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MEASUREMENT

Ahead for Measurement: Data Manipulation, AI, Measuring PR's Ability to Grow the Business

For years, PR measurement suffered as the forgotten stepchild of communications. Measurement, and math, was something that people thought they'd avoided when choosing communications as a career path.

The tide appears to be turning, albeit slowly, some would argue. In a digital world, where nearly every platform or device spews data, communicators have plenty to measure, and they seem more receptive to doing so. Collecting data and using it to prove communications' value is just the first step.

More important is deriving insights from data, with the goal of improving how communicators are doing their jobs. Fortunately, the practice of using communications data to derive insights also is forging ahead, as the PRNEWS-Pub-

licRelay survey showed late last year [See PRNEWS, Nov. 2018, and the accompanying chart at left]. As **Eric Koefoot**, president/CEO of PublicRelay, a media monitoring and analytics firm, said at that time, "We're seeing an upsurge in the marketplace for insight from data."

Those trends should help make PRNEWS' Measurement Conference later this month in Washington, D.C., a bit more upbeat. For our monthly roundtable feature we've asked several speakers who are scheduled to appear at the conference two questions: "Do you find the C-suite is interested in different metrics and definitions of success than previously? If so, why and what are they?" and "What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?"

Their edited responses are below.

Is/Are your CEO and/or executives asking for more data-driven analysis around PR measurement?

Yes - I must defend decisions using data 44.54%

Not yet - but I am preparing now 38.38%

No - I have not changed our reporting 17.09%



Katie Paine
Founder, Paine Publishing

Do you find the C-suite is interested in different metrics and definitions of success than previously? If so, why and what are they?

Paine: Yes. What I'm hearing is that impressions are suspect, vanity metrics are over and now there's a demand for demonstrated impact—whether on the bottom line, on perceptions or preference, on the budget (in terms of greater efficiencies) or on marketing/sales in terms of qualified leads or goal conversions. These metrics sometimes take the form of

Rising Tide: 83 percent of respondents said they're bullish on data. **Source:** PRNEWS/PublicRelay (Nov. 2018, 400 respondents)

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PR Needs to Measure Business Goals

an “impact index,” which combines influence of the media outlet with quality of the article. The idea is to measure not just reach or potential reach, but to try to measure what stakeholders do *after* they’ve been reached.

What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?

Paine: It’s no longer enough to just be able to spout the mission, priorities and long-term goals of your company. You need to understand the business plan, the sales and marketing plans and how your organization makes money. PR pros need to get into the heads of CFOs and COOs and understand how PR can help the organization achieve its goals – and then measure *that*.

I think you will see far more data integration and data manipulation to test long-held beliefs. Is it still true that a mention in a headline is more memorable? Three years of correlations with goal conversions says no.

It used to be that human-coding was necessary for accurate message and theme identification, but now you can take human-coded data, analyze it and teach your automated system to be far more accurate.

Measuring the presence of photos and videos now is included in many media measurement systems, which means that those elements may become far more important than words.



Chris Kim
Director of Social Media
Hitachi Vantara

What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?

Kim: As PR programs continue to blend into marketing activities that previously resided in silos, such as content marketing and executive thought leadership, PR’s measurement activities also will expand. Measurement will move from traditional awareness to engagement and conversion KPIs. To prepare, PR pros should partner with their marketing counterparts (eg, content marketing and executive communications) to align on strategy, tactics, and an actionable set of metrics that can be attributed to PR.



Johna Burke
Global Managing Director
AMEC

Do you find the C-suite is interested in different metrics and definitions of success than previously? If so, why and what are they?

Burke: The level of interest from the C-suite depends on the accuracy and sophistication of the communications team. Teams still providing ‘counts and amounts’ will continue to have marginalized influence and value within their organization because they are not providing information that is intelligent and actionable. Those providing insights to the C-suite are in demand and find themselves resource-rich, with access to hiring and developing their future team (including data scientists, statisticians and developers).

C-suites demand far more than metrics. They’re focused on attitudinal insight and action drivers related to customer journey. Executives know there are communications metrics that influence how loyal customers will be, but they also know outcome is the ultimate metric of success. Communicators working with data across the organization are closer to being able to map, predict and guide the customer journey more accurately.

In subtle and direct ways teams showing effective message amplification across all channels and correlation to lift the brand are defining and making key contributions pivotal to organizational success.



Pauline Draper Watts
EVP/Global Lead
Measurement
Edelman Intelligence

What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?

Draper Watts: More than 2.5 quintillion bytes of data are created every day, according to research last year from **Domo**. Amazing technological advances are driving this. As communicators, we have many tools at our disposal; however, it is not enough to depend on a tool. We need to understand the tool—the data it is and is not collecting—and apply our human filters

to remain strong storytellers. Data is there to support the story. Digging into the data provides insights that aid our decisionmaking. Without that understanding, we are in danger of drawing incorrect conclusions.

We need to become good at juggling within measurement so that we balance metrics with insights, speed with understanding, breadth with depth, consistency with flexibility, the macro with the micro and simplicity with sophistication.

Added to this, it becomes even more important to demonstrate our contribution, to show the value we bring through more advanced analysis that utilizes the additional data that now is at our disposal.



Jon Chang
Product Marketing Manager
Watson Marketing
IBM Watson Customer Engagement

What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?

Chang: One major change that every PR and content profession-

al should know about is **Google's** March 2019 Core Update. It seems to impact primarily health, medical, and "Your Money or Your Life" sites. This update, however, ultimately touches every global property. Although SEO experts still are trying to fully understand the update's changes, a common observation is the impact on trustworthiness (the T in E-A-T) of a site's content and experience. One of the next steps for PR pros is to find out which publishers are most impacted, because the visibility of those sites would influence press-placement strategies. [Publications whose SEO suffered from the March Update are seen in the Search Metrics graph below. Search Metrics says many of the publications hurt in March did well from the August 2018 update.]

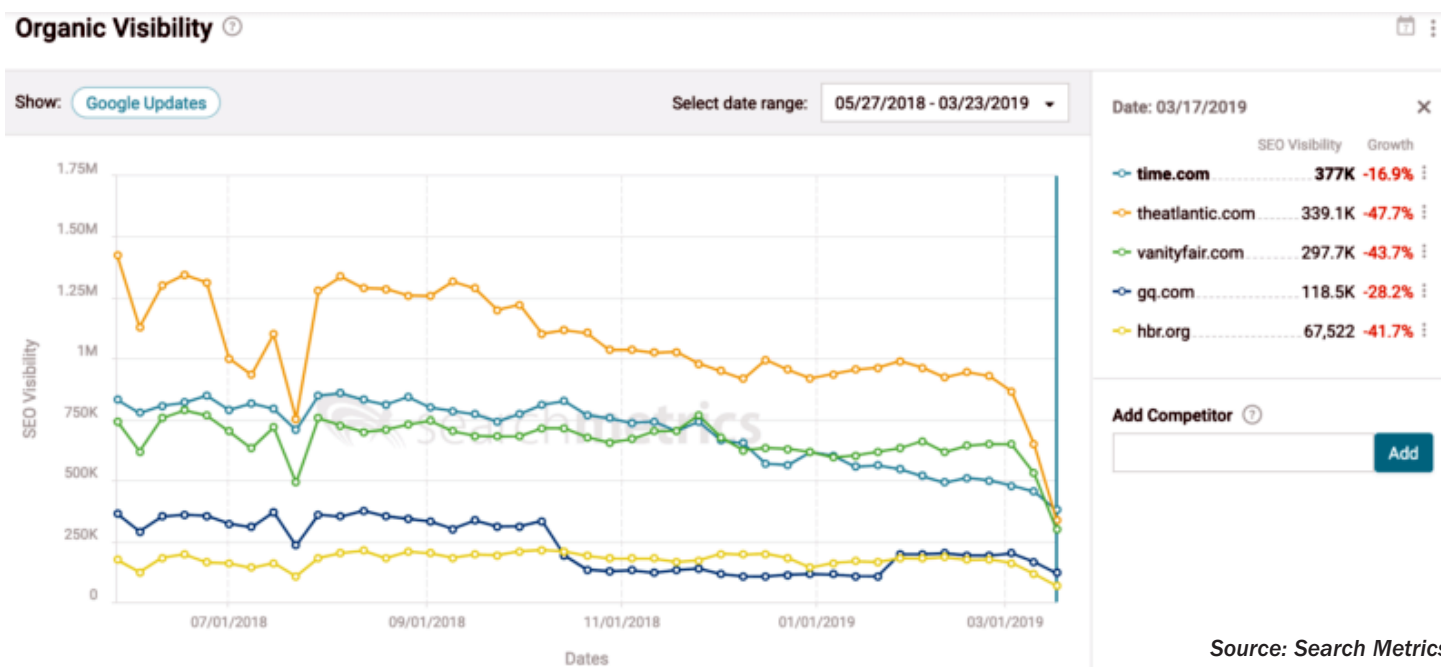


Alan Chumley
Managing Director, Analytics
W2O Group

Do you find the C-suite is interested in different metrics and definitions of success than previously? If so, why and what are they?

CCOs increasingly are looking to measurement to help them

Continued on page 4



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have a different, broader, and more strategic conversation with and contribution to their peers in the C-suite. They are integrating and aligning with the CMO and the CIO/CTO. CCOs are looking for analytics that helps them understand their audiences, what matters to them, where it matters and whether or not efforts mattered. They also are investing more in analytics, tools and people. Increasingly they are asking for more measurement sophistication in RFPs. They are looking to break down the PESO silos and seeking models that account for stakeholder journeys and associated metrics. (Awareness > Inter-Action > Attitude > Action > Advocacy).

So in addition to all the usual suspects, the sort of ever-green must haves, CCOs are looking for metrics that speak to brand health, brand attributes, reputational drivers, brand relevance, and attribution.

And generally CCOs are not subject to FOF0 (fear of finding out). And they are turning to data to diagnose and prognose. They are looking to demonstrate the value of efforts, but more importantly they are looking at measurement as an always-on fine tuning effort. Optimization more than celebration.

I'd also note that CCOs are very good about asking us what they should be asking for. Last, I notice CCOs increasingly are looking to be benchmarked against not just the usual suspects of direct competitors, but against other comparators or aspirations even in very different industry sectors.



Tina McCorkindale
President/CEO
Institute for Public Relations

What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?

McCorkindale: Moore's Law says computer processor speeds double every 10 years. If Moore's continues progressing the way it has, even though it's slowed some, then we will see drastic changes to measurement in the next five to 10 years.

With more sophisticated tools and techniques, the demand for and ease of measurement will increase. There also will be a shift to tools with machine (and smart) learning characteristics.

This will result in measurement and evaluation being a more end-to-end solution, integrated through all points of internal and stakeholder engagement, rather than being used the way they are today: to gauge the effectiveness of campaigns, which is a hindsight view, or to prove the value of PR. The widespread adoption of measurement and evaluation will then be used more predictively to inform decisionmaking.



Kara Taylor
Head, Insights & Impact Strategy Team
Capital One

What changes do you see ahead for PR measurement and what should PR pros be doing to prepare?

Over the last few years, the C-suite has shifted its view of PR. Many senior leaders now see it as a strategic lever alongside marketing, with a role beyond issues management. This has put increased scrutiny on traditional PR metrics, like potential impressions, number of placements, and competitive share of voice, which have limited ability to demonstrate impact across the audiences we care about most—something that our marketing peers, particularly within digital, can more readily report. As a result, at Capital One, we are redefining how we look at success and PR's role in creating brand relevance, driving a more efficient conversion funnel, and building relationships that directly contribute to business objectives. ■

NOTE: PRNEWS subscribers are entitled to a 33 percent discount on all PRN events, including the Measurement Conference.

Contact CBraut@accessintel.com for information.

CASE STUDY

How Arizona Used Social Sunshine to Lift Up Winter-Weary New Yorkers and Chicagoans

THE SET UP

It's the early days of April as we put this edition of PRNEWS to bed and in several parts of the U.S. snow is in the forecast. Does that get you blue? Tired even? Good. That's part of the genesis behind **Arizona Office of Tourism's** (AOT) attempt to have the state associated with warm weather, with the aim of getting more people to visit the country's sunniest state.

Yes, in the blazing hot competition known as the winter tourism market, Arizona bases its claim as the country's

sunshine capital on what it says is meteorological fact: The state averages 313 days of Sun each year. Sorry, Florida. Still, Florida officially is known as The Sunshine State, so AOT has some work to do to break through. And then there's competition from myriad warm destinations outside U.S. borders.

Previously, to raise awareness of its sunny surplus, Arizona deployed mostly traditional paid media: print advertising, television and radio, billboards. It also had a modest cam-

Continued on page 5



Cat-ching the Sun: One way the Arizona raised awareness of its state's "Sun to Share" effort was to engage in conversation on social, responding to an Instagram post of someone's cat in the snow and superimposing a warmer background. Humorous text (not shown here) also was included. Source: Nomadic, AZ Office of Tourism

paigned called "Random Acts of Sunshine," where it surprised people at work, for example, with little bits of sunshine. Arizona representatives would come to an office in Chicago or NY and give employees small gifts, like heated gloves, electric blankets or hot chocolate. It was typical guerilla marketing.

Last winter Phoenix-based PR agency **Nomadic** approached AOT and urged it to expand these in-market activations to social media. The idea was to bring random acts of sunshine to people *and* their social networks.

Nomadic's concept built on the condition known as "win-

ter fatigue," which, believe it or not, is real. Winter's shorter days result in the brain producing more melatonin, which leads to people feeling more tired than normal. And where do many people go to express themselves? Right, online.

So Nomadic's **Tim Washburn**, managing partner/executive creative director, figured that with the state's surplus of Sun, "We have sunshine to share and so sunshine to spare."

THE HURDLES

OK, but how do you bring Arizona's sunshine to social media? Nomadic proposed listening to social conversations where people, suffering from a bit of winter fatigue, were complaining about cold weather.

It also suggested searching for photos on social, including peoples' pets looking forlorn in cold weather and snow.

We'll describe later more completely how AOT and Nomadic managed to engage with these snow-bound souls and their pets. For now you need to know they did a variety of things to raise awareness of Arizona's Sun-drenched surroundings.

When they found people who'd posted pictures of their pets in snow or cold weather, Arizona quickly photoshopped the image onto a sunny background and sent it back to the pet's owner [see photos at left].

Perhaps that led the person to engage with Arizona, saying how great it was to see their dog or cat in the sunshine. In that case Arizona likely continued the conversation. Sometimes conversations carried on for a while, and then AOT reps posted that they would send the social user's lucky pooch a doggie sweater (with an Arizona logo on it, of course).

A PERSONAL TOUCH

A key to the effort was making sure AOT crafted "personal responses that would result in social conversations," said

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Communicators Say Resources, Response Time, Measurement Remain PR Crisis Pain Points

Editor's Note: Prior to PRNEWS' Crisis Summit in late February in Miami Beach, PRNEWS and partner **Crisp**, a social media issue detection and crisis monitoring firm, convened a Communications Leadership Roundtable. During the 90-minute session, 21 senior communicators exchanged views on trends, developments and best practices in PR crisis management. Major themes and discussions are summarized below. Per agreement, the participants' remarks are unattributed.

WHEN AND HOW TO REACT

Similar to results seen in the PRNEWS-Crisp crisis survey (see PRNEWS, March 2019 edition, and accompanying chart in this article), the executives provided a wide range of answers when moderators opened the session with a question about the biggest challenges in crisis management.

"Knowing when to react to something you've seen on social is the toughest" issue, one executive said. Another added, "The biggest problem for us is knowing when something is a legitimate issue or the isolated ranting of a few people with small followings."

Another communicator pointed to the need for PR to be able to separate authentic social conversations and trends from bot activity, misinformation and fake news. "It's important to listen and assess a situation before committing to taking action," one communicator said, "but it's getting more difficult with all the noise out there."

And then there's the rub: "You want to do your listening but you also can get killed if you wait too long," the same communicator added. Another noted the difficulties involved in executing a timely response when bureaucratic and legal hurdles are involved. "Sometimes it's a lot of hurry up and wait," one said.

Beyond knowing when and if to respond, striking the correct tone in the response also was cited as a major challenge.

INSIDE AND OUTSIDE LISTENING

There was lively discussion and agreement about the fact that communicators need to be constantly listening outside and within the enterprise. "There's no substitute for building relationships with HR and operations, so you can assess where potential risks are," one communicator said.

Another added that having strong relationships if and when a crisis occurs can be invaluable. "They can save you a lot of time," when you have to reach out to particular departments within the company, the communicator added.

Another communicator mentioned the difficulty of having enough human resources to respond to a crisis, and those around the table agreed. "We're stretched thin already... having us on 24/7 [during a crisis] makes it even more difficult," one participant said. Another added, "The amount of

information about your brand coming at you during a crisis is tremendous. It's like someone opened a fire hydrant. Having enough hands to monitor all that information is absolutely necessary."

There were a lot of heads nodding in agreement when one communicator made a related point about resources: "The hardest thing for us...is [finding resources to continue doing the day-to-day work of communications] while also managing a crisis."

SLIPPING THROUGH THE CRACKS

In a related discussion, another executive added that making sure normal issues don't "slip through the cracks" during a crisis is a challenge. "Having pre-arranged rotations and plans for where every member of the communications team should be during a crisis" as part of your crisis-management plan can mitigate this issue, since you can plan to have a skeleton crew handle day-to-day issues, an executive said.

When the group was asked about ways to get larger budgets for crisis management, the consensus centered on presenting case studies to the C-suite showing the financial effects of PR crises that were poorly handled. "Relating crisis to the bottom line is a very effective way to get attention to the need for budget" increases for crisis management, training and other kinds of preparation, several communicators said.

What are the 3 most difficult issues in crisis management for your brand? (Check all that apply)



In Crisis: Findings from the PRNEWS-Crisp survey of 400+ executives tracked closely with those expressed during the recent roundtable. Source: PRNEWS, Crisp, Feb. 2019

CRISIS HAND-OFF

Several communicators who work at multinational companies said they consider themselves fortunate in that they can hand off crisis work to colleagues in other time zones when the hour is late.

On the other hand, more than a few executives discussed the difficulties in maintaining a consistent message during a crisis when colleagues from other parts of the world are involved. “Sometimes it’s a cultural thing...[overseas departments] just do things differently...sometimes it’s just a translation issue,” one said.

Several PR pros also mentioned the difficulties of working on an overseas crisis due to time zone issues and delays that occur when public statements require translation. Then there’s the issue of waiting for approval, which seems compounded when “you’re waiting to hear from someone overseas,” an executive said.

THE C-SUITE AND CRISIS

Working with the C-suite during a crisis was a continuing theme in the discussion, though the consensus was that this wasn’t a major difficulty. Still, some communicators voiced complaints. “It’s sometimes hard to keep our CEO on point” during a crisis, one communicator said.

Another noted the importance of not having the CEO or other C-suite members involved in a crisis committee at the outset of a response. The presence of a senior player likely will inhibit other members of the team from speaking freely about the situation, one communicator argued.

“Bring the CEO [or other C-suite executives] in, perhaps to speak to the media, only after you’ve discussed the situation and decided how to respond,” this communicator said.

REBUILDING REPUTATION

Once a crisis is over, the job of rebuilding a brand’s reputation, the communicators agreed, is one of the most difficult. “Even more than one year” after a crisis, when some media

members write about our company, they mention the crisis in their story, one said.

“A crisis doesn’t really ever go away,” another PR pro said in agreement. Another noted this is due partly to digital technology. When a reporter uses **Google** to research a company, it’s not too difficult to find mention of a crisis if one occurred in the not-too-distant past, several of the communicators said.

Still, the key, the group agreed, is building and maintaining strong relationships with media so you can tell your brand’s story during a crisis.

Others mentioned the importance of having deep relationships with influencers and other stakeholders. “[Influencers and outside stakeholders] can help you tell your story during a crisis. It’s good to have someone from outside the company doing that,” an executive said.

UNINTENTIONAL CRISIS

A point resonated from a discussion about how brands can be dragged into a crisis unintentionally, such as when this is brought on by outside forces. But it can also come from within—one communicator noted how several senior executives expressed political views on social and those became associated with the brand. “Our brand doesn’t have a political view, but the public thinks it does,” the communicator said.

Another communicator built on that point, noting how it is admirable and probably necessary for brands to take stands on social issues. Still, this communicator said, “Sometimes I’d prefer our brand played it down the middle [on social issues],” noting how taking a stand can complicate the public’s view of the brand and can also lead to a PR crisis.

There was a brief discussion about measurement and crisis. About half the PR execs said they measure their efforts to manage crises, though many also said they’ve yet to find an effective way to place a value on success in keeping damaging stories out of the media. ■

The Participants

Jennifer Butler, VP Media & Corporate Communications, Herbalife Nutrition

Errol Cockfield, SVP, Communications, MSNBC

Amy Federman, VP, Corporate Communications, Ryder System Inc.

Rachel Gulden, VP, Walker Sands

Sallie Hoffmeister, Senior Executive, Sitrick & Company

Kaelan Hollon, VP, Communications, Motion Picture Association of America

Mark Hoskins, Communications Manager, Cisco

Jackie Jags, Senior Principal, Team Leader, PR, Chick-fil-A Corporate

Michelle Johnson, Director, Public Affairs, Reputation Management & Crisis Communications, SC Johnson

Kena Lewis, Director, Public Affairs/Media Relations, Orlando Health

Stacey Marsh, Senior Director, Corporate Communications, Adidas

Emma Monks, VP, Crisis Intelligence, Crisp

Isabel Morales, Manager, External Communications and Social Media, Chicago Museum of Science and Industry

Kristen Moss, Senior Director, Corporate Communication, Reebok

Leah Nixon, Director, Communications, National Heritage Academies

Dawn Peters, Senior Manager, Global Communications & Media, Wiley

Melissa Prince, VP, Corporate Communications, INSP

Rebecca Rose, Director, Marketing & Communications, The Everglades Foundation

Marisa Salcines, Global University Relations Lead, Technology & Cybersecurity, Equifax

Lisa Zamosky, Senior Director, eHealth

Laura Zaner, VP, Corporate Communications and Marketing, The Michaels Organization

B2B Brands' Social Content Off 18 Percent in 2018, Video Content Jumps 27 Percent vs 2017

It wasn't long ago when B2B brands were considered faceless and impersonal. B2C brands were where the action was, certainly for social media. That's ancient history. Today's B2Bs, at least some of them, have enough personality to be effective on social.

For example, the top three most socially active B2B brands in 2018 (**IMG Models Worldwide**, **Pantone** and **Sotheby's**) tapped **Instagram**, arguably the most personal of platforms, as their channel of choice, says **Ron Lee**, a manager at **Shareable**, which provided data exclusively to PRNEWS.

While it's true that IMG Models, Pantone and Sotheby's seem to have an unfair advantage over less exciting B2B brands—indeed, the trio was tops in 2018 and 2017—the category as a whole posted 1.1 million pieces of content on social last year. That includes 41,000 videos.

Content posted in 2018 was off 18 percent vs. 2017, when B2Bs amassed 1.4 million posts. As you might have guessed, B2B brands' videos on social easily topped the 2017 tally, with 41,000 videos representing a 27 percent increase versus the prior year.

The top three were more judicious with their content in 2018. Each posted fewer pieces of content than it did in 2017. It's somewhat concerning that consumer actions with that content and actions per post were off vs 2017 for IMG and Sotheby's. Pantone saw a 29 percent uptick in actions per post, Lee says. Consumer actions here are defined here as comments, shares, retweets, likes and reactions.

A newcomer to the top 10 is cloud-based web development platform **Wix**, whose 2.6 million consumer actions in 2018 was a distant fourth to Sotheby's 4.7 million.

Still, Wix's 2018 social activity is notable. Despite a 37 percent decline in content posted in 2018, consumer actions rose 436 percent. In addition, consumer actions per post jumped a whopping 745 percent. Wix's videos also saw huge growth in consumer actions versus 2017 (up 260 percent).

Wix's **Facebook** feed, its top channel, is loaded with inspirational and instructional posts, as well as fun content. "What's your favorite thing about spring?" one post asks. ■

CONTACT: Ron@shareable.com






Shareable

SOCIAL SCORECARD

TOP 10 U.S. B2B BRANDS 2018

Based on Actions (reactions, comments, shares, retweets and likes)

Sources: [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

| RANK | PUBLISHER | PARENT COMPANY | ACTIONS f t @ | CONTENT f t @ | ACTIONS PER POST f t @ | AUDIENCE f t | VIDEO VIEWS f | VIDEO ACTIONS f t @ |
|------|---|--|--|--|---|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 |  | IMG Models Worldwide | 12.7M | 3K | 5K | 1.8M | 144K | 2.9M |
| 2 |  | Pantone | 5.6M | 575 | 10K | 2.2M | 1.6M | 491K |
| 3 | Sotheby's | Sotheby's | 4.7M | 6K | 839 | 1.3M | 16.8M | 314K |
| 4 | Wix | wix | 2.6M | 2K | 1K | 4.5M | 29M | 628K |
| 5 |  | Amazon Web Services | 2.3M | 16K | 147 | 2M | 1.4M | 45K |
| 6 | LENNAR | Lennar | 2.3M | 3K | 811 | 1.6M | 420K | 11K |
| 7 |  | Realtors | 1.8M | 2K | 1K | 530K | 239K | 4K |
| 8 | ORACLE | Oracle | 1.4M | 2K | 840 | 3.4M | 14.6M | 100K |
| 9 |  | The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) | 1.4M | 792 | 2K | 147K | 212K | 8K |
| 10 | Pentagram | Pentagram Design | 1.1M | 802 | 1K | 792K | 32K | 150K |

Proud To Be in PR: The Story of Denny Griswold, Founder of PRNEWS



[Editor's Note: With PRNEWS celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, we thought it fitting to dedicate a story to the founder of the publication you are reading, an extraordinary woman named Denny Griswold. The author is another special lady, Shelley Spector, co-founder of the Museum of Public Relations. We trust you will find this an inspiring and enlightening story, though one tinged with sadness and a bit of déjà vu. The sadness derives from the end of Griswold's life. The déjà vu comes from the fact that women in PR today are facing some of the same issues they confronted at the time Griswold started this publication, 75 years ago.]

She was called the “grande dame” of the industry and the “queen of PR.” Her rival, **Jack O'Dwyer**, said she was the “closest thing we have to a celebrity in this field.” She gave the industry its first newsletter, *Public Relations News*, in 1944, its first organization of women in 1946 and its first PR handbook for business people two years after that.

Most important, she gave the PR field a sense of professionalism, and helped fuel its spectacular growth over the second half of the 20th century.

That she did so in a field that had maybe a half-dozen female professionals at the time of the founding of this newsletter is a testament to her talent, tenacity and verve.

EARLY LIFE

Born **Denora Prager** in New York in 1908, she went by “**Denny**” her whole life. This confused many readers who thought she was a man. She thought this was both a curse and a blessing. Being considered a male may well have given the newsletter more credibility, she said.

In fact, at the time of PRNEWS' founding, women leaders were so few and far between, that when she held the first meeting for **Women Executives in PR (WEPR)**, she could barely find enough females to fit around her Upper East Side dining table.

THE SPOTLIGHT

Griswold was a celebrity in an industry that discouraged its practitioners from seeking the limelight. But by staying in the limelight, indeed, by creating the limelight in the first place, she gave the field the glow it so desperately needed as it struggled to be recognized as a bona fide profession in the 1940s, 20 years after it formally came into being.

She would frequently throw black tie affairs at the **Waldorf**. But unlike today, these galas were not for PR people, but for CEOs. As the **New York Times** reported in 1965, the 20th anniversary of PR News attracted the CEOs of **Texaco**, **Western Union**, the **American Petroleum Company**, **Air France** and dozens of others. We know from reports that **Ford's Lee Iacocca** attended at least one party, as did **Chief Justice Warren Burger**.

“Powerful men always wanted to stay on her good side,” **Muriel Fox**, who worked as **Carl Byoir's** first female executive in the 1950s, said recently. “Reputations could rise or fall with Denny. The way she wrote about you in her newsletter—or even if she wrote about you at all—was critical.”

Despite her ability to throw an elaborate party, Griswold was deadly serious about her cherished PR field, which was just coming into full swing in the 1940s.

100 PR FIRMS

When she started PR News with husband **Glenn Griswold**, there were 100 PR firms and one dozen in-house PR departments. The field was growing fast, though.

“World War II labor shortages gave a number of women the opportunity to enter the field,” **Dr. Karen Miller Russell**, an associate professor at the **University of Georgia's Grady College** said in a recent interview. “What's amazing about Denny Griswold is that she retained her position as a leader in the field for decades through PR News. She obviously identified a significant need and then filled it. Because of her, PR News contributed to the growing professionalization of public relations.”

AN IDEA FOR A NEWSLETTER

It was July 1944 at 3 a.m. that Denny had the idea to start the newsletter. As she told the Times years later, she woke up husband Glenn, then the publisher of **Businessweek**, and told him about her idea. “Start taking notes,” she instructed him. He agreed it was such a good idea that he quit *Businessweek* to work alongside her.

While PR News was born just as the field was coming into its own, the newsletter not only chronicled the growth of the PR field, it would also fuel that expansion. The weekly case studies would showcase PR solving real business problems. In addition, the field by that time was employing enough practitioners that their comings and goings made for interesting reading.

FOUNDING WEPR

In 1946, Griswold founded the aforementioned Women Executives in PR, the first such organization of its kind. **Diana Kalman**, then a PR director for **Monsanto**, and founder of the **Women Executives in Public Relations Foundation**, in a recent interview, emphasized Griswold's championing of women in the field. Even though she initially found just five women in the profession to join WEPR, she envisioned the organization could be an advocate for women to join the field.

“Founding Women in PR showed what a true visionary Denny was,” Kalman said. “She knew that while there may

Continued on page 10

not have been many women in the field back then, this would one day change, and women would need one another to change it.”

Gertrude Bailey, an original WEPR member and a manager of PR for Monsanto, recalled in 1973 the paucity of women in the field when Griswold started the organization. “Denny was asked to make up a list of women executives” to join WEPR and “a few were all she she could find.”

TENACIOUS RECRUITER

Bailey recalled Griswold’s tenacity. “Whenever we couldn’t agree on whether we were going to have a lunch or evening meeting Denny would enter the fray. She would remind the ladies, “We have a definite job to perform, to further the professional interest of every woman in public relations. We have to give a little bit more. Surely it is not too much to give one evening a month!”

By 1955 there were 23 members. “Today (1973), we have more than 100 members representing 85 firms including 29 corporations,” Bailey said.

Over the next 45 years, as the agencies started attracting more women, Griswold chronicled their rise to leadership roles, honored them at events and continued to champion the success of women in PR.

A SAD ENDING

Beginning in the 1990s people stopped seeing Griswold at industry events. Some said she was living alone in her townhouse, with little family around. O’Dwyer wrote

“Denny helped hundreds of women pave the way to start firms. She didn’t just publish a newsletter, Griswold gave women the license to think that nothing was impossible.”

that she had been moved to a nursing home in the mid 1990s.

And then O’Dwyer reported: “Griswold, the former Denora Prager, was held incommunicado at the Wilton Meadows nursing home for the last 5.5 years of her life. Her death at 92 on Feb. 7, 2001, was discovered by this reporter who tried to reach her on the phone. Her many friends should have gone to the police.”

The Times was more diplomatic. It reported her Feb. 7



Denny Griswold, Founder, PRNEWS

passing weeks later, on March 24, saying the “founder and former editor of the newsletter Public Relations News,” died in Norwalk, Conn. “She was 92 and in recent years had lived at the Wilton Meadows Health Care Center in Wilton, Conn.”

UNSEEN SINCE 1995

Several weeks after her death, under the headline, “Griswold Not Reachable Since 1995,” O’Dwyer reported that “numerous friends and family” had

attempted to contact Griswold since 1995, but were unsuccessful. Several PR pros had ventured to the nursing home in Wilton, CT, over the years in an effort to connect with her. They were turned away. Phone messages to Griswold at the nursing home also went unreturned.

In that article O’Dwyer noted a three-person team from **PRSA**, including **Harold Burson**, met with Griswold several times. The talks involved turning her four-story NY townhouse at 127 E. 80th St into a communications museum and a training center. A contract was drawn up that stipulated Griswold would continue to live in the house for the rest of her life, O’Dwyer reported.

SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE

During the course of those talks Griswold suddenly “disappeared,” a member of the team told O’Dwyer. Its members were never was able to regain contact with her. Her townhouse subsequently was sold, reportedly for \$3.2 million.

“It is not known what happened to the antiques or all of the papers connected with PR News, which Griswold edited for nearly 50 years,” O’Dwyer reported. Indeed, my search for early editions of PRNEWS for this article have been to no avail.

By the time of her death, Griswold had received 134 awards and honors for community and PR activities.

EDITOR’S POSTSCRIPT: The author has a special connection to Denny Griswold, who once gave her a ‘Proud to be in PR’ pin, which is on display at the Museum of Public Relations.

During this 75th anniversary year, replicas of the pin are among the items PRNEWS will be distributing during its many events and a September celebration of the milestone.

As Shelley tells us, “Denny’s success in PR helped her and hundreds of women in the 90s pave the way for them to start PR firms.” Spector should know. She started a firm in 1991 that she continues to run. “Denny didn’t just publish a newsletter,” Spector says. “Denny gave women the license to think that nothing was impossible anymore.” ■

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Dog Days of Winter? An Instagram account owner's dog gets the sunshine treatment from Arizona (top). (Bottom) Arizona challenged a female photographer to gather 200 retweets of her post in 24 hours. She received 900 and won a trip for two to Arizona.

Scott Dunn, AOT's senior director of content and communications. An automated-sounding response would not do.

In fact, said Dunn, much time was spent thinking about and then creating just the right dialogue for the social conversations. AOT's responses had to be witty, compelling and most of all upbeat, he said. "It didn't matter if the [targeted] person had a lot of followers," if the team felt the conversation would not result in the kind of uplifting, happy and warm dialogue it desired, the effort was halted.

The thinking was similar with the gifts. Our point was not to "just give out gifts, but to make each gift super personal... and emotion-driven," Washburn said. Such personal interaction ultimately would initiate word-of-mouth marketing, they believed.

Sometimes if a conversation got particularly involved, the prizes became more substantial. A snow-bound photographer was conversing with an Arizona rep on social and mentioned

he'd love a trip to the Grand Canyon State. Arizona answered, 'OK, take a photo and get 200 re-tweets in 24 hours and we'll give you a trip.' The photographer amassed nearly 900. [Arizona's response to the photographer that she is about to win a trip is shown on this page, left.]

EXECUTION

We promised to tell you about how Nomadic and AOT pulled off this effort. It's a crucial part of the story.

For five consecutive days, during business hours, a large group gathered in a Phoenix conference room to target winter-weary social users in NY and Chicago.

To replicate the feel of a true conversation, AOT and Nomadic decided they needed a large group in the room "so you could react quickly," as you would in a conversation, Washburn said. If a key person absolutely could not be in the room, they had to be on call for the duration. "In a situation like this, you're sunk if you need to wait three hours for someone to approve" a prize, for example, Washburn said.

As such, in addition to reps from AOT, the room was filled with social listeners, creatives (writers and designers), project managers and fulfillment personnel, who were working on delivering prizes, but also negotiating to

find additional prizes.

The days began with social listeners, using tools such as **SproutSocial** and **Keyhole**, seeking weather-related conversations in Chicago and NY. AOT and Nomadic spent considerable time on advance scouting, researching where and when such social users were likely to be posting about the winter blues. The team researched some two-dozen hashtags such as #Ihatewinter and #thisissiberia? After a few targets were found, writers and artists went to work, huddling with AOT and Nomadic representatives to create appropriate responses. The goal was to engage in 90 conversations each day.

As you can imagine, energy in the room was high. "It was like a sprint and a marathon," Washburn said. He noted that, "Engaging with the customer directly can create an awesome experience" for both parties.

Continued on page 12

To publicize the social “Sunshine to Share” campaign, AOT used both social and traditional tactics. It reached out to travel journalists who cover NY and Chicago to inform them about the social effort. A video was produced to introduce the effort, which ran on social. AOT and Nomadic also contacted local Phoenix media, which resulted in coverage for the effort. “It’s always important to have local people see our work,” Dunn said.

THE RESULTS

The 2018 winter campaign was highly successful, according to Dunn, garnering some 5,000 consumer engagements and nearly 10 million impressions. One of the most important metrics for AOT, Dunn said, was sentiment. “Just five percent of the conversations were negative,” he said. “Our number one goal was to spread the concept of associating positivity, warmth and happiness with Arizona.”

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Avoid Pushing Yourself into a Social Conversation: AOT, Dunn said, went into the campaign with a mantra: “Are we talking to someone or advertising at them?” A corollary: “Are we joining or starting a conversation or being clever for its own sake?” The team learned it had to avoid “pushing ourselves” into social conversations. The best conversations didn’t feel forced, Dunn said. “We punted a few times on conversations” that didn’t feel right, he added.

2. Silence is Golden: Following from the above lesson, sometimes the team found “it’s better to say nothing” than to “respond or respond in too snarky a manner,” Dunn said. Since the goal was to make people feel “warm,

clever, personal and positive,” when a response felt too snarky it was dropped.

3. Spontaneity: Again, following from lesson one and two’s admonition against forcing the conversation, while the team had a slew of responses prepared ahead of time, some of the best interactions in terms of conversations and prizes “happened naturally, on the fly,” Washburn said.

4. Preparation: You don’t just get online and start conversing. “There’s a lot of pre-production” preparation involved as well as the copious research mentioned above that was completed in advance, Dunn said. For example, in addition to having pre-written responses ready to be adapted quickly, the team also had a few video responses on hand that could be delivered immediately. Having a workflow set up to accept posts and create responses also is key, Washburn said.

5. Mid-Course Corrections: Even with a large group of people in the room in Phoenix, the team’s goal of engaging in 90 conversations daily proved too ambitious. In the end, the average was closer to 75.

6. Prizes, Prizes, Prizes: Awarding prizes sometimes involves legal issues, Washburn said. Make sure those are handled before your campaign begins. It’s also important to have a variety of prizes (some large, others small and mid-size) to give away and that you can do so quickly. “Giving prizes tends to be more effective than offering creative,” he added. ■

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CRISIS

BY SCOTT SOBEL, SVP, CRISIS & LITIGATION, KGLOBAL

Why CSR Programs Should be Part of Your Crisis-Planning Efforts

Most PR clients, and especially major corporations and other larger institutions, concentrate on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs to influence important stakeholders when times are stable.

There’s a growing trend among brands that are considering CSR scenario planning to prevent or mitigate crises. The creation of CSR relative to crisis planning should be undertaken with delicate precision.

AUTHENTICITY IS CRITICAL

Of course, CSR programs can result in disaster if your target audiences smell hypocrisy, a cover-up or greed as motivation. Crisis managers should be cautious but also prudent because, if executed effectively, CSR is an investment in cri-

sis prevention in that it can build valuable relationships and goodwill when times are stable. CSR can also be used to mitigate ill-will after a crisis explodes.

▶ Working with members of Congress, state governments and schools to collaborate with a brand on CSR programs that reach tens of thousands of students and constituents has demonstrated the benefits of such efforts. For example, CSR creates personal relationships with politicians and regulators. Those bonds help portray brands as a good corporate citizens that deserve the benefit of the doubt when a high-profile accident occurs. Relationships with news media were also strengthened.



- ▶ Creating community CSR programs where corporations support police and first responders positions brands in a space where stakeholders, consumers and the news media recognize companies' good intentions and community concern. This can offset questions of credibility and sincerity during public controversies.

CUSTOMIZED NEEDS

Each CSR scenario should be customized to a specific brand's needs and target stakeholder's perceptions and outcomes benefiting the public good. One size does not fit all when it comes to meaningful CSR.

No matter when you consider fashioning your CSR program, a significant part of your reasoning must include CSR's value to crisis issues, because clients today are expecting to hear CSR alternatives. For instance, almost all of the largest and mid-cap global companies include CSR practices and even regularly report those practices and their impacts to the company's stakeholders, according to a recent **KPMG** report.

Effective CSR programs in the context of crises can be tricky since those programs involve so many variables and even breaking-news decisions. Here is a checklist of capabilities needed to create and run great and impactful CSR programs before, during or after a crisis.

Your plan and practitioners should have:

- ▶ **Imagination:** Create a unique, customized program that grabs attention.
- ▶ **Intuition:** Your heart and gut can validate the program's concept and implementation. Crisis issues are fraught with emotion. Use your best professional judgment honed by your intuition.
- ▶ **Empathy and sympathy:** Have a close relationship with those whom the crisis touches.
- ▶ **Goals:** Intimate knowledge of your target goals is necessary.
- ▶ **Messaging:** Use persuasive messages that can be spread through coordinated communications tools (a powerful CSR program is never one-dimensional).
- ▶ **Personnel:** Get the right people for the right job—especially the right spokespeople.
- ▶ **Positioning:** Have a plan to put the brand into the role of a vindicator or hero.
- ▶ **Monitoring:** Have the capability to sniff-out potential problems.
- ▶ **Scenario planning:** This helps to improve flexibility and identify and mitigate problems
- ▶ **Authenticity:** Use authentic promotion that is not seen as blatant self-promotion or hypocrisy, but promotion that supports all the socially redemptive results of CSR. **Skills:** These include organizational, leadership and compromise skills.
- ▶ **Moral compasses:** These guide and point to ethical and honest outcomes.

PITFALLS AHEAD

If you can't satisfy the checklist above, you run the risk of jumping into a badly conceived or executed CSR program that will do more harm to your reputation than good. In many cases during a crisis, a flawed CSR program can also get you in trouble with regulators and even prosecutors. Do you remember some CSR programs that didn't meet the checklist requirements and went horribly wrong?

1) The car manufacturer caught developing software that first met environmental standards but after emissions tests were passed, the same software was programmed to slip into a mode that circumvented those emissions controls.

2) Best intentions that had a fatal flaw. The soft drink company that presented a badly produced commercial with a ham-handed message that critics said exploited the Black Lives Matter movement.

3) Several companies that forced their workers to "donate" time to charities, didn't credit the employees for their efforts, though it took false credit for the motivation behind the donation.

MORE CHECKLISTS

When handled correctly, CSR programs coordinated with crisis prevention and mitigation can help strengthen a brand and influence internal and external audiences, including those stakeholders in the charts below.

Once you've made the crucial decision to incorporate CSR into all of your planning, including crisis planning, refer to these two lists and check off how your CSR program could address each stakeholder's concerns during a crisis.

Of course, the best time to develop a relationship with each one of the special influential stakeholders—such as the news media, government entities, first responders, consumers, investors and donors—is *before* a crisis ignites.

People will trust you much more when you invest in them and their issues when you don't need their help. CSR's most important mission is to build trust through shared values and meaningful and impactful actions. ■

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External Stakeholders

- News media
- Government and regulators
- First responders
- Clients (current and prospective)
- Consumers
- Vendors
- Investors (current and potential)
- Donors (in the case of non-profits or higher education institutions)
- Legal audiences
- Insurance providers

Internal Stakeholders

- Boards of Directors
- Managers
- Employees
- Investors
- Attorneys
- Lobbyists
- Volunteers
- Human Resources and External Recruiters

How to Use Data on a Media Relations Effort That Goes Beyond Impressions



I don't know how many times I've heard, "We must get coverage in **The New York Times**." It's a common denominator for many companies, including technology firms in Silicon Valley. It seems like every RFP you read asks for the same kind of coverage.

I get it. If you work in PR, you know how hard it is to get coverage in the Times, or similar top-tier publications with a huge business reach. It's the holy grail of media relations and it's great for bragging rights. The sales teams love it. The CEO proudly showcases the hard copy on her desk or in the company lobby. And a screenshot of the coverage always looks fabulous on a **PowerPoint** slide highlighting the millions of impressions earned.

But getting coverage in the Times *just* because it's the Times isn't a strategy—it's one of many outcomes of a successful media relations program.

So, go ahead, have a PR pro pitch the Times—there's obviously plenty of value in doing so. But looking at data can help you find other ways to get the coverage you're seeking.

AN APPROACH USING DATA

Let's look at the topic of AI, for example, since it's a major topic of discussion within the tech circles of Silicon Valley. Many companies today are either trying to associate themselves with the term or using the technology for product innovation.

Below is an analysis of traditional media to identify the publications driving the AI narrative forward. The analysis spanned 11 months (1/1/18 to 11/18/2018). It looked specifically at AI coverage in the U.S., in English, within the business, technology and software sectors. All coverage that featured AI in either the headline or sub-headline was collect-

ed. In all, 44,654 articles were published during this time frame.

The chart below reflects the top media publications writing about AI based on volume. For example, since January 1st, **Forbes** has published 519 articles about AI, **Business Insider** has published 392 articles about AI, and so on.

THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR

At first glance, one obvious insight looking at this data is that Forbes has published the highest volume of articles related to AI. It should be more receptive to a pitch or a byline.

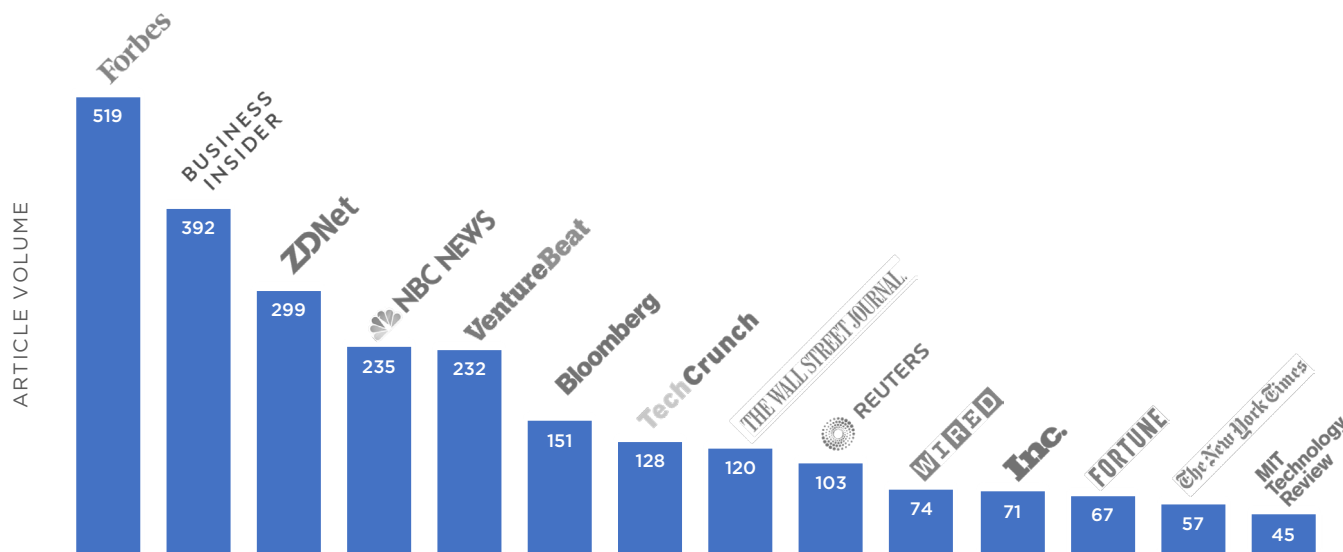
But these numbers can also be deceiving. Forbes has a fairly large contributor network. It also has several councils (e.g. Forbes Tech Council), an invite-only community for the C-suite, consultants and other business professionals. One perk of being part of a council is the ability to publish content on Forbes.com about any relevant topic.

It may also seem a bit discouraging since the Times has written 57 articles on the subject, which might suggest that it is less receptive to a pitch or a byline.

Adding another data point to the chart, as the orange line on the second graph indicates, and we can start to see additional insights that may inform a different direction. For example, you could cross-reference the total article volume from each publication with total interactions. An interaction is a share, like, retweet, comment or an inbound link (a third-party website linking to the article). Basically, it's an indicator of resonance. The higher the number of interactions, the more the article resonated with the audience.

Forbes is not only leading in total articles published but also in total interactions, which makes sense. The more

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



Source: Michael Brito, Zeno Group

content published will naturally result in more interactions. Forbes published 519 articles about AI and generated about 180,000 total interactions (an average of 346 interactions per article).

On the other hand, the Times published 57 articles resulting in about 140,000 interactions (an average of 2,456 interactions). So getting coverage in the Times is not only great for front-lobby bragging rights, but it provides business value too.

The data also shows when publications like **Bloomberg**, **TechCrunch**, **WSJ**, **WIRED**, and **MIT Technology Review** publish articles about artificial intelligence, the content resonates with their audiences. It makes sense to shift some of your PR resources and focus on getting coverage in these other publications. Platforms like **Muckrack** or **Newswhip** can help narrow down which journalists are writing about AI the most. With that information you can formulate your engagement approach accordingly.

But before going all in in executing a program, there are other factors to consider, as you should never base your entire media strategy on a single data set.

- ▶ **Web Analytics:** A historical analysis of what type of coverage and which media publications are driving traffic to your website. From there you can track conversions (sales, downloads) if you have your tags set up properly. You can get this data from **Google Analytics** or **Adobe Analytics**.
- ▶ **Influencer Analytics:** A topical influencer analysis will help prioritize which influencers (journalists, contributors, industry experts) you'll want to pitch and/or engage with. Doing so can help maximize your reach since most influencers share their article contributions in their personal social networks.
- ▶ **Unique Monthly Visitors:** A cursory look at the web traf-

“ You can use data to create a media relations program that delivers business outcomes instead of merely impressions ”

fic these publications get directly from external sources, like organic search or referral traffic from other websites. This data is more difficult to acquire since you don't own the site, but platforms like SimilarWeb can help give directional insights.

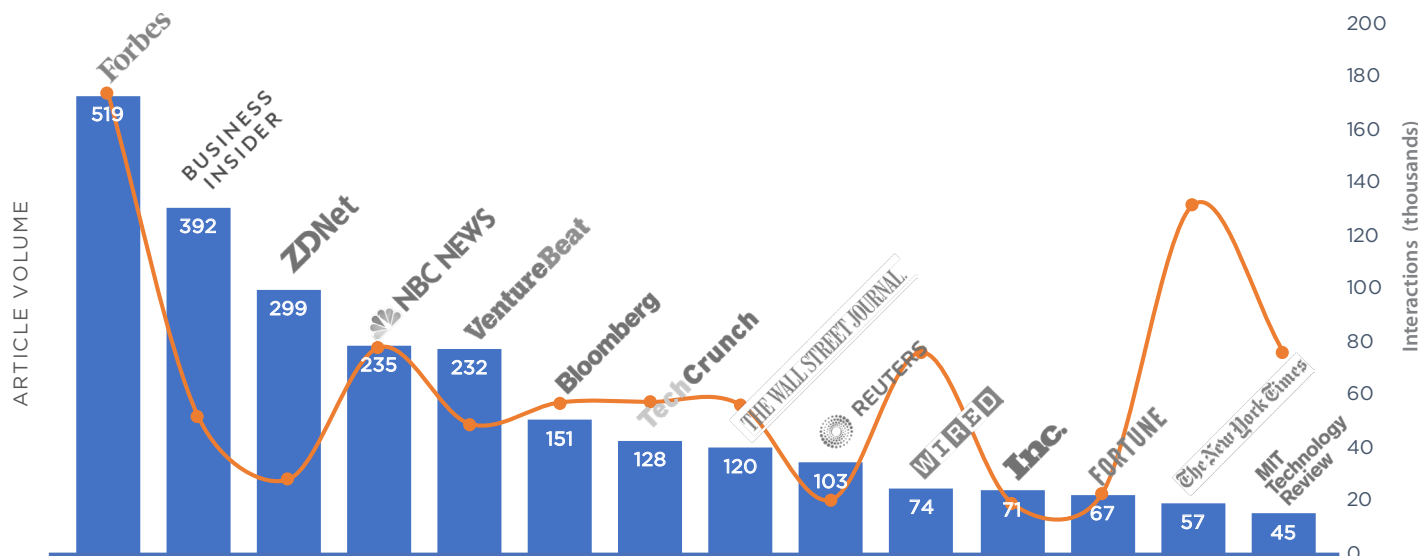
- ▶ **SEO Visibility:** An analysis of the Google search results for the targeted media publications. A manual scan of the results for artificial intelligence today show that Forbes and MIT Technology Review enjoy first-page rankings for the term. Interestingly enough, The Verge ranks even higher under “Top Stories” and they didn't even make it in the above analysis. There are several keyword analysis tools that can give you this data.

This may seem overwhelming and a lot of work. It is, but the key is to take this data in pieces, prioritize what's important to you and extract the insights accordingly.

Once you have access to this data, you can get a more complete picture of the landscape and start planning a media relations program that delivers business outcomes instead of merely impressions. ■

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



TAKEAWAYS

Takeaways from the Measurement Roundtable, Crisis Tips and a Different Look at SEO

In each edition of PRNEWS we highlight takeaways from select articles as well as important notes for subscribers and additions to the PR News Subscriber Resources Center, available to paid subscribers at: <http://www.prnewsonline.com/subscriber-resources/>

You can also access the Center by clicking “Resource Center” at the top, middle of the prnewsonline.com home page.

Remember, PRNEWS subscribers are entitled to a 33 percent discount on all PRNEWS events and webinars. Contact cbrault@accessintel.com for information.

SELECT TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ **Measurement Roundtable** (pp 1-4): The C-suite is asking communicators to demonstrate impact via measurement—whether it’s on the bottom line, on perceptions or preference, on the budget (in terms of greater efficiencies) or on marketing/sales in terms of qualified leads or goal conversions.
- ▶ Measurement will move from traditional awareness to engagement and conversion KPIs. To prepare, PR pros should partner with their marketing counterparts (content marketing and executive communications, for example) to align on strategy, tactics, and an actionable set of metrics that can be attributed to PR.
- ▶ Become familiar with **Google’s** March 2019 Core Update, as several important publications are finding much lower SEO scores than they had under the August 2018 Update.
- ▶ In addition to the usual suspects, the sort of ever-green

must-haves, CCOs are looking for metrics that speak to brand health, brand attributes, reputational drivers, brand relevance, and attribution.

- ▶ The improvement in digital technology will result in measurement and evaluation being a more end-to-end solution, integrated through all points of internal and stakeholder engagement, rather than being used the way they are today: to gauge the effectiveness of campaigns, which is a hindsight view, or to prove the value of PR. The widespread adoption of measurement and evaluation will then be used more predictively to inform decisionmaking.
- ▶ **Crisis** (pp 6-7): One of the biggest PR crisis pain points for communicators is finding the resources to continue doing the day-to-day work of communications while also managing a crisis.
- ▶ It sometimes is more effective to delay having the CEO or other C-suite members involved in a crisis committee. The presence of a senior player likely will inhibit other members of the crisis team from speaking openly about the situation and what needs to be done. Bring the CEO [or other C-suite executives] into crisis planning and response only after you’ve held initial discussions and decided how/if to respond.
- ▶ **SEO** (pp 14-15): Data can help prove the effectiveness of pitching stories to publications beyond the NY Times and Wall St. Journal. Stories run in other publications sometimes resonate more with your target audience than an article in the Times or the WSJ. ■

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