

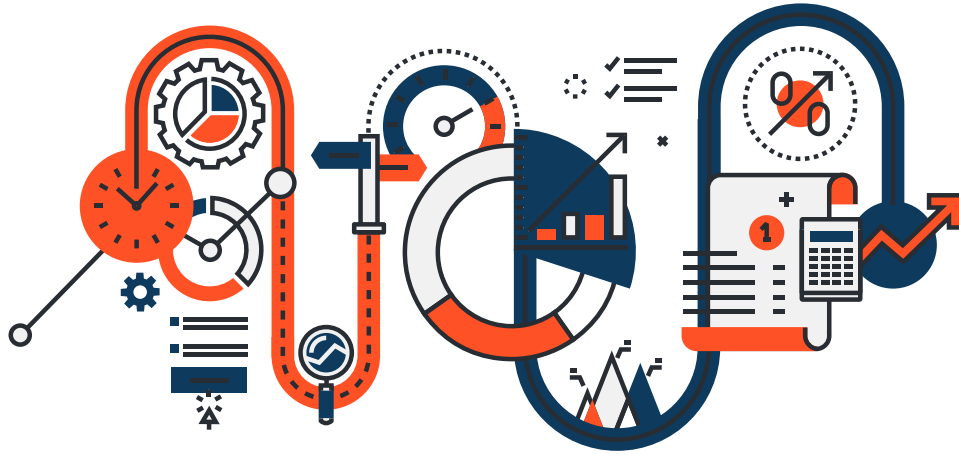
MEDIA MONITORING

... THE ULTIMATE GUIDE ...



... MEDIA MONITORING ...

Media monitoring is listening to who's saying what about your brand, your competitors, your industry, and any other topic that's important to you and your operations. In today's world, media monitoring must include more than just print, extending to online, broadcast and social media.



It feels like you've been punched in the gut.

Your boss is standing there in front of you—furious—demanding to know how you let this happen...

An industry report slamming your organization has been circulating since the beginning of the week and your competitors have been laughing it up, splashing it all over social media.

It's been snowballing out of control, and you, the communications expert, haven't done a thing.

How could you have, when you're just finding out now?

You feel sick.

A million thoughts and questions rush through your head. A couple of standouts: "How did I get here?" Better still, "How do I make sure this NEVER happens again?"

THE ANSWER—IN SHORT—IS MEDIA MONITORING.

Preventing situations like the one described above is just a fraction of what media monitoring can do for your organization, and your career as a communications professional.

THIS GUIDE IS GOING TO DELVE DEEP INTO MEDIA MONITORING.

We're going to talk about everything from what it is and what it's used for, to how you can make it work best for you and your organization.

Media monitoring is only now coming into its own even though it's been around since the 1850s. With alternatives ranging from free online options, to automated tools, to managed services, media monitoring can be as basic or as advanced as necessary.

And this is just the beginning.

When we're done here, you may not be an expert in the art and science that is media monitoring, but you'll be well on your way.

HERE'S HOW WE'RE GOING TO BREAK IT ALL DOWN:

- [Media monitoring: what it is and why it's important?](#)
- [Who should be using media monitoring?](#)
- [What to monitor](#)
- [Media monitoring for crisis situations](#)
- [Choosing a media monitoring provider](#)

Feel free to jump around and read about any section that catches your eye.

SO DIVE IN, COME UP FOR AIR WHEN YOU NEED TO, AND LET'S ALL GET TO KNOW MEDIA MONITORING A LITTLE BETTER.



MEDIA MONITORING

WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

What was once a literal cut-and-paste job—where workers scoured newspapers and magazines for mentions, cut out the articles, and pasted them into physical clipbooks—is now a modern and technologically advanced practice.



**WE'VE TRADED IN
OUR SCISSORS FOR
SOFTWARE.**

It uses machine learning, sophisticated algorithms, and powerful processors to track, gather, and organize mentions from across the media landscape. Sure, the premise remains the same—to track a topic through the media—but the process has become infinitely more refined.

Media monitoring is listening to who's saying what about your brand, your competitors, your industry, and any other topic that's important to you and your operations.

LOOK AT THE FIRST PART OF THE DEFINITION. MEDIA MONITORING IS LISTENING.

It's keeping your eyes and ears open to the conversation around your brand, a conversation that is happening all the time, on all channels and at all volumes.

Pretty important, right?

But different organizations have different wants and needs when it comes to media monitoring.

There are many types of media monitoring solutions available, and these fall into three broad categories:

- Free or cheap options
- Paid media monitoring tools
- Premium monitoring services

We'll cover these in a lot more detail later on, but for now it's good enough that you know they exist.

■■■ WHERE TO LOOK ■■■

With the avalanche of information every day—every second—gathering every bit of your organization's coverage can seem impossible. Don't worry, we have some good news for you. If there's a relevant mention out there, the best media monitoring solutions will find it for you. Here's where they look:

ONLINE

The world lives on the internet now. The fact is, if you're serious about tapping into the conversation and contributing to/taking hold of the message, then you need to be watching the web, from the biggest online news outlets to the smallest blogs.



PRINT

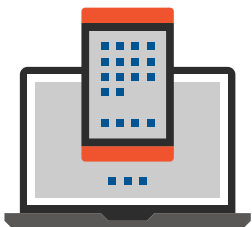


Modern media monitoring hasn't forgotten its roots. Newspapers and magazines still make up a good portion of press coverage, and, depending on your target audience, print might just be where you want your message to appear. There's still something prestigious about your message being in print and since it lives forever, it's where you should most care about how your brand is portrayed.

BROADCAST

Despite the downturn in cable subscriptions, television still holds substantial sway over public perception. Likewise, you ignore radio at your peril, seeing as in 2019 it reached 92% of the American population weekly. Good media monitoring software employs cutting-edge speech-to-text transcription, so you can trust you won't miss that priceless soundbite.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Social content continues to explode. Take for instance the fact that YouTube is now the second most-used search engine or that Reddit has more active monthly users than Twitter. If your audience isn't on social media, chances are you don't have an audience. What social media monitoring allows you to do is listen to, and involve yourself in, the conversation around your brand. This is called social listening. You can discover which pieces of content and coverage are resonating; and you can identify those all-important social media influencers.

■ ■ ■ FIVE REASONS TO MONITOR ■ ■ ■

MEDIA MONITORING IS CRUCIAL TO PR SUCCESS

The reason being that, when it comes to public relations, you can't be in the dark about anything. You absolutely need to know what's going on, not only with how your own organization is being presented and perceived, but with everything else too. You need to know what your competition is doing and where your industry is going.

And media monitoring provides that knowledge.

1. UNDERSTAND YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

When you monitor your market, you come to understand your target audience.

And by understanding your target audience, you can better relate to them and better communicate with them... which is pretty much the whole point of this PR thing, right?

It's about knowing how they speak and understanding the language they use when they talk about the things that matter to you. When you monitor your market, you learn what they do and don't care about, what they think about your competition, and what they love or hate about your product.

All this is to say, when you monitor your market, you can more effectively develop your communications so that you're speaking directly to the people that matter to you.

2. BRAND REPUTATION AND PERCEPTION

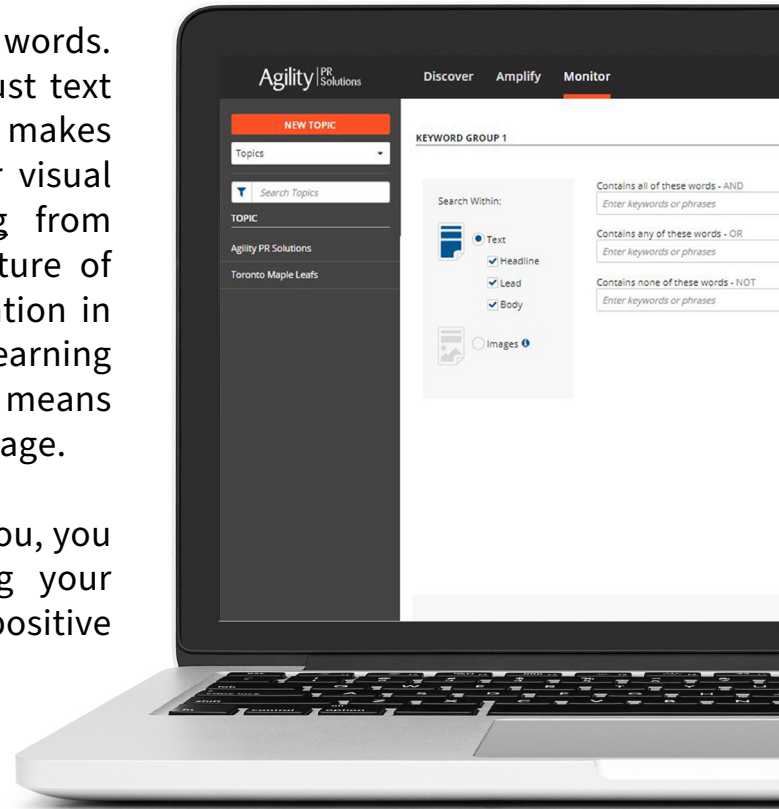
Your reputation is what you trade on. And it's only as strong as how your brand is perceived.

Now, how do you learn how your brand is perceived? *Gold star if you said, "media monitoring."*

[!\[\]\(ab4e2b3fc7e7887b7a72f548aa6f5e60_img.jpg\) Media monitoring can help you identify potential crises and mitigate damage through a quick and intelligent response.](#) It is also essential in creating an effective reputation management plan, allowing you to be proactive rather than just reactive.

And don't forget—a picture is worth a thousand words. Your monitoring needs to include more than just text mentions. Images dominate the media. So it only makes sense that you should monitor your brand for visual coverage too. AI-powered image monitoring from Agility PR Solutions, lets you get the full picture of coverage—literally. Even if there's no text mention in the article, our image monitoring uses machine learning to identify objects or logos in an image, which means you'll be able to unearth otherwise hidden coverage.

When you know what people are saying about you, you can respond thoughtfully, thereby increasing your transparency, your authenticity, and your positive relationships. *The result: a better reputation.*



3. RISK MITIGATION

No organization is immune from risk; it's a fact of doing business. But whereas understanding and mitigating potential risk is usually the responsibility of several internal departments, hiring a media monitoring provider can centralize the workload by:

- Identifying supplier-related risk by monitoring media mentions of new/existing suppliers
- Monitoring potential risk from changes to the legislative landscape you operate within
- Keeping an eye on what competitors are saying to the market, and, in turn, what market perception is of them

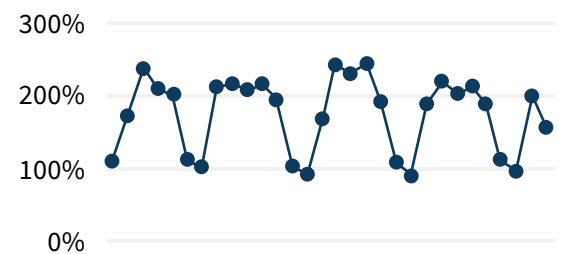
4. EVALUATE YOUR EFFORTS

There comes a time in every professional's life when they need to take a good, hard look at the work they do and objectively assess their performance.

For a PR pro, that day just so happens to come at the end of every campaign, if not more frequently.

Because if what you're doing isn't working, your boss or clients—or both—are going to want to see a change.

COVERAGE OVER TIME



Media monitoring lets you know if your efforts are turning into results. Only by tracking your coverage will you know if you're even getting any. Only by monitoring the media will you know if you're earning it. 🐦 Evaluating your efforts is crucial in any role, but PR and comms pros are nothing if not competitive and ambitious—we know you'd rather be learning and evolving than falling behind.

Nicholas Thompson
Editor-in-Chief
Wired
Audience Reach: 850,000 Circulation PRIMARY

Media Feed

Social Recent Coverage

@nxthompson
Editor in Chief of @wired. Contributor @cbsnews.
112,781 Followers 1,921 Following New York Location

Viewing the 20 most recent tweets.

Nicholas Thompson @nxthompson
"Unlimited power corrupts, even when the power is wielded by people in hoodies." One good thing that happened in te... <https://t.co/goQpI9DIKD>
21 minutes ago

Nicholas Thompson @nxthompson
If Bloomberg keeps spending millions in swing states, will it get GOP partisans to flip their position on whether F... <https://t.co/X30rGHEleo>
about 2 hours ago

Nicholas Thompson @nxthompson
Ahi! Actually, the AI is brilliant and devious. It got you to tweet out the ad. no? 🤖
<https://t.co/ybkMUygU8t>
1 day ago

5. IDENTIFIED JOURNALISTS AND INFLUENCERS FOR OUTREACH

When you monitor, you learn which journalists and influencers you should target.

If you find one who writes extensively on your competitors, you can reach out and show them what you do differently. If you find one who is not fully on your side, you can reach out and change their mind; the idea is that, in turn, they'll change the minds of their readers.

What we just mentioned is part of media relations—working with the media to relay information to the public. There's a lot to consider with media relations, but a large part of it is establishing positive relationships with media and pitching your story in a way that's attention grabbing and effective. But that's a topic for another time. Let's get back to monitoring.

Monitoring can identify:

- Journalists who often write about your market or industry and whose opinions carry clout with your target audience
- Individuals with social media followings whom you can leverage to gather product feedback, or influence to review or endorse your offering. Don't forget to include micro-influencers in your calculations
- Detractors who could spread negative or misleading information about you

It's imperative to know who's saying what and who's listening to them before reaching out with your own contribution to the conversation.



WHO SHOULD BE USING MEDIA MONITORING?

WELL, LET'S PUT IT THIS WAY...

If you work for an organization that has interactions with the public (perhaps as customers, investors, donors, employees, constituents, volunteers, neighbors, anything really) and you care about reputation and public perception, then you need a media monitoring tool in your kit.

Likewise, if you're forward thinking, and want to spot the opportunities and risks that could change everything for your organization, then tracking what's being said about your industry, your competitors, and the issues your organization cares about is a must—and a media monitoring service can help.

Let's consider a few scenarios.

- Startups and small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Large businesses
- Advocacy groups, associations, and the not-for-profit sector
- Government and public administration
- PR and communications agencies

■■■ STARTUPS AND SMALL- TO MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMES) ■■■

🐦 Even today, positive media coverage is still the ultimate credibility marker and can be a powerful growth hack for your business if properly leveraged. Earned media can draw a lot of attention to a company, helping to bring in new prospects, customers, investors, and talent.

In the words of another author, “The most trusted source of information about your business comes not from the information you disseminate to the public, but from third party sources such as the media or highly satisfied customers. People are much more likely to trust messages about your brand when they read or hear about it in the media, than through a hard sales message.”

But here's the thing—how will you collect and leverage this awesome credibility if you aren't regularly keeping track of every online publication, newspaper, journal, magazine, and blog that might mention you?

Startups and SMEs work hard to promote their brands—sometimes on very limited budgets. Keeping track of what media coverage they earn can help prove the value of time and money spent on PR and marketing.

They also need to be responsive to their audience and play a role in shaping public perception in order to grow. An article from [Piktochart nailed it](#), stating, "There IS a conversation about your brand happening out there, the only question is what are you doing about it?"

Not all startups can afford a robust media monitoring service; fair enough. But even they have some free options available (at least for monitoring online mentions).

“Many companies think online conversations matter only to their marketing teams. But your customers are the source of your business. Their opinions matter, not just to PR or marketing, but to every team—from product development to sales. Keeping track of these conversations is therefore incredibly important.”

Joei Chan

■■■ LARGE BUSINESSES ■■■

Naturally, larger businesses are in a bit of a different situation than startups and SMEs, but their media monitoring needs are no less important.

Large businesses generate a lot of media coverage and online mentions, but much of that content is not relevant to their overall success or day-to-day operations. They need help separating the noise from the important news. Big businesses also need to be able to demonstrate the ROI of their PR efforts, benchmark their performance, and communicate that information clearly with key stakeholders.

Whereas a small business may be able to set up an automated monitoring service and sort the relevant mentions from the noise by themselves, big businesses typically prefer to receive curated (managed) media monitoring reports that focus on only the most relevant pieces.



There are so many reasons for large businesses to invest in a robust media monitoring service:

- Public relations
- Risk management
- Crisis management
- Marketing
- Sales
- And more...

Let's dig into a few examples:

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Large companies invest a lot of money in public relations. Whether it's with PR firms or in building out their own in-house communications teams, they are increasingly looking for proof that their money is being well spent. Media monitoring and analysis can help answer that question—and seeing what works can help direct future efforts and investments in PR.

RISK MANAGEMENT

When a business reaches a certain size, there is almost inevitably some degree of public affairs risk built into the business model. Imagine the real-estate developer whose hundred-million-dollar build is threatened by community backlash over gentrification—yet chooses not to pay attention to influential blogs and community publications in the area.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

We'll touch on this in more detail further along, but for now let's just say this:

How a business responds to a crisis can be the difference between A) a disastrous hit to their reputation (sales, stock price, ability to attract talent, etc.) and B) cementing their role as a responsible leader in their industry.

But that ability to respond effectively depends on several factors: the response must be timely; it must address the public's concerns; and it must correct any damaging misinformation that has begun to circulate in the wake of the crisis. Guess what? All these factors start with monitoring the media and public discourse surrounding the event in question. Monitoring can help you evaluate what your company's public image was before a crisis, so you can gauge how to focus your crisis rehab efforts and know when you're getting back on track.

■■■ ADVOCACY GROUPS, ASSOCIATIONS, ■■■ AND THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR



The organizations in this category are driven primarily by the specific issues that are important to them and their members, constituents, or volunteers.

Although smaller not-for-profits (NFPs) may not have the resources to pay for a professional media monitoring service, they can still dip their toes in the water using some of the free options outlined in this document—and they should! Seriously, don't you think public opinion might be important to an organization whose very lifeblood is the goodwill of donors and volunteers? Of course it is!

Likewise, advocacy groups, associations, and NFPs can monitor the coverage of issues they care about in order to be more prepared and effective in the pursuit of their missions.

Take for example an organization whose mission is to protect the environment in a specific region. Beyond monitoring their own coverage, should they pay attention to news about a nearby industrial operation? About business and real-estate development in the region? About environmental protection legislation in their country, region, or municipality? Yes, yes, and yes.

Media monitoring can warn an organization of outside opportunities, risks, and threats. Not only can they use media monitoring to stay informed, they can leverage news of impending risk in order to rally support, donations, and mobilize their community with news of the urgency of the cause. In turn, monitored coverage of the public outcry in support of a cause can provide these organizations with some much-needed political leverage.

■■■ GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ■■■

Organizations in this category tend to be publicly funded and subject to a great deal of scrutiny. For government and public administration bodies, having the public's confidence or disdain makes a world of difference. These organizations absolutely must be attentive to public sentiment and the ways they are being portrayed in the press.



Like the previous category, government and public administration organizations can leverage media monitoring and analysis for:

- Issues management
- Reputation management
- Risk management
- Future planning

Want to dig further into the details? Check out our article [Why governing bodies should use media monitoring and analysis.](#)

■■■ PR AND COMMUNICATIONS AGENCIES ■■■

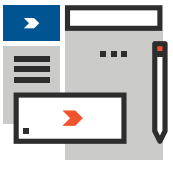
This is one group that can really leverage media monitoring to their advantage. In many cases, these agencies are hired to raise a brand's profile or manage perceptions.

It should come as no surprise then that a public relations or integrated marketing and communications agency would need to monitor media coverage of their clients. Monitoring their clients' coverage allows these agencies to benchmark earned media, track the success of their campaigns, and stay on top of any negative publicity in need of a response.

Growing comms and PR agencies also need to acquire new clients, and part of how they can demonstrate their value is by showing examples of positive coverage they've earned for their other clients. Monitoring and collecting these "clippings" can help bring some very persuasive proof to a pitch.

Agencies can also use monitoring to effectively seek out potential clients who are getting some coverage but could be doing better. Planning to reach out and pitch them? How about starting with some research on how they have been covered in the past, so you can start speaking intelligently about how they could improve their PR output with your help.

Nothing like sounding smart to clients and prospects!



WHAT TO MONITOR

"I know media monitoring's important, but where do I start?"

This is something we hear every day. And we get it.

Remember that information avalanche you simultaneously want to avoid and be part of? There is a way to navigate it all and only listen to the things that matter. A good media monitoring tool will help you do that.

The way most media monitoring tools work is with keywords. You (or the media monitoring company, or a combination of the two of you) compile a list of keywords that you think worthy of watching. Then you watch.

But this can quickly get out of hand, especially if the tool you're using allows for unlimited keyword monitoring (like we do).

That's why it's important that you remember one thing, which will become your new monitoring mantra: *"I do not need to monitor everything."*

But... you should absolutely monitor these four things:

■ ■ ■ YOURSELF ■ ■ ■

This one is probably a bit obvious, but it bears saying: you need to monitor the media for mentions of your own organization. That includes all known spellings and nicknames and short versions; if McDonald's ignored mentions of Micky D's, oh boy! they'd miss a lot.

At its most basic, monitoring yourself lets you know—and prove—that you're getting earned media coverage in the first place.

Now, these ones are big: it also lets you know who's talking about you and what they're saying.

THE WHO

If you know who your biggest supporters and detractors are, you can target them when it comes time to spread good news about yourself. Keep the “good guys” in your corner and the “bad guys” on your radar. While you may not be able to change the minds of the detractors, being first to know about criticism is essential in not being caught flat-footed. A quick response can give you the edge you need to control the narrative.

THE WHAT

Well, that's just elementary: how can you respond to something if you don't know what that something is?

A little gold nugget from our SlideShare [Taking Control With Media Monitoring: Tips for the Modern PR Guru](#):

*“When you know who is saying what—and where— about the topics that matter to your organization, you give yourself an edge. **When you don’t know, you’re at the mercy of your competition.**”*

And despite what you've heard since you were in short pants, there is such a thing as bad publicity. When your name gets dragged through the mud, wouldn't you rather know about it? You can't address what you don't know. Likewise, when the publicity is good—like actually good—and you know about it, you can exploit the nice feelings and promote the heck out of the piece.




MONITORING YOURSELF ALSO OPENS THE DOOR TO THE WONDERFUL—AND, TO BE HONEST, NECESSARY—WORLD OF BENCHMARKING.

When you start to listen, you're able to track the coverage you're getting. As the months and quarters and years roll by, you're then able to compare your current levels to past performance. This is how you know if you're improving, if you're furthering your brand's goals, and if you're evolving as a communications professional.

Benchmarking can be applied to many different aspects of monitoring:

- Overall coverage over time
- Share of voice
- Spokespeople quotes
- Key messages conveyed
- Instance of favorable vs. unfavorable mentions
- And many, many more!

It's all about being in control. When you monitor yourself, you gain the knowledge you need to better do your job. What's that quote? First you get the knowledge, then you get the power, then you get the control over your branding and positioning. That's definitely it.

But what about those organizations that feel they don't get enough earned media coverage to warrant monitoring themselves? To them we say, [media monitoring has more uses than just tracking your own coverage; there's a whole world out there you need to be tuned into.](#) 

■■■ YOUR COMPETITION ■■■

Whether you're an industry newcomer or an industry leader, you're not alone in your space. Monitoring yourself and your competition will help you ascertain your share of voice—the portion of media attention starring you in the total coverage of... well anything, a product, issue, industry etc.

If you are a newcomer, you know that even the smallest fish in the pond has competitors, and the best way to grow big like them is to stay on top of their movements and take advantage where you can.

If you're that leader, how are you going to make sure you stay on top? By keeping abreast of the movements of those who want to take you down, that's how.

"A precise understanding of your competitor's strengths and weaknesses is an important prerequisite for developing a strategy to compete against it."

Dr. Gerhard van Wyk, business analyst and professor of marketing management



Competitive analysis is a pillar of any successful organization. If you don't know what your industry rivals are doing—what products they're launching, what executives they're hiring, what their spokespeople are saying—you're operating in the dark.

Media monitoring turns on the light.

■■■ YOUR INDUSTRY ■■■

If you're too humble to monitor yourself and too shy to monitor your competition, please, please at least monitor your industry.

As the great Mark Cuban said, *"The first step (to business success) is to learn more about your industry than anyone in the world."*

The bottom line is that your industry is where you live.

If you're too small to garner much coverage, fine. If your only other competitor is just as small, good for you. But there is no reason not to do everything in your power to learn about and stay on top of your industry.

And media monitoring is the first step.

■■■ YOUR SUPPLIERS AND VENDORS ■■■

Here's one you may not have thought of: how about keeping track of the companies you partner with?

Like we outlined in the risk mitigation section above, no organization is immune from risk. And the more partners you have, the more exposed you are. When one of your suppliers or vendors is found guilty in the court of public opinion, chances are your organization will be found guilty by association.

Media monitoring can save you from that fate.

Before you enter into a partnership with a new supplier or vendor, use your media monitoring tool to investigate their past coverage. You might be surprised how many skeletons are there waiting to be uncovered.

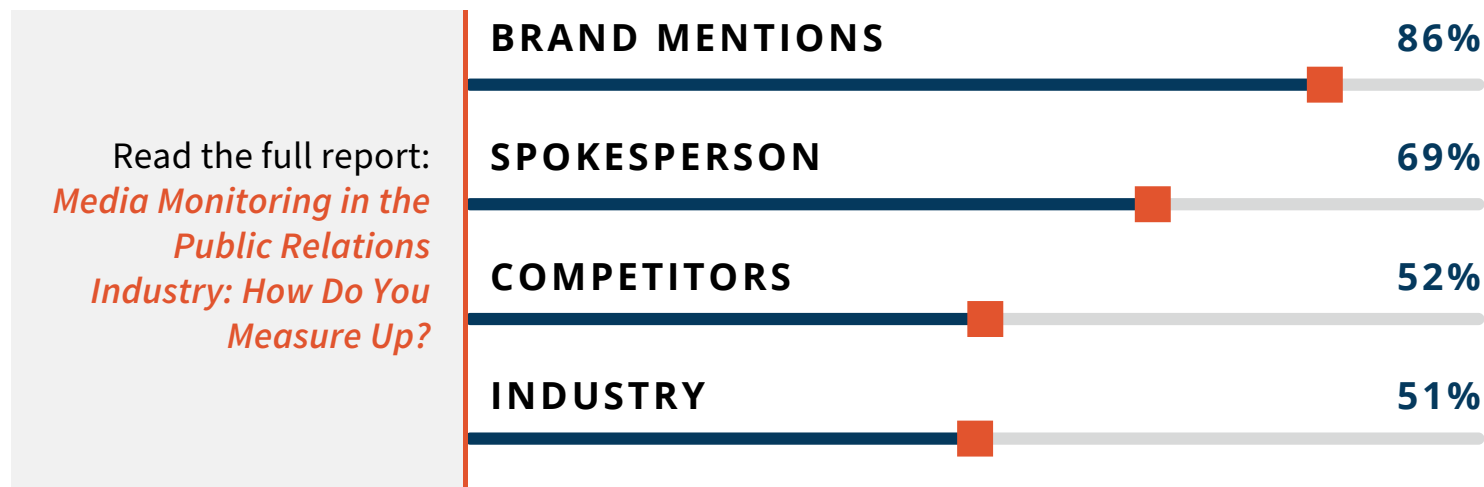
This is about protecting your brand value. You've worked exceptionally hard to build and maintain your good reputation (it's what you trade on, remember?); don't risk tarnishing it by neglecting to vet a partner before doing business with them.

Same goes for current partners. By monitoring their coverage, you put yourself in a position to get out in front of any news that could potentially damage your own brand.

We know that risk is a fact of doing business, but with media monitoring you reduce it and take back some of the control.



We recently asked 299 PR and communications pros from across North America, Europe and beyond about their media monitoring habits. We learned that 95 percent of them are doing some kind of media monitoring activity. Here are the topics they are looking at:





MEDIA MONITORING FOR CRISIS SITUATIONS

There comes a time in the life of every business when a public relations crisis surfaces. How the PR professionals involved handle this crisis can determine whether the company sinks or swims.

It's not hard to remember examples of big businesses being caught flat-footed in the face of crisis. What examples come to mind for you?

The airplane manufacturer's tone-deaf response to the devastating consequences of its malfunctioning products...

The well-known clothing brand's tactless and socially oblivious design choice that earned it consumer outrage...


The sports league whose biggest event was haunted by the bad press of a bungled call...

What happened in these moments? Did these companies know there was a massive media story building up around their crisis and simply chose not to respond? Or were they not monitoring the coverage to begin with?

Poorly handled news stories like these can have a crippling effect on a company's reputation, stock price, and future ability to do business. Well monitored and managed news stories means the company has a chance to respond effectively and shape the public narrative around their crisis.

Let's break down how media monitoring can be used at the various stages of crisis management

■■■ BEING PREPARED BEFORE A CRISIS ■■■

Sure, you can sit back and hope for the best... but you need to prepare for the worst. That's how you want to approach crisis management. You want to start creating a plan for your organization's crisis response strategy when everything is going well, not when everything is going wrong. 

More than just creating a plan, many organizations schedule a regular review of their crisis response strategy and update it to account for any changes in public opinion or brand reputation.

Use media monitoring to understand and benchmark your current brand perceptions (including regional differences). Use monitoring to identify potential surrogates—third party authorities and influencers who can champion your organization, even when you've made some mistakes.

Remember earlier when we said that you should be monitoring your competition? You can learn a lot by paying attention when a competitor experiences a crisis. Take special note of how they handle the crisis, how they talk about the situation, and who covers the story. You can take those key learnings and build them into your own crisis plan.



■■■ LISTENING DURING A CRISIS ■■■

When the "stuff" hits the fan, the PR professional wants to be the first to know, and for this they rely on real-time media monitoring with alerts to notify them of important coverage of their organization.



Before they can respond, PR pros need to know as much about the situation as possible, including what is being said about their organization or client(s), and who is saying it.

Research has consistently shown that listening is critical for communication and conflict resolution, especially during a crisis. Consumers want to make sure their voices are heard, especially when there's a problem, so make sure you hear them.

"Listen to the people who are complaining. It is very important to try to understand what is making people angry. Anger hinders communication, and the person you are addressing will not listen to your message until they have had their say."

From Forbes

A properly set up media monitoring program will help catch the news quickly and give you the advantage of a few precious minutes so you can craft a counter-narrative and get in front of the story before it gets out of hand.

■■■ BRAND REHAB AFTER A CRISIS ■■■

Beyond informing that initial response, monitoring the conversation around a crisis will reveal what a brand can do afterward to make things right and restore their tarnished reputation.

As we've said before, once the storm has passed, it's tempting to want to put a PR crisis behind you. But while operations have returned to normal, the truth is your company now exists in a new normal. How do you navigate this territory? Here are three key questions to ask yourself as your brand recovers:

- How bad is it?
- How can we rebuild?
- What have we learned?

The things you learn from monitoring the coverage can help answer these questions and pave the way forward.

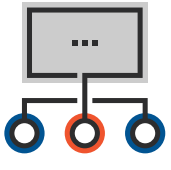
■■■ PRO TIP FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PREP: ■■■ FIND YOUR SPOKESPERSON/PEOPLE

Spokespeople are vital to ensure consistent clear communication with the media and other external audiences. They are your official voice in a time of crisis. You can have more than one, but as a rule, always be as selective as possible. The more people speaking to the media means the more chances there are for the message to be diluted or contradicted.

Here's a quick checklist to help you choose and prepare your spokesperson/people:

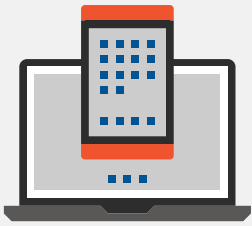
- Who is the official voice/face of the company?
- Who in the company has previously spoken with media?
- Are they media trained? If not, they'll need to be.
- Are they an expert on any specific topic?

Once you've chosen your spokesperson/people, these should be the ONLY people speaking to the media. Ensure that the rest of the company's employees/board are aware of this, so they know to redirect media inquiries as necessary.



CHOOSING A MEDIA MONITORING PROVIDER

So, you're thinking of getting started with media monitoring, or perhaps switching providers. Good for you, but where do you start?



If you'd like to talk to someone and get a personal consultation, [drop us a line](#) and one of our media monitoring experts can help sort through your requirements and help you find the right solution for you (even if it isn't us). They can talk to you about your wish list of features, help you sort must-haves from nice-to-haves, and come up with a plan that can evolve along with your needs.

Not ready to talk to someone? That's OK—just keep on reading.

Naturally, there are a lot of factors to consider. A good way to start is by considering your monitoring budget and needs. You'll have to choose between:

- [Free or cheap options](#)
- [Paid media monitoring tools](#)
- [Premium media monitoring services](#) (where media analysts do all the work for you)

■ ■ ■ FREE OR CHEAP OPTIONS ■ ■ ■

If you're broke but still intent on getting started with monitoring, we salute your initiative!

Consider setting up some [Google Alerts](#) to monitor coverage in online news and blogs. But be warned that the results you see will be bare-bones and you might even miss some mentions; we've heard that Google Alerts scrapes sometimes as little as 30% of what professional tools and services do.

You can augment that with some social media monitoring with [free social media monitoring options](#).

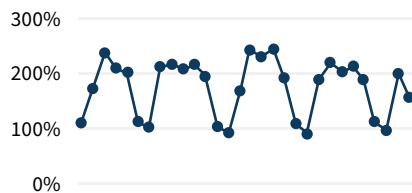
In both cases you'll have to decide what keywords to monitor for, so make sure to check out our [DIY Media Monitoring Guide](#) for some advice on how to get started.

PAID MEDIA MONITORING TOOLS

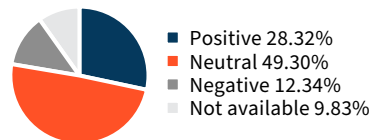
If you have a bit of a budget to work with, that opens a lot of options for you. When we say "media monitoring tools" here, we're pretty much referring to cloud-based software tools that you can use to run your own media monitoring program. Premium, "done-for-you" options are covered in the next section.

A media monitoring tool is one that you set up (usually with the help of the provider) and maintain yourself. It includes a dashboard, the option for you to receive automated briefs and alerts, and integrated reporting capabilities that make it easy to share the results of your media monitoring efforts among stakeholders.

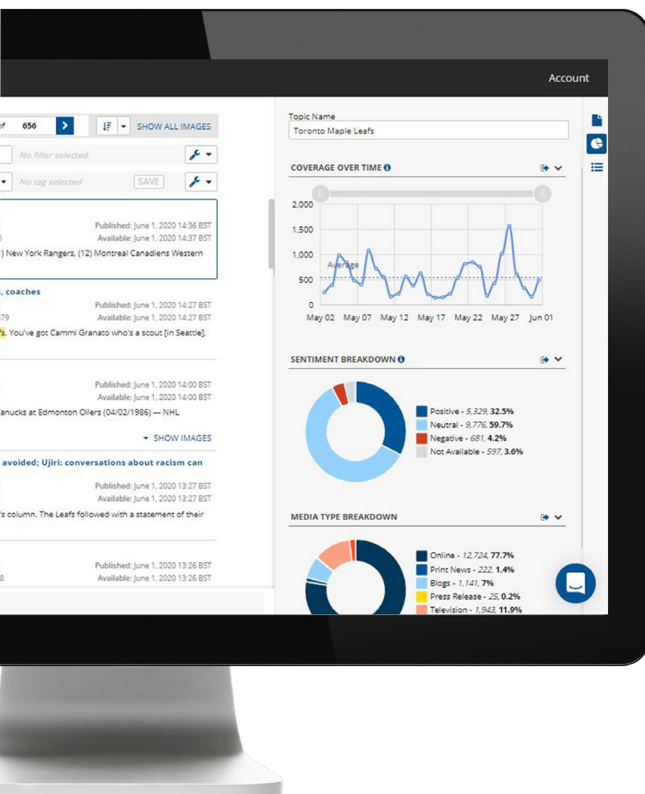
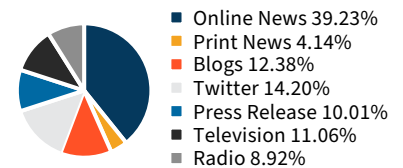
COVERAGE OVER TIME



SENTIMENT BREAKDOWN



MEDIA TYPE BREAKDOWN



It's great to have presentation-ready charts to add to your reports or to highlight for executives. Better still, reporting on sentiment and coverage-over-time also helps you figure out what's working (or not) so you can evolve as a communicator and demonstrate the business impact of your PR efforts.

Compared to the free and cheap options mentioned above, a paid tool should surface a lot more relevant coverage and will likely be searching a broader range of sources. A little more time consuming and less in-depth than a done-for-you media monitoring service, but much more robust than a free online tool.

Agility Monitoring from Agility PR Solutions has all the features mentioned here, and more

■■■ PREMIUM MEDIA MONITORING SERVICES ■■■

When your needs are a little more extensive, it helps to have a personalized, fully managed service at your disposal—a provider who can be a partner rather than just a vendor.

If you're working for a large organization that generates a lot of media coverage, or has complex monitoring needs, a managed media monitoring service will be the best fit. You fit into this category if...

- You need someone to help separate the wheat from the chaff
- You want advanced analysis and measurement
- You care about quality of coverage, not just quantity
- You need someone to create custom reports that exactly meet your needs
- You trust sentiment analysis to a human, over a piece of software

Getting this just right takes a human touch.



Agility PR Solutions' Media Intelligence Services provides exactly that. It's a mix of powerful monitoring tools and human-augmented, fully managed services. Our media analysts set up and fine-tune keyword searches, curate executive-ready daily briefs, add context and sentiment insights in a way that only a human can, and make sure you're delighted with every curated report and media brief delivered.

The difference between this and an automated tool is the level of analysis you get out of your monitoring. Whereas an automated tool will provide you with the quantity of your coverage, a managed service also lets you know the quality—accurate and relevant. And when you know quality, you can much more easily measure your PR efforts and connect them to your organization's business goals.

It's all about understanding the unique communications needs, challenges, and goals of your organization, and having a media monitoring solution to help you meet them. 🐦

Among the three types of media monitoring solutions, this is the Cadillac.

Read our client success stories to see how Media Intelligence Services can help an organization like yours.

■■■ COMPARING PROVIDERS ■■■

If you've been shopping around for a media monitoring tool or service, you've already heard of the two 800-pound gorillas in the industry. If you've been around for a while, you've probably spent your career hopping back and forth between the two—never being completely happy with either.

It's no secret that there are some big players in the space, but before you decide on the right option, be sure to read [reviews](#) on sites like G2 Crowd—and compare the leading vendors.

Everyone has different preferences about the businesses they work with and the service they receive, so look around and make sure you find a service provider that fits with your priorities. Here at Agility PR Solutions we believe in a few things:

EASY-TO-USE, INTUITIVE TOOLS

It has to be painless to set up and use. Ease of use makes the difference between a tool you'll love, and one that's a chore. If you're a PR professional this is a quality of life issue.

QUALITY SUPPORT

If you need help, you want a vendor that is there for you. Plain and simple. At Agility, we know how important that is. That's why we have live chat on our platform—so we're there to answer your questions, and make sure our tools are working exactly as they should, so you never have to worry.

SHARING IS CARING

We make it simple to collect your coverage into virtual clipbooks that you can effortlessly share with colleagues or clients who need to be kept in the loop.

DOING BUSINESS TOGETHER SHOULD BE SIMPLE

We love our customers, and it shows—because they love us too! Check reviews using sites like [G2](#) where you can see user ratings on important things like ease of use, quality of support and ease of setup.

IT'S NOT JUST THE COVERAGE THAT MATTERS

We include sentiment analysis so you can tell at a glance whether a mention is positive or not.


IMAGES ARE IMPORTANT

We use AI-powered image search in our media monitoring tool, so you can go beyond text-only results and understand even more about the context of your coverage.

YOU NEED SOME SPECIFIC INFORMATION INCLUDED

We include details that make it easy to tell your story, such as share of voice and coverage over time. Best of all, it's dead simple to paste these charts and tables into the reports you're sharing with your colleagues, boss, board, etc.

Okay, maybe we're bragging, but it's only because we think you're great and want to make a good impression.

Whether you're just starting out, or looking to make a switch, the best media monitoring providers make sure you can jump right in without missing a beat. 

At least that's our commitment to you...

With superb on-boarding packages, attentive account executives, reliable support, and the promise of a superior product and service, there's really nothing to be worried about.



**WE'RE PROUD OF HOW WE SERVE OUR CLIENTS AND
HOPE YOU'LL CONSIDER DOING BUSINESS WITH US!**