

Aseem

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SPEAKERS

Aseem (78%), Charu (22%)

7

Charu

0:06

Hi Aseem Good to have you on Mrigashira. Congratulations for the chairmanship of a Mac.

C

Charu0:18

Changing mindsets, helping us comms professionals do away with map vanity measures to Ganesha campaign success. Kudos to you and the team for paving the way. Tell us what a map the International Association for the measurement and evaluation of communication has been doing and what have been the biggest challenges.

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Aseem

0:43

Great. So actually, hammock is an international body. And you'll be surprised that it's not just the measurement firms who are our members, but it's also consulting firms, even management consulting firms. So we have management consulting firms, we have public relations, consultancy firms, and we all get together once every year, to not just celebrate the function of communication measurement, but also to think about how do we take the measurement space forward, we work on knowledge projects, we work on client education programs. And in all of this, our focus is always on ensuring that we are able to bring something new to our members so that they are able to go back and tell a better story, not just to the communicators, but to the business leaders also.

C

Charu

1:39

I think we've come a long way. I mean, till very recently, and few years, till a few years back, we always heard that PR impact is not directly quantifiable. And over the years, we've kind of developed different methods to measure the impact of public relations right? So what, according to you are the smartest ways of measuring the success of a PR campaign?

A

Aseem

2:04

Alright, so I'll break this question two parts. And I say this, because you start by saying what is the way of quantifying the impact of PR? A lot of people believe that measurement is something that is only done to see whether we have done well in the past. And I first want to share some thoughts to suggest that that's a myth. And for that, I'm going to take, take a very simple example that if you go to a doctor, so if you go to a doctor, and if you were to complain to the doctor that you know, I have pain in my chest or my ribs, then the doctor will say, okay wait I'm first going to do an x ray, we'll use the results of the X ray to figure out what is it that we need to do. So for diagnosis, you do some measurement. And then what

happens is, after the doctor suggests some medicines to you, you take those medicines, and after a month, you come back, and the doctor says, Again, we'll do a test, we'll do an x ray. And he does this X ray. And then he compares the first X ray with the last one. And then he says, Oh now I can see that we made progress or whether we have made progress or not. So now if you see, there are two steps to this process. One, we have used measurement for diagnosis. And two, we have used measurement to check whether we have made progress or not. Now, typically, people tend to believe that measurement is only required for the later part. But measurements role and diagnosis is far bigger. A real life example of this and communication is that when we add impact research and management work with clients, especially public relations firms, who are our partners, we support them for pitches. So when they are pitching to a new company, we support them with measurement, because that diagnosis is what they are able to use to tell the prospect that this is what we believe you should be working towards. And this is how we can help you. So that's the first part of my answer. The second part is how do you measure? So the good thing is that Amick has done a lot of work in this area. So what we've done is we've done two things. One, we've created a planning guide, it's called integrated evaluation framework. It's again available for free. It's a free resource for all communicators available on AMEC website, which is on the site, if you go and start using this tool, it will guide you through the entire process of how you should prepare and plan for a good campaign with good measurement. That's one the second thing is you need those metrics that now if this is what I'm trying to do, what do I measure? And to do that, what we've done is we've also created a number of suggested metrics. So there are metrics which are advised. You can look at those metrics and see what suits your program. And this journey started with a framework that we call valid metrics framework. And again, this is a result of a Knowledge Initiative, atomic, again, available for free to all our all everybody in the society. And you can you can use it to identify those metrics as well. But there's another aspect that you touched in your question, which is about quantifying. And usually, when business leaders tend to quantify stuff, they tend to quantify stuff in dollars rupees. And this is where we've been running a campaign where we've talked about how a practice, which is called AV advertising value, quillions is a bad practice. It's not good, it doesn't help you. And we've been running this campaign for a number of years. And we are very happy to report in the latest survey that we did globally, the acceptance of ABS has gone down drastically. So a lot of people come back to us and say, if not abs, then what? And that's where the integrated evaluation framework comes in, because it gives you a lot of options. And it tells you how, if you are clear about what your campaign objectives are, the framework will guide you on how to best connect the objectives to the results that you've achieved using the campaign.

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Charu

6:32

No, I completely agree with you. But you know, what happens normally is and that's where we tend to go wrong. And I'm glad you picked up this point about diagnosis, because typically what happens is a client says, I want coverage with no clarity on what for and what is the problem we are trying to solve. And that's still a problem, because the lot of clients is the far more evolved clients what we're learning this over the years, I see. I mean, we've been actually able to move the needle to some extent, but I think we still have a long way to go. I mean, still international brands do look at TV as the best way to measure which to my mind and to your mind. It's not the right matrix. But unfortunately, hopefully we'll get there. But I think this is a very good point you've made that you have a tool on a mag dot o RG which can help people prepare comms professionals prepare and plan for a campaign. And I think people should use that tool to learn more and understand more and take baby steps towards

better measurements. So I'm going to ask you about online media. So there's a lot of discussion about PR distribution along the lines of how can we track links in coverage to a company's website to directly attribute your activity to sales? Now, isn't this more like repeating the AV model where all content will need to include a backlink this SEO ready? Are we somewhere being led by marketing on how PR should be measured?

A

Aseem

8:06

Very good question. At the recently, recently, in June, we had a summit in Vienna, which is an annual summit that we have every year, again, members from all over the world get together here. The question that you asked about just now is about concept that we call performance marketing, in the online space. And performance marketing used to be a low hanging fruit all these years, it's like, you know, not many people were doing advertising or not, not many people were using performance marketing and online space to build their businesses and they were getting fantastic results. In the developed world, what has happened over the years is that the cost that you have to pay to attract people in this performance marketing model has gone really, really high. So earlier, you were able to bid for a keyword at a certain price. And that price is now gone 50x So a lot of companies which were gung on performance marketing, soon realize that, yes, we need to continue performance marketing, but we've reached a plateau wherein we cannot pay more to get what we were able to get earlier. So what they realize now is that now we need to go back into brand building. And this is something that is not happening in the developing world. In developing world, we still are getting a good return on performance marketing, so people are still go about it. But I can tell you the way we've seen this in Europe, we've seen this in North America, this trend is going to come to India as well wherein the cost or the money that you need to pay to bid for these keywords or in the online space is going to be so high that you will reach that plateau again and come back to building the brands. And what better way to build the brand than to do PR?

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Charu

10:07

Yeah, no, I think you made a very good point here. And I think we can already see traces of what you said happening here impact or outcomes of our communications is a complex thing to track, right. But with PR and comms professionals working towards ESG, communications, opening and behaviour, change communications, do the need to look at new tools or assets for measurement.

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Aseem

11:05

Okay, so you used two terms, tools, and frameworks. Now, these are two very different things in in our world. The reason I say this is because if you come to our AMEC website, we have developed both frameworks and tools. Now frameworks tend to be available and applicable for a longer duration, like integrated evaluation framework is a framework, it's not a tool, we have another tool, which is called measurement maturity mapper. Now, in all of this, I must tell you, the most difficult part of any measurement campaign is articulating the communication objectives that that a PR team or a PR professional has. Now, when we start working with clients, we tell them, the first thing you should do is talk to the business leader. Understand what helped you the need, for the objective that they have set? Right? Then you please convert that objective that you've been asked to achieve into your own communication objective? I can promise you that when we survey our clients. And you must note that

different clients are at different levels of maturity when it comes to measurement or communication. So you also talk about, you know, clients just want coverage. You know, I must say that's not bad. It's actually not bad, because all depends on how mature the client is on that communication measurement curve. So at AmEx, we developed a tool, which is called measurement maturity mapper M three tool. what this tool does is it will ask you some questions, you just have to give answers to these questions. And once you've given answers to these questions, it will tell you how mature is your measurement program? And it'll tell you how does it compare with the other members that you have in the industry. Now, for a team or a person who's working on a campaign, which is not mature is in the early stages of mature maturity, they're probably counting the very basic things may be fine because the program is also growing right now. But for established companies, which have huge PR budgets, which have been in the public relations domain for a long time, from them, it is expected that their maturity in terms of measurement program is going to be good. Therefore, what I suggest is that depending on how mature your campaign is, you can actually identify the right metrics that you need to choose for those programs. If you look at models that we have like the integrative valuation framework, this model can be applied to a brand building campaign as well as an ESG campaign. In this framework, depending on what your objective if you if you're working on a brand campaign brand building campaign will have different objectives and therefore other steps in this entire framework are going to be different. And if you're working on an ESG campaign, while the buckets will remain the same, the elements that you enter into these are going to be different. And you talked about outcomes, outtakes outputs, this framework guides you on how to measure each of these elements.

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Charu

15:33

Yeah. So tell us how do you see media tracking and analytics changing with many media outlets now choosing to go behind the wall?

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Aseem

15:45

Yes, so that's a that's a big question. So what happens is, when a lot of these content items are behind the paywall, then getting access to these content items is difficult. But in a way, we are able to solve it because the companies that we work with, they have access to these paywall items, and then we use a combination wherein we do some work for them and for the content that we don't have access to they access that content and analyse that content and their end. And then we combine the results to present the Combined view to the business leaders.

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Charu

16:28

So just last question, some quick tips on how today's young comms professionals should develop their measurement skills to succeed in PR.

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Aseem

16:39

So when I go to colleges and talk to PR professionals, at times I've heard, people tend to say, though, they, they say this in a very in a joking manner. But they say, We are creative people, we can't work with data. And I must share with you that this is a fallacy. Irrespective of the profession that you want to be in going forward, you will have to play with data. And data forms an integral part of any profession going forward. So now, we don't expect the PR

professionals to be experts in artificial intelligence. We don't expect them to know what are the machine learning algorithms available out there. But they should be knowledgeable enough to ask the right questions, they should know how to utilize that data to solve the problems that they have. They should know very basic use of at least tools like MS Excel. Because there will be times when you will have to clean up some data, you can actually do it on your own using tools like MS Excel. And then for Advanced Analytics, you can reach out to an expert. But when you do that, you should be able to ask the right questions, you should be able to understand what the person is giving to you as a solution. And this much expertise and knowledge even PR professionals need to have. So please don't be scared of data. You should try and learn more about how to utilize the data and the work that you do.

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Charu

18:28

I think data combined with creativity is the perfect building block for a superb campaign and along with a great measurement, you know, led to it. So thank you so much for joining us. Mrigashira. Pleasure having you.