DEDICATION
As the Tourism Crisis Management Institute celebrates it’s third year, we continue our dedication to Bernie Machen, President of the University of Florida. It was his vision and commitment to sharing the importance of tourism and crisis management which made this Institute possible!

VISION
The vision of the TCMI is to be the premiere North American Tourism Crisis Management Institute proving innovative, scholarly and applied research-driven service to private and public sectors. Quality research is facilitated through interdisciplinary teams of experts with experience and knowledge in problem solving.

MISSION
The mission of the TCMI is to develop research driven solutions to crises that address reduction, readiness, response and recovery issues in local, national and global tourism economies.
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we move into our fourth year, the Tourism Crisis Management Institute has matured with multiple partners, which have enabled us to make significant contributions to the Industry over the past year. These partnerships include organizations and institutions that represent the private, public and academic sectors.

We would like to recognize and offer thanks to all of our partners, namely, Dr. Siva Srinivasan (UF) and Dr. Coreen Matyas (UF), Dr. Jorge Villegas (University of Illinois, Springfield), Dr. Walter Klages (Research Data Services), Ms. Joni Newkirk, Mr. Scott Sanders, and Ms. Amy Elliot (Integrated Insights, Inc.), Dr. Suzanne Cook and Mr. Dennis Petroskey (United States Travel Association).

Our next fiscal year is exciting, as we have multiple projects scheduled especially with respect to the Gulf Oil Spill economic recovery initiatives. More specifically, we propose to better understand the impact of the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill on Florida’s tourism industry and provide a baseline study of perceptions of visitors and non-visitors alike. In addition, to determine the best predictor of why visitors may actually travel to the affected destination and their economic impacts to the region. Our current research shows that tourist’s perceptions of the area have been greatly altered due to the spill and the media’s coverage of the destination. Currently, we have maintained a working relationship with Research Data Services in Tampa, Florida and continue to monitor the impacts on tourism.

We also look forward to hosting our 1st Annual Tourism Crisis Management Leadership Workshop in October 19-20, 2010 at the new Downtown Hampton Inn in Gainesville, Florida. We have invited excellent experts from the private, public and academic sectors and we anticipate a successful inaugural workshop. In the coming year, we hope to continue our initiatives and keep making a positive impact for the tourism industry to mitigate the economic, environmental and social impacts of crises.

Stay with us over the next year… we hope to see you at our Leadership Workshop or online for our certification training!

Sincerely,

Lori Pennington-Gray
Lori Pennington-Gray, Ph.D.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

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Identifying the Factors that Influence the Evacuation Decisions of Florida Tourists when Hurricanes Strike!

Funded by: Eric Friedheim Foundation

Objective
The broad goal of this research was to understand how heterogeneous tourist groups process hurricane-related messages leading to their evacuation decisions. Especially, this study attempted to identify factors that influenced tourist’s evacuation decisions in the event of hurricane strikes.

Methods
Data collection was conducted during the hurricane season in July-August, 2009. Two modes of data collection were employed. (1) Focus Group Interviews (n=9) and (2) Stated Preference Intercept Interviews (n=465). The survey was self administered and was conducted at multiple sites in Orlando and Clearwater St. Petersburg.

Findings: Focus Group
The focus group yielded eight dominant themes with respect to the likelihood to evacuate from the current destination: 1) Distance and time from hurricanes, 2) Likelihood of getting hit by the hurricane, 3) Mode of transportation (car, plane), 4) Ability to get out of destination (plane or bus ticket), 5) Presence of family (with them or not), 6) Infrastructure (highway accessibility), 7) Shelter (availability, food, water, distance), 8) Source of information (local TV, weather channel, hotel, etc).

Findings: Stated Preference Survey
The figure below outlines factors that influence tourist’s decision making with regard to voluntary evacuation in the event of a hurricane.

Recommendations
Emergency Management Agencies and DMOs should coordinate efforts to provide better information about what tourists should do if a hurricane strikes. Hotels and other accommodations may also need to prepare plans and guidelines to accommodate tourists’ needs in the event of hurricanes.

The findings from the survey suggest that an area with many tourists may need extra time for evacuation. Thus, more time may be needed to evacuate tourists promptly. DMOs and Emergency managers need to collaborate to provide tourists with information during hurricane season on shelters, social media and one-stop shopping websites, which would aid in improving the evacuation speed for tourists.
Identifying Best Practices in Crisis Communications: Creating a Tool Box
Funded by: United Nations World Tourism Organization

Objective
This project is part of the UNWTO’s initiative to provide the tools for Destination Management Organizations to manage crisis communications effectively. TCMI was subcontracted by The Dexter Koehl Group, LLC.

Methods
The study uses interviews to gather information from several DMO executives with regards to their experiences in handling crises, especially their lessons learned in communications.

Hurricane Risk Information Behavior while in the Destination
Funded by: ASTA Holland America Line Graduate Research Scholarship

Received by Ignatius Cahyanto, PhD student
This proposed project will specifically examine the relationship between tourists’ personality, risk-specific belief, relevant hazard experience, current knowledge and relevant channel beliefs with tourists’ confirmation effort. This research is part of Mr. Cahyanto’s doctoral dissertation.

Research Questions
1. What is the relationship between tourists’ individual characteristics with their confirmatory effort?
2. What is the effect of tourists’ personality on their confirmation effort with regard to hurricanes?
3. What is the effect of tourists’ risk-specific belief on their confirmation effort with regard to hurricanes?
4. What is the effect of tourists’ relevant hazard experience on their confirmation effort with regard to hurricanes?
5. What is the effect of tourists’ hurricane knowledge on their confirmation effort?
6. What is the effect of tourist’s channel belief on their confirmation effort?
SOCIAL MEDIA

The role of media, information technology, internet and the evolving use of social networking mediums has gained major importance and utilized as critical avenues for information dissemination with respect to crisis communication. Proactive communications is a strength to deploy, as negative information flow can rapidly infiltrate due to use of contemporary technology. Consequently, rapid and intense negative publicity can dramatically affect the marketing appeal of a destination, especially during the recovery stage. Safety concerns associated with perceived risk is a paramount aspect of travel destination choice for most tourists. Therefore, this year we have expanded our initiatives within the context of new mediums. TCMI now has a presence on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. All three social mediums are employed and updated on a regular basis.

In addition, TCMI also has a new blog site (www.travelcrisis.com), which is a cooperative effort with Innovation Analysis Group in California, to track disruptive travel activities worldwide for travelers. The blog allows users to track the disruption based on types of events, locations, types of travel and uncategorized disruptions in real time.

In January, 2010, we inaugurated the blog site during the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, Canada. We found very few crises during the Games, however, of those which did occur, the majority were associated with local residents and their expression of policies related to the games and subsequent impacts to their community.
SELECTED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

**National Congress of Tourism Investigation**

Tourism Crisis Management

October 19, 2009
Tijuana, Mexico (SECTUR)

**Futurismo**

TRAINING POLICE OFFICERS AS “TOURISM AMBASSADORS”

February 25, 2010
Monterrey, Mexico (Fideisomiso Turismo Nuevo Leon)

**Florida Attractions Association**

The Crisis Event: Victimized or Managed?
What’s your Plan?

May 28, 2010
St. Augustine, Florida (Florida Attractions Association)

**Travel & Tourism Research Association**

Avoiding the Catastrophe... Stand. Be Counted and Deliver

June 20, 2010
San Antonio, Texas (Travel & Tourism Research Association)
Online Certificate

Course Details
To address the critical need to prepare tourism industry professionals for crises, TCMI’s comprehensive Online Tourism Crisis Management Certificates for Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), Lodging Industry and Attractions Industry continues to be offered. The certificates focus on crisis reduction, readiness, response and recovery efforts from natural and human-induced disasters that might affect destinations or businesses.

Course Instructors
DMO:          Elaine McLaughlin
              Lori Pennington-Gray
Lodging/Attractions:
              Scott Sanders
              Amy Elliott
              Joni Newkirk

Leadership Workshop

OCTOBER 19-20, 2010
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

TCMI offers an outstanding professional development opportunity for general managers, CEOs, presidents and other leaders in the tourism industry. In response to the need for crisis planning in the tourism industry, TCMI is bringing together key industry and academic leaders who have excelled in crisis management in order to share their experiences in a one and a half day workshop. These invited leaders have been innovative as well as excelled largely as they have recognized the importance of crisis management planning.

Leaders in the industry can look forward to learning about the experience of other tourism related businesses as it relates to crisis management. Sessions will focus on leadership issues related to risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery, which will provide the template for a tourism crisis management plan. Presenters from both hospitality/tourism and emergency management will provide best practices to help provide working examples of how to lead an organization through nature or human induced crisis in order to minimize damage to business and revenue. Participants will receive a certificate of participation.

OUR DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

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<tr>
<td>Lee Cockerell</td>
<td>President Lee Cockerell Inc.</td>
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<td>Steve Collins</td>
<td>Director Environmental and Health Programs</td>
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<td>Cruise Lines International Association</td>
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<td>Thomas Drabek</td>
<td>John Evans Professor and Professor Emeritus, University of Denver</td>
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<td>Scott Ackerman</td>
<td>VP Travel Guard</td>
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<td>John McCarthy</td>
<td>Former President Sanibel Harbor Resort and Spa</td>
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<td>Dennis Petroskey</td>
<td>Senior Vice President, Communications US Travel Association</td>
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<td>Kitty Ratcliffe</td>
<td>Former Director New Orleans CVB</td>
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<td>Brent Ritchie</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, Chair University of Queensland, Australia</td>
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<td>Andrea Schultz</td>
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<td>Peter Tarlow</td>
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<td>Chris Thompson</td>
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Crisis Planning and Preparedness in the United States Tourism Industry

Published in Cornell Hospitality Quarterly

The tourism industry is extremely vulnerable to crises and disasters which can have devastating and sustained long-term impacts for destinations and the economy. Hence, it is imperative to focus on crisis planning and preparedness for the industry. The purpose of this study was to explore current levels of crisis planning and preparedness in the U.S. tourism industry. In addition, the study examined the influence of organization/business resource allocation and past crisis experience with respect to communication procedures and planning criterion. Phone interviews with tourism leaders from three key industry segments (Lodging, Attractions and Promotions) were conducted. Majority of organizations had a crisis preparedness plan which was updated regularly. Overall, resource allocation had the most significant impact on crisis planning and communication procedures than past crisis experience.

Destination Management Organizations and Tourism Crisis Management Plans in Florida

Published in Tourism Review International

Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) at the local level are at the forefront of crisis management planning for the tourism industry. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of the role of DMOs in the event of a crisis. While crisis preparedness of an organization is based on the respective crisis plans, minimal attention has been given to the analysis of DMO’s crisis management plans in the U.S. The nature of organizational crisis plans can be analyzed through the use of multiple variables. This study examines DMO crisis plans in Florida that are designed specifically for the tourism industry, and are analyzed based on geographical location, bed tax revenues and the number of employees. The results indicate that revenues play a significant role in determining the level of tourism crisis management preparedness within DMOs.
Research/Proposals

1. Dr. Pennington-Gray is listed as an expert on the Oil Spill Experts Database which is housed at Florida State University (one of two tourism experts in the State). www.oilspill.fsu.edu

2. Submitted proposal to VISIT FLORIDA, the state tourism agency, to study the impact of advertising by VISIT FLORIDA on the traveling public.

3. Submitted proposal to the Florida Institute on Oceanography to study the impact of the Oil Spill on Florida’s tourism industry.

4. Seminar presentation and discussion on Oil Spill preparedness and recovery initiatives at the Florida Attractions Association conference.

Industry Involvement

1. TCMI is in close contact with the US Travel Association to monitor research needs and issues related to the impact of the Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

2. Attended three webinars offered by VISIT FLORIDA to monitor the situation and associated impacts.

3. Attended one conference call with the Board of Directors of the Florida Association of Visitor and Convention Bureaus.

4. Communication with the Collins Institute in Tampa —contact for research/policy on the Oil Spill and offshore drilling

5. Ongoing collaboration with Integrated Insight, in Orlando, Florida, to continue to put on workshops/guest speaking engagements on the impact of the Oil Spill as well and how to prepare for crises in general.
Funded Research
Eric Friedman Foundation Grant
UNWTO- Crisis Communications Best Practices
ASTA Holland American Line

Invited Presentations


Professional Presentations


Referred Publications


Submitted Proposals for Funding


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Will you be ready for the next crisis?
Join us in our efforts to prepare for tomorrow!