

PR News

Building the bridge between PR and the bottom line.

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Marketing

Social Media

Looking Down the Road, PR Pros Kickstart Content Marketing Plans

Can anything stop the runaway locomotive that is content marketing? Today, of the average overall marketing, advertising and communications budget, 39% of the funds are dedicated to content marketing, according to a recent report released by the **Custom Content Council** and **ContentWise**.

(DID YOU KNOW?)

Seven Things You Will Learn in This Week's Issue of PR News

1. Nearly 40% of marcom and advertising funds are dedicated to content marketing. (p. 1)
2. Two-thirds of companies don't know how to measure their social media efforts. (p. 1)
3. One way to get the media to cover a touchy subject: educate them fully on the topic. (p. 2)
4. Among consumers who own a TV and computer, 52% are likely to use the PC while watching the tube. (p. 3)
5. With 50 tweets, the Lymphoma Research Foundation's Twitter chat reached more than 23,000 users. (p. 5)
6. To reach a younger audience, Golin Harris practices "real-time" content marketing for its client, Klondike Bar. (p. 6)
7. Examples of "micro-involvement" by leaders: joining a project planning meeting and sharing meals in the company cafeteria. (p. 8)

The engine behind the acceleration in content marketing—digital and social platforms. The study found that 81% of respondents are creating content specifically for social channels.

Not surprisingly, social content is the most frequently used form of content marketing. Web updates, social content and SEO content are remarkably consistent, with 44% of study respondents expecting to

increase their output.

Brands are knee deep in content creation. At **Salesforce.com**, video, Web pages, eBooks and webinars are in the mix, among other content vehicles.

Content marketing plays a role across all phases of customer communications, says Jennifer Burnham, marketing director, social and content strategy at **Salesforce.com**. "Content marketing is a new lever to attract new customers

to our business, and deepen the engagement with prospective customers."

To enable a constant flow of content—and its dissemination to the right audiences—its creation has been likened to the traditional media newsroom.

Perhaps there are no better examples of content marketing programs than in PR agencies. Looking to expand their offerings, many agencies, large and

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Digital PR

Social Media

Measurement

Retooling Social Media Metrics To Provide Real, Actionable Insights

Under ever-increasing pressure to prove return on investment, marketers have made attempts to assign a value to Facebook likes and Twitter followers. Industry researchers and lawyers alike are happy to provide numbers, but is there any value in numbers like \$3.60 per Facebook like or \$2.50 per Twitter follower? Not much, unless you are also considering your objective, audience and offering.

Tracking metrics that provide real insights has proven to be a challenge and, regrettably, marketers are focusing on the wrong metrics resulting in poor strategic decisions.

According to an eConsultancy survey, two thirds of companies didn't have any clear

way of measuring what they were doing on social media and most aren't measuring the performance of activities against their social media objectives. Outlined in this article is a model that moves from tracking simple awareness and engagement with absolute numbers to ratios that provide true insights.

Before we dive in, let me take a moment to explain the concept of ratios as key performance indicators (KPIs). For starters, the standard model for social media measurement is to track simple awareness and engagement. Awareness metrics include total number (or percentage growth) of "likes," fans, followers, subscribers or views. Typical engagement metrics

include total quantity or quality of shares, comments, retweets, replies, ratings or conversations.

While these metrics can certainly help set a baseline and provide trending for general reach and frequency, they can be misleading or misinterpreted as absolute values. One way to minimize the limitations of these metrics is to track them as ratios instead.

For example, marketers shouldn't care as much about the total number of "likes" on Facebook; rather, they should care about the level of quality and engagement with those individuals. One way to do that is by looking at relationships like the average number of

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For Leaders, Micro-Involvement is a Big Thing

Leader visibility programs? Old school. Leader involvement. New school.

While working with a client to develop PR strategies to get its CEO and other leaders out and about with key stakeholders, it became clear that visibility isn't enough anymore.

Queen Elizabeth may still be able to lead by smiling and waving to adoring subjects. However, organizational leaders work under different expectations.

Stakeholders want to connect with leaders in more meaningful ways. Conversations, not speeches; informal show-and-tells, not packaged tours and being up close and personal, not congregating in auditoriums.

INTERACTION REQUIRED

Leaders need to connect with the troops. With command-and-control leadership dead, leaders must use influence skills to get stakeholders to take action. To do this well leaders need to listen to and interact with stakeholders more intently than they have in the past.

Yet, interactions take time; valuable time that many leaders can't easily spare because of all their other commitments. And overworked knowledge employees don't want to take time out of their day if they feel they're going to fall further behind.

The answer? Think and act little, as in micro-involvement. Yes, little is the new big. And the benefits can be huge.

Consider micro-financing, micro-learning and micro-breweries. Yes, there's also micro-managing—which is directly opposed to leader involvement.

MICRO-INVOLVEMENT

However, in the space between micro-management and macro-leadership, there's room for leaders and employees to benefit from micro-involvement, especially if it follows in the footsteps of macro-leadership.

Macro-leadership is the vision thing. Macro-leaders—generally senior leaders in the C-suite—define the future they want to build.

They create and clear the path to get there. These leaders also influence others to join them along this path. They work to create committed employees, customers and investors.

To influence effectively, leaders need to get stakeholders on their feet, walking on the path and taking job actions to experience the vision, goals and change the leaders have defined and are creating.

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

The next step is being side-by-side with employees, involving them in shared activities with

informal conversations.

This involvement is powerful on a number of different levels. For employees, they see the leaders' commitment, increase their understanding and feel like they're on the same team working together toward common goals.

For leaders, they get valuable, real-time unfiltered feedback. Plus, they start to build stronger personal connections with employees.

Traditional involvement activities take a huge chunk of time. Here's the value of micro-involvement: Leaders and employees can set aside short blocks of time—30 to 90 minutes—to do meaningful activities together.

"Involvement is rewarding for our leaders and our employees," says Heather Rim, VP of corporate communications at **Avery Dennison**.

She added: "The collective experiences translate into business benefits—better rapport, understanding and trust between employees and leaders, which especially makes micro-involvement activities well worth the investment of time and other resources."

Some examples of micro-involvement actions include:

1. Doing tag-alongs to visit customers.
2. Joining a project planning meeting.

3. Evaluating a new vendor.
4. Using company products together in either a real or simulated situation.
5. Sharing meals in the company cafeteria.
6. Enjoying a micro-brew at a local pub.
7. Walking around the campus or business park.

These tactics or similar actions can work for any size or type of organization, whether an established company like Avery Dennison or a start-up.

For example, on "Fun Fridays" at one start-up in Silicon Valley, the CEO/founder joins employees to walk to lunch at nearby food trucks.

Micro-involvement makes involvement more convenient, engaging and doable for everyone in the organization.

Perhaps more important, you're sharing diverse new points of view, strengthening relationships and building stronger foundations for greater credibility and trust. **PRN**

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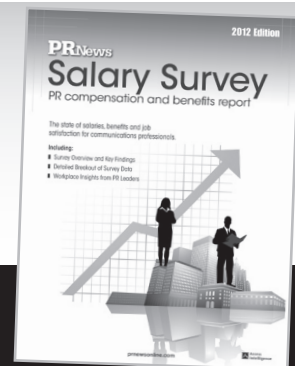
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PR News' Salary Survey

The state of salaries, benefits, and job satisfaction for communications professionals.

Chapters include:

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- Compensation and Benefits Survey Results
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