



## CHAPTER 2

### Why Measurement Matters and How It Underscores the Value of What You Do

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#### “What gets measured, gets done.”

Peter Drucker’s well known quote underscores the importance of metrics. More than just tracking something, measurement is an essential part of the overall communication process. In fact, I can’t imagine how a public relations initiative today can succeed without measurement — if for no other reason than if you don’t measure it, you can’t truly know it was successful.



Thanks to the impact of technology, greater access to data, and an increasingly digitally-centric world, the practice of public relations continues to evolve dramatically. Measurement has evolved as well, and there are many new tools and techniques that allow us to be more innovative when evaluating our work.

Yet some professionals still do not adequately measure their work, or they rely upon outdated measurement practices. Certainly there are obstacles that can make measurement challenging such as cost, lack of time, and confusion about what to measure.

But there are far more compelling reasons for why measurement must be an integral part of your work and, importantly, how it can underscore the value of what you do. Measurement can:

#### **Increase your chances of success**

Measurement done well begins with the end in mind. Regardless of budget or scope, you must identify from the start what you’re trying to achieve. Know what a win looks like for your client or your organization.

Whether it’s driving sales, improving customer service scores or increasing engagement, start there and work backwards to set your measurement objectives. In this way, measurement can help shape the campaign, guide the creative, and increase your chances of success.

#### **Underscore your value**

Not only can it shape what you do, but measurement can underscore the value of public relations in ways even the most creative of strategies cannot.



# THE PR PROFESSIONAL'S Definitive Guide to Measurement

Just a few years ago, I served on the Cannes Lions PR Jury. Despite being a global group (21 jury members from 20 countries) with wildly diverse perspectives, there was quick and unanimous agreement from the get-go that no entry, no matter how creative, would even be considered as a contender for a Lion without solid metrics.

Nothing can compare with results. It's up to you to ensure you have the tools and practices in place that can measure the things that matter most and show your impact on the business.

## **Bolster the agency/client relationship**

Agency professionals understand they have to demonstrate results. Clients need to know what their return on investment is for individual campaigns as well as for the overall agency/client relationship. With procurement playing a greater role in selecting and evaluating agencies, measurement continues to be a crucial part of the equation.

A solid approach to metrics undoubtedly bolsters the agency/client relationship. You can make measurement a priority in agency/client conversations, especially when budgeting. Ensure both parties agree on what should be measured and how often. Then establish regular progress reports to track campaign success.

## **Leverage data**

More and better data is available all the time to paint a clearer picture of tactics effectiveness. For example, using Bitly links in your content allows you to track click-through rates (CTR) to a website. In this way you can see what messages resonate with certain audiences, or what distribution channels drive more traffic.

## **Enable more integrated work**

Many of the campaigns designed and implemented by public relations firms today utilize a variety of channels and platforms and include the full spectrum of earned, owned, shared and paid media.



The breadth of measurement tools and techniques available supports fully integrated campaigns. I particularly like AMEC's new integrated measurement framework to measure a broad range of outputs, out-takes, outcomes and impact.

## **Drive collaboration**



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As public relations expands its offerings, its impact on the communications mix has broadened, too. Collaboration is critical for sharing learnings and understanding how consumers are engaging with a brand. Particularly agency partners working on behalf of a client must get behind the strategies that are working. Measurement drives that conversation.

## **Empower you to try new things**

Measurement offers continuous learning opportunities, allowing you to try new things and clarify which strategies are working and which aren't. For example, if you want to reach Gen Z and have never tried Spotify, you can design a pilot and see what works. As you test and learn, you can push where you find traction and scale from there.

## **Enable the business to evolve**

As the marketplace changes, your work and your measurement practices must change, too. You need to prepare yourself to use and evaluate new technology such as artificial intelligence and immersive experiences such as VR/AR. These are becoming increasingly popular in sectors such as retail, where e-commerce continues to grow.

Similarly, mobile offers many opportunities to innovate. Mobile continues to dominate consumers' digital time. Whether it's researching, networking, price-checking or planning a trip, consumers are turning to mobile devices and apps to enhance and manage their lives. You need a portfolio of measurement practices to support emerging technology and digital-first tactics.

You must also commit to investing in specialized hires that can sell in measurement up front and drive analytical use and benefit on the back end. Many agencies are creating positions for data scientists to deliver this expertise to clients today and create new data-driven products and services for the future.

## **Capture insights about engagement**

With the growth of digital, the days of evaluating a campaign's success only on "exposure" are past. Engagement matters significantly now, among many other outcomes and outcomes. It's important to use measurement to more fully understand how consumers are engaging with your content. You can go far deeper with the right metrics to clarify things like:

- cost per engagement
- how much of your site users are accessing
- type of content that is accessed the most
- conversion and/or abandonment
- emotional response to content delivered
- how often they are lingering on different pages
- whether certain channels and platforms are delivering the level of engagement you had planned.



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## Support the long view

We all know truly strategic communication is a marathon, not a sprint. A three-week campaign doesn't solve a real business problem. But sometimes you need to convince a client or another decision-maker of the value of a sustained investment.

Good measurement supports the long view. By capturing meaningful metrics such as year-over-year sales or perception change, you can show how the right messages delivered to the right consumers at the right time can make a business impact.

There are many compelling reasons for why measurement must be an integral part of your work. Commit to developing a strong portfolio of consistent and credible measurement practices. Not only will these help you tell your measurement story, but they will underscore the value of what you do.

## Elise's Top 3 Measurement Tips

1. **Measurement is evolving.** There are many new tools and techniques driving innovation in public relations.
2. **Nothing can compare with results.** Show your impact on the business by measuring what matters most.
3. **Consistent and credible measurement practices underscore your value and enable you to tell your measurement story.**



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