

A crusade for media measurement in Nigeria

In an interview with BrandArena, the lead consultant of Nigerian independent measurement and evaluation agency, Philip Odiakose, spoke on the need and benefit to have a body that regulates the activities of independent media monitoring and measurement agencies in Nigeria.



Philip Odiakose

Q: What has been the reaction of the IMC industry at large to your advocacy for independent media monitoring and measurement?

A: As I have always said, independent media measurement is the future and we are glad that that the IMC industry has started yielding to our plea. Since we started the campaign for independent measurement and evaluation to better brand experience, acceptance from PR agencies and communications managers has increased by 20% from 0%. Again, we are not there yet, but we are taking giant strides to make both PR agencies and clients understand the value of an independent measurement and evaluation service.

Q: You were recently in Ghana for AMEC Measurement Month, can you share with us some of the highlights of the event?

A: Yes, we co-hosted the event with Media Monitor in Ghana for the AMEC Measurement Month. The AMEC Measurement Month initially used to run within a period of one week, but due to the increasing interest of practitioners in measurement

and evaluation, AMEC Measurement Week became extended to a period of one month. It was a forum that required PR Measurement consultants around the world to sensitise PR agencies, communications managers and media practitioners on the importance to integrate measurement and evaluation into their communications strategy and the importance of the new AMEC framework.

We were also there to communicate our success rate as there has been an increase in awareness for brands and communications managers to see the need to engage an independent measurement and evaluation agency for brand health check and performance audit, which is something that P+ has been pioneering and preaching for the Nigeria market. Brands are starting to understand that allowing their PR agencies to mark their own homework is doing a lot of damage to brands.

Q: Is the current Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) method being used by practitioners good enough for communication/PR evaluation?

A: The fight against the use of AVE has been on for decades, the use of AVE in this part of the country is still very high as agencies believe it is the only way to show value for their spend, which the AVE analysis has been doing a lot of damage than good to brands in their care. It is important to note that at P+ Measurement Services we use measurement standards which are acceptable all over the world and we stand with the [Barcelona Principle 2:0 vs 5](#) which states that AVE is not the true reflection of value for ROI. Let me make this clear, that the word ROI is wrongly used in the PR practice, as all eyes tend to look at the financial figure in PR, neglecting the fact that PR is all about reputation, image building, crisis management and media relations. So when measuring the impact of PR on brands, key KPIs like, JRM, SOI, SOV, reach, cyberspace analysis, spokesperson impact, reputation measurement, journalist/Blogger loyalty analysis, message sentiment analysis, competitive analysis should be looked deeply into. Public and media perception audit of a brand should be checked quarterly or bi-annually; which will require the input of an Independent Measurement and Evaluation agency.

Q: Why do you think we should have an independent measurement and evaluation body in Nigeria?

A: I think the creation of such body is long overdue, we have a lot of media monitoring and evaluation agencies in Nigeria, which have been in operation in Nigeria for years under the umbrella of PRCAN and APCON. I think it is time we own an association and a body that regulate and creates best practices for media monitoring and evaluation in Nigeria. There are no independent associations in Nigeria for the consultant in Nigeria, which is why some of us run to APCON or PRCAN when an association letter is required to get certain businesses which are very wrong.

Secondly, the non-availability of an Independent monitoring and measurement body, gives the reason why PR or advertising agencies can take Independent monitoring briefs; which is unethical, unhealthy and unprofessional for an agency to mark their own homework. It is not right for you to be the accused, the judge and jury of your work

Having an Independent Monitoring and Measurement association will break such unethical practices and bridge the gap between PR agencies and independent measurement practitioners.

Q: There are rumors that some PR agencies are considering the establishment of new agencies that will cover communication measurement and evaluation...

A: Really, that will be unprofessional for such PR agency, as well as unhealthy for a brand. I think we need to stop looking at the monthly PR retainer for a minute and think of the brand health, questions like "Is it healthy for me to mark my own homework and still deliver value to the brand"?

It is still awkward when I hear PR agencies say they do media monitoring in-house. I think PR agencies should start seeing independent measurement and evaluation agencies as friends rather than competitors as we are all in the business to create an unforgettable brand experience.

Q: Are brand owners giving encouraging support for your operations so far?

A: I will say the sensitisation is penetrating gradually and fast, as brands are beginning to separate Media monitoring and measurement from PR agency briefs. Communications and PR managers are also turning advocates for the independent measurement as they have seen the impact and value we have provided with our timely media intelligence report. Business decisions are made and strategies are created from our work and we expect more ownership from more communications and brand managers in the future to be advocates. An example of such is the just concluded Edo state governorship election, which P+ Measurement Services was appointed as the Independent Monitoring and Measurement Consultant for one of the aspirant, our timely delivery and media intelligence report played a major role in the emergence of the current elected Governor of the state; in which we worked alongside Tony Usidamen, the CEO of UBURU an Independent communications agency in Lagos, and Media manager to the Governor during the campaign.

Q: How many independent monitoring and measurement agencies do we have presently in Nigeria?

A: We have over seven known media monitoring and measurement agencies in Nigeria; that is why it is imperative to create an independent monitoring and measurement body to regulate and set best practices for our industry and guiding measurement and evaluation activities in the right direction..

Q: Any on-going plan towards the establishment of a government recognised body?

A: The plan is already in motion and being implemented as we speak, but that will not stop members from belonging to the global body AMEC, which governs the activities of all measurement and evaluation practitioners in the world. P+ Measurement Services happens to be a member of AMEC.

Q: What else will you like to share with us?

A: The future of the monitoring and measurement industry in Nigeria is an industry where we are called in during the planning phase to help determine scope for how to measure results of campaigns on all media platforms from the start. Where brands and consumers will enjoy a full brand experience knowing that the right research and data is given all through each campaign, where agencies and clients are in unison and I will not stop preaching the importance of a unified smooth working IMC which includes independent measurement and evaluation.

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