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## Crisis Comm & Media Relations E-Newsletter

April 15, 2014

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

[Bruce Hennes](#)   [Barbara Paynter APR](#)    
[Hennes Paynter Communications](#)  
216-321-7774

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### What If Your CEO is a Poor Communicator?

*By Howard Fencel*

When a crisis significantly impacts reputation or stock price, when the magnitude of crisis is significant enough to bring business to a halt, your key internal and external audiences expect to hear directly from the CEO. But what if your CEO is a poor communicator?

[Read more here...](#)



### Managing a Product Recall

[Crisis Management and Messaging: Best Practices for Effective Recall Recovery](#) *Bulldog Reporter*

Managing a product recall can be a sticky situation and, with consumer safety and brand reputation often hanging on the line, caution is not an asset. Without the right support and expertise, even the smallest recall can turn into a PR nightmare. While crisis consultants can't change their client's circumstances, they can help control the outcome of a product recall by working to communicate the company's commitment to minimizing the damage as quickly as possible.



## Blurred Lines

[Who Cares If It's True?](#) *Columbia Journalism Review*

Marc Fisher writes: For nearly two decades, a culture war has divided journalists. The gap seemed mostly generational, but it always boiled down to a battle over the very purpose of what we do. All the dismissive sniping and straight-out antagonism between old-school defenders of the print craft and the young digital brains propelling start-ups came down to a debate over values: The old guard argued that they were driven by the quest for truth, and by their sense of what citizens need to know to be informed participants in democracy. Reporting was all about locking down the facts and presenting them to readers, who would know best how to take advantage of the light we shined. Digital journalists countered that their way was more honest and democratic—and quicker. If that meant presenting stories before they'd been thoroughly vetted, that was okay, because the internet would correct itself. Truth would emerge through open trial and error.

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL



## Consumers in Command

[A Brand Manager's Guide to Losing Control](#) *Harvard Business School*

Thanks (or no thanks) to social media, brand managers have lost the power to control the perception of their products through carefully orchestrated advertising campaigns. These days, consumers are in command. With an angry tweet, a happy Facebook post, or a parody video on YouTube, they can take charge of public discussions about the brands they use. And while marketers have tried to take part, they've had to face the fact that social media platforms are primarily meant for conversations among consumers, not for one-way brand messages that feel like advertising.



## Social Media Innovation

[For Pro Sports, Public Relations Going High-Tech, Real Time](#)

*National Public Radio*

Gone are the days of waiting for angry letters. Social media allows the NFL, NASCAR and other pro sports leagues to hear from fans in real time. And that feedback has become so important, leagues have built what are essentially social media command centers to monitor trends and engage directly with fans.



## WTF

[The Case for Profanity in Print](#) *New York Times*

Our society's comfort level with offensive language and content has drastically shifted over the past few decades, but the stance of our news media has barely changed at all. Even when certain words are necessary to the understanding of a story, the media frequently resort to euphemisms or coy acrobatics that make stories read as if they were time capsules written decades ago, forcing us all into wink-wink-nudge-nudge territory.



## Scoring More Business Press

[Reporters Want PR Pros to Send More Tweets, Trends & Pics](#)

*Bulldog Reporter*

Given today's brutal competition in the most influential business outlets, it helps to have an inside track on placement in top media. To that end, here are a few tips for turning heads and earning headlines at

A-list business media outlets.

## News From Hennes Paynter



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[Hennes Paynter Communications](#) is one of the few agencies in the U.S. focused exclusively on crisis communications and reputation management. You can reach us at 216-321-7774.



### Four Score and Seven Years Ago

[Learn the Address](#) *PBS*

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, documentarian Ken Burns, along with numerous partners, has launched a national effort to encourage everyone in America to video record themselves reading or reciting the speech. On the link above, you will find scores of actors, politicians, CEO's, media figures and others looking directly into the camera and reciting the words made famous by the 16th President of the United States. Besides an exercise in history, the website above provides side-by-side examples of those who perform the address vs. those who merely read the words. As we often tell our clients, you should never read a speech. You should perform it.



### Creating Virality

[The Most Popular Words Used in Viral Headlines](#) *The Next Web*

There is no one way to create viral content. So many different variables go into a viral post-timing, emotion, engagement, and so many others that you cannot control. There is no viral blueprint. The greatest chance we have to understand viral content is to study the places that do it best, figure out what worked for them, and try it for ourselves.



## Short Takes

[Sun-Times Kills Comments](#) *Poynter*

Major newspaper takes a strong stand until it can fix 'morass of negativity, racism, and hate speech.'

['Honest Trailer' - Gravity, the Movie](#) *Screen Junkies*

This is a movie trailer, the likes of which you've never seen before. Two warnings: 1. Do not watch this on your cell phone screen (watch it on your desktop in full screen mode); 2. Spoiler Alert !

[Cronut Inventor Shows How Not to Apologize for a Mouse Infestation](#) *Slate*

The bakery where cronuts were invented was infested with mouse droppings. Their response? How about a case study in doing everything wrong. #MassiveFail

[Smithsonian Magazine's 2013 Photo Contest](#) *The Atlantic*

['The Wolf of BuzzFeed' Trailer Parodies Website](#) *Poynter*

[Want to See the NSA's Public Relations Press Kit?](#) *Syracuse.com*

Actually, this is not a joke.

[A Chicago Restaurant's Guide to Spotting a Food Critic](#) *Romenesko*

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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 & Specialty 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  
12/17/14 Akron 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.

HENNES PAYNTER  
COMMUNICATIONS



### **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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216.321.7774



**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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Hennes Paynter Communications | Terminal Tower | 50 Public Square, Suite 3200 | Cleveland | OH | 44113