



CHAPTER 10

En(In)suring your reputation through smart PR measurement

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In an increasingly complex, competitive and fast-paced world, risk management is evolving and companies need to be able to assess both risks and opportunities in a more dynamic way. Non-financial risks – including regulatory, conduct, compliance, systems and particularly reputation risk – have grown in importance.

Similarly, with the rise of digital there has been dramatic change in marketing and communications. Technology has increased the speed of communication, disciplines have become more closely integrated, there are more channels and data than ever before and more direct interaction with customers and consumers.

For one of South Africa's leading short-term insurance companies, these shifts not only impacted how they measure and mitigate risks on behalf of clients but also how to aggregate and analyse their 'own risks', including brand reputation and how it contributes to business leads.

Over the past three years the measurement and evaluation of how public relations contributes to their business objectives has evolved to be more transparent, valid and replicable.

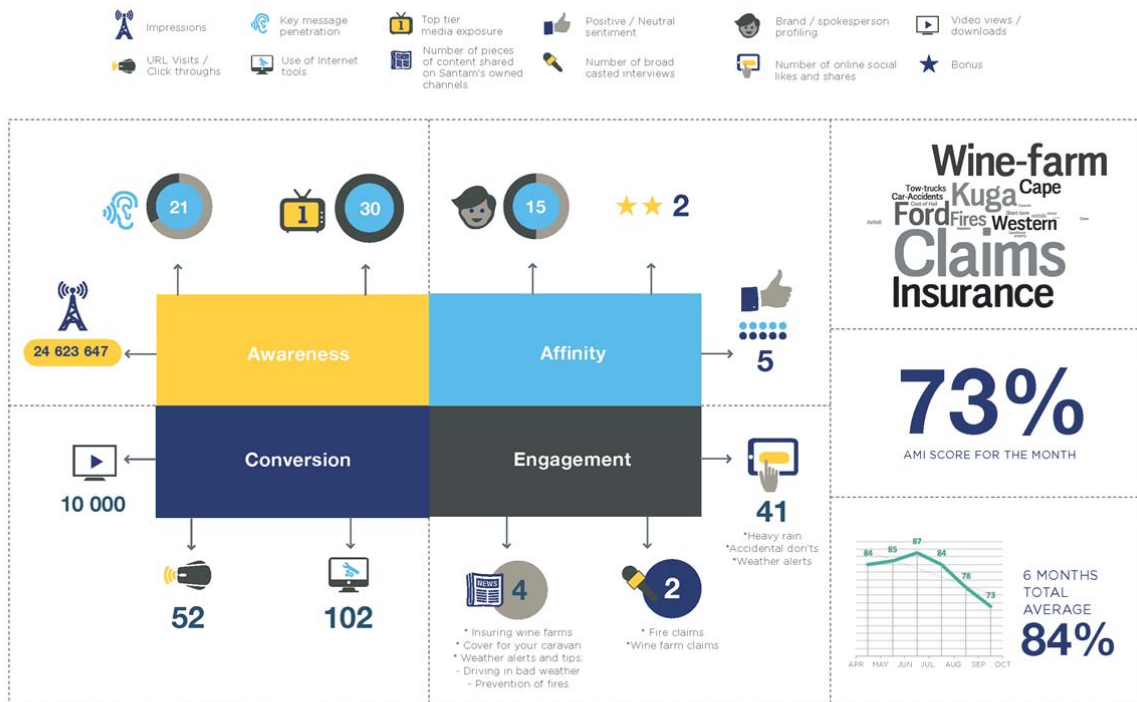
Measuring what matters:

In 2014, the PR agency Atmosphere developed a tool called the Atmosphere Media Index (AMI) to begin the shift away from the flawed metric AVE. The AMI measures media coverage on a broad spectrum of quantitative (media impressions, clippings) and qualitative (top tier media, key message penetration, spokesperson mention, prominence and type of mention) metrics. The weighted scoring system is designed to assess coverage results on criteria tailored to the client and the agreed communications objectives.

Two years later, there was a need to collaborate with other marketing disciplines around common measurement metrics that are meaningful across channels. We worked with the client to adapt the AMI specifically for their business, drawing a fuller link back to the contribution PR plays across four dimensions namely awareness, affinity, engagement and lead conversion.



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Deliverables:

- AMI Score of 75%
- 1 million impressions
- 6 x pieces of content (including 1 x thought leadership)
- 8 x pieces of publicity

Through this reporting framework the client has a holistic view of the full impact and combined success of efforts of all integrated marketing and communications activity.

How it works:

We applied the Barcelona Principles in our thinking:

- Followed input, output and outcomes approach and linked the PR strategy and objectives to the business and brand objectives. See Fig 1.
- Initially tracked each piece of activity to get a baseline score.
- Thereafter measured the activity against a jointly agreed target with the client.
- Packaged the information into a monthly dashboard. See Fig 2.
- Use the information monthly to guide future short-term activity while on an annual basis it informs Atmosphere's scope of work and the role that PR plays overall in driving the client's brand reputation.

Lessons learnt:

- We made the shift one step at a time to implement valid measures that more accurately assess the value of PR to the business – as part of the integrated mix of marketing communications efforts.
- There is no one-size-fits-all measurement framework and working with the client we applied best practice thinking in a way that makes sense to their business.



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- By measuring and tracking key dimensions over time we assess what is working and adapt our short-term implementation activity quickly on a month-to-month basis. However, the greater value has come from the insight the findings give us to feed into the strategic planning process for the long-term. We are now not only measuring our effectiveness but also evaluating the impact.

Going forward:

Never before have insurers and communicators had such vast amounts of data available to aggregate, analyse and influence their actions. As a PR agency, we continue to look at ways to make this simpler, better and faster. Some of the innovations we are investigating and testing include working with media monitoring companies to analyse the data based on tailored criteria per client and to how to use technologies such as AI to gather and assess large data sets to more quickly inform our communications programmes.

Mandy & Lauren's Top 3 Measurement Tips

1. We made the shift one step at a time to implement valid measures that more accurately assess the value of PR to the business - as part of the integrated mix of marketing communications efforts.
2. There is no one-size-fits-all measurement framework and working with the client we applied best practice thinking in a way that makes sense to their business.
3. Rely on agency partners along the journey. They have a more in-depth view across a range of campaigns and industries to guide us with the clearest advice on what's working for others and how we might improve our own efforts.



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