

Measuring & Communicating the Value of Global Public Affairs Internally

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Why does it matter?

Understanding, showcasing and communicating the value of our work is essential—especially in regions where public affairs is still emerging.

It matters because...

- Not everyone in the business understands the impact public affairs has on top and bottom-line figures
- A unified public affairs position is automatically reflected in the way a company is perceived by its stakeholders, audience and partners
- As such, internal alignment is key to ensure that the efforts are aligned
- It ensures that the right investments of management time and resources are made – this is an area that is largely looked over if no one understands the value and impact of the work being done
- It encourages collaboration by different functions



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- Co-founded the first lobbying firm in Egypt in 2014.
- Expanded to the North Africa in 2017 and GCC in 2018
- Setup a leading PA firm in the UAE that was acquired by APCO in 2021
- Worked with more than 100 MNCs across the region to setup PA functions, develop executive programs and support and manage their PA priorities.

Where do we start?

Internally

Kick off questions to begin with..

- 1) What's the internal ecosystem where we operate?
- 2) Who are our internal key stakeholders?
- 3) What matters to them, and to their business objectives?
- 4) What do I need to succeed?
- 5) What and how should we communicate for maximum impact?

What kind of company do we represent?

As we were supporting companies' setup their PA functions, it was key to differentiate between:

Type A:

Companies that deal with government stakeholders as potential customers, regulators and policymaker

Type B:

Companies that deal with government stakeholders as policymaker/regulator only

How is the PA function structured?

Based on the maturity of the function and the reporting structure, the way value is measured and communicated could differ.

Type A:

Global lead reporting to C-Suite with local direct reports in markets?

Type B:

Global lead with indirect reports who report in the business locally?

Type C:

Decentralized function, reporting to the business directly.

What are the company's priorities?

As global PA leads, we should always align the PA priorities to the business needs.

What should we be focusing on?

- Driving growth opportunities?
- Protecting the business from key risks?
- Educating our leaders?

Dilemma:

Sometimes the business priorities shift while we've been working on policy changes for a long time- how do we adapt?

Where do we look next?

Externally

- 1 What keeps our leaders up at night?
- 2 How do our customers see us?
- 3 How do governments see us?
- 4 What are my competitors doing?
- 5 Do we want to lead the industry or take the back seat?

What is happening externally that matters?

Depending on the external environment and our assessment of the global landscape, our approach and priorities shift.

- Should we focus on global geopolitics? Geopolitical trends take precedence in times of uncertainty
- Should we focus on local engagement? Rise of the right wing – localization is key.

What's happening with our industry?

Each industry operates differently and has different issues within the global context. Are the issues global or are there regions that provide opportunities?

Example:

- Sugar taxes - Is the industry welcomed by regulators?

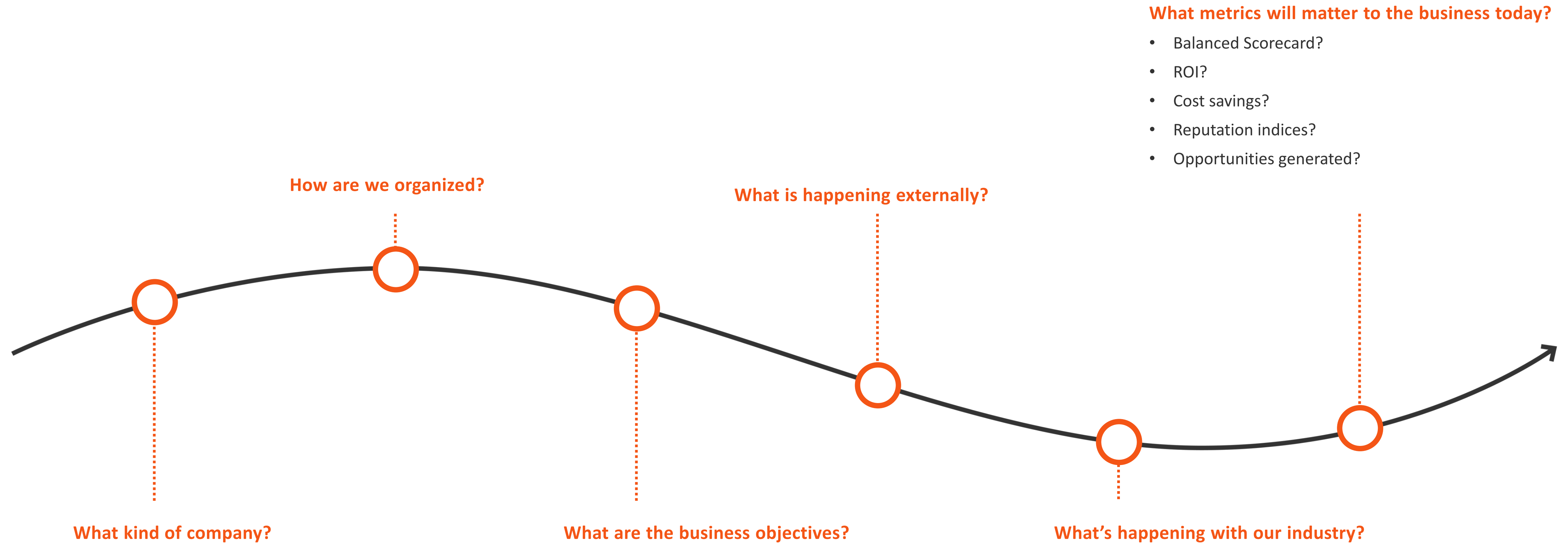
Example:

- Tobacco companies and consumer companies are both now advocating for smoke-free alternatives – are they perceived the same way?
- Obesity drugs and government

What are the competitors doing?

- Understanding what the industry peers and competition are doing provides useful insight on how to measure the impact.
- How do we communicate the value of our function if we are working as an industry coalition?
- How do we communicate that an industry win is also a win for our company?

The Measurement Journey



How do we measure value?

Numbers

Based on our previous answers, we should then answer the following questions:

Do we already have existing measurement methods? Are they satisfactory?

Are there any set expectations we need to meet? Are we expected to show impact in dollar value?

Which measures truly matter to the business?

- a. Reputation score
- b. Cost benefit analysis
- c. Economic impact assessment?
- d. Revenue growth? ROI?

Unlocking opportunities

Showcasing opportunities generated through the PA activities are usually easier to measure and communicate.

Depending on the type of organization, we could quantify the value through:

- 1) **Dilemma: Should we show the direct value generated as potential leads?**
- 2) Indirect value generated through advocacy

Examples:

- Healthcare company that eradicated hepatitis C in Egypt
- Reversing and anti-dumping measure in the GCC

Protecting the license to operate

It is usually more difficult to measure the value of something that hasn't occurred, or a risk that has been mitigated.

Advocating against a policy that could've caused major losses.

- DTS in Oman and

Micromobility regulations in Dubai

- Electric Scooters

Reputation management

- Boycotts in MENA

Monitoring and understanding the external environment

Don't just do the work

Tell the story

Guiding Thoughts

- **If it doesn't have a major business impact, it will never get the leaders' attention.**
- **Do we want an engaged leadership?**
- **What's the best way to tell the story?**
- **Tailor the messages to different audiences**

Case 1: Internal Workshops

Working with a leading beverages and snacks company, we proposed setting up an executive program for their C-suite in the MENA region.

Why...We wanted to ensure that the business understood what we offer and why our role is important.

What...We developed a PPGA program for their C-suite that covered:

What... is PA, tools for PA, global policy priorities, why is it important to the business and role play.

Who...Agency and PPGA lead

So What...We were able to increase the overall spend, team size and management engagement on the right issues.

Case 2: Getting leaders involved

Depending on the structure, you may already be working closely with the CEO/C-Suite.

Getting them involved from the start makes it much easier to communicate progress and impact.

1) **Briefing sessions by the PA** for the Annual planning ensures that PA has a seat on the table.

2) **Aligning our PA objectives** with the business objective – our role is to level the playing field, help unlock opportunities, manage risk and protect the company's operations.

3) **Get them engaged externally**

Key takeaways

Even though there are multiple ways to measure value, we've seen that business leaders today want to know relevant information fast and straight to the point; is it good, or bad? What's the damage or upside? What can we do about it?

Some final thoughts



Understand

Understand the organization's setup and business objectives to properly define value.



Prioritize and Adapt

What was important last year may not be important this year.



Alignment

Use the metrics that matter to the business – the better aligned to the business objectives, the better.



Evolve

Develop and evolve the metrics and measurement strategy as the function grows and evolves.



Feedback

Communicating value cannot happen in a silo – know the perception first, and receive constant feedback.