No Second Chances: Strategies for SIOs in Media Relations

Meredith McQuaid, University of Minnesota
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The Good:
Media Coverage We Would Love to See
The Good:

Media Coverage We Would Love to See

LIVE

BONUM MANE  Bonjour
καλημέρα  HELLO  guten
morgen

BREAKING NEWS

OH LA LA!

10:06  MORE U.S. STUDENTS LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES THAN EVER BEFORE

breakyourownnews.com
The Good: Media Coverage We Would Love to See

Int'l student enrollment up

State University President Mary Jones proudly announced in a news conference yesterday that international student enrollment has increased to record numbers.

"It's great that so many talented students from around the world want to study at our university," said President Jones. "It's important to have a diverse community on our campus and in our classrooms. I learn so much from them."

Rory Sanders, president of the University Student Association, agreed. "It's so important to have a variety of perspectives and experiences on our campus and in our classrooms. It makes our education richer and more meaningful."

The Daily V
The Good:

Media Coverage We Would Love to See

U.S. students learn the importance of travel and making new friends overseas

By STU D. BROAD

Study abroad has never been more popular with U.S. college students. No longer seen as a "vacation," study abroad is seen by students, parents, and employers as a critical part of academic and career development.

On last year due to

moose strongholds of the United States, with resulting...
The Good:  
Media Coverage We Would Love to See

Yeah, dude! Growth in white, male participation in study abroad reached record highs last year.  bzfd.it/2mTF1pL
The Bad and the Ugly:
Media Coverage We Dread
The Bad and the Ugly: Media Coverage We Dread
The Bad and the Ugly: Media Coverage We Dread

Stuck here without food, power. Surrounded by soldiers. Hey @StateU @studyabroad get me out! #scaredandabandoned #noplacelikehome

2:48 PM - 6 May 2015
The Bad and the Ugly:
Media Coverage We Dread

U.S. no longer preferred place of study for the world’s best and brightest. Part 1 of our year-long series on trends in university enrollment.
The Bad and the Ugly: Media Coverage We Dread
Considerations

- Does the international office have a communications/media plan?
- Does the college/university have a communications/media plan?
- Are the SIO and staff prepared for pace of coverage, types of coverage, and current and local (sometimes very local) attitudes?
- Will there be time to think before the need to react? Likely no!
- Is the SIO prepared to address the good, the bad, and the ugly?
Learning from a Real-Life Event

The Context: Thinking about the Unthinkable

Paris Terrorist Attack
Friday, November 13, 2015
Risk Management and Communication Protocol

• Did we have a plan?
• Did I feel prepared?
• What were some things we never thought would be needed?
• What was anticipated/unanticipated? By whom?
• How did we react? Need for quick solutions as event unfolded.
Assessment of Our Plan

• Changes we have made
• Critical role of the Campus Media Relations Office
• Better knowledge of what is covered by insurance
• Acknowledge you can never fully prepare for something like Paris attack or 9/11
How is Higher Education Unique?
“You cannot eliminate the risk by trading your core values. If you do, you’re abandoning the enterprise.”

- Herman “Dutch” Leonard
  Harvard’s Kennedy and Business schools
The Issue Spectrum

- Normal
- Routine
  May impact reputation
- True Crisis
  Career/organization defining
- Catastrophe

Novelty
expertise
assessment
scripts
skills
scalability
leadership
presence
1. Clarify Coordination
2. Develop Scenarios and Approach

**What**
- Focus on broad categories
- ID risks

**Who**
- Stakeholders directly/indirectly affected
- Stakeholders who will care
- Spokesperson – leave room to elevate

**Info**
- Questions to ask in the moment
- Understand what is public/what is not public
2. Develop Scenarios and Approach

**Tools**
- Know what resources you can bring to bear

**Msg.**
- Reflect your values
- Be transparent, empathetic, provide clear instruction

**Plan**
- Implement short-term tactics
- Monitor and manage long-term needs
3. Consider Goals and Objectives

• What do I want to convey?
• What difficult questions will I be asked?
• What questions do I want to be asked?
4. Practice Your Plan

- Media training
- Roundtables
- Do the everyday work well
Questions?