

June 2011 Newsletter

Jeff Ansell News & Views

My new book "When the Headline Is YOU: An Insider's Guide to Handling the Media" was released late in 2010 and is already in its 3rd printing.

Thank you again for quickly making it such a success.

Topics for this newsletter:

- 1.) SOCIAL MEDIA'S ROLE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS
- 2.) HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO YOUR ADVANTAGE
- 3.) PREVENTING DAMAGE IS BETTER THAN FIXING DAMAGE
- 4.) MR. GINGRICH NEEDS TO LEARN HOW TO SAY WHAT HE WANTS
- 5.) 33% CONSIDER TWITTER & FACEBOOK IMPORTANT NEWS SOURCES
- 6.) EVEN JOCKS NEED NEWS MEDIA SKILLS
- 7.) HIGHLIGHTS FROM MY BLOG
- 8.) HIGHLIGHTS FROM MY RECENT TWEETS

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends and colleagues.

Check out my BLOG . . . <http://jeffansell.com/wordpress/>

Follow me on TWITTER too . . . <http://twitter.com/JeffAnsell>

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1.) SOCIAL MEDIA'S ROLE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Spokespeople and companies today regard social media as an important communication tool.

They use it to distribute and manage press releases for all types of announcements, including product launches, or to try to salvage the reputation of companies from the misdeeds of errant executives.

Social media tools like Twitter and Blogs are powerful ways to reach into your community, but they should not be regarded as the only or primary means to engage clients and customers.

Like everything in life, balance is the secret to success.

Lean too far one way or the other and the boat starts to list out of control and slip off in a direction you might not want to go. Social media can be as dangerous as it can be helpful.

Many spokespeople use tools like Twitter or YouTube to backtrack from statements they regret, and occasionally it is successful, but for those with poor media communication skills it quite often only throws more fuel on the fire and makes the crisis worse.

The really smart thing is to learn how to NOT SAY DUMB THINGS in the first place.

Take Congressman Anthony Weiner for example. The more he opened his mouth the deeper he dug his grave. His troubles started on Twitter when he was accused of tweeting a picture of himself in his underwear to a woman in Seattle.

His trouble grew exponentially and to enormous proportion when he bungled his explanation.

The Twitterati and mainstream news media attacked him full on and pushed him over the cliff.

When Weiner realized no one was buying his explanation he made a lame joke on Twitter about how his numbers of Followers skyrocketed, and then he CLAMMED UP, with hardly a Tweet since the event.

During the heat of Weiner's sexting crisis his Twitter account jumped by thousands of Followers every day, sometimes by a thousand every few minutes, but he still failed to use it to address the charges leveled against him. He had an opportunity to explain himself, but he failed to engage.

In retrospect, it is clear now he was lying, but the issue is that he didn't know what to say, which indicates his lack of planning and media training, an understatement to be sure.

Today, NOT responding on your Twitter account is akin to the traditional "NO COMMENT!" and we all know saying nothing sends a message that you are guilty, whether the accusations are true or not.

Shutting down in any medium is a recipe for disaster. You have to communicate.

AM New York interviewed me when the Weiner story first broke.
<http://tinyurl.com/43rwj2n>

I just published an article for the Huffington Post re Weingate entitled;
The TRUTH Will Set You Free - <http://tinyurl.com/43k6sr6>

*** Breaking News – CNN reports Weiner will officially announce his resignation today
<http://www.cnn.com/2011/POLITICS/06/16/weiner.scandal/>

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2.) HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Unlike Congressman Weiner, some spokespeople know exactly how to use social media tools like YouTube to regain lost trust.

In what has become a classic example of how to respond in a crisis, Domino's Pizza President Patrick Doyle went on YouTube in 2009 when two of his employees placed videos of themselves online purposefully contaminating pizzas and boasting about it.

Doyle knew what to say to mitigate damages to his company and to get customers back on his side.

He created a conversational-styled social media video where he apologized profusely, explained the issue, and also told viewers how he was going to ensure it would never happen again.

He was genuine in his apology and took full responsibility for the actions of the two employees, both of whom were charged with felonies.

Doyle explained how he took the charges seriously by stating Domino's was re-examining all of their hiring practices, plus he vowed to send auditors to their stores every day of the week to make sure each location is as clean as possible. He admitted the employees caused a large amount of damage to the company's reputation and that it "sickened" him that the actions of two individuals out of 125,000 employees could have such great impact.

He demonstrated clearly in mainstream news interviews and through social media channels what Domino's was doing to regain customer trust.

Watch his YouTube video here - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dem6eA7-A2I>

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3.) PREVENTING DAMAGE IS BETTER THAN FIXING DAMAGE

Once the toothpaste is out of the tube it is impossible to put it back.

Executive reputation, which is tied to the share price of a company, needs to be constantly nurtured.

Protecting your reputation should be proactive, not an exercise in "damage control."

Unfortunately, due to poor media relations skills too many executives and politicians find themselves in a defensive position, often for an unwarranted reason and unable to save themselves or their share prices.

In these recessionary times trust is everything. Many companies today are under increasing pressure, and all it takes is one misstep to send them freefalling into financial failure.

The investment in learning how to manage media is far less than the cost of fixing problems caused by ignorance or lack of proper media training and preparation.

You might think you can handle anything that pops up, or naively believe you can learn on the fly, but when a crisis knocks unannounced in the form of an experienced investigative journalist, or worse, an amateur blogger with a rumor, you don't have time to call a PR advisor for help.

In this McGulp world you have to be prepared to act quickly. At the very most you might be able to buy yourself an hour or so, but anything longer sends a message something is wrong and you are stalling.

Salvaging a reputation means stock prices have already taken a hit.

Why let it sink to that level? Be a good Boy Scout and Be Prepared.

As explained in the NY Times, fixing a damaged reputation is very costly.
<http://tinyurl.com/4yhfau>

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4.) MR. GINGRICH NEEDS TO LEARN HOW TO SAY WHAT HE WANTS

Newt Gingrich recently said, "If you seek to be the president of the United States, you are never an analyst, and you are never a college teacher because those folks can say what they want to say,"

True, you can't say what you want, but you can learn to say what you mean.

With proper training anyone can deliver their message effectively.

Mr. Gingrich made the above statement mid-May, and less than a month later his presidential campaign team resigned en masse. Many reasons were offered as to why, including lack of commitment and differences in direction, but it has been apparent for quite some time his communication style has impeded his leadership.

If a former House Speaker has a challenge communicating effectively, where do you rank?

It was a surprise to Mr. Gingrich when his team resigned, but you would think a politician with such extensive experience could see something like this coming. Lack of vision is often a trait that gets many leaders in trouble. They don't prepare for all eventualities, and when a crisis hits they're caught flat-footed searching for words to describe their feelings. In almost all cases it is the beginning of their end.

When you reveal your weakness to people they focus on our faults instead of your strength.

Can Newt Gingrich Control Newt Gingrich? - <http://tinyurl.com/62pao3x>

Gingrich Team Resigns - <http://tinyurl.com/3n9wvuu>

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5.) 33% CONSIDER TWITTER & FACEBOOK IMPORTANT NEWS SOURCES

According to recent polls, "one in three people consider social media sites like Twitter and Facebook important news sources."

The poll also found that some people feel "journalists should not use Twitter at all."

In general, the poll reports that the older demographic regard traditional media, like newspapers and television, as more reliable. Younger people feel the exact opposite and trust social media more, although all age groups trust news less today than they have in the past. Regarding younger people, their loyalty is not to a news media organization's brand, but to the person's social media circle.

Read more - http://www.j-source.ca/english_new/detail.php?id=6460

50% of Americans report they rely on the people around them to find news, 44% get their news a few times a week from email or social media sites, and since 2009, Twitter's audience increased by 200%

Learn more about the Pew Research study between OLD & NEW Media here ...
http://www.journalism.org/analysis_report/new_media_old_media

"Churnalism - a news article published as journalism, is essentially a press release without much added."

This style of reporting is becoming so popular Churnalism.com was launched to track it.

According to Cardiff University research, "54% of news articles have some form of PR in them."

Track news yourself here - <http://churnalism.com/>

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6.) EVEN JOCKS NEED NEWS MEDIA SKILLS

Journalism extends across many areas, and the sports world is one of those places where knowing how to manage news media can enhance an athlete's or sports administrator's career.

Sports serves a vital role in society by bringing all types of people together.

Some sports celebrities manage news media better than others. Wayne Gretzky for example during the prime of his career proved to be a great communicator on and off the ice. Other's however find their interaction with media more challenging, like Brian Burke, NHL General Manager for the Toronto Maple Leafs, who decided to ignore journalists, and in some cases even insult them with harsh criticism.

He recently stated, "Write and say whatever you want." Guess what? They did!

Here's an interesting overview of Burke's recent sparring with media ...
http://www.j-source.ca/english_new/detail.php?id=5971

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7.) HIGHLIGHTS FROM MY BLOG

Blogging is an effective way to share all types of information with the world, and an excellent complement to other social media tools like Facebook and Twitter.

Here's a rundown of some of the media issues I've Blogged recently.

TIPS for Leaders in High Visibility Roles - <http://tinyurl.com/3vddhsl>

Secrets of Media Training & Pitfalls to Avoid - <http://tinyurl.com/3hqmkdp>

Nuclear Crisis Management in Japan - <http://tinyurl.com/5tc8o3r>

Reporter Set Up RIM CEO to FAIL - <http://tinyurl.com/3b443j6>

Radio's Role in News Media Today - <http://tinyurl.com/3vzr8gn>

Keeping COOL on the HOT Seat - <http://tinyurl.com/42tkhj3>

Media Training Model is Broken - <http://tinyurl.com/3sejn9u>

Asbestos Digs Itself a Deeper Grave - <http://tinyurl.com/3hveetz>

The LAW and Social Media - <http://tinyurl.com/3lbuf86>

Sales, Public Relations & News Media - <http://tinyurl.com/4yd2l7e>

Weiner Cover Up Worse than the Crime - 2 Parts - <http://tinyurl.com/3zghmrn>

How to Talk to a Reporter During a Crisis - <http://tinyurl.com/3ellkjs>

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8.) HIGHLIGHTS FROM MY RECENT TWEETS

Do you have a Twitter account?

Twitter is the fastest way to share news. Its popularity is growing rapidly

Here's a short list of some of the issues I've Tweeted lately.

Presenting to the East Coast CPRS & then to IABC 2011 World Conference to Host Quill Awards
<http://tinyurl.com/3bcv5sk>

Weiner pulls a Tricky Dicky - Weingate goes Watergate. Never takes long for TRUTH to pop up
<http://tinyurl.com/454xreo>

How to Talk to a Reporter During a Crisis - a review Frank Zeccola did of my IABC presentation & book
<http://tinyurl.com/3rzsg4>

Ryan Zuk recently did a Crisis Communication review on my new book, When the Headline is YOU -
<http://tinyurl.com/3f8so4s>

TIPS I shared with Salesopedia re the dynamic btwn the SALES Process, Public Relations & News Media
<http://tinyurl.com/3pg22xa> PODCAST

How to Handle Gotcha Journalist Interviews with Confidence - Bulldog Reporter Webinar
<http://tinyurl.com/4ba968s>

White House undermines credibility by erroneously speculating re events surrounding bin Laden death
<http://tinyurl.com/3qbs2vl>

Richard Maxwell recently launched a website called [Radioviz.com](http://radioviz.com), which focuses on the radio industry
<http://tinyurl.com/44ndtjm>

White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs Loses Cool With Fox News Reporter

<http://youtu.be/j0yNz-Qq5QU>

That's it for this edition of News & Views.

I hope you found it informative and valuable.

Sincerely,
Jeff Ansell

Be well . . .

P.S.

My new book, "When the Headline Is YOU" can be ordered at a variety of places online and from your favorite bookstores, including Amazon, Borders, Barnes & Noble, Chapters, Indigo, & directly from my publisher, Jossey-Bass.

It captures my decades of experience as a media coach and reporter, and is designed to help people understand and interact effectively with news media.

If you haven't purchased it yet and you're not even sure if YOU need my new book, check out our animated trailer to help you decide.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xhwd6tly1ao>

The excerpt below is from the introduction of my new book.

"Answering questions from reporters is risky business. Though a media interview may feel like a straightforward conversation, it actually represents a contrived and manipulative dynamic. Knowing how to talk to reporters is like learning a new language; a language that bears little, if any, resemblance to everyday conversation. It is a mistake for anyone to believe otherwise. It may seem as if speaking the truth should be enough to build credibility and trust, but that's rarely the case. Exposing oneself to media scrutiny requires more than simple candor and honesty. It requires knowledge, training, and a keen understanding of how reporters write the news." . . . end of excerpt

"When the Headline Is YOU" goes straight to the core of communicating with news media in our modern world. Communication has changed radically over the last few years, but there is still one constant humanistic dynamic; how a person or company delivers a message, and how others interpret it.

We are all subject to deeply ingrained behavioral traits, and no matter how much, or quickly technology grows or changes, the method of delivering a message, and how it impacts us is still the same. How we react is buried in our genes lurking at a reptilian level in our subconscious.

Contrary to what many people think, citizen journalism, blogs, and Twitter have not made it "easier" to be understood. New media has, in fact made it incredibly more complex and confusing, and that is exactly why clarity from the outset is so important. My book addresses clarity at a base level.

Now, more than ever, it is critically important how you sculpt your message, and how you interact with and deliver it to news media. It is a learned skill.

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My New BLOG - <http://jeffansell.com/wordpress/>

Join me on FACEBOOK - F A C E B O O K
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=147796085245411&ref=ts>

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