

Crisis Management in the Digital Age

Khoros compiled tips from the following experts from a session at [Khoros Engage](#).

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Why You Need a Crisis Management Plan

Today, negative and damaging news about a brand has the potential to spread quicker than ever, and persist even longer – all to a much wider audience. While we all hope a crisis won't rear its ugly head, it's not a matter of *if* it will happen, but when. How brands plan for, manage, and engage their audiences throughout an issue can determine how the brand is perceived moving forward.

Here are eight great tips from experts at Khoros Engage to help your brand be prepared:



1. Designate a first responder

News cycles have gone from 24 hours to 24 seconds. Have a designated first responder (and team of stakeholders) that can quickly issue a statement across all of your social media channels – assuring customers that your brand is aware of the issue and actively working on a resolution.



2. Plan for social media volume spikes

When your brand experiences a crisis, the volume of comments and inquiries your social media team receives can skyrocket. Designate extra personnel that can help triage, along with implementing a plan for how to prioritize responses. Having a [volume spike plan](#) in place can reduce the length, scope, and severity of a social media issue.



3. Have an early warning system in place

Whether you are paying attention or not, conversations about your brand are happening. Having the right [software](#) in place to quickly identify issues across your social channels can be your greatest asset in a potential crisis scenario.



4. Create a list of media allies

While you can't control what every media outlet reports about your brand during a crisis, you can influence public opinion if you communicate your side of the story early. Evaluate which media outlets you have close contacts with and if possible, get your brand's perspective of the story covered to help address any false information.



5. Raise awareness across departments

A brand emergency is every department's problem. While social media managers and public relations staff may take the lead in crafting the brand's response, it's important for everyone to know best practices for replying to customers with concerns. Additionally, you may want to brief all department leads on your [crisis management plan](#) so everyone can know which actions to take if a real crisis were to take place.



6. Find and nurture advocates

The biggest threat to your brand during a crisis is the digital mob. Engaging with brand advocates on a regular basis has the potential to create authentic supporters for your brand during its rougher moments. Look for ways to "surprise and delight" your strong fan base on social media in order to turn users into fans.



7. Do a dry run with your core response team

Practicing how you'll respond doesn't just help create muscle memory, it also exposes shortcomings or issues in your process to improve upon. For example, you might find that some key stakeholders are out of office and then create a back-up plan for who to contact in that event.



8. Update your crisis plan every six months

It's not enough to develop a crisis plan and leave it on the shelf until trouble strikes. With so many variables from your organization in flux, including processes and people, it's vital to revisit your plan with key stakeholders and adjust as needed.

About Khoros Engage

Khoros Engage brings together digital customer engagement leaders. Attendees hear from thought leaders inspiring them to bring their business to the next level, gain insights from brands and industry leaders on digital care, community, and marketing topics, and build a network of other digital leaders.

Want to learn more about crisis management?
Read our whitepapers [Managing Customer Care During Viral Spikes](#)
and [How to Protect Your Brand on Social Media](#).

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