

# Carilion Clinic: *a study in partnership*



## THE CLIENT

Carilion Clinic is a not-for-profit healthcare organization based in Virginia. Through its hospitals, primary care facilities, and specialty physician practices, it provides care for nearly one million people.

**THE ISSUE IN THE PAST HAD BEEN THAT MEDIA MONITORING REPORTS WERE FILLED WITH TOO MUCH NOISE.**

## THE CHALLENGE

When Chris Turnbull was brought aboard as Carilion's manager of public relations in 2015, he wanted to put in place a system that would better capture Carilion's media metrics. He wanted to be able to confidently measure Carilion's reputation in the various communities that it served, and regularly report that sentiment to senior executives in the organization. He wanted to know definitively how Carilion was being perceived, locally and regionally, whether or not it was on the right path, and he wanted the data to evolve accordingly. More still, Turnbull wanted to be able to trust that his metrics were a good reflection of reality.

The issue in the past had been that media monitoring reports were filled with too much noise. Because they are a healthcare provider, mentions in obituaries and crime reports would be picked up and included. Coverage reports would then come laden with, according to Turnbull, "so much junk," that he could never be certain about the accuracy or the relevancy of the data. **And when it comes to data, no trust means no value.**

His team was forced to spend hours vetting and editing these reports, hours much better spent crafting and executing winning strategy. **Turnbull needed a solution that would allow him to easily illustrate to the communications team, as well as to leadership and other stakeholders, the real value of the PR work Carilion does.**

So he sent out an RFP

Turnbull and Carilion had a very long and extensive wish list, full of specific and unique asks. Turnbull himself characterized it as “pretty unrealistic.” Agility PR Solutions replied to the RFP, and became one of only two providers that could deliver everything Carilion was looking for. With the prices quoted essentially the same, Turnbull had a difficult decision.

It came down to the fact that Agility PR Solutions was willing to partner with Carilion, to work alongside Turnbull and his team to deliver what they needed now, as well as grow with them as their needs matured and expanded.

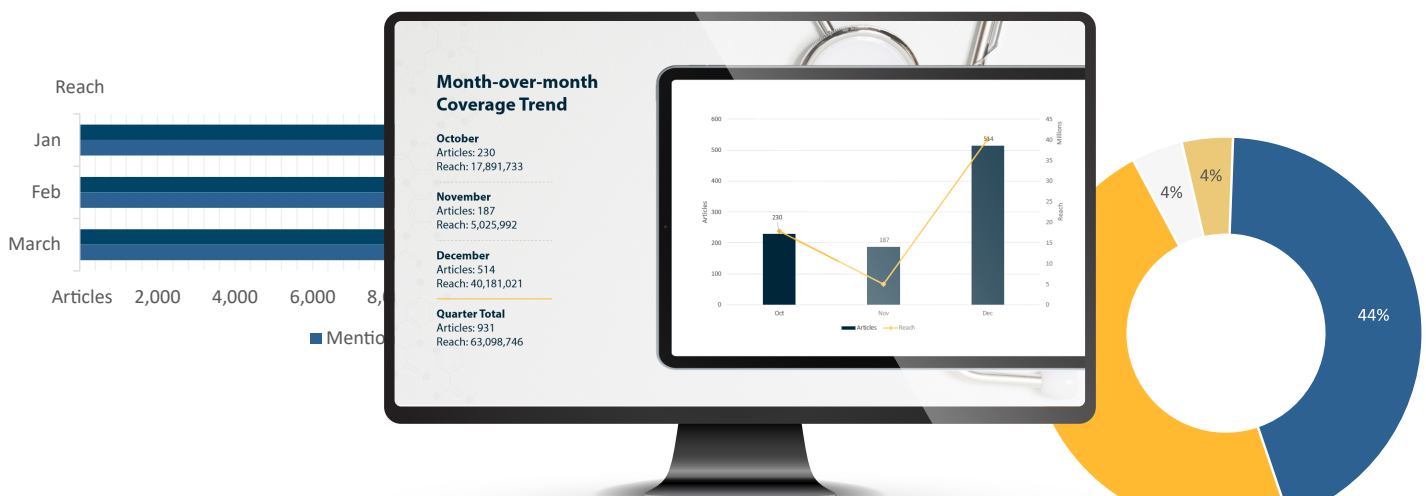
That rightsizing was crucial, as Turnbull had in mind a specific type of report. The concept came from his days working in a high-threat environment where company executives needed a daily brief about what the organization was facing. Carilion didn’t need daily briefs, but the idea still had merit.

## THE SOLUTION

The report he wanted would be handed directly to Carilion’s executives. It would consolidate information and coverage from various media and patient feedback sources to provide a pulse on the company’s reputation at that point in time. It would give leadership a heads-up about trends and reduce the “surprises” they might face when out and about.

It was a unique concept. According to conversations Turnbull was having with industry peers across the United States, he couldn’t find anyone in the health sphere who was thinking of something like it. Agility PR Solutions worked with the Carilion team to build what would become known as the Reputation Radar Report. Throughout the consultation, both sides became partners, working together to construct a framework that most effectively and most accurately illuminates what’s being said. “If it wasn’t an off-the-shelf product option, most providers weren’t interested. Agility was willing to adapt and work with us to build what we were looking for.

The Reputation Radar Report combines sentiment scores from earned media with sentiment scores from social media. In some reports, Turnbull has added patient feedback as well.



**“WE MOST APPRECIATED AGILITY’S WILLINGNESS TO RIGHTSIZE THEIR SOLUTION TO MEET OUR NEEDS, AND THAT WAS DIFFERENT THAN THE OTHER PROVIDERS THAT WE LOOKED AT.”**

## THE SOLUTION

The result is a reputation score, distilled from hundreds of mentions into a single, easy-to-read number, that can be replicated week over week and month over month so everyone can compare apples to apples.

Finally, thanks to the Carilion team’s forward thinking, Carilion’s executives had a report that, in a single glance, told them what they needed to know and demonstrated the value that PR brought to Carilion

**“FAR MORE ACCURATE, FAR MORE TRUSTWORTHY.”**

For so much of the Carilion leadership team—like leadership teams everywhere—time is a luxury they don’t have. For the report to be truly valuable, it had to be easily read, easily understood, and, most importantly, trustworthy, so a VP could glance at it and know, as they walk into a community event, exactly what the public is thinking of Carilion.

The benefits of the Reputation Radar Report have been many, but the most far-reaching is that Carilion’s leadership trusts the reputation score, and what the report is telling them about their place in the community.

Because an Agility PR Solutions media expert carefully reviews each and every mention—adding context and understanding whether coverage is negative, neutral, or positive—the Carilion team can rely on the scores Agility PR Solutions sends their way, calling the reports “far more accurate, far more trustworthy” than those they were receiving before making the switch to Agility.

## THE OUTCOME

Turnbull says there’s one example that pops up all the time.

In the past, whenever there was a mention of violence—someone sustained a gunshot wound or was assaulted—the article or tweet would be automatically toned as unfavorable. The reality, however, is that, in each of those instances, Carilion is mentioned as the clinic or hospital treating and helping the victims. Surely that’s not a negative thing, but it is something that an automated-only solution would miss.

“The reports that we received in the past were labor-intensive to bring up to a point where we would be comfortable sending to our executives.

Sheena, our dedicated media expert at Agility PR Solutions, and the rest of the Agility team have saved us a couple of hours for every report we get.”

In a testament to the veracity and usefulness of the data, when Turnbull and his team disseminate the report to Carilion’s executives, 70 percent of them open and read it every single time.

In fact, the feedback from the C-suite has been so positive that Turnbull has increased the report’s distribution to all VPs in the organization.

## THE OUTCOME

As distribution expands, and Carilion relies more and more on the data in the Reputation Radar Report, Agility PR Solutions is continuing to work with Carilion to improve the report and make it fit with the organization’s evolving needs.

And that’s what a true partnership is.

What drew Carilion to Agility PR Solutions was the ability to deliver what Carilion was looking for in its RFP. What keeps Carilion coming back, the reason they continue to renew, is the personal touch, the in-depth human analysis that’s provided, and, above all else, Agility’s commitment to working with Carilion to evolve the report, to continuously reassess in order to make it the most valuable resource it can be.

### IN SHORT, WHAT KEEPS CARILION COMING BACK IS AGILITY’S COMMITMENT TO BEING:

*“a partner rather than just providing us with a product.”*

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