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Crisis Comm & Media Relations E-Newsletter

November 15, 2013

Now in our 11th Year of Publication

Winner of the 2012 Gold "Rocks Award" for Best Newsletter from the Public Relations Society of America - Cleveland Chapter

[Bruce Hennes](#)   [Barbara Paynter APR](#)  
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Our regular office number is 216-321-7774.
However, if your situation is [DEFCON 2](#) (critical and extraordinarily time-sensitive), please call our 24/7 Emergency Crisis Comm Hotline at 216-223-8771.
If necessary, leave a voicemail and we'll get back to you within 30 minutes.



Special Message for Attorneys

It's CLE season. [Click here for more info.](#)



What's the Difference Between Crisis Management vs. Issue Management?

Clients contact us when they sense their organization is about to be immersed in a crisis. In many cases, they aren't facing a crisis; they're facing an issue that may become a crisis if they don't respond appropriately. Good issues management is as important as good crisis management, but it helps to understand the difference so the appropriate response strategy can be developed and executed.

Typically, a **crisis** occurs abruptly, with little or no warning. Product failures, embezzlements, tainted food, workplace violence, explosions, sexual misconduct, accidents and accusations out of the blue tend to fall into the crisis management category.

Issues, on the other hand, are the long-festering threats to an organization's future viability and its ability to achieve objectives - whether those objectives are increased sales, more donors, support from elected officials, better relationships with local citizens or a host of other desired behaviors that can spell future success or failure. Labor relations, elections, employee safety, environmental activism, infectious diseases and creating a groundswell of support for (fill in the blank) tend to fall into the issue management category.

Problems become disasters when executives ignore an issue, which then becomes a crisis.

Case in point: the Penn State-Jerry Sandusky crisis. Penn State Leadership had ample knowledge and warning that Jerry Sandusky was engaged in illicit behavior. Instead of dealing forthrightly with the issue and seizing the role of Vindicator and protecting the young Victims, Penn State found itself in role of Villain, losing decisively in the Court of Public Opinion and, ultimately, in the Court of Law.

A "**Vulnerability Audit**" is an excellent tool for taking an unflinching look to make certain your brand and promise match reality, as well as ensuring you have an operational plan in place to correct those vulnerabilities - and a communications plan in place if you suddenly find yourself in a crisis situation.

A **Crisis Communications Plan** anticipates the crisis situations most likely to occur to your organization, providing a step-by-step guide to communicating your way through that crisis, beginning with the first news cycle. A crisis communications plan empowers the crisis communications response team to respond quickly, so the team knows what to say, where to say, how to say it and whom to say it to, with speed, authority, credibility, accuracy and consistency.

Generally speaking, issues management is a marathon and crisis management is a sprint. I don't know about you, but I'd much rather have time to get stakeholder buy-in and put together and execute a long-term plan than get a call at 4:00 in the morning for a situation demanding instant response.

As Warren Buffett said, "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that you'll do things differently."

Bruce Hennes

Managing Partner

Hennes Paynter Communications

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Footage of JFK Death Plays On in Memory

[Abraham Zapruder and the Evolution of Film](#) *New York Times*

The distance between 1963 and now can be measured by the fact that so few cameras were on the scene then. In retrospect, Zapruder can be seen - and is frequently cited - as a pioneer of citizen journalism, a resourceful amateur who caught something crucial that the

professional news media somehow missed. Now, everyone with a smartphone is a potential Zapruder.

[The Other Shooter: The Saddest and Most Expensive 26 Seconds of Amateur Film Ever Made](#)
Motherboard

[Journalists Recall JFK Assassination 50 Years Later](#) *NewspaperAlum*



Toronto Mayor Out of Control

According to the New York Times article below, the mayor of Toronto, who has already admitted smoking crack, now faces an avalanche of court-released documents "painting a salacious picture of a combative, drunken mayor who assaulted staff members and entertained suspected prostitutes." I've been asked a number of times recently about what advice I'd give the mayor if he were a client. My best advice, knowing only what I know from reading the newspapers, would be for him to step aside temporarily. The mayor doesn't have a PR problem. He has a performance problem. And according to a colleague, "you can't spin your way out of bad behavior" (or perhaps behaviour, since the mayor's from Canada?).

Bruce Hennes

[Council Asks Toronto Mayor to Step Down Temporarily](#)
New York Times



Four Score and Seven Years Ago

[What Writers and Speakers Can Learn From the Gettysburg Address](#) *Poynter*

Nov. 19 is the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, arguably the most famous speech in American history. In his new book *How to Write Short: Word Craft for Fast Times*, Roy Peter Clark devotes the chapter "Surprise with Brevity" to an examination of Lincoln's speech.



The Dos and Don'ts of Pitching Journalists on Social Media

[10 Tips](#) *Mashable*

Social media is a blessing and a curse when it comes to pitching journalists. While Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Foursquare and Instagram present many new opportunities to forge connections, it's easy to step onto inappropriate turf.



Look at Me When I'm Talking To You

[Making Eye Contact Can Hurt Your Argument, Study Finds](#)

Washington Post

If you've ever used that line during a disagreement, you might want to think again. Forcing eye contact when trying to change someone's mind may actually cause listeners to become more stubborn, a new study shows.

Photo Credit: David Shankbone

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focused exclusively on crisis communications. To talk to us about our
crisis management services, please contact us at 216-321-7774.



Exclusive Interviews & Media Hype

[That Exclusive Interview Isn't](#) *Reuters*

The urge to adorn the mundane with the magnificent becomes most intense when a news organization bills an interview with a subject as an "exclusive." This is not to say that exclusive interviews do not exist. Yet most pieces billed as an exclusive interview are usually no more exclusive than a seat in a public commode.



Special Message for Attorneys

CLE Season is Upon Us

Loss of a senior partner or named partner...financial problems...
legal malpractice lawsuits...partner disputes...high profile litigation...
natural disasters...defective products...workplace violence...
compromised client information &
confidentiality violations...criminal accusations

**If you think you, your firm or your client doesn't
need a crisis plan, think again.**

As almost any general counsel of a large, publicly traded, consumer-oriented company will tell you, legal controversies today are tried in the Court of Public Opinion -- at least as much as in

any Court of Law. Every organization, especially large, publicly-traded corporations have much to gain (or lose) by the way a legal controversy is positioned in the media. Because the value of a company's reputation is immeasurable -- and perhaps its largest uninsured asset -- a corporation loses when the brand image is tarnished, even if the corporation technically wins at trial. Furthermore, since most legal controversies are settled prior to trial, the Court of Public Opinion has arguably become the most important battleground affecting not only good will and market share, but legal bargaining power and settlement negotiations. Managing this battleground, therefore, has become integral to many corporations' legal strategies.

Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics, Vol. 22, 2009

Managing the Media: Lawyers & The Press CLE

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Toledo Bar Association

Tom Pletz, Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP
Bruce Hennes, Hennes Paynter Communications

[Register Now](#)

Monday, December 16, 2013

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

Deborah Coleman, Hahn Loeser
Ian Freidman, Friedman & Frey
Bruce Hennes, Hennes Paynter Communications

[Register Now](#)

Tuesday, December 17, 2013

Columbus Bar Association

Scott Campbell, Thompson Hine
Bruce Hennes, Hennes Paynter Communications

[Register Now](#)

Friday, March 14, 2014 *

American Bar Association Leadership Conference

Bruce Hennes, Hennes Paynter Communications

In these days of 24/7 instant news, attorneys and their clients simply cannot wait until a legal decision is rendered. They must be prepared to vigorously defend their situation in a wide variety of venues, as well as media outlets.

In the first portion of this seminar, attorneys will hear about the canons and case law surrounding the relationship between PR activities, PR counsel and the management of the media, often a critical component of case strategy in litigation practice.

The remainder of the seminar includes: establishing & maintaining "control of the message"; when a reporter calls - making your points and not just answering questions; what reporters expect; what newsmakers should expect; defining and creating key messages; reporter's agenda vs. the attorney's agenda; the fundamental differences between print, television and radio interviews and how each require different skill sets; dealing with the press proactively and reactively; "off the record, not for attribution" and other advanced techniques; and

creating relationships with reporters and editors.

Also discussed are the ethical and practical perils of talking with the press in the midst of a client crisis or pending case, causing many lawyers to insist on a strict "no comment" to the press, which the public almost always interprets "no comment" as an admission of whatever charge is made, which may not serve the client's best interests. This seminar will offer attorneys a wide variety of strategic and tactical alternatives to "no comment."

Lawyers & Judges in the Courtroom CLE

Friday, November 22, 2013
Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

[Register Now](#)

Sponsored by the CMBA's Civility and Professionalism Task Force, this CLE satisfies the Supreme Court's biennial requirements for Ethics, Professionalism & Substance Abuse.

Members of the Bar, you are cordially invited to attend a CLE on November 22 designed to improve and advance the delicate dance between lawyer and judge in the courtroom.

The venue for this will not be in a judge's chamber, but at the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association, where lawyers and judges will sit side-by-side and view videotaped vignettes (starring the Bar's best actors and actresses, except perhaps for those from the Court of Nisi Prius) - peppered with participant participation and infused with insightful interchange intended to flesh out both best and worst practices.

"The focus of this CLE is squarely on the expectations that should occur in the courtroom between attorney and judge," said Judges Joan Synenberg and Michael Donnelly, co-chairs of the CMBA's Civility & Professionalism Task Force. "Instead of a lecture-focused CLE, this one is totally interactive, with both comment from the audience, as well as anonymous 'voting' (or 'response technology,' in today's parlance)."

"Let at least one of us be Frank - this will be entertaining and engaging. More important, this CLE will try to provide alternatives when lack of civility happens. Whether it starts with the bench or bar - what do you about it?" added Frank DeSantis and Alan M. Petrov, co-chairs of the Education Subcommittee producing this CLE.

For information about any of the CLEs above, please call Bruce Hennes at 216-321-7774.

For more information about how Hennes Paynter Communications can help train the attorneys in your firm, click [here](#).

** shorter seminars will not include all of the content listed above*



Short Takes

[5 Things About Appearing on the Colbert Report](#) *WNYC.org*

[The Key to Viral Videos](#) *Harvard Business School*

[The Psychology of Online Comments](#) *The New Yorker*

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Upcoming Events & Seminars

We often do presentations about crisis communications for industry trade groups, law firms, bar associations, hospital, education and other professional associations. Often, those events are open to the public or for a fee payable to the sponsoring organization. For a list of upcoming events and seminars, click [here](#) - or contact us to customize one for your organization.



Need a Presenter for Your Next Meeting or Conference?

Are you looking for an eye-opening, inspiring presentation for your next event? If your organization, company or association is searching for something different - a content-packed, entertaining, how-to customized seminar on how to manage the media - then we should talk. Don't just take our word for it - see [where we've talked before](#) and [what other people say](#) about our seminars.



Crisis/Media Training & Coaching

Your organization is in trouble...your CFO has been arrested...the company truck was in an accident...hackers hijacked your database...the pressure is on...the camera crew is at the door....

Do you know how to handle a high-pressure TV interview? Will your messages survive the editing booth? Do you know where to put your hands? What to wear? Do

you look at the camera - or at the interviewer?

It takes a lifetime to build a reputation and only a few seconds to destroy one. In a split second you could find yourself in a position where you need to know how to handle the media or be a public spokesperson. Would you know what to do or how to respond?

More important - do you have the necessary skill set to "manage the message" and advance the cause of your business, agency or nonprofit?

You can be certain the senior executives at virtually all of the Fortune 500 companies have been through media training, working with a media coach to learn how to handle adversarial situations with journalists and stakeholders. Perhaps it's time for you to learn this specialized set of survival skills?



We also offer spokesperson & presentation training and coaching, designed to improve your daily interactions with colleagues, employees, investors, journalists and other outside parties.

Call Bruce Hennes, Barb Paynter and the staff at Hennes Paynter Communications today at 216-321-7774 and talk to us about media, spokesperson and presentation training and coaching for you, your top execs -- or anyone who might have to hold the fort down with a reporter until the appropriate spokesperson can be located. For more about our training services, click [here](#).

Ask us, too, about how we can help you create, implement and test a crisis communications plan. For more information about those service, click [here](#).



**When your organization or reputation is threatened, you need a specialist.
A crisis communications specialist.**



CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS | MEDIA TRAINING | LITIGATION COMMUNICATIONS

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Administrivia

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OUR FAVORITE QUOTE: You simply can't communicate your way out of a situation you've behaved your way into (credit to Don Etling at Fleishman-Hillard for this insight).

WARREN BUFFET'S 4-STEP CRISIS COMM STRATEGY: Get it right. Get it fast. Get it out. Get it over.



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