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Crisis Comm & Media Relations E-Newsletter

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Now in our 12th Year of Publication

Winner of the 2012 Gold "Rocks Award" for Newsletters and the 2013 Gold "Rocks Award" for Crisis Communications from the Public Relations Society of America - Cleveland Chapter

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General Motors - Where Were the Truth-Tellers? *By Bruce Hennes*

According to this week's New York Times:

It was nearly five years ago that any doubts were laid to rest among engineers at General Motors about a dangerous and faulty ignition switch. At a meeting on May 15, 2009, they learned that data in the black boxes of Chevrolet Cobalts confirmed a potentially fatal defect existed in hundreds of thousands of cars.

Over the next five years, the number of people who knew about the continuing problems grew to include employees from sales and marketing, manufacturing and parts, field representatives and public relations. Also in the loop were scores of inside attorneys and outside counsel.

Why did no one stand up and say stop?

[Read more here...](#)



Is Good Journalism Compatible with Daily, Web-Driven Metrics?

[Reporters Playing in Traffic](#) *New York Times*

Growing numbers of newspapers and other news organizations are now incentivizing reporters to use "click-bait" to "drive eyeballs" to their websites. The New York Times David Carr writes: "Journalists who were paid to write when the muse or events beckoned, are now held accountable for the amount of work they produce and the volume of (web) traffic it attracts. Gee, it's almost like news is supposed to be a business or something. The availability of ready metrics on content is not only changing the way news organizations compensate their employees, but will have a significant effect on the news itself."

[A Lot of Top Journalists Don't Look at Traffic Numbers - Here's Why](#) *Hubspot*

Other news organizations are resisting this trend. As the American Journalism Review recently reported, in a piece called "No Analytics for You: Why The Verge Declines To Share Detailed Metrics With Reporters," some editors simply don't want their writers thinking about traffic.



How to Leverage a Breaking News Story

[News Heist](#) *Bulldog Reporter*

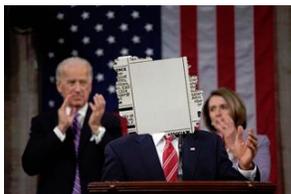
Imagine you're skimming headlines and suddenly you see it—a breaking news story that screams an "in" for your company or client. You know the public and press are waiting for info and insights, so you've got to act fast, or before you know it, the story will pass you by. In the digital age, the media is more eager than ever to hear from sources like you to get articles signed, sealed and delivered in a matter of moments. So it's high time you put a plan in place for reacting promptly to breaking news.



Crisis Communications: Food Safety

[The Story & The Story Teller](#) *Food Safety Magazine*

Crises can require unexpected pairings of resources and personalities in order for people and organizations to survive. In the case of a food recall, a company's food safety manager and its crisis communicator make up the most unlikely of duos. But don't underestimate the importance of this team to your company's ability to survive. Despite the fact that the people who play these two roles may seldom have reason to speak to one another under normal business circumstances, during a food recall they should become the closest of colleagues.



New Technology, New Money, New Newsrooms, Old Questions: The State of the News Media 2014

[State of the News Media Report](#) *Nieman Journalism Lab*

Pew's annual report finds that the transition to digital, and the influx of new money and new ideas, only represents a sliver of activity in the broader media.



Got 60 Seconds?

[A 1-Minute Talk on Giving a 1-Minute Talk](#) WAMC-FM Public Radio
Case Western Reserve University's Dr. Bill Doll outlines a few rules for crafting an engaging oration.



Rumor Management

[Case Study - The Two Jack Burkmans](#) Emergency Management

Gerald Baron writes: "I have said often that today rumor management is job #1 for crisis and emergency communicators. Why? Because you can't be first. No way, no how are you going to beat the passerby with a smartphone in telling your story. And the media will report the passersby stories a million times before you get around to getting approval and telling yours. But, what if the passersby get it wrong? What if the story the media tells isn't quite accurate? What if social media goes crazy with agenda-driven misinformation? You may not worry about it because those things never happen, right?"

News From Hennes Paynter



Hennes Paynter Communications



Thanks to the American Bar Association for inviting us for the 4th year in a row to speak about crisis communications & message management at their Leadership Conference in Chicago. Thanks, too, to [Casemaker](#) for sponsoring this plenary session. There were nearly 400 lawyers there - can you imagine the collective hourly billing rate?

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Cleveland and Akron's National Public Radio affiliates.



[Hennes Paynter Communications](#) is one of the few agencies in the U.S. focused exclusively on crisis communications. To talk to us about our crisis management services, please contact us at 216-321-7774.



It's Not Just What You Say - It's How You Say It

[How to Look Your Best On Camera](#) *Ragan.com*

Few things can make a person feel as awkward as being in front of a video camera. If you or an executive need to go under the lights, these tips can help you look more polished and natural.

Is it time for you to get this type of training? Click [here](#) for more information.



Truthiness

In the spirit of the times, we cannot vouch for the absolute veracity of any of the articles in this section of our newsletter. Which are true? Which are not true? Which are kind of true? You be the judge.

[NCAA Expands March Madness to Include 4,096 Teams](#)

[NASA Simulator Prepares Astronauts for Rigors of an Interview with Larry King](#)

[Netflix Introduces New "Browse Endlessly" Plan](#)

[Breaking News: Running Dogs](#)

[Coyote vs. Acme](#)

[Coyote vs. Acme: The Response](#)

[Clarke & Dawe - How the Financial System Works](#)

[Side Effects](#) by Steve Martin



Short Takes

[Ronald McDonald Endorses Taco Bell? How Can That Be?](#)
Christian Science Monitor

[The 10 Best Sentences Ever Written](#) *The American Scholar*

[10 Classic Car Ads](#) *Fast Company*

[Is Jimmy Fallon's Social Media Success Fueling His Strong Ratings?](#) *Lost Remote*

["Frozen City" Slide Show](#) *The New Yorker*

[Union Protesters, Car Dealership Engage in Sign Battle](#) *PRDaily*



[TAKE THAT, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY!](#) *Romensko.com*



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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 more information, please contact us.

3/31/14 Ohio Assoc. of Secondary School Administrators
4/24/14 Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association
5/2/14 Ohio Association of Public Safety Directors
5/13/14 Summit County Safety Council
5/15/14 Taft Stettinius & Hollister

5/16/14 Chemical & Specialties Management Council
5/20/14 President's Forum - Union Club of Cleveland
5/30/14 Tucker Ellis
8/26/14 Ohio Insurance Institute
12/16/14 Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association

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 crisis communications, reputation management or 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.



Managing the Media: Lawyers & The Press CLE

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, has 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

For more information about presentations and training for attorneys and their clients, please click [here](#).



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 services, click [here](#).



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



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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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