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J 452

Social Media Strategy

**Why Social Media**

 Today’s generation Y’ers trust their friend’s and family’s opinion more than any experts in any form of business. Where are these generation Y’ers communicating? They are talking online via social media. To even have a slight voice of persuasion with this group a company must be actively involved in speaking and listening. The best way to do that is social media.

**BP Oil Goals**

BP’s goal regarding the oil spill is to “keep you in the know on impact of Gulf Oil Spill on coastal communities!” Social media is a perfect way to target those specific areas quickly and daily. Every social media site has an information section where a person enters their location thus, making it easy to directly locate and communicate members of specific areas such as gulf coast communities. Also, nothing is easier to inform large groups of people on daily updates that social media like Twitter and Facebook.

**Target Audiences**

The first target audience BP needs to focus on is residents of the gulf coast and those whose livelihoods are affected. This group has been damaged the worst by the oil spill and needs to be updated often with the current situation of the gulf. They are upset, vocal, and their needs need to be met. Social media can not answer all their questions, but it can fulfill the desire and need to be listened too.

 Although not as pressing of a group, the second target audience BP should focus on a environmentally conscious Americans. This audience grows on a daily basis. This group is likely to boycott BP’s product if they do not believe BP is trying to fix the mess of the Gulf Oil Spill. Social media will help them view pictures, statistics, testimonials and the feeling of care and empathy BP has for the accident.

**Objective**

Change video style and content on YouTube, increase Facebook “Likes” by 30% and decrease negative press coverage of the accident by 40%.

**Strategy**

One strategy BP should focus on is blogger relations. Mainly, targeting nay-sayers of BP. They will focus on building relationships with these bloggers. Offer primary and secondary data of the situation occurring in the gulf. Also, offer a tour of how the restoration process is proceeding. BP should welcome the blogger to finding their own research and keep an open line with them to contact the public relations team with any questions or concerns that they have.

 Another strategy BP should use is to redefine their YouTube account. As of right now, it is just commercials for them. It is cheesy, fake, and not reliable. A new strategy for YouTube will be actual testimonials of residents, fishermen, and most importantly on site cleanup specialists. Making it more authentic and letting others comment and discuss freely about these videos will create more of a dialogue and make it more of a legitimate source of information and not advertising.

**Evaluation**

The success of these strategies will be evaluated by the increase in “likes” and followers. Also, a public relations employee should be assigned the job of finding daily news stories of BP and determine whether they shine a positive or negative light on BP. Before the social media strategy is put into place a count of the most recent news stories should be evaluated as to whether they a positive reflect on BP or a negative one. After the campaign has begun a monthly count of the news stories on BP will be calculated the same way as before in which are in BP’s favor and opposed. The blogger relations’ strategy will be determined successful if relationships with anti-BP bloggers are built and information is shared between them to help the gulf and the target audiences. If any positive light can be on BP in their blogs on a more continual basis than negative, it would be a successful campaign. Also, if they can increase their positive comments and subscribers to their YouTube account it will be successful.

**Influencers**

Liz Borkowski

The Pump Handle

<http://scienceblogs.com/thepumphandle>

Mike Bergin

10,000 Birds

<http://10000birds.com>

Thomas Spencer

Birmingham News

<http://blog.al.com/birmingham-news-stories/2011/03/locals_make_finals_in_environm.html>

Scott Eustis

Gulf Restoration Network

<http://healthygulf.org/blog/>

Gloria Steinem

Blogging Trauma

<http://dartsociety.com/category/environmental-costs/>

Dan Radmacher

Blogging Dan

<http://bloggingdan.com/category/environment/>

Steve Carelson

Blogging Blue

<http://bloggingblue.com/2010/08/16/why-are-some-gulf-coast-jobs-worth-more-than-others/>

Cynthia Gordon

The Root

<http://www.theroot.com/blogs/naacp/gulf-coast-still-hurting>

Rick Kistner

After the Spill

<http://afterthespill.com/2011/02/07/beyond-recovery-moving-the-gulf-coast-toward-a-sustainable-future/>

Kate Sheppard

Mother Jones

<http://motherjones.com/environment/2011/04/bp-anniversary-top-ten>

 **Code of Ethics**

 BP’s code of ethics for social media is to be honest to all and accountable for their actions. The tragedy of the spill could be catastrophic to the environment of the gulf. It can also be to the company, but no matter what BP should be honest about the damages. It will make the corporation more dependable and trustworthy.

 In no way shape or form will BP try to blame what has happened in the gulf on anyone else, but their own company. The actions taken before the oil spill can not be changed. Being accountable via social media strategies will help improve their image and restore faith to the general public, specifically their target audiences.