

DICTIONARY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS MEASUREMENT AND RESEARCH

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FOREWARD TO 2007 EDITION

In the more than three years since the *Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement and Research* was first released, it has become one of the most popular papers the Institute for Public Relations has ever published. Week after week, visitors to our free website (www.instituteforpr.org) download the dictionary. It has been reprinted with permission, distributed and sometimes debated at major professional and academic conferences.

The truth is that public relations teachers and practitioners traditionally have not used the same nomenclature – let alone definitions – for many central concepts of research and measurement. Increasingly, however, it is clear that we should save our creativity for program development and execution, not for the names and meanings applied to key elements of the science beneath the art of public relations.

To that end, this second edition covers an expanded number of terms, with input from a broader group of scholars and research experts. They now represent many more countries where public relations science is regularly used. The Institute owes an enormous debt of gratitude to all of them, but particularly to Dr. Don W. Stacks. His tireless commitment to the Institute's mission is surpassed only by his commitment to family and students – and we are so very grateful to be number three on that list.

So, is the dictionary done yet? For now, maybe. But this new edition will undoubtedly receive even wider distribution, leading to even more debate, and ultimately to further evolution in our thinking about public relations research and measurement. You are invited to take part.

Frank Ovaitt
President & CEO
Institute for Public Relations

Gainesville, Florida
January 2006

FOREWORD TO 2002 EDITION

“Words... are innocent, neutral, precise, standing for this, describing that, meaning the other...so if you look after them you can build bridges across incomprehension and chaos.

“I don’t think writers are sacred, but words are. They deserve respect. If you get the right ones in the right order they can nudge the world a little....”

From the play, THE REAL THING by Tom Stoppard

Why a dictionary for public relations measurement and research?

Because we don’t all measure the same things, measure the same ways, or use the same tools or terminology. To get all of us on the same page we need to know precisely what we mean when we use or say certain words in measuring our activities and our research.

Some may complain that the words we have chosen to define are too simplistic. Remember Webster once defended his word choice by explaining that it’s the little words we think we know the meaning of - but don’t - which cause most of the problems in understanding and communications.

We thank Dr. Don Stacks and others who have given so generously of their time to assemble this special choice of words and politely debate each definition. We have listed their names for you and they will tell you they gratefully acknowledge that this is a work in progress. Public relations continuously evolves so there are no “final words.”

Jack Felton
President & CEO
Institute for Public Relations

Gainesville, Florida
September 2002

PREFACE TO 2007 EDITION

Public relations measurement and research has progressed far in the five years between the first and second editions of the Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement and Research. In its desire to answer concerns—among its own membership and from “internal” and “external” clients—about demonstrating its effectiveness, the profession began to focus on demonstrating its impact on the client’s outcomes of interest. This in turn has led to a more education in research design and evaluation methods.

The second edition of the Dictionary clearly reflects this trend. It does so in several ways. First, the Dictionary has been expanded by almost 100 terms. Second, its cross-referencing is more complete. Third, individual terms have been further designated as statistical “s” or methodological “m” within the individual term definitions. Finally, terms have been redefined and in many instances are more sophisticated—reflecting a sophistication of the profession.

I am indebted to the Commission for Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation members who toiled tirelessly to find suitable new terms and define them so that the user might better understand not only the term but also its usage(s) in the research and evaluation process. The second edition would not have been possible without their help.

I would like to acknowledge the help of Ms. Marcia L. Watson who carefully proofed and corrected versions of the second edition. She did this in addition to her other duties as a doctoral student at the University of Miami.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the University of Miami School of Communication and Dean Sam Grogg for allowing me the time to work on this project.

Don W. Stacks
Coral Gables

DICTIONARY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS MEASUREMENT AND RESEARCH¹

– A –

Algorithm – *s.* a step-by-step problem-solving procedure, especially an established, recursive computational procedure for solving a problem in a finite number of steps

Alpha Level (α) – *s.* the amount of error or chance allowed in sampling or inferential testing

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) – *s.* an inferential statistical test of significance for continuous measurement dependent variables against a number of groups as independent variables

Articles – *m.* an output, typically printed but also found on the Internet

Attitude – *m.* a predisposition to act or behave toward some object; a motivating factor in public relations; composed of three dimensions: affective (emotional evaluation), cognitive (knowledge evaluation), and connotative (behavioral evaluation)

Attitude Research – *m.* the measuring and interpreting a full range of views, sentiments, feelings, opinions, and beliefs that segments of the public may hold toward a client or product

Attitude Scale – *m.* a measure that targets respondent attitudes or beliefs toward some object; typically interval-level data and requires that an arbitrary or absolute midpoint

(“neutral” or “neither agree nor disagree”) be provided to the respondent; also known as Likert-type or Semantic Differential measures; *s.* an output measured as an interval or ratio measure

Audience – *m.* a specified group from within a defined public targeted for influence

– B –

Bar Graph – *s.* A representation of a frequency distribution by means of rectangles (or other indicators) whose widths represent class intervals and whose heights represent corresponding frequencies; see also: graph

Baseline – *s.* an initial measurement against which all subsequent measures are compared; *m.* a data point established for comparison at the developmental stage of a research campaign.

Behavioral Event Interview (BEI) – an interview technique used to solicit evidence or examples of a specific competency or skill you possess; BEI is based on the premise that a person's past behavior is the best predictor of their future performance

Behavioral Objective – *m.* an objective that specifies the expected public relations campaign or program outcome in terms of specific behaviors; *s.* a measure that is actionable in that it *is* the behavior

¹ Terms are identified as either statistical (*s.*) or methodological (*m.*). Common usage is used when determining whether the term is listed as either statistical or methodological when terms have dual meanings (e.g., regression).

requested (e.g., outcome) of a target audience; see also: outcome

Belief – *m.* a long-held evaluation of some object, usually determined on a basis its occurrence; clusters of beliefs yield attitudes

Benchmarking (Benchmark Study) – *m.* a measurement technique that involves having an organization learn something about its own practices, the practices of selected others, and then compares these practices

Bivariate Analysis – *s.* a statistical examination of the relationship between two variables

BRAD – *s.* British Rate and Data measure – provides circulation and advertising costs data

– C –

Campaign (Program) – *m.* the planning, execution, and evaluation of a public relations plan of action aimed at solving a problem

Case Study Methodology – *m.* an informal research methodology that gathers data on a specific individual or company or product with the analysis focused on understanding its unique qualities; is not generalizable to other cases or populations

Categorical Data – *s.* measurement data that are defined by their association with groups and are expressed in terms of frequencies, percentages, and proportions; see also: nominal data, ordinal data

Category – *m.* in content analysis the part of the system where the content (units of analysis) are placed; also referred to as “subjects” or “buckets”

Causal Relationship – *m.* a relationship between variables in which a change in one variable forces, produces, or

brings about a change in another variable; *s.* the result of a significant interaction term in an analysis of variance or regression, often displayed in path analyses or sequential equation models

Census – *m.* collection of data from every person or object in a population

Central Tendency – *s.* a statistic that describes the typical or average case in the distribution of a variable; see also: mean, median, mode, range, standard deviation, standardized score, variance, z-score

Characters – *m.* a manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of individuals or roles (e.g., occupations, roles, race)

Chi-Square (X^2) – *s.* an inferential statistical test of significance for categorical data (nominal or ordinal)

Circulation – *s.* number of copies of a publication as distributed (as opposed to read)

Closed-Ended Question – *m.* a question that requires participants to answer selected and predetermined responses (e.g., strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree)

Cluster analysis – *s.* An exploratory data analysis tool which aims at sorting different objects into groups in a way that the degree of association between two objects is maximal if they belong to the same group and minimal if otherwise

Clustered Sample – *m.* a type of probability sample that involves first breaking the population into heterogeneous subsets (or clusters), and then selecting the potential sample at random from the individual clusters

Coefficient Alpha (α) – *s.* a statistical test for a measurement’s reliability for interval and ratio data; also known as Cronbach’s coefficient alpha

Cohen’s Kappa – *s.* an intercoder reliability measure used in content analysis when there are more than two coders; see also: reliability, content analysis

Cohort Survey – *m.* a type of longitudinal survey in which some specific group is studied over time according to some criteria that stays the same (e.g., age = 21) while the samples may differ

Column Inches – *s.* total length of an article if it were all one-column measured in inches (or centimeters); determines the total “share of ink” that a company or brand has achieved

Communication – *m.* the process that deals with the transmission and reception of intentional messages that are a part of a natural language system (e.g., words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs)

Communication Product (Product) – *m.* the end result of the communication product process resulting in the production and dissemination of a brochure, media release, video news release, Web site, speech, and so forth; see also: output, outtake

Communication(s) Audit – *m.* a systematic review and analysis of how effectively an organization communicates with all of its major internal and external audiences by identifying these audiences, by identifying the communication programs and their communication products utilized for each audience, by determining the effectiveness of

these programs and their products, and by identifying gaps in the overall existing communication program; uses accepted research techniques and methodologies; see also: formal methodology, informal methodology, case study, content analysis, survey, in-depth interview, focus group, experiment, secondary, historical, participant-observation

Communication(s) Research – *m.* any systematic study of the relationships and patterns that are developed when people seek to share information with each other

Community Case Study – *m.* an informal methodology whereby the researcher takes an in-depth look at one or several communities – subsections of communities – in which an organization has an interest by impartial, trained researchers using a mix of informal research methodologies (i.e., participant-observation, role-playing, secondary analysis, content analysis, interviewing, focus groups)

Concurrent Validity – *m.* a measurement device’s ability to vary directly with a measure of the same construct or indirectly with a measure of an opposite construct. It allows you to show that your test is valid by comparing it with an already valid test

Confidence Interval – *s.* in survey methodology based on a random sampling technique; the range of values or measurement within which a population parameter is estimated to fall (e.g., for a large population we might expect answers to a question to be within $\pm 3\%$ of the true population answer; if 55% responded positively, the confidence interval

would be from 52% to 58%); sometimes called measurement error

Confidence Level – *m.* in survey methodology based on a random sampling technique, the amount of confidence we can place on our confidence interval (typically set at 95%, or 95 out of 100 cases truly representing the population under study, with *no more than 5* cases out of 100 misrepresenting that population); sometimes called sampling error; *s.* the amount of confidence a researcher has that a finding between groups or categories is statistically significant; see also: statistically significant

Construct Validity – *m.* a dimension of measurement; *s.* a statistically tested form of measurement validity that seeks to establish the dimensionality of a measure; see also: validity, face validity, criterion-related validity, content validity, discriminant validity, divergent validity

Content Analysis – *m.* an informal research methodology (and measurement tool) that systematically tracks messages (written, spoken, broadcast) and translates them into quantifiable form via a systematic approach to defining message categories through specified units of analysis; the action of breaking down message content into predetermined components (categories) to form a judgment capable of being measured

Content Validity – *m.* a form of measurement validity that is based on other researchers or experts evaluations of the measurement items contained in a measure; see also: validity, fact validity, construct validity, criterion-related validity,

discriminant validity, divergent validity

Contingency Question – *m.* a survey question that is to be asked only to some respondents, determined by their responses to some other questions; sometimes called a “funnel question”

Contingency Table – *s.* a statistical table for displaying the relationship between variables in terms of frequencies and percentages; sometimes called a “cross tabulation table” or “cross tab”

Continuous Data – *s.* data that are measured on a continuum, usually as interval data

Contour Plot – *s.* a contour plot is a graphical technique for representing a 3-dimensional surface by plotting constant *z* slices, called contours, on a 2-dimensional format. That is, given a value for *z*, lines are drawn for connecting the (x,y) coordinates where that *z* value occurs. The contour plot is used to answer the question “how does *Z* change as a function of *X* and *Y*?”

Convenience Sample – *m.* a non-probability sample where the respondents or objects are chosen because of availability (e.g., “man on the street”); a type of non-probability sample in which who ever happens to be available at a given point in time is included in the sample; sometimes called a “haphazard” or “accidental” sample

Convergent Validity – *s.* a type of construct validity that refers to the principle that the indicators for a given construct should be at least moderately correlated among themselves; see also: Coefficient alpha, validity, face validity, content validity, construct-related validity,

criterion-related validity,
discriminant validity, divergent
validity

Correlation (*r*) – *s.* a statistical test that examines the relationships between variables (may be either categorical or continuous); see also: correlation coefficient, Pearson Product Moment coefficient, Spearman-Rho, *r*

Correlation Coefficient – *s.* a measure of association that describes the direction and strength of a linear relationship between two variables; usually measured at the interval or ratio data level (e.g., Pearson Product Moment Coefficient, *r*), but can be measured at the nominal or ordinal level (e.g., Spearman-Rho)

Cost Per Thousand (CPM) – *s.* cost of advertising for each 1,000 homes reached by the media

Cost-Effectiveness – *s.* an outcome that may be measured in public relations research which evaluates the relation between overall expenditure (costs) and results produced, usually the ratio of changes in costs to change in effects

Covariation – *s.* a criterion for causation whereby the dependent variable takes on different values depending on the independent variable

Criterion Variable – *m.* the variable the research wants to predict to; see also: dependent variable

Criterion-Related Validity – *m.* a form of validity that compares one measure against others known to have specified relationships with what is being measured; the highest form of measurement validity; see also: validity, face validity, content validity, content validity, discriminant validity, divergent validity

Crossbreak Analysis – *s.* a categorical analysis that compares the frequency of responses in individual cells from one variable against another; see also: crosstabulation, frequency, frequency table

Cross-Sectional Survey – *m.* a survey based on observations representing a single point in time; see also: snapshot survey

Crosstabs – *s.* statistical tables used to array the data; allows the analyst to go beyond total data into frequencies and averages as well as to make possible overall as well as sub-group analyses (e.g., comparisons of the opinions expressed by sell-side analysts with those stated by buy-side investment professionals)

Crosstabulation – *s.* the result of two categorical variables in a table; see also: crossbreak analysis, frequency, frequency table

Cumulative Scale (Guttman Scale/ Scalogram) – *m.* a measurement scale that assumes that when you agree with a scale item you will also agree with items that are less extreme; see also: outcome, Guttman Scalogram, Likert scale, semantic differential scale

Cyber Image Analysis – *m.* the measurement of Internet content via chat rooms or discussion groups in cyberspace regarding a client or product or topic; the measurement of a client's image everywhere on the Internet

– D –

Data – *m.* the observations or measurements taken when evaluating a public relations campaign or program; *s.* the frequencies, means, percentages used to assess a campaign or

program; see also: nominal data, ordinal data, interval data, ratio data

Database – *s.* a collection of data arranged for ease and speed of search and retrieval

Database Mining – *m.* a research technique utilizing existing data; see also, secondary methodology

Deduction – *m.* a philosophical logic in which specific expectations or hypotheses are developed or derived on the basis of general principles

Delphi Technique – *m.* a research methodology (usually survey or interview) where the researcher tries to forecast the future based on successive waves of interviews or surveys with a panel of experts in a given field as a means of building a “consensus” of expert opinion and thought relating to particular topics or issues

Demographic Analysis – *m.* analysis of a population in terms of special social, political, economic, and geographic subgroups (e.g., age, sex, income-level, race, educational-level, place of residence, occupation)

Demographic Data – *m.* data that differentiates between groups of people or things (e.g., sex, race, income)

Dependent Variable – *m.* the variable that is measured or collected

Depth Interview – *m.* an extensive, probing, open-ended, largely unstructured interview, usually conducted in person or by telephone, in which respondents are encouraged to talk freely and in great detail about given subjects; also known as an “in-depth interview”; see also: in-depth methodology

Descriptive Research – *m.* a form of research that gathers information in

such a way as to paint a picture of what people think or do

Descriptive Statistics – *s.* the reduction and simplification of the numbers representing research, to ease interpreting the results

Descriptive Survey – *m.* a type of survey that collects in quantitative form basic opinions or facts about a specified population or sample; also known as a “public opinion poll”

Design Bias – *m.* research design bias is introduced when the study fails to identify the validity problems or when publicity about the research fails to incorporate the researcher’s cautions

Discriminant Validity – *s.* a type of validity that is determined by hypothesizing and examining differential relations between a test and measures of similar or different constructs. It is the opposite of convergent validity and is also known as divergent validity; see also: convergent validity, divergent validity; *m.* a way of establishing if a measure is measuring what it is supposed to measure; see also: validity, criterion-related validity

Divergent Validity – *s.* see also: discriminant validity

Double-Barreled Question – *m.* a question that attempts to measure two things at the same time; a source of measurement error

– E –

Editorial – *m.* the content of a publication written by a journalist, as distinct from advertising content which is determined by an advertiser; an article expressing the editorial policy of a publication of a matter of interest (also known as a “leader” or “leading article”); space

in a publication bought by an advertiser that includes journalistic copy intended to make the reader think it originates from an independent source (also known as an “advertorial”); *s.* an outcome or measured variable

Environmental Scanning – *m.* a research technique for tracking new developments in any area or field by carrying out a systematic review of what appears in professional, trade, or government publications

Equal Appearing Interval Scale – *m.* a measurement scale with predefined values associated with each statement; see also: Thurstone scale

Equivalent Advertising Value (AVE) – *s.* equivalent cost of buying space devoted to editorial content

Error Bar – *s.* a graphical data analysis technique for showing the error in the dependent variable and optionally; the independent variable in a standard x-y plot

Ethnographic Research – *m.* an informal research methodology that relies on the tools and techniques of cultural anthropologists and sociologists to obtain a better understanding of how individuals and groups function in their natural settings; see also: participant-observation

Evaluation Research – *m.* a form of research that determines the relative effectiveness of a public relations campaign or program by measuring program outcomes (changes in the levels of awareness, understanding, attitudes, opinions, and/or behaviors of a targeted audience or public) against a predetermined set of objectives that initially established the level or degree of change desired

Events – *s.* a community affairs or sponsorship output

Experimental Methodology – *m.* a formal research methodology that imposes *strict* artificial limits or boundaries on the research in order to establish some causal relationship between variables of interest; is not generalizable to a larger population

Explanatory Research – *m.* a form of research that seeks to explain why people say, think, feel, and act the way they do; concerned primarily with the development of public relations theory about relationships and processes; are typically deductive

Exploratory Research – *m.* a form of research that seeks to establish basic attitudes, opinions, and behavior patterns or facts about a specific population or sample; are typically inductive and involve extensive probing of the population or sample or data

– F –

Face Validity – *m.* a form of measurement validity that is based on the researcher’s knowledge of the concept being measured; the lowest form of measurement validity; see also: validity, content validity, construct validity, criterion-related validity, discriminant validity, divergent validity

Facilitator – *m.* an individual who leads a focus group; also known as a moderator

Factor Analysis – *s.* a statistical tool that allows researchers to test the dimensionality of their measures; used to assess a measure’s construct validity

Fever Graph – *s.* a form of line graph that measures peaks and valleys of

data along a continuum that is either continuous or whose classes represent categories; see also: graph

Field Study Methodology – *m.* a formal research methodology that imposes fewer restrictions or limits or boundaries on the research in order to test some causal relationships found in experimental research and generalize them to a larger population

Filter Question – *m.* a question which is used to move a respondent from one question to another; a question that is used to remove a respondent from a survey or interview; see also: funnel question

Focus Group Methodology – *m.* an informal research methodology that uses a group approach to gain an in-depth understanding of a client, object, or product; is not generalizable to other focus groups or populations

Formal Methodology – *m.* a set of research methodologies that allows the researcher to generalize to a larger audience but often fails to gain in-depth understanding of the client, object, or product; a set of methodologies that follow scientific or social scientific method; a set of methodologies that are deductive in nature

Formative Evaluation – *m.* a method of evaluating the process by which programs occur while activities are in their early stages with the intent of improving or correcting activities

Frequency – *s.* a descriptive statistic that represents the number of objects being counted (e.g., number of advertisements, number of people who attend an event, number of media release pickups)

Frequency Table – *s.* a listing of counts and percentages in tabular form; may report a single variable or multiple variables; see also: crossbreak analysis, crosstabulation

F-Test – *s.* an inferential test of significance associated with Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); see also: Analysis of Variance

Funnel Question – *m.* a question used in a questionnaire or schedule that moves an interviewer or respondent from one part of a survey to another (e.g., “Are you a registered voter?” If the respondent says yes, certain questions are asked and if not, then other questions are asked); see also: filter question

– G –

Goal (Objective) – *m.* the explicit statement of intentions that supports a communication strategy and includes an intended audience/receiver, a proposed measurable outcome (or desired level of change in that audience), and a specific timeframe for that change to occur

Grand Mean – *s.* a descriptive statistics which represents the mean of all sample means in a study, weighted by the number of items in each sample. The grand mean treats the individuals in the different subsets (groups) as if there were no subgroups, but only individual measures in the set. The grand mean is thus simply the mean of all of the scores; see also: mean

Graph – *s.* a graphical representation of a variable; see also: bar, pie, line, fever

Gross Rating Points (GRP) – measures of weight or readership or audience equivalent to audience exposure

among one percent of the population; see also: Targeted Gross Rating Points (TGRP)

Guttman Scale (Cumulative Scale/Scalogram) – *m.* a measurement scale that assumes unidimensionality and that people, when faced with a choice will also choose items less intense than the one chosen

– H –

Histogram – *s.* a representation of a frequency distribution by means of rectangles whose widths represent class intervals and whose heights represent corresponding frequencies; a bar chart representing a frequency distribution; heights of the bars represent observed frequencies; see also: graph

Historical Methodology – *m.* an informal research methodology that examines the causes and effects of past events

Holsti's Reliability Coefficient – *s.* a fairly simple reliability measure used in content analysis; see also: reliability, content analysis, intercoder reliability, intracoder reliability, Scott's pi, and Krippendorff's alpha

Hypothesis – *m.* an expectation about the nature of things derived from theory; a prediction of how an independent variable changes a dependent variable; formally stated as a predication (e.g., males will purchase more of X than females), but tested via the null hypothesis (males and females will not differ in their purchases of X)

Hypothesis Testing – *m.* determining whether the expectations that a hypothesis represents are, indeed, found in the real world

– I –

Image Research – *m.* a research program or campaign that systematically studies people's perceptions toward an organization, individual, product, or service; sometimes referred to as a "reputation study"

Impressions – *m.* the number of people who might have had the opportunity to be exposed to a story that has appeared in the media; also known as "opportunity to see" (OTS); *s.* usually refers to the total audited circulation of a publication or the audience reach of a broadcast vehicle

Incidence – *s.* the frequency with which a condition or event occurs in a given time and population or sample

Independent t-Test – *s.* an inferential statistical test of significance that compares two levels of an independent variable against a continuous measured dependent variable

Independent Variable – *m.* the variable against which the dependent variable is tested

In-Depth Interview Methodology – *m.* an informal research methodology in which an individual interviews another in a one-on-one situation; see also: in-depth interview

Induction – *m.* a philosophical logic in which general principles are developed from specific observations

Inferential Research – *m.* statistical analyses that test if the results observed for a sample are indicative of the population; the presentation of information that allows us to make judgments whether the research results observed in a sample

generalize to the population from which the sample was drawn

Inferential Statistics – *s.* statistical tests that allow a researcher to say within a certain degree of confidence whether variables or groups truly differ in their response to a public relations message; see: Analysis of Variance, Chi-Square, bivariate correlation, correlation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Spearman-rho, regression, path analysis, sequential equation model, t-test

Informal Methodology – *m.* a research methodology that does not allow the researcher to generalize to a larger audience but gains in-depth understanding of the client, object, or product

Informational Objective – *m.* an objective that establishes what information a target audience should know or the degree of change in knowledge levels after the conclusion of a public relations campaign or program

Inputs – *m.* the research information and data from both internal and external sources applied in the conception, approval, and design phases of the input stage of the communication production process

Inquiry Research – *m.* a formal or informal research methodology that employs systematically content analysis, survey methodology, and/or interviewing techniques to study the range and types of unsolicited inquiries that an organization may receive from customers, prospective customers, or other target audience groups

Instrumental Error – *m.* in measurement, error that occurs because the measuring instrument

was poorly written; *s.* tested for via reliability analyses; see also: Coefficient Alpha, KR-20

Intercoder Reliability – *m.* the reliability of content analysis coding when the coding is done by two or more coders; see also: reliability, intracoder reliability, Holsti's Reliability Coefficient, Scott's pi, Krippendorff's alpha, Cohen's kappa

Interval Data – *m.* measurement data that are defined on a continuum and assumed to have equal spacing between data points (see interval and ratio data); *s.* includes temperature scale, standardized intelligence test scores, Likert-type scale, semantic differential scale, Guttman Scalogram; see also: attitude research, attitude scale, data, variable, Likert scale, Guttman Scalogram

Interview Schedule – *m.* a guideline for asking questions in person or over the telephone interviewers are tasked with predicting your likelihood of success in a given position and use your past behavior as one indicator of your future performance

Intracoder reliability – *m.* the reliability of content analysis coding when the coding is done by only one coder, usually the researcher; *s.* obtained from statistical tests which analyze coder decisions versus chance; see also: reliability, intercoder reliability, Cohen's kappa, Holsti's Reliability Coefficient, Krippendorff's alpha, Scott's pi

Issues Research – *m.* a formal or informal research methodology that systematically studies public policy questions of the day, with the chief focus on those public policy matters whose definition and contending positions are still evolving

Items – *s.* a manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting an entire message itself (e.g., an advertisement, story, press release)

– J –

Judgmental Sample – *m.* a type of non-probability sample in which individuals are deliberately selected for inclusion in the sample by the researcher because they have special knowledge, position, characteristics or represent other relevant dimensions of the population that are deemed important to study; see also: purposive sample

– K –

Key Performance (Performance Result) – *m.* the desired end effect or impact of a program of campaign performance

Known Group t-Test – *s.* an inferential statistical test of significance that compares the results for a sampled group on some continuous measurement dependent variable against a known value; see also: inferential statistics, independent t-test

KR-20 – *s.* a reliability statistic for nominal- or ordinal-level measurement; also known as Kuder-Richardson Formula 20; see also: reliability, Coefficient Alpha

Krippendorff's Alpha – *s.* a fairly simple content analysis coding reliability measure; see also: reliability, intercoder reliability, Intracoder reliability, Holsti's Reliability Coefficient, Scott's pi, Cohen's kappa

– L –

Latent Content – *m.* from content analysis, an analysis of the underlying idea, thesis, or theme of content; the deeper meanings that are intended or perceived in a message

Likert Scale – *m.* an interval-level measurement scale that requires people to respond to statements on a set of predetermined reactions, usually strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree; must possess an odd number of reaction words or phrases; also called "summated ratings method" because the scale requires at least two, if not three, statements per measurement dimension

Line Graph – *s.* a representation of frequency distribution by means of lines representing data points at various intervals along a continuum; see also: Graph

Longitudinal Survey – *m.* a type of survey that consists of *different* individuals or objects that is observed or measured over time (e.g., multiple snapshot samples)

– M –

Mail Survey – *m.* a survey technique whereby a questionnaire is sent to a respondent via the mail (or Internet) and the respondent self-administers the questionnaire and then sends it back

Mall Intercept Research – *m.* a special type of person-to-person surveying in which in-person interviewing is conducted by approaching prospective participants as they stroll through shopping centers or malls; a non-probability form of sampling

- Manifest Content** – *m.* from content analysis, an analysis of the actual content of a message exactly as it appears as opposed to latent content that must be inferred from messages
- Market Research** – *m.* any systematic study of buying or selling behavior
- Mean** – *s.* a descriptive statistic of central tendency that describes the “average” of a set of numbers on a continuum; also called “average;” the process of applying a precise number or metric, which is both valid and reliable, to the evaluation of some performance
- Measurement** – *m.* a way of giving an activity a precise dimension, generally by comparison to some standard; usually done in a quantifiable or numerical manner; see also: data, scale
- Measurement Bias** – *m.* failure to control for the effects of data collection and measurement, e.g. tendency of people to give socially desirable answers
- Measurement Error** – *m.* the amount of error found in a research campaign; in surveys it is the amount of error in individual responses; *s.* a term that expresses the amount of doubt that a researcher may accept in terms of findings; see also: confidence interval
- Measurement Reliability** – *m.* the extent to which a measurement scale measures the same thing over time; *s.* a statistical reporting of how reliable a measure is; see also: Coefficient Alpha, test-retest reliability, split-half reliability)
- Measurement Validity** – *m.* the extent to which a measurement scale actually measures what it believed to measure; see also: face validity, content validity, construct validity, criterion-related validity
- Media** – *m.* includes newspapers, business and consumer magazines and other publications, radio and television, the Internet; company reports, news wires, government reports and brochures; Internet Web sites and discussion groups
- Media Evaluations** – *m.* the systematic appraisal of a company’s reputation, products or services, or those of its competitors, as measured by their presence in the media
- Median** – *s.* a descriptive statistic of central tendency indicating the midpoint in a series of data; the point above and below which 50 percent of the data values fall
- Mention Prominence** – *s.* an outcome based on an indication of how prominent a company, product, or issue was mentioned in the media; typically measured in percent of article and position within the output (e.g., headline, above the fold, first three minutes)
- Mentions** – *s.* an output or outcome consisting of counts of incidents of a company or product or person appears in the media, one mention constitutes a media placement
- Message Content** – *m.* the verbal, visual, and audio elements of a message; the material from which content analyses are conducted; *s.* a trend analysis factor that measures what, if any, of planned messages are actually contained in the media; see also: message content analysis
- Message Content Analysis** – *m.* analysis of media coverage of messages regarding a client, product, or topic on key issues

Message Strength – *s.* trend analysis factor that measures how strongly message about a client or product or topic was communicated

Mode – *s.* a descriptive statistic of central tendency indicating the most frequently occurring (the most typical) value in a data series

Moderator – *m.* an individual who leads a focus group; also known as a facilitator

Monitoring – *m.* a process by which data are systematically and regularly collected about a research program over time; see also: environmental scanning

Motivational Objective – *m.* an objective that establishes the desired level of change in a target audience's specific attitudes or beliefs after a public relations campaign

Multiple Regression – *s.* a statistical technique that employs multiple dependent variables to predict an outcome variable (dependent variable); see also: Regression, independent variable, dependent variable

Multivariate Analysis – *s.* an inferential or descriptive statistic that examines the relationship among three or more variables

– N –

Network Analysis – *m.* a formal or informal research method that examines how individuals or units or actors relate to each other in some systematic way

Neutral Point – *s.* a point midway between extremes in attitude measurement scales; in Likert-type scales usually defined as “neutral” or “neither agree nor disagree”; see also: attitude, attitude scale, Likert scale, semantic differential scale

Nominal Data – *s.* measurement data that are simple categories in which items are different in name only and do not possess any ordering; data that are mutually exhaustive and exclusive; the simplest or lowest of all data; categorical data; example: male or female, where neither is seen as better as or larger than the other

Nonparametric Statistics – *s.* inferential and descriptive statistics based on categorical data; see also: Chi-Square, Spearman-rho

Non-Probability Sample – *m.* a sample drawn from a population whereby respondents or objects do not have an equal chance of being selected for observation or measurement

Nonverbal Communication – *m.* that aspect of the communication that deals with the transmission and reception of messages that are **not** a part of a natural language system (e.g., visual, spoken [as opposed to verbal], environmental)

Norm – *s.* short for “normative data”; see also: normative data

Normal Curve – *s.* measurement data reflecting the hypothetical distribution of data points or cases based on interval- or ratio-level data that are “normally distributed” and error free; all continuous or parametric data sets have their own normally distributed data that fall under its specific normal curve

Normative Data – *s.* the proprietary set of scores that allow comparison of results to other studies and see “where you stand” and provide a context

Null Hypothesis – *s.* the hypothesis of no difference that is formally tested in a research campaign or program; its rejection is the test of the theory; it is the formal hypothesis that all

inferential statistics test; see also:
inferential statistics

— O —

Objective – *m.* a measurable outcome in three forms: informational (cognitive), motivational (attitudinal/belief), behavioral (actionable); an explicit statement of intentions that supports a communication strategy, and to be measurable, includes an intended audience/public, a proposed change in a communication effect, a precise indication of the amount or level of change and a specific timeframe for the change to occur

Omnibus Survey – *m.* an “all purpose” national consumer poll usually conducted on a regular schedule (once a week or every other week) by major market research firms; also called “piggyback” or “shared-cost” survey

Open-Ended Question – *m.* open-ended questions probe the dimensions of attitudes and behavior held by a particular respondent through an interactive conversation between respondent and interviewer

Opinion – *m.* a verbalized or written evaluation of some object

Opportunities to See (OTS) – *m.* the number of times a particular audience has the potential to view a message, subject or issue; *s.* an outcome statistic based on outputs serving as a dependent variable in some research; see also: dependent variable, impressions, outcome, output

Ordinal Data – *s.* measurement data that are categories in which items are different in name and possess an ordering of some sort; data that are mutually exhaustive and exclusive

and ordered; categorical data;
example: income as categories of under \$25K, \$26K–\$50K, \$51K–\$75K, \$76K–\$100K, over \$100K

Outcomes – *m.* quantifiable changes in awareness, knowledge, attitude, opinion, and behavior levels that occur as a result of a public relations program or campaign; an effect, consequence, or impact of a set or program of communication activities or products, and may be either short-term (immediate) or long term; *s.* the dependent variable in research; see also: dependent variable

Outgrowth – *m.* the culminate effect of all communication programs and products on the positioning of an organization in the minds of its stakeholders or publics; *s.* an outcome statistics used as a dependent variable in some research; see also: dependent variable, outcome

Output – *m.* what is generated as a result of a PR program or campaign that impacts on a target audience or public to act or behave in some way — this is deemed important to the researcher (also known as a “judgmental sample”); the final stage of a communication product, production, or process resulting in the production and dissemination of a communication product (brochure, media release, Web site, speech, etc.); *s.* the number of communication products or services resulting from a communication production process; the number distributed and/or the number reaching a targeted audience; sometimes used as an outcome serving as a dependent variable in research; see also: dependent variable, outcome

Outtake – *m.* measurement of what audiences have understood and/or heeded and/or responded to a communication product's call to seek further information from PR messages prior to measuring an outcome; audience reaction to the receipt of a communication product, including favorability of the product, recall and retention of the message embedded in the product, and whether the audience heeded or responded to a call for information or action within the message; *s.* sometimes used as an outcome serving as a dependent variable in research; see also: dependent variable, outcome

– P –

Paired t-Test – *s.* an inferential statistical test of significance that compares data that are collected twice on the same sample; see also: inferential statistics, independent t-test, known-group t-test

Panel Survey – *m.* a type of survey that consists of the *same* individuals or objects that is observed or measured over time; a type of survey in which a group of individuals are deliberately recruited by a research firm because of their special demographic characteristics for the express purpose of being interviewed more than once over a period of time for various clients on a broad array of different topics or subjects

Parameter – *s.* in sampling, a characteristic of a population that is of interest

Parametric Statistics – *s.* inferential and descriptive statistics based on continuous data; see also: data, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics

Participant-Observation – *m.* an informal research methodology where the researcher takes an active role in the life of an organization or community, observes and records interactions, and then analyzes those interactions

Path Analysis – *s.* a statistical technique that establishes relationships between variables with arrows between variables indicating the pattern of causal relationships usually in the form of a “path diagram”; see also: path diagram

Path Diagram – *s.* a graphical representation of the causal relationships between variables showing both direction and strength of relationship

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient (*r*) – *s.* a correlation statistic used with interval and ratio data; see also: correlation, data, Spearman-rho

Percent of Change – *s.* a measure of increase or decrease of media coverage

Percentage – *s.* a descriptive statistic based on categorical data; defined as the frequency count for a particular category divided by the total frequency count; example: 10 males out of 100 people = 10%; see also: descriptive statistics

Percentage Point – *s.* the number that a percentage is increased or decreased

Performance – *m.* the act of carrying-out, doing, executing, or putting into effect; a deed, task, action, or activity as a unit of a program of performance

Performance Indicator – *m.* a sign or parameter that, if tracked over time, provides information about the on-going results of a particular program of performance or campaign; *s.* an outcome measured during a public

relations campaign that serves as a dependent variable; see also: data, dependent variable

Performance Measure – *m.* is a number that shows the exact extent to which a result was achieved; *s.* in a research campaign, an outcome of some sort serving as a dependent variable; see also: data, dependent variable, outcome

Performance Result (Key

Performance) – *m.* the desired end effect or impact of a program of campaign performance

Performance Target – *m.* a time-bounded and measurable commitment toward achieving a desired result

Periodicity – *s.* a bias found in sampling due to the way in which the items or respondents are chosen; example: newspapers may differ by being daily, weekly, weekday only, and so forth

Pie Graph – *s.* A representation of a frequency distribution by means of triangular portions of a pie whose sections represents the percentages of the variable of interest; see also: graph

Piggyback Survey – *m.* see: omnibus survey

Poll – *m.* a form of survey research that focuses more on immediate behavior than attitudes; a very short survey-like method whose questionnaire asks only very short and closed-ended questions; see also: in-depth survey, survey methodology

Position Papers – *m.* print output

Positioning – *m.* trend analysis factor that measures how a client or product or topic was positioned in the media (e.g., leader, follower)

PR Return on Investment (PRROI) – *m.* the impact of a public relations

program on business investment; *s.* the outcome (dependent) variable which demonstrates the impact of a public relations campaign or program investment on the overall business outcomes; a causal indicator of public relations impact; see also: causal relationships, Return on Investment (ROI)

Probability Sample – *m.* a sample drawn at random from a population such that all possible respondents or objects have an equal chance of being selected for observation or measurement

Probe Question – *m.* a question used in a questionnaire or schedule that requires the participant to explain an earlier response, often in the form of “why do you think this?”

Product (Communication Product) – *m.* the end result of the communication product or process resulting in the production and dissemination of a brochure, media release, video news release, Web site, speech, and so forth; an output or outtake; see also: output, outtake

Program (Campaign) – *m.* the planning, execution, and evaluation of a public relations plan of action aimed at solving a problem

Prominence of Mention – *m.* trend analysis factor that measures how prominently a client or product or topic was mentioned and where that mention occurred (e.g., headline, top of the fold, what part of a broadcast); *s.* an output unit of analysis used as a dependent variable; see also: dependent variable, output

Proportion – *s.* a descriptive statistic based on categorical data; defined as the percentage as made part of one (1.0); example: 10 males out of 100

people are 10 hundredths of the sample

Psychographic Research – *m.* research focusing on a population or sample's non-demographic traits and characteristics, such as personality type, life-style, social roles, values, attitudes, and beliefs

Psychometrics – *s.* a branch of psychology that deals with the design, administration, and interpretation of quantitative tests for the measurement of psychological variables such as intelligence, aptitude, and personality traits; also called psychometry

Public – *m.* a group of people who have consequences on an organization or affected by the consequences of organizational decisions; a group of people from which the public relations campaign or program selects specific targeted audiences in an attempt to influence it regarding a company, product, issue, or individual; see also: audience, sample

Public Opinion Poll – *m.* a type of survey that collects basic opinions or facts about a specified population or sample; also known as a descriptive survey; see also: poll, survey methodology

Public Relations Effectiveness – *s.* the degree to which the outcome of a public relations program is consonant with the overall objectives of the program as judged by some measure of causation; see also: causal relationship.

Purposive Sample – *m.* a non-probability sample in which individuals are deliberately selected for inclusion based on their special knowledge, position, characteristics,

or relevant dimensions of the population

Push Poll – *m.* a survey technique in which an interviewer begins by acting as if the telephone call is a general survey but then asks the respondent a question implying questionable behaviors or outcomes of a person or product

– Q –

Q-Sort – *m.* a measurement instrument that focuses on respondent beliefs by asking them to sort through piles of opinion statement and sort them into piles on an 11-point continuum usually bounded by “most-like-me” to “most-unlike-me”; see also: attitude scale

Qualitative Research – *m.* usually refers to studies that are somewhat to totally subjective, but nevertheless in-depth, using a probing, open-ended, response format or reflects an ethnomethodological orientation

Quantitative Research – *m.* usually refers to studies that are highly objective and projectable, using closed-ended, forced-choice questionnaires; research that relies heavily on statistics and numerical measures

Question – *m.* a statement or phrase used in a questionnaire or schedule that elicits either an open- or closed-ended response from a research participant; see also: funnel and probe questions

Questionnaire – *m.* a measurement instrument that contains exact questions and measures an interviewer or survey researcher uses to survey through the mail, Internet, in person, or via the telephone; may be closed-ended and open-ended, but

typically employs more closed-ended questions

Quota Sample – *m.* a type of non-probability sample that draws its sample based on a percentage or quota from the population and stops sampling when that quota is met; a non-probability sample that *attempts* to have the same general distribution of population characteristics as in the sample; see also: poll, survey methodology

– R –

Range – *s.* a descriptive central tendency statistics that expresses the difference between the highest and lowest scores in the data set; example: responses to a question on a 1 to 5 Likert-type scale where all reaction categories were used would yield a range of 4 (5 minus 1)

Ratio Data – *s.* measurement data that are defined on a continuum and possess an absolute zero point; examples: number of children, a bank account, absolute lack of heat (0° Kelvin = –459.67° or –273.15C)

Reach – *m.* refers to the scope or range of distribution and thus coverage that a given communication product has in a targeted audience group; broadcasting, the net unduplicated (also called “duplicated”) radio or TV audience for programs or commercials as measured for a specific time period

Readership – *m.* number of people who actually read each issue of a publication, on average; *s.* an outcome variable that often serves as a dependent variable; see also: dependent variable, outcome

Regression – *s.* a statistical tool that predicts outcomes based on one outcome (dependent) variable and

one predictor (independent) variable; see also: Multiple regression; *m.* a source of error or invalidity in experimental methodology that may impact on the validity of the experiment; see also: experimental methodology, validity, inferential statistics

Reliability – *m.* the extent to which results would be consistent, or replicable, if the research were conducted a number of times; *s.* a statistical measure accessing consistency of a measure, usually through the Coefficient Alpha or KR-20 statistic in measurement or Cohen’s Kappa, Hosti’s reliability coefficient, Krippendorf’s alpha, or Scott’s pi; see also: measurement reliability, Cohen’s Kappa, Holsti’s reliability coefficient, Scott’s pi

Reputation – *s.* An outcome variable often used dependent variable in public relations research dealing with the public’s perception of some source’s credibility, trustworthiness, or image based on the source’s behavior; see also: dependent variable

Research – *m.* the systematic effort before (formative research) or during and/or after (summative or evaluative research) a communication activity aimed at discovering and collecting the facts or opinions pertaining to an identified issue, need, or question; may be formal or informal

Research Bias – *m.* unknown or unacknowledged error created during the design, measurement, sampling, procedure, or choice of problem studied; see also: experimental methodology, validity, regression

Research Instrument – *m.* tool used to collect data; see also, questionnaire, interview schedule, semi-structured interview, structured interview

Respondent – *m.* the individual from whom data is collected through participation in a research campaign; sometimes called participant or, in psychological study, subject

Response Rate – *m.* from survey methodology, the number of respondents who actually completed an interview; *s.* the percentage of completed surveys (often adjusted for mailing errors)

Results – *s.* the outcome demonstrated to have been impacted upon by a public relations campaign; *m.* that which is measured in a campaign as dependent variables; see also: dependent variable, outcome, output, outtake, outgrowth

Return on Investment (ROI) – *s.* an outcome variable that equates profit from investment; see also: Public relations return on investment, dependent variable

– S –

Sample – *m.* a group of people or objects chosen from a larger population; see also: probability sample, non-probability sample; convenience sample; panel survey; longitudinal survey; snapshot survey

Sampling Error – *m.* the amount of error expected or observed in surveys that may be attributed to problems in selecting respondents; *s.* the amount of error that is acceptable or expected based on the sample size and expressed as confidence in sampling from a population; see also: confidence level

Scale – *m.* a measurement instrument consisting of attitude or belief items

that reflect an underlying structure toward some attitude or belief object; see also: attitude scale

Scalogram (Guttman

Scale/Cumulative Scale) – *m.* a measurement scale that assumes (a) unidimensionality and (b) that people, when faced with a choice will also choose items less intense than the one chosen; see also: attitude scale, Likert-type scale, semantic differential scale

Scattergram – *s.* a descriptive statistics based on continuous data that graphically demonstrated how data are distributed between two variables; also known as a scatter diagram or scatterplot

Schedule – *m.* the timeline on which a public relations program or campaign is conducted; a list of questions, usually open-ended, used in focus group and in-depth interviews to gather data; see also: survey methodology, in-depth interview

Scott's pi – *s.* a coding reliability measure employed in content analysis that reduces the impact of chance agreement among intercoder or intracoder coding; see also: reliability, content analysis, Holsti's Reliability Coefficient, Krippendorff's alpha, Cohen's kappa

Screening Question – *m.* one of several questions usually asked at the beginning of an interview or survey to determine if the potential respondent is eligible to participate in the study; see also: funnel question

Secondary Methodology – *m.* an informal research methodology that examines extant data in order to draw conclusions; a systematic re-analysis of a vast array of existing

data; often used in benchmarking and benchmark studies

Semantic Differential Scale – *m.* an attitude measure that asks respondents to evaluate an attitude object based on bipolar adjectives or phrases separated by a continuum represented as consisting of an odd number of intervals; developed by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum; see also: attitude scale, Guttman Scalogram, Likert-type scale

Semantic Space – *m.* the idea that people can evaluate attitude objects along some spatial continuum; often associated with attitude researchers Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum

Semi-Structured Interview – *m.* an interview conducted with a fairly open framework which allows for focused, conversational, two-way communication; it can be used both to give and receive information

Sequential Equation Model – *s.* a statistical methodology similar to path analysis but that uses as measures that are created such as attitude, intelligence, reputation rather than actual indicators (e.g., sales, revenue) to test an hypothesized causal relationship between predictor (independent) and outcome (dependent) variables; see also: dependent variable, independent variable, path analysis, regression, multiple regression

Share of Ink (SOI) – *s.* measurement of the total press/magazine coverage found in articles or mentions devoted to a particular industry or topic as analyzed to determine what percent of outputs or Opportunities to See (OTS) is devoted to a client or product; an outcome often used as a dependent variable; see also: dependent variable, outcome

Share of Voice (SOV) – *s.* measurement of total coverage devoted to radio/television coverage to a particular industry or topic as analyzed to determine what percent of outputs or Opportunities to See (OTS) is devoted to a client or product; also known as “share of coverage”; an outcome often used as a dependent variable; see also: dependent variable, outcome

Shared-Cost Survey – see: omnibus survey

Simple Random Sample – *m.* a type of probability sample in which numbers are assigned to each member of a population, a random set of numbers is generated, and then only those members having the random numbers are included in the sample

Situation Analysis – *m.* an impartial, often third-party assessment of the public relations and/or public affairs problems, or opportunities, that an organization may be facing at a given point in time

Skip Interval – *m.* the distance between people selected from a population based on systematic sampling; usually defined as the total population divided by the number of people to be sampled (e.g., for a sample of 100 people to be drawn from a population of 10,000 people, the skip interval would be $100/10,000 = 100$ individuals skipped between selected participants)

Snapshot Survey – *m.* a type of survey that consists of individuals or objects that is observed or measured once; see also: “cross-sample survey”

Snowball Sample – *m.* a type of non-probability sample in which individuals who are interviewed are

asked to suggest other individuals for further interviewing

Sociogram – *s.* a pictorial representation of the actual relationships of individuals within a specified unit such as a public, target audience, or work unit

Sources Mentioned – *m.* trend analysis factor that measures who was quoted in media coverage; also known as “quotedes”

Speaking Engagements – *s.* print or broadcast or Internet communication product output; see also: output

Spearman-rho – *s.* a correlation statistic used with nominal or ordinal data; see also: correlation, data, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient

Split-Half Reliability – *s.* a test for a measure’s reliability where a sample is randomly split and one segment receives a part of the measure and the second segment receives the rest

Standard Deviation (σ) – *s.* a descriptive statistic of central tendency which indexes the variability of a distribution; the range from the mean within which approximately 34% of the cases fall, provided the values are distributed in a normal curve

Standardized Score (Z-Score) – *s.* a descriptive statistic based on continuous data that expresses individual scores based on their standard deviations from the group mean; range of scores is usually – 3.00 to +3.00; see also: Z-score

Statistical Significance – *s.* refers to the degree to which relationships observed in a sample can be attributed to sampling error or measurement error alone; expressed in terms of confidence that the relationships are due to error X% of the time (e.g., 5%) expressed in

terms of the confidence that we have that the results are due to what was measured X% of the time (e.g., 95% confident); see also: inferential statistics, confidence interval

Stratified Sample – *m.* a type of probability sample that involves first breaking the total population into homogenous subsets (or strata), and then selecting the potential sample at random from the individual strata; example: stratify on race would require breaking the population into racial strata and then randomly sampling within each strata

Structured Interview – *m.* an interview with a pre-defined set of questions and responses which may provide more reliable, quantifiable data than an open-ended interview and can be designed rigorously to avoid biases in the line of questioning

Summary Measure – *s.* summary measures combine information of different types and from different sources which together permit a rapid appraisal of a specific phenomenon to identify differences (e.g. between groups, countries), observed changes over time or expected changes (e.g. as a consequence of policy measures); there are four key elements to summary measures: the selection of relevant parameters to be included, the reliable measurement/collection of these parameters, the unit in which the summary measure will be expressed and the relative weight of each of the constituents in the total summary measure

Summative Evaluation – *m.* a method of evaluating the end of a research program; the basis of establishing the dependent measures; see also: dependent variable

Survey Methodology – *m.* a formal research methodology that seeks to gather data and analyze a population's or sample's attitudes, beliefs, and opinions; data are gathered in-person or telephone (face-to-face), or self-administered via the mail, e-mail, or fax; see also: survey methodology, longitudinal survey, panel survey, cohort survey, snapshot survey

Symbols/Words – *s.* a manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of specific words (e.g., pronouns, client name, logotypes) that are counted; see also: content analysis

Systematic Sample – *m.* a type of probability sample in which units in a population are selected from an available list at a fixed interval after a random start

– T –

Target Audience – *m.* a very specific audience differentiated from “audience” by some measurable characteristic or attribute (e.g., sports fishermen)

Targeted Gross Rating Points (TGRP) – *s.* Gross Rating Points (GRP) targeted to a particular group or target audience; an outcome often used as a dependent variable; see also: dependent variable, Gross Rating Points, outcome

Test-Retest Reliability – *s.* a test for a measure's reliability by testing the same sample with the same measure over time

Themes – *s.* a latent unit of analysis used in content analysis that measures an underlying theme or thesis (e.g., sexuality, violence, credibility); see also: content analysis

Throughputs – *m.* the development, creative, and production activities (writing, editing, creative design, printing, fabrication, etc.) as part of the throughput stage of a communication product production process

Time/Space Measures – *s.* a manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of physically measurable units (e.g., column inches, size of photographs, broadcast time for a story); see also: content analysis

Tone – *s.* trend and latent content analysis factor that measures how a target audience feels about the client or product or topic; typically defined as positive, neutral/balanced, or negative; often used as an outcome and dependent variable; see also: dependent variable, outcome, content analysis

Trend Analysis – *m.* tracking of performance over the course of a PR campaign or program; survey method whereby a topic or subject is examined over a period of time through repeated surveys of independently selected samples (snapshot or cross-sectional survey)

t-Test – *s.* an inferential statistical test of significance for continuous measurement dependent variables against a bivariate independent variable; used when total number of observations are less than 100; see also: paired t-test; independent t-test; known group t-test, inferential statistics

Type of Article – *m.* categories of a publication such as “product review,” “by-lined article,” “editorial,” “advertorial,” “feature story;” *s.* trend analysis factor that measures the nature of client or

product or topic coverage (e.g., column inches, broadcast time); often used as a dependent variable; see also; dependent variable

– U –

Unit of Analysis – *m.* the specification of what is to be counted in content analysis methodology; consist of symbols/words, time/space measures, characters, themes, and items; may be *manifest* (observable) or *latent* (attitudinal)

Univariate Analysis – *s.* the examination of only one variable at a time

Universe – *m.* the set of all the units from which a sample is drawn; also called the population

– V –

Validity – *m.* the extent to which a research project actually measures what it is intended, or purports to measure; see also: measurement validity

Value – *m.* an underlying cultural expectation, usually directs an individual's beliefs

Variance (σ^2) – *s.* a descriptive statistic of central tendency that measures the extent to which individual scores in a data set differ from each other; the sum of the squared standard deviations from the mean (σ)

Verbatim – *m.* A transcript of the actual comments participants make in a focus group or individuals. Many researchers include verbatims in their final reports to support their interpretation of the finding; *s.* data which may be used in content analysis; see also: interview schedule, semi-structured interview, structured interview, content analysis

– W –

Weighted Average – *s.* an average that takes into account the proportional relevance of each component, rather than treating each component equally

Weighting – *s.* assigning a numerical coefficient to an item to express its relative importance in a frequency distribution

Word/Symbol – *s.* from content analysis, a unit of analysis consisting of the actual word or symbol communicated in the media; see also: content analysis

– Z –

Z-Score (Standardized Score) – *s.* a descriptive statistic of central tendency that takes data from different types of scales and standardizes them as areas under the normal curve for comparison purposes; see also: standardized score

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