





### How to cite this article in bibliographies / References

J Vázquez-Sande, L García-Abad, P Pineda-Martínez (2019): “Internal communication and reputational crisis. The case of the Rey Juan Carlos University”. Revista Latina de Comunicación Social, pp. 1748 to 1760,  
<http://www.revistalatinacs.org/074paper/1408/91en.html>  
DOI: [10.4185/RLCS-2019-1408en](https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2019-1408en)

# Internal communication and reputational crisis. The case of the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

**Pablo Vázquez-Sande**   Professor, University of Santiago de Compostela (USC), Spain – [pablo.vazquez.sande@usc.es](mailto:pablo.vazquez.sande@usc.es)

**Lito García-Abad**   Professor, Centre for Advanced Studies of Galicia (CESUGA), Spain – [ljgarcia@usj.es](mailto:ljgarcia@usj.es)

**Paula Pineda-Martínez**   Professor, University of the Basque Country (UPV), Spain – [paula.pineda@ehu.es](mailto:paula.pineda@ehu.es)

## Abstract

**Introduction:** In recent months, the Rey Juan Carlos University (URJC) has been shaken by a series of corruption scandals that became part of the public agenda due to extensive coverage carried out by most Spanish media organisations. **Objectives:** In this context of crisis, the focus of the research is the messages sent to students by the vice-chancellor’s office via corporate email over the last two years (November 2016 - October 2018). **Methods:** To do this, content analysis is used as the main technique to approach the messages sent to the most crucial stakeholders, from the point of view of internal communication: the students. **Results:** Three trends have been identified: a mostly reactive, non-proactive behaviour; a considerable delay in the management of the different conflicts; and a preference for a blame redirection strategy.

**Keywords:** Crisis communication; corporate communication; internal communication; reputation; University.

**Contents:** 1. Introduction. 1.1. The concept of crisis. 1.2. Crises in Spain's national public sector. 2. Methods. 3. Results. 4. Discussion and conclusions. 5. References.

Translation by **CA Martínez-Arcos**  
(PhD, University of London)

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. The concept of crisis**

It is often said that we live in a crisis-prone world (Rodríguez-Toubes and Fraiz, 2011), but this is not because there has been an increase in the number of crises that take place, but rather due to the fact that now most crises become universally known thanks to the disintermediation and instantaneousness of the communication channels in the hands of citizens (Lorenzo Valdés, 2013; Sánchez Calero, 2001).

From a theoretical point of view, according to González Herrero (1998), a crisis is defined as any situation that runs the risk of: a) increasing in intensity, b) becoming inspected by the government and/or the media, c) interfering with the normal work of business, d) jeopardising the positive image that a company or its directors enjoy, and e) damaging the company's results in any way.

For his part, Piñuel (1997) points out that a crisis reflects:

“a sudden change between two situations, which jeopardises an organisation's image and natural balance, because the two situations (pre and post crisis) provoke a sudden event (unexpected or extraordinary) that will force the organisation to react, which compromises its image as well as its internal and external balance (as an organisation and institution, respectively) before its stakeholders” (p. 167).

In addition, the definition of crisis always requires the existence of an audience who interprets the situation as difficult and hostile to their interests. As Coombs (2007) suggests, the people who make up the public targeted by the management and communication actions are the ones who perceive the threat posed by the crisis to the organisation; such perception can generate, sometimes, negative results for stakeholders.

Thus, crisis communication refers to a series of communicative actions that seek to take care of any kind of problem that poses a threat for the reputation of the organisation and is necessary to prevent the variety of publics from perceiving the smear against the reputation of the entity.

Managing a crisis proactively requires being prepared and trained to implement the procedures designed for that scenario. Doctrinally, it is said that communication in these situations functions as

the cohesive element in a situation of chaos, which allows giving meaning and order to the multiple variables that act in that temporal space. As Guzmán Hennessey (2007) states, “In order to anticipate crises, it is necessary to know in depth the dynamics of reality; if one discovers the patterns, one can infer, with some degree of certainty, what will happen”. This is the basis of Issues Management and the definition of pre-crisis stages, where the monitoring of potentially conflicting issues allows the construction of likely scenarios to be influenced to minimise their effects and even make them disappear. And this is where the discipline finds a connection with other organisational areas and functions, such as public affairs management and lobbying (González Herrero, 2004).

Chaos theory opens the door to disarrayed scenarios where alternative forms of order or, in Heisenberg’s ideas, the uncertainty principle can be found. In this new order, where small changes in origin can represent substantial changes in destiny or effects, crisis management attempts to move to situations of high uncertainty and complex systems to scenarios that seek to reduce entropy. Habermas believes so (Guzmán, 2007:143).

To identify whether the organisation is facing a crisis or not, Medina (2017) believes that such a situation can be defined by checking the confluence of a dozen variables: is a surprise factor, poses a threat, possesses a unique character, generates destabilisation, shortens decision-making times, increases the level of stress and tension on all the agents involved, accentuates the role of the public’s emotions, increases the difficulty to control behaviour, challenges the image and reputation of the organisation, the quality of information is often low, media pressure on the organisation increases and accentuates the danger to the position of power within the corporation (pp. 28-29).

At the same time, crisis managers must never lose sight of what the process of crisis management consists of, which is understood by Fearn-Banks as:

“strategic planning process whose goal is to anticipate crisis situations and to react properly during a crisis situation, or in a situation of negative events, a process that eliminates part of the risk and uncertainty and allows the organisation to effectively manage its destiny at the same time” (Fearn-Banks, 2001: 480).

This concept includes the perspective of communication and of the measures taken to solve the situation. In this regard, theorists distinguish between a proactive model, which takes place before the risk is triggered and before the conflict occurs, and a reactive model, whose goal is to contain its development. Each of them involves the incorporation of a series of measures that perform a specific function (Marín, 2009:16).

The importance of communication for effective crisis resolution is highlighted in several studies. Losada and Zamora (2011), for example, have shown, based on the case of Alakrana, how the communicative management of a public crisis can influence its outcome:

“There are different ways in which the communication of a government can contribute not only to worsening its own image, but also to generating a state of anxiety and concern and even to worsening the future scenario (...), which greatly complicates a favourable resolution” (Losada and Zamora, 2011:143).

In this line, if we focus on the communication field, there are three crucial elements in terms of correct crisis management: on the one hand, the message, which must be “direct, understandable and provide maximum information to reduce the feeling of distress and uncertainty among audiences” (Medina, 2017: 63); the spokesperson, who must be unique and with recognised solvency, legitimacy and authority to deal with the events; and the optimal knowledge of the different publics, since in crisis contexts it is appropriate:

“to align properly with the information that audiences have and their expectations. We cannot forget that stakeholders are understood as a party responsible, directly or indirectly, for the resolution of the conflict and, therefore, for the possible mitigation or end of the crisis” (Losada, 2010: 60).

In the opinion of theorists such as Gil (2013), the strategies to be followed from the communicative point of view once the crisis has erupted are: silence, which is not to comment and “deliberately ignoring the accusations or speaking as little as possible about them” (Gil, 2013: 36). However, this type of reaction is advised only in cases of mild to low risk crises for the entity. Another strategy is denial, which consists in demonstrating the falseness of the accusations attributed to the organisation and, when an entity opts for it, it must “deny all the incidents together and reject any interest generated towards it” (Gil, 2013:37). The third strategy is blame redirection, which is chosen when there is a third party that can take the blame for the situation. As in the previous one, this strategy should be used only in contexts where the veracity of that reality can be established. Scholars such as Gil consider that when the third party that takes the blame belongs to the entity, it becomes a “change of fuses” strategy, whereas when the third is external to the organisation, it is called the “kill the messenger” strategy. Finally, the confession strategy involves the recognition of responsibility and the acceptance of the crisis situation and the explanations given.

## **1.2. Crises in Spain’s national public sector**

Recent research has been carried out in the national public sector. For example, Medina (2017) has focused on four of the most controversial situations in Spain in the 2010-2014 period (the air traffic shutdown by the controllers’ strike, the 2011 Lorca earthquake, the conflict in Gamonal, and the Ebola contagion). Medina argues that six dimensions must be considered in crisis communication management: the crisis itself, crisis management, communication management, political management, relations with the media and the evaluation. She argues that efficiency usually rests on parameters three and four (communication and political management).

Health is a particularly prolific ground for research of this type, with proposals such as that of Nespereira García (2014) and García Frontiñán (2016), both on Influenza. In this regard, the first researcher focuses on the rhetorical construction strategies of the discourse, while the second claims that it is an episode whose public communication management was based on the correctness, transparency and availability of institutional cabinets to the media.

Meanwhile, other national research works advanced in the field of online communication. Such is the case of Costa (2015), who carried out a case study on Bankia, and García Ponce (2013), who focused on the concept of hostility in the internet.

At the same time, other studies have addressed disparate sectors, like terrorism, represented by the work of Zurutuza Muñoz (2009) on the 9/11 attacks, and food and drink, which has been examined by Enrique Jiménez (2007), who showed how Fontaneda's good crisis management allowed the brand to boost its business; Vázquez and Fernández (2013), who examined the role of Water of Mondariz during the cucumber crisis in 2011; and Saura Pérez (2003), who offered a panoramic approach to the sector during the 1990s.

Finally, research on the crisis in the Cadiz shipyards (Goicoechea, 2015) highlights the importance of monitoring "beligenic factors", which are indicators that allow predicting changes in the environment, and are directly linked to proactive crisis management, where anticipating crises is as important as reacting correctly to them. This closes the circle of conflict management perfectly: it is about examining and analysing the environmental variables that can influence an organisation's life to take the most appropriate measures at every moment and, if possible, even avoid crisis development. In the worst-case scenario, this evaluation must continue both during and at the end of the crisis, in a circular and permanent way in the management of economic, social, technological, political and internal affairs that can influence the organisation. The necessary active stance of this management philosophy contrasts with the empirical evidence of the disinterest of organisations in forecasting (Wilcox, 2001; Burgos and Pacheo, 2016).

## **2. Methods**

This research focuses on the Rey Juan Carlos University, whose reputation has been affected since November 2016 by several cases that put it in a clear context of crisis: the plagiarism accusations against Fernando Suárez, the Chancellor of this Spanish institution between 2013 and 2017; the alleged fraud committed in the master's dissertation defence process by the former Mayor of the Community of Madrid, Cristina Cifuentes, and the current leader of the main opposition party in Spain, Pablo Casado (both in the Institute of Public Law of the Rey Juan Carlos University); the plagiarism committed in a Master's dissertation (in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies) by the former Minister of Health of Spain, Carmen Montón; the judicial investigation into the granting of 500 law degrees to Italian lawyers; and the controversy surrounding the collaboration agreement signed in 2015, at the initiative of the current chancellor, with European Airline Center SL for the exploitation of a hangar that is used by this private entity, but is owned, built and paid-for by the university.

To address this issue, we designed an analysis sheet that includes 20 items whose aim is to answer the following research questions. Q1: Is the institution explicitly admitting that it is experiencing a crisis? Q2: What is its dominant reaction strategy? Q3: Is the organisation implementing communication management strategy to address the cause of the crisis? Q4: What are the main features of the communicative management of the crisis?

The period of analysis covers two years, from 1 November 2016, when the media began covering the accusations of plagiarism against Suárez, to 31 October 2018. This study departs from the premise that the organisation's public, its students, is especially sensitive to these cases. According to data of the University itself, in the 2017-2018 academic year it had 66,000 enrolled students: 38,941 in undergraduate programmes, 5,975 in master's programmes and 950 in doctoral programmes. Plus, the university had 2,539 students of institutional degree programmes and 730 enrolled in the University for Mature Students, which puts the total in 49,135 students.

The techniques used to carry out the study are literature review and the content analysis of 566 email messages sent to students of the BA programme in Advertising and Public Relations. Of these messages, 15 have been selected because they specifically refer to one of the aforementioned crises.

### 3. Results

The first relevant element is the time when the URJC sent different emails to its students. Thus, the first official reaction of the entity occurred on 21 December 2016 at 5.29 am, a month after the first accusations of plagiarism were made against Fernando Ramos (the first news reports date back to 16 November) and a week after the chancellors of other universities of Madrid delivered a joint statement about this situation.

It should also be emphasised that students received this information the day after the university made a statement to the media, which infringed the principle of informing internal audiences first, which occurred on several occasions throughout the entire period of study.

Students did not receive more e-mails on crisis-related matters until the period from 7 to 13 February 2017, when they receive contents about the elections in the institution, which were moved forward as a result of the plagiarism accusations.

By contrast, a change in strategy is detected throughout 2018. In September, the institution sent three emails relating to the crisis it was experiencing. In this sense, it is noted that since 13 April 2018 the University showed a much more proactive approach, adopting the habit of providing students with the report presented by the Chancellor to the governing council after this meeting had been held.

Secondly, another important question emerges about the source of the messages, since four senders coexist: the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (1), the Central Electoral Board (2, 3, 4, 5), the Vice

Chancellor of Communication (8) and, in essence, the accounts formally linked to the Chancellor. As in the previous aspect, there is also an evolution here: the message is centralised at the highest level of the entity, rather than delegating it to a Vice-chancellor as it happened at the beginning of the crisis.

In relation to this, the vast majority of communications are directed, generically, to the university community as a whole, although at first the emails explicitly referred to students.

Thirdly, on the explicit recognition of the crisis by the University, it was found that in 46.7% of cases this did not occur, since the situation is referred to indirectly, with expressions that avoid this term, such as “unfair and disproportionate situation” (1) and “the events that have taken place” (6). In this regard, it is noted that, until 2018, only the emails sent by one of the candidates to Chancellor (the winner’s rival, who was considered to have a continuist agenda), who alluded to the crisis by talking about a university “damaged in its reputation” (3), from which “bad practices must be removed” (3).

On the contrary, since 2018 this situation has been more frequently admitted by alluding to events that “are seriously affecting the reputation and image” (7), the “institutional crisis we are experiencing” (8) and “reputational damage” (14).

In relation to all this, the acceptance of the seriousness of the situation also followed a parallel path, although there was a clear predominance of emails that admitted, with more or less explicitness, the severity of these cases (73.3%). As it happened before, the first communication did not admit this situation, and the same happens in the emails sent in June, July and the first of September 2018, where, presumably, the University tried to divert the media attention by downplaying the level of external concern. However, the situation of the former Minister of Health forced the recognition of the severity of the crisis.

In addition, in the elections period, the consideration of the seriousness of the events ranged from the tepid positioning of the continuist candidate, with expressions such as “this is a difficult moment because the current circumstances will force me to be very transparent and to listen more to everyone” (2) and “this is a subject that worries me, just like it does to you; it is the reputation of our university” (5); to the much more forceful and combative positioning of the other candidate: “the seriousness of this problem has no parallel in the Spanish university field and calls into question our entire scientific system” (3) and adjectives used by Berganza (4) to define the institution, “execrable”, “agony”, “sick” “impunity” and “clientelist and corrupt structure”.

Outside the context of the election campaign, on 6 April 2018, the Chancellor admitted his “unease and sorrow”, as well as “the deterioration of the image” (6); while a week later he alluded to his “enormous concern and sadness for all the events”, among which he includes “evidence of serious administrative irregularities” (7). The following month, the Chancellor admitted: “we know that there have been irregular behaviours in our institution” (9); while, at the beginning of autumn 2018, he pledged to “detect and eradicate dishonest and much-damaging behaviours” (13), which is an

expression similar to the one used on 26 October 2018, when he admitted the events “have done so much harm to our institution” (15).

With regards to explicit allusions to the events that triggered the crisis, 33.3% do not clearly indicate what is the situation that the institution is facing. In this sense, the email sent by the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs to the students a month after the first case has broken is eloquent as it alludes to “the news recently published in some media about the Chancellor of our University, Fernando Suárez” (1) and mentions that he wants to “clarify the situation of the undergraduate studies” (8).

On the contrary, in other situations these cases are mentioned. In this sense, the emails sent by the General Electoral Board at the request of candidate Rosa Berganza, who speaks of “scandals that seriously affect the professional ethics of the head of the institution” (3) and of “the destruction of our institution” (3), are particularly explicit.

With regards to these three circumstances (explicit recognition of the existence of a crisis, explicit recognition of the severity of the events and explicit mention of the type of events that triggered the situation), it should be emphasised that only 33.3% delve, from the point of view of content, into the causes of the events that led to the crisis. One of these cases is the email sent by Berganza, in which she attributes the situation to “those who do not protest directly against academic plagiarism” (4).

The degree of concern shown by the institution with regards to this situation also shows that 33.3% of the communications sent to students were monographic in nature, since they only referred to one or more of the profiles of the institutional crisis it faced.

Likewise, the institution frequently notes its “commitment to go as far it takes” (7), which is often accompanied by a discursive approach to the future, such as ensuring that “this Government Administration is committed to eradicate past and future practices that could take place at this University” (7) and observing that “we continue working to prevent these issues from happening again” (13).

A fourth element is related to the communication management that is carried out in relation to the measures taken to restore the situation. In this regard, two thirds of emails highlighted the decisions taken to alleviate the damage.

These emails include some that are clearly focused on image and do not go into the heart of the matter, such as bringing forward the call for elections to the office of the Chancellor (1), the generic elections in the framework of electoral commitments, like the promotion of a regeneration plan (3), and those that seem to reflect willingness to achieve the latest consequences.

The last group may include “measures that this government administration will take forcefully” (7), such as the creation of a disciplinary record, control over the Institute of Public Law or an audit; as well as the implementation of electronic signing and double authentication mechanisms to prevent



fraud in transcripts, filing a judicial complaint and the drafting of an Ethical Code (9); the creation of the Vice-Rectorate of Quality, Ethics and Good Governance (11); the hiring of an external audit (12); the opening of classified information on the master's degree programme of the Institute of Public Law and the announcement of a judicial complaint if any irregularity is detected (13); and the filing of a judicial action (15).

Fifthly, the strategy has changed over time. During the first month no communication was sent to students regarding the plagiarism of the Chancellor (silence strategy), but then a blame redirection strategy was implemented, which is evidently detected in 60% of the emails sent to students.

However, these communications almost always correspond to veiled allusions to the previous administration of the Chancellor Office and professors involved, according to the account of the current Chancellor (6), who strives to disengage himself from all the events. This is reflected in such expressions as: “the events that have occurred in the past of this university and are affecting in the present” (7), “I think it is unfair to call into question the work of all the members of this institution due to the behaviour of a few” (9); “I am convinced that neither I (who at the time was not the Chancellor) nor any department of the University has committed the slightest illegality” (10); “regarding the mistakes that some people in this house made in the past” (13); “events of the past that we have to account for in the present” (14); “only in this way we can determine who were responsible for so much harm done to us, even if those responsible are only a few” (15).

In other cases, especially in Berganza's election messages, the blame redirection strategy is a much more direct and explicit allusion that encompasses both Chancellor Ramos and the candidate who aspires to occupy his place:

“Our university is the subject of public attention, but also of opprobrium, due to the scandals that seriously affect the professional ethics of the current leader and the one who aspires to win these elections with a continuist platform” (3).

At the same time, no cases of the denial strategy were detected. However, as noted above, the level of severity granted for these events varied significantly depending on the time.

It is striking that only 6.7% of the emails contain explicit apologies for the situation caused. However, these apologies do not refer to the events that triggered the crisis but to the Chancellor's management of this process:

“I have at all times tried to clarify the truth, I may have been wrong in specific decisions, or I may have sinned for over-trusting people who did not deserve my trust (as it was made clear in my previous appearance on 21 March, for which I apologised publicly), but I have never acted illegally and I will not allow anyone to tarnish my name or that of the university itself” (6).

On the other hand, it is found that, from a discursive point of view, the institution tried to blame the media for the critical situation it was facing. Thus, the first email already notes that it is motivated by “the news published recently in some media about the Chancellor of our university, Fernando Suárez” (1).

This tone is raised considerably during 2018, when the current Chancellor expressed his “surprise and frustration at the recent extensive use of some headlines” (8) and noted that “the URJC is being questioned in some media as a consequence of the irresponsibility of a few” (13). Along this line, it was pointed out that the closing of the proceedings following a complaint filed against the chancellor:

“Although it affected me, directly and personally, it is also good news for the institution, because it is on the path to take our university out of the negative media focus in which it has been immersed in the last months” (12).

#### **4. Discussion and conclusions**

The case under study is an example of how strong media pressure on a public institution can lead to a radical change in its crisis management strategy towards one of its internal stakeholders (students), towards whom it adopts a clearly reactive attitude at the earliest moments, and then a more proactive behaviour at the end of the period of study.

It changed its silence strategy for a blame redirection strategy (with varying degrees of explicitness and strength), although it almost never apologised for the situation it caused. No cases of crisis denial were detected, although the degrees of acceptance and concern the institution showed regarding the crisis increased over time, registering a flat period towards the 2018 summer and a new peak in September of the same year, in parallel to the discovery of new situations that affected an already damaged reputation.

On the other hand, the institution implemented a strategy of direct information towards its students regarding the measures taken to fix the damage caused. However, sometimes this communication is delivered after it has been published by the media, contradicting the recommendation to inform its internal audiences before its external stakeholders.

In addition, the existence of several spokespersons to manage these fifteen communicative processes as well as the use of contradictory message styles, which accuse the media of blowing up the scale of the crisis in the public opinion, seem to suggest that the institution was not prepared to deal with a crisis of this calibre.

Finally, the results of this research represent a first approximation to this subject of study, which will be complemented in the coming months with a survey that will be applied to a sample of the nearly

50,000 students of the Rey Juan Carlos University to assess the communicative management of the crisis that still affects this institution.

- The results of this article are part of the research activities promoted by the XESCOM Network (R2014/026 XESCOM), supported by the Ministry of Culture, Education and University Planning of the Government of Galicia.

## 5. References

JM Burgos Bravo & C Pacheo Silva (2016): “Construcción de imaginarios en la gestión de la comunicación en situaciones de crisis en las organizaciones”. En *Revista de Estudios Cotidianos – NESOP*, 1 (4), junio, págs. 117 a 136.

WT Coombs (2007): “Attribution theory as a guide for post-crisis communication research”, en *Public Relations Review*, 33 (2), páginas 135 a 139.

CV Costa (2015): *Comunicación de crisis, redes sociales y reputación corporativa. Un estudio sobre el uso de las redes sociales como un discurso contrario a una campaña publicitaria* (tesis doctoral). Madrid: Universidad Complutense. Recuperado el 5 de noviembre de 2018 de [https://www.ucm.es/data/cont/media/www/pag-73273/TesisDoctoral\\_CarlosCosta-2015.pdf](https://www.ucm.es/data/cont/media/www/pag-73273/TesisDoctoral_CarlosCosta-2015.pdf).

AM Enrique Jiménez (2007): *La comunicación empresarial en situaciones de crisis. Estudio de caso: la crisis de Fontaneda* (tesis doctoral). Barcelona: Universitat Autònoma. Recuperado el 11 de septiembre de 2018 de <https://www.tdx.cat/bitstream/handle/10803/4142/aej1de1.pdf>.

K Fearn-Banks (2001): “Crisis Communication: A Review of Some Best Practices”. En Heath, Robert L. (ed.), *Handbook of Public Relations*. Sage Publications Inc. California: Thousand Oaks.

E García Frontiñán (2016): *Comunicación de crisis en los gabinetes de prensa sanitarios. Análisis de la producción periodística y de la información publicada sobre la Gripe A* (tesis doctoral). Madrid: Universidad Complutense.

D García Ponce (2013): *Comunicación de crisis y conflictos comunicativos 2.0. Hostilidad en la red* (tesis doctoral). Málaga: Universidad de Málaga.

P Gil (2013): “El tratamiento informativo de la crisis y su gestión: Cómo salvar la situación”. En O Islas & G Hernández: *Investigando la comunicación en crisis*. México: Razón y Palabra.

MM Goicoechea Margalef (2015): *Herramientas de gestión de crisis en la comunicación institucional. Aplicación al análisis de la crisis de Astilleros de Cádiz 1995* (tesis doctoral). Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla.

A González Herrero (1998): *Marketing preventivo: la comunicación de crisis en la empresa*. Barcelona: Bosch.

A González Herrero (2004): *Issues Management: la gestión de asuntos potencialmente conflictivos*. En M T Otero Alvarado (coord.). Actas del I Congreso Internacional de investigadores en Relaciones Públicas. Sevilla: Facultad de Comunicación de la Universidad de Sevilla, 17 y 18 de noviembre, Asociación de Investigadores en Relaciones Públicas (AIRP). Recuperado el 20 de noviembre de 2018 de <https://idus.us.es/xmlui/handle/11441/38972>

A González-Herrero, A & S Smith (2008): “Crisis communications management on the Web: How Internet-based technologies are changing the way public relations professionals handle business crises”, en *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 16 (3), págs. 143 a153.

M Guzmán Hennessey (2007): “La anticipación de las crisis una aplicación del enfoque del caos”, en *Eidos*, nº 7, págs. 128 a 159.

M Lorenzo Valdés (2013): “Perspectivas de estudio en el manejo de crisis”, en O Islas & G Hernández (coord.), *Investigando la comunicación en crisis*, México: Razón y Palabra, págs. 81 a 95.

JC Losada Díaz & R Zamora Medina (2011): “Gestión de la comunicación de crisis en secuestros: lecciones desde el ‘Caso Alakrana’”, en *Trípodos*, 28. Barcelona: Universitat Ramon Llull, págs. 129 a 144; recuperado el 21 de septiembre de 2018 de <https://www.raco.cat/index.php/Tripodos/article/view/247488>.

JC Losada Díaz (2010): *Comunicación en la gestión de crisis. Lecciones prácticas*. Barcelona: UOC.

F Marín (2009): *Comunicación de crisis*. Madrid: LID Editorial.

RM Medina Mínguez (2017): *Comunicación en situaciones de crisis: factores de éxito que favorecen su eficacia. Estudio comparado de casos de comunicación de crisis en el sector público español entre los años 2010-2014* (tesis doctoral). Murcia: Universidad de Murcia. Recuperado el 11 de octubre de 2018 de <https://www.tdx.cat/bitstream/handle/10803/405321/TRMMM.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

J Nespereira García (2014): *Estrategias discursivas en la comunicación de crisis sanitarias (retórica y teoría de la argumentación): el caso de la Gripe A en 2009*. (tesis doctoral). Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid.

JL Piñuel Raigada (1997): *Teoría de la comunicación y gestión de las organizaciones*. Madrid: Síntesis.

D Rodríguez-Toubes Muñiz & JA Fraiz Brea (2011): “Gestión proactiva de crisis en el turismo: una experiencia de estudio en Galicia”, en *Pasos*, 9 (2), págs. 279 a 289.

ML Sánchez Calero (2002): “Importancia de la Gestión de la Comunicación en periodos de crisis empresariales”, en *Ámbitos* 8 (7). 2º semestre 2001 - 1er Semestre 2002 págs. 165 a 179.

MP Saura Pérez (2003): *La gestión de la comunicación de crisis en el sector de alimentación y bebidas en España en el período 1990-2000*. (tesis doctoral). Madrid: Universidad Complutense.

M Vázquez Gestal & AB Fernández Souto (2013): “Las marcas en los contextos de crisis. La empresa aguas de Mondariz y su respuesta a la crisis de los pepinos”, en *Historia y Comunicación Social*, 18 (1). Madrid: Universidad Complutense, págs. 207 a 218; recuperado el 12 de septiembre de 2018 de <http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/HICS/article/view/43961/41566>.

D Wilcox (2001): *Relaciones Públicas: Estrategias y Tácticas*. Madrid: Pearson.

C Zurutuza Muñoz (2009): *Reformulación dramática de la comunicación de crisis frente al terrorismo: aplicación metodológica a los atentados del 11 de marzo de 2004 en España* (tesis doctoral). Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra.

---

### How to cite this article in bibliographies / References

J Vázquez-Sande, L García-Abad, P Pineda-Martínez (2019): “Internal communication and reputational crisis. The case of the Rey Juan Carlos University”. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, pp. 1748 to 1760, <http://www.revistalatinacs.org/074paper/1408/91en.html>  
DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-2019-1408en

Paper received on 20 June. Accepted on 27 September.  
Published on 6 November.