



# Forget AVE. Start measuring PR for real.

MODELS, METHODS, PUBLICATIONS,  
AND TOOLS YOU SHOULD KNOW.



**“Armed with powerful information and technology in the age of big data, that value (of PR) can go even higher.”**

**Jim Weiss,**  
CEO, W2O Group, PRWeek.

Content Partners:



**amec**



Hey there,

Tell me: how does your organization feel about AVE? This is how Tom Fishburne, one of my favorite industry cartoonists, approached the problem of measuring the effectiveness of the wider communications in the digital era:



© marketoonist.com

The accusation that PR is not able to deliver measurable results was refuted a long time ago. Today, it's actually not an argument. The thing is that many of us still fail to understand what and how should be measured. Or, we simply choose to take the easy way out because of our client, who may feel attached to metrics such as AVE and require us to report such indicators, while PR pros don't know how/don't have the time/don't want to educate them to change the status quo. It's a vicious circle.

MARK THE CORRECT ANSWER

In his comment to the cartoon, Tom also emphasized that "Marketers can't always take metrics at face value. We have to get savvier and more sophisticated at questioning the numbers we use. We have to beware of faux metrics and fuzzy math."

CIPR (The Chartered Institute of Public Relations) has recently decided to give its members a year to [forget about AVE](#). AMEC, on the other hand, has launched a major global education initiative to help eradicate the declining demand for the much-derided AVE (Advertising Value Equivalent) metric. [As stated on its website](#), "AVEs will only disappear completely when all parts of the industry work together and speak with a consistent voice. Educators, academics, in-house practitioners, PR agencies, communications trade associations and the monitoring and analytics vendors all need to work together with unified messaging to make sure that this latent demand dwindles and dies."

These initiatives have made the subject of measuring PR effectiveness come back with double the impact. And this is a good thing.

We decided to join the debate and add some models, methods, and publications, as well as a list of tools to help You in measuring the effectiveness of Your Public Relations efforts.

We invited the PRCA, ICCO & AMEC to work with us as Content Partners of this issue. The PRCA is also providing us with media support.

Enjoy the read!



**Edyta Kowal,**  
Content Marketing Manager & Editor,  
Prowly



AVE

- Why are  
we against  
it?





# 22 Reasons to Say NO to AVEs:



**Richard Bagnall** is Chairman of [AMEC](#) and a senior global communications effectiveness consultant. His career spans both PR practice (in house and agency) and measurement and evaluation. He has over 20 years' experience running some of the world's leading communications measurement teams, including PRIME Research UK, Gorkana and Metrica.

As part of AMEC's 'Say No to AVEs' campaign, we present here the definitive list of 22 reasons why they shouldn't be used.

↑ [CHECK OUT THE FULL PDF](#)




## 1. The worldwide PR industry denounces AVEs as flawed

Global communication trade associations AMEC, IPR (Institute for Public Relations), PRSA (Public Relations Society of America), PRCA (Public Relations and Communications Association), the Global Alliance and ICCO (International Communications Consultancy Organisation) all agree that AVEs are not a valid metric. Here are some quotes on the subject: "Most reputable researchers view such arbitrary 'weighting' schemes aimed at enhancing the alleged value of editorial coverage as unethical, dishonest and not at all supported by the research literature." – The IPR. "Anyone attempting to use them (AVEs) today is fooling themselves, fooling their clients, and failing the profession. AVEs have no place in modern, professional, PR practice." – CIPR. "AVEs measure absolutely nothing other than the vanity of those reporting them." – PRCA. "By working with partners around the world AMEC is committed to a long-term campaign to eradicate this meaningless metric and educate professionals on better and available alternatives." – AMEC.



## 2. The Barcelona Principles

The global communications measurement industry came together in Barcelona in 2010 to establish seven broad principles to achieve best-practice for



meaningful measurement and evaluation programmes. The Barcelona Principles have achieved worldwide recognition within the PR and communications profession with perhaps the most famous principle being Number 5 which states plainly and simply:

“AVEs are not the value of communication”

### ✓ **3. Advertising and PR are different things**

And should, therefore, be treated as such. Advertising is an 'interruptive' marketing discipline. PR is an 'engaging' one. Audiences seek out editorial. Advertising, on the other hand, must interrupt us and grab our attention. Editorial has more credibility than advertising, coming as it does from a third-party viewpoint. Advertising messaging can be specific and controlled, editorial cannot. Advertising and PR may often complement each other, but they work in different ways, are designed for different reasons and should be measured in distinct ways.

### ✓ **4. You can't advertise everywhere**

Advertising is simply not available in all the places that it's possible to secure earned media coverage. For example, the BBC accepts no advertising in the U.K. – either broadcast or online. Many blogs don't carry advertising either. Should a piece of coverage be secured in media that does not carry advertising, how on earth can a meaningful 'advertising value' be attributed against it?

### ✓ **5. Don't confuse 'cost' with 'value'**

Advertising Value Equivalents are misnamed and confuse 'cost' with 'value'. Part of the appeal of AVEs is that they are mistakenly used as a metric to show the value of a PR campaign. We all know however that cost and value are very different things. Cost and value often bear no relation to each other. Have you ever placed an advert somewhere which cost money but received no response? Where was the value in that?





## ✓ 6. AVEs don't consider other important advertising criteria that affect its price

Adverts carry a premium price for being in premium locations. These might include right hands pages, inside covers, front pages, back pages, etc. What about the difference between black and white? How many AVE systems identify these criteria and value them accordingly? And even if they do, at what price (see below)?

## ✓ 7. What price anyway?

Very few adverts are bought at rate card prices. Think of the last advert you bought. Did you pay full rate card price? Media buying agencies certainly do not. Discounts and agency commissions are factored in at different rates for different agencies and clients. In the same way that when you take a flight, it's highly unlikely that you paid the same price for your seat as your neighbour, it's very unlikely that two similar ads in the same media cost the same. Yet despite this, AVEs tend to be calculated based upon published rate card prices, instantly over inflating the figures.

## ✓ 8. How much of each piece of content should be included to measure the AVE?

When attributing an AVE, how much of an article, post or broadcast clip should be included? Just the specific part with a brand name mention? The paragraph around it? The whole page? Or the whole article or programme? These challenges exist with broadcast as much as they do with the written word. An already spurious and subjective number gets ever more subjective when 'size' is considered.

## ✓ 9. AVEs take no account of the quality of the coverage

In the same manner that AVEs don't relate to the size of the piece, they don't take account of the quality of the coverage either. AVEs are purely a quantitative metric. They provide no insight into the quality of content, the messages, inferences, and issues that matter. AVEs simply ignore this; all coverage is counted equally, whatever the calibre of its content.





## ✓ 10. Adverts are always positive. Earned media coverage may not be

Ads can't be negative. Earned media can. How is this accounted for in AVEs? Some systems apply a negative value to the AVE, some do not. Both approaches are flawed. Reputation takes years to build but can be destroyed overnight through one event. Negative coverage can have rapid and disastrous consequences for a brand, way out of proportion to the effect that positive coverage generates.

## ✓ 11. AVEs take no account of target audiences

AVEs take no account of target audiences. Instead, they purely reward mass media outlets as these are the ones that will have the higher advertising rates. If you are trying to reach a niche target audience through low readership publications, your AVE is going to be very small, even if you have run a highly successful campaign. As a result...

## ✓ 12. Measuring AVE drives the wrong activity

We all know that "you become what you measure". According to the Harvard Business Review: "Human beings adjust behaviour based on the metrics they're held against. Anything you measure will impel a person to optimize his score on that metric. What you measure is what you'll get. Period." When measuring communication with AVEs, literally every piece of content counts, no matter how inappropriately placed or irrelevant the media in which it appears. Use of AVE as a metric encourages behaviours that won't benefit your organization, such as the 'carpet-bombing' or 'spray and pray' of press releases in the hope that large volumes of coverage will result, irrespective of where. It makes it tempting to use a scatter-gun approach to PR rather than a targeted, well-planned and efficient strategy.







### ✓ 13. AVEs are a vanity metric

Most communication campaigns will in all likelihood generate a high AVE, certainly a 'financial' number that is in excess of the cost/budget of the campaign itself. This large number, however, is nothing more than a vanity metric which sounds good but is in itself meaningless.

### ✓ 14. Advertising is not measured in 'PR value equivalents'

So, why should PR and communications professionals demean themselves by measuring in 'advertising value equivalents?'

### ✓ 15. Multipliers and 'PR Values'

Some claim that a multiplier should be applied to AVEs to 'weigh them up' further than a straight advertising value. This is done allegedly to factor in the additional impact of third-party endorsement provided by the journalist or influencer. However, there is no credible, peer-reviewed research that proves that any multiplier (or divider for that matter) should be used, or even whether one is relevant and appropriate at all. Where multipliers have been used, different organisations have used different multipliers, thus further confusing the market. A 'weighted' AVE claiming to represent 'PR value' is nonsense.


### ✓ 16. There is no agreed methodology to measure AVE

AVEs are not measured in a standard way. Each provider will have their own methodology and are likely to be using different advertising rates too. As well as not being meaningful, the metric is simply not transferable between suppliers either.

### ✓ 17. Good measurement and evaluation should inform the planning process

AVEs provide no meaningful information that can be used to refine a communication plan. They are literally a 'backward-looking' number to be used in a vain attempt at justifying performance. Best practice evaluation





should always produce insights and intelligence that can inform strategy.  
AVEs have no strategic value at all.

**“Human beings adjust behaviour based on the metrics they’re held against. Anything you measure will impel a person to optimize his score on that metric. What you measure is what you’ll get. Period.”**

✓ **18. AVEs don't work in digital and social media**

Advertising works in a different way online from how it does in the printed press. It is based on paid for exposures rather than guaranteed runs in publications. Accordingly, attributing any kind of meaningful AVE to an online piece of mainstream content is impossible. Additionally, it's not possible to assign a value to individual tweets, blog content, Facebook and LinkedIn updates, etc. AVEs are even more flawed on social media than they are in mainstream media!

✓ **19. AVEs are just an output metric**

AVEs are measured using 'content analysis' and therefore are an 'output' metric only. Best practice in communications measurement agrees that effective evaluation moves beyond outputs alone and should also include outtakes, outcomes and business impact too. (See AMEC's [Integrated Evaluation Framework](#) micro-site for more information on this.) AVEs take no account of these important parts of the evaluation process.

✓ **20. AVEs don't reflect objectives**

Good PR campaigns will support an organisation's objectives and will be planned against pre-defined communications objectives as well. AVEs



take no account of the success of delivery against objectives as part of their methodology.

## ✓ 21. PR is not just media relations

PR has always been about far more than just gaining editorial coverage and media relations. AVEs, at their best, attempt only to measure the result of your media relations activities. How can they be the true value of your PR efforts?

The changes of the last ten or so years have meant that this is an even more important point. Communicators today are expected to embrace all aspects of the PESO model – Paid, Earned, Shared and Owned. To measure effectiveness meaningfully, AVEs would need to be appropriate and relevant across each of these steps. But they're not. When, for example, a communications professional is incorporating paid media into their campaign, how can it make any sense to then measure 'Paid' with an AVE? And how many of us accept other organisations advertising on our own 'Owned' media too?!

## ✓ 22. The index itself is in decline

Finally, who on Earth would want to assign a metric of success against an index that is in steep decline? Advertising rates are linked to the readership of the publication and the response rates that they generate. As the media choice proliferates for consumers, audiences fragment and readerships across the board continue their decline, advertising rates are declining as well. Think about the implications of this. Imagine an identical campaign generating the same volume of content in the same media for two consecutive years. The AVE reported in the second year would be less than in the first year even though the output was exactly the same! Who would possibly want to report on their success using a methodology that penalised them the longer they used it?!

**\*This article originally appeared on [AMEC's website](#) and is printed here with permission.**



# #saynotoaves



**Francis Ingham**

MPRCA, Director General, [PRCA](#)  
Chief Executive, [ICCO](#)

AVEs measure nothing. They are an invalid and distortive measurement technique.

The PRCA and ICCO are clear that AVEs have no place in modern PR and communications practice, and our work with AMEC is aimed at eliminating their use.

Crucially, however, this has to be done by educating the industry, rather than by punishing those who still use AVEs. In many cases, agencies that use AVEs do so because clients demand them – that's where the majority of our work must be focused.



**Jason MacKenzie**

FCIPR Found.Chart.PR,  
CIPR President

It's time to make a clear and unequivocal statement that AVEs are unprofessional and this is something we intend to communicate to all other Chartered bodies. We believe that other professions represented around the boardroom table will welcome the guidance and grasp that public relations has a more profound impact on business objectives than an artificial measure placed on the value of coverage.



This goes beyond banning AVEs from awards. Our members know that AVEs are a fantasy metric so it's time to put an end to their use for good. We welcome AMEC's commitment to their eradication and look forward to banning their use in public relations. /source: newsroom.cipr.co.uk/



**Kevin Taylor**

FCIPR, Chair of the Professional Practices Committee

AVEs as a measure were nothing but fanciful even before the rise of online publishing. Anyone attempting to use them today is fooling themselves, fooling their clients, and failing the profession. AVEs have no place in modern, professional, PR practice. /source: newsroom.cipr.co.uk/



**Amy Grimshaw**

Head of PR & Communications at [foundersfactory.co](https://foundersfactory.co)

Micky Mouse measurement metrics like AVE and OTS (opportunity to see) have long been what's wrong with the PR industry; a lack of innovation which ultimately makes it seem like clients are being taken for a ride. Attribution will forever be the curse of the top of funnel activity like PR, but linking to business objectives is a good start.



**Aly Saxe**

CEO & Founder at [irispr.com](https://irispr.com)

PR and marketing organizations should continue to take a hard stance on AVEs. It's going to take a massive effort by the entire industry – practitioners, professional orgs, and education – to root this BS metric out of PR once and for all.





**Steve Falla,**  
FCIPR Chart.PR, Managing Director,  
Orchard PR

## **The assessment of CIPR's initiative**

It's welcome and long overdue. At Orchard, we wholeheartedly support it as we abandoned AVEs a very long time ago. The promise of resources to support best practice measurement methods and the transition period of one year make sense because it won't leave organizations and public relations practitioners high and dry.

There are still some clients and board directors who instinctively look towards AVEs as, on the face of it, they are easy to understand. It is helpful that the CIPR is taking this stance, as now when we are talking to new clients, contacts, and prospects, it strengthens our case and endorses our commitment to upholding best practice.

## **AVEs and their actual value in measuring the effectiveness of public relations efforts**

AVEs simply don't measure effectiveness at all, as there's no qualitative element to them. PR, more than other marketing disciplines, is about effectiveness, not just reach. We would rather reach 100 people and influence their behavior than 100 million and have no impact at all. What is the PR objective? Yes, outputs should be considered, but not in terms of what they would have cost an advertiser. More insightful ways of looking at outputs would be to demonstrate real value: Is the coverage in the right medium? Does it contain the key messages? Is the right person quoted? What is the overall sentiment of the piece? All of these can give you a sense that your communications should be working.

**Which method for evaluating the effects of PR efforts is, in your opinion, the most reliable and efficient, and what the final assessment of these measures should be based on?**

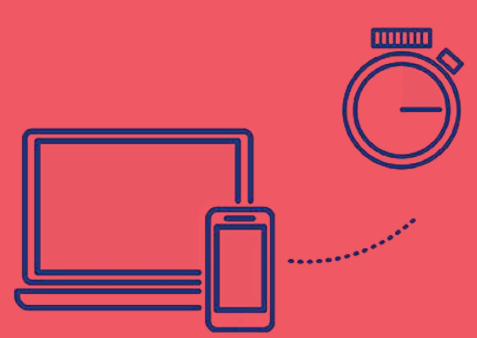


There’s unlikely to be one catch-all method, but some approaches might include surveys, market research, interviews with stakeholders to benchmark sentiment and behavior and then repeating those to determine the impact of the campaign. This can demonstrate what change has been effected by the activity. With digital coverage, there are countless analytical tools that can be employed, such as Google Trends and Twitter Analytics that can give insights into public behavior, and by extension, changes in that behavior brought about by communications campaigns.

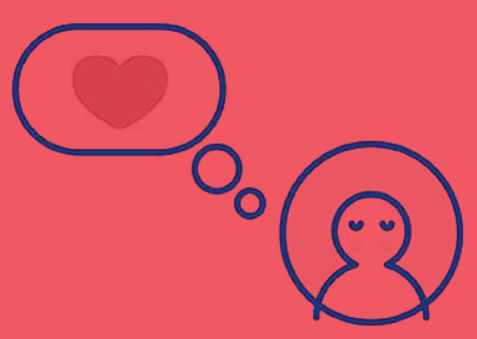
**How is the effectiveness of content and influencer marketing efforts currently measured in public relations?**

We need to work on making media coverage evaluation closer to the measurables that can be applied to social media activity – the number of impressions, how many visitors looked at the coverage, for how long, did they indicate that they liked the content, how deep was the engagement, did people click through and comment? Then those to whom we report will have a clearer picture of whether their message is getting through.

↑  
**How are you  
measuring PR?**



**Newsroom**  
in 15 mins, no IT support required!



**CRM**  
upload your media lists and work in teams



**Audience Pitch**  
release your news and track results

**TRY it for FREE**





**Rafał Sałak,**  
Head of Communication  
at [Prowly.com](https://prowly.com)

The popularity of AVE stems from our mistaken belief about Public Relations.

PR activities are frequently considered in complete isolation from the fundamental objectives of firms or organizations for which they're being carried out. Particularly in the case of the former, PR strategies should, as a general rule, produce results and deliver increased profits (or help avoid losses). Yet, the attitude persists that PR cannot be measured and that there's no way of demonstrating that communication has a direct influence on business.

While the world has gone forward and the wider marketing adapted various efficiency metrics, PR (especially in our market) continues to reach for AVE to demonstrate any activity in Excel tables.

Meanwhile, today's tools offer many opportunities for measuring the effectiveness of PR, particularly in the case of online campaigns. Stephen Waddington (Chief Engagement Officer, Ketchum) listed thirty metrics that should have replaced AVE long time ago. Among these, we may find, for instance, conversion or number of downloads, purchasing activity (mostly in e-commerce), dwell time or activation of rebate coupons. Most of these metrics may be used both in business and non-profit institutions or organizations.

We should define the metrics based on which we want to measure the effects of campaigns and their influence on our business goals already at the stage of developing our strategy. If we are not able to do it, even the best campaign, from the company's perspective, may turn out to be a complete waste of budget. Regardless of how much we have been able to save achieving these results without buying any ads.

Check out our  
set of tools on  
the last page of  
this e-book




Model  
approach  
– I measure,  
therefore  
I know



Let's be honest. The subject of measuring PR is not something that just came up in 2017. Tom Watson, who has been exploring this problem for years and committed many analyses and articles in this regard [[most of which you'll find here](#)], explains that this discussion started much earlier, that is, in the 70s.

**In the meantime, a few  
models have been  
invented that can be  
helpful in many ways.**





# AMEC's Integrated Evaluation Framework

**Richard Bagnall,**  
**Global Strategy Consultant, Prime Research**

Many of the evaluation methods and techniques that the industry took for granted for so many years are no longer enough. As organisational silos are coming down, PR professionals are being asked to work across all forms of media and use, and measure, these new channels, and tactics. Work must encompass paid, earned, shared and owned media. To be effective at our jobs, we now need to plan and measure our communications in a truly integrated manner.

To prove the value of communication in an age of accountability it is vital to move beyond measuring just the content (or 'media') analysis that largely sufficed for the previous 20 years. Now communication professionals must show the effect that their work has had on the objectives of their respective organisations.

AMEC's new Integrated Evaluation framework shows how to do this.

The interactive element of the integrated evaluation framework will guide you through the process from aligning objectives to establishing a plan, setting targets and then measuring the outputs, outtakes, outcomes and impact of your work.

**FIND OUT MORE IN  
RESOURCE CENTRE  
FOR AMEC'S NEW  
INTEGRATED  
EVALUATION  
FRAMEWORK**





At each step of the process, it provides additional information and suggests potential approaches and metrics that might be appropriate.

- It cannot be an exhaustive list and it doesn't provide the numbers for you.
- You will still need to source the data yourself to input into the tool.
- What it does do is provide a consistent approach to allow you to plan and measure in an appropriate manner.

The integrated evaluation framework replaces both AMEC's previous Valid Metrics and Social Media Measurement Frameworks. The industry now has one integrated approach to the measurement challenges of today.

This new framework shows how to 'operationalise' the Barcelona Principles and demonstrates how to turn Principles into action, and to finally prove the value of our work.

## Introduction to The New Interactive Tool

Giles Peddy,

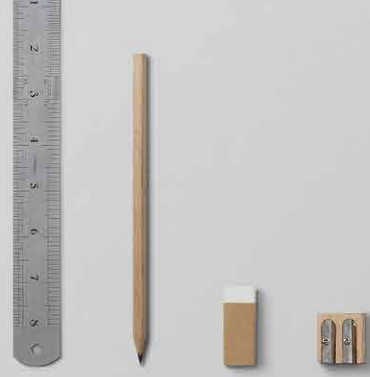
Group Managing Director UK, LEWIS

We wanted to make something that took users on a clear measurement journey from planning and setting SMART objectives, defining success, setting targets through to implementation, measurement, and evaluation. Importantly, we wanted to find a mechanism that would help credible and meaningful measurement pervade the industry.

### The New Interactive Tool

We have built it in a tile format for a clear step-by-step process. Each tile is numbered so you know where you are in the process. The journey takes you from organisation objectives and communication objectives all the way to business impact.

When you click on each tile, you get the space to fill in your work. To guide you, within each tile there is an (i) icon, which, when clicked on,



shows a pop-up with additional information and an explanation of the section. Furthermore, inside the pop-up is a link to a measurement taxonomy – giving you even more information on what types of measures to include. Below, we have provided some basic information on how to use it and also show how Lewis PR is using the framework to put our clients at the heart of the process.

Source: <https://amecorg.com/amecframework/>



Lewis gets great benefit by putting each of its clients squarely at the heart of the Integrated Evaluation Framework. We urge you to do the same.

Image use courtesy of Lewis.



### OBJECTIVES

Like all good measurement, it should start with clear organizational objectives. These can come in many different forms, whether they be awareness, advocacy, adoption or demand related. Following on from organizational objectives, is communication objectives. These should reflect and mirror the organizational objectives. Remember, the difference between an objective and a goal is that an objective has a measure of impact (e.g. 20% increase in brand awareness), compared to a goal that is an aspiration (e.g. increase brand awareness).

### INPUTS

This section covers two important areas. Firstly, to define the target audiences of the campaign. Second, is the strategic plan and other inputs such as describing some of the situation analysis, resources required and budgets.

### ACTIVITIES

This section is outlining what activities were carried out, any testing or research, content production etc. Importantly, the tool recognizes the importance of paid, earned, shared and owned (PESO) and gives users the ability to tag accordingly.

### OUT-TAKES

In outtakes, this refers to the response and reactions of your target audiences to the activity. How attentive were they to the content, what was their recall, how well understood is the topic, did the audience engage with the content or did the audience subscribe to more information.

### OUTCOMES

In outcomes, this measures the effect of the communications on the target audience. Have the target audience increased understanding, has it changed their attitude to the topic, has it increased trust and/or preference, has it had an impact on the intention to do something (e.g. trial, subscribe, register) or increased online advocacy.

### OUTPUTS

In outputs, this covers the core measures across PESO. So for example what was the reach of the paid advertising, how many visitors to the website, how many posts, tweets or retweets, how many people attended the event, and how many potential readers of the media coverage. This is quantitative and qualitative measures of outputs.

### IMPACT

This final section is where impact on the organizational objectives is evaluated. So here the tool is looking to cover reputation improvement, relationships improved or established, increase in sales or donations, change in policy, or improved social change. This is a clear demonstration of business outcome and link to organizational objectives.

Now what? Once completed click the SUBMIT buttons and you can convert your work into PDF for sharing or using in meetings or presentations. If you want to go back and EDIT, then click the red button at the top to make changes. Then click SUBMIT again. Save the PDF to your computer.



HOW?  
↓

**Press mentions and publications have long ceased to be a fitting testament to your effectiveness. So, do you know how to measure the effectiveness of your online and offline activities using the latest technologies and tools?**

# AVE – Does Anyone Actually Still Use This? Try the PESO Model



**Sabine Raabe**, Principal & Founder at [Biscuit PR](#). She is an Independent Public Relations Practitioner and woman who gets things done, having led changes for her clients around consumer rights, alternative transport & finance, overseas and domestic environmental issues, economic regeneration and human and civil rights.

I was surprised to read recently that the CIPR is planning to take disciplinary action against members who use the advertising equivalent value (AVE) metric to measure their performance to clients. Forgive me, but does anyone actually still use this outdated form of measurement to demonstrate the worth of their PR services?!

I cannot remember when we stopped using AVE, it just became less and less relevant. The digitization of our industry has provided PR with a whole new array of tools, including qualitative and quantitative monitoring and analysis tools. We adopted the PESO model to reflect the trend for user-generated content and the growing importance of digital media platforms and channels.

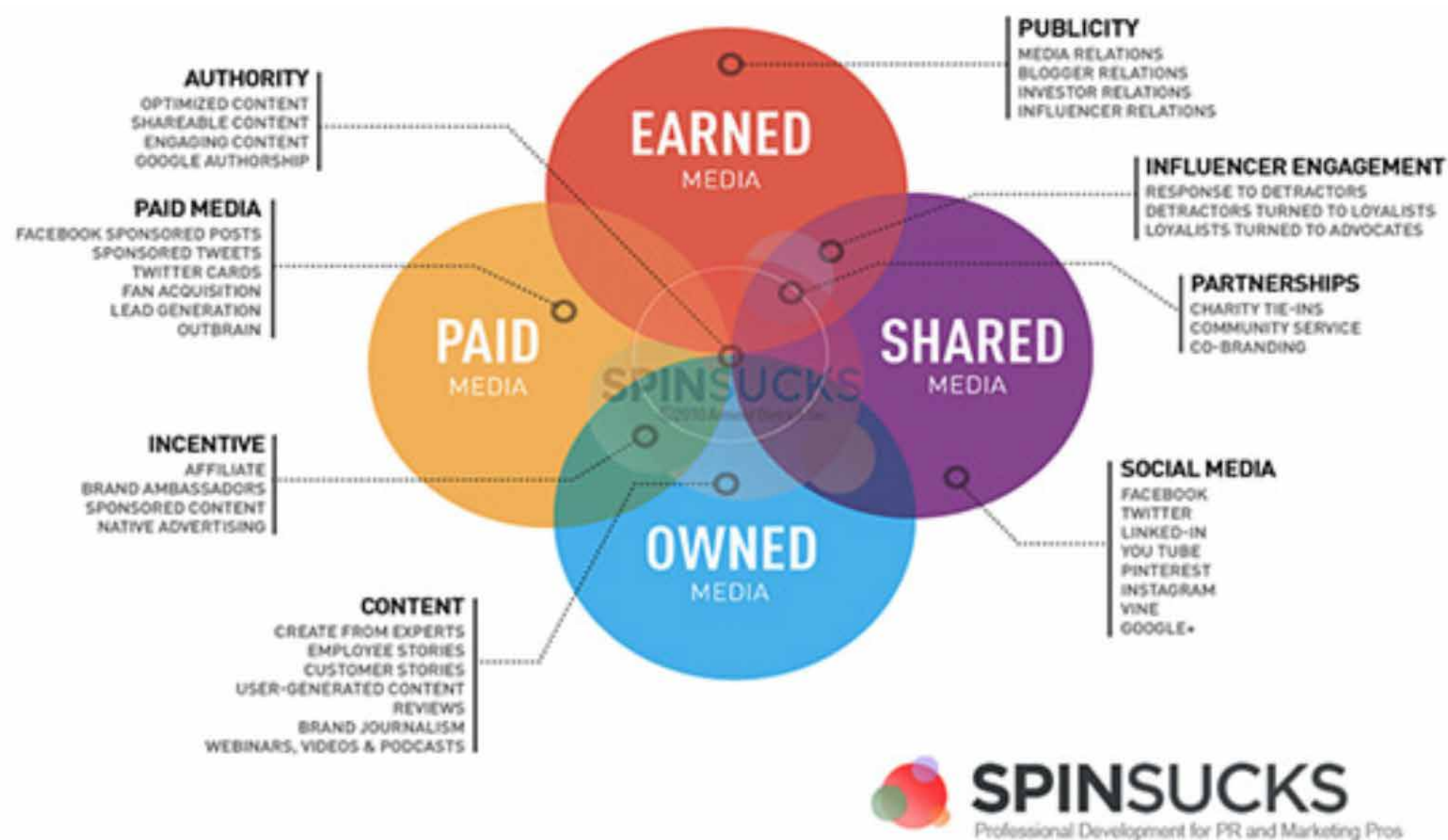
## PR measurement: the PESO model

The PESO model takes the four media types – paid, earned, shared, and owned – and merges them together.

- **Paid Media.** Paid media for a PR programme is social media advertising, sponsored content, and email marketing.



- > **Earned Media.** Earned media is what you know as either publicity or media relations. It's getting your name in print. It's having a newspaper or trade publication write about you. It's appearing on the news to talk about your product. It's what the PR industry is typically known for, because it's one of the few tangible things done.
- > **Shared Media.** Shared media is also known as social media. It's evolving and continues to build beyond just marketing or customer service teams using it.
- > **Owned Media.** Owned media is otherwise known as content. It is something you own, and it lives on your website or blog. You control the messaging and tell the story in a way you want it told.



Source: Spin Sucks

### For each media type, there are different metrics to track.

**Paid Media.** It depends on the tactics you use under this umbrella, but could include the following:

- > Social media marketing, such as Google AdWords.
- > Landing pages and how many people download your content and go into your email marketing database.

Increases in the qualified leads in your email marketing database.

- 
- > New fans or followers who come from reading your sponsored content.
  - > Leads and conversions.

**Earned Media.** Earned media got its name because you garner results from the relationships you earn – with influencers, journalists, and bloggers. To measure the effectiveness, consider the following metrics:

- > Influencer scoring: Does an influencer with 10,000 followers have the same score as someone with 1,000 followers? It could very well be that the person with 1,000 followers can incentivize purchase with 10 percent of his followers, while the person with 10,000 followers can incentivize purchase with only 1 percent.
- > How much Web traffic comes from a story about your organization?
- > See if those news outlets and blogs are sending visitors to your site.
- > An increase in new audiences.


**Shared Media.** You have to track the number of fans and followers because sharp declines – or a trend of decreasing follower count – will tell you something is wrong. But an increase, week after week, does not get you results. The following will do:

- > Are you using brand ambassadors to help spread the word about your product or service? If you are, track their effectiveness.
- > Assign points to things such as likes, retweets, shares, and comments. This gives you numerical data to confirm whether something works.
- > Use unique URLs, coupons, discount codes, or even telephone numbers only in your social media efforts. This will tell you whether you're getting results from these efforts.

**Owned Media.** The beauty of owned media is it completely integrates with the other three media types. Think about the following:

- > Pay attention to unique visitors, time spent on the site, and bounce rate. Those things, such as an increase (or decrease) in social media followers, can indicate success or failure.



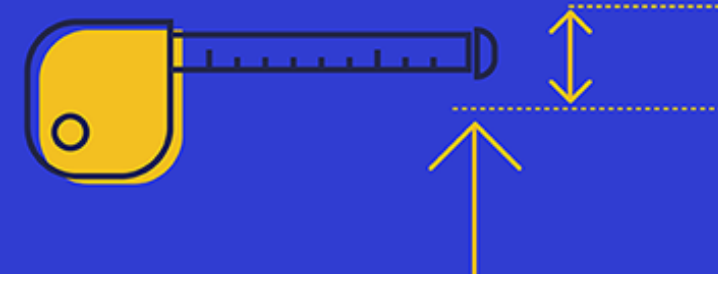
- 
- If you have an organized owned media program, you're likely distributing through email marketing. When you integrate your content with this paid media tactic, you can track things such as downloads and shares. Do people download the content? Do they read or watch or listen to it once it's been downloaded? Is it so good they can't help but share it with their communities?
  - Are people sharing your content? It is important to know this because it provides proof to a new reader that you know what you're doing.
  - Track the effectiveness of a community (people who comment on and share your content) by whether they're referring business to you. Is it driving sales?

## Owned media and paid media

Owned media and paid media can often merge. For instance, a brand ambassador who is being paid to share and promote brand-related content would fall under both categories. With all these different directions to take a PR campaign, it can be difficult to identify the most lucrative path. While there are exceptions where only one method is the best fit for a campaign, a skilled PR pro knows how to identify enough angles. The success comes from being skilled enough to use all PESO methods in a single campaign, as this indicates industry authority.

In the PESO model, each channel delivers unique importance. In the earned media realm, public relations practitioners create the opportunity to have your story told by credible, objective, third-party influencers such as journalists, bloggers, trade analysts, and industry leaders. In the social, content marketing and blogosphere, however, its power comes from the polar opposite source: the power of many. The conversation is picked up, shared, and commented on by the social community as your message makes its way from its blog, Tweet, or paid marketing message.





Championed by marketing and public relations thought leader, Gini Dietrich, the PESO model highlights the evolution of the public relations discipline to reflect the ever-changing world of communication. The benefit of the model is that it stops PR teams considering themselves only as brand-enhancers and shows the ability of PR campaigns as business-drivers. The PESO model seems to have closed a gap between PR and marketing, providing a structured framework for creating intelligent, integrated campaigns.

We have to accept that the AVE model is no longer good enough. It is now about getting the right content to the right audience and, when needed, pushing it along further via paid. Successful PR practitioners have and continue to adapt by applying the traditional principles of influencing opinion, storytelling, and building relationships while using new communication tools, practices and channels.



# New metric, same old flaws: AVE mutates into EMV



**Stephen Waddington**, Partner and Chief Engagement Officer at Ketchum helping clients and colleagues to do the best job possible engaging with the public. He is responsible for driving the integration of digital and social capabilities in client engagements across the agency's international network.

He is also Visiting Professor in Practice at the Newcastle University supporting the university and students through teaching and mentoring.

He runs a [wadds.co.uk](http://wadds.co.uk) blog.

Advertising Equivalent Value (AVE) has mutated into a new form of measurement for the digital and social age called Earned Media Value (EMV). Neither has any place in modern practice.

Earned Media Value (EMV), a modern version of Advertising Equivalent Value (AVE), is being promoted by tool vendors, media, and public relations agencies as a simple means to measure and benchmark campaigns.

AVE metrics are determined by calculating the equivalent advertising cost for earned content. An arbitrary multiplier is applied on the basis that editorial is more valuable than advertising. It's nonsense.

## **Paid, Earned, Social and Earned (PESO)**

EMV has arisen as media relations has developed into influencer relations, as a means of benchmarking influencer relations activity across paid and earned media. You can trace its roots via a viral-like mutation back to AVE.

EMV is calculated by multiplying the reach of a piece of earned or social media content by the cost per so-called impression. A further multiplier is added to the calculation based on the likelihood of conversion.





Philip Sheldrake, the author of [The Business of Influence](#), takes a dim view:

"It is an idiotic response that brings ridicule to the public relations and marketing professions."

EMV is attractive because it enables influencer relations activity to be aligned with other forms of paid digital marketing and provides a proxy for return on investment. It is applied indiscriminately to earned media and social media platforms and assumes that the goal of a campaign is always a sales conversion.

### **Simple answer, wrong answer**

Scott Guthrie, a management consultant who specialises in social media marketing, suggests that EMV has taken root because it provides a simple answer to a complex problem.

"EMV's offer clients big numbers. They give the impression of good value for money. But they fail to provide clients with any measure of whether the campaign is actually working."

Paid and earned marketing or public relations campaigns cannot be consolidated into a single number. Instead, practitioners should seek to link the investment in marketing or public relations activity to the outcomes achieved.

Defining a measurement framework for a campaign is hard. People use AVE and EMV because they're easy. But they're also wrong.

### **Activity, outputs, and outcomes**

The objectives of a campaign should be tied as closely as possible to organisational objectives.

Just as no two organisations are the same, no two objectives can be the same, and no measurement frameworks for a campaign will be the same.

The Association for Evaluation of Measurement and Communication (AMEC) has set out a robust methodology for planning and measurement a campaign.

There can be  
no excuses.

Every conversation about measurement within my own firm Ketchum starts with AMEC's [Integrated Evaluation Framework](#). The framework is available to download for free.

AMEC's best practice guidance says that when you're planning a paid or earned campaign, you should be able to define the outputs of your activity and map these again intermediary and organisational outcomes.

There will be challenges in decoupling the contribution of marketing and public relations activity from other activities, but it is achievable.

My tip would be to focus on your audience or publics and not on the media.

You need to understand the relationship between intermediary outcomes and organisational outcomes, and track both as part of your campaign.

[This blog post sets out 30 different metrics.](#)

The closer that you can tie the value you deliver to an organisation to the objectives of the organisation, the more you'll be valued.

You certainly won't be valued if you use AVE or EMV.

**\* this article was originally published on [wadds.co.uk](http://wadds.co.uk)**



**Must-read**

# Your Reading List

A woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a floral dress, is standing in a library aisle. She is reaching up with her right hand to touch a book on a high shelf. The shelves are filled with books, and the scene is bathed in a soft, teal-colored light. The text 'Your Reading List' is overlaid in a large, elegant, dark purple font.



**“Traditional methods no longer work. As digital becomes intrinsic to PR and the communications industry diversifies into new areas measuring outcome has become more urgent than ever.” [Amit Jain]**

At Prowly, the above statement is especially close to our hearts. This is why we continually refine our analytical model for you to be able to know more about your media relations. Also, every day, we absorb the knowledge shared by prominent experts on their blogs. Today, especially for You, we compiled this knowledge into a useful reading list:

CARE TO TEST  
US?  
HOW ABOUT  
a 7-DAY TRIAL?





## AMEC's Integrated Evaluation Framework

AMEC

[www.amecorg.com/amecframework](http://www.amecorg.com/amecframework)

## Resource Centre

AMEC

<https://amecorg.com/resource-centre/>

## Why Is PR Measurement So Important?

Holmes Report

<https://www.holmesreport.com/agency-playbook/sponsored/article/why-is-pr-measurement-so-important>

## 30 Alternative Public Relations Metrics to AVE

Stephen Waddington

<http://wadds.co.uk/2016/03/02/30-alternative-public-relations-metrics-ave/>

## PR Pros Must Embrace The PESO Model

Spin Sucks

<http://spinsucks.com/communication/pr-pros-must-embrace-the-peso-model/>

## Top Metrics for Measuring PR Effectiveness

PR Newswire

<http://www.prnewswire.com/blog/top-metrics-for-measuring-pr-effectiveness-20323.html>

## Breaking The PR Measurement and Evaluation Deadlock: A New Approach and model

AMEC

<https://amecorg.com/downloads/amsterdam2014/Breaking-the-PR-Measurement-Deadlock-A-New-Approach-and-Model-Jim-Macnamara.pdf>

## Valid Metrics for PR Measurement. Putting The Principles Into Action

AMEC

<https://amecorg.com/downloads/resource/>

[ValidMetricsFramework7June2011PrintVersion.pdf](#)

## Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation Practices Over the Course of 40 Years

Institute for Public Relations

<http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/LikelyWatson-Book-Chapter-Measuring-the-Edifice.pdf>

## 15 PR Tools for Mastering Public Relations

Prowly Magazine

<https://prowly.com/magazine/2017/03/06/15-pr-tools-mastering-public-relations/>

## The Definitive Guide:

### Why AVES Are Invalid

AVE

<https://amecorg.com/2017/06/the-definitive-guide-why-aves-are-invalid/>

## The Death of AVEs is Imminent

### - It's Time to Take Note

Spin Sucks

<http://spinsucks.com/communication/aves-death-imminent/>

## 10 Top Tools for PR Measurement

PR Daily

[https://www.prdaily.com/Main/Articles/10\\_top\\_tools\\_for\\_PR\\_measurement\\_15377.aspx](https://www.prdaily.com/Main/Articles/10_top_tools_for_PR_measurement_15377.aspx)






# Tools

- YOUR ARMS WITHOUT WHICH  
YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE  
UP A FIGHT



**Outlook and Excel are relics. Well, at least they're not your only viable options anymore. We are at a point in time when new online tools, programs, and apps pop up like mushrooms. Some are invaluable when it comes to measuring PR activities. Below, we present the ones that you should add to your cart\* ;)**   
**We'll be happy to expand our list further and add Your recommendations.**

\*All are clickable - check out what these tools have to offer!



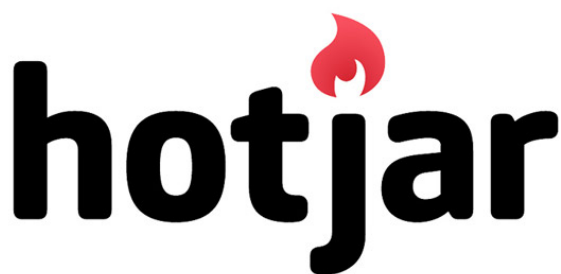


Google Analytics

Monitoring, social media, interaction & analysis



Traffic:



Media Relations and content marketing:







## Influencer marketing:



## E-mailing:





Prowly

# Measure your media outreach and save time on follow-ups.

Software for PR pros made by PR pros.

TRY NOW for FREE







# Prowly

Content Partners:



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