



Effective Communications in Crisis Situations

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➤ Agenda

- Our background and expertise
- Why we choose to communicate during a crisis
- How to effectively prepare for crisis situations
- Case Study – FLL shooting
- Case Study – UA passenger incident
- Takeaways
- Questions

✦ Aviation crisis experience

- *Southwest Airlines* – Ongoing crisis communications counsel
- *Pinnacle Airlines* – Crash of Flight 3701
- *Colgan Air* – Crash of Flight 3407 near Buffalo, NY
- *National Air Cargo* – Crash of Flight 102 in Afghanistan
- *Pacific Gas & Electric* – NTSB pipeline accident investigation
- *Northwest Airlines* – Mechanics strike; bankruptcy
- *DFW Airport* – Crisis planning and media training
- *Blue Grass Airport* – Comprehensive crisis planning and media training
- *Akron-Canton Airport* – Crisis planning, media training and ER drills
- *Swagelok* – Corporate aviation communications plan
- *NetJets* – Comprehensive crisis planning and executive media training



✚ Our aviation experience



✚ Defining a crisis

Anything – any issue, action, event – that **threatens** to significantly damage an organization and its employees, products, services, financial condition, or **reputation.**



➤ Why communicate during a crisis?

- If you don't, someone else will
- “No comment” = “probably guilty”
- Demonstrate concern
- Building/maintaining public support
- Help diffuse conflict
- Protect your brand and bottom line

*Be seen as part of the solution
– whether or not the issue was your fault!*



➤ Advance preparation is key to success

- Before a crisis, you should...
 - Conduct a thorough communications risk assessment
 - Develop a crisis communications manual, escalation process and tools
 - Provide crisis communications training
 - Practice handling a crisis situation



↳ Why is advance preparation important?

- Because during a crisis, you'll need...
 - The ability to quickly gather the right people to make good decisions promptly
 - Pre-developed communications templates
 - Pre-tested communications vehicles
 - Trained, competent spokespeople
 - Pre-developed relationships with the right people to help mitigate brand damage

↳ Lawyers and PR People...oil and water?

- Not at all!
- Same objective: Protect the Organization!
- Different angles, but equally important
 - Legal is the keeper of liability
 - PR is the keeper of brand and reputation
 - Both can have crippling impact if not handled properly
- Some tips
 - Establish working relationships and processes in advance
 - Stay in your lane
 - Learn each others' craft
 - Present a united front to management

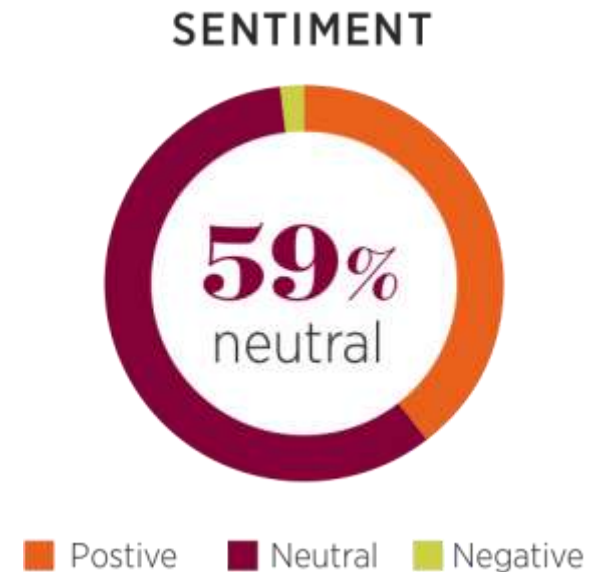
➤ Social Media: Managing social media's influence

- A few tips:
 - Evaluate your online presence
 - Have a monitoring service on standby for an emergency
 - Have a social media policy in place
 - Make sure you can communicate promptly via several venues
 - Don't begin social media communications efforts during a crisis; must be in alignment with your normal course of business



Monitoring

- Stakeholders expect to be updated minute by minute during a crisis
- Have a monitoring service on standby for an emergency
- Priority for monitoring and responding should be given to the company's official social media sites
- All social media posts should include links to the company's official statements on its website about the crisis.
 - Allows easy dissemination of information
 - Ensures consistent messaging across all platforms



↘ When to engage

- When evaluating a threat, consider the following:
 - Is the person who posted criticism influential?
 - Has the criticism been posted somewhere online where a lot of people will see it?
 - Does the attack contain egregious misinformation?
- If the answer to one or more of these questions is “yes,” a direct response from the company may be merited



✚ Best practices for responding to criticism

- Don't allow your emotions to take over
- Stick to the facts
- Quickly acknowledge concerns
- Provide updated information as soon as it becomes available
- If you can't respond to the question, explain why
- Correct misinformation
- Don't delete negative postings to the company's social media sites unless they are offensive or in obvious violation of the organization's social media policy
- Capture screenshots of important posts





FLL Airport Shooting

↘ FLL airport shooting




➤ Social media's role

 **Ft. Laude-Hlwd Int'l** @FLLFlyer · Jan 6
There is an ongoing incident in Terminal 2, Baggage Claim. Media availability is at the staging area.


← ↻ 690 ❤️ 258 ⋮

 **Ft. Laude-Hlwd Int'l** @FLLFlyer · Jan 6
All services are temporarily suspended at #FLL. Please contact your air carrier about your flight information. bit.ly/2iQVVjb

← ↻ 1.3K ❤️ 443 ⋮

 **Ft. Laude-Hlwd Int'l** @FLLFlyer · Jan 6
#FLL is currently closed and will be for an extended period of time. Please contact your airline about your flight bit.ly/2iQVVjb.


← ↻ 1.2K ❤️ 364 ⋮

 **Ft. Laude-Hlwd Int'l** @FLLFlyer · Jan 6
A hotline for information about Friends & Family at #FLL is available: 866-435-9355. For additional information: bit.ly/2hYJgey

← ↻ 196 ❤️ 81 ⋮

 **Ft. Laude-Hlwd Int'l** @FLLFlyer · Jan 7
The Red Cross is assisting passengers at @PortEverglades with bedding, food, and water. We thank them for their support.

← ↻ 45 ❤️ 78 ⋮

 **Ft. Laude-Hlwd Int'l** @FLLFlyer · Jan 7
#FLL wants to ensure each of the 20,000 items is returned to its rightful owner. More details to follow on where/when to pick up the items.

← ↻ 43 ❤️ 29 ⋮

↘ FLL website

Broward.org Government Agencies Services Residents Businesses Visitors Broward 100

FORT LAUDERDALE-HOLLYWOOD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Search Airport

Flights/Airlines Parking Transportation Terminals Services Business Community About Us

Broward County > Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport Winter Friendly Google Translate

Welcome to FLL!

Flight Status
Arrivals Departures
Select Your Airline

About Us
Parking
Transportation
Rental Cars

We continue to assist passengers who need to reclaim baggage and personal items left behind in the airport terminals. Report claims to the Broward County Call Center Sunday morning, and Monday during regular business hours. Call toll-free at 866-435-9355. We thank all of our passengers for their patience during this difficult time.

1 2 3 4

Advisories
[All Samsung Galaxy Note 7 Phones Banned From Airplanes. For more details, read the Department of Transportation announcement.](#)
[Ravenswood Road and bridge is closed for construction.](#)
[All Advisories](#)

BROWARD
Extended Forecast

✦ Airline reactions



United ✓
@united

Follow

Our thoughts are with all affected at [@FLLFlyer](#). We can confirm the incident didn't occur in our terminal. Stand by for operation updates.

2:04 PM - 6 Jan 2017

↩️ ↻ 100 ❤️ 245



Southwest Airlines ✓
@SouthwestAir

Follow

A ground stop is currently in effect at FLL until further notice. Our Hearts are with our FLL CoHearts and extended Family.

2:20 PM - 6 Jan 2017

↩️ ↻ 275 ❤️ 798



JetBlue Airways ✓
@JetBlue

Follow

If you have a flight booked to or from FLL today, please check bit.ly/JBTravAlert for info about flight status or changing your flight.

3:16 PM - 6 Jan 2017

↩️ ↻ 103 ❤️ 81



American Airlines ✓
@AmericanAir

Follow

Our thoughts are with all those affected at [#FLL](#). We're thankful all of our employees have been accounted for and are safe.

3:50 PM - 6 Jan 2017

↩️ ↻ 235 ❤️ 873

➤ Delta's reaction

 Delta @Delta · Jan 6
The thoughts and prayers of the entire Delta family are with the people of Fort Lauderdale and Broward County:
news.delta.com/thoughts-and-p ...
273 796

 Delta @Delta · Jan 6
Updated statement: Delta cancels Fort Lauderdale flights; activates care team
ow.ly/7U48307LqW8
127 181

 Delta @Delta · Jan 7
#FLL update (2/2): Delta to provide buses to cruise terminals & Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, & West Palm Beach airports.
ow.ly/omFW307LT80
31 89

 Delta @Delta · 23h
Thanks to @FLLFlyer & other airlines for use of Terminal 3 baggage claim as full schedule at #FLL resumes bit.ly/2j6PB4k
11 71

DELTA

NEWS HUB

PEOPLE & CULTURE PRODUCTS & SERVICES OPERATIONS OUR BUSINESS IMAGES & VIDEOS LANGUAGES

Thoughts and prayers following shooting at Fort Lauderdale airport

By Staff Writer · posted Jan. 6, 2017 2:45 pm

FOLLOW DELTA NEWS HUB

➤ Rumors perpetuated on social media

Kathy @SunSentinelKath · Jan 6
#breaking #FLL Second active shooter. Baggage area. Possible terminal 3. People fleeing area.

More gunshots reported at Fort Lauderdale airport...
More gunshots are being reported at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, following the shooting earlier Friday afternoon that left five dead and eight...

MagaFeed @MagaFeed · Jan 6
TSA CONFIRMS: Second Shooter At FLL Airport AFTER First Mass Shooting Kills 5
magafeed.com/second-shooter...

"FLL Airport" #airport #Terminal1

SECOND SHOOTER?

Kelsey Dean @kelsyrdan · Jan 6
It's been about 25 mins since first reports of a second shooter but still unconfirmed. Starting to doubt the reports #FLL

Evan Axelbank Fox13 @EvanAxelbank · Jan 6
I'm headed down to FLL to report on airport shooting. So far one confirmed incident, chatter about a second possible shooter but UNCONFIRMED

Scott Gustin @ScottGustin · Jan 6
FLL update — Barbara Sharief saying no second shooter.

Kyle Feldscher @Kyle_Feldscher
Mayor Barbara Sharief says there's no additional shooter at the airport. She tells MSNBC someone heard a loud noise and alerted cops.

Broward Sheriff Retweeted
TSA @TSA · Jan 6
Update: Active shooter at #FLL. Shelter in place. Airport closed.

Broward Sheriff @browardsheriff · Jan 6
Active search: Unconfirmed reports of addtl shots fired on airport property.

Broward Sheriff @browardsheriff · Jan 6
This is a fluid situation.
5 dead. 8 initially injured. 37 others injured after incident. All injured taken to BHMC & Memorial Regional.

↳ Observations and recommendations

- The need for constant communication
 - Initial arrest was quick but situation got out of control after that
 - Rumors of a second shooter swirling on social media led to chaotic second evacuation
 - Updates using emergency alert system more may have been helpful
 - Update social channels (and every other channel) once a second shooter was ruled out – most people were getting info via social media
 - All parties need to determine *in advance* who is responsible for timely communication with impacted people and how it will be carried out



United Airlines Passenger Removal

✎ United Airlines passenger removal



First person accounts of the event on social media



➤ @United responds to inquiries

Jayse D. Anspach @JayseDavid · Apr 9
Replying to @peopleteams @united and 2 others



0:58 ml

142 665 476

United @united · Apr 9
Hey Jayse, if you weren't able to get on your flight, please DM us. We can help get you re-booked. ^JR

25 17 11

Anonymous @USAnonymous · Apr 10
So @united is basically saying, "We asked for volunteers and no one said yes, so we called the cops." #G

54 869 2.2K

United @united
Follow

Replying to @USAnonymous

Flight 3411 from Chicago to Louisville was overbooked. After our team looked for volunteers, one customer refused to leave ^MD

RETWEETS 1,357 LINES 851

5:36 AM · 10 Apr 2017

4.3K 1.4K 851

JohnK @peopleteams · Apr 9
@CNN @united flight 3411 stuck on tarmac as united forces passengers off flight to accommodate their personnel.

1 5 6

United @united
Follow

Replying to @peopleteams

John, we're concerned about this. Safety and respect are of our utmost priority. Can you please DM more details? ^AD

Send a private message

5:37 PM · 9 Apr 2017

✎ United Airlines CEO's initial response



United
@united

Follow

United CEO response to United Express Flight 3411.

This is an upsetting event to all of us here at United. I apologize for having to re-accommodate these customers. Our team is moving with a sense of urgency to work with the authorities and conduct our own detailed review of what happened. We are also reaching out to this passenger to talk directly to him and further address and resolve this situation.

- Oscar Munoz, CEO, United Airlines

RETWEETS

21,640

LIKES

7,894



11:27 AM - 10 Apr 2017 from [Houston, TX](#)

Dear Team,

Like you, I was upset to see and hear about what happened last night aboard United Express Flight 3411 headed from Chicago to Louisville. While the facts and circumstances are still evolving, especially with respect to why this customer defied Chicago Aviation Security Officers the way he did, to give you a clearer picture of what transpired, I've included below a recap from the preliminary reports filed by our employees.

As you will read, this situation was unfortunately compounded when one of the passengers we politely asked to deplane refused and it became necessary to contact Chicago Aviation Security Officers to help. Our employees followed established procedures for dealing with situations like this. While I deeply regret this situation arose, I also emphatically stand behind all of you, and I want to commend you for continuing to go above and beyond to ensure we fly right.

I do, however, believe there are lessons we can learn from this experience, and we are taking a close look at the circumstances surrounding this incident. Treating our customers and each other with respect and dignity is at the core of who we are, and we must always remember this no matter how challenging the situation.


Oscar

Public backlash to the messaging

Kumail Nanjiani @kumail
The passive language here is how corporations deflect responsibility. "Review of what happened." It didn't just happen. You did this.

TIME @TIME
United Airlines "reaccommodated" a passenger. Is that the euphemism of the year?
RETWEETS 1,336 LIKES 4,548
12:27 PM - 10 Apr 2017

Merriam-Webster @MerriamWebster
"Volunteer" means "someone who does something without being forced to do it."
Trending: United: 'Our Team Looked For Volunteers' 'Someone who does something without being forced to do it' merriam-webster.com
RETWEETS 40,619 LIKES 65,932
8:06 PM - 10 Apr 2017

Joe Thomas @joethomas73
Dear #united, I had to "re-accommodate" someone once

RETWEETS 15,791 LIKES 30,088
11:53 AM - 10 Apr 2017

➤ Aftermath and consequences to the business



➤ Revised statement from the CEO

**United** 
@united



United CEO Oscar Munoz: I'm sorry. We will fix this. uafly.co/XuR1Bs

The truly horrific event that occurred on this flight has elicited many responses from all of us: outrage, anger, disappointment. I share all of those sentiments, and one above all: my deepest apologies for what happened. Like you, I continue to be disturbed by what happened on this flight and I deeply apologize to the customer forcibly removed and to all the customers aboard. No one should ever be mistreated this way.

I want you to know that we take full responsibility and we will work to make it right.

It's never too late to do the right thing. I have committed to our customers and our employees that we are going to fix what's broken so this never happens again. This will include a thorough review of crew movement, our policies for incentivizing volunteers in these situations, how we handle oversold situations and an examination of how we partner with airport authorities and local law enforcement. We'll communicate the results of our review by April 30th.

I promise you we will do better.

Sincerely,

Oscar

RETWEETS
3,112

LIKES
4,859



2:10 PM - 11 Apr 2017 from [Houston, TX](#)



➤ Reaction by politicians, regulators and DOT

JOHN KASICH: The United Airlines fiasco went viral because it showed exactly what's wrong in this country



Alan Smith @22h A 18,350

Gov. John Kasich of Ohio said the recent United Airlines fiasco provided a perfect example of what's wrong in the US and why the candidacy of President Donald Trump had such unexpected success.

"It was an example of where people ... where this guy was treated as a widget and not as a human being," Kasich told Business Insider on Monday while promoting his new book, "Two Paths: America Divided or United."



John Kasich. - Neil Wilson/Getty Images



Chris Van Hollen @ChrisVanHollen

Follow

#United must do more than "apologize". Full investigation needed. Airlines must start treating passengers with respect, not like cargo.

RETWEETS 245 LIKES 779



Amy Klobuchar @amyklobuchar

Follow

Travelers deserve to be treated w dignity. That's why I fought for Passenger Bill of Rights. This is unacceptable.

UNITED AIRLINES

Officer Put on Leave and Department of Transportation Looking Into United Airlines Incident

Reuters
Apr 10, 2017

United Airlines (UAL, -2.59%) passenger who was physically assaulted and one of the security officers pending an investigation.



Dr. Sandhu

Following United dragging incident, Congress to hold oversight hearing on airline consumer issues

My Last Dragged



Source: April 10, 2017, photo, courtesy of United Airlines passengers who signed the petition. United Airlines' response to a petition. Airlines flight. ©Chris Gaudy/Chicago Tribune via AP.

✦ Congressional hearing and updated airline policies

Congress to airlines: Police yourselves before we have to

By LAUREN GARDNER | 05/02/17 06:39 PM EDT

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[Share on Twitter](#)

Lawmakers in both parties lined up Tuesday to rail against airlines' mistreatment of customers, from their raft of confusing fees to last month's violent removal of a passenger from an overbooked United Airlines flight.

- ✦ "Seize this opportunity, because if you don't, we're going to act and you're not going to like it." - Rep. Bill Shuster (PA)
- ✦ "Unless we figure out a way to guarantee that customers are coming first, you're going to see more of that [violence on airlines]." - Rep. Elizabeth Esty (CT)
- ✦ "Nobody is against you making money. I don't want to yell at you. I just want to be able to go to the airport and get from Point A to Point B with a more pleasant experience." - Rep. Michael Capuano (MA)
- ✦ "Don't make us have to act and put [on] a one-size-fits-all approach." - Rep. Rodney Davis (IL)

Actions speak louder than words

Announcing changes to how we fly, serve and respect our customers:



Law enforcement will not remove customers from a flight.

Customers will not be required to give up their seat once on board.

Except in matters of safety or security.

We will identify volunteers much earlier in a case of overbooking.

We will increase incentives for voluntary rebooking up to **\$10,000.**

Southwest to Stop Overbooking as United Uproar Echoes

by Mary Schlangenhein and Michael Sasso

April 27, 2017, 3:24 PM EDT. Updated on April 27, 2017, 3:59 PM EDT

— "That's one of the pain points," CEO Kelly tells analysts

— United pushes maximum payout for giving up seat to \$10,000

Morgan Stanley

Capital

↳ Observations and recommendations

- Social media and video have added a whole new level of accountability and exposure risk
- The first response to a crisis is very important and will stick with the public throughout the incident, possibly making the situation worse if mishandled
- When crafting apologies, be sure to include emotional and humanizing messages
- Use consistent messaging for all audiences (i.e. employees and customers)
- Even when an action is allowable by regulation, it may not be the best choice
 - Many other less expensive options available
- Make sure customer facing teams are empowered to do the right thing and know how to escalate a crisis quickly
- What is still to come...



Questions?

Thank you!