

Protecting the reputation of a tourism destination in case of a crisis

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Imagine a wildly successful tourism destination that boasts the most finely crafted and precisely executed marketing plans. It all works perfectly. Tourists are flocking to visit. Meeting planners are booking years in advance. Even the hoteliers are happy!

Then something unexpected happens....a disaster that is way beyond the control of tourism professionals. It could be a hurricane, a terrorist attack or something less catastrophic, such as a crime wave or illness.

Tourists and tour operators lose confidence, misinformation fills the news channels and bookings are cancelled. All the hard work and money invested in building a positive image for the destination become worthless. And a more difficult, more expensive process of restoring tourism becomes necessary.

Destination preparedness and a professional response in case of a crisis can help protect the reputation of a tourism destination and stop this vicious cycle. This presentation will reveal the simple secrets of managing a crisis, for example:

- How to prepare for the unexpected
- What to do when the media is pounding at the door
- How to make sure everyday problems do not become crises
- When to go into crisis mode
- The most effective recovery strategies
- How the correct response to crisis can actually enhance your reputation

Working with the news media in a spirit of cooperation is one of the best strategies for protecting the reputation of a tourism destination in good times as well as bad. Most of the techniques to be discussed in this presentation will not only help those attending be better prepared to manage a crisis, but in the process will also strengthen the everyday operations of destinations and tourism products.