

Successfully navigating a “60 Minutes” investigation

Leaders at a national hospital company learned that a “60 Minutes” investigative reporter was calling physicians and questioning its admission procedures. Leadership was torn about the best way to move forward. On the one hand, they knew that engaging the reporter risked calling attention to a non-issue if the story never aired. On the other, refusing to comment could give off the appearance that the company had something to hide.

THE SOLUTION

First, we assessed the threat. We quickly learned from a variety of sources that the story would likely run and that we needed to get ahead of it.

We immediately convened stakeholders from the company’s communications, operations and legal teams to coordinate our crisis response plan. Together, we deployed the right team members to out-report the “60 Minutes” crew, making sure that we had all of the information they did. We hired an outside analytics firm to review the company’s admissions data – and the research showed the hospital’s admissions reporting procedures were unproblematic.

Armed with those findings, we engaged reporters and producers to determine the scope of the story. We learned what was likely to run and when.

We then pursued a “pre-sponse” strategy, providing that information, along with data from the outside firm’s analysis, to our own employees and Wall Street analysts, scooping the “60 Minutes” piece and ensuring that key audiences were prepared.

THE RESULTS

The “60 Minutes” story aired, but did not impact the share price or create an engagement problem with employees. The week following the broadcast, most reports from Wall Street analysts referred to the data from our independent analysis. With a coordinated team stacked with our advisers and hospital company leaders, we turned what could have been a major media mishap into a barely noticeable blip.

TACTICS



Listening session and pulse polls



Coordinated communications team



Independent analysis



“Pre-sponse” reporting



Leadership toolkit

THE TAKEAWAY:

A national hospital company learned a “60 Minutes” investigative reporter was planning a takedown. We worked with leadership to neutralize the story, protecting the institution’s reputation.

0%
dip in stock price
long term

coordinated communications
team across

70
hospitals

10,500
licensed bed system