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For questions about this executive summary, please contact **Glenn S. Curtis** at [glenn.curtis@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:glenn.curtis@thomsonreuters.com) or 646-822-6402.

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# STRATEGIC RESEARCH

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

### 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](mailto:glenn.curtis@thomsonreuters.com) or 646-822-6402.

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