



TIEMS Berlin Conference Declaration On:

Public alerting and social media during crisis and disasters

Fraunhofer FOKUS, Berlin, 30th Oct to 1st November 2013

Declaration

For crisis communication in 21st century

Recognizing:

that the conference on “Public alerting and social media during crises and Disasters’ held in Fraunhofer FOKUS, Berlin, Germany from 30th October until 1st November was attended by Emergency Management professional and practitioners from 20 countries and was a successful in providing opportunities to discuss important topics such as:

- Use of public sirens warning systems
- Modeling of public dissemination of alerts
- Lessons learn
- Monitoring and analyzing social media channels
- Social media as a sensor
- App’s for disaster

Appreciating

digital access is not equal around the world. There is a technology divide between the developed and developing world in terms of availability ‘smart’ phones and Information Technology (IT). Furthermore different generations have different sensitivities to ‘new’ and ‘old’ media channels.

Also appreciating

social media has a role to play in Emergency Management, so it is essential Emergency Managers and Crisis Communication Managers establish a protocol for utilizing the medium.

The TIEMS conference participants recommend:

- Social media should be used as part of a multichannel approach, social media alerting alone is not enough, traditional media like telephone, radio, TV and print material also have an important role.
- Media like Twitter cannot provide detailed information; thus it is necessary that messages refer to more informative sources regarding emergency management.
- Linkages to existing governmental websites which have high credibility should be explored and established.

- Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) needs adaption to work with social media.
- A white paper, precursor to a standard is needed which covers social media crisis communication as at present there are none.
- The white paper should consider either using the European Union (EU) Committee of European Nationalisation (CEN) approach to standard development which is open to input from Non-EU members <http://www.cen.eu/cen/Sectors/TechnicalCommitteesWorkshops/Workshops/Pages/default.aspx> or seek to use it to develop existing standards.
- The white paper should to cover the most basic systems of public alerting as well as have an adaptable foundation, ready to include new technology development.
- There is a need for more evidence, rather than the present case based approach, to better validate the use of social media for public monitoring and alerting. TIEMS recommends more quantitative research in this area
- Research into closed social networks, such as Red Cross might be a starting point for benchmarking data.
- Awareness is needed of social media tools that they can impact personal security and those who develop or endorse new tools need to make them resilient against mal-use.
- Some social media have induced serious ethical concerns; this should be debated regarding the use of social media for crises and disaster management.
- Good preparedness programs both for business and public organizations are not just technological; they need to reflect human behavior during crises and disasters and therefore should include proper psychological input from experts.

Acknowledging

the hard work of Fraunhofer FOKUS team in arranging the TIEMS conference and tours. As well as the endeavors of the speakers, exhibitors and poster makers all of which help to share knowledge of best practices at the event.

Thanking

Michael Klafft, Project Manager at FOKUS Fraunhofer for being a gracious host and making this event a very memorable occasion.

**Adopted on November 1st by the conference participants at
Fraunhofer FOKUS, Berlin, German.**