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Advanced Public Relations Theory  
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Final

## **RPIE Process**

### **PR Plan for “Healthy Foods Haven: Strawberries” Campaign (As of March 21, 2017-to be updated as campaign progresses)**

#### **R: Research**

- As soon as I was informed by the Healthy Foods Haven’s Los Angeles store manager regarding a batch of strawberries that the store sold over the weekend being possibly contaminated with E.coli, and they have already received five phone calls from customers saying that they had gotten sick after trying the strawberries, I would immediately have the manager or someone from the company take the remaining strawberries to be tested.
- Hearing that the strawberries that were sampled had not been washed, and may be contaminated with E.coli, I would request that the Los Angeles store obtain information on all of the people who shopped there that weekend. If that information is not possible to obtain, I would move to my next inquiry.
- I would do research on E.coli to see when and how it manifests itself in people, to make sure that the strawberries that the customers had sampled were actually related to their illness.
- I would contact the department of health and inform them of the situation, and also inform the CDC, and request direction on how to handle this situation in a calm, controlled manner.
- I would contact other branches of the company to see if anyone had dealt with this sort of situation before, and ask what steps they had taken. And then I would inform my boss, and our company’s CEO to the situation so they are aware.
- I would meet with the company’s Legal Department and Human Resources Department to ensure that whatever messaging we were putting out wasn’t potentially opening up a can of worms for a legal perspective, or violating the privacy of our employees who may have been involved in the situation. I would also reach out to our Social Media Department to alert them to the situation and ask that they reach out to our PR Department regarding any inquiries that may come up over social media and to let them know that we were working on messaging that they could use over our social media platforms.

- I would then contact all branches of the store that had gotten the strawberries, and request that they not be sold.
- I would stop all selling of the strawberries until the CDC and department of health got back to me on what steps need to be taken.
- I would call for an employee meeting to talk about the issue at hand. I would remind the employees that food safety is of the utmost importance and we don't want to get our valuable customers sick.
- Finally, after conducting research I would identify what we need to do to respond to this crisis situation, the publics we need to reach, and would start coming up with a PR plan by thinking about: WHO do we want to reach? WHAT do we want people in each public to DO? WHAT messages do we want to communicate to each public?

## **P: Planning/Programming**

### **Goals:**

- 1) Inform our customers of the potential hazard the strawberries bring.
- 2) Ensure the public that this is not a common issue, and we care about the safety of our customers and the quality of our products.
- 3) Maintain a positive image of Healthy Foods Haven
- 4) Maintain a positive image of Healthy Foods Haven in the media
- 5) Require all staff to go through a food safety workshop

### **Publics being targeted:**

- The public and our customers
- Healthy Foods Haven's internal employees
- The media
- The CDC and department of health

### **Objectives:**

- Send out a recall for all contaminated strawberries
- If anyone who consumed the strawberries and got sick from them to the point that they had to go to the hospital, Healthy Foods Haven will cover their hospital charges.
- Conduct a food safety workshop for employees
- Inform the public through social media that we care about our products and customers

### **Strategies:**

- Post a recall for all strawberries that were found to be contaminated.
- Contact all hospital-strawberry persons and offer them hospital payments.
- Through media, post an apology.
- Have the health department identify food hazards in the Los Angeles branch.

- Require food safety workshops that will be provided through the company and hosted at the stores.
- Inform the public that we are taking control of the situation and will be conducting workshops for our employees to keep them up to date on the latest food safety instructions.

#### **Tactics/Tools:**

- Through social media and flyers, post a recall for the contaminated strawberries.
- Send out press releases that emphasize the concern we have for our customers and their safety, and thank them for choosing to shop at Harvest Foods Haven.
- Using the information gathered from the health department, implement the information through all branches of the store.
- Activities/timeline (to be updated as campaign goes on):
  - Branch managers will be responsible for setting up food safety workshops for their employees
  - Ron will be responsible for sending out press releases
  - Jana will post recalls through flyers
  - Rick will use social media to post recalls and apologize to the public
  - Branch managers will be informed of health department recommendations and will be in charge of implementing the ideas.

### **3) I: Implementation**

PR campaign timetable:

- March 21-April 21 (one month campaign)

Budget:

- Social Media=\$10k
- Printing =\$25k
- Food Safety workshops=\$30k
- Total=\$65k for campaign

Sample messaging:

- Harvest Food Haven wants to thank you for shopping with us, we want to inform you that the strawberry incident has been taken care of and we will be taking steps to keep our products at their best and to keep our customers safe.
- Harvest Food Haven will be making sure that our employees are up to date with all food and safety requirements, because we want the best for our customers.

### **4) E: Evaluation**

What went well in the PR campaign included:

- Maintained Harvest Food Haven's positive image through social media and our obvious concern for the customers' safety.
- Employees are up to date and implementing food safety skills.
- No new incidents have occurred in the past 3 months.

What could be improved next time:

- Food Safety workshop created more employees "feeling sick" and not attending the workshop.
- Social media was not as well received as we had hoped, we should have been more of a presence on social media than we are.