Crisis Communications:
COMMUNICATING IN THE (NEW) REAL WORLD

TAKEAWAYS

WEBINAR AGENDA

1. MITIGATING RISK THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS
2. CONSUMERIZATION OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS
3. BUILDING TRUST THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS CADENCE
4. BEST PRACTICES
5. BASIC CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS
6. HOW TO GET STARTED
7. KEY TAKEAWAYS & RESOURCES
Today’s Speakers

Mandy Arnold
CEO/President

Gavin
marnold@gavinadv.com
717-580-2724

Jay Scott
PR Project Manager

Gavin
jscott@gavinadv.com
484-695-3774

An experienced, award-winning communications firm specializing in marketing communications, public relations and crisis communications for authorities, government and nonprofit clients.

Serving water authorities, public utility services, municipalities, townships, economic development organizations, state agencies and related service companies to manage effective messaging, communications and digital strategies.

Evolving-Influence.com
The state of communications preparedness.

60% of municipalities were not prepared for a crisis when it happened.

Planning is preparing.

Recent survey
- 49% of townships/municipalities use social media
- 90% of those that use social use Facebook
- 61% do not have a social media policy
- 27% noted experiencing a crisis in the past 24 months
- 32% noted being "slightly prepared"
- 38% are "moderately concerned" that a crisis will occur in the coming months

How prepared are you?
COMMUNICATING FOR THE (NEW) REAL WORLD

COMMUNICATION IS TRUST.

Social media sites as pathways to news
% of U.S. adults who get news on each social media site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>% of U.S. Adults</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reddit</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumblr</td>
<td>1%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


PEW RESEARCH CENTER

About two-thirds of Americans get news on social media
% of U.S. adults who get news on social media...

- Never: 32%
- Sometimes: 27%
- Hardly ever: 21%
- Often: 20%
- 66% ever get news on social media

But most social media news consumers expect news there to be inaccurate
% of social media news consumers who say they expect the news they see on social media to be...
BEST PRACTICES

CREATE COMMUNICATIONS FOR SUCCESS

1. BUILD TRUST BEFORE A CRISIS
2. GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT
3. MONITOR MENTIONS
4. RESPOND QUICKLY
5. BE TRANSPARENT
6. PREPARE FOR A CRISIS
7. ADDRESS CRITICISM
8. KNOW YOUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY & WHEN TO PARTNER

UNDERSTAND PITFALLS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

COMMON MISTAKES/MISUNDERSTANDINGS

- First Amendment issues relating to government restrictions on speech
- Use of public resource issues
- Employee use of social media, both on behalf of the agency and personally
- Open meeting law issues
- Public records retention and disclosure issues (PIO)
- Procurement, gift and contract issues
- Equal access/Section 508 (disability access) issues
- Clarity on roles and appropriate content topics
- Terms of Use access
KNOW WHAT PEOPLE WANT: BUILD TRUST

2017 WATER RESEARCH FOUNDATION:

Participants rated updates on issues directly affecting their ability to use your related services and related information as the content they would most like to see from similar organizations on social media.

DRIVE ACTION THROUGH VISUALS

87% OF COMMUNICATIONS ARE VISUAL

Increase the likelihood of information retention and engagement by using visuals to communicate your message on social media.
EDUCATE & INFORM

Leverage video to speak directly to your publics and control the message.

Consumers retain 95% of a message when viewed in a video, compared to 10% when read in text.

SHOW THE STORY

Municipalities often have complicated stories to tell. Before and after photos tell complex stories at a glance.

Riverside Public Utilities posted these before and after photos of a blown hydrant and subsequent repair to its Facebook account. These visuals tell a complex story in an instant.
HUMANIZE YOUR ORGANIZATION

City of Evanston, IL promoting local art contest.

GATHER FEEDBACK

The City of Redlands retweeting the SamTrans online survey on public transit fares.
ADDRESS ISSUES & MISINFORMATION DIRECTLY

BUILD NETWORKS

BUILD SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS:
- Local elected officials
- Emergency management agencies, utilities, weather services and related organizations
- Local news outlets
- Chambers of Commerce and prominent businesses
- Civic organizations and their leaders
- Local celebrities
- Sport teams

Wayne Township Fire Department @Waynetwpfire · Jun 11
We are proud to announce that the Wayne Township Fire Department is one of the first 10 Fire Departments in America to join the RING Neighbors community. Our relationship with RING Public Safety expands the reach of our public safety messaging and incident notification.
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY BASICS FOR EMPLOYEES

• Establish a social media policy and include it in your training (HR, onboarding and staff meetings)
  • Revisit your policy yearly
• Establish your brand voice and goals
• Set budgets
• Set roles by staff member
• Establish a process for issues management and crisis communications

HAVE A SOCIAL POLICY FOR SUCCESS

• Limit the purpose of the site to serve as a mechanism for communication between the agency and the public
• Define content purpose
• Have a Terms of Use/Service Policy
• Don’t delete postings simply because they may be critical of the agency or officials
• Respond with a sense of common humanity and humor if the agency makes a mistake in a social media post
PLAN AND PRACTICE BEFORE A CRISIS HITS.

PLANNING IS PREPARING.

COMMUNICATION BASICS
CONTROL THE MESSAGE & BE THE RESOURCE

1. BE FIRST
2. BE RIGHT
3. BE CONSISTENT
4. BE CREDIBLE

Chaos creates chaos and contributes to the immediate magnitude and aftermath of a crisis.
COMMUNICATION BASICS

THE MESSAGE SHOULD BE:

1. ACCESSIBLE
2. ACCURATE
3. TIMELY
4. REPETITIVE

CRISIS PLAN ESSENTIALS: GETTING STARTED

• Create your plan with community partners
• Plan for diverse communication needs of your publics
• Review specific communication needs of your township
• Consider all audiences (i.e. facilities, frontline staff, health providers, administration, community partners, media, influencers, etc.)
CRISIS COMM PLAN ESSENTIALS: PLAN CONTENTS

- Scope/definition of crisis for implementation
- Decision-making authority/roles for implementation
- Standard procedures/operational procedures
- Crisis communications task force
- Standard communications plan/tactics
- Approval of communications/message
- Immediate response procedures and points of contact (contact lists/distribution)
- Media response protocols (immediate)
- Required notifications, reporting and monitoring
- Tools, resources, templates and brand standards
- Ongoing communications
- Conclusion of crisis and reporting/tracking
- Plan updates/testing

IN ACTION: FIRST 1-3 HOURS

- Assess issue and what public audiences need to know
- Draft speaking points, statements and information
  - Plan for translation services
  - Contact important partners, administration and teachers
  - Communicate with publics directly
    - Social media
    - Website
    - Text message
    - Phone call alerts (One Call System)
- Notify media
- Host public information event
IN ACTION: FIRST 4-24+ HOURS

- On-site/24-7 access communication
- Create communication teams
- Monitor social media and respond quickly
  - Monitor your media and others
- Provide immediate point of contact for media
  - Be responsive and coordinate access to information

COMMUNICATIONS TIPS

- Provide single spokesperson
  - Supporting experts as needed
  - Establish who is speaking to what information
- Establish speaking points on the facts for everyone
  - Be concise and keep it simple
- Never speak to assumptions or hypotheticals
  - “We don’t have that information right now, but we will be providing updates as soon as possible.”
  - “I cannot speak to hypotheticals; what I can tell you is XXX”
  - “I would like to put you in touch with XXX who can provide you the correct information.”
MESSAGE MAPPING

Communicating clearly is essential to successful management of a crisis. Message Mapping is a process tool for developing a consistent message under pressure.

Consider: audience and essential action needed.

- State the situation
- Provide a factual statement on activities
- Supporting fact
- What you want people to do/know

MESSAGE MAPPING: SAMPLE

- State the situation
- Provide a factual statement on activities
- Supporting fact
- What you want people to do/know

We can confirm that we have had three staff in the Smithfield Township Office test positive for COVID-19 this week. These employees were sent home immediately upon showing symptoms and were then tested. All individuals who came in contact with these employees are being quarantined. The Township office has closed for a thorough sanitization cleaning in accordance with CDC recommendations and will reopen with limited services on Monday, August 25. We take the health and safety of our employees and community very seriously and will update the public as appropriate, which will also be posted on our website at SmithfieldTownship.gov.
BEST PRACTICES

1. Stress test your plan
2. Review with community partners
3. Weave safety messages into everyday communications
4. Build networks
5. Have a mobile-friendly website
6. Have a “dark site” ready
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hire a communications expert versed in crisis communications
- Establish a social media policy and channels
- Develop, test and revisit a crisis communications plan
- Implement communications plans to build trust before a crisis happens
- Establish communications standards and processes
- Build relationships with partners

Stay in Touch

Mandy Arnold
CEO/President
marnold@gavinadv.com 717-580-2724
Additional Resources/Slides

SHOW ACTIONS

Consider how your visuals can evoke the desired response. Show actions and use video to explain details.
WHAT TO EXPECT

DEPENDING ON THE SIZE OF YOUR MUNICIPALITY/GOV ORGANIZATION, YOU WILL SPEND:

8-80 Hours per week
TOOLS

sproutsocial

Hootsuite

PLAN TO ADVERTISE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Average Cost to Reach 1,000</th>
<th>Average # of Clicks to Website</th>
<th>Average Cost Per Click to Website</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>$719</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27 cents</td>
<td>Gotter 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>$9 to $11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25 to 30 cents</td>
<td>Parsons 2016</td>
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GOOD READS

- Institute for Local Government
  - http://www.ca-ilg.org/social-media-strategies
- Marin County Case Study - SocialMedia