

# Abstracts

## *Matthias Kopp: Church, Crisis, Communication. From Damage Control to Setting Topics*

Crisis communication belongs to the proprium of ecclesial communicational work. Due to various crises during the past years the Catholic Church has been challenged in this field. However, it is not only crises from which one learns, but rather also from preventive crisis communication: for large events such as World Youth Day or Catholic Congress sophisticated crisis-communication concepts exist. Invariably, in all crises it is a question of regaining lost trust and renewing credibility. In this paper crisis scenarios and the basics related to communicational crisis mastery are addressed. Thereby, every crisis demonstrates that the institution involved emerged from the crisis strengthened.

## *Andreas Schwarz: Crisis Communication in Child Protection. Media Image and Public Relations Work of Youth Welfare Offices in Cases of Severe Child Abuse*

Time and again, the media report on cases of children who have become victims of abuse, sexual violence or neglect – at times with fatal consequences. The role of child welfare offices are frequently addressed then, whereby they are often accused of failure of authority. The article presents the primary results of a study which analyses the internal crisis communication of child protective services and externally of the media coverage, with which it was compared. For this purpose 32 guideline supported interviews were conducted in nine youth welfare offices and the news coverage in regional and national print media concerning child protection services, as well as cases of child's welfare endangerment between 2009 and 2013, were analyzed. In conclusion, the implications concerning crisis communication of youth welfare offices in practice are deduced.

## *Benjamin Brodbeck: A Balancing Act Between Proximity and Dependency. The Efficaciousness of PR and Journalism in the VW Crisis*

Due to their news value corporate crises are of high journalistic interest. This increased attention combined with the prevalent uncertainty and tension in a crisis situation can alter the relationship between public relations and journalism. Based on the Efficacy Approach, the Determination Thesis and taking the relevant public relations and journalistic ethical codex into account, this relationship is described, based on the example of the ongoing Volkswagen diesel-crisis. Qualitative interviews with twelve journalists and two automotive experts regarding their experiences with Volkswagen PR representatives during and before the diesels crisis provide the data-basis for the study. The findings indicate that the crisis has an impact on the relationship between public relations and journalism, whereby an essential role is played by what kind of relationship had been established prior to the crisis.

## *Raimund Hellwig: "Hospital Germs"? On Crisis-Communication in the Health Care Sector*

The setting for hospital-communication has changed massively over the past 20 years: whereas at one time local newspapers reported on the subject of hospitals only as a side issue, today opinion formation is fed by the social web directly from the influence of alleged or actual crisis news out of the hospital. For that reason communication in many hospitals is regulated via a social media codex as well as through the monitoring of social media. Outside communication now includes that hospital personnel are aware of the variety and features of those channels, by which messages can reach the outside. Accordingly, competent reputation and risk management in the field of crisis communication of hospitals are being sought after, required and implemented.

## *Julia Wandt: University Library "simply ASBESTOS". Crisis Communication in the University Field*

To the ongoing reality of universities is the need to react to events for which they are not prepared. However, just as corporations do, universities can prepare for crises and dealing with them professionally. The role crisis communication plays is illustrated by the example of the closing of large sections of the library belonging to the University of Konstanz for several years, just days after receiving the award "Library of the Year 2010", due to the discovery of asbestos there.

## *Jonas Schützeneder: "Now the Team Has to React!" An Analysis of Crisis-Communication by Trainers in Elite Sports*

Driven by constantly increasing media interest, elite sports have become a pure contest of results distinguished solely by crises and flights of success. In the center of these ever more extreme judgements by media and fans alike, stand the trainers. They are the heroes after a victory and the scapegoats after a defeat. Within the scope of a content analysis undertaken in 2017, media depiction of professional trainers from the German soccer, basketball, ice hockey and handball national leagues was analyzed. In this article the theoretical principles of crisis-communication in sports are outlined and compared with the findings on crisis-communication made by the trainers.

## *Bernadette Uth/Klaus Meier: How Editorial Offices Can Promote Better Discussions. Influencing Factors on the Quality of User Comments*

User comments count to the most popular forms of participation on the Internet. Therefore, the question for journalists and editorial offices regarding what they can do to increase the quality of user comments on their news portals is especially important. With a content analysis of 1.500 user comments on five German news websites,

the factors on the level of commenting policies and those pertaining to the article, which influenced the quality of user comments, were investigated. From the results, it can be deduced that the suspension of anonymity and the introduction of real-name requirements contributed to higher quality. Further, in particular with regard to local and regional news articles, discussions could be specifically stimulated and promoted through journalistic participation.

*Martin Kirschner: The Project of a “Topical Dialogic”. Religious Communication and Theological Culture of Debate in Context of Polarization*

The present time is characterized by conflicts between doctrinal cultures within religions and world views. These are related to various theories of realization and understanding, which involve a positioning towards the normative essentials of modernity and the pluralistic processes of the late modern age. In theology this is reflected by the difficulty in enabling a dialogue and productive arguments between different hermeneutic approaches. The article introduces a research project which, in recourse to the teachings of the *Loci theologici* and in an experimental setting, seeks to develop approaches for a conflict theory concerning the theological establishment of truth. For this purpose, work was undertaken by a heterogeneous group of theologians on an open, topologically designed theoretical framework concerning theological epistemology.

*Joachim Valentin: Reviled and Envied. Reflections on the Media Presence of the Pope and Church*

The external communication of the Catholic Church is characterized, on the one hand, through the enviable gravity of popular church services being broadcast, but in recent years, unfortunately, also by the accumulation of scandals within core areas of Evangelical councils. As an answer thereto, it might serve to take seriously anew the anthropological turn of Karl Rahner, which is reflected not only in the texts of the II. Vatican Council, but also in the crucial media ethical texts of the last decades. After all, it shapes the – not uncontroversial – dealings of the media by Pope Francis.