

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: Crisis Communication and Reputation

Management: A Content Analysis of a Chinese High-speed

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As one of the most developed example of public transportation in China, the high-speed railway suffered a crisis because of an extremely serious collision accident on July 23, 2011. The government conducted the crisis communication try to save the reputation of the government and Chinese high-speed railway. By the means of a content analysis, this study was trying to find out: (1) What did strategies the Ministry of Railway use in this case? (2) How were these strategies used in the high-speed railway case? (3) What was the role the media played in the case?

92 articles in total were used in the content analysis from selected three newspapers with 223 total useable quotes. The results showed that the strategy the government employed included (corrective action, justification, concern, denial, excuse, scapegoat, compensation, and apology). These strategies were used different in different time section within one month after the accident happened. In addition, the results showed the corrective action and justification strategies were highly used through the entire process of crisis communication. The media, especially the international media, played a huge role in the case, which always lead the tendency of the crisis communication and reputation management.