

Earned Media Analytics In The Digital Age

If You Can't Measure It, You Can't Manage It. – Peter Drucker



Wendy Glavin, Founder and CEO, [Wendy Glavin Agency](#)

“Beyond Impressions Bringing Earned Media Analytics in to The Digital Age” was the topic of the day at PRSA headquarters on September 12th, hosted by BurrellesLuce and PRSA.

Agency executives say more than 50% of their revenue is derived from earned media activity which is projected to be the primary revenue driver in 2020. Yet, **Allyson Hugley, President, Measurement and Analytics, Weber Shandwick** raised the issue that people are deriving content in more fragmented ways, including, reading posts, and pages, rather than entire publications.

Since most people consume news digitally, Allyson said why are we still measuring at the outlet level, versus measuring engagement with specific content? Data dynamics have evolved from social intelligence to business intelligence, listening platforms to data management platforms (DMP), monitoring to modeling, firehose (too much content) to filters, human to machine, reactive to proactive.

Allyson explains: The depth of insights about earned media

performance gleaned from analyzing article level data is a significant departure from how it's been traditionally analyzed. Now, it provides intelligence around prioritized audiences to promote, balance, or reshape brand narratives. It offers media relations teams analytics to support rigorous planning, and precision for evaluating audience engagement with specific news stories and news outlets.

The [PR](#) industry must push for broader availability and adoption of this type of audience data. Only then, will earned media analytics be on more equal footing with paid and owned.

Chris Albert, Senior Vice President of Digital Analytics at Ketchum, says with so many tools in our arsenals, we've hit data overload. We use 70% of structured data, easily searched with algorithms, and 5% of unstructured data, more like human conversations which are virtually impossible to track.

Chris says the key to being data-driven is:

- 1. Aspire to be world class, showcase what it can be*
- 2. Use what you have, instead of it being perfect*
- 3. Evangelize wins, and learn from losses, both big and small*
- 4. Be honest and transparent with the client*

Cara Buscaglia, Head of Solutions at [Talkwalker](#) said we're navigating a complex landscape: 44% of marketers say they haven't been able to show the impact of social, and 36% of marketers say they cannot only show the qualitative impact, but the quantifiable effect of social now matters.

Executives want to know how activities affect the business bottom-line. Cara said we need online social data and intelligence programs to develop customized approaches.

Cara's key takeaways:

- 1. Determine what you want to track and why*

2. *Understand the issues that impact your business*
3. *Measure your audience's reactions*
4. *Review and analyze*
5. *Conduct an ongoing evaluation of KPIs is imperative to insure success*

Mark Stouse, CEO of Proof Analytics said, marketing and communications have lost track of our core values. Twelve years of research has taught us the conventional wisdom is true:

"PR is about convincing the right people of something." – **Dan Edelman**

"PR is about influence. The rest is just publicity." – **David Ogilvy**

"Giving people good reason to trust what you're about is our mission." – **Harold Burson**

All the changes are superficial, and tactical but it doesn't change the core tenets of PR and marketing. In a very complex world that's long on risk and short on trust, PR delivers awesome value.



Deirdre Breakenridge and Wendy Glavin

Keynote, Deirdre Breakenridge, CEO of Pure Performance's goal was to inspire the audience to get into a data mindset. Today, we must communicate impact and value to the CEO. Deirdre passionately spoke about the need to ask different questions, get varied answers, and make choices that will build our technology, media, and data muscles.

Deirdre said to be like a PR data engineer, or scientist by staying ahead of media trends, consumer behavior, competitive analysis, and market positioning for enhanced measurement practices.

Also, to learn about:

1. *Programmatic Ad buying*
2. *Block chain and Cryptocurrency*
3. *AI and Machine Learning*
4. *Emotion Analytics*
5. *Virtual and Augmented Reality*

We're in a race for relevance. Move forward with data intelligence by getting out of your comfort zone. Don't finish familiar, dare to be different, moves the needle, were some of her overarching themes.

Deirdre used her own life as a case study of how she progressed from intern to single mom, now married with four children, professor, internationally recognized public speaker, entrepreneur, CEO of Pure Performance Communications, mentor, and co-founder of #PRStudChat for PR professionals, educators, and students.

Deirdre presented a, "Test of Choices," five situations for the audience to think about and choose an A, B, C, or D answer. An "A" choice essentially meant you didn't want to get involved, and varying degrees of commitment for the rest. The purpose was to inspire us to think about how we would behave in unfamiliar circumstances, and to help us learn more about our personalities.

She concluded with, you're poised to evolve and capture the moments that matter for your own professional development.

You have the choice.

Mark Weiner, CEO of Prime Research discussed the *Irreversible Public Relations Big Data Revolution*. Mark proposed that there is a symmetry. PR contributes to and benefits from big data-driven business outcomes. In this new landscape, communicators must evolve along with our profession to harness the science beneath the art of Public Relations.

Big data answers these PR questions:

1. *Who is the most profitable target audience?*
2. *What motivates the target to act?*
3. *How well does our messaging match the targets' in terms of credibility, relevance, and sustainability in relationship to our own objectives?*
4. *How well does our competition or opposition perform against the same criteria?*
5. *Does the message resonate as strongly among internal audiences as well as it does in the marketplace?*
6. *Which media channels offer the greatest likelihood to reach and engage with the target audience? Do these channels require a tailored approach to succeed?*
7. *Are there seasonal tendencies for which we must account?*
8. *What is the relative impact of public relations on business outcomes when compared with other factors?*
9. *To what degree and to what effect does public relations interact with other factors?*
10. *How can we improve PR performance to achieve an even greater impact on the enterprise?*

Today, data is plentiful. We have too much of it. The challenge is to uncover the insights inherent in the data but only a combination of elements can unlock. Broadening the foundation of our insights beyond the traditional PR measures enables PR to contribute to and draw guidance from seemingly disparate areas of the enterprise.

PR insights manifest themselves in two ways:

1. *To inform better public relations decision-making which improves communication results*
2. *To inform better organizational decision-making which improves business results*

Mark explained, traditionally, public relations is a "relationship" business built on creativity, people, skills, and the ability to communicate effectively through compelling content. Now, research plays an increasingly important role

by informing the public relations process to help improve and generate value.

Through the emergence of new research methods and advanced technologies – coupled with our accelerated creativity; data drive more fully integrated communications; and real-time platforms enable people to act more quickly with greater intelligence. In this new landscape, communicators must evolve along with our profession to harness the science behind the art of public relations.

Listening to the breadth and depth of these conversations was motivational. If you don't know about data, this conference offered statistical, practical, simple, and higher level explanations, with examples, that showed me how little I know.

I look forward to learning more and asked a few people there how to go about it. Deirdre said, if you know about data, teach another person. If you don't know, ask ten people to explain it to you. Allyson suggested O'Reilly Podcasts, video courses, Coursera, and researching business analytics. Mark provided a website: <https://www.instituteforpr.org/>

I'm game. How about you?

About the Author: Wendy Glavin is Founder and CEO of Wendy Glavin Agency, based in New York City, offering marketing, public relations, and social media. Wendy is a 30-year veteran of corporate, agency, consulting, and small business ownership. Wendy has worked across a wide variety of B2B2C industry sectors, and is a published writer and guest speaker. Email her at: wendy@wendyglavin.com