

# Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting

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Rebecca and I attended the 2018 National Association of Counties Conference in Nashville earlier this month. I brought back a few observations on customer service, promotion and strategic planning that may be beneficial to you and your business. I also congratulate Tarrant County Precinct 1 Commissioner Roy Charles Brooks, who completed his year as President of the National Association of Counties. He served with distinction and brought a wealth of positive recognition to Tarrant County.

## SMART CUSTOMER SERVICE:

### Gaylord Opryland

How would you like your favorite recording artist to wish you "good morning"? If you're a guest at the Gaylord Opryland in Nashville, you're in luck – that's exactly what happens every day!

["Please choose the celebrity wake-up call you would like to receive."](#) For Blake Shelton, press 1. For Charlie Pride, press 2. For Charlie Daniels, press 3. For Kellie Pickler, press 4. For Hillary from Lady Antebellum, press 5. For Trace Adkins, press 6. For the standard wake-up call, press 7."

Each of these options results in a "call" whereby the chosen artist gives their name and wishes the guest a good morning.

What a brilliant and location-appropriate gesture! Offering wake-up calls from country music superstars probably wouldn't play well anywhere outside Nashville, the universally recognized home of country music (unless, of course, it's a hotel playing host to the Academy of Country Music Awards).

Congratulations to the Gaylord Opryland for offering such a unique service for its guests. This experience helps differentiate the giant resort, which also features several live entertainment stages in addition to the actual on-air studio for the legendary WSM-650 AM radio.



## SMART STRATEGY:

### When Crisis Comes to Town

**"Crisis will eventually come to your town, so you need to be prepared for that day!"** The man who spoke these words was Mark Gale, CEO of the Fort Lauderdale Hollywood International Airport. He was speaking in Las Vegas on Sunday morning, October 1, 2017.

Members of the crowd visited with him after that speech and said, "Nothing like what you're talking about could ever happen in Las Vegas. We have so much security."

That very night, less than 12 hours after his presentation on active shooter events, a gunman killed 58 victims and wounded hundreds more in the city with "so much security."

Gale also observed the following: "There is a lot of security in Las Vegas, but unfortunately, it's primarily inside the casinos."

And he should certainly know about active shooter events. He played a leadership role in responding to the Fort Lauderdale airport shooting on January 6, 2017, just nine months before the Las Vegas incident. At the Fort Lauderdale airport, a traveler loaded his gun inside the men's restroom and came out shooting, killing five and wounding six others.

Social media magnified the scope of the situation – which was under control in just 85 seconds – and created a massive panic that sent 12,000 people scrambling onto the runways and shut down all air travel.

Just over a year later, Gale's expertise was again put to the test with the February 14, 2018, shooting at Marjory Stoneman

**Crisis will eventually come to your town, so you need to be prepared...**

**Nothing like that could ever happen in Las Vegas. But 12 hours later...**

**Of their 132 takeaways from how they responded to these crises, five are...**

Douglas High School, also in his county. Afterward, the Broward County assistant communications officer confirmed that it was not just a good idea, but a necessity, for communities and companies to establish a crisis communication plan. The two men spoke on our convention's "When Crisis Comes to Town" panel in Nashville.

Of their 132 takeaways from how they responded to these crises, five of the most critical points are:



1. You **MUST** have a plan in place. Trying to improvise while a crisis is occurring leads to chaos, mistakes and miscommunication, and it can easily cost lives.

2. You **MUST** identify a point person in advance who is authorized to speak on behalf of your entity.

3. You **MUST** identify your most likely specific vulnerabilities and establish a plan that covers how to respond.

4. You **MUST** practice so you are prepared in the event a crisis occurs.

5. Everything you do, and the manner in which you do it, must reinforce that you care for everybody's safety.

Failing to have a plan in place – otherwise known as sticking your head in the sand – didn't work for Las Vegas, and it won't work for you.

Crisis didn't come to Broward County just once. Add two hurricanes to the aforementioned shooting incidents, and the county dealt with **FOUR SEPARATE CRISES** in a very short period of time. That's an incredible burden for any community to bear.

Our community – or your business – could be next. If you want to discuss crisis response strategies, please call me at 817-205-2334.

# NOT-SO-SMART PROMOTION: 3rd & Lindsley

My former tennis doubles partner Steve Durr in Nashville (who, as you may recall from my May edition, has been the sound engineer for the Indy 500 for 11 years) recently called to give me a music tip: On Monday night (July 16), go to a club called 3rd & Lindsley in Nashville.

"This will be a bucket list concert for you," he promised, "because you'll get to see The Time Jumpers." My immediate question was, as you might predict, "Who the heck are The Time Jumpers?"

Judging by Steve's reaction, you would have thought that I had spit on the front steps of the original Ryman Auditorium while simultaneously blaspheming the late country legends, Roy Acuff and Minnie Pearl.

"Only the finest western swing band in Nashville, **with the best lead guitar player – Vince Gill!** They play every Monday night, but you have to get there early."

I looked at the website and confirmed that Vince would indeed be playing. Rebecca agreed to go, even though she is not a huge country music fan – much less a western swing fan.

Since this is a general admission event with no reserved seating, we arrived around 6:15 p.m., giving us plenty of time for dinner ahead of the 8 p.m. performance. We sat with a couple from

Athens, Georgia. The young man had attended several of The Time Jumpers' concerts before and confirmed we were in for a treat.

Unfortunately, trouble arrived and showed its ugly face. A bit later, the young man overheard from another table that Vince Gill was not likely to perform. It turned out that Vince was on tour with a little band called The Eagles, for whom he plays lead guitar and sings vocals. They were performing in Boston later that week.

I don't fault Vince (those of us who should have met him now call Vince by his first name) for this disappointment, but I do feel that the venue should not have promoted his appearance to sell their tickets.

Regardless of who was at fault, The Time Jumpers – with or without Vince Gill – deliver an outstanding performance. For a sample of them in concert with "our good buddy" Vince, [click here](#).



# THE Tiebreaker Jay Makes M Restaurant Stand Out

Rebecca and I attended a dinner on Friday evening, July 13, at the M Restaurant in Nashville, where our group was seated in a private room. A young man in his 40s, whose confidence and skill led us peg him as either the restaurant manager, sommelier or executive chef, paid lavish attention to us, explaining how every menu item was unique to Nashville and which wines paired best with it.

As it turned out, he grew up in Northeast Tarrant County and graduated from L.D. Bell High School.

As we left, I asked for his card because I was so impressed with the way he took such

immaculate care of our party. "I don't have a card," he said. "I work here part-time and for special occasions such as tonight."

We were all sufficiently impressed. Here was a server who acted with such authority that we felt we were being hosted by the owner, manager or executive chef. Kudos to Jay Withers from M Restaurant in Nashville for showing us how to carry ourselves at work – thinking and acting like an owner while we care for customers.

Very well done!

