

# E-News!

## 10 Ways to Measure the ROI of Public Relations

Public relations is often seen as a necessary next step in the growth cycle. But measuring the ROI of PR seems elusive, if not impossible – especially for brands that are accustomed to the quantitative convenience offered by other weapons in their multichannel arsenal.

According to a recent marketing measurement survey conducted by Ifbyphone, the overwhelming majority of marketers (82%) report that they have no means of effectively measuring the return they get from public relations, singling out PR campaigns as the most difficult initiatives to measure.

The lingering questions for many executive leaders are whether effective ROI measurements for PR exist, and if so, how they can be used to accurately gauge the impact of their current and future public relations investments.

Although there is no widely accepted standard of metrics for the ROI of PR, there are several indicators executive management can use to evaluate the measurable impact of PR as a strategic lever for business growth.



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## 1. Inbound Leads

When it's done effectively, PR raises the visibility of your company in the marketplace, driving leads to your front door. When prospective clients see a company executive quoted in leading trade or consumer publications, it confirms their decision to reach out to your firm.

## 2. Appointments

PR placements are marketing tools that can be used to increase the number of appointments that are booked through prospecting calls. By referencing mentions and features in recognized media outlets, you lower the risk of a naked call and give your company immediate credibility with prospective clients.

## 3. Business Sales Cycle

Good Public Relations has the ability to shorten the sales cycle by 10% or more. Lacking solid media placements or thoughtful leadership material, prospects and leads must invest additional time in validating your company's credentials and discerning your business philosophy – steps that can be collapsed through strategic PR initiatives.

## 4. Investor Relations

With the right approach, PR can be leveraged to attract investors to your company and predispose them to fund your company's growth initiatives. Whitepapers and other tactics communicate expertise and project confidence in your firm's ability to translate investment dollars into profits, measurably increasing the level of investment in your business.

## 5. Crisis Management

Market share takes a hit in crisis situations. Although some crises can't be avoided, crisis PR can substantially mitigate their impact on market share. In many cases, well-crafted crisis PR strategies can help companies emerge from challenging scenarios unscathed.

## 6. Strategic Partnerships

Wouldn't it be nice if targeted companies approached your business with opportunities for strategic partnerships? The number of strategic partnership inquiries your brand receives is directly related to your thought leadership presence – and thought leadership positioning is a strategic outcome of sound PR.

## 7. Employee Recruitment

Public relations inevitably impacts your company's ability to recruit a higher level of talent than could be reasonably achieved without a strong PR presence. Rather than overpaying for the best and the brightest, strategic public relations initiatives can drive a higher tier of jobseekers to your firm.

## 8. Shareholder Relations

The decision to invest in a proven PR firm is often justified by the value exceptional PR efforts add to shareholder relations. Placement in well recognized outlets can keep current shareholders happy while generating interest among companies that recognize the potential value of acquiring your business.

## 9. Visibility

The struggle to connect with intended audiences is never-ending. Time and time again, targeted PR placements boost visibility among targeted audiences, often at a fraction of the price it would cost to reach those audiences through large-scale marketing campaigns.

## 10. Competitive Presence

Like it or not, your competitors are using public relations campaigns to present messaging to your audience. If the competition is able to outpace your visibility through public relations, it will have a quantitative impact on revenue and market share.

There are a variety of strategies that can be used to achieve



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granular insights into the ROI of public relations in your company. Some of the more common assessment tools include measurements of site traffic, targeted keyword searches for the brand, call volume, brand awareness analysis (pre- and post-PR), sentiment tracking, SEO metrics and more.

However, it's important to realize that public relations is not a magic pill. From the outset, you will need to determine whether PR exposure is a viable strategy for organizational value creation. In some cases, public relations may not be the best vehicle for achieving your business goals and objectives.

But once the potential for ROI in PR has been identified, the conversation changes to determining how to maximize the return from your organization's public relations investment. At this point, the challenge becomes crafting a successful PR strategy, managing its execution, and designing effective monitoring routines. Where strong PR strategy and execution exist, ROI is sure to follow.

Admittedly, precise calculations of ROI in PR will always be a challenge. But by better understanding the nature of PR and its intended outcomes, the task of identifying the ROI impact of PR in your organization will become much easier to accomplish.

By: Mike Santoro

## Doing More with Less

### *How Can You Motivate Your Employees to Be More Productive?*

Now, more than ever, organizations are looking for ways to motivate their employees to be more productive. The volatility of the economy is forcing organizations in every industry to look for ways to do more with less. The question is: What will motivate your employees?

Most managers would instantly respond, "Money." They couldn't be more wrong. While we all want to be paid a decent wage for our work, money will not motivate us to improve our performance or productivity. What will?

#### **Recognition.**

The need for recognition and praise is right up there with the need for food, water, and shelter. We all want to feel valued, to be recognized for our contributions. Far too many executives, however, put more emphasis on monetary rewards than they do on recognition, costing their companies more financially and doing nothing to motivate their employees. Money is at the bottom of the motivational ladder.

Too often, the only feedback many employees get is negative. Unless you balance any criticism with recognition, you are doing nothing more than demoralizing your employees, who in turn will become frustrated and less productive. It's much better to praise successes than it is to dwell on failures—and it will cost your company nothing.

Recognition brings with it other benefits besides increasing productivity. It builds loyalty and reduces turnover, because employees who feel valued don't want to look for jobs elsewhere. It also builds employees' self-esteem and self-confidence, which makes them feel good about themselves and more willing to tackle new challenges.

In order to be effective, recognition must do the following:

**Be timely.** If an employee does an excellent job on a project, and a week goes by before you acknowledge and praise her work, it is meaningless. If, on the other hand, within a matter of hours you tell her what a wonderful job she did and what a valuable member of the team she is, you will motivate her to continue to do good work.

**Be specific.** It's not enough to simply say, "Nice job, Joe." It's much more effective if you say, "Joe, you did a terrific job on that report. You not only answered all the questions I had, you turned it in a day ahead of schedule. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your hard work."

**Be sincere.** If you constantly acknowledge employees' effort with a simple,

“Good job,” it will have no effect. It’s too easy—and it sounds insincere. If, on the other hand, you recognize that employee and his efforts not only with words of praise but with body language—a smile, enthusiasm, and a warm handshake—you are sending the message that you sincerely appreciate a job well done.

**Be public.** When you recognize and praise the work of an employee—and do so in front of other employees—you not only are motivating that employee to continue to perform well, you are motivating other employees to work hard and earn similar praise. You do this in a variety of ways. You can recognize the employee verbally, either in your own words or, perhaps, reading a letter of recognition from the chief executive officer or another high-ranking company official. Another option is to feature the employee in the company newsletter. You can bet that employee will keep a copy of that article for many years to come.

Recognition is a powerful motivational tool that also reduces turnover, builds strong teams, and improves your organization’s bottom line by increasing productivity. In the process, it makes you look good as a manager and increases your chances of moving up the ladder.

By: John Tschohl

