

CRISIS MANAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS:

*How to Plan in Advance for a Crisis & Navigate a
Serious Incident in a 24/7 Digital Age*

SYTA Webinar

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Kitchen Public Relations

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Today's Agenda

- Introduction: KPR/SYTA partnership
- Why plan for a crisis?
- Today's media
- Possible crisis scenarios
- Key components of a crisis plan
- Rules for crisis management

Introduction

- KPR/SYTA partnership
- ABA crisis management experience
- SYTA project: Safety Preparedness and Crisis Communications Response Plan to be released at SYTA Conference, Albuquerque
- Crisis management is serious business

Why Plan for a Crisis?

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.”

Warren Buffett



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Why a Crisis Plan?

- In this 24/7 digital world, news travels fast. Having a crisis plan in place is critical.
- A serious crisis with injuries/deaths are big news.
- Reports on the internet can take place in minutes.
- Smartphone pictures and video can be available to the media before news crews arrive.
- 50 students on a bus = 50 cameras.

Crisis Management is Serious

- A crisis is one of the worst experiences you as an owner/operator will ever experience.
- A crisis can do severe damage to a company's good name and reputation.
- You, the owner/operator are responsible. It's your company.
- Handling a crisis the wrong way can cause irreparable loss of confidence of the traveling public— your customers.
- It can cost tens of thousands of dollars and your insurance company millions.
- It can put a company out of business.

Why a Crisis Plan?

- How would you describe the company's reputation/brand in the student youth and travel industry and the communities you serve?
- Why do you do what you do?
- Unique aspects of student travel.
- The purpose of a plan is to maintain and protect your reputation/business viability.
- Differentiating your firm in the marketplace. Do you get asked by school districts if you have a plan?

With a plan ...



Today's Media

- Is much larger, faster and potentially more dangerous because it's TV, radio, print, online and bloggers.
- The media's 24/7 news cycle is picture driven.
- Everyone has a smart phone and can send pictures anywhere on Twitter in seconds.
- Newsrooms actively seek out amateur photos and video in the aftermath of an accident. We're all reporters now.
- A serious accident, for instance, is BIG News.

Today's Media

- As an owner/operator you have too many things on your plate to deal with the media, law enforcement, passengers, your staff, investigators, insurance companies, attorneys.
- The media can be unrelenting and very aggressive. Reporters in a crisis situation are not necessarily your friend or ally, they're trying to get the story.
- You can't manage your message by avoiding the media.
- No comment doesn't work.

Crisis Scenarios in Student Travel Industry

- Transportation/Motorcoach accident
- Fatality or serious injuries
- Missing student(s)
- Natural/Weather disaster
- Disease outbreak/serious illness
- Sexual assault
- Act of Terrorism

The Crisis Plan

Key components:

- Define goals and priorities of effective crisis management.
- Understanding the importance of the first 48 hours.
- Define and evaluate potential scenarios.
- Develop protocols and action plan for each scenario.
- Create crisis communications team.
- Develop key messaging.

The Crisis Plan

Key components:

- Create holding statements and suggested media responses.
- Relationship with other vendors.
- Roles of Tour Directors, school personnel.
- Create protocols for media outreach and response.
- Media training: do's and don'ts.
- Internal communications.
- Impact of social media.

Get Your Message Out

- Acknowledge the tragedy. Express sorrow.
- Express empathy and compassion.
- Be transparent and honest.
- Get the facts straight, don't speculate.
- Concern for your passengers and families is your priority.
- Safety has always been your company's job #1.
- Express cooperation with the investigation.

10 Rules for Crisis Management

1. Prepare. Some companies have gone out of business because they were not prepared to manage a crisis.
2. Take responsibility. It's your company, it's your problem, you own it.
3. Respond quickly. First 48 hours are critical. Tell it all and tell it fast. Your top leaders need to be involved early on and stay involved.
4. Be transparent and tell the truth. The cover-up is always worse than the crime.
5. Show empathy and mean it. Don't be afraid to express sorrow and compassion. You're not admitting guilt.
6. Don't overreact. Stay calm and focused.

10 Rules for Crisis Management

7. Work with the media, not against it. Repeat your key messages- empathy, cooperation, transparency, concern for safety.
8. The crisis will go viral. Nothing travels faster than bad news. Be aware of what's being said about your company online.
9. Be prepared and stay prepared. 67% of surveyed U.S. companies had a crisis in the past five years. But only 34% of companies have a plan. Which company are you?
10. Imagine and prepare for the worst. Never become complacent with your crisis preparation.

Effective Crisis Communications



Prepare Prepare Prepare

- Even the safest operation isn't immune from a crisis situation.
- That's why planning in advance is so important to handling a potential crisis.

SYTA Crisis Planning

- Coming soon: presentation in Albuquerque
- Customized plans for individual SYTA members

Questions/Comments

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SYTA Annual Conference Preview Webinar for New Attendees

May 2, 2017, 3:00 PM EDT

June 21, 2017, 3:00 PM EDT

July 19, 201, 1:00 PM EDT

Understanding Appointment Requests for the 2017 SYTA Annual Conference

May 16, 2017, 2:00 PM EDT

International Webinar: Traveling to Europe

June 15, 12:00 PM EDT

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