

15 DIGITAL MARKETING ANALYTICS EVERY PR AGENCY NEEDS TO BE TRACKING



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Thanks to today's digital marketing tools, measuring PR and earned media has become more efficient and effective than ever. Quantifying the impact of PR is essential, even with businesses or brands that have a large number of offline components. Helping your client identify and understand the impact of your programs is often the difference between success and failure.

Starting with the end in mind will help us plan our target metrics in each of the four categories below.

1. Standard Marketing Metrics

In order for us to effectively measure PR, we have to understand what the primary end goals are. Building brand equity and increasing trust will always be a component of PR, but being able to showcase the tangible impacts of PR towards accomplishing these goals and on the bottom line is where we need to be.

PR campaign goals will depend on the product and the brand. Examples of targeted goals would include sales, awareness, signups and votes.

Leads are another important standard metric that typically contribute to the primary goals. CRM and marketing automation tools place a primary emphasis on lead generation and tracking. In addition, many organizations utilize lead scoring as a major component of their business development process. Monitoring the impact that your PR campaigns have on the overall lead scoring totals can provide a direct correlation to the success of your efforts.

Building awareness can also directly impact another standard metric – email list size. Keeping track of list growth after PR initiatives in comparison to without PR support is another solid reference tool.

Standard Marketing Target Metrics for Public Relations

- Goals - sales, signups, awareness, votes, etc.
- Leads
- Lead scoring
- Email list growth

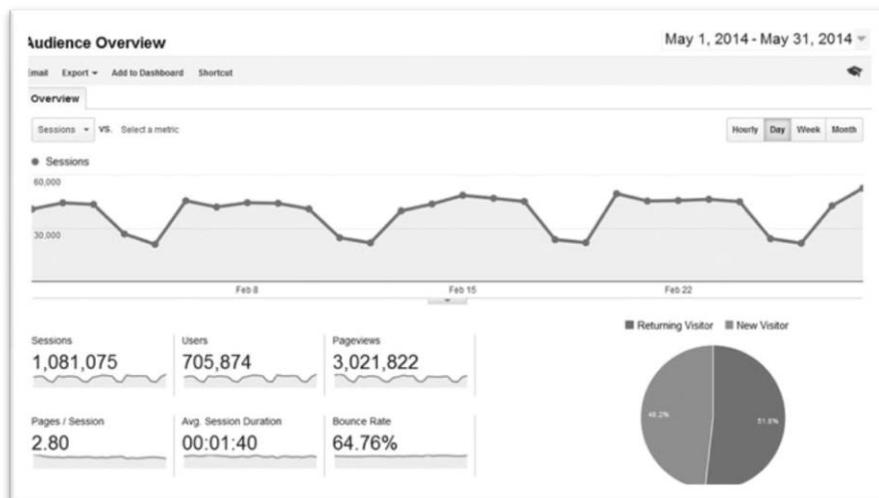
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2. Search Marketing

The strategies and tactics around search engine optimization are all about positioning content (specifically keywords), so it can be more easily found by searchers. It's basically the opposite of earned media, where you're actively seeking attention.

In theory, if a PR campaign works, then the targeted audience members will actively seek out the brand and learn more about it. Therefore, successful public relations should positively impact search rankings for the applicable keywords.

In addition, direct link-building via PR in reputable news sources, blogs, and social media, effective public relations can have a major impact on search rankings. Since not all links carry the same influence, there are powerful digital marketing tools that help us identify the influence a particular link may provide.



Here are five simple yet important metrics that can benefit most organizations and give you valuable insights for your client. In early 2014, Google Analytics changed the terminology they use within the reports to change what they call "visits" and "unique visitors." Visits are now named "sessions" and unique visitors are called "users."

- 1. Users (formerly unique visitors).** This is a single person visiting your site. When you use the metric unique visitor, that typically means how many times or how many people have visited your site.
- 2. Sessions (formerly visits).** As opposed to unique visitors, visits can include multiple visits made by a single person to your website. A single individual can visit a website ten times in one day, while a unique visitor can only visit your website once.
- 3. Time on your website.** Identifying how long people are spending on your website is a great indicator for the relevance, or stickiness of your website. If your audience

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is spending a minute or less on your site, there's a good chance that the information that you're providing is not proving to be engaging or valuable enough for them. Keeping an eye on this metric as you make changes or add new content to your site will give you an idea as to the overall success of your content marketing efforts.

- 4. Bounce rate.** When visitors come to your website, visit just one page, and then leave, this is known as a bounce. A high bounce rate is a key indicator that a visitor has received very limited value from your website. It's a great indicator that something is missing on your site. It could be that you're not providing enough information or you might be attracting a poorly matched audience to your site. Lowering your bounce rate should always be a target goal as you build your content marketing efforts.
- 5. Conversion rate.** This is converting visitors to your website to achieve your final end goal, whether that is gathering lead information or making a sale. Your conversion rate is a prime indicator of success for your overall digital marketing effort. Monitoring the conversion rate of each segment of your marketing will lead to better site optimization.

Search Marketing Target Metrics for Public Relations

- Search engine rankings
- Link building
- Conversion analysis by channel
- Visitor frequency, page depth, bounce rate
- Search traffic and conversions

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3. Social Media

The reality with social media marketing is that you have no control over the audience, the rules, or the social media network itself. Everyone is a guest, from the participants to the sponsors. In fact, the audience information is owned by the social media channel itself. However, there are a number of very important marketing analytics to monitor in which public relations can have a significant impact on social media:

Audience Growth

Successful PR campaigns can directly affect the size of the audience of a client or brand. The number of Twitter followers, Facebook Likes and LinkedIn followers are examples of audience growth.

Although these numbers are often considered quite arbitrary and somewhat insignificant in the overall digital marketing spectrum, they are the first step in the beginning of a relationship. A connection with the brand can't begin without this initial step.

Audience Engagement

The effectiveness of your PR will not only help grow awareness, but trust and authority as well. Action metrics such as Re-Tweets and aggregate views are used to help track this type of audience engagement.

Conversion

Social media is typically not among the top sources for conversion – depending on the product or service. However, using Google's Multi-Channel Funnels we can identify the impact that your social media campaigns have both in last-touch conversions and in assisted conversions. Even if social media may not have been the final touch before conversion, we can certainly detect if and when it was part of the process.

Social Media Target Metrics for Public Relations

- Audience growth
- Audience engagement
- Unique visitors via social media
- Conversion - last-touch conversions and assisted conversions

4. Paid Digital Advertising

Paid advertising and public relations take drastically different approaches to accomplish the same goal – generate new audiences. Google AdWords and Bing Ads are search-based paid advertising platforms that provide concrete conversion data.

Nearly every social media platform offers multiple paid advertising opportunities to reach a targeted segment of their user base. On some platforms, such as Facebook, paid advertising has become an essential strategy component for any brand looking to find new potential customers. All of these social ad platforms provide conversion data as well.

If a public relations campaign is successful in building trust through earned media, it's safe to assume that if a viewer sees a corresponding digital ad that creates trust and mirrors the message and tone of the earned media piece, they should be more likely to click on the digital ad. This type of impact will then be reflected in higher digital ad clickthrough rates and could provide assisted conversions as well.

Paid Digital Advertising Target Metrics for Public Relations

- Clickthrough rates
- Conversion rates

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Summary

It's important to realize that many of these measurement metrics are directly dependent on each other. These synergies are only detectable if you use the right tools and the right analysis methods to detect them.

Being able to provide your client with clear and consistent analytics about the performance of your work can't be overemphasized. The digital tools available today allow us to track performance exponentially better than just a couple years ago. And more importantly, your client expects that information and analysis since its standard with all digital marketing.

The time is now to make sure your agency is providing accurate analytics that also illustrate the full impact of your work. Don't let this essential component of your business slow down your agency by presenting anything less than the full analytics picture to your clients.

Questions? I would love to hear from you and would be happy to help.

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