The impact of Coronavirus on communications evaluation

Sam Howlett
Communication Impact Lead | Office for National Statistics

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What we will cover

• How the ONS was reporting communications impact
• How the communications team adapted
• What we lessons we can take away
Evaluating impact before...

- Monthly reports (delayed by a month)
- Heavy focus on quantitative media coverage metrics
- A very broad view of coverage
Presence
685 media items analysed: 22/day
Average daily reach: 3.1 million

Sentiment
88.3% Neutral media coverage
Positive vs. negative evaluations: 4.2% / 7.5%
Sentiment ratio (organisation): 69% / 24.2% / 6.8%

Reputation
71.6% No reference to reputation
28.4% Reference to reputation

Universe
Selected British traditional media coverage about the ONS and the UK economy
Period
August 1 – August 31, 2019
Measurement
Media volume: share and number of mentions; reach; sentiment

Source: PRIME Research
Coronavirus: Downing Street briefing
A further 5,614 people test positive for Covid-19 in the UK
• A further 5,614 people test positive for Covid-19 in the UK
What we needed to change

- More real-time reporting
- A broader view of our channels
- Inclusion of the right context
COVID-19 Communications Dashboard
20-26 April 2020

Radar

- Nick Timis appeared on BBC News shortly after release engineering that 15,510 deaths in the week up to 19 April were about 5,000 more than normal at this time of year.
- The announcement of ONS’s joint leadership of the large scale government study on the spread of Covid-19 was highlighted in Thursday night’s BBC briefing by Health Secretary Matt Hancock.
- UK’s stats regulator has written to the Department for Health and Pensions, asking the department to be more transparent with the figures ministers are using to demonstrate how it is handling the coronavirus crisis,” reports Civil Service World.
- The ONS weekly death statistics have continued to underline much of the debate about the true record of the virus. The Guardian writes: “With the latest death figures from the Office for National Statistics now the UK is beginning to shape what the Cambridge epidemiologist Dr. Griffler calls the only ‘unbiased’ comparator of Covid-19 deaths against what are seasonal deaths.”
- Concerns Friday’s ONS report on social impacts of coronavirus on disabled people and older Deputy National Statistics Jeni Bell further detail the subject. The Mirror writes that the ONS ‘has found that coronavirus and the lockdown is having a different effect on those with disabilities’.

Media Coverage
Total items in this period
965
Week on week: +22
Year on year: +56

Email bulletin

- ONS Blog - Measuring the labour market during Coronavirus
  15,409 unique opens
- ONS Blog - ONS looking at internationally during COVID-19
  13,288 Unique Opens
- ONS Blog - ONS updates on the UK under lockdown
  12,779 Unique Opens

Weekly page views
Week on week: +16.1%
Year on year: +17.3%
2,052,901

Top pages

1. Deaths - Office for National Statistics
   /https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/causesspecific/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/coronaviruscausesspecific/deathscausesspecificbyyearandsex
   110,894
2. Deaths registered weekly in England and Wales
   /https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/causesspecific/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/coronaviruscausesspecific/deathscausesspecificbyyearandsex
   110,876
3. Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Office for National Statistics
   87,501
4. Home - Office for National Statistics
   /https://www.ons.gov.uk
   51,100
5. Page views
   92,180

New subscribers this week
4,605 (1,618 subscriptions)
**Reggie Pageviews**

66,745

**Breakdown of views**
- SharePoint: 2,356
- Comms: 2,349
- Other: 2,042

**Top 3 news page hits**
- P6: 4,613
- BBC News: 1,911
- Oil & Gas UK: 1,711

**V’unvar**
- Number of active users: 1,636 (+12%)
- Posts: 1,111 (+8.8%)
- Unique messages: 361 (+15.4%)

**Commentary**
This week we tested hosting 3 ‘Year Call’ sessions.
Across the 3 sessions there were 1,104 bookings. This is as a result of
using Google hangouts which allows for greater numbers to attend.
There was great engagement with 104 questions and comments being
posted on G+.
The Reggie’s article about the event had 2,373 hits on this is a
teresting booking rate.

**Social**

Social media mentions of CNS

**Most engaged tweets**

- RT Pinnacol 958 Likes
  - Our weekly deaths data show that 702 of all deaths in England and Wales that occurred up to 16 April (registered up to 18 April), 15-17, involved COVID-19.

- 7 13 Pinnacol 521 Likes
  - There is a difference in the numbers because we include all deaths where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificates.
- 7 13 Heritage 423 Likes
Media Analysis – Spokespeople

Ian Diamond: Partial list of Sage membership released. Who are the experts advising the government on how to ease lockdown?

Sir Ian Diamond was featured in the Downing Street press conference.

France Kay’s article for Public Technology – “We need your data.”

Jonathan Athow – Inflation tails.

Nick Stripe, head of health analysis at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said: “People living in more deprived areas have experienced Covid-19 mortality rates more than double those living in less deprived areas.

As Nick Stripe of the Office for National Statistics noted on Twitter, UK death registrations data is the fastest, most frequent and most in depth than any other stats agency.

Nike Stripe: Care homes account for 40% of all coronavirus deaths in week to May 1 – CNS.

Jonathan Athow on BBC Today’s programme.
What we’ve taken away

• Focus on a topic enables understanding
• Timeliness improves relevance and actions
• We can and should adapt our approach
What’s next

• Feed into larger impact evaluation
• Turn lessons into recommendations
• Keep learning + keep adapting = keep maximising impact