

Google Says PR Measurement Is About Quality Over Quantity

By PR News Editors

When it comes to measuring your PR and communications efforts, more is not always better.

Janneke van Geuns, head of insights and analytics at Google, says that she has seen communicators try to collect and track an overabundance of metrics. But collecting more data isn't going to bring about better insights, she says.

Instead, communicators should break through the clutter of unnecessary (and just plain meaningless) metrics to focus on the those that matter most to you and your organization. This is especially important when bringing your metrics to senior leadership. Communicators can't allow extraneous metrics to dilute the message you're trying to present to the C-suite.

PR News talked to van Geuns about what metrics communicators should focus on, and what new tools Google is developing to make data collection and analysis easier.

PR News: What is the biggest misconception people have about using analytics to measure their communications strategy?

Van Geuns: The biggest misconception is the perceived need to capture and measure everything and anything. A common belief is that if you capture every type of metric, they will tell you magically what works and what doesn't. Unfortunately, that is not how we get to insights, and would be comparable to having to find a needle in a haystack. Setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) up front is a

crucial step in the analytics process. We conducted a study with Econsultancy* and found that 45% of all respondents said that unclear definitions of KPIs present a significant negative impact on their organizations, whereas business leaders are 47% more likely than the mainstream to say that their data and analytics strategy includes how they define KPIs for paid media (and 38% more likely for owned properties).

It is pretty simple: If you don't know what you're working toward with your analytics approach, you can't know what's useful to you.

PR News: What new feature(s) is Google Analytics working on?

Van Geuns: Google Analytics is one of many tools to help communicators understand how their PR and marketing tactics are working, and we are always aiming to make it as easy as possible for companies to quickly get to insights to support business decisions. One of the ways we are doing that is through Google Data Studio. This tool (in beta) turns data into informative dashboards and reports that are easy to read, easy to share and fully customizable. I have been excited about the capability to link Google Analytics to Data Studio to interpret web analytics data effectively.

PR News: What's the most overrated metric in social media measurement? Should communicators put much stock in measuring impressions?

Van Geuns: A metric can't be overrated if it is important to assess how social media is contributing to business results. If driving