



COSMIC

Guidelines for the use of social media for public organizations

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About COSMIC

COSMIC will deliver a set of instructions, recommendations & best practices for the use of social media in emergency situations.



MAP CRISES & COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION NEEDS

MAP USE OF CURRENT & EMERGIN TECHNOLOGIES IN CRISES

MAP ETHICAL, LEGAL AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS WITH THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN CRISES

GUIDELINES FOR CITIZENS AND PUBLIC/PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS



Society and crises

- Based on a literature review and case studies we conclude:
 - Citizens predominantly prepare for crises they perceive to present a significant and imminent threat to themselves or their relatives;
 - In crisis situations, citizens do what they are used to do in a day-to-day situation and are capable of taking greater responsibility for themselves and others.

Pukkelpop as an example

- Pukkelpop = music festival, 3 days
- Kiewit (Hasselt)
- 60.000 people
- 18.08.2011 (first festival day)
- Storm :
 - winds up to 170 km/h
 - rain: 36 l/m² in 20 minutes
- 5 dead, 23 heavy injured, >300 injured



How thunderstorms at Pukkelpop 2011 stimulated Belgium's use of social media for disaster response

For Disaster 2.0, Peter Mertens



- Mobile network saturated ; tweets still possible
- Young people
 - twitter-minded
 - parents at home
- Solidarity (via social media)



Society and crises

- Based on a literature review and case studies we conclude:
 - A minority of individual use social media for malicious purposes.
 - Social media can be used for countering unreliable and incorrect information
 - We must be careful on how to advise citizens should use social media

Aims of guidelines: AID

- ***A**dvancing the ability of civic society to take responsibility for safeguarding its wellbeing*
- ***I**ncreasing trust among and between civic society and authorities*
- ***D**eveloping the capacity of civic society and authorities to use social media responsibly*

Key Principles

- 1 In general information from citizens on social media can be trusted during crises
- 2 Citizens often make a better use of social media than government (therefore, government should adapt to citizens' initiatives during crises)
- 3 Citizens may need a little bit of help from government to use social media even better during crises.

The COSMIC guidelines: an overview



- Functionality of social media for crisis management and for citizens
- Ethical, Legal and Social Issues (ELSI) in the use of social media in a crisis
- Tips & tricks for authorities and institutions
- Tips & tricks for citizens



Guidelines: Functionality

- Our findings suggest that new media, including social media provide various communicative and organisational functions:

ONE-WAY
COMMUNICATION

TWO-WAY
COMMUNICATION

REQUEST/OFFER
ASSISTANCE

RELAY

CAMPAIGN

ORGANISE

2

The type of crisis matters...do we have examples?

Jelle Groenendaal, 11/23/2014

Guidelines: ELSI

- **Tips & tricks**

- Counter-surveillance
- Applying verification of information techniques
- Avoiding misuse of information and situations

- **Considerations**

- Ethical: Surveillance, information sharing practices
- Legal: Privacy, data protection, transparency
- Social: Safety & wellbeing, misinformation, rumours

Tips & tricks for authorities/institutions

- Develop a social media strategy prior to a crisis
 - Cooperate with & support social media initiatives
 - Take social media seriously
 - Consider and respond to ELSI considerations
- Understand your audience
 - Make use of the most popular social media platforms;
- Respond to social media messages in a timely manner;

Rumour



#FuckingObey
@FuckingObey_



Niet naar zuidplein gaan, politie vermeld dat er een persoon een bloedbad wil verrichten RT!
pic.twitter.com/8Igx8wk

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite



ComfortablySmug
@ComfortablySmug



BREAKING: Confirmed flooding on NYSE.
The trading floor is flooded under more than 3 feet of water.

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite

638
RETWEETS

28
FAVORITES



9:04 PM - 29 Oct 12 · Embed this Tweet



Bus on fire: how we use accident tweets to improve situational awareness

bertbruggemans / maart 18, 2014



- **A bus is on fire:** it is not just an engine that is overheated, but the passengers compartment is on fire. This means we will need much more water than a normal car on fire.

- **There is no mention of passengers on board.** Other tweets also confirm this. When there are several tweets that separately mention that there are no passengers, we can consider this information as relatively verified. Next to that we don't see any passengers standing in the proximity of the bus, so this confirms the information on the other tweets. Of course we still do a reconnaissance when we arrive on scene, but based on this information we don't have to send in a lot of ambulances at this moment.

- **The bus is on the side lane,** but smoke will be very intense. So the smoke combined with the place the fire service needs to extinguish the fire, will cause a heavy traffic jam. This information we can pass on to the police and traffic control.



- Governments should stimulate the use of social media by citizens before, during and after a crisis – relationship building is crucial.



- Governments should make citizens aware that tweets are an important source of information during crises;
- Governments should stress the importance of calling 112 in addition to social media usage;
- Use social media to stimulate citizens to take care of each other and take measures.

- Draft guidelines for organizations and citizens can be found on our website:

www.cosmic-project.eu

Your feedback is very much appreciated!

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