

# International Media Analysis Made Simple

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Mike Daniels  
Senior Counsel, Report International  
Chair, International Association for the  
Measurement & Evaluation of Communication  
Member, IPR Commission on PR Measurement & Evaluation

Angela Jeffrey, APR  
Founder, Angela Jeffrey & Associates - MeasurementMatch.com  
Senior Counsel, CARMA International  
Member, IPR Commission on PR Measurement & Evaluation

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## Authors

### **Mike Daniels, Senior Counsel to Report International and Chair of AMEC – The International Association for the Measurement & Evaluation of Communication**

Mike is one of the senior team at Report International, an international media analysis firm. Report International is one of the original small group of companies that, in the late 80s, translated an academic tool known as content analysis into a commercially proven methodology. Partnering with some of the world's leading global companies and institutions has given Mike a deep understanding of the critical issues involved in managing complex multi-geography programs, and the need to help clients create better and more value-driven analytics. He has a long track record in public relations and marketing, having owned his own boutique integrated marketing communications agency, prior to co-founding Report International. In 2010, he transitioned to a consultancy role after successfully selling the company to a specialist marketing services group. Now as a consultant, Mike combines his role at Report International as mentor and steward of its key partner relationships with chairing AMEC, the industry trade organization dedicated to promoting closer dialogue between suppliers and customers, an ethos Mike has ably demonstrated during his time at Report International. His specialties and interests are in Technology and FMCG, focusing on the application of media analysis not only to communications strategy, but also to branding, reputation management and corporate strategy.

### **Angela C. Jeffrey, APR, Founder, Angela Jeffrey & Associates and Senior Counsel to CARMA International**

Infusing clients, management and colleagues with excitement about successful public relations campaigns dominated 20 years of Angela's career with JCPenney, national agencies and her full-service public relations firm, Jeffrey Communications. PRSA Silver Anvils and IABC Gold Quills, plus a bevy of regional awards, were some of her career highlights.

Angela entered the public relations measurement world when she couldn't find a low-cost solution for media analysis. To solve the problem, she created a second venture to build *PRtrak*<sup>™</sup>, the first desktop public relations analysis tool for print, broadcast and internet coverage. The venture succeeded and was subsequently acquired, first by SDI, Inc., where she served as Vice President/Brand Manager of the *PRtrak* division; and then by VMS, where she worked with high-end analysis clients as Vice President Integrated Media. (*PRtrak* is now owned by BurrellesLuce). Today, Angela focuses on counseling organizations on public relations research and measurement strategy through her latest venture, Angela Jeffrey & Associates, the home of MeasurementMatch.com<sup>™</sup>. Through it all, Angela has become a recognized evangelist, thought leader, writer and speaker for public relations measurement and evaluation nationwide.

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## 1. Abstract

More and more organizations need to measure their media coverage globally, but how can they do this cost effectively? This paper takes a very granular approach to helping the reader define business goals and objectives; determine suitable measures; analyze media content needs; evaluate dashboard systems; determine language and analysis processes; develop measurement scorecards; select provider services; sell the solutions internally; and, evaluate their success. Clear pros and cons to every option are provided, enabling the reader to balance the three competing essentials: quality, speed and cost.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Introduction

If you work for a company or nonprofit that operates in more than one country, you more than likely have already struggled to find the best way to monitor and measure what's being said about your organization around the world. Depending on the number of countries that are important enough to measure, this process can look daunting and expensive.

The question we will seek to answer in this paper is:

***How does an organization structure a media monitoring and measurement program that provides optimal international business intelligence in a cost-effective manner?***

## 3. The Challenge

Without a doubt, top managers in more and more international companies are turning to global media analysis to keep abreast of what an increasingly fragmented media is saying about their organizations and that of their competitors. In today's volatile world, with the ever-increasing diversity and influence of media on all stakeholders – whether from established sources or from user-generated media – it has become difficult and highly risky for companies to defend and enhance their reputation without actively listening to influential media channels.

Even if it were only a question of reputational impact, there is a clear need for global analysis. Even more compelling reasons exist such as ensuring consistent message alignment; providing accurate data for input to market mix/effectiveness models; assessing media relations performance; and, from an internal perspective, delivering a transparent measure of media relations effectiveness.

There is a significant tension, though: international media analysis programs can be highly complex and typically often carry a correspondingly high price tag. This is all the more true for companies new to media analysis and that tend to ask for the full toolbox:

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<sup>1</sup> This paper includes the names of several well-known research and media measurement firms as examples. The authors recognize that there are many firms providing comparable services at a high level of quality. This list is not inclusive by any means.

- ❑ A single global provider for single-point management
- ❑ Comprehensive clip collection in near real-time
- ❑ Full and accurate story translations
- ❑ Complex and granular story scoring
- ❑ Customized dashboards
- ❑ Deep, insightful reports
- ❑ Seamless international coordination

Often, companies will create a Request for Proposal (RFP) without doing any initial research among vendors or industry and trade associations such as the Institute for Public Relations<sup>2</sup> and the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC).<sup>3</sup> Then, companies wonder why no media measurement firm can fulfill all their demands. Or, if a firm can meet the requirements, why the prices quoted are cost-prohibitive? So client organizations often settle for a less-than-optimum solution with a lot of dazzle, but that all too often ends up not meeting their real goals and objectives for measuring communications.

## 4. Two Key Considerations Before you Begin

In the remainder of this paper, you will see a roadmap to help guide your decision-making as you design your international media analysis program. It should make your planning process and your search for the best possible providers a great success.

Two preliminary considerations include understanding the media landscape in each country, and understanding the project management triangle

### 4.1 Understanding the Media Landscape in each Country

Since you will have long-since developed your international media relations program before attempting to measure results, you have probably conducted in-depth research on the media structures and landscapes of each country in which your team is engaging. If you have not yet studied these differences, we encourage you to explore the following resources to gain a clearer understanding of the media's varying power. For example, in a country where the news media is less credible due to "cash for news coverage," its ability to impact your organization's reputation is probably less than it would be otherwise.

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<sup>2</sup> The Institute for Public Relations (IPR) is an independent nonprofit foundation dedicated to *the science beneath the art of public relations*<sup>TM</sup>. The Institute focuses on research that matters to the practice, providing timely insights and applied intelligence that professionals can put to immediate use. [www.instituteforpr.org](http://www.instituteforpr.org)

<sup>3</sup> The International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC) focuses on providing a forum for information, knowledge sharing and best practice. It comprises over 100 member companies from more than 30 countries. The AMEC logo is regarded as an international mark of excellence in the provision of media evaluation and communication research services to clients. [www.amecorg.com](http://www.amecorg.com).

- Craig E. Carroll (ed.), *Corporate Reputation and the News Media: Agenda-Setting within Business News Coverage in Developed, Emerging, and Frontier Markets* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

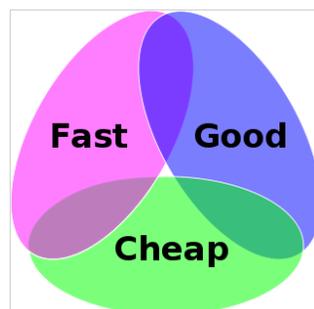
This international public relations textbook edited by Professor Craig E. Carroll, Ph.D. and 27 co-authors, examines the relationship between corporate reputation and the news media in 28 countries. Corporate reputation has been a subject of great interest to scholars and practitioners because it is related to being able to increase market share, lower market costs, attract investors and a myriad of other organizational outcomes. Carroll and his co-authors examined how companies are portrayed in their local (national) press in developed, emerging and frontier markets. The developed markets include Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S. Emerging markets are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Russia and South Korea. Frontier markets are Turkey, Nigeria, Slovenia and the United Arab Emirates.

- Dean Kruckeberg and Katerina Tsetsura, "A Composite Index by Country of Variables Related to the Likelihood of the Existence of 'Cash for News Coverage'," (Gainesville, Florida: Institute for Public Relations, 2003).

This white paper provides an index that has been developed as a baseline against which to score countries on the likelihood of the existence of "cash for news coverage" paid to news media by news sources. Sixty-six countries are included in the study, selected for their global economic and political importance and the availability of reliable data. The index provides a numeric score and rank for 66 countries that range in their likelihood that the practice "does not exist" to "likely does exist." Since the incidence of "cash for news coverage" is virtually impossible to measure directly, eight variables were developed by researchers to create the index. The index is helpful for practitioners to be able to predict whether or not journalists will seek to accept cash for coverage. The paper asserts that in terms of media analysis, results from sources known to accept bribes is likely to be far less impactful than genuinely "objective" media.

## 4.2 Understanding the Project Management Triangle

There's a truism in marketing communication and public relations services worth bearing in mind as you start specifying your media analysis needs. There is a tradeoff between three key constraints, often in tension with one another other: speed, quality, and cost.



*From Wikipedia: The Management Project Triangle as a "pick any two" Euler diagram<sup>4</sup>*

Generally, organizations can benefit from any two of the three elements, but not all three at the same time. So, you can have a high quality provider delivering results in the shortest possible time, but it's going to be, other things equal, more expensive than a service delivering either lower quality or at a slower pace. Equally, to reach a lower cost level, it is likely that either quality or speed will be sacrificed to some extent.

Understanding these constraints and how they apply to media measurement programs can help focus attention on the truly important service elements you need from a provider.

## 5. Designing an International Media Measurement Program

### 5.1 Step One: Identify and Articulate your Business Needs

As in all the best marketing and public relations work, you need to start by asking some basic questions.

- What exactly are your international communications efforts trying to achieve, how can this best be measured and who would most benefit?
- What spells "success" to your organization's management and stakeholders?
- How will the answers gleaned from an analysis potentially change your communications and contribute to your organization's bottom line?

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<sup>4</sup> The **Project Management Triangle** (called also *Triple Constraint*) is a model of the constraints of project management. It is a graphic aid where the three attributes show on the corners of the triangle to show opposition. This example uses a Euler diagram: the sizes or shapes of the curves are not important: the significance of the diagram is in how they overlap.

The best way to get answers is by asking some hard questions. Consider in-depth interviews with your management team, both horizontally and vertically within the organization. Or run an internal survey or focus group with a larger internal audience in your most important countries to determine what challenges they are facing. Consolidate all your feedback and undertake a gap analysis to see what is needed in an international analysis program, and what is already in place (if anything).

At the same time, you should also investigate other data that is already gathered by the organization that could help shape your own program, e.g. consumer awareness and brand perception studies (usually owned by your market research, consumer insights or marketing team), market share and sales data (from your sales organization), stock price (from your investor relations department or CFO), etc.

This initial research stage will provide a much clearer picture of your communications and broader organizational needs – and thus enable you to be much clearer about where your program will sit between the three key drivers. Some examples follow:

- **Speed:** do you and your stakeholders truly need real-time updates?
- **Quality:** what are the data requirements of your business functions, and what level of precision is needed to satisfy their needs?
- **Cost:** could other functions share in the costs if they were convinced of the value of the media analysis results?

## 5.2 Step Two: Determine your Measures and Metrics

Next, determine your communications measures through the simple six-step program that follows. Additional useful resources to guide you through this preparation stage can be found on [the IPR website](#) or from [AMEC](#).

In particular, take a look at the Barcelona Principles,<sup>5</sup> a recent declaration of seven guidelines for the measurement and evaluation of public relations from the 2nd European Summit on Measurement, organized by AMEC and the Institute for Public Relations. You'll want to make sure your measurement provider adheres to these guidelines, as well.

Also, see the AMEC Valid Metrics Guidelines,<sup>6</sup> which provide a practical set of matrices to help you link your public relations measures to business outcomes and organizational goals.

- **Identify organizational and business goals** – How do these goals apply to each country or international region? Are different products or services emphasized in different regions? Does each region have the same, or different, competitors? In international programs, regions and countries may even have different public relations goals and tactics, so make

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<sup>5</sup> The Barcelona Principles can be accessed on the IPR website at <http://bit.ly/es09jU>.

<sup>6</sup> The AMEC Valid Metrics Guidelines take the form of a matrix, with the underlying logic of the matrix applicable to a number of different types of campaigns. Within the matrix, three phases have been defined to reflect a simplified breakdown of the way public relations works. In essence, the grid reflects how public relations can be boiled down to activities, intermediary effects and target audience effects. A full explanation can be seen at: <http://bit.ly/KOBtbp>.

sure they are reflected in the program while bearing in mind the importance of consistency if cross-country comparisons are required.

- **Define audiences of importance to reaching those goals, and prioritize** – Most communications budgets don't stretch far enough to reach all targets, so choose the most important ones for the coming year and get management's buy-in.
- **Set public relations objectives against your prioritized audiences that are specific and measurable** – For example, you may want to increase Share of Discussion about Brand X among women 55+ in Scandinavia by Y percent in 2012, but increase Brand A among men 25+ in Brazil during the same time period.
- **Determine how you will measure each objective, with what tools, and, if possible, benchmark before your program begins. Choose tools in each of the following four measurement categories.**<sup>7</sup>
  - **Public relations outputs** – Measuring public relations outputs will enable you to see the immediate results of a public relations program or activity. For example, in media relations, you can count the number of stories received, audience opportunities-to-see, messages disseminated and so on. You can also count activities such as white papers written, speaking engagements, blogger events held, videos produced, etc. While output measurement is a critical part of your strategy since it gauges your *effort and efficiency in reaching your target audiences*, measuring only outputs can't tell you whether or not the target audience became aware of your message, understood it or exhibited any kind of attitude or behavior change. In addition, the dramatic increase in social and online media channels pose special challenges to companies measuring coverage from these sources.
  - **Public relations outtakes** – Measuring public relations outtakes will enable you to determine whether or not key target audience groups actually received your messages, paid attention to them, understood the messages and/or retained them in any way. Essentially, was there a “take-away” from your efforts? Elements to measure include the audience's overall favorability toward your message; their understanding or comprehension; their recall and retention; and their attention and consideration of a response. For instance, is the target doing anything with the information at hand, such as sharing your message with colleagues or going to a website?
  - **Public relations outcomes** – Measuring public relations outcomes is far more important than either of the other two measures because they determine whether the communications materials actually resulted in opinion, attitude and behavior changes among your target audience. Methods for measuring public relations outcomes include

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<sup>7</sup> The definitions above have been summarized from “Guidelines for Measuring the Effectiveness of PR Programs and Activities” by Dr. Walter K. Lindenmann (Gainesville, Florida: Institute for Public Relations, 2007), available at [http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2002\\_MeasuringPrograms.pdf](http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2002_MeasuringPrograms.pdf).

surveys, focus groups, pre- and post-test/campaign studies, observational studies, correlation and regression analysis and more.

- **Organizational outcomes** – Measuring organizational outcomes is the last and most critical step toward seeing if your public relations accomplishments relate to ultimate business goals such as increasing market penetration, market share, sales and profitability. It is often tough to ‘tease out’ the effects of public relations since many variables impact any given organizational outcome. While a public relations program may generate leads, for example, the skill of your sales staff, competitive pricing, product distribution and other variables will help drive the final sale. So how can a communications professional link public relations measures to real business results?
- **Determine how you will link outputs, outtakes, and outcomes** – Public relations outputs, outtakes and outcomes can be linked to organizational outcomes in a variety of ways. If yours is a large organization, you may have access to a Market Mix Model, which is a sophisticated statistical model that weighs all known paid- and unpaid marketing, economic and environmental variables that might have created a given business result.<sup>8</sup> Another method is to utilize Web Analytics and e-Commerce software to track customer engagement in social media through to leads, sign-up pages, funds raised or even sales.

Another technique, called the *Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient*,<sup>9</sup> is a measure of the strength of the linear dependence between two variables. Broadly speaking, there is a strong correlation when one factor goes up or down, and the other does, as well – either in the same direction, or in the opposite. A Pearson correlation is expressed as “r=” with a value of +1.0 to -1.0 inclusive. While a correlation must never be considered as “proof” of a direct causal connection between the two factors, any correlation above  $r=+.70$  or  $r=-.70$  would indicate some kind of relationship between the two. So, for example, if your output metrics go up in a given country, and survey scores or sales leads also increase in that country, showing an  $r=.70$  or higher, it is safe to conclude there’s some type of relationship between the two. While one could be causing the other, there is also the possibility that a third variable is at work on which the two depend.<sup>10</sup>

The following example of linking is from a real case history:

A major U.S. corporation is trying to raise awareness of its reputational drivers such as leadership, innovation and financial stability through massive international media outreach. Its public relations output measurement consists of monitoring its competitive media coverage and scoring each clip for how well it conveys these reputational drivers and other quantitative and qualitative factors. At the end of the year, the scores will be tallied and compared against the client’s

<sup>8</sup> See a discussion and an example of marketing mix modeling for public relations in Mark Weiner, Liney Arnorsdottir, Rainer Lang, and Brian G. Smith, “Isolating the Effects of Media-Based Public Relations on Sales Optimization through Marketing Mix Modeling,” (Gainesville, Florida: Institute for Public Relations, 2010), retrieved from <http://www.instituteforpr.org/topics/media-based-pr-on-sales/>

<sup>9</sup> For more information, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearson\\_product-moment\\_correlation\\_coefficient](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearson_product-moment_correlation_coefficient).

<sup>10</sup> Pearson correlations can be done quite simply in Excel using the =Correl or =Pearson calculation functions.

public relations outcome measures, which consist of attitude and awareness scores from an ongoing international poll. They hope to see a correlation between increases in the media coverage for each driver and the attitudes conveyed for those drivers through the survey. If the correlations are high, the client will know which organizational behaviors - as reported in the media - are associated with outcomes. The final step for this client will be to correlate the public relations outputs, outtakes and/or outcomes against organizational outcomes that, in this case, might be increases in new customers, services rendered, sales or profitability.

- **Measure continuously, and adjust accordingly** – While a one-off exercise may be useful for benchmarking or for a strategically important event, to be truly effective, measurement should be ongoing. An ongoing program enables you to adjust it where necessary in any country at any period of time to ensure the continuing maximum effectiveness of your public relations effort.

Once you have your measurement plan in place, you are in a position to start conversations about project scope and budget with potential suppliers in order to design a program that will meet your goals and objectives in the most cost-effective manner. The rest of this paper will focus on the measurement of public relations outputs by presenting the various pros, cons and trade-offs for all the key components of your media monitoring and analysis options.

### 5.3 Step Three: What Media Content Do You Need?

Based on your work above, you should be able to select the options that are right for you below.

- **Countries and languages** – Many clients approach media analysis thinking they want clips from every country in which they do business. This can quickly become cost-prohibitive unless only the lowest-cost automated analysis systems are used. These systems are not recommended given the generally less-than-stellar accuracy of non-English language automated analysis tools. It makes much more sense to select the most important countries and languages for your specific organization to start with and then add to your list in Year Two after your program has been validated with management.
- **Selecting media sources** – You may think you want to score “every” clip your firm and/or its competitors have garnered, but experience shows this can add more costs than the additional intelligence may warrant. A careful selection of the most critical media sources in each country, and prioritizing them for measurement purposes, will provide a statistically robust basis for your metrics. There are a number of ways to determine how many titles to track:
  - For example, if 50 percent of your sales come from Canada, then you might wish to ensure that 50 percent of the selected media sources in your program would be from that country.

- Or, determine Tier 1 and Tier 2 media lists for each country based on target reach through demographics.

Having concrete media lists will ensure you receive firm cost estimates from suppliers. Some practitioners believe 80 percent of the needed market intelligence can be found in the top 20 percent of the sources in each country, but this is not necessarily true in every case. For instance, in a predominantly B2B context, trade titles are probably key but the publications themselves may well be small in circulation and low in numbers.

- **Selecting the content** – To begin the process of budgeting, measurement companies need to estimate how many clips your firm (and/or competitors) garnered in the previous 12 months for each media type desired. Some of this can be determined through your own media monitoring history or through media analysis providers. Bear in mind that many clients' clipping services do not include competitor coverage, so you will then need to use other sources to gain an estimate of your competitors' coverage levels. Your potential analysis partners should be able to give an estimate from their own content suppliers. Some programs may require different competitor sets by country and/or region to reflect local brands' needs.
  - **Traditional print and broadcast media** – Do you need actual print clips with photographs and broadcast clips, or will text for print and closed-captioning for broadcast suffice? The decision may be down to the nature of your program: if it's for a B2C campaign, photos and video showing the presentation of your products may be critical, whereas in a B2B or reputation program, there may be much less need for pictures or video. You may also need to specify a different level of monitoring in various countries depending on what is affordable.
  - **Traditional monitors** – Firms like BurrellesLuce and Cision in the U.S., Reporte Informativo in Latin America, Gorkana, Precise and PressIndex in Europe, and Media Monitors in Australia can produce the highest quality of clips, but you'll want to explore all their packages to see where savings can be achieved. For broadcast in particular, while U.S. broadcast is very cost-effective, international collection can be prohibitively expensive. For clients needing vertical trade and niche publications in the U.S., BurrellesLuce or Cision are the most complete. Other firms like Gorkana, Precise and country-specific agencies will be able to collect more of the vertical and B2B international titles.<sup>11</sup>
  - **Aggregators** – Firms like LexisNexis, Dow Jones Factiva, Moreover and Meltwater provide great feeds of web-based and aggregated print and internet coverage. To get a feel for the overall media landscape, it can be worthwhile to start an international program with aggregated coverage, and then fill in critical title gaps with traditional media monitoring for cost efficiencies.

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<sup>11</sup> FIBEP is the global trade association for traditional press clipping agencies, and a list of their members can be found here: [www.fibep.info](http://www.fibep.info).

- **Social media** – There are a several different approaches to social media monitoring. It's important to recognize that traditional and social media may require different metrics, and while it may be possible to relate them in an analysis, they should also be reported separately. Much depends on the number of citations your firm and its competitors might have. You'll want to research that before asking a firm for a bid.
- **Census** – Tools from providers such as Sysomos, Radian 6, Vocus or Visible Technologies can produce all the citations you need for each competitor from their enormous databases. If the number of citations is very large, an automated analysis system will be required to make some sense of the vast amount of material. You can use an automated dashboard yourself or have an analysis firm do it for you. The caution is that automated media analysis is less reliable in non-English languages than in English.
- **Sample** – A better approach is often to select the most important social media outlets using a similar Tier 1 and Tier 2 approach as described for traditional media, with that content analyzed by humans who are assisted by automated tools. Handled this way, some of the metrics used for traditional media can also be applied to social, such as share of voice, key message conveyance, category, spokespeople, etc. The divergence will come in social media-specific quantitative metrics – Tweets, retweets, followers, fans, reach, impact, etc.
- **Hybrid** – Often, the best approach is to subscribe to a system in-house for real-time automated analysis and translation to get a “big picture” of how your organization is doing in the languages that are available, and supplement that top-line reporting with a Tier 1 or Tier 2 list of special publications for human analysis. This can be the best of both worlds.
- **Client-supplied clips** – *In many large international organizations, communications* teams are situated in regions that may already subscribe to monitoring firms. It can be wise to tap those existing contracts for clips, forwarding them on to your global analysis provider. Thus, the local regions can continue to receive their wider array of clips than your central analysis program can afford to have analyzed. By not disturbing current monitoring relationships, and gleaning just the Tier 1 or Tier 2 clips you need for your analysis, you and your regions can enjoy a win/win outcome.

Having said this, there are definite challenges in repurposing content. For one thing, you'll need great cooperation from your regional offices or public relations firms to make sure coverage is sent to the analysis company on a regular schedule, and that it includes competitor coverage if that is a core component of your measurement. For another, clip formats will be different from different suppliers, and may cost extra to be converted by the analysis firm for their ingestion. With more and more monitoring agencies utilizing electronic delivery techniques, this is becoming less of an issue. It is wise to add some budget and timing for this more complex arrangement to be put in place.

- **Copyright and licensing** – Should you require the management and distribution of full clips among your global, regional and national stakeholders, you'll need to take international copyright and licensing into consideration. Make sure the firms you use have the experience and expertise to handle this on your behalf and ensure that you won't be caught out by violations of intellectual property rights.

Capturing news and social media content has traditionally been one of the most expensive elements of an international media analysis program. With the advent of electronic and online content aggregators, the old relationship between speed and cost has somewhat broken down. Digital feeds can now be made available virtually instantaneously.

This combination of speed and low(er) costs does not however guarantee high quality in relation to the number of content sources and the in-depth scraping of all available and relevant content. A high-quality approach may still require a more expensive service, which can scrape a broader range of media sources and guarantee such factors as de-duplication of stories and elimination of irrelevant stories (e.g. due to ambiguities in the search strings used).

#### 5.4 Step Four: What Type of Dashboard or Full Reports Do You Need?

In designing your program, consider how you want to see your data. Do you want to see each clip, even if clips are in multiple languages? Do you want clips in “real-time” or “near-time?” Do you want to use data to create charts and graphs yourself? Or do you prefer leaving everything to your analysis firm and only receive fully narrated reports with charts and graphs? Let's look at the various options below.

- **Narrative analysis reports** – In this model, you would outsource all the monitoring and analysis to a specialist measurement firm, which would deliver monthly, quarterly or annual reports, very often in PowerPoint format, with full analysis. A less expensive method is to forego receiving clips and look only at the results of the analysis. This works well if your company is highly complex and you need solid guidance on your firm's media performance and what might need to be changed. To get the best results from your measurement partner, you'll need to consider the geographic regions, product breakouts and frequency of reporting you will want. The downside of not seeing the clips on a daily basis is that you may miss opportunities or developing crises. Report International and CARMA International are two examples of analysis firms that provide their clients with bespoke and specifically tailored reports based on a granular analysis methodology – ranging from daily news alerts, to weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual trend reports. The frequency of reporting, as well as the balance of quantitative data versus qualitative insight and narrative, should always be client-driven.
- **Online dashboards** – In this model, you would receive all your clips on a real-time or near real-time basis, but you may have to run searches and reports yourself from the system. Your choices include:

- **Real-time** – Many providers today offer “real-time” clip delivery with automated, artificial intelligence analysis options. These systems are typically exciting to see and offer great overviews of how various companies are trending in the news. Chart and graph templates make it easy to pull these overviews together. The plus side is these dashboards tend to be inexpensive with no incremental costs for clip volume. The downside is the analysis may contain inaccuracies and thus require the user to pick-through both valid and invalid clips. For international use, this can be quite unsatisfactory since you’ll have to depend upon some kind of automated translation – which tends to have extremely low accuracy levels.
- **Near real-time** – These dashboards are not as common, but work quite well. They provide clips quickly, but not until a human analyst has had a chance to filter the clips for quality and relevance. For example, some clients and competitors get hundreds of thousands of clips. To keep the analysis affordable, only clips about certain topics or of a certain size or level of prominence may be included in the study. The advantage of this model is obvious: much greater accuracy, which saves client time and resources. The downside is it will be more expensive than fully automated systems. Good examples of near real-time systems are Dow Jones Insight, BurrellesLuce WorkFlow, and CARMA Online.
- **Combinations** – A great way to maximize timeliness and accuracy is to license a low-cost real-time tool for daily searches and big-picture overviews, and a near real-time platform or narrative report for in-depth analysis on a subset of media titles. Be wary, though, of those that claim one system fits all needs! Snazzy bells and whistles don’t necessarily deliver quality at the level required by the C-suite.

In terms of our “Fast, Good, Cheap” Project Management Triangle, there are plenty of “fast and cheap” dashboards on the market, but you will be flooded with irrelevant clips, inaccurate automated metrics and little usable insight. There are good analysis companies that will provide high-quality, insightful results, but with less speed and higher cost. What is the right balance for your needs?

## 5.5 Step Five – What Type of Analysis Do You Need?

We touched on this above in the types of analysis that are available through dashboards and narrative reports, but let’s explore how to determine your needs in more detail.

- **Types of Analysis** – There are basically two types of analysis: artificial intelligence and human.
  - **Artificial intelligence** - Natural-language processing has become very popular throughout the communications industry because it is (relatively) instantaneous, (pretty) cheap, and gradually becoming a bit more reliable. It is still best used for categorizing clips, identifying topics and spokespeople, and getting some idea of trending on large data sets. Where sentiment is concerned, at this time of writing, the best of these tools

only offer about 70 percent accuracy (despite more inflated claims that you may see), and far less in non-English material.

- **Human analysis** - Human analysis likely offers higher quality results than automated content analysis for a variety of reasons. In particular, only humans can detect humor, nuance, sarcasm, and irony in language, and thereby accurately determine the overall tone of an article where there are multiple messages and varying sentiments. A reputable measurement firm will have undertaken inter-coder agreement (or reliability) tests to ensure that its methodology and the coding framework deliver results at or exceeding acceptable levels. Human analysis is likely to be more expensive than using an automated system, and, for situations with large quantities of material, human analysis may be unacceptably slow. Companies like PRIME Research, Cision, Echo Research, CARMA International, Report International, and Dow Jones have teams of experienced native language analysts all over the globe who are well trained and constantly monitored to ensure that the high quality standards required for this type of research are met at all times.
- **Combination** - The best option is to utilize both types of analysis: automated to sort the clips by easy-to-identify factors, and human analysis for insights into what the clip is actually saying. Pricing can be quite reasonable when this mix of services is used.
- **Language** – Probably the biggest challenge in any international program is how to handle language. Full translations by humans can easily overwhelm your budget, and cheaper automated translations are only somewhat helpful. Is there another way? Some companies utilize native-language human staff in each required country to analyze each clip within the original language, and then compose a brief English summary for uploading into the measurement platforms – along with the original foreign-language clip. In this way, the subtle messages hidden in each clip are identified and coded accurately for analysis without having to go through the costly full translation step.
- **Creating a media measurement scorecard** – Your communications and measurement plan will now be needed to direct the design of a media measurement scorecard that will become the central element in delivering the required metrics. The metrics chosen for your scorecard must directly relate to the goals and objectives written into your communications plan.

Many analysis providers have their own proprietary scorecards or indices that may meet your needs. Beware of vendors who will not share their 'secret sauce' with you in terms of the ingredients their metric includes. Some firms design custom scorecards with their clients, making everything transparent. The advantage of transparency is that the communications staff around the world can see why clips are scored in particular ways, and can use this as input to improve their work.

Should you plan to design a scorecard, here are some elements to consider -- bearing in mind that many measurement vendors will have their own approach to the scorecard (which

can sometimes be referred to as a coding frame). The example shown below is just one approach:

- **Basic formula** – The following formula has been used by a number of measurement providers including, for example, Ketchum.
  - **Part One:** Evaluate *qualitative* story aspects using a 1-100 scale, allocating more points for the most desired results. For example, a story with the client's name mentioned in the headline would receive more points than a story without a headline mention. A story that scored 100 would be close to perfect in the client's eyes.
  - **Part Two:** Now, score Tone using +100 for Positive, +50 for Neutral and -100 for negative. Some providers utilize a 3-point scale (positive, negative, neutral) for each mention or story element and then combine these scores for each article to arrive at a cumulative score.
  - (Multiply Part One and Part Two together) and divide by 100. The result is that clip's raw score or percentage of what a perfect clip would be.
- **Qualitative aspects** – The following are just some of the many qualitative aspects that can be evaluated in a clip:
  - Type of Source – Tier 1, Tier 2 or 'Other'
  - Type of Mention – Feature, Round-up, Mention
  - Prominence of Client in Story – Headline, First Paragraph, Bottom 80 percent
  - Client Ownership of Story – Exclusive, Dominant, Equal, Less than Others
  - Key Messages or Reputation Drivers
  - Quotes – Spokesperson, Third-Party
  - Photo presence (as mentioned above, this may be important in B2C environments)
- **Quantitative aspects** - The following are the most commonly-used metrics:
  - Clip or Social Media Citation Counts
  - Opportunities-to-See (Audience Impressions, Reach, Fans, Followers, Friends, Views, etc.)

While clip and citation counts are easy to come by, good audience estimates are not since many suppliers provide generalized numbers that can be highly inflated.

- For example, rather than providing Gross Impressions for TV audiences by Time of Day or Day of Week, some suppliers use 24-hour averages. There are major

differences between the audience counts for a national prime-time news program and a PSA running in the middle of the night.

- Another example is “Monthly Unique Visitors” for the Home Page of an online publication. A more accurate number would likely be “Daily Unique Visitors” for a sub-domain page since most articles are located deeper within the site and receive diminishing attention over the 30 days. Some automated dashboards attempt to reduce the inflation by providing proprietary “reach” numbers, which are a step in the right direction.

Social media audience numbers are even more challenging. How does one get an accurate sense of the size of an audience reached for a blog post, a Tweet, a video or comments? Is it fair to count all the followers of a person who retweets your Tweet, or all the Friends of those who post comments on your Facebook page? Is it fair to count all your RSS subscribers for a blog post when only a small percentage may even see it?

Look for the IPR and AMEC, along with other major industry associations, to come to an agreement soon on standards for all aspects of social media measurement.

- **Mixing them together to build an index** – You may now want to combine the qualitative and quantitative metrics for each clip into an “index” that can be used for all comparisons going forward. So, for example, building on the formula above, you can take your qualitative percentage and multiply it against your quantitative score to get a “Net” score. For example, Gross Audience Impressions multiplied by a qualitative percentage would result in a **“net impressions”** score. The theory is that *gross impressions* are really “opportunities to see” a story, but if the story is small, nondescript and on the back page, few people will actually see it. So, the smaller *net impressions* score qualitatively revises these estimated impressions according to how strong the story itself appears to be. This is a great index against which to measure your own progress over time, against objectives or against competitors.
- **Professional versus Do-it-Yourself scorecards and indices** – While we’ve shared enough here for you to create your own scorecard and index, we should add that a tremendous amount of judgment is needed to create these tools. For example, if you have major reputational drivers or over-arching corporate messages that should receive higher weights, these can be built into separate scorecard modules and greatly improve the specificity of your index. So do consider consulting with a professional analysis firm before taking on this complex task!

It is in this section that the tensions between cost, quality and speed are most clearly felt. So, for instance, while an automated reporting system might be relatively cheap, very often quality assurance needs to be done by the client, driving up resource use and internal costs. Higher quality of reporting may take a little longer to create and will almost certainly cost more than a straight automated solution, but should provide insight “out of the box”.

The greater the degree of insight and precision required in the reports (see the discussion of setting up a project in stage one of this process), generally the higher the quality at the expense of both cost and speed. Your ultimate needs are critical determinants of the best vendor choices as discussed below.

## 5.6 Step Six – Selecting a Monitoring and Analysis Provider

Many firms claim international capabilities, but here are some key questions to ask as you assess their skills:

- **International experience** – What types of experience have they had and for how long? Which countries have they worked in, and which clients have they served?
- **Knowledge about local markets** – The world is not homogenous. Which markets are they most familiar with from a cultural and business perspective?
- **How is language handled** – Do they insist upon manual or automated translations? Do they have native-language speakers in their offices or spread throughout the world? Are they able to capture nuance, humor and sarcasm?
- **Can they offer customized solutions** – Every international organization has different goals and needs. Is there a “one size fits all” mentality, or can the firm customize its measurement processes and/or dashboards to suit your needs?
- **In-country representation or management** – In how many countries does the firm have representatives? Can these people serve as remote client contacts, or are they simply clip-coders? How will the regional offices be handled for training, quality control and service?
- **Ability to draw content from multiple sources** – To get the best possible international coverage, you will need data feeds from multiple sources, such as a news aggregator, traditional clipping bureaus, broadcast monitors, and client-supplied sources. You need a provider who can ingest a variety of sources, not insist that only their monitoring solutions should suffice.
- **Ability to team with other providers** – The world is big, and no one company can monitor and measure everything, everywhere. Does your chosen provider have good relationships with others? They may need to collaborate on the project with other media analysis firms across the globe to get the best possible solution for you.
- **Transparency** – International analysis is enormously complex with many moving pieces. Is the provider honest about how long it might take to ramp-up and how it may need to evolve over time? Is the provider open about his/her strengths and weaknesses? A successful program is a journey, and you want to be sure to find a partner who’ll go the distance with you.
- **Consistent scoring of clips across multiple geographies** – Something to keep an eye on is the consistency of scoring across multiple geographies. Since international programs

typically involve a large number of clip-coders, you want to be sure that whatever firm you hire has a method of ensuring “inter-coder reliability.”<sup>12</sup> What this means is that special sessions between all coding teams are held on a regular basis during which each person scores the same clips. Scores are then compared for consistency and agreement. With this kind of process, coding reliability increases dramatically. It is not recommended to undertake an international program using a self-completion scorecard or tool, as ensuring consistency across diverse geographies requires specialist skill, experience and time.

- **Pricing** – in assessing firms, be sure to remember your trade-offs. Low prices deliver do-it-yourself solutions with automated analysis that will not be accurate enough for any kind of real evaluation or correlation to outcomes. More expensive firms will deliver on accuracy, but may require reduced media lists or fewer countries. What trade-offs can **you** make to get the best possible efficiencies?
- **24/7/365 support** – Look for a vendor that offers customer support at all times, across all time zones relevant to your team. This is especially critical for global corporations.
- **Account management and professional expertise** – Ensure your chosen partner has sufficient account management resources (at the right level) to deliver the levels of service you expect. It may be worth specifying some indicators of the level of client service (over and above quality assurance); you would want to see from the provider.

## 5.7 Step Seven: All Country/Regional Management Sell-In

After you have completed your plan, made trade-off choices and selected a monitoring and measurement provider, how can you make sure your program is a success? The answer is simple: present your plans to all key constituencies, listen to their feedback and work together to finalize any last-minute changes.

- **Management and stakeholders** – After your internal research, gap analysis, communications plan and vendor selection, make sure you let everyone involved know about your plans to roll-out your new measurement system. Make sure you have all the backing you need from any dominant coalition or other business critical decision makers.
- **Ramp-up time** – Allow up two to three months for ramp-up of the system for customization of dashboards, clip collection processes, development of your scorecard and training curriculum development with PowerPoint presentations and live interactive sessions. Spending appropriate time at this stage can minimize the need for later changes that can be expensive, not only in money but also in resource terms.
- **Training and sell-in** – Depending upon your corporate structure, you may have an easy task rolling-out the new system, or a very complex one. Whether or not regional communicators report to your department, or elsewhere, you want to make sure they are

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<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of measuring inter-coder agreement in media analysis, see Andrew Hayes and Klaus Krippendorff, Klaus, Answering the Call for a Standard Reliability Measure for Coding Data, *Communication Methods and Measures*, 1:1(2007): 77-8.

excited about the new solution. This may require you and your measurement provider traveling to distant teams to sell-in the new system and start training sessions.. Alternately, you might schedule a series of WebEx or GoToMeeting sessions. Many firms now use “on demand” training such as Brainshark, which provides PowerPoint presentations with voice-over to allow training on demand. Make sure everyone understands the basis for your scorecard and what they need to do to garner high-scoring media coverage in targeted media.

- **Iteration** – Perhaps most important, make sure your teams know they will have input into the measurement program, too. International measurement programs are an ongoing process; iteration and change will be needed to continually hone and perfect it. Consider selecting a small team to work with you and your provider as a task force to ensure the program’s success.

## 5.8 Step Eight: Evaluating Your Results

Whether you ended up choosing a dashboard solution, a narrative report solution, or a bit of each, the most important moment is evaluating your results and reporting them to management. If you happened to have chosen a real-time dashboard with automated, artificial intelligence analysis, you will be limited to the metrics provided within the platform. They ought to be sufficient to pull some charts and graphs on overall competitive share, trends and topics, and to summarize the results for your management. You might even consider shrinking several charts to a page and making your own narrative as concise as you can for short attention spans.

If you chose a near real-time dashboard or narrative report where human-generated scorecard-type metrics or indices have been used, you’ll have a wealth of information from which to glean insights for your communications.

This is the time to talk with your marketing or finance department to obtain organizational outcome data, so you can run correlations, utilize website analytics and e-commerce results, or submit all key metrics to a market mix model.

*For example, let’s say Adults 18-54 in Norway are polled every year for attitudes toward your company’s reputation drivers. Check your dashboard or narrative report to see how the Norwegian press is treating your firm in those specific areas. Then, run correlations between the two over time to see if a relationship may be present. If you get a correlation of .7 or above, you stand on solid ground suggesting your work in international media relations – which conveyed specific Organizational behaviors through the media – was related to Norwegian attitude change toward your organization.*

As mentioned earlier, correlations are pretty easy to do using a familiar tool like Excel; or, your measurement provider can do them for you. Bottom line – look for where your public relations outputs, outtakes and outcomes seem to be affecting organizational outcomes, and where they are not, and plan next year’s communications objectives accordingly. Your international media analysis program should give you a great advantage over your competition.

## 6. Conclusion

The completion of your program is a good time to evaluate how successfully it has tracked against the three key Project Management constraints – quality, speed and cost. Was your budget focused upon the most critical elements, or was it wasted on extraneous information? Let's review some of the choices you might have made in a few key areas:

<b>QUALITY</b>			
	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
Countries	All	50%	Top 10
Languages	All	10-12 major	English and one or two others
Dashboard	Analysis provider runs it for you and analyzes all clips	DIY automated system plus human-analyzed clips for key media only	DIY automated system only
Clips	Original clips and videos	Aggregated text and online for most; original print and videos for key media only	Only online coverage
Analysis	Every clip hand-analyzed for quantitative and qualitative elements, messages and insights. Periodic formal reports.	Hand-analysis of key media only with, or without, periodic formal reports.	Automated analysis only.
<b>SPEED</b>			
	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
Countries	Western countries only	Western, Asian and Latin American	Middle East, Africa, other third-world countries
Languages	Automated only	In-country analysis teams reading clips and writing English summaries	Human analysis of every clip
Dashboard	Real-time Automated	Near real-time Automated with human analysis of key media	Human analysis of every clip
Clips	Electronic clips only from all countries	Electronic from all countries with supplementation by in-country analysts who clip and upload to a portal	Original print and videos only from all countries
Analysis	Automated analysis only	Automated analysis of most clips, with key-media hand analyzed within 3-4 hours.	Every clip hand-analyzed for quantitative and qualitative elements,

<b>QUALITY</b>			
	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
			messages and insights. Periodic formal reports.
<b>COST</b>			
	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
Countries	All	50%	Top countries only
Languages	All	10-12 most popular only	English plus a few others
Dashboard	Fully customized and managed by analysis provider	Partly automated and partly serviced by an analysis provider	All automated
Clips	Original clips and videos for all coverage	A mix of aggregated and online text plus original clips from the most important sources	Only online.
Analysis	Every clip hand-analyzed for quantitative and qualitative elements, messages and insights. Periodic formal reports.	Automated analysis of most clips, with key-media hand analyzed within 3-4 hours.	Automated analysis only.

As you'll see, there is no "one size fits all" model. The trade-offs are very real, and sometimes rather painful. If you focus on your organizational goals, and the most critical elements to measure, you'll find the best-possible combination for your needs.

For more guidance on developing your measurement program, please see [www.instituteforpr.org](http://www.instituteforpr.org) for a wide variety of free white papers on the subject.