

World's biggest PR measurement summit held in Prague

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The International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC) held its annual global summit in Prague, The Czech Republic, from 21-23 May 2019. Themed "Data: Analytics, Algorithms & Augmentation", this summit is the world's biggest gathering of communication measurement and evaluation experts. It saw more than 310 delegates from six continents in attendance.



Photo by: AMEC from the AMEC Summit 2019

AMEC is arguably most well known for launching and adopting The Barcelona Principles in 2010 which created a framework for best practices in PR measurement. In recent years the organisation has seen massive growth and now boasts membership in 86 countries.

The 2019 Summit featured a host of speakers from the likes of Adobe Systems, Facebook, Prudential, Sage, Diageo and others who shared their latest experiences on best communication measurement practices.

A recurring theme echoed by several speakers was to embrace failure. It is a natural instinct of many communication and public relations practitioners to always focus on the success of campaigns rather than the poor performers.



Photo by: AMEC from the AMEC Summit 2019

Keynote speaker, Prudential's Allyson Hugley highlighted that innovation comes from not being scared of getting things wrong – if you are not failing you are not succeeding. "Mess up, just don't make the same mistake twice," said Sam Ruchlewicz from Warschawski.

Facebook Marketing Science Expert, Daniel Stauber concurred believing that success is a poor teacher and much more learnings can be had from failed campaigns.

Stauber believes many modern communication platforms can introduce analytical bias and hence communicators need to be very aware of the true objectives of their activities. He also cited research by the UCS Annenberg 2018 Global Communications Report which shows that 87% of professionals surveyed believed that Public Relations will see much more integration with Marketing in the next five years.

Another central theme that emerged was that measurement and evaluation is shifting from analysing past activities to becoming a critical tool for strategic planning to improve future performance.

PRCA Director General and ICCO Chief Executive, Francis Ingham noted that the latest UK PR surveys showed that the use by British practitioners of discredited measurements such as Advertising Value Equivalents (AVEs) had dropped to only 7%, but expressed his dismay that up to 26% did no measurement and evaluation at all.

He believes that if practitioners put more time, money and effort into measurement and evaluation it will be far easier to prove PR's worth, and the industry could charge more for strategic work.

Andy West, Group Chief Development Officer, Hotwire Global, believes that if practitioners cannot prove the impact of their PR activities they should not expect to keep or even receive any budget.

AMEC also released its annual Global Insights research in June 2019. A major trend reported by 76% of respondents is that clients are increasingly requesting measurement which includes other marketing activities as well as Public Relations and Communication in order to provide an integrated perspective of overall performance. There is also a growing demand from clients for consultative services which increased by 21% from 2018.

A surprising finding was that client demand for the measurement and evaluation of traditional media like print, radio and television was increasing at a five year high. Though online still dominates demand, clients still seem to value the traditional

channels.



Photo by: AMEC from the AMEC Summit 2019

Francois van Dyk, Head: Operations at Ornico, believes great strides have been made globally to develop and implement better PR measurement practices.

"With the original Barcelona Principles only proclaimed nine years ago it is clear that the industry globally has been hard at work to improve the standards of PR measurement. We can see this in the diminishing use of poor metrics. In 2010 more than 80% of AMEC clients still utilised AVEs for instance while demand, according to the 2019 research, shows that this has dropped to only 13%."

Recently elected the first representative from Africa on the AMEC International Board, he has urged the African Public Relations industry to embrace the professionalising of better measurement and evaluation practices.

"Over the last few years I have seen a massive adoption of best practices for PR measurement in markets such as Central and South America, as well as in Asia. African practitioners cannot be left behind. AMEC provides many free resources and case studies to assist practitioners in improving their measurement capabilities van Dyk said.

The Integrated Evaluation Framework

The AMEC Integrated Evaluation Framework, which guides communicators through the best measurement practices process has now further seen wide adoption across the globe as it demystifies best measurement and evaluation practices. Already available in 21 languages – from English, French, Spanish, German and Russian through to Chinese and Arabic - this free online resource has proved hugely popular among practitioners. Access the framework here: <https://amecorg.com/amecframework/>

Measurement Maturity Mapper

A great new AMEC resource which is now fully operational is the Measurement Maturity Mapper. This tool assists organisations to benchmark their progress towards best measurement practices and evaluate the current level and effectiveness of their measurement activities compared to other industry players.

Access the Measurement Maturity Mapper here: <https://m3.amecorg.com/>

AMEC International Certificate in Measurement and Evaluation

Industry education around best measurement and evaluation practices remains the key objective for AMEC – a point again highlighted by AMEC membership. The organisation's AMEC International Certificate in Measurement and Evaluation, presented in conjunction with the UK's PR Academy, has proved hugely popular and is open to students globally via online learning. Read more here: <https://amecorg.com/amec-college/international-certificate-course>

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