

# Towards a fresh approach to crisis management

Jackie Busch – liquidingo  
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## **JACKIE BUSCH**

The love of telling a good story that makes a positive impact in the world is what lights up the eyes of Jackie Busch, founder and owner of PR consultancy liquidlingo Communications. With more than two decades of industry experience, Jackie enjoys a career in PR that has spanned working with clients from lifestyle and entertainment to the Woolworths consumer portfolio, the MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet fundraising programme, the Association for Dietetics in South Africa, the South African College of Applied Psychology and organic online retailer, Faithful to Nature.



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A **Crisis Management Plan** is the communications and decision-making component of an overall Business Continuity **Plan** (BCP). A thorough **Crisis Management Plan** facilitates rapid communication to ensure overall safety to both internal and external stakeholders.

## BUT....

- Don't assume that one size fits all
- Parameters of a text book
- Social media
- Small internal or external PR
- Not all crisis situations can be planned for to a T

## LESSONS LEARNED ....



- A crisis is about the people and the reputation
- Partner with a crisis expert
- Deal with one issue at a time and always be honest
- Invasion of personal space

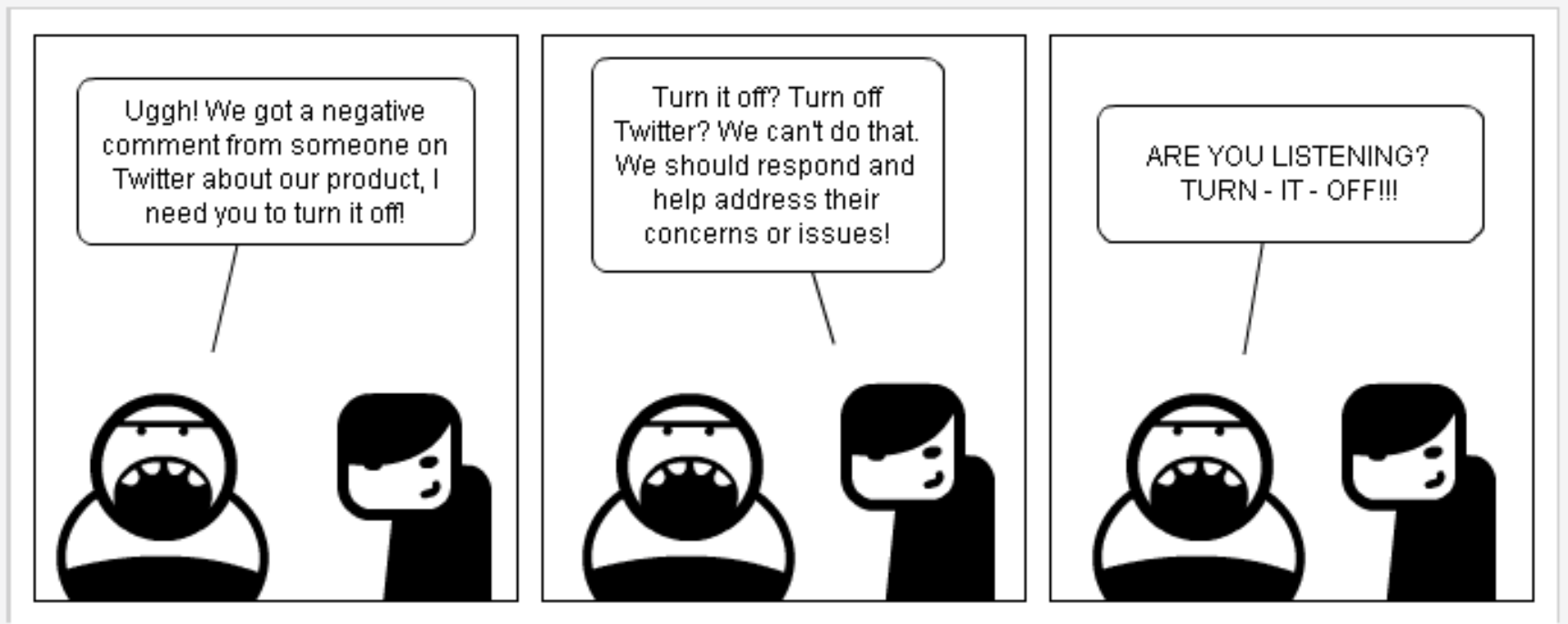
AND ....

# The Social Media Kneejerk

seanricholson

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[www.socmedsean.com](http://www.socmedsean.com)



# WHY A CRISIS EXPERT?



- Positive, proactive PR
- Crisis management from experience
- Unique skill set
- Big picture
- Separate the professional from personal





HEWERS

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# About me

- MA Communications – Centre for Mass Communication Research, University of Leicester, UK (Chevening Scholar).
- Worked in:
  - Public**
    - Parliament.
  - NGO**
    - South Newspaper.
    - Centre for Conflict Resolution.
    - Director of Communications at the Nelson Mandela Foundation.
  - Private sectors**
    - Maskew Miller Longmans.
    - Woolworths: group corporate communications manager.
- Author of “Crisis Tales”.

**Allergens:** Dark arts and alternative facts.

# About Hewers

Hewers is a bespoke, niche market crisis communication and issues management consultancy protecting personal, corporate and brand reputation, especially when things go pear shaped.

The name: “Hewers of wood and carriers of water”.

Hewers.co.za

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# Hewers genesis

- 8 years at Woolworths
  - M&A.
  - Results and financial media.
  - Annual report.
- Crisis and issues management:
  - Frankie's.
  - Product recalls.
  - Competition commission investigation into food prices.
  - Religious magazines.
  - Hot cross buns.
  - BDS campaign.
  - Strikes for union recognition.
- No agency support
- Formed the basis for Hewers

**We're battle-tested**

# What protects you in crisis?

Doing the right thing

Values matter

- Woolworths: SAs most reputable brand.
- About behaviour.
- The “frog”.
  
- United Airlines values.

## We Fly Right

... highest standards in safety and reliability ... earn trust by doing things the right way ...

## We Fly Friendly

Warm and welcoming is who we are.

## We Fly Together

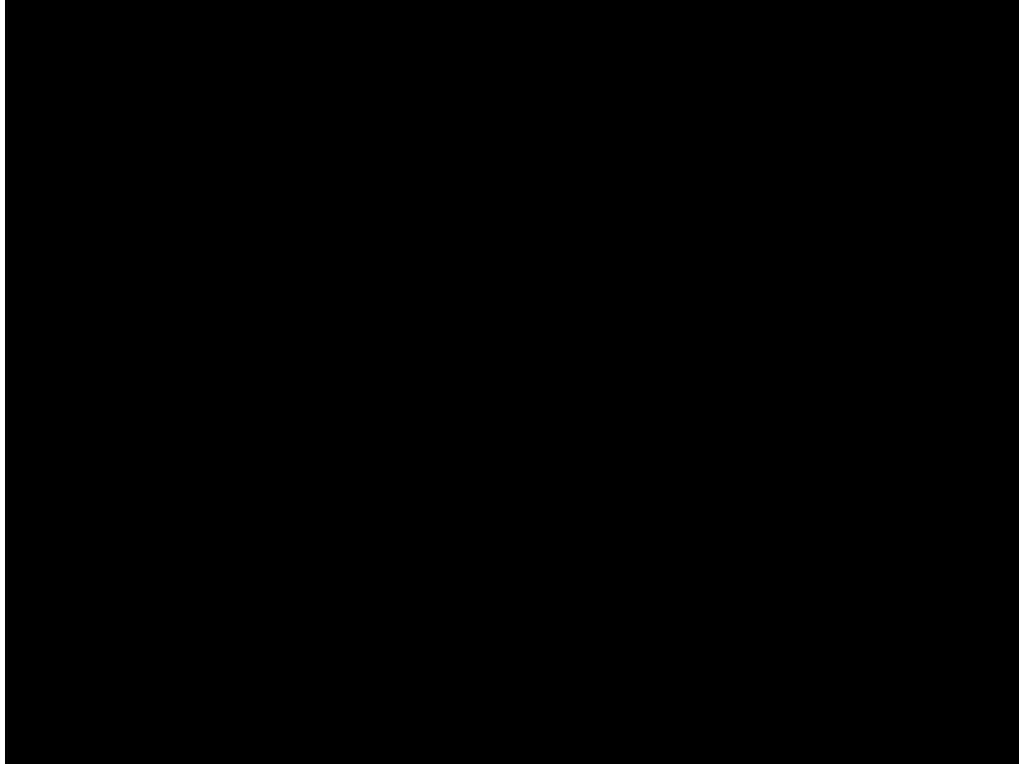
... we respect every voice, communicate openly and honestly, make decisions with empathy.

## We Fly Above & Beyond

... a commitment to excellence ... unmatched in our drive to be the best.



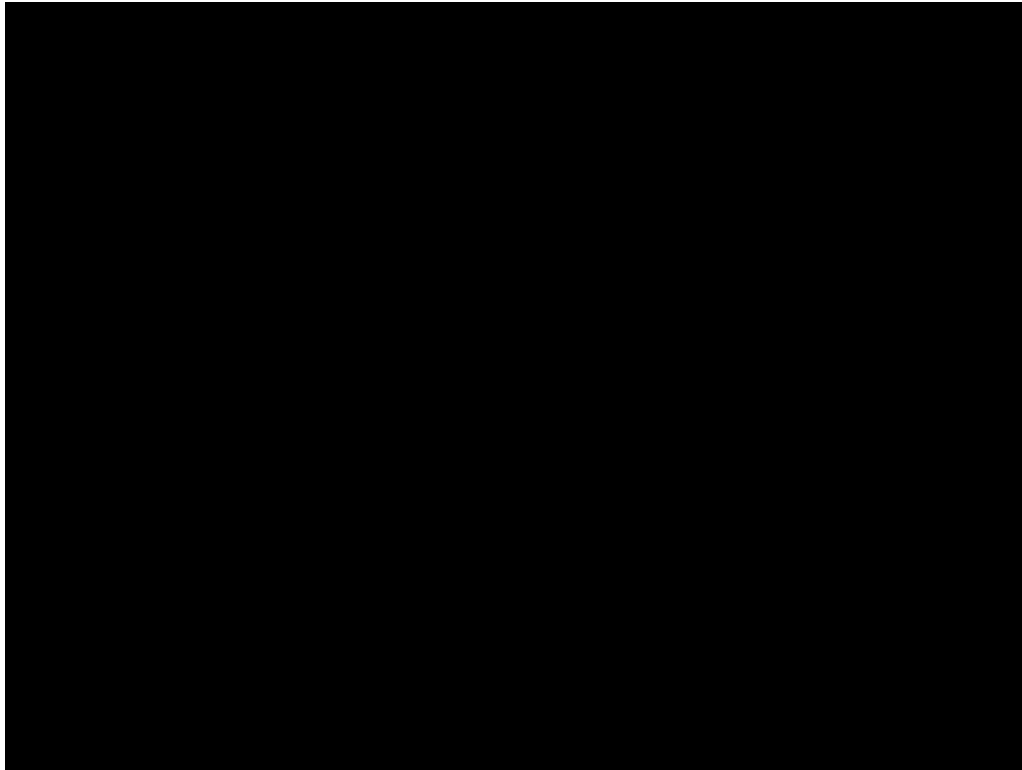
## Lessons from United Airlines



- Take responsibility. Own the problem.
- Never blame the victim.
- Be human.
- Review policy.
- Loss of USD 255 million



# Lessons from United Airlines



# What's the point of crisis communications?

## **Business continuity:**

- Continue day jobs.

## **Protect your brand and reputation:**

- Maintain and grow your organisation.
- Built and maintain trust.

## **Help those affected to bear the fear:**

- Acknowledge emotions.
- Share dilemmas.
- Honest and open communications.

## **Opportunity factor:**

- To reiterate your values.
- Redress.
- Develop voice.





## Do's and don'ts of media engagement

Do	Don't
Be helpful.	Ignore journalists.
Respond to all media queries.	Be afraid of negative stories.
Be truthful.	Be aggressive or hostile to journalists.
Keep your cool when faced with difficult questions.	Say or write anything that you would not want to see in print.
Develop good relations with journalists.	Say no comment.
Respect media deadlines.	Speculate on difficult issues.
Correct the facts or incorrect assumptions.	Make promises you can't keep.
	Lie. The truth will emerge.
	There is no such thing as "off the record".
	There is nothing wrong with saying "I don't know". You can revert with further info.
	Don't try to stop a story.
	Argue with a reporter.



# **The crisis plan: fixing the roof when the sun shines**

## **The crisis team**

### **Operating plan:**

- Terms of reference.
- Division of responsibility.
- Institutional awareness.
- WhatsApp group.

### **Identify interest groups:**

- Who are they?
- What action?
- Who talks to them?

### **Objectives:**

- Reduce risk.
- Share information.
- Protect reputation.



# The crisis plan: fixing the roof when the sun shines

## Identify spokesperson:

- To engage with media.
- To respond to interest groups.

## Media training:

- Schedule crisis communication training.

## Media resources:

- Holding statements.
- Position statements.
- Digital media support.
- Media monitoring and response.





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**THANK YOU**



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