CISION®

THE **FOUR STEPS** TO CREATING
THE ULTIMATE CRISIS COMMS PLAN

CONTENTS

CISION

SUMMARY

Along with promoting a company's work, one of the central responsibilities of PR pros everywhere is to protect brand reputation. Dealing with a crisis and ensuring that your employer or client emerges through difficult periods with their reputation intact is perhaps the most critical of the traditional comms functions.

With the advent of up-to-the second news and the rise of social media, the burning spotlight brought upon an organization in a crisis has only intensified. Comms pros now have to advise and make decisions in real-time, which will either afford them breathing room or could cause their company or client to sink into the mire.

This white paper will examine the four key steps communicators need to master to ensure they are as ready as they can be for a crisis situation. It will discuss how to quickly identify when a crisis is about to hit and how to ensure that you have confidence in implementing your crisis comms plan.

It will also explore how to work with your legal team to produce a perfectly pitched response and how you can then make sure your spokespeople deliver this message in an empathetic way. Finally, it'll also demonstrate how you can use modern comms technology to stay on top of the unfolding maelstrom and ensure you have the data on hand to track how your strategy is playing out.

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the most important role as a PR professional is the ability to guide your organization or client through a crisis. The general public, customers and clients will accept that not every company is perfect, and things can go wrong, however, your response will decide whether it comes through with brand reputation intact.

Perhaps the most important role as a PR professional is the ability to guide your organization or client through a crisis. The general public, customers and clients will accept that not every company is perfect, and things can go wrong, however, your response will decide whether it comes through with brand reputation intact.

Given that nothing can wipe reputation, prestige and share prices from an organization more quickly than a PR crisis, crisis communications is, ironically, one of the best ways you as a communicator can illustrate your value.

What is key from an organizational standpoint is that comms teams, whether in-house or an agency, are able to project an aura of calm and certainty that can spread to the rest of the group.

"In a crisis situation, people are looking to the PR and comms teams to provide a sense that everything is going to be OK," Samsung UK Head of PR, James Coyle, said. "There will be many people at an organization in a crisis situation who are in a flap and don't know how to deal with it externally or internally. What you need to be is the calmest person in the room and provide some clarity and vision of what the organization can do."

To be able to provide that stability, you will need a plan and a method which you can implement as soon as a crisis hits. There are four key areas you will need to cover to ensure your brand can get ahead and be secure and consistent in its response.

Firstly, being able to identify when an issue may lead to a crisis is crucial, as it will allow you to quickly enact crisis comms planning and prepare your organization for what may lie ahead. Failure to do so can lose precious time in the battle to maintain brand reputation. Melissa Agnes, an expert in crisis management has developed a handy downloadable flowchart you can use to quickly determine whether a situation is an issue or a crisis; you can download it **here**.

Once you've hit crisis mode, your plan must be sufficiently stable for the team to know their roles and key information, yet also be flexible enough to allow you to react quickly to the fast-pace of a crisis.

Working with the legal department to create an appropriate response is crucial for numerous reasons, both at the time and into the future. Ensuring that the sometimes-difficult working relationship between the different disciplines that does not hinder the crafting of key messaging is crucial.

Support from your senior leadership team will also be critical. As well as needing their help strategically, they will also be the public face of your business when reassuring stakeholders that the situation is being dealt with as efficiently as possible. Ensuring that you have someone up to the task of handling media appearances is crucial, with a poor appearance the quickest way of undermining your crisis comms strategy.

Preparing suitably to ensure that you can follow each step means that you will be in a far stronger position to navigate any crisis scenario which comes your way. It's a smart idea to run practice drills with all the involved stakeholders, that way your team is ready when a crisis really happens.

USING ANALYSIS TO
PLAN A CRISIS REACTION

To mitigate the potential negative impact on reputation, the speed at which an company deals with a crisis is critical.

Cision Insights have compared two real crisis responses from a tech company and a retail company following problems with their products, which illustrates this point.
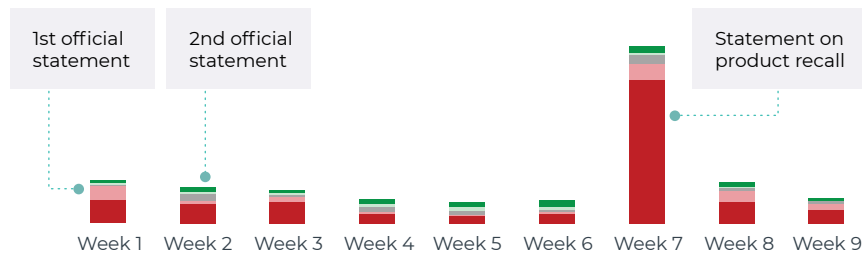
SECTOR OF COMPANY	% NEGATIVE	% SPOKESPERSON FEATURED	NUMBER OF STATEMENTS RELEASED	TIME BEFORE PRODUCT RECALL
TECH	79%	8%	3	7 WEEK
RETAIL	39%	29%	1	IMMEDIATELY

The retail organization chose to immediately release an official statement concerning the product issue, and to recall affected products at once. As a result, unfavorable coverage peaked early, but the company's management of the crisis was subsequently praised in the media.
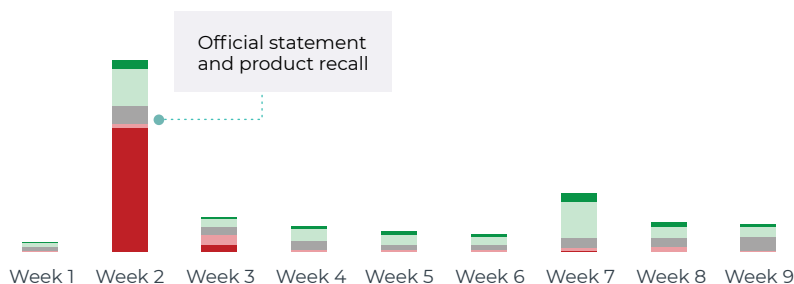
As for the tech company, negative coverage aggregated before they issued any official statement on the matter — and once this was deemed inadequate, negative discussion continued, meaning two subsequent statements were also required.

Only after the product recall seven weeks later did negative mentions gradually die down.

FAVOURABILITY OVER TIME TECH

1st official statement

2nd official statement

Statement on product recall

● Strongly unfavourable
● Slightly unfavourable
● Neutral
● Slightly favourable
● Strongly favourable

Week 1 Week 2 Week 3 Week 4 Week 5 Week 6 Week 7 Week 8 Week 9

FAVOURABILITY OVER TIME RETAIL

Official statement and product recall

Week 1 Week 2 Week 3 Week 4 Week 5 Week 6 Week 7 Week 8 Week 9

Here you can see that only after the retail statement did negative commentary tail off.

The implication of the retail organization's spokespeople successfully mitigated the negative impact of the crisis on the brand's reputation. 13 local representatives delivered the company's messages in the first week of the crisis, demonstrating the brand's willingness to resolve the issue globally, and in a timely manner. This resulted in almost one in three articles on the subject containing the spokesperson's message which therefore resulted in positive messaging which was widely distributed.

The tech company on the other hand, only achieved eight percent spokesperson penetration overall, despite issuing three statements over the crisis period. This meant that the negative conversation rumbled on for nine weeks in total, whereas the retail company's crisis was over in just two weeks and having a one global statement approach was therefore not effective in mitigating the issue.

It can also benefit a comms team to have a unified approach with marketing. The recent lack of chicken at KFC in the UK caused panic across the country and one hell of a busy week at head office.

The decision to place a full-page ad in *The Sun* and *The Metro* meant that their bold apology became the story for a while, instead of the still prominent lack of chicken. This meant that an action from the marketing team could then be used by the PR team to spread the message further, with further statements and updates released on social media.

Huffington Post went as far as to say the firm had demonstrated a *"masterclass in PR crisis management."*

AS EXAMPLES DEMONSTRATE, DECISIVE SWIFT ACTION WITH ALL PARTS OF THE BUSINESS WORKING TOGETHER CAN LIMIT THE TIME A CRISIS CONTINUES TO DOMINATE THE NEWS CYCLE.

WHEN DOES AN ISSUE BECOME A CRISIS?

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY IT?

Like most problems, the first step in dealing with a crisis is to know that you are in one.

Crisis comms professionals often compare the first hour of a crisis to the "golden hour" in medicine, where patients receiving emergency treatment within the first hour of a traumatic injury are far more likely to survive.

However, with the rise of social media, the period in which a crisis can escalate can be much shorter than an hour, meaning that communicators need to rapidly identify when something is more than a typical issue and will escalate into a full-blown crisis.

We asked crisis comms experts how to recognize that you are in a crisis and need to implement your crisis comms plan:

RICHARD JOHNSON
Advisor, **Clarion Communications**

Think of it this way. Issue management is like trying to steer a ship through the icy seas of the North Atlantic ... lots of potential risk which can be avoided if the right course is plotted. Crisis management is what's needed if you hit an iceberg and the ship starts sinking!

If your answer to the following three questions is 'yes' then you can be pretty sure you're entering crisis territory: Has the event or set of circumstances already harmed people, the environment, company/brand reputation or business continuity/performance? Is it already in the public domain? Does it require immediate management attention?

VICTORIA ROSS
Head of Crisis Management, **Karol Marketing**

A crisis is an acute situation that falls outside of normal business continuity and emergency response arrangements. It requires a strategic and often organization-wide response. Typically, it threatens an organization's license to operate; has an actual or potential negative impact on the share price; is perceived by external stakeholders to significantly the safety or well-being of people and/or the environment; and will require the deployment of additional resources (human, capital, equipment).

MARK PINNES
Deputy Managing Director at **Flagship Consulting**

Technically, an issue becomes a crisis when it stops the organization from operating effectively. These few dry words don't capture the emotional roller coaster that can hit your colleagues when the business faces full glare of potential public humiliation.

PHIL HALL
Chairman, **The PHA Group**

Whilst people often do use the phrases 'issue' and 'crisis' interchangeably there are some very distinct differences. In essence an issue is a problem that you have some prior warning of or have been aware of for some time.

From our experience with crisis management, we have seen how various issues can start off as particularly insignificant but can escalate if not dealt with properly. These are the concerns that can then become a major problem.

BE ON TOP OF ISSUES

Of course, as with medicine, prevention is better than cure. Taking steps to deal with issues and therefore avoiding crises altogether is the best way to minimize reputational damage. Our experts further discuss how to ensure issues don't escalate to crises:

JAMIE ROBERTSON
Managing Director, Corporate Reputation, **Ketchum**

First and foremost, it is rare for an issue to escalate to that point. Indeed, both issues and crises are amplified and quickly brought to front of mind at lightning speed, thanks in part to social media; however, the vast majority of issues that arise are addressed within 24 hours. Speed and decisiveness are key to maintaining full control of a situation. An issue is manageable. An issue crosses the threshold into a crisis when the situation overtakes you and you have to try and salvage the situation.

JENNIFER DONAHOE
PR & Social Media Account Director, **Planit Agency**

Identify all the potential crises that could happen to your company. Go beyond industry-specific to include crises companies are facing across the board: harassment charges, cyber hacks and more.

SHIMON COHEN
Chairman, **The PR Office**

While a crisis can come out of nowhere like the proverbial 'bolt from the blue,' organizations can lessen the risk of this happening by creating a crisis aware culture — encouraging staff at all levels to be their eyes and ears, encouraging them meet regularly to discuss and escalate potential problems, and take steps to resolve or mitigate them before they become a full-blown crisis.

PHIL HALL
Chairman, **The PHA Group**

From the work we have done, such escalations originate from poor leadership and poor communication. Many of the cases we have dealt with were avoidable, but the ball has been dropped at some point down the line and mistakes were made which then snow-balled into a bigger issue. Once the media then gets wind of any misgivings, an ava-lanche can ensue and dropping the ball leaves you fighting for your reputation.

I think what goes wrong in those initial hours is you've got people who aren't mobilized, who aren't together in the room trying to make different decisions. This means you're losing time and wasting resource.

So, while crises can come out of the blue, often they are known issues which have not been dealt with and are allowed to escalate. Ideally, you will be able to deal with most issues quickly and satisfactorily to ensure there is no wider organizational damage.

However, if an issue does escalate, identifying when you need to move into crisis mode is critical, as you could otherwise lose valuable time to prepare your response and nullify the situation.

HOW TO ENSURE YOUR CRISIS COMMS PLAN IS UP-TO-SCRATCH

So, now you have decided that you are in crisis mode, it's time to activate your crisis comms plan.

No crisis comms plan will be able to cover every possible scenario, with any attempt to do so creating a document which would make War and Peace look like a comic book.

Instead, your plan should be akin to a piece of carbon fiber; strong and firm enough to be able to provide a consistent method of working, but supple enough to allow you to alter the nature of a crisis response at a moment's notice.

> **As crises are often fluid and fast moving, organizations need to be alert to developments and be prepared to consider their approach as new facts emerge or once they have had a chance to gauge reaction.**
>
> **—Shimon Cohen**

However, he adds: "While there is something to be said for flexibility, consistency is also important – particularly in terms of the tone and messaging in crisis communications. There needs to be a consistent message across all comms output."

As well as being consistent with your brand's tone, there are more basic elements which are a critical part of a crisis comms plan, namely, that it is up-to-date and includes basic information all those working on the crisis need.

> When you're developing a crisis communications plan, my recommendation would be to ensure that it is something that anyone in your team can pick up and use if needed.
>
> **—Victoria Ross**

"A common pitfall is to not include information that 'everyone already knows' such as instructions or passwords for accessing social media channels, or tailoring roles and respon-sibilities too closely to individuals in your team. So often, team members move on and plans aren't updated, or it just happens that a key team member is away on holiday at the time."

Richard Johnson adds: "By their nature, crises are unexpected and unpredictable, and any plan will therefore need to be flexible. Having an agreed set of guiding principles in place, or simple 'do's and don'ts,' can often provide an anchor for communications in otherwise unknown territory.

> **It also helps to have thought through in advance some of the 'what if's' that have a tendency to scupper even the best laid plans, especially as crises have a nasty habit of popping up late on a Friday afternoon. What if the CEO or key spokesperson is not around? Is there a deputy? Are they trained? Is there a deputy for the deputy? What if I need to place a recall notice in key newspapers tomorrow? Is there a template design? Is there a crisis contact at our media buying agency? What if I need to reach key stakeholders quickly? Have I got an up-to-date contact list?**
>
> **—Richard Johnson**

Another key element of ensuring that your crisis comms plan is up-to-scratch is to ensure that it has actually been battle-tested.

While communicators may feel that scenario planning and testing days may take their attention away from day-to-day work, the experience will be invaluable when it comes actually implementing a crisis comms plan, as any flaws can be ironed out prior to being in the live-fire of a crisis situation.

Crisis comms plans are essential reference tools, but the best performing firms role play crises with external consultants to create 'as-real' scenarios that force the company to respond in real time. "You don't want your team doing this for the first time when future of the business is on the line," warns Mark Pinnes.

Jennifer Thomas, head of internal communications at Direct Line Group, adds: "After planning for bird flu — which never came — for two years, there's something to be said for planning for situations in non-crisis time to ensure that you are prepared as you can be. It allows you to get comfortable with the unknown. In a crisis you will never have all the information you need, practice making decisions in that scenario."

As well as preparing your team for a crisis, scenario training sessions can also have the benefit of focusing the minds of your company's senior leadership, as Gavin Megaw, managing director of corporate and brand at Hanover Communications, reveals: "The reason scenario training days are great is because they scare the hell out of the senior team, that's why you use them. You need to ask yourself what's the worst that can happen and then focus on in getting scenario planning done properly to allow you to challenge."

Having a simple, flexible crisis plan which has been battle-tested will ensure that your team has a dependable reference of their roles and responsibilities throughout the crisis and give them confidence that they are navigating the correct course through the early tumultuous moments of a building crisis.

SARA FLOOR
Communications Coordinator, **California State Association of Counties**

We have a crisis plan and attend industry-wide crisis drills almost every other year. It's important to review the plan and make updates on a regular basis. My top tip is to build those media relationships now before a crisis, so you have some trust and solid footing when the rugs pulled out from under the rug.

I'm sorry...

WHY SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD

In a crisis scenario, your organization will be asked to respond publicly to what is going on, and this response will likely need to be assessed by lawyers.

PR pros and lawyers can be like oil and water when it comes to crises. Communicators want to communicate, quickly, while legal teams want to avoid any comment which could come back to haunt it.

This major difference in goals can lead to friction when trying to come up with the best possible response to a crisis. So, how can lawyers and communicators best work together?

"Collaboratively and openly," says Ketchum's Jamie Robertson. "Communications advisors for the most part realize that there are parameters that guide how much information can be transmitted at any one time, but it is equally important to remember that the tone and speed of a response can have a fundamental and material bearing on the long-term impact of the crisis.

"Think back to the way that **Lufthansa dealt with the tragic Germanwings aircraft crash in 2015.** The response was quick, clear and sincere, with direct and obvious commitment from the airline's senior leaders. The result of that approach is that Lufthansa's long-term reputation for safety remains intact and, if anything, its corporate reputation has been enhanced."

CINDY ARCO
PR Manager
Comcast – Florida Region

" Make sure you have legal counsel available to advise in the event of a crisis … I once was working with a client on the crisis response and communications plan … and learned they, despite being a fairly large company with many customers, did not have a lawyer.

However, many communicators believe that lawyers are there to stop them from saying the one word which is essential when a crisis hits: ***sorry.***

As Stuart Thomson, head of public affairs at Bircham Dyson Bell, points out, this is a misconception which comes down to a poor relationship with a legal team:

STUART THOMSON
Head of public affairs
Bircham Dyson Bell

" You often can't pick up a crisis management manual without somebody saying 'the lawyers wouldn't let me say sorry.' I think that's actually down to a lack of effort by the comms people. It's about relationship building and culture building and understanding the roles of others as well as what we want as communicators.

Saying sorry is the obvious example, but there are some things we want to say as comms professionals that in reality we can't say or do. That's not someone being intransigent, somebody being difficult or someone worrying or not worrying about reputation, it's to protect against future liabilities for the organization and also for you. "

SO, WHAT *IS* THE BEST WAY FOR COMMUNICATORS AND LAWYERS TO AGREE ON EXTERNAL COMMS WHICH SATISFY ALL PARTIES?

" As with any working relationship, it comes down to trust, often there is this perception that PRs and lawyers find it difficult to work together in a crisis, but as anyone who has been working in this field for a while will tell you, it's about developing that working relationship ahead of time.

—Victoria Ross "

"By developing an understanding of the parameters that lawyers will be working within and how they generally prefer to work, bringing them in to your planning process and wherever possible trying to work collaboratively from the outset, not just on statements but also on the development of plans and procedures — you will find that it will all make for a smoother working relationship, if and when a crisis occurs."

Thomson adds: "If you go to them and say: 'I need this so I can stick it on Twitter, or a journalist is breathing down my neck, I've got ten minutes,' then they're going to say 'there's my pile of papers, your priority is down the line.' If you don't have a relationship beforehand, frankly you won't succeed."

WHAT IS THE LEGAL VIEW ON WORKING WITH PRs IN CRISIS SITUATIONS? JO SANDERS, DISCUSSES HOW LAWYERS AND COMMS TEAMS CAN WORK TOGETHER EFFECTIVELY:

JO SANDERS
Partner in Reputation and Data law
Harbottle & Lewis LLP

"There can be a tension between communications teams and the legal function within a client, especially if the PR team believe that lawyers will always tell them not to say anything. That's just not the case, and I've never advised a client that they cannot speak at all if they want to.

The key is to ensure that any statements that might be made have been 'stress tested' to ensure that information is accurate, lawful and consistent with the business's position. The legal and communications functions need to support each other in this, and this is especially important in the context of the new data breach obligations.

Also, lawyers with expertise in information and reputation can help PRs – they can offer the legal tools to help challenge a journalist who seems to have been misinformed, has not understood the issues or is approaching a potential article or broadcast with a biased and closed mind.

These are all points to be challenged robustly and responsible journalists can welcome it if it leads to a more accurate report. This type of engagement can help to avoid misinformation appearing in the first place. In the case of serious false or misleading stories, lawyers can also give back up to PRs in seeking corrections or removal.

Where a data breach has happened, new the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into force in May this year requires communications to be made both to the regulator (the Information Commissioner) and also in some circumstances to affected individuals.

So, what the law requires businesses to do is to communicate. The lawyers will need help from the PR experts to shape and guide how to best communicate with those people, who might be clients, customers and employees, in a way which is truthful and effective. GDPR should be bringing lawyers and communications teams even closer together."

Clearly, to avoid any disconnect between legal and comms teams, the pair need a solid working relationship prior to entering a crisis. While comms teams should impress upon their legal counterparts that some form of apology is likely to be required, communicators should also be aware of why lawyers may be hesitant about publishing certain statements.

By working together, both should be able to compose messaging which expresses an organization's sorrow about what has gone wrong without also accepting liability.

ENSURING YOUR SPOKESPEOPLE SUPPORT RATHER THAN SINK

With your crisis plan in full swing and your key messaging agreed with the legal team, you now need someone to deliver it.

This is perhaps the most crucial aspect of all crisis comms. You may have a foolproof plan and secure messaging in place, but any misstep in public could sink any chance you have of coming through the crisis unscathed.

In most cases, the CEO or the organization's leader is going to be the one fronting-up to the public, as they are the face of the organization and maintaining its reputation is one of the role's key responsibilities.

Often, your CEO will have been selected in-part because of their ability to command attention and communicate naturally, so having them represent the company in a crisis is fine. However, there are some CEOs who do not make the best communicators. What do you do in this case?

MARK HUTCHEON
Communications and Brand Director
Williams F1 Group

"

Deciding whether a CEO should front up is all about judgement. Of my last two CEOs, one was an exceptional media operator and was in total command of that part of his job, while the other just completely refused to do it. You can work with both of those.

You've got to know who you're dealing with, if you've got a pretty awful media operator, what's your contingency, is there a deputy or a customer person or more of an operation person who can just talk through the facts, do you just rely on social.

"

However, with the fate of the brand at stake, if your leader really isn't up to the task as a spokesperson, then you must confront the issue and nominate someone else to fulfil the role. While this may be an awkward conversation initially, a leader should be able to recognize that selecting a better person to represent them publicly benefits everyone.

Thomson adds: "Almost the worst type of CEO isn't the one who just does badly, but the one who doesn't realize they're doing badly or won't take any advice. There's not much you can do about that unless you have allies on the rest of the leadership team who can bring some pressure or influence to bear."

Oli Wheeler, founder of THRSIXTY, says: "Always be honest about who your best spokesperson is. A crisis is no time to have an ego. Some people are just better at it than others."

> **ONCE YOU'VE DECIDED ON WHO YOUR COMMUNICATOR WILL BE, IF IT'S NOT THE CEO, HOW DO THEY GO ABOUT COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE?**

> **A TRADITIONAL TACTIC IS TO "BRIDGE;" WHERE INTERVIEWEES USE A KEY PHRASE TO DEFLECT A DIFFICULT QUESTION AND ALLOWS THEM TO "ANSWER" WITH A KEY MESSAGE.**

Gavin Megaw says that this technique is pointless, as it just causes the audience to switch off:

GAVIN MEGAW
Managing director of corporate & brand
Hanover

"I have a real issue with what we have allowed to happen when it comes to interviews. Media trainers come in — they say 'here's a question, for God's sake don't answer it! Here's a message and we're going to bridge away, particularly in a crisis, and focus on our message.

What happens? When you start bridging, people stop listening. We think we're helping people to be smart and clever because they know this bridging technique, but actually it's just creating a vacuum."

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENSURE YOUR REPRESENTATIVE CAN FACE TOUGH INTERVIEWS, ANSWER QUESTIONS AND STILL RELATE KEY MESSAGES?

Megaw adds: "Give them a piece of paper and create three columns. Left hand column questions at the top, middle column trigger at the top, right hand column messages at the top. Three messages you want to communicate in this crisis or the situation you're facing. Get them to write down all the questions they can think of in that column."

He warns: "They'll say that you've gone mad as there are hundreds of questions they could be asked, but there never are. You can bucket them in five or six fundamental areas. The trigger column is a positive trigger which allows you to connect the two things without having to bridge away. You may get difficult questions and you can train them to deal with difficult things, particularly interruptions. If they go in with a mindset of trying to avoid questions, they will lose, and people will stop listening."

Given everything that can go wrong, why should organizations look to their spokespeople in front of the full glare of the cameras, rather than just issue a statement? Because if the spokesperson does their job well, it allows you to get a grip on the story and turn it to your advantage.

During the NHS WannaCry ransomware attack, St Barts NHS put two key spokespeople up for television interviews. As Jon Hibbs, director of communications and engagement at Barts Health NHS Trust details, this allowed the organization to take control of the messaging around the story.

JON HIBBS
Director of communications and engagement
Barts Health NHS Trust

" My advice is to take the opportunity. We put our chief medical officer up on *Channel Four News*, making clear that our hospitals were still open for business and still treating patients. Without that intervention, the story would've been about diverting ambulances to other hospitals.

A few days later we got the Royal London Hospital's top emergency consultant on BBC London News with a similar sort of message and a wrap-up of the first week, detailing how many patients we were still treating every day. Without him appearing, the story would've been about cancelled operations. "

So, getting the face of your organization out there will always be the best way to ensure your message gains resonance, assuming that the message is communicated effectively, in a human way without looking evasive.

USING THE MOST ADVANCED COMMS SOFTWARE TO STAY ON-TOP OF YOUR CRISIS

If you've been able to effectively implement the four steps detailed above then congratulations, you should be some way towards wrestling back control over the crisis that has ensured.

Now, you need to track how your response is being covered in the media and the response of the general public as a whole, both to ensure that your messaging is having its desired effect and also to respond to any issues which splinter from the crisis.

WHEN YOUR ORGANIZATION IS IN THE MIDST OF A CRISIS, IT CAN BE VERY HARD TO MAINTAIN PERSPECTIVE. THE REALITY IS THAT YOUR CRISIS IS LIKELY ONLY BARELY REGISTERING WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC, BUT IN THE EYE OF THE STORM, IT IS VERY HARD TO MAINTAIN THIS PERSPECTIVE.

SO HOW CAN YOU DO THIS?

"By using digital tools and metrics to understand what is happening on the ground," says Gavin Megaw. "Anyone in a crisis will be in a bubble. If you can step back and look at it in the context of what else is happening in the world, it's often a mere blip."

Cision offers you the chance to do exactly this with the **Cision Communications Cloud**®, the most advanced piece of holistic comms technology on the planet. With the Comms Cloud™, you will be able to keep track of every aspect of what is being said about your company during the crisis by monitoring print, online, broadcast and social channels.

The platform also offers easy-to-use analytics which enable you to join the dots across social, digital and traditional media channels to give you a 360-degree view of how your crisis strategy is playing out and whether you need to alter it.

CONCLUSION

When the worst happens, a PR pro can really come into her own if she can position herself to ensure that the crisis can be dealt with as a minor blip, rather than something more catastrophic.

By planning correctly and following the four steps outlined in this white paper: identification, implementation, messaging, and delivery, comms professionals will—in most cases—be able to wrestle back control of the crisis and be able to implement a calm, planned and measured response.

Using technology, such as the Cision Communications Cloud, will then allow communicators to tailor their responses to any new or lingering issues arising in the crisis by letting them see which messages have proved most effective.

Some of the content for this white paper was taken from PR Week's 2018 Crisis Communications conference.

STEP
01
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STEP
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STEP
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STEP
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FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT THE
CISION COMMUNICATIONS CLOUD
CAN DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS:

REQUEST A DEMO