

2018  
Ultimate  
Guide to  
Media  
Monitoring,  
Measurement  
& Analytics  
for PR &  
Marketing

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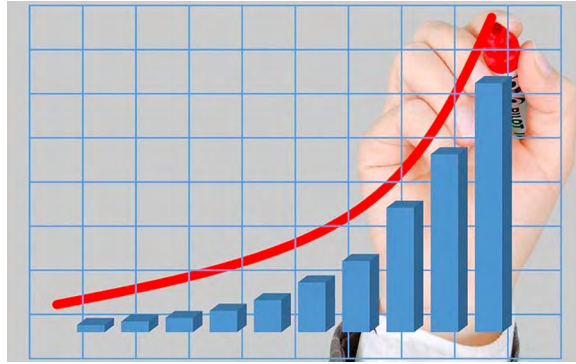
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## 18 Tips to Improve Your Organization's Social Media Listening



Organizations are increasingly employing social media listening for public relations, marketing, competitive intelligence, customer service and product development. A growing number of successful case studies, better monitoring and measurement tools, and better understanding of data analytics continue to encourage more brands to embrace social media listening, also known as social media monitoring.

Social media listening is one of the most important public relations trends over the next five years, agree PR executives surveyed for the [Global Communications Report](#). The executives say social media listening is the second most important PR trend after digital storytelling and more important than big data, influencer marketing and branded content.

While more organizations listen to customers on social media, many may wonder exactly what to listen for and how to do it. Here's a primer on what and how to monitor.

**Focus on keywords.** Organizations start by monitoring the names of their company, brands and products. Monitoring company and brand names is essential to deliver superior customer service.

Tip: Brainstorm a list of term and examine Google's keyword planning tool to verify or nullify selections.

**React quickly.** Consumers expect prompt answers and resolutions to their problems on social media. Most research indicates that most people who reach out to a brand on Twitter expect response within the hour.

**Avoid automated responses.** Customers desire personalized responses. They disdain automated replies, warns says Firas Kittaneh, CEO and co-founder of One Mall Group, in [Entrepreneur](#). Automated messages send the message that the company doesn't really care about them or their issue.

**Create a [social media policy](#)** that outlines who is responsible for replying to customers, timeframes, proper etiquette and other parameters.

**Separate functions.** Establish a separate customer service unit that focus on social media responses, using query terms that focus on customer complaints and questions. Create a separate channel for your company's customer support, including a separate Tweeter handle, such as @AcmeSupport. That allows your primary feed to focus on marketing, advises [Sendible Insights](#).



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## Public Relations & Marketing

**Measurement benefits.** Social media listening enables PR and marketing departments to improve their strategies and prove their value to top management. While media monitoring reports when news outlets mention the company or its products, many people now share and obtain news through social media. That's why social media monitoring has become [imperative for PR](#).

**Seek an integrated portal.** A monitoring tool that integrates data from traditional earned media, social media, and owned media into single dashboard provides a 360-degree view of how all media campaigns impact key business objectives.

**Cooperation is key.** Marketing and PR can improve results of both their departments if they share information and work together. Aligning a coordinated marketing campaign with PR placements can help marketing increase sales. And PR can better measure its contribution to corporate goals by working with marketing before, during and after an announcement or campaign launch. Examining changes in sentiment, share of voice and other key metrics over time allows PR, as well as marketing, to gauge the effectiveness of their strategies.

**Break down silos.** Feeding media monitoring results across department silos ensures that all areas of the organizations can access the wealth of information. Centralized repositories of social media monitoring data to allow HR, finance, administration, sales, product management, security, and IT departments, as well as marketing and PR, to access the data.

## Competitive Intelligence

**Spy on competitors.** Monitoring competitors can reveal competitive opportunities by identifying weaknesses in competitors' products, customer service or marketing. Your organization can exploit their weaknesses and copy their strengths. To select keywords, you can essentially replicate your own corporate and brand search terms with those of competitors. Include their company names, product names, products, misspellings and other keywords that describe industry issues.

**Compare success.** Competitive intelligence enables a company to compare its PR and marketing against competitors. Companies can track trends in engagement levels, follower numbers, and product messaging and other metrics. PR can track competitors' earned media coverage, both negative and positive, and compare changes to their brand's share of voice and sentiment over time to competitors'.

## PR Crisis Management

**Spot emerging crises.** Social media listening can identify a nascent PR crisis and give your organization time to resolve the issue before it explodes into a full-blown crisis. Paying close attention to spikes in negative comments allows PR to spot an emerging problem.

**Monitor the crisis.** Understand how a crisis is evolving by continually monitoring corporate and brand names, names of top executives, and derogatory words people during a crisis. In addition, search for common slang terms and common misspellings of those keywords.



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**Changes in sentiment** over time indicate whether your PR crisis response is succeeding. Monitoring competitors' brands and keywords describing your industry niche can help you better understand changes in overall market sentiment.

**Gain real-time information.** Social media comments from people at the scene of crisis often reveal information before news reports. However, it's essential to vet information since it may be inaccurate or fraudulent.

## Tips for Improving Searches

The internet is full of acronyms, abbreviations and words with multiple meanings. Identical abbreviations may exist for your company. Such multiple meanings can fill monitoring reports with irrelevant results.

**Boolean search terms** reduce extraneous results. Place the word "not" before the undesired term to exclude it from results. Write "and" between search terms to require the search results to include both words in any order. Write "or" to find any of the desired search terms. The Lincoln Motor Company can monitor for Lincoln AND (auto OR car OR dealer OR etc.) AND NOT (president OR penny OR emancipation OR St. OR Ave. OR school, OR etc.).

Tip: Regularly test search strings, perhaps once a month or more.

**Bottom Line:** Social media listening can greatly improve an organization's PR, marketing and customer service. However, to gain its full advantages, it's essential to monitor the right terms and carefully analyze the information, and rely on a media monitoring service that provides comprehensive and accurate data integrated into a single dashboard.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](http://Glean.info)

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## 5 Reasons to Trash Google Alerts in Favor of a Paid Media Monitoring & Measurement Service



Google Alerts has long been a favorite online monitoring tool for many, including marketing and PR professionals, small businesses and even not so small organizations. After all, it's free and easy to set up. Google's name recognition attracts users who don't know of alternatives.

Google Alerts has some outstanding disadvantages. Namely, it doesn't work. Google Alerts is plagued by persistent complaints from users who are not receiving notifications. Google's [help forum](#) hosts a very long list of complaints going back years from users not getting notifications. Observers say Google Alerts has been broken for years.

### Google Alerts is Unreliable

The Financial Brand once relied heavily on the alerts. No longer. "It is now so unreliable that it has been rendered effectively useless," wrote Jeffrey Pilcher, publisher of [The Financial Brand](#), a news website for the financial services industry. "Users can forget about creating any new Alerts — those pretty much won't work at all."

Google dismisses users with responses like "Hi all, thanks for the update. We're currently investigating this." It has strayed from its internet search roots and has become afflicted by the "shiny new object syndrome," Pilcher says, referring to Google+.

"Google Alerts is no longer a PR girl's best beau for capturing client mentions across the web, writes Christina Goswiller for [PR Couture](#). Because capturing client mentions across the internet is essential for your PR career, Google Alerts is not worth your time or the risk, Goswiller says. Other free monitoring services exist but, as the saying goes, you get what you pay for. Instead, opt for a paid monitoring service.

### It Doesn't Include Live TV & Radio Broadcasts

TV remains the foremost media for news; more people still rely on TV than on print or websites to get their news. It's the news media that makes the greatest impression on the public. A story carried on network news has more impact than most any combination of print media exposure.

Almost all American households own at least one television, and about 50 percent of Americans obtain their news most frequently from television, compared to 43 percent who often get their news online, according to [Pew Research](#).

Google Alerts does not include news from live TV or radio broadcasts. That creates a huge hole in any news alerts – and a wholly incomplete picture of the results of any PR campaign. Most subscription media monitoring services include broadcast monitoring.



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## It Doesn't Monitor Social Media

Google Alert's lacks social media monitoring. It monitors only the open internet such as online media and blogs, the traditional realm of Google's search engine. That's a substantial drawback. Many people now turn to social media to read news and to learn about and comment about products and services.

More Americans than ever obtain their news through social media and the figure continues to rise. According to the [Pew Research Center](#), two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans say they get at least some of their news on social media and 20 percent do so often. Even older Americans, typically not considered heavy social media fans, increasingly view news stories on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.

When people view news about a company, celebrity or topical issue, there's a good chance they'll see it social media. That's probably why social media monitoring is one of the most critical factors determining executives' satisfaction with their PR firms, according to the [PR Customer Experience Benchmark Report](#) from Researchscape International. More executives (57 percent) use PR firms for social media monitoring than for other services.

[Social media listening](#) enables companies to respond to customer service complaints, complete product research, obtain sales leads and competitive intelligence, and find user-generated content to share. Likewise, nonprofits turn to social media listening to grow their donations, recruit volunteers and increase awareness of their mission.

## It Lacks Integrated Media Monitoring

In not monitoring broadcast news or social media, Google Alerts is unable to deliver an integrated view of all the media mentions. At best, it offers only a sliver of actual coverage. The missing coverage results in fewer media clips, a very cockeyed view of actual coverage that results in less favorable analytics.

The best media monitoring services integrate analytics from all media and social networks, including the client's Google Analytics, into a single dashboard for a comprehensive and easy review. An integrated analytics approach provides a 360-degree view of how earned media, marketing or social media campaigns impact key business objectives.

## Worst of All, Google Alerts Lacks Analytics

Google Analytics does not include analytics. It only reports, or at least is supposed to report, keywords. It does tell you if mentions of your brand are positive or negative or how your share of voice compares to competitors. It does not tell you if brand mentions, sentiment or share of voice is improving over time.

Social media analysis can provide a treasure trove of data. It can determine to what extent your audience is sharing your content. It can reveal details about your audience's characteristics and what people really think about your organization. By gaining insights into how people feel about your products and services, you learn where you can make improvements.



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Media measurement can demonstrate the value of public relations campaigns by analyzing brand mentions, brand sentiment, share of voice and other metrics. Anecdotal reports don't convince numbers-oriented corporate executives of the value of public relations. PR professionals who track hard numbers with advanced media monitoring and measurement tools can show the value of their campaigns to clients and corporate superiors.

**Bottom Line:** Google Alerts has deteriorated and is no longer a viable option for monitoring mentions of your organization or other keywords. Experts have recommended against it for years. Because their careers depend on media monitoring, it's critical for PR pros to rely on a paid media monitoring service that produces dependable results and monitors broadcast news and social media in addition to blogs and online news sites. Glean.info is among the options PR departments and agencies should consider.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](http://Glean.info)

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## Social Media Listening: How PR Firms Satisfy Clients



Social media monitoring is one of the most critical factors determining executives' satisfaction with their PR firms, new research reveals. Business executives see only earned media services and developing earned media coverage as more important, according to the [PR Customer Experience Benchmark Report](#) from Researchscape International, which provides PR firms survey research.

Other important factors that impact satisfaction include setting up media interviews, influencer marketing and developing PR campaigns.

The report calls social media monitoring an area of weakness, although 67 percent of executives are completely or very satisfied with PR firms' monitoring services. Other important areas that PR firms can improve include developing PR campaigns and case studies to increase their customers' overall satisfaction.

### Social Media Monitoring: A Common PR Service

Companies generally turn to public relations firms for social media monitoring services. More executives (57 percent) use PR firms for social media monitoring than other services. Other common PR services include digital marketing (56 percent), writing news releases (51 percent), and developing PR campaigns (51 percent).

Executives were satisfied with several skills and services PR firms provide such as presentation skills, digital marketing, and overall knowledge of their clients' business/industry. However, they consider those skills less important.

Looking at the big picture, 55 percent of the executives surveyed are very satisfied overall with the PR firms they use, and 22 percent are completely satisfied. "But this doesn't always translate to additional business opportunities: only 47 percent are very or completely likely to purchase additional services from their PR firm," states Jeffrey Henning is the president of Researchscape International, for the [Institute of Public Relations](#).

### Social Listening One of Three Top Trends

[The Evolution of Public Relations](#) report from the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) cited social media listening as one of the top public relations trends, along with digital storytelling and real-time marketing.

Those top three trends are interlinked: "I heard something" (social listening), "I need to tell a story about it" (digital storytelling), and "I need to do it fast" (real-time marketing).

Experts agree that social media listening is becoming more common among corporations and non-profit organizations. More consumers use social media to learn about and comment about products. That enables brands to employ social media listening to promote goods and services, engage customers online and complete product research.

### More Advanced Media Monitoring Tools Available

In addition, [social media monitoring tools](#) have become more advanced and easier to use. Social media monitoring technology also became better at analyzing consumers' intent. Brands can better determine the consumer's stage in the buying cycle – if they're



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thinking they might like a new product, actively shopping and prepared to purchase, or if they're dissatisfied with a current provider and ready consider an alternative.

PR firms can also now offer more advanced media measurement services such as [automated sentiment analysis](#), which grades social media comments on a positive, neutral, negative scale.

**Bottom Line:** Business executives place a high importance on social media monitoring services PR firms provide. PR firms that work with sophisticated media measurement vendors will gain a competitive advantage and be better able to retain clients and gain new ones.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## Improve Your Media Monitoring & Web Searches with Advanced Search Operators



If you think you know how to search online you might be wrong. Anyone can search on Google but relatively few know how to use Google search operators, also called advanced operators or Boolean operators.

Ordinary keyword searches often produce unwanted, irrelevant results; advanced operators deliver more precise results. They improve efficiency and save time by finding

more accurate results faster. They're useful for content research, media monitoring and technical SEO audits.

"By using search operators, you can slash the time you spend on Google and get better results. And the best part: It's not difficult at all," says digital marketing guru [Neil Patel](#).

"Crafting original content in 2017 requires wading into the sea of content that's already been created, and Google remains the most complete map of that sea. Advanced search operators are invaluable research tools for content marketers," agrees [Peter J. Meyers](#), marketing scientist at Moz.

### Numerous Benefits of Advanced Search Operators

All the major platforms including Google, Bing LinkedIn and most social media platforms enable advanced search operators.

PR and marketing teams can apply advanced operators to media monitoring services. Without the operators, companies can miss mentions of their brands and other keywords and be overwhelmed by large numbers of irrelevant mentions. The problem of extraneous mentions is especially challenging for companies with names and search terms identical to an unrelated term, such as a company in an unrelated industry.

Some media monitoring services, such as [Glean.info](#), let clients apply filters based on geographic location, language, social media platforms and other factors. Glean.info and a few other media listening services can specify initial caps, as in Orange, the French mobile phone service, or all caps as in acronyms. That's particularly useful if your acronym is also a common word. A Boolean query is mandatory for acronyms because most three or four-letter acronyms stand for multiple organizations.

Here's a summary of the most common and useful search operators.

**Quotation marks.** Placing quotation marks around a word or phrase tells the search engine to only return results that exactly match the word or phrase. Top results for a search of video marketing show the words video and marketing but not video marketing together. That's not the desired results. "Video marketing" in quotes returns more appropriate results.

**And.** Placing AND between search terms prompts search results with both words in any order.

**The minus sign.** Placing a short dash (-) in front of a word excludes it from search results. That's a useful technique to eliminate irrelevant results. You can place the minus



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sign before more than one word or phrase.

**The plus sign.** Placing plus sign (+) makes sure that the word is included in results. That can be especially valuable when searching for a niche topic.

**The wildcard operator.** The asterisk is the wildcard. If you place it before a term, you'll get all the variations of the word. For example: admin\* returns: administrator, administration, administer, administered, etc. "The asterisk is a time saver for search engines that recognize it because it saves you from creating long OR statements and having to think of every way a particular word can be expressed," explains [Boolean search expert Glen Cathey](#).

**Or.** The OR operator tells the search engine to return either keyword. You can also use the pipe symbol. (|). Results could include one, both or all terms. Google doesn't require placing or statements in parentheses, but other platforms, such as LinkedIn do. "As a best practice, I tell people to always use parentheses around OR statements as a matter of good search syntax, Cathy advises.

## Combining Search Operators

You can combine search operators to further define results. For instance, you can exclude entire phrases with the exact match and exclusion operators. Simply place the phrase in quotes and place a short dash immediately before it. Search results for the query: Tesla -"model 3" would omit that particular model. You can also combine the OR operator with words in quotes.

The ability to specify proximity of words in a Boolean search or frequency of keywords in an article is another helpful search operator available in some media monitoring services including Glean.info.

**Bottom Line:** Advanced search operators are invaluable for searching the web. Almost anyone can benefit from using the search terms, including content creators researching background information. The appropriate use of advanced search operators also greatly improves search results from media monitoring services. Because of the vast amount of information online, the operators are essential for generating accurate results and eliminating irrelevant mentions.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## How Media Monitoring of Brand Mentions can Energize Your SEO



Marketing, public relations and especially SEO pros widely recognize backlinks as the pillar for improving search engine results of the corporate and brand websites. Few realize that brand mentions can drastically improve search rankings. Some SEO experts call brand mentions the future of SEO.

[Digital marketing guru Neil Patel](#) points to a key paragraph in Google's

patent for its Panda update first identified by Moz. One sentence in that paragraph states: "An implied link is a reference to a target resource, e.g., a citation to the target resource, which is included in a source resource but is not an express link to the target resource."

### Implied Links & Explicit Links

An implied link can only mean a brand mention, Patel asserts. A brand mention tells people about your site without linking to it, but people still find your site by simply entering the name into the search bar.

Acquiring backlinks, or explicit links, has been the main strategy for improving page rankings. But people have learned to game Google's algorithm through link exchanges, private blog networks, automated programs and other techniques that Google frowns upon, often referred to as black hat techniques. Google may consider implicit links a way stymie those underhanded practices, Patel says. Google views brand mentions as social proof and an indication of a website's popularity and quality.

"Mentions alone do not tell the whole story, of course, and links are still very important in the overall mix of factors that affect rankings, but it is now time to start thinking about how you can create brand buzz and grow those mentions," [writes Simon Penson](#) of Zazzle Media for Moz. "My advice would be to begin thinking outside of follow links. Be happy to earn (and build) nofollowed links and mentions. Think outside the link, because there IS value in driving mentions and building brand."

### Steps to Winning More Brand Mentions

To acquire more brand mentions, digital marketers recommend:

- Learn about your target audiences and their preferences through social media analytics to produce content they'll love.
- Seek guest blogging opportunities in either general interest authoritative sites like Forbes or Huffington Post or leading blogs in your niche.
- Promote your content through social media marketing campaigns.
- Turn brand mentions into explicit links.

### How to Transform Brand Mentions into Explicit Links

Explicit links are still instrumental in boosting SEO, Patel notes. First use a [media monitoring service](#) to locate brand mentions. Paid media monitoring tools such as Glean.info offer more accurate and comprehensive brand monitoring services than free tools such as Google Alerts.





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Determine the page rank and domain authority of the page. If the site has good scores, contact the site webmaster. Thank them for mentioning your brand. Provide them your website address and kindly ask them to link to your site.

Consider link-building opportunities beyond brand mentions, suggest Andrew Dennis, content marketing specialist at Page One Power. These can include online mentions of:

- Employees
- References to specific products or services
- Coverage of company sponsored events
- Common misspellings associated with your company.

“The number of mentions and link opportunities you can find are only limited to your own creativity,” Dennis writes in [Search Engine Land](#). “Even if you’re a smaller business, you can search for internet chatter happening within and around your local community to find link prospects.”

**Bottom Line:** Brand mentions provide SEO value even if they do not link to your site. That means it’s now essential to track and report brand mentions. In addition, organizations can use media monitoring tools to identify brand mentions and transform them into explicit links for even greater SEO value.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## The Value of Broadcast News Monitoring for PR Agencies: Win New Clients & Impress Current Ones



Image source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Broadcast media monitoring provides PR agencies a competitive advantage that helps attract and retain clients.

Television remains the most influential news medium. Almost all American households own at least one television, and about 50 percent of Americans obtain their news most frequently from television, compared to 43 percent who often get their news online, according to [Pew Research](#).

While many news organizations put some of their newscasts on their websites or on YouTube, not all stories from the live broadcast are posted online and stories are often not posted in their entirety. To monitor TV news broadcasts completely, it's important to monitor the video broadcast directly using a national broadcast monitoring service. TV broadcast monitoring services in the U.S. usually monitor the closed caption text. In other countries, services use transcriptions of the audio and/or speech to text software.

PR agencies can grow their business and impress clients by offering broadcast monitoring services, according to a [new playbook from TVEyes](#), a broadcast media search engine.

### Win New Clients with Broadcast Monitoring Services

Here's how PR and marketing agencies can win new clients through research of TV broadcasts:

**Track news events in specific product niches** to become expert and to identify opportunities. A new product launch can create need for public relations among competitors that may make ideal new clients for an agency in that niche. Example: When Apple announced its new smartwatch, Motorola also announced an expansion of its own smartwatch but attracted limited media attention. That's an opportunity to pitch campaign ideas to the company to win its business.

**Learn about potential clients and competitors.** An analysis of a prospective client's previous broadcast coverage and their competition's coverage can provide insight on the companies that need improved media relations and PR services. It can also provide a baseline from which the agency can pitch enhanced media relations services.

**Bring the new business pitch to life.** Incorporating video clips about current clients into presentations to prospective clients helps an agency stand out among competitors.

### Strengthen Loyalty of Current Agency Clients

The following are some ways that PR agencies can use broadcast monitoring to help current clients and strengthen the clients' loyalty to the agency:

**Uncover non-verbal nuances.** Watching the video clips produced by broadcast monitoring frequently reveals nuances that are not shown through conventional web searches or by reading a transcript. For instance, sometimes the adversarial tone of a journalist or the perceived insincerity of a corporate spokesperson can only be determined from a review of the video clip.



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**Create more effective messaging.** Interviews with the “man on the street” help companies better understand the tone of and attitude behind comments. Analysis of appearances of corporate executives can identify how to strengthen corporate messages in interviews.

**Improve media training.** Before and after video clips can hone a client’s media interviewing skills and eliminate bad interview habits. Clips of a journalist’s previous interviews with other executives can prepare an executive for an on-camera interview with the reporter.

**Track top competitors.** News that a competitor has released a new product or is fined by a regulator enables an agency to recommend appropriate reactions to the client.

**Stay on top of social and political issues** that affect your client, providing you a “first-mover advantage.”

**Improve crisis management.** Broadcast monitoring provides near real-time insights into the events, organizations, and people involved in a crisis as well as a way to track the success of recovery or rebuilding messaging.

“Unlike any other tool, broadcast monitoring will set your agency apart during every stage of the client life cycle: attract, acquire, develop, retain, and build loyalty,” the TVEyes playbook states.

## Comprehensive Media Monitoring

While TV news monitoring offers many benefits for both agencies and clients, it’s also advantageous to integrate TV news monitoring into a comprehensive media monitoring service such as Glean.info.

TV networks and local stations now promote their programs and engage with their audience on social media where viewers share and discuss TV news stories. That means it’s important to seek a media monitoring service that integrates TV and social media data.

The best media monitoring services integrate into a single dashboard for easy viewing the analytics from all media and social networks, including the client’s Google Analytics. If all media mentions are under a single umbrella, online reputation management and media measurement is much more comprehensive, accurate and convenient.

It’s may be more economical to employ a media monitoring service that permits clients to subscribe to only the closed-caption text of broadcast news or one that will do customized keyword searches after broadcast. Clients can then choose to see a preview video of only the most important clips that the monitoring service has identified. Learn more about how to select a [media monitoring vendor](#).

## More Advice for Television News Monitoring

In setting up TV news monitoring, select specific keywords terms to locate relevant videos. Concentrating on specific high-priority searches, such as a brand initiative, is more effective and affordable than attempting to monitor every brand mention. In broadcast monitoring, it’s important to include spelling variations, and common misspellings of the company, brand, and high-level executives. To minimize irrelevant video clips, it’s often beneficial to use [Boolean search queries](#) for companies, brands or executives with common names such as “Adele” AND (song OR singer OR Top 50 OR album).

**Bottom Line:** Broadcast news monitoring can help PR agencies win new clients and greatly improve services to current clients. It gives PR agencies a competitive advantage that distinguishes them from competitors. Despite the recent acceptance of online



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news, television remains the most popular source for news. As a result, national monitoring of TV news has become a must-have service for agencies serving major corporations and not-for-profit organizations.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](http://Glean.info)

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## Benefits, Challenges & Solutions of Competitive Intelligence through Media Monitoring



Most companies, brands, and not-for-profit organizations post massive amounts of material and commentary on social media in order to promote themselves and gain new followers. That frequent sharing provides a windfall of information for competitors as well as consumers. Consumers sometimes fear that posting on social media will make them vulnerable to identity thieves

and burglars. Yet many companies post truly sensitive information on social media.

Competitive intelligence, or collecting publicly available information about competitors, provides numerous benefits.

“The more you know, the more you grow. This is certainly the case when using social listening to keep tabs on the competition. Social media offers a pool of competitive insight that will benefit your brand tremendously,” [states Juntae DeLane](#), founder of Digital Branding Institute.

### Competitive Intelligence Benefits

**Product information.** Social media listening exposes what consumers are saying about competitors and their products, and what they like and dislike about them, including possible customer service issues. Your organization can exploit their weaknesses and copy their strengths. If their top executives start mentioning a new technology or partnership, they might be preparing to launch a new product or service. That timely warning could provide your organization time to prepare a counterpunch.

**Marketing.** Companies can track trends in engagement levels, follower numbers, product messaging and other metrics. Some monitoring services can complete a sentiment analysis which rates brand mentions on a positive to negative scale. You can learn about competitors’ audience profiles by analyzing people who mention competitors, which help better define your own target audience.

**Public relations.** Media monitoring reveals competitors’ earned media coverage, both negative and positive. PR can compare their efforts to competitors’ by comparing changes to share of voice and sentiment over time.

**Sales.** Competitive intelligence can spot openings for possible sales. If social media listening uncovers a negative mention of a competitor’s product, your sales staff can contact them and engage them in a conversation. It’s import to follow proper business etiquette by offering information the consumer may find useful and avoiding an immediate hard sell.

### Competitive Intelligence Challenges

Although competitive intelligence offers clear benefits, analyzing the massive amounts of social media posts can be overwhelming, [says Bonnie Hohhof](#), an author on competitive intelligence and adjunct professor at George Washington University. In addition, non-standard vocabulary, the need to track social media across several languages, and placing social media content in its proper context pose challenges.



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The solution is to find the right social media monitoring and measurement tool, and determine the right keywords to track, Hohhof says. Selecting the most appropriate service can be problematic, given the wide range of considerations and needs of different departments. Free tools have drawbacks. They lack service contact people, provide only quantitative or statistical reports, and generally provide only a limited amount of English-language coverage.

Hohhof recommends seeking a media monitoring tool that can:

- Gather information in near real-time from many different sources, channels, and forms (posts, pictures, videos), plus multiple countries and languages.
- Identify and discard unwanted information, including spam and duplicates.
- Send alerts on new topics, new correlations, or changes in intensity from historical norms.
- Analyze the information, including pattern and bias identification.
- Provide results through a wide range of visualization tools, including dashboards.

## Steps to Developing Competitive Intelligence

**Hone keywords.** In developing keyword queries on competitors, follow the same media listening techniques you use to track mentions of their own company and products. Basically, replace your search terms with those of competitors. Include competitors' company names, product names, products, misspellings and other keywords that describe industry issues. Employing [Boolean search terms](#), or words like AND, OR, NOT and punctuation like parenthesis and quotes, can produce more meaningful data and eliminate irrelevant mentions.

**Share the data and insights.** Public relations departments who typically first view media monitoring results should share data freely with other business units. Sharing data with other departments, functions and country managers ensures the entire organization benefits. Other departments often find additional insights that PR can miss.

**Seek insights.** In assessing media results from PR and marketing campaigns, many communications professionals concentrate on the data and pretty graphs produced by media monitoring and measurement services. While comparing PR or marketing performance with competitors is undoubtedly useful, the most valuable nuggets of competitive intelligence usually come from looking beyond the numbers and seeking insights from the content. To find those insights, organizations need knowledgeable staff members or a third-party service to review media mentions for both content (including data) and context.

**Bottom Line:** Companies can gain a competitive advantage with the through competitive intelligence that social media monitoring and measurement provides. Wading through the massive amount of information poses the greatest obstacle. Organizations can glean priceless insights by carefully selecting keywords and working with the right media monitoring tool.

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## Checklist: Selecting a Media Monitoring and Measurement Vendor



More companies and non-profit organizations are using social media monitoring and measurement dashboards to improve customer service, conduct market research and identify successful marketing strategies. PR departments have long used news clipping services and media measurement services to manage corporate reputation, handle PR crisis, and assess the impact and value of public relations activities.

Finding a media listening and measurement service that meets the organization's needs can be an arduous and problematic task. New start-ups continually emerge, companies are regularly acquired, go out of business, or revamp their offerings. Many organizations have experienced the unhappy situation of selecting a media listening solution that doesn't meet their needs, and having to begin the search all over again in less than a year.

Katie Paine, measurement expert and CEO of Paine Publishing, offers valuable tips that can help avoid that unfortunate scenario in her new [Guide to Measurement Vendors](#). The guide offers insights into the strengths of various vendors in both news and social media monitoring and measurement.

Here are some key criteria recommended by Paine and other measurement experts to use in selecting a media monitoring and measurement service:

**Media coverage.** Many services do not cover all media – print, broadcast, online, social – in one integrated dashboard. Make sure that the service monitors the key media types you need and the outlets you need within each media type. Most organizations, for instance, have specific local news sources or trade publications they want to monitor. Many companies have specific blogs or social media accounts to monitor. Make sure the service already monitors your required sources or can readily add them to its monitoring list.

**Timely alerts.** For daily alerts of brand mentions in media coverage, timing is often as critical as content. Make sure the vendor can deliver media alerts when you need them.

**Clip accuracy.** Seek a vendor with good keyword filters. These days, the real problem isn't finding all the news articles and social media posts containing your key words; it's finding the right ones. That's especially true if you're monitoring some generic words. If the monitoring service can't filter out spam, porn, geographical references and other irrelevant mentions, then look elsewhere. A short free trial using your own keywords will tell you much more about media coverage and clip accuracy than a canned online demo. (If you can't get a free trial, insist on a 30-day cancellation clause.)

**Sentiment analysis.** When considering media monitoring services that offer qualitative assessment of articles, broadcasts and social media posts, seek one that uses a combination of automated software and human analysis. Relying solely on automated sentiment analysis software to assess tone/sentiment, messages, prominence, dominance, and other qualitative factors can produce results that are quite misleading.



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Demand a minimum 88% accuracy in a Scott's Pi intercoder reliability test. (Paine says she can help run a test.)

**Social media metrics.** If you seek a company that can provide comprehensive social media monitoring and comprehensive social media metrics, seek a vendor that can take the application program interface, or API, from a variety of sources and automatically extract all the data that social media networks compile. Make sure the vendor tracks the networks you seek to monitor and measure.

**Graphic depictions.** It's hard to believe, but some measurement services use the wrong type of chart format to display results for trends or comparisons. Make sure the charts offered and the chart formats meet your needs – or offer flexibility to develop additional charts.

**Customization.** Most all companies and non-profit organizations have some sort of special need in monitoring or measurement. It can be coverage of certain media sources, or custom metrics, or certain types of measurement or graphic depictions. Find a vendor that is able to customize its standard package to your specific wants and needs. Many vendors cannot or will not.

**Industry standards.** Before you begin your search, find what vendors have pledged their support to PR industry standards. The list is available at the [Institute for Public Relations](#) website. Vendors who do not follow industry standards are likely to push you to use AVEs and other dubious metrics, Paine warns.

## Determine Your Requirements First

Paine and other experts recommend you first determine your requirements, objectives and budget before contacting vendors. After determining your needs, interview vendors to find if they can meet them.

"This is much preferred to watching the 60-90 minute dog and pony show that vendors show to every prospective client. Make sure each requirement on your list is addressed—and demonstrated—to your satisfaction," [stresses Dr. Liz Gross](#), a social media and market research strategist for a federal student loan servicer.

After selecting a vendor, seek a trial period. Avoid signing a multi-year contract to keep your options open, Gross urges. The company you choose could overhaul its solution, be acquired, or go out of business before the contract ends.

Some organizations, notably larger companies and government agencies, require formal competitive bidding and a formal [request for proposal \(RFP\) process](#). Although RFPs offer a methodical way to gather competitive bids, they often leave out information that vendors need to create a thorough proposal that's specific to the organization's needs. It's essential to include specific requirements in the RFP in order for vendors to produce quality proposals with accurate cost estimates.

**Bottom Line:** These recommendations from industry experts can you help find a media monitoring and measurement service that meets your organization's PR and marketing needs. Be sure your team first agrees on its needs, goals and budget before vetting media monitoring and measurement vendors.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)





## Katie Paine's 6 Steps to PR Measurement Success



PR often fails to gain budget resources and the respect of management because of poor measurement practices or the lack of measurement. The faulty measurement practices include bad metrics, misaligned goals, and failure to include social media in PR measurement, among other factors, according to PR measurement guru Katie Delahaye Paine, CEO of [Paine Publishing](#). It's essential to measure PR contributions to revenue or other

measures of success for your organization, she stressed in a recent [webinar](#).

A common measurement error is selecting metrics that reveal little or no meaningful information. Some traditional metrics are no longer viewed as useful. In the early days of digital publishing, commercial organizations applied metrics from traditional print publications to the digital realm. But those metrics don't apply to online media.

Impressions remain one of the most common senseless metrics. They can reach ridiculous numbers but don't help reveal awareness. "Impressions are like sperm. There's lots of them but few do what you want," Paine said.

### Barcelona Principles

PR can turn to the Barcelona Principles established by industry leaders for PR guidance. A few of the document's main points include: measure outcomes (achieved results) rather than outputs (work done); measure both quantitative and qualitative factors; and measure social media along with other channels. Advertising value equivalencies are not a valid metric for PR measurement.

Some criticize the principles for not providing a prescriptive solution, but the principles were only meant to provide guidance. "Think of them as the Declaration of Independence. They only provide the basic principles," she explained.

### Steps to Measurement Success

Paine outlined six steps to PR measurement perfection.

**Define goals.** Ask yourself: What were you hired to do? What are the expectations? Define your "Champaign moment" when you celebrate complete success.

**Define your parameters.** Define who you are trying to reach and what makes them act. Understand your target audience, what motivates them and who influences them.

**Define benchmarks.** Organizations typically compare progress to the last month. For more insights, look at the past 13 months and compare your performance to peers and competitors.



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**Define metrics.** The ideal metrics provide tangible communications activity and are linked to your organization's goals. If market share is your goal, then you have to measure market share.

**Pick tools.** You need three types of tools: content analysis to determine sentiment, survey research, and analytics — in particular Google Analytics. Tools should be one of your last considerations. Too many people try to get metrics from tools that don't measure what you want.

**Analyze data.** Translate data into action and continue measuring. Use the data and its analysis to help make better business decisions throughout the organization.

## A “Kick Butt Index”

Creating a “kick butt index” defines exactly what the organization considers PR success. The best KBI provides actionable information, provides enough fresh data, and continuously improves your processes by letting you if you are getting closer to your goal. The index uses a weighted quality score based on factors such as the message, mentions, third-party endorsements, headline and desirable visuals. While desirable criteria improve the score, corresponding undesirable criteria produce negative scores. Creating the index calls for weighting various criteria that motivate your stakeholders, or your target audience act. That requires extensive internal discussions to define what influencers their behavior, Paine said. It varies between brands. [Glean.info](#) is one of the few media measurement services that include the equivalent of a kick butt index, customized for each client.

The result is a single number that defines PR's contribution to the organization.

“It's not about the volume of clips,” she said. “It's about the quality of coverage.”

**Bottom Line:** Advice from one of the leading PR measurement experts offers a scientific approach to measuring PR's contribution. With its concrete steps, that approach can help PR pros find the most appropriate metrics and demonstrate its contribution to the organization's success.

**Added Thought:** Glean.info and Media Measurement News highly recommend that PR professionals subscribe to [The Measurement Advisor](#), edited and published by Katie Paine, as a core source of information and insight each month on measurement and analytics. There is a free one-month trial.

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## 8 Obstacles to PR Measurement – and How to Overcome Them



PR's continuing struggle with measurement confounds many PR measurement experts.

Although most PR managers appreciate the benefits of measurement, PR agencies and corporate departments cling to inferior metrics that emphasize viewership — such as total reach or impressions — rather than business outcomes.

Most agency and client-side executives surveyed for the [Global Communications Report](#) believe total reach is the most common form of measurement (68%), followed by impressions (65%) and content analysis (64%). Fewer stressed brand perception (47%) or return on investment (41%). Almost a third (30%) say they use advertising value equivalency (AVE), which PR measurement experts almost universally denounce as an inappropriate PR metric.

In addition, an [AMEC survey](#) revealed that 56% of communications professionals are unhappy with the current availability of information, 35% are unacquainted with the valid metrics framework, and 63% are dissatisfied with the ability to demonstrate the impact of communications on business outcomes.

### PR Measurement Obstacles

Tina McCorkindale, president and CEO of the Institute for Public Relations, sees three reasons [why PR measurement efforts frequently fall short](#).

**Over-reliance on media.** Focusing solely on media measurement provides an incomplete picture. For a more complete view, PR can also employ other methods such as surveys, experiments, and predictive modeling made possible by the increased access to big data.

**Success metrics.** All too often, PR seeks to win acclaim by reporting unrealistic results that lack credibility. Such was the case when the [Washington Redskins](#) counted impressions to claim that more than 7.84 billion people read about their training camp within a three-week period. That's more than the entire population of the world. PR can gain greater respect and credibility by using realistic metrics that produce credible data and that are tied to business outcomes.

**Confusing insights and data.** PR often uses the buzz term “insights” interchangeably with “data” and “metrics.” Data are not insights. “Insights are an extra step in the process where the data is interpreted and application to the business is made that may have not been made otherwise,” McCorkindale asserts.

**A shortage of qualitative information.** Qualitative research from focus groups or surveys can answer some of the “why” questions that quantitative methods cannot. However, relying on smaller samples as the gospel with qualitative research can create problems with generalizations, she cautions.

**Misguided intentions.** PR should not employ measurement to prove its value



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compared to other corporate departments. Instead, measurement should be used to improve PR. “Research and insights should save time and money, and help support our decisions by also narrowing options and pinpointing issues,” she writes.

## More PR Measurement Obstacles

Other commentators cite other PR measurement hurdles.

**Fear of numbers.** PR pros typically dislike or even fear numbers and data. That math phobia may be why they chose PR as a career in the first place. Unfortunately, that avoidance of measurement means numbers-orientated C-suite executives often view suspiciously a PR department or agency that lacks data to demonstrate success. Online courses in statistics and data analytics, now deemed [must-have PR skills](#), can boost PR professionals’ confidence in handling data – and help their careers.

**Finding top talent.** Attracting and retaining top talent is the greatest challenge facing PR executives surveyed by the USC Annenberg Center for Public Relations for the Global Communications Report. Almost two-thirds (62%) value analytics skills. Only the basic skills of writing, strategic planning and verbal communications are viewed as more important. PR may be able to attract desirable talent by recruiting from outside its ranks, something it has not traditionally done.

**Lack of integrated tools.** Most media monitoring tools do not integrate traditional media monitoring and social media monitoring, or do a poor job of integration. Traditional media monitoring vendors typically don’t understand social media listening, and most social media listening companies did not care about or were bad at traditional media monitoring. However, [new platforms](#) can now perform both functions well and integrate different data streams from traditional media, social media as well as internal communications into a single dashboard.

**Bottom Line:** PR agencies and corporate departments face many challenges in implementing PR measurement programs that produce accurate, meaningful results. However, it’s possible for PR to overcome those challenges in order to improve PR strategies and demonstrate PR’s value in advancing the organization’s mission.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## How to Measure the Value of Press Releases in 2016



Despite the much-publicized demise of print media, press releases remain one of the most important weapons in the PR arsenal. PR can share news releases on social media, distribute them to bloggers and other influencers interested in the company's niche, and post them on company blogs and websites, which win top billing on Google News.

PR pros believe brand awareness and sales increase after they issue press releases. The hard part is proving that

value to senior management. Media monitoring and measurement services help PR overcome that challenge.

"Thanks to better monitoring and tracking services, tracking the true ROI of a news release has never been easier," writes Serena Ehrlich, Business Wire director of social and evolving media.

### Examine Your Metrics

Measurement reports reveal important insights into the effectiveness of your press releases, Ehrlich explains in her Business Wire article [How to Measure the ROI or Impact of a News Release in 2016](#).

**Coverage.** Coverage, the first and oldest PR metric, refers to the amount of coverage your news and content generated. Coverage includes the number and reach of placements in print, online and broadcast, location within the placement, length of article, multimedia assets used, and corporate or brand messages delivered.

**Visibility.** How broadly was the news shared, who shared it and which audiences impacted the marketing funnel the most? Was it editorial coverage? How many influencer shares of that coverage occurred? Did employee sharing increase word-of-mouth marketing? Did the multimedia assets you included increase impact?

**Geo-Impact.** In what geographic regions did the news resonate? Organizations can act on this data with paid advertising or a concentrated sales effort, striking while the conversational iron is hot, Ehrlich advises.

**Social shares.** Examine the number of influencers who talk about your news and the number of overall news shares. Also consider the message adoption and associated hashtags usage.

**Inbound traffic.** Simply add a URL Builder or extension to a URL within your press release that drives traffic back to your website. After viewers click the link, you can track their actions within your website. Because some media outlets will not include hyperlinks to your website, remember that this will only be a snapshot of incoming traffic. Also consider increases in inbound website traffic during the news cycle.

**Owned channel registrations.** Include links to join your other owned channels, including following social channels or registering for a newsletter. This enables



interested parties to take the first step in creating a relationship with your organization.

**Engagement.** Other PR measurement experts such as Katie Paine also include [engagement rate](#) to measure impact in social media. Engagement rate consists of the number of likes, comments, and shares that an article generated as a percentage of the total number of views. Some experts emphasize the sentiment of the comments. To obtain valid measurement of sentiment, a piece will have to generate significant numbers of comments.

### **Craft a First-Class Press Release**

The first step in measuring the press release's results is to consider your goals and its expected outcome. Are you alerting media to new products, or showcasing thought leadership with white papers and infographics?

Ehrlich and other experts offer these recommendations to create news releases that drive results.

- Your audience. When writing the release, concentrate on how the news will impact your target audience. The release should be unique, new and informative or helpful for your audience. As the saying goes, "new" is the biggest part of "news."
- Avoid mass messages. Gear the release to a particular publication or small number of reporters. Emailing the same release to a huge number publications acquired through a data base rarely works.
- Consider the headline. Including the organization's name and being succinct are essential for headlines. You can also play around with the words to create a catchy headline. Including a powerful verb in the headline works best.
- SEO. Include keywords in the headline, subheads, anchor link text, and within the body of the text. [Search engine optimization](#) (SEO) is important to gain placement in search results, although Google's algorithm punishes content mills that churn out releases filled with spammy, "unnatural" links.
- Write well. The best press releases are succinct, straightforward and free of clichés and industry buzzwords. Placing the hook in the headline and first sentence is the best way to win attention – especially from journalists or editors who decide whether or not to publish the story.
- Be visual. Research shows that most people including journalists tend to learn better through [visuals](#) and are more likely to interact with images, videos and audio. Editors are more likely the run stories that include interesting multimedia elements.

**Bottom Line:** Writing and distributing news releases remains one of the most important functions of PR, though distribution methods have changed. Demonstrating the value of news releases can improve PR's standing in the organization. Fortunately, media monitoring and measurement services make that easier than ever.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## 8 Ways to Dump Useless Metrics & Achieve Better PR Measurement



PR measurement requires selecting appropriate metrics, but sometimes you need to do the opposite and eliminate unsuitable metrics.

As staff members and others stakeholders suggest media metrics to track, the number of metrics can balloon over time. A cumbersome number of metrics is time consuming to track, report and analyze. Too many media intelligence metrics create a haze that makes it more

difficult to concentrate on the few metrics that can generate helpful insights and actionable recommendations.

If you've done PR measurement for a while, you probably have metrics that deserve to be eliminated. They may be obsolete, irrelevant and sometimes even harmful. Your analytics staff may be buried in data that's useless.

### Not all Data is Helpful

"Not all data is helpful," [says Lars Lofgren](#), KISSmetrics marketing analyst. "Some of it is worse than worthless because it tricks us into believing we have answers when we don't. But when you focus on data that helps you make decisions, everything else in your business gets easier."

That's why good PR measurement practice calls for periodically reviewing current metrics with an eye toward pruning. You can follow these steps to eliminate the unnecessary and inappropriate ones.

**Re-evaluate your PR measurement.** Take a step back and reassess what you're measuring. Ideally, re-evaluation is done once a year, but a new CEO offers an opportune time for re-examination, points out [PR measurement expert Katie Paine](#). Convincing all stakeholders to drop familiar metrics, even if they're not useful, may be difficult. "But trust me, everyone will be happier to see five meaningful metrics, as opposed to 105 numbers that no one knows what to do with." Paine asserts.

**Drop the worst metrics from reports** and see if anyone notices. You can always add them back into your reports, but if no one complains or even notices, they probably aren't worth tracking, Paine says.

**Ax metrics not linked to business objectives.** A common PR measurement error is picking metrics that don't connect to business goals and objectives. Use metrics that show how PR helps increase sales leads, reduce costs, attract visitors or customers, boost conversion or support other business objectives.

**Avoid vanity metrics.** Numbers of Twitter followers and Facebook likes are easy to report and boost the ego, but they don't help improve business results. "We only have so much time in the day," Lofgren says. Every minute counts so don't waste any looking at metrics that don't help you. Focus on metrics that matter and ditch the vanity metrics.

**Seek actionable metrics.** "It all comes down to one thing: Does the metric help you



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make decisions? When you see the metric, do you know what you need to do?” Lofgren says. Ask yourself if it helps you take action and make decisions. If doesn't, drop it.

**Ask yourself “So what?”** “That is, if this metric shows X, what will I do about it? What about Y? If you can't answer that question, consider not collecting this metric,” recommends [Igor Altman](#), senior direct of project management at Medidata Solutions.

**Avoid inappropriate comparisons.** Companies often compare themselves to the wrong competitors. “The most common mistake I see is a brand comparing themselves with the biggest brand in their industry, even though their brand is much smaller and serves a completely different group of clients,” [says Kim Do at Lewis](#), a PR agency. Compare your organization to competitors in the same geographical locations, in the same vertical markets or those seeking the same media audience.

**Use an appropriate media monitoring and analytics dashboard.** Many PR measurement dashboards include inappropriate metrics for both PR and marketing. Seek a media analytics dashboard such as [Glean.info](#) that integrates all media (online, print, broadcast, social, and owned including the organization's website) and that allows you to customize metrics to measure the impact of PR and marketing on your organization's specific goals.

**Bottom Line:** Many PR teams tend to track and analyze too many metrics. And many are outdated or unhelpful and consume precious time and energy. Dropping bad metrics can help PR focus on just a handful of key meaningful metrics can bring clarity to PR measurement.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## How to Measure PR & Marketing on a Limited Budget



The challenge of obtaining substantial media exposure and measuring the results of PR and marketing campaigns may be eased by a large budget. But most organizations don't have millions (or even thousands) to spend on media measurement. Nonprofit organizations, start-ups and small businesses are among the organizations that likely have limited resources for PR and marketing and especially for PR measurement. Even many large organizations rely on

shoestring budgets for media monitoring and measurement.

The following tips can help organizations with limited funds affordably measure their PR and marketing. PR measurement on a limited budget

### Pick the Right Metrics

**Set goals that are easy to measure.** Specific goals can be measured more easily. Goals could cover lead generation, increased sales, or positive media mentions in certain publications. Seek meaningful results. Make sure goals link to business objectives and can be measured regularly.

**Look beyond traditional media metrics** to find ways to meaningfully and affordably measure PR, recommends [Mara Conklin](#), founder and president of Clarus Communications. For example, one company reported that their sales reps noticed that the sales cycle started shortening as the PR program gained traction. That's because sales reps could spend less time educating prospects about their company.

"Because good PR positively impacts attitude and perception, it's okay to look for "soft" measurements that really contribute to the company, Conklin writes.

Some measurement experts advise: "If you're not measuring, you're not marketing." Some PR pros say: "What's measurable isn't always meaningful, and what's meaningful isn't always measurable." Establish a balance between those contrasting philosophies, advises Kathie Green, director of marketing at TapSense.

**Measure against goals.** "It is important to set and meet your quantifiable press-coverage goals every quarter, to ensure you stay focused on creating great content, raising awareness for your company, and getting return on investment from your PR efforts," Green writes in [Entrepreneur](#).

**Use Data You Already Have.** If one goal is increased traffic to the corporate web page, web analytics can report website traffic, the number of returning visitors, time on page, and the most popular pages and other information. Social media sites report engagement levels and the number of followers.

Savvy PR pros use those tools to their full advantage but keep in mind the [limits of Google Analytics as a PR measurement tool](#) and understand that measurement pros often view social media metrics like follower counts as vanity metrics.



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## Find an Affordable Media Monitoring Vendor

**Seek a Cost-Effective Media Monitoring Service.** A media monitoring and measurement service that can tailor its package to your specific needs and requests will offer a more cost-effective solution. It's crucial to [complete thorough research](#) before selecting a media monitoring vendor and request a free-trial to test its capability. Avoid long-term contracts that can leave you stuck with an undesirable partner and below-average product.

### [Schedule a Free Online Demo](#) of the **Glean.info Media Monitoring & Measurement Dashboard**

PR and marketing teams with limited budgets have media analytics tools that can track sales during a PR campaign, points out Mel Carson, founder and principal strategist at Delightful Communications.

"Without a doubt, the lines between PR and marketing have blurred, thanks to advances in digital media and a new breed of thought-leaders coming up who are questioning traditional, siloed methods," [Carson writes](#). "Entrepreneurs on a budget can only benefit here, because they can now track the success of their PR using some of these relatively inexpensive and easy-to-use tactics and tools."

**Bottom Line:** Organizations can now measure their PR and marketing efforts without spending huge sums. Carefully selecting metrics and partnering with the right media monitoring tool enables PR and marketing to accurately measure their campaigns for reasonable costs.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## How to Measure ROI of Trade Shows



Trade shows offer valuable marketing and public relations benefits, including sales leads, media coverage and brand exposure.

Trade shows are also expensive. Booth space, attendee registration, booth design and setup, giveaways, promotions, employees to man the booth and staff travel expenses all add to costs. If companies don't measure ROI, they cannot be sure trade show investments pay off.

Despite widespread uncertainties about the costs versus benefits, vendors typically pack trade show space.

Almost half (44 percent) of business owners and marketing managers don't measure ROI of their trade shows, according to [a survey](#) by Display Wizard. Many exhibitors (39 percent) called trade shows a profitable marketing tactic and cited their benefits: the ability to reach many customers in a short space of time and give consumers the opportunity to see the people behind the company.

"It's crucial for businesses to have a good understanding of the return on their marketing spend in order to sensibly assign budgets for the following year," says Display Wizard Co-owner Diarmuid Beary. Inability to measure ROI of trade shows could allow inappropriate or unnecessary spending, which directly impacts the performance of the entire business.

### The Four Steps

In an article for [MarketingProfs](#), Peter Symonds, Display Wizard trade show marketing expert, outlines four steps to measure trade show ROI. Here's an overview:

**Set a simple goal.** Select a quantifiable, actionable goal and an appropriate metric to measure it. Keep things simple. Set one goal for your first show. "If your goal isn't measurable with a concrete "yes" or "no," it's too vague or complicated," he says.

**Track and update leads.** Most trade shows provide systems to record visitors by badge number. With a customer relationship management (CRM) tool, track your leads to see which ones produce sales. Create a custom tag within the CRM system to identify and measure leads from trade shows.

**Calculate your lifetime customer value.** Lifetime customer value (LCV) tells you the total amount of profit a new customer produces over the long term. After tagging tradeshow leads in CRM software, you can group leads from one event, then divide the total profit by the amount of leads.

**Continue measuring and optimizing.** Many businesses make the mistake of measuring their trade show ROI once, then assuming that it will not change. Because every trade show is different, it's essential to track and monitor each event.

If companies don't measure ROI, they cannot be sure trade show investments pay off. Obtaining clean data is essential for measuring ROI, yet often challenging, according to [a new ebook from Shift Communications](#). For instance, trade show registration lists



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often don't jive well with automated marketing systems.

"There must be reliable data in the marketing systems, and marketers must make accurate use of that data, to truly determine trade show ROI," it states. "How did the brand reach people? When people provide information at the booth, are they giving up-to-date information? What information does the conference provide through its badges?"

Shift Communications suggests that marketers considering attending trade shows ask these questions:

- Are our customers there? Are our competitors there?
- Should we speak there? Should we become a sponsor?
- How large is the event's media attendance? How many briefings can we secure?
- Should we pull a stunt to stand out?
- What is our budget? The answer to this question is necessary to measure ROI.
- Is the marketing team dedicated to engaging with the audience?

## Measuring Public Relations Activities

Major trade shows often attract a large contingent of consumer and trade press. Most major shows also have their own daily publications and/or TV broadcasts available to attendees. Trade shows therefore offer significant opportunities for public relations activities to obtain earned media placements that create greater awareness of the organization's products and services. Measuring results of PR activities connected to the trade show, therefore, should factor into assessment of trade show ROI. A [media monitoring and measurement service](#) can provide, segregate and analyze data from trade show publicity.

**Bottom Line:** Although trade shows may offer substantial marketing opportunities, they're extremely expensive. That means quantifying and measuring the concrete results of trade shows is imperative to sensible budgeting of future marketing and PR expenses and, ultimately, to business success.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## The Fallacy of Awareness as a PR Measurement



Many business executives and public relations professionals cite “increase awareness” as a top PR objective. But awareness has become a controversial metric in PR measurement circles. Some say awareness, or brand recall, is a major factor leading to purchases. Consumers are much more likely to purchase a product if only they can remember it. Others call awareness a vanity metric that does little to measure key business objectives.

### The Big Lie

If people say their only goal is to increase awareness, they are lying, asserts [Julie Wright](#) of Wright Communications. No one wants their PR campaign to simply raise awareness. They want their campaign to motivate consumers or other stakeholders to take a specific, measurable behavior: buy a product, visit a destination, attend an event, submit their email, visit the website, download the white paper or make a donation.

“Hold yourself to a higher standard and help your client or boss understand that you do more than just ‘create buzz,’” Wright urges. She recommends these steps to develop a more meaningful PR measurement.

- Set an objective that states the behavior you want your stakeholders to take and a timeframe for reaching the objective.
- Work backwards and think about your informational objective. Develop the message or knowledge your stakeholders need to receive and the motivation or the emotional connection they need to take the desired action.
- Research your stakeholders to determine their level of awareness and knowledge and what motivates them.

### A Red Herring

Doing PR to increase awareness is a red herring, says Katie Paine, CEO of Paine Publishing. Awareness might be an acceptable goal for a start-up, but established brands need to address perception and consideration of the brands, Paine said in an [interview](#) with marketing and PR agency Arketi Group.

Nonprofits often want to increase awareness of their organization. The problem is not increasing awareness, but a false understanding of what the organization does. The solution is to educate people about the nonprofit’s mission and why it matters.

“The red herring factor is when people say, ‘I want to increase awareness.’ It’s not really about awareness or impression—it’s getting people to understand what you do and why it’s important,” Paine says.

### A Waste of Money

Sean Ellis, founder and CEO of GrowthHackers.com, calls building awareness a waste of start-up resources. “Building a strong customer acquisition engine is the best chance you have of creating long-term awareness,” [Ellis writes](#). “At a certain scale, awareness/brand building makes sense. But for the first year or two it’s a total waste of money.”



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Still, many PR teams continue to pursue awareness. There's enough historical data to suggest an indirect link between brand awareness and sales, argues Douglas Cook at Skyscanner Growth in a [Medium article](#). Yet the company's research reveals a curious disconnect between awareness and web traffic for its own projects.

"To date I've never seen brand awareness on a list of vanity metrics alongside the likes of UVMs or page likes, but perhaps it should be?" Cook surmises.

In the pre-Internet days, PR turned to surveys to gauge brand awareness. They now can also use [social media measurement](#). Social media analytics provide data much faster and affordably than traditional surveys. It also avoids survey bias, the tendency of people to provide incorrect answers.

**Bottom Line:** Although PR pros often brag about increasing awareness of their brands, some PR measurement experts call awareness a spurious objective. More valid objectives relate to specific actions of stakeholders and the organization's primary goal. Simply trying to "create buzz" degrades PR's role.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## 9 Distressing PR Measurement Failings



Measurement offers the public relations industry one of its top growth opportunities. PR agency executives surveyed by the USC Annenberg Center for Public Relations ranked measurement third out of 18 potential growth drivers. Two-thirds of agency executives and over half (54%) of in-house PR executives say measurement is very or extremely important as a growth

driver, states the center's [Global Communications Report](#) done with the Holmes Report.

Yet PR measurement remains surprisingly unsophisticated. Many PR teams still focus on obsolete and discredited metrics such as advertising value equivalencies (AVEs), impressions and number of social media followers rather than on business outcomes. Fewer than half employ social media listening strategies, such as real-time monitoring on conversations or changes in opinion or actions.

"Measurement remains the holy grail in the PR industry," stated Fred Cook, the center's director, in its report. "Everyone agrees that it's a huge growth opportunity but few seem to have figured out an integrated approach to determining the real return on investment for communications."

With that in mind, we've gathered the most common PR measurement mistakes from measurement experts.

**Comparisons to the wrong competitors.** Defining competitors helps formulate successful strategies, but brands frequently compare themselves to the wrong competitors. "The most common mistake I see is a brand comparing themselves with the biggest brand in their industry, even though their brand is much smaller and serves a completely different group of clients," says [Kim Do at Lewis](#), a PR agency. Compare your organization to competitors in the same geographical locations, in the same vertical markets or those seeking the same media audience.

**Incorrect use of PR measurement tools.** PR measurement tools can deliver data in wildly different ways. It's essential to understand the data each tool provides, their strengths and weaknesses, and to apply tools consistently to provide "apples to apples" comparisons. "Don't create two comparable social metrics reports from two different tools," Do advises. "Chances are the data behind each will be very different."

**Unclean, unreliable, or duplicated data.** Accurate media measurement for PR and marketing depends on accurate, reliable and unduplicated data that comes with each media clip. With most PR professionals getting data from multiple sources, there's a high probability of duplicate clips and duplicated data. When our [Glean.info](#) service was switching between indexing systems, we ran the systems in parallel for a while. Within a day, we discovered that we had eliminated duplicate clips as planned, but that we were double-counting the viewership data. Fortunately, we found and corrected the problem quickly. Check how you data are aggregated from multiple sources. Every duplicate media mention in your archive will throw off your analytics.

**Selecting the wrong goals.** Picking goals that do not connect to business objectives is a common PR measurement error. "The problem with most PR programs is nobody says



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to senior leadership, “Our business goal is to increase revenue, reduce cost, and grow market by X. How does what we do every day in PR contribute to that?” Katie Paine, CEO of Paine Publishing, told [Arketi Group](#). Measurement experts recommend first learning management’s top goals, and then selecting PR metrics that report progress toward those corporate goals that involve leads, revenue and profitability.

**An obsession with awareness.** All too often, PR says its goal is to increase awareness. Paine calls that a red herring. A better goal is to educate your audience about what your brand does and why it matters to them.

**Over-reliance on media.** Focusing solely on media measurement provides an incomplete picture. For a more complete view, PR can also employ other methods such as surveys, experiments, and predictive modeling made possible by the increased access to big data, says Tina McCorkindale, president and CEO of the [Institute for Public Relations](#).

**The “success theater” trap.** PR teams sometimes track unhelpful metrics in order to boast to clients or corporate leaders, McCorkindale says. While they report unrealistically huge numbers, they do little to reveal the real value of PR. Case in point: The [Washington Redskins](#) counted impressions to claim that more than 7.84 billion people, read about their training camp within a three-week period. That’s more than the entire population of the world.

**Emphasizing data over insights.** Many analysts like to report reams of numbers. The key to real success in PR measurement is to sift through the vast amount of data to find actionable insights. Employ analysts capable of uncovering those insights, either in-house or through a third-party service.

**Not integrating data.** Many PR measurement tools often do not integrate data from traditional media, social media monitoring and earned media and owned media, or do a poor job if they do. Not integrating data into a single portal produces a difficult to understand array of numbers. PR can miss meaningful connections between data sources. The first-class [media monitoring dashboard](#) integrates analytics from all media and social networks, including the client’s Google Analytics. An integrated analytics approach provides a 360-degree view of how earned media, marketing or social media campaigns impact key business objectives.

**Bottom Line:** When done correctly, PR measurement can help improve PR campaigns and prove PR’s value to clients and C-suite executives. PR measurement often falls short, however. Avoiding these common mistakes can help put in place an outstanding PR measurement program.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## Does Engagement Still Matter



PR and digital marketers frequently consider engagement a key social media metric. Yet some believe online engagement is faltering. Fewer brands engage with followers, asserts Arik C. Hanson, principal of ACH Communications, in his [marketing and communications blog](#).

Very few companies, typically larger brands, dedicate the staff for extensive engagement. [Wendy's](#)

[tweets](#) are an exception. Even JP Morgan, a huge financial services company, gains few responses on Twitter, as a glance at its feed shows, Hanson points out. It treats Twitter as a broadcast channel. Accenture, a large B2B brand with over 300,000 followers, elicits little response on Twitter.

Hanson blames trolls, the 2016 Election, and general declining interest in online conversations. Online publications are [closing comments sections on articles](#). In a most recent example, Vice shut down its comments section, blaming an overabundance of trolls. Publications say they're moving conversations to social media, but those conversations are now also increasingly dominated by hyper-political debates, personal attacks and hate speech.

### Winning Engagement is Challenging for Brands

Sparking engagement is more difficult for brands. Comments and shares have dropped. At their best, comments provide meaningful input, spur conversation, and provide feedback. Shares, the best form of engagement, help spread the brand's marketing and PR message. Likes, the lowest form of engagement, barely qualify as significant engagement. If comments and shares disappear, brands will be left with very little else, Hanson warns.

Hanson relies on personal observations and lacks hard data. Others have complained of an increase in derogatory comments, especially during the presidential campaign. People may be sharing posts, but share only with people they agree with in their own networks.

Marketers have differing views about the importance of engagement as a social media metric. Some argue engagement indicates the quality of content and the effectiveness of the brand's marketing more realistically than number of followers.

### Even Likes Count

Even the number of likes matter because consumers believe the popularity of a product correlates to its quality, says Lesya Liu, social media strategist at The Social Media Current. "We as entrepreneurs also look at the like counts as a metric for reputation of the company and as a metric for effectiveness of social media marketing efforts," Liu writes in [Entrepreneur](#).

However, engagement is not the ultimate business goal, only a tactic to produce leads, clients and sales. Like any other business activity, engagement entails costs and resources that must be balanced against results. The key to success is determining how engagement helps you reach your business goals.



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Engagement must be linked to business objectives. Engagement is only a tool, one that's not extremely valuable on its own unless it's tied to a measurable goal. Those goals can be customer acquisition, product development, customer service or brand awareness.

**Bottom Line:** Engagement may be falling out of favor as a social media metric. Trolls and declining interest in online conversations may be putting a damper on engagement. Some brands may place a low priority on engagement, and instead use social networks as a broadcast channel. Many marketers tout the benefits of engagement, saying it can accurately measure marketing success. The key is to link engagement with bottom-of-the funnel metrics.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](http://Glean.info)

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## 12 Must-Have Features in a Robust Media Measurement Dashboard



Monitoring and measuring news and social media has transitioned from a nice-to-have to a must-have in public relations, marketing, product management, competitive intelligence, customer service and other corporate functions. Besides gauging the effectiveness of PR efforts and marketing, media monitoring and measurement helps organizations

conduct market research, improve customer service, manage corporate reputation, collect competitive intelligence and assess corporate strategy, among other benefits.

Most all companies and not-for-profits outsource monitoring and measurement and receive daily email alerts on new media mentions from their selected service. However, selecting the best media and monitoring vendor can be challenging. Media monitoring and social media monitoring services abound. Many perform adequate monitoring only for social media; others only for traditional media. Many offer little or no analytics services.

The media monitoring coverage and services of measurement dashboards are key features to examine. Without comprehensive, accurate coverage and a well-designed dashboard, analyzing the huge amount of media data can be overwhelming, especially for a well-covered public corporation or well-known not-for-profit organization. When evaluating a media monitoring and measurement service, you'll want to be sure they offer these features:

**Comprehensive monitoring.** A quality dashboard displays data from owned media and a full range of news and social media. That includes print, television and radio broadcasts, blogs, message boards and forums and online news, in addition to social media networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

**Integrated analytics.** The best dashboards integrate analytics from all media and social networks, including the client's Google Analytics. An integrated analytics approach provides a 360-degree view of how earned media, marketing or social media campaigns impact key business objectives.

**Customizable.** If a dashboard can be customized to the client's needs, different divisions, departments, brand managers, or country managers can create different search and measurement profiles. They can generate charts and graphs for their particular needs. PR teams monitoring a crisis or a campaign can create specific views, filters, and dashboards. The service can create new custom metrics for clients.

**Intuitive.** An intuitive design makes it easy for users to master the dashboard and learn how to use it. Users can easily choose metrics they want to track, the charts and graphs to display those metrics, and other dashboard features.

**Accuracy.** Good keyword filters will eliminate irrelevant clips and ensure the most accurate search results possible. Advanced search capabilities include Boolean search commands, such as "And," "Or," and "Not," and the ability to specify capitalization proximity, plurals and possessives and word repetition.

**Sentiment analysis.** The best dashboards provide sentiment analysis: They grade



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brand mentions on a positive-to-negative scale and assess the prominence, dominance, and other qualitative factors of brand mentions. They also identify predetermined corporate messages. Be sure to test its accuracy, as automated sentiment analyses are often inaccurate. The most advanced services combine automated sentiment analysis with human analysts.

**Automated alerts.** A first-class dashboard can send customized alerts to match the client's specifications. It can send different email alerts to individuals in different departments or with different responsibilities in the organization daily or several times a day.

**Language translation.** A high-quality media monitoring service can translate foreign languages into your native language – or the native languages of other users around the world. Automated translation isn't perfect by any means, but it usually does provide a real understanding of the content of the article or social media post.

**Cost effective.** Price is naturally always a major concern when selecting a media monitoring service. Be sure to seek a comprehensive, integrated and intuitive dashboard for a cost effective price. In addition, seek a media monitoring tool that offers monthly contracts to avoid being tied into a long-term contract with a service that turns out to be inadequate.

**Human analysts.** Although most organizations find automated monitoring and measurement sufficient, some desire the additional advantages of human analysts. Well-trained, experienced analysts can assess clips with greater depth and accuracy than any of today's software. They provide clients more meaningful insights on the impact of their PR and marketing programs.

**A free trial.** A short free trial will reveal the dashboard's abilities and the accuracy of its data better than a canned online demo. If the vendor doesn't provide a free trial, insist on a 30-day cancellation clause.

**Bottom Line:** Finding a media monitoring and measurement tool that meets your organization's needs can be challenging. These recommended features can help PR and marketing teams weed out the weaker players and find the most appropriate and cost-effective media monitoring and measurement service. By focusing on the vendor's dashboard, organizations can hone in on the full range of its monitoring and measurement capabilities.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](http://Glean.info)

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## Advantageous Alternatives to Advertising Value Equivalencies (AVEs) for Media Measurement



The overwhelming majority of PR measurement experts dismiss advertising value equivalencies (AVEs) as inaccurate and misleading. The AVE measurement reports what earned media coverage would cost if it were advertising.

Measurement experts agree that [AVEs cannot measure PR's effectiveness](#). Yet use of AVEs persists. The metric refuses to die because it's easy to report and understand. Unlike more meaningful metrics, AVEs don't require PR pros to determine exactly what they are measuring. When a CEO demands a quick and single, simple answer, AVEs fill the bill – but unfortunately don't provide valid results or real insight into the impact of a media campaign.

PR measurement expert Katie Paine, CEO of Paine Publishing, explains how to find alternatives in a recent in-depth article in [The Measurement Advisor](#). Here's a synopsis.

**Define acceptable proxies.** Find an acceptable proxy that your team and your senior leadership agree adequately measures the desired action. For instance, visits to the “Thank You for Your Donation” page, can serve as a proxy for a nonprofit.

**Gamify your research.** If your goal is to educate the public on an issue or to communicate a specific message, you need to determine if the messages have been received and believed in order to gauge the campaign's success. That's difficult without an expensive and time-consuming survey. An alternative is to quiz website visitors or attendees at an event. Offer people a prize for answering correctly. You can also create a “passport system” that allows access only after people answer certain questions and get their passports “stamped” to signify that they know one of your messages.

**Compare cost effectiveness.** If obtaining exposure for your key messages is PR's goal, you can compare effectiveness of launch tactics, by taking the budget for each event and then dividing it by the number of messages communicated for that event. This metric is cost per message communicated. You can use it to compare programs or events or to track the effectiveness of a program over time.

**Engagement.** Engagement can indicate how well people respond to your outreach efforts. Be clear on your definition of engagement and set expectations correctly. The [Conclave on Social Media Measurement Standards](#) defines engagement as the percent of followers on Twitter or likes on Facebook who have taken some action you define as engagement.

Many alternatives to AVEs are available. It's essential to remember that the best metrics vary among organizations and campaigns. “Just as no two organizations are the same, no two objectives can be the same, and no measurement frameworks for a campaign



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will be the same,” [blogs Stephen Waddington](#), a partner and chief engagement officer at Ketchum.

Measurement experts urge PR pros to first determine their goals and objectives and identify [metrics that measure](#) how effectively they are reaching those goals. The closer you can tie the value you deliver to deliver to the organization’s objectives, the more highly you’ll be valued.

Some of the established media monitoring and measurement services including [Glean.info](#) offer advantageous alternative metrics to AVEs and will customize metrics or develop new ones to meet the specific needs of their clients.

**Bottom Line:** AVEs remain in use because they are easy to report and understand. However, that doesn’t make them accurate or useful. Finding and tracking more meaningful metrics may be challenging, but it’s well worth the effort. Better-designed and more valid metrics can help PR more effectively measure reaction to and impact of media campaigns and demonstrate PR’s value to the overall organization.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## Is Automated Sentiment Analysis Right



Automated sentiment analysis is becoming more popular for media measurement as the computer-based software programs improve and organizations seek to analyze enormous amounts of mentions quickly and affordably.

By automatically grading news articles and social media posts as positive, negative or neutral, the

sentiment analysis software can help public relations and marketing departments determine how well their campaigns are working by analyzing trends in consumer sentiment. Political campaigns can use sentiment analysis to study the public's reaction to candidates' positions; investors and stock analysts can analyze perceptions about the stock market or a particular stock.

Automated systems are less expensive than paying human analysts. However, they are not always the best choice. Although the software has improved, it remains far less accurate than human analysts. Automated programs cannot place comments in context and often fail to grasp nuances of human language. They have difficulty interpreting slang and sarcasm.

Pointing out an example of automated analysis can misfire, Huffington Post business [blogger Dan Mirvish](#) noted that when Anne Hathaway was in the news with favorable publicity, Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway's shares went up. He found six dates going back to 2008 when that happened. Automated trading programs apparently confused the actress with Buffett's company.

### Questions to Consider

Katie Paine, CEO of Paine Publishing and a noted expert on media measurement, recommends [questions to ask](#) to help decide if sentiment analysis is right for your organization.

- Do you receive more than 2,500 qualified mentions a month in social media? Qualified mentions do not include spam, content-farm generated copy or mentions of similar-sounding brand name. If your brand has relatively few mentions, a computer program might be more expensive than a trained analyst.
- Do people express any sentiment when discussing your brand? Conversations about some products, such as B2B products, are typically very factual. It may not be possible for a computer to glean any sentiment from the conversations.
- Do you have direct interaction with customers? If you have no direct customer interaction, then determining if sentiment has any real impact on your business will be difficult. You can link sentiment to customer behavior only if you are an online retailer or are in a field where people make reservations, or register online.
- What level of accuracy is acceptable to your executive leadership? Most automated tools have an accuracy rate of about 60% to 70%. If that is not acceptable to your leadership, you can use human coders to conduct a random sample check to ensure a higher degree of accuracy.
- What level of detail do you need from your sentiment analysis system? You will probably need a human analyst if you need to track complex messaging, quotes, issues, positioning, or other esoteric details.



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- Do you run numerous campaigns, which will require different search terms and different message tracking and different definitions of positive or neutral? Computers take weeks to reprogram, test and fix. If you need fast turnaround on changes to your system, then use a human.

## The Hybrid Approach

Some monitoring services, including [Glean.info](#), combine automated sentiment analysis with evaluation by human analysts. By using human analysts, companies can establish finely-tuned criteria for what constitutes a positive or negative mention. Although not always perfect, human analysts are trained to recognize language nuances and idiosyncrasies that trip up automated programs. They can also be quickly trained on specific rating criteria for each client.

Humans are also less literal than machines and can better tease out meaning. Large companies with thousands of media mentions can the control costs of human analysis by reviewing a sampling of posts. Many companies, for instance, use human analysis only for media mentions that appear in top tier media sources.

PR measurement and data analysis experts agree that integrating automated tools and human analysts is the best approach for most organizations.

Experts at the Sentiment Analysis Symposium favored using a combination of software and humans.

“Machines do analytics, humans do analysis,” remarked Anjali Lai, an analyst at Forrester Research, according to [Adweek](#).

**Bottom Line:** Automated sentiment programs provide both benefits and pitfalls. In many cases, human analysts provide superior results. It’s essential to carefully weigh the pros and cons before establishing a media monitoring and measurement plan. For many companies, a hybrid approach that integrates humans and machines is the most effective and cost-efficient option.

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## Media Monitoring & Measurement: Essential Tools in PR Crises



Two types of plans are essential in preparing for a PR crisis: a crisis management plan and an ongoing communications measurement plan.

“You need to know what’s happening out there, and your dashboard software is the most important piece of any crisis environment,” says Josh Machiz, director of integrated marketing at Nasdaq in its white paper [How to Build a World-Class](#)

[Crisis Communications Playbook](#). “Certain words, connected to your organization, could spell a crisis.”

A monitoring system can identify media outlets with negative mentions, enable you to respond to unfavorable publicity, and measure your effectiveness in decreasing and countering negative publicity. A good measurement system provides critical data to help you in your decision-making.

PR measurement expert [Katie Paine](#), CEO of Paine Publishing, explains reasons measurement is invaluable for handling PR crises.

1. You will know if your brand is being compromised—maybe even before the local media contacts you. A monitoring system that searches both social and traditional media for mentions of your brand will alert you to any unusual mentions.
2. You can learn if negative mentions are worrisome. Are several negative tweets a normal blip or a sign of an imminent disaster? A measurement system can compare volumes, reach and sentiment of mentions to provide real insight.
3. Long-term measurement can reveal the most effective tactics in the past. Insights from that data can help guide decisions during the heat of the crisis, helping you will remain calm during the crisis and avoid spontaneous, ill-advised decisions based on little or no information.
4. You will know how your message is resonating in the media. With an ongoing measurement system in place you can quickly see if your actions are portrayed as you intended in the media and if the resulting coverage reflects the positioning you desire. “With measurement you can be the best-informed person in the room,” Paine says. “You’ll confidently enter the war room, armed with facts and figures about what worked in the past, what is working now, and what should be changed going forward.”
5. The organization will be able to maintain its perspective. An analysis can reveal if the tone of media coverage is within normal ranges or compare coverage to industry averages. Perhaps media coverage is not as negative as it seems.
6. You’ll know if your strategy is succeeding and if you can relax. Typically, crisis coverage and negative mentions peak on the first day then gradually decrease. If mentions continue to increase after the first day, PR has a problem.
7. You’ll be better able to argue for a budget increase. Monitoring and measurement will quantify PR’s impact and costs.

In addition to the decision-makers, effectively responding in a PR crisis requires at least



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two people: one to monitor the conversation and another to write social media posts that are distillations of the official statement, Machiz says. Do this in coordination with your crisis communications team, he advises. As you feed your team information about the problem from Twitter and other sources, they will draft statements for the Web. On social media, you can either issue multiple tweets or post an abbreviated statement and a link to your website.

**Bottom Line:** Ongoing media monitoring and measurement provides one of the most important tools for determining how best to respond during a PR crisis. Media monitoring and measurement can help organizations during a crisis in ways executives don't realize. The most effective media monitoring is an ongoing service that provides a data archive to help guide decision-making during the crisis..

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## 8 Metrics to Better Measure Video for PR & Marketing



The use of video for PR and marketing, especially video in digital distribution channels, has grown rapidly in recent years. To be precise, 82 percent of B2C marketers and 79 percent of B2B marketers now include video in their content marketing programs, according to the [Content Marketing Institute](#). Yet far fewer are pleased with marketing

outcomes video produces. Only 59 percent of B2C marketers and 62 percent of B2C marketers rate videos as an effective content marketing tactic.

A website-centric view accounts for the shortfall in satisfaction, argues Greg Jarboe, president and co-founder of the content marketing agency SEO-PR. They typically obtain their metrics from Google Analytics or a few other similar web analytics services rather than YouTube Analytics. Those web analytics indicate that social media videos — even videos on YouTube, the grand-daddy of video sites — generate only small number of visitors and conversions.

That's because Google Analytics only tracks people who've clicked on a link in a video's description or an associated website card, Jarboe explains in a [Tubular Insights blog post](#). It doesn't track people who visit your YouTube channel then visit your website 30 to 90 days later.

"So, go ahead, try explaining that to your executives or clients," he says. "And, then try to justify why they should give you a bigger share of the marketing budget to release video content frequently on a recurring schedule and maintain activity on their YouTube channel despite the fact that it will be hard to track the direct impact of these efforts on website traffic, leads, or sales. This is the elephant in the room."

### Moving Beyond Video Views

An over-reliance on view counts accounts for much of the uncertainty and inaccuracy about the effectiveness of video marketing. Views are probably the most popular video metric. However, counting views presents substantial disadvantages. The metric lacks a quantifiable value as well as a standard definition. View count doesn't tell you about your audience demographics, and doesn't indicate if viewers like your videos. Many view counts also don't account for the length of viewing time.

These are some metrics video experts recommend to improve video marketing measurement.

**Watch time** is how long viewers watch the video. Studies show a consistent relationship between how long a PR, marketing or education video ad is viewed and increases in brand awareness and consideration, Jarboe says in the linkdex blog.

**Viewers.** If viewers provide email addresses, you can track what videos they watch, says Kristen Craft of Wistia in her article for [Harvard Business Review](#). You can segment those viewers and invite them to view other content that matches their interests. Knowing what they watch provides information that sales can use to target pitches.

**Average engagement** measures the proportion of the video that viewers watch on



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average. Ideally, of course, viewers watch the entire video. Analytics can show sections of videos that viewers are rewatching, indicating the type of material viewers prefer. Points at which viewers often stop viewing can indicate weak points in the video that can be improved.

**Play rate** is the percentage of people who click on the video divided by the total number of the visitors to the web page where the video resides. A low play rate means you might need to re-evaluate the video's title, description, thumbnail graphic, or the video's position on the page. Play rates exceeding 50 percent are considered successful.

**Action completions.** By watching the number of visitors who complete calls to action, you can see what videos are succeeding. By A/B testing action completions for various website page locations or for promotional copy, you can test what page locations or copy work best. Caution: you can only A/B test one variable at a time.

**Consumer attitudes.** Website surveys can provide valuable information about consumers' attitudes and behaviors. Google Consumer Surveys allow website managers to ask visitors four default questions for free and more for additional costs, Jarboe notes.

**Subscribers.** More subscribers to a YouTube channel naturally lead to more viewers and more total minutes watched, says [Dan Nedelko](#), founder of HoneySpot Marketing, in a blog post for Vidyard. When a viewer subscribes to your channel, they receive automatic updates when you upload videos, and subscribers tend to watch videos longer.

**Comments and social shares.** Comments and social shares mean you're creating the right content. The sharer's credibility spreads to you, and extensive commenting can lead to an ad hoc community centered on your site.

**Bottom Line:** Although video can be a powerful marketing and public relation strategy, many marketers are unsatisfied or unsure of its effectiveness. Video views, the prevailing metric, are a vanity metric that doesn't indicate if your videos are effectively promoting your company. Instead, marketers suggest tracking more telling metrics to improve video marketing strategies.

Author: William J. Comcowich, [Glean.info](#)

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## How Nonprofits Can Reap Powerful Benefits from Media Monitoring & Measurement



Like for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations can gain substantial benefits by monitoring the wealth of data available from both traditional and social media sources.

Locating positive media coverage can demonstrate the impact of marketing and public relations work. Identifying negative media articles and social media posts allows nonprofits to swiftly respond and resolve issues.

“Nonprofits that keep their ears perked by employing listening devices are well-poised to strategically respond to what others are saying about your organization,” [explains Cecilia Bianco](#) for Prichard Communications. “Online ‘listening’ can refer to a number of tactics—social media monitoring, target audience analysis or key message penetration—but we find that monitoring media coverage is one of the most effective tools for listening to what others are saying.”

### The Value of Media Measurement

Media measurement does more than report mentions of a nonprofit’s name. Media measurement can:

- Reveal how many people discuss your key issues, measure sentiment surrounding those conversations, and track trends in mentions and sentiment.
- Show how well audiences understand your issues and gauge their level of awareness.
- Track what media outlets and bloggers say about the organization, its leadership and cause to help nonprofits improve and protect their online reputations.
- Determine what type of content works best and the best channels for communications.
- Reveal what inspires people to donate or volunteer.

### How Nonprofits Benefit from Media Monitoring and Measurement

Nonprofits gain the full value of media monitoring and measurement by following a proven process.

**Monitor broad issues.** Many nonprofits track only mentions of their organizations. Monitoring broad issues related to your cause can reveal deeper insights. Using [Boolean search techniques](#) can locate specific results and eliminate irrelevant results – it’s not as difficult as the name implies.

**Establish objectives.** Set clear objectives against which to measure results. These may include the number of donors, donor retention, fundraising amounts, the number of volunteers and volunteer retention.

**Connect goals to actions.** Establish a connection between the nonprofit’s mission and its marketing and PR activities before starting a measurement program. “Far too few nonprofit communicators take the time to make the connection between their efforts and the mission before they embark on a measurement program. When you do, the results are powerful,” writes PR measurement expert Katie Paine, CEO of Paine



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Publishing, in her blog the [Measurement Advisor](#).

**Consider your stakeholder.** Nonprofits have many stakeholders, including donors, volunteers, sponsors, employees, and the people they serve. Design the monitoring and measurement program to seek insights that meet the different interests those diverse groups of stakeholders.

**Metrics.** Select at least three specific metrics for analyzing various categories of communications including email, marketing, public relations and social media, [Paine advises](#). Select metrics that are quantifiable, with a number such as an amount of money or percentage that can be compared to another number such as past performance or competitors. It's also critical to include a date when the goal will be achieved.

**Control costs.** Paid monitoring services offer distinct advantages over free services. However, nonprofits face unique pressure to keep expenses down. Nonprofits can control costs by working with a monitoring service that offers month-to-month agreements rather than one that binds them into long-term contracts. In addition, selecting vendors that can customize their services to the nonprofit's needs can help the organization avoid paying for unneeded services.

**Bottom Line:** Media monitoring alerts nonprofits when they are mentioned in traditional media and social media. However, media measurement provides more powerful benefits. By analyzing media data, nonprofits can find the best strategies for encouraging people to donate and volunteer.

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