

ANTI-CRISIS PR IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

In the work of any hotel enterprise, even the most successful one, a crisis might arise sooner or later. Hotel business by itself is not equally profitable in all regions of the world.

Moreover, the hospitality industry is influenced by a large number of factors. An onset of a crisis in a hotel can be triggered not only by some internal problems of the enterprise, but also due to some economic, political or financial difficulties of the region, in which the hotel is located. A crisis in a hotel can arise due to events that are out of people's control, such as natural disasters, etc. Negative trends in economics almost always impact the hotel enterprises in a negative way. Also, a breakout of a military conflict in the region leads to crises in the hotels, which are located in the zone of conflict.

Anti-crisis PR effectively helps the hotel to overcome the crisis with minimal losses. In Western countries this direction of PR is in a great demand.

Some people mistakenly assume that anti-crisis PR is applied only in a moment of a crisis. In fact, the main philosophy of this direction of PR is that every company must prepare for the crisis in advance. The essence of the anti-crisis PR lies in developing an anti-crisis program, which clearly sets out the plan of actions for the company in case of the crisis advent.

Experts claim that most of the crises experienced by enterprises, including hotels, are predictable. Crises faced by the hotel can be highly varied, ranging from natural disasters to onsets of any financial or structural changes within the company itself. Experts believe that even considerable positive changes in the work of the enterprise can be viewed as a crisis. When the hospitality institution undergoes a crisis, the enterprise should take a clear and unambiguous position on a controversial issue, constantly maintaining contacts with the media, keeping its workers informed about the state of affairs and carrying out periodical monitorings of the crisis course.

The anti-crisis PR of a hotel consists of the following steps:

1. Development of a unified strategy and policy for dealing with journalists, representatives of authorities and controlling institutions;
2. Spreading out press-releases and/or holding a press-conference stating the official post of the hotel's first persons related to the incident;
3. Co-working with staff to maintain their loyalty to the company;
4. Instructing the staff, that is in contact with clients, about the proper behavior and essence of comments concerning the negative incident;
5. Monitoring the reputation of the hotel in the Internet, processing negative information, stimulating discussion that will increase customers' loyalty.
6. Involvement of experts and specialists for obtaining an independent evaluation that will serve as a convincing argument in communication with mass media and the public in general;
7. Other anti-crisis measures, the set of which is determined separately and is

specific for each case.

Although occurrence of crisis situations is a worst-case scenario, I'd recommend to develop an action plan for such cases, as well as on a regular basis review and update it by reflecting changes in internal and external environment. The goal of any PR-crisis plan is to ensure the harmonious and balanced actions of company management, PR-managers, and other experts to help preventing the spread of negative information as soon as possible.