THE PR PROFESSIONAL'S
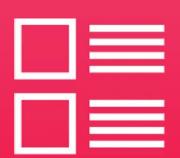# Definitive Guide to Measurement

CHAPTER 12

What we mean! Definitions and terms

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Every fast changing industry has its jargon. The lexicon emerges to aid efficient communication, but that efficiency is only achieved when everyone knows what the words and phrases really mean, and uses them consistently. This glossary aims to help secure that consistency sooner than otherwise.

Feedback is welcome of course via the comments section at the end, and we'll update based on relevant feedback.

All hyperlinks are cross-references. Links to external webpages are indicated by an arrow at the end of the respective entry.

A

- Advocacy – An individual or organisation that is engaged with an agenda, an individual or an organisation and speaks highly of it to others. The act of seeking third-party support through persuasion
- Algorithm – a step-by-step problem solving procedure; an established, recursive computational procedure for solving a problem in a finite number of steps.
- AMEC – The International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication is the global trade body and professional institute for agencies and practitioners who provide media measurement, evaluation and communication research. https://amecorg.com/
- AMEC Integrated Evaluation Framework – This guides you through the process from aligning objectives to establishing a plan, setting targets and then measuring the outputs, outtakes, outcomes and impact of your work. The website contains a number of resources including an interactive element to take you through the process. https://amecorg.com/amecframework/
- Audience / target audience – a specified group within a defined public targeted for influence.
- AVE – Advertising Value Equivalents; a discredited approach to gauging the value of public relations (or media relations more precisely). See Barcelona Principles.

B

- Barcelona Principles (2.0) – A series of statements to guide best practice in PR measurement that were endorsed after a vote of global delegates at the AMEC European Measurement Summit in 2010 (version 1.0) and 2015 (version 2.0). https://amecorg.com/barcelona-principles-2-0/
- Blog/Blogger – a blog is series of content, typically text or image, published by a blogger online in sequential date order focused on a subject or issue and encouraging interaction. (Also see vlog/vlogger)

- Bot – a software application that runs automated tasks over the Internet. Typically, bots perform tasks that are both simple and structurally repetitive, at a much higher rate than would be possible for a human alone.
- Bounce rate – A 'bounce' is when a visitor to a website only views a single page before leaving. Bounce rate is the percentage of visits to a webpage where this occurs. A high bounce rate indicates a lack of engagement.
- BPM – Business Performance Management; the disciplined approach to management encompassing metric selection, measurement and organizational learning. The Balanced Scorecard is reportedly the dominant BPM framework amongst the Global 2000.
- Bubble – To only listen to people and media sources that have similar views to your own. This can influence the news or social media sources you choose to have access to. Over time being in such a bubble can also be reinforced by online algorithms. These choose the advertisements and content you see based on your previous online behaviour. (see social capital)

C

- Click – each instance when a visitor follows a hyperlink from one page to another, or expects some other action.
- Clickbate – online content designed to encourage visitors to click on a link to increase the number of hits recorded. This type of content is often used to increase revenue for those selling advertising space.
- Cutting – the piece of written material containing messages about the client or its products or an extract from a paper or magazine regarding a particular account. Also commonly referred to as clipping
- Communication- the credible, honest and timely two-way flow of information that fosters common understanding and trust.
- Copy – the text produced by a consultancy for a press release or article. Journalists also refer to their news stories or features as copy.
- CPRS – Canadian Public Relations Society. cprs.ca

D

- Download – a copy of a document or other digital file is pulled from a web server to the user's Internet connected device. When a user accesses a web page, it's actually downloaded from a web server to the user's browser, but this isn't usually what's meant when the word is invoked.

E

- Earned media – third-party media coverage secured through a relationship or news worthy event, rather than paid-for advertising or other means of securing media. Includes on- and off-line media. Often used synonymously with public relations, but public relations is not defined by media.
- Engage – occupy or attract someone's interest or attention; involve someone in a conversation or discussion.
- Evaluation – the assessing of the impact and value of a series of actions in achieving desired outcomes from start to finish. The recording of the actions themselves, such as the amount, potential value and frequency is only part of the evaluation process.
- Eyeballs – the aggregated published or acknowledged readership numbers for all content in which a brand or organisation receive published content. (See impressions, and opportunities to see.)

F

- Fake news – News that is presented as true but has no basis in fact. By calling something "Fake news" the author is accused of wilfully lying or being blinded to the truth by their personal bias.
- Forum – an online site hosted by a community to discuss and interact about its area of interest.
- Frequency – the amount of times that an event occurs. Often used in conjunction with reach (seeReach and Frequency).

G

- Government Communications Service (GCS) – The professional body for people working in communications roles across government in the UK. They have a number of free resources on their website including an evaluation framework. https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/

H

- Hits – the logged request for a file on a webpage and images and other digital assets on that page made by a browser, a search engine or a webcrawler. Commonly confused as a count of the number of times that the page has been viewed in its entirety. Also, see media hits.

I

- ICCO – International Communications Consultancy Organisation. www.iccopr.com
- Impact – commonly used when analysing how much visual presence and 'wow factor' a piece of content carries. Is often measured in a number of different ways by different companies and commonly results in the use of a scoring system. Component impact measures might include size of headline, font, article, presence of imagery, position in publication etc.
- Impressions – the aggregated published or acknowledged readership numbers for all content in which a brand or organisation receives earned content (see eyeballs and opportunities to see). For web content, an impression is counted as each time some content is loaded into a browser.
- Influence – You have influence when you persuade others to think or do something they wouldn't otherwise have done. Metrics often presented as measuring influence instead measure the propensity for an individual's social media contributions to be shared, and the reach of that sharing. Influence needs to be measured on a case-by-case basis to help develop our understanding of how people are influenced and fine tune generalised approaches.
- IPR – the Institute for Public Relations, a US based independent non-profit foundation dedicated to the science beneath the art of public relations. www.instituteforpr.org
- Issue – a matter, typically in dispute, between two or more interested parties.

K

- KPIs – Key performance indicator(s); define a set of values against which to measure success. KPIs must be defined to reflect objectives and strategy, and will be sufficiently robust for the measurement to be repeatable. Quantitative KPIs can be presented as a number, ratio or percentage. KPI's tend to be:
    - Quantitative indicators which can be presented as a number
    - Practical indicators that interface with existing company processes
    - Directional indicators specifying whether organisational performance is improving or not
    - Actionable indicators sufficiently in an organisation's control to effect change
    - Financial indicators used in performance measurement and when looking at an operating index.

L

- Like – allows users of some social networks to recommend websites and other things online.

- Lurker – someone who reads social media content but doesn't actively participate in debate and communication.

M

- Machined media – content that is automatically discovered, presented and published by machines for humans. May be considered alongside paid, owned and earned media.
- Market Research – a collection of disciplines designed to understand the attitudes and behaviours of individuals and organisations towards other individuals and organisations. These disciplines are often categorised as either primarily qualitative or quantitative research. The topic areas can include both market orientated commercial research to more societal social research.
- Measurement – the action of measuring something; ascertaining the size, amount, or degree of something by using an instrument or device; assessing the importance, effect, or value of something.
- Measurement Month – An annual AMEC event each September that consists of a series of international events focusing on measurement.
- Media hits – an item or piece of content to be counted or measured. Not to be confused with hits.
- Media relations – a component of public relations focused on journalists and bloggers as intermediaries to the audience you wish to reach.
- Meme – usually a humorous image shared by social media that takes on a cultural significance. It is shared by people as shorthand for how they feel about something, and can often consist of variations on a theme. More generally a meme is an aspect of culture or behaviour that people start to copy and embed in their culture and personal behaviour.
- Message board – a script on a website with a submission form that allows visitors to post messages (called "threads" or "posts") on your website for others to read. These messages are usually sorted within discussion categories, or topics, chosen by the host, or possibly the visitor. A messageboard is also called a web board or a forum.
- Metric – a system or standard of measurement; (in business) a set of figures or statistics that measure results.
- Microblogs – online short form communication services that facilitate the public exchange of text, video and image links. Popular microblogs include Plurk, Twitter, Tumblr and Yammer. China tends to have its own popular microblogging sites that include Sina Weibo and Tencent Wiebo.
- Mission – a statement of why an organisation exists; often described alongside the organisation's vision and values.
- Motivation – reason(s) for acting or behaving in a particular way.
- MRC – The Media Rating Council is a USA based industry-funded organisation established in the early 1960s at the behest of the US Congress after the Harris Hearings on Broadcast Ratings with the remit to review and accredit audience rating services. www.mediaratingcouncil.org

N

- Net Promoter Score (NPS) – an approach to quantifying customer loyalty and advocacy based on customers' answers to the question along the lines of: 'Would you feel comfortable recommending us to others?'

O

- Objective – a specific aim of an organisation.
- OTS – opportunities to see. The aggregated published or acknowledged readership numbers for all content in which a brand or organisation receives earned content. See also eyeballs and impressions.)

- Outcome – Something that has happened as the result of a campaign. In public relations this would typically be defined as a measurable change in awareness, knowledge, attitude, opinion, behaviour or reputation metrics.

- Output – in PR terms, the material and activity that the PR professional generates such as a press release, email, events etc. as well as the ensuing media coverage that is generated. Outputs will also include proactive communication by an organisation on its owned media channels and properties.

- Out-take – what an audience now understands having been exposed to content about an organisation or a brand. Out-take occurs before an outcome, although some pundits ignore out-take and just discuss outputs and outcomes.

- Owned media – media channels that are owned by or in the control of an organisation or a brand. Typically these will include websites, company blogs, newsletters and brand accounts in social media.

P

- Page views – A request for a file from a webserver whose type has been defined as a page in the log analysis of the web server. One page view may account for many web hits.

- PageRank – According to Google: 'PageRank reflects our view of the importance of web pages by considering more than 500 million variables and 2 billion terms. Pages that we believe are important receive a higher PageRank and are more likely to appear at the top of the search results.'

- Paid media – content that has been generated as a result of a purchase such as an advert or an advertorial.

- Podcast – an audio or video clip that is available for download online to listen to or watch at a time of the recipients choosing. Originally used to describe a series of content, the term is often now used to describe a single piece of content.

- PR Council – formerly the CPRF (Council of Public Relations Firms) this is the trade association for public relations firms in the US. www.prcouncil.net

- PRCA – The Public Relations and Communications Association is the professional body that represents UK PR consultancies, in-house communications teams, PR freelancers and individuals. The PRCA promotes all aspects of public relations and internal communications work, helping teams and individuals maximise the value they deliver to clients and organisations. www.prca.org.uk

- PRCA MENA – PRCA MENA is the Public Relations and Communications Association that represents PR consultancies, in-house communications teams and individuals across the Middle East and North Africa. PRCA MENA promotes all aspects of public relations and internal communications work, helping teams and individuals maximise the value they deliver to clients and organisations. prca.mena.global

- PRSA – The Public Relations Society of America is the world's largest organisation of public relations professionals with more than 21,000 members across the United States. www.prsa.org

- PRSSA – The Public Relations Student Society of America has 10,000 members at colleges and universities internationally. www.prssa.prsa.org

- Public relations – a management function that focuses on two-way communication and fostering of mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and its publics. Public relations is often defined in terms of earned media, but all approaches to media are valid.

Q

- Quantitative – Data that can be quantified and summarised with a numerical figure. Often used to describe quantitative research techniques such as public opinion surveys.

- Qualitative – Data that is descriptive and non-numerical. Often used to describe qualitative research techniques such as focus groups. To confuse matters qualitatively gathered information can be quantified in some cases. Similarly in a quantitative survey there may be a box for

verbatim qualitative comments. These in turn may be quantified by coding answers and counting how many comments occurred within each code. Finally some data techniques which require significant interpretation, such as identifying customer groups/segments/clusters, might be classed by some as qualitative techniques.

R

- Randomised Controlled Trials – Selecting two random samples with similar characteristics and only carrying out an intervention in one; thus enabling any change that occurs to be attributed to the intervention.
- Reach – a dis-aggregated number of people (or percentage of an audience) that have been exposed to content. 'Reach' differs from impressions, opportunities to see and eyeballs in that it counts the actual number of people exposed to coverage rather than the number of 'opportunities' to see the coverage. It is a widely mis-used term in the industry and should only be used when readership data has been dis-aggregated to take account of cross readership patterns.
- Reach and Frequency – a common metric quantifying campaign success predominantly used and accepted in advertising. It couples the reach metric with frequency which is the average number of times that each person has been reached, or exposed, to the content.
- Reblog – when a bloger effectively endorses another blogger's post by posting it facsimile to their own.
- Relationship – the way in which two or more people or things are connected, or the state of being connected.
- Relevance – closely connected or appropriate to the matter in hand.
- Representative random sample – a randomly selected subset of the total data pool (universe) that accurately reflects the profile of the whole data pool. Defined mathematically but often not as pure in practice as can be impacted on by not all the data pool being accessible. For example, a random sample could be drawn of news clippings publically available online but would necessarily exclude those on paid sites (such as the Times in the UK). This could be misrepresented as a sample of all newspapers. In market research not all those randomly selected to take part in a survey do take part and initially representative samples can be skewed to those more likely to take part.
- Reputation – the beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something. Research – the process of investigating to answer a question.
- Resonance – the power to evoke enduring images, memories, and emotions.
- Return on investment (ROI) – a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment or to compare the efficiency of a number of different investments. To calculate ROI, the benefit (return) of an investment is divided by the cost of the investment; the result is expressed as a percentage or a ratio. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no such thing as 'non-financial ROI'. If this phrase is invoked it may be to convey the importance of non- financial metrics and their vital role in business performance management. (see Social Return on Investment)
- RT – retweet; when a Twitter user endorses another Twitter users' tweet by forwarding it to their network.

S

- Semantic analysis – computationally trying to determine the meaning of language, of a corpus.
- Sentiment – often used interchangeably with tone, but more precisely refers to the feelings the author is trying to convey.
- Sentiment analysis – a subtopic of semantic analysis; computationally trying to determine the author's emotional regard for or attitude towards something from the text alone; usually

expressed on a 3- or 5-point ordinal scale (eg, very unfavourable, unfavourable, neutral, favourable, very favourable).

- SEO – search engine optimization; the process of editing a webpage to help maximize its PageRank and similar quantifications of its relevance to particular search terms.
- Significance – the quality of being worthy of attention; importance.
- Social aggregation sites – websites that collect content from multiple sources and represents it in one location.
- Social analytics – the application of search, indexing, semantic analysis and business intelligence technologies to the task of identifying, tracking, listening to and participating in the distributed conversations about a particular brand, product or issue, with emphasis on quantifying the trend in each conversation's sentiment and influence.
- Social bookmarking sites – websites and services that allow users to store, manage, organise and share links of content from across the web. Examples include Delicious, Reddit, Stumbleupon, Digg, Pinterest.
- Social capital – A phrase popularised by Robert Putnam following his 1995 essay and subsequent book "Bowling Alone". He identified the need to ensure people have regular social contact with people outside their own community. This helps to build social capital and trust in others. Social capital is sometimes incorrectly used to describe the frequency with which a source's social media contributions are shared, and the reach of that sharing. Not every social share is accretive to social capital. Social capital is destroyed when stuff is shared in disagreement, disgust or mockery for example. (see bubble)
- Social media – media that isn't traditional / 'industrial' / 'mass' media; media that is interactive.
- Social media spam – can be either content or user accounts (for example on Twitter and Facebook). The content is often auto-generated and designed solely to promote a sale, a fraud or often to promote porn. The content is mass distributed and has no element of a conversation to it.
- Social Return on Investment (SROI) – This measures the extra financial value from expenditure on activity. It is usually restricted to measurable environment and social benefits resulting from public expenditure. An example is that if a public body spends money on communications activity locally then this supports local jobs and the economy. It is not the primary purpose of the activity but is a social benefit. An SROI methodology requires a high standard of evaluation.
- Social Web – consists of social media, applications, services and the network of devices. Splog – a 'spam blog' is a blog used to promote affiliate websites with the intention of increasing search engine ranking or to sell products or adverts.
- Stakeholder – a person or organisation with an interest or concern in our organisation or something our organisation is involved in. (Whilst this definition includes competitors, they're not normally classified as stakeholders.)
- Strategy – Michael Porter defines strategy to be about selecting the set of activities in which an organisation will excel to create a sustainable difference in the marketplace, and thereby creating sustained value for its shareholders (or sustainable value in the case of non-profits)

T

- The Coalition – a group of PR trade bodies working together to lead the profession towards measuring social media in a meaningful and credible manner. The coalition includes AMEC, CPRF and the IPR.
- The Conclave – a loose body of interested parties looking to extend the work of The Coalition to include other marketing disciplines which social media also touches.

- Tone – often used interchangeably with sentiment, but more accurately refers to the general character and attitude the words convey.
- Transparency – open to public scrutiny.
- Troll – a person that lurks on message boards and social media properties making inflammatory comments.
- Trust – firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something.

V

- Values – describes what's important to an organisation; often described alongside the organisation's mission and vision.
- Viral Campaign – a communications campaign which is designed to exploit the potential of the internet to spread messages rapidly. The audience is encouraged to pass a message on to all their email contacts.
- Vision – describes what an organisation wants to be; often described alongside the organisation's mission and values.
- Visits per session – a series of web page requests from the same uniquely identified client (eg, laptop or smartphone) with a time limit of 30 minutes between each page request.
- Vlog/vlogger – a blog created using video content by a vlogger typically focussed on a cause or special interest. (see blog/blogger)

W

- Wiki – a website facilitating collaborative editing. The best known wiki is Wikipedia.
- WOMMA – the Word of Mouth Marketing Association is a non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing and advocating the discipline of credible word of mouth marketing. http://womma.org/

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