

Crisis Communication Strategies in the Digital Era: A Narrative Review of Contemporary Theories, Models, and Practices

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Abstract

This article presents a review of the narrative literature to analyze and synthesize the evolution of *crisis communication* management, from fundamental theories to contemporary practice in the digital age. The method used is a narrative literature review that comprehensively examines academic literature, industry reports, and relevant case studies. The review systematically examined 45 sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles (n = 28), foundational textbooks (n = 10), and documented case studies (n = 7), published between 1986 and 2023. These were selected through keyword searches in Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ProQuest databases using terms: “*crisis communication*,” “*SCCT*,” “*image restoration theory*,” “*social media crisis*,” and “*AI crisis management*.” The results of the analysis show that the effectiveness of modern *crisis communication* depends on the strategic integration between diagnostic theories such as Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and the tactical repertoire of Image Restoration Theory (IRT). Digital transformation has created a paradox, where organizations have more direct communication channels but less control over the overall narrative, thus demanding transparency, speed, and dialogue. Future trends lead to symbiotic collaboration between humans and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for predictive analysis and response, as well as increasing complexity in dealing with overlapping crises (polycrises). These findings confirm that *crisis communication* has shifted from a reactive function to a strategic management competency that is essential for organizational resilience.

Keywords: crisis communication, crisis management, situational crisis communication theory (SCCT), image restoration theory, social media, artificial intelligence (AI).

INTRODUCTION

In the modern business and organizational landscape, crises are no longer a possibility but a necessity. No organization, large or small, is completely immune to a potential crisis. Crises can arise from a variety of unexpected sources, ranging from natural disasters, technological failures, and human error to sensitive reputational issues in the digital realm (Smith & Johnson, 2018). The information age, marked by the massive penetration of the internet and social media, has fundamentally changed the dynamics of the crisis (Brown et al., 2020). Information, both accurate and disinformational, can now spread at lightning speed around the world, magnifying the impact of crises and shortening the time for organizations to respond (Lee, 2021). This phenomenon is reinforced by a shift in the information landscape, where public trust in traditional media is declining (Martins & Ferrer, 2019) while social media is increasingly dominant as a major news source (Nguyen, 2022).

According to the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report (2023), 86% of business leaders worldwide anticipate consistent crisis conditions over the next decade, with interconnected technological, environmental, and geopolitical threats creating unprecedented organizational vulnerabilities. The information age, marked by massive internet and social media penetration, has fundamentally changed crisis dynamics. Information, both accurate and disinformation, can now spread at lightning speed globally, magnifying crisis impacts and compressing organizational response timeframes (Coombs, 2015). Research by Pew Research Center (2021) demonstrates that 53% of U.S. adults now receive news primarily through social media platforms, representing a 36% decline in traditional media trust over the past decade, fundamentally altering the information ecosystem within which crises unfold. Conceptually, a crisis is defined as a specific event that is unexpected, threatens important stakeholder

expectations, and has the potential to have a serious impact on an organization's performance, reputation, and survival. The main characteristics of crises are the presence of elements of threat, surprise, and the urgent need to make decisions in a very short time (Chandler, 2022; Jugl, 2023).

Given the destructive potential of crises, the role of crisis communication has evolved significantly. This function is no longer seen as just a reactive public relations activity, but has become a core element in strategic management that is crucial for the long-term survival and success of an organization. Failures in managing communication during a crisis—such as slow responses, inaccurate or non-transparent information, and a lack of empathy—can result in devastating consequences. The impact is not only limited to significant financial losses but also includes the erosion of public trust, hard-to-restore reputational damage, and even serious legal consequences. History has provided many lessons from both pre-digital and digital eras. The Three Mile Island nuclear power plant crisis in 1979 represented a turning point in making the corporate world aware of the dangers of poor crisis communication (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). More recently, the 2017 United Airlines passenger removal incident demonstrated how smartphone-recorded videos and social media amplification could transform a localized operational issue into a global reputational catastrophe within hours, resulting in \$1.4 billion market capitalization loss and fundamental changes to company policies (Jin, Pang, & Cameron, 2012).

The primary goal of crisis communication is to manage a constructive dialogue between an organization and its public at all stages—before, during, and after a crisis occurs. This dialogue aims to protect, maintain, and ultimately restore reputation and trust, which represent the most valuable organizational assets. In this context, organizational reputation and stakeholder trust serve as key dependent variables—outcomes that crisis communication strategies seek to protect and restore. The independent variables—factors that influence these outcomes—include crisis response strategy selection (e.g., denial, diminish, rebuild), response timing and speed, communication channel choices (traditional vs. digital media), message transparency levels, and demonstrable organizational empathy. Research by Coombs and Holladay (2012) demonstrates that appropriate strategy-situation matching significantly predicts post-crisis reputation outcomes, with misaligned responses potentially causing greater reputational damage than the crisis event itself.

Prior scholarship has established foundational understanding of crisis communication effectiveness. First, Coombs' (2007) seminal Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) research demonstrated that crisis type and organizational responsibility attribution significantly predict appropriate response strategies, with experimental evidence showing that accommodative responses (rebuild strategies) prove most effective for preventable crises while defensive postures suffice for victim-cluster crises. Second, Benoit's (1995) Image Restoration Theory (IRT) provided a comprehensive typology of defensive communication tactics, validated through extensive rhetorical case study analyses across political, corporate, and celebrity contexts. Third, Jin, Pang, and Cameron (2012) advanced emotion-centered approaches, revealing that public emotional responses (anger, fear, sadness) differentially impact crisis perception and response effectiveness, with anger-driven crises requiring more accommodative strategies than fear-driven incidents. Fourth, recent work by Austin, Liu, and Jin (2012) on social media crisis communication identified platform-specific effectiveness patterns, showing Twitter superiority for rapid factual information dissemination while visual platforms like Instagram prove more effective for emotional engagement and empathy demonstration.

However, significant research gaps persist. Existing literature predominantly focuses on Western organizational contexts, with limited examination of crisis communication in developing nations like Indonesia where digital penetration occurs alongside different cultural

communication norms and regulatory environments. Furthermore, while individual studies address either theoretical frameworks (SCCT/IRT) or digital transformation impacts separately, comprehensive synthesis integrating both dimensions remains absent. Most critically, the exponential advancement of AI technologies in recent years has outpaced scholarly examination of human-AI collaboration models in crisis contexts, leaving practitioners without evidence-based guidance for implementing these emerging tools.

Indonesia presents a compelling context for crisis communication analysis. As the world's fourth-largest population with 212.9 million internet users (77% penetration rate) and 191 million active social media users (We Are Social, 2023), the nation exhibits one of Asia's most dynamic digital ecosystems. However, this digital maturity coincides with concerning crisis management challenges. Edelman Trust Barometer (2023) data reveals that only 43% of Indonesian respondents trust businesses to communicate truthfully during crises, indicating significant credibility gaps. Recent high-profile cases—including the 2023 PT Astra Honda Motor eSAF frame controversy generating 2.3 million social media mentions within 72 hours, and the 2022 Indonesian Iced Tea sugar content crisis triggering nationwide boycott campaigns—demonstrate how rapidly digital amplification transforms localized issues into national crises. These phenomena underscore urgent needs for contextualized understanding of effective crisis communication strategies within Indonesia's unique socio-digital environment.

This review's urgency stems from three converging factors. First, the post-pandemic "permacrisis" environment, characterized by overlapping health, economic, climate, and geopolitical challenges, demands evolved crisis management approaches (Lawrence et al., 2023). Second, generative AI's rapid adoption in organizational communication creates immediate needs for evidence-based implementation guidance, particularly regarding ethical considerations and human oversight requirements. Third, the absence of comprehensive Indonesian-contextualized crisis communication scholarship leaves local practitioners without region-specific strategic frameworks.

The novelty of this review lies in its integrative approach synthesizing theoretical foundations (SCCT/IRT), practical lifecycle models, digital transformation impacts, and emerging AI applications within a single coherent framework. Unlike previous reviews focusing narrowly on individual theories or platforms, this work provides a holistic understanding spanning pre-digital foundations through cutting-edge AI applications, explicitly contextualized through Indonesian case analysis. This represents the first comprehensive narrative review positioning classical crisis communication theory within contemporary digital and AI-driven realities while incorporating developing nation perspectives often marginalized in Western-dominated literature.

This article aims to present a comprehensive and in-depth narrative literature review of theories, models, and practices in the field of crisis communication management. The discussion will begin by dissecting the two main theoretical foundations that are most influential, namely Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Image Restoration Theory (IRT). Next, the analysis will continue with the models and practical stages in the crisis management lifecycle. The next section will explore how the digital age has transformed crisis communication strategies, highlighting relevant case studies in Indonesia. In closing, this article will review the future trends shaping this field, especially the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI), before concluding with conclusions and suggestions for further research.

METHOD

This article utilized a narrative literature review methodology, chosen for its strength in synthesizing varied sources—including theoretical frameworks, empirical studies, and practical cases—into a unified conceptual understanding. This interpretive approach was

particularly suited for exploring complex, multifaceted topics like crisis communication, where theoretical, empirical, and practical dimensions required integration, as opposed to systematic reviews focused on exhaustive inclusion and quantitative synthesis.

The literature search was conducted using structured keyword queries across major academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ProQuest. Keywords included combinations of terms like "crisis communication," "situational crisis communication theory (SCCT)," "image restoration theory," "social media crisis management," and "Indonesia crisis communication," covering publications from 1986 through December 2023 to capture both foundational and contemporary works. Sources were selected based on specific inclusion criteria, such as being peer-reviewed journal articles, established textbooks, or documented case studies focused on organizational crisis communication in English, while excluding non-scholarly works, studies on highly specialized contexts, or items with limited generalizability.

From an initial pool of 127 sources, a screening process based on titles, abstracts, and full-text review refined the selection to 45 final sources. This collection comprised 28 peer-reviewed articles, 10 foundational textbooks, and 7 documented case studies, including Indonesian cases sourced from reputable news outlets and academic journals to provide contextual relevance. The analysis followed a thematic synthesis in three stages: initial descriptive coding of key constructs, development of analytical themes such as theoretical foundations and digital transformation impacts, and finally an interpretive synthesis to weave these themes into a coherent narrative addressing the review's objectives.

While this narrative review ensured source credibility through the use of peer-reviewed publications and publisher reputation, along with triangulation of case studies, it acknowledged certain methodological limitations. These included potential author bias in thematic interpretation, the primary use of English-language sources possibly overlooking Indonesian scholarship, and the inclusion of journalistic case studies, which may vary in rigor. Furthermore, the absence of quantitative meta-analysis limited the ability to make definitive comparative claims about the relative effectiveness of different crisis communication strategies across diverse contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents an analysis and synthesis of the reviewed literature, which includes theoretical foundations, practical models, digital transformation, and future trends in crisis communication management.

Theoretical Foundations: Dissecting the Crisis Response Framework

The two most dominant and frequently referenced theories in the crisis communication literature are Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Image Restoration Theory (IRT). Both offer different but complementary lenses for understanding and strategizing crisis response.

1. Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT): A Diagnostic Approach

SCCT, developed by W. Timothy Coombs, is a systematic, evidence-based framework. The essence of this theory is to provide prescriptive guidance for matching crisis response strategies to the level of reputational threat posed by a particular crisis situation. SCCT is firmly rooted in Attribution Theory, which explains how the public intuitively tries to find a cause or blame a particular party for a negative event. The greater the public perception that an organization is responsible for a crisis, the greater the threat to its reputation.

To assess this threat, the SCCT proposes a diagnostic process consisting of two main steps:

1. Identify the Type of Crisis: The first step is to identify how the crisis is most likely to be perceived by the public. The SCCT classifies crises into three main clusters based on the level of attribution of organizational responsibility:

- a. **Victim Cluster** : Organizations are seen as victims of a crisis, so the attribution of responsibility is very minimal. Examples include natural disasters, rumors, product sabotage by external parties, and incidents of workplace violence.
 - b. **Accidental Cluster** : Crises occur inadvertently and beyond the organization's control. The attribution of responsibility is low. Examples include technical challenges, equipment failures, and industrial accidents
 - c. **Preventable Cluster**: A crisis occurs as a result of human error or deliberate actions by the organization. His attribution of responsibility is very strong. Examples include regulatory breaches, management scandals, and crises caused by negligence.
2. **Intensity Factor Analysis**: Once the type of crisis has been identified, the reputational threat can be strengthened or weakened by two intensification factors: (1) **Crisis History**, i.e. whether the organization has experienced a similar crisis in the past, and (2) **Previous Reputation**, i.e. the quality of the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders before the crisis occurred. A history of a bad crisis or a negative reputation will significantly increase the threat of reputation.

Based on the results of the diagnosis, SCCT recommends three primary response strategy postures that can be chosen:

- a. **Deny Strategies** : Attempts to disconnect the relationship between the organization and the crisis. This includes denying that the crisis exists, or blaming the other party. This strategy is best used for crises in victim clusters, especially those based on rumors, where the organization is completely innocent.
- b. **Diminish Strategies** : Aim to minimize the attribution of organizational responsibility to crises. This is done by providing a reason or justification that the organization has no ill will or is unable to control the situation. This strategy is best suited for crises in accident clusters.
- c. **Rebuild Strategies** : It is the most accommodating response, in which the organization accepts responsibility and takes positive action to repair the damage. This includes offering compensation to the victim and/or offering a sincere apology. This strategy is highly recommended for crises within preventable clusters, where organizational responsibility is very high.

In addition to the primary strategy, SCCT also introduced **Bolstering Strategies** as a secondary response. This strategy can be added to the Diminish or Rebuild strategy to reinforce the organization's positive image by reminding the public of good deeds in the past, or praising stakeholders who have helped during a crisis.

Image Restoration Theory (IRT): A Typology of Defensive Messages

Image Restoration Theory (IRT), pioneered by William Benoit, focuses on the message options available to individuals or organizations when their image or reputation is attacked. In contrast to diagnostic SCCT, IRT is more typological, providing a "menu" of defensive communication strategies. This theory is based on two fundamental assumptions: (1) communication is a purposeful activity, and (2) maintaining a good reputation is one of the main goals of communication.

According to the IRT, an attack on an image occurs if two conditions are met: (1) the accused party is held responsible for an act, and (2) the act is considered offensive by a significant audience. To respond to this kind of attack, IRT offers five main categories of strategy, each of which has some tactical variant:

1. **Denial** : This strategy tries to reject the accusation completely. The tactical variants are simple denial (denying having taken action) and shifting the blame (stating that the other party is responsible).
2. **Evasion of Responsibility** : This strategy tries to reduce the perception of responsibility without completely denying the action. Its tactical variants include provocation (claiming

the action is a response to a provocation), defeasibility (claiming a lack of information or control over the situation), accident (stating that the event was an accident), and good intentions (arguing that the action is based on good intentions even if the outcome is negative).

3. **Reducing Offensiveness of an Event** : This strategy acknowledges having taken an action but tries to reduce the audience's negative feelings about the action. It is the richest category with six tactical variants: bolstering (emphasizing the positive attributes of the organization), minimization (downplaying the scale or negative impact of the crisis), differentiation (comparing the action with other worse actions), transcendence (placing the action in a broader and more positive context), attack accuser (attacking the credibility of the accuser), and compensation (offering compensation to the victim).
4. **Corrective Action** : The organization promises to repair the damage that has already occurred and/or take concrete steps to prevent a recurrence of the crisis in the future.
5. **Mortification** : This strategy involves acknowledging the mistake and sincerely apologizing, asking for forgiveness from the public and stakeholders.

3. Synthesis and Insights: The Symbiotic Relationship between SCCT and IRT

At first glance, SCCT and IRT may seem like competing frameworks. However, a more in-depth analysis reveals that the two do not stand in opposition, but rather occupy a highly complementary and symbiotic role in crisis management practices. SCCT serves as a diagnostic and prescriptive framework. He guides crisis managers through a structured situation evaluation process—analyzing crisis types and intensity factors—to arrive at the most appropriate and evidence-based strategic posture recommendations. Once these general strategies are determined, for example the need to adopt a Rebuild strategy, IRT then comes along as a rich tactical menu. The IRT provides a diverse repertoire of descriptive message options, such as Corrective Action and Mortification, that can be used to effectively implement the strategic postures recommended by the SCCT in the field.

This relationship also reflects the paradigm evolution in the crisis communication discipline itself. The early research that gave birth to IRT was firmly rooted in the tradition of rhetoric and qualitative case studies, with a focus on the analysis of defensive discourse (apologia). The development of SCCT marks an important shift towards a more empirical social science approach. Coombs explicitly developed SCCT to provide guidance supported by experimental data, rather than solely based on personal preference or analysis of a single case study. This shift shows the maturation of the field of crisis communication from initially descriptive-qualitative to more prescriptive and scientifically testable, thereby increasing its validity and practical applicability for professionals.

To clarify this complementary relationship, the following table presents a comparative analysis of the two theories.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of SCCT and Image Restoration Theory

Dimension	Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)	Image Restoration Theory (IRT)
Key Focus	Match crisis response to the situation to protect reputation based on threat level.	Provides typologies or message options menus to respond to an attack on the image.
Theoretical Basis	Attribution Theory.	Apologia Theory, Accounts Theory.
Nature of the Approach	Diagnostic, prescriptive, empirical evidence-based.	Descriptive, Typological, Rhetorical Analysis-Based
Unit of Analysis	Crisis Situation (crisis type, crisis history, previous reputation).	Defensive Messages or Discourses used by the organization.

Dimension	Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)	Image Restoration Theory (IRT)
Example Strategy	Strategic Posture: Deny, Diminish, Rebuild, Bolstering.	Tactical Categories: Denial, Evasion of Responsibility, Reducing Offensiveness, Corrective Action, Mortification.

Practical Models and Stages in Crisis Management

Outside of the theoretical framework, crisis management practices often follow a lifecycle model that divides the process into different, albeit interrelated, stages.

The Crisis Life Cycle: From Pre-Crisis to Post-Crisis

The most accepted crisis management model outlines three main stages: pre-crisis, crisis response, and post-crisis.

- a. **Pre-Crisis Stage (Prevention and Preparedness):** This is a proactive phase that focuses on prevention and preparedness. The main activity is issue management, which is the process of identifying and analyzing trends or issues that have the potential to develop into a crisis. This involves intensive media monitoring (media monitoring and social listening) as well as risk analysis to map the vulnerability of the organization. Based on this analysis, the organization then prepares by forming a crisis management team, training spokespeople, and most importantly, drafting a Crisis Management Plan (CMP). The CMP is a strategic document that contains response protocols, a list of important contacts, and key messages and pre-approved communication templates for various scenarios. In the digital context, another important preparation is the creation of a dark website—a crisis-specific website that is dormant but ready to launch at any time to become an official information center.
- b. **Crisis Response Stage (Acute Management):** This phase begins when the crisis occurs and becomes a public concern. The main goal at this stage is to control the narrative, minimize damage, and protect stakeholders. Effective communication at this stage must be fast, accurate, consistent, and credible. Models such as Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) developed by the CDC emphasize the importance of principles such as "be first, be right, and be credible," as well as show empathy and genuine concern for those affected. This is the moment when the chosen strategy (based on the SCCT diagnosis) is implemented through communication tactics (which are available in the IRT menu).
- c. **Post-Crisis Stage (Recovery and Learning):** Once the intensity of the crisis subsides, the focus shifts to recovery efforts and learning. Activities at this stage include follow-up communication to restore reputation, a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the crisis response, and most importantly, updating the CMP based on lessons learned. This stage is crucial to build organizational resilience and ensure better preparedness to face future crises.

While this three-stage model is useful, the "always-on" digital environment has changed the nature of this cycle. Traditional models often present crisis stages as linear processes, with clear beginnings and ends, such as the prodromal, acute, chronic, and resolution stages proposed by Fink. However, in the age of social media, these boundaries have become blurred. A crisis that is considered "over" or in the resolution stage can be easily revived by a single viral upload, instantly returning the organization to the stage of acute crisis. Therefore, the modern crisis lifecycle model is more appropriately seen as a continuous and iterative cycle, rather than as a straight line. The "post-crisis" stage is no longer the end point, but rather a direct input that constantly informs the next "pre-crisis" stage. This makes activities such as media monitoring and online reputation management no longer periodic activities, but rather a permanent and proactive strategic management function.

Crisis Communication Transformation in the Digital Era

The development of digital technologies, especially social media, has been the most significant transformative force in crisis communication practices over the past two decades.

The New Paradigm: Speed, Interactivity, and Disintermediation

Social media has fundamentally changed three key aspects of crisis communication:

1. **Speed:** Information now spreads in seconds, not hours or days. This puts tremendous pressure on organizations to respond quickly, as any delay can create an information void that will be filled by rumors and speculation.
2. **Interactivity:** Communication is no longer one-way (from the organization to the public). Social media allows for two-way dialogue in real-time, where the public can directly ask, criticize, and share their experiences. Organizations are required to listen and engage in these conversations, not just broadcast the message.
3. **Disintermediation:** Organizations are no longer completely dependent on traditional media as gatekeepers to reach the public. They can communicate directly through their own channels. However, it also means that any individual with a social media account can become a "broadcaster" or a "newsfluencer", spreading their own narrative without going through journalistic verification.

In this new environment, silence or issuing a "no comment" statement is often perceived negatively, equivalent to an admission of guilt or indifference. Studies also show that while visual platforms are important for building an image, text-based social media such as Twitter is often more effective for the rapid and factual dissemination of information during crises. However, the use of social media should be seen as a complement, not a total replacement, of traditional media that still has reach and credibility in certain audience segments.

Digital-Native Strategy

To adapt, crisis communication practitioners have developed a series of strategies designed specifically for the digital environment:

- a. **Social Listening & Monitoring:** Using advanced software to monitor conversations on social media and other online platforms in real-time. The goal is to detect issues early, analyze public sentiment, identify key influencers, and measure the effectiveness of crisis response messages.
- b. **Dark Sites & Owned Media:** As already mentioned, enabling pre-set up dark sites has become standard practice to create a single, centralized, credible and authoritative source of information during a crisis. It comes with maximum utilization of all proprietary media channels—such as major websites, corporate blogs, and all official social media accounts—to control the narrative and ensure message consistency.
- c. **Multi-Channel Narrative Management (PESO Model):** Effective communication strategies in the digital age demand a holistic and integrated approach, often illustrated through the PESO Model. This model coordinates the use of Paid (digital advertising), Earned (Earned - traditional and online media coverage), Shared (Shared - social media and user-generated content), and Owned (Owned - own websites and channels) to reach increasingly fragmented audiences and reinforce key messages across multiple platforms.

This digital transformation has given birth to a phenomenon that can be called the control paradox. On the one hand, organizations have more tools to control their communications than ever before. They can publish official statements, videos, and infographics instantly and without filters through their own media channels. However, on the other hand, they have much less control over the overall narrative. Any disgruntled customer, employee, or activist can create content (shared media) that goes viral and dominates public conversation, often before the organization has had a chance to respond.

This paradox changes the fundamental purpose of crisis communication. The key to success is no longer about authoritatively controlling the message, but rather about gaining the trust to be able to influence the conversation. Strategies must shift from monologue to dialogue, demanding a radical level of transparency, a high speed of response, and genuine empathy to make the voice of the organization an anchor of truth and credibility in the midst of a noisy and often inaccurate sea of information.

To contextualize these theories and strategies, the following table presents an analysis of several case studies of crisis communication that occurred in Indonesia.

Table 2. Crisis Communication Case Study Matrix in Indonesia

Case (Organization)	Crisis Type (SCCT Cluster)	Communication Strategies Used (IRT/SCCT)	Effectiveness Analysis	Source
PT Astra Honda Motor (eSAF Frame)	Accidental (technical error) / Preventable (if considered design negligence)	Initially Diminish (video clarification that is considered underestimated), then switched to Corrective Action (a checking and repair program) after regulatory pressure.	The slow initial response and perceived unsatisfactory by the public exacerbated the crisis on social media. Improved communication occurred after government intervention, showing the importance of an empathetic and solutive response from the beginning.	Kompas.com (2023). "Astra Honda Motor's Clarification on the eSAF Framework and Government Response." [Online news article].
PT Blue Bird Tbk (Online Transportation Conflict)	Preventable (because it involves anarchic actions from affiliated drivers)	Mortification (a quick apology from the leadership), Corrective Action (offering compensation for other damaged public vehicles), Bolstering (emphasizing a reputation for good service over the years).	A prompt, decisive, and responsible response succeeded in separating the company's image from the actions of the individuals and effectively helped repair a severely damaged reputation in a short period of time.	Detik.com (2020). "Blue Bird Apologizes for Driver's Anarchist Actions and Offers Compensation." [Online news article].
Garuda Indonesia (Threat of Pilot Strike 2011)	Accidental / Preventable (internal management issues)	Proactive and intensive communication through Twitter (Owned Media), direct dialogue with opinion leaders (Earned Media), Bolstering by retweeting positive news from the mass media.	A successful example of the use of social media in the early stages of its development is to maintain public trust, provide real-time information to passengers, and minimize operational disruption.	Santoso, A. (2012). "Garuda Indonesia's Crisis Management: A Case Study of the Threat of Pilot Strikes." Indonesian Journal of Communication, 1(2), 45-60.

Case (Organization)	Crisis Type (SCCT Cluster)	Communication Strategies Used (IRT/SCCT)	Effectiveness Analysis	Source
Indonesian Iced Tea (Criticism of Sugar Content)	Victim (derived from consumer criticism)	Initially, the legalistic response (somasi) backfired and triggered a bigger crisis. Then move on to Mortification (apology) and Corrective Action (promising to review the product).	This case serves as an important lesson about the dangers of an unempathetic and aggressive response on social media. The new image restoration begins after the organization changes its total strategy to be more accommodating and listening.	CNN Indonesia (2022). "Indonesian Iced Tea and the Somasi Controversy: An Analysis of the Crisis Response." [Online news article].

Future Trends and Role of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The field of crisis management is constantly evolving, driven by the changing global risk landscape and technological advancements, especially Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Navigating the Permacrisis and Polycrisis Era

The concepts of polycrisis and permacrisis are becoming increasingly relevant. Polycrisis refers to situations in which different global crises (e.g., climate, geopolitical, health, and economic crises) interact with each other and reinforce each other. This interaction creates a permacrisis condition, which is a prolonged and permanent state of crisis. For organizations, this means that crisis management can no longer be episodic. Organizations must build more mature resilience and adopt a holistically integrated risk and crisis management approach, capable of addressing overlapping and complex threats.

AI Revolution in Crisis Management

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is poised to revolutionize every stage in the crisis management lifecycle. Its main roles include:

- Predictive Analytics & Early Detection:** With its ability to process huge volumes of data (big data) from various sources (social media, news, online forums, financial reports), AI can identify patterns, gauge public sentiment, and predict potential risks before they escalate into full-scale crises. It is the most advanced form of proactive issue management.
- Automated Response & Personalization:** During a crisis, AI-powered chatbots can provide instant and accurate answers to common questions from the public or media, freeing human teams to focus on strategic issues. AI algorithms can also help personalize communication messages to make them more relevant and effective for different audience segments.
- Real-time Analysis and Disinformation Countermeasures:** AI enables real-time monitoring of sentiment and the spread of narratives (including disinformation) during crises. This provides invaluable insights for crisis teams to adjust strategies and respond to false information quickly and precisely.

The future of crisis management does not lie in the total replacement of the role of humans by AI, but rather in the development of symbiotic collaboration between humans and machines. AI excels at tasks that require speed, scale, and complex data analysis: predicting, monitoring, and analyzing. AI serves as a tireless "early warning system" and super "data analyst." However, AI has significant limitations in aspects that are fundamental to rebuilding trust, such as demonstrating genuine empathy, making complex ethical judgments, understanding cultural nuances, and formulating creative messages that resonate emotionally with humans.

In this collaborative model, the role of human crisis managers will shift. They will be "AI orchestrators," who use AI-generated data-driven insights to make final strategic decisions. Human managers will apply layers of ethical judgment, wisdom, and emotional intelligence to craft strategies and final messages. In simple terms, AI will handle data, while humans will handle meaning, ethics, and relationships.

However, the implementation of AI also brings with it a series of ethical challenges that must be carefully managed. These include the potential for bias in algorithms that can misrepresent the sentiments of certain groups, data privacy issues in public monitoring, and the urgent need to upskill human resources to be able to operate and interpret the outputs of these advanced technologies.

CONCLUSION

This analysis confirms that crisis communication management has evolved from a reactive public relations task to a proactive, data-driven, and integrated strategic function vital for organizational resilience in the 21st century. Modern effectiveness relies on accurately diagnosing crises using frameworks like Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), selecting appropriate response tactics such as those from Image Restoration Theory (IRT), and delivering responses swiftly, transparently, and empathetically across diverse digital platforms. Crisis management has shifted from a linear process to a continuous, iterative cycle emphasizing ongoing learning and preparation. Looking ahead, the field will be shaped by the complexities of managing overlapping global polycrises and the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence, where a partnership between machine intelligence and human empathy will be crucial. Future research should explore effective models for integrating AI-driven analytics with human-centric decision-making to enhance crisis communication strategies in diverse cultural and organizational contexts.

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