Crisis Response Workshop for Associations

Communicating through crisis and planning your association’s post-pandemic opportunities

Presenters:

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COVID-19 virus has changed the world forever
Crisis Communication Underway. Are you doing enough?

- Communicating with your teams: Over communicate
- Risk assessments and possible scenarios for short, middle and long-range
- Keep refining your messages as situations change
- Use digital channel to connect, share messages, your values
- Monitoring association member sentiment and prepare to engage, respond
- Stay true to your mission: Connected, Service, Authenticity
Maintain trust of your members; stakeholders

A VITAL ROLE OF COMMUNICATING AND PLANNING DURING A CRISIS TO ACHIEVE RECOVERY, PURPOSE
Bedrock rules for responding to a crisis

- People (health and safety) come first
- Tell the truth – ALWAYS
- Get the most complete information available
- Inventory what you don't know
- Decide how to remedy the situation
- Respond quickly, but responsibly

Warning: If you don't tell your story and share facts, someone else will fill the information void.
Members of your crisis team

- C-suite leaders
- Marketing and communications leader
- Legal counsel
- Financial-CFO
- Member relations, services leader
- Public relations/crisis counsel
- Possible: Board chair
What makes a crisis worse for associations?

- Lack of communication: Internal and external
- Failure to get worst news out quickly
- Don’t undervalue your relationship with members
- Slow to express compassion, empathy
- Not prioritizing member needs, expectations
- Not understand a crisis has lifecycle: IT TAKES ENDURANCE
Why is your Association so important?

- Members, Current Customers and Prospects need your association now more than ever
  - Associations are the profession’s “clubhouse”
  - Associations are seen as neutral arbiters of “the truth”
  - Associations are thought leaders, especially in crisis
  - Associations are both knowledge and product assembly lines
  - Associations are great warehouses of member benefits, products and services
  - Associations that stay engaged will still be here after the crisis ends
Your Association Must be OPEN FOR BUSINESS

• Stay Connected and engaged with the profession (members, customers and prospects)
  ✓ Most of the country is still working, just from home
  ✓ There is more access and use of technology than ever before
  ✓ People have more time to consider offers
  ✓ People enjoy being included, knowing that your association cares

• Modify messaging and offers to meet the markets needs and ability to pay
  ✓ Are you able to grab market attention
  ✓ Are you making a sale
  ✓ Are you able to offer deals (be flexible)
  ✓ Are you able to expand a current market segment
  ✓ Are you testing new products and services
  ✓ Are you able to grab market share from others
Marketing Channels

Multi-Channel Marketing

- Personal Sales
- Database Marketing
- Direct Mail Marketing
- Social Media
- Telemarketing
- E-Mail Marketing
- Google Re-Marketing
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
Your Association Must be OPEN FOR BUSINESS

• Demonstrate hope, empathy and guidance through the crisis
  ✓ Who needs your products, services and benefits
  ✓ Match offerings to needs
  ✓ Explain why they need them

• Downplay fear and anxiety with knowledge and your brand promise

• Routine marketing works, do it
  ✓ Have a Plan
  ✓ Be media neutral
  ✓ Be flexible on terms and payment
  ✓ Offer specials
  ✓ Keep-up with acquisition, renewals and product sales
  ✓ Now there is time for Certification
  ✓ Repurpose content from cancelled or delayed conferences
Lifecycle of a crisis
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IDEAL CRISIS RESPONSE PROCESS

Live your mission and values
Make post-pandemic strategies
Develop your messages strategically

• Use facts and data
• Engage your Board leadership
• What is the most important message you want people to remember about your association managing this crisis?
• What do you want them to feel?
• What do you want them to do?
Leadership Tips

Do
• Develop and drive clear, mission-focused strategies
• Keep teams focused on short-, medium-, long-term goals
• Share regular updates: Over communicate
• Keep Board informed, engaged
• Plan for post-crisis

Don’t
• Be reactive
• Let others tell your story
• Get caught up in minute-to-minute concerns and lose the big picture plan
• Let chaos of the situation dictate pace of your response
Crisis Recovery: A new world ahead

Crises can bring leadership, recovery opportunities

• Take immediate action: Revisit your strategic plan/priorities
  – What will you change? Why?
  – What will be different? How can your team adjust and respond?
  – What training do people need to make changes answer needs?
• Make your association more relevant post-pandemic
• Revise fundraising strategies for immediate, long-term opportunities
• Envision future success and reshape your messages/story
• Refine your organization’s crisis plan
Thank you!

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Thank you for participating!

If you have any suggestions for additional COVID-19 webcast topics, please email them to Karen Bernstein, ASAE senior learning manager at:

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