

The future of media monitoring is brand intelligence

By  Michal Wronski

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Decades ago, media monitoring mostly consisted of a simple clippings service that delivered news clippings to clients and PR firms on a regular basis...

As the years progressed, both client needs and technologies became more sophisticated, which resulted in media monitoring companies providing analysis and AVEs of the media coverage to more accurately gauge PR efforts. Clients began wanting on-demand digital availability of their coverage, as well as live daily updates to stay constantly informed. The industry adapted.

Fast forward to today, and the very definition of media has changed. Instead of just monitoring coverage in print and broadcast channels, media monitoring firms are required to monitor mentions online and in social media. In effect, every person on social media has become a publisher and media owner. One-way broadcast channels have become two-way engagement channels that can be publicly monitored. The number of publishers monitored has suddenly jumped from several thousand to hundreds of millions!



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This has resulted in an unprecedented explosion of data that needs to be dealt with in an insightful manner. A print mention from a notable journalist is guaranteed to be a high-quality mention of the brand and cannot be ignored. The thousands of social interactions around most brands need to be dealt with very differently. Individual mentions aren't always as relevant in social media, but in unison they form insightful pictures into consumer insights and sentiment trends. Social media influencers and bloggers have also in many ways become more powerful than journalists in their ability to spread messages, so brand mentions from online influencers simply cannot be ignored. When these influencers interact together, an entire web of conversations can be visualised as a network to show which influencers have the most sway in their communities. *The game has changed.*

Complicating the measurement of media is the fact that digital agencies tend to only focus on online and social media mentions, while above-the-line campaigns often overlook social media coverage. Additionally, while traditional media monitoring is mostly used within public relations, online and social monitoring is often used in the context of digital strategy, market research and even customer relationship management. The lines have become very blurred indeed.

What does this mean for the future of media monitoring and where is everything going? This is where the notion of brand intelligence comes in, where monitoring companies like Ornico have their sights focused. Media monitoring is no longer about press clippings or even top-level analytics, it's about extracting the right intelligence from all the media sources to provide critical insights into brand sentiment, advocacy, share of voice and the long-term trends in this regard. Going a step further, the real value will be in predictive analytics of brand intelligence. Predicting how a brand will be perceived in the media in the future will become a crucial insight for many business executives to tailor their strategies to the market.

The world has changed and consumers have moved on, but brands and agencies have been slow to respond to these changes. True brand intelligence can provide critical objective insights about a brand in the media, but to be used accurately would need to be delivered to management teams running organisations in order to be fed back into brand strategy, positioning and even product development. Combine brand intelligence with internal brand data such as sales, revenue and CRM data, and you start closing the ROI loop in your marketing - the coveted holy grail.

This is where the future is headed, and brands need to either adapt their strategies or risk losing relevance in the market. Across every industry, B2C and B2B sectors, these disruptions are taking place. The best way to mitigate the risks is to educate key executives about the new possibilities big data presents to organisations so that they can utilise and integrate them effectively within the enterprise. This education needs to also include integration of strategy and media intelligence.

The tri-partisan relationship between monitoring companies, agencies and brands is evolving very quickly, and it's important for all sides to be collaborative and work together to ensure each brings their own unique competencies to the table, for maximum integration and effectiveness. The future is bright for those that evolve to this new level!

ABOUT MICHAL WRONSKI

Mike is technologist, entrepreneur and previous MD of Fuseware (<http://www.fuseware.net>, @fuseware), a company specializing in social media analytics and research. Fuseware was acquired by Ornico Group in May 2015, where Mike joined the team as a business development manager. Contact Mike at michalw@ornicogroup.co.za or follow @mikewronski on Twitter.

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