



Why Measurement Matters

Measurement Month 2018



GRAYLING

Why measurement matters

The (ex) client's view by Danica Ross



Before I joined Grayling almost five years ago, I spent more than a decade on the client side, within the Financial Services and Education sectors. I never had any real desire to work for an agency. I was quite happy

being the one running the show – briefing my agencies, setting the strategic direction, keeping them and my internal team on track, filtering out the good ideas from the crazy ones, and reporting on progress and results internally. And the importance of that last responsibility cannot be overstated.

As any comms professional knows, the success of any programme is contingent upon a number of factors, including the strength of the story you have to tell, the timing, and the ability of your team to execute. As you can imagine, during my in-house days my teams and I had some great successes, and some... well, utter disappointments.

In both scenarios, it's crucial to understand what worked, and why, and what didn't, and why not. And in both scenarios, you have to report up the chain to the C-suite and other senior stakeholders, who are eager to see results.

This is where robust measurement and evaluation comes into its own, and where I often struggled with my agencies. Because however good they may have been on the execution side of things, the measurement and evaluation often left a little to be desired.

And look, I get it. I really do. As I've joked many a time, "I went into PR so I wouldn't have to do math!" We're "word people," happier to turn a clever phrase than calculate standard deviation; more at home with a pitch than a pivot table. And yet, to do justice to a campaign, we need to make friends with data. Moreover, to identify success and replicate it, we need to be able to analyse and evaluate.

My oft-repeated refrain while a client will sound familiar to anyone else with an in-house comms role: You can deliver the greatest campaign in the world, but unless I can prove to the CEO (and CFO!) how it moved the needle, it's all for nothing.

That's why measurement matters: Because when you're client-side you may be the only comms person in the whole organisation, and you need to fight hard (and repeatedly) to secure and maintain your budget. And that's only possible if you have the data to back up your case.

Now I'm on the other side of the fence, and target-setting and robust evaluation are things on which, as Chief Client Officer, I insist. Thankfully, these days we have dedicated data analysts to balance out the creatives, enabling us to help our clients not only demonstrate a strong ROI, but also inform future strategies.

And if you're wondering why I finally gave in and moved to the dark side of agency life – the answer is simple. In 2013, I hired Grayling as my agency and found myself impressed by everyone I encountered. When the opportunity presented itself to join that team, I didn't have to think twice.

Why measurement matters

The agency view by Jon Meakin



When I speak to my Grayling colleagues around the world about the importance of measurement and evaluation, while I don't exactly get eye-rolls, I do get a distinct "There's Jon on his soapbox again" vibe. I understand that. The

knowledge transfer programmes I run on Strategy or Creativity are much better attended, for exactly the reasons that Danica identifies. That stuff is just a lot more fun than measurement, isn't it?

Isn't it?

My contention is that as well as being important, measurement is anything but dull.

Think of it this way: We often hear about the challenge of retaining millennials as employees because of "job dissatisfaction". But what could be more satisfying, more rewarding than not only 'knowing' you've done a good job, but being able to prove it?

Still not convinced? OK, try this: Why do companies employ agencies? Yes, because it's more flexible and cost-effective than building a huge in-house team, and you get access to expertise and relationships you wouldn't otherwise be able to tap, but aside from all that? As I always remind my colleagues,

we are not here just to get results – that's a given. We are also here to make our clients look good. So that at the end of the month, the quarter, the year, our clients can stand in front of their bosses and say "Look what your comms function achieved".

Not just that, but evaluation done well should also enable our clients to make strategic recommendations to their bosses about future campaigns.

In short, better measurement equals clients who look good to their bosses, equals happy clients. And happy clients are clients that want to stick around and, who knows, maybe even invest more with us the following year.

Now I am not under-playing the very real challenges of measuring and evaluating sophisticated, multi-channel communication programmes, or even straightforward traditional media relations campaigns. Every client is different, every campaign is different, and these challenges my colleagues and I will be exploring in more detail during [AMEC Measurement Month](#). But there are plenty of tools and methodologies that may be employed to solve for this.

The key thing is that we and our clients enter every relationship with an agreement that measurement matters. And that getting it right is rewarding for all concerned.

About the authors



Danica Ross

Chief Client Officer, Grayling United States

As Chief Client Officer, Danica works with account teams to ensure success and satisfaction across Grayling's entire book of US clients.

Her personal area of expertise is running programmes for global, publicly traded organisations that have both B2B and B2C functions. Danica has a passion for leveraging research and data to drive headlines, and her core strength is pulling disparate work streams into a cohesive programme driving toward common goals.

Prior to this role, Danica served as Managing Director of Grayling San Francisco. She also has nearly a decade of in-house experience, and was once a Grayling client.



Jon Meakin

Global Head of Strategic Services

With 25 years' communications experience, gained in Europe and the US, Jon runs Grayling's Global Strategic Services team, responsible for research and insights, measurement and evaluation, and the marshalling of strategic and creative resources throughout the Grayling network.

A regular conference speaker and judge of international PR and creative industry awards, Jon also sits on the International Board of the Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC) and is the founding chair of that body's Agency Working Group.

ABOUT GRAYLING

At Grayling we develop inventive, integrated communications solutions that are rapidly scalable to deliver against organisational needs.

With hands-on senior counsel, powerful content, and unrivalled connections, we help our clients to engage, adapt and evolve in fast-changing landscapes, building brand resilience and creating measurable advantage.

ABOUT AMEC

The Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication is the world's largest media intelligence and insights professional organisation, representing those who provide media evaluation and communication research.

AMEC currently has more than 160 members in 86 countries worldwide.

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Part 1: Why Measurement Matters

Part 2: What Good Measurement Looks Like

Part 3: Measurement Challenges

Part 4: The Future of Measurement

LET'S TALK

Jon Meakin

Global Head of Strategic Services

E jon.meakin@grayling.com

M +1 917 624 3227

Danica Ross

Chief Client Officer, United States

E danica.ross@grayling.com

M +1 310 612 9292