Select one question from Chapter 13 and one question from Chapter 14 and address thoroughly.

Chapter 13-

1. Corporate scandals, environmental disasters, and even general mishaps can quickly snowball into big controversies that can severely damage a company’s reputation. Consider the situation Toyota faced in 2010 after increasing reports surfaced of consumers experiencing incidents of unintended acceleration as well as braking problems with several Toyota makes and models, leading to massive recalls. Conduct research in business media and at government, company, and industry websites to prepare a report on that situation:

Describe the extent of the crisis and who was involved.

Identify public relations tools and strategies that Toyota employed to manage the crisis.

How effective was the PR strategy? Could Toyota have avoided the controversy altogether or done more to resolve the problem and win back customers? Explain.

or

3. Choose a well-known brand, and visit three of the types of social-media sites listed in the chapter to learn what people are saying about that brand. Summarize the types of messages you found. Indicate which of these messages you think would support the brand’s marketing and which would undermine the marketing effort. Suggest some ways that marketers for your brand could respond to these messages and get more involved in the online conversations about the brand.

Chapter 14

1. Visit three businesses where salespeople are integral to the promotional process. Pick at least one business that is not household consumer oriented (for example, office equipment or business services organizations). Rate the salespeople you encountered as to their professionalism and skill level.

or

2. Tupperware is a case study in the issues surrounding personal selling’s collision with World Wide Web technology. The company, which has been in existence for six decades, is based on direct selling, as a small army of consultants corrals homemakers for “Tupperware parties,” working locally and profiting, if not globally, at least nationally. For those consultants, the Internet seemed to present every opportunity for them to expand their reach to customers around the world. But allowing each Tupperware consultant to create his or her own website could wreak havoc in the organization, raise issues of consultants poaching on each other’s territory, or dilute the national brand’s image if the websites are poorly executed. Tupperware frowned on this sort of chaos, discouraging individual Web page creation.

Then in 1999, the company launched a corporate site through which it could make direct sales to consumers, to the detriment of its own field force—many of whom were highly critical of what looked like a play to gobble up the benefits those “high-touch” consultants had created in the market. Perhaps as a result of the backlash, Tupperware in 2000 launched a website at http://www.my.tupperware.com to enable the 75,000 members of its u.s. direct sales force to create their own sites, tied into the corporate site to execute online sales (and presumably crediting the particular consultant who brought the sale).

Using an Internet search engine, query on the phrase “tupperware consultant.” What sorts of pages do you turn up? What do you think of Tupperware’s compromise between its traditional strategy of relying solely on its field force and the other extreme of selling only online at a corporate website? Do you think Tupperware’s compromise position supports or undermines its sales force? Why?