

This document is a final project from a communications in crisis situations course. It was to assess for strategies in handling a corporate crisis while critiquing how the crisis was handled in real life. Below is a press release, a letter to stakeholders, my personal crisis plan, and finally my opinion on why modern crisis cases, much like this one, are important to study.

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CC Final Project

Jaclyn Hill, an Iwoia native, was recently under fire after her failed makeup launch in July of 2019 (Brolley, 2018). The now Florida resident is well known for her presence on YouTube in the beauty “guru” community for her outgoing personality and impressive makeup skills. This community consists of many individuals much like herself who make their living on reviewing makeup products and creating tutorials for viewers to follow. Since starting in 2011 Jaclyn has created quite the following for herself sitting at a comfortable 5.78 million subscribers as of December 2019 ("Jaclyn Hill").

Jaclyn Hill Cosmetics lived up to their mantra, “It’s More Than Just Makeup” after customers received lipsticks with what appeared to be mold, hair, and mysterious “grain” mixed into the formula (About). The faulty lipsticks shipped nearly world wide and social media was quick to call out this beauty icon(About). Her large following may seem like her biggest asset, but it quickly turned into her biggest nightmare when she began to trend on twitter for faulty product.

When customers opened lipsticks that appeared to contain mold, hair, and more, they were obviously concerned for safety reasons. However, Jaclyn Hill Cosmetics has assured and since stated that the lipsticks are not moldy or harmful in anyway. As to the hair found in the product, Jaclyn had this to say, "If any of you are receiving lipsticks like this.... please know that

this is NOT hair!" Hill tweeted. "My factory used brand new white gloves to do quality control & they shed all over my product! We switched to rubber gloves 2 days ago & will make sure this never happens again" (Simeon, 2019)

I have identified three important stakeholder groups as companies who have investments in Jaclyn Hill Cosmetics, beauty influencers, and customers. Companies include Estee Lauder, Morphe, Sephora, all of which sell her product, have done collaborations, or in Estee Lauder's case own the company. Furthermore, beauty influencers are on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat.

It has come to our attention that the recent launch of our Jaclyn Hill Lipstick Collection has unfortunately fallen short of our standards. In June of 2019 customers received lipsticks which contained trace amounts of synthetic hairs as well as air bubble pockets which created a grainy texture. Customers, understandably, were concerned and rumors quickly spread suggesting that our product contained mold or was old and expired.

First, we would like to assure you, the lipsticks are *not* harmful to our customers in anyway. None of the lipsticks were expired, or contained mold. All of the lipsticks were/are safe to use, despite the physical abnormalities. We plan to offer a full refund to customers, as well as the guarantee this will not occur again. However, there are some things that are important to address.

Some of the concerns brought to our attention include:

- Small hair/fibers
- Air pockets
- “Mold”
- Grainy texture
- Broken bullets

While the lab that created the first formula used FDA-compliant ingredients and underwent rigorous testing before launch some mistakes occurred in the process. In the case of the air pockets in some of the lipsticks the formula was cooled too quickly, resulting in the air bubbles. Furthermore, after investigation the lint or “hair” on the lipsticks was remnants of gloves that were used when handling the bullet before placing them in the tubes. These two things explain the issues customers were facing when opening and testing the product.

Our shortcomings do not justify the product that was distributed, however it is a situation we can recover, learn from, and avoid in the future. To answer concerns, our website has protected us from legal action by stating,

We will not be liable to you in any way for:

1. any loss of revenue, profit, business or sales that you suffer; or
2. any losses which are not foreseeable or are not obvious when we accept your order.

Overall, this isolated situation is something we are taking action to ensure never happens again. We have stopped further production from the lab that produced the original product and have started the process of vetting new labs with only the highest of standards in mind. To reiterate, here is nothing of concern in the products we initially released.. What is nothing more than mass

hysteria, fueled by influencers attempting to gain attention from current events is now under control. We appreciate your continued support and are looking forward to the future of Jaclyn Hill Cosmetics and its future success in the makeup industry.

Time is of the essence when responding to this situation. Customers will be concerned for their health and question the safety of the product. Furthermore, the cost of the product comes into questions when they receive the faulty product. My strategy consists of three steps.

1. Act Quickly

- a. Do not act *too* quickly

- i. When this situation came to light Jacklyn responded instantly on Twitter, acting defensive and reactive, which came across of arrogant and off putting

- b. I recommend 24 hours to digest and strategize. Anything much past this, in my opinion, is entirely too long to wait, especially when the product in question is used on consumers faces

2. Strategize

- a. Launch an investigation, what went wrong, where, and why

- b. Find out how many lipsticks were in the bad batches

- c. Determine who your target audience is. In this case that would be companies like Estee Lauder as well as the customers who purchased the lipstick

- i. Jacklyn also has over 5 million subscribers on YouTube, meaning more people follow her than people who purchased the lipstick- she has a lot of eyes on her seeing how she will respond

- d. Come up with an easy way for customers to file their complaints, where they can attach pictures, and file for a refund
3. Communicate
- a. I would release a statement on the issue which first and most importantly reassures customers that the products are *not* harmful in anyway
 - b. Sympathize and apologize to those who are upset, this is a frustrating situation and offer immediate refunds
 - c. The company is called “Jacklyn Hill Cosmetics” therefore it is absolutely necessary she is the one to deliver the apology.

This case is an opportunity to learn how to handle a situation that is being watched by millions and globally. Negative information always spreads faster than positive, especially in an era where people, for example other influencers or makeup review artists, can make money on your failures. Managing crises like this is important to do so quickly and effectively, therefore this is an excellent case to study for future situations like these where media can be the end of your career. In regards to her company, this is a time to use the attention to release new and improved product and to get more influencers large and small to buy so they can review. If the following product is much better they will have nothing to criticize and it will shine a brighter light on the company. Ultimately, this serves to validate the old saying, no press is bad press.

Citations

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