the new standard

How AI Will Change PR and Communications in 2027, and How Agencies Can Prepare:

A TNS Study

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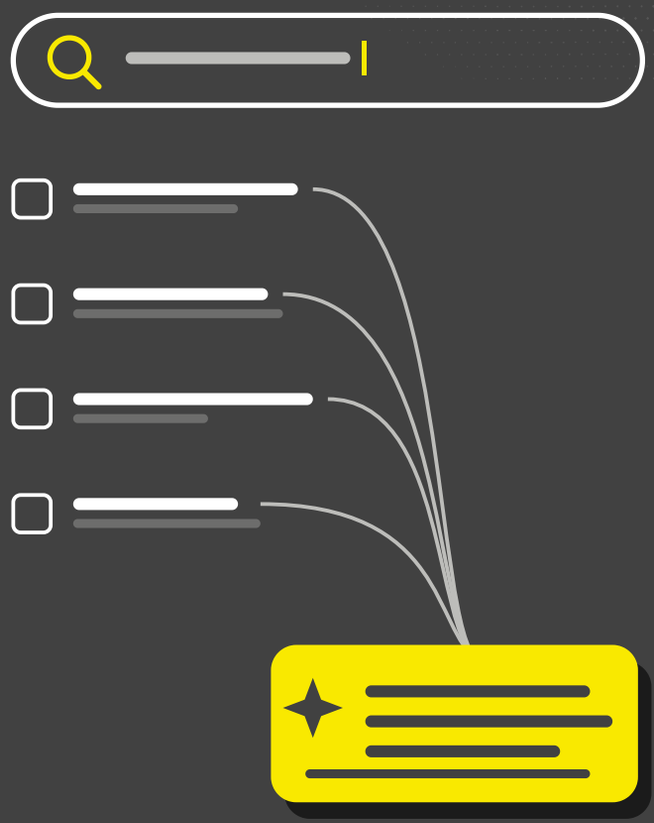
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AI sits on both sides of the pitch: 76% of PR professionals and 82% of journalists use it

76% of PR professionals use generative AI and 82% of journalists use at least one AI tool. And 57% of people in nine countries saw or engaged with AI answers in search in the past week. Sources: two Muck Rack surveys (a PR software vendor); Reuters Institute, October 2026.



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Drawing: TNS.

How to read this study

Surveys with different samples cannot be compared or added up. No study we found measures whether AI improves PR results. Outside Brazil and Buenos Aires we found no recent survey of Latin American PR professionals on AI.

The study in eight findings

1. Journalists use AI themselves, but most oppose AI-written pitches. 82% of journalists in one survey use at least one AI tool; in another, 53% oppose AI-generated pitches. Source: Muck Rack (AI use), 897 journalists; Cision (pitches), 1,899 journalists; early 2026; both sell PR software (chapter 01).

2. People click less when Google shows an AI summary. Users clicked a search result in 8% of visits with an AI summary, against 15% without. Source: Pew Research Center, 900 US adults, March 2025 (chapter 02).

3. AI answers almost never cite paid content, and journalism's share is falling. Paid content is 0.3% of links cited in AI answers, and journalism fell to 22% of citations in September 2026, from 27% in May; other studies find very different shares, by industry and method. Source: Muck Rack, a vendor, October 2026, 207 million citations (chapter 02).

4. Big brands have largely stopped paying agencies by the hour. Labour-based pay fell from 54% of multinationals in 2011 to 19% today. Source: WFA with Agency Mania Solutions, 69 multinationals, 29 September 2026; advertising and marketing, not PR only (chapter 03).

5. People want AI content disclosed, but disclosure can cost trust. 86% of consumers say AI-generated content should be disclosed, yet 32% say they would trust a brand less if its content is AI-generated. Source: Meltwater, which sells media monitoring tools, with YouGov, nearly 10,000 consumers, 21 April 2026 (chapter 04).

6. Few companies are ready for a deepfake crisis. Only 18% of nearly 300 senior corporate affairs practitioners say their function is prepared for a deepfake or AI misinformation incident. Source: GlobeScan, 13 May 2026 (chapter 04).

7. Brazil's online sample uses AI chatbots for news more than the world average. In Brazil's online sample, 13% use AI chatbots for news each week, above the 10% global average; Peru is at 11%. Source: Reuters Institute, Digital News Report 2026, online samples of about 2,000 per market (chapter 05).

8. Brazil's election labels were often missing, and Peru is the only TNS market with a general AI law in force. In Brazil's 2026 election, where AI-made electoral advertising had to be labelled, only 371 of 920 political-electoral posts confirmed as AI carried a label. Source: Agência Brasil, from Lupa's monitoring with Unicamp; El Peruano; not legal advice (chapter 05).

01

76% of PR professionals use AI; the survey says use has levelled off

Muck Rack, which sells PR software, says generative AI use in PR "has peaked at 76%" (564 PR professionals, 5 to 24 December 2025). It warns that changed question wording makes year on year comparisons weak.

93% say AI makes them faster. The gains are self-reported

93% of the survey's AI users say AI makes them faster, and 82% say it improves quality; 98% always or often edit AI text.

Every one of these figures is self-reported. We found no study that compares PR results with and without AI.

Only 51% have an employer AI policy, and 43% get training

Only 51% of PR professionals have an employer AI policy and 43% get training, both up from 21% in 2024 (the same December survey). And while 77% of the survey's AI users avoid entering financial data, only 36% avoid entering client names.

82% of journalists use AI; in another survey, 53% oppose AI-generated pitches

82% of journalists use at least one AI tool, up from 77% a year earlier (the same firm's State of Journalism 2026: 897 responses analysed, 30 January to 2 March 2026, 81% in North America). Cision's release on its 2026 State of the Media (1,899 journalists in 19 markets across North America, EMEA and APAC, January and February 2026) says "53% oppose AI-generated pitches due to concerns around accuracy and personalization." Both firms sell PR software.

Opposition is not universal. Cision's own article on the survey puts those in favour at 21%, and its chief executive later wrote in Press Gazette that 25% were neutral.

82%

of journalists use at least one AI tool

Muck Rack, State of Journalism 2026: 897 responses analysed, 30 January to 2 March 2026, 81% in North America

53%

of journalists oppose AI-generated pitches

Cision, 2026 State of the Media: 1,899 journalists in 19 markets across North America, EMEA and APAC, January and February 2026

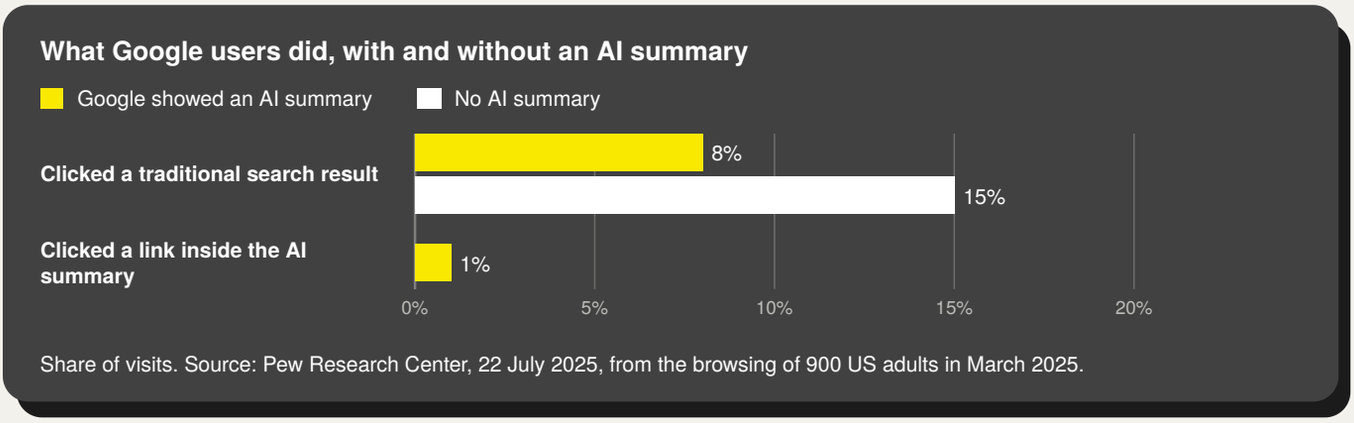
Two sources, two samples: the two figures do not describe one group of journalists. Both firms sell PR software.

In the mostly North American State of Journalism survey, journalists delete pitches that miss their beat (88%), are overly promotional (71%) or arrive as mass email (50%).

02

Google users click a result in 8% of visits with an AI summary, 15% without

When Google showed an AI summary, the 900 US adults whose browsing Pew Research Center tracked in March 2025 clicked a traditional search result in 8% of visits, against 15% when it did not, and clicked a link inside the summary in only 1% of visits.

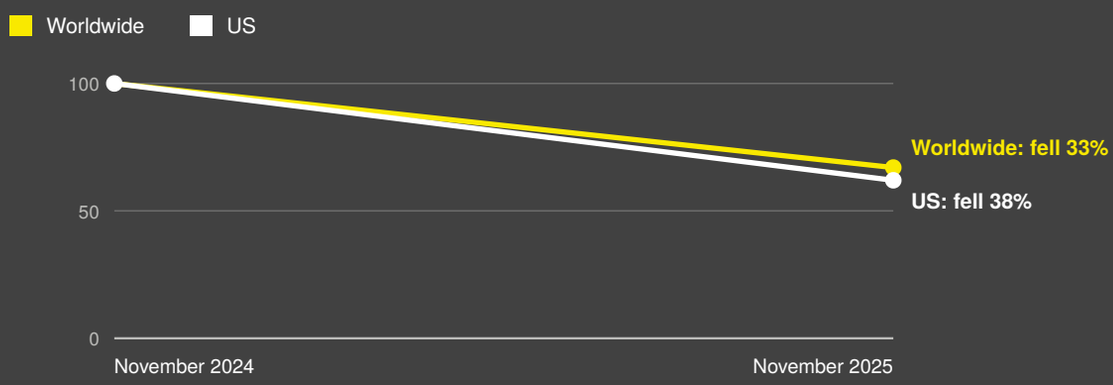


Share of visits. Source: Pew Research Center, 22 July 2025, from the browsing of 900 US adults in March 2025.

Publishers lost 33% of their Google search traffic in a year

Google search traffic to publishers fell 33% worldwide and 38% in the US from November 2024 to November 2025, across 2,576 sites (Chartbeat data in the Reuters Institute's Trends and Predictions 2026). Chartbeat sells analytics to publishers. In August 2025, Google said total clicks from search to websites were "relatively stable" year on year, but it published no data to show it. Google search alone still sends about 500 times as many referrals to publishers as ChatGPT (Chartbeat).

Google search referrals to publishers



Not replaced by AI: ChatGPT sends about one five-hundredth as many referrals to publishers as Google search.

Index, November 2024 = 100. Source: Chartbeat data on 2,576 sites, in the Reuters Institute's Trends and Predictions 2026 (12 January 2026). Chartbeat sells analytics to publishers.

AI answers almost never cite paid content: 0.3% of links

In Muck Rack's October 2026 study of 207 million citations, nearly 99% of cited links come from non-paid sources, and paid or advertorial content is 0.3%.

Journalism alone fell to 22% of citations in September 2026, from 27% in May. Press releases were 1.1% of citations in the study's May edition. The firm is a vendor; its September test covered ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini and Perplexity.

Other studies find very different shares, by industry and method

- An arXiv preprint by Pratyush Kumar found about 78% of citations went to corporate websites (more than 100,000 responses, March to May 2026; we read only its abstract).
- The DeltaV Digital 2026 AI search citations study found the share of top 30 domain citations going to a brand's own website ranged from 0.0% (B2B technology services) to 74.7% (higher education) across eight client brands.

In a lab test, quotations and statistics raised visibility in AI answers; keyword stuffing did not

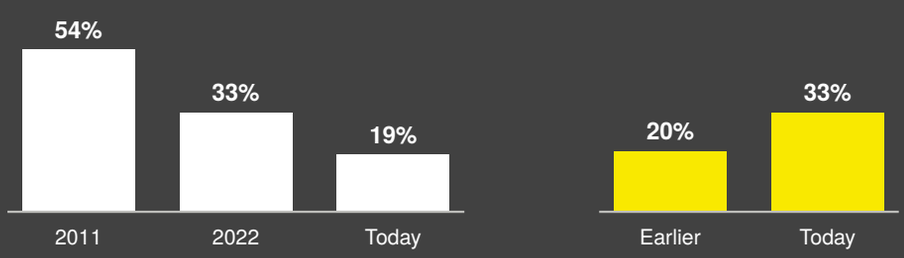
Researchers from Princeton and other institutions tested 1,000 queries from a benchmark of 10,000. Adding quotations, statistics or source citations to a page raised its visibility in AI answers by a relative 30% to 40% on one measure and 15% to 30% on another; keyword stuffing did not help. It is a lab test on the AI engines of 2023 and 2024, not live brand data (GEO: Generative Engine Optimization, KDD 2024).

03

Labour-based agency pay fell from 54% of multinationals in 2011 to 19% today

Among 69 multinationals with USD 147 billion of marketing spend, labour-based agency pay fell from 54% in 2011 and 33% in 2022 to 19% today, while fixed fee or output models rose from 20% to 33%. The survey covers advertising and marketing agencies, not PR only, and 71% of respondents work in procurement.

How multinationals pay their agencies



Share of 69 multinationals (USD 147 billion of marketing spend) using each model. Source: WFA with Agency Mania Solutions, 29 September 2026; advertising and marketing agencies, not PR only; 71% of respondents work in procurement.

Omnicom cut jobs, but its CFO says AI is "not necessarily the primary driver"

Omnicom announced about 4,000 job cuts after buying IPG (Axios, 2 December 2025). On its results call of 18 February 2026, its chief financial officer said: "AI is not necessarily the primary driver of how we looked at this." On the same call, its chief executive said AI-enabled automation will let it eliminate some positions that are now done by hand.

Only 3% of agencies report significant staff cuts due to AI

77% of PR professionals fear the next generation will not learn the basics (Muck Rack). But only 3% of agencies report significant staff reductions due to AI (Productive.io, which sells agency software; 174 agencies and consultancies that use Productive, March 2026, 54% in Europe, not PR specific).

04

86% want AI content disclosed, but 32% would trust a brand less if its content is AI-made

86% of consumers say AI-generated content should be disclosed, yet 32% say they would trust a brand less if its content is AI-generated, and 15% would trust it more. That is the disclosure paradox: people want to be told, and being told can cost trust.

The survey, by Meltwater, which sells media monitoring tools, with YouGov, covered nearly 10,000 consumers in seven markets (21 April 2026); a news report on the study lists none in Latin America.

86%
say AI-generated content should be disclosed

32%
would trust a brand less if its content is AI-generated

15%
would trust it more

Consumers surveyed. Source: Meltwater with YouGov, nearly 10,000 consumers in seven markets, 21 April 2026; Meltwater sells media monitoring tools; a news report on the study lists none in Latin America.

Only 18% of corporate affairs functions say they are ready for a deepfake

In GlobeScan's survey of nearly 300 senior corporate affairs practitioners, 18% say their function is prepared for a deepfake or AI misinformation incident. Respondents in Latin America feel the most prepared, which GlobeScan says may reflect "an optimistic underestimation of the threat ahead."

EU disclosure rules have applied since 2 August 2026

The EU AI Act's transparency duties in Article 50 apply from 2 August 2026. Deepfakes must be disclosed, and so must AI-generated text published to inform the public on matters of public interest, unless a human has reviewed it and someone holds editorial responsibility for it.

This is our reading, not legal advice.

05

13% of Brazil's online sample uses AI chatbots for news weekly, against 10% globally

In Brazil's online sample, 13% use AI chatbots for news each week, above the 10% global average, and 19% of under-25s do; Peru is at 11%, Argentina and Colombia at 9% (Reuters Institute, Digital News Report 2026, online samples of about 2,000 per market).

In Buenos Aires, 91% of communicators use AI, but 64% got no training

In the Buenos Aires area, 91% of 318 communicators use AI at work, but 64% got no training from their employer (UADE, fieldwork November 2025, non-probability sample).

Brazil's election: only 371 of 920 political-electoral posts confirmed as AI carried a label

Under Brazil's electoral court rules for the 2026 election (TSE Resolution 23.755, 2 March 2026), AI-made electoral advertising had to carry a label that is "explícito, destacado e acessível" (explicit, prominent and accessible).

From 16 August to 28 September 2026, Lupa's VigIA monitor, with Unicamp's Recod.ai lab, confirmed AI in 920 political-electoral posts, including at least 554 deepfakes; only 371 of the 920 carried a label (as reported by Agência Brasil, 2 October 2026; we did not find Lupa's own report).

Only Peru, among TNS markets, has a general AI law in force

Market	General AI law	Where it stands on 10 November 2026
Argentina	None at national level	Non-binding guidance from 2023
Brazil	Bill PL 2338/2023	Passed the Senate on 10 December 2024; awaiting the rapporteur's report in the Chamber
Chile	Bill	A Senate committee approved it in general on 26 October 2026, as reported by Mala Espina Check
Colombia	Bills	Government bill sank on 20 June 2025; a new bill, PL 025/2026, was filed on 21 July 2026
Ecuador	None	The Assembly archived its main AI bill on 15 September 2026
Mexico	None	Federal AI bill filed on 24 July 2026, as reported by ITSitio
Panama	Bill PL 588	Passed third debate on 19 August 2026, 46 votes to 0; the president partially objected to it on 28 September 2026, as reported by Panamá América; we found no record that it has since become law
Peru	Law 31814 (2023)	In force; its regulation, Supreme Decree 115-2025-PCM, was published on 9 September 2025

Sources: official records where we found them, otherwise the outlets named in the references. Checked 10 November 2026; not legal advice.

06

Forecast: publishers expect their search traffic to fall 43% in three years

News publishers expect their search traffic to fall by 43% over the next three years, and a fifth expect to lose more than 75%. This is a forecast by 280 digital news leaders in 51 countries, not a measurement (Reuters Institute, Trends and Predictions 2026, 12 January 2026).

Eight steps for agencies

The steps are TNS's view of the evidence in chapters 01 to 05, not data and not legal advice.

1. Earn the coverage AI answers draw on. AI answers almost never cite paid content, and in a lab test quotations and statistics made pages more visible in them (chapter 02).

2. Pitch fewer journalists, with more substance. In Muck Rack's mostly North American survey, 88% delete pitches off their beat (chapter 01).

3. Keep a person in charge of every output. 98% of Muck Rack's AI users always or often edit AI text (chapter 01).

4. Write the policy and train everyone, juniors first. Only 51% of PR professionals have an employer AI policy (chapter 01).

5. Keep client data out of public tools. Only 36% of Muck Rack's AI users avoid entering client names (chapter 01).

6. Price the outcome, not the hour. Labour-based pay has fallen to 19% of multinationals (chapter 03).

7. Prepare for a deepfake before one happens. Only 18% of corporate affairs functions say they are prepared (chapter 04).

8. Track the rules by market and by date. The EU's Article 50 has applied since 2 August 2026; Brazil's AI bill is still in the Chamber; Panama's president partially objected to its bill in September 2026; Peru's law is in force (chapters 04 and 05).

Talk to TNS. TNS works with brands and institutions across Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Peru: https://tnsagency.com/en/#contact.

07

How we built this study

Public sources only. Every figure comes from a published survey, study, company filing, official legal text, platform policy or news report. TNS ran no survey of its own, and no source endorses this study.

Checks. Each figure was traced to a source page, which we cite, and checked again on 12 November 2026. Where we saw a figure only in a news story or a law firm summary, we name that outlet or firm.

Vendors and rules. Muck Rack, Cision, Chartbeat, Meltwater, Productive.io and DeltaV Digital sell PR, media, analytics or marketing tools and services. Rules were read on 10 November 2026; this is not legal advice. All charts are TNS's own.

Cite this study. TNS (2026), "How AI Will Change PR and Communications in 2027, and How Agencies Can Prepare: A TNS Study", tnsagency.com, https://tnsagency.com/en/ai-pr-communications-study-2027/.

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