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Comparing and Analyzing Organization Responses to Crises Through Stakeholder Engagement Between the Cruise and Hotel Industries

Cody Caster Norris

Clemson University, codynorris94@icloud.com

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COMPARING AND ANALYZING ORGANIZATION RESPONSES TO CRISES
THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE CRUISE AND
HOTEL INDUSTRIES

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Communication, Technology and Society

by
Cody Caster Norris
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Accepted by:
Dr. Andrew Pyle, PhD, Committee Chair
Dr. Erin Ash, PhD
Dr. Meghnaa Tallapragada, PhD

ABSTRACT

Crises in the tourism industries are repeatedly occurring and the way organizations respond have yet to reach an acceptable level expected by crisis communication scholars based on current literature and research. Through a comparative case study, cruise line crises will be examined through the lens of Discourse of Renewal and compared to hotel crises to determine how the both tourism organizations are responding and engaging with stakeholders during these crises. Furthermore, insight and implications of current crisis response efforts and guidelines on how cruise lines should transition to best practices are offered.

DEDICATIONS

To my partner Brandon: thank you for your continuous support throughout this journey and for always helping me stay grounded. I love you and am beyond thankful for you.

To my MACTS cohort: thank you for being such a fantastic group to be a part of. I appreciate each one of you and could not think of any other people to spend two years in Daniel Hall with.

To my Mom: thank you for always pushing me to do big things, for your unconditional love, and for paying my rent my first summer as a graduate student.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

As social media continues to grow and evolve, the way organizations communicate with their stakeholders through these channels during crises should evolve as well. Whether it's Twitter, Facebook, TripAdvisor, or Google Business, organizations usually employ their official channels for outreach and responses to their consumers (Veil, Buehner, & Palenchar, 2011). This is a common practice for all types of organizations, including cruise organizations such as Carnival Cruise Line, Princess Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean, and Celebrity Cruises. Relying on official channels ensures that messages are closely controlled. However, not implementing or utilizing those channels when stakeholders are heavily engaging in dialogue, and actively responding to the conversation is a missed opportunity on the cruise organization's part.

In February 2013, the Carnival Triumph lost power and propulsion due to a fire and was drifting for days without electricity. This left 4,000 passengers and crew stranded in the ocean with limited resources such as food and no running water (Faulkner, 2001; Griffin & Bronstein, 2013). Fortunately, Carnival Cruise Line stayed in contact with their stakeholders (cruisers, family and friends of the stranded cruisers) during the entire ordeal by holding press conferences, issuing official statements, and time stamping their Facebook posts.

The Carnival Triumph case represents a 180° turn in cruise crisis communication efforts after the Costa Concordia (sister cruise organization and sister ship) sank in 2012 (BBC, 2015). The sinking of the Costa Concordia was a traumatic event for the cruise and

tourism industries, mainly because of the lack of action and complete error on the captain's part. The Costa Concordia event resulted in 32 deaths. The captain was charged with 32 counts of manslaughter and abandoning ship (BBC, 2015). While Costa Cruises was present on Facebook during this time, the official twitter account was founded a year later. While the lack of presence on official social media channels years prior is still somewhat understandable, it does not excuse organizations from actively communicating with stakeholders online.

Other tourism organizations such as hotels have been implementing new methods for guest engagement before, during and after their stay, regardless if a crisis occurred. By reaching out to guests post-stay, or, responding to guest surveys and reviews on social media, hotels are diligent about understanding potential issues and complaints, acknowledging when guests have issues, and are quick to rectify the issues for the stakeholders through this discourse (Park & Allen, 2013). With the numerous cruise crises that have occurred and could possibly occur, it is interesting that cruise lines are not taking the leap into the realm of social media engagement with their stakeholders on their own official channels to respond to crises such as norovirus that develop.

When stakeholders are involved, and something goes wrong, it is up to the organization to actively keep stakeholders and all parties involved through transparent communication and honesty while also evolving and implementing future tactics to handle forthcoming crises (Liu, Pennington-Gray, & Krieger, 2016). If hotels are able to interact with guests digitally and virtually, before, during, and after their stay, while also moving beyond post-crisis apologia, why are cruise lines stagnant and complacent and not utilizing

these tools to ensure the same for their stakeholders while also fostering growth for their organization (Sellnow, Seeger, & Ulmer, 2019). When crises such as norovirus strike, it is becoming more important to move away from simply focusing on image repair which in previous literature, focuses on the well-being of the organization, and move more toward discourse of renewal which focuses on the stakeholder's well-being. Furthermore, renewal discourse ensures growth, knowledge and ethical communication stemming from the organization.

In the realm of crisis communication efforts, this study will focus more on organizational renewal rather than organizational image as its theoretical perspective, but both will be utilized as theoretical lenses. It will highlight how cruise lines are currently stuck in the image repair mindset when it comes to their crisis messaging. Further, the lack of stakeholder engagement for certain crises such as norovirus will be analyzed. Lastly, we will look at hotels as another tourist organization that has begun to move beyond image repair and focus more on renewal with their communicative responses and overall action taken during crises (Yin, 2014). After comparing hotel and cruise response efforts, a set of guidelines on implications and best practices for responding and stakeholder engagement during crises will be offered. The purpose of this project is to empower cruise lines to employ better stakeholder engagement practices based on literature and what hotels are currently doing that is in line with current renewal discourse research.

Renewal discourse moves beyond the tarnished image of the organization and focuses on: involving stakeholders in ethical communication during a crisis; learning from the crisis as an organization so that they are better prepared to face crises head on in the

future; allowing for their values as an organization to evolve after the experience; fostering positive relationships with their stakeholders through reassurance that their best interest is the organization's top priority (Pyle, Fuller, & Ulmer, Forthcoming; Sellnow et al., 2019; Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002). While the renewal approach is inconsistent with that of image repair, crisis communication scholars are pushing for a fairly new approach on how organizations can better handle crises through stakeholder engagement (Pyle et al., Forthcoming; Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Crisis Communication

The way an organization functions day to day with their duties, can be generalized as a continuous cycle of that being how they operate. However, a disruption to the company can cause chaos and other unseen events if not handled appropriately. These disruptions, whether they are minor incidents or catastrophic events, are known as crises. An employee calling in sick during the holiday shopping season or a vehicular accident involving several workers are both crises. A cruise ship running aground in shallow water splitting open the hull causing it to sink is also an example of a crisis. In a now classic piece, Hermann (1963) characterizes crisis as a surprise, a threat, and requiring a short response time. Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (1998) add to this definition of crisis, suggesting that in a time of crises, organizations are also given the opportunity to address these events through positive communication processes and outcomes. Specifically, organizations can utilize crises as a way to “provide the opportunity for open and honest exchange of information, for communication that engages stakeholders in mutual sensemaking processes, and for communication that help people protect themselves from the impact of the event” (Ulmer, 2012, p. 3). Furthermore, it is important that in times of crisis, organizations should not be cyclic in their crisis efforts, especially when more can be done and when stakeholders are repeatedly being affected by the crisis (Dobele, Westberg, Steel, & Flowers, 2014).

In the event of a crisis, organizations must be prepared for various outcomes, while also maintaining the normal day to day workflow and remembering the goals of the organization (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 1998). During an organizational crisis, building

a sense of trust with the stakeholders affected through strategic communication efforts, ensuring that action is being taken, and reassuring that future crises will be prepared for are some of the best approaches that organizations can take (Boin & Lagadec, 2000; Pyle, Linvill, & Gennett, 2018). Organizations must move beyond an approach that focuses solely on image management and progress toward organizational learning, ethical communication, and prospective vision.

Image repair theory.

Image repair discourse examines the image of the organization and what the organization can do to essentially fix or repair the perceptions of the public during times of crises through ways such as evading responsibility or reducing offensiveness (Benoit, 1997). When an organization finds itself in the middle of a crisis, and the organization is not at fault, the public will have an inclination that the crisis was not caused by the organization or it was out of their control, therefore the pushback from stakeholders and the public will be less drastic (Benoit, 1997). Furthermore, Benoit (1997) states that “perceptions are more than reality” so it’s important for organizations to address the perceptions as soon as possible when a crisis occurs because these perceptions can spread quickly especially with the help of social media (Palen & Hughes, 2018).

Contrarily, if the organization is at fault, denying and evading responsibility are other routes that organizations can take in the event of a crisis. These two methods do not take responsibility for what has occurred and may go as far as placing the blame on another organization, person, place or thing (Coombs, 2007). In the realm of cruising and hospitality, and the types of crises that these industries face, there is little to no room to

evade or deny any of the different crises that may occur (Liu et al., 2016). In past crises for example, denying and evading can drag a crisis on and further exacerbate the negative impacts for the organization and its stakeholders (e.g. the BP oil spill also known as Deepwater Horizon) (Sellnow et al., 2019).

Another approach for organizations to take in an effort to clear their conscious of guilt is through apologetic discourse that acknowledges the crisis and begins to take corrective action for the organization and all parties involved (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002). These methods focus on acknowledging the crisis, and communicating to stakeholders, however, it's still not up to par with discourse of renewal due to the lack of ethical communication (is the organization speaking out to cover their image or do they actually care about the situation occurring?), and there being a lack of fostering growth from within the organization in a pre-crisis mindset for the future (Pyle et al., Forthcoming).

Discourse of renewal.

During a crisis, organizations generally have a set plan in place on how to handle different scenarios that are thrown at them (Ulmer & Pyle, 2016). But, in the sense of post-crisis communication efforts, it is argued that in crisis renewal discourse, there are four important tenets that organizations focus on. First, post-crisis discourse is prospective and “seeks to describe activities related to future goals and development as opposed to retrospective seeking to explain what happened in the past” (Pyle et al., Forthcoming). Second, post-crisis discourse looks to the future of the organization with a perspective of a blank slate. For example, a fire can radically alter an organization's place in the community (Sellnow et al., 2019). While this may be devastating from one viewpoint, in the context

of renewal discourse, it allows for the reconstruction of the organization short-term and long-term (Seeger & Ulmer, 2001). Third, this discourse is provisional in the sense that it allows for cyclic communication efforts between the organization and stakeholder and is driven by organizational values and is contrary to Image Repair's efforts to rebuild with limited liability (Benoit, 1997; Booth & Matic, 2011; Coombs, 2007). Lastly, renewal discourse includes organizational learning and growth. Organizations who acknowledge their small failures (such as norovirus), and willingly address them through vicarious learning, can prevent reoccurring crises (Veil et al., 2011).

One notable instance in the cruise industry where several tenets of discourse of renewal were present during a crisis was in 2013 when the Carnival Triumph caught fire, lost power and propulsion, and was left adrift for several days at sea. During this time, Carnival Cruise Line routinely updated their social media channels with information pertaining to the ship, the guests and the crew (Agnes, 2013). Fortunately for the guests, and other stakeholders, the way Carnival handled the crisis was done so in a way that incorporated two tenets of discourse of renewal including ethical communication and effective organizational rhetoric (Griffin & Bronstein, 2013; Pyle et al., Forthcoming). However, Carnival had little use of the other two tenets during this massive crisis and forthcoming crises prove that there was a lack of organizational learning and no prospective vision. This is inferred due to numerous crises occurring after the 2013 Triumph incident with no stakeholder engagement via social media, and no acknowledgement on how they will improve through stakeholder engagement in the future.

Crisis Management in Tourism

Crisis management's focus in tourism is on the guests being affected, the organization's image and reputation and maintaining the situation so that it is controlled and hopefully fixed (Blake & Sinclair, 2003). Traveling heavily involves stakeholders and the public as they are the ones participating in numerous travel arrangements and visiting foreign places, while also entrusting that these organizations they are affiliated with are going to take excellent care of them during their time away.

An exemplar of a crisis disaster disrupting the general day to day workings of an organization is when two Malaysian airline flights were lost within a four-month time span. Further exacerbating this crisis, Malaysian Airlines insensibly introduced a bucket list campaign shortly after that did not settle well with the public (Thomas, 2014). With Merriam-Webster defining bucket list as something a person wants to accomplish or complete before dying, Malaysian airlines found themselves deeper in bad press by not recognizing how inappropriate a campaign such as a bucket list would be during the time of two missing flights and five-hundred plus people missing. Furthermore, without acknowledging the negative attention the campaign was receiving and using this as a learning opportunity, Malaysian Airlines simply removed the webpage where people could submit their bucket list responses (Barber, 2014). While crises can completely disrupt an organization's day to day workflow, the way organization's handle these crises publicly and privately through communicative efforts and overall learning says more about the organization than disregarding it by implementing a marketing ploy to detract attention from the crisis at hand.

To reach that stage of crisis management, a few other actions on the organization's part must occur. Before a crisis occurs, the organization must be aware of potential crises. In this comparative case study, the cruise industry crisis is norovirus, while the hospitality industry's is bed bugs. After numerous reported cases of both, it's safe to say that both industries understand that these two scenarios could occur at any time (CDC, 2018; Entomology, 2016). Briefly touching on implicative guidelines of managing crises, organizations should aim to prevent the situation from worsening. In this perspective of post-crises, organizations should engage with their stakeholders who are reaching out to them with their concerns (Evans & Elphick, 2005). Lastly, after a settlement with guests has been reached, the organization returns to the pre-crisis stage until another stakeholder reaches out for support.

Stakeholder engagement in tourism.

A major component of crisis management is the stakeholders. These are the individuals and groups who have something they might lose or gain from the organization and they have invested interest or resources into the organization. For tourism and cruise lines specifically, the stakeholders are those individuals who are taking the vacations or who have ties with the organization that the crisis is affecting (Liu et al., 2016). While focusing on stakeholders is crucial to overcoming a crisis, organizations must also keep the stakeholders involved. They should also remain honest through ethical communication and examine how the stakeholders interact with the organization as these interactions can be life or death for the organizations' reputation, public image and financial stability (Coombs, 2007; Ulmer, 2012; Ulmer & Pyle, 2016).

Social media and crises.

One way for organizations to keep stakeholders involved is through social media (Agnes, 2013). Crisis communication strategists can utilize social media as a tool or medium to spread messages to vast numbers of people with the click of a button (Jin, Liu, & Austin, 2011). Numerous organizations now utilize social media sites and platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to reach out to their stakeholders as well as a way to maintain communication efforts with those groups. Most invested stakeholders follow their favorite organizations on at least one social media platform so utilizing this technology for stakeholder engagement is an excellent place for ethical communication (Palen & Hughes, 2018).

Through social media communication, not only are organizations able to reach out to the public through postings, but they're also able to engage with these publics as if they were having a conversation back and forth. Specifically, in a time of a crisis, sharing on social media enables a platform of open dialogue between an organization and its stakeholders. However, this fluid communication only occurs if both parties are actively responding (Veil et al., 2011). If organizations do not engage with their consumers through social media during crises, it could show the stakeholder that their invested interest in the organization is not worth the organization's time nor does the organization care about the stakeholder's wellbeing and safety (Palen & Hughes, 2018).

From a public relations standpoint, it is crucial for organizations to reach out to their stakeholders in times of crises. If social media accounts are utilized by the organization for marketing purposes, they too should be channels utilized for crisis

communication efforts. Utilizing social media over traditional media to communicate crisis information not only gets the message out faster, but also can reach a vast number of people. It's important to note that the medium in which the information is dispersed also matters. Schultz, Utz, and Göritz (2011) found in their experimental study that in a time of a crisis, the message does not matter as much as where the message is placed. Therefore, when organizations are attempting to reach their consumers and stakeholders in the time of a crisis, where the message is being sent and received matters more than the content of the message itself.

Crisis Management in the Cruise Industry

A specific area of crisis communication research that is still being explored is that of the cruise industry and what takes place when cruise organizations have to communicate about and deal with crises. Types of crises for the cruise industry range from: illnesses on board from crew and passengers (usually in the form of norovirus that can spread rapidly in the ship's closed system); passengers and crew members jumping overboard or falling over the decks; bad weather such as hurricanes and ships sinking due to captain error (Lerner & McNally, N.D.). Although it is exceedingly rare compared to an illness outbreak, a sinking ship is a massive crisis for cruise organizations (BBC, 2015).

Previous literature in cruise tourism looks at areas such as image repair, stakeholder engagement, corrective action and reducing offensiveness. It's important to note that there are many other factors that affect how the cruise industry manages crisis situations because of the environment of the cruise industry (Liu et al., 2016). With the ship being a closed

system, and there being multiple ships per cruise lines, cruise organizations must be ready to tackle the several scenarios listed above at any given moment. This is similar to the hotel industry with major brands like Hilton and Marriott and then their subsidiaries and chains beneath. With the number of cruise lines, ships and passengers growing, the efforts from the cruise organization will also need to be increased (Team, N.D.).

One area of focus when addressing cruise crises is through compassion and empathy for passengers through ethical communication (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002). One exemplar of a cruise line completely “missing the boat” was Royal Caribbean putting out two press releases regarding the 2014 incident of the MS Explorer of the Seas’ 10-day voyage that resulted in over 600 passengers contracting norovirus. The press releases offered information of what Royal Caribbean planned to do once the ship returned home and stated they were going to offer passengers compensation which equated to a “do over cruise.” However, the plan for the ship once it returned to its homeport was not something orchestrated by Royal Caribbean, but rather by the CDC. The CDC Vessel Sanitation program requires a full sanitation of the ship along with detailed information pinpointed to where the illness originated from (CDC, 2018). Royal Caribbean offered no sympathy, coping or social support or contact information for passengers and passenger’s families affected by the incident (Team, N.D.). Further, Royal Caribbean was not prospective in vision on what they planned to do to keep this from occurring in the future, nor did the organization take any ownership or demonstrate organizational learning (Pyle et al., Forthcoming)

Similar to Royal Caribbean's minimal effort to be actively available for their stakeholders during their 2014 incident, Carnival Cruise Line too has had several opportunities to foster renewal in times of crises. Carnival Cruise Line, a subsidiary of Carnival Corporation has had its fair share of cruise crises. A widely-known incident occurred when the Carnival Triumph lost power in 2013 and was left drifting in the gulf for days. This left passengers without food, electricity and running water. Fortunately, the organization was upfront with their communication efforts by keeping the public involved through tweets and time-stamped Facebook posts, however, there were no instances of renewal in the messaging (Agnes, 2013; Griffin & Bronstein, 2013). There have been several incidents of crew members losing their lives, and Carnival Cruise Lines' sister line Costa Cruises lost an entire ship and numerous passengers due to sinking from captain negligence. It's safe to say that Carnival Cruise Line has had plenty of opportunity to up their crisis management efforts (Agnes, 2013).

Organizational crises are not new, however the way organizations handle specific crises has and is steadily evolving (Ritchie, 2004). Overtime, one would think that cruise lines would have responding to crises such as norovirus or passengers falling overboard down to a science, but they're still missing the mark in the realm of renewal discourse as it relates to ethical communication to stakeholders and learning and growing as an organization (Agnes, 2013; Pyle et al., Forthcoming). While the exemplar of the Carnival Triumph shows that the cruise line was dedicated to providing updates via social media, they completely missed the mark and the opportunity to create renewal discourse in those updates from this massive crisis that affected their stakeholders and the organization.

Social Media & Cruise Crises

While the relationship of tourism and social media is fairly new, research shows that social media's presence in tourism is "influential, especially on information search and share and the way tourists and tourism businesses participate in tourism" (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014, p. 34). Cruise organizations are no different, and that participating in social media efforts are crucial to building relationships, and maintaining those relationships, as well as empowering trust, especially in a time of a crisis.

This idea of the public participating in crisis management through social media engagement now shifts focus to what organizations are doing or should be doing to integrate social media into their crisis management efforts more effectively (Jin et al., 2011). While many tourism organizations are already doing so, there are still many opportunities that cruise corporations can act on to ensure that their guests remain happy and loyal to the brand, but also feel safe at all times. Looking toward the hospitality industry, an area of tourism already implementing guest outreach and crisis communication efforts, cruise lines could easily implement similar practices and strategies to ensure that stakeholders are not ignored and that engagement continues.

Stakeholder engagement as a parallel.

When crises arise, the first priority of any organization should be to protect their stakeholders and possibly the general public from harm (Coombs, 2007). Through publishing information for stakeholders, to instructing them on best practices, and facilitating coping, stakeholders are the key focus of any crises situation and they want to know what precautions or measures are being taken to ensure their safety. Furthermore,

they deserve to know what's going on and it's up to the organization to continuously provide and monitor this information as well as answer public questions (Sellnow, Ulmer, & Snider, 1998). This discourse of renewal will allow for both the organization to take corrective action as well as show their stakeholders that specific plans are in place to fix the crisis that has occurred (Ulmer & Sellnow, 2002)

Taking responsibility for crisis situations is the last step in managing these types of incidents as an organization. Taking precautionary measures to prevent future crises and correcting what went wrong in the best way possible that benefits the stakeholders is crucial to maintaining those stakeholder relationships. This also sets an example for other organizations who may be unsure on how to handle crises (Sellnow et al., 1998). However, it is important to note that, the benefits for the stakeholder should always outweigh the benefits for the organization (Coombs, 2007). Often times, a benefit for the stakeholder will come at a cost for the organization, but it would easily pay off in the long run. Specifically speaking, for the cruise industry, if a cruise is interrupted by bad weather or a crew falling overboard and a port is missed, compensation for all guests would be a benefit for those involved, but would come at a cost for the cruise organization. Fortunately, this would strengthen the relationship that passengers have with their cruise line and would be beneficial in the long run (Ritchie, Dorrell, Miller, & Miller, 2004; Sellnow et al., 1998).

As seen in previous literature, stakeholder engagement is a crucial piece of the puzzle to ensuring that crisis situations are conveyed clearly to the public and that there are no mis-communications with those who have something to gain or lose depending on the situation at hand (Jin et al., 2011; Waligo, Clarke, & Hawkins, 2013). Furthermore, being

transparent with stakeholders and engaging with them through press conferences or on official social media channels also shows that their best interest is in the organization's full consideration. However, there are a lot of missed opportunities when it comes to cruise lines and their efforts to engage with stakeholders on their own channels during times of crises.

After the Carnival Triumph lost power in February 2013, and Carnival's sister organization lost a ship to captain error (The Sinking of the Costa Concordia), Carnival Cruise Line increased their engagement with their stakeholders from a marketing standpoint to showcase their new ships and destinations via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. However, in times of crises, the cruise industry is silent on social media (Agnes, 2013). Being present on the official channels routinely (even in the event of a crisis) would in itself create a stronger loyalty and relationship between the cruise organization and its stakeholders.

If a guest is reaching out to a cruise line via social media expressing their concerns about norovirus on a cruise that they were just on, or that they plan to be on, or if they actually got sick, it's up to the cruise organization to initiate a response back to ensure that the guest is taken care of, and that any worries are put to rest. The theoretical foundation of discourse of renewal and image repair weigh heavily on the relationship between the stakeholder and the organization when something not normal is occurring such as norovirus (Benoit, 1997). Similarly, if a guest has seen news reports or reviews on TripAdvisor regarding bed bugs at a specific property they're staying at, or they themselves experiences bed bugs during their stay, it is up to the hotel to respond and engage with the guest to

ensure that matters are being resolved and their safety and health is their top priority (Park & Allen, 2013). These cyclic communication efforts can and have occurred online through social media and continue to do so, however, they're marketing focused and aren't geared toward responses of crises. As social media continues to expand, there's even more ground to cover in engaging with stakeholders and more ways to ensure that crises are diverted or at least alleviated through these social media channels (Jin et al., 2011; Ritchie et al., 2004).

Similarly to the cruise industry, the hotel industry experiences its fair share of crises, some being more extensive than others such as employee strikes, and some being repetitive such as bed bugs and safety/security incidences (Park & Allen, 2013). In December 2018, over 7000 workers for Marriott and Marriott branded hotel properties went on strike demanding better wages after barely being able to make ends meet. After several weeks, a consensus was met and those workers who interact with guests one on one were given raises and a silent GPS button for scenarios if they felt unsafe (Schwartz, 2018). During the timeline of the strike, consumers were left with little to no help when it came time for basic hotel services such as housekeeping of guest rooms, and being checked in, however, a statement from Marriott eloquently stated they remained ready to serve guests as best as possible and they respect their associates rights to participate in the strike (Reints, 2018). Furthermore, as social media sites blew up with negative reviews for more than two dozen properties, hotels worked closely with their public relation staff and third-party vendors to handle responding to such reviews (Schwartz, 2018). iResponze, a social media review and response start-up that manages over one-thousand hospitality properties felt the full effect of the Marriott strike by having to respond to a record number of reviews with a

response that was ethical, prospective in vision and included a sense of organizational learning on behalf of the hotel (Boston, 2018; Pyle et al., Forthcoming).

That same year, Marriott also faced a data breach that began dating back 4 years prior to 2014 for its Starwood subsidiary (Telford & Timberg, 2018). When Marriott made a statement, it too contained tenets of discourse of renewal rather than image repair because it focused on growth, learning, fixing the issue for the stakeholder and keeping the stakeholder as their ultimate focus. Furthermore, this data breach was exacerbated by negative online reviews where Starwood (Marriott) properties and third-party vendors such as iResponze were required to take extra steps in responding to reassure previous, current and future guests that Marriott is doing everything it can to ensure that no further data is breached; they are taking necessary steps to correct the problem; and that the guests are their top priority (Kim, 2018). A statement made by Heather Cardone, Engagement Director for iResponze's US team, said that before responding to any reviews about the data breach, engagement ambassadors [had to] reach out to the hotel with a suggested response and get approval of the response (Cardone, 2018). There's evidence of hotels communicating in a way that is consistent with the four tenets of discourse of renewal, however, cruise lines on the other hand, have yet to dive further into stakeholder engagement in online platforms during times of crises and furthermore, do not appear to be learning and growing from previous crises.

Research Questions

RQ 1A: What types of recurring crises do cruise lines tend to face?

RQ 1B: What types of recurring crises do hotels tend to face?

RQ 2A: What channels and methods do cruise lines use in crisis communication?

RQ 2B: What channels and methods do hotels use in crisis communication?

RQ 3A: How do cruise lines engage with stakeholders via social media messaging during crises?

RQ 3B: How do hotels engage with stakeholders via social media messaging during crises?

RQ 4A: How do cruise lines implement image repair strategies or renewal efforts in their crisis messaging?

RQ 4B: How do hotels implement image repair strategies or renewal efforts in their crisis messaging?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Through a comparative case study for this project, the communication outreach efforts between the cruise industry and the hospitality industry was assessed and analyzed to determine best practices for further crisis communication implementation efforts (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, guidelines and best practices were offered as what cruise lines can begin to do to increase their stakeholder engagement online during certain crises as well as incorporate renewal discourse in those messages. Through reviewing the literature, there is evidence of discourse of renewal tenets in hotel's responses during crises such as the Marriott worker strike and Marriott Starwood data breach (Kim, 2018; Reints, 2018; Schwartz, 2018; Telford & Timberg, 2018). Thus, utilizing hotels as a parallel for crisis communication efforts in tourism is the best exemplar to compare with what cruise lines are currently doing.

In order for this to remain as comparative as possible, the same research questions for cruise lines were duplicated for hotels. However, hotels are not the focus, they are simply being utilized as a comparison for this study. After reviewing previous literature, press releases, and statements, and investigating content with Social Studio it was determined that cruise crises and hotel crises tend to reoccur. For RQ1A, RQ1B, RQ2A, RQ2B a catalog of cruise crises was built with the following parameters to determine repetitiveness. There were five major cruise lines examined: Carnival Cruise Line, Princes Cruises, Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises, and Norwegian Cruise Line. The cruise catalog included the ships for each line (See Appendix A for a list of names of all vessels

included in this study). Further, each crisis was grouped based on whether it was man-made or not man-made and whether it was intentional or unintentional (See Appendix A for definitions of terminology). Each crisis was grouped by a descriptive and it was dated with the year the event occurred. The found channels and areas where the cruise line acknowledge the event was recorded to the best of the researcher's ability. Lastly, prior literature provides insight on what cruise lines and hotels have done in the past during crises and how they implement crises management plans. Cataloging cruise crises was the starting point for this case studied. Through targeted searches, building the catalog of the cruise crises allowed me to provide data triangulation and further expand research questions based on the findings (Yin, 2014). Hotel crises were not going to be cataloged for repetitiveness, if it was found that hotels responded via social media regarding these crises. There are also more hotel chains, and subsidiaries than cruise lines/ships that would make cataloging extremely difficult.

For RQ 3A, three norovirus events were selected from three of the five cruise lines (one from each line) and Social Studio was utilized to collect data. Social Studio is an online software that allows for researchers to search and pull online data from the past and set specific keyword criteria. The software was used to determine the number of norovirus-related tweets ($n = 19$) from stakeholders to the cruise line during that time frame of the crisis and also the number of the tweet replies back to the stakeholder by the cruise organization ($n = 0$). Each event maintained a 60-day window for the tweets, with each norovirus event occurring in the same year, consecutively after one another. To determine the number of tweets by the stakeholders toward the cruise line, the keyword "norovirus"

and each cruise lines' individual twitter handle were included in the keyword search parameters. An audit was conducted on the same 60-day window (respectively of each event) on each cruise line in Social Studio using their twitter handles as the source, and the keyword "norovirus" was included to examine whether or not the cruise line responded to tweets about norovirus. Furthermore, all messaging from the cruise line was analyzed to determine whether and how the cruise line responded to the crises on twitter. Messaging from stakeholders that did not relate to the crisis were omitted from the sample and were not analyzed further.

For RQ 3B: *Do hotels engage with stakeholders via social media message during crises?* Two bed bug events were selected from two major hotel brands (one from each). To determine a specific time frame to search for, one that was also in the same year as the cruise norovirus crises, a simple Google search of "*(hotel brand name) bed bugs news 2017*" produced several news stories from reputable news sources. Social Studio was then utilized to determine the number of tweets by stakeholders (n = 15) to the hotel brand during that time of crisis. Each event maintained a 60-day window for the tweets, with each bed bug event occurring in the same year. To determine the number of tweets by the stakeholders toward the hotel brand, the keyword "bed bugs" and each hotel brand's individual twitter handle was included in the keyword search parameters. An audit was conducted on the same 60-day window (respectively of each event) on the two hotel brands in Social Studio using their twitter handles as the source, and the keyword "bed bugs" was included to examine whether or not the hotel brand responded to tweets about bed bugs. Furthermore, all messaging from the hotel was analyzed to determine whether and how the

hotel responded to the crises on twitter. Messaging from stakeholders that did not relate to the crisis were omitted from the sample and were not analyzed further. (See Appendix C for tweets/codebook).

For RQ4A and RQ4B, four statements (two from each organization type) were utilized for further data triangulation in conjunction with the tweets and official messaging. Statements were examined through the lens of Image Repair Theory (Benoit, 1997) and Discourse of Renewal (Pyle et al., Forthcoming), coded and analyzed based on those definitions to determine which way the organization leans when addressing crises. Specifically, themes (or tenets) that were present in each statement were denoted by a superscript after the statement. (See Appendix C for statements, codebook, and definitions).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS & FINDINGS

Through cataloging cruise crises post-sinking of the Costa Concordia (BBC, 2015), there were 53 cruise crises recorded that were found. Second, it was found that the most common types of hotel crises are billing issues, bed bugs, safety and security issues and often times liability issues (Park & Allen, 2013). It was determined that cruise lines do make statements and official press releases when there are crises deemed major (e.g. fire on-board) however, their social media use accounts were used for marketing purposes (Sloan, 2013; Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). One exception to this statement was the Carnival Triumph fire that occurred in 2013 and left the ship adrift in the ocean and without power (Griffin & Bronstein, 2013). Lastly, it was shown that hotels approach crisis management not only through press releases but also through guest satisfaction surveys and responding to and engaging with stakeholders via social media (Park & Allen, 2013).

Cruise Crises Catalog Data

The cruise lines included in the catalog were Carnival Cruise Line, Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line. Further, the cruise lines' ships were also included in the search and data collection as potential data points. Carnival Cruise Line currently has 27 operating vessels. Princess Cruises has 16 operating. Royal Caribbean (not including their subsidiary Celebrity) had 25 vessels currently under operation. Celebrity Cruises (a subsidiary of Royal Caribbean) had 10 vessels currently. Norwegian Cruise Line had 15 vessels.

The breakdown of cruise line as it relates to the 53 crises recorded. Carnival Cruise Line had seven crises which included three incidences of norovirus, three mechanical incidences, and one incident of a passenger/crew falling overboard. Princess Cruise had 20 crises with all being incidences of norovirus. Specifically, seven of those norovirus events occurred repetitively on the Crown Princess within a four-year span. Royal Caribbean had 12 crises, 10 of which were cases of norovirus, one was a mechanical failure that resulted in a fire on Grandeur of the Seas and one was a natural disaster where Anthem of the Seas was caught in a massive storm. Celebrity Cruises had 10 incidences all being norovirus or health-related. Norwegian Cruise Line had four all being incidences of norovirus as well.

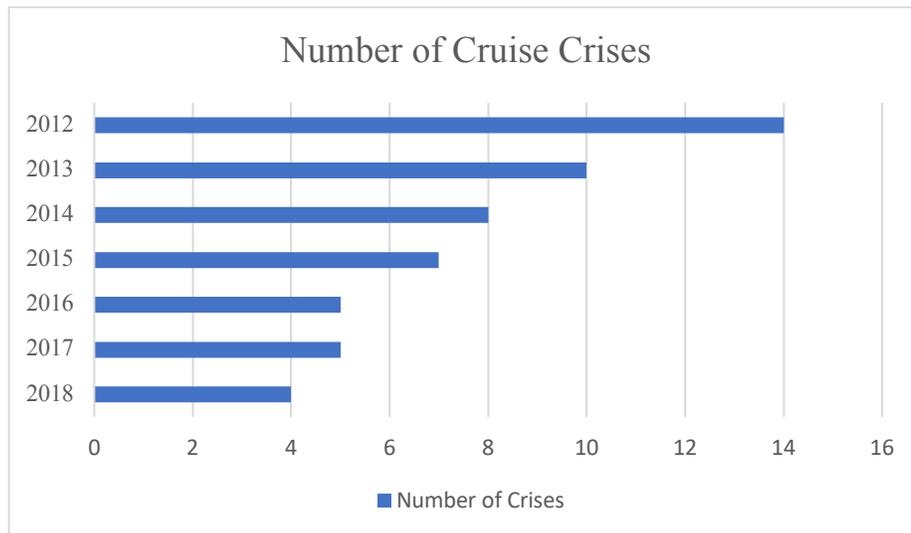
Table I
Cruise Crises

Cruise Line	Total # of Crises	# of incidences of Norovirus	# of incidents falling overboard	# of mechanical failures including fire	# of natural disasters
Carnival Cruise Line	7	3	1	3	0
Princess Cruises	20	20	0	0	0
Royal Caribbean	12	10	0	1	1
Celebrity Cruises	10	10	0	0	0
Norwegian Cruise Line	4	4	0	0	0

(Table I: For a full overview of the crises, see Appendix B. (NOTE: Some ships did not experience a crisis, and therefore are left off of the table in Appendix B.)

There were four man-made unintentional incidences, two not man-made unintentional, and 47 not man-made intentional incidences. The 47 not man-made intentional crises were all norovirus related and makes up 88% of the total 53 crises. Mechanical crises were that such as a fire or loss of power and totaled at only four. Natural disasters in this study was defined as a massive storm that caused damage to the Anthem of the Seas and in only one occurrence. One person also fell overboard and was recorded as such.

In terms of overall timeline, there were 14 crises that occurred in 2012, 10 crises in 2013, eight crises in 2014, seven crises in 2015, five crises in 2016, five crises in 2017 and four in 2018.



For the related response channel, Carnival Triumph had news coverage, press release and social media coverage by the cruise line. This crisis caused the ship to drift without electricity for four days. Five of the incidents had all four response types (news, press, social media & other). Three of the incidents only had news coverage. Lastly, 44 were other. Other was defined as a third-party website such as the CDC, CruiseCritic or CruiseFever. The norovirus information was pulled from the CDC’s Vessel Sanitation Program which contains data and record of every disease and illness outbreak on vessels that carry more than 13 passengers.

Stakeholder Engagement on Social Media

To answer RQ3A, Social Studio was utilized to define ranges where tweets from stakeholders regarding norovirus were collected. Incidences on Princess Cruises’ Crown

Princess, Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Reflection, and Royal Caribbean's Independence of the Seas, were utilized in the study to define the range to search for tweets based on norovirus events occurring on these cruises. Each norovirus event occurred in the year 2017, specifically, October 2017, November 2017 and December 2017 respectively. Through a 60-day span in Social Studio (Crown Princess October 2017 – November 2017, Celebrity Reflection November 2017 – December 2017, and RC's Independence of the Seas December 2017 – January 2018), tweets regarding norovirus were reviewed within Social Studio to determine whether or not cruise lines acknowledged and replied to tweets about norovirus from stakeholders. A search of the data found no responses from Princess Cruises, Celebrity Cruises or Royal Caribbean during their respective 60-day time frames. There were four tweets from Prince Cruises stakeholders during the respective window that included the keyword "norovirus" while Celebrity Cruises had three tweets and Royal Caribbean had 12. These instances suggest that cruise lines are not engaging with stakeholders via social media during crises and furthermore, best practices suggest they should be engaging.

During the 60-day span for each event, the cruise lines were still tweeting and making use of the social platform, they were just not engaging with stakeholders regarding the crisis of norovirus. No engagement means that regarding tweets toward the organizations, there were no responses by the organizations to those specific stakeholders. Specifically, Royal Caribbean's twitter account (@royalcaribbean) tweeted (n = 1.2k) times; Celebrity Cruises (@celebritycruise) tweeted (n = 122) and Princess Cruises tweeted (n = 426). While these tweets were not coded, sorting through the numerous tweets showed

a general focus on marketing of the cruise lines' new ships and products. Of the collected tweets (n = 19) by stakeholders, none represented crisis engagement because there was no response to the tweets from the cruise lines. It was therefore impossible to employ either theoretical lens to assess the social media messaging of cruise lines during the examined crises. Due to this lack in the data, news coverage, press releases and official statements were utilized for effective data triangulation for responses by cruise lines.

Utilizing Social Studio, two major hotel brands were examined regarding the incident of bed bugs and to answer RQ3B. Of the collected tweets (n = 15), there were direct reply tweets by the hotels as well (n = 15). Marriott and Hilton were utilized in the study. To determine a time frame to search twitter data from bed bugs and stakeholder engagement from the hotel brands, a quick google search presented two prominent bed bug occurrences. One was at the San Antonio Courtyard Marriott and the other at the Hilton Garden Inn Ontario. The two bed bug events occurred in the year 2017, specifically, July 2017 and October 2017 respectively. Through a 60-day span in Social Studio (Marriott's San Antonio Courtyard event July 2017 – August 2017 and Hilton's Hilton Garden Inn Ontario event October 2017 – November 2017), tweets from stakeholders were collected only if they included the keyword "bed bugs" and the hotel's twitter handle.¹ Tweet responses by the hotel brands were then collected, coded and analyzed through the lens of Image Repair and Discourse of Renewal. Three tenets of Image Repair (denying/evading responsibility, organization image, and reducing offensiveness) were utilized as codes and three of the four tenets of Discourse of Renewal (organizational growth, ethical communication, and prospective vision) were utilized as codes (Benoit, 1997; Pyle et al.,

Forthcoming; Ulmer, Seeger, & Sellnow, 2007). The tenet of effective rhetoric was omitted as it was not prominent in the tweets back to the stakeholders. The hotel did not try to persuade guest to do anything or make them feel a certain way through rhetoric strategies.

A targeted search via Social Studio found a total of (n = 15) tweets during the 60-day time period of the Marriott and Hilton bed bug crises. Of these, (n = 8) were messages from guests to Marriott, and (n = 7) were messages from guests to Hilton. There were a total of (n = 15) tweets back to guests within the 60-day spans, (n = 9) being from Marriott and (n = 6) being from Hilton. There was one instance where Hilton did not tweet back at the guest, and there was one instance where Marriott tweeted back twice to one of their guests. (See Appendix D for catalog of tweets). During the same time span, Marriott tweeted (@marriott) (n = 2.8k) times which includes the messaging back to their eight guests who tweeted them about bed bugs. Similarly, Hilton (@hiltonhotels) tweeted (n = 1.2k) times during the respective 60-day time span including the six tweets back to their guests regarding bed bugs. Parallel to cruise lines, the hotels utilized their twitter account for marketing purposes and guest reach out, however, the difference is the hotels acknowledge the crises of bed bugs whereas the cruise lines remained silent in the crisis realm of norovirus.

Based on the definition of denying/evading responsibility, organization image repair, and reducing offensiveness (Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 2007), there were a total of six tweets that attempted to deny/evade responsibility of the bed bug incidents, five that weighed heavily on looking at the image of the organization, and thirteen that aimed to reduce offensiveness of the crisis of bed bugs. Defining three of the tenets of Discourse of

Renewal including organizational growth, ethical communication and prospective vision (Pyle et al., Forthcoming), there were a total of three tweets back to stakeholders that discussed organizational growth. All fifteen tweets were deemed as ethical communication because the hotels were publicly acknowledging that the guest had an issue with bed bugs and were working quickly to either look into the guests' claims or assist them further. There was only one tweet response back to a guest that was considered prospective in vision.

Table II
Replies to Stakeholder Tweets by Hotels

Image Repair Code	Total Tweets with Code	Marriott Tweets with Code	Hilton Tweets with Code
Deny/Evade Responsibility	6	4	2
Organization Image	5	2	3
Reducing Offensiveness	13	7	6

Discourse of Renewal Code	Total Tweets with Code	Marriott Tweets with Code	Hilton Tweets with Code
Organizational Growth	3	3	0
Ethical Communication	15	9	6
Prospective Vision	1	1	0

Theoretical Perspective Themes in Crisis Messaging

RQ 4A asked *in times of crises, do cruise lines lean more toward Image Repair or Discourse of Renewal when making official statements* and RQ 4B asked *in times of crises, do hotels lean more toward Image Repair or Discourse of Renewal when making official statements?* To determine whether or not hotels and cruise lines lean toward image repair tenets or discourse of renewal tenets, four press release statements (two from the cruise industry and two from the hotel industry) were analyzed and coded through the lens of Image Repair (deny/evade responsibility, organization image, and reducing offensiveness)

and the lens of Discourse of Renewal (organizational growth, ethical communication, and prospective vision) (Benoit, 1997; Pyle et al., Forthcoming; Ulmer et al., 2007) (NOTE: definition for the six tenets can be found in appendix C).

Table III
Cruise & Hotel Crisis Statements

Tenet/Theme	Organization Name			
	Carnival	Royal		
Image Repair Code	Cruise	Caribbean	Marriott	Hilton
Deny/Evade	2	3	0	1
Organization Image	4	1	0	0
Reduce Offensiveness	2	2	0	2
	Carnival	Royal		
Renewal Discourse Code	Cruise	Caribbean	Marriott	Hilton
Organizational Growth	0	1	3	3
Ethical Communication	1	1	2	1
Prospective Vision	0	0	3	2

From the data collected, the cruise lines used more tenets of Image Repair (Benoit, 1997) over the hotel properties, who rarely used tenets of Image Repair or none at all (Marriott), and had more themes of renewal discourse in their statements. The theme of evading responsibility/denying occurred twice in the Carnival statement (ex: “The water released was “clean water from a fire suppression system”); three times in Royal Caribbean’s (ex: “But ...I’m honestly not sure we’ll ever know what started it”); none in Marriott’s and once in Hilton’s statement (ex: “We have been working with the DoubleTree by Hilton Portland in Oregon, an independently owned and operated property, as they have reviewed and responded to an on-property incident.”).

Statements and information that looked at the organization's image and attempting to focus on the positive things the organization is doing occurred four times in Carnival's (ex: "Carnival said it does not expect the incident to disrupt the Dream's cruise schedule. The Dream's next cruise departs New Orleans for the Western Caribbean on Sunday, May 6."); once in Royal Caribbean's (ex: "We would never send the ship out if it wasn't safe,"); none in Marriott or Hilton's. The tenet of reducing offensiveness appeared twice for Carnival, twice for Royal Caribbean, not once for Marriott and twice for Hilton.

Themes from the Discourse of Renewal perspective included organizational growth being used once by Royal Caribbean (ex: "Several changes have been made to the mooring area of the ship as a result of lessons learned from the fire, Lutoff-Perlo adds."); three times by both hotel properties (ex: "Finally, we are devoting the resources necessary to phase out Starwood systems and accelerate the ongoing security enhancements to our network" and "we reiterate our sincere apology to Mr. Massey for his treatment this past weekend, and deeply regret the experience he endured."); and none by Carnival.

All four organizations included some form of ethical communication, however, Marriott's statement included information coded as ethical communication twice. It's important to note that all four organization's ethical communication information was related and driven by compensation to the guests affected by the crises. Lastly, neither cruise line had any information or comments that were deemed prospective in vision, whereas both Hilton and Marriott's comments were prospective in vision occurring twice and three times respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Organizational Crises

Cataloging cruises crises from the past 6 years shows that there are many types of cruise crises and many of them are repetitive (i.e. norovirus). Prior literature also shows that there are several types of crises within the hotel industry and that they, too, are repetitive (i.e. bed bugs) (Park & Allen, 2013). Both being hospitality/tourism industries, it would be assumed that serving the public and handling crises with care would be the top priority of the organization. Cruise lines like Carnival or Royal Caribbean have had their fair share of news attention and crises abruptly occur from fires breaking out on their ships, rendering them without power to sister subsidiaries losing an entire vessel due to captain error (Agnes, 2013; BBC, 2015; Sloan, 2013). Hotel brands such as Marriott and Hilton have also been in the public eye due to data breaches and racial incidents. Previously, organizations have focused on themselves when it came to crises and what they can do to fix the public perceptions and quickly get their organizations back in order. Fast forward, crisis communication scholars are pushing for organizations to evolve when it comes to crises and focus stakeholder engagement (Dobele et al., 2014; Pyle, 2016). These crises along with repetitive crises such as norovirus and bed bugs set the stage for these organizations to prove whether or not their crisis communication response efforts are ethical, prospective in vision and that they use crises as learning opportunities to grow. The two perspectives utilized in this study were Image Repair Theory and Discourse of Renewal. While both are ways organizations can go about handling crises, many organizations are moving away from one and toward the other. Others are stuck in old

behaviors and habits. Specifically, cruise lines have not had to move beyond image repair. The cruise industry is booming and until guests begin moving to other cruise lines or their revenue declines, the cruise industry has no purpose (in their minds) to begin this transition to stakeholder engagement on all topics and incorporating renewal discourse in their messaging. Highlighting all the positive achievements that cruise lines are doing during times of crises detracts from the actual crises and we can assume that stakeholders are persuaded to a better understanding. For hotels on the other hand, either they have had to begin incorporating these tenets for financial reasons or, they realize the ethics behind an excellent crisis response and they value their stakeholders.

Discourse of Renewal & Image Repair Theory

While Marriott and Hilton responded to their guests via Twitter who had bed bug claims, the content of the tweets were lacking with regards to tenets of discourse of renewal, but heavily featured one tenet of Image Repair Theory. All tweets conveyed some sense of ethical communication (Pyle et al., Forthcoming) while most conveyed the theme of reducing offensiveness. This is probably due to apologia and attempting to calm the guest while the organization looked further into what they could do to assist the guest and satisfy them for their troubles. However, simply fixing a repeated problem that guests have is getting stuck in routine behaviors and make it harder to unlearn.

Renewal discourse is also the best option when engaging with stakeholders during times of crises. As previous literature suggests, image repair homes in what the organization can do to fix a tarnished image or lessen the blow of the crises as it negatively affects the organization. Discourse of renewal is almost the opposite where the focus is

shifted away from the organization's image to that of the well-being of stakeholder. Ethical and honest communication is key, but also acknowledging the mistakes that were made by the organization (if any) and what steps the organization is going to take to deter the crisis from occurring again. Lastly, in the sense of cruise lines not responding, we could assume that no response is a response and cruise lines are evading responsibility by simply ignoring the crisis such as norovirus.

Ignoring norovirus altogether.

The information regarding the numerous norovirus cases came directly from the CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program which keeps track of this incidences. There were only a handful of statements by news sources (not the cruise lines themselves) that acknowledged large outbreaks or norovirus on specific cruise sailings. Some interesting ideas of why this is not acknowledged by the cruise lines is because: it only affects a few guests and they have yet to have a need to acknowledge this type of crisis publicly, or perhaps the cruise lines do engage with their stakeholders but do so through private message or direct messaging on twitter. Often times disease can be synonymous with dirty or unclean, and cruise lines might want to avoid that sort of language. Parallel with hotels, guests are generally turned off by hotels that even have claims of bed bugs, so it could be the same with cruise lines and norovirus. Perhaps in the future, as social media continues to grow further, conversations about norovirus may become more prominent and on different channels and cruise lines may have to start addressing them then.

Lack of Data from Cruise Lines

This project determined a large gap in the data from cruise lines engaging with their stakeholders via social media in times of a crises. Specifically, when a stakeholder reached out to the cruise organizations during the time when these norovirus events were occurring, cruise lines were silent. Not only did their engagement lack in the terms of renewal discourse tenets, but there was not engagement altogether. This speaks volumes for organizations who are clearly active in the social media world and utilize their social media platforms as a place to engage with guests about positive things they're doing such as building new ships and creating new cruise ports. The fact that there is no engagement when a crisis arises is perplexing.

To the cruise lines, norovirus may not seem like a major crisis and that it does not need to be acknowledged via social media platforms such as twitter. However, the theory of discourse of renewal say otherwise. Renewal discourse encourages organizations to ethically communicate with stakeholders and states that being prospective rather than retrospective is crucial to maintaining positive relationships with stakeholders as well as helping stakeholders protect themselves during crises.

Cruise Lines vs. Hotels on Social Media

Research question three focused on the use of social media, specifically the microblogging platform Twitter as a place for stakeholders (e.g. cruisers & hotel guests) to publicly engage with the organization regarding anything. For this specific research question in this study, the focus was solely on norovirus and cruise lines as well as hotels and bed bugs as a parallel. After further investigation of tweets to organizations by

stakeholders, there were tweets to both cruise lines (Royal Caribbean, Princess Cruises, and Celebrity Cruises) regarding norovirus on their cruises and there were tweets to hotels (Marriott and Hilton) regarding bed bugs. However, the difference in how the hotels handled the tweets from stakeholders versus how the cruise lines handled the tweets was simply recognizing, responding and engaging.

Importance of Lack of Engagement

SocialStudio has a feature that allows those collecting data to see the entire twitter conversation for tweets. After setting parameters with time frames and keyword, it was clear that cruise lines were being tweeted at (@ mentioned) but they were not responding whatsoever. Since no tweets back to the cruise guests existed from the cruise line, there was no way to code or analyze tweets because they did not exist. On the other hand, hotels did respond and engage with guests even if the tweets were about bed bugs (the parallel to norovirus). All but one tweet was acknowledged by the hotels.

Furthermore, this lack of engagement by the cruise lines presents several scenarios, all that should end in the cruise lines taking a discourse of renewal approach and actually engaging with their stakeholders. Cruise lines possibly do not want to acknowledge the norovirus crisis publicly, and they simply choose not to. However, from the approach of renewal discourse, this lack of engagement is detrimental to the relationship between the stakeholder and organization, thus, it further encourages cruise lines to engage and respond to guests, especially during crises. Renewal discourse is the best approach because of the ethical communication tenets found in the theoretical perspective. Ethical communication

is an integral part of relationships with stakeholders, thus, not having ethical communication, you risk losing and damaging those relationships (Dobele et al., 2014).

Cruise Lines vs. Hotels in Press

Since tweets were rather lacking on the cruise lines' part, statements that were published during times of crisis for both cruise lines and hotels were examined and coded through the lens of image repair and discourse of renewal. This is where a massive difference in how cruise lines respond versus how hotels respond in time of crises. The four incidents that were examined included the Carnival Dream flooding in May 2018, Royal Caribbean's Grandeur of the Seas catching fire, Marriott's subsidiary Starwood's data breach that resulted in 500 million guest's information being stolen, and, Hilton's DoubleTree in Portland firing two employees for racially profiling and calling the police on a black man.

Themes

Both Carnival and Royal Caribbean's statements routinely tried to deny or evade responsibility by saying things such as "the water leak was from the water pressure system" (Larino, 2018). Starting off a statement attempting to move attention away from the fact that the cruise ship was flooding or caught on fire (Royal Caribbean) is a clear indication of Image Repair. Further, Carnival mentioned the organization's image four times and focused on efforts of what the organization has been doing to help the matter such as offering to fly guest's home. They even brought attention back to the cruise and stated that it will continue as planned and that future cruises on the Carnival Dream would not be affected. Royal Caribbean's CEO flew out to the ship hours after the fire occurred to

personally apologize to the guests and that was one of the highlighted pieces of the statement. Commonly, all four organizations (Carnival, Royal Caribbean, Marriott, and Hilton) showed themes of reducing offensiveness through apologia because it's a learned behavior to initially apologize. For Marriott, that was the only Image Repair tenet used in their statement regarding the data breach. Hilton tried to evade responsibility and repair their image once. However, since their statement was about racism and that it was a statement regarding a privately owned and operated DoubleTree, they sort of get a pass because it wasn't the overall organization, but rather one specific property.

Carnival's statement regarding the Carnival Dream showed no sense of organizational growth. For example, perhaps discussing plans to increase inspection of water pipes in the future or make the frequency of inspections increase would've been a good start. Royal Caribbean did mention that they were changing the placement of the ropes/mores so a fire would be less likely in the future. But, this does not make it okay because they also never discovered or stated how the fire started, nor did they act like they cared to find out.

Both Marriott and Hilton's response efforts were strongly in line with the tenets of discourse of renewal when discussing the future through organizational growth and prospective vision. Marriott took numerous steps to ensure that they are notifying their guests of the data breach, and they've implemented numerous resources, call centers, and data security software to routinely check on guest's information and monitor that sensitive data. Hilton reassured their core values, and continued by stating they will continue to work with diversity experts to ensure that their organization continues to be inclusiveness of all

walks of life. Furthermore, they stated they would be requiring all general managers to go through diversity training again and encourage staff of hotels to do the same.

Compensation and ethical communication

A theme of compensation was prominent through all four statements because not only does it reduce offensiveness, but it's ethical to refund stakeholders or provide them with some sort of compensation if their cruise was disrupted due to something under the control of the organization or if their data was breached or if they were mistreated by hotel staff. While all four organizations proceeded with some sort of compensation, it's a common thing for cruise lines to compensate guests when there is a disruption to their cruise and it's under their control (R. Bryce, 2014). However, norovirus is a continued mystery as to how cruise lines handle that crises. Hotels generally comp guests too if there are bed bugs or if the issue is more severe. It's a way of showing stakeholder that yes, the organization made a mistake and they don't deserve your monetary contributions. But, hotels go a bit further through engagement via social media and when making public statements. They go back to their core values, how they can improve, how they can move forward and how they can make the stakeholder feel at ease. Cruise lines on the other hand just compensate, and bring the public's attention to something else.

Effective organizational rhetoric.

The fourth tenet of discourse of renewal, effective organizational rhetoric was missing through all twitter data and statements that were coded and analyzed. The focus of this tenet is on the organization leaders and their communication efforts during crises. While hotels engaged with stakeholders via social media and both hotels and cruise lines

put out official statements and press releases during crises, these statements were by their public relations department. Following the tenets of renewal discourse and the exemplar of the oil spill, leadership from within the organization should further communicate these overarching goals and changes, rather than remaining partially silent. A strong and ethical leader creates and maintains the rhetoric that just was not found in the statements and tweets.

Limitations

A few limitations from this study include: cruise lines not tweeting back to their guests when the tweets were about norovirus; the carnival triumph fire incident; the length of the statements that were created by the organizations during the crises; the Hilton statement was regarding one property while the Marriott statement was regarding an entire subsidiary that impacted millions; and lastly other social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat were not utilized or examined.

Cruise lines not tweeting back.

This portion of the project was lacking in data due to the fact that cruise lines were not engaging and tweeting back to their stakeholders. Social Studio did not provide any tweets from the cruise lines back to the stakeholders when they addressed norovirus during the specific and respective 60-day window for each event. However, perhaps cruise lines were/are sporadic with their responses to norovirus in the sense they may have tweeted outside of the 60-day time frames. Further, cruise lines may have reached out to stakeholders via direct message rather than addressing publicly. Social Studio cannot access user's private direct messages to determine if this is factual or not.

Carnival triumph fire incident.

Once incident that has been discussed in this study was that of the Carnival Triumph fire that left the ship, the crew, and passengers without food, electricity and running water for days. This is where Carnival did an excellent job in their crisis response efforts. Through numerous statements, posting on numerous social media sites, and compensating the guest for twice their cruise, the organization did well when it came to those efforts. While they were lacking in organizational growth and prospective vision tenets, the way they handled the media and the incident was very supportive by scholars (Agnes, 2013; Griffin & Bronstein, 2013; R. Bryce, 2014).

Hilton's statement vs. Marriott's statement.

While the content of Hilton's statement was clear, thorough and coded through both lenses of Image Repair and Discourse of Renewal, it was focused and geared toward one specific DoubleTree by Hilton property located in Portland, Oregon. Marriott's statement on the other hand was focused on a data breach that affected their subsidiary Starwood Hotels and Resorts. This difference in the type of crisis could have affected the codes and tenets that were found throughout both. Perhaps having a statement from both Hilton and Marriott regarding a racial incident at a single property or a statement from both Hilton and Marriott on a previous data breach would have provided more concise and similarities as it relates to the tenets of Image Repair and Discourse of Renewal.

Other social media platforms.

One of the most important limitations is other social media platforms. We cannot for sure say that cruise lines are not reaching out via other platforms such as Instagram,

Facebook and Snapchat. This project could be expanded further to include examining and analyzing conversations on these sites. Specifically, comments on Facebook and Instagram could be coded and analyzed if and only if, cruise lines reply back to stakeholders in the comments sections of those social media posts. Snapchat would be more difficult to analyze, however, if cruise lines use the platform for mass messaging, those messages (if crisis related) could be coded and analyzed through the same two lenses.

Conclusion

Imagine, you are on a cruise and you begin to feel ill. You reach out to the cruise line via social media and you are blatantly ignored because you mention a taboo term such as norovirus. Similarly, you stay at a hotel and find bed bugs in your room. You immediately take to social media to voice your concerns, only to have the hotel brand reach back out to you and go a step further to contact the hotel itself. They consistently acknowledge the problem and work to fix your issue and make it right. Further, when an even larger crisis breaks such as a data breach, you would want plenty of reassurance that steps are being taken to fix and further prevent ongoing issues.

In the realm of crisis communication, cruise lines are still stuck in the image repair mindset or they do not acknowledge crises at all (i.e. norovirus tweets). Contrarily, hotels are beginning to move beyond image repair and are taking a renewal discourse approach to their crisis communication efforts. Realizing that the stakeholders are an integral part of success and ongoing viability, it's interesting that a tourist organization fails to fully support stakeholder engagement and blatantly ignores certain crises, even though they are common occurrences (i.e. norovirus) (CDC, 2018). Perhaps the cruise sector of tourism is

too heavily engaged in their marketing practices to promote new ships, new ports and new amenities, or perhaps certain crises are taboo and the cruise lines are afraid of losing stakeholders if they were to discover more information about norovirus. Regardless, this current approach is not in line with renewal discourse, specifically the tenet of ethical communication.

To conclude, it will be interesting to see how both sectors evolve in the future to continue handling and monitoring guest complaints through stakeholder engagement. Overall, the hotel sector is not perfect in renewal discourse, but they seem to be trying and doing better than what cruise lines are currently doing.

CHAPTER SIX

BEST PRACTICES FOR ADDRESSING CRUISE CRISES

Based on the findings of what hotels are currently doing regarding stakeholder engagement and those efforts that are in line with the tenets of discourse of renewal theory, a few guidelines on what cruise lines can do to improve their crisis communication efforts with stakeholders include the following.

1. Engaging in Conversation

First, cruise lines were not responding publicly to tweets addressing specific concerns during crises such as norovirus. The findings showed first hand that when cruise lines are approached by stakeholders via the social media platform Twitter, regarding norovirus, the cruise lines in the research study all remained silent. Cruise lines should begin to address all topics of conversation online via social media as it is in line with renewal discourse tenets. Cruise lines are also engaging in other aspects, but it's not authentic and ethical engagement. Specifically, cruise lines are utilizing the social media platform to market their brand, their new ships, their new ports and all the positive things their doing, however, the lack of authentic and ethical engagement which are also aspects from renewal discourse stem from the organizations not responding to guests who tweet them about crises such as norovirus. It is crucial to address all tweets by stakeholders as best as possible because that would be in line with the tenet of ethical communication found in discourse of renewal (Pyle et al., Forthcoming). It is bound to happen for tweets to be overlooked, however, a pattern a not acknowledging a specific tweet type is not in line with best practices.

Furthermore, engaging with guests who had a less than satisfactory experience is crucial because the acknowledgement can mend and repair that relationship between the stakeholder and organization. If cruise lines follow current research on renewal discourse, not only would it create a clean slate for the organization in the eyes of the stakeholder, but also keep that relationship in-tact (Dobele et al., 2014). Specifically, if a guest experiences norovirus aboard a ship, an example that is in line with renewal discourse tenets would be to possibly refund the cost of the trip and reassure the stakeholder that action will be taken to correct the issue and steps will be taken to prevent it from occurring again.

2. Engage Where the Stakeholders Are

Social media continues to boom, and more platforms are becoming prominent. Sites such as Facebook boast over a billion users. There is also Instagram and Snapchat. These three along with Twitter should be cruise lines main focus when engaging with their stakeholders (Austin, Fisher Liu, & Jin, 2012).. While it may be more difficult to Snapchat guests, it is a great tool that can be utilized for official messaging and updates when crises such as norovirus arise. Instagram is similar, however, having a public comments section, it gives cruise lines the opportunity to address comments (specifically crises publicly). Lastly, in addition to using Facebook as an official messaging source, seek out other prominent cruise fan pages such as Cruise Critic and Cruise Fever. Follow the content they are posting and engage with stakeholders there as well addressing any concerns that arise (Dobele et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the Carnival Triumph fire incident in 2013 is an exemplar of a cruise line acting to fulfill obligations as an organization that are in line with stakeholder

engagement and renewal discourse tenets. As mentioned, the organization engaged on a multitude of platforms including social media, news sites and press releases; they time stamped their postings; had effective rhetoric, ethical communication and were prospective in vision in correcting the issues of the ships. While some may argue that this is a bit much to do for a norovirus outbreak, however, remaining in line with renewal discourse and stakeholder engagement can be accomplished in a quick, simple and effective tweet or Facebook comment back (Pyle et al., Forthcoming).

3. Incorporate Renewal Discourse in Messaging

While cruise lines are putting out messages during crises they deem of a large magnitude such as a fire, they are missing the mark when it comes to the messaging, context and framing based on the theory of discourse of renewal. Scholars are pushing for this transition over to renewal discourse. Specifically, cruise lines should begin to address crises head on. For example, Carnival's statement when the Carnival Dream flooded came across like they were denying or evading responsibility for the faulty pipe. A good message would be more ethical and own up to the faulty pipe that caused the flood, but elaborate on plans to ensure that it does not occur again. Furthermore, reassuring stakeholders that precautions are going to be taken going forward implements the tenet of prospective vision.

These same renewal discourse tenets can be applied on social media when engaging with stakeholders. Rather than having a copy and pasted tweet ready to go, the cruise line should be more personable and authentic with their messaging as hotels are currently doing (Park & Allen, 2013). This shows the guest/stakeholder that they are a priority and that the organization receives the message they are sending clearly. Lastly, it reinforces that

positive and ethical communication between both parties while also fostering growth within the organization and between the two parties as well.

4. Seek Out Current Research and Evolve Crisis Efforts

As seen in this study, crisis communication efforts have transitioned and evolved from Image Repair to Discourse of Renewal as the current and best theoretically-based perspective to formulate concrete and effective crisis messaging. One tenet of renewal discourse is organizational growth. Therefore, organizations should continuously be seeking out ways to improve their crisis communication efforts (as much as they seek out new innovations to bring to their ships and ports). Remaining cognizant of current research and best practices will ensure that stakeholders never feel left behind as well as show others that the organization truly values their stakeholders through engagement online.

Organizational growth also means getting out of cyclic habits regarding crisis communication (Pyle et al., Forthcoming). Specifically, if cruise lines are not engaging via direct message or private message, and that's the reasoning behind ignoring tweets publicly, it may be difficult to begin to address these public tweets. Therefore, a plan should be in place on how to address them. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, a draft response is good, but best practices of ethical communication would require the cruise line to put a personal touch on the crisis response. If the messaging is a statement or report going to a large number of people for a reoccurring issue (such as norovirus), it is important that cruise lines do not reuse old material. Rather, use a prior statement as a template, then tailor the response appropriately.

Overall, striving to be aware and not remaining stagnant is crucial for success from cruise lines for their crisis communication efforts. Moving and staying away from image repair tenets that focus on organizational well-being and shifting that focus to stakeholder well-being is the best approach based on findings in the study.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Cruise Catalog Terminology

Man-made Intentional - the crisis was created by man and was intentional in the sense they disregarded warnings and had full control over their actions (i.e. falling overboard, jumping overboard)

Man-made Unintentional – the crisis was created by man but was unintentional in the sense they had no control over the crisis occurring (i.e. mechanical failure, fire)

Not Man-made Intentional – the crisis was not created by man, but was exacerbated by man due to failure of following directions or appropriate protocol by other organizations (i.e. norovirus spreading due to failure of thoroughly cleaning vessel, unethical leadership)

Not Man-made Unintentional – the crisis was not created by man and could not be avoided (natural disaster)

Response Type

Social Media – crisis was mentioned on at least one social media platform

Press Release – the cruise line issues an official statement or press release

News media – the crisis was discussed publicly by news sources and/or covered in news stories

All the above – the crisis was mentioned on all three

Other – the crisis was presented on a third-party website such as the CDC, CruiseCritic and Cruise Fever.

Appendix B

Cruise Crises Catalog

Categories – News Media, Social Media, Other (CDC, CruiseCritic, CruiseFever), All the Above

Cruise Crises Response Channel Catalog

Cruise Line	Ship	Man-made vs. Not Man-made	Descriptive Crises	Date	Response Channel
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Triumph	Man-made Unintentional	Mechanical	2013	News Media/Social Media/Press
Royal Caribbean	Explorer of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	News Media
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Summit	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other
Princess Cruises	Ruby Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other
Princess Cruises	Emerald Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Princess Cruises	Ruby Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Royal Caribbean	Rhapsody of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Glory	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Princess Cruises	Sun Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Princess Cruises	Ruby Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Silhouette	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Constellation	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Royal Caribbean	Voyager of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Norwegian Cruise Line	Norwegian Gem	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Summit	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	News Media
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Millennium	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other

Cruise Crises Response Channel Catalog

Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Solstice	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other
Princess Cruises	Ruby Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other
Royal Caribbean	Vision of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2013	Other
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Royal Caribbean	Grandeur of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Royal Caribbean	Grandeur of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Princess Cruises	Caribbean Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Royal Caribbean	Explorer of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Norwegian Cruise Line	Norwegian Star	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2014	Other
Princess Cruises	Caribbean Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Princess Cruises	Star Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Princess Cruises	Coral Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Infinity	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Norwegian Cruise Line	Norwegian Pearl	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Equinox	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Royal Caribbean	Grandeur of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2015	Other
Norwegian Cruise Line	Norwegian Gem	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2016	Other
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Sunshine	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2016	Other
Royal Caribbean	Anthem of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2016	Other
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2016	Other
Royal Caribbean	Independence of the Seas	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2017	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Reflection	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2017	Other
Princess Cruises	Crown Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2017	News Media
Princess Cruises	Coral Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2017	Other
Celebrity Cruises	Celebrity Infinity	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2018	Other

Cruise Crises Response Channel Catalog

Princess Cruises	Island Princess	Not Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2018	Other
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Splendor	Man-made Intentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Glory	Not Man-made Unintentional	Overboard/Falling	2017	All the Above
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Sunshine	Man-made Unintentional	Mechanical	2018	All the Above
Carnival Cruise Line	Carnival Dream	Man-made Unintentional	Mechanical	2018	All the Above
Princess Cruises	Star Princess	Man-made Unintentional	Unethical Leadership/Health/Norovirus	2012	Other
Royal Caribbean	Grandeur of the Seas	Man-made Unintentional	Mechanical	2013	All the Above
Royal Caribbean	Anthem of the Seas	Not Man-made Unintentional	Natural Disaster	2016	All the Above

Appendix C

Organization Statements

Coded Based on Image Repair (Benoit, 1997) & Discourse of Renewal (Pyle et al.,
Forthcoming) Tenets

Image Repair Tenets

- Denial/evade responsibility¹
- Repairing organization image²
- Reducing offensiveness³

Discourse of Renewal Tenets

- Organizational growth/learning⁴
- Ethical communication⁵
- Prospective in vision⁶

Definitions:

1. Denial/evade responsibility – the incident that occurred was an accident and therefore the organization should not be held accountable.
2. Repairing organization image – redefining the attack, shifting the conversation elsewhere, focusing on positive things the organization is doing/has done
3. Reducing offensiveness – minimize the negative feelings through apology, placing the crisis in a more favorable context, providing compensation
4. Organizational growth/learning – willingness to move forward and learn from past mistakes, must be able to unlearn ineffective practices

5. Ethical communication – openness, honesty and respectful engagement and providing as much information as possible
6. Prospective in vision – planning for future renewal and growth and framing the crisis as a way to make things right for the stakeholders

MARRIOTT'S STARWOOD DATA BREACH (Kim, 2018)

“We deeply regret this incident happened,”³ said Arne Sorenson, Marriott’s President and Chief Executive Officer. “We fell short of what our guests deserve and what we expect of ourselves. We are doing everything we can to support our guests, and using lessons learned to be better moving forward.”^{4,5,6}

“Today, Marriott is reaffirming our commitment to our guests around the world.⁶ We are working hard to ensure our guests have answers to questions about their personal information, with a dedicated website and call center.⁴ We will also continue to support the efforts of law enforcement and to work with leading security experts to improve. Finally, we are devoting the resources necessary to phase out Starwood systems and accelerate the ongoing security enhancements to our network,”^{4,6} Mr. Sorenson continued.

Guest Support

Marriott has taken the following steps to help guests monitor and protect their information:

Dedicated Website and Call Center

We have established a dedicated website (info.starwoodhotels.com) and call center to answer questions you may have about this incident. The frequently-asked questions on info.starwoodhotels.com may be supplemented from time to time. The call center is open seven days a week and is available in multiple languages. Call volume may be high, and we appreciate your patience.

Email Notification

Marriott will begin sending emails on a rolling basis starting today, November 30, 2018, to affected guests whose email addresses are in the Starwood guest reservation database.⁵

Free WebWatcher Enrollment

Marriott is providing guests the opportunity to enroll in WebWatcher free of charge for one year. WebWatcher monitors internet sites where personal information is shared and generates an alert to the consumer if evidence of the consumer’s personal information is found. Due to regulatory and other reasons, WebWatcher or similar products are not available in all countries. Guests from the United States who activate WebWatcher will also be provided fraud consultation services and reimbursement coverage for free. To activate WebWatcher, go to info.starwoodhotels.com and click on your country, if listed, for enrollment.

Marriott is furnishing a Form 8-K with the SEC attaching a copy of this press release and presenting certain other information with respect to the incident.

* Starwood brands include: W Hotels, St. Regis, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Westin Hotels & Resorts, Element Hotels, Aloft Hotels, The Luxury Collection, Tribute Portfolio, Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts, Four Points by Sheraton and Design Hotels. Starwood branded timeshare properties are also included.

Marriott International, Inc. (NASDAQ: MAR) is based in Bethesda, Maryland, USA, and encompasses a portfolio of more than 6,700 properties in 30 leading hotel brands spanning 129 countries and territories. Marriott operates and franchises hotels and licenses vacation ownership resorts all around the world. The company also operates award-winning loyalty programs: Marriott Rewards®, which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards®, and Starwood Preferred Guest®. For more information, please visit our website at www.marriott.com, and for the latest company news, visit www.marriottnewscenter.com. In addition, connect with us on Facebook and @MarriottIntl on Twitter and Instagram.

Contacts:

Connie Kim

301-380-4028

NewsRoom@marriott.com

HILTON STATEMENT ON INCIDENT AT DOUBLETREE BY HILTON
PORTLAND, OREGON (Hilton, 2018)

Hilton is committed to providing a diverse and inclusive culture, quality accommodations and welcoming environments for all guests and Team Members visiting our more than 5,500 properties.³

Hilton has zero tolerance for racism. We have been working with the DoubleTree by Hilton Portland in Oregon, an independently owned and operated property, as they have reviewed and responded to an on-property incident.¹

This morning the property issued the following statement:

“Following an internal review, we have terminated the employment of the security guard and manager involved in this incident. Our hotel is a place of hospitality, and their actions were inconsistent with our standards and values.

Our hotel is committed to engaging outside advisors and experts in diversity and inclusion to evaluate our processes, protocols and trainings to ensure something like this does not happen again.^{4,5,6}

We reiterate our sincere apology to Mr. Massey for his treatment this past weekend, and deeply regret the experience he endured.” – DoubleTree by Hilton Portland⁴

We will continue to work with the property’s ownership and management, including reinforcing the availability of Hilton’s extensive Diversity & Inclusion training curriculum. This is available to all hotels within our network, including franchise properties.^{4,6}

Hilton also holds our franchise partners to related standards. We have made diversity and unconscious bias training mandatory for General Managers and encouraged for other hotel managers across all Hilton-branded properties.²

We are proud of our company’s culture and our recognition as a World’s Best Workplace that values diversity and inclusion.³ We welcome more than 160 million guests a year, and as we enter our 100th anniversary year, our focus will remain on being a welcoming and hospitable place for all.

CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE'S CARNIVAL DREAM FLOODING NEWS STORY
(Larino, 2018) [courtesy of The Times-Picayune]

Passengers aboard the Carnival Dream got an unexpected shock Thursday evening (May 4) after a pipe burst sent water cascading into one of the stateroom decks while the ship was at sea. Photos and video captured by passengers show water pouring from the ceiling and walls and flooding a ship corridor lined with dozens of staterooms.

In a statement, Carnival Cruise Lines confirmed the water line break happened around 6 p.m. Thursday on Deck 9. The water released was "clean water from a fire suppression system,"¹ and crews started cleanup efforts immediately, the statement said. The break affected roughly 50 of the more than 1,800 staterooms aboard the ship.^{1,2,3}

"We appreciate our guests' understanding and sincerely apologize,"^{2,3} the statement said. "We also thank our crew members for their quick action and hard work."

The Dream, one of two Carnival ships based in New Orleans, is currently sailing a seven-day cruise through the Western Caribbean. The ship returned to the water in February 2017 after a two-week renovation that upgraded the ship's interiors and food and beverage offerings. Carnival plans to replace the Dream with the Carnival Glory in New Orleans in 2019.

Photos and video of the line break shared on Facebook by Dream passenger Marla DeAnn Haase showed a passenger popping his head out of a stateroom as water flows from the walls and ceiling of a carpeted hallway. A stream of water pours out from behind one of the room number placards. A second video Haase posted later showed crew wading through what appeared to be ankle-deep water and using buckets to bail water out of the hallway after the leaking had stopped.

In a post, Haase said she and other passengers were relocated to the ship's spa "to sleep on yoga mats on the floor" for the night.

Affected passengers will get a full 100 percent refund of their cruise fare as well as a 50 percent future cruise credit, according to the statement. The company also gave those people the option to disembark the ship Friday and end their trip along with air transportation home.⁵

Carnival said it does not expect the incident to disrupt the Dream's cruise schedule. The Dream's next cruise departs New Orleans for the Western Caribbean on Sunday, May 6.²

Follow-up video and photos shared by Carnival Cruise Lines showed the same hallway Friday as crews worked with drying equipment to clean the area. Rolls of carpet lay along the hallway in one photo.

"We don't expect any impact on the next cruise," the company said.²

ROYAL CARIBBEAN'S GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS FIRE NEWS STORY (Sloan, 2013) [courtesy of USA Today]

The cause of the May fire that damaged several decks of Royal Caribbean's Grandeur of the Seas remains a mystery, despite weeks of investigation.

"We've had a lot of investigators on board from many different agencies, (and) we are starting to get some reports in,"¹ the line's executive vice president for operations, Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, tells USA TODAY. "But ...I'm honestly not sure we'll ever know what started it."¹

RELATED: Fire damages cruise ship
PHOTO TOUR: Inside a Royal Caribbean ship

Speaking on board the vessel Thursday in advance of its return to service later today, Lutoff-Perlo said there was no indication the fire was caused by a mechanical failure. What is known is that the fire started in a mooring area near the back of the ship where ropes are stored. But no obvious ignition source has been discovered. ¹

Significantly damaged during the blaze, which took two hours to douse, the 1,950-passenger Grandeur of the Seas has spent the past six weeks undergoing repairs at a shipyard in the Bahamas. It sets sail later today from Baltimore on its first cruise with paying passengers since the event, a seven-night sailing to Bermuda.

Though the cause of the fire remains unknown, Lutoff-Perlo says the ship is perfectly safe to carry passengers.

"We would never send the ship out if it wasn't safe,"² she says. "There should be absolutely no doubt in anybody's mind that this ship is safe."³

On Thursday, Grandeur of the Seas appeared pretty much as good as new, though repairs to fire damage continued in a couple of areas. The ship's second-largest entertainment venue, the South Pacific Lounge, will remain closed for the coming week for repairs, as will a portion of the aft promenade.

In addition, a number of crew cabins still are undergoing repairs, forcing some crew to sleep in passenger cabins, which in turn has forced the line to bump some passengers from today's sailing. The crew cabins suffered water damage as firefighters fought to contain the blaze and have had to be completely gutted.

Lutoff-Perlo says all of the final repairs will be done by next week's sailing starting on July 19.²

Several changes have been made to the mooring area of the ship as a result of lessons learned from the fire, Lutoff-Perlo adds.⁴

"Most of this came from our team, in terms of enhancements and improvements that we could make ... for storage of ropes, (and for) steel hatches being moved, and different things that came out in terms of materials that are on the mooring decks," she says.

Royal Caribbean has been widely praised for its handling of the fire, which occurred as Grandeur of the Seas was on the way to the line's private island in the Bahamas, CocoCay. The ship never lost power during the incident and was able to reach Freeport, Bahamas, about seven hours after the fire started.³

Lutoff-Perlo and Royal Caribbean CEO Adam Goldstein immediately flew to the ship, within hours of the fire, and met with passengers to apologize for the incident. The line also quickly arranged transportation to get passengers off the ship and back to their homes. Passengers also were immediately promised a full refund for the sailing as well as a voucher good for 25% off a future sailing.⁵

Appendix D

Catalog of Collected Tweets

Catalog of Tweets for Marriott

Tweets to Organization (@ mention)

@Marriott Your location in Provo, UT has bed bugs. I'd recommend getting a good exterminator. Would have been a great stay if not for them.

@Marriott stayed at your hotel this week in Dulles & it was not pleasant. I had to find another hotel after getting a room with bed bugs!

@Marriott thank you & your Avon, OH Residence Inn for the bed bugs!!!!!!!!!!

Update: I now know why Drake does not stay at @Marriott because my bed was infested with bed bugs. I thought I was turning into Spider-Man.

@Marriott Staying at the Frenchman's reef and morning star... First time room had bed bugs, they threw my suitcase "tumi" in the trash!

@Marriott Stayed San Francisco Waterfront on 7/7; woke up with bed bugs; mgr " no one else had a problem in that room" so ok that I did? NOT

@TripAdvisor upcoming review bed bugs at new springhill suites downtown CLT @Marriott @MarriottRewards property-

Platinum Elite customer @Marriott on hold 25min @Twitter twice slow to respond new CLT downtown hotel bed bugs! How do you plan to fix it?

Tweets from Hotel Organizations to Stakeholders

	Image Repair Tenets			Discourse of Renewal Tenets		
	Denial/Evade (0, 1)	Organization Image (0, 1)	Reducing Offensiveness (0, 1)	Organizational Growth (0, 1)	Ethical Communication (0, 1)	Prospective Vision (0, 1)
<p>Tweets from Organization (replies back to stakeholders) I'm very concerned to see this, Jim. I've contacted the hotel's executive management, and asked them to follow up with you directly. 1/2</p>	0	0	1	0	1	0
<p>2/2 You should hear from them within 24-48 hours. We'll also continue to follow up on this until you receive a response. Regards, Bob</p>	0	0	0	1	1	1
<p>Please dm the details regarding your experience, your contact info. and confirmation number. Thank you, Ari</p>	0	0	1	0	1	0
<p>We are very concerned to see this. Please dm your contact info. and confirmation number. Thank you, Ari</p>	1	1	0	0	1	0
<p>Hello Shameer. Sorry you experienced bed bugs. Please DM me your reservation details and contact info. I will be glad to assist. Rodney</p>	0	0	1	1	1	0
<p>Jeffery I am sorry to hear about your experience. I asked management to contact you about this. You should hear from them within 24/48 hrs</p>	0	1	1	1	1	0
<p>We're very sorry to hear this; please DM your contact info/stay details so we can research. Thank you for letting us know, Ari</p>	1	0	1	0	1	0

Tweets from Hotel Organizations to Stakeholders

Hello, we'd like to further assist you with your issue. Plz send a DM w/ stay & contact info. Derrick	1	0	1	0	1	0
Please DM your contact information and confirmation number in order to assist further with addressing your concerns. - June	1	0	1	0	1	0

Catalog of Tweets for Hilton

Tweets to Organization (@ mention)

@HiltonHotels my friend is there NOW covered in bed bugs damnit, answer!

@HiltonHotels @HiltonHonors Nothing like finding bed bugs in your room and then being called a liar that made it all up by the Ozark, AL Hampton Inn manager! If this is the kind of rude people you have running your hotels I guess it's time to move on to a competitor!

@HiltonHotels staying in Santa Clara, wall/window leaking, rug wet and u r just offering to send a fan!?! Crazy. That's like sending Raid if I found bed bugs. What has become of Hilton ...

Bed bugs ☐@HiltonHotels☐ in chicago. Hiltons stance was not helpful ☐@TripAdvisor☐ Very disappointed in the level of service or lack there of. ☐@cbschicago☐ ☐@chicagotribune☐ ☐@ABC7Chicago☐

Very disappointed at the Hilton at New Orleans Riverside!! Making sure that everyone knows how disgusted I am to have experienced this and I'm embarrassed that I'm physically hurting and emotionally disturbed @HiltonHotels

@HiltonHotels I've been a Diamond member for about 9 years straight with Hilton, which shouldn't even matter with the situation at hand. I stay in one of their 100%, so they say, guarantee hotels and get bit by BED BUGS.

@HiltonHotels @HIWoodbridge the hotel has bed bugs and on complaining they take no action.. I am still waiting for that call from Assistant General Manager kamisha? #badcustomerservice not cool for a brand like Hilton.. room 309...

Tweets from Hotel Organizations to Stakeholders

Tweets from Organization (replies back to stakeholders)	Image Repair Tenets			Discourse of Renewal Tenets		
	Denial/Evade (0, 1)	Organization Image (0, 1)	Reducing Offensiveness (0, 1)	Organizational Growth/Learning (0, 1)	Ethical Communication (0, 1)	Prospective Vision (0, 1)
We are sorry to hear this. Please have your friend contact us at 888-240-6152 so that we can assist. Thanks. - FG	0	0	1	0	1	0
We would like to review. Please follow and DM with full name on the reservation and your email address so we can look into this. Thank you. -AM	1	0	1	0	1	0
We definitely don't like the looks of that carpet. We would like to help. Can you please follow and DM us with your Hilton Honors number, email address and the confirmation number for your stay? We look forward to hearing from you soon. -NS	0	1	1	0	1	0
We sincerely apologize for this situation. Please follow and DM us for further communication. Thank you. -MD	0	0	1	0	1	0
We are truly alarmed by your experience and would appreciate an opportunity to look into the matter. Please follow and DM your complete booking details for further communication. Thank you! -GO	1	1	1	0	1	0
NO REPLY TO THE 8th TWEET	x	x	x	x	x	x

Tweets from Hotel Organizations to Stakeholders

<p>We would like to look into this matter further. Please send us a DM with your confirmation number, full name on your reservation, email address and the credit card type and last 4 digits of the card used for booking. Thank you. - FG</p>	0	1	1	0	1	0
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