

# Measurement That Matters — A Practical Guide for Communicators

## ***How to connect communication work to real business impact***

Brand position and value propositions are complementary strategies that, when aligned, create a compelling organizational narrative that builds trust and loyalty and drives growth. However, if Marketing and Sales teams are out of alignment, messaging can become fractured, creating confusion for customers and other key stakeholders.

These challenges are common — and they're solvable.

An effective measurement approach helps communication leaders see patterns, uncover trends and act on insights. The result? Clear, data-driven decisions that support business success. The following steps can help your team assess, define and demonstrate your value with confidence.

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### **BEGIN WITH A STRATEGIC FOCUS**



Before diving into metrics, get grounded in the big-picture organizational shifts your team wants to influence.

**Ask:** What areas of your organization's strategic plan are you hoping to influence? Are there any big picture changes to your business or industry you need to address? This could be:

- Improving financial business results
- Enhancing your organization's culture and talent strategy
- Building a positive reputation for your brand
- Mitigating the impact of a significant regulatory change

**The takeaway:** A broader high-level aim will help you identify the right data to track, so you can tell a compelling story to executives.

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### **OUTLINE PRIORITY OBJECTIVES**

Once the strategic focus is clear, identify the organizational objectives or business goals that directly connect to it.

**Ask:** Which organizational objectives or business goals align and connect directly to the strategic focus area? These might be:

- Improving employee engagement (culture and talent)
- Increasing market share (organizational growth)
- Increasing customer retention (brand and reputation)

**The takeaway:** Communication teams often miss this step. Tying communication to business performance isn't possible unless the team knows which objectives it's trying to impact.

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## ALIGN ON MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Now, define what measurable progress looks like. These outcomes represent the ROI you want to influence.

**Ask:** What measurable outcomes (or ROI) would show progress toward our objectives? Examples:

- Improve employee pulse survey participation by X% by a specific date  
*Objective: Increase employee engagement*
- Grow in market share by X% by a specific date  
*Objective: Increase market share*
- Improve customer feedback scores X% by a specific date  
*Objective: Increase customer retention rate*

**The takeaway:** Effective targets are measurable, time-bound and specific, connecting directly to a particular objective. In some cases, organizations may have multiple targets tied to each objective.

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## SELECT YOUR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Next, identify what data you can gather to inform these ROI targets.

**Ask:** What data can our team gather to inform these ROI targets? Examples:

- Engagement with culture-related content on intranet  
*ROI target: Improve employee pulse survey participation by X% by a specific date*  
*Objective: Increase employee engagement*
- Number of return users to website  
*ROI target: Increase repeat site visits by X% by a specific date*  
*Objective: Increase customer retention rate*

**The takeaway:** Communication KPIs are day-to-day activities that influence progress toward the ROI targets. (The raw data that can measure communication effectiveness). This is an opportunity to check if the data you track today ladders up. If it does, keep tracking it. If it doesn't, identify a different metric.

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## SHARE ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

Data alone can't advance business goals. Communicators must contextualize, share and act on it.

**Ask:** What can we learn from this data? What's the most effective way to share our insights? How can we translate these insights into action? Use those answers to inform:

- A dashboard that highlights key performance and themes and connects work to strategic focus areas and objectives
- Action items to improve performance and advance strategic organization objectives
- An approach for collecting, sharing and evaluating metrics regularly to ensure they are strategically aligned

**The takeaway:** Data becomes valuable only when it is interpreted, communicated effectively and used to guide action aligned with strategy.