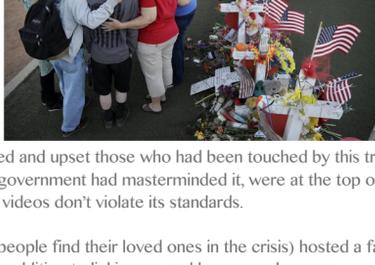


CURRENT EVENTS

LAS VEGAS SHOOTING BY: ABIGAIL MECHLEY

The Las Vegas shooting on Sunday, Oct. 1 was one of the deadliest in recent history; with 58 killed and over 500 injured, it received a lot of news coverage, though not all of it was factual. In the days following the shooting, real and fake news circulated through the internet, and several major websites—including Google, YouTube and Facebook—mistakenly helped to promote falsehoods. With the internet's ever-growing importance and its ability to crowdsource information more quickly than reporters can, it's tempting to use what news is available first; however, citing a source that isn't properly reviewed can create real harm, and maintaining factual news is especially important following disaster.

On Oct. 2, Google's algorithm allowed fake news to top the search results, including several message threads from 4chan that misidentified the shooter. This resulted in more people taking 4chan's claim as fact, and Google didn't correct the error for another several hours; this was an even bigger issue because the message threads appeared in /pol/, a section of 4chan that is already infamous for trolling and fake news.



YouTube, also owned by Google, began promoting conspiracy videos within days of the shooting, which shocked and upset those who had been touched by this tragedy. Videos claiming that the shooting was fake, or that the government had masterminded it, were at the top of search results, and YouTube has since responded that these videos don't violate its standards.

Facebook's "Safety Check" page (which was set up to help people find their loved ones in the crisis) hosted a fake news story claiming that the shooter was a far-left radical, in addition to linking several hoaxes and scams.

Google and Facebook are each working to fix the algorithms that allowed fake news to be promoted; YouTube has responded that the videos showing up in regular searches weren't in violation of its standards.

These fake news stories don't just hurt the credibility of social media corporations; perhaps more importantly, they do the most harm to victims, victims' friends and family, and those trying to track their loved ones after disaster. People are also far more likely to remember the first information they see, and when that information is false it can cause conflict and greater harm.

Damage control from all sides has been underway since the shooting occurred, with many reputable news organizations fact-checking online reports; however, it seems likely that a situation like this could happen again.

One option, perhaps, would be to remind internet consumers that social media isn't a verified news source, and shouldn't be treated as such; however, this approach shifts responsibility away from corporations serving billions world wide, and treats "fake news" as an individual (rather than social) issue.

Another option might be to (initially) promote only legitimate news organizations with a history of evidence-based writing, gradually promoting other sources as they can be verified. This, too, could be difficult, since it may require companies develop a separate algorithm for tragic events such as this.

In the meantime, news organizations should pay even more attention to verifying facts and responding quickly when falsehoods are circulated. For social media giants and other companies, it's not enough to do nothing, or to blame the consumer. Companies need to take responsibility for their role, whether that means including disclaimers in any non-verified story, or sorting through news more effectively.

There's one lingering question in this instance: how we can proactively combat the fake news that follows tragedies, especially when it's initially spread more quickly than it can be fact-checked? There is no easy answer. What is clear is that fake news will not be going away anytime soon, and it's certainly a problem in need of solving.

HURRICANE RELIEF BY: BAILEY STYZINSKI

It's no secret that one of the most important aspects of public relations work is to stay on top of current events and determine what affect they might have on their company or client. Sometimes no response is necessary, but when a company must take action, it is the public relations specialist's job to determine a plan to take appropriate action. In the wake of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, public relations specialists were at the top of their game, and made a sizable impact on disaster relief.

Americans scrambled to contain chaos to a minimum after hurricanes tore through coastal towns in Texas and Florida, but the efforts they made had little impact against the terror Harvey and Irma brought to their neighborhoods. It was immediately clear that outside assistance would be necessary to help communities recover and get back on their feet. Homes were destroyed, families separated and stress ran high as many Americans felt their whole world falling apart.

Companies heard the silent cries of some of the most affected communities and were quick to offer as much assistance as possible. While many companies made donations to the American Red Cross Association, Save the Children and the Center for Disaster Philanthropy to name a few, some companies recognized the impact they could have by donating products and services to the disaster victims. Some of these donations include those made by Dick's Sporting Goods, FedEx and Lowe's.

Dick's Sporting Goods donated \$3.5 million in clothing and footwear to those affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. This donation will help clothe those who lost most of their belongings in the storms. FedEx committed \$1 million in cash and transportation support to Irma victims. Their donation will focus on delivering critical medical aid and supplies to victims to combat the lack of medical resources. Lowe's committed \$1 million for Irma relief in cash and product donations. This will assist victims of Hurricane Irma as they begin to rebuild their homes and restore their communities. These generous donations, as well as many others made, will greatly impact victims of recent terrifying tropical storms so that they can begin to look to what the future has in store for them and their families.

SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS

DOUBLING UP: TWITTER MAKES BIG CHANGE BY: CLAIRE BOWMAN

Have you ever crafted the perfect tweet, but then you're suddenly forced to delete an apostrophe or abbreviate a word to fit Twitter's 140-count limit? Well, those painful days might be over, as long as you can contain yourself to 280 characters. Recently, social media giant Twitter is testing something new by upping its character limits on tweets for select users, making some excited and leaving others wondering why.

Twitter CEO, Jack Dorsey, tweeted about the possibly permanent change as a problem solver and said it would still maintain the social platform's "brevity, speed, and essence." There has been some speculation that this change will also attract older users. Because these users are usually more active on Facebook where they have no limit on what they can post, this increase in limitations may make Twitter more appealing to them. (Photo from www.communicateonline.me)



This is what 280 characters look like. Nope... Not yet. Ummm, this is tough. Okay, now.

If this is the case, companies who heavily use Twitter to advertise may need to think about changing up their game plans if this becomes a permanent fixture of Twitter.

For a platform that has seen most of its popularity with a younger crowd, marketing has been largely targeted for them. So if the audience starts to change, public relations teams will likely need to alter their strategies if they want to appeal to multiple groups. Lastly, it will be interesting to see if companies start to take advantage of more characters. When it comes to advertising, shorter typically means sweeter, so it may be beneficial to focus on changing up content instead of length.

PUBLIC RELATIONS TIPS

FIVE TOOLS EVERY PR STUDENT SHOULD MASTER BY: ALLISON HAWORTH

As rising seniors are job searching to enter the workforce, it is imperative to be knowledgeable in multiple types of media platforms to put you ahead of the competition. In my last internship, I used all five of these tools ranging from email, social media and sale pipelines, which gave me a jump on the latest trends in the PR world.

- Hootsuite:** Hootsuite is a social media management platform in which you can link all of your social media accounts to one dashboard, rather than sending out the same tweet 10 times on different social medias. Now more than ever, being able to manage a business's social media presence is a challenging task in itself, but this platform allows you to auto-schedule, draft and reply to any message on social media in one place.
- Constant Contact:** Constant Contact is an email-marketing tool that allows you to create campaigns, polls, emails, newsletters, events and much more. With an email being one of the main methods of communication nowadays, it is very likely that your future employer utilizes this tool day in and day out of the office.
- Hubspot:** Hubspot is software that is very useful for inbound marketing and sales. While it has many functions, one of the most important features is tracking your marketing and sales pipeline from certain clients. Being able to create leads to your contact list is a sure sign of an increase profit for your future company!
- Weebly:** Weebly is a website builder that allows you to drag and drop pieces of your website to create content. With many different themes, tools, media and pages to choose from, it is a very useful skill to have as everything is being digitized in today's world.
- Google Drive:** Google Drive is a file storage and synchronization service that allows you to keep all your documents in the cloud. While there are numerous amounts of apps, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides and Google Forms are my most popular apps. With the ability to share files with an infinite amount of people, this allows the document to be updated to the most recent file automatically after anyone who has access makes a change.

FIVE TWITTER ACCOUNTS YOU MUST FOLLOW BY: SARAH EMERY

I would consider myself a Twitter aficionado. I've even been granted access to 280 characters, although I spend the majority of my time on Twitter reading and learning from what others have to say than posting my own content (unless it's about my love for desserts).

Here are five Twitter accounts any up-and-coming PR professional HAS to follow:

- @APStylebook** - Whether you love it or hate it, AP Style is here to stay in the media world. The AP Stylebook Twitter account is highly active and the weekly #APStyleChat will update you on everything from fake news to punctuation.
- @PRNews** - PR News calls itself the "hub for communicators," and I'd definitely agree! The account has a healthy mix of top headlines, communication tips and media trends and is a great way to see the world from a PR professional's perspective.
- @Hootsuite** - A strong understanding of social media and digital marketing is paramount for the 21st century PR professional. With informative infographics and links, I find myself bookmarking Hootsuite's content all the time!
- @PRWeekUs** - If you're still hungry for PR-related posts after reading the Miami University PRWeek US's blog and newsletter, make sure to follow PRWeek US for trending stories about successes throughout the public relations universe.
- @miamiohPRSSA** - Stay up-to-date on what the Miami University PRSSA chapter is doing! Happy tweeting and reading!



PRSSA NEWS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE & BENEFITS OF PRSSA BY: PAIGE GARTY

About National Conference:
The annual PRSSA National Conference is a weekend event where members from all across the country gather to listen to speakers, attend workshops and network with one another. The speakers are usually big names from well-known companies. In my past experiences, I've heard from C-suite executives from Kind Bars, Southwest Airlines, IBM, Panera and more. The speakers and workshops cover topics from fashion PR, to crisis communications, to inbound marketing, to tips about how to land your first job.

National Conference 2017:
Two weekends ago I had to privilege to head back to my home state of Massachusetts for the 2017 National Conference. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of PRSSA, the conference was not short of interesting speakers and topics. Here are some of the highlights:

Senior VP and Chief Brand Officer for IBM, Jon Iwata:
-He was the President of his PRSSA chapter.
-Talked about the advances of artificial intelligence, and how talking isn't the new technology anymore (looking at you Siri). These systems are learning and listening in order to react appropriately.
-Marketing is not simply about messaging, but wanting to shape your consumers' thinking in a certain way.
-"The many reach the many more." -Jon Iwata

Vice President of Marketing for HubSpot, Meghan Keaney Anderson:
-Inbound marketing is all about meeting the people where they already are.
-Do not reel in consumers with baiting tricks, and do not ignore the already on.
-Remember: it is not about one channel, but being relevant to customers.
-"Market on their terms, not yours." -Meghan Keaney Anderson

Vice President of Public Relations for Panera, Jonathan Yohannan:
-Company brands evolve, so they need to learn how to evolve in a way that meets customers' needs while sticking to the company's core values.
-Now, people want to know what's in their food, they want healthier options, and they want it all fast.
-This is why Panera was the first fast food restaurant to put calories on their menu. They also have eliminated all artificial preservatives, colorings and ingredients.

My National Conference Career:
-Four years in PRSSA
-Five total national events
-Three National Conferences: Atlanta, Indianapolis & Boston
-Two National Assemblies: Austin & Seattle
-30 business cards obtained
-Dozens of new Instagram followers



These statistics have allowed me to make connections with people from the University of Oregon to Boston University. There are some people I have become close with and look forward to seeing at the next national event. I have gained ideas, like our mentorship program and attendance point policy. I've helped others with fundraising program and beloved grilled cheese sales. Each national event I attend I gain a greater appreciation of PRSSA and how incredibly beneficial this organization can be. There is something empowering about being in a room full of driven people who share the same unflinching love for the same organization.

Key Takeaway:
So, after reading the above you may be thinking, "Wow, Paige, sounds like national events are pretty cool and all, but how does this affect me?" Well, I didn't get to travel to five cities and hear from all of these incredible speakers just because I wished for it. I put in a little more effort than the people around me, and saw beneficial results.

It all started my freshman year, back when the Digital Communications committee was called Online Communications and there was no such thing as an all-club meeting. All I did that year was show up to speaker events and turn in my blog posts on time. There was a special opportunity to write an article for Cincinnati PRSSA, so I volunteered because why not? Those three actions, which seemed trivial at the time, set me apart from the rest of my committee. Because I showed up, was committed, I was asked to run for VP of Programming (now called Professional Development). My sophomore year on the executive board, again, I put in the time and effort to produce solid results, and at the end of the year I was asked to run for President (and you all know how that ended).

The moral of my little story is that if you apply yourself to something you're passionate about, then people will notice and you will reap the benefits. This is why at the beginning of each semester I remind everyone that the more effort you put into something, whether it's PRSSA or not, the more you will get out of that experience.

Now, as a senior I am reflecting on all of my experiences over the past few years, and I want all of you to know that whether or not you make it to a National Conference, please take advantage of that opportunity tossed your way.

NEED TO KNOW

UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 23-29: SDS & Skippers Fundraiser
- November 2: Grilled Cheese Fundraiser at Phi Delt Gates
- November 7: Speaker Ashley Walters
- November 14: All Club Meeting 3

PRSSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

- President: Paige Garty
- VP of Publications: Shelby Olson
- VP of Finance: Tanner Banning
- VP of Community Relations: Madison Witherell
- VP of Professional Development: Leah McCloud
- VP of Public Relations: Maddie Malloy
- VP of Digital Communications: Cassie Goward
- VP of PR Visions: Sarah Hunter
- Faculty Advisor: Sarah Clark, APR

