CRISIS MANAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

CHALLENGES TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE FACE OF LARGE SCALE EVENTS NEGATIVELY IMPACTING TOLL ROAD OPERATIONS

ASECAP MARKETING EVENT, 3 MAY 2018



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

- It's the goal marketing strives for.
- But can it *significantly* affect toll road profits directly? No.
- Is, then, toll road customer satisfaction a hard business necessity or a nice-to-have luxury?
- Is there a link between customer satisfaction / the marketing function, on the one hand...



...and crisis management / communication, on the other?



REPUTATION (IS THE LINK)

- If it's not on the media (or the social media) it's NOT a crisis
- The extent and duration of "abnormality" experienced by affected parties and "felt" by the public will determine the *newsworthiness* of any incident and the damage to reputation.
- Operational excellence may succeed in limiting disruption but is this sufficient to appease media / social media outcry?





SOME INCIDENTS THAT HAVE MADE THE HEADLINES

- Recently inaugurated tunnel closes down for eight hours due to power and auxiliary power failure, provoking supervising Ministry reaction.
- Xmas holiday drivers stranded for hours due to heavy snowfall.
- Long delays at toll stations due to peak bank-holiday traffic.





YET ANOTHER ROLE FOR MARKETING

- To flourish, operational excellence needs a receptive soil of satisfied customers / stakeholders and crisis preparedness.
- It seems that *this* role of Marketing (making systematic deposits in the reputation account by keeping customers and stakeholders satisfied all the time) must be accomplished a priori.
- Having enough reputation capital "to spend" at any moment may be the only way to prevent an incident from escalating into a crisis (it "buys" good will as well as the opportunity for our point of view to be heard).





"INCIDENTS" THAT MADE THE NEWS FOR NOT HAPPENING

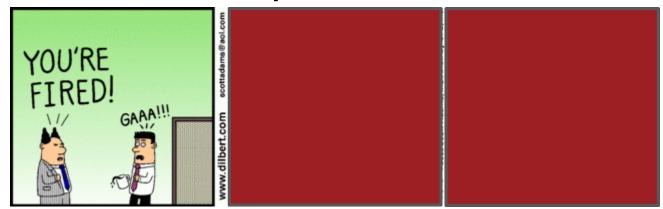
- AMSA communicates actions undertaken for *keeping motorway* open despite adverse weather conditions.
- Olympia Odos launches real-time traffic monitoring and estimation app, to assist drivers make informed trip-timing decisions.
- Nea Odos, Kentriki Odos & Moreas distribute educational leaflets for safe driving with practical information for the driver (i.e. SOS number, do's & don'ts when driving under extreme weather conditions etc.).
- Attiki Odos runs safe-driving campaigns for motorbike riders.
- All are forms of "reputation deposits".





IT MAY ALL BE ABOUT EXPECTATIONS.

- A crisis causes a violent, massive violation of expectations (customers / stakeholders get the opposite of what they expect).
- Can we keep them satisfied by systematically delivering a level of "service" *perceived* by them to be equal to, or higher than what they expect? (so that a single abrupt deviation may appear as an outlier and our "responsibility" may appear minimal).
- Each and every marketing initiative can contribute to this end by successfully diagnosing, *managing* and *addressing* broader customer / stakeholder expectations.





A SMALL DIGRESSION

- In Greece, in the recent past, toll roads became synonymous to crisis.
- Construction of the country's 2nd generation projects coincided with Greece's protracted economic crisis, leading to
 - existential crises (2 resets),
 - financial crises (50% fall in toll revenues),
 - social (refuse-to-pay movement) and political (public criticism of toll rates by elected officials, even by co-signatories to the PPP contracts) legitimation challenges



A REMINDER ALBANIA, APRIL 2018





INTERESTING QUESTIONS

- What factors enter the "value-for-toll" formula? (many of the services offered are invisible to i.e. drivers who do not use them)
- Why is customer satisfaction (and reputation) important, even if customers / stakeholders have no real alternatives (paying drivers to take another route, roadside residents to move elsewhere etc.) and toll revenues are not seriously affected in a direct way?
- When in a crisis, do or say? (Maybe say what you are doing to end the disruption and all the things you have done to prevent it from happening in the first place.)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE