

Headliners:  
The Influence of Media Coverage in Museum Crises

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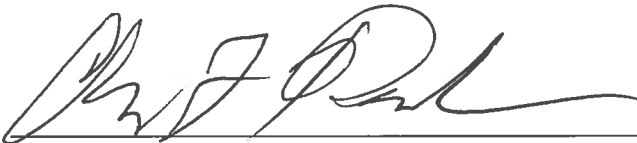
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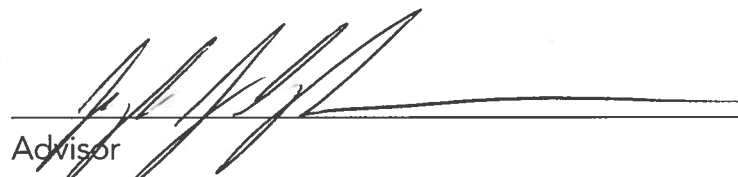
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## Abstract

This project will help to interpret the past, present, and future accounts of art museums crises and their potential effect on the museum brand. It is important to consider the communication conflict happening now and throughout history. The museum field could benefit from understanding important crisis communication roles the museum administration and media must take together to sustain the museum brand. This study is intended to find supportive evidence that the media influences the public perception of art museums throughout The United States.

This paper includes a supplemental handbook that serves as a summary of this study and its findings. The twenty-page booklet can be used as a convenient reference in times of crisis.

## Acknowledgements

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## **Introduction**

Art museums are cultural institutions of creation and of experimentation for any given public. It is important to understand the perspective from which this study evaluates art museums, as they will be defined as institutions that provide an art-based cultural and educational niche in the United States. These institutions may be well-known or small, neighborhood museums that provide services to the public in art education, interpretation, and preservation. This research will support the need for crisis planning and encourage collaboration with media professionals. Using the media as a communication collaborator to the public plays a significant role in this study and how the museum could use reporters as a resource. The use of multiple case studies will critique the current communication practice, museum governance, and crisis management plans. This study focuses on how museum communicators can learn from the Detroit Institute of Art and similar institutions to be better prepared for crisis communication by developing institutional crisis communication strategies. The study also highlights the media's impact during a crisis and how can it be used as a tool for other museums that find themselves in crisis. Finally, understanding what museums can learn from crisis situations that can help them better understand or evaluate their brand.

Art museums have developed throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century to become a place of leisure to the public, increasing risk and responsibility to entertain and excite

more than ever before. Methods to evaluate art museums and their visitors during a crisis will measure the way media coverage of a museum crisis translates it to the public. Due to the lack of research of crisis communication in museums, this is an important conversation for museum administrators and communication professionals. Key discussions will address the communication department, the crisis team, the importance of a crisis plan, possible affected relationships of these crises, and an option of rebranding after the crisis. Case studies of current crises in art museums will stand as support in qualifying this thesis. Research and analysis for this study was developed through interviews, surveys, and content analysis of web and print articles.

Chapter One will introduce the history of crises in art museums, highlight the lack of research done regarding crisis communication in museums, and discuss the public and its vital role in art museums. The public plays a defining role, as they are responsible for the reputation and survival of the institution.<sup>1</sup> This chapter will end with information regarding an art museum's public image. Using many previous studies and raw data, this chapter elicits the importance for ensuring a positive image in times of crisis.

Chapter Two discusses what the museum consists of by illustrating the ideal museum representative and communication department. Standards from leading

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<sup>1</sup> Hart, Julie. AAM. Governance class notes. Lecture. 25 Sept. 2014.



museum associations including American Alliance of Museums and Association of Art Museum Directors are compared to determine if each was truly fitting for museum crisis situations. Case studies and examples will be included in this chapter to understand who is leading the current art museum news stories.

Chapter Three will dive into the media sources used currently, the changes that have occurred in the profession, and what that might mean for museums. This chapter will interpret the history of media influence in American lives and support the claim that the news media does effect public perception of art museums in crisis. Understanding both the media and museum professional role will be highlighted to encourage endorsement for professional collaboration. Examples and case studies of effective collaborations are provided to showcase how the ideal story might be framed to keep a positive image while maintaining public support.

Chapter Four digests the raw data collected on the public perception of art museums and story analysis of three major art museum crises happening today. Data was collected through surveys, interviews, and content analysis. These analyses serve as examples to current museum professionals to determine why they have been important and trending factors of the museum sector. Discussion follows this chapter to critique whether necessary actions were taken to ensure that public trust was sustained.

The final chapter, Chapter Five communicates the importance of recognizing and controlling a crisis. Understanding the spreading capacity of a crisis and using risk management planning can often prevent a crisis from becoming overwhelming and develop into a spiraling news story. There is an attached visual companion piece which summaries this study for best practices and tools in crisis planning.

## **Chapter One**

### History

For centuries, museums were not intended to be public entities and required appointments for visitation. Collecting and preserving art was not intended to be an educational priority, but signaled wealth and power. Not until the early 1920s were museums given an intention to collect, preserve, study, exhibit, and interpret, but wartime brought about frustrations for defining art and rules of collecting.<sup>2</sup> Slowly, art museums developed into a cultural identity sorted by political agendas. After the Second World War and into the present, education and collection accessibility have become the demanded service for the public. This history has provided context for the museum public today.

Museums and institutions are often misunderstood to be immune to the catalysts of a crisis. In this study, a crisis will refer to Susan Kearney's definition as "a situation that is seriously threatening your people or property, your reputation or your organization's ability to operate."<sup>3</sup> Kearney is a leader in nonprofit crisis communication and received crisis experience firsthand while working for Council of Better Business Bureau. As a broader definition, crises can range from internal issues such as governance, personnel, collections, copyright, and earned income or

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<sup>2</sup> Weil, Stephen E. *Beauty and the Beasts: On Museums, Art, the Law, and the Market*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1983. Print.

<sup>3</sup> Kearney, Susan. "Crisis Communication for Nonprofits." Interview by Kira Tyler. Audio blog post. NonProfit 911. Network for Good, 21 Sept. 2014. Web. 25 Sept. 2014.

external issues that might include economy, politics, legal issues, or third-party associates.<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of control, natural disasters will not be referred to as crises throughout this study, but they are important crises that can and do affect museums.

Crisis in the museum is all but rare, yet there has not been much research concerning how crises effect the museum and its image. Beginning after World War II, major issues concerning art museums revolved around acquiring acquisitions from Europe. During and after the war, Nazi-looting uncontrollably demanded the attention of collectors around the globe. It was not until the 1990s that museums experienced a call-to-arms about looting antiquities and fine art, including the Nazi-era art as well as Native-American and African cultural objects.<sup>5</sup> This forced museums to confront these issues and many chose to return looted objects in good faith. Obligations fell onto museums that were federally funded due to government funding expressed throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s. Government giving in The United States began to interject art museums with political opinion and preference.<sup>6</sup> Into the 2000s, art museums found themselves in a public debate over what and who constitutes art, when documents unfolded about the underwriting

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<sup>4</sup> Genoways, Hugh H., and Lynne M. Ireland. *Museum Administration: An Introduction*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira, 2003. Print. Accessed 4 June 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Cuno, James B., Neil MacGregor, James Wood, Glenn D. Lowry, Philippe De Montebello, and John Walsh. *Whose Muse?: Art Museums and the Public Trust*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2004. Print. Accessed 25 July 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

from an artist at the Brooklyn Museum on his own exhibition.<sup>7</sup> James Cuno, current President and CEO of the J. Paul Getty Trust, is an art historian and curator who stated, "Charges of blasphemy, pornography, and financial corruption were made against the Brooklyn Museum and for months stuck to the public image of museums as such."<sup>8</sup> Examples such as these force museum professionals to seek answers to prevent an unexpected tarnishing of institutional image. Throughout the study, image will be defined as "the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that people have of an entity."<sup>9</sup> Crises may affect the image of an art museum at any point while it is in the news cycle.

Research concerning media influence on society is a well-studied topic concerning the sociology, psychology, and computer-mediated communication methods in delivering messages. However, similar work concerning the museum public is rare. Crisis preparation and coverage in museums has been generalized and many times based on a crisis affecting the museum for the moment. Museums need to begin to ask themselves how the public characterizes them. Developing an

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Cuno, James B., Neil MacGregor, James Wood, Glenn D. Lowry, Philippe De Montebello, and John Walsh. *Whose Muse?: Art Museums and the Public Trust*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2004. Print. Accessed 25 July 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Kotler, Neil G. & Philip Kotler. *Kotler. Museum Marketing and Strategy: Designing Missions, Building Audiences, Generating Revenue and Resources*. p, 135. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998. Print. Accessed 17 July 2014.

understanding of the public before a crisis can help to monitor their activity in the institution during a crisis.

The most important factor is to understand the impact an art museum can have on the community and what to expect from each audience. Thomas W. Leavitt, once an American Alliance of Museum (AAM) President, asked all museums to answer, "How are museums viewed by the public and are those views in accord with the images of ourselves?"<sup>10</sup>

One of the most publicized crisis news topic for museums concerns deaccessioning.<sup>11</sup> Yet most journalists and the general public do not understand what the term means. Deaccessioning is defined as "the process by which a work of art or other object (collectively, a 'work'), wholly or in part, is permanently removed from a museum's collection."<sup>12</sup> The selling of an object as an asset for the museum's general operating budget is a huge ethical dilemma as stated by professional museum standards.<sup>13</sup> Recently, deaccessioning has been used for museum operating costs. The question has lingered whether this standard has become enough to maintain integrity and the public trust.

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<sup>10</sup> Adams, G. Donald. *Museum Public Relations*. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1983. Print. Accessed 25 Sept. 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Hart, Julie. University of the Arts. Anderson Hall, Philadelphia. 25, Sept. 2014. Lecture.

<sup>12</sup> Association of Art Museum Directors. *AAMD Policy on Deaccessioning*. Rep. New York: AAMD, 2010. Print.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

As collectors dedicated to preservation and conservation of great art, AAM and AAMD feel as though museums should direct income of an object's removal of the collection toward future conservation of objects and acquisitions in that collection. As stated by AAM Senior Director of Standards, Julie Hart, during a recent lecture, "museums rely on the public as their reputation for survival. Their livelihood is based on integrity."<sup>14</sup> The concern for museums is to ensure advocacy with stakeholders and securing an image with our community. After all, museums have solely relied on the donations, pledges, and promises stakeholders safeguard. No evidence has been shown that violating professional standards has declined this support, but there are other factors that fall into play. Since the global financial and economic crisis of 2008, most nonprofits have been suffering financially.<sup>15</sup> There is no doubt the financial crisis has shifted and produced a vulnerable economy to influence many museum crises and determine much of the art museum's current public.

The public is the intended visitor the museum communicator and news media source aspires to reach and consists of those who will be impacted whether by growth or ceding during the news cycle of a museum crisis. The most influential public is the museum's stakeholders. Stakeholders are defined as a group whose

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<sup>14</sup> Hart, Julie. Governance Notes. AAM. Accessed 24 Sept. 2014.

<sup>15</sup> Acemoglu, Daron. *The Crisis of 2008: Structural Lessons for and from Economics*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. 6 January 2009. Web. Accessed July 8, 2014.

members have common interest or values in a particular situation.<sup>16</sup> Keeping them in conversations throughout the crisis can and will develop stakeholders who advocate on the museum's behalf to other publics. Museums, most of which are private non-profit entities, have earned the responsibility to serve the public as they are all in a way stakeholders through taxes that fund subsidies.<sup>17</sup> The more museums become community-focused, the more people have a sense of attachment and advocacy to their nearest or favorite institution.<sup>18</sup> This responsibility has forced art museums to be as transparent as possible and has been accompanied with much opinion. Throughout this study, research will determine the fallibility of what museum professionals intend to communicate and what they actually do. Enforcement of information by the news media, along with the trends of the present news media cycle will foretell the changing perspectives of art museums through crisis.

The art museum public consists of a combination of two models based on John Cotton Dana and Paul Joseph Sachs. John Cotton Dana is "the prototype of the museum populist."<sup>19</sup> Dana once stated, "See that your library is interesting to

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<sup>16</sup> Sheil, Astrid. "PR: Purposeful communication." Strategic Public Relations. Calif. State Univ. San Bernardino, San Bernardino. 12 Apr. 2011. Lecture.

<sup>17</sup> Christopher Knight. Interview. 16 Oct. 2014.

<sup>18</sup> McClellan, Andrew. *Art and Its Publics: Museum Studies at the Millennium*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2003. Print. Accessed 28 July 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Meyer, Karl E. *The Art Museum: Power, Money, Ethics*. New York: W. Morrow, 1979. Print. Accessed 7 Aug. 2014.



the people of the community, the people who own it, the people who maintain it."<sup>20</sup> His leadership and conviction toward the access of education would rally Dana into museum populism. Museum populism is the belief that museums are and should be the access to the public in an engaging and entertaining format.<sup>21</sup>

Paul J. Sachs (1878- 1965) was quite the opposite of Dana. He was raised in opportunities for wealth and education. Sachs, the son of founders of Goldman Sachs and Company, developed an interest in art and eventually accepted an assistant director position at the Fogg Museum of Harvard University in 1911.<sup>22</sup>

Sachs would eventually become known as a connoisseur for his lectures and leadership in educating the public and his pupils about the art world.

Much of the public might value the line between education and leisure, but the two examples of museum advocates are extremes and do not represent a finite separation. As the museum does fall into the public sphere, museum professionals must realize the use of the word "public" encompasses an audience so broad that many have not even stepped foot into a museum at all.<sup>23</sup> There are many ways to determine a museum public. Public are often separated by three types of groups:

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Meyer, Karl E. *The Art Museum: Power, Money, Ethics*. New York: W. Morrow, 1979. Print. Accessed 7 Aug. 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Duncan, Sally Anne. "Harvard's "Museum Course" and the Making of America's Museum Profession." *Archives of American Art Journal* 42.1/2 (2002): 2-16. Print. Accessed 8 Sept. 2013.

<sup>23</sup> Barrett, Jennifer. *Museums and the Public Sphere*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Print. Accessed 12 Aug. 2014.

latent, aware, and active.<sup>24</sup> Latent assumes that the public is unaware of the activity.

Aware consumes all those who are awake, but unmotivated to be part of the solution. The active public is “in-your-face” about their motivation and making changes.<sup>25</sup> A representative must understand and distinguish the active-public, which is the low-hanging fruit versus those yet to be reached. This will help to determine communication methods during a crisis. The active public is the public to be aware of, since they could create waves for the museum, as they are likely to be the most invested.

Public perception of art museums has often been studied through internal museum evaluations. These evaluations are seldom made public, but contain data concerning the effective communication of the museums image. A study in 1991 called *Insights* calculated visitor attitudes of the art museum. The study includes advice from the public as well as intentions of the art museum professional. Notes include quotes from professionals such as, “Different people experience the museum different ways.”<sup>26</sup> One visitor’s perspective of the art museum was that “professionals do not communicate their message clearly enough.”<sup>27</sup> The key is

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<sup>24</sup> Sheil, Astrid. “PR: Purposeful communication.” Strategic Public Relations. Calif. State Univ. San Bernardino, San Bernardino. 12 Apr. 2011. Lecture.

<sup>25</sup> Sheil, Astrid. “PR: Purposeful communication.” Strategic Public Relations. Calif. State Univ. San Bernardino, San Bernardino. 12 Apr. 2011. Lecture.

<sup>26</sup> Walsh, A. *Insights, Museums, Visitors, Attitudes, Expectations: A Focus Group Experiment*. Los Angeles: Paul Getty Trust, 1991. Print. Accessed 12 Aug. 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. (p.104).

effective and immediate collaboration from both the museum professional and the news media. Integrity, trust, and transparency must become the foundation of an institution throughout a crisis and be communicated effectively in and outside of the museum to ensure a positive image.

## **Chapter Two**

### Who is the Museum?

While it is easy to say art museums must follow national standards and best practices set by professional organizations, trends throughout the museum world are ever-evolving. This enables policies and practices the opportunity to adjust to these changes. Best practices and standards were presented to the museum field in the 1980s when there was an outcry for definition of art, as referenced earlier. It was not until 1996 that a call for unity inspired written museum standards in The United States.<sup>28</sup> The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) define these professional standards for a variety of museums. The American Alliance of Museums categorizes their excellence standards as national standards in the following categories: collections, education, public trust, emergency planning and risk management, sustainability, and community engagement.<sup>29</sup> Membership and accreditation are voluntary and include 38 characteristics for defining the excellence standards of nonprofit and for-profit institutions.<sup>30</sup> The Association of Art Museum Directors provides a guide to obligations of the art museum director such as "responsibilities to their staff,

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<sup>28</sup> Hart, Julie. Governance Notes. AAM. Accessed 24 Sept. 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> American Alliance of Museums. "Characteristics of Excellence for U.S. Museums." *Characteristics of Excellence for US Museums*. American Alliance of Museums, n.d. Web. 06 Oct. 2014.

their governing bodies, and the communities they serve.”<sup>31</sup> Although these standards are voluntary, and require an accreditation to be acknowledged by the associations, (only 5% of museums in the United States are accredited) these guidelines have been referred to as national standards to unify the museum field. Being a member of any of these professional organizations will mean upholding the same ethics, values, and standards they have implemented within qualifications. Meanwhile, each museum is subject to an individual mission statement and institutional plan to clarify and disclose each unique institution’s intentions in serving the good of the public for grant purposes and tax-exempt status.<sup>32</sup>

While these standards and best practices are important to consider, having a crisis communication plan unique to the art museum is critical for crisis and risk prevention. This can often be done internally along with the strategic plan and policy-making process in order to ensure universal communication and procedure. External sources and third-parties are often sought out for guidance and unique perspective with regard to policy-making. Similarly to the best practices and

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<sup>31</sup> American art Museum Directors. “Professional Practices in Art Museums”. Published 2011. Accessed 29 Sept. 2014.

<sup>32</sup> Merritt, Elizabeth E. “National Standards & Best Practices” Public trust and Mission. Section 2: Standards and best practices. American Association of Museums. Accessed 7 Sept. 2014.

standards, the crisis plan should be internally evaluated yearly with an increased chance for improvement.

## **CASE STUDIES**

Presently, the professional guidelines are broad in an attempt to familiarize with multiple nonprofit fields of concentration. Illustrating and comparing the guidelines to the case studies will serve as analysis for museum crisis situations and whether they fit for each crisis. Three substantial art museum crises will be analyzed throughout this study, each different cases that were subjected to controversy over best practices and professional standards.

### **DELAWARE ART MUSEUM**

The Delaware Art Museum (DAM) in Wilmington, Delaware was hit with a collections crisis after DAM announced it would sell objects from the collection to pay bond debt from renovation costs. DAM has been described as a “quirky,” community-based, midsized art museum founded in 1912 by Delaware residents seeking to commemorate the late Howard Pyle, whom dedicated his career to teaching and illustration within the community. With donations from the local community, the museum started with a few of Pyle’s work.<sup>33</sup> Renovations and expansion of the Kentmere Parkway building accumulated financial instability

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<sup>33</sup> Delaware Art Museum. Museum History: 100 Years of Art. Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, July 2011. PDF. Accessed 20 Oct. 2014.

when Wells Fargo expedited bond payments made just years prior due to the economic downturn in the United States.<sup>34</sup>

While it is not an encyclopedic collection, the art museum made news headlines after it was sanctioned by AAM in early 2014. Museum collections management policies, according to AAM, "should be upheld by every museum striving to maintain excellence in its operations."<sup>35</sup> The guidelines listed in this policy include providing a "Statement of Authority", "Code of Ethics", and "Accessioning/Deaccessioning" statements.<sup>36</sup> Both AAM and AAMD standards discouraged the proceeds from the sale of objects for anything other than the care of the collection itself or for the purchase of new objects. Although the Delaware Art Museum did attempt to work with AAMD for alternative solutions before selling objects, time was running out and DAM cancelled their membership with the Association of Art Museum Directors before their initial sale.

#### DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ART

The Detroit Institute of Art (DIA) was faced with a unique museum crisis in July 2013 after the city of Detroit declared Chapter 9 bankruptcy. The DIA is a municipally owned museum, with AAM accreditation and has been in the news

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<sup>34</sup> Delaware Art Museum. Delaware Art Museum Board of Trustees Vote to Retire Debt. Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 26 Mar. 2014. PDF.

<sup>35</sup> American Alliance of Museums. "Developing a collections management policy." 12 Oct. 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

cycle for over one year as the court hearings proceed. Although authorities denied sale of the collection, the monetary sum was evaluated, estimated, and continuously featured in news stories around the nation. The City of Detroit and the DIA have been transparent about their collections value and the repercussions of sale. Selling the artwork for funds to repay city debt would break the strict deaccessioning policy set forth by AAM. The professional association works as a peer-reviewed checks and balances system. If a museum does not follow the standards as a member, other member museums are discouraged to collaborate with the sanctioned institutions.

#### CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART

The Corcoran Gallery of Art was once the oldest art gallery in the United States dedicated to American and contemporary art. The gallery and its collection was turned over to the National Gallery of Art in August of 2014 after the museum was unable to finance operating costs for the remainder of the year. Due to the strict acquisition policy this institution kept for years, it was unable to deaccession objects from the collection as assets. The one likely sale was of Persian rugs that took place in 2013 and brought in \$48.3 million was rumored to be used to pay off debts in renovation expenses, but the entire sum went to preservation of the



collection.<sup>37</sup> This institution did not break AAM policies for selling this collection, however, sales might have saved the oldest gallery in the country.

### **The Museum Communicator Role**

Although every employee is a museum representative, the museum communicator or equivalent position, will be the main focus of this study. Due to the range of different museum professionals who might hold responsibilities to this role, titles may include, but are not limited to: spokesperson, communicator, professional, or specialist. The museum communicator or spokesperson will be separated in this section from the roles of those throughout the rest of the museum. During a crisis, daily roles of participation for the average museum communicator or similar representative needs to be heightened, expedited, and thorough. When this happens, other representatives of the museum divide operating roles.

The museum communication departments in each of the case studies differ due to size and budget and often a museum does not employ enough staff to make up a department. Smaller institutions with 3-50 employees will often divide roles as administrators. These institutions have increased pressure to ensure a credible and transparent cultural institution for their public. Larger institutions of

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<sup>37</sup> Mullins, Luke. "Crisis at the Corcoran." Washingtonian. Washingtonian, 27 Nov. 2012. Web. 10 Oct. 2014.

51-100+ employees have more of an advantage because they tend to have a well-defined communication department and if possible, a public relations specialist.

Jessica Jenkins, Manager of Marketing and Public Relations at DAM stated throughout her case there were many new skills to learn in a short amount of time. "There were a lot of situations that I was in over the last six months with reporters that I had never been in before."<sup>38</sup> She continued,

"Usually I pitch a lot of exhibition related news or programs, events, stories about the museum, stories about a new grant. Then I had to switch and become this other public relations person where I am dealing with really difficult questions; I'm prepping our CEO for interviews, I'm working with the board, working with other staff members...so that shifted for me."<sup>39</sup>

Jenkins' experience is not much different than others who have faced an unexpected crisis in a nonprofit or museum. Mary Perry, a communications specialist, was also faced with similar situations while she worked at three different institutions in Southern California. "Everywhere I've worked, I worked very closely with risk management towards the Security Director and we would be on the safety committee wherever we'd be because if something happened I would need to be right there at the forefront."<sup>40</sup> With perspective Perry chuckled, "It's one of those things, whether you're working at a museum or if you're working at a business, it's a 24/7 job. An emergency is most likely not going to occur during a

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<sup>38</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

<sup>39</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

<sup>40</sup> Perry, Mary. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 29 Sept. 2014.

nine-to-five, Monday through Friday work hours. If something is going to happen it's going to be on a Saturday night."<sup>41</sup> These examples give great depth to understanding the critical role the museum spokesperson must dedicate to the prevention and management of crises.

Due to the potentially crippling effects during and after a crisis, the communication department should be held in respectable, credible standing before a crisis. This includes prompt and effective communication to the community, staff, and media collaborators. An effective communication department runs operations such as executive and internal communications, prepares crucial materials needed for multiple media platforms, and works consistently to align the museum's mission with outgoing content. Effective communicators should keep all staff informed first and foremost. Jenkins describes that internal communication while undergoing the shift in the crisis conditions was thoughtfully executed at DAM as she stated, "I think any good crisis communication strategy is set up so that you are dealing directly with multiple departments within an organization,"<sup>42</sup> She continued by reinforcing her point, "It was very important for us to make sure we were constantly communicating with

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<sup>41</sup> Perry, Mary. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 29 Sept. 2014.

<sup>42</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

everybody.”<sup>43</sup> Remembering that the internal staff is the first to hear, see, and repeat anything that happens within the museum can influence best judgment about what is communicated and when.

The communication department and senior staff specifically has an important role to continuously advocate and communicate a positive image and message to the public and stakeholders of the museum. This role has been influenced by the public relations practices set forth by Edward Bernays, known as the “father of public relations.”<sup>44</sup> Bernays created public relations by separating what was once wartime propaganda practices using research, psychology, and sociology to influence his subjects. The difference between propaganda and public relations is that public relations is a two-sided story. Many communication practitioners must be aware that there is a controversial ethical obligation to communicate the truth or communicate only the information that benefits their organization. Aiming somewhere at what Aristotle would call the “golden mean” is a great place to start. Museums can only do so much to measure public influence and do not know enough about how the public makes decisions to understand a breakthrough. Determining a baseline for monitoring success in admission, membership, or news articles can be a great place to start. Museums

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Sheil, Astrid. “PR: Purposeful communication.” Strategic Public Relations. Calif. State Univ. San Bernardino, San Bernardino. 12 Apr. 2011. Lecture.

should be transparent during a crisis, keeping in mind the public have earned a right to know due to their financial investment as taxpayers in play. According to Susan Kearney, the role of a communication practitioner would spearhead the following tasks during a crisis<sup>45</sup>:

- Create a management plan
- Create list of process and materials
- Train a spokesperson
- Stay calm. Be confident.
- Provide external perspective; understand how reporters may be viewing the situation.
- Ensure consistency throughout the crisis
- Facilitate learning by pulling the team together

In order to facilitate conversation about crises in museums is to realize they are a significant area of unstudied impact. Communication departments are necessary entities within a museum or nonprofit that allows consistency of communication and open correspondence with the public. The communication department is necessary for organizing internal material, staff, and talking points as the crisis is resolved. Whether a public relations professional or marketing specialist is handling these responsibilities, the museum representative must be able to timely and effectively communicate to the public and members of the news media.

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<sup>45</sup> Kearney, Susan. "Crisis Communication for Nonprofits." Interview by Kira Tyler. Audio blog post. *NonProfit 911*. Network for Good, 21 Sept. 2014. Web. 25 Sept. 2014.

### **Chapter Three**

#### Publicity, Press, and the Public Relation Professional

*"Who's knowledge are we going to trust in a society where we are doomed to trusting the wisdom of strangers?" –Sheila Jasanoff*

The news media and their persuasive nature have been studied for centuries. Media has come a long way since the first published article. Among the first to publish pamphlets and articles were the likes of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Paine. Into the 1900s only the literate would invest in the purchasing of newspapers as it became freely available. As years passed, the investments would grow and six major corporations took the reigns of publishing.<sup>46</sup> Mass communication mediums soon became a competitive market as for-profit entities popular for story telling and news. Today, the access to multiple media platforms are capable of reaching global proportions in a matter of seconds with examples such as micro-blogging, video blogging, and documentaries.

Throughout this study, the news media will be defined by *The Press* as, "the occupation in which people get paid to write true stories about current events and publish them on a regular basis."<sup>47</sup> The present news media, however, has evolved and is molded to readership interest pieces and are not always true. Understanding the need for public interest news stories and the development of

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<sup>46</sup> Overholser, Geneva, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. *The Press*. New York: Oxford UP, 2005. Print. Accessed 1 Oct. 2014.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

journalism is important to understanding the way the public receives their news and the comparison of what they are hearing from each source.

The media has changed significantly in the past twenty years. The most powerful change *Los Angeles Times* art critic, Christopher Knight noticed was the employment rate. When he began in November 1989, staffing at *The LA Times* was 1,200 people and today falls around 550 employees. Along with the help of digital media, the increase of global readership has forced media professionals to work promptly, effectively, and for a broader audience. Knight reflects that, "it gives me certain pause about the quality of the coverage, since I don't have as much time as I used to have."<sup>48</sup> Brian O'Doherty and Nancy Hanks provide assurance to Knight's statement in their book *Museums in Crisis*, "A final irony is that the legitimate channels of communication for the art world, as indeed for any other public, are getting increasingly untrustworthy at the very moment when everyone believes they are receiving total exposure."<sup>49</sup> The media influence on the public perception of a museum will only be effective if there is an audience. This is the journalist's role to determine whom the audience will be and how to write for that public. "Priority," says former NPR reporter, Bruce Gellerman, is up to

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<sup>48</sup> Knight, Christopher. "Media Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 15 Oct. 2014.

<sup>49</sup> O'Doherty, Brian, and Nancy Hanks. *Museums in Crisis*. New York: G. Braziller, 1972. Print. Accessed 5 Sept. 2014.

“journalistic judgment” to determine who the audience will be and how that audience will be reached.<sup>50</sup> Still, the museum may maintain many news media communication platforms and should justify an effective communication strategy to ensure impact and priority of art stories through each platform. Media platforms have transformed within the past ten years, beginning in 2004 with Social Media platforms. The Internet made news accessible globally and in a moments notice. Headlines have been most successful as “What You See Is What You Get” (WYSIWYG; pronounced whiz-ze-wig) information due to the ease of scrolling content. Once the story has been written, content-filled headlines allow readers to filter assumptions quickly based on WYSIWYG. Most individuals seek to get what they *want* from a story, unable to understand that each media source will have a slightly different story to tell.

According to the data conducted throughout this study, most participants answered between *Sometimes* (62.2%) and *Yes* (35.1%) about conducting further research on a recently read news topic (See *Appendix Figure 11*), assuming participants were skeptical about media coverage. Gellerman assured the audience in a panel discussion about public perception that, “I am not a scientist, but I play one on the radio.” He continued, “What I am is a person who

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<sup>50</sup> Gellerman, Bruce, Allan Brant, James J. McCarthy, and Sheila Jasanoff. “Persuasion in a Climate of Uncertainty.” YouTube. YouTube, 8 Nov. 2010. Web. 11 Nov. 2014



understands the language of science. I am a translator. I am an interpreter. I take what they say, I put it into a context and then tell a story about it."<sup>51</sup> Knight agrees stating, "I think a lot of journalist don't understand how museum's function and what they're for. Certainly what their history is."<sup>52</sup> Confirmation from both Gellerman and Knight assure the study that journalists understand that they do not know everything about the sector of which they report. Knowing that most journalists and media professionals might not understand the context of the museum as an organization, museum professionals should be prepared to give a brief introduction, not as publicity, but as public knowledge.

Each media source is ultimately attempting to make a profit. Selling a story is selling a paper; acquiring its own publicity throughout the museum news cycle. Understanding which media sources are covering a museum crisis is crucial to understanding the affect it may have on the public. Each media source may have a unique understanding of the priority, even though objectivity is a generalized norm for journalists. Gellerman agrees that there are perspectives of the journalists as well. He stated, "What I'm looking for in a story are patterns."<sup>53</sup> He continued to explain that a story might highlight multiple priorities, however he could still

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<sup>51</sup> Gellerman, Bruce, Allan Brant, James J. McCarthy, and Sheila Jasanoff. "Persuasion in a Climate of Uncertainty." YouTube. YouTube, 8 Nov. 2010. Web. 11 Nov. 2014.

<sup>52</sup> Knight, Christopher. "Media Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 15 Oct. 2014.

<sup>53</sup> Gellerman, Bruce, Allan Brant, James J. McCarthy, and Sheila Jasanoff. "Persuasion in a Climate of Uncertainty." YouTube. YouTube, 8 Nov. 2010. Web. 11 Nov. 2014.

sway the story's focus.<sup>54</sup> It is the museum professional's job to assure this does not happen. Priority should be placed on solving the crisis and moving toward recovery.

As stated earlier, headlines play a fast factor in making assumptions about the crisis and determining readership. Knight states, "I proceed from an assumptions that when someone sees my bio line and it says 'Times Art Critic', the vast majority of people stop reading, so I'm writing for people who want to read about art." He continued, "But my job is to invite them in and if someone stumbles into it, I do want to write in an engaging way, and once someone starts reading my column my primary job is to get them to read all the way through to the end."<sup>55</sup> Both Gellerman and Knight understand that as journalists they dictate readership and information the public receives. These writers understand that it is not their job to create a balanced story or to increase art museum attendance, but to deliver a message the public can relate to their daily lives as citizens and community members. This is often why art museum articles can be communicated through a multitude of sections within a media source.

## **MUSEUM PROFESSIONAL**

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<sup>54</sup> Gellerman, Bruce, Allan Brant, James J. McCarthy, and Sheila Jasanoff. "Persuasion in a Climate of Uncertainty." YouTube. YouTube, 8 Nov. 2010. Web. 11 Nov. 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Knight, Christopher. "Media Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 15 Oct. 2014.

According to Knight, working with museum professionals is a great hardship, as they are likely unprepared for a crisis. "It's very, very difficult to find very really great museum press people. They tend to be the Bane of one's existence," said Knight. When asked about main issues working with museum representatives, Knight responded, "probably partially because I'm involved in journalism and in the digital world, things need to be done extremely quickly. Museum press offices tend not to respond quickly."<sup>56</sup> He continued with an example, "There was one... we needed just basic factual material you know, public record material from the museum. And literally, I could call their press office and no one would answer the phone. I would leave messages—urgent messages and I wouldn't get a call back for two or three days. And it's because they were freaking out."<sup>57</sup> These instances are continuously happening all over the place, not just in Los Angeles. Museum public relations professionals are not at fault for the crisis, but at fault for any miscommunication or confusion that results in the wake of the crisis. When museum communicators are able to communicate the museum's expertise and are prepped to cover all angles of a crisis with immediate and effective communication, there can hardly be a miscommunication of objectives and priorities. The museum professional should be prepared to create

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<sup>56</sup> Knight, Christopher. "Media Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 15 Oct. 2014.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

transparency about the museum. Enabling the ease of media and museum collaboration during neutral museum operation conditions can prevent confusion when changes of the museum representative role happens in the event of a crisis. Collaboration with the media professional in the “calm time” prior to a crisis benefits each party to establish trust and enables delivering a clear message effective for both parties.<sup>58</sup> One-sided crisis communication in the museum should be prevented. In order to know what information to address to the public, the museum spokesperson and crisis management team must have a clear understanding and acceptance of what will and could be written about the museum once the story is in the news cycle.

### **DEFINING THE IDEAL STORY**

Exceling at the perfect story can be quite an expectation. In *Museum Public Relations* by Donald Adams, he states, “Most museums experience an occasional media story that is inaccurate and unfair.”<sup>59</sup> Effective news stories are considerably hard to define and depend on the crisis at hand and each party’s perspective. The museum crisis team should outline questions and articles they intend to see throughout the crisis and should address those while formatting press releases and press conferences. Be efficient, timely, and stick to the storyline developed by

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<sup>58</sup> Perry, Mary. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 29 Sept. 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Adams, G. Donald. *Museum Public Relations*. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1983. Print. Accessed 25 Sept. 2014.

the crisis management team. Be prepared for released information to not be used by the press, who might intend to tell a more compelling story. Knight mentioned that he does not use press releases due to the "fluff" information often decorating the museum and exhibitions as "the greatest thing since sliced bread."<sup>60</sup> Although he does not use them, he did mention they are purposeful and provide details to visitors not familiar with the museum.<sup>61</sup> The news media, on the other hand works in favor of the public and intend to present news that would be in the best interest of the public.

After the initial and the most crucial news cycle is when public opinion will form and determine whether the news cycle continues with the story. As previously stated, many participants throughout this study were interested in articles regarding art museums and often conduct further research after reading the news from one media source. Knight offers his suggestion, "I think most museum press offices are less interested in press as they are with publicity."<sup>62</sup> Reaffirming this proclamation Adams, "Most press releases are written to please an employer rather than to meet the media's needs."<sup>63</sup> This confirms the collaboration and communication between media and museum professionals has

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<sup>60</sup> Knight, Christopher. "Media Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 15 Oct. 2014.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Adams, G. Donald. *Museum Public Relations*. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1983. Print. Accessed 25 Sept. 2014.

been suffering for some time. This is where having a monitoring system or baseline for measuring impact would be beneficial to determining success. Adams warns, "Listen very carefully to questions. In many cases it will be obvious that the reporter has not been briefed on the story, and clarification will be necessary."<sup>64</sup> To avoid confusion for both parties, be clear in messaging. During a crisis, the information received by the media may be interpreted and written in different ways for a multitude of audiences.

Success could be monitored and defined as the attention received from news stories. Museums tend to benefit from this crisis attention because it will often lead to increased visitor-ship. Public relations specialist Mary Perry believes this could very well be true for the museums attractiveness. She states, "I think that the drama that took place affects attendance. I think that could be true for any crises, when something happens people want to see where it happens."<sup>65</sup>

To determine an effective story or article, a museum professional must understand the purpose for delivering a message. Defining whether the crisis communication strategy will inform or persuade readers is the difference between press and publicity, respectively. During a crisis, museum professionals should understand the ultimate goal is to inform then reassure the public in the image

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<sup>64</sup> Adams, G. Donald. *Museum Public Relations*. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1983. Print. Accessed 25 Sept. 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Perry, Mary. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 29 Sept. 2014.

and reputation of the institution. In the 1998 version of *Museum Marketing and Strategy*, authors Neil G. Kotler and Philip Kotler define image as “the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that people have of an entity.”<sup>66</sup> This belief system is a loyalty based on impressions. There is difficulty in assessing the prior beliefs or experiences that one might have before entering or viewing a museum. These experiences would individually and eventually impact a visitor’s, or prospective visitor perception of the institution.

Delaware Art Museum Manager of Marketing and PR, Jessica Jenkins was presented with the challenge to develop a public relations strategy for maintaining their crisis. “So how do we create campaigns or how do we get our messaging out there and let people know what were doing now and why we’re still important and what our impact is in our community?”<sup>67</sup> Her role dramatically shifted and the usual publicity needed to be converted to crisis control and press coverage, unusual to the museum’s practices.

The most effective media collaborator this study recognized through research was the Barnes Foundation. The Barnes Foundation was in and out of the news cycle for multiple years, battling to move and conserve the privately

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<sup>66</sup> Kotler, Neil G. & Philip Kotler. *Museum Marketing and Strategy: Designing Missions, Building Audiences, Generating Revenue and Resources*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998. Print. p.135. Accessed July 17, 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

preserved collection of Albert Barnes. The Barnes Foundation was hit hard in early 2009 when the first source of publicity was, ironically, a documentary based on the scrutiny of its move from Merion, PA to the Philadelphia parkway.<sup>68</sup> The documentary proved to gain global attention for The Barnes Foundation and managed to raise membership and operating costs to move.<sup>69</sup> Today, The Barnes Foundation presents the positive press coverage on their website, enabling transparency of the institution and acknowledging success since the crisis. The Barnes was a case in which the crisis communication was communicated efficiently by museum professionals and enabled a smooth transition with public trust and support. The team at The Barnes was able to maintain coverage through multiple stages of their crisis and provide supportive evidence to the public.

Another example of this media transparency has been proven successful at the Rose Art Museum in Massachusetts. The Rose Art Museum is an art museum affiliated with Brandeis University and was under scrutiny for the potential closure and sale of the collection in 2009. As a museum immediately impacted by the financial recession, the stakes were clear: the school was about education, not preserving art. The museum did not have much of an image on campus, as no

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<sup>68</sup> *The Art of the Steal*. Dir. Don Argott. Perf. Julian Bond, David D'Arcy and Richard Feigen. 9.14 Pictures, 2009. Netflix.

<sup>69</sup> Mills, Mark. "The Barnes Foundation's Visitor Experience." *Issues in Museums: Visitor Experiences*. United States, Philadelphia. 15 Mar. 2014. Lecture.



classes had been held in the building.<sup>70</sup> Similarly to the Barnes, the Rose Museum has developed a webpage dedicated to the news about their museum. The team has since been able to use media coverage as a source for timely and transparent communication.

Using the media as a tool for crisis communication can be beneficial to both the museum and media professional. The media has an obligation to report on news that might interest the public. Engaging early and effectively will help to ensure a smooth transition into a crisis when dealing with journalists and the news media. This way, the museum can benefit from a news story and be viewed with integrity through facts. Unfortunately this study does not interpret what psychology knows about human behavior to understand persuasion and trust. The quote used at the beginning of this chapter best summarizes that society will rely on the “wisdom of strangers”, but it is yet to be known why the public trusts and whom they may trust. Throughout the next chapter, a story analysis of multiple news articles was interpreted for three art museums. These stories were analyzed to defend whether the media does have influence of public perception in art museum crises.

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<sup>70</sup> Shea, Andrea. "After Controversy, Brandeis Brings Back The Rose Art Museum." *After Controversy Brandeis Brings Back The Rose Art Museum* RSS 20. 90.9wbur, NPR, and Boston University, 28 Oct. 2011. Web. 15 Dec. 2014.

## Chapter Four

### Presentation of Data

The news media's role with the museum includes serving as a priority to deliver news to the public while working in collaboration with museum professionals. Feature stories enable the media professional to research a crisis event with more detail and extended access from the museum to provide facts on a particular topic of interest. Museum professionals may also offer a press campaign, in which the museum professional would contact the news media and pitch upcoming exhibitions, re-openings, or significant institutional news. This study consists of raw data of primary interviews, online surveys, and story content analysis beginning January 2014 until October 2014.

### **Story Content Analysis**

To synthesize the model of media storytelling with the model of the museum public relation professional, this study uses story content analysis of media coverage from three art museums. Thirty articles were used to determine the media portrayal of art museums during a crisis. The analysis will provide context for story tone, language, photo diversity, geographic marketed audience, and story credibility by examining ten articles for each case study (DIA, DAM, and the Corcoran). Analyzing the tone of the writer, the language, and audience it reaches is crucial to determining the effects each medium is

portraying to the public. The coding and story content analysis form can be found in Appendix Figures 1 and 2.

### **Museum Perceptions Survey**

An original survey instrument was developed after thorough investigation of hypothesis to test art museum perceptions. A pilot test was in the field for a period of one week and refined to use less jargon and meet thesis goals. Minor changes were made to Questions regarding branding, as the term caused confusion during the pilot-testing phase. The final survey was deployed for four weeks beginning August 14, 2014 through September 12, 2014.

The survey included ten questions targeting respondents' perception of art museum coverage in the news. This survey was conducted through an online database, SurveyMonkey.com. The participants were advised that participation was voluntary and would be used to fulfill requirements for thesis completion.<sup>71</sup>

### **Participants**

The research aimed to collect 60 online surveys, but ultimately the sample size was 37 total responses. The majority of participants were female (Q.10; 80.6%) and range between 21 and 29 years of age. Blogs and micro-blogs were used to reach the participants and included the Survey Monkey link.

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<sup>71</sup> Consent form for survey can be found in Appendix Figure 3.

Due to the researcher's demographics, the results may be skewed to a younger demographic audience.

## **Data**

### Visitor Demographics

#### ***In what ZIP code is your home located? (Q.8) n=37***

Intentions were to learn about the location of participants, as they may lead to an understanding about media coverage of the arts. The top two most common participants were located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (13.4%) and La Quinta, California (13.4%). This information was unable to provide data to highly regarded crisis media coverage; instead this information resulted in skewed data by limiting the geographic range of the study. Therefore, this study does not have a strong representation to art museum participants from across the United States.

#### ***Which category below includes your age? (Q.9) n=37***

Seventy percent of survey participants were in the 21 to 29-age category with the age range 30-39 as the second common response (13.5%). Only one participant was designated at 60 or older (2.7%). Millennials (ages 21 to 29) dominate a significant presence in the survey, which highlight findings from

Question 7 that support where readers receive their news: social media and online news sources.

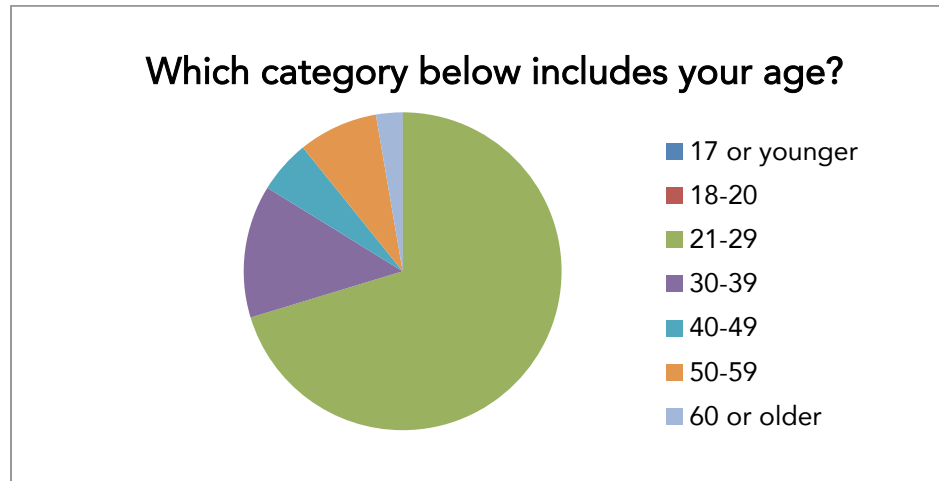


Figure 1

### Media

#### ***Where do you currently receive the news? (Q.7) n=37***

The leading news preferences were respectively Social Media (89.2%), Online News Source (73%), Word of Mouth (56.8%), Newspaper (54.1%), Television (51.4%), Magazine (29.7%) and Radio (29.7%). This information was necessary to assess the audience in determining a trend in news media platforms. There was enough data to support social media and online news were the favored method of gathering information. This is relevant for museums to understand their best chance of forming a communication channel with their audience.

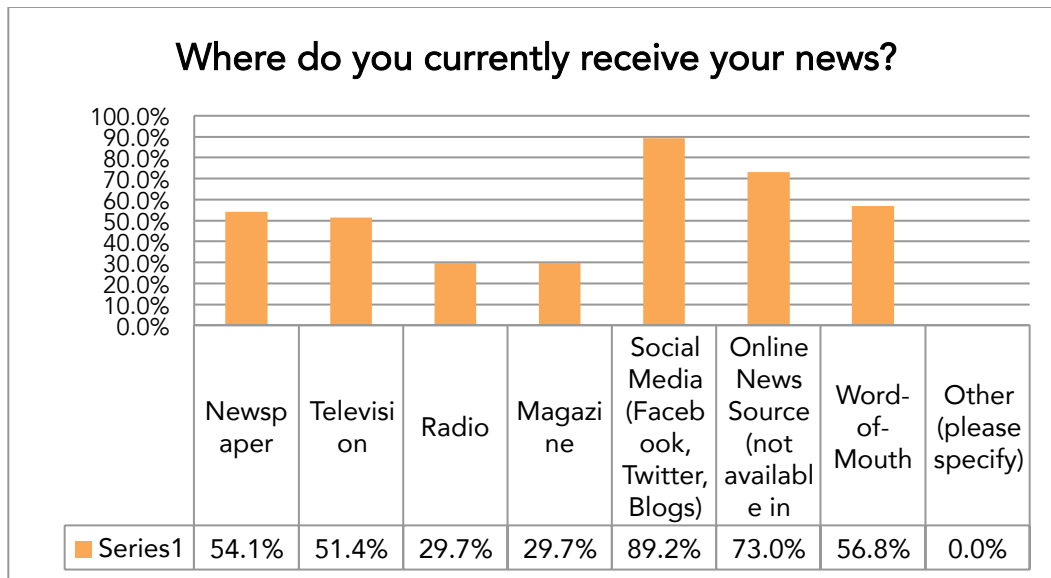


Figure 2

***After reading a news article, do you often conduct further research on that topic? (Q.5) n=37***

This question was asked to get a better understanding of the participant's comprehension of news. *Sometimes* (62.2%) and *Yes* (35.1%) were the top choices of respondents while *No* (2.7%) was an uncommon answer. Due to an array of information available about a museum in times of crisis, this question was relevant to determine active participation in researching the topic for common talking points. Storytelling through talking points can benefit the museum by creating a uniform message to the public. Museums must understand that misconceptions can occur with misread, misused, and miscommunicated information with press releases and media conferences. This

is important especially for word-of-mouth news sources where facts can slowly be fabricated throughout the crisis.

***Have news articles affected or influenced your opinion to visit an art museum? (Q.4) n=37***

This question was used to understand the interpreter of news article content. While plenty of participants answered Yes (40.5%), the majority of responses were No (59.5%) to have been influenced by an article. Findings from this question were intended to engage participants to recall museum stories in the news that may have influenced their visitation to art museums. These findings were close enough to recommend the question be done with a larger audience to determine if there might be a closer margin of error.

***How interested are you in following news reports or articles about art museums in The United States? (Q.6) n=37***

Participants were asked this question to better understand their likelihood of reading art museum news. This would help to determine likely participants or readership of museum news. *Sometimes Interested* (56.8%) was the favored and likely answer. *Very Interested* (32.4%) fell second, while *Never Interested* (10.8%) did not stray far off. This question is very important and should be considered by all art museums throughout the country. If replicating the study, "Sometimes" should be followed by a description of what would make readers follow.

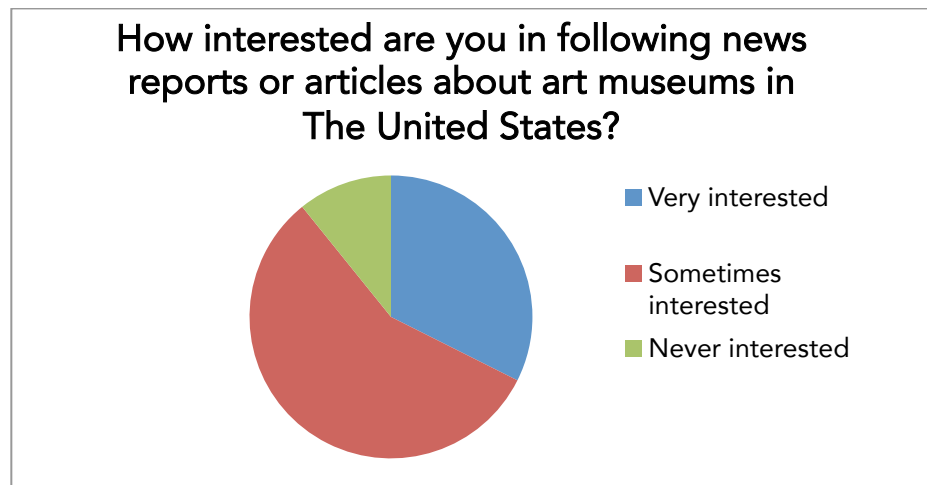


Figure 3

### Art Museums

#### ***Have you been to an art museum in The United States? (Q.1) n=37***

The majority of participants answered that they have been to an art museum in the United States (94.6%). Understanding the relationship the reader has with an art museum is crucial to understanding the potentially impacted public. Since it was determined that the majority of these participants have visited an art museum, the study could also highlight an understanding of the museum's relationship with the national community.

#### ***If yes, how often did you visit a U.S. art museum within the past year, August 2013-2014? (Q.2) n=35***

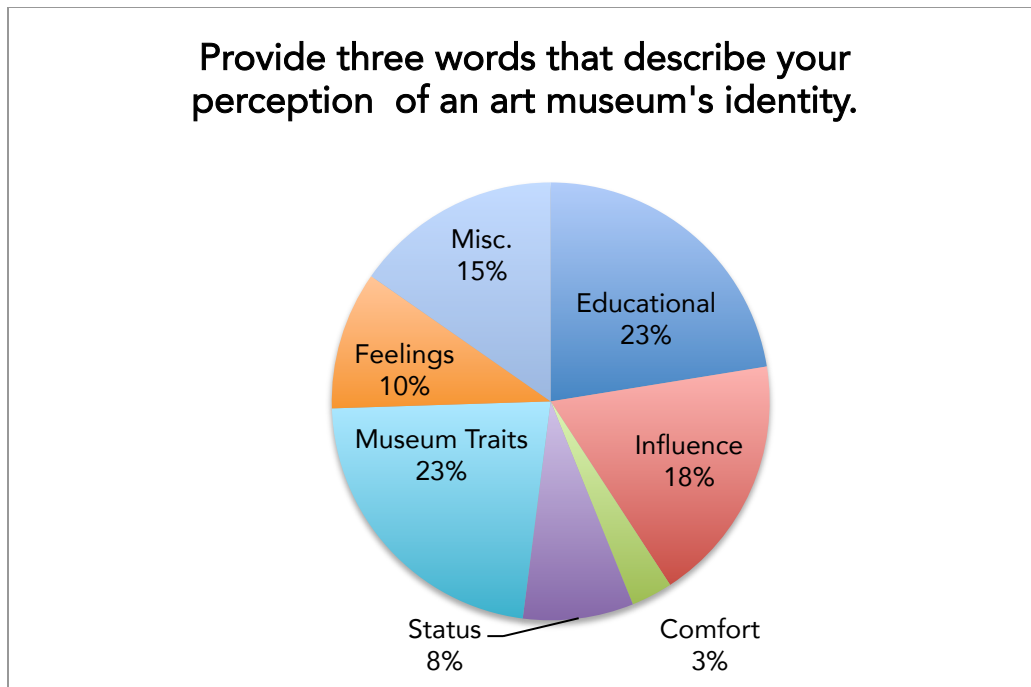
The responses between visiting the museum once (31.4%) and visiting 2-3 times a year (31.4%) were determined evenly visited. Still, there was a significant



amount of visitors between 4-6 times (25.7%) given the duration. Only one participant visited more than ten times (2.9%) within the past year. Two respondents (9.09%) stated they did not attend an art museum within the year.

***Provide three words that describe your perception of an art museum's identity. (Q.3) n=37***

This question was used to categorize general perceptions of an art museum's image or identity. This could help define a general perception of the art museum as portrayed by the media. It is important to consider that these perceptions are also influenced by previous experiences and outside influences that are uncontrolled (i.e. economy and location.) The individual words were categorized into six main description houses: Educational, Influence, Feelings, Status, Museum Traits, and Comfort. A miscellaneous section was created as feelings or descriptions that were unlike any other answers received or did not answer the question correctly. Examples of this category include "artist", "Dynamic", "Providing context for art", and "Encompassing."



**Figure 4**

The coding for this response can be found in *Appendix Figure 9*.

### Story Content Analysis

The Story Content Analysis throughout this study has consisted of three art museums, specifically cases that fell into the 2014 news cycle. The art museums include Detroit Institute of Arts, Delaware Art Museum and Corcoran Gallery of Art. A content analysis form was constructed with assistance from *Analyzing Newspaper Content: A How-To Guide* to establish a consistent coding format.<sup>72</sup> This analysis was used to illustrate the tone and influence that

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<sup>72</sup> Linch, Stacy, and Limor Peer, Ph.D. *Analyzing Newspaper Content: A How-to Guide*. Illinois: Readership Institute at Northwestern University, 2002. PDF.

media sources could have for a museum crisis. The story analysis form can be found in Appendix Figure 1.

Qualitative coding was used throughout the methodology process to analyze the news story in question. *Treatment* determines how the news article was supplied to the reader. The Treatment may be *General News*, *Commentary*, *Feature*, or *Other*. *Origin* is a categorization of who supplied the information to the news article. The Origin may refer to *Staff*, *Reader*, or *News/Media Source*. The full format of the Story Content Analysis Coding can be found in Appendix Figure 2.

## CASE STUDIES

### DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ART

After careful analysis of articles concerning the Detroit Institute of Arts, the data summarized articles from seven different media sources including top findings from the *Detroit Free Press* and *The New York Times*. In deeper analysis, *Treatment* of these articles was sufficient to determine if the articles were bias or misrepresented in any form. The DIA has been vocal at least once every two month in providing an update on the museum and negotiation to work toward a solution for safeguarding the collection. The DIA released the following in January of 2014 to remain present in the crisis: "The DIA has been working actively with U.S. Chief District Judge Gerald Rosen and attorney

Eugene Driker, the appointed mediators in Detroit's bankruptcy, to ensure the success of a fundraising effort that will ultimately provide protection for the DIA art collection and much-needed financial assistance for the City."<sup>73</sup> The proposed Grand Bargain will separate the institution from the city so the institution may operate in the nonprofit sector.

In his September 2013 article Detroit Free Press writer Mark Stryker states, "Anyone who thinks that art and politics inhabit separate spheres within civic life need only explore the roller-coaster history of the Detroit Institute of Arts."<sup>74</sup> Stryker has been a significant journalist since the beginning of the crisis. He has continuously updated readers with feature and opinion stories. It is possible he worked closely with the DIA to produce these stories. The recent agreement concerning the settlement and Grand Bargain has kept the DIA in the news cycle.<sup>75</sup> In Fall 2014, the Grand Bargain was passed and preparation for the adopted resolution and separation of the institution is underway and proceeding to make headlines.

The DIA articles *Geographic Focus* was of much concern since this crisis concerned the entire city of Detroit and highlighted collections that were

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<sup>73</sup>"Detroit Institute of Arts Museum." *Detroit Institute of Arts Museum*. Detroit Institute of Arts, 13 Jan. 2014. Web. 15 Apr. 2014.

<sup>74</sup> Stryker, Mark. Detroit Free Press. September 8, 2013. Web. Accessed 10 Jan. 2014.

<sup>75</sup> Lambert, Lisa. "Detroit Wins Court Approval for Plan to Exit Bankruptcy." Yahoo! News. Yahoo!, 07 Nov. 2014. Web. 11 Nov. 2014.

municipally owned. This study sufficiently supports the majority of articles that were reported from a *State/Regional* or *Local* location.

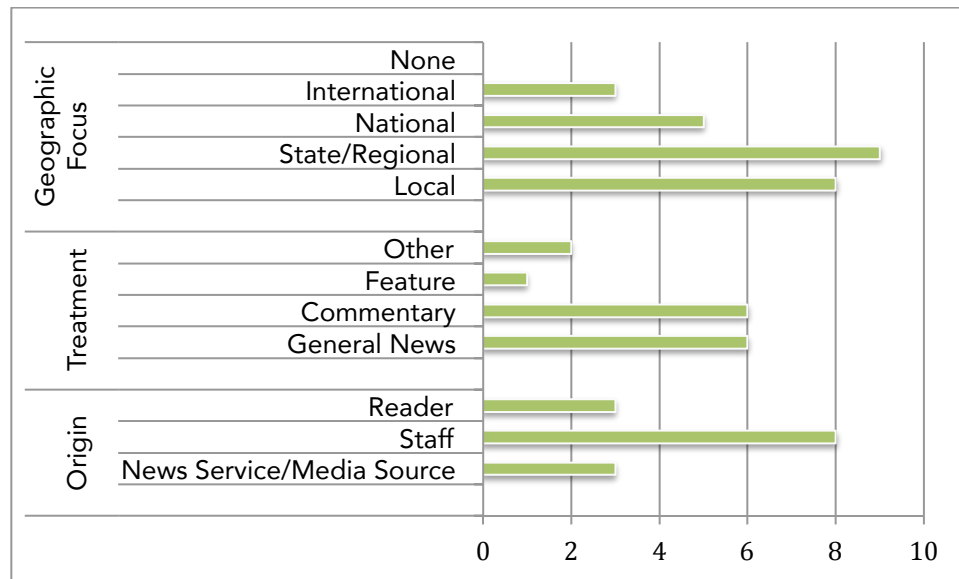
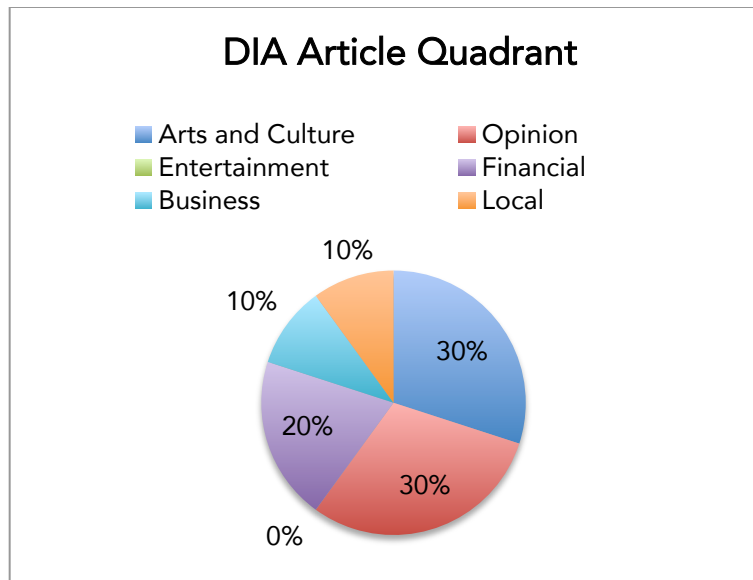
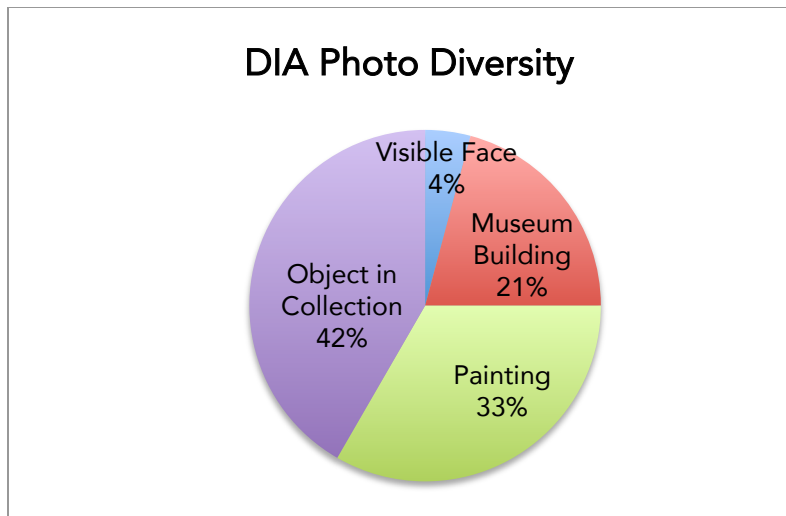


Figure 5

Although none of the collected articles made a front-page story, the location of the story within the media source was of considerable significance. The study divided the media source into six quadrants, Arts and Culture, Opinion, Entertainment, Financial, Business, and Local, and determined the theme of the article based on its location in the media source. The majority of crisis stories were found in Arts and Culture (30%) and Opinion (30%) with Financial (20%) articles following.

**Figure 6**

Within the DIA crisis articles, an average of 1.4 photographs were used, specifically concerning objects from the collection (42%). This was sensible as the crisis concerned losing objects that were acquired by the city. Article topics were distributed fairly sparingly in each quadrant. Entertainment was the only news story quadrant that did not mention the DIA as entertainment may not have affected or was not as important as a public need of citizens in Detroit.

**Figure 7**

Language and tone throughout the articles was determined using a list of negative words from Enchanted Learning's Negative Words List and best judgment.<sup>76</sup> Articles were coded with B for Blame, 1 for Destruction, h for Hope, D for Despair, and A for Apology. Throughout the Detroit Institute of Arts crisis articles, spanned across one year of the crisis, the most common language was that of Despair. Following despair, blame was the second found *Language* interpretation for storytelling. Although these were the leading language usages, altogether this generated an average of a neutral tone throughout the storytelling process.

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<sup>76</sup> "Negative Vocabulary Word List - EnchantedLearning.com." Negative Vocabulary Word List - EnchantedLearning.com. Enchanted Learning, n.d. Web. 10 Apr. 2014.

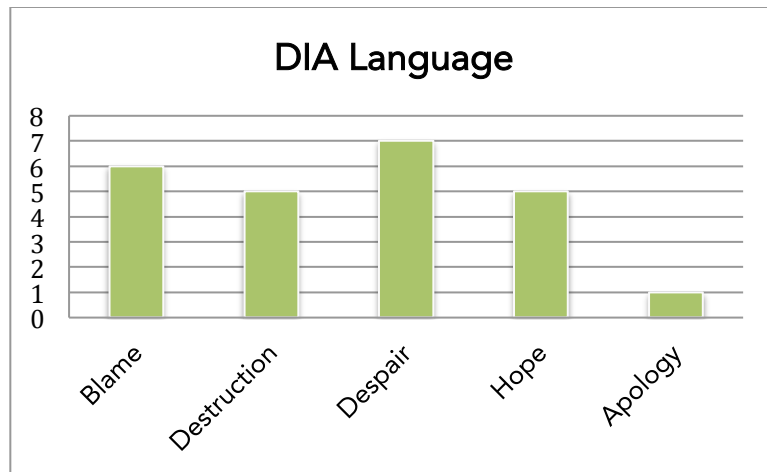


Figure 8

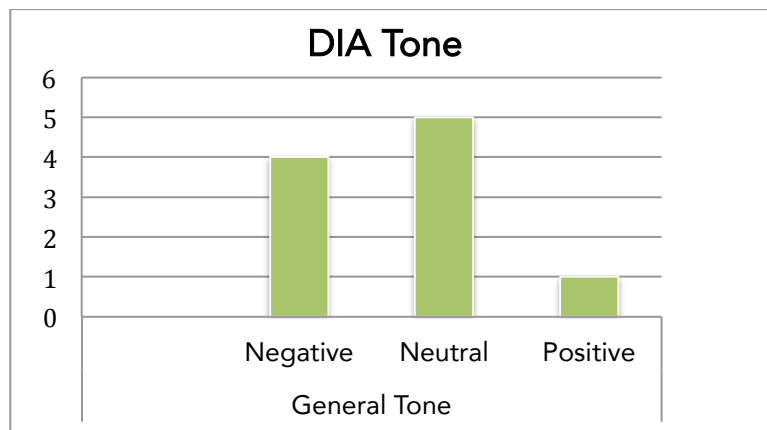


Figure 9

The most significant finding throughout the Detroit Institute of Art case study was the spread of quadrants in which the articles were found. The museum is faced with a unique situation in which their operations must collaborate with the city of Detroit. This involvement requires that politics and local financial issues be addressed to the citizens with priority and in a transparent manner. Museum communication officials would have trouble



addressing the crisis and need of attending to their collection while there are more logical concerns to the average citizen including basic human needs.

#### DELAWARE ART MUSEUM

Analysis of crisis articles concerning the Delaware Art Museum came from nine different media sources and determined to be all online sources, highlights include stories from *The New York Times* and one feature video from *NewsWorks.org*. The majority of articles were determined to be Arts and Culture topics with a few Opinion pieces. A small 30 percent of these articles were persuasive Go & Do articles with an average of 1.6 photographs per article. Photo diversity was split between Object in Collection and Painting, which in this case fall into the same category.

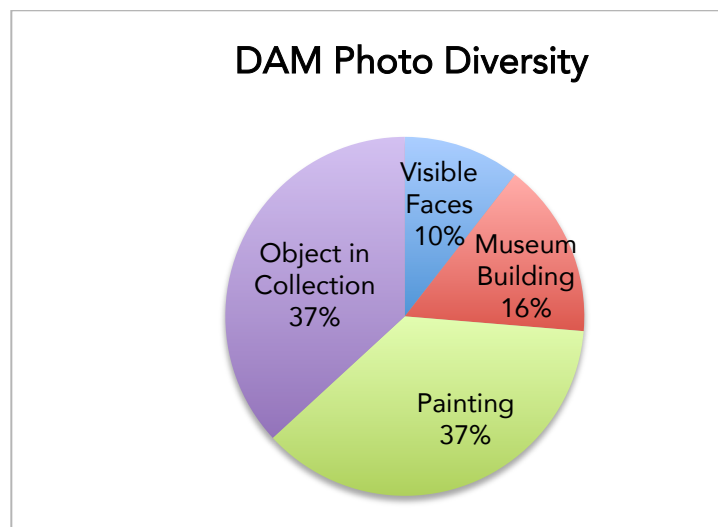
The Delaware Museum of Art is currently undergoing a case to repay debt and replenish endowment. According to *USA Today*, the museum released a statement in March 2014 that they plan to sell as many as four works of art for a value of \$30 million.<sup>77</sup> Museum CEO Mike Miller noted that this was a “last resort” option to avoid closing the museum. He also noted that this would notoriously affect the museum for years to come. “After losing its credit guarantee from Wells Fargo bank, the museum was faced with having to repay

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<sup>77</sup> News Journal, Margie Fishman Wilmington (Del.). “Delaware Art Museum to Auction off Treasures.” *USA Today*. Gannett, 27 Mar. 2014. Web. 2014. Web. 03 2014.

by October the full \$19.8 million remaining on the bond, which would have nearly liquidated the museum's reserve fund"<sup>78</sup> The author continued by offering information about the extreme nature of a sale such as this.

Museums regularly sell pieces in their collections to fund future acquisitions, a process known as 'deaccessioning.' The Delaware Museum has sold six works in the past decade through this practice. But selling works to fund operating expenses or capital improvements is against AAMD and AAM guidelines, Rub said. It also contradicts the Delaware museum's collection policies.<sup>79</sup>



**Figure 10**

Using photographs of the objects throughout the articles supports the storyline in which Delaware made public: they were to sell objects from the collection. It has been taken into consideration that many objects and paintings

<sup>78</sup> News Journal, Margie Fishman Wilmington (Del.). "Delaware Art Museum to Auction off Treasures." USA Today. Gannett, 27 Mar. 2014. Web. 2014. Web. 03 2014.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

that appeared were not the ones to be sold. This may have been part of the publicity tactics to highlight what the museum still included, instead of focusing on the lost objects.

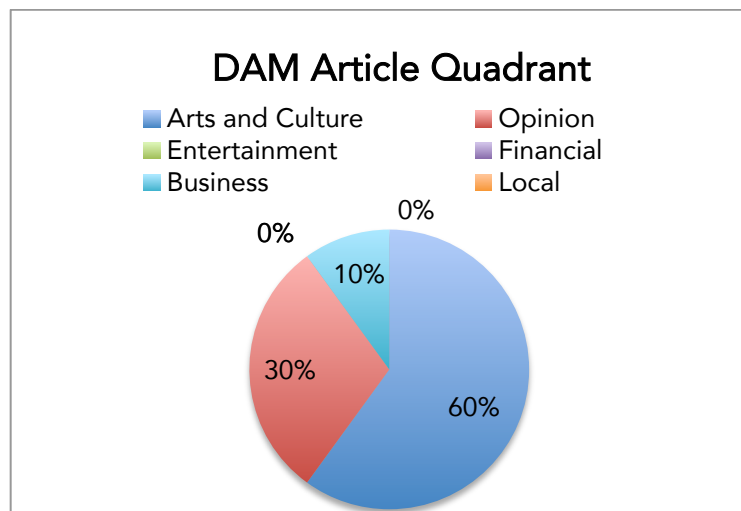


Figure 11

The Delaware Art Museum was surprisingly thrown into the national news cycle when officials announced their museum would sell up to four works of art to pay off bond debt. The museum is a midsize community museum dedicated to the Wilmington region in Delaware and this type of media attention was surprising for the small community. Due to the museum location and size, their media coverage was mainly based in Opinion and Arts and Culture. After they were publicly sanctioned by AAM, a ripple effect of arts and culture articles streamed through national, regional, and local news. National papers such as *The New York Times* and *USA Today* were most apparent in coverage with State

and Regional papers following. *The News Journal* was influential in generating both commentary and general news about the coverage.

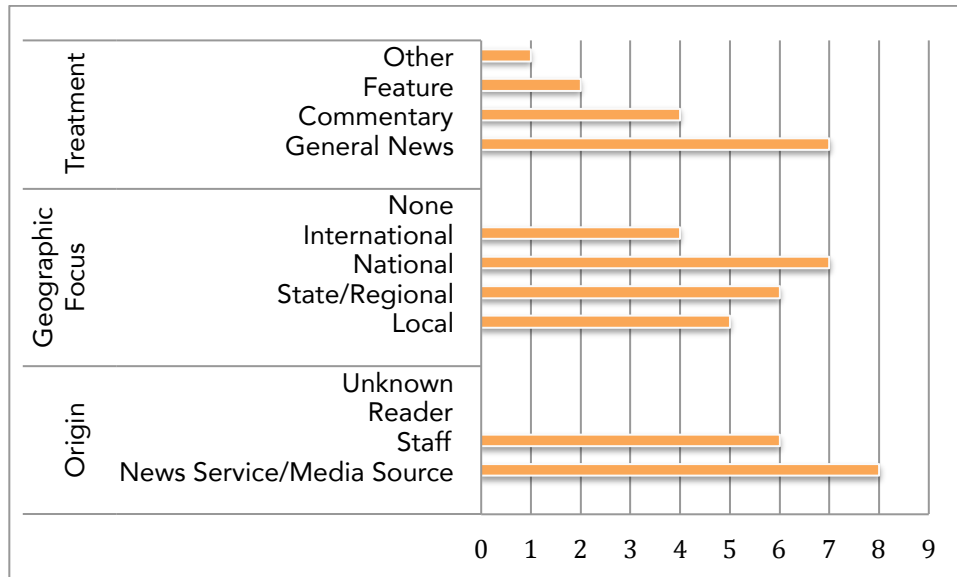


Figure 12

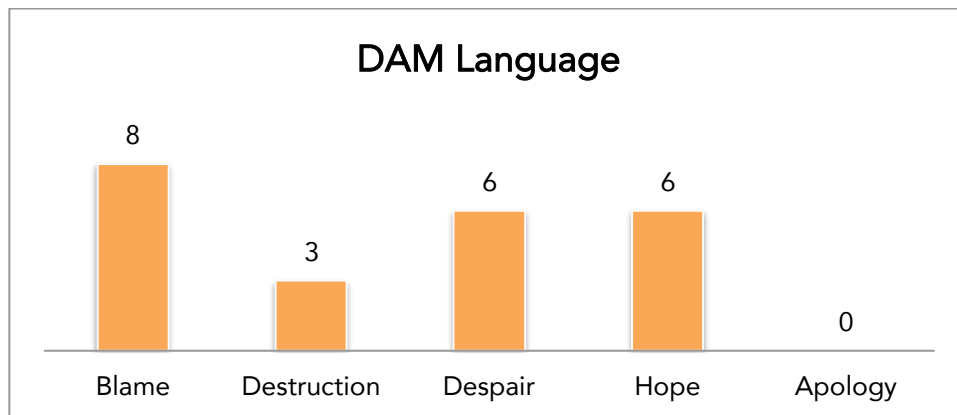
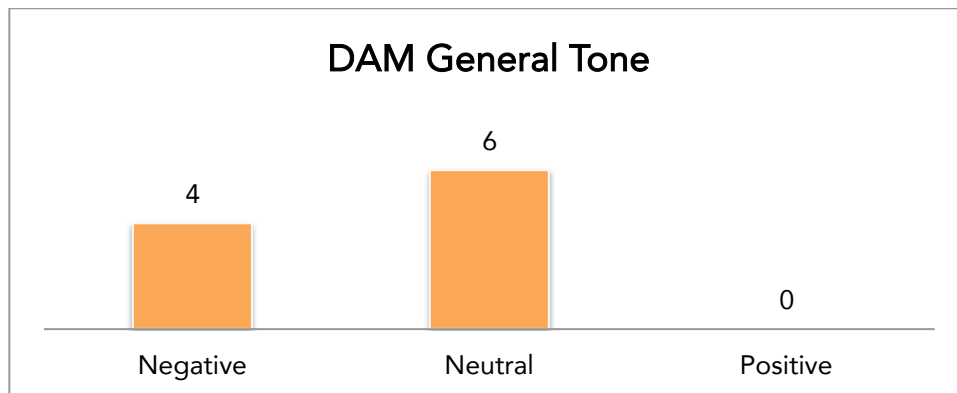


Figure 13

The language used throughout these articles surprisingly initiated a lot of blame to the Delaware Art Museum. Although this can be attributed to the Arts and Culture media coverage perspectives which would not condone the sale of art for general operating costs. Surprisingly, there was much hope found

throughout these articles that DAM would succeed in continuing their mission to provide art to the community of Wilmington. This communication was evidently a consistent talking point, as it was reassured by the Manager of Communication, Jessica Jenkins. "Our mission and goals as an organization are to be here for the community. Despite this current situation we are still here and continue to be a cultural beacon and educational resource for the city."<sup>80</sup> Her audience agrees, "Now that this information has come out that we were struggling financially, it's kind of woken a lot of people up to realize, wow this is in my backyard I need to be here to support it- I want it to still exist."<sup>81</sup> This is the exact tone we hear from the local DAM articles.



**Figure 14**

The public relations professional in this case, handled the crisis management team and communications thoroughly and effectively. The most

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<sup>80</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

effective method was the consistency in message. This helped to drive more general news coverage, announcing only what the museum wanted to say and keeping the story at regional level.

#### CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART

The Corcoran Gallery is a school and museum that, for years, has battled financial woes. It was not until early 2014 an announcement was made that the financial stability of the institution could not proceed any longer without dire consequences to their institutional ethics and museum standards and called for collaboration with George Washington University.

The articles were collected from six different news sources, mostly national coverage such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Article coverage of the Corcoran Gallery of Art was mainly arts and culture based, but expanded into both local issues and financial as the Corcoran was not only closing, but laying off professors of the associated school. The coverage of the story stayed local, due to its large cultural history in Washington D.C. and was the main topic of general news and feature stories based in arts and culture in the area.

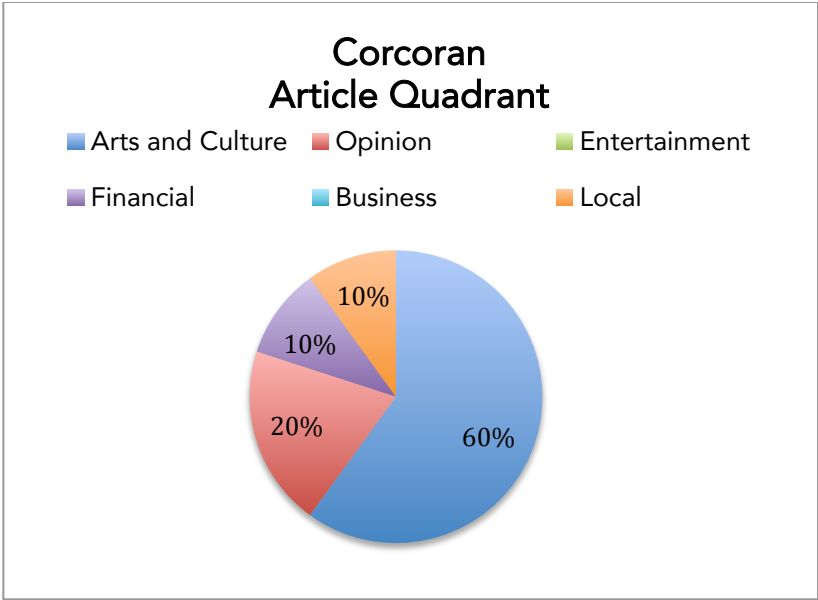


Figure 15

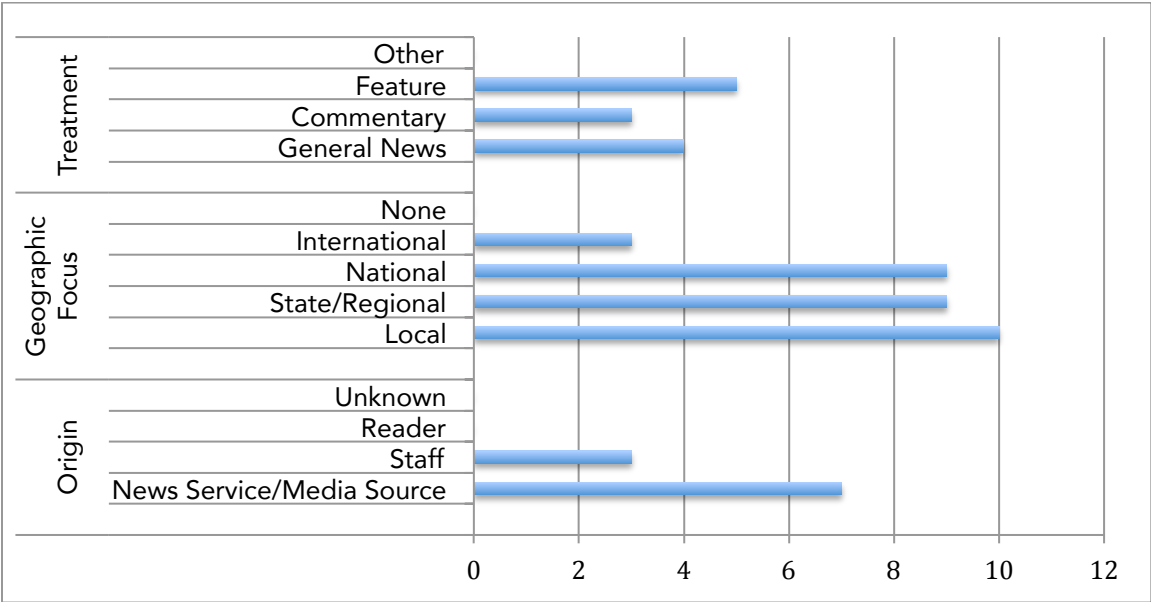


Figure 16

The building played a huge role as their main source of identity, as the photographs seemed to portray the museum building more than any other

topic. There is an average of 3.5 photographs located within the Corcoran articles that were mainly concerning the historic building. This was sufficiently followed by both the *Object in the Collection* and *Faces*, which was associated with those previously employed by the institution. This relevantly tied the issues concerning what would happen to the collection along with jobs lost between both the museum and the associated school.



Figure 17

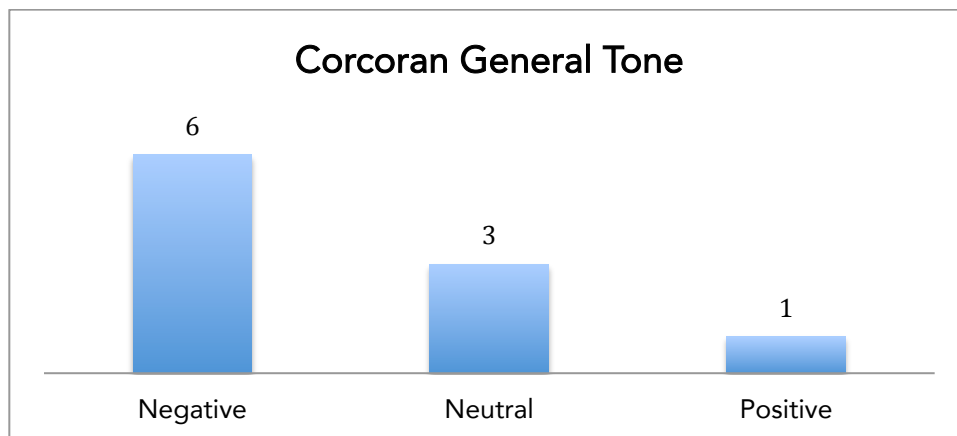
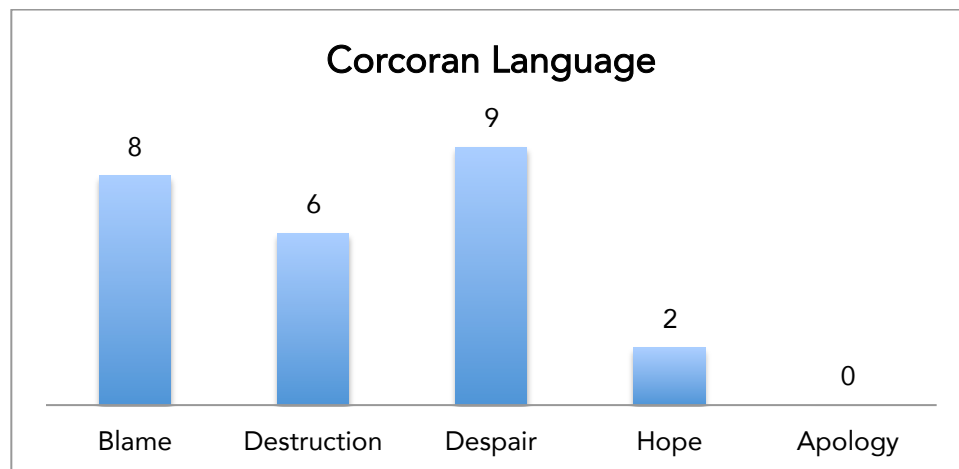


Figure 18



The general tone when reading articles concerning the Corcoran crisis were mainly negative. This was the result of cultural agendas clashing with the public needs. Closing the building resulted in a loss of many jobs and in one article there was a public funeral observed for the loss of the institution.<sup>82</sup> The tone in the majority of the stories concentrated the language on Despair and Blame with little reference to Hope for the institution.



**Figure 19**

Today, the Corcoran Gallery of Art has dissolved. It is now included as a collection of the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. where only the finest objects from the collection will exist. The school is now associated with The George Washington University and continues to serve those interested in Arts and Design.

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<sup>82</sup> Rubio, Lorraine. "Fake Funeral for Corcoran Gallery." Artnet News. ArtNet Worldwide Corporation, 30 Sept. 2014. Web. 1 Oct. 2014.

### **Discussion and Implications for Further Study**

The intention of these case studies was to inform the museum professional that there is a variation of content and interpretation about art museums by the media. This collection of articles allows museum professionals to view the articles as impact of what the reader will experience throughout the crisis. Often museum professionals will see and address one article at a time, but there is a mass amount of information entering the news cycle every moment and the reader experiences the crisis through many channels, writers, and viewpoints. The collection of articles emphasizes the need for a cohesive and consistent message from the art museum. Changes will inevitably come, but standing behind the initial message to the public is a sure sign of keeping credibility and public trust.

This study could be improved by having participants read the case study articles after the researcher has completed the story content analysis. Following the article reading, participants would be given a questionnaire to establish support of the researcher's analysis. This would provide support for the content analysis of whether the articles are positive or negative coverage.

One factor that was overlooked was habits of trust. It is important to consider how the public defines a credible source. A deeper study of psychological and sociological theories could have been used to understand

these trust habits. A question about the public's trusting habits could have been entered into the survey to determine if there are correlations to news source and impact. This would help in establishing a definition for this and future studies.

## Chapter Five

### Knowing Your Crisis

Crisis planning and management skills develop through experience and preparation. According to The International Council of Museums, an international committee dedicated to preserving culture around the globe, has claimed there are only two types of museums: those museums that have experienced a crisis, and those that have not yet faced a crisis.<sup>83</sup> Many professionals deal with ad hoc crisis communication when faced with a crisis for the first time. The purpose of having a crisis communication plan is to effectively communicate about a crisis in a clear and timely manner. As a reminder, a museum should have taken all precautions to prevent such crises with a risk management policy. However, there is no way to predict every possible threat and a crisis communication plan can prepare and prevent risk to the institution.

Museums should have a standard for identifying possible risk throughout the museum. This policy is usually interpreted for insurance purposes and should be constantly shifting through new exhibitions and museum renovations. In the *Nonprofit Management 101: A Complete Practical Guide for Leaders and Professionals* by Pamela Davis, she states, "The majority of claims reported by nonprofit organizations are accidents and injuries related to automobiles, or

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<sup>83</sup> ICOM. "Crisis Communication - When Disaster Strikes." The International Council of Museums. PDF. 5 Nov. 2014.

slips, trips and falls at the offices, other facilities and special events.”<sup>84</sup> Although these risks seem minor, an institution should prioritize risk, making it easier to understand how the crisis communication should be handled. A simple three-tier system is the preferred method and can be discussed with those participating in the Communication Management Team. More about the tier system will be mentioned below.

### **BEST PRACTICES AND EXAMPLES**

A few of the best practices in managing a museum crisis are universal rules of effective communication. There is a lack of great examples in the museum field that provide successful support in crisis communication management and planning, however, there are a few nonprofits that have succeeded in providing a crisis communication plan that highlight important steps. The University of Memphis, in accordance with the best practices of Higher Education Institutions, was able to coordinate a plan that defined crisis, provided transparent communication members as well as how to activate the plan if necessary.<sup>85</sup> Nonprofits such as universities can provide a great representation of how to communicate to the public in a timely and effective

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<sup>84</sup> Davis, Pamela. “Risk Management and Insurance.” Nonprofit management 101: A complete practice guide for leader and professionals. Print. 2 Nov. 2014.

<sup>85</sup> The University of Memphis. Crisis Management Plan. Memphis: The University of Memphis, 5 Nov. 2014. PDF.

manner. This crisis communication plan structures an outline for nonprofits and encourages active planning.

Another similar case is The Colorado Nonprofit Association. This plan forms the ideal structure with a simple twelve-page checklist and template to effectively jumpstart a nonprofit's communication plan. This template is intended to be helpful to those within the association and includes standards for creating an organizational plan. Additions such as these to professional museum standards can be beneficial in not only providing risk management support, but also crisis management and recovery.

### **EXPERT ADVICE**

**Mary Perry-** "I can't stress enough about how important it is to be ready. It's better to be ready for something that's never going to happen than not be ready for something that *is* going to happen."<sup>86</sup>

**Jessica Jenkins-** "I think its something a lot of museums should be considering as part of their policy or for communication documents because you never know if that's something that you're going to need to handle in the

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<sup>86</sup> Perry, Mary. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 29 Sept. 2014.

future.”<sup>87</sup> When asked about her first steps when faced with the crisis Jenkins explains, “defining internally what was going on.”<sup>88</sup>

Dealing with a crisis communication plan development and implementation can be difficult and time-consuming. It includes cooperation with all senior staff, board members, and sometimes outside collaborators. As Robert R. Janes states in *Museums in a Troubled World: Renewal, irrelevance, or collapse?*:

“All museums have the responsibility and the opportunity to become synthesizers, and foster an understanding of the interconnectedness of the problems we face, both environmental and social. A mindful museum can empower and honour all people in the search for a sustainable and just work- by creating a mission that focuses on the interconnectedness of our work and its challenges, and promotes the integration of disparate perspectives.”<sup>89</sup>

Janes assures museum professionals that we may all be uncomfortable at some point allowing consultants and outside staff to control “internal rethinking” of museum decisions, but it is inevitable.

### **CRISIS PREPAREDNESS**

This study has defined crisis as “a situation that is seriously threatening your people or property, your reputation or your organization’s ability to

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<sup>87</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

<sup>88</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

<sup>89</sup> Janes, Robert R. *Museums in a Troubled World: Renewal, Irrelevance or Collapse?* London: Routledge, 2009. Print. Accessed 26 Sept. 2014. (166).

operate."<sup>90</sup> Susan Kearney, a communication specialist, defined this term in her guest appearance on *Crisis Communication for Nonprofits* in mid 2014. The following outline is attributed to her work and analysis of how a crisis communication plan should be handled by the museum representative.

Organizational considerations are important factors in each individual crisis communication plan and must be outlined before addressing a crisis.

Organizational considerations can range from size of museum, staff, location and audience. Due to the range of art museums and galleries throughout the United States, no crisis will execute the same way. Kearney is adamant about having a baseline or a type of monitoring device that allows the institution to understand the impact of the crisis. These baselines will ensure a smooth translation of what needs to be tackled to expedite the restoration phase.

Kearney's steps are as follows:

- 1. Have a plan**
- 2. Communicate**
- 3. Monitor**
- 4. Restore**
- 5. Learn**

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<sup>90</sup> Kearney, Susan. "Crisis Communication for Nonprofits." Interview by Kira Tyler. Audio blog post. NonProfit 911. Network for Good, 21 Sept. 2014. Web. 25 Sept. 2014.



### PLAN

Preparing and planning for an unexpected crisis is hard to imagine, but will ultimately align a map of what the museum might need. Planning can range from simple to detailed depending on the state of the crisis. If a museum has unexpectedly encountered a crisis, this plan should be as detailed as possible because of all the information the museum has access to. For museums that have yet to face a crisis, a simple plan would be beneficial with highlights that identify a crisis team. The crisis team will assign roles such as a spokesperson and legal representative for the museum. The plan should identify the audiences to address and how each should be addressed. This would include internal staff, donors, vendors, and the board.<sup>91</sup> The crisis team should define policy and procedures in determining scope of crisis, external communication, and planning recovery.

### COMMUNICATE

The role in communicating seems obvious, however when faced with a crisis, it is easy to avoid outsiders while scrambling to determine a state. Kearney suggests, "Speed is of the essence," when communicating to the media. It is important to be transparent and stick with crisis response. Be aware of the news

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<sup>91</sup> Kearney, Susan. "Crisis Communication for Nonprofits." Interview by Kira Tyler. Audio blog post. NonProfit 911. Network for Good, 21 Sept. 2014. Web. 25 Sept. 2014.

cycle and try to get in and out as quickly as possible. Museums are often confused with publicity as free press however, as this study supports, the public will determine that individually. The internal communication is just as important. "Arm staff with knowledge," she pressed, because they are the museum representatives as well. Your internal support staff will likely let the museum know what is being said outside as well. Offer support and time to listen to complaints and suggestions.

### MONITOR

Having a monitoring device will allow comprehension of the museum's crisis for the museum and the public. Determining what the museum will monitor and what materials the museum will need are the first step in defining success and toward recovery. Keeping an organized record of digital correspondence, membership, admission, or media coverage will help the museum to learn from this crisis and develop a plan for further risk.

### RESTORE

Restoring the museum will take positive effort from everyone on the crisis management team. Updating early and often about the progress of the crisis and recovery of the museum's well being will serve as confident support. The recovery stage will not happen over night, but it should begin after the first

news cycle. Keeping records of events and correspondences will help to ensure a learning process along the way. Asking staff to participate in weekly meetings about the crisis will ensure empowerment and transparency about intentions to restore the institution and its image.

### LEARN

After the initial impact of the crisis has affected the museum and its usual operating procedures, the crisis team will begin to learn from the crisis. Learning whether to minimize a story or not to keep it out of the news cycle is one such point. Learning from stakeholders and internal staff is an important factor to implement. Just as the museum would debrief after an event or exhibition, gather staff to hear about issues or praise that might have happened. Concerns will arise in each department that will be necessary for revisions to the crisis plan. Remember to revise the plan after learning about such scenarios. There is always a possibility for follow-up claims, lawsuits, or actions against the museum. Make sure this plan ensures “what if” scenarios for the future.

### **REBRANDING OPPORTUNITIES**

There are benefits that can proceed from a crisis. The museum has a better understanding of themselves and how the public perceives the institution. If the image or reputation of the institution was severely impacted, a museum

might consider rebranding. The toughest question is considering if rebranding is necessary for the art museum. Rebranding takes a considerable amount of mission shifting, strategic planning, and establishing a new museum image.

In the case of the DIA, they have hired brand ambassador, Leo Burnett for future exhibitions and communication branding.<sup>92</sup> The Detroit based leader in branding will begin branding for the DIA's newest exhibition at the end of 2014. This will be a great transition into the newly separated organization.

In the case of the Corcoran an entirely new brand has been implemented on the college as it proceeds into The George Washington University. The College of Arts and Design has encompassed the brand identity of its new university. Although the Corcoran historic building is undergoing renovations to adjust to the new brand, it should continue to stand to commemorate the Corcoran brand.

Delaware Art Museum representative Jessica Jenkins states rebranding is likely not a huge priority for her institution at this time however considerations are being made for restructuring. "Now that things have shifted within the organization and we've had to go this route, we are currently evaluating who we are and our future impact on the community. We're doing what we are doing so

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<sup>92</sup> Halcom, Chad. "Leo Burnett Detroit Signs Deal for DIA Marketing." Crain's Detroit Business. Crain Communications, 30 July 2014. Web. 1 Aug. 2014.

that we continue to exist and be here for that community. Going forward it will be important to make that clear in all of our messaging and at the base of our strategic long-term goals.”<sup>93</sup> Although the Delaware Art Museum will not be undergoing rebranding it has been worth considering since their newfound spotlight in the national public eye.

Rebranding is not a marketing tool to take lightly. As mentioned before, it is a complete restructuring of the institutions goals, mission, and possibly their visual image. Intentions to rebrand should be evaluated by all members of senior staff and board members. Remembering that the institution is first and foremost a house for collections and place for the public is a crucial starting point to evaluate a purpose for rebranding.

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<sup>93</sup> Jenkins, Jessica. "Museum Professional Interview." Telephone interview. 22 Aug. 2014.

## Conclusion

Discussions throughout this study were in support of the need for crisis planning and encouraged collaboration with media professionals. The findings support the need for museums to use monitoring devices to record how crises can affect their publics. Generally these publics would include the stakeholders of the institution and then encompass a larger audience, possibly on a national level. Due to the range of perceptions about art museums from the national public to their stakeholders, communication from the museum should make up for variations of interpretation.

This study is intended to assist the museum in focusing and understanding the key relationships that may be effected by the crisis. In order to do this, it is important that the communication department, or equivalent position, establishes a relationship with the local media before a crisis. This will ensure a strong relationship during the crisis. This department, along with other necessary senior staff should develop a crisis management team for the museum. If the public is unable to support the institution any longer, a rebranding opportunity may be considered for the institution.

This research was intended to provide context of the media relationships with the communication team of the museum. Although the data did not result in the intended hypothesis, this study provided advocacy for the museum

communication department. The case studies were used to critique the current communication practice, museum governance, and crisis management plans. The case studies were useful in providing perspective of the need for museum professionals to be prepped in crisis communication. The three art museums, DIA, DAM, and the Corcoran are of a timely relevance. A follow up study should be taken to compare public perceptions to each crisis. This study did enforce a strict time capacity to locate and analyze articles. The articles collected throughout this study go beyond creating a press book for an exhibition or crisis event. This information will help the museum spokesperson through crisis situations during the current crisis and in future events. The importance of this study is to understand that collaboration with the media is crucial for museums, especially at the present time.

As seen throughout this study, it is possible that journalists do not understand the topic they write about. Cultivating the media as a source is not a new concept, however, museums and nonprofits do not always have the resources to establish crisis-based communication plans based on the media and public interpretation. This study encourages implementing crisis planning and media preparation into museum strategic plans and respective departments.

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## Story Analysis Form

Story ID \_\_\_\_\_

Museum in story \_\_\_\_\_ (USE CODE)

**Front page of newspaper**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes = 1; No = 2

**Section Front**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes = 1; No = 2  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Section (USE CODE)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Quadrant (USE CODE)

**"Go and Do" Information**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes = 1; No = 2

**Jump**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes = 1; No = 2

**Links to similar stories**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes = 1; No = 2

**Photo & Graphics**

\_\_\_\_\_ # Graphics  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Color Graphics  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Photographs  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Color Photographs

**Photo Diversity**

\_\_\_\_\_ # with visible faces  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # museum building  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # paintings  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # object in collection  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Photo area (in sq. inches)

**Media Source:** \_\_\_\_\_

Enter full name of media source (ex. New York Times)

**Origin:**

\_\_\_\_\_ News Service/ Media Source  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Staff  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Reader  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown

**Geographic Focus:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Local  
 \_\_\_\_\_ State/ Regional  
 \_\_\_\_\_ National  
 \_\_\_\_\_ International  
 \_\_\_\_\_ None

**Treatment:**

\_\_\_\_\_ General News  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Commentary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Feature  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Sources:**

\_\_\_\_\_ # of sources quoted  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of officials/ celebrities  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # of ordinary people  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # identifiable male  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # identifiable female

**General Tone:** \_\_\_\_\_

(1 = Negative; 2 = Neutral; 3 = Positive)

**Language:** \_\_\_\_\_ (USE CODE)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Enter date of publication as *mmddyy*

Figure 20

### Story Content Analysis Form - Coding

**Story ID** will serve as the tracking of articles. These will be numbered in the order they are evaluated and entered into tracking database.

Museum in Story:

1. Detroit Institute of Arts
2. Delaware Art Museum
3. Corcoran

**Front page of newspaper** will determine whether this article ran on the front page of a newspaper. Serving a "1" will determine a "Yes", and "2" a "No."

**Section Front:**

Content analyst will first determine whether the article was located on the front page of the news source's topic section. A "1" will determine a "Yes", and "2" a "No."

Analyst will then determine the section. Answering, "1" will determine a print or hardcopy source and answering "2" will determine an online source.

Quadrant code will be answered by responding for the following news quadrants:

1. Arts and Culture
2. Opinion
3. Entertainment
4. Financial
5. Business
6. Local

**"Go and Do" Information** is based on the persuasive nature of the article to influence reader to take actions after reading. Acknowledging a "1" will determine a "Yes" and "2"

**Jump** designates a hyperlink within the story that might influence readers to jump into another story or topic. This is designated with a "1" indicating there was a jump and "2" for no jump.

**Links to similar stories** section is an observation of any other materials within the same story that are included as a different perspective or articles written at another time. These are usually found at the bottom of the article or as

**Photos & Graphics**

This section intends to decipher the initiatives behind placement of photographs and graphics. Analyst should consider these as part of the storytelling practice.

Graphics # - Place number of graphics seen in the news story.

Graphics of Color # - Place number of color graphics seen in the news story.

Photograph # - Place number of photographs seen in the news story.

Photographs of Color # - Place number of color photographs seen in the news story.

**Figure 21**

**Photo Diversity**

# Visible Faces – Place number amount of photographs seen with a visible face.  
 #Museum Building – Place number amount of photographs seen of the museum building.  
 # Of painting – Place number amount of photographs seen of paintings.  
 # Of Object in the Collection – Place number amount of photographs seen with objects from the museum collection.

**Photo area in square inches**

Take accumulative photo area in square inches per article.

**Media Source**

State the media source in full name.

**Origin**

News Service – Mark if the article was from a news service or generated press release.  
 Staff – Mark if staff of the media source wrote the article.  
 Reader – Mark if the story was primarily written by the media source's reader.  
 Unknown – Mark if the writer of the article was unknown.

**Geographic Focus**

This category serves to determine the geographic range of viewership. It is possible to have multiple marks.

Local – Mark if the article was published in a local news media source.  
 State/Regional – Mark if the article was published by a State or Regional media source.  
 National – Mark if the article was published by a national media source.  
 International – Mark if the article was published by an international media source.  
 None – Mark if the article was published by an unknown source

**Treatment**

Using best judgment, consider how the news within the article was treated.

General News – Mark if the article was treated as General News (i.e. basic coverage).  
 Commentary – Mark if the article was treated as Commentary (i.e. opinion).  
 Feature – Mark if the article was treated as a Feature (i.e. special, unique, detailed).  
 Other – Mark if the article was treated as anything other than listed above.

**Sources**

# Of sources quoted – State the number of sources found within the article.  
 # Of officials/celebrities quoted – State the number of officials or celebrities quoted in the article.  
 # Identifiable male – State the number of identifiable males quoted in the article.

Figure 21

# Identifiable female - State the number of identifiable females quoted in the article.

**General Tone**

Using best judgment, consider diction, syntax, writer's intentions, angle, and length of article.

Negative – Mark with a 1 if the article possesses a negative tone?

Neutral – Mark with a 1 if the article possesses a neutral tone?

Positive - Mark with a 1 if the article possesses a positive tone?

**Language**

D - Mark a 'D' if this story presents despair.

1 - Mark a 1 if this story showcases signs of destruction.

B - Mark a 'B' if this story presents or acts on blame to a person or the museum.

A - Mark an 'A' if this story presents an apology

H - mark an 'h' if this story includes signs of hope for the museum.

**Date**

Documentation of the date the article was published in six numbers: *mmdyy*.

**Welcome**

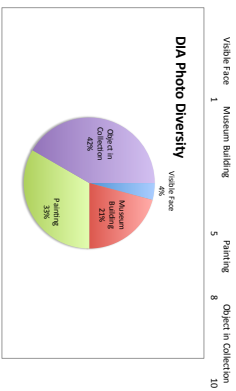
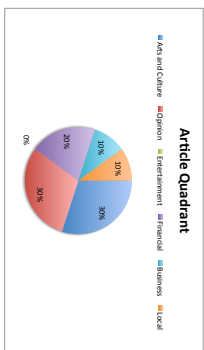
Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback will be used as part of a research study to fulfill requirements for a master's thesis. For more information please contact [jduran.info@gmail.com](mailto:jduran.info@gmail.com).

Figure 22

## Detroit Institute of Art

Comprehensive Project Data Report - Q3 2024											
Project ID	Project Name	Phase I: Planning & Design				Phase II: Development & Testing				Overall Status	
		Task ID	Task Name	Progress %	Due Date	Task ID	Task Name	Progress %	Due Date	Status	Priority
001	Alpha Initiative	1.1	Design UI	85%	2024-09-15	2.1	Develop Backend	60%	2024-10-01	In Progress	High
002	Beta Initiative	1.2	Research DB	90%	2024-09-10	2.2	Implement API	75%	2024-09-25	Completed	Medium
003	Gamma Initiative	1.3	Define Schema	100%	2024-08-20	2.3	Unit Testing	40%	2024-10-10	Pending Review	Low
004	Delta Initiative	1.4	UI Prototyping	70%	2024-09-20	2.4	Integration Testing	20%	2024-10-20	Not Started	Medium
005	Epsilon Initiative	1.5	Backend Logic	50%	2024-10-05	2.5	Performance Testing	10%	2024-11-01	Not Started	High
006	Zeta Initiative	1.6	Frontend Dev	95%	2024-09-05	2.6	Security Audit	30%	2024-10-15	In Progress	Medium
007	Eta Initiative	1.7	Database Setup	100%	2024-08-15	2.7	Deployment Prep	5%	2024-11-15	Not Started	Low
008	Theta Initiative	1.8	User Stories	80%	2024-09-18	2.8	Code Review	65%	2024-10-05	In Progress	Medium
009	Iota Initiative	1.9	System Arch	92%	2024-09-08	2.9	Documentation	45%	2024-10-25	Pending Review	Low
010	Kappa Initiative	2.0	Feature X Dev	78%	2024-09-22	3.0	Feature Y Dev	35%	2024-10-30	In Progress	High
011	Lambda Initiative	2.1	Feature Z Dev	60%	2024-10-02	3.1	Feature A Dev	25%	2024-11-05	Not Started	Medium
012	Mu Initiative	2.2	Feature B Dev	55%	2024-10-08	3.2	Feature C Dev	20%	2024-11-10	Not Started	Low
013	Nu Initiative	2.3	Feature D Dev	40%	2024-10-12	3.3	Feature E Dev	15%	2024-11-15	Not Started	Medium
014	Xi Initiative	2.4	Feature F Dev	30%	2024-10-18	3.4	Feature G Dev	10%	2024-11-20	Not Started	High
015	Omicron Initiative	2.5	Feature H Dev	25%	2024-10-22	3.5	Feature I Dev	5%	2024-11-25	Not Started	Medium
016	Pi Initiative	2.6	Feature J Dev	20%	2024-10-28	3.6	Feature K Dev	0%	2024-11-30	Not Started	Low
017	Rho Initiative	2.7	Feature L Dev	15%	2024-11-02	3.7	Feature M Dev	0%	2024-12-05	Not Started	Medium
018	Sigma Initiative	2.8	Feature N Dev	10%	2024-11-08	3.8	Feature O Dev	0%	2024-12-10	Not Started	High
019	Tau Initiative	2.9	Feature P Dev	5%	2024-11-12	3.9	Feature Q Dev	0%	2024-12-15	Not Started	Medium
020	Upsilon Initiative	3.0	Feature R Dev	0%	2024-11-18	4.0	Feature S Dev	0%	2024-12-20	Not Started	Low
021	Phi Initiative	3.1	Feature T Dev	0%	2024-11-22	4.1	Feature U Dev	0%	2024-12-25	Not Started	Medium
022	Chi Initiative	3.2	Feature V Dev	0%	2024-11-28	4.2	Feature W Dev	0%	2024-12-30	Not Started	High
023	Psi Initiative	3.3	Feature X Dev	0%	2024-12-02	4.3	Feature Y Dev	0%	2025-01-05	Not Started	Medium
024	Omega Initiative	3.4	Feature Z Dev	0%	2024-12-08	4.4	Feature A Dev	0%	2025-01-10	Not Started	Low
025	Alpha Initiative	3.5	Feature B Dev	0%	2024-12-12	4.5	Feature C Dev	0%	2025-01-15	Not Started	Medium
026	Beta Initiative	3.6	Feature C Dev	0%	2024-12-18	4.6	Feature D Dev	0%	2025-01-20	Not Started	High
027	Gamma Initiative	3.7	Feature D Dev	0%	2024-12-22	4.7	Feature E Dev	0%	2025-01-25	Not Started	Medium
028	Delta Initiative	3.8	Feature E Dev	0%	2024-12-28	4.8	Feature F Dev	0%	2025-01-30	Not Started	Low
029	Epsilon Initiative	3.9	Feature F Dev	0%	2025-01-02	4.9	Feature G Dev	0%	2025-02-05	Not Started	Medium
030	Zeta Initiative	4.0	Feature G Dev	0%	2025-01-08	5.0	Feature H Dev	0%	2025-02-10	Not Started	High
031	Eta Initiative	4.1	Feature H Dev	0%	2025-01-12	5.1	Feature I Dev	0%	2025-02-15	Not Started	Medium
032	Theta Initiative	4.2	Feature I Dev	0%	2025-01-18	5.2	Feature J Dev	0%	2025-02-20	Not Started	Low
033	Iota Initiative	4.3	Feature J Dev	0%	2025-01-22	5.3	Feature K Dev	0%	2025-02-25	Not Started	Medium
034	Kappa Initiative	4.4	Feature K Dev	0%	2025-01-28	5.4	Feature L Dev	0%	2025-03-01	Not Started	High
035	Lambda Initiative	4.5	Feature L Dev	0%	2025-02-02	5.5	Feature M Dev	0%	2025-03-05	Not Started	Medium
036	Mu Initiative	4.6	Feature M Dev	0%	2025-02-08	5.6	Feature N Dev	0%	2025-03-10	Not Started	Low
037	Nu Initiative	4.7	Feature N Dev	0%	2025-02-12	5.7	Feature O Dev	0%	2025-03-15	Not Started	Medium

### Figure 23





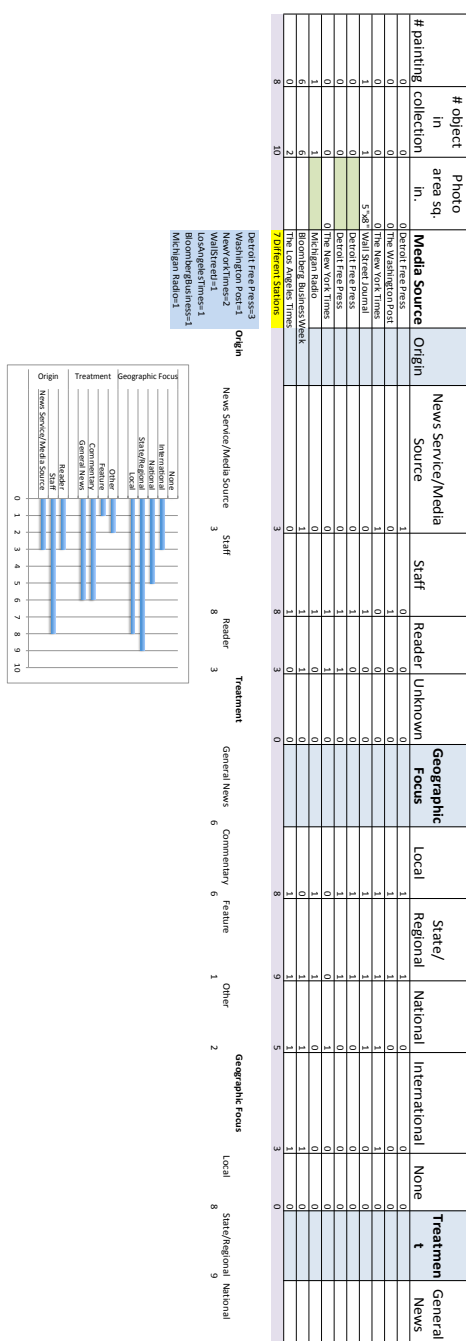




Figure 23

</

**Figure 24**





# Object in collection	Photo area sq. in.	Media Source	Origin	Service/ Media Source	Staff	Reader	Unknown	Geographic Focus	Local	State/ Regional	National	International	None	Treatment	General News	Commentary	Feature
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
11	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
12	0	0	0	7	3	0	0	0	10	9	9	9	3	0	4	3	5

Los Angeles Times-1  
New York Times-3  
Washington Post-3  
Wall Street Journal-1  
AP News-1  
Washington Post-1

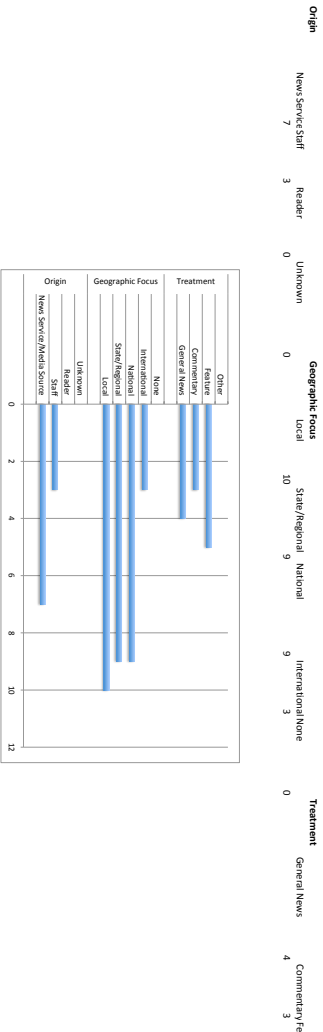


Figure 25

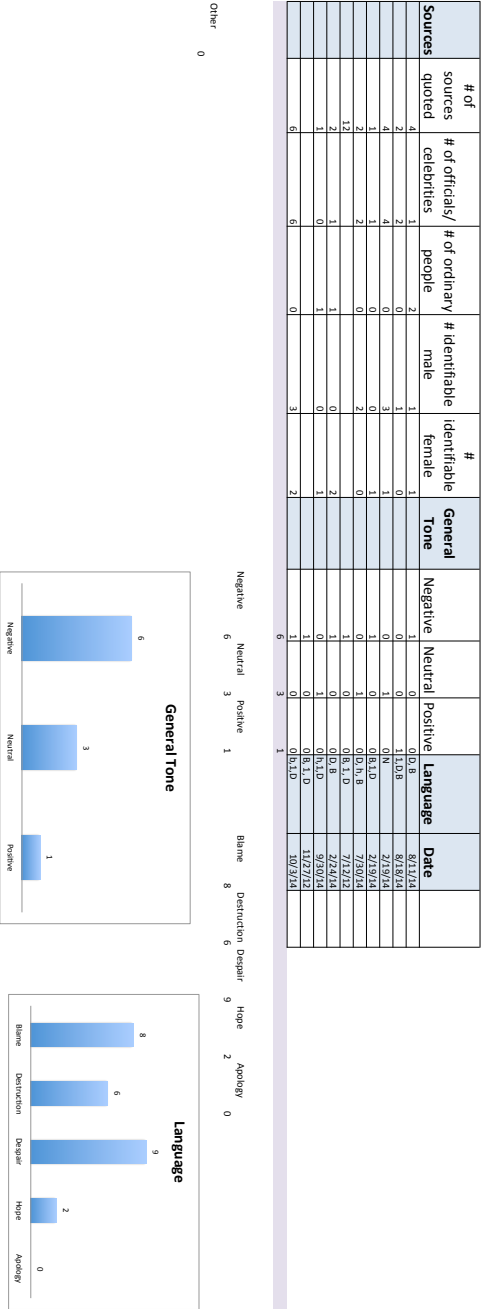


Figure 25

Art Museum Perceptions

Have you been to an art museum in The United States?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	94.6%	35
No	5.4%	2
	answered question	37
	skipped question	0

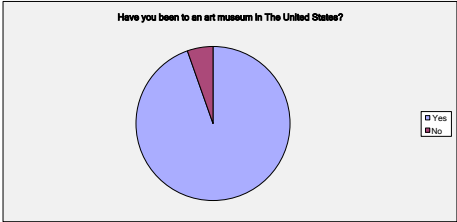


Figure 26



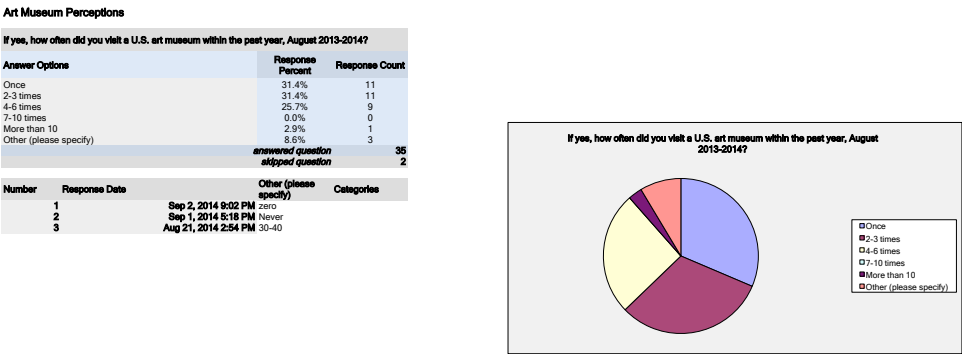


Figure 27

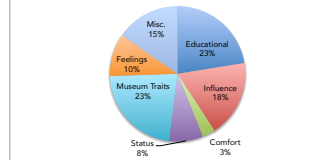
### Art Museum Perceptions

**Provide three words that describe your perception of an art museum's identity?**

Answer Options	Response Count
	37
answered question	37
skipped question	0

Number	Response Date	Response Text	Category
1	Sep 11, 2014 6:43 PM	Prestige, snobbery, culture	
2	Sep 10, 2014 8:25 PM	Calm, intriguing, insight	
3	Sep 10, 2014 8:25 PM	Quality and prestige	
4	Sep 1, 2014 2:41 PM	Quel. Education. Ellipsis (some art museums are still this way, but only some, not all)	
5	Sep 1, 2014 7:21 PM	Importance Appreciation History	
6	Sep 1, 2014 4:49 AM	Unique Interesting Informative	
7	Sep 2, 2014 8:02 PM	Unique, fascinating, unique	
8	Sep 3, 2014 6:42 PM	Creative, interesting, Educational	
9	Sep 2, 2014 1:23 PM	History, voice, bold	
10	Sep 1, 2014 1:35 AM	changing community space	
11	Sep 1, 2014 11:37 PM	History, Ecology, Inspirational	
12	Sep 1, 2014 10:32 PM	Staic, historical, enlightening	
13	Sep 1, 2014 8:24 PM	Impressive, dynamic, educational	
14	Sep 1, 2014 8:24 PM	well taste perception	
15	Sep 1, 2014 8:10 PM	big, old, fun	
16	Sep 1, 2014 7:28 PM	Intellectual, different, interesting	
17	Sep 1, 2014 6:38 PM	Trendy, classically educated	
18	Sep 1, 2014 6:37 PM	Eclectic, Creative, Bright	
19	Sep 1, 2014 6:24 PM	Underground, elite, pompous	
20	Sep 1, 2014 6:32 PM	Preserve, educate, restore	
21	Sep 1, 2014 6:24 PM	Classic Culture Interpretation	
22	Sep 1, 2014 6:01 PM	Inspiration, history, preserved	
23	Sep 1, 2014 6:53 PM	Classic unique educational	
24	Sep 1, 2014 6:18 PM	Creativity, Effort, Worth	
25	Sep 1, 2014 6:02 PM	Influencing, eye opening and relaxing	
26	Sep 1, 2014 6:02 PM	Legacy, culture, future	
27	Sep 1, 2014 4:29 PM	Storing, value, experience	
28	Sep 1, 2014 4:21 PM	historical community beautiful	
29	Sep 1, 2014 4:20 PM	peaceful Informative Inspiring	
30	Aug 28, 2014 6:49 PM	Intellectual beautiful breathtaking	
31	Aug 27, 2014 4:51 AM	Providing context for art	
32	Aug 24, 2014 4:21 AM	Classical, purposeful, moving	
33	Aug 21, 2014 4:36 PM	Intelligence Educated State	
34	Aug 21, 2014 2:54 PM	Preserve, educate, appreciate	
35	Aug 16, 2014 1:26 AM	Unique information perspective	
36	Aug 15, 2014 2:14 PM	Informative Inspiring warm friendly	
37	Aug 15, 2014 1:10 AM	cultural story-telling uplifting	

Provide three words that describe your perception of an art museum's identity.

[illegible]

Educational Influence	Comfort	Status	Museum Feelings	Misc.
22	18	3	8	22
				10
				15

**Figure 28**

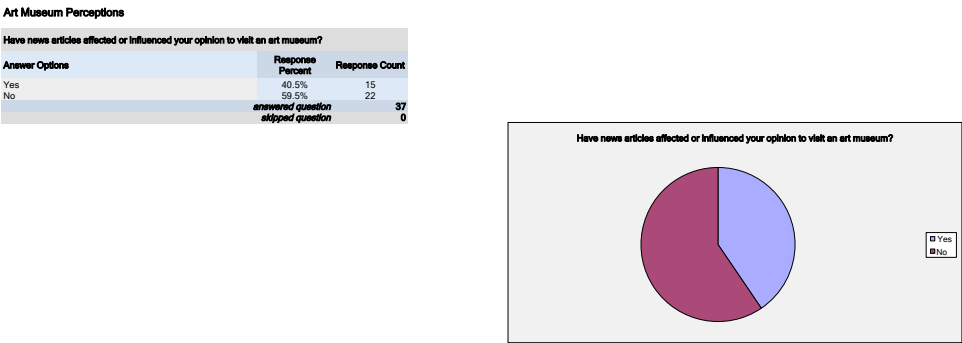


Figure 29

Art Museum Perceptions

After reading a news article, do you often conduct further research on that topic?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	35.1%	13
No	2.7%	1
Sometimes	62.2%	23
answered question		37
skipped question		0

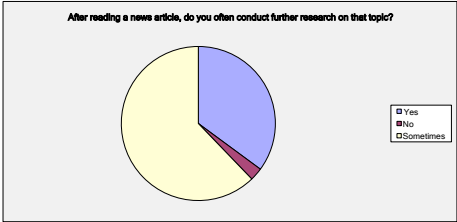


Figure 30

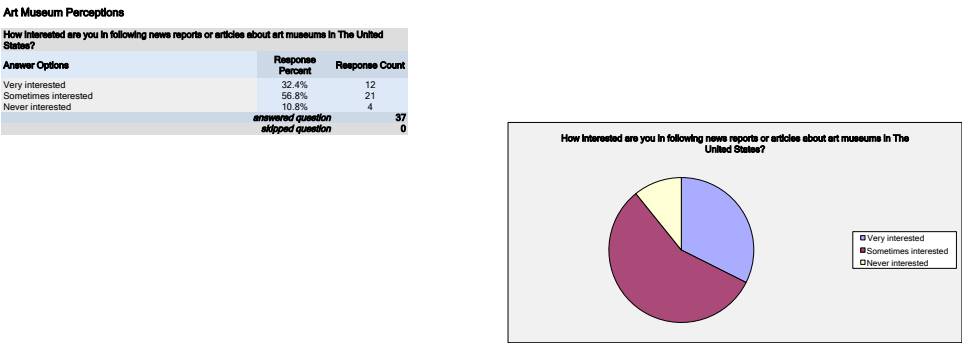


Figure 31

Art Museum Perceptions

Where do you currently receive your news? (Check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Newspaper	54.1%	20
Television	51.4%	19
Radio	29.7%	11
Magazine	29.7%	11
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs)	89.2%	33
Online News Source (not available in print ie. Yahoo news,	73.0%	27
Word-of-Mouth	56.8%	21
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0
answered question		37
skipped question		0

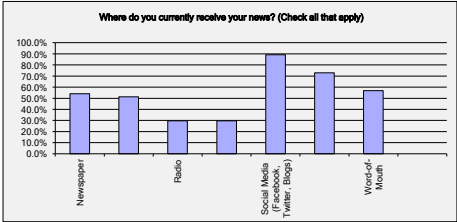


Figure 32

## Art Museum Perceptions

In what ZIP code is your home located? (enter 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 00544 or 94305)

Answer Options	Response Count
	37
<i>answered question</i>	<b>37</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>0</b>

Phila=5    Indio=3    LQ=5

Number	Response Date	Response Text	Categories
1	Sep 11, 2014 6:43 PM	19143	Philadelphia, PA
2	Sep 10, 2014 9:25 PM	92648	Huntington Beach, CA
3	Sep 7, 2014 9:35 PM	92201	Indio, CA
4	Sep 4, 2014 2:41 PM	19123	Philadelphia, PA
5	Sep 3, 2014 7:21 PM	92253	La Quinta, CA
6	Sep 3, 2014 4:49 AM	92504	Riverside, CA
7	Sep 2, 2014 9:02 PM	92570	Perris, CA
8	Sep 2, 2014 4:42 PM	19067	Morrisville, PA
9	Sep 2, 2014 1:23 PM	94804	Richmond, CA
10	Sep 2, 2014 1:35 AM	90025	Los Angeles, CA
11	Sep 1, 2014 11:37 PM	92253	La Quinta, CA
12	Sep 1, 2014 10:32 PM	93117	Goleta, CA
13	Sep 1, 2014 9:24 PM	90250	Hawthorne, CA
14	Sep 1, 2014 8:47 PM	92236	Coachella, CA
15	Sep 1, 2014 8:19 PM	19107	Philadelphia, PA
16	Sep 1, 2014 7:38 PM	91701	Rancho Cucamonga, CA
17	Sep 1, 2014 6:38 PM	92253	La Quinta, CA
18	Sep 1, 2014 6:37 PM	30606	Athens, GA
19	Sep 1, 2014 6:34 PM	8028	Glassboro, NJ
20	Sep 1, 2014 6:32 PM	91786	Upland, CA
21	Sep 1, 2014 6:24 PM	92260	Palm Desert, CA
22	Sep 1, 2014 6:01 PM	94566	Pleasanton, CA
23	Sep 1, 2014 5:33 PM	92201	Indio, CA
24	Sep 1, 2014 5:18 PM	92253	La Quinta, CA
25	Sep 1, 2014 5:02 PM	92346	Highland, CA
26	Sep 1, 2014 5:02 PM	19104	Philadelphia, PA
27	Sep 1, 2014 4:39 PM	99803	Juneau, AK
28	Sep 1, 2014 4:31 PM	8096	Woodbury, NJ
29	Sep 1, 2014 4:20 PM	92253	La Quinta, CA
30	Aug 29, 2014 6:49 PM	78247	San Antonio, TX
31	Aug 27, 2014 4:31 AM	95119	San Jose, CA
32	Aug 24, 2014 4:21 AM	92040	Lakeside, CA
33	Aug 21, 2014 4:38 PM	19147	Philadelphia, PA
34	Aug 21, 2014 2:54 PM	7030	Hoboken, NJ
35	Aug 16, 2014 12:46 AM	92201	Indio, CA
36	Aug 15, 2014 2:14 PM	17406	York, PA
37	Aug 15, 2014 1:10 AM	92373	Redlands, CA

Figure 33

Art Museum Perceptions

Which category below includes your age?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
17 or younger	0.0%	0
18-20	0.0%	0
21-29	70.3%	26
30-39	13.6%	5
40-49	5.4%	2
50-59	8.1%	3
60 or older	2.7%	1
answered question		37
skipped question		0

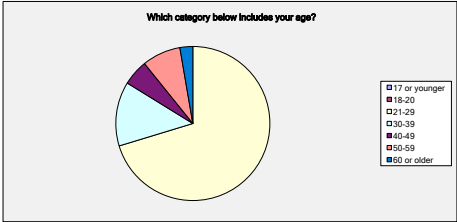


Figure 34



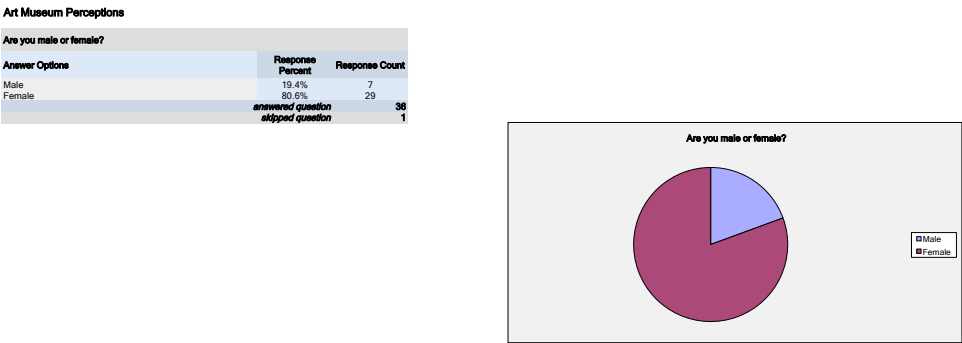
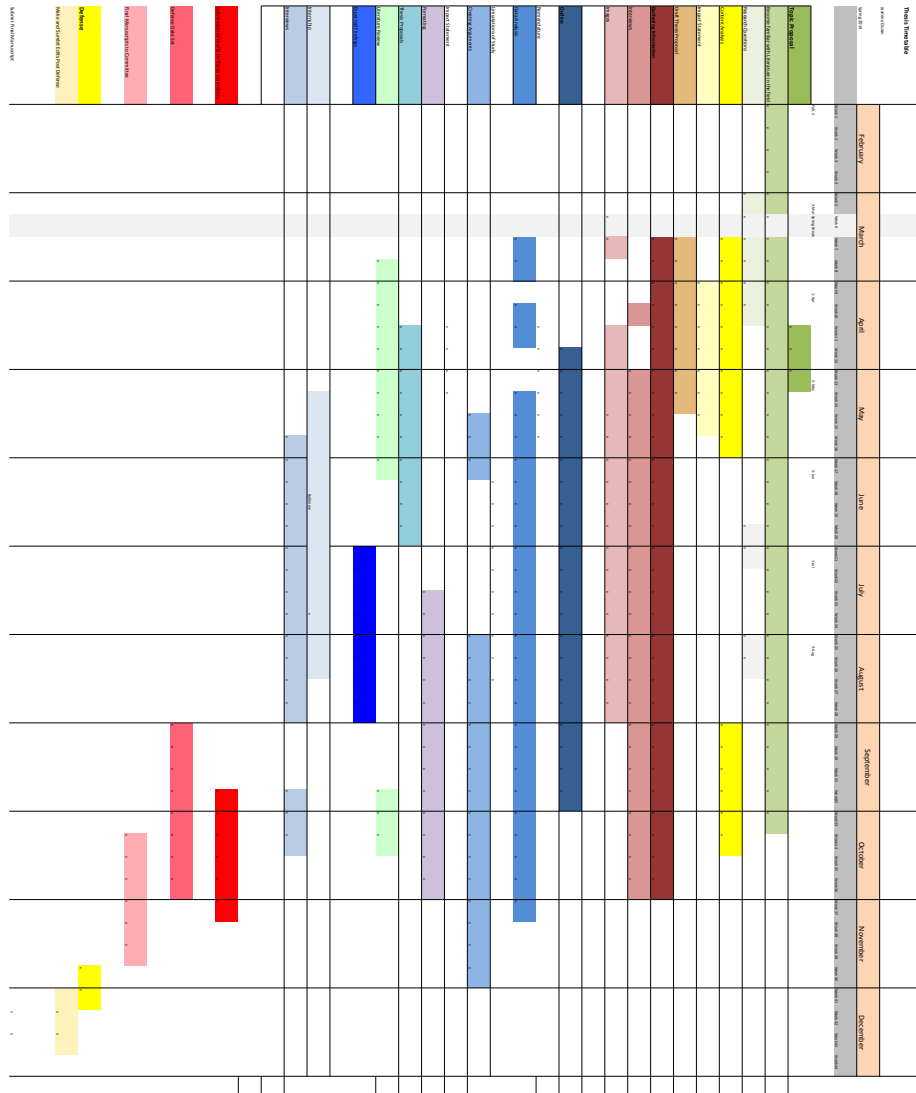


Figure 35



**Figure 36**

# Headliners: The Influence of Media Coverage in Museum Crises

Jasmine N. Duran

Museum Studies  
The University of the Arts  
December 2014



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# INTRODUCTION

This research will support the need for crisis planning and recommend that plans be placed in communication and strategic plans for all museums. This thesis includes research that relates to museum governance, communication, and collection stewardship. The media communicator and journalist play a significant role in this study as to how the museum should use their influence as a resource. The scope of the study was centered on art museums, but the results can be applied more broadly.

Utilizing means for evaluating the art museum representatives and art museum visitors during a crisis, this study measures whether media articles of museum crises impact the public perceptions of art museums. Due to the lack of research done regarding crisis communication or planning in museums, this is an important conversation for the museum professional. Key discussions will address the communication department, the crisis team, the importance of a crisis plan, the potential affect on relationships created by these crises, and the possibility of re-branding after the crisis.





# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1 How can museum communicators learn from the Detroit Institute of Art and similar institutions to be better prepared for crisis communication strategies?

2 Does the media impact the museum's image during a crisis and how can the media be used as a tool for other museums that find themselves in crisis?

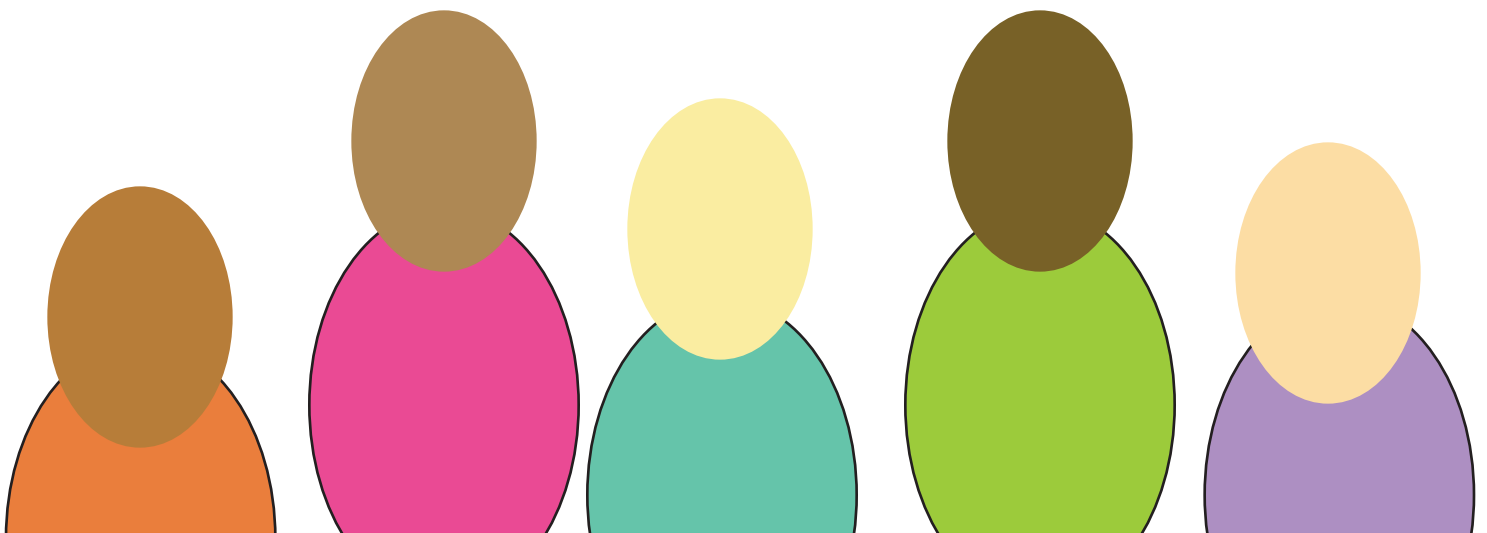
3 What can museums learn from crisis situations that can help them better understand or evaluate their brand?



# WHO IS THE MUSEUM?

Often a museum is made up of professional standards that safe-guard the intentions of the institution. Standards and missions define museums and allow them to best serve the public. If these standards included engaging museum departments and representatives with crisis planning and communication standards, this could ensure the museum's reputation in the community is undamaged after a crisis.

The museum representative includes all persons involved internally with the institution. Throughout this study, emphasis has been placed on the museum communicator and museum public relation professional.



Communication Department  
**Board of Trustees** Collections  
Facilities **Security** Development  
**Education** Executive Director Marketing



# PUBLICITY, PRESS, AND THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONAL

Today, multiple media platforms are capable of reaching global proportions in a matter of seconds; such as micro-blogging, video blogging, and documentaries.

Still, the museum may maintain many news media communication platforms and should implement an effective communication strategy to ensure impact and the prioritization of mission supported stories through each platform.

Participants appeared skeptical or curious about media coverage of art museums answering Sometimes (62.2%) and Yes (35.1%) about conducting further research on a recently read news topic.

**“I think a lot of journalist don’t understand how museum’s function and what they’re for. Certainly what their history is.”** -Christopher Knight





# PUBLICITY, PRESS, AND THE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONAL

**"I proceed from an assumptions that when someone sees my bio line and it says 'Times Art Critic', the vast majority of people stop reading, so I'm writing for people who want to read about art. But my job is to invite them in and if someone stumbles into it, I do want to write in an engaging way, and once someone starts reading my column my primary job is to get them to read all the way through to the end."**



Christopher Knight






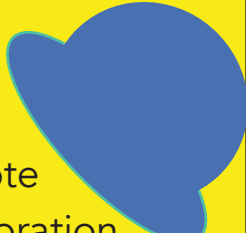
# THE ROLE OF THE MUSEUM PROFESSIONAL



**"It's very, very difficult to find very really great museum press people. They tend to be the Bain of one's existence,"** - Christopher Knight



The museum professional should be prepared to promote transparency about the museum. Enabling the ease of collaboration during neutral museum operation conditions can prevent confusion when the museum representative role will likely change in the event of a crisis. In short, *the museum professional must wear many hats.*



The public relation or communication professional should:

- *Create a crisis team with a spokesperson*
  - *Prep all staff with updates and talking points*
  - *Have immediate relationships with media, lawyers, and professional museum organizations*
  - *Get out of the news cycle as soon as possible*
  - *Monitor the impact*
  - *Follow-up crisis brief*
- 
- 



# RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

## Interviews: Expert Insights

**Mary Perry** Public Information Officer, Desert Sands Unified School District

"I can't stress enough about how important it is to be ready. It's better to be ready for something that's never going to happen than not be ready for something that is going to happen."

**Jessica Jenkins** Manager of Marketing & Public Relations, Delaware Art Museum

"I think its something a lot of museums should be considering as part of their policy or for communication documents because you never know if that's something that you're going to need to handle in the future." When asked about her first steps when faced with the crisis Jenkins explains, "defining internally what was going on."

**Christopher Knight** Los Angeles Times Art Critic

"It's very very difficult to find very really great museum press people. They tend to be the Bain of one's existence," said Knight. When asked about main issues working with museum representatives, Knight responded, "probably partially because I'm involved in journalism and in the digital world, things need to be done extremely quickly. Museum press offices tend not to respond quickly."



# RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

## Online Surveys



### **Public Perception of Art Museums**

What is the art museum image?

### **Media**

How does the public receive their news?

Does the media have influence on the reader in attending museums?

### **Visitor Demographics**

Who is the museum public?

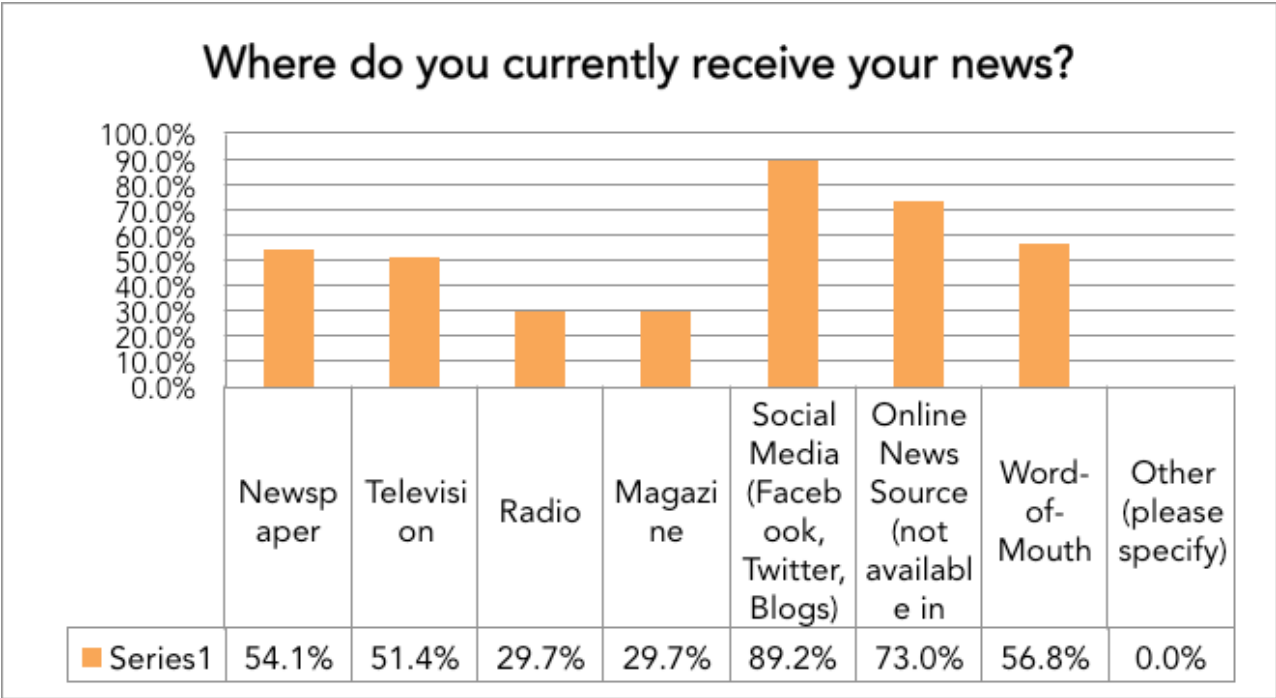


# RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

## Online Surveys

### Participants

The research sample size was 37 total responses. The majority of participants were female (Q.10; 80.6%) and range between 21 and 29 years of age. Blogs and micro-blogs were used to reach these participants which includes the Survey Monkey link. Due to the researcher’s demographics, the results may be skewed to a younger demographic audience.







# RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

## Online Surveys

Have news articles affected or influenced your opinion to visit an Art museum? (Q.4)

Yes (40.5%)

**No (59.5%)**

How interested are you in following news reports or articles about art museums in The United States? (Q.6)

**Sometimes** Never Interested

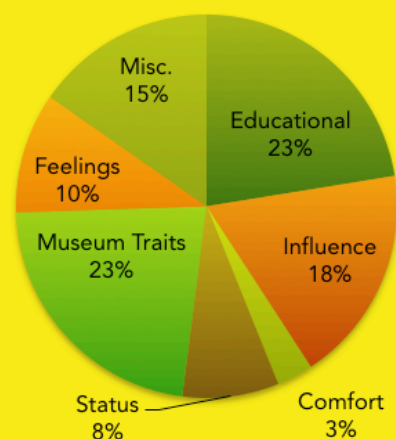
**Interested** (10.8%)

**(56.8%) Very Interested (32.4%)**

After reading a news article, do you often conduct further research on that topic? (Q.5)

No (2.7%) **Sometimes**  
Yes (35.1%) **(62.2%)**

Provide three words that describe your perception of an art museum's identity.





# RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

## Case Studies

1

Detroit Institute of Art

2

Delaware Art Museum

3


Corcoran Gallery of Art



# RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

## Story Content Analysis

Analyzing stories enabled comparisons of the negative, neutral, and positive tones media sources conveyed to the public. For every case study ten articles were compared and analyzed. Data resulted in finding the integrated audience, the news style, which platforms were used, the main journalists or media sources covering the stories, and geographic focus. These case studies provide a variation of content and interpretation about a specific crisis.



**Viewing these articles as a collection is intended to impact the way a reader might view multiple articles of the same topic. There is a mass amount of information entering the news cycle every moment, but consistent messaging could help to deliver credibility and public trust.**

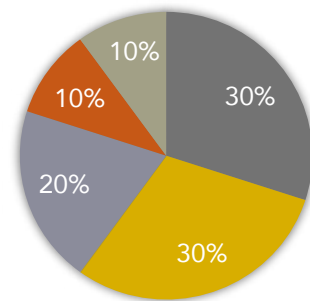
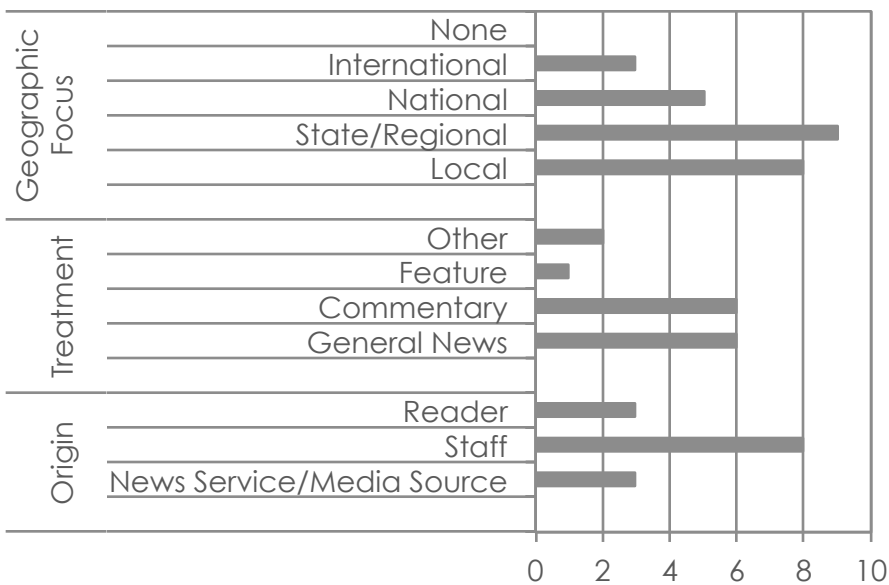
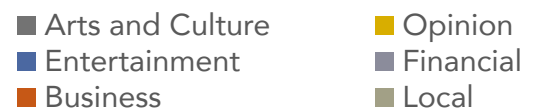


# DIA

# 1.4

## Photographs Per article

### DIA Article Quadrant



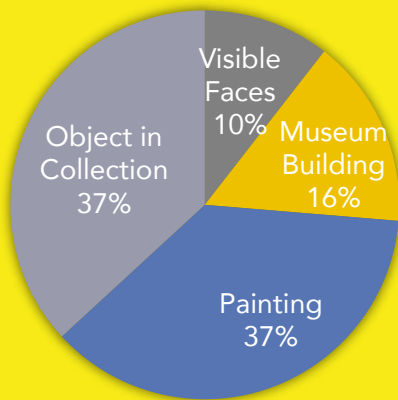




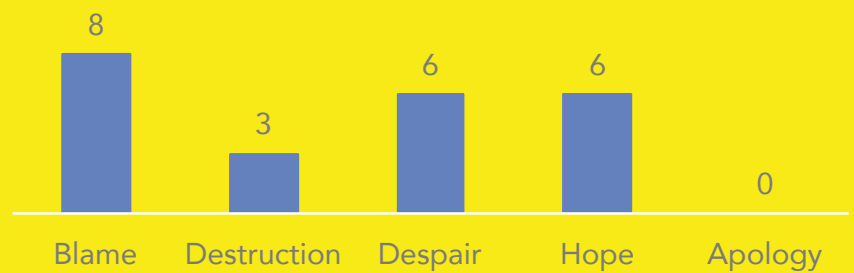
# DAM

1.6

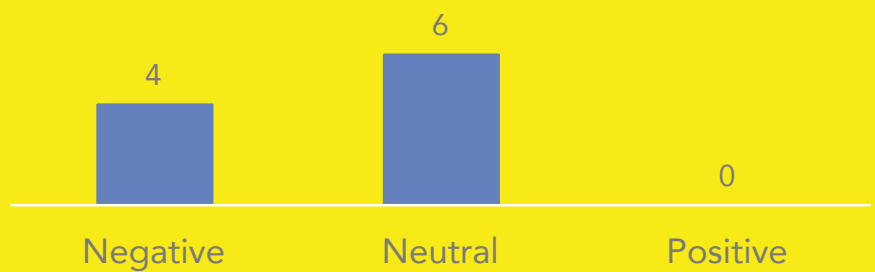
Photographs  
per article



DAM Language



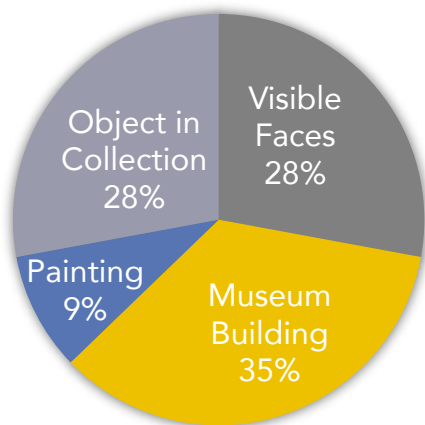
DAM General Tone



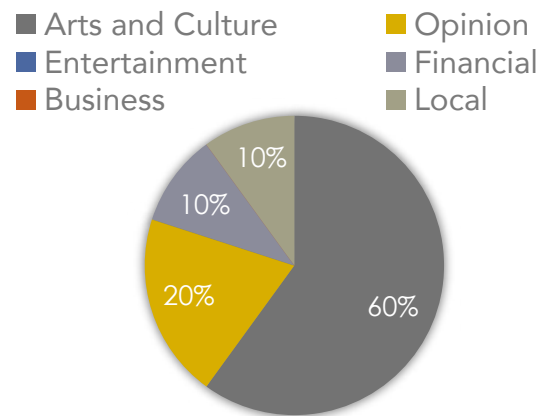


# CORCORAN

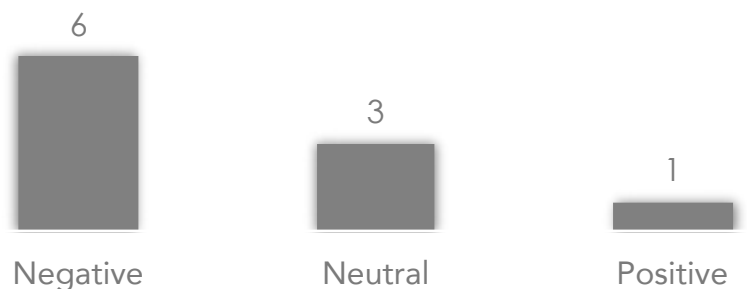
3.5  
Photographs  
per article



Article Quadrant



Corcoran General Tone





# CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND PLANNING

- 1** Have a Plan
- 2** Communicate
- 3** Monitor
- 4** Restore
- 5** Learn



# CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND PLANNING

## 1. PLAN

1.1 Preparing and planning for an unexpected crisis is hard to imagine, but will ultimately align a map of what your museum might need. Planning can range from simple to detailed depending on the state of the crisis.

1.2 **If a museum has unexpectedly encountered a crisis, this plan should be as detailed as possible because of all the information your museum has access.**

1.3 For museums that have yet to face a crisis, a simple plan would be beneficial with highlights that identify a **crisis team**. The crisis team will assign roles such as a spokesperson and legal representative for the museum. The plan should identify the audiences to address and how each should be addressed. This would include internal staff, donors, vendors, and the board. **The crisis team should define policy and procedures in determining scope of crisis, external communication, and planning recovery.**





# CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND PLANNING

## **2. COMMUNICATE**

2.1 The role in communicating seems obvious, however when faced with a crisis, it is easy to avoid outsiders while scrambling to determine a state. Kearney suggests, "Speed is of the essence," when communicating to the media.

**2.2. It is important to be transparent and stick with crisis response. Be aware of the news cycle and try to get in and out as quickly as possible.**

2.3 Museums are often confused with publicity as free press however, as this study supports, the public will determine that individually. The internal communication is just as important. "Arm staff with knowledge," she pressed, because they are the museum representatives as well. Your internal support staff will likely let the museum know what is being said outside as well. Offer support and time to listen to complaints and suggestions.



# CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND PLANNING

## **3. MONITOR**

3.1 Determining what the museum will monitor and what materials the museum will need is the first step in defining success and toward recovery. Keeping an organized record of digital correspondence, membership, admission, or media coverage will help the museum to learn from this crisis and develop a plan for further risk.

## **4. RESTORE**

4.1 Restoring the museum will take positive effort from everyone on the crisis management team. Updating early and often about the progress of the crisis and recovery of the museum's well being will serve as confident support. Asking staff to participate in weekly meetings about the crisis will ensure empowerment and transparency about intentions to restore the institution and its image. Re-branding may be necessary after this crisis has passed.

## **5. LEARN**

5.1 Learning from stakeholders and internal staff is an important factor to implement. Just as the museum would debrief after an event or exhibition, gather staff to hear about issues or praise that might have happened. Concerns will arise in each department that will be necessary for revisions to the crisis plan. Remember to revise the plan after learning about such scenarios. There is always a possibility for follow-up actions, claims, lawsuits, or actions against the museum. Make sure this plan ensures "what if" scenarios for the future.



# MUSEUM COMMUNICATION TODAY & FOR THE FUTURE

It is important to work to maintain **Collaboration and Key Relationships** with your public and media resources.

Be sure to invest time into **Crisis Planning** for your museum. This consists of developing a **Crisis Team** and a spokesperson.

Your museum should have a **Monitoring and Record Keeping** system during a crisis to help measure impact. This will help ensure a learning process for any crisis in the future.

Keep your internal staff informed at all times. This will ensure **Team Building** exercises that are sure to benefit your museum in a time of crisis.

Release **neutral to positive media messages** in times of crisis and try to get out of the news cycle as soon as possible.

Hire those familiar with Crisis Management and Communication. Although museums may be suffering financially today, **hire an informed representative** to guide your museum smoothly through the hard times.



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