

Measurement 101 for Nonprofits

By Katie Delahaye
Paine

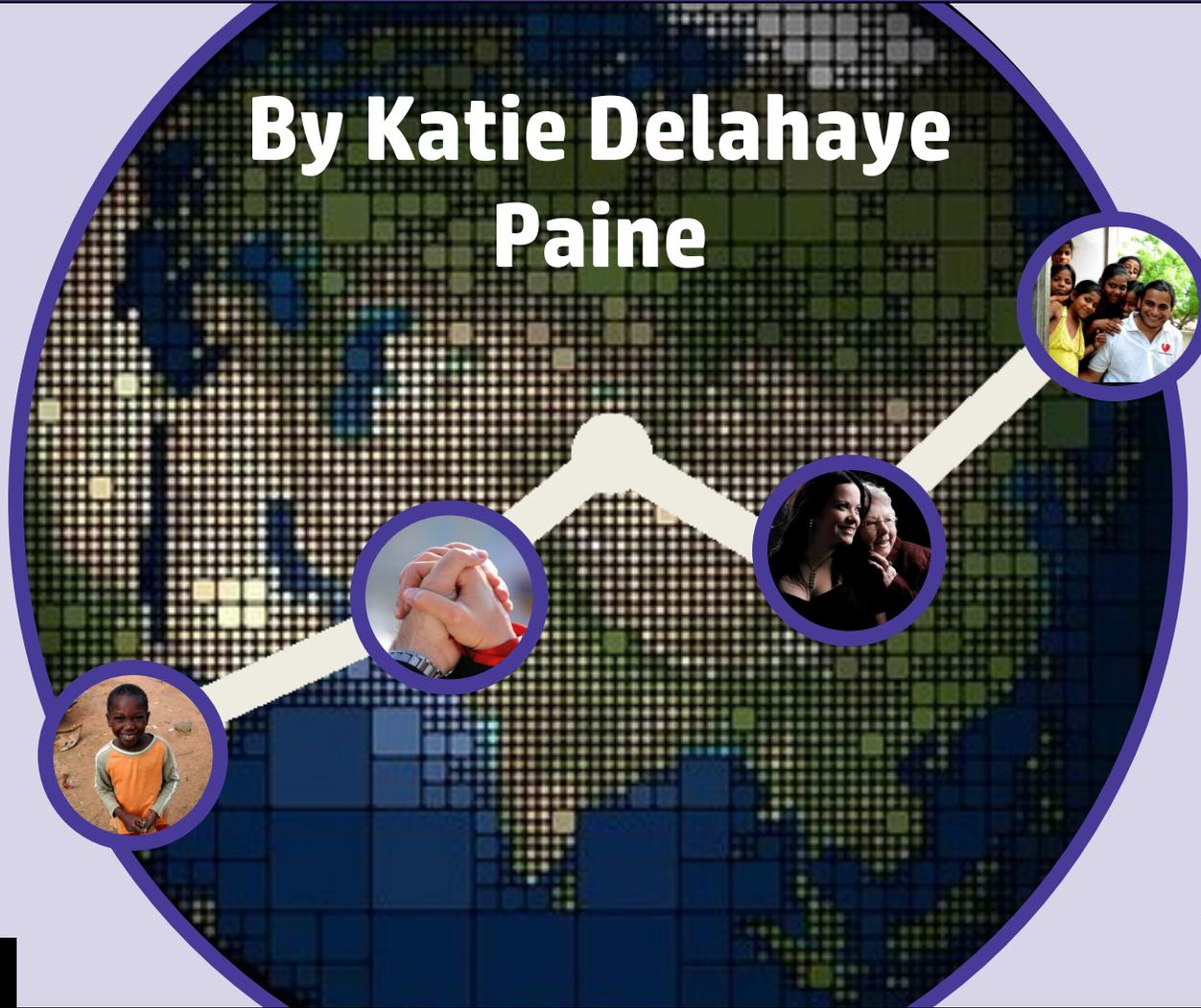


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About Paine Publishing

Paine Publishing, LLC is an educational publishing company that helps organizations establish effective, meaningful communications measurement programs that are in compliance with industry standards.

We publish [*The Measurement Advisor*](#), a bimonthly newsletter for professional communicators who want information and to create and improve their measurement programs. Each newsletter contains the latest news, tips, and resources for everything you want (and need) to know about measurement of PR, social media, marketing, internal & corporate communications, and more.

Additionally, Paine Publishing offers a range of downloadable resources including:

- [Measurement 101 Course-in-a-Box](#)
- [Measurement 101 Course-in-a-Box for Professors](#)
- [The Measurement Sherpa's Essential Guide](#)
- [Barcelona Principles Compliance Tutorial](#)
- [The DMO's Ticket to Barcelona Principles Compliance Tutorial](#)
- [50 Shades of PR ROI](#)

For more, visit us online: www.PainePublishing.com



About the Author

Katie Delahaye Paine, CEO of Paine Publishing

Katie, also known as the Measurement Queen ([@queenofmetrics](#)), has been a pioneer in the field of measurement for roughly three decades. She has founded two measurement companies and has written three books (all available on [Amazon](#)).

Her most recent company, Paine Publishing (established in 2013), is the first educational publishing firm entirely dedicated to making more Measurement Mavens. Its bimonthly newsletter, [The Measurement Advisor](#), is the world's most comprehensive source of information about best practices in communications measurement.

In her consulting practices, she designs measurement dashboards for some of today's most admired organizations. Katie has also been a leading promoter of standards in the PR and social media measurement field, most recently as the initial organizer of [The Conclave](#) that released social media measurement standards. Katie is a Senior Fellow and Advisory Board member of the Society for New Communications Research (SNCR). She was also an initial founder of the Institute for Public Relations Measurement Commission (IPRMC).

Measurement aside, Katie is happiest on her sailing dinghy, a vintage 1960 Merrimac, or moseying around Shankhassick Farm in Durham, New Hampshire, where she lives with her cats Toulouse & Fergie, and a flock of chickens.

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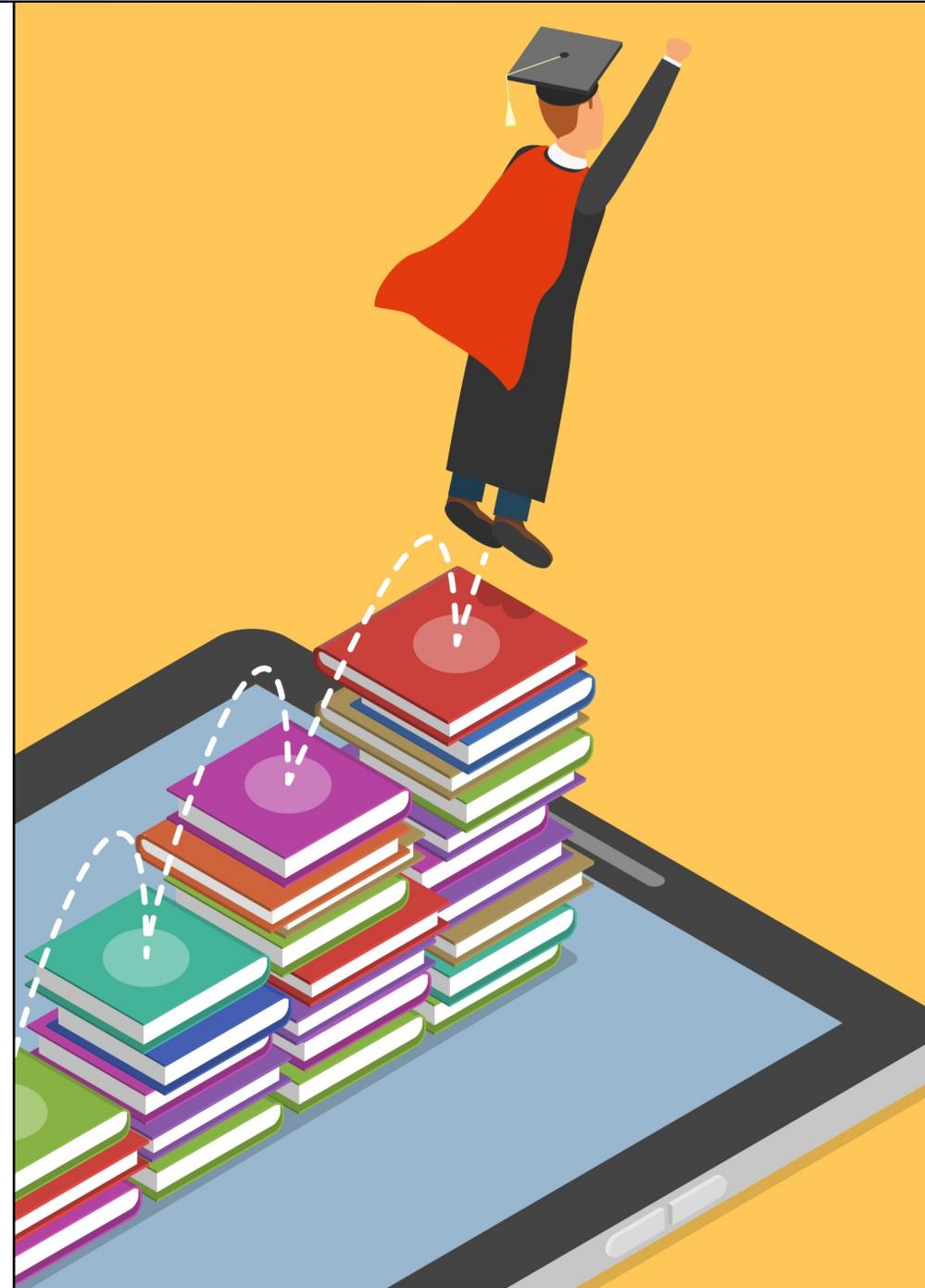


Why Every Nonprofit Needs This eBook Now

Over the past couple of decades, the business world has adopted communications measurement and evaluation as essential business tools. Metrics, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and dashboards are now standard for most for-profit communications and marketing departments. Nonprofits, on the other hand, have been slower to embrace measurement, but that's now rapidly changing. Several forces in the nonprofit environment are pushing this exciting change.

The first driving force has to do with the make up of nonprofits' boards and the types of people who run them. In nearly three decades of working with communications professionals, I've observed that there are two types of people in this world: *numbers* people and *words* people. *Numbers* people embrace math, spreadsheets, and statistics with gusto; plus, they love showing off their charts and graphs. *Words* people approach the world from a creative perspective, describing their results in detailed stories. Words people have tended to gravitate towards the nonprofit sector, but that's also changing. As they've matured, many numbers people with successful business careers behind them have transitioned to the nonprofit sector. They're accustomed to making decisions with the help of good reporting, data, and metrics; therefore, they expect to use these tools in the nonprofits they've joined.

Secondly, in the post-Great Recession environment there is far more attention paid to accountability and efficiency than before. Budgets are chronically constrained and every penny needs to be accounted for. Unless you can show results, budgets are unlikely to be



renewed.

Finally, the ubiquity of social media and “big data” have raised expectations that measurement and evaluation are tools that, if not easy to use, are certainly accessible to organizations that want to employ them.

So, whether you’re the local food kitchen or the American Red Cross, in today’s environment you need to show that your communication efforts are having an impact. The good news is that advancements in technology have made measurement affordable regardless of your budget. The even better news is that many organizations have already paved the way. This eBook combines their experiences with industry research and best practices to assist you on your measurement journey.

Measurement Myths to Eradicate

The first step on that journey is to dispel some of the common myths surrounding metrics. For decades, these myths have discouraged organizations from embracing measurement and evaluation:

- First of all, there’s the fear that measurement will show that a popular program isn’t working. That’s understandable, as no one wants to have their favorite program cancelled. But the purpose of any evaluation plan is to determine what elements are working and which elements are not. And if you don’t have an evaluation system in place, how will you know the difference? Doesn’t it make more sense to spend more money on the programs that work, and save money by eliminating the ones that don’t? If research shows that a program is not working, don’t you want to know that?
- Secondly, there’s a belief that measurement is expensive. But consider this: What’s the cost of ignorance? If you’re spending

\$20,000 on a communications plan and no money comes in, isn’t that more expensive than spending \$1,000 evaluating that effort so you don’t waste the other \$19,000?

- Thirdly, measurement is not something you do when a program is complete and the money’s been spent. Measurement needs to be built into your plan upfront so that you understand how you’re doing along the way and can make modifications as needed.
- Fourthly, you want to measure your failures as well as your successes. If you don’t know what didn’t work, you are doomed to repeat it. Have the confidence to point out what doesn’t work. This conveys the message that you’re managing budgets well and that you’re willing to make judgments based on facts, not emotions.
- Finally, no matter how much you may want to be a hero, measurement is not something that can be done alone. You need to get buy-in from the entire organization. Please don’t groan. You might find that the quiet accountant down the hall actually has critical data that can help your cause. The point is, for any good organization, the results are greater than the sum of the parts. So just because you think you know the return on investment (ROI) for your direct mail campaign, don’t assume there aren’t other factors you need to take into account.

So if you’re ready to take your first step into the wonderful world of measurement and evaluation, read on!