



Dorsey Strategic Communications

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## **Executive Summary**

This business plan proposes a yearlong strategy for Dorsey Strategic Communications, a public relations firm specializing in crisis planning and management as well as strategic marketing development. Dorsey Strategic Communications is based in Hartford, Connecticut and exclusively consults spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups advocating in Connecticut.

Market research shows that local small business and non-profit organizations do not have sufficient resources to manage crises. Often times, organizations lack crisis management plans that assist with the reputational and emotional damage they can experience. Dorsey Strategic Communications consults and trains spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups during their time of crisis, and construct proactive crisis plans on their behalves.

## **Mission Statement**

The Dorsey Strategic Communications mission is to professionally and ethically represent its business partners, their missions, values and endeavors. The firm's objective is to act as the management function that builds and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between your organization and its publics whom its shared success depends.

## **Vision Statement**

A crisis is a reputation-defining event in the life of your organization. It is an unpredictable event that thrusts your organization into the spotlight. It presents danger that threatens the organization, and at the same time, an opportunity that can strengthen and infuse new life into your organization. During these critical turning points is when organizations need experienced business partners they can trust. The Dorsey Strategic Communications vision is to be proactive in the development of your organization's crisis plan, help manage your organization's crisis as well as defend and strengthen your reputation.

## **Market Analysis**

### *Primary Audiences*

The firm's primary target audience includes small-to-large sized organizations in Connecticut that specialize in spiritual, religious, ethnic, non-profit and other special interests. Primary audiences are the firm's potential clients. In acquisition of potential clients the firm will remain committed to being

proactive in the development of crisis plans for business partners, helping manage their crises as well as defending and strengthening their reputations.

### *Secondary Audiences*

The firm's secondary target audiences include the various members, publics and stakeholders of its business partners. The firm's relationships with its clients will remain professional, ethical and value-driven. The firm's operations are geared toward crisis planning and management as well as strategic marketing development for its business partners. Essentially, Dorsey Strategic Communications clients' primary publics are the firm's secondary publics.

### *Intervening Audiences*

Intervening target audiences can include but are not limited to the media and advocacy organizations. Media outlets will be highly interested in any and all information regarding crises and the clients' involvement. As a result, Dorsey Strategic Communications will focus on media as intervening publics who can quickly and efficiently disseminate information to the general public.

In addition, advocacy organizations may act as an intervening public if the crisis involves certain topics such as religion, the environment, animals, or human rights. Dorsey Strategic Communications will concentrate on specific advocacy organizations as intervening publics as needed.

## **Situation Analysis**

### *Strengths*

Dorsey Strategic Communications is equipped with several strengths for the crisis management specialization. Unlike, other competing communications agencies in the area, the firm exclusively works with the special interest group niche market. For example, Dorsey Strategic Communications will be exclusively consulting spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups advocating in Connecticut.

Another strength for Dorsey Strategic Communications is being a new firm to enter the Connecticut public relations market. The firm will start fresh and have the ability to cultivate a unique employee and corporate culture of professionalism, ethical practices, honesty, transparency and passion. These qualities will drive employees to succeed on behalf of the firm's business partners.

Although the firm will be new to market, Dorsey Strategic Communications has hired experienced crisis management employees who have prior working knowledge of the specialty. On average, the firm's employees have a minimum of three years experience in crisis communications, reputation management, media relations, fundraising, social media marketing, and research and data analytics for corporate, agency, private-sector, public-sector, non-profit and NGO entities.

This experience has provided employees at Dorsey Strategic Communications with an understanding of the needs of clients, as well as effective and accurate responses to various crisis situations. Prior relationships with media outlets also provide the firm with an advantage over competing crisis management firms. The firm's employees are familiar with what various media outlets expect from clients and they have the skills to deliver value-driven outcomes.

### *Weaknesses*

The firm's biggest weakness is that it is new. Dorsey Strategic Communications will not begin with a well-established client base and will need to aggressively recruit clients, raise awareness of its respectable expertise and business practices as well as build its brand.

Another weakness relates to recruiting employees. There is a stigma attached to crisis management; most professionals understand crisis management job functions to be very stressful and demanding. These qualities may or may not hinder employee recruitment.

Lastly, crisis management usually requires special adherence to legal ramifications of crisis situations. The legal aspect of crisis management can present Dorsey Strategic Communication with a weakness, unless handled responsibly. As a result, the firm will have employees with legal experience and expertise. The firm will need to have legal counsel to ensure that federal, state and local laws and regulations are being followed.

### *Opportunities*

Crisis management is one of the fastest growing public relations specializations. New firms entering the industry with crisis management specializations have the opportunity to quickly gain a strong reputation as a leading crisis management firm. This can be an advantage over competing firms that may not focus on crisis communications.

Additionally, Dorsey Strategic Communications has a distinct opportunity to become one of the leading crisis management firms in the industry that focuses exclusively on business partnerships with spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups advocating in Connecticut. The firm has the opportunity to evolve with the crisis management specialization and establish the firm as the ideal crisis management firm for religious institutions, small businesses and non-profit, ethnic and other special interest groups.

### *Threats*

Although crisis management is a newer specialty in the public relations field, many firms have already developed a crisis management department or have created entire firms devoted to the field. As a result, Dorsey Strategic Communications is competing with other crisis management firms that are already well established in the specialty.

## **Goals and Objectives**

### *Goals*

Dorsey Strategic Communications' goal is to establish us as the leading crisis management firm dedicated to consulting spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups in Connecticut.

### *Objectives*

Dorsey Strategic Communications has three (3) value-driven objectives:

1. To raise awareness of the firm among spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups in Connecticut by 50% by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. (7 months)
2. To establish relationships between the firm and 10 local media outlets by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014. (9 months)
3. To increase the firm's media coverage by 30% by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015. (10 months)
4. To acquire 8 clients by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015. (12 months)

## Strategies and Tactics

### *Actions Strategies and Tactics*

1. Visit spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups in the state of Connecticut to raise awareness of Dorsey Strategic Communications.
  - a. During the firm's four-month business launch, employees will visit and reach out religious institutions and organizations in Connecticut. This action strategy will inform the businesses and organizations of the firm's existence, its services, and why Dorsey Strategic Communications is the best crisis management firm to develop a crisis plan for their entity.
  - b. Employees will also visit and reach out local chapters of the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Clubs and other local community professional organizations. This action strategy will inform the businesses and organizations of the firm's existence, its services, and why Dorsey Strategic Communications is the best crisis management firm to develop a crisis plan for their entity.
2. Create Dorsey Strategic Communications website.
  - a. The firm's website will contain company information, examples of published articles and links to online blogs from the firm and its employees, and an online forum for discussing crisis management as a growing and necessary public relations specialty.
3. Host a special event before October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.
  - a. The firm's special event will be a community-wide barbeque to help raise awareness and officially introduce Dorsey Strategic Communications to the local community. The firm will invite perspective clients, local businesses, media outlets, and important public figures and opinion leaders. This actions strategy will inform the businesses and organizations of the firm's existence, its services, and why Dorsey Strategic Communications is the best crisis management firm to develop a crisis plan for their entity.

### *Communications Strategies and Tactics*

1. Utilize traditional media to inform local spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups as well as local media and businesses about Dorsey Strategic Communications.
  - a. During the four-month launch period, the firm will send formal letters and emails to primary, secondary and intervening target audiences. Afterwards, employees will promote the firm via mail, email and word-of-mouth in order to gain publicity, business partners, and brand loyalty.
2. Utilize social media to inform local spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups as well as local media and businesses about Dorsey Strategic Communications.
  - a. During the four-month launch period, the firm will establish social media accounts on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Afterwards, employees will promote the firm on these social media networks in order to gain publicity, business partners, and brand loyalty.
3. Create and disseminate informational business packets to spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups as well as local media and businesses in Connecticut.
  - a. Among the materials included will be “Dorsey Strategic Communications At a Glance”, “Does Your Organization Have a Crisis Plan?”, “What is Crisis Management?”, business cards, published articles by all employees, and company information.
4. Promote Dorsey Strategic Communications website via social media.
  - a. Once the website has been created, it will be promoted across social media platforms.

### **Budget and Rates**

<b>Dorsey Strategic Communications Fiscal Budget 2014</b>	
<b>Feature</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Rent – Hartford, Connecticut Headquarters	\$2,800/month x 12 months = \$33,600.00
Utilities	\$1,400/month x 12 months = \$16,800.00
Office Renovations	\$3,000 .00
Staff Desktop Computers	\$1,800 x 5 = \$7,200.00
Electronic Supplies (including wireless routers, printer, copier, fax machine, etc.)	\$3,350.00
Office Supplies (including paper, staplers, clips,	\$2,000/12 months x \$24,000.00

notepads, etc.)	
Operations CEO Salary	\$65,000.00/year
Employee Salaries (4 employees)	\$45,000.00/year x 4 = \$180,000.00
Legal Fees	\$7,000.00 annual retainer
Accounting Fees	\$3,000.00 annual retainer
Website Design	\$1,500.00
Website Monthly Host & Domain Charge	\$8.00 x 12 = \$96.00
Publicity Materials	
Letterhead	3,000 copies x \$0.80 = \$2,400.00
Business Cards	1,000 copies x \$0.32 = \$320.00
Brochures	350 copies x \$4.20 = \$1,470.00
Services Fact Sheets	1,000 copies x \$0.80 = \$800.00
Contingency Fund	\$1,964.000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$350,000.00</b>

<b>Dorsey Strategic Communications Services Rates 2014</b>	
<b>Feature</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Cost of Services (for clients) – Crisis Management	\$380/hour
Cost of Services (for clients) – Crisis Plan Development	\$250/hour
Cost of Services (for clients) – Strategic Marketing Development	\$250/hour
Cost of Services (for clients) – Media Training	\$250/hour
Cost of Services (for clients) – Brand Management	\$250/hour

## Evaluation

At the end of the first year of operations (March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015), there will be a number of ways Dorsey Strategic Communications will track and measure the firm's success. These include:

1. Search engine rankings
2. Website activity (hits, searches etc.)
3. Number of clients
4. Number of media mentions
5. Number of special event attendees at community barbeque

6. Benchmark and event evaluation surveys
7. Discussions and posts on social media platforms
8. Number of “likes” on Facebook
9. Number of LinkedIn followers and mentions
10. Number of Twitter followers, “retweets”, “mentions” and “favorites”
11. Revenue

In order to evaluate the Dorsey Strategic Communications business plan, several actions need to take place. In order to determine if the goal to establish us as the leading crisis management firm dedicated to consulting spiritual and religious institutions, ethnic and other special interest groups in Connecticut is achieved, various actions must be taken to acquire metrics. One of the easiest ways the firm can measure the overall success of the strategic plan is with pre and post-campaign studies.

Dorsey Strategic Communications can create and disseminate a survey to surrounding organizations and businesses at two different points: four to six months into the launch of the firm, and after the first year of operations. The first survey will help create an implementation report for the firm to use as a baseline and benchmark to measure the success at the end of the first year.

Also, the firm will evaluate its specific goals and objectives of the business plan. In order evaluate objective one, raising awareness will be monitored through social media as well as press clippings media coverage content analysis. By analyzing and evaluating its social media sites, Dorsey Strategic Communications can determine if there was an increase in awareness. The firm will monitor the number of likes, friends and follower it receives throughout the year as well as analyze the content and conversations on each of page and account. By conducting research using these content analysis methods the firm will observe potential changes in attitudes toward Dorsey Strategic Communication and determine if two-way communication is being used.

To evaluate objective two, Dorsey Strategic Communications will determine if the firm established relationships with 10 local media outlets by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

To evaluate objective three, Dorsey Strategic Communications will conduct press clippings, media coverage content analysis and calculate the number of media mentions and working business relationships the firms makes with reporters and publications.

To evaluate objective four, Dorsey Strategic Communications will determine if the firm signed eight clients by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015 and, most importantly, evaluate the impact of the firm's special event and services. By distributing evaluations surveys to the members who attended the special event and used the firm's services, Dorsey Strategic Communications can determine what contributed to the establishment of its client base. These metrics can help for future planning, implementation of events, and assuring client satisfaction.

The evaluation plan will enable Dorsey Strategic Communications to successfully evaluate its value-driven goals and objectives as well as the overall success of the strategies, tactics and business plan.