

# Communications Issues

Issue 20

*A Community Service of Harley House Consultants Inc.*



## What is the ROI on Communications?

### Introduction

Return On Investment (ROI) is defined as a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment or to compare the efficiency of a number of different investments. Faced with today's spending cutbacks, it is even more important to demonstrate the Return on Investment (ROI) that communications makes.

Communicators should measure their performance so as to:

- Improve programs and tactics
- Demonstrate success (progress) and be recognized for it
- Make the communicators job easier and more valuable
- Help manage the manageable so as to provide more time to manage the unmanageable
- Improve accountability to senior management by relating contributions directly to the key objectives and performance targets of the organization
- Help communications programs command the resources they need to contribute effectively to key organizational objectives

### Measuring the Unmeasurable

At one time or another, we have heard that "Communications is the last bastion of the unmeasurable." On the other hand, as communications practitioners, "We can never expect to get credit for what we do in communications until we can find a way to measure our effectiveness."

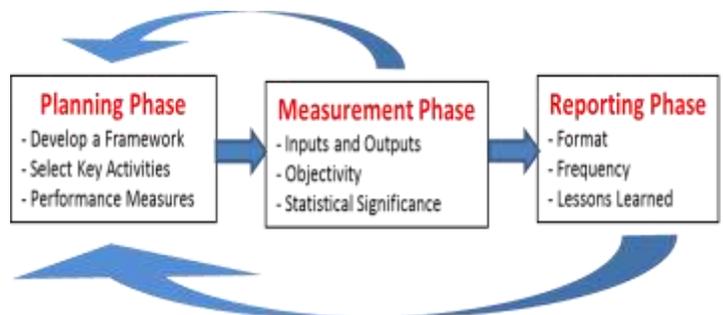
There are actually three levels of performance measurement. These can be used separately or combined, and include:

1. Measuring Output - Measuring production of the communications effort so as to assess whether the message was aimed at and sent to the target audience.
2. Measuring Out-take - Measuring the degree to which the audience is aware of the message, retained and understood it.
3. Measuring Outcome - Measuring the degree to which the program is actually changing people's opinions, attitudes and behaviour.

### How to measure

Establishing and implementing a performance measurement system for communications involves:

- Planning what communications activities should be assessed and how to do so;
- Measuring progress towards results that are sought and having the flexibility to be able to adjust operations to better meet these expectations; and
- Reporting on the outcomes accomplished.



### Performance Measurement Toolkit

A Performance Measurement Tool Kit for Communicators has been designed to work within the Federal Communications community. The Tool Kit outlines the process to follow to plan, measure and report on each of the following Communications Performance Measurement Tools:

- Annual Client Survey
- Post Project Review Reports
- Annual Resource Report
- Time Reporting System
- Account Executive Report

For more information about how to measure communications performance go to [www.harleyhouse.com](http://www.harleyhouse.com) click on: [Performance Measurement for Communicators](#) email Dale Harley at [dale@harleyhouse.com](mailto:dale@harleyhouse.com) or call him at 613-882-5684.

*Making Communicators Better Managers—Making Managers Better Communicators*

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