Crisis Communications for Not-For-Profits Resource Guide

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Crisis Communications for Not-for-Profit Organizations
Resource Guide

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Professional Not-For-Profit Resources

Guidestar.org
www.guidestar.org

Ensure that your organization's profile is up to date. Transparency can help protect your not-for-profit's reputation. The Guidestar blog addresses many issues, including public relations, social media, and crisis communications, such as the post "Is Your Nonprofit Prepared for a Crisis?" [http://trust.guidestar.org/2013/10/10/is-your-nonprofit-prepared-for-a-crisis/]. There are resources for purchase.

Foundation Center
http://foundationcenter.org

Foundation Center is a directory sharing details about nonprofits. Make certain your profile information is correct. Searching "public relations," "social media," or "crisis communications" will bring up helpful articles, essays, books, and worksheets. There are free abridged online books, such as "Promoting Issues and Ideas: A Guide to Public Relations for Nonprofit Organizations" [http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/onlinebooks/booth/text.html].

Association of Fundraising Professionals
www.afpnet.org

Most of the helpful resources on this member site are "members only," but AFP offers free access to some articles. Here is an *oldie but goodie* on "hijacking" your homepage to deal with a crisis [http://www.afpnet.org/ResourceCenter/ArticleDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=3622].

Council for Advancement and Support of Education
www.case.org

CASE is a membership organization for school advancement professionals that makes limited resources available online, including a large collection of university crisis communication plans, such as this plan from Case Western Reserve University for "Social Media in the Event of an Emergency" [http://www.case.edu/umc/marketing/social-media/#emergency].

Chronicle of Philanthropy
https://philanthropy.com

A dedicated news site and published journal focusing on not-for-profits, The Chronicle of Philanthropy has an online Communications and Marketing section featuring tools that address many public relations topics for nonprofits [https://philanthropy.com/resources?topics=communications+and+marketing].

Online Social Media Monitoring

Google Alerts
www.google.com/alerts

Google Alerts are email updates with the latest relevant online Google search results based on your queries. Enter a search query you wish to monitor. You will see a preview of the type of results you'll receive. Google Alerts can allow you to:
- monitor a developing news story
- keep current on topics relevant to your nonprofit
- receive the latest updates on things that impact your organization
- stay virtually connected to your stories

Meltwater
www.meltwater.com/products

Meltwater's Media Intelligence Platform scans billions of conversations and extracts what's relevant, allowing you to "listen" via Media and Social Media Monitoring to track response, see your impact, and gain strategic insights. It's a great tool for measuring the effectiveness of public relations campaigns.

Critical Mention
www.criticalmention.com/media-monitoring/

Critical Mention offers a comprehensive web-based real-time media monitoring service that allows you to search, track, and analyze vital information from television, radio, online news, and social media.

Cision Media Monitoring
www.cision.com/us/pr-software/media-monitoring

Cision monitors social media, broadcast and video, print and online media to help you understand the impact of your story by knowing what people are saying about it with Cision's social and traditional media monitoring tools.

Hootsuite Pro
www.hootsuite.com

Hootsuite Pro lets you manage your organization's social media presence across all social networks. You can build and engage audiences, execute multiple campaigns, collaborate with team members, and measure the performance of your social media with Enhanced Analytics Reports.
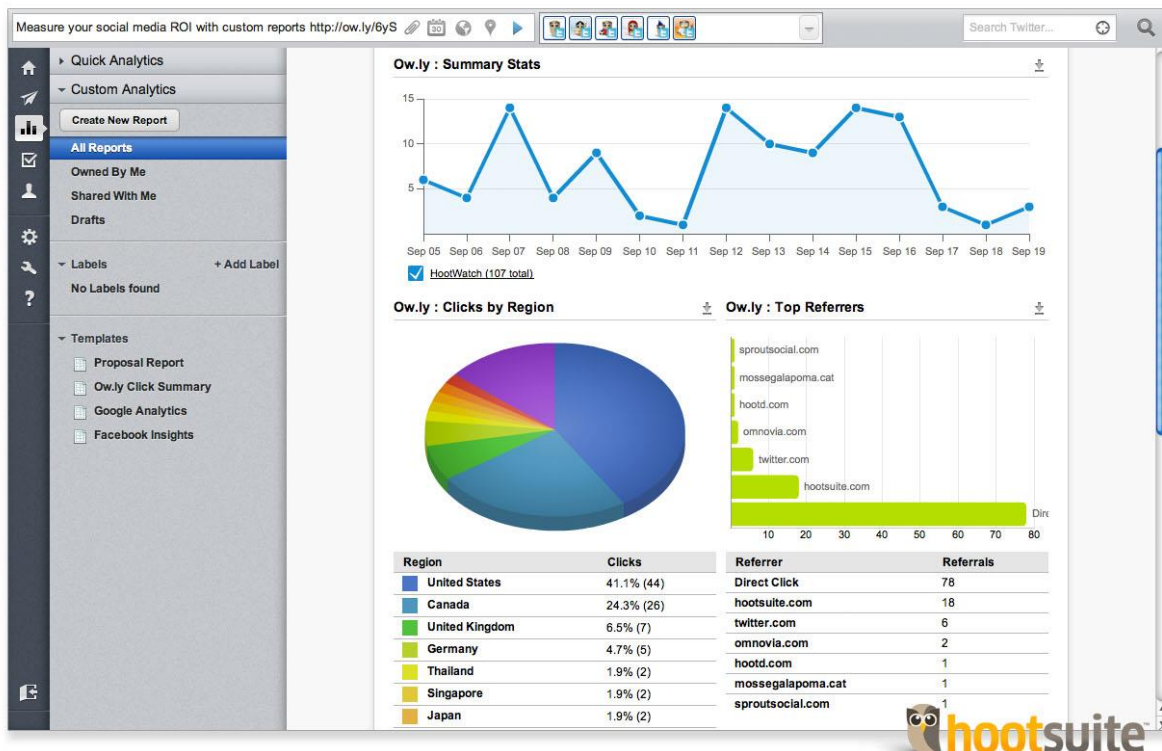
Professional Public Relations Tools & Services

PR Newswire
www.prnewswire.com

From simple press releases to full-blown PR campaigns, PR Newswire offers full-service news release distribution, with end-to-end content and news production services. PR Newswire can deliver news straight to credentialed journalists, bloggers, and key influencers on a local, state, regional, or global level. There are options for amplifying with image, video, audio, and landing pages, and the ability to track results and manage the process.

PRWeb
www.prweb.com

PRWeb press releases are another option to help your organization get reach and publicity on the web across search engines, blogs, and websites in just a few simple steps.

Cision Press Release Distribution
www.cision.com/us/pr-software/press-release-distribution

Cision's Press Release Distribution software allows you to distribute all of your content—press releases, articles, photos, videos, infographics, and more via local or international networks.

Public Relations Society of America
www.prsa.org

PRSA is the world's largest and foremost organization of public relations professionals. The association provides professional development opportunities, sets standards of excellence, and upholds principles of ethics for its members and the public relations profession.

Colorado Nonprofit Association
www.coloradononprofits.org

Visit this organization's virtual Help Desk & Resources section to download a Communications Toolkit, Crisis Communications Toolkit, and Social Media Toolkit.

Strengthening Nonprofits: A Capacity Builder's Resource Library
www.strengtheningnonprofits.org

This website provides a collection of e-learning lessons and guidebooks as a resource for nonprofit capacity builders nationwide on many topics, including "Managing Crisis: Risk Management and Crisis Response Planning."

Nonprofit Quarterly
http://nonprofitquarterly.org/

Branded as "innovative thinking for the nonprofit sector," NPQ is not only considered an excellent resource for all things nonprofit, but is also a good source for webinars.

BoardSource
www.boardsource.org

A national organization focused exclusively on nonprofit governance, BoardSource is the resource publisher that is relied on by institutions offering graduate not-for-profit education. Almost every book or guide includes a section or chapter on communications.

Crisis Communications for Not-for-Profit Organizations
Public Relations Crisis Planning Worksheet

Not-for-Profit Organization Name: _____

Prepared by: _____

A. Initial public relations objectives: Describe what could happen to your organization or your clients that could result in a crisis.

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B. Target audience: Who is likely to be impacted or concerned about a crisis related to your organization or client?

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C. Target media contacts: Who in the general or nonprofit-focused media is likely to care about a crisis in your practice areas? (This can also be expanded to include all media in your geographic service area.)

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D. Consequences: Consider what can be gained or lost with your crisis becoming known to a larger audience.

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E. Top-tier audiences: Are you in a direct-service arena or are you a grant-making foundation or a policy organization? How might that impact mass media communications and one-on-one calls to clients, employees, or government authorities?

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F. Credibility and expertise: Depending on potential crisis scenarios, who in your organization will be the most trusted person to communicate the crisis?

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G. Monitoring: Decide on what resources or services you will use to monitor how the crisis is being publicized.

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H. Staffing: Decide who will handle the logistics of the plan, whether it's done in-house or with an outside agency or consultant.

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I. Inventory of public relations tools: List all your existing communication channels that you might use in the event of a crisis (e.g. newsroom at your website). Be sure to include corporate social media accounts such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

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NOTE: This worksheet is intended to give Not-for-Profit Organizations a place to start thinking about a crisis communications plan. However, it's recommended that your organization:
    1. Give all employees a communications policy to sign.
    2. Include in that policy the organization's social media rules.
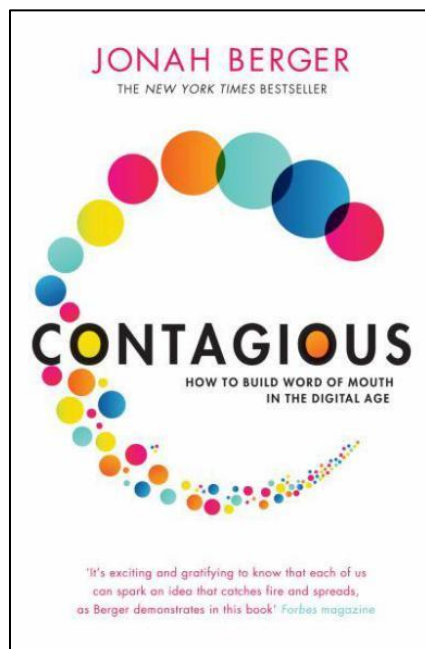
Recommended Reading

#Brand Vandals
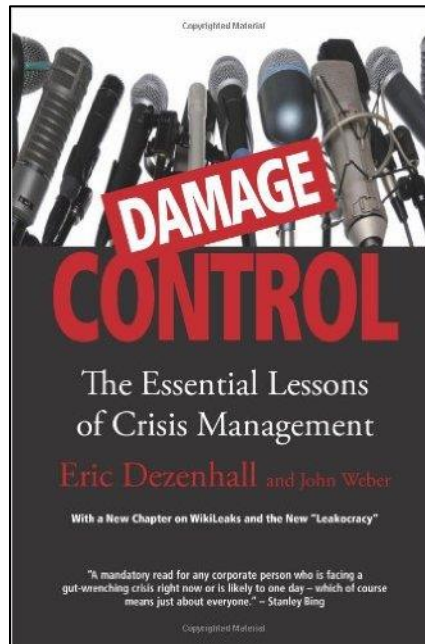*by Steve Earl and Stephen Waddington*
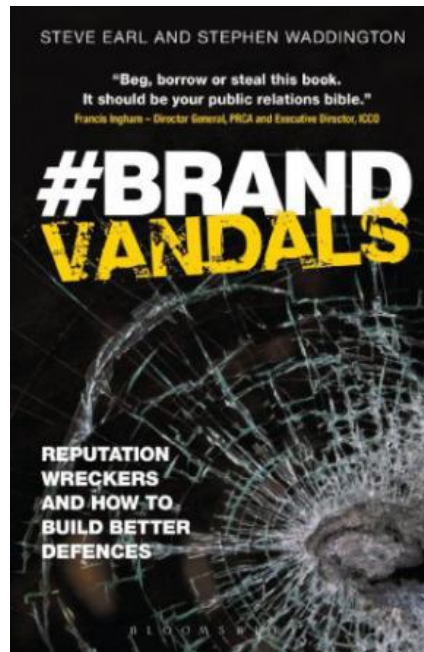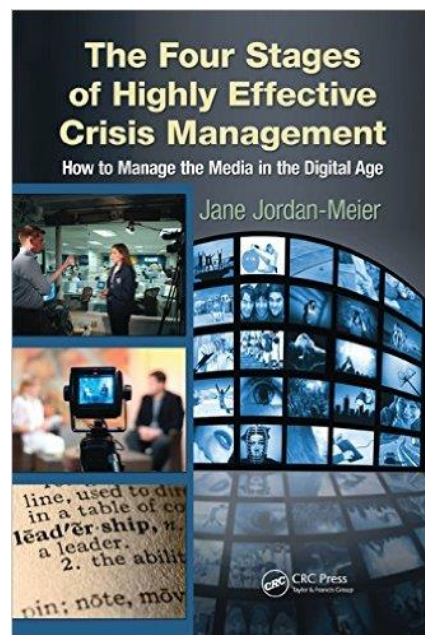

Contagious
by Jonah Berger

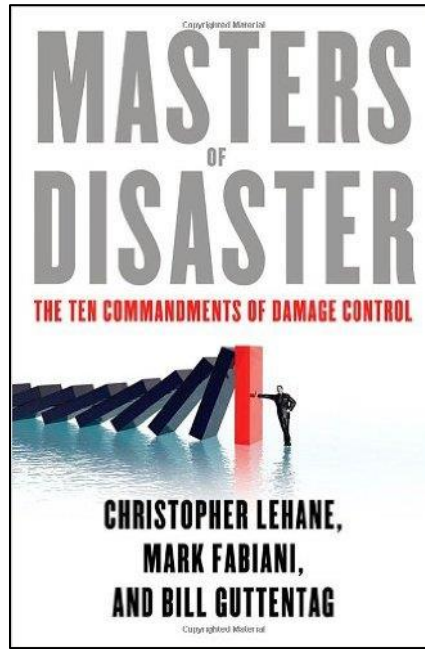**Damage Control**
by Eric Dezenhall and John Weber

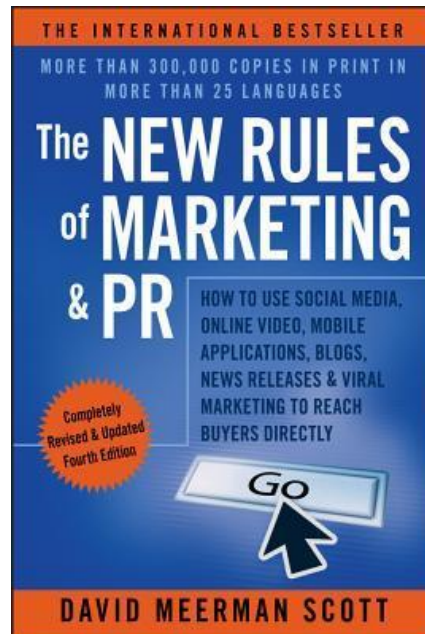**The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management**
by Jane Jordan-Meier

Masters of Disaster
by Christopher Lehane, Mark Fabiani and Bill Guttentag

The New Rules of Marketing & PR
by David Meerman Scott

Using Public Relations Strategies to Promote Your Nonprofit Organization
by Ruth Ellen Kinzey