Data, Analytics and the Everyday Practice of PR

You keep hearing that it's vital to learn how to use data and analytics, but the very thought gives you a headache. You're a PR person, not a data scientist. (And that's probably the last thing you'd ever want to be.)

You love your job and you thrive on creating content and messaging that builds awareness, authority, and affinity for your brand. Per the definition of PR your core functions are:

- Identify the audiences you need to reach
- Figure out where best to reach them
- Position your company or organization as an authority on a topic or industry
- Craft messaging that resonates with different audiences
- Deliver that message to the right people, in the right place, at the right time
- Engage and build rapport with your audiences
- Build a community of like-minded individuals who have an affinity for your brand and know, accept, understand, and support the organization.

This is not always the easiest of jobs and you might feel like you're flying blind. But what if that dreaded data could actually make your job easier and more effective?

Identifying Your Audience

This is just one aspect of how analytics and data can support your everyday PR work:

The purpose of identifying audiences, and creating the ideal persona in each audience, is so you can improve your communication with them and build better relationships — be it a customer, a prospect, a blog reader, a donor, or even a reporter. Yes, there are all kinds of tables and lists you can use to approximate the audience you think you're after. But until now you've never had access to data about the actual people using your website or following you on social media.

Your New BFF

Think of Google Analytics as your new BFF — the one who knows everything about everyone and is willing to dish!

You can find out heaps of information about the people who visit your website, blog or newsroom: Age, location, how they got there, what they did once they were on the site, what they looked at, what they clicked on and how long they stayed.

It's like having your own little fly on the wall watching your site visitors. It removes the guesswork from the equation.

You can contrast and compare your social media analytics with your site data and build a very accurate persona of your ideal customer, reader or prospect. Just this week I did this exercise with a financial services company and we discovered that their most active and engaged persona is a female between the ages of 35 and 50 who lives in the New York area, has an average income of $75,000, and responds best to content about ideas for women about financial and retirement planning. This information led to immediate ideas for content and social ad campaigns.

And the more you dig in, the more you learn. The more you know about your audiences, the easier it is to craft the right messaging and build rapport. [Learning how to use data and analytics](#) can boost the results of your PR work.