

Media Relations in a 24/7 World



METROLINX

An agency of the Government of Ontario

Media Relations in a 24/7 World

 *Information, whether true or false travels at the speed of a mouse click and opinions are formed—and reputations damaged—in the time it takes to read 140 characters or download an image or view a video.*

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Media Relations & Issues Management

Metrolinx Metrics 2015:

- 2,300 media calls, 18% increase over 2014
- 500 million media impressions, 25% increase
- Overall tone of media is 84% positive or neutral

Issues and events:

- UP Express launch & start of operations
- TBM move & Eglinton Crosstown progress
- PanAm & Para PanAm Games
- GO Bus rollover & Union Station fatality
- Suspicious package at Exhibition GO Station



Social Media in 2015

- 1.2 million views on Flickr—a new record!
- Unprecedented progress that captured social media attention:
 - Launch of the UP Express (2,603 mentions and 17.5 million impressions on social)
 - The Eglinton Crosstown TBM move (almost 200 mentions and 941,000 impressions)
 - ... not to mention social buzz generated by Turbo the Goat (4 million impressions), GO Bear (over 100 retweets & likes on Hotline Bling video), and a wayward raccoon.

What does issues management mean?

- Proactively managing:
 - Identification
 - Analysis
 - Tracking and Reporting
 - Response to issues that can impact the reputation of the organization, its divisions and executive members.
- Requires a coordinated team effort.

How do you identify issues?

- Staff positions – issue management should be included in job descriptions
- Annual plans and divisional communication plans should always include identification of issues & mitigation strategies
- Forward thinking – every public facing organization should have a crisis communication plan
- Devote resources to issue management training

How do you track issues?

- **Social media** – follow the influencers; follow the conversation
- **Traditional media** – clippings services & media analysis
- **Industry news** – track the trends & experiences of other library systems
- **Post incident debriefs** – what worked, what didn't work

What do you do if you track an issue?

- Have you developed your reporting requirements: Who do you notify? Who is responsible for developing response?
- When do you need to develop a strategy & response?
- Who develops it? How?
- How do you prepare ahead of time?
- Don't forget to keep staff informed


Crisis Communications 101


- **Prompt** – even if just a holding message
- **Open & honest** – be as transparent as possible
- **Empathic** – always lead with a feeling message
- **Inform** – keep the public/customers informed
- **Be visible** – be available to media
- **Debrief** – review/document the incident with response team & learn/improve



Importance of social media

- **Prompt** – even if just a holding message
- **Open & honest** – be as transparent as possible
- **Empathic** – always lead with a feeling message
- **Inform** – keep the public/customers informed
- **Be visible** – be available & responsive on social media
- **Debrief** – review/document the incident with response team & learn/improve

 **GO Transit** @GOtransit · Apr 28
2/2 Continue to check gotransit.com for service updates.
[View Tweet activity](#)

 **GO Transit** @GOtransit · Apr 28
We wish to confirm that there has been a tragic accident that has resulted in a fatality at Union Station. Police on site investigating 1/2
[View Tweet activity](#)

 **GO Transit** ✓
@GOtransit

LSW: Union Station 00:43 -
Aldershot GO 01:51 #GOtrain is
estimated to be delayed 30-35
minutes from Union because of an
earlier fatality,

12:52am · 16 Dec 2015 · CCMSTwitterChannel



Brutal murder in a local library

How did the Library handle it?

- Holding message with reporters & social media - immediately
- Determined strategy & spokesperson – within 30 minutes
- Key messages developed – within an hour
- Q&As developed, follow up with media & social media – within 12 hours
- Regrouped with full SMT – 16 hours
- Internal message to staff – 24 hours
- Debrief – 72 hours



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