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**MEASURING RETURN ON INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH THE HELP OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

A quick growth of social networks is an undeniable truth of our century. As a result, the web and social media are incorporating more and more people across the globe each day, making it easier for businesses to communicate with their publics. previously there used to be a clear delineation between marketing and public relations, but the impact of the web has caused a blurred line between the two industries. Indeed, this can lead to the “death” of public relations. But on the contrary, the web is actually helping to enhance the efficiency of the PR industry. So how can you incorporate social media and inbound marketing to enhance your business PR efforts?

Most people underestimate the benefits of social media explaining them like means of “embracing the audience”, “joining the conversation” or “being authentic”. For businesses, social media is much more valuable, as far as it allows consumers to be in constant communication about people, products and events.
Now, more than ever before, it is important for PR professionals to be involved and aware of the constant chatter. When people get any emotions, they take them to the web. As consequence, if your business is actively engaged in social media you will need some special tools to measure the success of your programs and to determine whether your efforts are generating positive results.

Measuring the return on investment – and more appropriately for PR, the return on effort – is an important part of any marketing initiative. Being always vague and difficult to measure, ROI in public relations has always been a pain point for practitioners. However, the web has helped to make tracking ROI more reasonable and less of a headache. The following are some quantitative ways which help to identify whether the used PR methods are delivering results.

* Tracking Mentions in Media Using Google Alerts.

Define the tone of your mentions. Are they positive? Negative? Neutral?

* Comparing Mentions of Your Company Against Competitors.

 Consider measuring how your company is faring against competitor brands in terms of media mentions and their tones by setting up Google Alerts for your competitors as well.

* Tracking Press Release Syndications.

Track how many times the press releases you distribute via wire services get syndicated on portal sites. Some newswire services like Marketwire offer customized reports per release to show you where your release has been syndicated.

* Evaluating the Reach of Media Coverage.

If your brand was mentioned on a popular news site or blog or your CEO was interviewed on a podcast or online radio show, use free web analytics tools like Compete or Alexa to determine the reach of those sites. Similarly, if your CEO was interviewed on a traditional radio show, find out what the listenership is typically like for that particular show.

* Evaluating Your Reach in Social Media.

 How many Twitter followers do you have? How many Facebook fans have you accumulated? Check out your Facebook Page’s Insights to determine if you are effectively engaging your fans.

* Net Promoter Score.

Net Promoter is a management tool that can be used to gauge the loyalty of a company’s customer relationships. Has your score increased since you have been dedicating more time and effort to customer relations?

* Analyzing Your Website’s Sources.

Use Google Analytics to help analyze how people are finding you online. Did your site visitors find a press release of yours on a portal site that linked back to your website? Are you generating traffic from social media sites like Facebook or Twitter?

* Counting Your Award Wins.

How many awards have you won? Have any of your award wins resulted in media coverage or talent acquisition?

* Evaluating Your Speaking Engagements.

How many speaking engagements have you secured? What was the size of the audience to which you presented?

* Asking Your Customers How They Found You.

While it might be difficult to determine otherwise, consider asking customers or prospects how they initially found out about you to determine if your PR efforts are actually working to attract prospects and, ultimately, customers.

* Comparing Results Before and After Specific Initiatives.

Maybe you launched a Facebook Fan Page or corporate Twitter account recently. Do you notice any difference in your business reputation or public perception since you started devoting more time to specific PR efforts?

Measuring ROI can also help you decide if you need to make adjustments to your current processes so you can get the most from your efforts.