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A Review of Agency Communication during the Eaton and Palisades Fire Responses

Content Audits as Crisis Communication Research Tools

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Abstract

Crisis communication literature has called for additional evidence-based research. In response, I employed a content audit to review the social media crisis communication efforts of the Los Angeles Fire Department, Los Angeles County Fire Department, California State Parks and Federal Emergency Management Association during the Palisades and Eaton fires in January 2025. The review is in an effort to find areas of improvement for crisis communication and potentially produce a detailed heuristic that focuses on the pre-crisis and crisis communication phases of natural disaster responses. The content audit provided a means of contextualizing data both quantitatively and qualitatively and showed that crisis communication tends to focus on communication during a crisis response with significantly less attention being paid to pre-crisis and post-crisis communication. Similarly, the volume of communication spiked during the early phases of the natural disaster creating a bell-curve in terms of communication volume. Qualitative insights derived from the content audit include that consistency in communication as well as inclusion of aggressive imagery, appeals to pathos, or imagery of groups of folks physically working on disasters tended to yield the most reactions. Alternatively, word-based messaging without imagery yielded less reactions from the audience. While this audit focused solely on Facebook messaging from four agencies, content audits proved to be effective in using concepts from existing crisis-communication theories to analyze specific pieces of communication. Similarly, the content audit brought out several questions for future research projects and is a viable tool in producing evidence-based research within crisis communication studies.

Introduction

In January of 2025, the Palisades and Eaton Fires in Los Angeles, County destroyed nearly 40,000 acres, 16,235 structures, and killed at least 29 people according to the Los Angeles Times (Mapping the Damages). The fires were fueled by multiple Santa Ana wind events where gusts reached between 60 and 70 miles per hour (Keely). UCLA reported that damages from the fire could cost as much as \$164 billion dollars (CBS News). It comes as no surprise that during complicated disaster responses such as the Palisades and Eaton Fires, crisis communication plays an important role in pre-crisis, crisis response, and post-crisis management.

Crisis communication has been defined by Timothy Coombs as, “the collection, processing, and dissemination of information required to address a crisis situation.” (Parameters for Crisis Communication). It was also defined by Tyler Spradley as, “a series of communicative practices and processes that seek to foster safety and organizational stability when normal operations are challenged by crises.” (Spradley). Each of these definitions agrees that crisis communication involves a process and a crisis. They differ in that Coombs emphasizes ‘information’ and Spradley emphasizes ‘safety and organizational stability.’ It goes without saying that information, safety, and organizational stability are important factors in crisis communication. Nonetheless, a common understanding of each of these definitions provides a good starting point for my study.

In his 2022 publication, Coombs also stated, “Researchers can participate in the quest to improve how to assess crisis situations and to provide evidence to professional crisis managers that can enhance crisis communication efforts in order to aid other organizations and

stakeholders” (Coombs SCCT). This call for both assessing and contributing evidence to crisis managers by coombs and others initiated my interest in analyzing crisis communication. I first intended to create a rubric for grading pieces of communication released by public agencies parallel to the rubric outlined in the cyber-security and infrastructure security agency Communications Interoperability guide (Office of Emergency Communications). However, after my literature review I decided to take a different approach. Instead, I use criteria from existing crisis communication theories as data points for completing a ‘content audit’ of the social media communication of four agencies who were involved in crisis communication for the Eaton and Palisades fires. In A Handbook for Content Analysis, Paula Land defines a content audit as, “a qualitative evaluation of a set of content. When you audit content, you assess it against a variety of measures depending on your context and goals” (Land). I draw context and measures from principles of Situational Crisis Communication Theory, Rhetorical Arena Theory, and other crisis communication research. My goal is simply to analyze the data, compare communication efforts across agencies both quantitatively and qualitatively, looking for common trends and patterns, and looking for inconsistencies in communication to find areas of improvement in communication from agencies to the public. That said, I intend to expand upon this research in the future in an effort to produce heuristics for pre-crisis and crisis-response communication phases of a disaster response more specific than those outlined in Situational Crisis Communication Theory.

Several public agencies were involved in the response and recovery efforts for the Eaton and Palisades fires including Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), California State Parks, Cal Fire, the National Forest Service, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They each participated in crisis communication efforts through various means such as social media, news, press releases, and video releases. I focus on Facebook releases by LAFD, LACFD, the California State Parks, and FEMA for a couple of reasons. Firstly, Facebook and other social media content can be quantified and also analyzed qualitatively in manageable numbers for a project of this size. The analysis can provide insights to improve crisis communication. Secondly, the study also serves as a test to see if a ‘content audit’ seems to be an appropriate tool for crisis communication research. Content audits, while more commonly used in business settings, provide a framework for quantitative and qualitative analysis and can contribute in providing evidence-based research for crisis communication managers.

Literature Review:

I first reviewed several crisis communication studies ranging from theories developed in the 1990’s, to more recent studies about social media in emergency management. Since this is my first effort in researching crisis communication, I was surprised that many of the theories driving crisis communication are based on public relations concerns. Three of the fundamental theories in crisis communication, namely, Situational Crisis Communication Theory (Coombs SCCT), Image Repair Theory (Gamage), and Contingency Theory (Pang, Jin), are interested in creating road maps for organizations to mitigate reputation issues that arise from crisis responses. The theories were later applied to disaster relief efforts. It is important to note that later research has focused on optimizing crisis communication tools and perfecting the use of social media as a means of two-way communication between emergency response organizations and victims.

These of course are great steps towards pivoting the focus of crisis communication to first consider how agencies can best inform the public about crisis related issues.

Of the theories I reviewed, Situational Crisis Communication theory is most central to my project because it is the basis for most of my content audit criteria. In a 2022 research paper titled, “Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) – Refining and Clarifying a Cognitive-Based Theory of Crisis Communication” (Coombs SCCT), Timothy Coombs revisited his 1990’s theory, providing readers with a clear outline of SCCT. The theory itself describes the three time-phases of crisis communication, namely, pre-crisis, crisis-response, and post-crisis. It also points out two major steps in crisis communication called the ethical base response and crisis interventions. While this project surveys all three phases of crisis communication, my future work is mainly concerned with the ethical base response occurring in the early phases of a response when an organization might share information by instructing, adjusting, or sharing information with the public. A research paper called, “Use of Crisis Communication Strategies in Emergency Management,” (Haupt) cites SCCT and also provided the basis for some of the criteria in my content audit. Part of the paper discusses two important ideas in SCCT in depth, namely, a non-linear, cyclical type of articulation in crisis communication including: instructing, adjusting, and sharing. Secondly, it goes further into the concept of Kairos discussing pre-crisis, crisis-response, and post-crisis communication.

I also used content audit criteria derived from Rhetorical Arena Theory, also called RAT. ‘Rhetorical Arena Theory: Revisited and Expanded’ (Frandsen, Johansen), by Finn Frandsen and Winni Johansen revisits a theory published in 2000 that examines the nature of participants and the mediation of crisis communication strategies. In short, the theory attempts to map out the stakeholders in a crisis response where each stakeholder has an amount of ‘space’ relative to their contribution to communication efforts during a response. In the Palisades and Eaton fires, for example, LAFD and LACFD were significant communicators and held fairly large places within the Rhetorical Arena. Alternatively, California State parks acted as a smaller player in the arena because they did not participate in communication as much and also focused solely on the Eaton fire.

“Communicating with the public in emergencies: A systematic review of communication approaches in emergency response” (Hinata), was a literature review, though it highlights the concepts of Modes of Communication, additional criteria in my content audit. Modes of communication consist of one-way passive, passive-two way, and active two-way modes. The modes of communication are the styles of interaction in which agencies communicate to the public. One-way passive occurs when an agency simply provides information without any back and forth dialogue. Passive-two way occurs when an agency more or less scans public communication for information pertinent to a disaster response. Lastly, active two-way communication occurs when agencies and the public interact with one another. This paper also defines the mediums of communication in crisis communication such as social media, telephone, and news as examples.

Two other theories that are peripheral to my research include contingency theory and Image Restoration Theory. ‘Theory advancing practice: The contingency theory in the strategic management of crises, conflicts and complex public relations issues’ (Pang, Jin), is a modern review of contingency theory, a continuum-based theory for public communication that outlines 87 possible factors that influence an organization's stance on a crisis. Alternatively, ‘Using Image Restoration and Situational Crisis Communication Theories for Effective communication’

(Gamage) focused mainly on details about Image Restoration Theory, a theory that more or less parallels Situational Crisis Communication Theory.

My other reading focused on modern research ranging from the late 2010's to within the last couple of years. These papers tended to focus on social media as a means of crisis communication, though I did read parts of the Cyber-security and Infrastructure Security Agency (CICA) National Emergency Communications Plan (National), and viewed their 'Communications Interoperability Performance Measurement Guide' (United States), a rubric used to measure communications between various Emergency Operations Agencies. I also reviewed 'Crisis Management 2.0: Towards a Systematization of Social Software Use in Crisis Situations' (Reuter). This paper created a matrix that describes social media communication from agencies to agencies, agencies to public, public to public, and public to agencies during a crisis. An interesting idea for a crisis communication tool was outlined in, 'An online social network for emergency management' (White). The essay presents a theoretical social network specifically for emergency managers to communicate with each other. Another paper I reviewed is called 'A Holistic Approach to Evaluating Social Media's Successful Implementation into Emergency Management operations: Applied Research in an Action Research Study' (Westbrook). The paper more or less calls for research in emergency communication to become evidence-based, something my project intends to work towards. A general consensus in crisis communication research seems to be a push for more 'evidence-based' crisis communication research, and research that applies theories within specific contexts, cultures, countries and any number of other categories as communication is obviously different within different contexts. My project intends to contribute to evidence-based research by providing a framework for analyzing content from agencies to the public.

Methodology:

The methodology for my research project is fairly straight forward. More or less, the project follows the path of a content audit. A content audit "builds on the inventory. When you audit content, you evaluate it against goals and standards, and you analyze it for quality and effectiveness, revealing information that can be used to improve existing content and plan for the future state" (Land). Content within the context of my content audit refers to the messages sent from agencies to the public via Facebook, though the definition will expand in future research.

The first part of the audit concerns coming up with parameters or criteria to contextualize the data that you collect from the content. After reading through several crisis communication theories, it made sense to draw data points based off of key concepts from previous theories in order to root the content audit in existing crisis communication research. I primarily employed Situational Crisis Communication theory and Rhetorical Arena Theory for criteria, though I did add some of my own criteria such as date, agency, and message for ease of analysis. Below, I define the main categories in which each piece of content will be measured. The subcategories are listed in bullet points within each category and serve as the possible 'answers' for a piece of content as it fits within one of the main categories.

Criteria:

Date of Communication: Date that the social media post went live

Agency: The agency that posted the message on social media

- LAFD – Los Angeles Fire Department
- LACFD – Los Angeles County Fire Department
- California State Parks
- FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Association

Context (From SCCT): The context of the crisis. In this case, the context for every piece of communication is ‘accidental.’

- Victim – a crisis where organizations can be a victim alongside stakeholders
- Accidental – No one seems to have control over crisis factors, i.e. technical error or technical accidents
- Preventable – Had people acted differently, the crisis would not have happened

Kairos (From SCCT): The timing of the message within the context of the disaster response

- Pre-Crisis: Crisis Communication before January 8, 2025
- Crisis-Response: Crisis Communication from January 8, 2025 - January 31, 2025
- Post-Crisis: Crisis Communication after January 31st, 2025

Articulation (From SCCT via Use of Crisis Comms): A three-part cyclical model for crisis communication

- Instructing: informing stakeholders of response practices
- Adjusting: integrating information related to the who, what, when, where, why, and how
- Sharing: disseminating at the onset of a crisis

Mode of Communication (From Communicating with the public in emergencies): Three categories of social media use in communication between agencies and the public

- One-way: Responders use social media to convey situational updates or advice
- Passive-two way: Emergency responders may track the engagement with the public
- Active two-way: Emergency responders reply publicly to social media and information posts from the public

Type of text (From Rhetorical Arena Theory): Semiotic resources used in crisis communication:

- Words
- Visuals
- Actions
- Artifacts
- Sounds
- Video
- Link

Medium: The vessel for the type of text

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Online Website
- Television
- Texting

Genre: The category of the piece of communication

- Press releases
- Press conferences
- Media interviews
- Formal Statements
- Social Media Posts
- Web Pages
- SMS

Fire Name: Messaging addressed specific fires or both during L.A. Disaster response

- Palisades Fire: the message addresses the palisades fire
- Eaton Fire: the message addresses the Eaton fire
- Both: the message addresses both fires simultaneously

Number of Reactions: the number of reactions to a social media post

Number of Comments: the number of comments on a social media post

Number of shares: the number of shares of a social media post

Message: A brief description of the message for later analysis

Having defined the audit criteria, it should not be overlooked that collecting the data was completed uniformly and in an organized fashion. I created a spreadsheet with dropdown menus for each criterion except for date, likes, shares, comments, and message which are either qualitative or have too much variety in possible answers, i.e. 10 comments versus 1,500 comments. The dropdown menus included the subcategories noted above to minimize any risk of errors.

To collect the data, I started viewing social media posts from individual agencies starting with the earliest pre-crisis posts on January 2nd. I worked through crisis response posts to post-crisis post until posts made on February 17th. For each media post that I viewed, I recorded data in a spreadsheet according to the criteria noted previously. Each piece of communication would then contribute to all of the defined categories for later analysis. While collecting data, it became clear that trends were becoming evident. As trends became evident, I would note any qualitative insights on a separate document. I could then reference those insights and revisit the data in order

to discern whether the qualitative insight is supported by data, or whether I my insight was misinformed.

After gathering data and recording qualitative insights, I then analyzed the data to produce quantitative insights. Lastly, I created charts and graphs to visualize the data, some of which proved to draw out visual representations of the data which I had not previously considered. For example, one of the graphs that I produced provides a view of kairos, consistency, date, quantity of communication, and rhetorical arena in one visual.

Limitations:

I collected a range of data that provides possible comparative analysis for a range of concerns. That said, some of the data proved to be ineffective in that certain subcategories were the same for each piece of communication regardless of other variables. Alternatively, a piece of communication itself may have fallen into multiple subcategories creating a ‘blurry’ definition of which subcategory to input in the spreadsheet.

In the first case, the criteria called ‘context’ included the possibilities of victim, accidental, or preventable as outlined in Situational Crisis Communication theory. Each piece of communication correlated with either the Palisades fire, Eaton fire, or both. Thus, every piece of data was considered a ‘victim’ context. That said, it is important to consider and record context as the data collected here could be built upon by collecting further data with the same criteria from other disaster responses that might include different contexts. A second criteria that has the same issue is ‘Medium.’ This refers to the platform that was used to disperse the given piece of communication. As of now, this study only includes social media posts from Facebook, and therefore, the medium of each post is ‘Facebook.’ That said, I intend to expand the research to include other mediums such as Instagram, twitter, and press releases.

In the second instance where data may have fallen into multiple subcategories of one criterion, the ‘genre’ was not always clear. Sometimes a post on Facebook was simply a social media post. At times a post may have served as a social media post but also provided a link to another website. In other cases, a post may have been a link to a video conference on a social media post. Furthermore, sometimes a message was a shared post from another website that included both a written message and a photo or video. For that reason, I will avoid including ‘genre’ as a criterion in this analysis, though clearer categories or an ability to put data into multiple categories in future research could alleviate this issue.

Keep in mind that while this research project will only provide a content audit of Facebook posts amongst agencies the responded to the Eaton and palisades fires, the overarching goal of this research is to develop either a heuristic or a theory that addresses the ‘ethical base’ phase of crisis communication theory. More or less, it focuses on the pre-crisis, and crisis-communication phases of the response. The heuristic will be based upon a more thorough content audit that spans multiple mediums and perhaps multiple disaster responses. While I intend to continue my research and develop a heuristic or theory, I am still in the process of collecting more data, analyzing data, and finding qualitative insights. For now, I will merely focus on some data analysis and some of the qualitative insights without providing a heuristic.

Results and Discussion:

Due to the nature of the research, there are many possibilities for providing quantitative and qualitative analysis. As I did not have sufficient time to exhaust qualitative possibilities, I will provide quantitative analysis pertinent to the two major theories that were used as criteria in the content audit, namely, Rhetorical Arena Theory, and Situational Crisis Communication Theory. Chart 'A' and Graph 'A' below show data that correlate with the previously stated theories. I will follow that up with a selection of qualitative insights that came about while doing data entry.

Rhetorical Arena

Understanding the rhetorical arena is valuable in developing a heuristic because it makes sense for some stakeholders in the rhetorical arena of crisis communication to dispel certain information, alternatively, it might not make sense for some stakeholders to dispel certain knowledge depending on how central they are to a response, how large their audience is, and a number of other factors.

Subject of Agency Communication (Chart A)

Agency	Palisades	% of Comms for Palisades fire	Eaton	% of comms for Eaton Fire	Both (A post related to both)	Column 4	Total Number of Facebook Posts
LA City FD	109	97.30%	3	2.70%	0	0%	112
LA County FD	10	10.40%	16	16.70%	70	72.90%	96
California State Parks	8	66.70%	2	16.70%	2	16.70%	12
FEMA	0	0%	2	2.70%	71	97.30%	73

While the crisis communication during this particular response was complicated because multiple fires happened at once, the rhetorical arena is shown in part via Chart 'A' seen below. LAFD and LA county FD had the greatest number of Facebook posts over the course of pre-crisis, crisis response, and post-crisis communication at 112 and 96 Facebook posts respectively. This indicates that they were large players in the rhetorical arena. Importantly, they each tended to address specific fires. FEMA had 73 posts, and the California state parks had 12 posts, meaning that they were less smaller players in the rhetorical arena. LAFD focused its efforts on communicating about the Palisades fire as approximately 97.3% of their posts focused on the

Palisades fire alone. LA County FD, on the other hand, focused its communication efforts on the Eaton fire with 72.9% of its posts pertaining to the Eaton fire. FEMA tended to address both fires at time with 97.3% of posts pertaining to both fires simultaneously. Lastly, 66.7% of the California state parks Facebook posts addressed the palisades fire because the Palisades fire affected a state park.

One consideration is that the number of posts might not be a perfectly accurate measure on how central an agency is in the rhetorical arena. It is entirely possible for an agency to post over hundred times, however, if they have a small audience, you must weight their part of the rhetorical arena accordingly. Alternatively, an agency could post only a handful of times yet possibly reach a larger audience. Again, you must weigh their part in the rhetorical arena in conjunction with the breadth of their audience and the influence of their voice within the arena.

SCCT

I will now veer the discussion towards factors that were drawn from SCCT. Graph ‘A’ below shows the amount of communication by the four agencies in the study on any given day over the course of the Palisades and Eaton fire responses. The various colors indicate the agency, and the size of the bar indicates the number of Facebook posts by an agency on any given day. This type of graph shows multiple factors including Kairos, consistency, volume of communication, and rhetorical arena. Because I’ve already touched upon rhetorical arena, I will focus on Kairos volume and consistency in this part of the discussion.

One of the key principles in SCCT is the timing of communication, namely, pre-crisis, crisis-response, and post-crisis. For our purposes, I’ve called the timing of communication ‘Kairos’ because it is indicative of the boiled concept of Kairos meaning, ‘a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment’ (Merriam-Webster) according to the Merriam Webster dictionary. I defined the pre-crisis phase of the Eaton and Palisades responses as communication that took place before January 8th, the first day of the Palisades fire. Crisis response communication occurred from January 8th to January 31st. Lastly, post-crisis communication is any communication after January 31st, the day the fires were finally contained. There were few posts made before the fire, 13 in total amongst all of the agencies I reviewed. A majority of communication occurred early in the crisis-response phase from January 8th to January 20th. The amount of communication began to diminish after the 20th. While further research would need to take place, it seems that stretching this curve slightly could possibly improve communication. In particular, more pro-active, pre-crisis communication could potentially improve a response. The amount of pre-crisis communication depends upon the type of disaster. A hurricane, for example, is easier to predict and therefore pre-crisis communication is emphasized. Alternatively, tornados can occur quickly so less time is available for pre-crisis communication. Of course, this can be mitigated by emphasizing crisis communication seasonally. Agencies could and do, provide extensive communication about natural disasters prior to wildfire season, or hurricane season as examples.

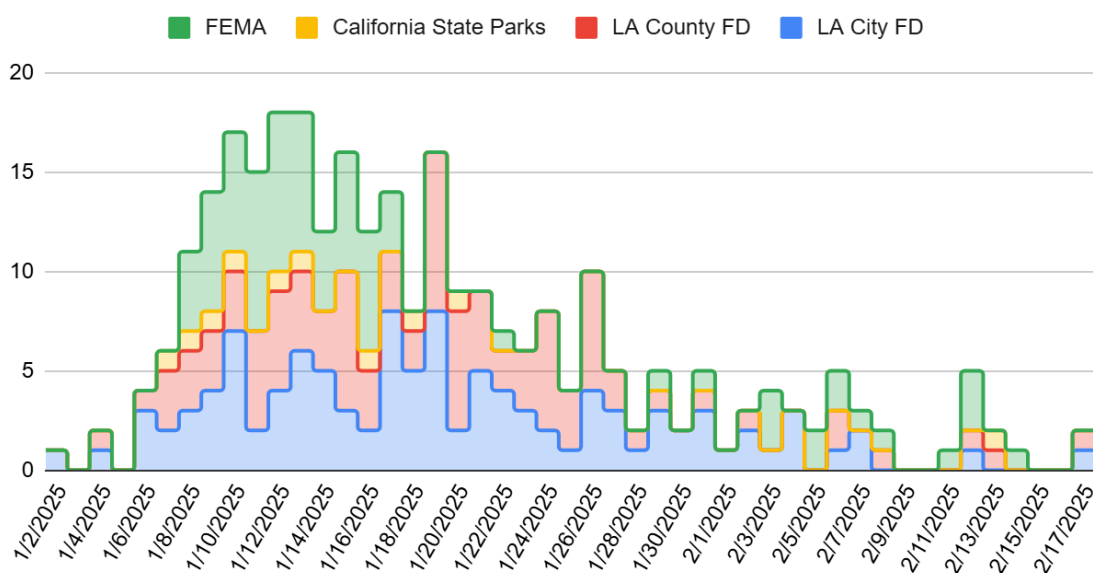
A second consideration that the Graph ‘A’ shows is the volume of communication per day. The volume is similar to Kairos, though it concerns itself with the actual amount of information that is shared with the public on any given day. The graph here shows somewhat of a bell curve. While more communication naturally takes place from agencies to the public during the crisis response phase, studies based on the sheer volume of communication and how that is

understood by victims of a disaster response could potentially improve communication. More communication does not always mean better communication. Flattening the curve could yield more consistency and more organization in information dispersal from agencies to the public.

A third consideration shown in Graph A is the consistency of communication. LAFD and LACFD provided the most consistent communication. Of course, they were the biggest stakeholders in the rhetorical arena as mentioned earlier. While this edges into qualitative trends, the L.A. County FD provided a morning fire update and an evening fire update each day which yielded consistent, high numbers of likes, comments, and shares. It simply indicates that a consistent form of update is effective.

Amount of Communication (Graph A)

Facebook Posts Per Day



Qualitative Insights

While gathering data and viewing crisis communication by agencies via Facebook, qualitative patterns start to reveal themselves. Many of the qualitative patterns I will share correlate with the number of likes and comments generated from a Facebook response. Obviously, the greater number of likes indicates that more people at least saw a post. As an example, LACFD used aggressive imagery early on in the response, such as bright photos of flame and smoke, or firefighters working to save homes. The aggressive imagery was coupled with links to daily fire updates. The aggressive imagery coupled with pertinent information produced relatively high numbers of comments, likes, and shares. Posts that had pertinent information that did not have aggressive imagery did not seem to yield the same number of reactions. An example is an informative post about a press release that only contained words. Further research would have to take place showing that aggressive imagery coupled with

pertinent information yields better dispersal of information as it is unclear whether including aggressive imagery is an effective technique to inform people or merely to create reactions.

A second pattern was that photo collages seemed to receive high levels of reactions, more so than videos. I am not sure why that is the case, but perhaps the information seen in a photo collage combines information that is easier to comprehend than videos as it is not moving, with information that can also show a ‘story’ and could even indicate motion. The photo collages also allow viewers to flip through photos giving them some sense of control. Again, this is reaching into a field far outside of the confines of this study, but the use of photo collages in crisis communication would be an interesting area of further research.

Photos that appealed to pathos also tended to receive higher likes and comments. As an example, LAFD posted an image of a dog that was not necessarily pertinent to the response, though it yielded a high level of likes and comments. Similarly, photos of kids visiting fire stations, volunteers, and large crews working also yielded higher numbers of likes and comments.

The Content Audit as a Crisis Communication Research Tool:

While this research project had a fairly small sample size considering it only looked at the content of the Facebook posts of four agencies, at the very least, it shows that content audits can be effective tools in crisis communication research. They yield easily digestible figures that can be employed by crisis communication managers. They draw out trends that could lead to further research. They are modifiable, meaning that they can be customized to address specific disasters. In the case of the Eaton and Palisades fire, I included a ‘name of fire’ section as communication pertained to the Eaton fire, the Palisades fire, or both. Contrary to the ‘modifiable’ quality of content audits, they could just as easily be used as a standardized method of gathering data. Much of the criteria that I used in collecting data could be applied to the crisis communication of any disaster. In fact, I am hoping to apply the criteria from this content audit to other disasters in order to understand deeper trends across disaster contexts and agency communication practices. Lastly, they allow both quantitative and qualitative analysis, both of which are essential to understand and rationalize in crisis communication.

Conclusion:

The Eaton and Palisades wildfire disaster responses had interwoven disaster communication amongst agencies that addressed multiple forest fires simultaneously. Information was dispelled to the densely populated area of greater Los Angeles meaning that there was a large, complex, audience. Several agencies, non-profits, and private parties participated in the rhetorical arena by contributing to communication efforts in the pre-crisis, crisis response, and post-crisis phases of the response. Amongst the components of the rhetorical arena were LAFD, LACFD, California State Parks, and FEMA. Their audience, message, and articulation varied depending on the timing of the message, the subject message, and the intention of the agency who was communicating.

For my project, I completed a content audit of the Facebook communication by LAFD, LACFD, California State Parks, and FEMA. I analyzed messaging across agencies of different levels to consider the effectiveness of communication from agencies to the public. I employed a

content audit as a tool to do so, basing the criteria of the audit on concepts derived from existing crisis communication theories. The content audit produced quantitative and qualitative insights that could be used to make a detailed heuristic or prescriptive theory that focuses on pre-crisis and crisis-response specifics contingent upon further research. The content audit also proved to be a useful tool in crisis communication research due to its modular nature and ability to draw out trends and insights that can easily be shared with crisis communication managers while bringing up questions that could be explored in future research projects. Alternatively, the content audit could be standardized as a means of collecting data over the course of several disaster types and contexts in order to draw out longer term trends seen across the complicated variety of disasters.

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