

DRIVING GROWTH WITH PR MEASUREMENT

**The analysis breakthroughs set to
bring earned media to the top of the
marketing mix**



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SUMMARY

Gone are the days when you'd have to rely solely on soft metrics like reach or AVE when reporting to company stakeholders. Right now, the best communicators are using new technology to show the impact earned media has on conversions, lead generation, revenue and more.

These are the same insights that have fuelled rapid expansion in the paid and owned media industries in recent years. Now, you too can use them to make the case for increased investment in PR and comms.

With case studies from Bacardi, The Museum of London, The Stroke Association and more – this white paper reveals how you can use the latest measurement techniques to maximise the impact of your earned media programmes.

What's more, it provides a closer look at the new technology set to revolutionise PR in the coming months. By incorporating these ideas into your earned media programmes today, you can ensure your company's comms strategy is ready to claim its place at the heart of the marketing mix.

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INTRODUCTION

For earned media to grow as rapidly as the paid and owned media industries have in recent years, communicators need to embrace measurement.

Yet, many in PR still don't see why it's so important. For them it's about adding up how many people your coverage reached. Or else, they think it's about guessing what an equivalent amount of ad space might have cost.

But neither of these interpretations comes close to explaining what makes measurement an essential part of every modern PR campaign.

Measurement is the key to understanding which messages change the way people think about your brand. It lets you see exactly which publications drive the most traffic to your website. It even reveals what types of coverage tend to generate the most leads and drive sales.

Imagine what that information could do for your next campaign.

Well, thanks to the latest measurement techniques, that level of insight is within your grasp – and it's already helping some of the world's biggest brands maximise the impact of their earned media initiatives:

- Earlier this year, Bacardi transformed its corporate social responsibility strategy using PR measurement insights to target key stakeholders. Following the change, it saw its earned media coverage increase 300%.
- The Stroke Association used measurement insights to double the number of signatures its '#NewEra' petition was generating. As a result, it collected 55,000 names and culminated in two meetings with the government's health minister.

- Slimming World even used the latest measurement techniques to enhance the performance of its 'Dream Weight' campaign. During the crucial January weight loss period, it saw its coverage increase 365%.

Case studies like these are just a taste of what's possible with the latest PR measurement techniques.

In fact, thanks to recent technological advances, you'll soon be able to measure the impact of your earned media programmes just as effectively as your marketing and advertising colleagues.

Gartner's latest CMO spend survey revealed that paid and owned media budgets were forecast to rise 300% in 2017. Now, technology is opening the door for the same kind of rapid expansion in PR and comms.

Today, we'll reveal how you can apply the latest measurement techniques to demonstrate the impact of your own comms programmes – and provide an exclusive look at the technology set to revolutionise the industry in 2018.



**TECHNOLOGY IS
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A BETTER WAY TO MEASURE THE VALUE OF EARNED MEDIA

Earned media is perfectly positioned to solve the biggest challenges senior marketers face. It generates qualified prospects, identifies potential leads and engages customers at the right place and time.

By rights, communications should play a far more prominent role in the marketing mix. The reason it doesn't can be summed up in just three words: lack of measurement.

Marketing execs want to know their investments are achieving tangible business goals. But old calculations like Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) simply aren't up to the job. Today, technology is helping communicators measure the performance of their campaigns with far greater accuracy.

Why communicators need a new way to measure earned media

You'd be hard-pressed to find a marketing director who considers AVE a meaningful metric. So, perhaps it's not surprising that some major PR organisations are calling for it to be abandoned altogether.

AVE ascribes the same value to both positive and negative media coverage. It doesn't account for when coverage reaches the wrong audience for your brand. And it does a bad job of measuring the impact of coverage received through social media.

"AVE is a lazy way of persuading marketers schooled in old ad ways that PR counts," says Robert Phillips, Edelman UK's former CEO. "The model of the future must be able to analyse the depth, resonance, importance and influence of the conversation."

Other common measures like Opportunities to See (OTS) and reach also fall short of this standard. But

new innovations are helping communicators assess the impact their campaigns are having on tangible metrics like conversions, lead generation and ROI.

Armed with these insights, not only will you be able to demonstrate the success of your campaigns to senior stakeholders. You'll also have the tools to optimise them for maximum impact.

Better tools mean better measurement - and better results

Great PR measurement is about showing you the future, not just measuring the past. Only then can you develop a content strategy that leverages the best combination of earned media tactics for your business.



"The entire industry needs to change its mindset," explains Sean O'Driscoll, Cision's chief strategy and insights officer. "At the moment, we use data retrospectively to assess what's already happened. But we should be using it as a guide to doing things better in the future."

Comms teams sight "complexity" as one of the main reasons for skipping this vital step in the planning process. But, as you're about to see, this kind of forward thinking approach is now accessible to everyone.

With latest tools and techniques, you can turn the masses of data your campaigns generate into clear insights that help you optimise your campaigns. Then, you can use these same insights to make the case for greater investment in earned media and comms.



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HOW THE MUSEUM OF LONDON DOUBLED ITS VISITOR NUMBERS WITH EARNED MEDIA MEASUREMENT

The Museum of London had a problem.

One of its locations isn't easily visible to the public. For this reason, it will relocate that site to Farringdon in 2022. But ahead of the move, it needed to get the word out about its plans.

To help with this, Cision partnered with the Museum of London to develop a measurement framework that achieved three core objectives:

First, the museum wanted to raise awareness of its existing locations and plans for the future.

Then, it wanted to show that its comms programmes attract more visitors. It also wanted to determine the popularity of individual exhibits.

Building a measurement framework that aligns comms activities with corporate objectives

To achieve this, Cision worked with market research firm Opinion Matters to survey 10,000 UK residents on a wide range of topics - including their lifestyle preferences, attitudinal statements, purchasing intents and media consumption habits.

Cision then combined this information with media content analysis to paint a complete picture of how best to reach the museum's target audience and create a shortlist of publications to pitch to.

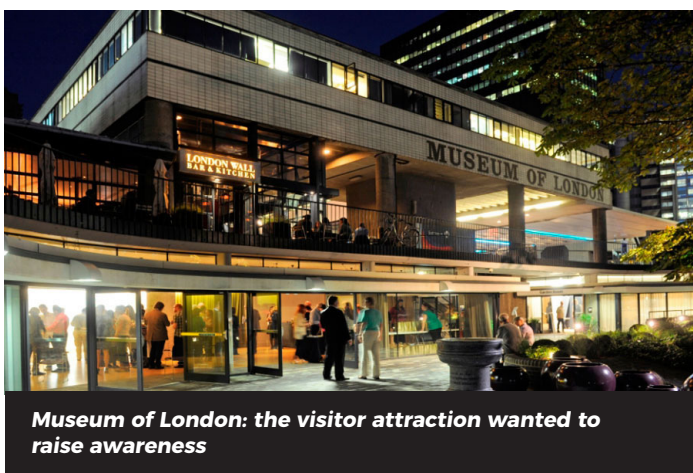
Finally, Cision helped the museum monitor and optimise its outreach activities by providing it with access to real-time analysis tools, monthly updates and quarterly evaluation reports.

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Laura Bates, the Museum of London's PR manager, explains: "To do our jobs most effectively, we need to gauge our successes and if we're reaching the right people through the right medium."

She adds: "We worked closely with Cision to share our audience research, target media, key messages and visitor number information so we can accurately track the links between our media relations and what that means for our KPIs."



Museum of London: the visitor attraction wanted to raise awareness

Proof that earned media raises awareness and drives visitor numbers

As a result of its collaboration with Cision, the museum saw its visitor numbers increase 108% over the course of the campaign.

Over 75% of the coverage in the museum's target publications included its key messages, while social media engagement rose 60% year-on-year.

Awareness of the planned relocation to Farringdon rose 13%, with support for the plans increasing from 39% to 49%.

Bates concludes: "We are now able to use media intelligence to better target our audience, tweak messaging in forthcoming announcements based on previous message cut through, compare stats year on year to draw comparisons and directly link visitor spikes to boosted media coverage."

Read on to discover how enhance your own comms initiatives with earned media measurement in three simple steps.

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ENHANCE YOUR CAMPAIGNS WITH PR MEASUREMENT IN THREE SIMPLE STEPS

To this day, the AMEC (Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication) 'Barcelona Principles' form the basis of every serious PR measurement framework. But the media landscape has changed a great deal since they were first published.

A typical earned media programme will now span a much wider range of media channels. What's more, communicators are expected to go beyond the coverage they generate and show the impact it has on their business.

That's why we developed this simple guide to help you design a personalised measurement programme that's tailored to your individual goals.

1. START BY SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to measure the success of any campaign, you must first outline exactly what it is you are trying to achieve. So, goal setting is a fundamental part of any PR programme:

- What is your target audience?
- How do they consume their media?
- What do they currently think of your brand?
- What do you want them to do in response to your campaign?

Try to be as specific as possible when answering these questions. Only once you know exactly what your objectives are can you craft a great campaign that exceeds them.



How it works in practice...

For example, we recently won gold at the 2017 AMEC awards for our contribution to The Stroke Association's '#NewEra' campaign.

The charity started by defining two key objectives. It wanted to raise awareness of strokes as the UK's third biggest killer, and to lobby the government to continue a strategy designed to ensure stroke patients get consistent care throughout England.

As a result, we were able to help it target the coverage that contributed most to these goals. The campaign petition generated 55,000 signatures and culminated in two meetings with the government's health minister.

2. DECIDE HOW YOU'RE GOING TO MEASURE THINGS

Historically, PR measurement has focussed on outputs like how much coverage a campaign generates. But, with data and the latest tools, it's now possible to measure outcomes such as higher engagement – and even business results like increased sales.

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Not only will these insights help you target the best coverage to achieve your goals. They'll also help you make the case for increased investment in your company's comms programmes.

Marketing execs want to be confident their investments are contributing to their company's bottom line. So, the key here is to use the strongest metrics available and apply them consistently across your comms strategy.

Measure both quantity and quality

When measuring the outputs of your campaigns, we recommend using a combination of quantitative, qualitative and targeting metrics.

That is, it's best to measure how much coverage you're generating (e.g. impressions), what type of coverage it is (e.g. sentiment, messaging) and whether you're reaching the right audience (e.g. publications, demographics).

Keeping this in mind at the start of each campaign will help ensure you generate positive coverage that influences your brand's future customers.

Why outcomes and business results matter

It's only by looking at how people have responded to your earned media coverage that you can prove you're achieving your business goals.

Surveys and social media engagement metrics are great ways to see how comms affects your brand's reputation. But with the [Cision® Communications Cloud®](#), it's now also possible to measure its impact on web traffic, lead generation and even sales.

"We need to show [clients] the value of the work we do with tangible results and ROI," explains Cision Comms Cloud user Lynita Johnson. "Showing a direct link between what we do, the coverage we helped to secure and how it drives traffic and leads for their business is critical."

3. PLAN YOUR MEDIA OUTREACH AND ACTIVITIES

By this point, you should have a clear idea about who you're trying to reach and how best to reach them. So, now it's time to get creative!

When you've crafted a compelling narrative that will capture the imagination of your target audience, use a comprehensive media database to find the best media contacts and influencers to tell your story.

But remember, you don't have to wait until a campaign is over to start measuring its performance. Incorporating measurement into your comms strategy from the word "go" will help you target the coverage that contributes most to your goals and objectives.

The best campaigns also utilise paid, owned, earned and social channels. So, be sure to consider how your activities will fit into your company's broader marketing strategy.



How it works in practice...

Bacardi transformed its approach to corporate social responsibility following the success of its global sustainability initiative, Good Spirited.

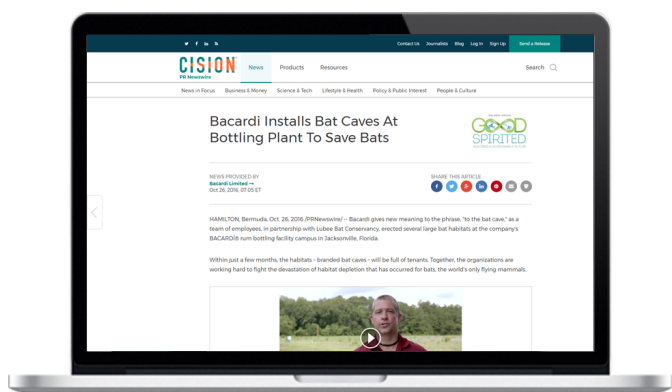
Thanks to measurement insights from Cision, the Good Spirited team discovered that focussing on softer activities produced better results with more media opportunities.

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For example, when we distributed its ‘Bacardi installs bat caves at bottling plants to save bats’ press release through our PR Newswire network, it was quickly picked up by the Associated Press.

To provide Bacardi with these insights, Cision developed a bi-yearly report highlighting key performance indicators including press release performance and qualitative and quantitative media analysis.



Cision also meet with the team of a regular basis to discuss upcoming campaigns and provide them with a bi-monthly executive summary to ensure they always have the best insights at their disposal to inform their decisions.

“We use the reports to gauge how encompassing our outreach efforts are quarter-by-quarter and year-over-year in a variety of KPIs,” explains Amy Federman, Bacardi’s director of corporate communications. “These results are shared with senior leaders.”

She adds: “We also use the insights in the reports to learn what messages, brands and initiatives resonate the most with our various audiences.”

By incorporating measurement into the very fabric of this CSR initiative, Bacardi was able to boost its media coverage by 700%. Its web traffic increased 30% year-over-year, powered by earned media placements in highly relevant trade publications.

ENHANCE YOUR NEXT CAMPAIGN WITH CISION INTELLIGENCE

As you’ve seen, incorporating measurement into your earned media initiatives from the outset does more than make it easier to demonstrate the success of your campaigns to company stakeholders.

It also helps you improve their performance by revealing which activities you should target to achieve the best results.

At Cision, we’re already [helping many of the world’s biggest brands](#) maximise the impact of their comms programmes – and we can do the same for you.

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THE FUTURE OF PR MEASUREMENT: WHY SMART INSIGHTS ARE THE KEY TO DRIVING COMPANY GROWTH

There have never been more opportunities to leverage earned media for your business. But the media landscape is constantly shifting.

An increasingly fragmented media environment, the growing power of social influencers and declining trust in traditional media all create challenges for communicators.

But, for those armed with data and the latest tools, those challenges are also opportunities.

“There’s a huge role for research and measurement to play in identifying the best earned media opportunities,” explains Erin Salisbury, senior project manager, research at Ketchum. “Conducting research and utilising data should be the first stop in each PR campaign.”

By incorporating these smart insights into your comms strategy today, you can ensure your business is in the best position to profit from the biggest measurement breakthroughs in 2018.



Discover the best ways to influence your target audience

Press releases, influencers, speaking opportunities, social media and more can all drive lead generation and build customer trust. But different strategies are suitable for different businesses.

Ensuring you’re fully informed before you start communicating is the key to uncovering the best approach for you.

“In today’s disruptive environment we need to take the measurement of several channels into account,” says Salisbury. “By looking at performance of content on a specific topic, within a specific industry, or about a brand and its competitors, we can understand what worked in the past.

“Pair that with some more advanced analytics and statistical modelling and we can make recommendations based on data and science that will provide clients and teams with the best opportunities.”

As you’ve already seen, this kind of forward thinking approach is helping some of the world’s biggest brands discover the best ways to influence their audiences. Soon, it could be doing the same for you.

Partner with Cision today and we’ll use our industry-leading measurement technology to help you understand your key audiences in greater depth than ever before.

What’s more, we’ll help you finally start to demonstrate the impact earned media has on lead generation, conversions and even revenue.

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Prove the link between earned media and sales

Today, you've seen how the future of PR measurement means looking beyond how much coverage your campaigns generate and demonstrating what that coverage means for your business.

From measuring the impact earned media is having on your brand's reputation to showing that it's achieving tangible business results – we can help.

The Cision Comms Cloud's unique integration with marketing platforms including Google Analytics shows you exactly which outlets are driving traffic to your website. What's more, it tracks exactly which of those visitors' actions are driving lead generation and revenue.

Combine these insights with bespoke reports from the Cision Intelligence team and you'll finally have the tools you need to prove the impact earned media has on your company's bottom line.

CONCLUSION

Cision's award-winning media intelligence has helped the likes of Ketchum, Ogilvy PR, Kellogg's and more measure the performance of their earned media programmes.

We're constantly innovating to bring clients the best measurement insights. So you can be confident you'll receive an unbeatable service.

Earlier this year, we helped Slimming World generate a record number of web sessions during this year's crucial January weight loss period. Just like Bacardi, The Stroke Association and the Museum of London, it partnered with Cision to maximise the impact of its PR and comms.

As a result, the company attracted 18% more new members than it did the previous year – powered by a 3,000% increase in the proportion of website visitors searching for their local weight loss group.

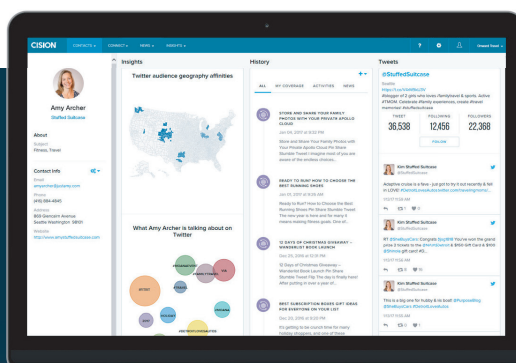
Thanks to the bespoke measurement framework we created, the Slimming World team was able to identify the best media for achieving its goals.

Now you've seen how we do it, we want to do the same for you.

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT HOW **CISION** COULD TRANSFORM YOUR COMMS STRATEGY TODAY

FIND OUT MORE

Or email uk.content@cision.com



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Written by: Solomon Radley, content marketing manager, Cision EMEA

Designed by: April Rashad, graphic designer, Cision