UNIVERSITY OF AGDER

Intentional transparency

A rhetorical case study of BP's transparency policy throughout the Deepwater Horizon crisis in comparison to how Tesco dealt with the European horsemeat scandal

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This master's thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

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Abstract

In this thesis, I have studied how a major event such as a crisis changes the way a company promotes transparency in their corporate communication. To gain knowledge about this aspect of their communication I did a multicase study of two cases; BP and the Deepwater Horizon accident and Tesco and the horsemeat scandal.

Methodically I did a categorization of press releases from three selected periods. One year before the accident, during the accident and one year after the accident. This categorization was followed by email interviews as well as a rhetorical analysis of selected press releases from the two companies.

The primary findings of this thesis are divergent between the two organisations. BP's press releases did not seem to change significantly considering the transparency shown in their press releases. Tesco's press releases showed a significant change in how they promoted transparency in the area affected by the crisis.

Prewords

Writing this thesis has been a journey in so many ways. To write these words are both an unbelievable relief and joy as well as a bit sentimental.

There are so many people that are worthy of a thank you.

My master's advisor Karen, constantly optimistic and encouraging. Always with good contributions and reflections, thank you.

To my fellow students, for making my years in Kristiansand such a great chapter.

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Content

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

"Honesty and transparency reduces the number of skeletons in the closet and provides us with a favourable position for crisis management" (Jan Halvor Bransdal, Attachment 3)[1].

The quote above is from Jan Halvor Bransdal, CR responsible of Stormberg, when asked if he feared that their transparency profile made them more vulnerable in time of crisis. Stormberg has a strong and implemented focus on transparency as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility.

According to this approach, a crisis should work as an incentive to become more transparent. The purpose of this thesis is to see if this approach is applicable to additional companies' relation to transparency through studying how a crisis influences the transparency in the corporate communication. Will a crisis increase the signs of transparency in their external communication or is the defining pattern that a company's experience with being vulnerable would make them less transparent?

In this thesis, transparency is considered one of the main criteria for a proper and well-reflected CSR strategy. This is supported by Dubbink, Graafland, and Liedekerke (2008, p. 391), they state that "Transparency is a necessary condition for CSR. CSR will remain marginal as a mechanism of governance as long as stakeholders cannot closely keep their eye on them. This is not to deny that some managers will be inherently motivated for CSR. But for it to become a significant mechanism of governance, stakeholders must be able to see the difference between CSR and window dressing".

In the contexts of defining transparency as necessary for defining transparency as necessary for the exercise of CSR, and for the consumers to recognise CSR efforts from "window dressing" it is interesting to see how companies conduct their transparency when put under pressure.

There appears to be two major aspects behind the strategies of Corporate Social Responsibility today; the purpose of doing good, and the purpose of doing good to have a buffer in case something goes wrong. Different organisations would have different emphasises on the two

[1]. The quote is translated by me.

aspects. It might be worth asking the question: Has Corporate Social Responsibility become more common or is it simply the communication of these good intentions which is given more significance?

Corporate Social responsibility seems to be of increasing significance in the media. It appears companies promote their Corporate Social Responsibility through campaigns to a larger extent than just a few years ago. Corporate Social Responsibility has become a way to stand out amongst a vast group of companies. Especially worth mentioning is Coca Cola’s campaign together with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF, 2014) and Statoil’s prize winning CSR report from 2011 (PR Daily, 2012). At the same time as Coca cola were participating in the WWF campaign they were massively criticised for their depletion of ground water in India (WWF, 2014) and Greenpeace (2011) are amongst the organisations arguing that Statoil’s Canadian tar sand projects need to be shut down immediately as they are a great environmental threat. In other words there seems to be a discrepancy not only between how the companies communicate and how they behave, but also in how their efforts are perceived by different audiences. The companies’ effort to show how they take their Corporate Social Responsibility seriously seem to be increasing. One of several explanations for this is that the consumers have become more conscious about their social responsibility. Therefore companies need to focus on something more than financial gain to attract consumers (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004).

Part of the explanation for the increase in focus on CSR lies here as it is about the competitiveness of the market. Maybe it is so that the increase in selection of companies and goods is making the consumers become more demanding, that price itself is no longer enough to attract them.

1.1.2 Research question

The question that I am trying to answer in this thesis is

How is the corporate communication of transparency in an organization affected by a major crisis?

To investigate this I will answer two other questions;

Are there any signs of a change in transparency?

How is this change apparent?

1.2 Scope

To be able to find an answer to this research question there are two cases being analysed in this thesis.

The first case is BP before, during and after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The oilrig Deepwater Horizon was a prestige project for BP. In September 2009 the rig was the deepest in history drilling in the Tiber Prospect with a well bore of 10 683 meters (BP, 2009b). April 20th 2010 the rig exploded, 11 of the workers were killed in the accident and the following fire (BP, 2014b). On the 22 of April 2010 the rig sank, at this stage it had already caused the greatest oil spill in American history. Despite major efforts to stop the oil spill, the well continued leaking oil until the 19th of September 2010.

The other Case is Tesco. On the 15th of January 2013 reports came out stating that there was DNA from horse and pig found in burgers and ready meals from Tesco. The impact on the consumers were massive, and Tesco dropped over €300 Million in market value by Wednesday 16. January (Fletcher, 2013).

The purpose of this assignment is to see if these two crises changed the way BP and Tesco are communicating transparency. To investigate that a selection has been made of press releases from their official web pages BP (2014a) and Tesco (2014c). Other news clips or articles have not been considered as part of the material. The reason for this was that the intention behind this thesis is to evaluate their intentional communication and their own press releases were considered the best material for this purpose.

Due to the large amount of press releases it was necessary to make a selection. The selection was limited to one month, one year prior to the accident, two months from the time of the accident, and one month one year after the accident. This selection gave 84 press releases from BP, of which 66 were related to the crisis. The selection gave 30 press releases for Tesco, of which 12 were related to the crisis. The fact that this selection was made does limit the transferability of the thesis. However, from the aspect of this thesis it was not possible to take into consideration all the press releases. Because the purpose of the thesis is intended message, it was also considered likely that this would be apparent as the press releases are raw material straight from the organisation and have not yet been filtered by a journalist, or others external actors. In addition to this, the selection was done over a timespan of three years, it is however likely that changes in the intentional message would be apparent.

From these press releases, a rhetorical analysis consisted of six press releases from BP and five from Tesco. The reason for the extra press release from BP is that they had a press release related to the field of the crisis one year prior to the accident, whilst Tesco did not.

The research is primarily done through a rhetorical document analysis. In addition to the rhetorical analysis of the press releases both the organisations were sent seven questions by email (see attachment 1). Unfortunately, the response to these gave very limited information about the cases. These cases are analysed from the perspective of Transparency due to the significance in relation to communication as well as the execution of CSR.

Text in this assignment is used in accordance with Norman Fairclough (1992, p. 95) who defines text as "the written or spoken language produced in a discursive event". The discursive event here being the press releases. Press release is also referring to the message of the press release, and not the actual document itself.

1.3 Structure

1.3.1 Theory

In this part of the thesis, the theory in which the analysis is based is presented. First comes a presentation of the concepts that are essential to the understanding of the thesis. Second, the rhetorical theory is presented with a focus on the external rhetorical pentagram, emphasising the aspects that will be used in the analysis.

1.3.2 Methods

The methodical approach in this thesis is case study research, the benefits and disadvantages of this are presented first in the methods chapter. Thereafter follows a short description of the cases as well as an explanation as to why they are good objects for analysis in this thesis. Following this part comes a discussion of the use of quantitative and qualitative research as well as the distinction between them. There is also an explanation of why, and for what purpose, each of them are used in this thesis. Next is an outline of the naturalistic paradigm and the implications this choice has for the thesis. Then follows an explanation of why the rhetorical approach is chosen for this thesis, as well as a description of the email interview. Finally it concludes with an explanation of the categorization being done in the quantitative part of the thesis.

1.3.3 Analysis

The analysis for this thesis mainly consists of two parts from the perspective of the cases. The first part is the analysis of BP, the second is the analysis of Tesco. The analysis is following the same layout, analysing one year at the time from the rhetorical perspective presented in the theory.

1.3.4 Conclusion

The conclusion consists of a discussion of the findings in the analysis in light of the research question.

2.0 Theoretical approach

2.1 What is a crisis?

The word crisis comes from the Latin word *krisis* which means sudden change, decisive turn or fatal disorder (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004, p. 103). Ihlen and Robstad further define a crisis as "a bigger adverse event that brings forth problems that cannot be solved through ordinary organisation and vigour" (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004, p. 103). Dutton (1986, p. 502) argues that a crisis can be recognised by three factors; the perceived importance, immediacy and uncertainty. These factors will further influence how threatening the crisis will appear to an organisation. Coombs and Holladay (2011) divide the crisis into three stages; precrisis, crisis event and post crisis. They argue that even though a crisis is unpredictable it is possible to prepare for it. For dealing with a crisis they suggest four stages; prevention, preparation, response and revision. They are all of major significance, but most relevant for this assignment is the three latter stages as the purpose of the thesis is to see if the crisis gives rise to change in the case of both BP and Tesco.

In that respect, it is important to emphasise that a crisis does not necessarily lead to a negative outcome for an organisation. If a crisis is well handled, it can increase the credibility and better the reputation of an organisation (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004). From this we can conclude that a crisis is defined primarily due to the way it comes to exist, rather than of it's outcome. While this thesis will analyse the response to the crisis in each case, it's primary focus is to examine the revision of the crisis. This is the stage where the organisation evaluates the crisis and how it affected the organisation. The organisation considers how it will avoid a similar crisis in the future and how to communicate with it's stakeholders as part of that (Coombs, 2007). In this thesis, the purpose is to look at how this affects their openness and the authenticity of their communication. Neither of these definitions of a crisis provide us with a tool for an absolute objective definition of a crisis event. From this we can conclude that a crisis is subjective (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004).

2.1.1 Why does this affect the communication?

When a crisis occurs, two main groups require information, the internal and the external. The internal is the employers; the external is the media and external stakeholders. Although both groups require information, they have slightly different requirements as to what information. They both need to be well informed in a time of crisis. The purpose of this communication is "to influence public opinion development to the point that opinions held in the postcrisis period are at the same level or greater in positive opinions and at the same level in negative opinions among the members of any constituent audience compromising an environmental component for an organization" (Sturges, 1994, pp. 303-306).

No two crises are the same. They do however have some common denominators. The demand for communication in a crisis is higher than in a non-crisis situation. It is important that all the stakeholders get the information they require to prevent the crisis from getting bigger. Today in the society of social media, a crisis can also take place as a direct result of lack of communication. If an organisation is late responding to customer claims, these claims can easily be made public and a crisis may occur (Coombs, 2007). Lack of information can also lead to a communication crisis within the overall crisis. This can take form in mistrust, issues cooperation or misunderstandings amongst others (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004). From a communication crisis a crisis event will therefore often consist of two aspects, the actual crisis event, and a communication crisis that follows.

According to Benoit (1997, p. 178) a communication crisis consists of an attack that has two components; “1. The accused is held responsible for an action. 2. The act is considered offensive”. He argues that whether or not the company is in fact responsible for the action in question, or the act indeed was offensive, is of little or no significance. It is the perception of the situation that is important. He also argues that “it is not reasonable to form an unfavourable impression of a firm *unless that company is believed to be responsible* for that act” (Benoit, 1997, p. 178). A company should therefore never interfere with a crisis situation in which they are not perceived to be responsible even if they in fact might be at least partially responsible for the crisis. In BP’s case it is quite obvious that the act has taken place and there are not any obvious actors to be held responsible expect BP. In Tesco’s case however the crisis event is not entirely Tesco’s fault, as they bought the meat from their trusted supplier. Other retail companies are affected by the crisis as well, but Tesco is still given a very hard time in the news. Part of the explanation for this might be found in their role as a market leader.

When the crisis has taken place and the company is held responsible there is an urgent need for communication, this is where crisis communication management would be useful. “Crisis communication management literature focuses on communicating to affected constituents during the aftermath of a crisis breakout and continuing through the period of turmoil generated by the crisis” (Sturges, 1994, p. 297). The purpose of communication management literature is for the organisation to communicate efficiently during a crisis with the purpose of minimizing the negative effect of the crisis and regaining the reputation of the organisation.

A crisis goes through several stages, both before and after the actual crisis event. Sturges (1994) argues that in the lifespan of a crisis consists of a life cycle consisting of 8 steps; the issue is latent, the event occurs, the pro and con factions form, debate occurs, time lapses, public’s opinion forms, social action is taken and finally a social norm develops. He argues that there are two steps where given information is most likely to influence the stakeholders. These two are when the issue is latent and then next when time lapses. He argues that immediately after the crisis it is hard to form opinion in the desirable direction for an organisation because this is a time when the opposition will be strong. When time has lapsed and the opposition no longer reinforce their message, it is more likely for an organisation that their version reaches the stakeholders. He also emphasises that a crisis does not occur in a vacuum. This is why the latent stage is also of major significance. When a crisis occurs, the public already have a formed opinion about the organisation. This is what in Rhetoric is called the initial, or extrinsic ethos (Kjeldsen, 2006). The extrinsic ethos, the opinion or reputation created before the crisis, will influence how the crisis is perceived from the stakeholders. This is the reason why he argues that “The real work of influencing relationships should be done long before a crisis arises when issues, although salient to the public, are still latent” (Sturges, 1994, p. 307).

This understanding can also be found with Scholes and Clutterbuck (1998, p. 229); “Here we come to the nub of the matter: the need to have – and deserve – a corporate reputation that can act as a buffer when things go wrong”. To achieve such a buffer, the organisations need to address the crisis while it is still latent. This is why this thesis examines the articles written about the subject of the crisis before the crisis event itself takes place.

Coombs (2007) argues that the response to a crisis can take one or several of ten forms; These strategies are; Attacking the Accuser, Denial, Scapegoating, Excusing, Justification, Compensation, Apology, Reminding, Ingratiation, victimage (Coombs, 2007, p. 155).

Benoit (1997) merges the responses to five main categories with the purpose of restoring the image of an organisation after a crisis. These are; Denial, Evasions of Responsibility, Reducing Offensiveness of Event, Corrective Action and Mortification. Denial is achieved through arguing that the organisation simply did not do what it is accused of doing, or that someone else was responsible for the act. Evasion of responsibility is when the organisation is arguing that the organisation was provoked by the act of others, that they did not have the correct information, that is was an accident or that the act was performed with good intentions. The third strategy is reducing offensiveness of the event. This strategy can be performed through stressing the organisations good traits, minimalizing the seriousness of the act, arguing that the act was less offensive than it appears, that the act had to take place because of other, more important considerations, attack the accuser or reimburse the victim. The fourth strategy, Corrective Action, is done by arguing that the organisation plans to solve the problem as soon as possible or to prevent it. The last strategy is mortification where the organisation apologises unconditionally for the act.

2.2 What is Corporate Social Responsibility?

The social responsibility of an organisation can come in two forms, one is the direct responsibility to make sure that the business is run as environmental friendly as possible, that the company pay their taxes and follow the rules of law. The other is an indirect responsibility.

This responsibility is related to the power the organisation has in the society and how it uses its power (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004).

The indirect responsibility is what is often referred to as social corporate responsibility or CSR. CSR can be explained as "[…] a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in the business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). Other definitions worth mentioning are "CSR is the voluntary actions that a corporation implements as it pursues its mission and fulfils its perceived obligations to stakeholders, including employees, communities, the environment, and society as a whole" (Coombs & Holladay, 2011, p. 8). Both these definitions emphasise that CSR must be achieved through voluntary efforts. Gössling and Vocht (2007, p. 363) find CSR to be "an obligation of the business world to be accountable to all of its stakeholders – not just its financial ones". They talk about giving something back to the society; something more than what is the primary focus now, adding a dimension or a perspective. Porter and Kramer (2011) are further emphasizing this aspect. They argue that the focus should change from Corporate Social Responsibility to Creating Shared Value. Their purpose is for companies to change capitalism into a wider term, from only including economic value to also include societal value. They argue "a societal purpose represent a higher form of capitalism – one that will enable society to advance more rapidly while allowing companies to grow even more. The result is a positive cycle of company and community prosperity, which leads to profits that endure (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 15).

2.3 Transparency

> *"The term 'transparency' evokes the image of a clear pane of glass through which the sunshine (or the light) can beam in an unrestrained fashion. It is a notoriously imprecise term and is to be understood more as the expression of a political objective than anything else"* Curtin (1999, p. 447).

This is one of many quotes debating the meaning of the word transparency. The word continues to be used in many different settings being attributed a number of different meanings. Transparency is arguably fundamental for the execution of CSR as it gives the stakeholders access to true and honest information about the companies' strategies as well as their CSR efforts.

“Transparency […] refers essentially to access to information held by public authorities by both individuals and legislative assemblies” (Curtin, 1999, p. 447). Transparency initiative (2014) on the other hand argues that it is not enough to make information accessible, it also has to be relevant, timely and accurate for the demand for transparency to be fulfilled. Finally, Transparency International assigns the word even more meaning declaring; “Transparency ensures that public officials, civil servants, managers, board members and businessmen act visibly and understandably, and report to their activities. And it means that the general public can hold them to account” Transparency international (2014). Based on these definitions there seems to be several layers of transparency.

While Curtin’s definition focuses only on access to information, Transparency Initiative further adds that for information to be accessible it is not enough that it is not hidden, it also needs to be presented in a certain way. Transparency international further adds that the public can hold them to account, which to some degree requires a democratic society. For this thesis, as the purpose is to study the communication of transparency, Transparency Initiative’s definition is the most apt as the thesis is not to take into consideration the degree of democracy. Curtin’s definition would also be useful, but as the thesis only investigates press releases from a given time, it is necessary for the information to be timely, relevant and accurate.

Tesco were named Top Retailer in Transparency International’s report, “Transparency in Corporate Reporting” in 2012 (Tesco, 2012a) which was before the crisis. On the 23th April 2013 they declared that they aim to “create more transparency in our supply chain for customers” Grace (2013). BP states that “BP works with governments, non-governmental organizations and international agencies to improve transparency in revenue flows from oil and gas activities in resource-rich countries” (BP, 2013). BP and Tesco have in common the fact that their focus in relation to transparency is on corporate and financial transparency rather than that of communication. That is not to say that they do not have a focus on transparency in their communication, but rather that it is not as explicitly communicated through their web pages. Neither of them seems to be using the word transparency in a communication context

2.4 Stakeholders

Edward Freeman (1984) Provides the classic, and by far most used, definition of a stakeholder as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of organizational objectives” (p.46). This definition of stakeholder contains employees, customers and communities to mention some. These will all have to be taken into consideration in the company’s strategies. “In fact, the very heart of capitalism and its entrepreneurial spirit is in figuring out how to meet the demands of customers, suppliers, employees, communities, and financiers, so that all win” (Edward Freeman, 2010a). Stakeholders can further be divided into groups depending on how aware they are of their role as stakeholders of an organisation and depending on whether or not they act on their interests. The most relevant type of stakeholders for this assignment is those called the publics here defined as “[they] seek out organisations that create those issues - to gain information, seek redress of grievances, pressure the organizations or ask governments to regulate them” (Grunig et al., p. 128)[2].

In some cases these stakeholders may have conflicting interests. In these cases, it is essential that the organisation communicate with the stakeholders. Especially for larger organisations that have a larger number of stakeholders and may experience the complexity of communicating to different interests. The new media and an increase in global communications has brought some new challenges to these relations. The organisations now have to assume that “[…] each of their audiences will get to know what is being said or done to the others and will simply no longer tolerate the telling of different stories or inconsistent behaviour patterns” (Scholes & Clutterbuck, 1998, p. 229).

2.4.1 Why is this of extra importance now?

Earlier CSR was primarily performed through charitable donations. The company would make these unrelated to their business. Today the primary focus is rather on making sure the core business is run in a socially responsible way and further to use this as a competitive advantage (Jones, Comfort, Hillier, & Eastwood, 2005). This change has made CSR more integrated in the organisations actual goals. The change described in CSR has made it more relevant now than ever. With CSR being closer related to the main goals of the business, transparency has become an important part of CSR. Through the analysis of cases in this, thesis the relevance of transparency and communication as part of CSR will become apparent as a fundamental and necessary part of any CSR strategy.

[2] From (Ihlen & Robstad, 2004, p. 48)

2.5 Press release as genre

Lassen (2006, p. 527) argues that the press release is not a genre, but "used as a vehicle for a number of different genres with different objectives". Whilst McLaren and Gurau (2005) argue that a press release is a genre consistent of an announcement, an elaboration of that announcement, a form of self-quotation, usually from the CEO, and finally contact details. They conclude that "The fact that there was so little variation found between the press releases included in the corpus may suggest that this is a highly conventionalised and indeed static genre" (McLaren & Gurau, 2005, pp. 26-27).

2.6 What is Rhetoric?

Rhetoric is chosen as the tool for analysis because the primary purpose is to look at the companies' intentional message and whether or not a change has occurred before and after the crisis. The fact that their intentions are the primary aspect makes a Rhetorical analysis most relevant.

The history of Rhetoric can be dated back to Aristotle who is being recognised as one of it's founding fathers. He stated that "Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle, 2001, p. 4). This definition is still commonly used, however new definitions further specify the use of rhetoric. (Bitzer, 1968, pp. 3-4) added to Aristotle's definition, stating that "[…] a work of rhetoric is pragmatic; it comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself; it functions ultimately to produce action or change in the world; it performs some task. In short, rhetoric is a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of though and action".

Whilst Aristotle's definition focuses on the study of rhetoric, called rhetorica studens, Bitzer talks about the use of rhetoric, called rhetorica utens (Kjeldsen, 2006). Whilst Aristotle defined rhetoric as the mere observation of the means of persuasion, Bitzer's definition is referring to the actual use of rhetoric and what the requirements are as to what and when it is to be used. Further, Burke (1969) focuses primarily on the foundation necessary for rhetoric to take place. He argues that the orator shall only try to persuade someone if that someone was free. If a person is forced to perform a certain act then rhetoric is neither necessary nor requested, according to Burke, it is only in situations where you are dealing with a free individual that rhetoric is necessary and executable.

There is a current consensus that rhetoric consists of the means of persuasion and that these are affected by the criteria creating the situation in which they are available. The study of rhetoric requires an understanding of the means of persuasion and the extent to which these means are being utilised. Aristotle's study of rhetoric was often met with argument that rhetoric was too subjective, that the art of speaking to a crown was a gift that you were either born with or born without. Following this logic it was not an art that could be studied. His response to this was: "[…] it is possible to inquire the reason why some speakers succeed through practice and others spontaneously; and every one will at once agree that such an inquiry is the function of an art" (Aristotle, 2001, p. 1).

2.6.1 Why is it relevant today?

Significant changes have appeared in the field of Rhetoric since the days of Aristotle. Amongst the most important is the emergence of the media society. Whilst the early Rhetoric primarily focused on the spoken speech today's rhetoric is applied to a much wider field. Society, and Rhetoric with it, have become multimodal and multimedial. Consequently, there is a new understanding of rhetoric and as a result new opportunities and challenges. Amongst the most significant changes is the understanding that a message today might not have a known personal consignor but rather a company or a brand name. Because of this, the recipient's understanding of the message is no longer necessarily connected to the messenger, but rather to a brand or a formal consignor. The consignor will also have a broader selection of channels and a greater opportunity to aim a message at a specific audience. This will be discussed in depth later in this thesis, but because of it, rhetoric has had to change, to add new dimensions to the already known definition of Aristotle.

Even though changes have appeared in the media society especially, the fundamental aspects have proven to be just as useful in this changing environment. It seems that the means of persuasion are as useful now as they were in the classic antique. As the purpose of this assignment is to study the intention to show transparency in Tesco and BP, the focus is on their intentional communication. The field of rhetoric can provide insights into relevant aspects of their communication and the means they are using to convince their audience of their transparency.

2.7 The External Aptum

To understand the different parts of rhetoric it is essential to understand the full meaning of the word Aptum. The direct translation of the word means “what is suitable” (Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 71). There are two types of Aptum, the external and the internal. The internal focus on the different parts of the text and how they relate to each other. The external focus on how the text relates to the audience, the case, the constraints and the consignor. Therefore, one can say that Aptum is the relationship between the different parts of the text, how they relate to each other and to the situation in which the text is set. You will hear people say that something was very apt, as to confirm that something fitted the situation well. In these situations, they are referring to Aptum. When the relation between the different parts of a text and the surroundings is good, the audience rarely notice that it. It is when something does not fit or stand out that it becomes apparent (Kjeldsen, 2006). To explain this further; imagine that a text is well written and performed in a suitable manner, but it is not fitted for the audience. If you were reading a text for grownups to children, or putting up a written text on YouTube, it would put unnecessary constraints on the situation and make persuasion significantly harder, it would not be expedient.

As this thesis seeks to study the transparency of external communication, the external Aptum is considered to be the most relevant. The external Aptum consists of five constants; the audience (auditor), the specific circumstances (tempus), the rhetor (orator), the topic (causa) and the mode of expression (genus orationis) (Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 73). Kjeldsen himself did not invent these constants, but he has adapted them to today’s communication situation. These constants need to be adapted to each other as they together constitute the possibilities and constraints to the rhetoric. As Cicero and Guthrie (1822) put it “There is no general rule for this ; for one kind of style cannot agree with every cause, every hearer, every character, every juncture; […] debates, panegyrics, trials, discourses, consolations, reprimands, disputation, and history, require each a different style” (Cicero & Guthrie, 1822, p. III.55). The speech must therefore be constituted in consideration with all the five constants.

2.7.1 The Rhetorical situation

For a situation to be rhetorical, it has to contain three constituents. The first being that rhetorical discourse occurs as a response to an existing problem or a communicative exigency. The second being the rhetorical audience and the third being the constraints provided by the situation and the rhetor (Bitzer, 1968). Together these three are creating the situation in which rhetoric takes place; the rhetorical situation. “Rhetorical situation may be defined as a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence” (Bitzer, 1968, p. 6). It is apparent here that what Bitzer refers to is that which in classic rhetoric is referred to as Kairos. “Kairos calls attention to the nature for discourse as event rather than object […] it alert us to the constantly changing quality of appropriateness ”(Kinneavy, Witte, Nakadate, & Cherry, 1992, p. 310). As we can see from this, Kairos is the right moment for a certain message, the rhetorical opportunities of a given moment (Kjeldsen, 2006, p. 69). As Kairos focuses on the appropriateness of the moment, Bitzer’s rhetorical situation has a stronger degree of compulsion to it. There are certain expectations of the situation that needs to be fulfilled (Kjeldsen, 2006). “So controlling is situation that we should consider it the very ground of rhetorical activity[…]” (Bitzer, 1968, p. 5). In practical use, Kairos will often be similar to Aptum, as they are both concerned with what is appropriate or what is suitable.

The lifecycle of a rhetorical situation consists of four stages; origin, maturity, deterioration and dissolution (Kjeldsen, 2006). The first stage; origin, is where the exigence comes to exists, but the rhetorical constraints and the audience is not yet aware of the exigence. The second stage; maturity, is where the time is right. The communicative exigency is in place as a response to an existing problem, the constraints and the rhetorical audience is aware of the exigency, and the conditions are favourable for addressing the situation. The third stage; deterioration, is a stage where the audiences’ attitudes towards the situation already have been set, and the act is no longer newsworthy. The last stage; Dissolution is when the exigence no longer can be solved through communication or rhetoric, the chance to change it has passed. Each of these stages will have varying duration dependent on the situation (Kjeldsen, 2006). The material in this thesis is taken from the different stages; the first is one year prior to the crisis, the rhetorical situation is at this stage non-existent or at the stage of origin. The exigence has not yet started to exist, and if it has the audience are not yet aware. The second selection of material is from the time of the crisis. At this stage the rhetorical situation has occurred, and it is at the level of maturity. This is because the audience already are informed that the crisis has taken place. The third selection of material is one year after the crisis. The rhetorical situation is at this stage somewhere between the stages maturity and deterioration.

2.7.2 Audience

Amongst the authors offering a definition of Audience is Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969, p. 19). They define it as "The ensemble of those whom the speaker wishes to influence by his argumentation". This ensemble is not always obvious. Sometimes the audience is not the people that appear to be the targeted audience at all, but rather an excuse to get your point of view across. Examples of this can be seen in political debates when a politician appears to be addressing an opponent, whilst the real audience, the audience she is trying to influence, is the general population.

Any rhetorical situation requires an audience as «Every speech is addressed to an audience and it is frequently forgotten that this applies to everything written as well" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 6). This is strongly related to the demand for positive change through discourse and so the audience must not only be receivers of the message. It is essential that the audience in a rhetorical situation can be convinced through rhetorical discourse and are able to influence or change the exigence. Therefore it is crucial that the rhetorical discourse is able to fulfil the audience's need for information for them to be convinced (Bitzer, 1968). To fulfil the audience's need for information it is important to know your audience. If you do not know your audience, you cannot expect to convince them. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969, p. 23) explains: "Knowledge of an audience cannot be conceived independently of the knowledge of how to influence it". Based on this they argued that "The great orator, the one with a hold on his listeners, seems animated by the very mind of his audience" Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969, p. 24). An ability to put yourself in the situation of the audience is therefore essential to be a good rhetor. For an organisation, there might be many different audiences that all want to be seen, and Benoit (1997, p. 178) emphasises that organisations, as they often have to address multiple audiences, will have to prioritize among these to be able to address the audience in a suitable manner.

2.7.3 Exigence

There are many types of exigencies but they are not all rhetorical. For an exigence to be rhetorical it is required that it is solvable through use of discourse and through discourse it is possible to bring positive change to the exigence (Bitzer, 1968). To put it in other words; an action is rhetoric because it comes forth as a response to a situation or a problem that it seeks to modify or solve. There is not necessarily only one exigence in a situation, sometimes there can be many, and conflicting exigencies. The word exigence can also in some cases be misleading since an exigence is not necessarily negative. An exigence can also be seen more as an expectation of the moment, a request from the audience for information. An example on this might be the expectation that the winner of a talent show gives a comment right after the result has been announced. It is not a negative need for information, but rather an implicit request from the audience to hear what the person in centre has to say. The expectation is an exigence that should be filled.

2.7.4 Constraints

Any rhetorical situation also consists of constraints. The constraints can be attitudes, documents or facts. The common denominator is that they are barriers that can stop the rhetorical audience from mediating the exigence (Bitzer, 1968). There are two types of constraints: The "artistic proofs" that are directly connected to the rhetor and the "inartistic proofs" that are connected to the situation (Aristotle, 2001).

The inartistic proofs are constraints that are not controlled by the speaker, but merely there as something the rhetor needs to relate to. Example of this include laws, documents, and history. These are not part of the rhetorical discourse according to Aristotle. Today some would argue that they are as important as the artistic proofs. At first Rhetoric was merely used to convince an audience during an oral presentation or speech. Therefore the inartistic proofs were quite similar and not of major significance. Today a rhetor can choose between a wide range of media channels and modalities. A Mode is a semiotic resource, which depends on culture and a social setting for it to make meaning. Some examples of a mode include video, pictures, music, sounds text (Kress, 2010).

Today's society is considered multimodal. Multimodality is "[… the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which these modes are combined" (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 20). The expression "the medium is the message" highlights the change in significance of the inartistic proofs. When you choose your medium, you choose not only your audience, but also the possibility you have to use different media. If a rhetor chooses any internet channel, that can be social media, a news web page of a personal blog, he or she makes it possible to use video, pictures, music, sounds, whilst if the rhetor choses a newspaper it is not possible to show videos or play music. This limits the modalities the rhetor can use, but also at the same time the expectations of the audience. They are as aware of the limitations of the medium as the rhetor. The inartistic proofs are usually the ones that are the easiest to identify.

The artistic proofs are the means that the rhetor can use to persuade the audience by using the principles of rhetoric. They consist of the arguments that the rhetor creates in the situation, the means of persuasion. These are further divided into three: Ethos, logos and pathos (Aristotle, 2001). The artistic constraints are also the cultural and psychological influences in the audience (Kjeldsen, 2006). If the consignor manages to take into account the constraints of the situation and use them to his benefit, the text has Kairos in relation to the situation.

There are three types of speeches, or oratories from which rhetorical message can take form. "[…] there are three divisions of oratory – (1) political, (2) forensic, and (3) the ceremonial oratory of display" (Aristotle, 2001, p. 8). These divisions of oratory are used for different purposes. The political oratory is to be used when the main purpose of the text is to convince someone to act in a certain way, to perform a certain act, for example to vote for a certain party. The forensic oratory is suited for situations where the text is used to bring forth the truth about something that has happened in the past, and how it took place. Both these have the audience as judges of the act that has taken or will take place. The audience is the ultimate judge (Aristotle, 2001). The third type of oratory is the ceremonial oratory of display. This has as the main purpose to honour or disgrace someone for something they've done. Kjeldsen (2006) calls this speech the demonstrational speech. It is often used at ceremonial occasions. In this third oratory, the audience's role is to observe the speech. They are not asked to make a judgement over an act (Aristotle, 2001).

The content of a rhetorical text is more than merely the cases discussed in a text. It also consists of the arguments used and the modes of persuasion that are in action. There are three modes of persuasion and Aristotle writes:

> "On the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself"(2001, p. 4) 1356a 2,3

When Aristotle wrote his *Rhetoric* his main subject of research was spoken rhetoric. Since then due to technological advancement and societal changes, there has been a need to broaden the field of rhetoric to encompass written text as well. Despite the changes the three means of persuasion have remained the same.

2.7.5 Pathos

The first mean of persuasion is Pathos. Using pathos, the rhetor seeks to create certain feeling in the audience to persuade them. Some of these feelings include anger, sorrow, and pity. Through these feelings, the rhetor influences the audience's judgement of the message. Pathos is used when the purpose of the speech is to arouse and engage, in ancient Greek it is called *movere* (Kjeldsen, 2006). The pathos appeal is often used in the third oratory, the ceremonial oratory. This oratory often contains very emotional expressions, like a love declaration (Kjeldsen, 2006)

One very effective way of creating emotions in the audience is by using utopia or hypothetical situations. The purpose of these is not to use facts, but to create a situation to which the audience can relate to create awareness amongst them. "it confronts reality with an imaginary presence which it thrusts on the hearer in order to secure longer lasting reactions" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 146). According to Aristotle there are three aspects of emotions that needs to be understood before one can use a pathos appeal; the first is the background, why the emotion comes to exist, the second is what, or whom, usually evokes the emotion, and the third is in what occasions does it usually persist (Kjeldsen, 2006). These aspects will vary with age and gender, which is why it is of such importance to know your audience. When the rhetor understands and knows his or her audience he can use body language, words or other effects to imitate the appropriate feelings that are to be expected for the situation, and thereby convince the audience (Kjeldsen, 2006).

2.7.6 Logos

Logos is the use of facts and truths or apparent truths to convince the audience. When you use logos to persuade you use known material or other trustworthy sources to persuade the audience. The spoken, or written, word is the basis for persuasion through logos. This part of rhetoric is about what you say, not about how you say it, the content of your text. Logos is about making logic connections in your text that the audience understands. It is used when the purpose is to instruct, lecture or teach, this is called *docere* (Kjeldsen, 2006). It can be done in several ways, one is through what Aristotle called a simile. By linking new information to known and accepted information (Aristotle, 2001). To show this through an example; the car is a certain brand, the certain brand always makes good cars, consequently; it is a good car. Another way to use logos is by using statistics or accepted facts as part of your argument. Logos is often used in the political oratory, the oratory that has as its main purpose to convince the audience to act in a certain way. By using facts and statistics to prove your argument you also show that you have knowledge about the subject of which you are speaking. Therefore logos arguments will also help build your ethos appeal.

2.7.7 Ethos

Ethos is persuasion through the rhetor's personal credibility. As Aristotle puts it: "it helps a speaker to convince us, if we believe that he has certain qualities himself" (2001, p. 22). Ethos can be described as the confidence that is created by the audience's confidence in a person's good judgement. Because he or she is perceived to be a person with good moral and ethics the audience is more likely to be persuaded by the message put forth. "In short, a speaker should inspire confidence: without it, his speech does not merit credence" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 318). Ethos is best used when the purpose of the text is to gain confidence or sympathy, it is called *delectare* (Kjeldsen, 2006). Due to the implicit uncertainty that follows most situations, we only rarely know something for absolute sure, ethos is determining (Kjeldsen, 2006).

Aristotle was of the opinion that Ethos always is created in a specific situation and that whatever credibility a rhetor had before this situation is of little significance. He believed that only the impression made during the speech was a rhetoric remedy. Newer rhetoric research tends to describe three types of ethos; the pre-situational or extrinsic, the ethos you gain during your text, also called the intrinsic ethos, and the accumulated ethos (Kjeldsen, 2006). The first is the credibility you bring with you into a rhetorical situation, examples of this might be a professional title or a former impression made on the audience. The second one is how you appear during your text. This ethos will be strengthened, or weakened, through the rhetor's appearance throughout the speech. The third one is the way the audience would judge your ethos at the end of your text. This would be influenced by both the extrinsic and the intrinsic ethos. Therefore, ethos is not a constant connected to a person or an organisation, but rather a perception a certain audience have of a consignor at a given place and time (Kjeldsen, 2006).

Ethos consists of three dimensions, these are sanity/prudence, good character/virtue and benevolence/intention (Kjeldsen, 2006). Even though one of these dimensions are corrupted as by a crisis, a rhetor can have credibility through the other dimensions. For both the organisations considered in this thesis they have taken damage to one of their ethos dimensions, they may however still be credible based on the other dimensions.

Aristotle also focused on personal ethos whilst today organisational ethos is just as significant. An organisation, like an individual will have a positive or negative ethos appearance. The primary reason why this is so important today is the emergence of text and rhetorical messages with no personal author, but rather an organisation as consignor (Kjeldsen, 2006).

Ethos can be built through authenticity, or credibility. If a person or organisation is perceived as honest and transparent then this will strengthen the ethos (Kjeldsen, 2006, pp. 121-123). Authenticity has become a prominent factor of Ethos. In the classical antiquity, the rhetor was expected to take on a social role, as for example politician or citizen. The emotions of the speech given were connected to the role, and not so much to the individual. The authentic speaker seems credible through apparent lack of rehersing, or rhetoric. The ethos will be strengthened through authenticity in cases where the speaker is not trying to appear as something, but rather tries to be honest, to be sincere and genuine (Kjeldsen, 2006).

There are three main factors to appear authentic. The first factor is the rhetor can not seem too trained or rehearsed in the message, the second is to appear intimate, personal and engaged, and the third is that the rhetor must seem consistent, both in the current, but also over time (Kjeldsen, 2006). If a rhetor seems to be under constant change it becomes apparent that the message is not an expressions for a real ethos, but rather a need to please in the current situation. Kjeldsen (2006), amongst others, would argue that authenticity has become so important that it should be added as a fourth dimension of ethos. Ethos is often used in the forensic oratory, to make a statement about something that happened in the past, and how the event took place.

2.7.8 The Rhetor and the topic

It is already made apparent that when choosing the medium the rhetor has made an impact on the way his or her message is consumed. From which mode of persuasion the rhetor finds their arguments is relevant as to how the message will be perceived. Whilst the rhetor originally was a person giving a speech, today's rhetor can be an organisation, or a bigger unit. Therefore, the audience's perception of the rhetor will be more complex.

The topic is formed by the rhetor and his intentions (Kjeldsen, 2006). Therefore it must be adapted to these constants in particular. Organising the text is essential in creating a preferred perception of the text and an important task of a rhetor's efforts to deliver a certain message, or topic. In Aristotle's time, the organisation was merely the order in which the different arguments were arranged. Today the organisation of the text may include for example the layout of a webpage or a newspaper, pictures or videos (Kjeldsen, 2006). For the text analysed for this thesis, because it also considers the pre-situational ethos, the most relevant aspect of organisations is the order in which the documents occurred as well as the order of the arguments.

3.0 Methods

This part of the assignment there will be accounted for the methods used in this thesis and why these particular methods are chosen. The thesis consists of two cases and a rhetorical analysis of press releases as well as email interviews as the primary base for research.

3.1 Case as method

In the research question for this thesis it becomes apparent that some kind of case research is relevant, as the question is how transparency in an organisation changes in relation to a crisis. Why, where or how many is not in question here. Therefore, quantitative methods like surveys or experiment would not be good methods to answer the research problem for this thesis.

For this thesis the method chosen to answer the research question is a case study where two cases are analysed before, during and after a crisis by using a rhetorical analysis of press releases.

Case study is a qualitative research method. It is used to "contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena" (Yin, 2009, p. 4). (Gobo, 2011, p. 16) emphasises that it is "bounded in space and time and embedded in a particular physical and sociocultural context".

According to (Yin, 2009, p. 7), case studies, as every other research method, can be used for three purposes; descriptive, exploratory and explanatory research. Even though it can be used for different purposes, it is often preferred in explanatory research. The reason for this is that explanatory research often has as its purpose to study “how” or “why” an incidence takes place. To answer such questions it is essential to study the object over a certain time. Studying the object as an incidence or by a frequency based approach will not provide the researcher with the information necessary to answer such questions (Yin, 2009, pp. 9-10).

Yin (2009) argues that the research questions are the first of a total of three factors that indicates when a case study is an appropriate method. The factors he emphasize are “(a)”how” or “why” questions are being posed, (b) the investigator has little control over events, and (c) the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context” (Yin, 2009, p. 2). To sum up “The case study is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated” (Yin, 2009, p. 11). As all of the mentioned factors, a), b) and c) are present in this thesis, it concludes that case study is the appropriate choice of method. As there are two cases being analysed it is a multi-case study.

As mentioned case study research can be used for different purposes. In this thesis it is used for an explanatory purpose. Case study research is characterised by a pattern-matching logic, in an explanatory study the pattern-making logic embedded in building an explanation about the case (Yin, 2009, p. 141). As Yin puts it “To “explain” a phenomenon is to stipulate a presumed set of causal links about it, or “how” or “why” something happened. The causal links may be complex and difficult to measure in any precise manner” (Yin, 2009, p. 141).

Case study reserach has been criticised for lack of rigor, however, Yin argues that this can be solved by following systematic procedures in the casework. It is also argued that the use of case study eliminates the opportunity to scientifically generalize the research. However, According to Yin (2009) the research is generalizable, but only to theoretical propositions. Ryen (2002) Supports this statement as she argues that the purpose of qualitative research is to make sure it is accumulative and accuracy in the method will ensure this.

3.2 BP and Tesco

The crises affecting Tesco and BP are making good cases for this assignment due to their similarities and as well as their differences. As organisations, they are quite different. They vary in financial model as well as in purpose, organisation model and financial dependencies.

Despite these differences, they both experienced a major crisis that did result in huge financial loss. The crisis also made a significant negative influence to their reputation. Both the crises analysed for the purpose of this assignment affected the core activities of the companies. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill affected both BP's image as a first mover technology vice and as a safe supplier of oil and gas. The Horsemeat scandal affected the primary purpose of Tesco, which is to deliver safe and satisfactory food to its customers.

Both the organisations are both amongst the largest companies within their field and were of such subjects to public debate, criticism and examination in the time after the crisis. Even though the crisis made a major effect, neither of the companies went bankrupt. One can therefore argue they both survived the crisis.

3.3 Quantitative and Qualitative research

In this thesis, the research has been both quantitative and qualitative. The first part was quantitative as it consisted of a categorization of press releases based on the subject to which they referred. The second part was a qualitative, rhetorical analysis. Qualitative and quantitative research are distinctly different so it is natural to explain why, and for what purpose, it was used in this thesis.

Quantitative research is inductive, it starts with a hypothesis and the goal of the research is to test whether or not the hypothesis is correct. Quantitative research is also subject to generalization. The results in one quantitative research are representative for other situations with the same premises (Ryen, 2002, p. 29).

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is inductive. A qualitative research method starts with the empirical evidence and develops a hypothesis based on that. Because qualitative research often is conducted on a smaller research group, with many distinct premises, it is not subject to generalization. (Ryen, 2002, pp. 29-30).

The view that research should be cumulative is strong in both disciplines, both the quantitative and the qualitative, however with slightly different implications. In quantitative research, the cumulative value of research is considered the proof that the research is coming closer to an objective truth. This would be true if the research is done for example within the field of medicine and the purpose is to study the cause of cure for a certain disease (Ryen, 2002, p. 31). In the social sciences where qualitative research is primarily used, the idea that there is such a thing as objective truth is under heavy criticism. Some would argue that to the extend that such a thing as "truth" exists it is only as a subjective understanding of the world. The cumulative value is therefore not seen as bringing the researcher closer to an objective truth, but rather an increased understanding of the world and the paradigms that exists within it (Ryen, 2002, pp. 30-32). To achieve this it is essential that the research is methodical and that every decision made is to be thoroughly explained so that later research will understand and appreciate the decisions made.

Using both qualitative and quantitative research in a thesis is one of the forms of triangulation. Triangulation is the use of more than one method to prevent the weakness of one method to gain to large an impact on the final result of the research, or to elaborate the understanding of the research with the purpose of making the research more comprehensive (Ryen, 2002, pp. 194-195).

In this thesis, triangulation is provided by the categorization of the total number of press releases before selecting the press releases analysed in the rhetorical analysis and through the email interviews of the organisations press offices. The purpose of the categorization is to make sure that the selection for the analysis is representative for the total number of press releases, through being from different parts of the total material whilst the email interviews was done to look for a divergent between the analysis and the expressed intention of the organisations involved. As such the qualitative rhetorical analysis is the main part of this thesis.

3.4 Paradigm

Within qualitative research, there are four main existing paradigms. A paradigm can be defined as "a set of beliefs that guides action" Guba (1990, p. 17)[3].

The four paradigms, as presented by Ryen (2002, p. 61) in her book *Det kvalitative* intervjuet. Is the naturalistic paradigm, ethnomethodology, emotionalism and postmodernism. To categorize a paradigm there are three aspects that needs to be considered; the ontological, the epistemological, and the methodological. The ontological is a set of assumptions about the world; the epistemological is concerned with what is considered truth and on what basis. The methodological is knowledge about how we can access these truths, which methods we must use (Ryen, 2002, p. 23).

This thesis is based in the naturalistic paradigm. This paradigm is the most commonly used within qualitative research. Within Naturalism it is a objective for the researcher to get as close

[3] From (Ryen, 2002, p. 23)

as possible to the research objectives without losing distance to the research material. Through the respondents own words the researcher can show what they are thinking or doing as their words are a reflection of their reality. The naturalistic paradigm presupposes that the objectives view of what is true is true from their point of view. Because of this the primary focus is on what is being said as that refers to the social reality in which the object exists (Ryen, 2002, pp. 62-64).

3.5 Qualitative document analysis

There are several approaches as to how documents are used in qualitative studies. Some approaches would study the document as a resource whilst some would see them as topics themselves. For the purpose of this thesis the document is seen as a resource, and the content is the primary focus. The focus of the assignment is what is written in the press releases. This is also the way of viewing documents that has been the most common in the history of sociology (Prior, 2011, p. 95). The documents are analysed from the perspective that they will tell us something about what is going on in the organisations. This approach has been criticized for insufficiency as some researchers would argue that it is not enough to merely analyse the content of documents as they are always part of a world, they come to exist in a setting, for a reason that should also be taken into consideration (Prior, 2011, p. 96). As the purpose of this thesis is to consider how the organisations communicate transparency through their press releases and how they themselves want to be viewed it is still considered the most expedient approach in this case.

3.6 Rhetoric approach

The analysis in the qualitative part of this thesis is a rhetorical analysis. The primary focus of the assignment is to look at an intended message from the two chosen organisations, BP and Tesco, and therefore, a rhetorical analysis is suitable. The rhetorical analysis is based in the external rhetorical pentagram, as the perceived audience and the rhetor is of crucial significance to our understanding of the organisations message.

3.7 Interview by email

In addition to the rhetorical analysis, the companies were contacted by email. Unfortunately, the company's response were limited. The purpose of the email interview is to have a supplement to the rhetorical analysis. As the response was so limited there was not much of a supplement to be made.

The interview has a long background within research, but first in the 20th century was it distinguished as a method of its own. As for any method that is in widely use, the interview has been widely criticised. Amongst the most stated critique is the lack of symmetry between the respondents and the interviewer and the assumption that one can get correct information or natural data from an unnatural setting (Ryen, 2002).

The email interview as such has some advantages that made it suitable for this assignment. In addition to being fast and cost efficient it also gives the respondents time to formulate their answers. Due to the purpose of the assignment being their intended message this is seen as an advantage.

An interview can have three main levels of structuring. The most strictly structured are with yes or no questions and very little room for the respondent to influence the interview. The semi structured has questions that are more open where there is room for the respondent to fill in or leave out information. The least structured interview is completely open, the researcher wants the respondent to speak about a certain subject, but all the questions will come as natural follow up questions and are not planned in advance.

The interviews in this thesis was somewhere between the two first levels. As it was by email it did have a certain structure and the questions were planned in advance, however all the questions were fairly open and the respondent did therefore have the opportunity to fill inn or leave out information.

3.8 Categorization

I have chosen only to consider the press releases that mentions the crisis or the field in which the crisis appeared. That would be supply chain and food security for Tesco, and oil rig and security precautions for BP. After excluding the press releases that did not relate to the crisis at all I split the remaining press releases in to five categories.

1) Texts that bring forth new information about the crisis.

These texts have as their primary focus merely to provide new information about the crisis and how it is evolving. For both BP and Tesco this is the largest category at the time of the crisis. The reason for this is a relatively large amount of factual press releases where they give updates on the crisis on a day to day basis.

2) Information about precautionary measures taken in relation to the crisis.

This is information about action taken to stop the crisis in a short-term perspective. This category would include information about how to stop the oil spill for BP, but not on what they are doing to prevent the long-term environmental consequences. It is useful to separate between long term and short term consequences primarily to see if there is a strong distinction between required and voluntary actions taken to limit the effect of the crisis.

3) Consequences of the crisis.

This category contains information about action taken towards the long-term consequences of the crisis. It is important to clarify that the word crisis is used referring to the actual crisis event, and not to the communication crisis that would affect the company.

4) What is done to prevent a crisis of similar character in the future?

This is actions to prevent a similar crisis in the future. These actions are not necessarily aimed at the consequences, but rather at the source of the crisis.

5) Other.

Press releases that are describing the field within which the crisis occurred without fitting in to any of the other categories are left here.

From these categories, a rhetorical analysis of three press releases were done from the time of the crisis, one press release from one year before and two press releases from one year after the crisis. For BP the press releases were chosen from the following categories; one year before the crisis category five. At the time of the crisis one press release was picked from each of the three largest categories, these were categories one, two and three. One year after the crisis, that were categories three and four. For Tesco there were no relevant press releases a year prior to the crisis. At the time of the crisis, the three largest categories were one, two and four. One year after the crisis there was only one category represented, so the analysis is based on category four.

The nature of the crisis are different, this becomes evident in the material a year after the incidents as BP's have a higher focus on the consequences still, whilst Tesco seems to have a primary focus on restoring its image within food security.

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Multimodality

The texts that are to be analysed comes from a multimodal medium, the internet. Some of the press releases would therefore have aspects such as layout, movies, pictures and colour that might influence they way they are being perceived by an audience, however due to the limitations of this thesis they are not being included in the analysis as independent modes. That is not to say they are not significant in a rhetoric setting, simply that the text itself is considered the primary message in this context.

It is worth mentioning however that whilst the multimodality of the internet medium provides many options for presentation, the flexible nature of it can also be the cause of genre specific challenges. The press releases are likely to be split up and rearranged as the journalists or other audiences pleases. Some quotes might be shortened, others excluded. Due to this nature of the press release it is essential that all the paragraphs, and all the quotes carry out the same intended message.

4.2 Categorization

The results from the categorization can be seen in attachment two. It is clear that neither of the companies had a major focus on the area in which the crisis occurred one year prior to the crisis. BP had one press release addressing a related subject whilst Tesco had none. At the time of the crises there is a significant increase in related press releases for both companies, which is to be expected at such a time. BP's press releases are spreading across a more diverse range of themes, whilst Tesco's are addressing fewer themes. Part of this is can be explained by the total number of press releases as Tesco has fewer press releases total than BP. One year after the crises both the organisations are addressing the area in which the crisis did occur. The most significant change at this time however is to be found with Tesco. As their total number of press releases has decreased from one year prior to the crisis, they still have two press releases related to the area of the crisis. Due to this, the number of press releases related to the crisis is at 50% of the total number of press releases.

4.3 The Rhetor

There is no information about who wrote the press releases on the web page, which makes it evident, that the Rhetor in this analysis is the organisations, and not a person. This is amplified by the fact that the press releases are published at an official company channel, their web page. A personal author would therefore not be relevant as the organisation itself supports the statement. This seems to be consistent with the expectations of the audience.

5.0 Analysis BP

5.1 Press releases from one year prior to the crisis, 2009

BP Announces Start-Up of Dorado and King South Projects in Gulf of Mexico (BP, 2009a)

Release date: 05 May 2009, from category *Other*. It is exactly one page long.

This press release mainly addresses two topics; the start-up of Dorado and King South projects, the new technology making this possible.

5.1.1 The rhetorical situation

As presented in the theory, a rhetorical situation consists of three constituents. There has to be an exigence, an audience and artistic and inartistic proofs or constraints (Bitzer, 1968).

One year prior to the crisis we are assuming that no one has the information that the crisis will occur. This is one of the characteristics of a crisis as presented by Coombs (2007), among others. We can also conclude that the communication crisis has not yet occurred as one of the criteria for the communication crisis to appear is that the actual crisis has taken place Benoit (1997); Sturges (1994). Several of the crisis theorists' such as Coombs and Holladay (2011); Sturges (1994) argue that the crisis is latent before it is happening and that this causes a need for information. Despite this is, it is not itself an exigence that the rhetorical audience can fill. Based on this we can presume that the actual crisis is not the communicative exigency in this rhetorical situation.

As BP is a commercial actor, it is constantly in need of two groups of external stakeholders; investors and consumers. As the crisis has not yet taken place, we can assume that the consumers are primarily interested in the price of the product and a stable supply of oil and gas. For the investors it is essential that BP prove that they are an attractive investment. This is essential to the running of the company. To attract investors and increase their value is therefore likely to be the main incentive for BP's communication at this stage. To do this it is essential for them to document and promote progress financially. This is the rhetorical exigence.

5.1.2 Audience

One can make some assumptions about the audience. The first is that the primary audience is the external stakeholders. The reason for this assumption is that press releases are aimed at media, and that there are other channels being used when the primary audience is the internal audience, for example intranet, email and information meetings. Even though the external stakeholders would be the primary audience, it is important to remember that the information will be read by the internal stakeholders as well. Keeping in mind Scholes and Clutterbuck (1998) argument that different stories will not be tolerated, it will be important for the organisations to make sure that the arguments in the information to the external stakeholders is corresponding with the information to the internal stakeholders. For a rhetorical situation, it is also required that the audience has the power to change the exigence. Therefore, only the stakeholders that have the power to fulfil the exigence in question are to be included as the audience. Based on the analysis and the exigence it is concluded that the rhetorical audience consists primarily of investors that currently, or considering to be, investing money in BP.

5.1.3 Constraints

For all the press releases, the non-rhetorical constraints will be consistent to a certain degree. The press releases are all posted through the internet medium wich presents the challenges and benefits as discussed in the paragraph about multimodality. As explained in the theory, the press release as a genre follows quite strict rules for layout. These rules will be consistent with the expectations of the journalists that are the primary users of such press releases. Even though the journalists are not the primary audience in this rhetorical situation, they are the gatekeepers of the newspapers, radio stations and so on. It is therefore essential that they get the information in a way that suits their expectations to not add any further constraints to the text.

5.1.4 Pathos

These press releases do not contain a strong pathos appeal. This can be explained partly by the exigence and the rhetorical situation at the time when the press release is written. A pathos appeal, though very powerful, might be deemed inappropriate in this context as a start-up project such as the one presented in the press release together with the current rhetorical situation calls for proof of knowledge and credibility rather than emotional appeals.

5.1.5 Logos

The two latter points on the notes to editors list are concerning the prizes they have received for safety. Nowhere in the press release do they explicit state a current focus on safety. Rather they are using the information about former prizes to imply that they are a trustworthy company through a logos appeal; companies that are given awards for their safety have safety as a focus and therefore are safe. In addition to the information about safety, the press release is full of numbers and facts such as “a total of 11 wells”, “production of 60,000 b/d oil and 70 mmscf/d of gas”. These numbers are so large and abstract that they do not create any instant meaning in the average audience, it might be that the numbers are there just to illustrate that the new start-up project is large, and that the actual understanding of exactly how large is off less importance. Another explanation can be that this signifies that the intended audience in this situation must be someone with significant knowledge of the oil industry and the area of drilling especially, as an investor might be.

5.1.6 Ethos

BP is using this press release to establish the perception that they have extensive knowledge about the field in which they are operating. This can be seen in sentences such as “both projects leverage existing subsea and topsides infrastructure and the latest subsea and drilling technology” (BP, 2009a). Proving competence builds credibility. They are also using a quote from the Chief Executive of Exploration & Production. It is not a coincidence that the self-quotation is a part of the genre of press releases (McLaren & Gurau, 2005). A quote strengthens the ethos because the general audience find a message more trustworthy when it has a name, or even better a face, to it. In this case, it is only a name, but when a message is supported by someone willing to put their full name out with it, it increases the credibility and therefore the ethos appeal.

5.1.7 Transparency

The press release has quite technical language which though it surely provides accurate and correct information about the new projects, it is obvious that it is not intended for a general audience. The fact that there is one press release at this time concerning this area of their production might show that it is an area that is granted a certain emphasis for BP at this stage. The primary focus of the press release is the technological advancement of BP rather than the environmental and security aspects of their production in the gulf area. This is to be expected, as there has not yet been any reason to doubt their credibility in these areas. Remembering Benoit (1997) stating that there is no reason to form an unfavourable impression of the company unless it is accused of an offensive act.

The numbers discussed in the logos section would provide a certain level of transparency as any fact stated in a public document can be debated and the organisation can be held to account if the information proves wrong. This is consistent with Transparency international (2014) emphasis in their definition of transparency that the general public are provided with such a role.

5.2 Press releases from the time of the crisis, 2010

BP Agrees to Fund Construction of Six Sections of Louisiana Barrier Islands (BP, 2010a)

Release date: 01 June 2010. From category *information about precautionary measures taken in relation to the crisis.* Less than one page long.

The topic of this text is the construction of barriers to protect the coastline of Louisiana from the oil spill caused by the explosion and collapse of Deepwater Horizon.

BP Announces Accelerated Payments of Commercial Large Loss Claims (BP, 2010b)

Release date: 14. June 2010. From category *Consequences of the crisis.* It is just exceeds one page.

The topic of the text is the way BP is dealing with the out payments due to the claims following the Deepwater Horizon crisis. The payments they have approved until now as well as what they have learnt from the process.

Update on Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill – 28 May (BP, 2010c)

Release date: 27. May 2010. From category *Text that bring forth new information about the crisis.* It is almost two pages long.

The topic of the text is how the crisis is evolving and what they are currently doing to stop it.

5.2.1 The rhetorical situation

The rhetorical situation at the time of the crisis is significantly different from one year earlier. We are now at the response stage of the crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 2011). The extrinsic ethos is severely hurt, therefore one must assume that the audience will have a much more critical approach toward the press releases than they would one year earlier. A new exigence has come into existence. At the time of the crisis, there is a precarious need of information about the accident itself and the consequences. Dutton (1986) provided three factors from which it is obvious that the crisis of vital importance for BP as it is affecting their core activities. The need to stop the oil spill for the purpose of limiting the consequences makes it extremely urgent. Uncertainty is also present at this time because the implications and the extent of the crisis is not yet clear. Based on this the crisis is very threatening to the organisation.

According to the theory of Benoit (1997), the two components of a communication crisis are also apparent: The organisation is being held responsible for an action that is considered offensive. Both Sturges (1994) and Coombs (2007) are emphasising the need for communication in this situation, though Sturges also states that it is unlikely to form an opinion in the desirable direction for the organisation at this time. The stakeholders need for information is immense. The rhetorical exigence is therefore the need to get information out to the stakeholders. The findings from the categorization of press releases at this time shows that the three largest categories are category one, two and three (Attachment 2). These are addressing the crisis, the action taken and the immediate consequences. This can be expected to be consistent with the needs of the stakeholders. This information also addresses Dutton's (1986) three factors for perceived importance and based on this seems to be a good approach from a crisis theory perspective. The purpose at this stage from a rhetorical perspective is to regain the organisation's credibility.

5.2.2 Audience

There are some groups of stakeholders that are mentioned in the press releases, and as of such can be presumed to be given a larger significance. Amongst these are the states of Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida in addition to the tourism industry. At this stage there seems to be three primary audiences; the first and most directly affected at a short time basis is the people and businesses directly affected by the crisis. There is an urgent need to regain credibility amongst this group and to limit their financial loss. At the same time, the shareholders and the investors might be threatening to pull out due to the crisis. This group is of crucial significance as they provide the financial stability for the company. It is important to prove to them that the crisis is dealt with in the best possible way. The third group is the states affected and through them, the United States of America. An eventual fine or financial restrictions will come from here, and they can create barriers for further operations for the company.

Even though the topic of the press releases is the crisis and what is being done to prevent it there is a strong implicit message here as well; we are doing what we can to deal with this crisis and to limit the consequences. The people and businesses most directly affected are being mentioned in the press release in the form of the tourist industry, still the financial contributors have a stronger influence on the state of the company. Based on this, the primary intended receivers of this message are presumed to be the financial contributors. The second most important audience at this stage is presumed to be the states which are both strongly represented in the press release as well as having strong financial impact on the company. It is therefore likely that those directly affected are mentioned as evidence of effort from the company rather than as proof they are of major significance. As far as the crisis is concerned, the rhetorical situation has now reached the level of maturity. The exigence has taken place and the audience are aware of the situation.

5.2.3 Constraints

At the time of the crisis the aspect of existing laws, documents and history will be important constraints, as they will to some degree shape the way the organisations can, and will, communicate. The fear of lawsuits as well as the fear of being caught lying will restrict the organisation's communication. In addition to this, one can assume that the general population has negative attitudes towards the organisation due to the crisis.

In the second paragraph of press release BP (2010a) they state that they do not "[…] assume any liability for unintended consequences of the project". This statement, from a rhetorical perspective seems to state the contrary of what they argue in the rest of the press releases. This statement does not assume responsibility, nor does it help the organisation build credibility. To understand this statement we have to consider the unartistic proofs. It seems apparent that the reason this statement is there is to prevent any future lawsuits against BP for unexpected consequences of the barriers.

5.2.4 Pathos

At this stage one would expect more pathos appeals than one year prior to the crisis. The reason for this is that part of the restoration of the image can be done through sympathy. Also proving that BP are using all available means to limit the effect of the crisis. They state that they are "committed to […] reduce the impact of the oil and gas spill […]"(BP, 2010a). That they will "keep doing everything we can" (BP, 2010b) and "we hope these changes will help those whose businesses and livelihood have been hurt by the oil spill"(BP, 2010b). These sentences will affect some feeling in the audience. Still pathos is definitely not the dominant means of persuasion as there are no other good examples of pathos being used in this text.

5.2.5 Logos

As previously discussed Logos arguments involve the use of facts. The numbers being used in the text are facts that are part of a logos persuasion. Examples of this are when BP state they will fund the "360 million it will cost to construct the six sections"(BP, 2010a), and the last paragraph concerning money they already have paid the affected actors (BP, 2010a). There are examples of logos being used in sentences as well; when BP states that they are "[…] committed to implementing the most effective measures"(BP, 2010a). They state they have now covered

“90 % of commercial large loss claims” (BP, 2010b), that they are making “improvements to the commercial large claims process” (BP, 2010b) and that they “reducing delays”(BP, 2010b). The list of improvements are explained in a way that seems logical and understandable even for people who do not have detailed knowledge about economics.

The type of logos argumentation that is used in these press releases is only working due to the fact that BP are not entirely without credibility at this stage. There are several questions to be asked if the stakeholders intended to be critical or had no faith in BP. These questions would be “what are the most effective measures?”, and “what research lies behind this statement?” “90% of commercial loss claims, are there other claims?” In such a way their whole logos statement could be destroyed. So it is dependent on credibility to have the intended effect. At this stage BP’s credibility is low so they will need to strengthen it through the ethos appeal.

5.2.6 Ethos

When it comes to using an ethos persuasion, there are several examples to be found. BP state that they are supporting the U.S. government, this is an example of BP trying to build ethos by referring to agreements with other trusted actors. They are also mentioning the other payments in the last paragraph to show their commitment and the work they are doing to stop the crisis. Showing a continuous effort within the field is a way of building credibility and ethos. They are quoting their chief executive officer. Having someone, and especially the chief officer, put their name in the press release is a way of further building ethos through credibility. At the end of the press release the contact information to the press offices in London and Houston are given, as well as the contact information for a Unified Command Joint Information Center. BP provides information in press release BP (2010b) that they are currently paying the initial payments for claims in excess of $5,000.

5.2.7 Transparency

BP are stating that “the top kill procedure has never before been attempted at these depths and it’s ultimate success is uncertain” (BP, 2010c). There are several ways one can interpret this statement, they might just be preparing their audience for a failure they know will come, they might also be admitting to it because some of their stakeholder already have this information, therefore the others will get it from them, cf. Scholes and Clutterbuck (1998). It might also be an example of unedited honesty. Concerning the rest of the claims they are "awaiting documentation" (BP, 2010b). This is a strategy of evasion of responsibility as they are arguing that they are waiting for the complaint to be fulfilled and it is therefore not their fault that all the payments have not been made yet.

Concerning the responsibility of the crisis itself, they are not trying to evade the responsibility for that. Rather they are using what Benoit (1997) would refer to as *corrective action* to restore their image. All the three press releases from this point in time are seeking to show that they are making tremendous efforts to prevent the crisis from increasing, and to deal with the current effects of the crisis. They are proving these efforts through mentioning how much money they have used on the crisis, how many barrels of oil have been skimmed from the water, and how many organisations they cooperate with to solve the crisis as soon as possible. The fact that they are not trying to evade the responsibility might also be seen as an attempt to be transparent. As was the case one year prior to the crisis, BP are also at this stage given exact numbers and facts, which would strengthen the degree of transparency. They are also giving contact information for several contact points at the end of the press release. This is a way of building credibility and transparency by showing that they are open for further requests about the given information.

As previously discussed BP are stating that they assume no liability for unintended consequences. One can argue that for legal reasons it would not be strictly necessary for them to state this in the press release. This argument would be based on the probability that it is stated in the contract between BP and the state of Louisiana. Based on this one can assume that this statement is primarily an expression for a desire for honesty and transparency in their communication.

5.3 Press releases from one year after the crisis, 2011

BP Commits to Early Restorations Projects Along Gulf Coast (BP, 2011a)

Release date: 21. April 2011, from category *Consequences of the crisis.* It is a page and a half long.

This press release address the topic of restoration of the coast, and especially promoting the gains of early restoration.

GRI Research Board Announces Request for Proposals for BP's $500 Million Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (BP, 2011b)

Release date: 25. April 2011, from category *Consequences of the crisis.* It is three pages long.

The topic of this press release is that the selection process for the proposals for BP's $500 Million Initiative is now open. Through proving the major effort BP is making to limit the effects of the crisis and to prevent it from happening again, they want to prove that they are a responsible, credible actor.

5.3.1 The rhetorical situation

According to Sturges (1994) one year after the crisis would be a very good time to bring information about the area affected by the crisis, with the purpose of regaining the organisation's credibility in the field affected. Based on this we would expect to see quite a high number of press releases concerning the relevant field one year after the crisis. This corresponds with the results from the categorisation, which shows that there is an increase in press releases related to the field of the crisis (3 for BP in 2011 versus 1 in 2009). There is also an increase in the number of press releases in total (13 in 2011 versus 7 in 2009). Sturges (1994) argues that it is easier to change the public's opinion and thereby shape an organisation's reputation when time has lapsed. Keeping in mind Coombs' (2007) argument; that lack of information itself can cause a crisis it is still essential to the organisations to get information out about the consequences of the crisis as well as BP's work to limit the consequences. The purpose for this information at this stage is to regain their credibility after the crisis and to rebuild their buffer as Scholes and Clutterbuck (1998) would explain it.

The organisation should now be in what Coombs and Holladay (2011) call the revision stage. They need to evaluate how they dealt with the crisis. At the same time, it is essential for them to try and regain their good reputation at least to the level it was at before the crisis occurred to get investors and stakeholders to reinvest money in the organisation. To achieve this BP needs to regain the trust they lost when the crisis occurred. This is the exigence at this stage.

Concerning the life cycle of the rhetorical situation, it has now reached the level of maturity. The exigence is still in place and the event is still to a certain degree newsworthy (Kjeldsen, 2006). The conditions are also favourable for addressing the situation. This is interesting because one of the press releases from this time strongly stresses the fact that BP are pushing the restoration process and the insurance payments. This is apparent through comments like "BP believes early restoration will result in identified improvements" (BP, 2011a), "[…] will restore injured natural resources […] at the earliest opportunity" (BP, 2011a), and that they will "accelerate work" (BP, 2011a). This is significant for two reasons; first, it shows that BP understands the urgency of the situation and are devoted to starting the clean-up process as soon as possible. Secondly, they understand the communicative urgency due to the life cycle of the rhetorical situation. If they wait to start the process of cleaning up the gulf, the life cycle might reach the level of deterioration, or even worse, dissolution. The image of their company will then be set, and the event will no longer be newsworthy. If this is to happen, it will require a much larger effort from their side to regain credibility.

5.3.2 The Audience

There are several clues in the text as to who the rhetorical audience are. When BP refer to the damages and the restoration process they primarily focus on a few selected areas mentioned in the two press releases; wildlife, habitat, tourists, human health and natural resources. This is further established by the parties included in the research process discussed in BP (2011b), where these areas are well represented. This might in itself be a reason to include these parties in the research process, to prevent public criticism. Based on this it is reasonable to assume that these organisations are of major significance to BP and the reestablishment of it's reputation. The rhetorical audience will therefore be the affected organisations; primarily fishing, tourist and human health organisations.

5.3.4 Constraints

The constraints at this stage are similar to those at the time of the crisis. One would still expect the extrinsic ethos to be negative.

5.3.4 Pathos

It appears that BP uses pathos more consciously in the press releases from this year than in the earlier ones. The clean up is generally referred to as the restoration. This is a euphemism, an attempt to make their degree of fault in the spill less obvious in the audience's minds. BP are stating that the efforts they are making a "voluntary commitment" because it "is not required by the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) at this stage"(BP, 2011a). Stating that they are doing more then what is required from them is an important pathos persuasion. It is worth noticing the formulation "at this stage", which really says that such efforts might have been required at a later stage regardless of BP's current actions. BP are also stating that they hope to work in "partnership" with the Trustee Council to seek "significant, meaningful restoration"(BP, 2011a). The last sentence does not mean much in itself, the words significant and meaningful are there to appeal to the audiences' emotions. They are using words such as "fair and transparent"(BP, 2011b) both clear euphemisms. Except from these however, the press release is still not basing its persuasion primarily on emotion, but rather leaning on a fact-based approach.

5.3.5 Logos

The first press release (BP, 2011a) is based on two premises; that sooner is better than later, and that BP will start the clean-up process as soon as possible. The first one is itself logos persuasion. During the press release there are several ways that BP seeks to reinforce this premise, this becomes evident through words and sentences such as; "identified improvement", "earliest opportunity", "focusing on projects that can start in 2011 and 2012" and "otherwise likely would be deferred for several years" (BP, 2011a). The press release has two numbers in it; the sum devoted by BP to the restoration, and the number of cooperative studies underway to "evaluate the potential injuries" (BP, 2011a). Both these numbers are essential for our understanding of the importance of early restoration. The first number, one billion dollars, shows that they are devoted to the project. The second number, over 100, shows that there is research being done, and it makes the audience believe that the decision to act now is well supported in research. The second press release (BP, 2011b), has two numbers in it as well, the first is stating the size of the initiative, which proves it is a significant contribution. The second is the expressed deadline for the award of funds "during the summer of 2011" (BP, 2011b).

5.3.6 Ethos

To build ethos is essential especially in the first press release (BP, 2011a) due to the premises as discussed in the logos section. The reason for this is that BP are making a statement in this press release based on the premise that sooner is better than later, if that premise is judged untrue by the audience the press release will lose all it's persuasion. To strengthen their ethos one of the things they do in this press release is excessive name dropping. The press release mentions the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA), the Trustee Council, the Oil Pollution Act (OPA), at the end of the press release they also state that there are representatives from all five states included, and then they are mentioning the states and the organisation from which the trustee is coming. They are using these organisations to show massive support for their decision, hoping the audience will draw the conclusion that a decision with such broad support must be right. There are two quotes in this press release, the first is given by the chairman and president of BP America, the second is a quote from the agreement made between BP and the Trustee Council.

The second press release (BP, 2011b) has the longest title presented in all the press releases. In it's entirety reads: "Vice president of Science, Technology, Environment, and Regulatory Affairs, for BP's Gulf Coast restoration Organization". This press release is not stating as many other organisations as the former press release. They do however state that the Gulf of Mexico Initiative is funded by them, but administered by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. This press release also states that the Gulf of Mexico Alliance is an independent organ. This strengthens the degree of credibility in the initiative, as it creates a distinction between BP itself, and the initiative. BP also state the members of the initiative, by name and organisation, and that the research results will be "published in peer-reviewed scientific journals with no requirement for BP approval". This is a major step towards transparency, and also a significant strength to BP's ethos as they are funding research with no control over the results. This will convince the audience that BP has nothing to hide, which strengthens their authenticity, and thereby their credibility.

5.3.7 Transparency

The press releases from one year after the crisis is using 4th strategy for image restoration, corrective action (Benoit, 1997). This is the same strategy being used at the time of the crisis. BP are trying to restore their image through proving that they are making corrective action, trying to limit the consequences of the crisis and to meet their obligations to the affected parties. They are still stating numbers and using quotes to gain credibility. There does not appear to be any special efforts towards transparency in these press releases compared to the earlier years.

5.4 Email response

In the email, there were seven questions, referring to their view of transparency and how the BP plc see transparency as part of their strategy. The response did not answer any of these questions. It did however provide information about how they dealt with the crisis and the response.

"*Throughout the crisis and the response, we issued press releases, ran a very full set of "Gulf of Mexico response" websites with social media postings and an images/video library, gave numerous press and community briefings all along the Gulf Coast. Right from the start we were aiming at those most affected by the spill, enabling them to understand how the claims process worked, and how the response was going. Since then, we have kept using www.bp.com to report progress, and have reported fully in our annual reports and sustainability review (the annual non-financial report). There has also been continual communication throughout the affected region*" {Email from BP UK Social & Community Affairs, 14th of April 2014}.

Even though the word transparency is not used in this response, they are referring to what could be defined as transparency in the text. Especially when arguing they were "enabling them to understand how the claim process worked" this is coherent with the Transparency Initiative's definition arguing that timely and understandable information is a form of transparency (Transparency initiative, 2014).

6.0 Analysis Tesco

6.0.1 The Rhetor

There is a personal rhetor in two of Tesco's press releases (Tesco, 2013a, 2013b), in addition to the personal rhetor the main rhetor is the organisation as the press releases are posted on the official web page of Tesco. Tesco is the market leader by a significant amount, and as such are an influential, and powerful, organisation in the retail business.

6.1 Press releases from one year prior to the crisis, 2012

Although Tesco has no articles from the year of the crisis, it is important to consider the rhetorical situation, and the audience from this period.

6.1.1 The rhetorical situation

In the latent stage of the crisis no one is aware that it is to come (Sturges, 1994) and so the exigence will not be the crisis. There is however a need for information and attraction. Tesco is at this stage the market leader, having a market share of 29.9 per cent (BBC, 2014). This was the first time they contained a market share under 30 per cent since 2005 and they wanted to increase their market share (Tesco, 2012d). One of the efforts they put in place to achieve this is the launch of the Everyday Value brand in April 2012 (Tesco, 2012b). This brand was aimed primarily at the customers that were concerned about price and to provide an easy and cheap option for that part of their customer base. From this, it is concluded that the rhetorical exigence at this stage is to win back their customers, to regain a market share over 30 per cent. The constraints at this stage would be the cultural expectations, the customers preferring other shops.

In the lifecycle of the rhetorical situation, we are now at the level of origin. It is likely that the exigence, the horsemeat in the food, is in place, but the audience are not yet aware of it. It does not seem like the area affected by the crisis one year later is an area in which they put in a major effort at this stage. There are no press releases about the subject of supply chain, farming, or security of British meat and milk products at this stage.

6.1.2 Audience

The audience for Tesco at this stage would, based on the rhetorical situation be the customers. Their customers must be presumed to consist of people in all age groups, except those who are too young or old to go shopping by themselves. Tesco describes it's customers in 2012 as "driving a strong pace of improvement in the things that matter for customers – service, range, quality, price, availability and the store environment" (Tesco, 2012c). It is apparent based on the amount of focus areas above mentioned that they are dealing with a large and complex customer group with different requests and preferences.

6.2 Press releases from the time of the crisis, 2013

Philip Clarke speaks at the National Farmers Union Conference 2013 (Tesco, 2013a)

Release date: 27. February 2013. From category *information about precautionary measures taken in relation to the crisis.* The press release is five pages long.

The topic of this text is a given speech from the National Farmers Union Conference in 2013. It is addressing the crisis that has occurred with horsemeat in food sold in Tesco, and the issue of supply chain and food security.

Statement from Tim J Smith, Tesco Group Technical Director (Tesco, 2013b)

Release date: 12. March 2013. From category *Text that bring forth new information about the crisis.* The press release is less than a page long

The topic of this text is the effect of the testing and the products that are affected as well as what is being done to investigate further.

Tesco statement on investigation into meat contamination (Tesco, 2013c)

Release date: 30. January 2013. From category *What is done to prevent a crisis of similar character in the future?* The press release is exactly one page long.

The topic of this text is about the actions taken to stop horsemeat from reaching the shops as well as testing procedures for meat in the future. This text originally contained a video of Tim Smith, Tesco's Group Technical Director. This video is not taken into consideration when analysing the text.

6.2.1 The rhetorical situation

At this stage the crisis event has occurred (Coombs & Holladay, 2011). According to Dutton (1986), it is apparent that the crisis is perceived as important. Through affecting Tesco's main product, food, this crisis creates uncertainty about whether any of Tesco's product are affected. The crisis is related to Tesco's core activity, sale of food. The crisis is immediate due to Tesco's need, and responsibility, to get the affected meat out of the shops. According to the theory of Benoit (1997) we can argue that both the components of a communication crisis are in place; the organisation is being held responsible for an action, and that action is considered offensive. When this situation is in place, there is a dire need of communication (Sturges, 1994). The exigence is therefore to convince the customers that Tesco's products are safe so that they come back into the shop to buy Tesco's product.

In the lifespan of the rhetorical situation, we would now be at the stage of maturity. The exigence has become apparent for the audience, and it is the possible, as well as necessary, for the rhetor to address it. At this stage, it is important to mention as part of the constraints that the horsemeat scandal took place primarily in Great Britain, a culture in which eating horsemeat is not common. This will be part of the inartistic proofs.

6.2.2 Audience

Based on the rhetorical situation the audience at this stage is the customers, which consists of a complex and diverse group of people. To reach this audience, the best way is to go through the media, which makes the press releases a powerful tool. One year prior to the crisis the audience were argued to be the part of the customer base concerned with cheap food, at this stage there are implications that Tesco still want to reach this part of the customer base. This is based in the speech in which Philip Clarke addresses the National Farmers Union where he states that "It does not follow that the measures I am announcing today mean that food needs to become more expensive" (Tesco, 2013a).

6.2.3 Pathos

The press releases from 2013 use pathos consistently when they are apologizing for the crisis. Through phrases such as "unreserved apology"(Tesco, 2013c), and "pledge to improve our supply chain" (Tesco, 2013b) and they describe how they want to build a "true and sustainable partnership" of "equals" (Tesco, 2013a) and finally state that "the commitment I have made today are genuine" (Tesco, 2013a). Tesco seem to be using pathos here to recognise the offensive act, the crisis and to apologise for the effects it has had on the affected parts. An example of this is "We recognise that if we are to have a genuine partnership with you, we need to give you the certainty you need to maintain and grow your business" (Tesco, 2013a). Philip Clarke's speech to the National Farmers Union (Tesco, 2013a) seems to be especially pathos oriented. The speech is a combination of a ceremonial oratory and a forensic oratory. The message shifts between emotional descriptions of the past, and the future, combined with a statement about what has happened in the past and why (Kjeldsen, 2006).

To recognise the feelings of those affected by the crisis seems to be an essential part of Tesco's pathos appeal at this time in all the press releases. They are also talking about making a new supply chain that their customers can trust in. It is apparent that the pathos appeal at this stage is given a large emphasis, when referring to the crisis event and the complications following, but also when referring to the future and the measures taken to prevent a new crisis and the road ahead.

6.2.4 Logos

Surprisingly there is not a lot of logos used in the press releases from Tesco during 2013. There is not a lot of numbers or facts; it seems that the main aim for Tesco is not to give information about the facts, but rather information about their apology and what they intend to do to better the situation. None of the press releases from this year are political oratories. All in all Tesco seem to avoid facts and focus on other means of persuasion.

6.2.5 Ethos

The many ethos appeals in the press releases from 2013 are apparent. The main message seems to be an acknowledgement of the effect the crisis has had. Two of the press releases have a personal rhetor, and one even has a video that shows the consignor. Even though the video itself is not analysed in this thesis, the fact that the video is there would be strengthening the ethos, just knowing that it is there would enhance the ethos appeal.

Whilst BP seemed to focus on the category of corrective action when it comes to restoring their image, Tesco used several and diverse strategies. Two of the three press releases from 2013 go through at least three. These three are: Denial, Reducing offensiveness of event and Corrective action (Benoit, 1997). All the press releases seem to follow the same pattern, two of them Tesco (2013a) and Tesco (2013c) both start with a denial in the form of sentences such as "the evidence tells us that our frozen burger supplier, Silvercrest, used meat in our products […]"(Tesco, 2013c). Then all three have statements where they take full responsibility for the crisis, for example "Ultimately Tesco is responsible for the food we sell" (Tesco, 2013c), that; "we are very sorry that we have had a further product which failed to meet the high standards we and our customers expect" (Tesco, 2013b). And finally; "as the market leader in the UK, it is Tesco's responsibility to lead the way out of the crisis" (Tesco, 2013a). After this part comes the part in which they aim to reduce the offensiveness of the event along the lines of "Tests on 15 other lines from the same manufacturing site were clear of horsemeat" (Tesco, 2013b) or

“We have a well-equipped, expert technical team and world-class check in place” (Tesco, 2013c). Finally comes the information about the corrective action taken to prevent a similar crisis. This is very interesting considering the three press releases come from three different categories, and apparently aim to address different aspects concerning the crisis.

The fact that they state the full responsibility for the offensive act makes them seem authentic in their apologies, which strengthens their credibility, but the fact that they vary in the way they try to rebuild their credibility weakens their authenticity in the form of consistency.

6.2.6 Transparency

In the press releases from 2013 Tesco’s intention for transparency start to become explicit. This becomes apparent through links to the testing-program and about the improvements to the supply chain on their web pages (Tesco, 2013b). They also an urge for transparency in the text “What we are working to achieve is transparency: transparent relationships with our suppliers and transparent relationships with our customers” (Tesco, 2013a) and “We made a commitment to customers to investigate thoroughly and share the findings with them” (Tesco, 2013c).

At the same time, they are varying in their strategy for image restoration, and they do not seem to bring forth any new facts about the situation. This is not surprising, as the facts of the situation could not do much to improve their image, nor the crisis. One could also argue that as they have taken full responsibility for the act, the crisis is of less significance.

6.3 Press releases from one year after the crisis, 2014

One million children to learn about where food comes from (Tesco, 2014a)

Release date: 27. January 2014, category *What is done to prevent a crisis of similar character in the future?* It is three and a half pages long

The topic of this text is a program Tesco started up named “Farm to Fork” in which they aim to teach primary school children about where the food comes from and what it contains.

Over 200 lamb farmers sign two year contracts with Tesco (Tesco, 2014b)

Release date: 5. February 2014, category *What is done to prevent a crisis of similar character in the future?* It is one page long.

The topic of this text is the new farmers' contracts that are offered over two years to provide sustainability to the farmers.

6.3.1 The Rhetorical Situation

At this stage, Tesco is in the revision stage of the crisis (Coombs & Holladay, 2011). Remembering Sturges (1994) arguing that this would be a good time to try and change the image created of the organisation by the crisis event. If Tesco were following this strategy, we would expect to find more press releases about the area affected by the crisis at this stage. If Tesco were serious about their intentions stated one year earlier about being more transparent we would expect this to be followed up by information about their supply chain and the aspect of food security. Considering Tesco had zero press releases concerning the area of the crisis a year prior to the crisis event, an increase would not require a tremendous effort.

An increase in relevant articles was found through categorization, in 2014 there are two press releases concerning the area of the crisis. At the same time, there is a significant decrease in the total number of press releases from Tesco compared to 2012 (4 press releases in 2013 versus 7 in 2012). These findings are interesting as they could imply a significant change of focus from Tesco.

Compared to BP's case in which the actual crisis is still taking place one year after it started, Tesco's situation is quite different. There is no longer horsemeat in the food they sell, so the actual crisis is over. What they are dealing with at this stage is the aftermath of the communication crisis. Their rhetorical situation has therefore reached the third stage, the level of deterioration (Kjeldsen, 2006). The act is no longer newsworthy and the attitudes towards the organisation have been set. The exigence of the crisis is no longer in place and the rhetorical situation is no longer formed by the actual crisis. At this stage, if Tesco wants to improve their image in the areas affected by the crisis in 2013, they need to do so fulfilling other exigencies. For Tesco it is assumed that to regain their market share to the level it was before the crisis is still the exigence. This is an exigence that the audience can fulfil. Tesco need to re-establish their reputation and credibility to at least what it was before the crisis. To do this they need to promote food security and strengthen their ethos on the areas affected by the crisis.

6.3.2 Audience

Tesco's two press releases addressing the field of the crisis in 2014 are both addressing the same consumer related issue; the desire for British food. The crisis one year prior served as an awakening for many, and the farmer's organisations used this crisis to emphasise the benefits of using national meat instead of importing large amounts. The request for British food seems much more apparent at this stage then it was in 2013. Based on this, the audience for Tesco's two press releases are the consumers, the people that go into their stores every day to buy food, including meat. The inartistic proofs in this situation will be affected by the fact that the cultural expectations are influenced by the crisis in 2013, where Tesco sold horsemeat labelled as beef.

Based on the assumptions made here about the exigence, the audience must once again be the consumers. According to Sturge's (1994) theory they are now in a mode where it is possible to change their perceptions of Tesco in a more favourable direction.

6.3.3 Pathos

In these press releases Tesco are responding to a societal need, they are using pathos in their responses to that need. For example through sentences such as "we know parents are concerned", and stating that primary schools will be "given a chance" they are acknowledging a need amongst primary school children and their parents. They are presenting their program as a response to this need. This is a pathos appeal. In addition to this, all the quotes in both press releases seems to be pathos oriented, which makes them stand out from the general text. This is in accordance to the way they used pathos in 2013, to acknowledge the feelings of their audience.

6.3.4 Logos

Tesco shows good knowledge and overview of the theme they are presenting, stating that "fewer than 10 per cent achieve their five-a-day target" (Tesco, 2014a), "more than half (52,9 per cent) believe potatoes count toward the total"(Tesco, 2014a), and "More than 200 British lamb farmers have entered into direct, two year contracts with Tesco"(Tesco, 2014b). Tesco are presenting statistics to prove that they are in fact addressing a significant, existing problem. They also state that they aiming to reach one million of a total of five million primary school children in the UK in the first year of the Farm for Fork project, which is an ambitious goal.

They plan to reach this goal by pledging £15 million to the project in it's first year alone. The use of these figures proves an overview over the project, through this they are building credibility, ethos, through logos. Both the press releases from this time are fact based. The information density is high and there are many statistics and other information being presented. This could point towards the press releases from this stage to be political oratories.

6.3.5 Ethos

In this press release, Tesco is referring to Diabetes UK, the Children's Food Trust, the NFU, St Merryn, Red Tractor Farm Assurance Scheme, and Google+. They also have quotes from all these parties supporting the project, in addition to quotes from their own Managing Director, Chair of the Primary Heads Association, the founder of Magic Breakfast, Farmers John Maynard and Warren Davies, and Sorted Food. Through these quotes, they are implying that a project supported by so many different organisations must be good. They are also stating that the Farm to Fork project is a "commitment to improving children's relationship with food and it forms part of the company's wider ambition to help and encourage all of its customers and colleagues to lead healthier and more active lives". The way they are connecting the program to an overall goal of the company is a way to strengthen the company's ethos through this project and the other way around; to strengthen the credibility of the program through connecting it to the company's main goals. Stating their good intentions will also strengthen their ethos, as that is one of the three ethos dimensions.

6.3.6 Transparency

At this point there seems to be an increased focus on the area affected by the crisis, both in the number of actual press releases about the subject, and in a percentage of total press releases. Both the projects invested in by Tesco at this stage seem to be major investments, and thereby commitments from their part in a more transparent and simpler supply chain. It seems consistent that Tesco are including other organisations in their work at this stage to be able to rebuild their reputation. Even though this might be only a PR strategy, many of these organisations do have credibility within the field of food security and it can be assumed that they would not sign or support an agreement that would be counter-productive to their work. Therefore, it does work as a tool to strengthen the credibility of Tesco. The fact that they have quotes from farmers affected by the agreement in Tesco (2014b) also makes them appear more credible and transparent. The more factors they bring in that they cannot control, the higher their credibility.

Studying the factors of authenticity, it seems that the later press releases are consistent with the promises made in 2013.

6.4 Email response

In Tesco's case, the email response was not an adequate response. Here is the main content of their email:

"*At Tesco we appreciate it when students take an interest in our company. We're always happy to help, but I'm afraid that we receive so many requests from students to fill in their questionnaire that we are unable to do this. I'm really sorry that I can't help you further. We do have quite a lot of general information about Tesco on our website and you can find this on our website at: http://www.tescoplc.com/ I wish you all the best with your subject and thank you for contacting us"* {email from Tesco Customer Service, 27th March 2014}.

7.0 Conclusion

In this thesis, I have tried to answer the following questions:

"How is the corporate communication of transparency in an organisation affected by a major crisis?"

To answer this question I have undertaken a rhetorical analysis of press releases from the two organisations looking for changes in their communication profile that can be related to an intention of transparency.

For both the organisations there is a change in emphasis on the area affected by the crisis as they both have more press releases addressing this area a year after the incident. The reason for this might differ between the two. BP's press releases one year after the crisis are only referring to the consequences of the crisis, as Tesco's press releases are focusing on efforts made to prevent a new crisis of similar character. As accounted for in the analysis, this might be explained by the organisations' difference in advancement in the rhetorical lifecycle. One would expect BP to address the issue of security and disaster prevention one year after the crisis if it has become an area of increased focus to them. They do not address it in the selection for this thesis.

Considering the aspect of transparency, they both answered the email. This action must be seen as an attempt to appear transparent and accommodating to research and critics. However, even though BP put more effort into it’s response neither of them answered the questions to an adequate degree.

In addition to this, neither of the companies had, at the selected time, expressed on their webpages explicit desire for transparency in their communication. However, they both seem to emphasise transparency in corporate reporting wherein communication could be attributed some significance.

As for the results of the findings from the rhetorical analysis, there were significant differences between the two cases.

It is worth mentioning that there is a significant difference in the organisations’ rhetoric profile, as Tesco uses pathos to a much higher degree than BP does. This can be explained partly by the fact that Tesco are addressing customers and consumers as their primary audience whilst BP are addressing investors and shareholders. One can assume that the latter group are more interested in facts and less convinced by emotions.

In the case of BP and Deepwater Horizon, there are some changes in the degree of transparency. In addition to the increase in number of press releases there is and observable change in language. The press release from the year prior to the accident has more technical language than the more recent press releases. This cannot be provided with too much emphasis as there is only one press release from the year prior to the accident and so it might be a coincidence, however it is worth mentioning. Except from this, it is difficult to see any major changes in the language, rhetoric or authenticity that implies a change in focus on transparency.

In the case of Tesco and the horsemeat scandal, there are significant changes in the degree of transparency. There is a major increase in focus on supply chain, local food and food security that is existent one year after the crisis as well. This is despite the rhetorical lifecycle stating that the horsemeat scandal is no longer the exigence. The change is explicitly stated in 2013 through the statement: “What we are working to achieve is transparency: transparent relationships with our suppliers and transparent relationships with our customers” (Tesco, 2013a). Transparent relationships with customers would demand transparency in corporate communication. In 2014, Tesco invested in long-term projects for increased transparency and food security as promised. Many of the contracts signed are for more than two years according to their press releases, which makes it a considerable commitment in action, not only in words. These actions strengthen the level of authenticity and through that, the ethos appeal in the press releases in 2014 compared to those from 2012 and 2013.

It is apparent so that the crisis influenced the organisations intention of transparency in significantly different ways. Whilst Tesco appears to have used the crisis as an impetus for increased transparency and a lasting change in the area affected, BP does not seem to have made any changes when it comes to the intention of transparency.

The reason for the divergent results of the two cases can be complex and is likely to be contributed to several factors. However, the main difference found between the cases in the rhetorical analysis is the audience. This is based on rhetorical approach as well as financing model. Whilst BP's audience are shareholders and investors, Tesco's audience are the consumers and customers. It would be interesting to have a further look into the implication this has through the expectations of this audience with the purpose of seeing if their expectations and priorities can be part of an explanation of the divergent results or if there is a discrepancy between the audience's expectations and the organisations communication.

As it has been indicated in this thesis, there are no explicit intentions of communicational transparency to be found on the organisations web pages for the times analysed in this thesis. A quick search on the words transparency and communication on the organisations' webpages shows that Tesco now have several documents mentioning both, whilst BP still focuses on financial transparency. There is a question to be asked here about whether lack of such an explicit statement is intentional or if it is due to a lack of conceptual framework around the concepts of transparency as part of CSR. Measurement of transparency efforts being a major part of this. When I started working on this assignment I realised the lack of such a framework was and contacted Transparency International via email on the 28th of March (Attachment 4). I received an automated reply the same day stating they would get back to me as soon as possible (Attachment 5). Unfortunately, I have not yet received an email from them regarding this request. It seems apparent that the lack of framework as well as a way to measure degree of transparency in communication makes it a complex area to work with.

As this assignment showed that the main difference between the organisations was the audience, it would be interesting to have information about the expectations of the stakeholders from a transparency perspective as well as the ability they have to process large amounts of information from such organisations as has been the case in this thesis. This is important since for the actors to actively consider, and if necessary take action, based on information they are given they must be able to process the information as well. This is in compliance with the definitions of transparency provided by Transparency international (2014) and Transparency initiative (2014).

8.0 Afterword

Working with this thesis has increased my understanding of transparency as well as strengthen my believe that it is fundamental for any organisation trying to emphasise Corporate Social Responsibility. It has been very challenging, yet rewarding working with a concept that is so hard to measure in actual numbers. Finding signs of transparency through a rhetorical analysis was for me a new way of using rhetoric that proved useful as well as very interesting. Using rhetoric to look for honesty and transparency rather than influence and manipulation for me also proves the powerful tool that rhetoric is. This is why the knowledge of it is so useful in so many different ways. The fact that a crisis does influence the degree of transparency in some cases also implicates that the consumers to an increasing degree is interested and concerned about where they put their money. Remembering Ihlen and Robstad (2004) stating that a crisis well handled can increase the credibility and strengthen the reputation of an organisation., transparency might not only be a tool to increase customer power, but also a way to survive a crisis and come out of it as a stronger and more resistant organisation with closer connections to the customers.

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Attachments

Attachment 1 email from me

Dear press office

I am a Masters student writing my thesis on transparency in organisations before and after a major event. One of the cases analysed by my thesis is British Petroleum before and after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The primary mission of my thesis is to see if the crisis changes how the company communicates and if there is increased transparency in the corporate communication after the crisis. I am mainly doing my research through rhetoric analysis of press releases before and after the crisis, but I was also hoping that you would take the time to answer a few questions related to the transparency and communication strategy of British Petroleum.

Have you seen any major differences in the company before and after the Deepwater Horizon?

Did British Petroleum see the need for a change in transparency during the crisis?

I see on your webpage that financial transparency is a focus area for you, how do you measure the level of transparency to make sure you do in fact achieve a satisfactory level?

Is there a focus on transparency in other areas, for example during communication to stakeholders and media? If so then how do you measure whether or not you reach your goals in these areas?

To what extent is transparency perceived as being important to the customers of British Petroleum?

Do you view transparency as a positive force in your work or as a CSR burden?

Looking forward to hearing from you.

--
Kind regards
Ingrid Hansgård Gjelsvik
Phone:
+47 47 62 44 74
+44 (0) 07511281531

Dear Corporate Responsibility Team

I am a Masters student writing my thesis on transparency in organisations before and after a major event. One of the cases analysed by my thesis is Tesco before and after the Horse meat incident. The primary mission of my thesis is to see if the crisis changes how the company communicates and if there is increased transparency in the corporate communication after the crisis. I am mainly doing my research through rhetoric analysis of press releases before and after the crisis, but I was also hoping that you would take the time to answer a few questions related to the transparency and communication strategy of Tesco.

Have you seen any major differences in the company before and after the Horse meat incident?

Did Tesco see the need for a change in transparency during the crisis?

I see on your webpage that financial transparency is a focus area for you, how do you measure the level of transparency to make sure you do in fact achieve a satisfactory level?

Is there a focus on transparency in other areas, for example during communication to stakeholders and media? If so then how do you measure whether or not you reach your goals in these areas?

To what extent is transparency perceived as being important to the customers of Tesco?

Do you view transparency as a positive force in your work or as a CSR burden?

Looking forward to hearing from you.
--

Kind regards

Ingrid Hansgård Gjelsvik

Phone:

+47 47 62 44 74

+44 (0) 07511281531

Attachment 2 Results from the categorization

Categories

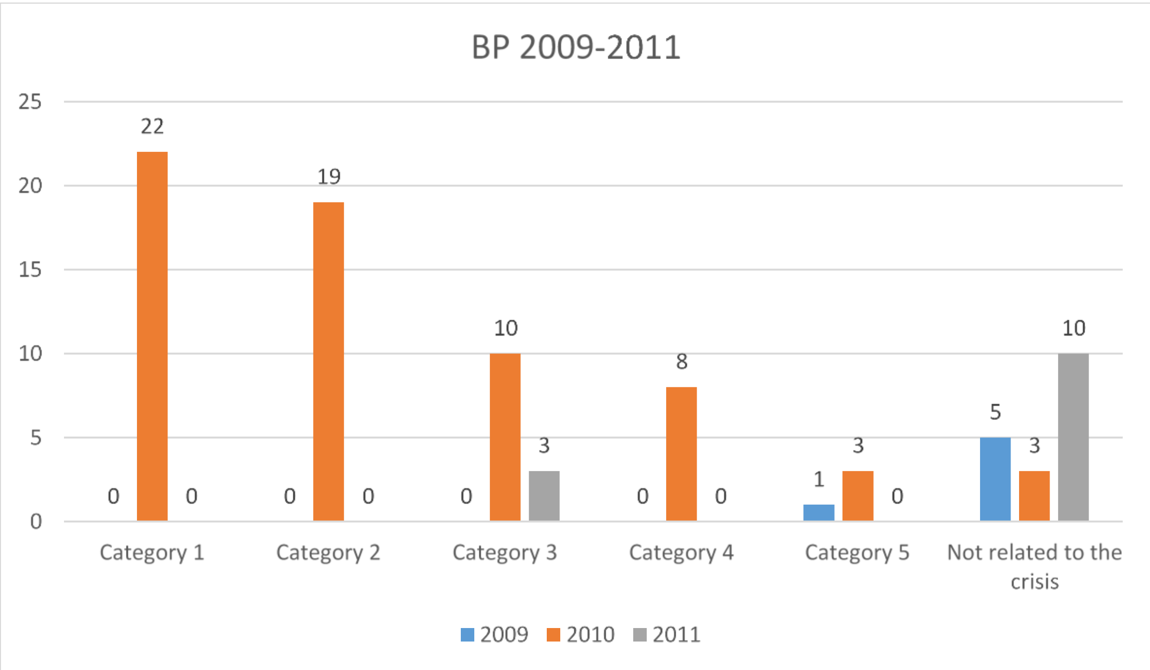
1) Texts that bring forth new information about the crisis.

2) Information about precautionary measures taken in relation to the crisis.

3) Consequences of the crisis.

4) What is done to prevent a crisis of similar character in the future?

5) Other.



Attachment 3 email response fra Jan Halvor Bransdal, Stormberg

Fra: Ingrid Gjelsvik [mailto:ingridgjelsvik@gmail.com]
Sendt: 28. mars 2014 12:33
Til: Jan Halvor Bransdal
Emne: Masteroppgave om gjennomsiktighet

Til Jan Halvor Bransdal

Jeg er en masterstudent fra Universitetet i Agder og holder nå på med en masteroppgave om gjennomsiktighet/transparency med Karen Landmark som veileder. Hun rådet meg til å kontakte deg for litt informasjon om hvordan Stormberg jobber med gjennomsiktighet. Jeg lurte derfor på om du kunne ta deg tid til å svare på noen få spørsmål?

Jeg vet at dette med ærlighet og åpenhet er veldig viktig for dere. I arbeidet med masteroppgaven har jeg funnet at det er vanskelig å måle nivå av gjennomsiktighet. Jeg lurte derfor på hvordan dere sikrer at dere når målsetningene deres på dette området?

Opplever dere at fokuset på å kommunisere ærlighet og gjennomsiktighet kan gjøre dere sårbare i en krise?

Nei. Motsatt. Dette gjør det lettere for oss å håndtere en krise. Ærlighet og gjennomsiktighet reduserer antall lik i skapet og stiller oss gunstig til i en krisehåndtering.

Hvordan sikrer dere fokus på gjennomsiktighet i relasjonen til interessenter og kunder?

Her bør du nok differensiere interessenter noe mer for mer presist svar. Mot Kunder så er vi bevisst i vår satsing på kommunikasjon gjennom sosiale medier. Både det som skjer i og rundt Stormberg. Vi bestreber også å være åpne og ærlige bakover i leverandørkjeden. Da gjennom mer tradisjonelle kanaler.

Tror dere gjennomsiktighet er et fokusområde for kundene deres?

Ja, det tror vi. Responsen vi får beviser det.

Ser dere gjennomsiktighet som en drivkraft i virksomheten eller som en CSR-byrde?

Som en viktig drivkraft. Ikke bare for C(S)R, men for virksomheten som sådan.

Jeg håper å høre fra deg!

--

Kind regards

Ingrid Hansgård Gjelsvik

Phone:

+47 47 62 44 74

+44 (0) 07511281531

Attachment 4 email to Transparency International

18.4.2014 Gmail - Transparency in communication

Gmail by Google

Ingrid Gjelsvik <ingridgjelsvik@gmail.com>

Transparency in communication

1 message

Ingrid Gjelsvik <ingridgjelsvik@gmail.com> Fri, Mar 28, 2014 at 12:04 PM
To: info@transparency.org.uk

Dear Transparency International

I am a Masters student writing my thesis on communication of transparency in organisations before and after a major event. The primary objective of my thesis is to see if the crisis changes how the company communicates and if there is increased transparency in the corporate communication after the crisis. I am mainly doing my research through rhetoric analysis of press releases before and after the crisis. The problem I find is that there does not appear to be an established standard by which to measure the level of transparency. Therefore, I was wondering if you are aware of any good way to measure transparency in communication, or if you are aware of any research being done on this particular field? I would deeply appreciate any input.

--
Kind regards
Ingrid Hansgård Gjelsvik
Phone:
+47 47 62 44 74
+44 (0) 07511281531

Attachment 5 email response from Transparency International

18.4.2014 Gmail - Automatic reply: Transparency in communication

Gmail by Google

Ingrid Gjelsvik <ingridgjelsvik@gmail.com>

Automatic reply: Transparency in communication

1 message

Info <info@transparency.org.uk> Fri, Mar 28, 2014 at 12:08 PM

To: Ingrid Gjelsvik <ingridgjelsvik@gmail.com>

Thanks for getting in touch with TI-UK. We'll get back to you as soon as possible.

Transparency International UK