in risk and crisis communication

	Affordances	Definitions
(6)	Contributing information	Making crisis-related digital content available to users through social media
(7)	Forwarding information	Sharing previously contributed crisis-related digital content with users beyond its original audience through social media
(8)	Framing narratives	Contributing or forwarding digital content that conveys a particular interpretation of a crisis
(9)	Establishing digital presences	Setting up and promoting outlets for contributing and forwarding crisis-related digital content through social media
(10)	Communicating a reputation	Signaling the status and legitimacy of users contributing or forwarding crisis-related digital content through social media

Overview of social media affordances for externalizing

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Best practices in risk and crisis communication

	Affordances	Definitions
(11)	Negotiating consensus	Aligning perceptions and developing a shared interpretation of a crisis
(12)	Integrating contributions	Registering, monitoring, and deploying resources provided by users in response to a crisis in a coordinated way
(13)	Crowdsourcing contributions	Calling for and incorporating resources to be provided by users in response to a crisis
(14)	Developing community	Advancing connections, sense of community, and collective action among users in response to a crisis
(15)	Establishing norms	Developing and enforcing principles for using social media to respond to a crisis collaboratively

Overview of social media affordances for collaborating

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Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks



Lec. 6**Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks****What is social media risk management?**

Social media risk management is the process of identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks that stem from social media.

Your brand, customers, and employees are all active on social media.

This means your social channels are a common ground where conversations — both good and bad — and crises can start.

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Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks

What are the risks of social media for businesses?

Damage to reputation (Negative comments, inappropriate posts, or bad reviews can all damage your brand's reputation.)

Security breaches (If your social account passwords get into the wrong hands, then a security breach is a major risk.)

Compliance violations (Social media compliance refers to following rules and regulations set by regulatory bodies, social platforms, and your own company.)

Legal issues (You should also have a policy that covers your employees' social activity and conduct if you want to avoid legal issues.)

Financial consequences (Any negative situation, like a PR crisis, impact your company's bottom line.)

Lec. 6**Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks****5 steps to managing risk on social media****1. Define your social media policy**

The policy should clearly state what everyone's roles are in crisis scenarios — from the legal team to PR to customer service.

2. Train your employees

Your employees are some of your company's best brand advocates. But without clear guidelines or regular training, employees can put your business at risk.

3. Monitor your social media accounts

Brands must keep a close eye on their mentions so they can quickly step in if needed.

Lec. 6**Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks****5 steps to managing risk on social media****4. Respond promptly to negative feedback**

A negative comment or review can gain traction within minutes or even seconds. It's critical to have a response plan ready to go so you can address feedback the instant it comes up.

5. Review and revise your policy on a regular basis

Your organization's social media policy isn't set in stone — it should be revised as often as social media changes.

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Preventing Social Media Risk



Lec. 6 Preventing Social Media Risk

1) Guidelines

As general best practice, a high-level overall policy should be rolled out to guide the use of social media by all employees of the organization and any third party acting on behalf of the organization. The guidelines should highlight key components including:

Scope—Defining the overall scope of the policy guidelines that is set forth by the enterprise for its employees

Purpose—Definition of the purpose of the guidelines for the organization, specifically, how social media activity on behalf of the organization will take place and what sort of information is relevant to share via that activity.

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Preventing Social Media Risk

Goals—Clear definition of the overall outcome that is to be achieved from the social media presence for the organization and how the social media platform will get the organization there

Ownership guidelines—General guidelines for the creation and maintenance of all social media sites for the organization

Contributor guidelines—General guidelines and principles directing contributors to the social media sites

Approved social media platforms—Expectation for departments assessing social media solutions outside of the company to demonstrate how the social media presence will contribute to achievement of the overall goal and, more importantly, the platform's degree of utilization and security

Lec. 6 Preventing Social Media Risk

2) Training and awareness

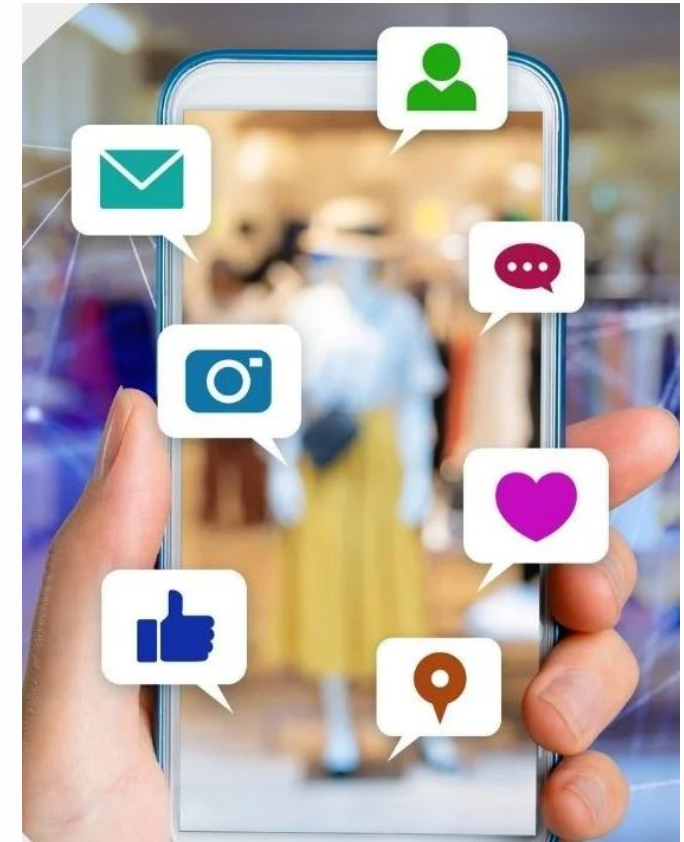
It is key for the organization to embody the proper use of social media etiquette as part of the onboarding training of all employees, especially in roles such as marketing, HR and IT—departments that will most likely be representing the organization as part of their ongoing job functions. Embedding the behaviors and instilling the right concepts of social media norms that align with the organizational policies and processes will help in the long run as more and more employees participate on social media and represent their organization and its products and interests.

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Preventing Social Media Risk

3) Social media crisis and communication plan

A robust social media crisis and communication plan must be developed in the event that a crisis occurs. There has to be a single point of contact, usually the communications team, for all communication with the media and stakeholders. Key department personnel have to be involved, especially if there is a matter that applies to that specific department.



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Conclusion

The Social Media Crisis Plan (Issues & Risks)

- **The Seven Functional Blocks of Social Media**
- **How to appear transparent, visible and accessible**
- **Managing accessibility**
- **Managing a 24/7 information stream**
- **Best practices in risk and crisis communication**
- **Assessing and Managing Social Media Issues and Risks**
- **Preventing Social Media Risk**

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Thank You