Great Expectations: The Truth About Digital PR Campaigns

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We’ve got a problem.
Here’s what Twitter has to say about digital PR campaigns.
“Digital PR Twitter is getting f**king ridiculous.”

@WolfofBaldStreet
“Attention seeking.”
“The #DigitalPR community shouldn’t feel pressured to post their best work and highlights...”
You know what?
I’m guilty too.
Shannon McGuirk @ShannonMcGuirk_ · Dec 22, 2017
🔥🔥Aira's PR & Content team are on FIRE! This year, we generated 2,427 pieces of coverage for our clients!
MozCon Virtual

Shannon McGuirk @ShannonMcGuirk_ · Jul 23, 2018
It's true! Our latest @travelsupermkt campaign reveals the top 15 destinations that are going to be popular tourist haunts by 2025. TOP TIP: book your flights to these destinations before prices rocket 🛫🌈

--- Insider @thisisinsider · Jul 23, 2018
These will be the 15 most popular cities for tourists by 2025 insider.co/2uWgxdJ

Shannon McGuirk @ShannonMcGuirk_ · Nov 28, 2018
@airadigital’s content & PR team are on fireeee! 🔥🔥🔥

Daily Mail Online @MailOnline · Nov 28, 2018
Revealed: The countries with the most space junk dailymai2DYZsqN

Shannon McGuirk @ShannonMcGuirk_ · Dec 22, 2017
🔥🔥Aira's PR & Content team are on FIRE! This year, we generated 2,427 pieces of coverage for our clients! So proud of you girls 🙌🏼 @LiviWilkesPR @katherynwatsonx @Aliyah_loughlan @MarinaPlummz 🔥🔥
It didn’t stop there.
Modern Santa
Is this the future face of Christmas?

For generations Santa has been depicted with his traditional red and white jacket, bobble hat and full beard. But what would Santa look like if he was rebranded for today?

We asked people how they would modernize Santa and these were the most popular suggestions...

- New hair: 18%
- iPhone: 22%
- Amazon Prime: 23%
- Tattoos: 20%
- Diet: 21%
- Flying car: 72%
- Skinny jeans: 18%

Results

468 Pieces of Coverage
324 Linking domains
From the whiteness of the sand and the clarity of the water to the drama and beauty of the surroundings, some beaches have a set of definitive characteristics so idyllic that when they come together the result is so stunning, so Instagramworthy, that you just have to share it.

Whether you’re seeking sunny solitude on a Caribbean holiday or pounding the surf Down Under, we’ve analysed the number of hashtags used at some of the most picturesque seafronts worldwide. Here are the most popular beaches in the world according to Instagram.

Take a look at the interactive map below to see the amount of hashtags used for each beach...

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**Results**

150 Pieces of Coverage

66 Linking domains
Results

68 Pieces of Coverage

45 Linking domains
Here is one of those successful campaigns...
And in context...
I was not showing you the full picture...
Today, I want to show you the full picture.
The full picture covers these three pillars with creative campaigns...
Huge wins

Steady performers

Huge fails
Huge wins

Steady Performers

Huge fails
What’s the problem?
We are giving the impression that we don’t have campaign fails.
We are putting too much pressure on ourselves and newbies in the industry.
We are normalising the idea that each campaign launched must get 100+ links.
We're setting **unrealistic** expectations and KPIs.
We’re making others think that 5, 10 or 20 links can’t be effective.
We know ‘steady performers’ can be effective, we should celebrate the impact and learn from them.
We can do better.
Rinse & repeat

Why do we focus on the wins?
Let’s go back to our first ‘Aira viral’ campaign...
Results

68 Pieces of Coverage

45 Linking domains
It was at this point we focused on the wins, *only the wins.*
Guess how many maps we launched that year for one client?
Huge wins

Steady Performers

Huge fails
Hmm, this sounds familiar...
What do we do to get links?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Format</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Guest posts</td>
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What about next year and beyond?
What will we do in the future to get links?

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That’s 10 ‘winning’ formats in 14 years. But we were doing more weren’t we?
What about the formats we didn’t celebrate?
We love to rinse and repeat formats but again, that doesn’t show the full picture.
The truth about digital PR
Let’s talk about failure...
The first step in telling the **full picture** is talking about **failure**.
Who’s had a campaign fail?
HOW MUCH OIL IS LEFT?

At the start of 2016, this is how much oil USA had left.

Watch it disappear

5.30 km³

Years: 0
Months: 0
Where have you been the past four years?

The Daily Mirror
Launch = 0 links
Why?
We launched our campaign here...
It was not wise to launch a campaign to press during the US presidential election.
I kept that one quiet on Twitter.
Failures come in all shapes and sizes.
THE WORLD’S TOP SELLING CAR MODEL
IN EVERY COUNTRY

What are the top selling car models from around the world? The bestsellers list can be dramatically different due to availability, price, and local preferences.

What model will come out on top? Take a look at the map below to find out the world’s top selling car model in every country.
The world’s top selling car model in every country

Cape Town - Data showing the most popular car sold in each country makes for interesting reading. For example in Southern Africa the Toyota Hilux is the best-selling vehicle in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and Lesotho.

When it comes to car manufacturers, Toyota storms ahead to take the top spot dominating the sales markets. The Japanese auto industry pioneer is now the world’s biggest carmaker overall, earning top marks from experts and customers alike for quality and innovation.
‘Honk Kong’ will be a country that forever haunts me.
Failure’s don’t stop there...
Who’s had to report on a campaign fail?
Hi Shannon,

How are you? Good weekend?

I just wanted to get your view on how January unfolded as it was below normal standards on a link building front? What do you put this down to?

Thanks,
Who’s had to pull their team through a campaign failure?
The reality...

Shannon 4:13 PM
Well done for pushing on the team today guys, keep going 😊

We've got this!

Aoife O'Connor 4:15 PM
I've got your back on this Livi
You have to have each other's backs through thick and thin.
Sometimes it really hurts when things don’t go to plan but it’s reality with link building.
The truth about digital PR
What is normal?
The State of Link Building Report 2020

Read Report
Have you ever had a campaign that received the following number of links?

1. 1-9 links  159 Resp.  61%
2. 10-19 links  142 Resp.  55%
3. 20-39 links  119 Resp.  46%
Have you ever had a campaign that received the following number of links?

- 0 Links: 28% (73 responses)
So, I’m a bit suspicious that only a third have experienced 0 links.
Despite what Twitter shows, not every campaign is going ‘viral’.
The research shows the majority of campaigns are getting 1-20 links.
AND THAT IS GOOD!!!
What’s ‘normal’ for Aira?
138 campaigns in a year
2,381 followed links
Avg. 17 links
Huge wins

Steady Performers

Huge fails
The link numbers are almost irrelevant if they’re **not having an impact** on bigger KPIs.
You *don’t always* need loads of links to get real business results.
47 links across 5 campaigns
with technical SEO and keyword research.
MozCon Virtual


[Graph showing session counts from 2 Oct to 30 Oct]
“[Aira have] consistently provided great guidance on setting targets, communicating their progress and helping us grow as a company.”
‘Steady performers’ can make a big difference to the bottom line.
The truth about Digital PR
Learning from ‘steady performers’
Hi Shannon,

How are you? Good weekend?

I just wanted to get your view on how January unfolded as it was below normal standards on a link building front? What do you put this down to?

Thanks,
We turned it into this...

Great job guys! You are finishing the year a real high – keep it going.
We have a number of processes in place that help us learn and develop as a team.
Content Evaluation Matrix
Where this all started...

Mark Johnstone
Focusing on wins...
Trend: Maps are great for link building.
Learning from ‘fails’...
The Most Lucrative Movie Quotes Of All Time

Everyone has a favourite movie one-liner, even movie moguls. The odds are, even if you haven't seen a film you will be familiar with the famous phrases that actors and actresses have spoken whilst in character. But have you ever wondered how much they were paid to say them?

Some movie directors have clearly made a number of offers that actresses and actors can’t refuse...

Click on the squares below to find out how much (or little) some of the biggest names in Hollywood were paid to say their most-famous one-liners.

Earnings for one-liner  Earnings per word

$12924.66

My mama always said life was like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get...
I'm also just a girl, standing in front of a boy, asking him to love her...

The first rule of Fight Club is: You do not talk about Fight Club!

Ooh. You look like you came from the 90s. Where is your pen?

The pen is blue! The pen is blue!
And a second example...
What Are The Odds?
The things we wonder about and how (un)likely they are

Categories:
- Life & Death
- Politics
- Curiosities
- Work & Money
- Sports & Games
- Family & Kids
- Health & Body

Getting into college (UK)
My baby will be healthy
Getting married (women, 30yrs old, UK)
Having a boy (UK)
Getting married (women, 20yrs old, UK)
Trump being impeached (by end of 2017)
Another planet like Earth exists
Your job being replaced by a robot
Jury duty in England & Wales
War with Iran
Living to 100 (women, 18 yrs old, UK)
My baby will have blue eyes
We live in a simulation
Living to 100 (men, 18 yrs old, UK)
War with North Korea
Having a boy (UK)
Having a girl (UK)
What **should** we have learnt from those campaigns?
Trend:
We can complicate things too much.
Not learning from these produces **inconsistent** digital PR results.
Whereas ‘steady performers’ can produce consistent results...
Looking at ‘steady performers’...
Trend: Campaigns with multiple data points and are evergreen work well for consistent results.
The world's best cities to stay connected

Staying connected abroad has a breadth of benefits that can make our time away much smoother and more enjoyable. But access to the internet isn't always the easiest or cheapest to get in some global destinations.

Look at the graphic below to find the best destinations to stay connected when abroad. Will you be changing your next holiday location so you can be better connected?

Use the filters below and hover over each bar to discover the world's best cities for connectivity.
Looking at ‘steady performers’ helped us get a 95% increase in organic traffic and 63% increase in organic revenue.
You should be reviewing your work **every quarter** to find these trends and implement them.
Here's a template for you to review your work.
In summary...
Let’s circle back around
The full picture = Digital PR is hard.
You **will** experience a *campaign fail* (or a two). It’s going to happen.
It’s important to keep **consistency and quality** in mind over virality.
#1
Take the ‘viral’ pressure off and start talking more about ‘steady performers’ and fails.
#2
Realise that ‘steady performers’ can **consistently** impact weighty SEO KPIs.
#3

Use the Success Matrix to review campaigns and catch trends early.
Today,
I've showed you the full picture.
Thank you

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