



University of Florida
Tourism Crisis
Management Institute

First Annual Report 2007-2008



UF | Tourism Crisis
Management Institute
College of Health and Human Performance
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



DEDICATION

This first annual report is dedicated to UF President Bernie Machen whose vision and commitment helped create this new and exciting University of Florida initiative .

VISION

The vision of the Tourism Crisis Management Institute is to be the premiere North American tourism crisis management institute providing innovative, scholarly and applied research-driven service to private and public sectors. Quality research is facilitated through interdisciplinary teams of experts with experience and knowledge in problem solving.

MISSION

The mission of the Tourism Crisis Management Institute is to develop research-driven solutions to crises that address planning, preparedness, response and recovery issues in local, national and global tourism economies.

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Front Cover photos courtesy of NOAA and FEMA

photo courtesy of Sarasota Convention and Visitor Bureau

A Message from Dean Dorman



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During its first year of operation the Tourism Crisis Management Institute has grown from a germinating concept to an organization with vision, mission and a focused perspective on assisting Florida's most important industry.

The seed five year funding provided by President Machen has allowed the Institute to begin to develop research, products and service that will enable the group to achieve a model of self-sustained funding after year five.

While barely a year old, Institute team members have already pursued funding through the National Science Foundation, Homeland Security (Congressional appropriations), private sector sponsorship and collaborative partnerships with State and local tourism offices. By gathering an interdisciplinary team the Institute has led the way for the University of Florida to generate research that will position us as the leader in Tourism Crisis Management for all of North America.

The first UF Tourism Crisis Management Think Tank took place in January of 2008 and set the stage for many cross-campus collaborative research projects to evolve. The June 2008, Florida Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus Symposium on Crisis Management was the next logical step.

The leadership from Florida's tourism industry representing most of Florida's 67 counties gathered in Gainesville on June 25th 2008, to hear the results of the Institute's research, to receive individualized evaluations of their current crisis management planning and learn about the "best practices" plans being implementing in other parts of the world. The next step will be to assist these same organizations with the development of model mutual aid agreements that will strengthen Florida's response and the recovery of tourism as a critical economic contributor to the state's well-being.

We are excited about the opportunities for this new Institute.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve M. Dorman".

Steve M. Dorman, MPH, Ph.D.
Professor and Dean



The Foundation for The Gator Nation
An Equal Opportunity Institution



A Message from Lori Pennington-Gray, Director of TCMI

In 2007 the Tourism Crisis Management Institute (TCMI) was established to conduct research and provide the tourism industry with specific support for crisis management at the local, state, and national levels.

In an effort to understand the needs of academicians and practitioners, the Institute hosted two critical visioning meetings: First Annual UF Academic Think Tank and the Florida Association of Convention and Visitor Bureau (FACVB) Tourism Crisis Management Symposium. The first visioning meeting was held on the campus of the University of Florida (UF) with UF faculty who are currently engaged in crisis-related research. This gathering enabled the Institute to come

together as an interdisciplinary team to examine the gaps in crisis research. Because of this collaborative interdisciplinary effort, the Institute submitted an NSF grant titled, "Modeling Evacuation Decisions of Tourists in Response to Hurricane Communication."

The second visioning effort was a Crisis Management Symposium held in collaboration with the FACVB's Destination Marketing Summit. The symposium hosted almost 100 key tourism industry practitioners in the State of Florida. These key industry leaders were able to provide feedback about much needed training, research, and education on tourism crisis management.

We are pleased to present two main research projects which were completed in the first year: (1) The Tourism Crisis Preparedness Study and (2) The Florida CVB/TDC Crisis Readiness Report. The Tourism Crisis Preparedness Study used a national sample and asked tourism industry representatives to comment on their levels of tourism crisis preparedness and planning. The study indicated the need for a more coordinated academic approach to crisis management within the tourism industry. The findings are presented in the annual report.

The second research project was a content analysis of Florida based convention and visitor bureaus' (CVB) and tourist development councils' (TDC) crisis management plans. Of the 56 Florida CVB/TDC organizations, 24 provided their crisis management plans for analysis and four indicated their organization did not have a plan. Only 17 of the county plans reviewed were specific to the tourism industry. The remaining 7 submitted plans were emergency management plans for the county as a whole and not specific to tourism. This limited planning, points to a need to explore how the Institute can assist Florida tourism destination management organizations in preparation for crisis reduction, readiness, recovery and response.

One of the major goals of the Institute in the following year will be to use the findings from the two crisis planning meetings and the two research studies to improve the efforts of the tourism industry so they will be better prepared to deal with the challenges of crises that threaten this vital economic sector. Another goal over the next year will be to pay specific attention to the academic literature and ensure the Institute's findings are well communicated in peer-reviewed environments including journal and conference presentations.

The Institute is looking forward to continuing our integration of academic and practitioner focused perspectives on tourism crisis management issues.

Best Regards,

Lori

Lori Pennington-Gray, Ph.D.



TOURISM CRISIS PREPAREDNESS STUDY

Research project on crisis management in the tourism industry

In order to understand the tourism industry perceptions regarding emergency preparedness and crisis management, 364 phone interviews were conducted by the Florida Survey Research Center with key tourism organization leaders.

The sample of tourism decision makers (N=364) was based on the list of attendees from the 2008 Tourism Industry Association conference and the entire list of the Florida Governor's Conference attendee list (2007). The initial sample of 364 contacts was reduced to a usable sample of 335 contacts due to 16 non-working numbers, 11 wrong numbers, and two fax numbers. A maximum of six call backs were performed when the individual to be interviewed was not immediately reached. One hundred and fifty eight (n=158) phone interviews were completed resulting in a response rate of 47%.

- Most of the business entities interviewed had a written evacuation plan
- Promotional organizations seemed more involved than attractions and lodging properties in emergency preparedness planning
- The crisis situations perceived as more likely to impact the business entities interviewed were weather emergencies and natural disasters.

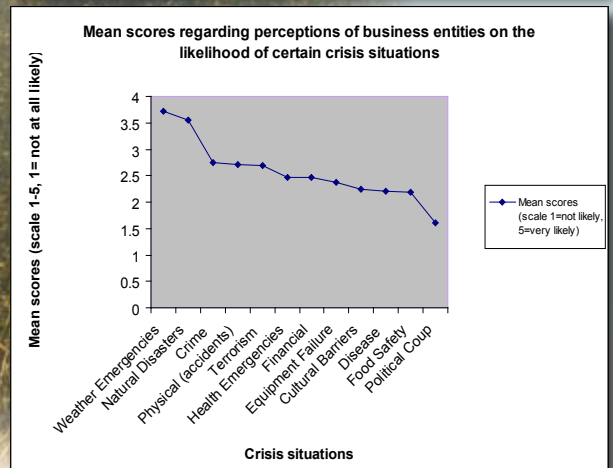
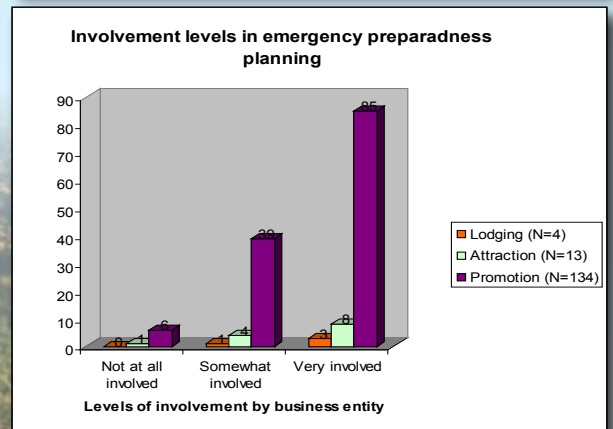
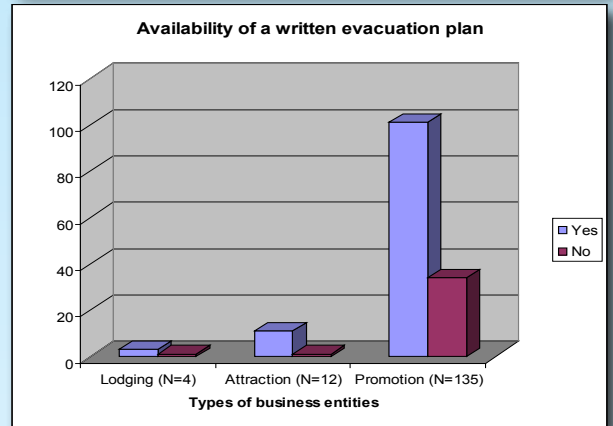
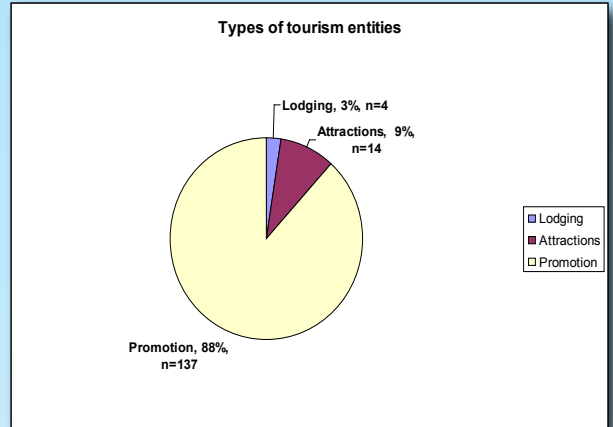


photo courtesy of Ocala/Marion County Visitors and Convention Bureau



FIRST ANNUAL UF ACADEMIC THINK TANK

The Tourism Crisis Management Institute held its first annual “Think Tank” in January 2008. The all-day session brought together Dean Dorman from the College of Health and Human Performance and 14 University of Florida faculties from Engineering, Food and Agricultural Sciences, Advertising, Geography, Building Construction, Geological Sciences, and Tourism departments. President Bernie Machen opened the meeting expressing his support of the vision and mission of the Tourism Crisis Management Institute.

The think-tank participants were asked to brainstorm about gaps in crisis management research that may affect tourism economies. The participants were divided into three groups and the brainstorming session was guided by a conceptual crisis model consisting of three crisis phases: Pre-crisis, during crisis, and post crisis (Faulkner, 2001).

Once the data was categorized using the crisis model, analysis of content and expert opinion was conducted. Five key themes emerged from the data:

1. Precise tourism crisis definitions and typologies
2. Tourism crisis communication
3. Tourism crisis assessment and mitigation of travel risk
4. Tourism crisis training and education
5. Tourism crisis recovery marketing and promotion

The meeting concluded with the identification of research questions directly associated with each of the above mentioned areas, which will provide the framework for the next phase of operations for the Tourism Crisis Management Institute.

Florida’s tourism economy supports 964,700 jobs and brings in almost \$4 billion in tax revenues that provide funding for services enjoyed by Florida citizens.

Source: Visit Florida, 2008



photo courtesy of Amelia Island Plantation

THE FLORIDA CVB/TDC CRISIS READINESS REPORT

- By Way Of Content Analysis

Method

State of Florida Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) and Tourist Development Councils (TDCs) were asked to provide their tourism crisis management plans to the University of Florida's Tourism Crisis Management Institute via email or mail. In the state of Florida there are 67 counties, and 56 of these counties have a TDC or CVB. Twenty-four of the 56 CVBs/TDCs submitted their crisis management plans - a response rate of 43%. Of the 24 submitted county crisis management plans, only 17 were specific to the tourism industry. The remaining seven were general county emergency management plans with little attention to the visitor industry - a response rate of 30%. Four counties expressed they did not have a tourism crisis management plan.

Comparative analysis was conducted to analyze each plan based on four stages of crisis management. The following findings represent the 17 dedicated tourism management plans.

Findings

The Reduction phase indicated most plans included crisis awareness in their crisis management plans, although 41% of the plans did not include a component on raising political awareness in regards to the economic impact of a crisis on tourism. Almost two thirds of the plans included standard operating procedures in relation to planning for an event.

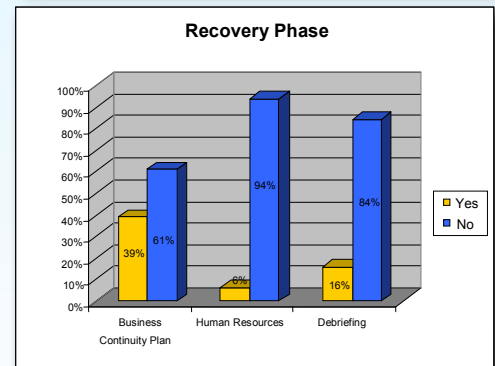
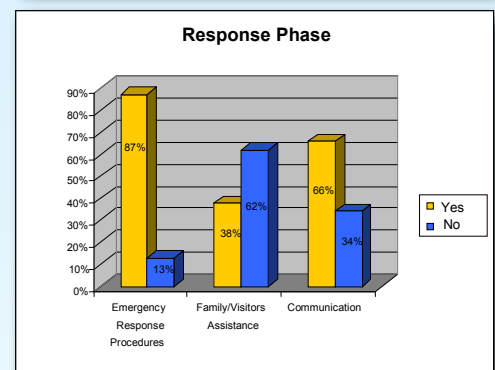
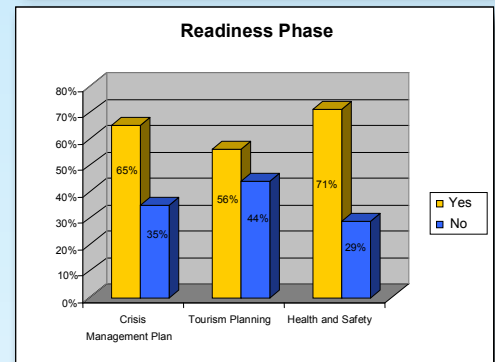
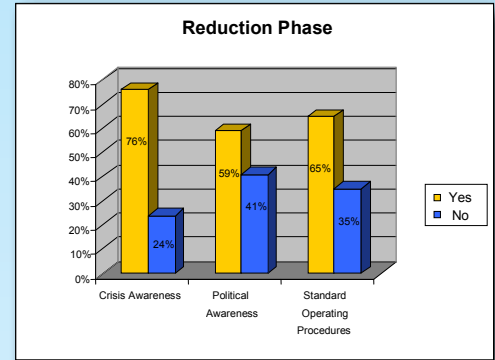
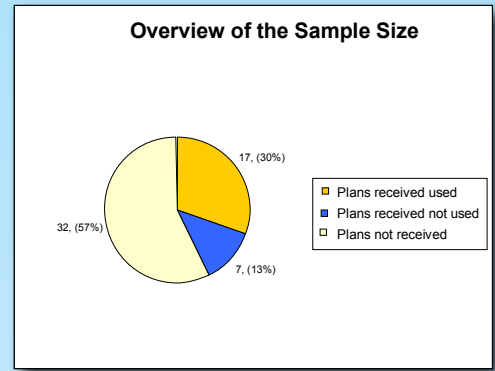
In the Readiness phase most counties included crisis management plans; however, 44% did not include planning specific to tourism in their crisis management plan. Seventy-one percent of the plans did include a component on health and safety for visitors and organization employees and families.

The Response phase showed 66% of the counties included emergency response procedures in their crisis management plans. In contrast, only 38% of the plans included procedures to assist families and visitors. About 66% of the counties included communication procedures in their crisis management plans. In fact, for most CVB/TDC organizations, the major component of their planning focuses on external and media communication.

Specific to the Recovery phase, 61% of the counties did not include procedures to address business continuity plans. Only 6% indicated they have procedures to address human resource/labor issues in a post event situation and only 16% planned for debriefing sessions to the local industry and political leadership after a crisis.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Most crisis management plans submitted were lacking information concerning procedures for tourism planning, family/visitors assistance, business continuity plans, human resource issues, and debriefing plans. This gap of critical information in CVB and TDC crisis management plans provides TCMI with the opportunity to assist Florida counties in developing well-rounded crisis management plans.



FACVB SYMPOSIUM

The public profile of the University of Florida's Tourism Crisis Management Institute (TCMI) was raised significantly with the first ever Tourism Crises Management Symposium held June 25th in Gainesville. TCMI partnered with the Florida Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus to develop a three-hour workshop aimed at assisting Florida's key destination management organizations in the development of their tourism crisis management plans. Almost 100 representatives from CVB and TDC organizations around the state participated in this inaugural event.

The symposium brought together experts from the private and public sectors to respond to the following expressed needs:

- What does a comprehensive crisis plan look like?
- How do we create our organization's plan?
- How do we plan for our own employees and their needs while they help our community's economy to recover from a disaster?
- Can we develop tools to help each other if one area of Florida is affected and other areas are not?
- How can Chambers work with their CVB/TDC to mitigate the sensationalism that is sometimes created by media?
- How can the county CVB organizations work with Visit Florida to re-position the State following a disaster?
- What are the training needs for crisis planning as it relates to the tourism industry?



photo courtesy Visit Gainesville VCB

The symposium provided an opportunity to learn about "best practices" being used in other countries; to share concerns, ideas and solutions for planning, responding and recovering from man-made and natural disasters. It also allowed the TCMI team to better understand the needs of destination management organizations in relation to crisis plan preparation, staff training and public policy decision-making.



photo courtesy of The Beaches of South Walton

MARKETING UF's TOURISM CRISIS MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

The TCMI executive team has begun to work on a promotion plan that will help raise the profile of the institute among tourism related businesses, destinations and professionals. A new website is in beta development. The site will provide a comprehensive overview of research projects, white papers and services associated with the institute as well as team resumes and expertise.

Corporate and association partners will be engaged in the institutes various research, training and certification projects as the University of Florida moves into it's second year of tourism crisis management.



photo courtesy of FACVB

New marketing brochure

Direct mail and e-mail

University of Florida
Tourism Crisis Management
Institute

Will you be ready when a crisis impacts your local tourism industry?



We Can Help You Plan For the Unexpected!

www.tourismcrisis.com
352.392.4042

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 28, 2008

UF Institute to host symposium on tourism crisis management for Florida destinations

GAINESVILLE, Fla. – The Tourism Crisis Management Institute at the University of Florida will host a symposium on Crisis Management for Destinations on June 25 at the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center.

The symposium will be held prior to the opening reception of the annual Florida Association of Convention and Visitor's Bureau's Destination Marketing Industry Summit.

The symposium will compare various Florida tourism crisis management plans with a "Best Practices" model and discuss the key elements needed in formulating and implementing crisis management tools. A brainstorming session will explore opportunities for mutual assistance between destinations during a tourism crisis event.

The impetus for developing this symposium was generated from the institute's think tank meeting on Jan. 18. The meeting brought together UF faculty with crisis management expertise from various departments and the dean of the College of Health and Human Performance, Steve Dorman. UF President Berris Macken opened the meeting and expressed his enthusiasm and full support of the Tourism Crisis Management Institute.

The FACVB Destination Marketing Summit is organized to showcase industry experts and their analysis of the latest trends affecting the tourism industry.

"It's never been more important for the destination marketing industry to invest in additional training for ourselves and our staff," said Paul Cator, chairman of the FACVB board. "To provide you with the knowledge and resources you need to succeed and prosper in the coming year, we have created a one-of-a-kind program."

For more information, please visit www.facvb.org/events/.

For information, please contact: Elaine McLaughlin, strategic operations director of the Tourism Crisis Management Institute, 239-292-0218, emc2@ufl.edu; lu2@ufl.edu or Lori Pennington-Grey, director of the Tourism Crisis Management Institute, 352-392-4042, ext. 1318, penngro@ufl.edu

Print and electronic publicity program

photo courtesy of Sarasota Convention and Visitors Bureau





Ignatius Cahyanto

GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Publications

Paper and abstract

Bychkovskikh, E & Pennington-Gray, L. (2008). World Heritage Site Designation and Stakeholder Theory: The Case of Vladimir, Russia. Presented at the International Travel and Tourism Research Association Conference in Philadelphia, PA. June 15-17, 2008. Digital CD ROM proceedings

Cahyanto, I., Pennington-Gray, L., & Thapa, B. (2008). The Use of Reflexive Photography As A Means Of Developing Tourism. Accepted and will be presented at the International Conference 2008 Cultural and Event Tourism: Issues and Debates in Alanya, Turkey. November 5-9

Technical report

Cahyanto, I., Willming, C., Pennington-Gray, L., McLaughlin, E., & Thapa, B. (2008). Tourism Crisis Management Global Best Practices. 25 pgs

Cahyanto, I., McLaughlin, E; Willming, C., Pennington-Gray, L. & Thapa, B. (2008). Analysis of CVB/TDCs Tourism Crisis Plans in Florida. 30 pgs

Professional Presentations

Cahyanto, I. (2008). Overview of Best Practices in Tourism Crisis Management. Presented at the Tourism Crisis Management Interdisciplinary Think Tank. Gainesville. January 18

Research Projects

- Faculty of the University of Florida with experience and expertise in crisis management.
- Tourism crisis plans from Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) around the globe.
- Tourism crisis plans from Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVB) and Tourism Development Councils (TDC) in the state of Florida.
- Organizations that provide tourism crisis management related information in their website.
- Media contact related to tourism crisis management.

Conference Organization

- Organized the Tourism Crisis Management Think Tank. Invited 25 interdisciplinary faculty from University of Florida to address issues related to Crisis Management. January 18, 2008
- Helped organize the FACVB Tourism Crisis Management Symposium with over 100 invited Professionals from Convention and Visitor Bureaus throughout Florida. June 25, 2008



Elena Bychkovskikh

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photo courtesy of Florida Department of Environmental Protection

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