



Media Minefield

PR Crisis

Who's to blame?

Companies finding themselves in the midst of a public relations crisis may want to pin the blame on someone, but it turns out, there's a good chance they may have to point the finger at themselves. A new survey shows more than 75% of PR disasters are "the brand's fault." From minor embarrassments to image-shattering disasters, the most common crises came from within: poorly designed products, flawed communication strategies or ill-advised advertising campaigns.

Of course, the best way to deal with a PR crisis is to avoid it in the first place, but, as so many corporate brands have learned the hard way, that's not always possible. A crisis could come at any time, day or night. It's important to be prepared.

Know Your Message

Employees at every level should know how to talk about your company. In the Message Maps we create for clients, we call this the "primary message." If each employee understands your message, it will build a foundation so the same language is used during times of crises.

Identify Your Spokesperson

During a crisis, each employee should know who the designated spokesperson is and how the media can reach that person. The spokesperson should have prior media training and should be coached prior to any interviews. Our media coaches rely on their news experience to think of every question a reporter could come up with. The spokesperson should be prepared to answer any and all of them.

Be Ready, Day or Night

Remember, news never sleeps. There are newscasts at 4am, 11am, 4pm and 11pm (just to name a few!) Have a plan on how you will get your message out at any time of day or night, whether it's a written statement or a designated nights and/or weekend spokesperson.

Avoid "No Comment"

We've said it before, and we'll say it again: "no comment" is a comment. When a company says those two little words, it sounds like it has something to hide. Even a short, written statement is better than "no comment."

Build a Good Team

No matter what kind of crisis you're experiencing, an experienced PR agency can help you through it. A good PR team should be an extension of your team, so work with a company you trust with your message and one that understands how the media works.