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Media Relations Litigation Communications
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Crisis Comm & Media Relations E-Newsletter February 15, 2009

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1. Good Night & Good Luck

Edward R. Murrow, as channeled by David Strathairn, on the subject of television and radio:
<http://tinyurl.com/aqew5l>

2. Obama's First Press Conference

Did Obama duck the tough questions? Read how four media trainers grade the president's first news conference, with quick tips for executives facing the press. Bulldog Reporter
<http://tinyurl.com/djasnn>

3. Going on the PR Offensive

The peanut butter crisis is wreaking havoc among millions of scared consumers who love to eat this product. People have died and thousands have reported related illnesses. It sure seems that every day a lot of misinformation is reported by media (and throughout the blogosphere) about the Peanut Corporation of America (the culprit) and others who might be involved. The net result is that the peanut butter industry has been severely hurt. So how have Jif, Skippy and Peter Pan, the three main competitors in this industry, changed their approach to deal with this dangerous situation? Measuring Up Blog
<http://tinyurl.com/da6smt>

4. In the Spotlight and Seared by the Glare

Kennedy, Blagojevich and Palin missteps offer tough communications lessons. The Washington Post (free registration required) <http://tinyurl.com/dzrbpe>

5. If You Live/Work in the Greater Cleveland Area

Brent Larkin, long-time Plain Dealer Editorial Page Director, will soon retire. Elizabeth Sullivan, currently on the PD's Editorial Board, has been named to take Brent's place and fellow Editorial Board member Joe Frolik has been promoted to Chief Editorial Writer.

The Press Club of Cleveland is pleased to present two of Ohio's most-influential journalists at a "Meet the Media" luncheon on Tuesday, March 3 (Snow Date: March 9). This event will take place at Nighttown (<http://www.nighttowncleveland.com>), home of The Press Club and Cleveland Journalism Hall of Fame, in Cleveland Heights. For full details about this luncheon, please go to <http://tinyurl.com/d8txec> This event is open to non-members. Seats are strictly limited, so early reservations are strongly recommended.

If you have a business or personal interest in public affairs, or a client with similar interests, this is a terrific opportunity to meet and greet the PD's new Editorial Board leadership team in an intimate and convivial manner.

For specific questions, call Bruce Hennes, event chair, at 216-321-7774 or by email at hennes@crisiscommunications.com.

The Press Club of Cleveland sits at the intersection of the working media, public relations and corporate communications. Membership is open to any of the aforementioned people, as well as anyone with an interest in the media. For information about The Press Club of Cleveland or to read a copy of our monthly publication, The Byliner: <http://www.pressclubcleveland.com>

6. Has Michael Phelps' Reputation Gone Up In Smoke?

As Michael Phelps is learning the hard way, even Olympic Gold can quickly lose its luster in the midst of a reputational crisis. With tens of millions of dollars in endorsements at stake, one of the greatest athletes of this

generation must now swim upstream against the growing perception among parents that he may not be the best role model for their children. The jury's still out as to whether getting caught on camera smoking marijuana is going to sink Phelps' celebrity spokesperson potential before it's ever fully realized. But he would be well advised to take some immediate crisis communications steps to salvage his reputation – and future endorsements. Levick Strategic Communications Bulletproof Blog <http://tinyurl.com/bsc9d3>

7. Propaganda

Propaganda is the dissemination of information aimed at influencing the opinions or behaviors of large numbers of people. As opposed to impartially providing information, propaganda in its most basic sense presents information in order to influence its audience. Propaganda often presents facts selectively (thus lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or gives loaded messages in order to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. The desired result is a change of the attitude toward the subject in the target audience to further a political agenda. To read a wide variety of opinion and examples on this subject, check out Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda>

For a shorter, more concrete and visual example of propaganda, check out this video clip from John Stewart and the Daily Show: <http://tinyurl.com/al29ph>

8. Twitter Experiment

David Pogue, tech writer for The New York Times, did an interesting and illuminating experiment using Twitter. New York Times (free registration required) <http://tinyurl.com/cr3cgu>

9. Responding to Online Criticism

When it comes to managing your company's (or individual) reputation online, responses to criticism should follow pre-determined action list so responses are both consistent and professional.

<http://tinyurl.com/by78uj>

10. Straight Talk in Tough Times

If you're concerned about how the economic crisis will affect your business, it's likely that your employees are concerned too. They're probably questioning the stability of the organization, wondering what kinds of cutbacks are being considered and calculating where they rank in terms of possible layoffs. The way that you communicate with your employees during difficult times has a tremendous impact on morale, engagement and productivity. If you leave their questions and concerns unaddressed, employees lose faith. In the absence of information, they fill the vacuum with speculation and rumor that, while usually incorrect, is nonetheless damaging. The result can be a distrustful, disengaged work force that reduces effort and commitment just when you need their dedication the most. How do you stop — or better yet, prevent — this cycle? PR Tactics and The Strategist Online <http://tinyurl.com/d7v78z>

11. Super Bowl Ads

Grab that popcorn. Settle down in front of that new widescreen TV you bought. Here are the Super Bowl ads. All 53 of them. <http://tinyurl.com/aeo9et>

12. Our Permanent Collection

A. Our favorite blog on the subject of public and citizen preparedness. Undoubtedly, you will find it helpful to you, your family, your business, nonprofit, government agency and your community when it comes to preparing for emergencies -- big and small: <http://incaseofemergencyblog.com/> Written by John Solomon, he's also the writer of "It's An Emergency – We're Not Prepared," which can be read here (free registration required): <http://tinyurl.com/5twym9>

B. Our favorite radio program is Homeland Security Inside & Out. This is a weekly broadcast on the internet featuring interviews with key figures in Homeland Security, crisis and disaster response. The weekly program can be accessed live via their website, as a podcast email sent to you and listenable on your computer at your leisure or as a free, subscribable podcast, using your iTunes software. For more info: <http://tinyurl.com/5pca64>

C. Our favorite book about Homeland Security is "Our Own Worst Enemy: Asking the Right Questions About Security to Protect You, Your Family, and America" by Randall Larson, director of the Institute for Homeland Security. The book provides a solid, practical, logical approach to personal security for all Americans and explains why the government is not prepared to help us in a time of crisis. For more info: <http://tinyurl.com/5ad3dz>

D. As we learned on 9/11 and after Hurricane Katrina, when landline and cell phone telephone lines go down or are jammed to overcapacity, short text messages (150 characters maximum) can often get through. This is because person-to-person voice phone calls basically require an "open pipe" while text messages occupy very little bandwidth and can be "lined up" for delivery. The easiest way to send a text message is cell phone to cell phone (for instructions on how to do so, we suggest you find a 13 year old – they all appear to be quite capable of texting).

You can also use your computer or Blackberry-type device to send a text message, also known as SMS, to a cell phone, just like a regular email. Here are the exact email addresses you can use to send computer-to-cell phone emails (the x's represent the cell phone's area code and phone number, without the "1" and without any dashes):

- AT&T xxxxxxxxxxx@txt.att.net
- Nextel xxxxxxxxxxx@messaging.nextel.com
- Sprint xxxxxxxxxxx@messaging.sprintpcs.com
- T-Mobile xxxxxxxxxxx@tmomail.net
- Verizon Wireless xxxxxxxxxxx@vtext.com
- Virgin Mobile xxxxxxxxxxx@vmobl.com

For a complete list of all cell phone company "texting domains", type in <http://sms411.net>.

WARNING: 1. Depending upon the recipient's cell phone contract, they may pay a few cents to send or receive a text message; 2. Sometimes computer-to-cell phone text message are nearly instantaneous, sometimes they can take hours to go thru the system. Best bet: we suggest you try sending a few computer-to-cell phone text messages now – before you need to do this in an emergency.

E. It's been seven years the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and three years since the issuance of The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States Report. Are we safer today? The authors of that official report think the answer is no. You can read what they recently wrote here: <http://tinyurl.com/25zzxz>

F. Want a short refresher on crisis communications? Check out this short, six-minute video of Bruce Hennes on the web: <http://tinyurl.com/ybfdeq> If you'd like to post something similar on your own website,

Steve Petti is the guy to call. For more info: <http://www.newimagemedia.com>

G. Dan Hanson at GreatLakesGeek.com, interviews Bruce Hennes:
<http://www.greatlakesgeek.com/podaudio/bios/brucehennes.htm>

H. Make a Plan: With ready.gov/business, the business you've worked so hard to build can be as prepared as possible should a disaster strike. Download free, easy-to-use checklists, templates and other resources to help you develop an affordable plan. Protect your business or life's work - start or update your plan today. Becoming a success is hard work. Protecting it isn't. Here's how: <http://www.ready.gov/business/>

I. Emergency & Crisis Info: Do you live in Greater Cleveland? If so, you may be in range of these new, low-power, community and emergency information stations: Mayfield Heights 1700-AM; Mayfield Village 1640-AM; Beachwood 1630-AM.; Pepper Pike 1670-AM; Lakewood 1660-AM; Strongsville 1640-AM; Brunswick 1700-AM; Westlake 1680-AM. In the event of an emergency, you will find these stations to be an important source of information. Please consider setting a button to one on your car radio.

J. Pandemic Flu Links: <http://www.ccep.ca/ccepbird.html>

K. Disaster Links: <http://www.disasterlinks.net/>

L. Business Emergency Planning Association: We're active with BEPA. You should be, too. For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/bepa-cleveland>

M. More tips to keep your family & business safe: <http://att.sbc.com/gen/general?pid=1325>

N. Apologizing – Vanity Fair's All-Purpose Public Mea Culpa Kit: <http://tinyurl.com/ysu4ch> Keep a copy handy - the reputation you save may be your own.

O. When disaster strikes and telephone lines are jammed, how can you assure your critical calls go through? The National Communications System (NCS), part of the Department of Homeland Security, offers priority telecommunications services to first responders, police, fire and rescue, public safety officials at all levels of government, and other national security and emergency preparedness personnel to ensure ongoing communications during crisis situations. Sign up today at www.ncs.gov or call 800-NCS-CALL.

P. Give your family, friends and clients The Gift of Safety. You can find a wide assortment of emergency wind-up radios (with built-in flashlights and cell phone chargers), first aid kits and other home/business emergency preparation items, all at reasonable prices. Best of all – 100% of the proceeds go directly to The American Red Cross, Greater Cleveland Chapter. All you need to do is download the two PDF's below, print them out and send your order in.

Red Cross Radios: <http://tinyurl.com/6lmqhy> Other emergency gifts: <http://tinyurl.com/5a4ybu>

Q. Tell me, again, about crisis management: <http://tinyurl.com/b7no3>

Did someone forward this e-newsletter to you? You can get your own subscription at no charge simply by sending your request to hennes@crisiscommunications.com.

Media Training & Coaching

Your firm 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? Do you know where to look? What to wear? Where to put your hands? 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 – will you “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 thru media training, working with a media coach, where they’ve learned to deal with adversarial situations with journalists. Perhaps it’s time for you to learn this specialized set of media survival skills?

We also offer straight spokesperson & presentation training and coaching, which consists of ways to improve a spokesperson's skills and daily interactions with peers, subordinates, investors, journalists and other outside parties.

Call Bruce Hennes and the staff at Hennes 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.

Ask us, too, about how we can help you create, implement and test a crisis communications plan.

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Call Hennes Communications For Media Training & Crisis Comm Plans



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******* SPECIAL NOTE FOR ATTORNEYS *******

We can do our signature seminar - Managing the Media: Lawyers & The Press - in your office for the benefit of your firm’s attorneys, corporate counsel and clients. A number of firms have used our seminar as an effective marketing tool to reinforce existing business relationships and prospect for new business. For more information, including a list of the nationally-known firms that have retained us for this service, please call us at 216/321-7774.

About Hennes Communications LLC

Hennes Communications is a crisis communications, media training and media relations consulting firm based in Cleveland. Serving corporations, government agencies, nonprofits and individuals who are “on trial” in the court of public opinion, Hennes Communications also offers litigation communication support and public relations services to their clients. The firm is a coalition member of ProtectingAmerica.org and National Preparedness Month (US. Department of Homeland Security).

We can be reached by calling 216/321-7774 or by email at hennes@crisiscommunications.com.

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CHECK OUT BRUCE & BARB’S SCHEDULE....

2/24/09 Association of Secondary School Administrators

How the Media Manipulates the News (1 hour)

2/25/09 Medina County Estate Planning Council

How the Media Manipulates the News (.50 hour)

3/27/09 Business Volunteers Unlimited

Business Continuity for Nonprofits (2.5 hours)

<http://tinyurl.com/6jo56n>

Co-Presenters: Robert Goszka; Dr. Nancy Grant; Pam Oliver, Kristen Putnam-Walkerly & Theresa Schaffer

3/31/09 Ohio Safety Congress

How the Media Manipulates the News & Extreme Crisis Communications (2 hours)

4/3/09 Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce

How the Media Manipulates the News (1 hour)

4/23/09 Coshocton County Health Department

Managing the Media AND Extreme Crisis Communications (4 hours)

<http://tinyurl.com/coshocseminar>

5/13/09 Lake County Communicators

How the Media Manipulates the News (1 hour)

5/14/09 Portage County Safety Council Annual Meeting

How the Media Manipulates the News (1 hour)

5/28/09 Subcontractors Association of N.E. Ohio

How the Media Manipulates the News (1 hour)

6/22/09 American Red Cross Ohio Training Institute Disaster Day

Extreme Crisis Communications (2 hours)

7/21/09 Ohio Fire Chiefs Association Annual Conference

Extreme Crisis Communications (2.5 hours)

NOTE: All of the above are open-to-the-public. Some of the seminars are free, others require a fee, payable to the sponsoring organization. Please call or write us for further information.

Administrivia

This email newsletter about Crisis Communications & Media Relations is generally published twice a month.

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FORMAT: There are still many browsers and email programs that are not state-of-the-art and subsequently cannot automatically "read" HTML (the coding used to design web pages). Therefore, this newsletter is designed simply, omitting most graphics, and can be read by virtually any email program.

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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).

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**When your business or reputation is
threatened, you need a specialist.**

A crisis communications specialist.



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