PRNews
Social * Marketing * PR

December 12, 2017
Issue 46
prnewsonline.com

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SPECIAL ISSUE: DATA AND THE COMMUNICATOR

Cutting Through the Communications Data Wilderness: 12 Leaders Assess the Data Era

[**Editor's Note:** For the third article in this five-part series about measurement-related issues, *PR News* and partner **PublicRelay**, a media monitoring and analytics firm, held a Communications Leadership Roundtable in late November, a convocation of 12 senior communications professionals. The following is a summary of the questions posed and comments during the discussion (the participants, who are listed on page 3, were told in advance that they would not be quoted for attribution). The first and second articles in this series appeared in the Nov. 7 and 21 editions of PR News.]

Is data transforming communications?

"Data has given us the keys to the C-suite. It's the best time ever to be in PR," a participant said. Another agreed, "Data makes us more relevant to those we're communicating to."

On the other hand, some warned not to get too enamored of data alone. Proper analysis of data is critical, the group agreed. "We need to make sure we don't get seduced by the surface value of data," one executive urged the group.

Another executive argued that making good use of data takes time, training and experience. "You have to augment technology and data with humans." A participant added, "Everyone who offers a technology solution [for data work], they're all pretty much the same thing," one executive said. "What makes a difference is the human element. The data's only as smart as the questions we ask about it."

"We talk about data from a measurement standpoint, but rarely mention analytics, insight and optimization…these areas provide a better foundation for a strategic conversation with the C-suite."

A participant mentioned the need "to spend a lot of time cleaning data…data scientists spend 80% of their time doing this." The participant continued, "Data is like oil, it needs to be refined."

The group agreed there's another downside to measurement as there are "questionable methodologies" being used to analyze data.

Said one participant, "It's easy to be seduced by amazing charts from platform providers. When I challenge providers they say, 'Only you would ask that.' It's currently a gold mine for platforms, and people are going to use data to sell."

Black box solutions also came under criticism. "You can catch the human that created the questionable methodology, but with black boxes, the humans don't really know what's in there," said one participant. The group agreed it's imperative for the industry to learn more about what's behind data methodologies.

There's an adage that PR needs to have a seat at the table when important business issue are being discussed. What are your thoughts on why this is still being said and how can we burnish PR's image so it has a full voice?

In the current political climate, one executive argued, having a corporate purpose is critical and it's no longer acceptable for brands to remain silent on political and social issues. "Because of that, the CCO [chief communications officer] must have a seat at the table."

Added another, "The audience [for PR] has evolved over

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PRNews
Social * Marketing * PR

Vol. 74 ISSN 1546-0193

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Published weekly by Access Intelligence, LLC
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UPCOMING EVENTS AND WEBINARS

WEBINAR: HOW TO BUILD A PR MEASUREMENT CENTER
DECEMBER 21, 2017
1:30-3:00 PM ET

TOP WOMEN IN PR AWARDS LUNCHEON
JANUARY 23, 2018
NEW YORK CITY

SPRING AWARDS LUNCHEON (HONORING THE CSR AND NONPROFIT AWARDS)
MARCH 20, 2018
NEW YORK CITY

How Capital One Sorts Data to Create Videos That Track With Business Goals

[**Editor's Note:** Each week we highlight a slide from a *PR News* presentation of interest. This week's slide comes from Chris White, managing editor, content marketing, and Sukhi Sahni, director, communications and marketing at **Capital One**. If you have an interesting presentation to share, contact: sarenstein@accessintel.com]

Everyone loves video. Communicators are anxious to message via video. Some are rushing to do so. A more reasoned approach, informed by data, is to think about video creation in a way similar to how many PR efforts begin: by deciding on business goals. As White, puts it, "Understand your business goals and what level of the funnel you're playing at before you create content. Know what you want to do before you do anything."

Knowing your goals is half the battle. The other half is "articulating [goals] through analytics and reporting, which is how you'll measure progress." Strategically you also want to understand how to get better over time, White argues.

Looking at the top of the funnel on the slide (Awareness), imagine a company wants to raise awareness of its brand, referred to on the slide as brand recall/lift and brand perception. It creates a video series with the goal of raising brand recall or brand lift. The problem many face is once that campaign ends, people ask about different metrics. "How many purchases did these videos drive?" Although that can be measured, it's deceiving in the context of the awareness stage, White says, "because the videos weren't intended to get people to make purchases. If your goal was conversions/purchases, you probably would have done things a lot differently." You can measure just about anything, but "not everything you can measure matters." A few metrics matter, based on your business goals. "It's important not to conflate them."

An example with conversion would be if a company has **Facebook** ads urging consumers to complete a lead form. The business goal, or outcome, is to generate leads. "But that doesn't solve for how you get better at generating leads," White says. This is where Optimization Metrics (right side of the slide) enter. You could pay for more traffic if your cost-per-click were lower, and could reduce cost-per-click by increasing click-thru-rate (CTR) with more compelling creative. Although these metrics don't reflect your business goals, they influence them. "Your business doesn't make money on high CTR, but it can definitely lose money on it." ■

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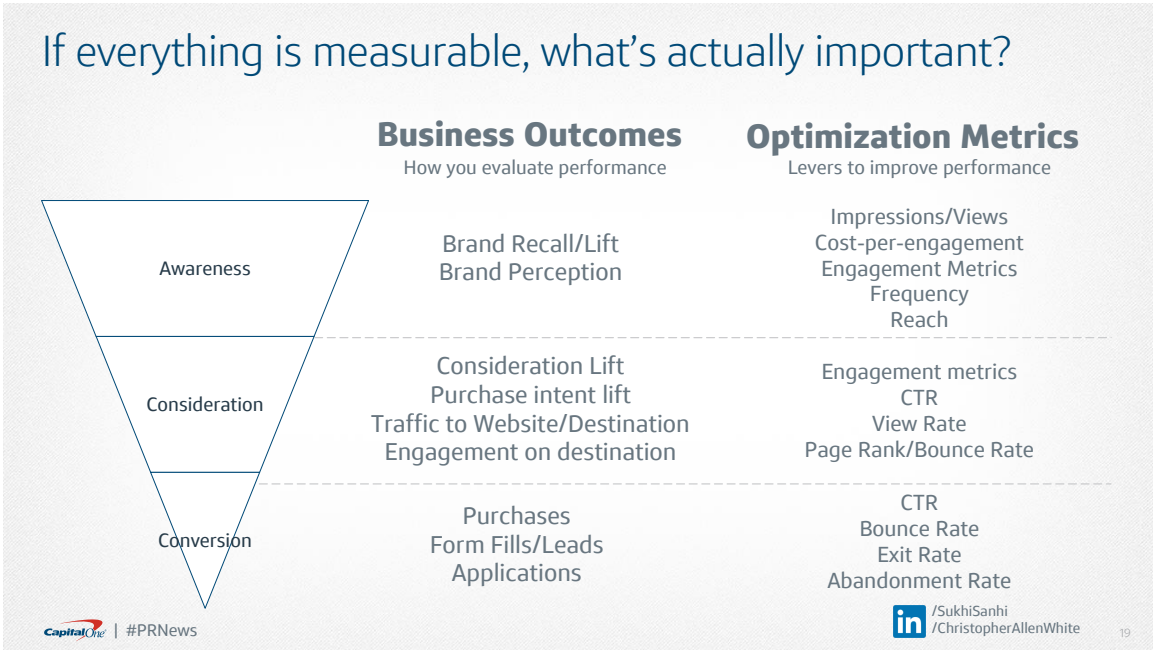


Source: Capital One

Continued from page 1

Stamina, Patience Needed for Measurement

time." [With social media,] there's a public aspect to all a company's activities. Companies need to bring communicators to the table because it's not only the press that's influencing their business, but regulators and consumers.

Another reason PR has a better chance to be at the table is PR has evolved from being laser focused on earned media. "Now we're also content creators. And with social media, our employers and consumers are all broadcasters. That's helped" raise the importance of PR, this executive said.

Crisis PR also has helped, the group agreed, as has PR's ability to keep stories out of the papers. "We all have metrics," one executive said, "but it's those articles that we make sure we don't appear in that are so valuable. We've started showcasing that with our senior leaders."

It's also that PR knows how to help CEOs avoid saying things that could become inflammatory. "We know where the minefields are," an executive said. "The measurement of the crisis avoided is the holy grail," another said.

DATA FOR THE DEFENSE

For communicators who have been seated at the C-suite table "it's been a disappointment…for years we've struggled to defend ourselves" due to a lack of data, one executive argued. PR pros were unsure where they were making an impact. "The opportunity with big data is insight," this executive said. "Earned media in this noisy environment is the gold standard. We now can say to the C-suite, 'From this data insight, let me tell you three things that will help your P&L.'"

The group agreed there also needs to be a long-range strategy for measurement. "We have to get away from the short-term, episodic, what-happened-this-week approach. It's risky to focus on an individual moment."

'THE REACTION OF THE MOMENT'

The accelerated pace of management, measurement and news cycles was a constant refrain during the session. "Everything seems to be short-term, but creating a brand takes time. Companies and communicators make a mistake when they lack a long-term, sustained measurement effort" an executive said.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Andrew Bowins, Executive Director, Corporate Reputation, KPMG

Allyson Hugley, President, Measurement and Analytics, Weber Shandwick

Ally Bunin, VP, Employee Engagement, Brighton Health Plans

Rosemary Mercedes, CCO, SVP, Corporate Communications, Univision

Steve Cody, CEO, Peppercomm

Nadia Petschek Rawls, Director, Social Media and Audience Development, TED Conferences

Jessica Driscoll, VP, Communications, Discovery Communications

Michael Schneider, VP, Communications, ADP

Dave Guarino, VP, Communications, S&P Global

Andy Whitehouse, Founder, Copperfield

Catherine Hernandez-Blades, Chief Brand and Communications Officer, Aflac

Eric Koefoot, President/CEO, PublicRelay

The consensus of the group was that with the excessive focus on politics, it's taking longer and longer to get stories picked up in the press. "A CCO's most important quality is stamina," one participant said.

Another issue with the rapid pace of business is that new products and people seem to receive the most recognition. This is an issue, particularly when it comes to finding data insights, said one executive, since "experience" is critical to frame data. Without experience and "diverse wisdom," another executive said, "you don't know what's a passing fad or not."

There were positives, however, during this part of the discussion in that some mentioned a more reasoned approach

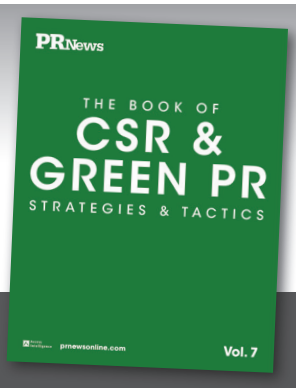
Continued on page 4

CSR & GREEN PR GUIDEBOOK

PR News' CSR & Green PR Guidebook captures best practices in communicating the positive relationships that organizations are building with their communities of interest. This six-chapter guidebook connects the dots between the effective communication of positive social contributions and corresponding improvements in bottom lines.

Chapters include:

- Cause Marketing & Community Relations
- Sustainability Initiatives & Reporting
- Employee Communications and CSR
- Social Media & CSR
- Philanthropy & Human Rights Communications
- Stakeholder Communications



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www.prnewsonline.com/csr-green-pr-guidebook-vol-7

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Continued from page 3

to measurement and managing. An executive noted, "We have switched to a disciplined, month-over-month, quarter-over-quarter approach to measurement." The company, the executive said, is tracking themes that are "part of our overall business strategy…we're operating now at a higher level."

Another executive picked up on themes. "We're looking at how our metrics move against a theme. That level of disciplined metrics over time changes things. We measure share of voice against a fixed list of outlets. If you measure everything you can't get a good picture of share of voice. Do I look at a target list across all channels? No. We look at **Twitter**, print and digital separately."

Many in the group echoed the idea that sometimes brands measure and value metrics that customers find irrelevant. "We now look at themes that actually are breaking through," said one. "We have data to demonstrate to the C-suite how people are consuming content and *what* they're consuming."

WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Added another executive, "Some CEOs think social media is just posting. In fact, social media is much more about engagement. It's reaching out to a particular audience and bringing it back to a potential opportunity."

Said an executive, "Measuring social now is like the challenge we had with media relations 10 years ago. No matter how polished a video is, was it impactful? We're all in love with video, but maybe an image with a cutline is going to do a better job driving people to a website. We had a video that gained lots of eyeballs, but the main message was in the last minute and 80% of viewers had turned it off by then."

Argued another executive, "It comes down to the content, the audience and what the objective is."

Said another, some metrics provide almost no deep insights on engagement. For example, 75% of articles shared aren't read, this executive said.

Where does social sit in your world?

The consensus on social media was that no department owns it and that it should be seen as a tool. "Did people used to say, 'Who owns the phone?' Nobody owns social anymore, like there's a ringed fence around it," one executive said. Added another, "Social wedges itself between comms and marketing at our company. It should be treated as a channel."

Wherever social sits, another participant said, "there needs to be close collaboration between digital and communications. I involve the digital person in every meeting." Added another executive, "We don't look at social from a channel perspective. There's a tremendous amount of internal training needed. There are so many different things—social selling, it's all over the place."

UP AHEAD

What will the communicator of the future look like?

"He or she will have to be a jack of all trades…like journalists who write articles, do social media and appear on camera." On the subject of future communicators, another executive said, "I think we're all looking for people who are talented but have judgment and understand business. We all struggle with hiring."

[The fourth article in this series is scheduled to appear in the January 9, 2018, edition of *PR News*.]■

CSR

How BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Used Data to Conceive and Measure a CSR Campaign

An area where data has influenced communicators heavily is in corporate social responsibility (CSR). Instead of addressing social issues based on what communicators *felt* the public was thinking about, savvy PR pros now are likely to measure attitudes through research before embarking on an effort.

Once the research is completed, communicators can analyze the data and draw conclusions about how to invest corporate resources in CSR efforts that research identified as significant. After that they are able to lay out measurable objectives and goals; once the campaign is completed, they can determine success using measurement and the resulting data.

Take the case of **BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee** (BCBST). In 2015 Tennessee was a hotbed of opioid use, ranking number two in the nation for opioid prescription; unfortunately it also was 4th in opioid overdose deaths.

Since BCBST covered more than 1 million opioid prescriptions for its members, it decided it wanted to help. It began a campaign to reduce the number of Tennesseans who abuse/misuse controlled substances. It decided 2 ways to do this: reducing access to prescription drugs in homes; and increasing the perception of harm of prescription drugs among youth and adults.

BCBST partnered with the community program Count It! Lock It! Drop It! (CLD) and made a grant to the organization to effect change.

It then had an agency conduct a statewide public awareness survey to establish benchmarks to track campaign success. The results were used to shape campaign messaging

Public Education Goals Year 1

- **Collect 300 pounds of medications (opioids) at CLD-sponsored take-back events**
- **Collect 1,000 pounds of medications (opioids) at CLD community drop boxes**
- **Increase awareness of Count It! Lock It! Drop It!**
- **Increase the number of people who count their prescription pain pills**
- **Increase the number of people who are aware prescription medication should be safely discarded at take-back events and drop boxes**
- **Increase the number of people who take their unused opioids to a drop box**
- **Research**

Source: BCBST

and strategy. A follow-up statewide survey was conducted in August 2017 to track campaign progress.

DEMAND IS IDENTIFIED USING DATA

When the initial survey found Tennesseans strongly supported public education campaigns to raise awareness of the problem and the steps needed to reduce the problem, BCBST realized the public desired such an effort. Other findings from that survey, shown below, helped BCBST realize residents were likely to dispose of pain medication at approved drop-off centers if they were made aware of them.

Armed with this data, BCBST and its agency mounted an integrated campaign (media relations, digital and social media, advertising and targeted emails) to make Tennesseans aware of three things they could do to help combat the opioid problem:

CLD Three-Year Goals

- **Expand program to 44 communities**
- **Locate permanent drop boxes in all 95 counties through partnership with State of Tennessee**
- **Partner with Tennessee Bureau of Investigation to report pills collected at drop boxes and take-back events**
- **Partner with Drug Enforcement Agency to support and promote National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day**

Source: BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee

1. Count their pills once every two weeks to prevent theft and help ensure meds are taken properly. (**Count It!**)

2. Lock meds and/or store them in secure places. (**Lock It!**)

3. Drop off unused or expired meds at drop boxes located in pharmacies, law enforcement venues or at take-back events. (**Drop It!**)

In addition there was a partnership with Tennessee newspapers to announce the effort as well as events to raise awareness.

As you can see from the chart below, the campaign is working.

For example, the program has expanded to 59 counties from the baseline of 32, although the one-year goal was 44.

The 1-year goal for the amount of medicine collected at CLD drop boxes was set at 1,000 pounds. The one-year result was more than 34,000 pounds collected. ■

CLD

Three-Year Goal: Expand program to 44 "hot spot" communities
Baseline: 32 CLD communities
1 Year-Results: 59 CLD communities

Three-Year Goal: Locate permanent drop boxes in all 95 counties
Baseline: 86 counties with drop boxes
1-Year Results: 95 counties with drop boxes

Three-Year Goal: Establish partnership to streamline reporting
o pills collected at drop boxes and take-back events
Baseline: Reporting was inconsistent
1-Year Results: Information reported by 92 of the 95 counties; poundage reported almost doubled from baseline numbers

Three-Year Goal: Support and promote National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day
Baseline: No events were planned in Nashville, the state's largest city
1-Year Results: Eight take-back events in Nashville; media materials shared with CLD communities for local outreach

Public Education

1-Year Goal: Collect 300 pounds of medications at CLD-sponsored take-back events
Baseline: 781.86 pounds collected; one event held in spring 2016
1-Year Results: 27,645.42 pounds collected; data based on two events

1-Year Goal: Collect 1,000 pounds of medications at CLD drop boxes
Baseline: 27,377.14 pounds collected
Results: 34,268.98 pounds collected

1-Year Goal: Increase awareness of CLD
Baseline: 10% (2016 survey) | **1-Year Results:** 21% (2017 survey)

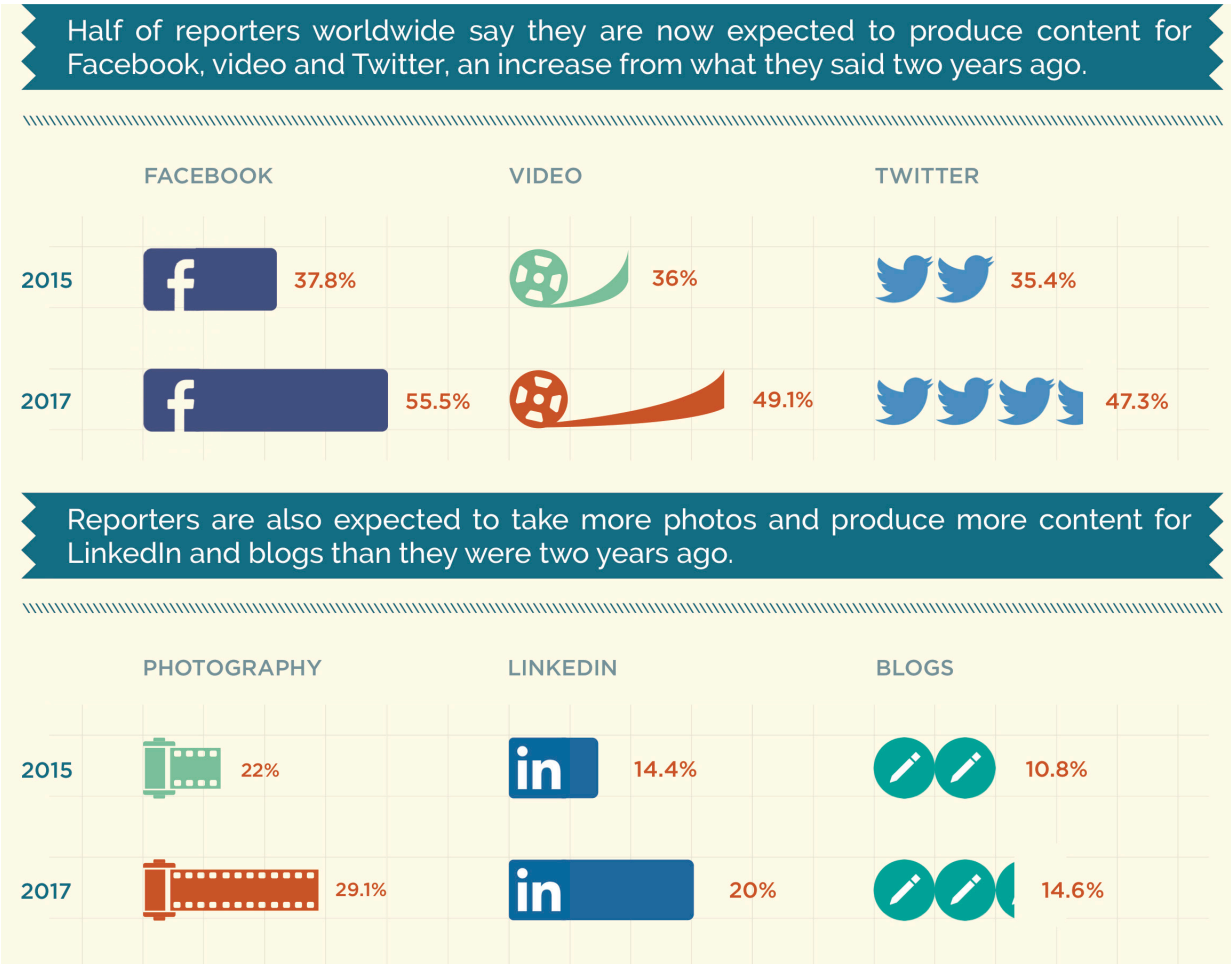
1-Year Goal: Increase the number of people who count their prescription medication
Baseline: 33% (2016 survey) | **1-Year Results:** No change (2017 survey)

1-Year Goal: Increase awareness that prescription medication should be safely discarded at take-back events and drop boxes
Baseline: 63% (2016 survey) | **1-Year Results:** 72% (2017 survey

1-Year Goal: Increase the number of people who take unused opioids to a drop box
Baseline: 30% (2016 survey) | **1-Year Results:** 43% (2017 survey)

Clark Kent or Superman? More Journalists Being Asked to Provide Social Content and Visuals

"Do more with less" is a refrain heard often in PR enclaves. It's the same for journalists, where more than half (55.5%) of 110 scribes in a new global survey say their jobs now include creating content for **Facebook**. **PRGN** and **Buchanan PR** sponsored the survey. While the upper panel seems to show the most striking numerical increases in workload, the lower panel illustrates the emphasis on visual storytelling. Savvy PR pros will make visuals easily available to journalists. ■



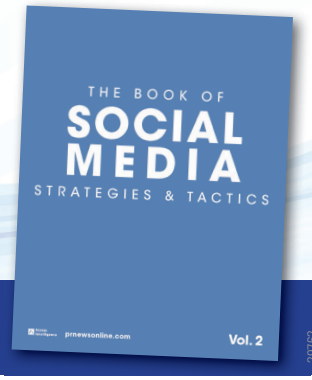
Sources: PRGN and Buchanan PR

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDEBOOK

In PR News' Social Media Guidebook, the challenges of planning, executing and measuring successful social media campaigns are met with eight chapters on everything from Snapchat to live streaming to blogging.

Chapters include:

- Measuring and Communicating Social Success
- Facebook
- Snapchat
- Live Streaming



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Social's Influence Varies by Industry, Demographic

Many communicators assume social media and influencers are influential to some degree on peoples' decisions. The more important questions: How influential are they? Which demographic groups are influenced most? And do people value the advice of influencers and what they see on social media equally across the board? In other words are there particular sectors where social media content and influencers' advice carries the most weight?

A report released today from the **Institute of PR** (IPR) attempts to answer some of those questions. Its authors, Dr. Tina McCorkindale, IPR's president/CEO, and Dr. Marcia DiStasio, an associate professor at **University of Florida**, surveyed nearly 2,000 people, to draw its conclusions, the summary of which are summarized in the infographic.

In short, the report found social media influences people, although there are differences among age groups, as might be expected. Nearly half (40%) of respondents across generational categories said social media influenced their decision-making related to travel, for example. Concerning other industries, perhaps those that arguably could be called more serious than travel, social media was still influential, but to a lesser degree. The study looked at social influence in travel, financial services, retail and healthcare. 25% said social was influential in financial services, 22% in retail and 21% in healthcare.

All social posts are not created equal, though. Across all generations, social media posts from close friends and family were the most influential, but the degree of influence depended again on the industry.

Consistently across most industries and generations, word-of-mouth took the top spot as the most influential channel. Advertisements and commercials, traditional and social, were typically the least influential.

Does the fact that an influencer has many followers make a difference when people are assessing that influencer's advice? Only in the travel industry, the report says (see chart, below). ■

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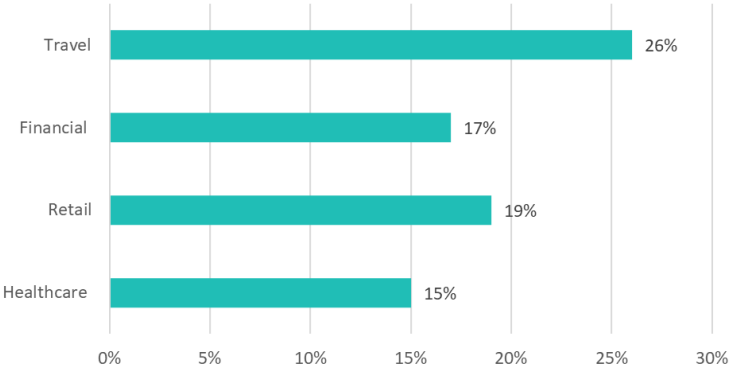
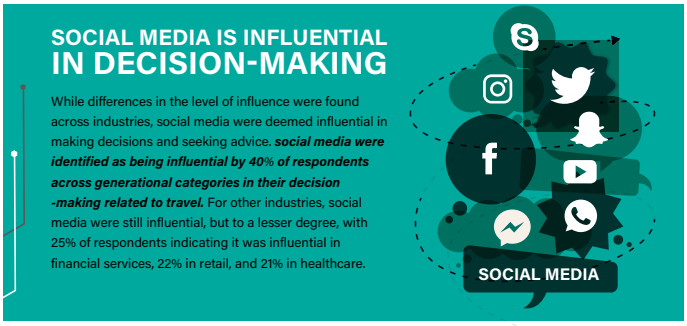
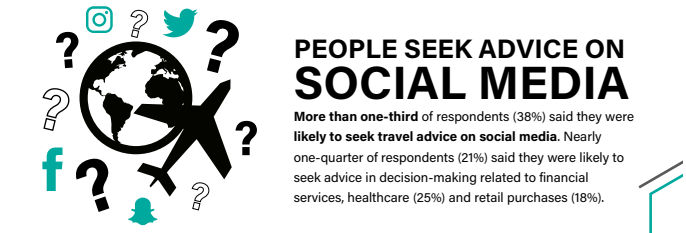
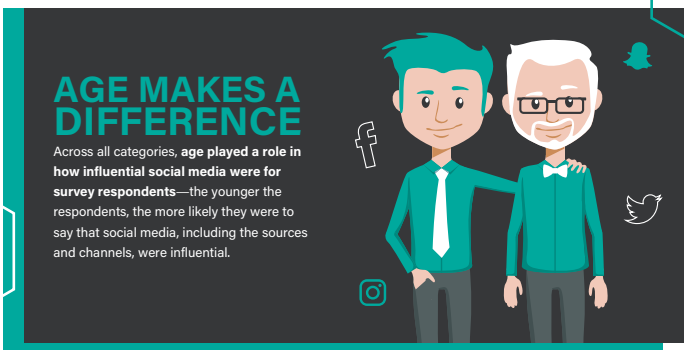
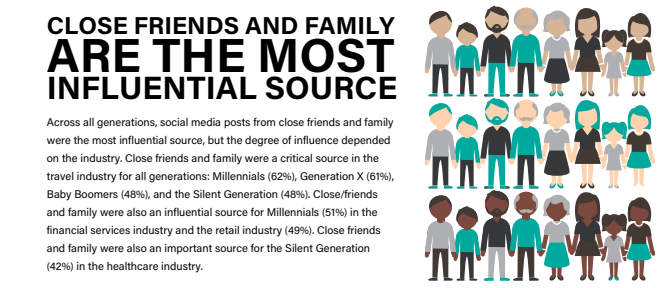
INFLUENCE ON HIGH NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS

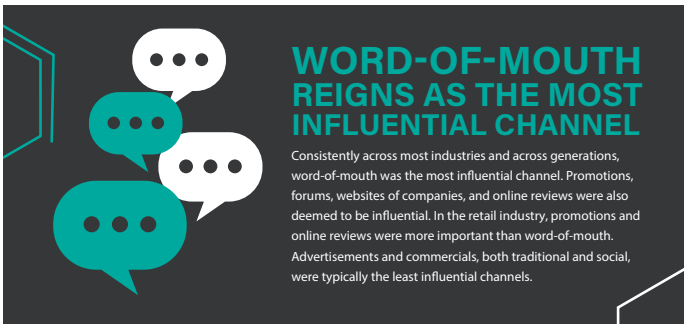


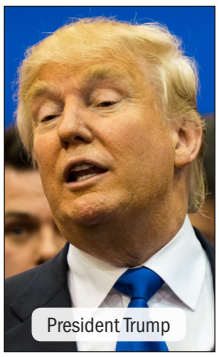








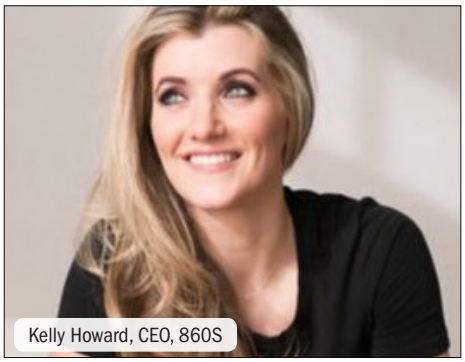



President Trump

1. Speaking Frankly, Franken and Franks: As we wrote last week, since many organizations failed for years to enforce sexual harassment regulations against superstars, they created the conditions for sexual misconduct to flourish. As a result, it's hardly a surprise the #metoo wave continues. This is not to say ordinary citizens aren't sexual harassers, they certainly are, but they're unlikely to be #metoo targets. The good news is that since our last edition, political institutions, which seemed to be ignoring #metoo developments, began to take sexual harassment regulations seriously. The House and Senate Ethics panels, for example, awoke from their slumber and started to make noise about investigating politicians' alleged sexual misconduct. Partly as a result, Democrats **Rep. John Conyers** and **Sen. Al Franken** and Republican **Rep. Trent Franks** were convinced to step down. Where federal politics still seems to be failing to take sexual harassment allegations seriously is in the race for an Alabama senate seat. **President Donald Trump**, who'd danced around supporting candidate **Judge Roy Moore**, endorsed him Dec. 4. The **Republican National Committee** (RNC), which also had kept Moore at arm's length, joined the president later that day, pledging to fund Moore's candidacy. Still, some Republicans felt allegations against Moore warrant closer scrutiny. Dec. 10 Alabama's senior senator, **Richard Shelby**, told **CNN**'s *State of the Union* he'd voted for a Republican write-in candidate, not Moore. Alabama "deserves better," Shelby said. The next day, RNC executive **Joyce Simmons** of Nebraska resigned in protest over the Moore endorsement. Will #metoo infiltrate the White House?

2. Mario Karted: One of the few positives in the #metoo events is that at least the latest apology was good. *Eater* reported Dec. 11 celebrity chef **Mario Batali** will step away from the day-to-day of his restaurants "for an unspecified period" in the wake of #metoo allegations from four women. The quartet say his inappropriate conduct spanned 20 years. Batali wrote in part: "I apologize to the people I have mistreated and hurt…much of the behavior described does, in fact, match up with ways I have acted. That behavior was wrong and there are no excuses. I take full responsibility and am deeply sorry for any pain, humiliation or discomfort I have caused to my peers, employees, customers, friends and family." Nicely done, chef. **ABC**, which carries *The Chew*, a daily show Batali co-hosts, said it's investigating allegations and has asked the chef to take a leave of absence. Now it's up to **Batali & Bastianich**, which manages the chef's empire of 24 restaurants, to investigate and if necessary, mete out discipline to Batali, one of its owners. Ditto ABC.

3. Growth: Weber Shandwick acquired **Resolute Digital**, a digital marketing and tech company, and **Bomoda**, a data science and business intelligence firm with a speciality in China. – **EightSixtySouth** of LA officially debuted. Specializing in fashion, beauty and lifestyle, its CEO is **Kelly Howard**.


Kelly Howard, CEO, 860S

4. News Bits: New England Patriots' star quarterback **Tom Brady** proved again he knows how to defuse a situation almost as well as a savvy PR pro. Footage of him tongue lashing and pushing offensive coordinator **Josh McDaniels** on the sidelines Dec. 3 made sports headlines. While PR pros might have recommended he address the situation sooner, Brady began a press conference Dec. 9 saying, "I want to apologize to Josh for last week in Buffalo. I know our coaches work really hard. They're responsible for putting us in a great position to succeed, so I just want to get that off my chest." Brady was similarly direct in handling an out-of-wedlock child he and former flame **Bridget Moynahan** had in 2007. While controversy brewed, the quarterback, who was dating supermodel/now wife **Gisele Bündchen** at the time, said little before leaving summer training camp briefly to be close when Moynahan delivered. After Brady returned to camp he acknowledged the baby. Controversy pretty much defused.

5. FakeNews: We've told you about Germany's efforts to combat fake news by making it illegal. Now Ireland is trying, too. Irish lawmakers penned a bill aimed at bots spreading fake news and influencing political debate. The bill is similar to a bipartisan proposal introduced in the U.S. Senate earlier this year in reaction to reports Russia influenced the 2016 presidential election through fakenews ads on **Facebook**. Ireland's bill makes such actions a crime, **Poynter** reports. The U.S. version aims to force companies to adhere to tougher rules on political advertising.

6. People: Brownstein Group vet **Sean Carney** was named content director. – **FleishmanHillard** elevated **Sophie Scott** to global managing director, technology. Previously Scott was a senior partner and MD of technology and strategy for the U.K. and Europe, Middle East and Africa. ■

Sophie Scott, Global MD, Tech, FleishmanHillard

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