

# PR Metrics: There is No Magic Number



*Leslie Stefanik, Vice President, Marketing, PublicRelay*

The truth is, there's no short cuts or magic numbers when it comes to your PR metrics and measurement plan. There's a reason PR measurement and analysis gives many communicators anxiety. It seems overwhelming to get started or difficult to extract actual insights from a haystack of data. That's because worthwhile PR measurement does take time and effort – two things most PR pros are short on.

But when you dedicate proper resources to measurement, whether in-house or with an analytics partner, it can revolutionize your processes and change the perception of the communications department within your organization. Harness the power of PR

measurement to uncover insights that optimize strategies and tactics, enable more efficient resource allocation, and ultimately increase your business impact.

## **Don't Hang Your Hat on One PR Metric**

Many PR pros feel pressure to prove their department's business contribution in a dollar value. But your work is so much more than a single dollar value. In fact, it can't and shouldn't be summed up in a single metric of any kind.

Communicators are gatekeepers of corporate reputation, risk managers, trusted advisors, social responsibility advocates, policy experts – to name a few. The outcomes of your efforts contribute to several company-wide goals. Your PR metrics should reflect that.

## **Do Establish Brand Drivers**

Brand drivers are the reputational pillars that your company wants to be known for such as being innovative, a great place to work, or having exceptional product quality.

While difficult to measure because these concepts cannot be summed up in a few keywords, brand drivers are a foundational PR metric. Tracking these concepts overtime will show how your communications efforts are translating to business objectives. They'll also highlight which areas of your reputation are healthy and which need help so you can better focus your efforts and resources.

## **Do Measure Changing Attitudes**

Now that you've established brand drivers and key messages that you want to push, you also need to measure your tactics

for accomplishing that growth. Measuring media relations and influencer outreach is a great way to start.

The word influencer can mean many things. Influencers can be authors at national outlets or niche trade publications, social media accounts with a particular following, or third-party influencers such as academics, NGO's, or political pundits. Whatever influencers you target, it's important to measure their attitude toward your organization over time. Did you increase their engagement with your brand? How did you guide their opinions? How prevalent are your key messages in their writing? Did you convert an author at one of your top-tier outlets that had previously written about your competitors, but not about you? That's a big win! Make sure you have a system in place to measure the affects.

These are just a few PR metrics that will help you showcase and optimize your business impact. To learn more about why communicators shouldn't rely on a magic number and alternative PR metrics to create a great measurement program, watch this webinar featuring Global Managing Director of AMEC, Johna Burke.



***About the Author:*** Having worked on both the agency and industry sides of marketing and communications, Leslie brings extensive corporate communications, branding and demand generation practice and understanding to the team at PublicRelay. Formerly the VP of Digital Marketing for Optymyze, Leslie holds a Bachelor's of Business Administration in Marketing from Youngstown State University.