

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**