

A Helping Hand!

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During the March 1996 spring break, Mark Fyke, an 18-year-old high school student at Nicholson Catholic College in Belleville, Ontario, Canada, was vacationing with friends in Daytona Beach, Florida, U.S.A. Approximately forty individuals, 16 of them students at Nicholson, chartered a bus for a week of fun in Daytona Beach.

On Friday evening, at approximately 11:45 p.m. on March 15, 1996, Mark phoned his mother from a pay phone outside the Thunderbird Motel at which the group was staying. Mark used this phone in order to avoid paying telephone surcharges levied by the motel. During the conversation, Mark told his mother that the Belleville group would be heading home in a few hours.

Just after talking on the phone, Mark was confronted by a gang of youths who demanded money. When Mark refused to turn over any money, he was fatally shot in the back of the head by one of the youths. On the morning of Saturday, March 16, the distraught group of students and friends boarded their bus for a day-and-a-half journey back to Belleville.

Focus: Corporate social responsibility, crisis management.

Questions

Imagine that you are the Director of Marketing for Canadian Airlines International or Air Canada, two of the many airlines which serviced the Daytona/Orlando area at the time.

1. Is there anything that your company could have done to help this group?
2. What would you have done? Why would you have done this?
3. Are there any reasons why you would not want your company to get involved in this situation?
4. If you did get involved in this situation, how would you respond to critics who might argue that your action was nothing more than a marketing ploy?
5. If you did get involved in this situation, what type of press release would you have developed, if any?

For all questions, use the appropriate theories and concepts, when necessary. Do not just report case facts.

[The facts described in this case are, unfortunately, true.]