

# PR News

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Hi –

I'm writing to offer you a chance to become the measurement guru in your organization. If you are still reading this after that first sentence, then you understand that measuring your PR efforts is one of the most important skills you can possess in your job. But let's talk about your career, not your job, and becoming a bona fide measurement expert.

On Wednesday, May 15, my team and I are hosting the annual PR News Measurement Conference in Washington, DC. This is where the “guru” part comes in, because it's our goal to make sure that everyone who attends leaves so much smarter about PR and measurement.

**More information:**

[prnewsonline.com/may15](http://prnewsonline.com/may15)

We've designed a one-day program that covers the most important and “right now” areas of public relations and sets you up for success as new challenges come your way. From measuring your activities on social media to tying your PR to sales or employee morale, the PR News Measurement Conference will tackle how to really measure the impact of what you and your team are working so hard on every day.

If you read PR News or attend any of our events, you know that we focus on the tactics, practical advice, the here's-how-you-do-it without breaking the bank. That's what you can expect on May 15. And we allow enough time for networking and forging new connections with like-minded PR peers. I've mentioned that you can become a measurement “guru” if you attend our PR News conference. To clarify: You will not leave our event calling yourself a guru (that would be inappropriate). But, we are pretty sure that your colleagues, your boss, clients and peers will soon enough refer to you as “the measurement guru” if you truly take what you learn on May 15 and apply it to your trade.

So, I hope to see you at the PR News PR Measurement Conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. If you have any questions about this event, please don't hesitate to contact me.

**In the meantime, check out the content, speakers and sponsors at [prnewsonline.com/May 15](http://prnewsonline.com/May15), and register now while there are still seats available. Thank you for considering this opportunity and I look forward to seeing you.**

With kind regards,



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# PR News

Building the bridge between PR and the bottom line.

April 29, 2013

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Social Media

Online Video

## Great Content and Consistency Are Critical to Melding Social Channels

**Zumba Fitness**, the international dance-fitness program catering to roughly 14 million people in more than 150 countries, was looking to shake things up for its brand. So earlier this month the company rolled out a free app, called “The Great Calorie Drive.” The PR effort, which runs through

June, enables Zumba users to donate the calories they burn in a Zumba class to people struggling with hunger throughout the world; that’s an average of 750 calories per person, per class, or one meal. So far, nearly 37,000 people have signed up.

Via partnerships with Feeding America and the World Food Programme, Zumba has donated more than 29 million calories to people combating hunger.

The program is noteworthy for many reasons, but one important reason is the way in which it exemplifies how PR communicators are moving to social media as the core of their campaigns. In the case of Zumba, a video accompanying the campaign runs on [greatcaloriedrive.com](http://greatcaloriedrive.com) as well as Zumba’s YouTube channel and Facebook page. When someone checks into the program a message automatically goes to

that person’s Facebook page to notify his or her fans.

“With so many people already on the social-media bandwagon it’s easy to integrate” the various social channels, says Allison Robins, PR director of Zumba Fitness. “If anything, social media is a way to seed new content to engage existing fans and reach new ones.”

PR execs increasingly are finding new ways to integrate

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### ( DID YOU KNOW? )

#### Seven Things You Will Learn in This Week’s Issue of PR News

1. The “second wave” of PR measurement ties the speed of automation with the understanding and insights that humans can provide. (p. 1)
2. Blogs and YouTube may be the best springboards for getting people to share your content via social media. (p. 1)
3. PR pros should provide regular “digital updates” at executive leadership meetings. (p. 2)
4. Facebook is the top global brand for the third consecutive quarter. (p. 3)
5. T.G.I. Friday’s leveraged the “Mayan Apocalypse” late last year to boost awareness about the restaurant chain. (p. 4)
6. Most measurement budgets are not big enough to effectively track social channels. (p. 7)
7. Social media is supplanting traditional media channels for B2C (Procter & Gamble) and B2B brands (Salesforce.com) alike. (p. 8)

### PR Measurement

## Measurement Hall of Fame Inductees’ PR Tracking Insights: Q&A With the Experts

Contrary to conventional wisdom, PR measurement should inspire (rather than thwart) creativity. PR measurement tends to work best when automation is wed to the human touch. Social channels, of course, are difficult to measure, but if PR execs don’t start to think strategically about social media their brands may go by the wayside altogether. These are just a few sage words of advice about PR measurement from this year’s PR Measurement Hall of Fame inductees.

The 2013 Hall of Fame inductees will be honored during PR News’ PR Measurement Conference, which takes place May 15 at the National Press Club, in

Washington, D.C.

For a primer on the conference we spoke with several of this year’s inductees to get their take on where the pendulum is swinging on PR measurement.

**PR News:** *What are some of the major trends in PR measurement right now?*

**Mark Weiner:**

The biggest trend is what I call ‘the second wave’ of social media listening, engagement and analytics. The first wave was driven by indiscriminate, real-time content gathering, which led to cascades of irrelevant content and inaccurate data.



Unfortunately, the first wave is marked by automation that is too literal in its thinking and unable to uncover context or to recognize human intentions.

The second wave marries the speed and consistency of automation with the understanding and insights only humans provide. The challenge of the second wave is exacerbated by the need for “small data” to drive “big data” (itself a major trend in business generally). “Big data” seeks to correlate a variety of data streams to uncover opportunities for better business decision-making. In this case, PR or social media data may reveal opportunities for product development or customer service.

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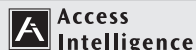
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## ▶ How To...

Employee Relations

Digital Media

By Marc Monseau

# 'Be Culturally Ready' For Social



Every day we are reminded of how digital communications platforms, including social networks, have changed how people interact with each other and how they expect companies to interact with them.

Success, as study after study has shown, depends on whether companies not only understand these trends, but also how to effectively use different digital platforms.

One such study, titled "The Economics of the Socially Engaged Enterprise," compiled by the **Economist Intelligence** unit and **PulsePoint Group**, found companies that fully embrace social engagement are experiencing four times greater positive business results than those that are less engaged.

Yet ensuring companies not only know what needs to be done, but are culturally ready to support digital communications, isn't easy.

PR professionals have a unique skill set, from experience with stakeholder relationship management to internal and external communications, that can not only help organizations find their digital footing, but also to make the cultural changes needed to keep them one step ahead of the competition.

In all of this, you, as a PR professional, can play a key role. Drawing upon experiences in coordinating strategic communications, you can help ensure consistency across multiple external touchpoints.

Through a blend of education and the execution of proof-of-principle concepts, you can also create cultural readiness.

There are many different tactics that you can use to accomplish this, but below are six key approaches to consider:

- **Gain senior management support:** You can (and should) help your leadership team become more digitally savvy to better understand the impact these technologies have on society and your industry. Consider providing regular digital updates at executive leadership meetings or holding an immersion day that brings outside thinking into your organization to provide insights into how technology is being used to build and expand businesses.
- **Befriend Legal:** Having worked with different regulated companies, I've found that legal and regulatory are often unfairly blamed for the lack of innovative communications. Rather than view legal as a hurdle, you should partner with your legal colleagues.
- **Create policies and procedures:** For many companies, and, in particular, regulated industries, established policies may limit the ability to communicate using social and digital channels. Benchmark with other companies to understand their approaches and to get a clear idea of what has triggered regulatory action in the past.
- **Raise Awareness of Your Social Presence:** Track and monitor the conversation about your business, creating reports covering the volume, sentiment and topics covered. Share these reports with the key internal stakeholders to help them understand what is being said and how those conversations impact your organization.
- **Demonstrate Value:** Take on a small project that you can control that has a meaningful business objective and where the results can be measured. As the project evolves, share the results with internal stakeholders to help them better understand the value that such projects can have to the organization. Celebrate success broadly with your internal audiences to encourage others.
- **Create a Sandbox for Experimentation:** Establish a safe place where employees can use and experiment with social media tools to support the business. For instance, there are a variety of collaboration tools that can be used to solicit new ideas from employees. By employing such tools, you can help raise the organizational readiness of your company by demonstrating how social technologies can help make the business more efficient.

These are just a few of the things that you, as a PR professional, can execute within your organization to help them become culturally ready to be more socially-engaged. By drawing upon experience in internal and external communications, stakeholder management and a knowledge of new communications trends, you can help lead the charge to effectively compete in the new online relationship-driven world. **PRIN**

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Marc Monseau is managing partners of mintcollective and former director of corporate communications and social media at Johnson & Johnson, @mdmonseau.

# Apple Stumbles and Facebook Rumbles On; Video Didn't Kill The Radio Star and The Gadget We Can't Live Without

► Yesterday's winning brand could be today's losing brand: Facebook is the top global brand for the third consecutive quarter, generating \$730M of Impact Media Value, according to General Sentiment's Q1 2013 Global Brands report.

"Our Global Brands report looked very different a year ago," said Pete Moran, CEO of General Sentiment, in a statement. "Then, Apple was the top brand, and technology companies comprised the first nine slots. Last year, Facebook wasn't even on the list. Today, Apple is at fifth, and automotive brands Volkswagen and Honda have entered the top ten."

The report measures the purchase equivalent value of a brand's exposure as determined by the sentiment, frequency and exposure of news mentions and social dialogue. Google (\$545M) claimed second place, and Amazon.com (\$519M) placed third while Apple (\$350M), which was lord of the manor last year, fell to fifth place this year.

Here are some of the details from the study:

- The automotive industry gained the most traction this quarter, led by Volkswagen climbing 17 rungs and Honda's (\$178M) ascent from eleventh

**One device could not live without in home** (respondents with Household Income \$250,000+; % of Respondents by Group)

	Total Adults	Age <35	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Smartphone	58%	47%	63%	58%
Tablet	22	25	20	22
Video game system	7	22	3	2
Sensor-based video games	3	0	4	3
Internet-connectable television	3	0	4	4
e-Reader	2	1	2	2

Source: Shullman Research Center, April 2013

Oh, what a tangled web of decision. If they could have only one of their currently owned devices, a majority of high-income consumers chose their smartphone, according to Shullman Research Center's "Survey of the Affluent." Only tablets and video game systems were chosen by a smaller percentage of elite consumers.

to ninth.

- Technology brands continued to dominate the list; Microsoft, Adobe and Intel claimed the sixth, seventh and eighth spots, respectively.

- In 2012 Apple was the top brand, and technology companies comprised the first nine slots. Last year, Facebook wasn't even on the list.

Source: General Sentiment

► **Online Radio Reaches 86 Million Listeners Weekly:** Radio isn't dead, thanks in large part to smartphone growth and the ability of consumers to listen to tunes on their hand-held devices. Indeed, one in three Americans aged 12 and

older now listen to all forms of online radio on a weekly basis, according to a national survey of 2,021 Americans, per Arbitron and Edison Research.

Some of the other nuggets from the survey:

- Fifth-three percent of all Americans aged 12 and over (an estimated 139 million people) own a smartphone; three-quarters of those aged 18-to-34 own such devices.

- Weekly online radio listeners listened for an average of 11 hours 56 minutes, per week, up by more than two hours over last year's listening levels, and nearly double that reported

in 2008.

- AM/FM radio is an "almost all of the time" or "most of the time" the in-car choice for 58% of adults aged 18 and over; dashboard AM/FM radio far outpaces frequent in-car use of CD players at 15%, portable digital audio/MP3 players (11%) and satellite radio (10%).

- AM/FM Radio delivers far more consumers (49%) than other media during the half hour before they arrive to shop, more than twice the number reached by the next closest medium (billboards, at 21%).

PRN

Sources: Arbitron, Edison Research

## PRNews' Crisis Management GUIDEBOOK

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# Friday's Uses the Mayan Calendar to Remind Consumers of Origin of Its Name and Rally The Call to Party

**Company:** T.G.I. Friday's  
**Agency:** Peppercomm  
**Timeframe:** December 2012

It was the best of days; it was the end of days. Or so the end of the Mayan calendar warned for Friday, Dec. 21, 2012. So exactly how does a brand prepare for the "Mayan Apocalypse"? For T.G.I. Friday's, the answer was simple: Let's party.

Friday's and Peppercomm prophesized in the third

quarter of 2012 that the Mayan Apocalypse was a storyline the media could not resist. They thought Fridays needed to be front and center, while staying on-brand. With that in mind, The Last Friday campaign was designed with the following goals:

- 1) To draw new customers, reengage lapsed ones and reward regulars during the holiday season.
- 2) Be a driver of the media conversation surrounding the Last Friday of the Mayan calendar.

## Four Tips For Four-Horseman of-The-Apocalypse-Proof PR



Maggie O'Neill

For T.G.I. Friday's, the brand that celebrates the end of each workweek, the Mayan Apocalypse prediction was a perfect opportunity to celebrate and capture the media spotlight.

Agency partner Peppercomm and Friday's relied on some tried and true PR strategies and some newer ones for gaining national attention for The Last Friday campaign. Maggie O'Neill, partner and senior director, Peppercomm, describes the four horsemen of PR tactics used:

1. **Message across platforms:** "PR is not just a press release and a pitch. When working on a campaign with this many legs, make sure that not only is your message consistent across all media channels, but that you are using all assets to deliver the best message," O'Neill says. "Think visuals, tangible items and live engagement."
2. **Tap into a trend:** When building a large campaign, look for an upcoming holiday, trend, pop-culture event that you can leverage to your brand. "Think about the media coverage on April Fool's Day around marketing. People are looking for engagement around certain events. Better to capitalize on that than try to build a new one," O'Neill says.
3. **Make it simple for media:** Provide media the easiest access to all of the information. A multimedia news release, like Friday's did with a video testimonial from its CEO for the Last Friday Campaign, puts all assets in one place. "Or consider an infographic to deliver your message, or an engaging mailer to bring the media into the event itself," O'Neill says.
4. **Make it social:** "Media are just as much a part of the social dialogue as consumers are, so keep that in mind when spreading the word about a campaign on social platforms," O'Neill says. "It's a great opportunity to have an open dialogue and garner interest from traditional media as well."



Photo courtesy: Peppercomm

T.G.I. Friday's held celebrations at 14 select Friday's restaurants throughout the country on Dec. 21, 2012 to help celebrate the "Apocalypse."

3) Raise awareness of T.G.I. Friday's in unexpected places and engage Friday's fans and new customers in a memorable way.

4) Create a shift in the mindset among consumers that Friday's is more than your typical casual dining restaurant.

The Last Friday campaign would also offer the opportunity to help reposition the brand as an attractive bar venue. Friday's popularity originated with young adults, thanks to the restaurant's popular bar scene, but the brand seemed to age alongside its original target audience and became more family focused.

### TAKING IT SERIOUSLY

A core team of six communicators from Peppercomm began to track the discourse on the Mayan calendar. In last year's third quarter mentions among various media channels averaged 15,000-20,000 per day.

Rebecca Maas, management supervisor at Peppercomm, says that while the campaign was prepared for the possibility of holiday-related news trumping the campaign, "It was imperative that we appropriately message around the end-of-world sensitivities while still working toward our goal of securing positive media coverage."

Quinton Crenshaw, director of communications for T.G.I. Friday's, says that the supposed end of the world did indeed cause panic for some people. "To do this, we constantly reinforced the message that we were simply using the end of the world as an excuse to celebrate with our guests."

Peppercomm's plan called for full integration across communication channels, requiring digital, events, creative and media teams, within a six-week period, fanned across the nation. Planning required working with local markets to secure permits, manage logistics and support with materials and promotions.

#### A BIG EXCUSE TO PARTY

Peppercomm created 14 signature events, which served as the core of the campaign to commemorate The Last Friday—Friday, December 21, 2012. Patrons could memorialize The Last Friday in true Mayan—and Friday's—fashion. Think pyramids, tropical flora, food of the gods and thirst-quenching drinks.

The pop-up events were executed under three tiers:

**Tier A events:** Designed to draw new patrons, these events took place at four off-site and unique locations—**Hollywood & Highland** in Los Angeles, **Wrigley Field** in Chicago, **Union Station** in Washington, D.C., and **11 11 Lincoln Road** in Miami.

The events featured fun, custom-built production elements that ranged from replicas of Mayan pyramids to themed tabletop settings along with branded photo booths and special DJ stands.

**Tier B parties:** Designed to reward loyal customer bases, these parties were a replication of efforts in the Tier A markets, and held outdoors, but on the premises of T.G.I. Friday's locations in

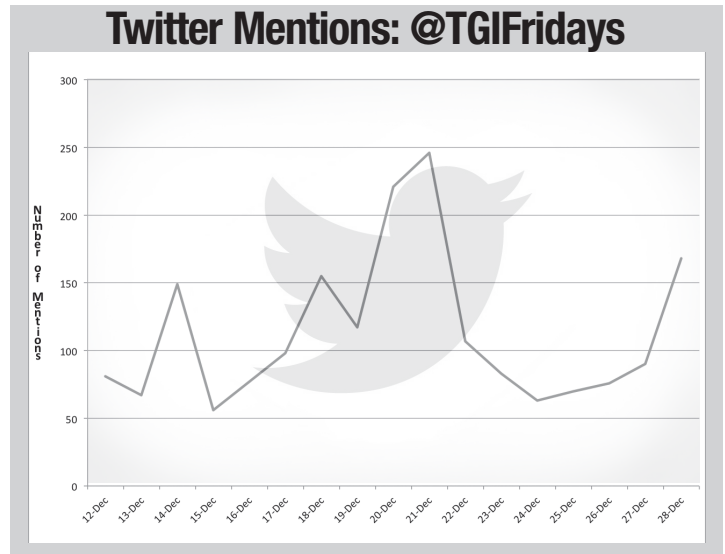
Tampa and Orlando, Fla.

**Tier C parties:** Designed to build out Friday's customer base, these eight parties were held in select T.G.I. Friday's locations across the country, including Atlanta, Dallas, Denver and New Orleans. Each location featured live entertainment, food and drink specials and trivia. The events required full participation by each restaurant's respective team members, and Peppercomm staff, to fully execute.

Crenshaw says that to gain the attention of local media, a market-specific hook was more important than ever. "A physical presence in every city isn't always possible or plausible, but we're working to make sure our larger campaigns have localized elements in as many cities as possible," he says.

The campaign's specific PR tactics included:

- A dedicated microsite, TheLastFriday.com: The microsite provided details of the event and an opportunity to enter the End of the World Survival Kit sweepstakes, which awarded a kit including bar supplies needed in the event of an apocalypse.
- Paid, earned, and owned media strategy: Maas says the campaign's paid-media strategy included digital banner ads and mobile trucks with "Party Like There's No Tomorrow: 12/21/12" signage.
- Media engagement: A Multimedia News Release, distributed on Dec. 5, featured a video of Friday's CEO Nicholas Shepherd announcing the campaign. Shepherd, while serving as a barkeep, announced that "TGI Friday's was born to celebrate the end of the week, so who better than to celebrate with for the end of the civilization?"
- Survival Kits for Media: Key media were mailed kits that were designed to look



The number of times the official @TGIFridays handle was mentioned during The Last Friday campaign, with a distinct peak on Dec. 21.

like indestructible steel cases complete with "survival" tools—drink-making supplies. "Because we were assessing our social-media efforts and contest entries in the weeks leading up to the in-market events, we were able to effectively pitch traditional media and properly prepare media messaging," Maas says.

- In-restaurant promotional materials: These materials included "The Last Friday" cocktail napkins, menus, street team activation, and collateral handouts. The hashtag #TheLastFriday was used both by Peppercomm team members live-tweeting the event and consumers sharing their experiences.

Crenshaw says that garnering media coverage during the holiday season was especially tricky. "Fortunately, we were able to separate Fridays from the holiday retail clutter with this campaign and allow a point of differentiation that inherently fit the brand," he says.

The biggest curveball of all, Maas says, was the Newtown shootings on Dec. 14, one week before the big event. "We had to monitor the news and make the right call for re-entering the news conversation with the brand," she adds. Despite

the change in the national discourse, the campaign still compiled:

- Year-over-year sales increased as high as 170% in targeted locations, particularly among the bar crowd.
- 222,248,674 media impressions from 60-plus placements, including CBS This Morning and The Los Angeles Times.
- 56 million multimedia news release online impressions and 25,000 views of the CEO's video message.
- 2,720,953 Twitter impressions from more than 1,000 tweets using #thelastfriday, and 1,535,423 Facebook impressions.

Though the planet survived the Mayan Apocalypse, the Friday's brand captured the national spotlight, which Crenshaw says the team will strive to repeat in the future. After all, people appreciate an excuse to party. **PRN**

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# Programming Social Channels

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all their social platforms and, in turn, grow audiences. These channels include **Facebook**, **Pinterest** and **Twitter**, of course, but you can also toss apps, blogs and **YouTube** into the PR mix.

And while blending social media can help you spread your communications far and wide, the messages might get lost (or misunderstood) without a consistent brand message, both in the written content as well as the optics.

## CONSISTENCY IS CRUCIAL

Alex Nicholson, VP of new and social media at **Cone Communications**, recommends three tips for PR pros who are eager to cross-pollinate their messages via myriad

social channels:

**1. Have a clear visual strategy:** Be sure to meld visual content across your social channels. Cull imagery from a physical product and reformat that image—in the same style—on your social channels so that the visual content is consistent both online and offline.

**2. Use a clear link strategy:** Direct your social traffic to your website and don't sow confusion by including other Web links or online destinations that are only marginally affiliated with your brand.

**3. Maintain a consistent voice across channels:** Understand the "tone" of your brand via social outlets,

## What the 'Big 3' Social Media Platforms Do Best

It used to be easy to say, "Facebook is for good news. Twitter is for bad." But in today's media environment, that's too simplistic. Each of the main social platforms has their own use, independent of some of the other social channels.

### ► Facebook:

- Brands can use Facebook to dive deeper into storytelling through videos, images and infographics.
- There are also opportunities to drive further engagement via contests, games, sweepstakes and promotions.

### ► Pinterest:

- Create strong, visual brand storytelling that integrates product seamlessly into a lifestyle experience.
- Connect visual content back to e-commerce or additional content on brand-owned channels.
- Share high-value content in a visually interesting way, such as pinning infographics, maps, quotes, recipes or tips.

### ► Twitter:

- Companies should think of Twitter as an extension of their press page and use it to share headlines, brand updates and company news.
- Many brands also succeed by using Twitter as a customer-service vehicle and/or to surprise and delight consumers with content, product samples and brand experiences.
- Brands can also use Twitter's search tools to identify emerging issues that are germane to their business.

*Alex Nicholson is VP of new and social media at Cone Communications.*



Alex Nicholson



Photo courtesy Steven Shepard

**Spreading Far and Wide:** This image of a Costa Rican volcano was featured in a Cisco-produced documentary about the challenges and socioeconomic benefits of extending the telecom network to remote regions. The series originated on the company's YouTube channel.

Nicholson says. For example, in its PR efforts on behalf of laundry detergent "Snuggle," Cone conveys a "warm and fuzzy feeling" in all of its communications. "That means that if you're dealing with multiple community managers you have to make sure to align the brand ethos, from a visual and verbal standpoint."

## LEAD WITH THE VISUAL

As the written word becomes subordinate to visual imagery, a growing number of brands are producing online videos that are initially posted on YouTube and then distributed throughout the social sphere.

Take **Cisco Systems Inc.** To help celebrate the first anniversary of its "Connected Life Exchange" blog, the company in late 2011 produced a Web documentary focusing on how telecom networks help people living in Third World countries to compete on a global scale.

The documentary, titled *The Network Effect*, originated on Cisco's YouTube channel, which offered the video the best shot at being shared via social networks, including Facebook and Twitter, according to Tim

Washer, senior manager of social media in the service-provider division of Cisco.

Some of Cisco's largest customers shared the video via their social media presence, reaching a Twitter following of more than 200,000 people combined, Washer says. The video also garnered 137,000-plus views and has been screened at the highly popular SXSW conference in Austin, Texas.

"Most humans think visually, so regardless of the channel, you need to think in visual terms, whether that's a video or a photograph," Washer says. "I can put a video up on YouTube and then post the link on Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn."

He adds: "Each specific [social channel] has its own specific culture. If you can connect with people on an emotional basis, that is what brings the channels together." PRN

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# PR Measurement Hall of Fame

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## David Michaelson:

The primary trend in measurement today is the movement to create standard measures for public relations activities. This is a critical effort that will hopefully result in the ability to create comparative measures for all stages of the public-relations process, from outputs to outcomes to outtakes.



## Donald K. Wright:

Probably the biggest trend is the movement to convince PR practitioners to measure. Research I've conducted each year since 2005 clearly shows there is not nearly enough measurement taking place in our field and, unfortunately, when practitioners do measure, it often involves use of AVEs and/or mainly measures of communications outputs (instead of outcomes).



**PR News:** *What are the biggest misconceptions about PR measurement?*

**Jim Fetig:** In the early days, the C-suite thought it was all smoke and mirrors. We had to walk them through the methodology to establish credibility.



Also, without extensive surveys, there are many things that can't be measured with media metrics. Audience attitudes themselves and the degree of sentiment such as brand affinity are among things that can't be measured.

## Diane Lennox:

AVEs (ad value equivalency). Let's make



them go away. Even the most advanced vendors of measurement tools and services—the ones sitting on the Barcelona panels, who shouted that AVEs must die—still offer it to clients who insist.

It simply makes no sense to compare ad space with media coverage without taking into account the content, let alone the fact that the dollar figures from rate cards are rarely applied in reality. It's not just inaccurate, it allows agencies to actually inflate their value by applying a high dollar figure to the ad space and then co-opting for PR. I've heard one expert call it the biggest lie in PR.

**PR News:** *PR pros are inundated with measurement tools these days. How do they know which ones to deploy and which ones to forego?*

**Fetig:** You can be a bleeding-edge type or a fast follower. I prefer the latter, so that I can hang back a bit and find out what works before jumping in. It saves time and money. I once was told that we needed to be involved in Second Life at a cost of nearly \$1 million. I waited and was glad I did.

**Lennox:** The tool will always depend on what you are trying to measure, as well as your tolerance for error. If your goal is to monitor your reputation across a wide range of traditional and social media, you may need to look at some of the more sophisticated services that offer a hybrid approach that blends automated and human coding.

**PR News:** *What are the most effective ways that PR pros can measure the use of social channels, particularly when it comes to demonstrating their value to the C-suite?*

**Lennox:** It depends on what you're trying to accomplish. If you set a clear objective that is achievable, measurable, and aligns with the goals of your organization—a tall order, perhaps—the measurement approach should define itself. Social channels, like any media, have strengths and weaknesses. Some have their own measurement built in.

**Wright:** Although social channels are more difficult to measure than traditional media (newspapers, radio, TV, etc.), the industry has to move in that direction because, quite frankly, that's how people are communicating today. Unfortunately, most measurement budgets are not large enough to permit effective measurement of social and other emerging media.

**PR News:** *Looking a bit into the future, will PR pros have to be quasi accountants/analytics experts to get a handle on PR measurement?*

**Michaelson:** Absolutely not. Measurement provides guidance, but is not a substitute for solid communication skills, great insights, solid instincts and expertise.

**Weiner:** Just as the current scope of PR allows for a mix of specialties including investor

## PR News' 2013 Measurement Hall of Fame Inductees

### Jim Fetig

Chief, External Relations (recently retired) Corporation for National and Community Service

### Diane Lennox

PR Services Manager SAS

### David Michaelson

Managing Director Teneo Strategy

### Katie Paine

Chief Marketing Officer, News Group Chairman & Founder, Salience/KDPaine & Partners

### Mark Weiner

CEO PRIME Research

### Donald K. Wright

Harold Burson Professor and Chair in Public Relations Boston University's College of Communication

relations, and government affairs at agencies, corporations, NGOs, it also provides a niche for a small group of public-relations researchers and consultants.

While this tiny subset may constitute a population of less than one-half of one-percent of the profession, the future promises an emerging specialty group devoted to the science of public relations. **PRN**

*(Get the latest best practices in PR measurement and their real-world applications at PR News' PR Measurement Conference. To register for the event, please go to [prnewsonline.com/prmeasurementconference2013](http://prnewsonline.com/prmeasurementconference2013).)*

# 5 Ways For PR Pros to Gauge Social Media ROI



When we talk about the return on investment for social media, PR executives and their marketing counterparts are grappling with the same question: “Is the time I spend listening, responding and posting worth the time I put into it? And how do I prove that to my boss or my client?”

Social media channels have some clear advantages in reaching the audiences that brands and organizations care about, including:

- Direct communication with audiences
- Instant feedback from customers or consumers
- Information and data on what people are talking about

Because social media is an emerging technology many marketing and PR pros aren’t immersed in the outcomes and metrics of the channels. That means education is needed to overcome suspicion about using social media instead of—or in addition to—traditional channels. PR folks can take five steps to help articulate the value of social media to C-level managers.

## ▶ Get steeped in metrics:

Social media channels throw off tremendous amounts of data such as retweets, likes, referrals, shares, pins, follows,

favorites and comments. The first time someone looks at this information, it is overwhelming. The key is to look again tomorrow. And the day after that, and then several times a day, until it is possible to see the correlations, patterns and the trends that emerge.

Similar to driving, a dashboard can pull together the data from social media properties to make it easier to see everything happening. Some correlations will be obvious. For example, posting more content typically leads to more engagement or increases the number of followers.

## ▶ Go beyond the raw numbers:

After getting comfortable with the data the next step is to dig deeper into social media audiences. The “information to intelligence” phase is critical. Do some detective work to understand the people who are following or engaging with your social channels. What other topics or brands are they posting about or following? What are they doing with social and digital content?

How many are influential about the organization’s fundamental topics? Many free and paid tools allow organizations to analyze their social-media

audiences and to understand share of voice or sentiment. These insights go beyond the activity metrics and can set benchmarks to help drive more effective social strategies.

## ▶ Be transparent:

Anyone claiming to be social-media expert likely has five (or fewer) years of experience in the medium. Compare that with traditional communications disciplines, such as media relations or print advertising, with decades of best practices to lean on and thousands of experts.

It’s key to remind skeptical executives or managers that few brands or organizations have “figured out” social and that it will take time, ingenuity and flexibility to find success.

## ▶ Question past assumptions:

The rise of social media has thrown many traditional business models into turmoil, particularly in the media world. It has also sparked questions about the efficacy of traditional forms of communication.

Did a press release or article that took weeks to develop reach the right audience members, and did they pay attention and eventually take the desired action?

## ▶ Focus on potential:

For an executive, the idea that social media channels can drive sales or business leads in a more efficient and measurable fashion than traditional marketing and communications methods is an appealing promise. That is why brands such as **Procter & Gamble** and **Salesforce.com** are pushing deeper into social media. For them, social media is replacing their traditional efforts instead of supplementing them.

PR professionals must get comfortable with the fact that social media will be something they are spending more time on while spending less time on traditional strategies and tactics. And using these steps, they can explain the value of that time on social media to skeptical executives and managers.

Ultimately, it’s not that everyone needs to strive to be a digital communications professional; instead, it’s that everyone needs to be a communications professional in the digital age. **PRN**

## CONTACT:

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## PR News’ PR Measurement Guidebook



Learn the freshest and smartest ideas for measuring the impact of public relations and tying your efforts to key business objectives and performance indicators!

### Chapters Include:

- Sales and Marketing
- Social Media Metrics
- Managing Reputation and Measuring Crisis
- Proving PR’s Worth

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