



Crisis Communications for Law Firms Resource Guide

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Resource Guide

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Professional Legal Resources

2010 Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct - RULE 3.6: Trial Publicity

www.iardc.org/2010%20Rule%203.6.htm

Can't Be Said:

(a) A lawyer who is participating or has participated in the investigation or litigation of a matter shall not make an extrajudicial statement that the lawyer knows or reasonably should know will be disseminated by means of public communication and would pose a serious and imminent threat to the fairness of an adjudicative proceeding in the matter.

Can Be Said:

(c) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), a lawyer may make a statement that a reasonable lawyer would believe is required to protect a client from the substantial undue prejudicial effect of recent publicity not initiated by the lawyer or the lawyer's client. A statement made pursuant to this paragraph shall be limited to such information as is necessary to mitigate the recent adverse publicity.

American Bar Association

www.americanbar.org

The "ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct" were adopted by the ABA House of Delegates in 1983

[\[www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility/publications/model_rules_of_professional_conduct.html\]](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility/publications/model_rules_of_professional_conduct.html). They serve as models for the ethics rules of most states. Illinois adopted these rules in February 1990.

There are a variety of resources, including a section maintained by the Center for Professional Responsibility [\[http://www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility.html\]](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility.html). The March 2014 issue of the ABA's online webzine, *Law Practice Today*

[\[http://www.americanbar.org/content/newsletter/publications/law_practice_today_home/lpt-archives/2014/march14.html\]](http://www.americanbar.org/content/newsletter/publications/law_practice_today_home/lpt-archives/2014/march14.html), deals almost exclusively with law practice marketing.

Illinois State Bar Association

www.isba.org

Founded in 1877, the Illinois State Bar Association's primary focus is to assist Illinois lawyers in the practice of law and to promote improvements in the administration of justice. The organization offers a variety of publications and online resources, such as this six-page primer on "The New Rules of Marketing and PR for Lawyers" (PDF file)

[\[http://www.isba.org/sites/default/files/newrulesmarketingprforlawyers.pdf\]](http://www.isba.org/sites/default/files/newrulesmarketingprforlawyers.pdf).

Online Social Media Monitoring

Google Alerts

www.google.com/alerts

Google Alerts are email updates with the latest relevant online Google search results based on your queries. Enter a search query you wish to monitor. You will see a preview of the type of results you'll receive. Google Alerts can allow you to:

- monitor a developing news story
- keep current on topics relevant to your firm
- receive the latest updates on things that impact your firm
- stay virtually connected to your stories

Search query:

Result type: Everything

How often: Once a day

How many: Only the best results

Your email:

[CREATE ALERT](#) [Manage your alerts](#)

Meltwater

www.meltwater.com/products

Meltwater's Media Intelligence Platform scans billions of conversations and extracts what's relevant, allowing you to "listen" via Media and Social Media Monitoring to track response, see your impact, and gain strategic insights. It's a great tool for measuring the effectiveness of public relations campaigns.



Critical Mention

www.criticalmention.com/media-monitoring/

Critical Mention offers a comprehensive Web-based real-time media monitoring service that allows you to search, track, and analyze vital information from television, radio, online news, and social media.



Cision Media Monitoring

www.cision.com/us/pr-software/media-monitoring

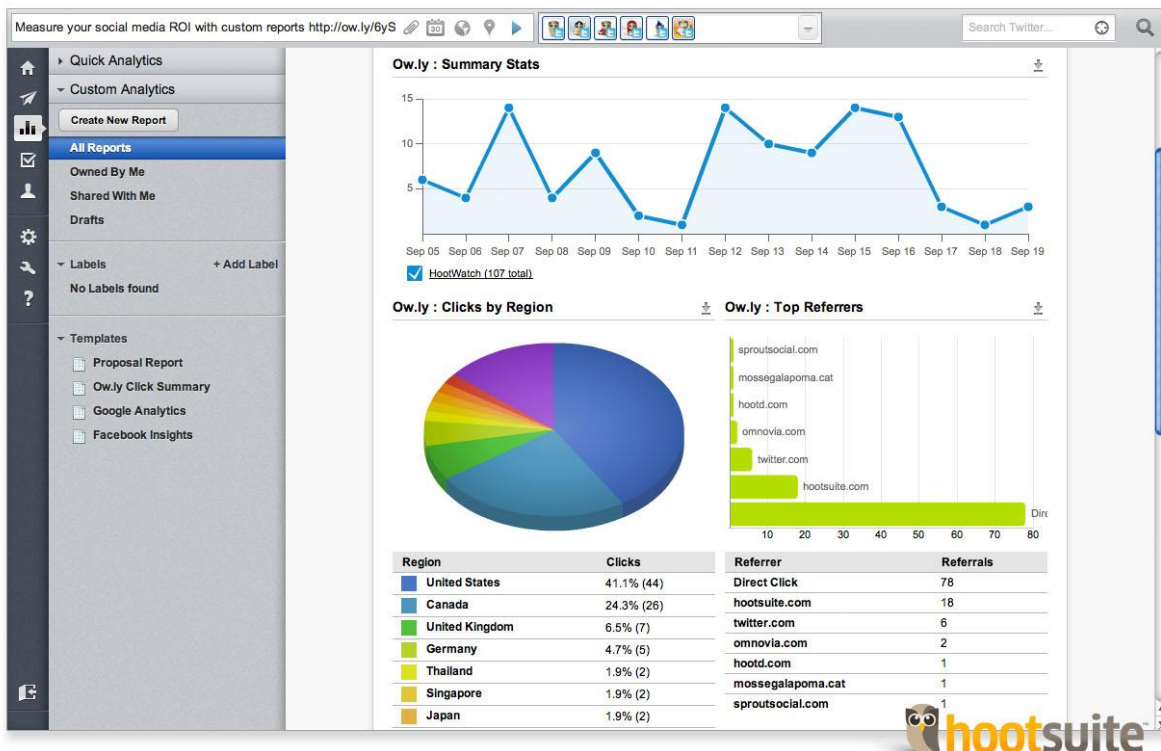
Cision monitors social media, broadcast and video, print media, and online media to help you understand the impact of your story by knowing what people are saying about it with Cision's social and traditional media monitoring tools.



Hootsuite Pro

www.hootsuite.com

Hootsuite Pro lets you manage your firm's social media presence across all social networks. You can build and engage audiences, execute multiple campaigns, collaborate with team members, and measure the performance of your social media with Enhanced Analytics Reports.





Professional Public Relations Tools & Services

PR Newswire

www.prnewswire.com

From simple press releases to full-blown PR campaigns, PR Newswire offers full-service news release distribution, with end-to-end content and news production services. PR Newswire can deliver news straight to credentialed journalists, bloggers, and key influencers on a local, state, regional, or global level. There are options for amplifying with image, video, audio, and landing pages, and the ability to track results and manage the process.

PRWeb

www.prweb.com

PRWeb press releases are another option to help your firm get reach and publicity on the Web across search engines, blogs, and websites in just a few simple steps.

Cision Press Release Distribution

www.cision.com/us/pr-software/press-release-distribution

Cision's Press Release Distribution software allows you to distribute all of your content—press releases, articles, photos, videos, infographics, and more via local or international networks.

Public Relations Society of America

www.prsa.org

PRSA is the world's largest and foremost organization of public relations professionals. The association provides professional development opportunities, sets standards of excellence, and upholds principles of ethics for its members and the public relations profession.

LawMarketing.com

www.lawmarketing.com

An online news and resource outlet that dubs itself “the business side of law,” LawMarketing.com seeks to give attorneys tools to help them attract more clients by staying on top of marketing trends and strategies.



Crisis Communications for Law Firms

Law Firm Public Relations Crisis Planning Worksheet

Law Firm Name: _____

Prepared by: _____

A. Initial public relations objectives: Describe what could happen to your firm or your clients that could result in a crisis.

B. Target audience: Who is likely to be impacted or concerned about a crisis related to your firm or clients?

C. Target media contacts: Who in the general or legal-focused media is likely to care about a crisis in your practice areas? (This can also be expanded to include all media in your geographic service area.)

D. Consequences: Consider what can be gained or lost with your crisis becoming known to a larger audience.

E. Top-tier audiences: Are you working in the business-to-consumer (e.g. personal injury) or business-to-business area (e.g. intellectual property)? How might that impact mass media communications and one-on-one calls to clients, employees, or government authorities?



F. Credibility and expertise: Depending on potential crisis scenarios, who in your firm will be the most trusted person to communicate the crisis?

G. Monitoring: Decide on what resources or services you will use to monitor how the crisis is being publicized.

H. Staffing: Decide who will handle the logistics of the plan, whether it's done in-house or with an outside agency or consultant.

I. Inventory of public relations tools: List all your existing communication channels that you might use in the event of a crisis (e.g. newsroom at your website). Be sure to include the firm's social media accounts such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

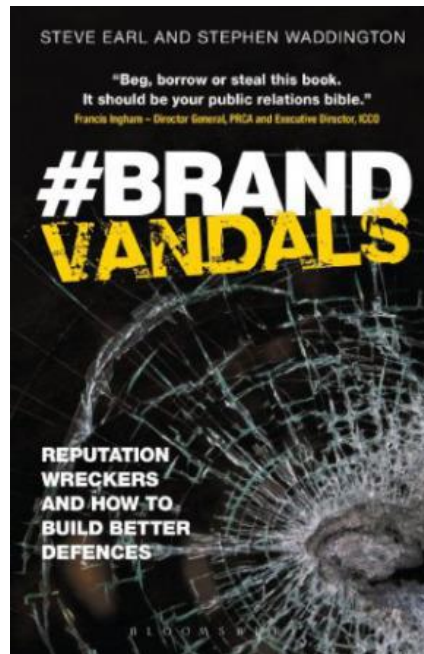
NOTE: *This worksheet is intended to give law firms a place to start thinking about a crisis communications plan. However, it's recommended that your firm:*

1. Give all employees a communications policy to sign.
2. Include in that policy the firm's social media rules.

Recommended Reading

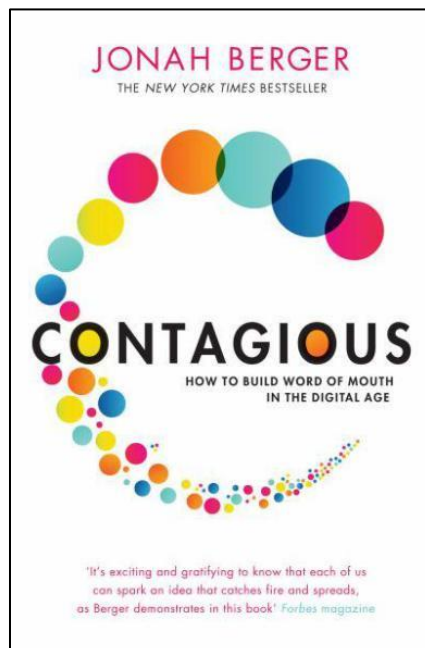
#Brand Vandals

by Steve Earl and Stephen Waddington

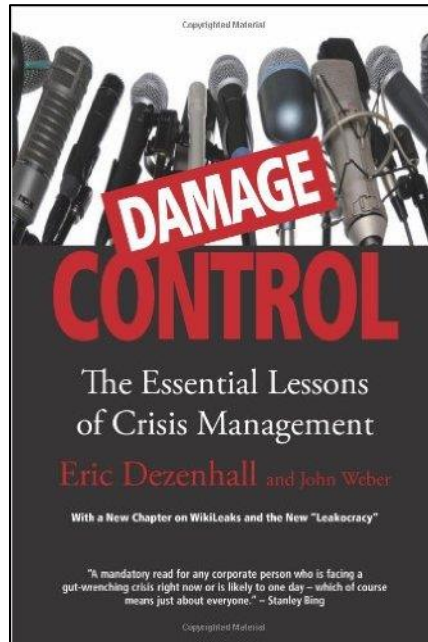


Contagious: How to Build Word of Mouth in the Digital Age

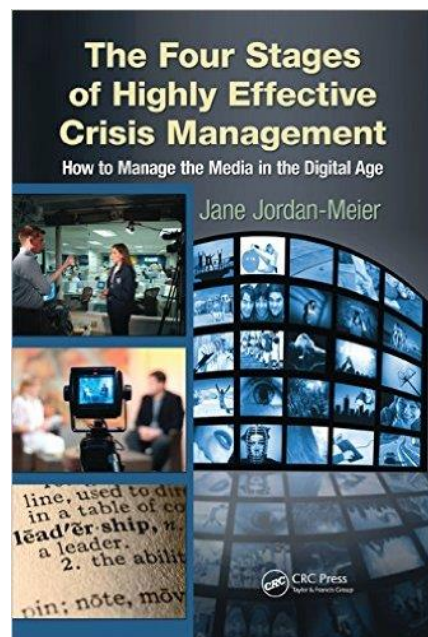
by Jonah Berger



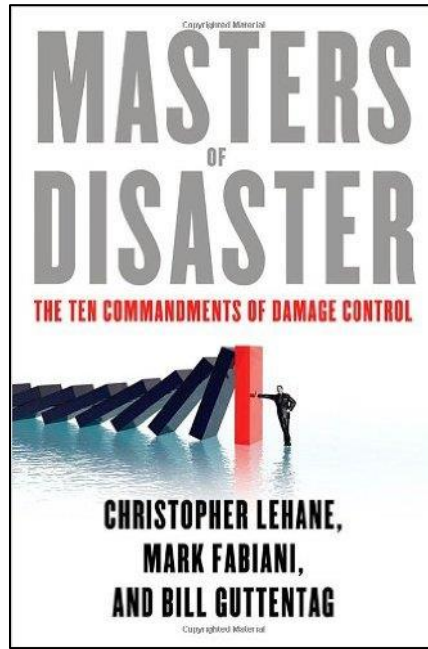
Damage Control: The Essential Lessons of Crisis Management
by Eric Dezenhall and John Weber



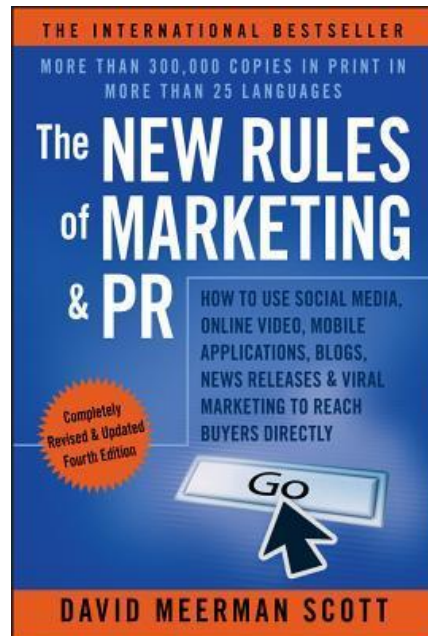
The Four Stages of Highly Effective Crisis Management
by Jane Jordan-Meier



Masters of Disaster: The Ten Commandments of Damage Control
by Christopher Lehane, Mark Fabiani, and Bill Guttentag

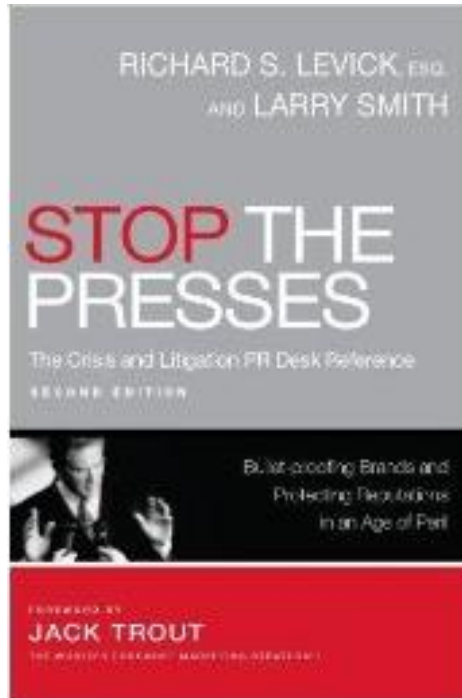


The New Rules of Marketing & PR
by David Meerman Scott



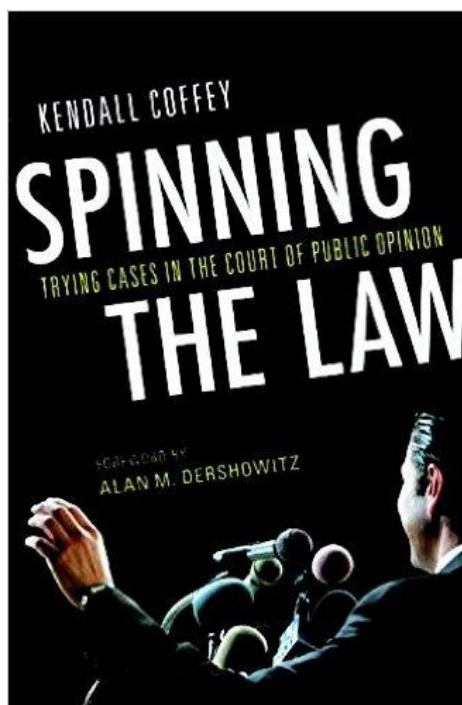
Stop the Presses: The Crisis and Litigation PR Desk Reference

by Richard S. Levick and Larry Smith



Spinning the Law: Trying Cases in the Court of Public Opinion

by Kendall Coffey



In the Court of Public Opinion: Winning Strategies for Litigation Communications
by James F. Haggerty

