Are you experiencing a communications crisis?

In a crisis, every moment matters. If you are currently in a communications crisis or see one on the horizon, ensuring you have the right communications partner in place can make the difference between a nuisance and a catastrophe.

There are a few critical questions to consider before contacting a crisis communications expert or team. Ask yourself:

- What happened and when?
- Who is impacted?
- What actions have been taken since the moment the crisis was realized?
- How quickly is a communications response needed?
- Are there any immediate risks or concerns?

Do you need a public relations crisis team?

Sometimes a perceived crisis is simply a problem blown out of proportion, and other times a seemingly small matter can become a bet-the-business risk. Consider the following when trying to gauge the risk:

- Does this situation have the potential to, or has it already caught, the attention of reporters, bloggers or the media?
- Will media coverage of this situation negatively impact my brand or reputation?
- Will this situation negatively impact my team's ability to communicate and remain effective?
- Is it possible this situation may damage my business or impact my bottom line?
- Will this situation negatively impact how my stakeholders or partners perceive my brand or reputation?
- Is this situation gaining attention on social media channels?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you may need a crisis communications team.

What should you do next?

If you find you need crisis communications services, you will want to take the following steps.

- Document everything. This includes:
    - The names of members of the media that have reached out, their contact information and when they reached out.
    - Precisely when any posts about this crisis were made, and on what channels.
    - Any communications you received about this crisis from team members, stakeholders, customers, partners, etc.
    - Any records of the incident like video tapes or voicemails.
- Call an experienced crisis communications agency immediately
    - The Kimball Hughes Public Relations Crisis Team is available 24/7, including holidays. We can be reached at CrisisTeam@kimballpr.com or 484-584-1100.
- Contact legal partners if you are potentially about to be sued or have been served. Public relations partners cannot offer legal advice.
- Do not:
    - Agree to impromptu interviews with the media
    - Say “no comment” in response to any media question
    - Make any public statements

What will a crisis communications agency do?

Once a letter of engagement has been signed, your crisis communications team will move quickly to manage any urgent communications matters immediately. Simultaneously, the team will work with you to develop a crisis response strategy, and create any messaging needed to help manage the crisis. This includes but is not limited to:

- Holding Statements
- Media Statements
- Talking Points
- Q&A Materials
- Letters to Important Stakeholders
- Social Media Content

Your crisis communications team can also perform media training and assess your media readiness, if needed.

How much does a crisis public relations team cost?

Each crisis is different, and the number of hours needed to effectively manage a communications crisis can vary. Typically, Kimball Hughes PR charges an upfront retainer of $15,000 against which our crisis team bills its time. For more details, contact us today.