

Are you “telling it like it is”?
**The DER SPIEGEL scandal and its impact on the
reputation of an entire industry in times of fake news
and lying press**

TEACHING NOTES

The authors prepared this case solely as a basis for class discussion and not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. Although based on real events and despite occasional references to actual companies, this case is fictitious and any resemblance to actual persons or entities is coincidental.

Teaching plan

This teaching plan serves as a guide through the presentation of the DER SPIEGEL scandal which might affect an entire industry in times of 'fake news' and 'lying press' discussions. Thus, this case is an example of a real-life management decision that a competitor magazine in the industry made to respond to a scandal in the field of corporate brand management. This guide aims to provide assistance to the presenter with the preparation, organization and structure of the case so that an engaging discussion among students is created and the below stated learning objectives are achieved. Hereby, the students of the Corporate Brand Reputation Management course represent the audience for this case. The teaching notes consist of a case synopsis, a description of why the DER SPIEGEL scandal can be considered an evergreen case, learning objectives including theoretical background, discussion and assisting questions, teaching suggestions as well as an epilogue.

Case synopsis

On December 19 2018, DER SPIEGEL revealed on its Twitter account that they had published nearly 60 articles by the prize-winning reporter and editor Claas Relotius, who had admitted that, in several instances, he either invented stories or distorted facts. For example, he included individuals in his stories who he had never met or spoken to, telling their stories or quoting them. As a consequence, DER SPIEGEL and the media group have taken various actions to resolve the crisis, for instance by reporting about the scandal in a very transparent way and apologizing to the readers, the news industry and the family of DER SPIEGEL founder. Even though this scandal is product-rooted, it affects the corporate brand as well as other product brands of the SPIEGEL group. Furthermore, considering that the SPIEGEL group is one of the most renowned media groups in Europe, this is a major scandal which might have an impact on an entire industry in times of 'fake news' and 'lying press' discussions. Thus, it is interesting to observe the reaction of the competition to this scandal. As an international equivalent to DER SPIEGEL, both known for precise editorial work in terms of fact checking and copy editing, The New Yorker's reputation might be affected due to the industry crisis. Therefore, the following questions arise:

Should you [as an Editor-in-chief at The New Yorker] comment on the incidents or not? And if so, would you support, be neutral or criticise DER SPIEGEL? What are the short- and long-term consequences for The New Yorker?

Would your decision change if you were a German competitor? What are the short- and long-term consequences for German competitors?

Relevance for now and the future

In the era of the polarised political world, and ‘fake news’ accusations, a media scandal is of extremely sensitive nature. Within the world of journalism, story fabrication might be the most prominent type of crisis, shaking one of the most prominent elements of a news outlet’s reputation, its trustworthiness. Therefore, the learning outcomes of crisis management within the media and journalism context provide a unique insight to an industry which is usually on the other side of the field, with an inquisitive approach towards corporations’ scandals. This case represents a crisis, which emerged internally and affected the core of the brand (telling it like it is), which can be regarded as one of the most severe types of crises. Therefore, we believe that the present case can serve as an interesting and thought-provoking base of discussion, including various aspects, ranging from current political climate to organisational culture management.

Learning objectives

The present section introduces the learning objectives of the DER SPIEGEL case. The specific learning outcomes are related to crisis management and -communication, stakeholder management, corporate brand identity and reputation management, and internal branding/organisational culture management. **Table 2** at the end of the section summarises the key learning outcomes and is organised under the concepts of remembering, understanding, applying, evaluating and creating. The first three concepts (remembering, understanding, and applying) clarify the DER SPIEGEL case and the handling of the crisis, while the evaluation and creation of solution are the learning outcomes, which can be fulfilled by answering and recommending the case questions.

Crisis management

One central worry in reputation management is the concern about a major crisis (Roper & Fill, 2012). In order to understand the severity of the DER SPIEGEL scandal and its influence on the competition, a theoretical background on crisis management is necessary.

Crisis management and –communication

Even if the crisis is product brand-rooted, the corporate brand is mostly affected as well. Especially, when reflecting on corporate identity and reputation in times of brand crisis, the significance of corporate-wide orientation and the responsibility of the management becomes obvious (Greyser, 2009). In this case, the scandal of DER SPIEGEL affected the whole SPIEGEL group.

Augustine (1996) suggest that the following steps are crucial in order to successfully manage a crisis situation:

- Avoiding the crisis
- Preparing to manage the crisis
- Recognizing the crisis
- Containing the crisis
- Resolving the crisis
- Profiting from the crisis

Since the first and second stage have clearly been ignored by the SPIEGEL group and since the crisis has not fully been resolved yet, we will focus recognizing and containing the crisis in more detail.

Recognizing the crisis includes assessing the seriousness of the crisis and its impact on the brand's reputation. According to Greyser (2009), the severity of the situation can be evaluated on four elements: the brand elements, the crisis situation, company initiatives and results. Moreover, Greyser states that a crisis can be considered extremely severe if the essence of the brand, which is *"the distinctive attribute/characteristic most closely associated with the brand's meaning and success"* (Greyser, 2009, p.592), is affected. Understanding the brand essence and recognizing the threats towards it is crucial in crisis management. Greyser (2009) also emphasizes that a crisis is more severe if it evolves from within the organisation.

In the case of the SPIEGEL group, the brand promise of the founder Rudolf Augstein *"sagen, was ist"* (telling it like it is) can be considered the essence or the core of the SPIEGEL group's brand. Since the fabricated stories by Claas Relotius extremely contradict to the essence of the brand and since the crisis is rooted internally, we consider this scandal extremely severe.

In order to overcome the crisis, effective communication and authenticity are key (Greyser, 2009). Roper and Fill (2012) describe the purpose of corporate communication as follows *"Corporate communication is concerned with presenting an organisation, in ways that management determine, so that stakeholders recognise, understand, like and interact with it in ways that are important to them."* (p.214). Moreover, they state that strategic events such as a crisis or disaster urge the use of corporate communication since the reputation of the organisation needs to be defended (Roper & Fill, 2012). According to Greyser (2009), authenticity in corporate communication plays a key role in building, sustaining and defending reputation. Therefore, he recommends that an organisation should admit the truth and should try to address the problem. This should be supported by credible communication. He further proposes to *"focus on forthrightness in communications and on truly substantive credible responses in behavior"* (p.600) in times of brand reputational crisis.

Taking this information into account, the SPIEGEL group has been successfully managing the crisis so far as they reported about the scandal in a very transparent, self-critical and thus, credible and authentic way. Furthermore, they recognised that

the brand essence, Rudolf Augstein’s “sagen, was ist”, was threatened and took actions to defend it, for instance by apologizing to the family of the founder and by assuring the quality of the fact checking system. However, what the SPIEGEL group has failed to do in the first place, was to recognize that their employees can protect or destroy the reputation of the business in their daily operations (Roper & Fill, 2012). Thus, if a company wants to prevent a reputational crisis, they should also reward employees not only on financial results, but also reputational incentives (Roper & Fill, 2012).

Managing stakeholders in a crisis

Reputational crisis can occur in many forms (Greyser, 2009) as many different stakeholders are vulnerable to the spill over of a crisis (Roper & Fill, 2012). Crises usually do not just impact one single organisation but also other affiliated organisations (Roper & Fill, 2012). Hence, an organisation must recognize itself as part of a stakeholder network (Roper & Fill, 2012). Therefore, environmental scanning and thus, exploring the views and perceptions held by stakeholders about an organisation is crucial in crisis communication management (Roper & Fill, 2012). As a conclusion, the SPIEGEL group must monitor the perceptions that stakeholders have formed during the scandal. According to Pearson & Mitroff (1993, cited in Roper & Fill, 2012), stakeholders can adopt particular roles when perceiving the organisation in crisis (Table 1):

Table 1 Different types of stakeholders in a crisis (own table based on Pearson & Mitroff, 1993, cited in Roper & Fill, 2012)

Rescuer	Stakeholder providing a solution which saves the focus organisation e.g. collaboration, injection of finance
Hero	Stakeholder making claims or acting on behalf of the stricken organisation and thus, receives fame
Victim	Stakeholder suffering as a result of the crisis of the focus organisation
Protector	Stakeholder shielding the focus organisation e.g. by working with the media to present another side of an argument or issue
Ally	Stakeholder supporting during the crisis and sharing views and opinions with the organisation in the crisis
Enemy	Stakeholder with the intention to ruin the focus organisation
Villian	Stakeholder that is generally perceived to have caused the crisis

Monitoring which stakeholders take on which of the aforementioned roles is interesting when a crisis strikes, as roles can change depending on the crisis (Roper & Fill, 2012).

Furthermore, poor reputation as a result of a crisis is not only limited to one organisation but can affect an entire industry and, therefore, competitors can suffer from a crisis if the industry reputation is damaged (Roper & Fill, 2012). Thus, the competitors of the SPIEGEL group also need to defend their reputation during this crisis. As proposed by Roper and Fill (2012), the SPIEGEL group's competitors can follow four key strategies:

Silence strategy

If the issue represents little threat to the organisation, may involve little public attention or if the organisation is uncertain how to respond, the stakeholder can seek to buy time by remaining silent. This strategy would refer to competitors not commenting on the DER SPIEGEL scandal.

Accommodation strategy

If the issue is overwhelming, the stakeholder might adopt to the issue through internal adaptation. This is the strategy that could be taken on by competitors who are concerned by a similar scandal and would therefore adopt their internal fact-checking system.

Reasoning strategy

If the impact on the organisation is not clear, the stakeholder should openly drive and establish dialogue. Competitors commenting on the DER SPIEGEL scandal in a rather negative way, but not making any internal adaptations, would take on this strategy.

Advocacy strategy

Rather than adapting internally, the stakeholder should try to change the public opinion if the issue threatens stakeholders in a way that they cannot achieve their objectives. This solution could be reflected in competitors commenting on the scandal in a supportive way.

Corporate brand identity and -reputation

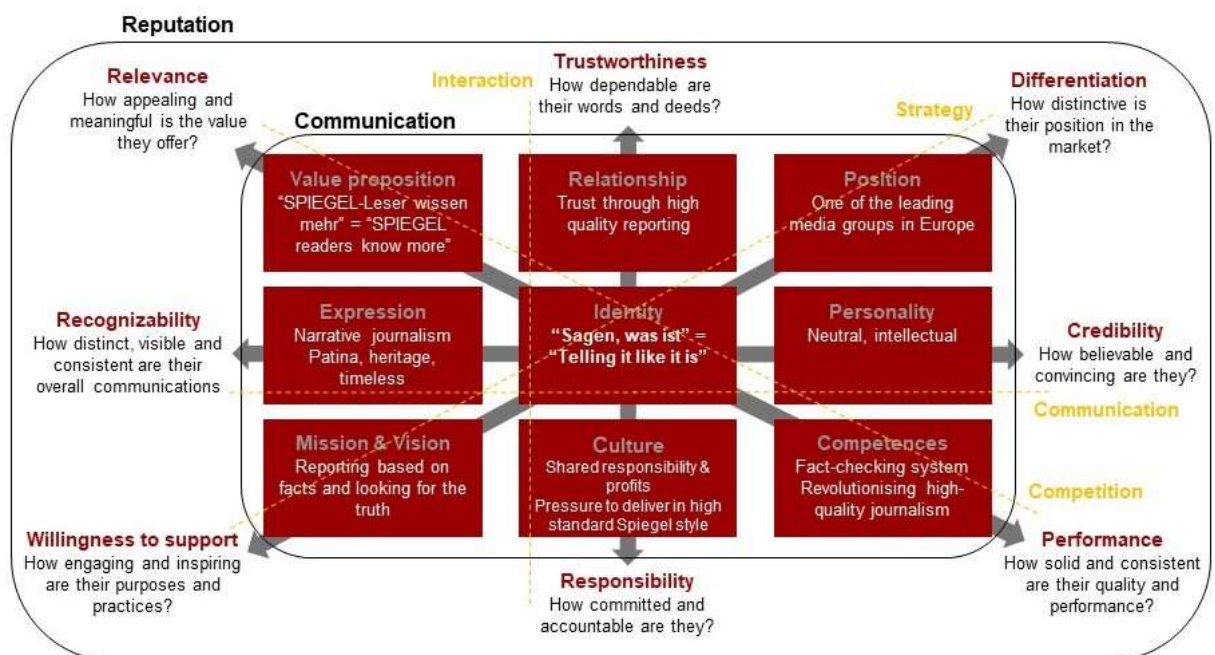
Reflecting on an organisation's identity in a crisis is a crucial step to overcome it (Greyser, 2009), as indicated in the previous chapter. In order to fully understand the consequences of the Relotius affair on the SPIEGEL group it is necessary to analyse how the corporate brand identity and the reputation of the SPIEGEL group are related. According to Roper and Fill (2012), identity and reputation are intertwined as the image formed by stakeholders is shaped by the formal and informal identity cues presented by the company. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to define the internal identity and values of the firm, which are then communicated to the external environment. The organisation must ask itself how it is perceived by stakeholders and if this perception resembles its identity. If a misalignment exists, a negative influence on reputation will result and will force the organisation to align its internal and external perception through various actions, such as corporate communication (Roper

& Fill, 2012). Consequently, the SPIEGEL group's identity must first be assessed to examine how the Relotius scandal affected the corporation's reputation, and detect any resulting misalignments.

Corporate brand identity and reputation matrix

A framework widely used for this purpose is the corporate brand identity and reputation matrix by Urde and Greyser (2016). In **Figure 1**, the CBIRM matrix applied to the SPIEGEL group is depicted.

Figure 1 Corporate brand identity and reputation matrix applied to the SPIEGEL group (own illustration based on Urde & Greyser, 2016; SPIEGEL ONLINE, 2019)



The matrix consists of nine elements, of which the middle element represents the company's core identity, meaning the promise and values that the firm stands for. Therefore, the core reflects all other elements of the matrix and each element reflects the core, meaning everything is interrelated and influenced by it (Urde & Greyser, 2016). As it was defined earlier, the brand essence, the inherited identity of the SPIEGEL group is "telling it like it is", the famous words of Rudolf Augstein.

Furthermore, the bottom row of the matrix consists of three internal brand elements. Mission and vision refers to what engages the firm beyond the aim of making money and its direction and inspiration (Urde & Greyser, 2016). Here, the SPIEGEL group aims for reporting based on facts and looking for the truth. The culture element reflects the ruling attitudes and behaviour at work (Urde & Greyser, 2016). In this case, the working culture at the SPIEGEL group can be explained as shared responsibility and profits, as well as the pressure to deliver in the high standard SPIEGEL style, also known as narrative journalism. Competences describes what the firm is particularly good at and what makes it better than the competition (Urde &

Greyser, 2016), which in the SPIEGEL group's case relates to its fact-checking system and its revolutionising high quality journalism.

Next, the middle row accounts for three internal and external elements, of which one is the brand's core. Expression refers to the firm's unique way to communicate and express itself, making it possible to recognise it at a distance (Urde & Greyser, 2016). Here, the SPIEGEL group's expression can be described as narrative journalism, patina, heritage, and timelessness. The personality element explains the combination of human characteristics or qualities that form the firm's corporate character (Urde & Greyser, 2016). Devoted to report based on facts, the SPIEGEL group's personality can be described as neutral and intellectual.

Moreover, the top row comprises three external identity elements. Value proposition reflects the firm's key offerings and how they want to appeal to stakeholders (Urde & Greyser, 2016). In this sense, the SPIEGEL group communicates its value proposition as "SPIEGEL Leser wissen mehr", which means "SPIEGEL readers know more". The relationship element illustrates the nature of the firm's relationship with key customers and non-customer stakeholders (Urde & Greyser, 2016), which is explained as trust established through high quality reporting in the SPIEGEL group's case. Position defines the firm's intended position in the market as well as in the hearts and minds of key customers and non-customer stakeholders (Urde & Greyser, 2016). Here, the SPIEGEL group is characterized as one of the leading media groups in Europe.

Additionally, each element of the matrix, except for the core, is linked to a reputational question, which is depicted outside of the matrix. These questions support managers in finding out *"how its multiple stakeholders perceive the brand, and to what extent these external perceptions match the internally driven identity"* (Urde & Greyser, 2016, p.103).

Finally, the nine elements are connected through vertical, horizontal and diagonal arrows, which represent the linkages between identity, the nine inner elements from the company's perspective, and reputation, the eight questions describing stakeholders' perception. The four linkages are competition, interaction, strategy, and communication (Urde & Greyser, 2016).

As indicated earlier, Greyser (2009) classifies a crisis as severe when the essence or brand core is affected. Taking the CBIRM into consideration, it becomes clear that the brand core is deeply harmed since Relotius 'did not tell it like it is' and faked characters as well as stories. Consequently, all other elements of the matrix are concerned since the core of the matrix reflects and influences all elements and, thus, influences stakeholders' perceptions of reputation. For instance, stakeholders must evaluate if they are still willing-to-support the SPIEGEL group, since its practices are far from inspiring and engaging. Here, the strategy arrow connects the mission and vision element with position in the market, which is also negatively affected by the scandal. After the scandal, the perception especially by external stakeholders radically changed. On SPIEGEL ONLINE, readers have commented on the articles about the scandal and have expressed their disappointment by stating that they have ended their

DER SPIEGEL subscription and lost trust in media (DER SPIEGEL, 2018). Therefore, the magazine might lose market share and experience a decrease in trust and reputation.

The identity element corporate culture

Moreover, an element strongly affected by the Relotius affair is the SPIEGEL group's culture. Therefore, we would like to reflect on this element in further details. An organisation's brand essence relies on its values and culture, as these are the building blocks of the mission, personality and defining "what it is", as well "the way things are done" (Martin, 2008, p.19, cited in Roper & Fill, 2012). As discussed earlier, culture is placed at an important place within the CBIRM matrix (Urde & Greyser, 2016), it is part of the interaction axis, and relates to the responsibility reputational element. Within the discussed crisis, both the reputational (responsibility) and identity aspects (culture) of the SPIEGEL group have been threatened, as the crisis is rooted internally and affects the brand core. Therefore, the media group needs to ensure that the corporate culture is nurtured in these troubled times as well, since satisfied employees and strong culture are important to further enhance the reputation of an organisation (Roper & Fill, 2012). The SPIEGEL group relies on Rudolf Augstein's statement that they are only telling the truth. This is supported by the hard work of the fact-checking department at DER SPIEGEL, which has received international recognition.

Critics have argued that the SPIEGEL-style narrative journalism triggers a certain organisational culture and thus, pressures journalists to emphasise dramatic elements within the report, which might result in a shift away from the truth. Furthermore, the capability of the SPIEGEL group's fact-checking department has also been questioned. Therefore, the employees of DER SPIEGEL as well as the whole SPIEGEL group might question the culture and the related working pressure. Thus, the core identity of the media group, telling it like it is, and two identity elements, reliable fact-checking and narrative storytelling, were questioned and criticised. Lastly, as the crisis has emerged internally and has been discovered by a colleague, nurturing the culture with internal communication is of high importance (Greyser, 2009).

The psychological contract, as part of the employers' promise, which refers to the mutual and informal beliefs and perceptions between the two parties, might be shaken, as it depends on trust between the employer and employee (Roper & Fill, 2012). In the present case, the promise is closely related to the prestige of working at a renowned media group, which only reports based on truthful facts. The present crisis affected this promise, due to the failure of telling the truth, which might hinder the trust within the SPIEGEL group. Furthermore, the unique ownership structure of the SPIEGEL group - 50% employee ownership - also highlights the importance of mutual and shared responsibility within its corporate culture. Therefore, it is important to focus efforts on regaining trust both internally and externally as part of the management of the crisis, through forthright communication and nurturing the culture of the SPIEGEL group (Greyser, 2009). Lastly, as Augustine (1996) argues the final step of crisis management is profiting from it, therefore, the SPIEGEL group

should aim to strengthen the organisational culture and eliminate the possibilities of future story fabrications.

Overview of learning objectives

An overview of the learning objectives is presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2 Key learning objectives (own table)

Key Learning Objectives		
remembering	... how companies can manage an internally-rooted crisis and that the crisis can have a spill over effect on competitors in the industry	Here: DER SPIEGEL and The New Yorker. In the German, direct competitor context: DIE ZEIT, FAZ, DIE WELT, HAMBURGER ABENDBLATT Spill over effect due to 'lying press', 'fake news'.
understanding	... how identity and reputation influence each other before, during, and after a crisis	Here: 'telling it like it is', the brand core is questioned, with diminishing effects on the SPIEGEL group's reputation
applying	... key corporate brand and crisis management frameworks to assess crisis situations, manage them and react to them as a competitor	Here: CBIRM the SPIEGEL group, developing response strategies for the SPIEGEL group's competition with crisis management theory, crisis communication management
evaluating	...how a crisis of one company can affect the competitors' and industry reputation	Here: The actions of both international (The New Yorker) and German competitors in the aftermath of the crisis and the reputational consequences of those actions
creating	...decisions on a top management level as a reaction to a competitor's crisis	Here: the Editor-in-chiefs' decisions of DER SPIEGEL's national and international competitors

Discussion questions

To ensure a strong discussion, it is beneficial to prepare main questions, but also assisting questions to further motivate the discussion. The present section offers the main questions and few supporting questions for a class discussion. The presenter can choose between the assisting questions and decide the sequence to best accommodate the class environment. In case the discussion questions do not motivate the conversation and participation during class, then the presenter can follow the broad themes of identity and reputation management, crisis management and communication, competitor decision making.

Main questions

1. Should you [as an Editor-in-chief at The New Yorker] comment on the incidents or not? And if so, would you support, be neutral or criticise DER SPIEGEL? What are the short- and long-term consequences for The New Yorker?
2. Would your decision change if you were a German competitor? What are the short- and long-term consequences for German competitors?

Assisting questions

- Who should write the article, you as the Editor-in-chief or someone else?
- What consequences would the competitor face if it supports DER SPIEGEL?
 - If they supported DER SPIEGEL, would the competitor be suspicioned for having similar problems?
- What consequences would the competitor face if they stayed neutral about DER SPIEGEL?
 - If they stayed neutral, would they miss out on reporting on a good story?
- What consequences would the competitor face if it criticizes DER SPIEGEL?
 - If they criticized DER SPIEGEL, would they not harm their own reputation as well in terms of 'fake news' and not believing everything that is said in the news?
 - Whom would you blame? The SPIEGEL group or Claas Relotius?
- Do you think The New Yorker is affected by the DER SPIEGEL scandal considering that they operate on different markets?
 - Can you consider international magazines or newspapers competitors of DER SPIEGEL?

- Would you say the media landscape is rather national or rather global in today's world?
- Does the crisis provide a good time for a competitor to make a statement in the present heavily-critiqued media environment?
- How can the competitors contribute to rebuilding the industry reputation and fight 'fake news' and 'lying press' supporters?

Teaching plan and -suggestions

The following chapter provides suggestions on how to present the case in order to enhance the teaching process so that the presenter can create an interactive discussion and plan the presentation accordingly.

Pre-presentation and introduction phase

Before starting the case presentation, it is crucial to define the role of each presenter, if there are several presenters. One approach could be that two presenters lead the discussion while the third person is responsible for taking notes and monitoring the time.

To provide sufficient knowledge required for answering the discussion question, it is advisable to present background information on the SPIEGEL group, the crisis, Claas Relotius, the handling of the crisis, the 'fake news' scandal as well as the relationship between DER SPIEGEL and The New Yorker. This information is presented in the Written Case as well as in the PowerPoint presentation. To give the presenter, as well as to the audience a better understanding of the SPIEGEL group's identity, the CIBRM has been applied the case brand and it is recommended to include it in the presentation. To guarantee enough preparation time, the students will be provided with the written case 24 hours before the presentation electronically and with a printed version of it on the day of the presentation.

The presenter is also provided with speaker's notes in the description of each PowerPoint slide to give guidance through the presentation.

Furthermore, we encourage the presenter to use different forms of media during the presentation. Thus, we propose to make use of the white board for illustrating the board plan and tracking comments from the audience. Additionally, we recommend to show a video that connects the DER SPIEGEL crisis to the fake news scandal and dramatizes the case, for example the one we provided in the PowerPoint presentation, right before posing the first discussion question.

Before moving on to the discussion phase, it is critical to ask the audience if they have any questions that need to be clarified in order to be able to answer the discussion questions.

Discussion phase

The discussion will be introduced by stating how many weeks have passed since the scandal and asking the audience to take on the role of the Editor-in-chief of The New Yorker and consider commenting or not commenting on the issue and if so, in which way.

Thus, a vote regarding who could comment on the scandal and who would not is recommended at the beginning of the discussion phase. If the time of the presentation is sufficient, we would propose using online voting tools to enhance interactivity and media usage. Following that, the presenter should ask students why not commenting on the scandal is advisable. After having received an answer, the presenter should start to draw the column “No comment” as well as the rows “Short-term consequences” and “Long-term consequences” of the board plan, illustrated in **Table 3**. The presenter should then move on to students who voted for commenting on the scandal and ask if they would support, stay neutral or criticise DER SPIEGEL. At this point, the presenter can start drawing the other columns of the board plan and start filling in the comments of the class. To create as diverse outputs as possible, the presenter is advised to balance active and passive students and split the discussion by posing provocative follow-up questions in a neutral way.

In case the discussion does not evolve in a way that the class organically makes comparisons to German competitors, the presenter can pose the second discussion question after approximately half of the given time. To capture the comments on this, the presenter is suggested to draw the second row of the board plan. **Table 3** illustrates what a possible discussion output could look like:

Table 3 Board plan (own table)

		No comment	Criticise	Be neutral	Support
The New Yorker (international competitor)	Short-term consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miss out on a story to report on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a strong stance against 'fake news' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stuck in the middle: missing out on taking a controversial stance that could promote readership and traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving backlash for supporting 'fake news'
	Long-term consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reputational industry crises might not swap over to other countries outside Germany 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to damaging the industry reputation Contribute to swapping over the crisis from one country to another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to swapping over the crisis from one country to another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neglecting the importance of the crisis → losing credibility Strengthening the ties within the media world
German competitor	Short-term consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miss out on a story to report on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance own magazine from the scandal Emphasize quality of own fact-checking system Chance for differentiation from competitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stuck in the middle: missing out on taking a controversial stance that could promote readership and traffic Buy time to observe how the scandal will evolve and then finally take a stronger stance in the debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving backlash for supporting 'fake news'
	Long-term consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspicion for producing 'fake news' as well Might weaken the industry reputation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to damaging the industry reputation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public blame for not taking a stance, image as risk-averse Suspicion for producing 'fake news' as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspicion for producing 'fake news' as well

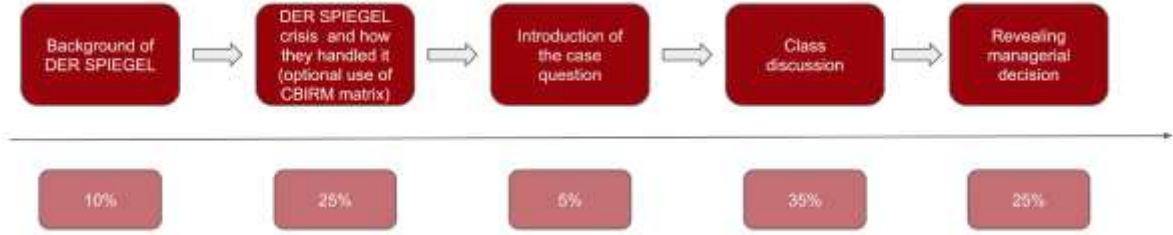
Concluding phase

If the discussion does not take a natural end, the presenter should interfere and sum up the main ideas and ask for a final vote to see who would not comment, who would support, who would stay neutral and who would criticise DER SPIEGEL. Following that, the presenter can thank for active participation and move on to presenting the managerial decision.

Time plan

In this section we provide a suggestion of time allocation for the presentation and discussion of the case illustrated in **Figure 2**. The suggested time allocated for each step is presented as a percentage, since each part can take up longer or shorter time, depending on the length of the class. The DER SPIEGEL case and the broader media context requires an explanation to understand the current climate and sensitivity of the issue. We recommend that 35% of the class should be allocated to the ‘understanding’ and ‘applying’ learning outcomes, where the key aim is understanding the brand, and the discussion of SPIEGEL group’s crisis management through the potential application of the CBIRM matrix. The next 35% of the time should be allocated to The New Yorker’s decision involving a class discussion and the board plan to encourage independent thinking, and meeting the ‘evaluating’ and ‘creating’ learning outcomes. Lastly, students can be challenged by taking the case to a more direct competitor level, within the German context to ensure that the ‘evaluate’ and ‘create’ learning outcomes are addressed on a more challenging level. We recommend that this final part should take up around 25% of the given time.

Figure 2 Time plan (own figure)



Epilogue

The present case serves as a stimulating class discussion, since it looks at the DER SPIEGEL crisis from two perspectives. Firstly, the internal management of the crisis is presented and secondly, competitor's reaction can be discussed. The key learning aspects of the case are therefore two-fold. It provides insights about crisis management for a scandal which is rooted internally and affects the brand essence, as well as motivates independent thinking for solution creation from the competitors' perspectives. The first step within the case is understanding crisis management within the SPIEGEL group, involving the politically sensitive context. Therefore, the spill over effect for a whole industry can be considered during class discussions. In the class discussion phase, the case considers the possible paths that competitors, both in national and international context, can take. This is a unique case as the opportunities and potential backlashes are considered in a wider context. Holistic manner of thinking is often required in corporate brand reputation management, as organisations often face a crisis, which is caused by a competitor and still requires attention. The present case offers learning outcomes, which are beneficial for variety of courses, such as corporate brand management, strategic management, and human resources management.

Reflection

Our group was extremely happy to welcome this case writing opportunity. Attending the Corporate Brand and Reputation Management classes was highly rewarding in terms of learning outcomes due to the live cases. Therefore, building our own case as part of the group assignment and thinking about the learning outcomes of the case was a unique opportunity.

Working on the DER SPIEGEL case gave us the opportunity to consider corporate crisis management in a holistic manner, from multiple perspectives. Firstly, we studied a practical example of the management of an internally-rooted crisis, which affects the core of the brand. Since we learnt at classes about the challenges involved with this type of crisis through Greyser's (2009) work, we knew that the DER SPIEGEL crisis is of highly sensitive nature. Digging ourselves deeper in the context, we also realised that the timing of this crisis also carries risk factors, due to the political divide and 'fake news' accusations, as well as the 'lying press' phenomenon in the German context. Therefore, we believed that competitors of the SPIEGEL group, both national and international, need to make careful choices regarding their reaction to the DER SPIEGEL crisis. In the media industry reporting on daily occurrences is expected, yet the present case might carry implications for the competitors due to the spill over effect, we believe that the competitors' had to consider management decisions on an Editor-in-chief level. Researching the different reactions to the crisis, and thinking about the reasoning behind these actions was enriching for our learning.

Changing perspectives, and placing ourselves within the role of a present and teacher was an interesting experience. Writing the 'Teaching notes' section truly

helped us to construct a case in a systematic manner. The goal was to provide learning outcomes based on: remembering, understanding, applying, evaluating and creating. Going through each of these steps, made us consider each element of our case and conceptualisation of the DER SPIEGEL crisis.

Finding the competitors' management decision required us to study numerous journal reports on the crisis, and consider what could have been the reasoning behind each piece, on a managerial level as a first step. Then we had to determine, which one could be the most beneficial for learning. As we have found different decisions both in the international and German context, we decided to consider both decisions, as changing the context in the class discussion can be thought provoking, and can benefit to learning on an advance level. Within Corporate Brand Management literature, most of the theories discuss how companies can handle their own crisis. Identifying relevant theories about the industry effects of a crisis, and the implications of a crisis for a competitor was somehow challenging. Roper and Fill's (2012) argument for four key competitor strategies (silence, accommodation, reasoning, advocacy strategy) in a crisis can be interesting to consider in the present case. However, we believe that competitors' action within a crisis should be considered more often, as these management decisions carry beneficial learning opportunities

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