

PR News

Building the bridge between PR and the bottom line.

Measurement Matrix: Matching Business & PR Goals With Metrics

Setting Measurable Goals	Five-step process to define your measurement program: 1. Define organizational goals. 2. Define audiences of importance to reaching those goals, and prioritize. 3. Set very specific PR objectives for priority audiences that are measurable. 4. Determine how you will measure each, with what tools, and benchmark <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Define output, outtake and outcome measures appropriate to your goals Determine who/what to measure against (objectives, time or competitors) Most important, determine how you will link these measures together! 5. Measure continuously, and adjust accordingly			
Business Goal or Objective	PR Objectives	Outputs to Measure	Outgrowths to Measure	Comparing to Outcomes
Sales of Products and Services	Increase awareness Increase preference Stimulate trial Increase media recommendations Increase purchase intent	Media analysis on quantity, quality and reach of coverage in traditional and social media; attendance at special events; numbers of speeches given. Consider using efficiency metrics like cost-per-impression, cost-per-message, cost-per-speech, etc.	Surveys before and after program to help establish link between outputs and awareness, preference or intent; consider omnibus or Internet surveys if cost is too high; track responses to messages through sales departments, call center 800 numbers or URL Web site click-throughs.	Benchmark and graph numbers of leads, prospects or customers before, during and after campaign. Get paid-media schedule and plot along with non-paid media efforts on a calendar spreadsheet, and overlay with sales data (offsetting for sales cycle) and look for correlations. You should see more spiking from non-paid media versus paid-media efforts. <i>Or</i> consider correlating media efforts with sales goals through share of discussion competitive analysis. In social media, look for conversions and online orders, or to increased Web site activity and queries.

Business Goal or Objective	PR Objectives	Outputs to Measure	Outgrowths to Measure	Comparing to Outcomes
Increased Market Share	<p>Increase Share of Discussion</p> <p>Increase share of message</p> <p>Increase share of positive coverage</p> <p>Increase share of journalist recommendations</p> <p>Increase share of quotes</p>	<p>As above, but focus mainly on competitive media analysis on share of overall coverage, key message, positive and negative, media recommendations, key spokesperson quotes. Also track numbers of customers at the beginning and end of the campaign.</p>	<p>As above. Surveys will help establish the link between your output measures and whether or not the audience is moving toward behavioral objectives. In social media, look for increased positive activity including numbers of fans, tweets and retweets, recommendations and click-throughs.</p>	<p>As above. Obtain market share data from marketing or sales; plot on graph and overlay your share measures against it. Use Pearson Product Moment Coefficient correlations to see if your share of discussion correlates with market share. Run social media results and survey scores against market share, too, for correlations.</p>
Enhanced Brand Equity	<p>Reinforce brand characteristics</p> <p>Increase perception of value</p>	<p>Media analysis focused on messages of value and brand character; competitive analysis if possible.</p>	<p>Unaided awareness survey before and after campaign to see if audience can play back your messages. Social media comments should reflect key messaging of value and brand character.</p>	<p>As above, plot and correlate efforts against sales. Consider getting average revenues per sale, and see if they have increased.</p>
Enhanced Reputation	<p>Increase alignment between desired reputation and audience perceptions</p> <p>Improve strength of all relationships - and prioritize.</p>	<p>Media analysis focused on messages of importance to each stakeholder audience; positive/negative letters, e-mails and social media messages received.</p>	<p>Do focus groups or surveys using Dr. James Grunig's method, "Guidelines for Measuring Relationships in Public Relations," at www.instituteforpr.com. Survey measures Control Mutuality, Satisfaction, Trust, Commitment, Exchange Relationship, Communal Relationship.</p>	<p>Compare media outreach results with survey scores before and after campaign to ascertain change.</p>

Business Goal or Objective	PR Objectives	Outputs to Measure	Outgrowths to Measure	Comparing to Outcomes
<p>Mitigate Crisis; Optimize Stock Price</p>	<p>Reduce negative impact of crisis on perceptions of the firm</p>	<p>Real-time traditional and social media analysis focusing on message and tonality. Do media audit on published pieces created for the crisis. Clear messages?</p>	<p>Omnibus studies, overnight polls and media content analysis to determine attitudes, perceptions.</p>	<p>Plot media measures, tours, public meetings, etc. on chart with sales, stock price, and positive/negative index for social media. Of course, benchmark these at the beginning of the crisis.</p>
<p>Increase Profitability</p>	<p>Reduction in turnover and better customer service</p> <p>Decreasing cost per sale</p> <p>Decreasing cost of communications</p>	<p>Cost-per-sale decreases with employee stability. So do a media audit of materials used to communicate specific PR objectives before initiating new campaign. Measure external PR outreach efforts in the ways mentioned above.</p>	<p>For internal audiences, run survey on attitudes via Survey Monkey or other free tool before and after an employee outreach campaign. Or monitor your internal wiki or blog to see if chatter changes in tone. For external audiences, hop onto marketing department surveys with PR-specific questions to obtain metrics on attitudes, preference or intention to buy.</p>	<p>Plot outtake measures against benchmarks such as turnover rate, customer service ratings, average cost-per-sale; last year's cost of communications, etc. (data is available in marketing, sales and finance departments). Use survey or social media information to verify receipt of messages. Find out costs of hiring/training a new employee, or cost of acquiring a new customer in your industry, and translate to how much money the campaign may have saved the company.</p>

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Tip Sheet: Five Steps to Aligning Strategy With Social Media

With its fast-paced evolution, social media continues to fascinate and frustrate PR professionals as they figure out the nuances and opportunities each network presents. Working in the technology industry, we're often exposed to new concepts and innovation that challenge the communications function to translate them for their intended audience—a process that benefits from a framework to manage strategic planning. The following five-step plan offers just such a framework for engagement with social media.

1. Prioritize research. Plenty of organizations pay lip service to research, but it is often the first activity to be cut from a budget or timeline. Organizations that have failed to analyze and understand their target audience often have made infamous blunders. For social media engagement to work, it requires a firm understanding of the audience that uses them.

Researching social media should tell you who within your target audience is using which networks for what purposes, and the sentiment they currently hold toward your brand. Once you have a firm command of the audience, you're ready to make informed decisions on how best to align your strategy for social media.

2. Align social media planning to strategy. Many senior practitioners are mistakenly viewing social media as a strategy in and of itself or referring to execution efforts as “social media strategies,” confusing marketing teams, senior management and junior PR people alike. You would not likely develop a broadcast-media strategy or a trade-media strategy, but many work diligently (and hopefully) on social media strategies. The fact is that strategy comes first. A strategy doesn't change simply because we roll it out on social networks.

Organizations adopt any of a variety of strategies to be perceived as innovative. Perhaps yours seeks to create a brand-new category for a product or aspires to differentiate its brand. Whatever the strategy may be, it needs to be the guiding principle that defines how your team selects and executes the tactical elements of your communications program.

3. Execute against individuals. Unfortunately, it is during execution that the social media efforts of many organizations fail. In my experience, the most common reason for this is they neglect to provide their social media contacts the thoughtfulness and personalization that they devote to business relationships in other environments. Organizations too often treat the online

community as a billboard, rather than as a sounding board or discussion forum.

We cannot view social networks as a mass medium—that suggests ignorance of their purpose. We must view them as a niche venue to reach targeted individuals (emphasis on individual) by customizing our message to gain their embrace of our brand.

Hence, a brand differentiation strategy executed over social media may seek to affect influencers first, achieving success by initially winning over a small, but select, group of individuals who have the respect and ear of the larger community.

4. Evaluate...and measure. As with traditional media, we can use digital channels to express a point of view, offer industry expertise and/or provide news. Social media diverges from earlier channels, however, after the point of initial expression. The relationship between a business and its “followers” does not remain static; we must continually refresh the conversation and—above all—listen to and evaluate the responses of those with whom we engage to advance the dialogue.

In this way, the cycle of quantitative and qualitative measurement in social media is not periodic; it's perpetual and most valuable if done in real time and used to refine messages and other expressions. Likewise, social media results need to be collected in a manner than can be used to evaluate your relative success.

For instance, if your strategy is to differentiate your brand by activating advocacy within influential third parties, focusing your attention on your number of Twitter followers may not be as good a performance indicator as “influenced reach,” a selective measure of how individuals respond, in words or actions, to messages you've introduced to a select group of online influencers.

5. Repeat. Following this process and repeating it as necessary will allow you to evaluate, implement and examine the effectiveness of a PR strategy. Social media isn't for everyone; but with a little diligence, this process should provide you the tools to develop an informed approach to social platforms, and to realize the potential they hold. PRN

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7 Simple Ways to Track How Well-Liked Your Brand Is on Facebook

By Dave Kerpen, Likeable Media

Everybody wants to be liked. And in today's world, savvy public relations executives and marketers are leveraging and integrating social media in everything they do. But how can you track the progress of your work, and determine how well your brand stacks up? At Likeable, we're working on answering complex social media ROI questions and a Likeable Index to measure it all. In the meantime, here are seven simple ways to track how well-liked your brand is on Facebook:

1) "Likes" on Your Page vs. Your Competitors

Likes are the most obvious way to track how well-liked your brand is. You can track this manually on Facebook, of course, but AllFacebook.com's page stats also features graphs and allows you to track your page's likes against two competitors. Check out this example of 1-800-Flowers.com vs. Proflowers vs. Teleflora.

2) "People talking about this" Metric

You might have lots of likes on your Facebook page, but if those people are totally passive, how meaningful is that? Facebook's new "People talking about this" metric, located directly underneath the "like" count on your Page, tracks how many people have interacted with your page in the last 24 hours. It's the best metric of how well-liked you are in real time.

3) Engagement Rates on Your Page

Facebook Insights allows you to look at how well-liked each and every post of yours has been, along with comments each post has generated, giving you effective engagement rates that you can measure on a weekly or monthly basis. There's a lot more you can learn from Facebook Insights, an evolving product for Facebook marketers.

4) Click-Through Rates (CTR)

Engagement rates tell you how active your fans are within the Facebook environment, but you probably also want to track how often they're coming to your Web site from Facebook. Use bit.ly or another link shortener or tracker each time you share a link

with your fans, so that you can compare click-through rates and total traffic over time.

5) Basic Sentiment Analysis

Facebook Insights doesn't yet offer sentiment analysis, but Radian6, Vocus and other companies do. This way, you can track not only how many people are talking about you and your competitors, but how much of the conversation is positive, negative or neutral.

6) Shares

Not only can your Facebook posts be liked or commented on, they can be shared. Sharing allows your posts to travel outside of your fan base to the greater 800 million-plus Facebook ecosystem. So tracking your post shares over time can be a really effective way to see how well-liked your content really is.

7) Contest Entries or Votes

Many brands use contests, sweepstakes or other promotions to engage their fans on a regular basis. One example is Ritani's Real Moments Campaign. If you host an ongoing weekly or monthly promotion, tracking the number of entries you receive over time is an excellent way to see how deeply engaged your fan base is.

While it's great to have a fan page on Facebook, using these seven metrics can allow you to easily track exactly where you stand versus your competitors on the leading social network, as well as how well-liked you are now versus the past. Now, the challenge remains: How do you go from being well-liked to most profitable?

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[Disclosure: 1-800-Flowers.com and Ritani are clients of the author's company.]

Prepping for a Phone Interview: A Step-by-Step Action Plan

By Karyn Martin

So you've landed a press interview. Now what? First, it's important to consider how the interview is taking place: in person, via e-mail or over the phone. Since both executives and reporters tend to be overscheduled, the phone interview is the most common type of interview. This article will give you step-by-step instructions on how to prepare for a phone interview.

If you are doing your own PR, you'll want to follow this guide closely. If you are working with an agency, this guide will help you set expectations with your agency representative, since they should be guiding you through this process.

Immediately

Try to find out specifics on what the reporter is writing about. Do they have a direction already? Or, is there opportunity for you to help shape the story?

One Week In Advance

Consider the position of your interviewer—remember that reporters have an agenda that most likely won't align with your goals for the interview. Not all of them are looking to expose your dirty laundry, or will come into the interview with preconceived notions of you or your company, but most will have done their homework. This is why it's critical for you to do yours.

First, learn about the person. Find them on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and subscribe to their feeds. Do they have a personal blog? Subscribe to this as well. Spend the week before the interview getting to know their online personality. This will give you insight on how to relate to them on a personal level during the interview. If you are working with a PR agency, ask for personal insight on the reporter.

Next, understand the writer. Research their recent, relevant articles and read them thoroughly. Gain a feel for the reporter's style. Identify their beat. Do they focus on company or product profiles? Or, is it more about telling the larger trend or market story?

Then, understand the media outlet. If you are being interviewed by a staff writer, grab a few copies of the publication's most recent issues and visit its online site. Dive into the content. Identify the publication's mission. How does the publication and its writing staff differentiate themselves from competing publications? Understand the publication's audience; these are the readers that your interviewer will be writing for. Why are they reading the publication? What information are they looking for? Do they value compelling, qualitative stories or is it all about the numbers?

Five Days Before

Hopefully you've already worked with your PR team to define your core messages, but if you haven't, then it is critical to do so in advance of your interview. Identify and focus on conveying three key messages during the interview. If you use any more than three, the message can get muddled or simply be too much

Rules of Thumb to Follow When Talking to the Media

1. **Nothing is off the record.** While most reporters will strike something if you ask after the fact, this is not always the case. Don't say it if you don't want to see it in print. If you are uncomfortable answering a specific question, or are unsure of the answer, explain that your company does not disclose that type of information, or offer to confirm an answer and provide the details in a follow-up e-mail or call.
2. **Speak slowly, in short, concise sentences**—a reporter is looking to capture short quotes, clips, or sound bites from what you say. Be prepared to hear typing as you talk.
3. **Pause occasionally** to ensure the reporter is following the more complex or technical points. Use analogies to help explain, if needed.
4. **Avoid negative statements.** Turn the thought into a positive observation, trend, concept, etc. However, don't be afraid to disagree with a comment.
5. **Answer the question.** Directly address the reporter's question and then elaborate on the how and why. Don't begin an answer with the background and work your way up to a larger point—give the reporter the sound bite up front in case they have to cut the interview short.
6. **No, you can't approve the story.** Typically this is the case—so don't ask.

—Karyn Martin

for the reporter to absorb. Your messages should speak to your company's or product's benefits, differentiators and successes. Think strategically with a focus on the core business message.

You should be able to deliver the core messages within 20 seconds or less. This isn't about giving your elevator pitch; rather, this is your opportunity to share your core value statement. Your

messages, like your responses to the reporter's questions, should be concise and clear. Look for natural ways to verbalize these messages at the beginning of the interview, and restate them at the end. Remember to develop a few engaging and colorful statements that will work well as sound bites.

With your core messaging complete, further customize your main points based on your new understanding of exactly who this reporter is, how they write and for whom they write. The points you emphasize for a technology reporter are going to be a bit different than the ones you highlight for a finance reporter.

After you make your main points, then elaborate on the details. Prepare examples and analogies to supplement your key points. This helps illustrate your broader messages in more relatable way for both the reporter and their readers. If there is something you don't want to talk about, that's OK, but be prepared to be asked about it and have an intelligent response. The "no comment" response is best avoided.

Be prepared to educate. You may be interviewed by a reporter who is new to the publication or beat. The more technical the conversation content, the more important it is to gauge the reporter's understanding of the topic at the onset.

Have third-party sources ready. If you are lucky enough to get a feature article, great. However, most likely the story isn't all about you. Reporters are looking for outside validation or perspectives. Be prepared to offer a few reliable sources to further validate your story.

If possible, plan on offering to send the reporter supplementary materials following the interview, such as images, graphics,

case studies, white papers, etc., to further support the story you shared.

Two Days Before

Practice. Engage with someone to play the role of reporter and ask for feedback on your diction as well as your pace. Understand your verbal ticks or habits. Minimize the "ums" and "likes" during your answers. Don't memorize responses—rely on your sound bites. Finally, be yourself. Reporters do multiple interviews each day and they always welcome a conversation with someone who is being genuine. And they can tell the difference.

The Day Before

Confirm the interview logistics with the reporter. How long do they anticipate spending on the call? Are they working with a hard deadline?

15 Minutes Before

Close your door. Clear your mind. Drink a little water. Mentally set the stage for your conversation.

Follow this guide, and you'll be able to effectively communicate your core messages to the reporter, in a way that is most beneficial to their reader. At the same time, you will ensure quality press coverage.

Karyn Martin is director of public relations at 451 Marketing. She has more than 10 years of experience running integrated PR campaigns for national b2c and b2b companies across the U.S.

Quality of Internal Culture, Room for Growth Keys to Retaining Top Talent

By Kimling Lam, Meltwater Group

It might be the recruiter's job to vet hundreds of applications to find the best employees, but you, as a public relations professional, have to help maintain employee satisfaction once they've entered the company workforce.

This may be easier said than done (and, believe me, it is), but with the right branding and communication strategies, your best employees will never want to leave.

MESSAGES TO CONVEY

Employees value a great brand just as much, if not more, than consumers. Employees should feel proud and excited to work at their respective companies. In efforts to encourage that excitement and drive employee retention, here are few strategies to consider:

Play up your company culture. Company culture is more than just a poster hanging in the office break room. It's an energy—a sense of enjoyment that comes from people loving what they're doing, and a sense of urgency, where everyone is working together intently to achieve a larger goal. By accentuating your company culture, employees will feel a sense of pride and loyalty to the brand. It will inspire them to contribute to the company and align their work, which will lead to greater efficiency and will ultimately affirm their sense of purpose within the organization.

Encourage growth. Top talent will not begin, let alone stay, at a company that does not encourage growth. Employees should feel that the sky is the limit within the company and that their growth is not hindered by walls or glass ceilings. It is important to set the stage by creating deliberate opportunities for learning and career growth. Highlight programs that will show employees just how much you care about their professional development, and what lengths you are willing to go to aid them.

If you love something, set it free. Most people are multifaceted and don't know exactly what they want to do, so letting employees know that they're not confined to their hired role is key. Encouraging employees to think beyond their current position can help develop leadership skills and drive innovation, two factors that will keep them excited about work.

Encourage an entrepreneurial spirit. Just as companies thrive to be trailblazers, so should its employees. Encourage fast-paced, positive competition that will keep your workforce wanting more. Help them understand that your company desires all employees to have fire and passion for what they do.

COMMUNICATION METHODS

So, now that you have an idea of what you want to communicate to encourage employee retention, all you have to do is figure

out the best way to go about relaying the message. Employee memos stuffed into mailboxes and blanket e-mails are a thing of the past. People need interesting, interactive outlets to catch their eye and help them retain important information. Here are a few suggested methods, both digital and traditional, for reaching your employees:

► Start an employee blog. Start a blog that is only visible to company employees. If you already have an employee blog, make sure employees are reading and engaging with it. Share company news, information, ideas, big wins (make sure you emphasize celebrating those wins), best practices, social events, etc. Encourage employees to use the platform to express ideas and opinions. Highlight intra-company competitions and winners.

► Invest in a "Facebook for Business" program. People love using Facebook to feel connected within their communities. Why not have similar programs in the office for employees to connect and share with one another? Communicating with employees through engaging channels, like social media sites, could help them retain important information and feel connected with each other and the company. A good connection could help employees plant deep, long-lasting roots in the company.

► YouTube—good for more than a few laughs. Video-sharing sites can be beneficial for employee communications. A good practice would be to slot one executive a week for a short video discussing company plans, offering advice and sharing insight.

Post the video and share with employees via e-mail and additional social outlets. This will allow for employees to connect with company leaders on a mentorship level, rather than just on a leadership level. Also, highlight featured employees on a regular basis, from entry-level employees all the way up the management chain.

► Find ways to keep it short and sweet. Microblogging programs are great for brevity and quick snippets of information. Send a quick shout-out to an employee for a big win, or send reminders of professional development sessions. Small bits of information are easy to digest and can be an effective communication method when brevity is the best fit for the conversation.

► Don't forget the face time. Be sure to make an effort to get some face time with employees every once in a while. Also, make sure employees are connecting with one another outside of social channels. Host a monthly internal meeting or plan a company-sponsored cocktail hour. Whatever form the gathering may take, make sure that it occurs at least on a monthly basis.

IT'S THE CULTURE

A company can only go as far as the workforce that drives it, so it is vital to retain the best people. To preserve leaders, you need to sustain a vibrant core culture and give them ample opportunity to grow.

4 Media Relations Tips That Transcend Platforms

By Scott Van Camp, PR News

There's no doubt about it, today's journalists are challenged more than ever before. Reduced media budgets have increased their responsibilities while the rise of digital and social media has them posting to websites, blogging and tweeting on a regular basis.

What does this mean for the communications professional? They need to be more sensitive to journalists' needs. There are, however, some tried-and-true media relations tactics that transcend all media platforms. Here are four that PR News collected from the experts.

Give Reporters a Human Touch: Pitch journalists with stories that have a human element. Even within a product pitch, that humanity will likely touch reporters. "Rather than quoting a senior executive about a product, find customers who will talk about its benefits to them," says Tom Unger, VP and regional communications manager at Wells Fargo.

Share Your Research With Reporters: Keep on-hand statistics, facts, names, phone numbers, historical data, community

resources and any other information you can compile that's relevant to your business or client, and share it willingly to help the reporter out. "They'll turn to you again and again for expertise and insight," says Elaine Shapiro Zamansky, media relations manager at the Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority.

Provide Journalists With Fact Sheets: Scott Harris, public affairs specialist for military and international programs at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, says to prevent misquotes giving reporters fact sheets before an interview—particularly with technical stories that quote scientists and academics. "The general public wouldn't even spot the inaccuracy, but the scientist doesn't want his peers to think he doesn't know what he's talking about," Harris says. In addition, offer to fact check the story.

Seek Out Citizen Journalist Platforms: In this day and age of social media, top industry influencers can be easily found. Communicators should seek out these citizen journalists and foster relationships with them. "PR professionals should provide them with content with links and access to additional information," says Cheryl Ann Lambert, assistant public relations professor at Boston University's College of Communication.