

Chapter 5

Measuring PR performance across borders –
how a global programme works.

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Setting up a global measurement programme.

Consideration 1: The benefit from measurement.

This important question is all too often never asked – not knowing how the analysis will be used suggests that there is little point in measurement.

Communications activity is an attempt to create a change in behaviour or a change in perception – or both. Without a focus for metrics, it will be difficult to identify any impact, so why bother?

The value that results from good measurement is the data to create better campaigns, which communicate more effectively and efficiently; to diagnose issues with a campaign and highlight opportunities to address these issues; and to celebrate successful campaigns, showing the tangible impact that has been achieved.

The ideal is a programme that is well linked to business results and ultimately to sales, but even more limited evaluation should help with communications planning to be useful and justify the investment. If your evaluation can identify product areas that need support and how best to provide that support, then the benefits are obvious.

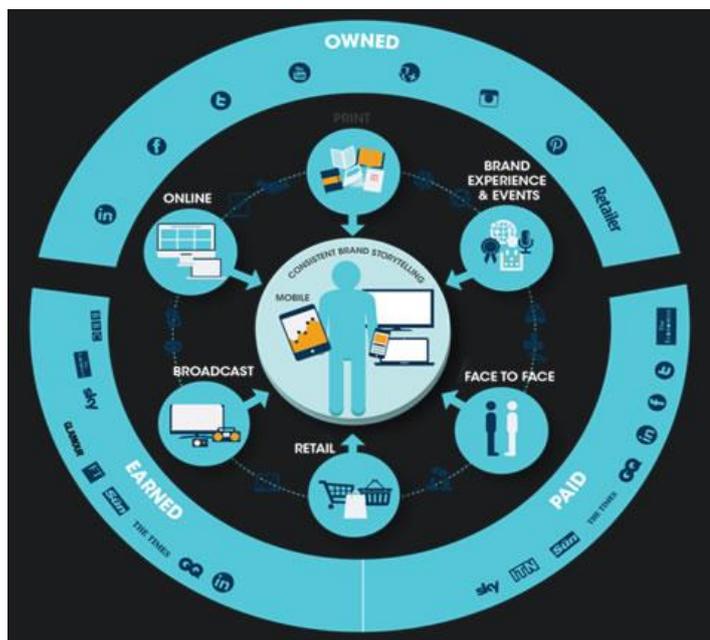
WHAT HAVE I DONE?	WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT ON MY BUSINESS?	WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT ON THE TARGET AUDIENCE?
Press releases Journalist interviews Media coverage volumes Blog posts Third party blogs	Purchase activity (sales/leads) Advocacy/peer recommendation Increased sale amounts Repeat purchase behaviour	Social media sharing Influencer pickup Website traffic Calls to contact centres

Consideration 2: Layers of complexity.

Layers of complexityThe global context adds to an already challenging problem.

Communication campaigns rarely happen in isolation, and for multi-national campaigns the ‘background noise’ can often vary by region and country.

News Media activity is only a single facet of an organisations public face, social media, word of mouth, advertising and marketing communications all impact the target audience.



Trying to achieve a consistent brand story across all channels then creates the difficulty of identifying how individual channels have contributed to any behavioural change.

Markets will have different media environments, leading to challenges in reconciling the performance on a market-by-market basis.

Then language and cultural nuances need to be accounted for.

There is an opportunity within this as well – e.g. the ability to test activity in a small market in a local language, a pilot before a major international campaign which is less likely to ‘leak’ across national and language boundaries. This can provide interesting opportunities to look at individual channels too.

Consideration 3: Useful reporting of results

A natural tension is generated by the need for various levels of reporting (e.g. global/regional/local, channel by channel) and the sharing of budget across teams. For small

markets where budget is limited even basic tracking costs can have a disproportionate impact.

A successful programme will demonstrate for local teams what happened with their campaign, but will also help the global or central team identify overall performance. The level of detail for each team typically follows the budget.



The lack of granularity in reporting for evaluation which is led centrally with minimal local detail does result in less value for local teams and less buy-in to the process. Conversely there can be a lack of consistency where a significant amount of local customisation and analysis is possible. However, enabling strong local analysis can help ‘bottom up’ sharing of learnings for more effective activity.

EXAMPLE: Global tracking of media coverage for a healthcare client

- WE created a custom web portal for an international client communications team of 300+
- Customised to provide high level view for global management team, with ability to filter down and show detail for local teams in specific business units.
- Analyst team worked closely with business units across all markets to provide the context which was then included in reporting, including local competitors, specialist outlets, and major in-country campaigns and events.
- Used to guide global decision making on communications priorities, as well as local tactical activity, including crisis response monitoring.

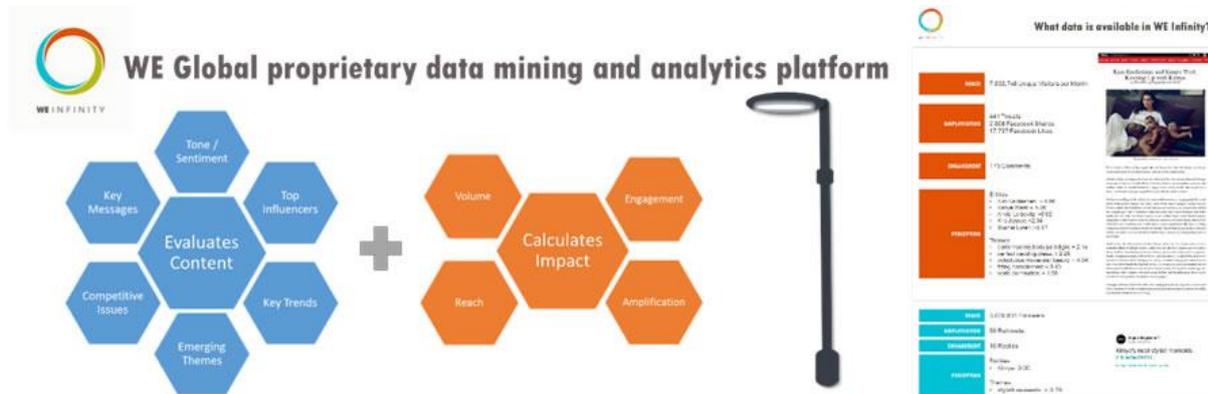
This then is an internal discussion for client teams understanding how they will use the evaluation to drive communications decision making and how the programme will be funded.

Consideration 4: Quality control

A critical element of the reporting is the quality of the data underpinning the analysis. For many markets, digital content will fairly represent the media coverage, for others where there is still a print media news channel, content not necessarily published online a clipping service specialising in the local markets will be needed.

Good quality data needs good quality tools for analysis, and Waggener Edstrom (WE) has always been committed to identifying ways to use technology to enhance the accurate tracking of communications activity e.g. developing tWEndz, an award winning tool from 2010 which was one of the early tools to track activity on Twitter for WE clients.

More recently, WE has invested significantly in WE Infinity, an automated platform for capturing coverage for client campaigns, integrating social media channels and news platforms and establishing new metrics to demonstrate the performance of communications activity.



This analysis is a mix of automation and human-led effort, checking that automated processes have categorised and handled coverage correctly, then allowing the human researcher to provide additional data for the reporting and create meaningful, actionable visualisations of the data.

The human quality control reduces the risk of inaccuracy in reporting, and further cross referencing and re-evaluation of a subset of content ensures consistency across the team of analysts.

The data and appropriate analytics tools are part of the puzzle, an effective measurement program is a collaborative exercise. In global campaigns showing value for all the partners is part of getting buy-in and cooperation.

This means that results need to be made as meaningful as possible for local teams as well as for the central or global team leads.

The local partner agency and client teams are a hugely valuable resource, particularly dealing with these 'layers of complexity. By providing the context and background on different media environments, competitive landscape, how different channels are being used at a global and local level, even simple reporting can reflect their understanding in the analysis, points which may not be obvious in a high level overview will be impactful for a team with a small budget.

EXAMPLE: Global measurement project for a Pan-African investment initiative – tapping into local expertise to ensure evaluation has value across national, regional and global teams.

- Local teams in Africa highlighted their issues e.g.:

- A standard practice of 'paid for' editorial in some markets.
- Flagging influencers that may not otherwise have been identified.
- Providing language support where an expert was not available.
- Share regional and country insights on social media usage.

- WE provided an initial update focussed on Broadcast and Digital media, followed by additional detail on impact of print-only media when the data was available.
- Follow up reporting over time (quarterly) continued to be rated highly, due to the link with WE analyst team in London and local partners.

Taking the time to engage at a local level, understanding their issues will make the reporting more interesting and relevant to them – and therefore more useful at a local market and a global level.

The identification of markets which have similarities in terms of type of media landscape, market share/size, etc. will also help comparison between markets and potentially clarify where spend will have the most impact.

Consideration 5: Performance

The value of evaluation is often underrated for campaigns which have not performed well, or where some regions or countries have had issues. Good evaluation enables discussion of underperforming activity by identifying the issues and using this understanding to create solutions to the problem.

Having the local context to make the outputs relevant to the individual markets makes the evaluation more useful and actionable, and more valuable to all partners in the communications process.

In summary

Much of the guidance shared here is relevant to all campaigns, regardless of whether they have an international or global scope. Global projects do bring additional challenges but three simple tips will deliver a strong measurement programme and effective communications.

- Make sure your campaign objectives are clear and link your measurement activity to the objectives – focus on ‘outcome’ measures over ‘output’ measures where you can.
- For a global or multi-national project, use your local contacts to provide the context to the results from their region or country. The context is what will make your results more interesting, more widely read and have more of an impact in the creation of future campaigns.
- Use the results of the measurement activity to drive your overall strategy and campaign activity – it’s an important resource of valuable data. If your evaluation isn’t being used then change it or stop it!

The examples in the essay are drawn from a number of projects undertaken within the EMEA region, including global projects and those with a pan-regional scope. These evaluation programmes were developed using the Barcelona Principles and the AMEC Measurement Frameworks.

Colin and Chris' 3 Top Measurement Tips

- ✓ Set specific and measurable objectives in advance that can be used to improve communications planning
- ✓ Use the local expertise of client and agency partners to add market specific value and context
- ✓ Don't waste time and budget on evaluation if the results won't be used!



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