From Measurement to Management

PART 5: ADVOCACY
EDITOR’S NOTE

Advocacy is the final chapter of a five-part PR measurement series based on the five key dimensions adopted in the LEWIS measurement framework.

Previous guides include:

- Introduction with Foreword from AMEC
- Exposure
- Engagement
- Preference
- Impact

CONTENTS

Overview 4
Defining advocacy 5
Measuring influencer endorsement 6
Key KPIs 7
Conclusion 8
Acknowledgements 12
In the previous guide on impact metrics, we explored the best measures of action - those that represent conversion. For most organizations, the top goal is converting people from prospects to customers, or from an ‘undecided’ to a supporter of an issue.

But the long-term goal is turning supporters into advocates. Advocates don’t just participate in buying and selling; they multiply it. They don’t simply vote or donate; they also convince others to do so.

The genesis of advocacy isn’t from public relations, or even marketing, alone. For companies, advocacy is predominantly driven by product and service quality, and also by the quality of customer relationship and human resource management. For issues-focused organizations, government or political campaigns, advocacy is inspired by the ability to meet the mission, which itself may include communications effectiveness.
DEFINING ADVOCACY

A moment of advocacy differs across the range of organizational scenarios. For most product brands, an advocate is an existing customer whose public endorsement increases the likelihood of sales. Brand advocates also include employees willing to go beyond job duties to recruit others into the organization. For issues or political campaigns, an advocate is often a person who will spread the word and attempt to influence others to share the cause or mission.

Once the advocacy action has been defined, measuring it becomes a bit simpler. Organizations with direct customer and employee referral mechanisms can share good measures of the ebb and flow of participation levels and referral actions. A range of more specific measures of advocacy can be derived from customer, member and employee surveys, most centering on likelihood to recommend to a friend.

For easier to gather measures, some organizations will identify an advocate as an individual who has made a positive comment on a social network, or provided a link to branded material, as examples. Keeping track of the raw number of these advocates over time is a basic unit measure. In social channels, a more complex KPI might arise from examining the ratio of positive comments to total comments about a brand, among previously identified advocates. In addition to leveraging social network data, product brands often track ratings from buyers, as collected by third parties such as Amazon ratings, as a means to measure both number of advocates and sentiment levels around a particular product.
Public relations professionals play only one part in inspiring endorsement, but there are measures specific to PR activity when it comes to advocacy. For the most part, they center on key influencer endorsement and their sentiment toward brands. Are product reviews positive? Are key media or analyst influencers organically endorsing a position, a purchase, or even a brand’s potential approach? The measures here round out those for exposure, preference, and impact. Is the brand or campaign delivering quality, and communicating quality so well that key influencers are willing to put their name next to it?
Specific to the earned channels, LEWIS recommends the following KPIs for most media relations programs:

- Number of positive product reviews
- Review sentiment (% pos = positive reviews/total reviews)
- Number of key influencer advocates
- Number of organic endorsements by key influencers
- Advocate sentiment (% pos = positive articles/total articles by previously identified influencer advocates)
Over the course of this measurement guide series, we’ve explored the five key dimensions adopted in the LEWIS measurement framework. Our goal is to support a much-needed shift in the communication industry’s approach to measurement.

Each of the guides provides best practice advice on how to use measurement strategically, to provide insights that can drive campaign success and greater ROI for your communications.

To recap, here are the key takeaways from the series:

**Exposure**
While volume of clippings remains the primary KPI around exposure, this does not tell the full story.

Context is key. The importance of placements should be determined according to how much exposure it creates amongst core target audiences.

While there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to creating a tier system for key media, we recommend doing so on the basis of communications goals.

Analyze past campaign performance data to inform the setting of exposure goals within each tier.

Read the full *Exposure* guide for comprehensive best practice advice on setting exposure goals, creating relevant key media tiers and the key KPIs.
Engagement
While engagement may not be the end goal for most campaigns, it is an important measure of performance.

As with exposure, contextualizing engagement data is essential.

With social media, tracking basic interactions alone isn’t enough. Ratios centering on the volume of actions in proportion to overall exposure provide greater insight into which content is most compelling.

The same is true with Google Analytics. Key engagement metrics (bounce rate, return visits etc.) should be compared against overall traffic.

For media relations, PRs should analyze comments, social shares, creation of follow up content etc. for earned media coverage to measure content value alongside reach.

Read the full Engagement guide for more in-depth guidance on adding context to insight, setting engagement goals and the key KPIs.

Preference
Preference measurement is where we start to gauge whether or not communications activity is actually influencing opinion and intention.

It requires a move from mere reporting to true study. Data should be analyzed not just at the onset of campaigns, but also during execution milestones, and at the end or refresh of the campaign cycle.
For earned media, there is a range of KPIs that can be applied to gauge authority and preference over competitors among the media. Share of voice is a key KPI for brands for measuring preference, as is measuring coverage and engagement generated by pre-identified key influencers.

Read the full Preference guide for more comprehensive best practice advice on conducting primary research during the consideration stage, securing media’s preference and key KPIs.

**Impact**
While the above dimensions of measurement focus mainly on output metrics, impact metrics center on business outcomes to determine ROI.

Defining and setting conversion goals makes it easier to assess the effectiveness of campaigns in driving the desired action or outcome. Marketing attribution software has helped streamline this process.

For brands without these technologies at their disposal, measuring business impact of earned media can be achieved via Google Analytics to calculate ‘goal value’.

Read the full Impact guide for more in-depth guidance on business outcome metrics, valuing leads, defining and setting conversion goals and key KPIs.
Advocacy
The ultimate goal for most organizations is to convert supporters or prospects into advocates.

Defining or categorizing your advocates and the desired advocate action is an essential first step to determining how you measure advocacy.

Measures of advocacy within the context of PR will mostly center on key influencer endorsement and their sentiment toward brands.

Focusing on the specific data sources and, again, adding context when tracking and analyzing advocacy action will provide useful insight that can help enhance ongoing advocacy programs.
Main contributor: Ian Lipner, Senior Vice President, LEWIS PR

Ian leads product development on an international level for LEWIS PR, aiming to arm the company and its clients with the communications tools of the future. Included among these is LSCORE, LEWIS’ proprietary results assessment methodology, an innovation that helped make LEWIS among the first agencies to instill a focus on marketing outcomes and data-driven campaign direction on a worldwide basis.

Foreword contributor: Barry Leggetter, CEO, AMEC

Before joining AMEC as CEO, Barry Leggetter had a 30 year-career in public relations. He was UK CEO for Porter Novelli, FleishmanHillard and GolinHarris and International Chairman of Bite. The International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC) is the leading global trade body for PR program research, measurement and analytics. AMEC has members in more than 40 countries.
About us

LEWIS was founded in 1995 by a former journalist and, since then, it has grown to over 500 employees based in more than 28 offices across the US, EMEA and Asia Pacific.

Its regional headquarters are in London, San Francisco and Singapore. LEWIS is known for delivering bold digital communications campaigns that enhance revenue, value and reputation for global brands. Digital communications services span PR and media relations, social media marketing, search engine optimization and digital content production.

Contact us

Websites:  www.lewispr.com
           www.lewispulse.com
Blog:      http://blog.lewispr.com
Email:     content@lewispr.com

For additional resources or more information about our services, please subscribe to our newsletter or contact the LEWIS team via the website.

© Copyright LEWIS Communications. 2015 all rights reserved.