STRATEGIC RESEARCH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS – A BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR PR PROFESSIONALS

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Thomson Reuters Strategic Research Reports are designed to assist C-level executives, investor relations departments, corporate strategy and development teams, treasurers, and public relations and corporate communications professionals with insightful, timely, and relevant material designed to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Be familiar with the inner workings of all company departments. PR teams that are up to speed on this front will be able to respond to a crisis in a more efficient manner.
- Brainstorm with your team to determine possible crisis situations. Then write boilerplate responses. In an actual crisis, these boilerplates may be modified to fit the situation.
- Determine the appropriate person or group to answer or respond to a particular category of crisis. For example, the CFO might be a logical point of contact to talk about a financial issue, while an engineer might be better suited to discuss product related issues.
- When a crisis hits, always consult with the management team as soon as possible to get their take on the situation.
- Always keep legal on speed dial.
- Make sure the message being conveyed is clear and concise.
- Make certain that all responses disseminated by the company are consistent and that there are no discrepancies.

THOMSON REUTERS TIP SHEET

Crisis Communications Checklist for Public Relations

BEFORE A CRISIS HITS

- ☐ Assess the potential range of "crises" for the company and prepare statement boilerplate and disaster plans.
- ☐ Determine spokespeople and backup spokespeople in the event of a crisis.
- ☐ Establish a "Rapid Response Team."
- ☐ Prepare "dark pages" for your company's web site to address potential crisis situations.
- ☐ Maintain ongoing, open communications with the media to ensure best credibility.

AFTER A CRISIS HITS

- ☐ Assess the situation quickly, and keep senior management in the loop.
- ☐ Draft a message for a media audience; collaborate with IR and legal teams.
- ☐ Be sure the message acknowledges the problem, and includes the company's plans for addressing/resolving the crisis. Use simple, straightforward language.
- ☐ Activate pre-prepared "dark pages."
- ☐ Utilize video conferencing and webcasts to get the message out and reassure stakeholders.
- ☐ Be prepared to respond to press questions in a timely fashion.
- ☐ Release a press statement via newswire.

FULL REPORT

To inquire about the full report, please contact **Glenn S. Curtis** at glenn.curtis@thomsonreuters.com or 646-822-6402.

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