



# A TIME OF CHANGE:

How CCOs and CMOs are Handling a New Presidential Administration



Trump is causing unprecedented uncertainty for Chief Communications Officers and Chief Marketing Officers. According to *Yahoo Finance*, as of February 2017, Donald Trump has used Twitter to call out more than 60 organizations since 2009.

Some examples include:



## FAKE NEWS

The new administration has also created a heightened focus on the rise of fake news and alternative facts, changing how consumers rely on traditional institutions for information. Communications and marketing leaders reported they are preparing their organizations as best they can in anticipation of any issues, for better or worse.

## ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO TACKLE TWO IMPORTANT WORK STREAMS IN PARALLEL

- 1 Planning for a potential issue or crisis.
- 2 Creating a strategic blueprint to best position their respective organizations to communicate both internally and externally about changes from the new presidential administration.

## ONE CCO's ROADMAP — for a — TRUMP PLAN

### Move Quickly:

Coincidentally, the response plan was sent to upper management for review just days before her industry's leaders were summoned to the White House for a meeting with the president.

### Stay True to Your Core Values:

The CCO works for a company that's very vocal in its commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. Even in this period when those values have become politically charged, she says the organization's communications won't waver from those values. The key, she says, is continuing to express their values in ways that are apolitical and show their positive impact on the business.

### Seek Broad Buy-In:

The CCO realized that she needed input and signoff from as many leaders as possible. Even though the company holds some progressive views, it still has a bit of a conservative tilt. She needed to make sure she took into account multiple viewpoints.

### Be Laser Focused:

The plan tells communicators exactly if, when, how, and how often to respond to different types of scenarios, whether Trump's statements are positive or negative, true or "alternative facts." It also details how quickly they must respond on social media — as soon as 15 minutes if the president tweets about the company.

### Think Outside Your Walls:

The blueprint also outlines company responses if the president or White House make statements that affect the industry as a whole.

### Even When You Plan, Expect the Unexpected:

A comprehensive blueprint can't consider every scenario or account for human behavior. When one consumer asked a company employee to show her support for a progressive event, the employee innocently complied. Of course, the consumer mentioned it on social media, from where it was picked up by mainstream media. When questioned about the situation by reporters, the company calmly explained that individual employees sometimes comply with customer requests to support their causes, and cited previous apolitical examples.

### The Lesson is Clear:

When you're a Fortune 500 company, stakeholders will assume that even individual gestures represent the organization's views. Employees from the top down need to be reminded that seemingly insignificant actions can have major repercussions. But employees should also be shown on a regular basis that the company will stay true to its core values.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

Overall, companies are taking steps to *proactively prepare for opportunities and challenges* in the new presidential administration. With potential changes to regulation, immigration, and other government actions, CCOs and CMOs are anticipating the impact on their organization and industry. It's vital they *create a framework for collaborating* cross-functionally with other teams, such as government relations or affairs, to ensure they are being *proactive and strategic*.

