DEMONSTRATING THE VALUE OF COMMUNICATION | PART III
EVOLVING COMMUNICATION MEASUREMENT

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INTRODUCTION

JOHNA BURKE
Global Managing Director, AMEC

To deliver the most effective PR and communication programs — and to prove the value of our work to our organizations — communication professionals need to be able to accurately evaluate what actually works to influence our audiences (and what does not.)

That means setting up and implementing ways to measure the impact of specific communication initiatives to our organizations.

Empowering communication professionals to do just this is AMEC's mission. And this e-book, "Evolving Communication Measurement" is a valuable new resource for communicators who strive to make a real difference. The information in this guide will help you create better briefs and set KPIs. It also offers a usable framework to assess the effectiveness of your campaigns.

The AMEC Board and Leadership extends sincere appreciation to all the contributing experts as well as the editing and graphics team for producing this e-book for AMEC Measurement Month 2019. I believe this collaboration of thinking, examples and process will prove to be a valuable resource for communication professionals globally for years to come.

As the communication field continues to evolve, so do measurement and evaluation practices. If you seek further inspiration and assistance, the **AMEC** website contains additional tools, frameworks, and case studies.

Warm regards,

Johna Burke
Global Managing Director, AMEC

Why you need to incorporate INFLUENCERS as part of your Earned Media evaluation and how to do it.

Alistair Wheate, Head of Product, Onalytica

There has been a lot written and said about influencers and influencer marketing in the last couple of years – good and bad – and it's not a subject that communications practitioners can afford to ignore. It's also a subject that should be included as part of any conversation about media evaluation.

The first point that must be stated when talking about "influencers", is that we have a problem with the nomenclature. "Influencer Marketing" as a concept has particularly taken off in the B2C world, especially on Instagram, where the premise is essentially a transaction between a brand and an influencer.

A recent trend in the last couple of years has seen the influencer 'category' being split into two distinct disciplines. This is mainly happening within some of the larger, multi-discipline agencies, but is also happening with brands that work across both the B2C and B2B space, or who are B2C focused but also have distinct comms strategy related to CSR.

On the one strand the term "influencer" is specifically referring to 'social media influencers' who brands intend to work with on a transactional basis (either through direct payments or some form of gifting), and for which the measurement is mainly along the lines of what would be considered traditional advertising metrics. Instagram is still the channel of choice – but expect to see Facebook try and control this transaction between brands and influencers more and more.

On the other strand the term 'influencer' is often substituted to avoid confusion between two very different approaches. Terms typically used are: 'Key Opinion Leader' (KOL), 'Subject Matter Expert', 'Key Stakeholder', 'Industry Influencers' and more. Therein lies the problem that there is no one single term that is universally accepted when we are looking for experts that are influential in their field, have an online profile, but aren't necessarily seeking paid brand partnerships.

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TRADITIONAL
- PUBLICATIONS
- JOURNALISTS
- ANALYSTS

INDUSTRY EXPERT
- BLOGGERS
- THOUGHT LEADERS
- SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SMEs)

ACADEMIC
- ACADEMICS
- RESEARCHERS
- UNIVERSITIES
- COLLEGES

BUSINESS LEADER
- C-SUITE
- SENIOR MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYEE
- INTERNAL SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS
- CUSTOMER FACING EMPLOYEES
- ALL STAFF

PROFESSIONAL
- TEACHERS
- DEVELOPERS
- PARENTS
- STUDENTS
- ENTREPRENEURS

TOPICAL COMMUNITY
- KEY THEMES
- PRODUCT CATEGORY
- PRODUCT BENEFITS
- PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY
- REPUTATIONAL ISSUES

BRAND ADVOCATE
- CUSTOMER ADVOCATES
- COMPETITOR ADVOCATES
- BRAND ADVOCATES

POLITICAL
- GOVERNMENT
- POLITICIANS
- CIVIL SERVANTS
- LOBBYISTS

CELEBRITY
- ACTORS
- MUSICIANS
- TV PERSONAS
- SPORTS STARS

In this article, I am going to be focusing on the second strand of influencer marketing, but to keep it simple, I am going to use the term 'influencer'. As you're reading this, swap the word 'influencer' with KOL or SME or whatever other term is best suited for your organisation!

It is this second category of influencer marketing where media measurement plays an important role. The engagement with influencers won't be primarily about paid-for engagements ('influencer advertising' as described above) and will need, for the most part, to be earned. This 'organic influencer marketing' or 'influencer relations' should be measured following similar principles to how other earned media should be measured.

WHO IS AN INFLUENCER?

Depending on which category of influencer marketing we're talking about, the definition of what an 'influencer' is, also changes dramatically.

When looking at paid influencer marketing the criteria is relatively* simple – Do they have lots of followers? Do they get lots of engagement? Do they have the right audience? Do they post the right sort of content?

* 'relatively' meaning that we do of course have to unfortunately contend with the fact that a lot of influencers have fake followers and fake engagement!

When looking at 'organic' influencer marketing, the criteria can be very different. Clearly having a large following

on social media and high levels of engagement matters as well, but it can be the case that there are many important influencers who don't have lots of followers or much engagement on their social channels.

The key here is to consider other factors:

- Do they have an important role in the real world?
- Are they well connected with other people who are influential online?
- Are they getting relatively high levels of on-topic engagement from other people focused on your key topics?
- Are they influential in other forms of media (they speak at events, write articles, are interviewed on TV etc)?

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The criteria for who is influential will vary massively depending on the topics that matter to your business. If you are focused on specific medical conditions as a business then your influencer community will likely be made up of a higher mix of both academics/medical professionals and patient advocacy campaigners, whereas a tech brand focusing on the Internet of Things, will probably include more journalists and business leaders. You may also be surprised how big and active some 'niche' communities are – in a recent report on Wealth Management influencers we found 7.6m posts on the topic in a year.

WHY SHOULD YOU INCLUDE INFLUENCERS IN YOUR EARNED MEDIA EVALUATION?

Now that we've established what we're not talking about – i.e. paying influencers to promote your brand – and that 'influencer' can mean quite a broad range of individuals, why is this relevant to media evaluation? There are many reasons, but we are going to focus on three core reasons.

1) INDIRECTLY IMPROVE YOUR MEDIA PROFILE

The people you're analysing who write about your brand in the media are not forming their opinions about your brand, your peers and the issues in your industry in a vacuum. They are forming their opinions based on a variety of interactions with a whole range of people and commentators, of which your own direct relationship with a journalist or publication will be just one factor. Many of these interactions will be happening on social media, meaning that they can be analysed! Knowing who your key media influencers are engaging with can help you understand what's shaping their view of your brand and the key issues in your industry. If you can see that a number of influential voices are critical of your brand and that the key journalists are engaging with those influencers, then there probably isn't a whole lot your press team can do to change their mind on an issue.

You'll instead need to focus on improving your relationships with the people shaping the views of the journalists.

A recent piece of research we did on the topic of 'AI' in the media found that the influencer Sandra Wachter (@ sandrawachter5), Professor in Law & Ethics of AI, Big Data & Robotics at Oxford University was the top influencer of journalists on the topic. It's not uncommon for journalists to look to experts like Sandra for views and comment on the issues of the day.

2) PLAN YOUR FUTURE CONTENT

Understanding what the leading experts are talking about can help you predict what tomorrow's issues are going to be. Aligning your content plans to this can help ensure that the content you are creating is relevant to the topics that will be hot tomorrow, not just today.

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> "Try to ensure that you have a good mix of different types of influencers and influencers who are focused on different topics."

> "Third parties saying positive things about your brand are always going to be more impactful than brands doing so themselves."

3) AMPLIFY YOUR CONTENT & REACH NEW AUDIENCES

Too often PR teams focus on getting good coverage and then trying to measure how well that coverage did. But why not also consider how to help good coverage get a boost via social sharing? This is where 'employee advocacy' programs regularly come into play and often about as far as they get. Typically, there's a centralised way of sharing positive coverage into a platform for staff to then share on their social channels. This can be impactful, especially if staff have tried to build their personal social networks. Where this becomes even more effective, is where an employee advocacy program is interlinked with an influencer engagement program, so that employees sharing content is more likely to result in influencers reading and sharing this same content with their audiences. Third parties saying positive things about your brand are always going to be more impactful than brands doing so themselves. In turn, if journalists see that their articles about a brand or topic are well received, they may be more inclined to write about it again in future.

HOW TO FACTOR INFLUENCERS INTO YOUR MEDIA EVALUATION

Once you've identified some of your key goals around analysing influencer conversations and engaging with influencers, how do you then incorporate this into your media evaluation?

Step 1: Identify your influencers
The first step is to define who your relevant influencers are and identify them. We do this mapping exercise in order to then define your influencer 'program', but you can call it something else. We use the word 'program' rather than 'campaign' as this is not meant to be a one-off event with a start and an end date, but rather an ongoing process and a key part of the comms and marketing strategy. We recommend that your influencer program includes 100 to 2000 influencers depending on the geographic scale, topical diversity and the breadth of the individual topics. In some cases, it can be better to have multiple 'programs' if the topic areas are completely different, but it is most commonly the case that topics

overlap and therefore it's better to group together in a single program. A 'typical' program will include 500-1000 influencers in it for a regional focus and about half a dozen key topics. Try to ensure that you have a good mix of different types of influencers and influencers who are focused on different topics. If you have 6 key topical focus areas as a business you may decide that you want 200 influencers for each topic area and then, considering there will be some overlap, end up with ~1000 influencers in your program.

When building your program, we also recommend you include some of your key employee advocates and also key spokespeople for your competitors.

Step 2: Map out the topical communities
Once you have identified the key influencers for your program, the next step is to track all of the key conversations relevant to your brand amongst that community.

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This exercise is similar to how you would setup social listening for key topics, but you can cast the net a bit wider in terms of keywords. For example, if you were interested in "Cloud Computing", you wouldn't just put the word 'cloud' into a social listening tool; you would instead need to add a range of "include" and "exclude" terms, to make sure you weren't getting conversations about actual clouds. When listening to an expert community, such context terms will result in you missing out a lot of important conversations. As you are tracking conversations amongst - for example, software developers – if they are talking about 'cloud' or 'java' or 'agile' they are probably not talking about the weather, coffee or sports.

Once you have mapped out the topical communities within your program you will be able to see who is connected to who and better understand where you might want to focus your efforts in terms of relationship building.

Step 3: Analyse the conversation
You probably already measure your brand share of voice for media coverage and social media so why not also track your influencer share of voice? This can be further broken down by topical community, so you can see how you are doing compared to your peers in terms of getting the attention of key influencer in each of your key topical focus areas.

Measure your relational strength with key influencers:

- How many meaningful interactions are your key advocates having with the key external influencers?
- What topics are being discussed in those exchanges?
- What articles are being shared?
- What is the sentiment shown towards different brands by different influencer groups?
- Are there emerging themes and issues that represent potential risks or opportunities for your brand?

Influencer analysis is different from media analysis as you are not necessarily measuring against your comms activity and your objectives. It can be about this in part, but the focus is rather about proving more context as to what is happening in the media coverage of your industry and helping you to plan your comms strategy for the future.

There is a lot more to the 'why' and 'how' of influencer marketing in the context of communications than can be covered in a short article. If you want to know more there are various free resources that you can find on the **Onalytica website** and **Influencer Academy**. [AMEC2019]

Alistair *heads up the product team and advises clients on influencer marketing strategy at organic influencer Marketing specialists* **Onalytica***.*

Prior to Onalytica Alistair was Head of Digital at Gorkana (then acquired by Cision) where he was the lead consultant for social media analysis solutions.

During his time with Gorkana Alistair led solutions that picked up a number of AMEC awards including the Platinum award in 2014 for work with Defra.

You can follow Alistair on **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**. If you would like to know more about working with influencers, check out Onalytica's new **The Complete Guide to Industry and B2B Influencer Marketing**.

FAILING FORWARD

Why we should focus on what doesn't work.

Allison Spray, Managing Director of Data and Analytics, H+K

The majority of data programs will fail. That's a good thing.

This was a bold point made by Allyson Hugley of Prudential at the start of the most recent AMEC Summit. It was also emphasized by Facebook's Daniel Stauber: "Success is a lousy teacher."

More than any other discipline, learning to accept – and even celebrate – failure feels challenging for public relations. This is perhaps even more true in the measurement space, where conversations often start from a point of 'proving your worth'.

But as the marketing and communications world becomes increasingly digital-first, we've seen a shift toward a test-and-learn approach from other disciplines where accountability is paramount. Surely if these data-led disciplines can learn not to fear failure, so can we?

So, what can PR professionals do to start to change the culture? First and foremost: we have to be willing to try and accept that not all outcomes will be what we expect.

We can look to some of the world's largest companies to understand how experimentation (and failing forward) is crucial to their aggressive growth. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has alluded to the importance of failure within their growth and innovation strategy.

"If you're going to take bold bets, they're going to be experiments," he explained in HBR shortly after Amazon bought Whole Foods. "And if they're experiments, you don't know ahead of time if they're going to work. Experiments are by their very nature prone to failure. But a few big successes compensate for dozens and dozens of things that didn't work."

In the PR context – you might not want to start with a large-scale acquisition.

But there are lots of small ways you can begin to embrace failing forward to improve your content and campaigns. Here are three to consider trying in your organisation.

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> "Experiments are by their very nature prone to failure. But a few big successes compensate for dozens and dozens of things that didn't work."

1. EMBRACE A TEST-AND-LEARN MODEL ON YOUR NEXT CAMPAIGN

Always-on reporting is becoming commonplace for brands during big launch moments. Why not take that data and turn it on its head?

Focus on what's not working, and what you can learn from it – rather than only telling a victory story with the big numbers. Make sure you can segment your data easily and then start to pull out the individual tactics that aren't landing. Are you struggling to get coverage in lifestyle titles? Is message 2 never included? Are gifs working but short-form video struggling?

Focusing on these areas can make sure you're using budget (and time) effectively and reveal truths about your audience you'd never know otherwise.

2. WHERE YOU DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION – TRIAL IT IN A REAL-WORLD SCENARIO

There are multiple ways this might work. Within a social context, you might consider creating some dark posts targeted at a segment of your audience with a new piece of collateral and test how it performs against your existing benchmarks. For a relatively small investment, you'll know whether it is worth pursuing further... or if you should go

back and try again. If you don't want to trial it with a live audience, you can also use primary research methods to understand how your audience is likely to respond.

Within H+K's behavioural science unit, we've worked with traditional survey vendors to create real-world experiences to test whether our hypotheses (for example, about messaging or design) bear out when put to use in a real-world scenario. Do they always work? No. Do we always come out with a better final product for having tested multiple, bolder iterations?

Absolutely.

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> ## "Focus on what's not working, and what you can learn from it – rather than only telling a victory story with the big numbers."

3. BE BOLD IN YOUR NEXT BIG MEASUREMENT OR RESEARCH PROJECT

This really comes down to study design. For most researchers, there are tried and true ways to get to the answer of a question. Maybe you even follow templates when it comes to certain requests.

If you're looking to fail forward, though, you have to be willing to take risks in your study design. Look at new metrics, or novel combinations of data. Ask your clients and partners for other datasets you can include. Know that not every piece of research will work out. Sometimes you will hit the data-equivalent of a dead end. But some will, and those with a willingness to fail and experiment are going to have a much higher rate of innovation in their use of data longer term.

Shifting our mindsets – individually or collectively – around our approach to failure is no small task. Measurement that really looks out for our blind spots and digs into what isn't working well won't show the rosy picture.

When you embrace failing forward, however, you can better improve content and reputations over time by listening to what your target audience is telling you. And really, what could be a better use of data and measurement than that? [AMEC2019]

Allison Spray *is the Managing Director of Data + Analytics for* H+K. *She is responsible for measurement, reporting and insight development as well as innovating new data strategies for clients.*

Allison is responsible for H+K's suite of Data + Analytics products, ranging from audience intelligence to insights to evaluation, including the 'Made to Measure' strategy linking measurement to business objectives. Allison brings a decade of experience in integrated measurement and creative brand strategy, overseeing global measurement and research programmes for Fortune 500 brands.

She is a well-respected industry figure and International Board Director for the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communications (AMEC). She has spoken on data and insights at numerous conferences, including PR Week's PR360, the ICCO Global Summit and the AMEC Global Summit.

You can follow **Hill + Knowlton Strategies** and **Allison** on Twitter

THE FUTURE OF PR?

AS MEASUREMENT REMAINS AN AFTERTHOUGHT IT THREATENS THE LEGITIMACY OF THE PROFESSION

Prof. Dr Ana Adi, Quadriga University

Communication practitioners and academics alike fail to list measurement and evaluation as essential to PR/Comms for the mid-term, finds the study PR2025[2]. Thus, they fail to recognize the fundamental role research plays in legitimising the profession and ensuring success of PR/Comms efforts. While this might be encouraging for measurement and evaluation supporters as it presents an opportunity to continue their work and a demand to intensify it, it is indicative of a historical legacy that is hard to shake off.

Let me explain: the way measurement and evaluation are referred to when speaking about PR/Comms has as much to do with the future of the profession as with its past, and as a whole, with its legitimacy and credibility. So, if measurement and evaluation remain an afterthought, then PR/Comms continue to linger in the land of unrealistic objectives, unfulfilled promises and next-to-best assessments of contribution to success. That future is bleak, objectifying and demeaning.

RESEARCH AS THE ESSENCE OF GOOD, SUCCESSFUL PR

For years now, practitioners and academics alike have lamented the poor perception of the profession, as the next best thing but not as good as Marketing and Advertising, failing to provide hard evidence for its contribution to organizational success. This is how Grunig's[2] iconic Excellence Study started, putting into theory the principles that would help PR show its contribution, legitimizing its practice, helping it be taken seriously. It thus specified:

how public relations makes organizations more effective, how it is organized and managed when it contributes most to organizational effectiveness, the conditions in organizations and their environments that make organizations more effective, and how the monetary value of public relations can be determined (Grunig, 1992: 27)[3].

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[1]Adi, A. (2019) PR2025: trends, competences and solutions for the near future of PR/Communications – Results of a Delphi method study. Quadriga University of Applied Sciences. Available from: **https://www.quadriga-university.com/sites/default/files/document/2019-06/PR2025_Adi.pdf**

[2]sponsored by the IABC in the 1980s and based on surveys and interviews with CEOs and communication practitioners based mostly in Europe and North America

[3]Grunig, J. E. (1992). Communication, public relations, and effective organizations: An overview of the book. In J. E. Grunig (Ed.), Excellence in public relations and communication management (pp. 1–28). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, p. 27

> # "A PR function that can report on its contribution to organizational success is more credible."

It is from here that the entire argument in favour of embedding research into the PR strategic process comes in, as research was seen to be able to provide the insight, overview and course for correction that an organization would need when navigating the complex relationships with its stakeholders. A PR function that can report on its contribution to organizational success is more credible.

Studies like the [Communication Monitor](#) series associate implementation of measurement and evaluation with excellence in communication. However, such studies are taking the current pulse of the profession. And while they do provide food for thought identifying development opportunities, they leave that gap opened.

PR2025 EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR BETTER MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

My study PR2025[4] was designed to specifically address that gap. Considering the rapid pace of technological innovation and business disruption and the many challenges they present to communicators: from deep fake to automation and artificial intelligence, from creating shared value to shared economy and circular economy, it is time that communicators ponder upon their development needs.

But no discussion of development can take place without a benchmark, without an assessment of current and of desired outcomes and more importantly without an assessment of the perceived and the desired role that communicators see themselves playing in their organizations and society. It is here that research should shine and thus measurement and evaluation be presented as embedded in the practice if symmetrical communication (two-way communication focused on negotiation and achieving mutual understanding with stakeholders) were to be seen as best practice.

And some references to research did indeed occur in the PR2025 study but they represented a minority[5]:

The role of PR within our consultancy to be increasingly data-led and technology driven in an ever-increasing complex communication landscape with shifting channels of communications which rise and fall in popularity and fluctuate between different segments of the public. The role will remain as the method of two-way communication between the organisation and its stakeholders with an emphasis

on horizon scanning for reputational risks, sentiment of the publics, and opportunities. (F, consultancy)

We will focus much more on data driven PR. The roles of PR professionals will change dramatically over the next years. Already today chatbots can create press releases. (M, agency)

Even in the qualitative round a preference for "trusted advisor" and "reputation management" was to be noticed:
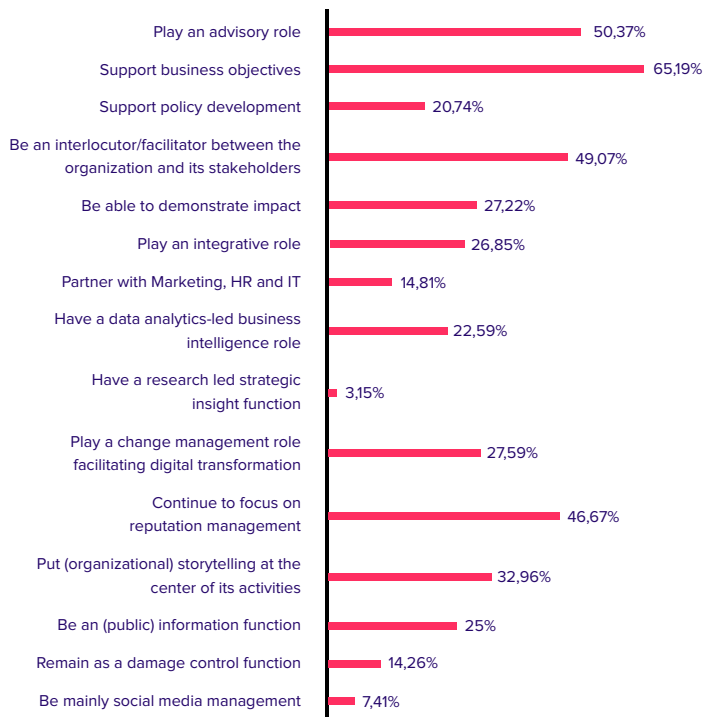
Becoming the trusted advisor, who gives wanted and unwanted suggestions how to improve and strengthen the position of the organization in society. Facilitating others in their appearances, public and internal, and help the organization to improve their communications. Organizations need to work on trust, need to become purpose driven (what would society miss, when organization is not existing anymore) and organization needs to promote their position in society (diversity, inclusiveness, CSR, etcetera). Organization will be (more than now) news and communication producer. Organization will extend its analytics (big data) to be able to have the newest insights on key issues. (M, academia)

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Play an advisory role — 50,37%
Support business objectives — 65,19%
Support policy development — 20,74%
Be an interlocutor/facilitator between the organization and its stakeholders — 49,07%
Be able to demonstrate impact — 27,22%
Play an integrative role — 26,85%
Partner with Marketing, HR and IT — 14,81%
Have a data analytics-led business intelligence role — 22,59%
Have a research led strategic insight function — 3,15%
Play a change management role facilitating digital transformation — 27,59%
Continue to focus on reputation management — 46,67%
Put (organizational) storytelling at the center of its activities — 32,96%
Be an (public) information function — 25%
Remain as a damage control function — 14,26%
Be mainly social media management — 7,41%

PR2025 (Adi, 2019) The future role of PR/Comms within own organization.

(n=36, Q1: What do you envisage the role of PR/ Communications to be in 2025 within your organization?

This preference was confirmed in the second round, when the respondents' consensus pointed out the supporter of business objectives (65.19%) and advisory roles (50.37%).

Only 3.15% of the respondents envisaged the role of PR in their organization to "have a research led strategic insight function". While one could argue that supporting business objectives and playing an advisory role both encompass a research and evaluation component, this might not necessarily be the case.

PR MUST BE SEEN AS RESEARCH-DRIVEN

Perhaps I am too pedantic here, but trusted advisor has to do with power and access to power (C-suite, board, "having their ear") and meeting business demands still puts money first before anything else (so here we'll be speaking more about ROI and less about reputation or responsibility).

None of these can be achieved without good research. But with communicators focusing on those aspects (power, relationships, acceptance and money), they make research secondary (a means to an end, but a fuzzy, not clear and not pursued). Until PR is seen as research-driven and PR and research go hand in hand, measurement and evaluation will be an afterthought and measurement and evaluation supporters will have plenty of work to do. [AMEC2019]

Prof. Dr Adi *writes, teaches and researches topics related to storytelling, protest public relations and corporate activism. Prior to joining Quadriga University of Applied Sciences and running their executive MBA Communication & Leadership program, Dr Adi has worked, lived and studied in the USA (with a Fulbright scholarship), Belgium, Bahrain, Thailand and the UK (and travelled far beyond).*

She is the Chair of the Digital Communication Awards in Berlin since 2015 and a member of the Institute for Public Relations Measurement Commission since 2018. She is the editor of the book Protest Public Relations: Communicating Dissent and Activism (Routledge) and the host Women in PR, a podcast series featuring professionals and research into PR (now available on SoundCloud, iTunes, Google Play, Spotify and Stitcher).

You can follow Ana on **Twitter** or visit **www.anaadi.net**

PROPER PLANNING, NOT BEAN COUNTING.

Andy West, Chris Paxton and Kevin Dulaney of
Global communications agency, Hotwire.

We're anti bean counting. Avidly so. Nothing personal, no doubt it has its place. If you have a ledger in which to record your stock of legumes, fine by us. Or a spreadsheet boasting tallies of fava, runner, kidney and other bean varieties, hats off to you. And surely there are people in Heinz who must stay on top of how many beans to buy. We're cool with all of that. Live and let live. A bean census can make sense.

Yet when it comes to communications, we take a much dimmer view of bean counting. For many years it's been the bane of the comms industry. A weakness and a failing.

The bitter truth of the matter is that agencies and clients seem obsessed with counting stuff. Whether that's counting clips, adding up impressions or totting up the dreaded AVEs

– a **discredited methodology** so sinfully spurious it pains us even to mention it by name! The industry remains awash with snake oil and vanity metrics.

Thankfully, the picture is changing. The more enlightened agencies and clients now take a more meticulous approach to planning and pursue measurement that offers genuine focus, purpose and power. And in this, they of course are supported by the sterling efforts of AMEC to champion best practice in the shape of welcome developments such as the globally popular **Integrated Evaluation Framework**.

As a midsize global agency with ambitious growth plans, we at Hotwire are passionate about our commitment to prioritising serious planning over feckless bean counting. Taking this stance is the only way to transform PR from the

poor relation of marketing (and business more widely) into a strategic driver for the organisation. That's where we all want PR to be, and indeed where it deserves and needs to be. It's high time that happened.

DELIVERING ORGANISATIONAL AND COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

In line with the laudable 'Common Ground' initiative **unveiled by AMEC a few months ago** which encourages agencies all over the world to set aside their competitive tendencies and unite around the common cause of raising the standard of measurement and evaluation everywhere, we're happy to talk openly about our way of putting insight at the heart of strategy development. And how we ensure our work is effective at delivering organisational and communications objectives.

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For us, planning is very much a process. It embraces measurement, evaluation and insight. All of which must be conducted systematically.

First of all, we have to gain a clear understanding of the business need; the organisational and communications objectives. As the AMEC Integrated Evaluation Framework makes clear, these come in a variety of forms, from awareness to advocacy, adoption, demand-generation and so on. For instance, do we want our target audience to visit a certain website, post a product review online or buy our client's latest cloud solution?

Clarity on the objectives will not only drive strategy development but also shape measurement planning in relation to judging the success of outcomes further down the line. Many agencies still struggle to do this well. Failure to get to the bottom of organisational objectives leads to woolly thinking around what the communications work should aim to achieve. The likelihood then is that the work will be wide off the mark. Hence, even if it's brilliantly creative, it isn't fit for purpose.

You should only judge the impact of your work against the agreed objectives. Anything else is a cop out. Or to be kind, a bonus.

DEFINING THE AUDIENCE AND OPTIMUM PATHWAYS

Once we have a clear handle on the business need, we move on to developing the strategy. Defining the audience and the optimum pathways to reach it lies at the heart of the strategy phase. Needless to say, data provides a fantastic amount of help here, allowing us to look at target groups in a robust, meaningful and differentiated way. Some of the technology we utilise helps us understand audiences not just demographically but also psycho-graphically, attitudinally and behaviourally. Among the tools we turn to for audience profiling is **GlobalWebIndex** which has a panel of over 17 million consumers, spread across almost 50 countries.

You can't be everything to everybody through every channel. Indeed, it's a nonsense to try. Good planning revolves around using measurement and data to make smart choices. In this way you can help clients identify and prioritise cohorts predisposed to their category and brand.

Historically, PR has been slow to come to the serious targeting party and consequently there have been far too many scattergun campaigns. The upshot of this is that many clients don't expect much in the way of "planning firepower" from their PR agencies. That needs to change.

At Hotwire, we have invested in building our planning capabilities and it is incumbent on us as an agency – and more broadly, for the agency sector as a whole – to convince clients that allocating budget for planning is money well spent. Although initially this can be a tough sell, once clients have agreed to make this sort of investment, they feel reassured. A focus on data and measurement allows them to feel comfortable about the direction of travel and the worth of our work.

Of course, the key to success often lies in how data is interpreted. 'Insight' is a much used and abused term.

Many facts and findings held up as being insightful are anything but. They may lack relevance, add to the information clutter and obscure far more important things. **»**

"You can't be everything to everybody through every channel. Indeed it's a nonsense to try."

One way we like to define insights is understanding an audience, including its motivations, problems and frustrations. Especially those frustrations we are in a position to solve.

UNEARTHING HIDDEN TRUTHS

Often there is a need to drill beneath the superficial to unearth hidden truths. Let's take something as simple as somebody buying a coffee. Why did they buy it? Because they wanted to try a new recipe containing Brazilian beans (sorry, beans have snuck back into our story!) instead of the Costa Rican ones in the old formula? Or because they were shattered and in dire need of a caffeinated pick-me-up after a sick child kept them up all night?

One product, two very different reasons for its purchase. Understanding the whys and wherefores enables us to plan much more effectively and target more precisely. While we'll never know the reason for every single decision, technological advances have

already made it easier to spot patterns and find evidence in support of behaviours.

As AI continues to develop and learn at breakneck speed, it will get ever better at harvesting online opinions and reviews that we can analyse to get to grips with the motivations behind a purchase or other action. And once hidden truths are revealed we can feed the insights they offer us into the planning process.

It's worth noting, however, that not every insight can be acted on. A product or service might not possess the right capabilities to exploit an opportunity. Perhaps a competitor already owns that particular space, maybe barriers to entry are too substantial. In such situations, honesty and realism matter a lot.

A QUALITATIVE MEASURE OF BRAVERY

Before starting on campaign implementation, there are a number of things we like to get straight. Budget is the

most obvious of these, but we also set a lot of store in trying to ascertain some sort of qualitative measure of bravery. Are clients willing to try something a little different, innovative or even out-there to distinguish themselves from the crowd? In other words, what is a brand's appetite for risk in a communications context?

Next, we need to get a handle on channel suitability. Can objectives be achieved using social media? Which channels and outlets provide the best fit in terms of message and core audience? We also need to address proof points. Are the claims the client proposes to make able to be substantiated? We're not in the business of promoting hot air or come to that inadvertently sowing the seeds of a crisis. Planning must be built on firm foundations.

To expand on that theme, best practice for planning entails client and agency working hand in hand with an onus on transparency. »

"Great data-driven insight is a boon to creativity, not a smothering blanket. What we must always keep in mind is that rigorous planning and testing gives fabulous creative work the opportunity to shine."

Clients prepared to share data about the performance of a particular category or product range make our lives easier and, in the process, help themselves. Accurate business intelligence that's relevant to the outcomes we want to drive can be a game changer.

There's an argument here for agencies to think bigger and be bolder by asking for higher level inputs than is typically the case. The fuller the picture we can work from, the better our strategic planning capability will be. A fact on its own might seem trivial but it may have a bearing on positioning strategy and channel choice that could make a significant difference. It pays to be thorough. This speaks also to the nature of the client-agency relationship. Those agencies with sophisticated planning tools and know-how will occupy a space that is far less about being a supplier and much more about being a strategic partner.

That carries through from campaign preparation to activation. Yes, some of the trusty old building blocks of comms activity such as spokesperson identification and writing killer press releases will remain largely unchanged. But the comms plans made at the outset can be tweaked, or if need be radically overhauled, as never before mid-campaign in what we can call a new age of feedback-driven flexibility.

A/B TESTING AND A PERFORMANCE MINDSET

More than at any other time in the past we can now easily conduct campaign tracking experiments. We often apply A/B testing to fine tune activity for maximum effectiveness. Is social post x more engaging than social post y? We need to think as performance marketers, measuring content by its impact. And not just the content. We can experiment on time of day for each platform to optimise reach and cut-through.

Selecting the best time of day for a social media post is becoming more commonplace.

Increasingly we're working with clients to understand for example whether posting on Monday at 9am resonates more or less than posting on Tuesday at noon. Is there a sweet spot when office workers take a morning coffee or cigarette break and check their phones? We see a glut of smartphone comments on Twitter at certain times of day and we can use this data to educate brands on the daily high and low points of social media use. And to educate our team.

Great data-driven insight is a boon to creativity, not a smothering blanket. What we must always keep in mind is that rigorous planning and testing gives fabulous creative work the opportunity to shine. Historically, measurement has to a large extent been about tracking how many pieces of coverage we are getting. There is still a role for this. But a key plank of measurement should be using it as guide to what we should do more of and what we should cut down on or dispense with altogether.

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HONESTY ABOUT FAILURE

We can optimise campaigns on the basis of what's working. Yet that's only one side of the coin. The flipside requires openness and honesty about what isn't working as well as we'd hoped. Not all facets of a campaign will be successful. Agencies must show the bravery not to hide away from aspects of a campaign that fall flat. We must have the confidence to front up and tell clients, "we tried this, and it did not work."

This is far from the end of the world. With dynamic measurement at our disposal, we can change course swiftly if necessary and make continual improvements to ensure a campaign delivers on its all-important objectives. There's more to it than quick fixes, however. Lessons learnt can and should be applied to future communications programmes. They must be fed back into the planning process to ensure the next campaign is even better than the last.

To us, this is the antithesis of bean counting. Evaluation must be so much more than a montage of press clippings and a pat on the back. Instead it should contain serious analysis together with recommendations

on what to do differently or better that can be fed into the next round of the planning cycle. If we test, take snapshots and pull through what we have learnt, our planning process will be stronger and those involved in it better armed to make recommendations.

This also puts us on a stronger footing to guard against vanity metrics and off-message spotlight hogging. Pandering to a client CEO's ego is ill-advised. Many an agency has been on the receiving end of awkward conversations that run along the lines of, "our CEO really wants to appear in this leading publication."

An interview in said publication may be a bad fit for organisational objectives. Rigorous, evidence-based planning makes it easier to steer clients away from a faux pas in the media minefield. Best practice in planning ensures communications activity stays on course and delivers business outcomes linked to business objectives.

INVESTMENT IN AI AND OTHER TECH SOLUTIONS

Staying on top of best practice requires investment in technology and analytics.

We've already mentioned AI in passing but clearly it will play a bigger role in the coming years. Rapid data transference combined with machine learning will speed up decision making and accelerate strategy development. We'll be able to access every datapoint you can think of. The trick will lie in not being overwhelmed and knowing what to look for – perhaps an anomaly that is the gateway to a mind-blowing insight!

Monitoring platforms are evolving and by necessity that evolution must be ongoing. While AI is already very effective at content identification and classification on text-led platforms such as print publications and many websites, there are big challenges to be overcome in monitoring video- and image-led platforms such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram which of course are hugely popular with younger audiences.

In future, voice interpretation and visual image recognition – for example, to pick up on the use of a brand logo – will have a bigger part to play in measurement and we must all embrace this.

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"You should only judge the impact of your work against the agreed objectives. Anything else is a cop out. Or to be kind, a bonus."

In planning and measurement terms we must also be mindful of the subconscious impact of rating systems. Consider how quickly TripAdvisor, Glassdoor and countless other review sites have established themselves. Everything has a rating now. It's fair to say that many business decision makers care very little about what a brand says about its own products and services; they would much rather form an opinion on the basis of what the community is saying.

We need to understand the positive and negative influence and impact of such comments. That's why at Hotwire we are looking at several tools with databases for rating systems that will allow us to gather valuable data on the sentiments expressed. And then incorporate those into our planning and evaluation.

One of the reasons so many people in the PR industry are obsessed with social media 'likes' and 'shares' is because they are binary metrics that are very easy to count. However, true analytics is about spotting patterns and you can't really spot patterns just by counting things. AI will enable us to build categories of things to provide guidance, insights and answers. That's an opportunity that we as business have to take, because we're strategists and deliverers of results.

We won't be swayed from our focus on proper planning and robust measurement. Tip all the beans you like on our desks, we refuse to count them! [AMEC2019]

Andy West *is Chief Development Officer at Hotwire and serves on the Board of AMEC. A passionate measurement evangelist, Andy is responsible for the firm's global sales and marketing as well as working with three of Hotwire's largest clients.*

You can follow Andy on **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**

Chris Paxton *is Chief Strategy Officer at Hotwire. He specialises in insight based strategy and activation and has a long history working globally with technology, FMCG and retail brands, helping them through their corporate, brand and innovation planning*

You can follow Chris on **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**

Kevin Dulaney *is VP & Global Head of Technology at Hotwire where he is overseeing the deployment of a deep technology stack to support the firm's commitment to data centric insights.*

You can follow Kevin on **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**

Hotwire *is a global communications agency that helps brand better connect and engage with customers. We are the right size of global agency to provide deep insights, meaningful creative platforms and measurable campaigns to brands that are looking for a fresh approach to local and international communication challenges.*

Andy, Chris and Kevin are at the vanguard of pushing Hotwire's data and insights capabilities to the next level. A powerful trio with a background in PR, brand marketing, market research and technology, this team is challenging the status quo not just across Hotwire but across the industry. Each is passionately committed to the AMEC principles and to proving the impact campaigns have.

ADDING VALUE TO THE MEASUREMENT EQUATION

Deb Camden, Australian Innovator, The Communication Dividend

This Measurement Month, I'm feeling bold and ambitious. Embracing my inner disruptor, I'm issuing a global challenge – to shift our thinking from measurement and evaluation as a process to focus on the value we create.

After all, business begins with value and as professionals involved in advancing the communication and PR profession, we have an integral role to play in organisations of all sizes, shapes and purposes. Value creation is the future of business and society. In this regard, we can learn from the industry-leading work of AMEC Fellow, Fraser Likely. Writing in "Demonstrating the value of communication Part II", Fraser and his co-author, Dr Alexander Buhmann, Assistant

Professor, BI Norwegian School of Business, present an overarching model to assist Chief Communication Officers (CCOs) put the AMEC Integrated Evaluation Framework into a broader evaluation context. They share insights on measurement for effectiveness and evaluation for value – that is, evaluation for merit and worth.

HOW LONG HAVE WE BEEN TRYING TO PROVE PR'S VALUE?

It's sobering to reflect that it's taken almost 170 years to achieve the current state of play for communication measurement and evaluation from the humble beginnings of the world's first press clipping agency established in London

in 1852. Polish newsagent, Henry Romeike, found actors, writers, musicians and artists would visit his shop to look for articles about themselves. It was then he realised he could turn this curiosity into a profitable business laying the foundation for today's flourishing world of media intelligence.

Professor Tom Watson in his paper, "The Evolution Of Evaluation – The Accelerating March Towards The Measurement Of Public Relations Effectiveness" offers a timeline that shows US presidents from George Washington onwards monitoring newspapers to gain intelligence on what was being said about them and the views of fellow citizens.

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Beyond the political sphere, by the late 19th century, many industries and groups in the US – from railroads to temperance societies and evangelists - also were tracking media coverage and public opinion.

From the late 1970s onwards, PR measurement and evaluation has been a major practice subject and has been identified as an important issue for research and practice implementation (McElreath, 1980, 1989; Synnott and McKie, 1997; Watson and Noble 2007; Watson 2008). Under AMEC's leadership over the past 23 years, we've seen major breakthroughs with the Barcelona Principles 1.0 and 2.0, Integrated Evaluation Framework (IEF), Measurement Maturity Mapper (M3), certification and education.

MAKING M&E = BUSINESS AS USUAL

While it's true, we've come a long way, it is even truer that there is still a way to go. Progress in business is being made at a rapid pace with new technology and new possibilities emerging every day. Yet, the reluctance to embrace measurement and evaluation as a core skill for communicators continues.

As recently as two years ago, I was at a communication conference in Singapore, and in the closing session, the topic turned to measurement. One of the panel members was bold enough to ask the question many seasoned PR conference delegates were thinking - "When are we going to stop talking about the need for measurement and evaluation?"

The results of AMEC's 2019 Global Insights Study are the compelling facts that underscore the challenge that lies ahead:

- A persistent barrier to business development is a perceived lack of client knowledge about the value of measurement and evaluation – often in the higher reaches of client organisations.
- A barrier to growth of measurement revenues is a lack of understanding of measurement and evaluation, how it works and where the value lies. Almost 4 in 10 (39%) gave this response.

We can't afford to wait another 170 years or even another 10 years to evolve measurement and evaluation practice to the point where it's no longer a topic of conversation because it's finally practised as business as usual.

BEYOND OUTCOMES TO VALUE CREATION

Demonstrating that communication is at the heart of value creation could be the key that unlocks sustainable long-term support for communication.
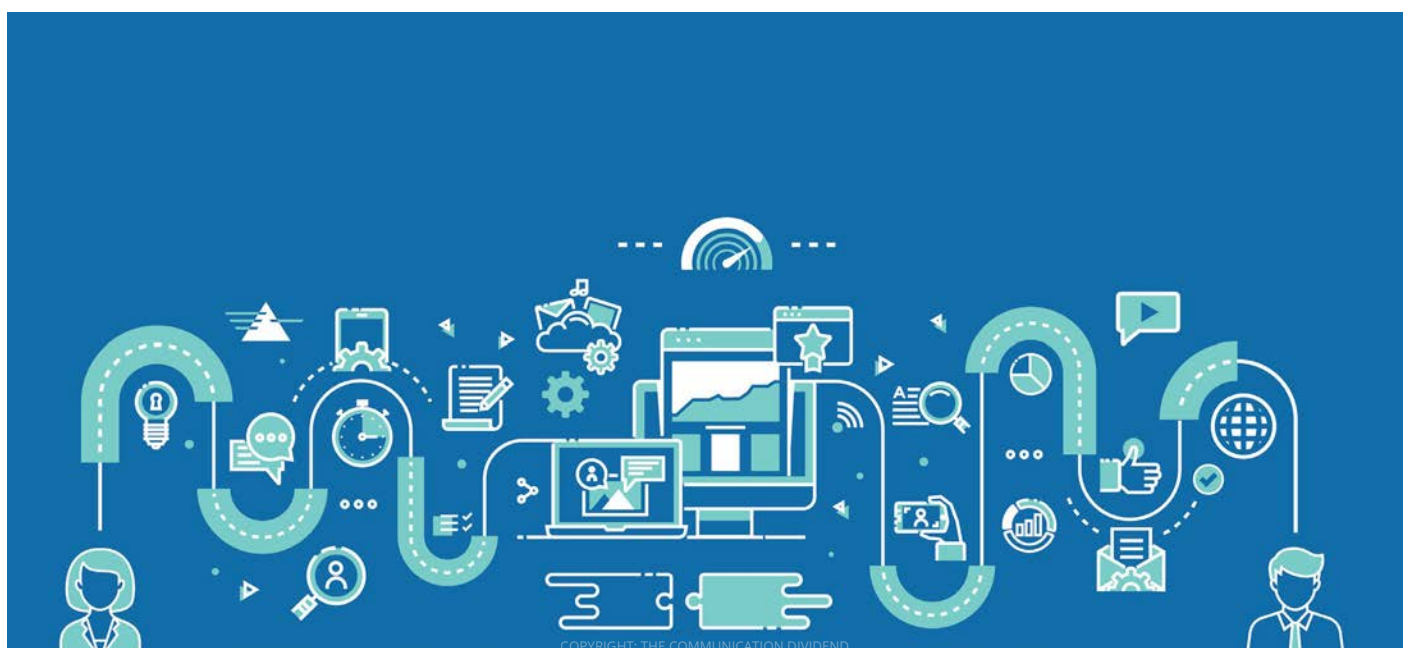
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> **"Shifting our collective focus to value creation is not going to happen overnight. It will take time and it will be challenging but it also could be professionally reinvigorating."**

For that key to shift our focus and the conversation from measurement and evaluation as a process to a conversation around value - the value we create as communicators and the value made possible through measurement and evaluation – what do we need to do?

The answer, in my view, lies in three priorities for future attention:

1. continuing to educate our profession and our organisations
2. evolving our frameworks to recognise communication as a process for creating value
3. developing new metrics that illustrate the value that communication creates for business and for society.

Education: AMEC's role in educating the market about evaluation is well recognised by members with 30% identifying it as the most important way in which AMEC can help them conduct business, and an additional 46% place this aspect of AMEC's function in second or third spot. That significant result is evidence of support for education as a motivating force for change and transformation.

New frameworks: Growing recognition of the importance of intangible assets including communication is providing the ideal opportunity to evolve our frameworks and to explore non-traditional methodologies of measurement that will resonate with the C-suite.

New metrics: Identifying and adopting value-based communication metrics that corporate leaders and others involved in shaping corporate performance can use to account for the contribution that communication makes to the value creation process, will go a long way to help communicators validate our worth.

Shifting our collective focus to value creation is not going to happen overnight. It will take time and it will be challenging but it also could be professionally reinvigorating.

Early in my career, I was Women's Editor of an afternoon newspaper in Australia. Even in the early 1980s, as an ambitious 22 year old, I realised that the true measure of my success would be achieved when my position was made redundant – when there was no such position as a Women's Editor because there would be general acceptance both by management and our readers, that the news that affected women was news that affected everyone. Fast forward 40 years and a Google search for "women's editor" reveals a satisfying absence of these roles.

In the same vein, AMEC and all of us will know we have achieved our purpose, when PR measurement and evaluation is not regarded as an optional extra but such an intrinsic part of professional practice that it no longer needs to be discussed or debated. It is simply and universally accepted and embraced because at last, corporate leaders and decision-makers understand the value we create. [AMEC2019]

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Deb Camden *is the Australian innovator behind* **The Communication Dividend**, *a new best-practice measurement framework that empowers communication professionals to prove their value.*

A self-confessed evangelist for measurement and evaluation, Deb has blended learnings from more than three decades of professional practice along with industry and academic research to create a measurement solution that provides the missing link between business strategy and communication strategy. Designed for even the most number-challenged communication professional, it uses leading-edge technology to help communicators prove and improve the business value of their work.

Another of her innovations is a **SMART Objective Builder**, *a free web app to help communication and PR professionals develop measurable objectives.*

When she's not thinking about PR measurement and evaluation, Deb enjoys watching whales on their migration from Antarctica to the warm waters off the coast of Australia's Sunshine State of Queensland.

+61 409 060947
deb@commdiv.com.au
You can follow Deb on
LinkedIn and **Twitter**

THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF MEASURING COMMUNICATIONS IN ASIA PACIFIC

how to make an impact across multiple markets

Emma Smith, CEO, Sandpiper Communications

Consultancy life is hard work. Period. But try delivering a "one measurement fits all" approach to a region of 48 countries and 3,200 languages, which boasts the two most populous nations, China and India; the world's most aged country Japan; the fastest aging country South Korea; and Indonesia where 42% of the population is under the age of 25, and you have your work cut out for you.

Luckily, I love a challenge. But I also love results. Having worked in communications in Asia Pacific for over twenty-five years, I know first-hand how difficult it is to implement and measure multi-market programmes. Designing a campaign that will have a similar outcome from Pakistan to Penang, Singapore to Seoul with multiple languages, cultures, stages of development and sophistication is nigh on impossible. Each market is different, each with a varying degree of sophistication and appetite for the brand or issue you are promoting.

MEASURING IN MULTIPLE MARKETS

Multi-market measurement requires a combination of tools and approaches since every market is different, and different tools have different language capabilities, for example. What looks like success in one market may be failure in another. Often, we see companies over simplifying measurement by just looking at awareness and sentiment, which tells you very little and are not actionable.

But times are changing. As Asia Pacific becomes the world's growth engine so must our methods and flexibility in measuring and evaluating become more sophisticated and nuanced.

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OBJECTIVES FIRST

For every programme, be it a major campaign or a small project, the most important question is to ask: "what is the objective?" - remembering that the objective could be on several levels.

It could start with a simple output such as quality and quantity of media and social media coverage; seniority and number of attendees at an event; or number of potential influencers met one-to-one by our client. But it then moves to the outcomes and business results – how can our work have an impact on sales, lower costs, raise share prices or influence opinion on an issue or about a client brand?

Importantly, we measure the big business outcomes AND the small, incremental tasks. We're equally passionate about

consistent levels of client service, from how quickly we answer the telephone or reply to email, as we are how many proactive ideas we have offered.

So, before any programme begins, we always ask what are our short-term and long-term goals? This leads us to asking what does our audience think or do now – be it buying, voting or simply their perceptions of an issue or topic – and how can public relations have an impact on this?

We are fortunate to work with many leading financial, healthcare and consumer clients who have deep customer relationship and marketing functions, and well-structured sales funnels and understanding of their unit economics. This means we know a lot about their customer personas – it helps us to know where to target our communications, be

it via traditional media, digital news, social media, events, roadshows or one-on-one briefings. It also means we can tap into their established brand and customer tracker surveys to measure and evaluate our own work by seeing the before and after picture.

However, some of our clients are relatively new players or may be breaking into new markets, or focusing on change and internal communications, so we need to think and approach this differently. In these cases, where the base research is not available, we and our clients are not too proud to use traditional and social media share of voice, content analysis, impressions and click-through rates, as well as simple online surveys to track how well a campaign is doing and what needs to be changed. »

"Too often objectives are set in isolation. The challenge with all measurement models is not the 'what', it is the 'how'."

USING THE AMEC INTEGRATED EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

That's why we're fans of AMEC's Integrated Evaluation Framework. Since it was first developed, we've been able to use it as a basis for all our measurement. We rarely use it 'as is' – that's it's beauty. It's a great model which can be adapted to almost every client situation.

The most important part of the AMEC framework is, I believe, the setting of clear objectives that link to the business strategy. Too often objectives are set in isolation. The challenge with all measurement models is not the 'what', it is the 'how'. The same is true with the AMEC framework. Most companies have ideas of what they should measure, they just lack the skills and capability to know how to find out what they want to know. Therefore, the how might

involve looking across the business beyond the communications team to see what other measurement is taking place that could be used for, or integrated with, the communications measurement programme.

Everyone knows that a strategic communication programme is a marathon, not a sprint. A launch event or a month-long media relations effort cannot alone address a real business problem. But by even measuring the output and outcome over a short period of time we can instil confidence with the program direction, and this demonstration of results is what oftentimes leads to a longer and more meaningful assignment.

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY IS AN ART FORM

Despite the number of tools and measurement companies

out there, I believe companies are still not harnessing technology well enough for true programme measurement. Data analytics can certainly unlock insights from all sorts of data sets that were previously difficult to access. However, the problem now is not the lack of data, it's the art of drawing together the right data to distil effective and meaningful insights that can be used for the basis of smart objectives and measurement.

Consultancies need clients willing to take measurement seriously and invest time in this area to build truly strategic programmes. Too often still clients fall back on comfortable measures around brand awareness, number of media clippings, etc. This is a mistake, as effective measurement helps strengthen the internal business case for investment in communications in the first place.

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FIVE 'MUST DO" ACTIONS

I mentioned to one of my longest-standing clients that I was writing this piece, and we agreed on five "must do" actions for a happy measurement outcome:

1. SET KPIS UP FRONT
To be successful and effective, public relations programmes must be embedded in research (be it our own research or research belonging to our client), which is used to set the KPIs, develop the strategy and design the tactics.

2. REMEMBER YOUR CLIENT ALSO HAS A CLIENT
Know what KPI the 'big boss' wants to achieve. This may mean a business-oriented measurement goal such as improvement to sales numbers, but it could equally mean how often the 'boss' wants to see her name appear in the media!

3. DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL
When it comes to measurement tools, don't over-complicate as this often has the opposite effect to making things simple. Use client-owned trackers and ready-made digital measurement tools where possible as these are often quicker to implement. I don't know anyone who has not used SurveyMonkey at some point in their career and it can be a very effective snapshot.

4. KEEP THINGS SIMPLE
If you make KPIs simple, they can be reported and evaluated more frequently. BUT remember, please don't make them more important than the actual program (it's easy to get obsessed with measuring and forget to be creative)

5. BE FLEXIBLE
Programme parameters change frequently in Asia Pacific due to anything from a political event to devastating weather. Clients and consultancies must be ready to adapt programmes and KPIs.
[AMEC2019]

Emma *has spent more than 25 years in Asia Pacific, working in almost every country in this dynamic, fast growing region. She has worked for one of the world's largest public relations firms, having been APAC CEO of Weber Shandwick, before building her own firm, which she sold to MHP Communications in 2013 and bought back in 2019, rebranding the newly independent business as* **Sandpiper Communications**. *Currently she is the CEO of Sandpiper, a strategic corporate communications consultancy, and manages the firm's business globally from its headquarters in Hong Kong.*

During her time in Asia Pacific, she has worked with some of the world's largest companies and complex issues, including Tung Chee-hwa's successful campaign to be the Hong Kong SAR's first Chief Executive, and the Beijing Olympic Committee's successful 2008 Summer Games bid.

She is a former board member of PRHK and IABC HK and has sat on IABC's International Advisory Committee. In recent years, she has been listed in PRWeek's Global Power Book and is a judge of PR and Public Affairs Awards in Asia. Her firm won Financial Communications Campaign of the Year for 2017 and 2018 for its work with clients. She is a part-time lecturer for MBA and EMBA students and sits on the board of two, Hong-Kong based charities.
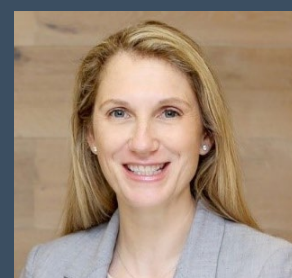
You can follow Emma on **LinkedIn**

SIX
measurement
lessons
from the Master Jedi, Yoda

Francois Van Dyk, Operations Jedi, Ornico

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, lived the oldest and most powerful Jedi Master Yoda, teacher all other Master Jedis including Obi-Wan Kenobi, Count Dooku, Ki-Adi-Mundi and later Luke Skywalker. Though little is known about his origins and home world, he is known for having trained the Jedi for more than 800 years – a true master indeed.

This little green character from Star Wars was selected by Empire Magazine as the "25th greatest movie character of all time". Originally appearing in The Empire Strikes back (1980) he has been part of popular culture for almost four decades - especially his unusual way of speaking.

Many of his sayings, and indeed his syntax, has become legendary. But let us have a closer look and see what we can learn about PR measurement and evaluation from some of this wise Jedi's most famous quotes:

"YOU MUST UNLEARN WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED"

I see the term "PR Pro" being used all over Twitter and industry blogs. It seems to infer that any Public Relations person is automatically a "pro" or professional. Though industry bodies such as the IPR, ICCO and the PRCA have done amazing work to professionalise the industry there are still many "PR pros" who have little grasp about the true scope of Public Relations and communication.

PRCA Director General and ICCO Chief Executive, Francis Ingham, recently noted that the latest UK PR surveys showed that the use by British practitioners of discredited measurements such as Advertising Value Equivalents (AVEs) had dropped to only 7%. But he expressed his dismay that up to 26% did no measurement and evaluation at all.

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This is a serious concern as the UK has one of the most mature and professional markets compared to the rest of the world. Though the latest AMEC Global Insight Study 2019 shows that client demand for poor measurements such as AVEs has dropped to 13% it still remains a mainstay or indeed the only measurement of "value" for many practitioners globally.

Measurement guru KC Brown called AVEs and multipliers "the biggest lie in PR" in his 2011 YouTube video. I could not agree more.

The best place to start learning about good measurement and evaluation is to unlearn these old "truths", which have long been discredited.

"IN A DARK PLACE WE FIND OURSELVES, AND A LITTLE MORE KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS OUR WAY"

Communicators with little or no measurement knowledge must indeed find themselves in a very dark place. AMEC has done phenomenally well to create and grow industry-wide knowledge and practices in a relatively short amount of time. It is difficult to believe that it has been less than a decade since the launch of the Barcelona Principles in 2010.

With many free AMEC resources available such as the Integrated Evaluation Framework, the Measurement Maturity Mapper (which tracks your progress towards better measurement and evaluation practices) and paid certification courses through the AMEC College, there are no excuses to not to gain the knowledge to light your measurement darkness.

Why would you not like to demonstrate the true value of your communication activities?

"IF NO MISTAKE HAVE YOU MADE, YET LOSING YOU ARE... A DIFFERENT GAME YOU SHOULD PLAY"

A recurring theme echoed by several speakers at the 2019 AMEC Global Summit on Measurement, held in Prague, was to embrace failure. It is a natural instinct of many communication and public relations practitioners to always focus on the success of campaigns rather than the poor performers.

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> **"There will always be communicators that are further along their measurement journey than you and that's fine. As long as you remain curious to learn and grow, to explore and discover the previously unknown which now becomes obvious, you will be on the right path."**

However, as keynote speaker, Prudential's Allyson Hugley noted, innovation comes from not being scared of getting things wrong – if you are not failing you are not succeeding.

"Mess up, just don't make the same mistake twice," said Sam Ruchlewicz from Warschawski. Facebook Marketing Science Expert, Daniel Stauber believes that success is a poor teacher and much more learnings can be had from failed campaigns. So, do not be afraid of making mistakes once you embrace best measurement practices. Experiment, play and learn – it is an exciting journey to continuously improve your measurement and evaluation skills.

"THROUGH THE FORCE, THINGS YOU WILL SEE. OTHER PLACES. THE FUTURE... THE PAST"

Another central theme that emerged at the AMEC Global Summit was that measurement and evaluation is shifting from analysing past activities to becoming a critical tool for strategic planning to improve future performance.

Though many brands and organisations still get their monthly reports to provide an analysis of media coverage received, including clipping numbers and maybe even sentiment, the focus now needs to shift to create learnings for future planning.

Data and intelligence can become very dangerous if analysed in isolation and organisations need to start combining not only marketing and communication data but also Human Resources (HR) information, Customer Relations Management (CRM) and even IT data, to gain true insights. If social media commentary is negative about a brand, they need to look at employee motivational levels, the efficiency of IT systems and many other factors which

may play a role. Fix the correct issues and reputational risks will decrease. No amount of marketing activity will improve a poor product or service. All these things are related. So, stop just looking backward but utilise the intelligence to guide the future path of the business.

"MUCH TO LEARN YOU STILL HAVE...MY OLD PADAWAN... THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING!"

The rate at which new innovations, technologies and methodologies are improving the measurement and evaluation practice is astounding. The AMEC Global Insight Study 2019 shows that 82% of members surveyed are increasing their investment in innovation. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence are seeing more introduction in the industry, particularly for thematic or topic extractions, influencer identification and predictive analytics.

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It is however flawed to believe that fancy new technologies will give you all the answers. In many cases technology creates a measurement bias – just because Facebook indicates "likes" on a post you end up measuring the "likes" rather than measuring what matters.

The Insight Study shows that in terms of client service the biggest client demand in 2019 is for a combined mix of measurement, analytics and insights, as well as for high end professional consultancies –

hence knowledgeable people who can assist them to achieve their goals.

There will always be communicators that are further along their measurement journey than you and that's fine. As long as you remain curious to learn and grow, to explore and discover the previously unknown which now becomes obvious, you will be on the right path. You can map your progress using the Measurement Maturity Mapper.

"ALWAYS PASS ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED"

Well, this is an obvious one! Share the love. Empower your colleagues and organisation with the knowledge you are gaining. Let us build the Public Relations and communication profession to a true professional standard. So we can actually distinguish the real "PR Pros" from the "non-pros". So good luck, and may the force be with you! [AMEC2019]

Francois van Dyk, is Operations Jedi at **Ornico**, the African Brand Intelligence research company. He studied and taught public relations a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away.

Being passionate about the advertising, journalism and public relations fields, he joined Ornico in 2002 where he oversees all advertising, editorial and social media monitoring, analysis and cultural functions.

Francois is an International Board Director of **AMEC** (the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication) – the world's largest PR and communication measurement organisation with membership in 86 countries. He also serves on the Measurement Council of the IAB South Africa.

When not battling villains, he writes articles where he muses on issues ranging from public relations and marketing to measurement and evaluation best practices. He has been a speaker on communication measurement and marketing at workshops and conferences in South Africa, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Spain, The Czech Republic, Namibia, Botswana, Kenya and Nigeria.

A favourite pastime is teaching young padawans better measurement and evaluation skills.

You can follow Francois on
Twitter
francoisv@ornicogroup.co.za
+27 11 884 5041

Ornico City
90 Albertina Sisulu Road
Johannesburg CBD
South Africa

REBOLD

EDUCATION IN MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION through a practical guide with examples of the IEF

Jesús Bélmez,
Media Intelligence Director, Rebold

Wanting to push the Spanish-speaking communication industry to adopt measurement & evaluation faster, Rebold created a brand-new M&E guide in Spanish and launched it via an innovative multi-session event in partnership with other stakeholders.

We are currently experiencing a process of transformation in multiple fields and the communication industry is no stranger to this process. The multiplication of channels and platforms for disseminating content, changing habits of media and content consumption, the dispersion of audiences and the continuous empowerment of the final consumer, who produces and disseminates his or her own content, are all leading the communication departments to adapt to a new scenario.

A few years ago, discussions about measurement and evaluation in communication could be classified as exclusive and only suitable for a niche group of professionals,

but at present they are indispensable for the survival of any professional working in communication and public relations.

Strategic planning requires, more than ever, a global vision to mark coordinated objectives and actions, always taking the audience as a reference and objective point. Therefore, the optimization of a communication strategy cannot be understood without an adequate and continuous evaluation of its effects and its consequent use for future planning.

In spite of this, according to the PRCA PR & Communications Census 2019, 26% of public relations professionals do

not perform any type of measurement and evaluation of their work. In the case of Spain and Latin America, despite the pedagogical and dissemination efforts made by Rebold (former Accesso), we find that this discipline is unknown by many professionals in organizations throughout the country.
For more than 12 years, Rebold has been supporting AMEC in the definition of and search for a communication measurement standard.
We have lived passionately the birth, development and evolution of essential tools such as the Barcelona Principles 2.0, AMEC's Integrated Evaluation Framework (IEF) or the Measurement Maturity Mapper.

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However, in spite of the fact that we have been promoting these tools for more than 10 years, we have not achieved a deep acceptance of them in Spain and Latin America. Because of this, and after several meetings with clients with whom we are working closely, we concluded that we needed a guide in Spanish that explained the methodologies proposed by AMEC in detail.

A GUIDE IN SPANISH TO PROMOTE MEASUREMENT DISCIPLINE AND THE IEF

As a result, the **Measurement and Evaluation Guide for Excellence in Communication** was born, and in it we explain, with practical applications, not only each phase of the framework, but also the reason for each of them. In addition, we describe all the guidelines that facilitate a correct and efficient measurement and evaluation and, consequently, the keys to an optimization of the strategy for a correct measurement of communication. We also incorporate all the metrics and dimensions appropriate for each specific case: our own channels, public relations, social communities, digital advertising, social media marketing, influencer marketing, etc.

This Guide is intended for the few Directors of Intelligence in communication departments, less than 20 throughout Spain, (we hope that this will help to increase the number!), Account managers in communication agencies, University Professors of Corporate Communication and, hopefully, Analytical Communication Directors.

In our messages, we emphasize how a correct measurement of their work can help them to be more relevant in their organization and work for excellence in their job. We explain to the Directors of Intelligence how it will provide them with a measurement framework, and they will not have to invent what is already invented and accepted globally.

To the Account managers in communication agencies, it will help them to create a self-assessment model to understand how customers are, or should be, by measuring their work. To the Directors of Communication, it would help to know what questions should be asked and how they can be answered, to report, analyse, plan and set objectives in communication.

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> **"Strategic planning requires, more than ever, a global vision to mark coordinated objectives and actions, always taking the audience as a reference and objective point."**

Finally, and with an entity to be highlighted, we tell the University Professors of Corporate Communication that this guide should be the seed to help them to create academic content about a discipline that, unfortunately, is not a subject in degrees, postgraduate courses and master's degrees in Spain and is essential to guide and create true communication professionals.

CYCLES AND CONFERENCES TO TELL PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS AND SUCCESS STORIES

In order to strengthen the dissemination of the Guide, we organized, together with **Dircom** (Association of Communication Managers), the First Measurement and Evaluation Seminar to achieve Excellence in Communication, taught in Madrid and Barcelona during the first half of 2019. We designed a cycle of four sessions to analyse the keys to carry out an effective measurement that helps the measurement in terms of intangibles and reputation as well as sales and business
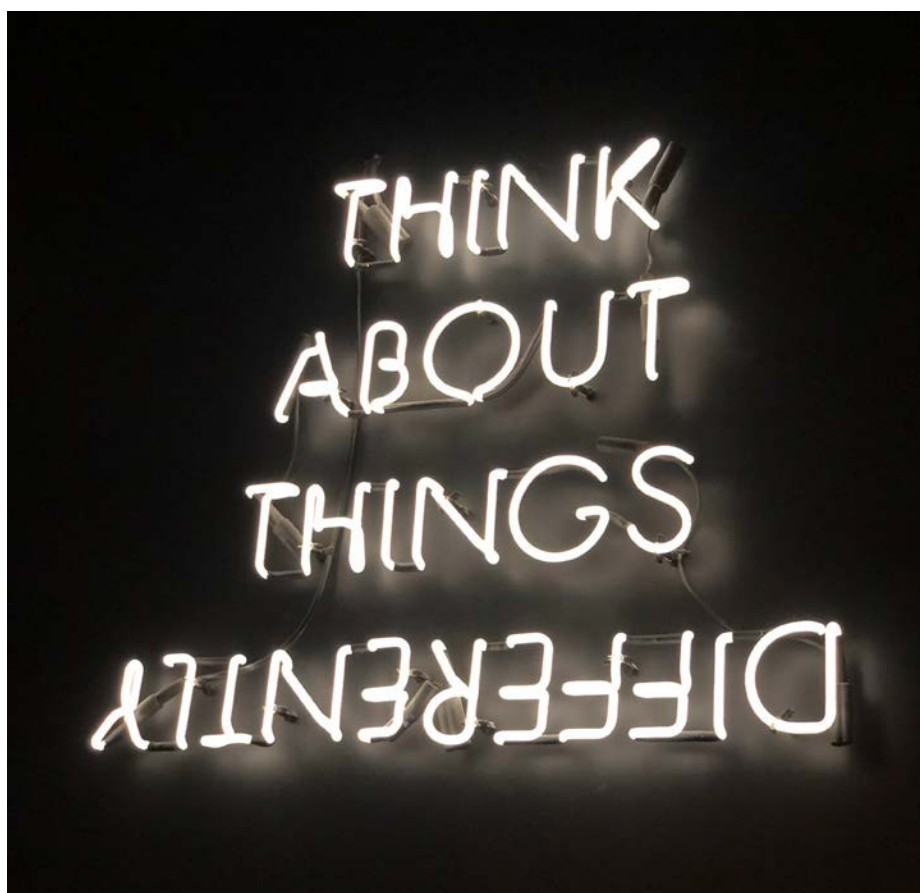
results. Each session delved into the changes that should be applied in companies to move towards a comprehensive model of measurement and evaluation of communication that incorporates the learning and progress of the Integrated Evaluation Framework (IEF) of AMEC.

The aforementioned Integrated Evaluation Framework

contemplates communication comprehensively, thus establishing an itinerary that serves as a guide to optimize the communication strategy through a more effective measurement of its effects. To present this itinerary in a practical way, each of the sessions was carried out by experts from the sector and through the presentation of practical cases.

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The first session *"Outputs: from measurement to evaluation"* focused on the analysis of the dissemination of messages.

What are the KPIs to measure the dissemination of communication? How to incorporate social networks into the measurement of dissemination? How to analyse the dissemination of the different messages throughout the national and regional territory? were some of the questions solved in this session.

The second session *"Outtakes: Engagement evaluation"* explained the progress in measuring the perception of the messages disseminated by the different target audiences.

A practical case raised the question on how a social listening measurement methodology can help reposition the territory of a brand through answers to the following questions: Do audiences identify with my brand message? Is my message attractive and does it involve the audience? Do they agree or disagree with my message? and how can the insights and conclusions generated by these reports be transformed into strategic and creative concepts, supported by data?

The third session *"Outcomes: the key, evaluate from the stakeholder"*, advanced in the measurement of intangibles by showing how the change generated in the different audiences is measured through communication actions.

How do audiences react to communicated messages? What is the result in reputational terms? How should I adapt my communication efforts? Is there any risk in terms of reputation? These are some of the questions that arose during the case study, which also deepened in the value of the outcomes measurement and its impact on reputation within the framework of the communication strategy of any entity.

The fourth session *"Impact: how to measure the impact on reputation and sales"*, delved into the tools and methodologies to quantify how the different communication actions at each touchpoint, or contact point, have an impact on the Customer Decision Journey.

What are the most influential contact points for the consumer? What is the strength of my brand and others in the sector? How do brands use different contact points? What is the best decision in the optimization of marketing mix? were some of the questions that arose during the session, which was accompanied by a demo in which you could see in real time the impact of each marketing mix variable on the company's business.

These four sessions were designed to provide a guide to optimize the communication strategy so as to learn about each of the steps to be implemented and build a path towards excellence in communication together. »

> **"How do audiences react to communicated messages? What is the result in reputational terms? How should I adapt my communication efforts? Is there any risk in terms of reputation?"**

The success of this cycle has led us to replicate it in Dircom territorial delegations. We are going to multiple regions of Spain where we summarize these four sessions and approach the cycle to communication managers of medium-sized companies and regional or local organizations interested in improving the professionalization of their career.

PEDAGOGY AND EDUCATION AS STANDARDS OF THE DISCIPLINE OF MEASUREMENT

The dissemination of the Measurement Guide and the presence of professionals from the educational world is allowing us, in collaboration with Universities and Business Schools, to introduce exclusive modules on Measurement and Evaluation of Communication in educational communication programs. Good proof of them is the implementation of the Measurement and Evaluation Course together with the International School of Communication or the creation of an exclusive module on Measurement and Evaluation in the Master in Business and Corporate Communication Management of the Institute of Continuing Education IL3 from the University of Barcelona. The success of these initiatives has aroused the interest of other schools that want to incorporate these contents in their educational offerings in the field of communication such as the University of Seville and Malaga or the University Jaime I in Madrid.

As long as the future communication and public relations professionals come into contact with the measurement universe from the training stage to be taught about its relevance for a correct development of their profession, it will be easier to permeate companies naturally. [AMEC2019]

Jesus is the Media Intelligence Director at Rebold. He is a specialist in Corporate Communication and Brand Reputation as a result of 14 years of experience working hand in hand with communication teams of large companies in Spain and Latin America. Jesus is a journalist from the University of Seville and has a Master's in Communication Management and Advertising Management from ESIC: Marketing & Business School.

As a project manager Jesus has participated in the design of the measurement and evaluation systems of communication departments of dozens of companies in Spain, including several of the Ibex-35 and public bodies. In addition to its design, he watches over its correct implementation and its continuous updating and improvement to adapt them to the new needs faced by the communication and marketing departments: immediacy, cross-cutting between departments, transmedia, resource optimization.

As a complement to his profession and to develop in something which he is passionate about, teaching, Jesus participates as a collaborating professor in different educational centres such as the Institute of Continuing Education of the UB (University of Barcelona), IDEP (Barcelona School of Design) and, together with other Rebold colleagues, he has launched the First Communication Measurement and Evaluation Course in collaboration with the EIC (International School of Communication).
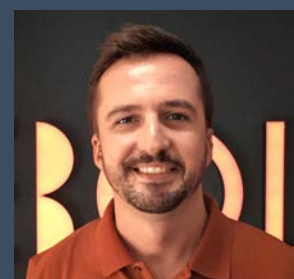
You can follow Jesus on **LinkedIn** and **Twittter**
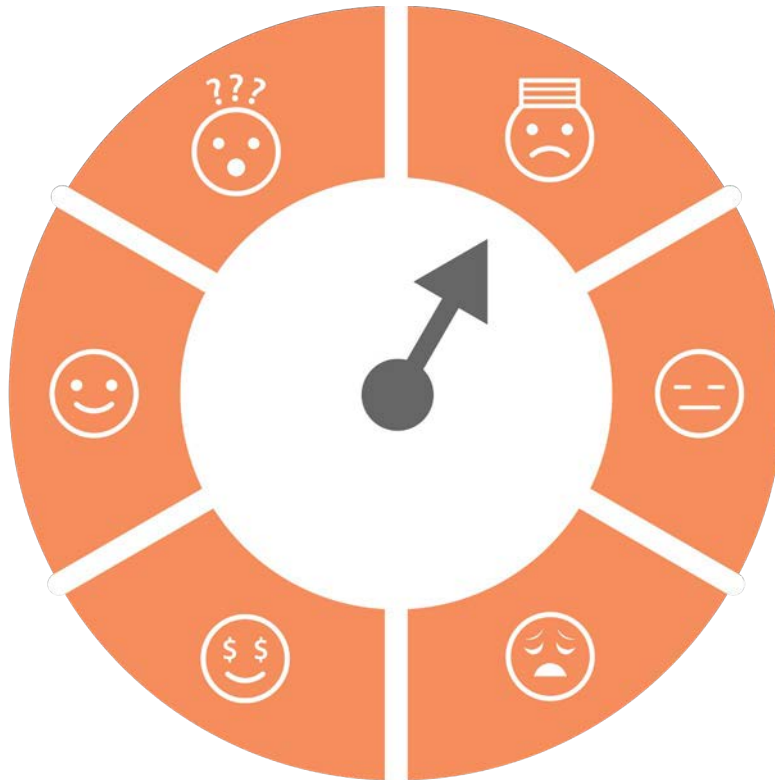
THE SIX CLIENT TYPES AND A DIFFICULT JOURNEY

Jon Meakin, Global Head of Strategic Services, Grayling, and Chair, AMEC Agency Group

Since Grayling started getting really serious about measurement and evaluation, and about embracing AMEC's best practice methodologies, I have had lots of conversations with colleagues and clients across the world, about how we can improve the way we evaluate the success of our campaigns.

More to the point, those conversations have invariably evolved quite naturally into discussions about why we evaluate.

If we are honest, in the agency world at least, evaluation has very often historically been done because we know it's

something we are supposed to, but usually do half-heartedly, or badly, or both. How many pitch rehearsals have a I sat through where someone has said "Let's put the measurement slide in here"? One slide, right at the end, inserted to check a box. And even then, it's usually not about evaluation at all, but about reporting – which is not the same thing.

Done properly, the evaluation of PR and communications takes time, effort and resource (yes, I mean budget). It is a strategic function that adds tremendous value. It is also not something one undertakes only at the end of a campaign or period but is an ongoing discipline that

provides insights to support PR strategies and tactics, in real time. But getting to that point is a journey, and a journey that starts with a conversation.

FACING THE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH

Having a proper conversation about measurement and evaluation can often be an uncomfortable experience, for agencies and clients alike.

For most of us, it includes an admission that we have been doing something wrong, or at least haven't been doing something right – in this case, evaluating.

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Admitting failure is generally not something most people are comfortable doing. "Success has many fathers; failure is an orphan" so the saying goes. And this is especially true of PR people. We are hard-wired to put a positive spin on everything, playing up the positives, and glossing over or completely ignoring the negatives.

So, facing the uncomfortable truth, that we have not been evaluating properly, is hard, I won't pretend otherwise. But the thing about this is that PR agencies and their clients are in it together.

Think about it: While those of us on the agency side may have recommended some form of what we call measurement or evaluation (but probably isn't

much more than counting clips or aggregating reach), our clients have willingly gone along with it. If they hadn't, we would be doing something different, something better.

Don't get me wrong, this is not about apportioning 'blame', it's about facing the fact that as a profession we have historically been bad at this. I've **written** before about how this is the PR profession's blind spot, and some of the reasons for this, and won't re-hash that here, suffice to say there are myriad reasons. But we are where we are. And to start to fix it, we need to have those uncomfortable conversations.

A LIBERATING EXPERIENCE

For agencies, the starting point is having those difficult

conversations with clients, something that we at Grayling have started to do.

And you know what? It's a pretty liberating experience.

In my experience at least, most clients have been really keen to engage in a discussion about why, what and how we should be evaluating our work. The acknowledgement that we haven't been doing it well does not come as a surprise. Clients are smart; if we know we're not doing it right, you can be damn sure they know it, too. And if they haven't raised it with you, their agency, it's not because they don't know we are not doing it right, it's probably because they don't know what to do about it.

And around and around it goes.

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So, the agency proactively raising the issue, and proposing some solutions, usually comes as a great relief, and any discomfort is short-lived, immediately transitioning into a conversation about what we should be doing.

This is where the thousands of small-to-medium-sized agencies that lack the resources of their global big sisters and brothers can lean on AMEC, which has been leading the charge in setting best practice for over a decade, and not only has a wealth of freely available tools and templates, but can provide access to industry mentors and more through the Common Ground initiative.

For what it's worth, my starting point is usually to spell out what good measurement looks like:

- **TAILORED:** Every organisation is different, every campaign is different, so each measurement model should be unique; there is no on-size-fits-all model, sadly
- **INTEGRATED:** Each communications programme is the sum of its parts, so measure everything within a single framework– paid, earned, social and owned
- **FOCUSED ON IMPACTS:** Going beyond outputs (numbers of clips, total reach…), to measure outcomes and impacts
- **PRESCRIPTIVE, NOT DESCRIPTIVE:** We should not be just recorders of history; great evaluation is forward looking, critical, and informs future strategies

I have yet to meet a client who disagrees with any of this. So far, so good.

But then things can get tricky.

MEET THE SIX CLIENT TYPES

I just said that every organisation is different, and that's true. But it is still possible to identify archetypes. And when it comes to attitudes to measurement and evaluation, and in particular to how we can evolve and improve that function, I've identified six.

I should preface this section with a disclaimer: These archetypes are based on my personal experience, but experience with clients (and prospective clients) over many years, in my current agency and previous ones, and on both sides of the Atlantic. So, if any of my own clients recognise themselves in any of what follows, that is entirely coincidental!

Anyway, here they are, the six types of client when it comes to evaluation:

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1. THE PRISONER OF THE PAST
The Prisoner of the Past is likely to be a senior, highly experienced comms professional. They've been in the business for decades and may well have been a journalist, way back when. Some time in the 1990s, the Prisoner landed on a system for 'measuring' success that they and their organisation are happy with – and they see no reason to change it.

Of course, the Prisoner of the Past is aware that PR has evolved, and that there are other things one can measure, but their methodology has served them perfectly well for a long time.

If it ain't broke, don't try to fix it. Besides, they can't very well go to their boss and suggest doing something different, can they? That would raise all sorts of uncomfortable questions. No, better to just keep doing what we've been doing. So long as we can show an increase in reach each year…

2. THE APATHETIC
Closely related to the Prisoner of the Past, and likely a peer, the Apathetic is really not interested in all your fancy talk of analytics and what-have-you. She or he has been at this game long enough to know if something is working or not. While the Prisoner of the Past has an outdated process with which they are happy, the Apathetic literally does not care.

And they certainly don't want to waste a portion of their precious budget to tell them something they already know – something they could tell you, in fact! No, just get on with the job, and they will tell you if what you're doing is working or not.

3. THE CAN'T PAY, WON'T PAY
Commonly found in smaller organisations (and / or those with modest PR budgets), the 'Can't Pay, Won't Pay' client has a lot on her or his plate. She or he may well be a team of one, and really relies on their agency to execute – even though the retainer is modest (something about which they are very apologetic, and a little embarrassed). They have to juggle the ever-changing priorities of a fast-moving organisation and the 'fluid' demands of multiple internal stakeholders, who don't seem to speak to each other to agree what they actually want.

Anyway, the long and the short of it is that they agree with everything you are saying about needing to be smarter about measurement and all that – but the budget will only go so far, and the bosses expect it all to go towards execution. So, can you just provide a monthly report that shows where we've got coverage and how many people we've reached? Thanks.

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> **"Success has many fathers, failure is an orphan"** so the saying goes. And this is especially true of PR people. We are hard-wired to put a positive spin on everything, playing up the positives, and glossing over or completely ignoring the negatives."

4. THE SILO SLAVE

The Silo Slave works in the PR team of a large organisation – the PR team, not the social team, the web team, the IR team the public affairs team, the events team… no, they are all separate. The Silo Slave is likely to be receptive to your suggestions about how to improve things and may have a few meetings with you to move things forward.

But there are stumbling blocks. All those different teams have different budgets, you see, and the digital team already has a measurement dashboard, but the Silo Slave is not clear on what they measure, or why, or how, and they won't share the data, and they don't see how you can integrate PR, sorry, and in any case why should they, and they don't turn up to meetings or return emails, and… You get the picture.

The Silo Slave wants to make the necessary changes, they really do, but the barriers are just too great, and they likely lack the necessary clout within the organisation to break down those silos and make it happen. So, let's just look at PR coverage, shall we?

5. THE WELL-INTENTIONED

The Well-Intentioned client will be very receptive to your proposals, but unlike the Silo Slave, they have their hands on all of the levers, and actually have the power to effect change. They get what needs to be done, and while that may well push them out of their comfort zone (data analytics? Ugh!) they also recognise the value that proper insights will bring to the organisation.

The conversations will be very positive. Great! The challenge with the Well-Intentioned is that in common with most in-house comms professionals, they are spinning a lot of plates; they have many masters to serve, and limited resources within their team. And frankly, no-one in the organisation is asking for this.

They get that it is important, and they want to do it – really, they do – but they just don't have the bandwidth right now.

Let's just get through this next campaign / quarter / year and then we'll look at it again, OK?

6. THE QUESTION EVERYTHING

This is probably your dream client – but could quickly turn into your biggest nightmare, too. The Question Everything client is likely to be young, ambitious and a digital native. They may well be new in post, but either way they are keen to shake things up, make their mark on the organisation and prove the value of the PR and comms function to the higher-ups.

They will be highly receptive to your overtures and will want to hold whiteboard co-creation workshops with your team to get this right – because they really want to get this right… Whatever the cost to you. There will be meetings, decks, and phone calls galore – and if you're not careful, your client will be three steps ahead of you.

But handled in the right way, this could be a partnership that leads to a best-in-class evaluation model.

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If any of this sounds familiar, it should. These are typical, not because there are only six types of client – of course there aren't – but because the challenges our clients face are rarely unique. They usually fall into just a few categories:

- **Habit** – we've always done it this way

- **Silos** – we can't change because the organisation won't let us

- **Resources** – we don't have the people / skills / budget to change

PRAGMATISM PREVAILS

Given all of these challenges, how can we ever turn that initial conversation into tangible action? The good news is that the main take-away here is really the same for each of those six types: You need to be pragmatic.

Many PR professionals – in-house and agency alike – are perfectionists, so that may be hard to swallow, but it's the reality.

Whether you are a client (of whichever type!) or an agency professional, you are going to have to accept that the outcome of that initial conversation is unlikely to be perfect. But here's the thing: Whatever you do, it's going to be better than what you've done in the past.

Within AMEC circles, we often talk about 'the measurement journey', and that's the way to look at it. And on a difficult journey, as this often is, even one small step can be a huge achievement. [AMEC2019]

Jon has more than 25 years' public relations and communications experience, encompassing consumer, corporate, business-to-business, and crisis and issues management.

In his current role, as well as being responsible for Grayling's West Coast team in the United States, Jon runs the agency's global Strategic Services team, which encompasses research, insights and strategy; measurement and evaluation; creative and content solutions; and Grayling's proprietary online reputation management tool, GCore.

Jon's career has seen him develop and run successful international campaigns for clients in Europe and the United States, in sectors including food and drink, travel and tourism, publishing, property, technology, and energy.
Jon is a regular judge of PR and creative industry awards, a speaker at international conferences, and has run crisis simulation exercises for clients and conference delegates the world over.

Jon is also a Board member of the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC), and the founding Chair of that body's Agency Group, where his focus is on embedding measurement and evaluation best practice throughout the PR agency world.
British born, Jon is currently resident in San Francisco.

jon.meakin@grayling.com
You can follow Jon on
LinkedIn and **Twitter**

Measurement's Next Tech Revolution – Opportunities & Challenges

Mazen Nahawi, Founder & Co-Managing Partner of CARMA

While it is tempting to dream that advances in technology and artificial intelligence will soon make our job of measuring and evaluating communication much easier, we must not be blind to the new challenges that also arise with such technology. Nor forget to invest in people as well as automation.

Measurement's first tech revolution helped us crawl tens of millions of websites, digitize thousands of newspapers and use speech-to-text technology to dispense of large teams manually reviewing broadcast stations around the world.

It also helped us digitize most 'counting' as well as report quantitative metrics to our clients in real-time. And, with social media, we can mine large data sets and use AI (artificial intelligence) to measure *some* basic qualitative metrics with equal speed.

For those who have been passionate about PR, communications and measurement for a long time, that is a wonderful change from the world of glue, scissors, fax machines and rulers, which wasted vast amounts of valuable executive time on metrics which were largely useless at best, and terribly misleading at worst.

THINGS ARE JUST GETTING STARTED

We should celebrate and embrace this tech revolution, which has modernized the media intelligence world, bringing good analytics and meaningful metrics, faster and cheaper to PR pros world-wide, and their clients.

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I believe this is just the start: we are about to see a second wave of tech transformation in measurement, some of which is positive and exciting – and some which will be cause for alarm.

NEW TECH COMING YOUR WAY

The biggest leap in tech is now less about quantity and more about quality; semantic engines will elevate our ability to extract messages and, to some extent, improve our ability to examine favourability and some reputational drivers. Advances in cloud computing mean we can now archive far greater data sets, and mine them, for a fraction of the cost of hosting compared to just a few years ago. Combine this with China and India's incredible push to digitize media content, and we can now automate the processing of immense data

sets which are truly global in nature, and not limited to Latin-script languages in Europe and America.

Big data in linguistics is not just limited to large data sets; it includes the growing number of specialistic teams building dynamic libraries which match words, phrases and even emojis, in different Asian, African and Middle Eastern dialects - to search strings and analytics frameworks.

The tech-linguistics revolution means media analysis, social listening and even traditional media monitoring, will soon be able to extract much greater data – with a lot more accuracy – from the 80% of the world's population and media which doesn't use Latin script letters.

Other advances in mobility and visualization, correlations

with non-media data and deep learning, all promise to empower PR pros with a new world, which will be largely unrecognizable in a few years' time.

The outline of technology's future impact on measurement is starting to appear in the form of data which is more meaningful and insights which are more actionable, from a truly global, multi-lingual and multi-cultural universe – all being delivered faster, cheaper and with greater mobility than ever before.

BEWARE: MEASUREMENT TECH DOES HAVE ITS PITFALLS

During the past few years, too many PR professionals have wrongly assumed current technologies allow them to do things, which are simply not possible.
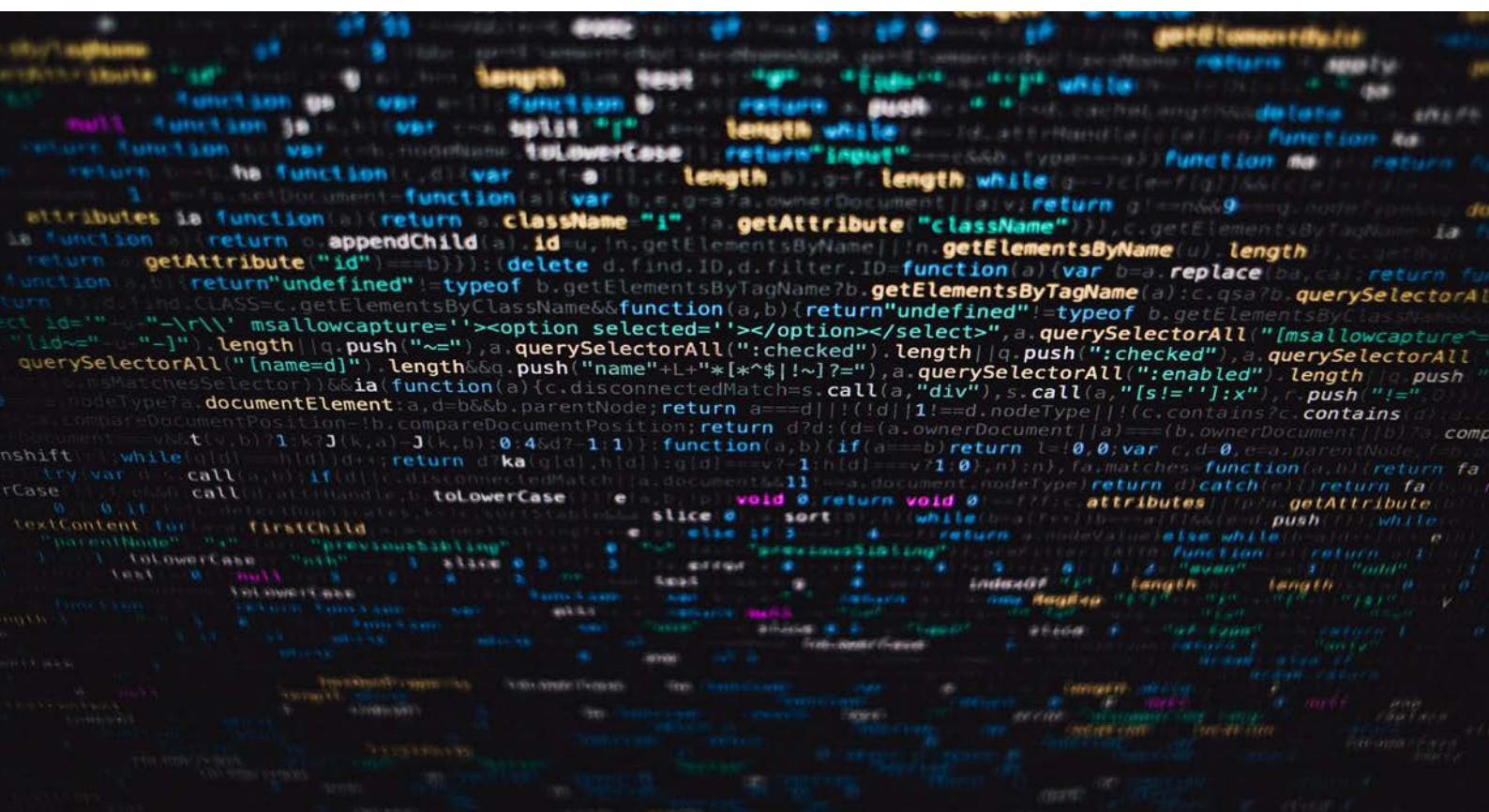
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CARMA

> # "The biggest danger in the current tech offering in measurement is the use of meaningless metrics, and in some cases, misleading metrics."

I have seen and heard too many instances of clients who wrongly assume automated measurement dashboards can substitute for carefully built measurement programs which combine people and technology, social and traditional content, as well as output and outcome metrics.

Automated dashboards, using today's technology, are great at quantitative metrics and some very limited qualitative metrics, but they simply cannot provide the strategic insights which really help guide decision-making and proper evaluation.

The reasons for this are simple: algorithms have not been able to capture and process key metrics like sentiment with enough accuracy and are ineffective at analytical correlations. They also are extremely limited in combining social and traditional media, and almost always use data sets which suffer from serious language limitations – meaning content expressed in icons, emojis and most of the world's languages, simply gets ignored.

The biggest danger in the current tech offering in measurement is the use of meaningless metrics, and in some cases, misleading metrics.

THINKING AVE'S? WELL THIS IS FAR WORSE.

Ask any major social platform for their definition of impressions and engagement, and you will get fluid answers and inconsistent approaches to identifying whether people are really seeing content or not.

Some platforms will count a 'view' for a video clip even if you just watched it for a few seconds, while others will count your scrolling down a feed as 'impressions' for every handle you come across, even if you never read a single word from any of them. One major social network famously dropped unique engagements – a good metric – when it realized how it would show deteriorating reach and resonance among its audiences.

The reality is, dodgy digital and social metrics have become the new AVEs: they are fashioned by platforms and networks which are not keeping honest about genuine engagement behaviour, and are propagated by too many communications professionals who like the

sound of telling their clients they reached billions more people than exist on our planet.

Some clients, too, like that sound. But the best clients, with the smartest people and the biggest budgets, are increasingly rejecting these metrics. They were among the first to reject AVEs and are once again among the first in rejecting bogus digital metrics; I urge you to join them.

New technologies will bring great opportunities, but they will undoubtedly open the door for even more dodgy metrics; After AVEs in the millions and impressions in the billions, I wouldn't be surprised to hear in the near-future of an AI-powered Reputation Score tied to a Libra cryptocurrency value equivalent being used to supposedly measure the value of PR!

WHAT'S YOUR LANGUAGE?

Technology will make things faster, cheaper and generally better. It will certainly do things which were not done before – in measurement that means an initial foray into some qualitative metrics and processes.

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The reality however is that technology is simply not going to replace a human being's ability to think, create, innovate and analyse the way humans do.

Here's why: *the human brain is evolving*, and, along with our ability and capacity to communicate in new ways, *is outpacing technology's ability to capture and analyse it all* for us.

One example of this would be in linguistics: in the Middle East, there are over 400 major dialects used in the Arabic language.

Not even one of them has been comprehensively digitized into proper NLP databases, dynamic libraries and semantic engines. Now consider the fact that many individuals are supplementing their dialects with images, symbols and even new words and letters not from one, but several other languages simultaneously!

This means nearly every single person is effectively creating a unique form of communications, which they created using words, letters and images. *Yes, every person is now the author of their own language/dialect, unique to them*. Multiply that by 7.5 billion people, and you can see how all the linguistics and technology teams in the world will never be able to catch up with the speed of evolution in human intellect and expression.

WHAT'S THE WAY FORWARD?

It may seem daunting to embrace the upcoming tech revolution in measurement, especially when many of its positives and negatives are irresistible even with the technology and dashboards of today.

The reality is now, and in future, nothing will beat a balanced combination of world-class technology working in tandem with the most advanced computational being the world has ever known: the human mind.

Every measurement professional and business must endeavour to balance its investment in the best technologies available, but also in the quality of its human resource. We need automation, AI, Cloud and Deep Learning, but we also need people to create, manage and grow these technologies and to use the continually evolving power of the human mind to turn growing data sets into genuine insights, which help change people's (not machines') behaviour.

It is gratifying to see a growing number of global measurement RFPs rejecting pure automation and demanding a proper balance between technology and human capabilities. The most advanced clients, many of them tech-giants, are leading this movement.

The winners of our industry will invest in the latest technology and innovate to translate its promise into great insights and measurement while making sure they also invest in our limitless human ability to dream, create and inspire a world which we enjoy and understand. [AMEC2019]
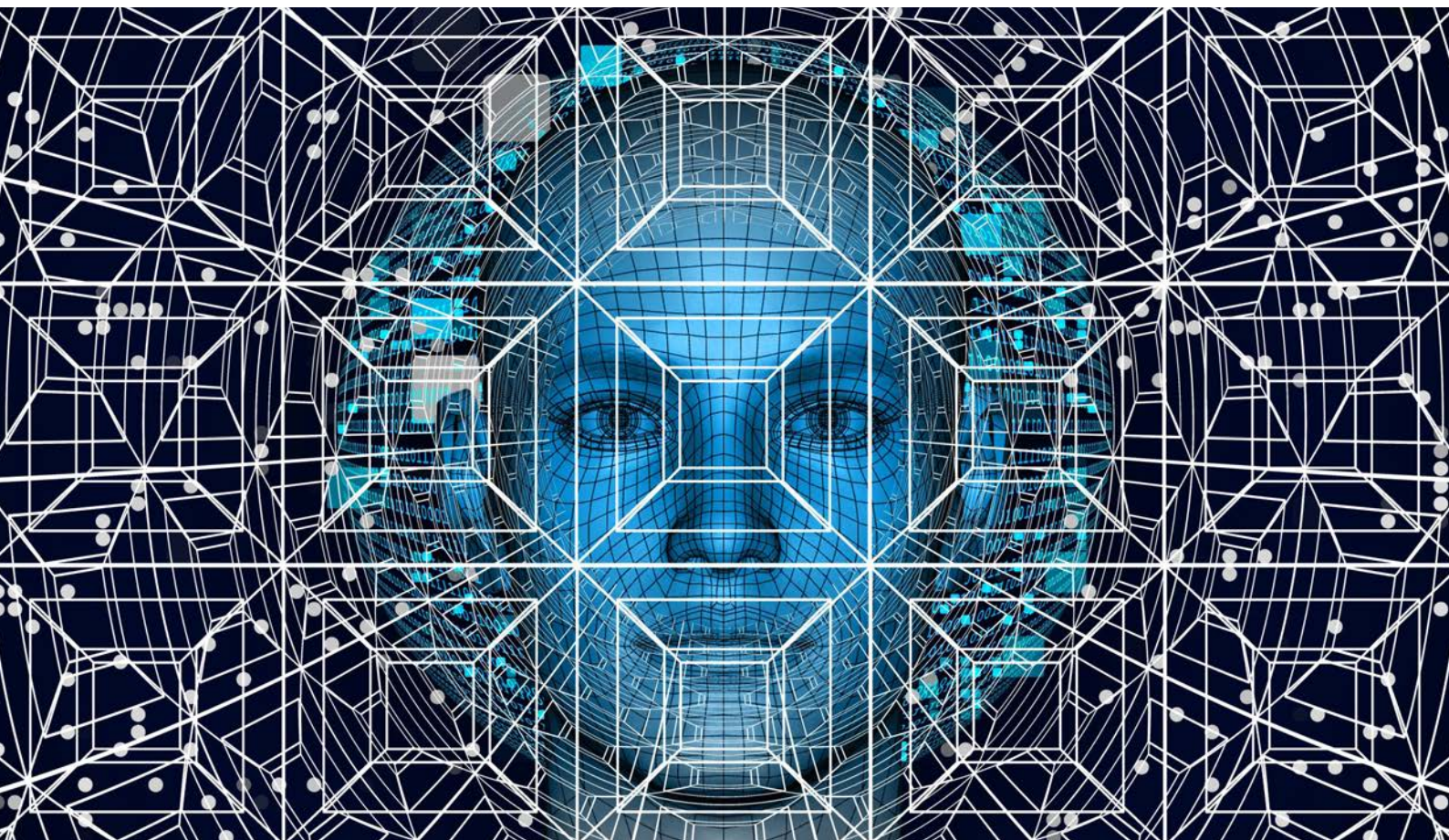
Mazen Nahawi *is the Founder & Co-Managing Partner of CARMA, a global media intelligence company with over 600 staff in more than 40 countries.*

He began his career as a journalist before taking up senior positions in public relations and management consultancies.

He lives between Dubai and Malta and is married with six kids.

**mazen.nahawi@carma.com
www.carma.com**

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:
Transforming Media to Intelligent Media

Sophia Karakeva, Communications and Marketing Executive, DataScouting

The majority of media companies, if not all, are looking for new technology to support efficient workflows, manage content distribution, enhance user experiences and support revenue growth. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is helping them (at least up to a certain level) in this direction, impacting everything from content creation to the consumer experience.

Media companies are already using AI to automate operations (with applications such as automatic metadata tagging and extraction) through techniques, such as image recognition and speech-to-text transcription, to drive content monetization strategies.

REINVENTING MEDIA

Media companies could also use AI to strengthen their predictive capabilities. For example, they could predict demand to adjust resources, or to predict possible disruptions in the content supply chain.

Additionally, AI could help media companies move from the "one-to-many" to the "one-to-one" model when it comes to distribution, driving title recommendations and curating content based on consumer preferences.

DATA-FIRST APPROACH

But even though media companies are already using analytics tools to analyse operations and audiences, they are still at the early stage of using more sophisticated tools such as deep learning algorithms. And surprisingly, the main challenge to that is training data (machine learning). Simply said, AI can only be as good as the data that is being used to train it.

»

And in supervised learning algorithms datasets are labelled by humans to train the model, which makes the process more expensive and difficult for large datasets.

Deep learning algorithms produce the most accurate results but usually require millions of observations from different types of data in a unified manner. This includes audience data, operational data and content data (metadata). Additionally, all that has to be done at scale.

TRANSFORMING MEDIA TO INTELLIGENT MEDIA

AI has the power to quickly sift through public information (what influencers are saying to whom and where) and draw upon this data to determine a true level of influence.

Still, AI has had a slow start in the communications professions. The **CIPR** recently launched a study that indicates that the use of AI in public relations will triple in the next five years. AI is a valuable tool

that will help agencies automate and perform routine tasks (such as write data-driven stories, create media lists, transcribe audio into text, understand video, predict media trends, monitor social media and help in crisis management) more effectively. AI is already present in many tools that PR agencies are using (like Hootsuite, Trendkite or MailChimp).

In marketing, it is crucial to make decisions based on facts (and not just rely on gut feeling), in order to work strategically long-term. AI will affect marketing in making it more about numbers and statistics. The kind of content that is produced will be based on statistics of what the audience wants and not what the marketer thinks. Thus, besides their communication skills, marketers will have to develop computer science skills as well.

WELCOME TO THE DAWN OF THE AGE OF INTELLIGENCE

AI is a universal technology, meaning soon there will be nothing outside of the reach

of AI. It might be under human control, but it does not mimic human intelligence. AI stands for specialized intelligence, not generalized intelligence. In other words, AI cannot do all the work for us - at least not yet.

But, according to **Microsoft**, in five years from now every business will rely on AI. Microsoft's report **Accelerating Competitive Advantage with AI** shows that there is more awareness and adoption of AI overall among businesses, with 56 % of businesses adopting AI. However, less than a quarter of these organizations (24%) have an AI strategy and 96% of employees surveyed reported that their bosses are adding AI without consulting them on the technology. This is fuelling anxiety around the technology, as well as concerns over job security. Additionally, one of the main reasons behind businesses not implementing AI is a shortage of talent in their workforce for handling automation processes. »

Despite barriers, companies plan to increase investment in AI over the next five years.

According to [research](#) conducted by Vanson Bourne on behalf of Rainbird, in the next 5-10 years, the greatest demand for AI will come from the IT department (74%). Those who could see the greatest potential for AI included operations (59%), marketing and communications (46%) and finance (43%) who are already showcasing some of the wider capabilities of the technology.

FINALLY, MAKING INSIGHTS ACTIONABLE

Will AI take over PR? No, but it can definitely help. AI is the science; PR is the art. Companies expect to see the benefits of AI and the primary drivers of adoption of AI technology are the opportunity to automate routine workflows and gain increasing insight into audiences.

AI-powered analytics tools provide better insights for campaign management, budget planning, & ROI analysis. AI can gather the insights from a pile of unstructured and structured data sources in a fraction of a second.

So, whether it is about operating an intelligent media archive, providing real-time speech recognition for TV shows or analysing entire radio or TV streams – with the help of AI, media content can be systematically captured, analysed and processed. AI-powered media intelligence software, such as **DataScouting**'s **MediaScouting** suites improve the entire workflow of media professionals, and offer personalized content to media consumers. [AMEC2019]

Sophia *has been active in the media industry for over 20 years and she currently holds the position of Communications and Marketing Executive at DataScouting, a leading software research and development company in Greece. As a journalist, Sophia is also a news correspondent for the Czech TV. Sophia has over a decade of experience in providing expert consulting, analysis and media monitoring in the area of media intelligence, as in the past she worked for 12 years in various executive positions in the media monitoring sector. She has a PhD in Mass Communication and Journalism from the Charles University in Prague.*

Sophia is currently (2019) a FIBEP Vice President and member of the FIBEP Copyright and Fair Trade Commission. She has also served as Vice Chair of the European Chapter for AMEC. She holds the AMEC International Certificate in Measurement and Evaluation and the AMEC Social Media Measurement Certificate.

Sophia is a conceptual media thinker, communication believer, marketing digger and analysis enthusiast.

soka@datascouting.com
You can follow Sophia on
LinkedIn and **Twitter**

DataScouting *is a software research and development company, specialized in creating traditional and online* **media intelligence** *and analysis platforms, as well as providing* **digital convergence services** *and software solutions for cultural heritage organizations such as* **libraries, archives and museums**. *Using Machine Learning technologies such as Optical Character Recognition, Text and Video Analytics, Information Classification and Speech Recognition, DataScouting's* **platforms** *automatically augment* **textual** *and* **audiovisual** *streams, helping you to manage and easily identify content of interest.*

DATASCOUTING
actionable information

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