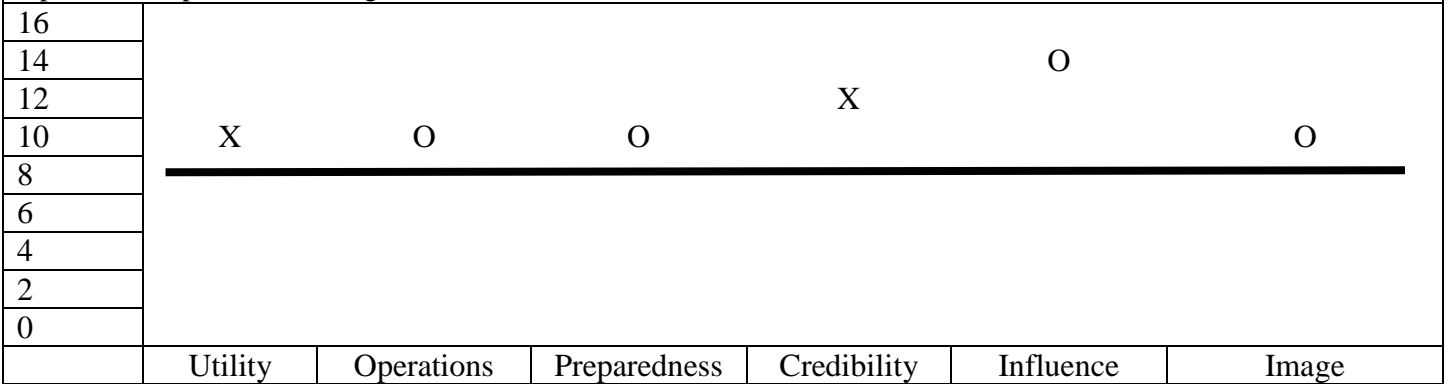


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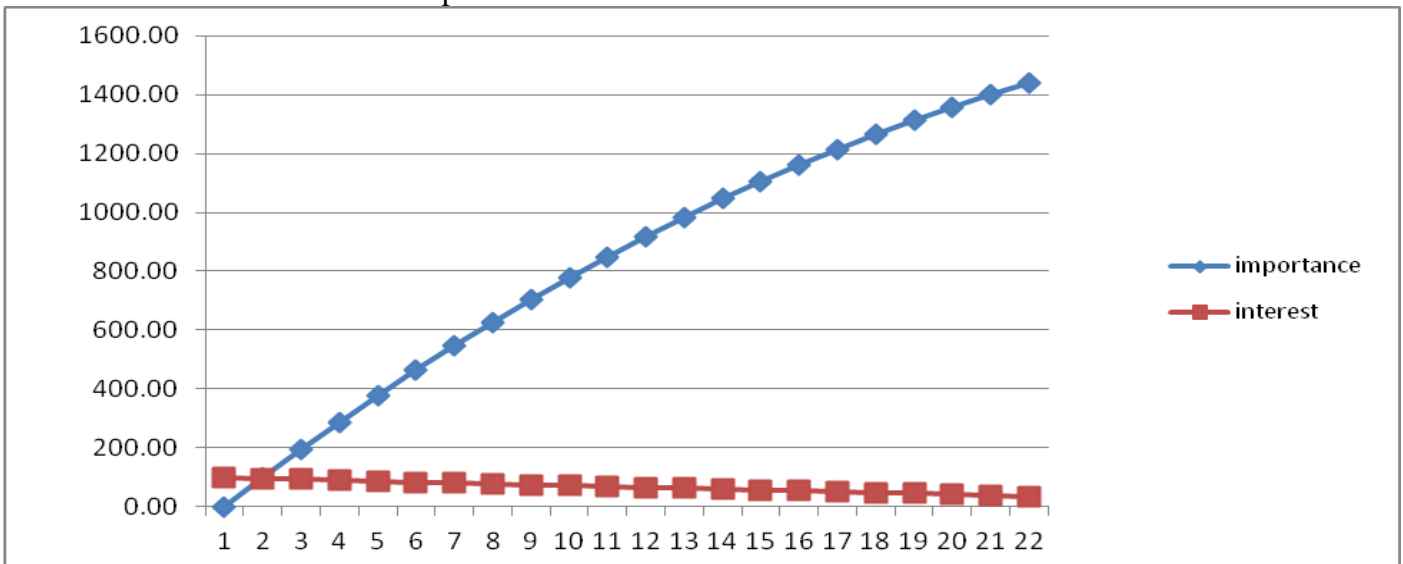
Figure 1
Sparboe, Safety and Animal Care Practices

Introduction. In November of 2011 ABCNews 20/20 presented a story regarding Sparboe egg farm's food safety and animal care practices. A centerpiece for the story was video secretly taken illustrating conditions in some of the company's facilities. Reaction to the story was immediate as special interest organizations affiliate with government agencies and animal rights groups increased attention to the company and its practices. In addition, several key Sparboe customers severed their relationship with the company. In short, the Sparboe brand experienced the phenomenon we call "brand trauma". Note: X's mark core factors associated with an organization's brand image, O's represent components defining the two core factors.



Discussion: Utility, defined by operations and an organization's preparedness, and credibility, defined by the organization's image and capacity to be influential, drive brand health. When these factors are affected brand trauma can emerge. In the table, 8.0 marks the brand trauma threshold. Scores about this line illustrate areas contributing to the brand's health and potential vulnerability. In Sparboe's case every factor scored in the brand trauma zone, particularly the capacity to be influential among network stakeholders. Finally, Figure 2 maps the issue's importance to the company over time, measured in months. Here anything rating over 800 is significant so the score of 1400 illustrates the potential magnitude of the issue. As importantly, the scale at bottom tracks interest in the issue by involved stakeholders over months and we project initial interest for stakeholders can extend beyond 12 months.

Figure 2
Importance of and Interest in the Event over time

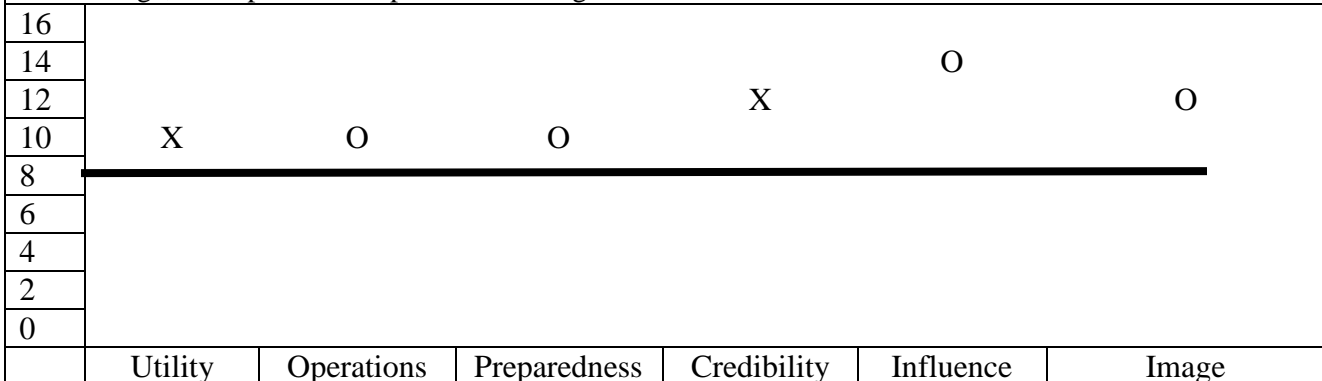


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Figure 1

Sharapova Failed Drug Test

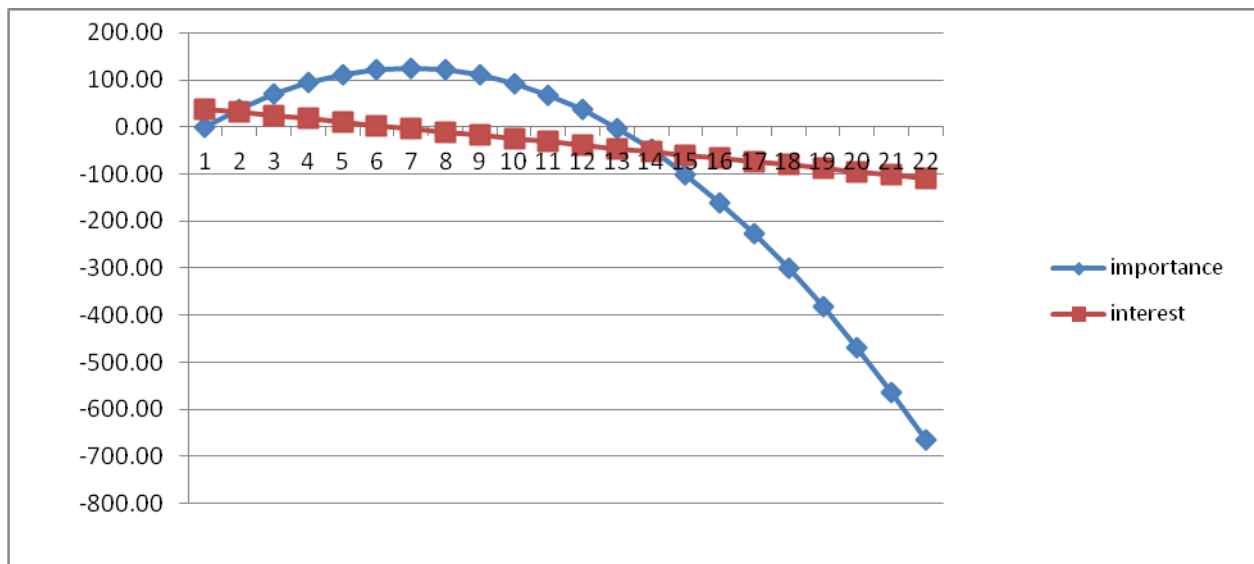
Introduction: Maria Sharapova announces she failed a drug test Meldonium, listed as a banned drug by the World Anti-Doping Agency. She said she had been taking the drug for ten years for various medical issues. Sharapova has been suspended by the International Tennis Federation will hold hearings on her case and determine on any long-term bans. Nike, Tiffany's Avon and Porsche are among the athlete's network of sponsors. Note: X's mark core factors associated with an organization's brand image, O's represent components defining the two core factors.



Discussion: To her credit Sharapova didn't wait to communicate the problem but her resulting scores illustrate the potential impact on her brand health as a tennis player is at risk at least for her professional stakeholders. Many of her backers withdrew their support and this directly impacts her credibility, influence and overall image. Cases like this are especially interesting. Sharapova's social network was defined by competitors, corporations offering her endorsements, the media and, tennis regulatory organizations. These are almost obligated to be involved in this event but not necessarily the general public. So, in Figure 2, the importance line doesn't break the 200 level, suggesting that this event doesn't command a great deal of public interest.

Figure 2

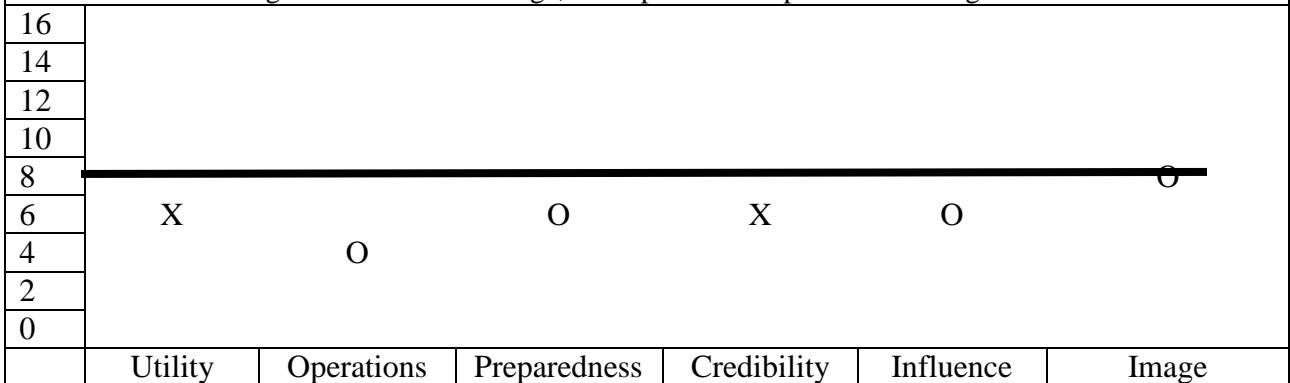
Importance of and Interest in the Sharapova Event over time



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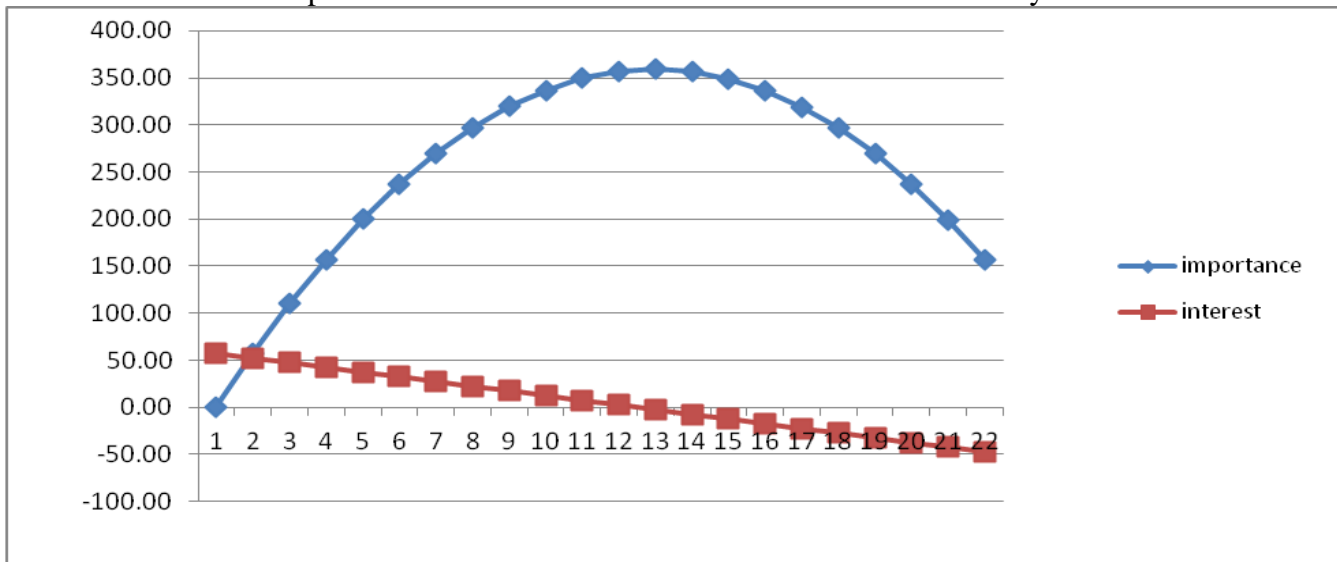
Hillary Clinton's Emails

Introduction: Different issues bear on Ms. Clinton's brand in this instance. One of the most important is the fact that she apparently used a separate, non-State Department server for emails she sent and received while Secretary of State. This has led critics to question if her behavior jeopardized national security or, at a minimum, was simply inappropriate for a person in her position. These can be problematic questions but what bears most heavily on her credibility is the way she has responded to and managed related emerging issues. Note: X's mark core factors associated with an organization's brand image, O's represent components defining the two core factors.



Discussion: Much has been made of this controversy. Claims that she's covering up or withholding information, that the emails contained secret and top secret information are used to impact her trustworthiness. However, no variable set breaks into the brand trauma zone. Most scores are close enough to keep questions regarding the matter from going away but this controversy has more tactical than strategic usefulness. Figure 2 illustrates that this type of controversy has nominal "staying power" but its "importance" on peaks at 350, suggesting it won't maintain general public interest as an event. What keeps an issue such as this alive is the action of certain stakeholders, such as Ms. Clinton's opponents/adversaries, who keep the issue in the media by holding various hearings or meetings related to it.

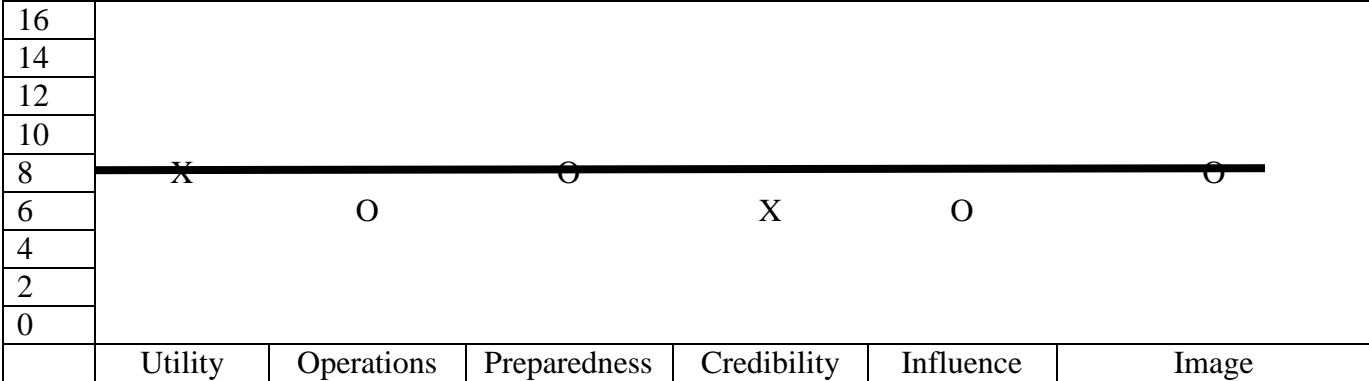
Figure 2
Importance of and Interest in the Clinton Email Controversy over time



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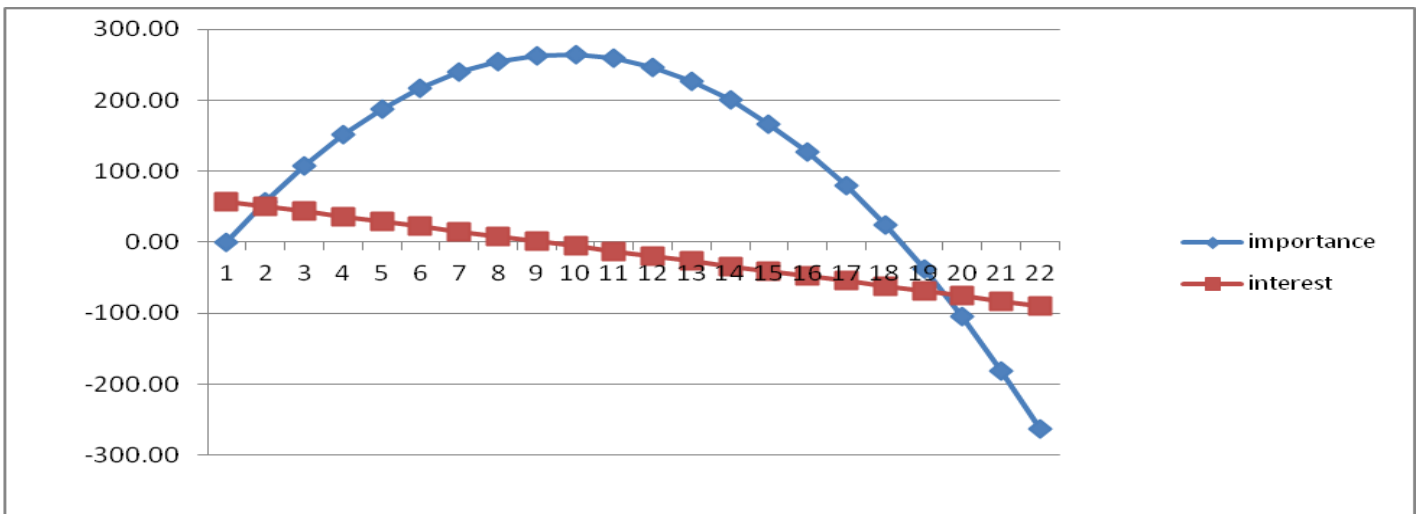
Hillary and the Benghazi Incident

Introduction: While Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's office experienced an attack on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi, Libya. In the 2012 attack a number of American personnel were killed including ambassador, J. Christopher Stevens. Controversy around the Benghazi event resulted in special Senate hearings and criticism of Secretary Clinton's oversight of embassy affairs and operations. Note: X's mark core factors associated with an organization's brand image, O's represent components defining the two core factors.



Discussion: This is another example of where an event, the embassy attack may not necessarily contribute to brand trauma. Attempts to link this tragic event to lack of preparedness or general State Department and embassy operations account for the emerging brand trauma ratings. However, when such an event occurs and especially when linked to key personalities (i.e., Senator Clinton and President Obama who appointed her to the position) the potential impact of the event on Senator Clinton's image should not produce long-term harm. Figure 2 helps illustrate this point. Addressing this crisis requires attention to both improving embassy operations and nurturing Secretary Clinton's image but both are housekeeping or expected maintenance functions. The score of ~250 suggests since the event was not within Secretary Clinton's power to control or prevent its importance is nominal for most. This doesn't reduce the tragic nature of an event that occurred in a far off land. Rather, it does remind us that some events are extreme and beyond control -- they are, in many respects, acts of God. As such, these events have a shorter time horizon than one of similar nature and, too, closer to home.

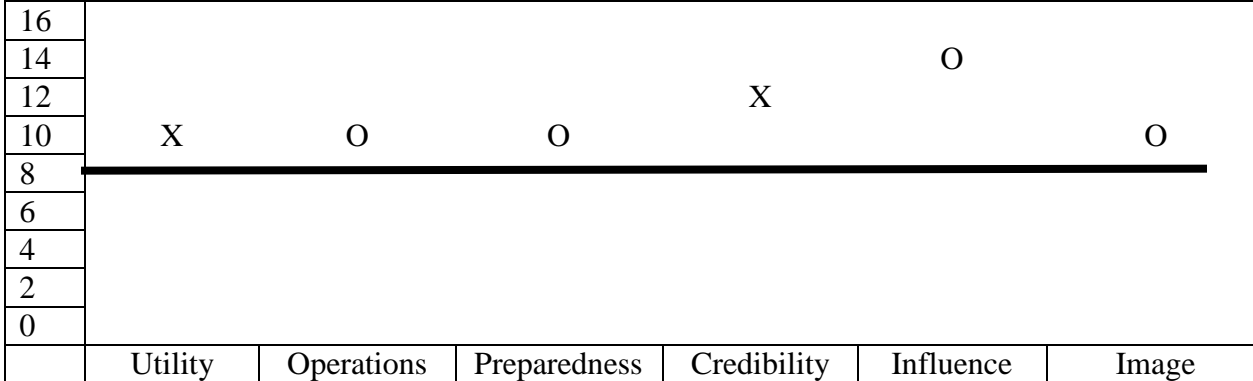
Figure 2
Importance of and Interest in the Clinton/Benghazi Embassy Event over time



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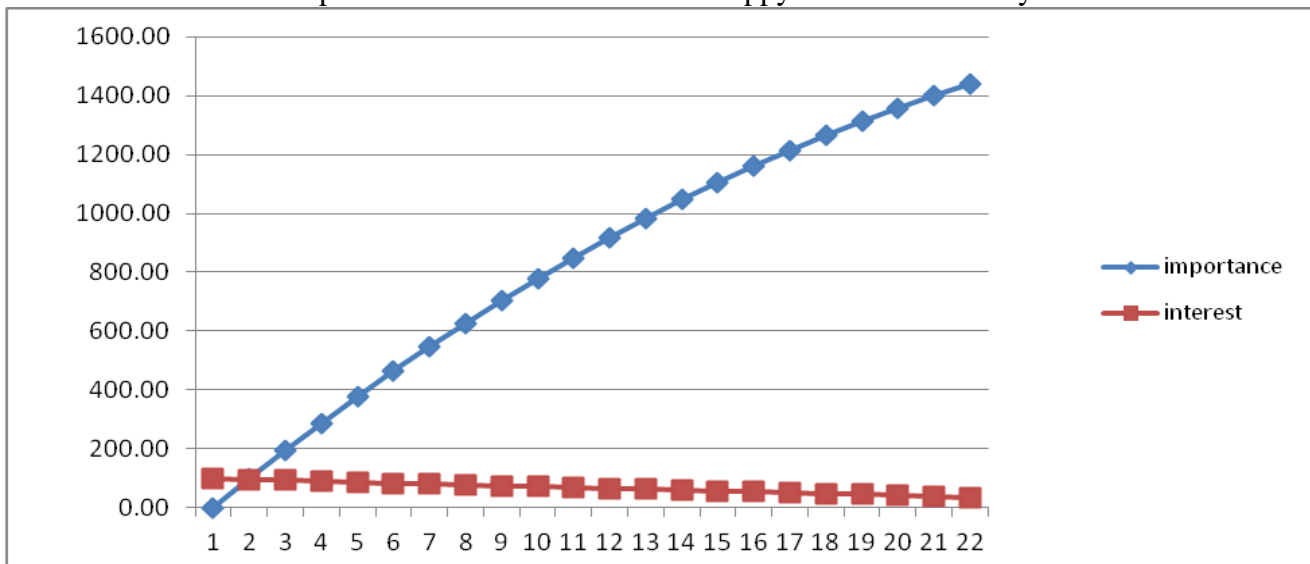
Social Issues: Puppy Mills

Introduction: Social issues emerge which reflect new directions or trends within society. Sentiments regarding "puppy mills", the unregulated, unsanctioned breeding of animals for sale is one such issue. In this instance the mix defining the stakeholder network can include special interest groups, people not wanting to spend a large amount of money for a pet, legislators, those selling the animals and, of course the media. The emergence of "brand trauma" in this instance serves as an anchor defining positions and groups interested in the subject. Note: X's mark core factors associated with an organization's brand image, O's represent components defining the two core factors.



Discussion: One of the most interesting results of the puppy mill study is the way these results can compare with those of, say, a notable personality. The puppy mill analysis illustrates a key element associated with "brand matters": brands are a way for defining an image for most social phenomena. People, groups, organizations and, in this instance, social issues can be described in terms of the image or brand associated with them. What's also interesting is that when helpless animals are perceived as being exposed to harm and abuse negative sentiments associated with the event can become very complex adding to the trauma ratings identified. So, puppy mills score above the 1400 mark in interest and can be a topic of conversation for many months.

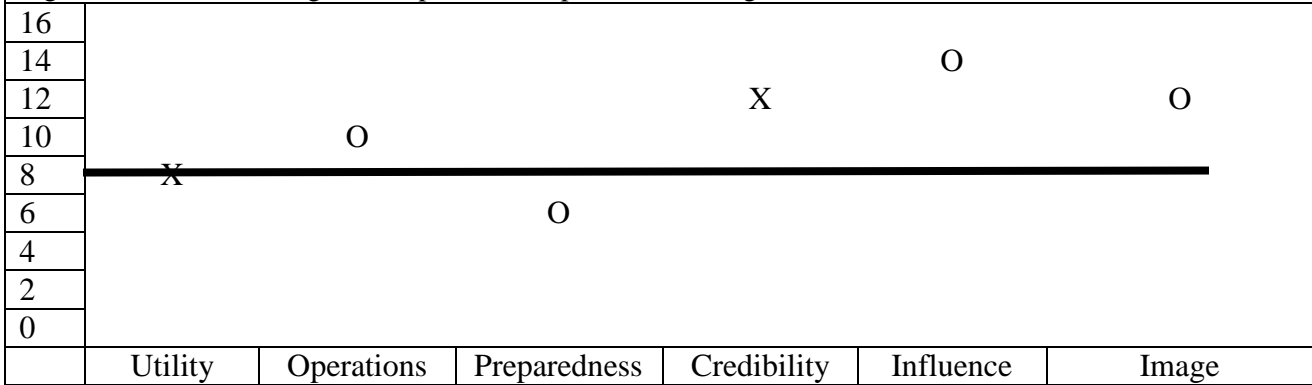
Figure 2
Importance of and Interest in the Puppy Mills Controversy over time



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Chris Christie's "Bridgetate"

Introduction: If events like the Benghazi tragedy's significance may be mitigated by distance from the United States the Fort Lee, New Jersey illustrates how proximity can have multiple levels of impact. In this instance, "bridgetate" is proving to be a troublesome issue for Chris Christie, a controversial governor with aspirations for national politics. In this instance, it's said that lane closures creating major traffic jams at the entrance to main toll plaza for the upper levels of the George Washington Bridge into New York we constructed in retaliation against Fort Lee's Mayor Mark Sokolich for not endorsing Christie in the 2013 gubernatorial election. Here brand trauma has less impact on matters related to operations than on matters related to the governor's credibility, capacity to be influential and overall image. Note: X's mark core factors associated with an organization's brand image, O's represent components defining the two core factors.



Discussion: Bridgetate illustrates how a negative given event can bond with an already outspoken, controversial personality to maximize traumatic brand effects. Data mapped in Figure 2 illustrate that this is a controversy that is not fading anytime soon, particularly after the governor sought to participate in the current Republican Primary Election debates. During the debates bridgetate was resurrected to explore Christie's involvement in the incident and to question his capacity to lead if he can't to hire honorable people for his staff. The 1200 point score suggests the incident can be of interest for many months.

Figure 2
Importance of and Interest in "Bridgetate" over time

