

Crisis Communications & Social Media for Emergency Managers



Presented by SUZANNE BERNIER, CEM, CBCP, MBCI
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AUTHOR OF DISASTER HEROES

This former journalist, now a multi-certified, award-winning and internationally-recognized crisis management consultant, speaker and author, has helped governments, communities and companies plan for and respond to disasters for over twenty years. She was named 2016's 'Continuity & Resilience Consultant of the Year – North America' by the Business Continuity Institute (BCI), and had the honor of being a guest speaker at The White House during FEMA's 2016 Individual & Community Preparedness Awards.

When something bad happens, you have three choices – you can:

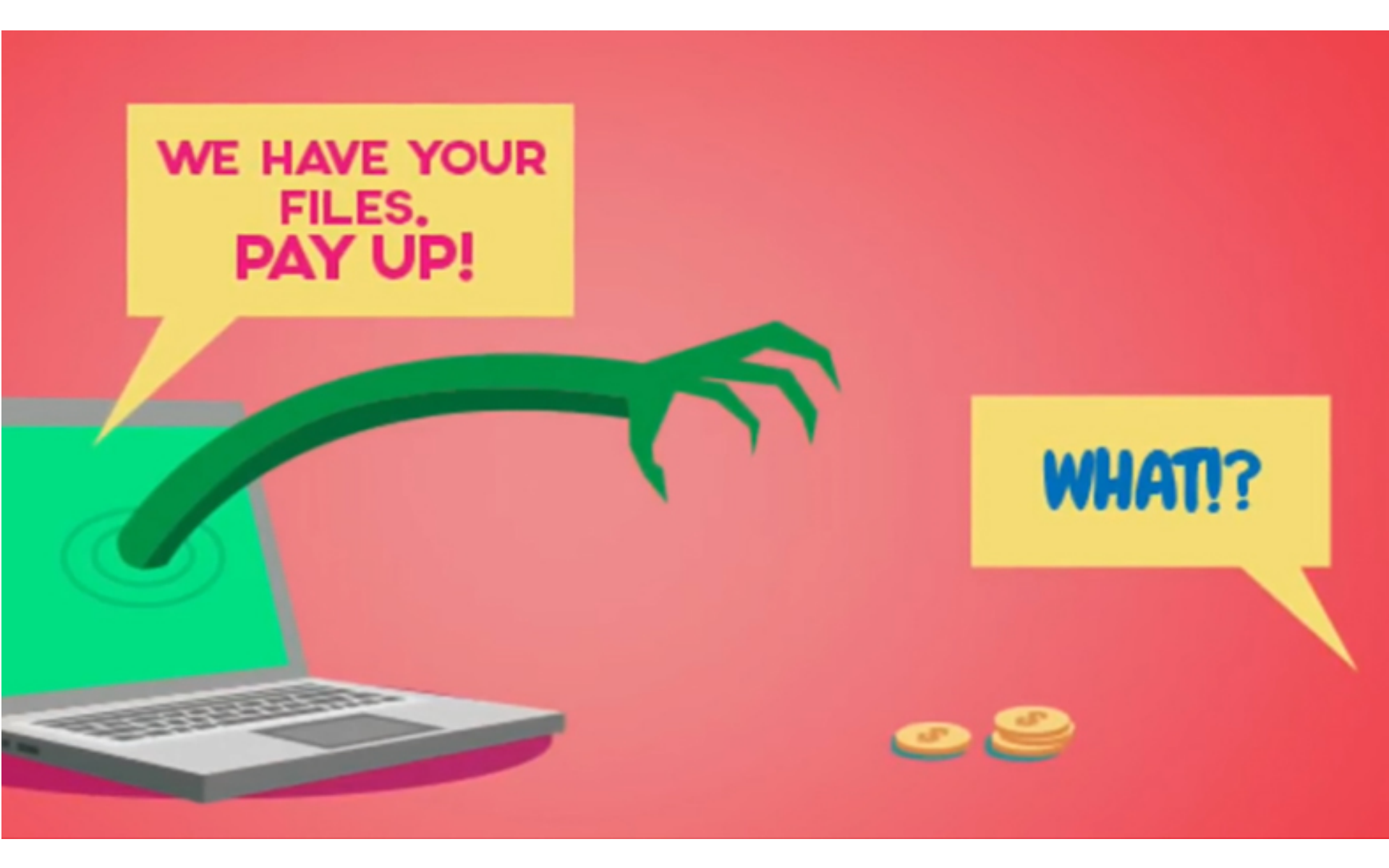
1. Let it define you
2. Let it destroy you, or
3. Let it strengthen you.

The image features a dark, atmospheric night scene. The background is a deep, dark blue, almost black, with a soft, ethereal glow emanating from the center. Two tall, thin poles, possibly light poles or utility poles, stand on either side of the central text. The ground is dark and appears to be a field or a road, with some faint, blurry shapes that could be trees or bushes. The overall mood is mysterious and futuristic. The text "A NEW ERA" is prominently displayed in the center, rendered in a bold, metallic, blue font with a slight glow. The letters have a textured, crystalline appearance, suggesting a high-tech or advanced theme. The lighting is primarily blue, creating a cool and futuristic atmosphere. The text is the central focus, with the background elements providing a sense of depth and context.

A NEW ERA

**DON'T PUT ANYTHING IN AN
EMAIL**

**THAT YOU WOULDN'T STAND BY IF READ AT A
PRESS CONFERENCE OR PUBLISHED IN A
NEWSPAPER**



**WE HAVE YOUR
FILES.
PAY UP!**



WHAT!?

WannaCry

Global Cyber Attacks

What Has Happened So Far



ACTIVE SHOOTER




PULSE



LOVE > HATE
#ORLANDO LOVE

ORLANDO UNITED

EVERYBODY
LOVE
EVERYBODY

LET THEM SAY US DANCE
SING LAUGH AND LOVE
LET US LIVE WITH PRIDE

LO

ALWAYS



Active Intruder Preparedness



Students, staff blast MUN over lack of communication during emergency

Memorial University promises to improve communication with staff and students

By Peter Cowan, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 06, 2016 3:42 PM NT | Last Updated: Oct 06, 2016 5:27 PM NT



MUN lockdown 4:10

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Legal



120



52



[Memorial University](#) @MemorialU · Oct 6

The St. John's campus is closed until further notice following reports of suspicious activity. The RNC is investigating.



295



72



"We need to do a better job of letting folks know what's happening.

- Dave Sorensen, Memorial University

Domestic Terrorism at Mass Gatherings



اويس
@owys663

#ISLAMICSTATE

#manchesterarena

#UK #British

ARE YOU FORGET OUR THREAT ?

THIS IS THE JUST TERROR

5/22/17, 6:32 PM



“The reputation of a thousand years may be deterred by the conduct of one hour.”

Japanese Proverb





abc NEWS | EXCLUSIVE

abc NEWS
EXCLUSIVE

abc NEWS EXCLUSIVE

UNITED AIRLINES UNDER FIRE
ONE-ON-ONE WITH OSCAR MUNOZ

GMA
@GMA

abc NEWS

FIVE-FOOT PYTHON FOUND IN MASSACHUSETTS HOTEL ROOM DRAWER

abc NEWS

MIC

Five Steps to Success

1. Execute a solid communications plan (& social media strategy)
2. Be the first source for information
3. Show competence and expertise
4. Remain honest, open and truthful
5. Express **empathy** early

Common Sense Principles

1. Acknowledge the crisis asap
2. Put people first
3. Decide on key messages
4. Take responsibility for, and ownership of the crisis
5. Deliver solutions from the top
6. Make a promise and deliver on it!

Be First, Be Right, Be Credible

Accuracy of
Information
+
Speed of Release

CREDIBILITY

+ =

**SUCCESSFUL
COMMUNICATION**

Empathy
+
Openness

TRUST

An aerial photograph showing the wreckage of a Boeing 777 aircraft on a runway. The aircraft is severely damaged, with its fuselage split open and debris scattered around. The registration number N27142 is visible on the upper wing. A yellow ground support vehicle is positioned near the front of the wreckage. The scene is set on a dark, paved runway.

LIVE

BREAKING NEWS

BOEING 777 CRASHES AT SFO

ON THE PHONE: BRUCE MILAN, FORMER UNITED PILOT





W AT 10 • NEW AT 10 • NEW AT 10 • NEW AT 10 • NEW AT 10

FOX 13

10:03 84°

EXPLODING SAMSUNG GALAXY NOTE 7 IGNITES JEEP

NEW
AT 10

Show you care!

Especially if you/your business/your clients or customers are affected.

But, where appropriate, even if you are not.



Reach out – be human

- “How are you doing?”
- “Let us know how we can help.”
- Retweet messages of support
- DIRECTLY respond to your followers
- DO SOMETHING to help (i.e. If there is a power failure, offer your business or store as a place for people to go.)
- Consider signing with a name on your posts. Use “I” and “we”

Opportunity!

- How do you want your company/organization to be seen during and after the crisis?
- After the crisis is over, what will people think about your response?
 - *Did only what was necessary*
 - *Businesslike/official*
 - *"They weren't there for me"*
 - *"They listened and responded to me"*
 - *"They cared"*

Key Communication Decisions

- What to release
- When to release
- How to release
- Where to release
- Whom to release it to
- Why release it

The Ten Steps of Crisis Communications

1. Anticipate Crises



**Anticipate
Crisis
Inside
and
Outside
Of Your
Organization**

2. Have a Trained Crisis Communications Team



3. Have a Crisis Communications Plan



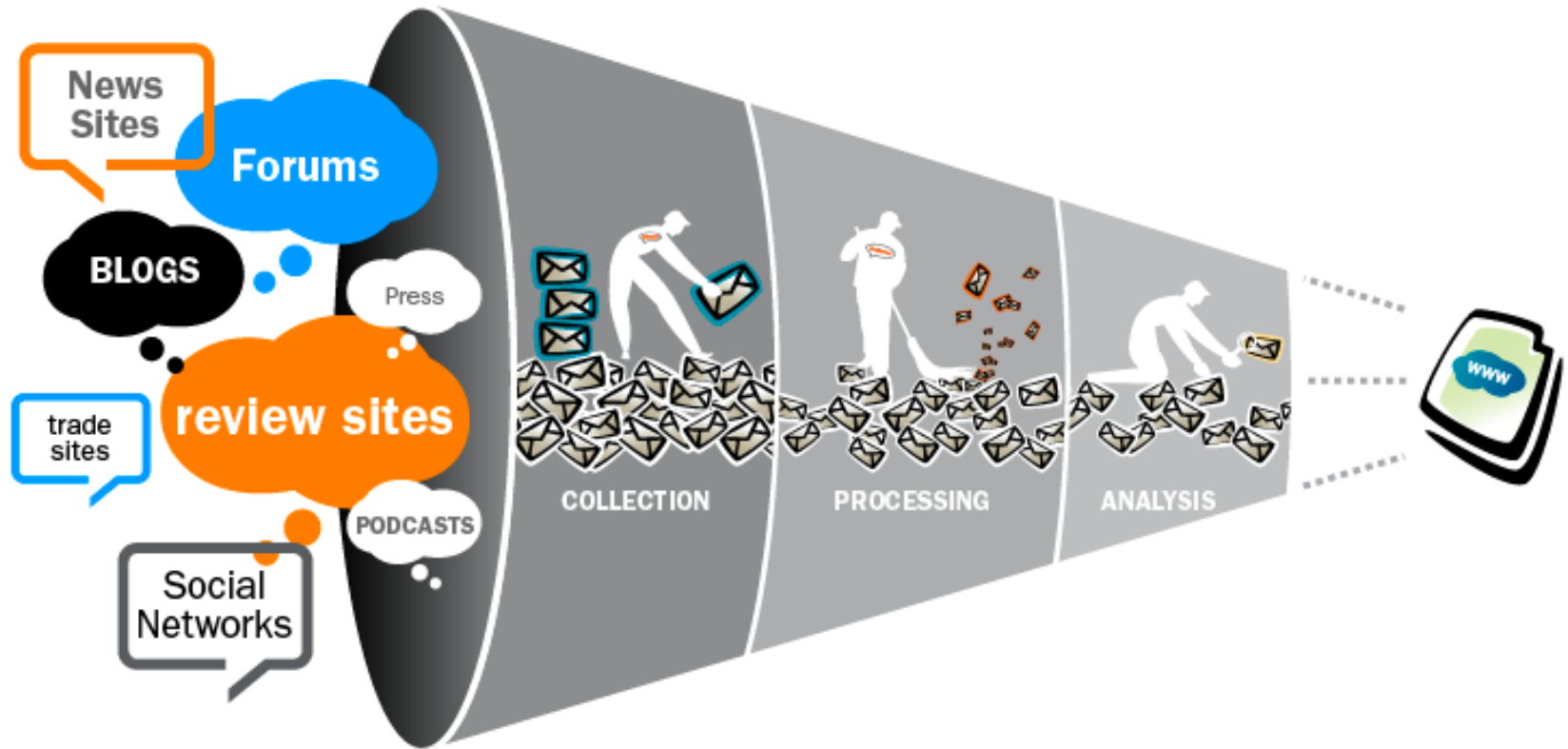
4. Identify and Train Spokespersons



5. Establish Notification Systems



6. Monitor Traditional & Social Media



7. Identify and Know your Stakeholders



8. Develop Holding Statements

Example: Holding statement

At approximately 9am today, Jan 30, 2014, a fire occurred at the bank at _____.

The local police and fire services were immediately alerted and contained the situation.

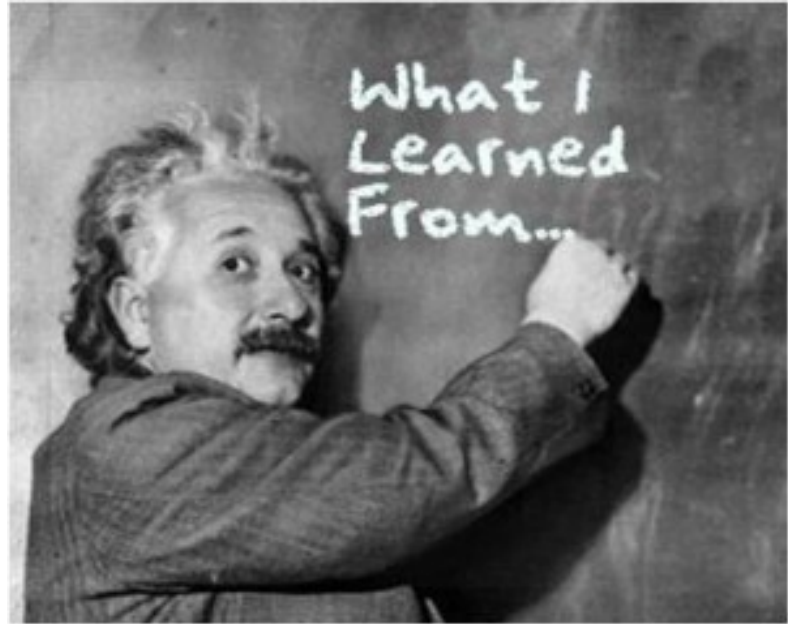
Our immediate concerns are for the safety and well-being of our employees and the public and to minimize the impact to the surrounding area.

We will keep you updated as more details become available. (Please check our website/blog or call the hotline _____)

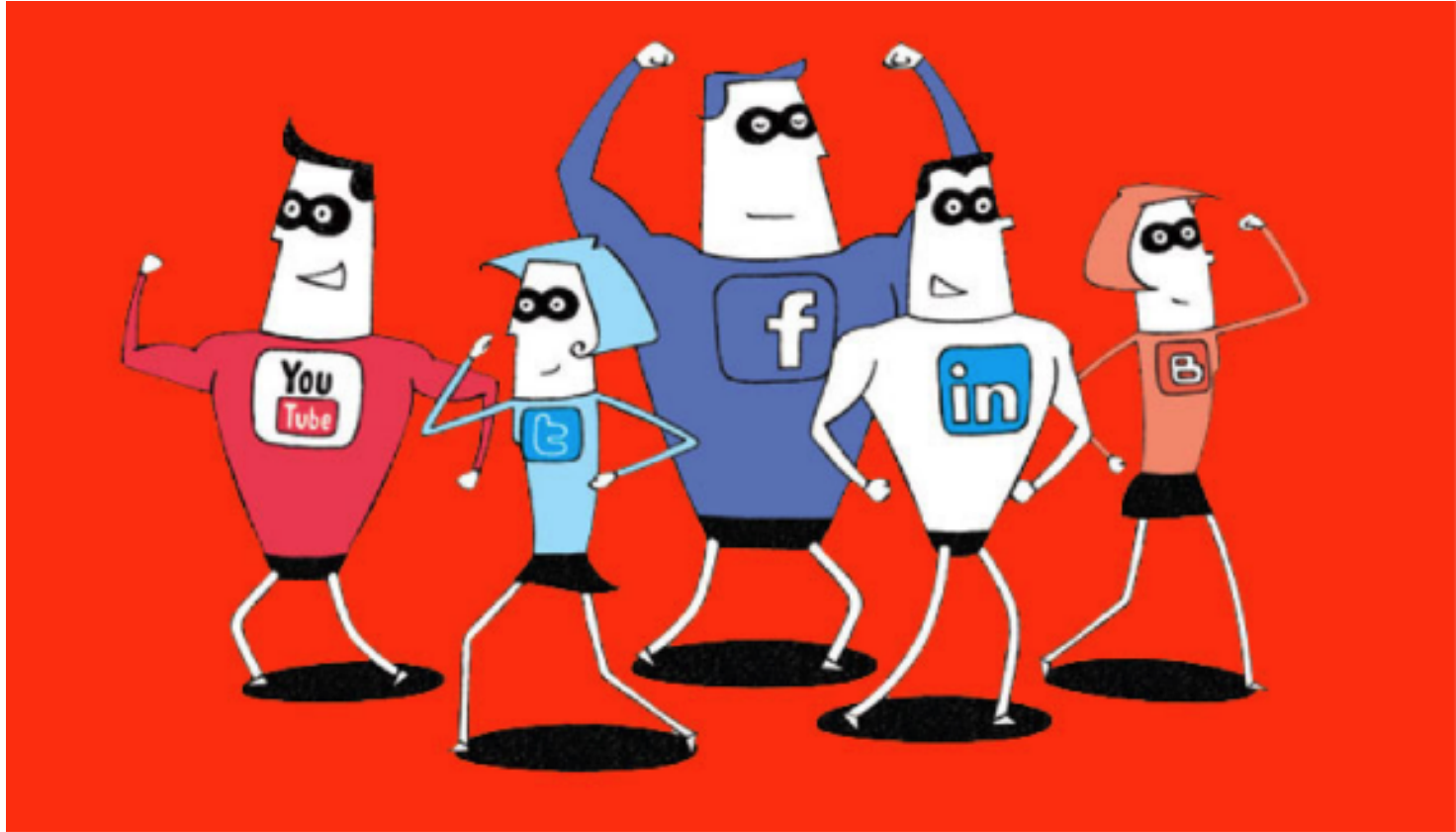
9. Finalize and Adapt Key Messages



10. Perform a Post-Crisis Analysis



What is #SMEM?



Emergency Managers are NOT
Social Media Gurus and Vice-Versa!

Why do we need to incorporate
social media within our crisis
communications plans?

Before



Event



Responders



Media



Now



Traditional Communication vs Social Media



- One way
- Talking to, talking at
- Sharing information
- Broadcast

- Conversation
- 2 (or more) way
- LISTENING
- Responding
- "We're in this together"



The Pros and Cons of Social Media

What about those who aren't "connected"?

- Additional way of getting EM messaging out, not only way
- May not be connected to social media, but listen to traditional news (who get much of their info from SM)
- Most have family or loved ones who are connected and would promptly share emergency information directly



YOU'VE BEEN HACKED!

AP AP Stylebook 
@APStylebook

 Follow

The **@AP** Twitter account has been suspended after it was hacked. The tweet about an attack on the White House was false.

 Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More

425
RETWEETS

11
FAVORITES



10:27 AM - 23 Apr 13

YOU'VE BEEN HACKED!



The Associated Press 
@AP



Following

Breaking: Two Explosions in the White House and Barack Obama is injured

 Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More

1,452
RETWEETS

63
FAVORITES



12:07 PM - 23 Apr 13

YOU'VE BEEN HACKED!

AP AP Stylebook 
@APStylebook

 Follow

The **@AP** Twitter account has been suspended after it was hacked. The tweet about an attack on the White House was false.

 Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More

425
RETWEETS

11
FAVORITES



10:27 AM - 23 Apr 13

IN CASE OF FIRE



EXIT BUILDING
BEFORE TWEETING
ABOUT IT

Visual Rumors



Rumor Control

- FEMA had web page solely dedicated to Hurricane Sandy rumor control
- FEMA tweets to correct misinformation via #Sandy RUMOR CONTROL:
 - The rumor that FEMA is offering \$300 cash cards for food is FALSE



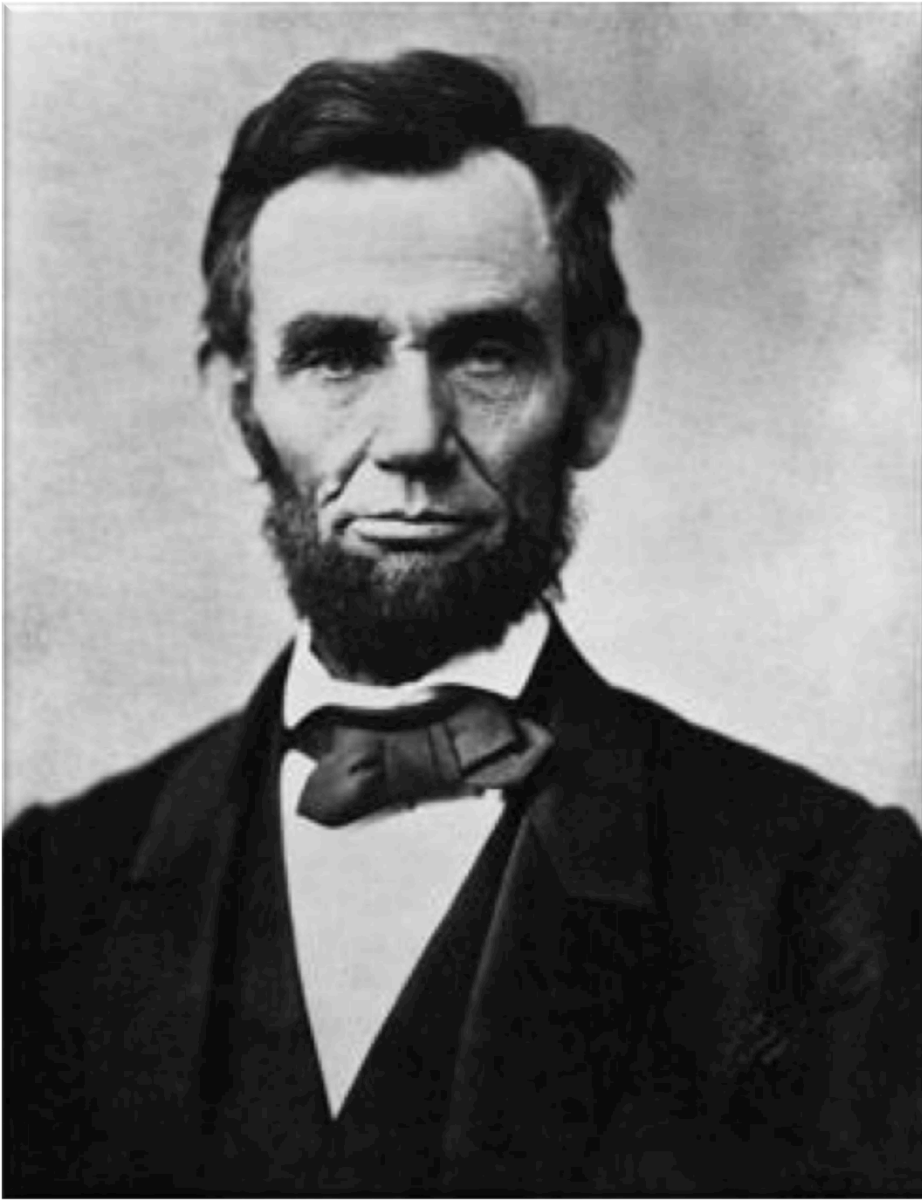
Sharks on Wall St (Not loan Sharks either!)

Fact or Fiction?

Don't believe **everything** you see/read on the Internet!

Sharks swimming around in what appears to be a shopping mall after Hurricane Sandy!!!





“Don’t believe everything you read on the Internet just because there’s a picture with a quote next to it.”

—Abraham Lincoln

facebook

twitter

Social Media

STRATEGY
STRATEGY

LinkedIn

YouTube

Social Media Strategy



What to Include in Your Social Media Strategy?

- What your organization will try to achieve through its use of social media
- To what level your organization will engage in social media and in what context this level may change during different phases of an emergency (eg. Level 1 – monitor only, Level 2 – monitor and respond to select posts, Level 3...)
 - Consider levels of activation and de-activation
 - Decide in advance what your organization will/won't respond to

What to Include in Your Social Media Strategy

A content strategy outlining what types of information will be shared and how often (if applicable)

Any formal links your organization will make with other related organizations (including guidance on how information will be shared between organizations and who has authority to do what

Include Your Employees on the Plan

- During an emergency, your employees can help push your messaging out to the public
- Let employees know ahead of time what is expected of them during an emergency

Include Your Employees on the Plan

- Seek out those staff who are more familiar with social media platforms on a personal level
- Train them in social media communications roles they will undertake during an emergency
- Encourage employees to familiarize themselves with your organization's Twitter account, Facebook pages, etc...

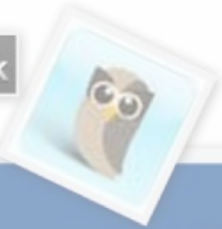
Staffing for Social Media

- Who will engage in social media?
- Consider staffing requirements before an emergency and train where necessary
- On-the-job training and experience before an emergency is key
- Include a social media component in any EM training provided
- Run pre-event tests of your use of social media (incorporate within existing simulation exercises)





TweetDeck



facebook®

LinkedIn

YouTube



282 tweets
retweet

This is an Exercise!

fr

in

t

slideshare

twitter

flickr™

Managing Resourcing Issues

- Train as many staff as your resources permit
- Where feasible, partner up with other related organizations
- Take advantage of local or international volunteers (if appropriate), particularly for monitoring and gathering info during response phase –
- The Virtual Operations Support Group lists active teams of volunteers across the world: <http://vosg.us/active-vosts/>
- Use social media management tools (HootSuite, Tweetdeck)



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A Few Resources

1. FEMA's online Social Media in Emergency Management course: <https://emilms.fema.gov/is42/index.htm>
2. bernsteincrisismanagement.com
3. The Use of Social Media for Disaster Recovery: <http://extension.missouri.edu/greene/documents/PlansReports/social%20media%20in%20disasters.pdf>

In Summary

1. Any credible organization should have a tried and tested Crisis Communications Plan **and** Social Media Strategy
2. If you don't already have one, start working on a social media component to add to your current Crisis Communications/Emergency Response Plans
3. Harness the power of social media to hear and be heard
4. If you learn the rules and understand the tools, you can use social media to your great benefit

Thank You!

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@sbcrisis



BE SAFE. BE PREPARED. BE A HERO.