

# A changing world, a new corporate voice:

## Measurement should respond to a nuanced stakeholder environment

Companies and their leaders are speaking out in the name of social good, and it is more important than ever that what they say and do align. Discrepancies are increasingly criticised, particularly among a more engaged and triggered online audience. How companies respond to the issues of the day will inevitably have an impact on license to operate in the future.

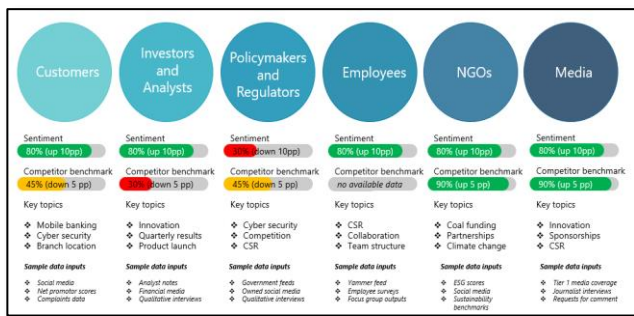
This desire for a clear, authentic, and relevant voice from corporates has put communications further in the spotlight, leading many corporate affairs teams to question whether they are saying *and* doing the right things in such unprecedented times.

Measurement is key to making sense of this new reality, enabling impactful communications that respond to changing dynamics.

**Stakeholders' changing needs:** Corporates have always juggled differing stakeholder priorities, but recent events have introduced a new set of relationships between corporates and their stakeholders: governments have kept entire industries afloat, investors are shifting the makeup of their portfolios, employees are demanding a corporate response to issues

of the day, and consumers are changing their spending habits in line with both continued 'social distancing' and social and environmental activism. A lot is happening, and corporates need to rethink how and where they engage across the board.

Good measurement responds to this nuanced stakeholder environment. Stakeholders want different things from a company, and when corporates communicate they need to be aware of these expectations and how well they're meeting them. Measurement that goes beyond detailing communications outputs to understanding outcomes and impact across stakeholders will help ensure communications are landing the right way with each group.



**New objectives for communications:** Corporates are being pushed into campaigning areas they may have previously avoided. And while it is necessary for

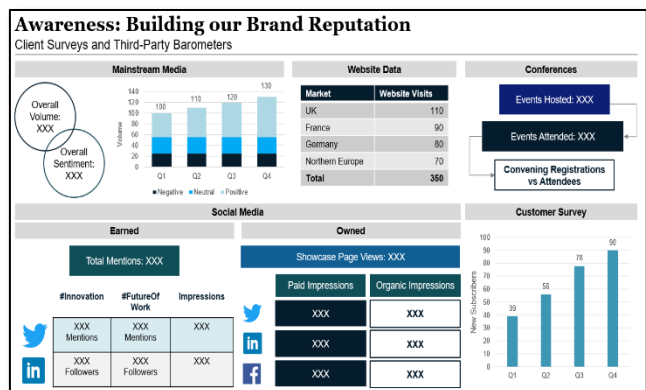
With new expectations and goals for corporate communications, and greater representation of corporate affairs on executive teams, it is challenging to know how to measure success. Just as company communications are moving away from traditional campaigning areas, so too does the way they should measure their success. It may be that success around a certain hairy issue equates to a lack of negative reaction, rather than an overtly positive one. It may be that driving brand advocacy has become more important than new customers. Just as company communications are moving away from traditional campaigning areas, so too does the way they should measure their success.

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these companies to engage as a member of broader society, this move, and subsequent stakeholder pressure, can leave teams with the difficult task of understanding how communications have landed.

As current events unfold and communicators are steering their companies through both a business and brand reputation challenge, companies are also appraising their communication mix – some are focusing more on engaging loyal customers and advocates and others are dialling up a focus on customer acquisition.

This is where holistically measuring campaign success is important. Holistic measurement might mean incorporating primary research to understand perceptions directly from stakeholders or considering data sources that go beyond traditional comms (marketing data, parliamentary notes) that will give us a sense of whether these new objectives have been met. This in turn helps teams demonstrate the value of their work, iterate, and improve outcomes.



*FTI's Digital and Insights team has extensive experience in guiding corporates across industries in best practice measurement methods, and we consult on how companies can put data and insights at the heart of their communications practices. Please contact us to discuss how we might support you.*

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