Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and the impact on public relations (PR) practice

Contents

"After so many years of scepticism and resistance, we're finally witnessing a surge in interest in AI within public relations. This report provides invaluable insight on how to do this correctly. It presents thorough research in digestible terms that make it easy for any practitioner to get started.

With so many AI vendors in the marketplace, it can seem like a Wild West when selecting tools. This report simplifies that by outlining several solutions and providing details on how PR professionals can actually implement tools to improve their efficiency.

Even though I am very active in this space, having written two books on the subject, and having delivered keynote speeches and training on it globally, I also gained new insights.

It's an essential read for any practitioner who perhaps whetted their AI appetite recently with ChatGPT and now wants to move forward in their adoption journey."

**Katie King, CEO, AI in Business, and author
of AI Strategy for Sales and Marketing**

"This report is a story of two halves.

The first half is about the current application of tools in the public relations profession. We've been pleased to support the analysis by granting access to the full Chiefmartec dataset.

The second identifies the explosion to come in communication, public relations, and marketing tools as a result of artificial intelligence. I'd add AV/VR, APIs and no code interfaces, and Web3 to this list of growth factors.

I predicted a seven-year boom for tools in January 2023. This report supports that assertion.

I commend the CIPR for its work in helping PR practitioners get to grips with the fast-evolving tool landscape and the potential of tools to help us work smarter and more effectively."

Scott Brinker, editor, Chiefmartec

Overview of this report

This project seeks to explore the artificial intelligence (AI) sophistication (or otherwise) of tools and services capable of deployment in the public relations sector. We originally examined an initial dataset of more than 10,000 marketing tools and focused the analysis on those related to public relations.

The launch of OpenAI's ChatGPT tool on 30 November 2022 based on the GPT-3 dataset appears to have stimulated dramatically heightened interest in the PR industry around further AI developments. In light of this, we have also looked at an emerging group of AI tools with applicability across numerous aspects of public relations practice.

Up until November 2022, the application of AI within public relations-related tools remained somewhat limited. However, at time of writing (February 2023), there's been a burst of new AI-driven tools, services and use cases with the potential to impact virtually every aspect of the public relations profession.

This report is an attempt to assess the likely rapid progress of AI technology over the next year and the longer-term strategic considerations for all public relations practitioners as a result.

The challenge with publishing a report of this nature in a highly dynamic and innovative environment is that it may quickly become out of date. The AI tools that we discuss in the context of their application to public relations are examples available at the time of publication. It's inevitable that there'll be much further innovation in this area in the next 12 months and beyond.

AI: what is it and where is it going?

What's Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are designed to think and act like humans. AI is achieved through developing algorithms and computer programs that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and language translation.

Types of AI

There are different types of AI, including narrow or weak AI, which is designed to perform a specific task, and general or strong AI, which can perform any intellectual task that a human can. AI applications range from simple to complex, such as chatbots that respond to customer inquiries to autonomous vehicles that can drive themselves.

Where is AI headed?

AI technologies have advanced significantly in recent years and are now being used in various industries, including healthcare, finance, transportation, and manufacturing. The goal of AI research is to create systems that can perform tasks that'd normally require human intelligence, such as recognising speech, making decisions, and translating languages.

Understanding the impact of AI on public relations

The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) has been at the forefront of helping practitioners understand the impact of artificial intelligence on public relations for many years.

Our *Humans Still Needed* report[1], authored by Jean Valin, and published in May 2018, examined the impact of technology, and specifically AI, on public relations practice at the time. It tried to predict the impact of AI on skills in the profession over the next five years.

This project compared a database of 200 tools (crowdsourced from CIPR members and practitioners by Andrew Bruce Smith and Stephen Waddington) with the Global Alliance Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK) framework developed under the leadership of Jean Valin which was later re-cast using a capabilities approach by a team led by Anne Gregory[2].

This analysis found that 12% of a public relations practitioner's total skills (out of 52 skills) could be complemented or replaced by AI at that time, with a prediction that this could climb to 38% by 2023. A review of the tool market in public relations is therefore a timely undertaking.

[1] Valin, J., Humans Still Needed, CIPR,
https://newsroom.cipr.co.uk/humans-still-needed---research-project-reveals-impact-of-artificial-intelligence-on-public-relations/ (Accessed 20 January 2023)

[2] GlobalAlliance Capability Framework,
https://www.globalalliancepr.org/capabilitiesframeworks (Accessed 20 January 2023)

Overview of the current public relations tools market

We partnered with Scott Brinker, editor, Chiefmartec, for this project. Scott has built a comprehensive dataset of more than 10,000 tools used in marketing and related fields including public relations.

The Chiefmartec database[3], published each year since 2011, is an open-source project that invites public submissions[4]. You can access a graphic of the entire database and filter the database by parameters including tool category, function and the year that a specific tool launched[5].

Our analysis of the Chiefmartech dataset suggests that there are 18 categories, involving around 5,855 tools that have the potential to be applied to public relations practice. We've shown this subset of the database in the table below. We'd encourage public relations practitioners to interrogate the database for themselves.

"We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run."

Roy Amara, President of the Institute of the Future (1925-2007)

Chiefmartech category	Application or function (no of tools)
Advertising and promotion	Public relations (82)
Content and experience	– CMS and web experience management (329) – Content marketing (369) – Email marketing (251) – Interactive content (269) – Marketing automation and campaign/lead management (353) – Mobile apps (124) – SEO (181) – Video marketing (174)

[3] Chiefmartec, Marketing Technology Landscape 2022, https://chiefmartec.com/2022/05/marketing-technology-land-scape-2022-search-9932-solutions-on-martechmap-com/ (Accessed 20 January 2023)

[4] Chiefmartec: Submit, change or remove a tool, https://martechmap.com/contribute (Accessed 20 January 2023)

[5] Chiefmartec, Marketing Technology Landscape 2022 Supergraphic, https://chiefmartec.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/martech-map-may-2022.pdf (Accessed 20 January 2023)

Data	– Audience/marketing data and data enhancement (234)
	– Business/customer intelligence and data science (337)
	– Customer data platform (84)
	– Dashboards and data visualisation (143)
	– Governance compliance and privacy (98)
	– Marketing analytics performance and attribution (128)
	– Mobile and web analytics (120)
Management	– Agile and lean management (54)
	– Budgeting and finance (72)
	– Collaboration (296)
	– Product management (54)
	– Projects and workflow (261)
	– Talent management (201)
Relationship management	– Account based marketing (27)
	– Community and reviews (151)
	– Customer relationship marketing (355)
	– Events, meetings and webinars (337)
	– Influencers (119)
	– Live chat and chatbots (278)
	– Social media marketing and monitoring (374)

We used a data extraction and natural language tool called URL Profiler to analyse the websites of each of the tools identified to characterise them and determine the application of automation, artificial intelligence, and machine learning within them.

If AI is an important feature of a tool, you'd expect a vendor to include it within a webpage title or metadata description. In fact, there were a surprisingly low number of tools in the Chiefmartec database that claimed to incorporate AI or machine learning: 2.0% (140) included AI in the title of the webpage and 2.4% (165) included AI in the metadata description. Related AI terms such as machine learning or natural language processing appeared to have limited impact on the number of matching results.

We concluded from this that the market in AI tools for public relations remained in its infancy. Our findings were consistent with our previous analysis. The conclusion to be drawn at the beginning of November 2022 was there had been limited progress in the previous five years. The only other conclusion from this exercise would be that marketing technology tool vendors are extremely poor at digital marketing.

It'd seem that up to November 2022, the market for public relations tools has been characterised by point solutions for tasks such as media analysis, influencer mapping, social media listening or press release distribution. We found limited evidence of integrated tech stacks. Innovation in tools in public relations, and adoption by practitioners, appeared to have changed little in the past five years.

However, November 2022 may well be seen as a turning point. The rapid arrival and accessibility of a new generation of generative AI and machine learning tools and services, coupled with the relatively easy ability to integrate and/or combine these technologies, has since created the potential for significant effects upon all aspects of the public relations profession. The speed with which these developments have occurred (and are likely to continue) presents challenges regarding accurately assessing the likely short and long term impact on the public relations sector overall.

What follows is our attempt to provide an accurate summation of how things currently stand as of February 2023, as well as provide some strategic guidance on what factors and issues should be the focus for public relations practice in the near-to-medium term future.

What's Big Data?

Big data refers to extremely large and complex datasets that can't be processed or analysed by traditional data-processing tools or techniques. It's characterised by the 3 V's: volume (large amount of data), velocity (speed of data in and out), and variety (different types of data). The processing and analysis of big data can uncover hidden patterns, correlations, and insights, which in principle could lead to better decision-making and improved organisational outcomes.

Generative AI applications

Open AI's ChatGPT tool launched on 30 November 2022. Within a week it gained one million users. By the end of January 2023, this had risen to 100 million global users. There seems to be no sign of user growth (or interest) abating.

Reaction so far within the public relations industry seems divided between those who see it as an existential threat - or an opportunity to augment the role of the professional. Some have simply dismissed it as a gimmick.

However, ChatGPT is merely one of a whole raft of new generative AI and related technologies that have arisen in what seems like the blink of an eye.

ChatGPT itself is at root a highly capable chatbot built on GPT-3.5 (Generative Pretrained Transformer 3), a so-called Large Language AI processing model developed by OpenAI that can generate human-like text-based content.

Given that writing is still one of the most prevalent required skills for any PR professional of any level of seniority or experience, it isn't hard to see how ChatGPT may impact this aspect of practise. ChatGPT and similar tools such as Jasper AI can create written public relations content of any kind - press releases, email pitches, messaging, etc. Simply feed in a prompt and you'll get a response back in seconds. Sceptics have already pointed out that the results are often simplistic, cliched or downright wrong. They argue that ChatGPT can't and won't replace the need for real human beings to create high quality content.

But that might be missing the point. As communications and AI practitioner Christopher Penn says[6]:

"When it comes to the use of artificial intelligence, in particular, large language models like GPT-3 and the ChatGPT interface, what these models are good at is transforming inputs. Large language models, in general, are nothing more than massive statistical probability matrices. A word is told by the company it keeps.

This means that these tools and models understand language only to the extent of the statistical distributions of the words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that they appear in. That's why they can replicate grammar very well because grammar is nothing more than statistical distributions of words. They're autocomplete on steroids.

Telling a large language model to write a blog post about social media marketing is going to generate extremely bland, average content. Telling it to generate social media content about the engagement rates on TikTok with regard to time of day and gender is going to give you more specific content because the large language model itself can understand, based on the additional words you've provided, more of the context. It is drawing from additional statistical probabilities from those words – a word is known by the company it keeps.

However, what these tools produce is still a statistical average of what they've been trained on. They're not going to produce anything original because they can't by definition. But what if you don't want average? What if you aspire to more than mediocrity? What role do these tools play? Here's the part everyone is overlooking: these tools are better at refining than creating, and that's the secret we need to understand to unlock their power. Because these models – their technical name really is transformers – are adept at taking in inputs and transforming them into outputs, they are actually BETTER at refining text than they are creating it."

[6] Penn, C., https://www.christopherspenn.com/2023/01/almost-timely-news-what-chatgpt-is-really-good-at-measu rement-strategies-for-agencies-course/ (Accessed 23 January 2023)

As others have indicated to support Penn's argument, there's clearly a skill in providing an AI with the right prompt ("prompt engineering" may well be a highly prized ability for all public relations professional in the future – unsurprisingly this isn't a skill currently featured in the Global Alliance Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK) which describes over 50 skills and abilities needed to practise public relations).

Those in the AI augmentation camp don't see AI tools replacing practitioners - but do see them used to support the content creation process. Rather than expecting the AI to do all the work, they argue, it can help PRs focus their time and effort on generating more valuable written content.

Of course, it isn't just about writing.

The list of possible public relations use cases for large language model AI grows by the day. Looking at the Global Alliance Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK), many of the 50 skills it lists (covering everything from research, planning, analysis, forecasting, campaign delivery and measurement) could be impacted.

Other generative AI technologies such as Midjourney and Synthesia are just two examples of an ever-growing number of AI tools capable of generating images and video from text prompts and scripts. The number of tools, services, browser extensions and use cases is already in the hundreds, if not thousands, and shows no sign of abating over the coming months.
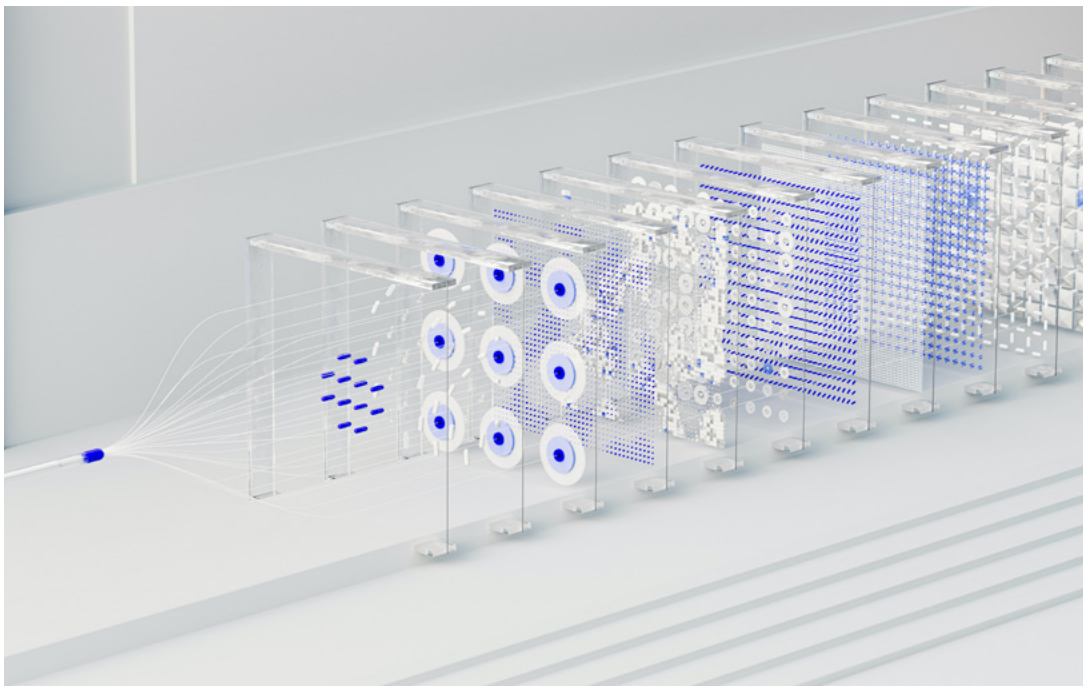
The democratisation of machine learning

Another AI tool launched in December 2022 – but which has so far received little or no attention at all compared to ChatGPT - is Google's Simple Machine Learning (ML) Add-On for Google Sheets. In many ways, this kind of technology could be just as impactful for many aspects of public relations practice as generative AI.

In simple terms, the Simple ML Add-On brings machine learning-based data analysis capabilities to the masses. Much has been made of the power of Big Data over the last decade – and the ability of machine learning-based AI technology to detect patterns and insights in huge data sets. However, the cost and computing resources required to support this has meant that only a relatively small group of large organisations have been able to benefit from it.

Now, anyone with data in a Google Sheet can use machine learning on their own data sets. There are a lot of obvious use cases in the realm of public relations. For example, analysing media coverage headlines or social media content for trends and patterns.

It can also "fill in the blanks" in data sets providing levels of statistical confidence in the suggested numbers. Google has already introduced this technology into tools such as Google Analytics (estimating data for web site visit data for those who reject cookie consent by analysing and extrapolating from those who do agree to share data). By "modelling" the numbers that do exist, the Google Sheets Add-On can provide an often accurate method of plugging holes in data beyond simply guessing. Use cases here might include estimates of media coverage exposure where none previously existed.

Google Sheets users can now also access GPT features directly within the spreadsheet via a free add-on function. This allows the automatic generation of content and data based on GPT prompts directly within a spreadsheet. Or it can be used to automatically analyse data already captured. For example, running sentiment analysis on headlines and content already contained within existing spreadsheet files. Or using natural language commands to "clean up" messy datasets.

Because GPT is accessed as a spreadsheet function, it can be combined with other functions to deliver calculations and insights which would have been unimaginable only months ago. The point here is that powerful AI technology that until now was only available to organisations with large resources, is now accessible by anyone with a computer, a browser and an Internet connection. Areas of public relations practice that might take advantage of this include research, behavioural analysis, auditing, data management, measurement, or forecasting.

What's Machine Learning?

Machine learning is a subfield of AI that focuses on enabling computers to automatically improve their performance on a specific task through experience, without being explicitly programmed. Machine learning algorithms use statistical models to analyse and identify patterns in data, and then use these patterns to make predictions or decisions without being explicitly told how to do so.

Other AI applications: combinatorial AI

Beyond generative AI tools that create text, image and video content, AI technology is already present in tools to help other aspects of professional life.

AI tools exist to analyse and provide guidance on using inclusive language; AI-powered communication coaches can help you speak with confidence and clarity, or AI assistants can immediately summarise and write meeting notes along with automatically extracted key action points and highlights. There's no doubt the number and availability of such tools and services is only likely to grow over time.

One other likely development worth considering is the inevitable use of so-called combinatorial AI. As already noted, ChatGPT has been criticised for its lack of accuracy in relation to matters of fact or computation. However, IBM researcher James Weaver has already created a working prototype application that combines ChatGPT with the Wolfram Alpha computational engine along with an AI-driven human avatar.

Wolfram Alpha fills in ChatGPT's fact and calculation blind spots. Given the speed with which this prototype was developed, it seems hard to imagine that other such "combinatorial" approaches won't be created to provide ever broader capabilities in the very near future. Many of these will have a wide variety of potential use cases across all aspects of public relations practice.

AI, opportunity and ethics?

While AI has the potential to transform many industries and improve our lives in many ways, there are also concerns about the impact of AI on employment, privacy, and security. As AI technology continues to develop, it is important to consider these issues and make sure that AI is developed and used in a responsible and ethical manner.

Ethical and legal considerations

In 2020 the CIPR *AI in PR Panel published the Ethics Guide to Artificial Intelligence in Public Relations*[7]*, authored by Anne Gregory and Jean Valin. The key areas and issues highlighted in that report remain entirely valid – the use and application of AI, social change; the impact on the nature of work; privacy control and transparency issues.*

The arrival of a new generation of generative AI and machine learning technologies available at scale and inexpensively only bring these into sharper focus for the practitioner of today.

For example – to what extent should practitioners declare using AI technology in any aspect of their work (will all emails, press releases or other related content require a declaration of what and how AI technology has been used in its creation?).

And what of the "explainability" of AI? According to the Wikipedia entry on explainable AI:

"The algorithms used in AI can be differentiated into white-box and black-box machine learning (ML) algorithms. White-box models are ML models that provide results that are understandable for experts in the domain. Black-box models, on the other hand, are extremely hard to explain and can hardly be understood even by domain experts."

So should all AI technology be explainable? Even here, there are no simple black and white answers. According to The Economist magazine (February 2nd, 2023):

"Whether people really need to understand what is going on inside an AI is less clear. Intuitively, being able to follow an algorithm's reasoning should trump being unable to. But a piece of research by academics at Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Polytechnic University of Milan suggests that too much explanation can be a problem."

"Employees at Tapestry, a portfolio of luxury brands, were given access to a forecasting model that told them how to allocate stock to stores. Some used a model whose logic could be interpreted; others used a model that was more of a black box. Workers turned out to be likelier to overrule models they could understand because they were, mistakenly, sure of their own intuitions. Workers were willing to accept the decisions of a model they could not fathom, however, because of their confidence in the expertise of people who had built it. The credentials of those behind an AI matter."

Once again, trust and reputation are paramount.

As noted in the earlier Ethics Guide, one of the most important roles that PR professionals can and will play in the future will be to not only understand how to use AI in their own work – but to provide organisations everywhere with sage counsel on how to interpret the reputational implications of AI usage that may impact any or all stakeholder groups. Navigating this new terrain will involve an expansion of the PR professional's current skill and knowledge set. In some ways, there has never been a greater need for PR practitioners who can provide the insight and guidance necessary to make this a reality.

Thus, the role and ability of the practitioner to advise organisations about the reputational impact of how AI

technology could or should be used has never been more important. And we're already seeing examples of where input from PR professionals could play a role in organisational decision-making.

At the time of writing, Google has been developing its own version of ChatGPT, known as LaMDA. However, Google has so far refused to make it publically available due to "reputational concerns". However, in light of the incredible interest and response to the launch of ChatGPT, Google intends to unveil more than 20 new AI products in 2023 and will demonstrate a version of its search engine with chatbot features this year. No doubt this tension between "doing the right thing" for all stakeholders, and commercial or political pressures to deploy AI come what may, will continue to play out across all industries and sectors.

And of course, all of these AI technologies (sadly) have the potential to be weaponised for morally dubious purposes to create dis– and mis-information at unimaginable speed and scale.

And does the AI industry have its own ethical problems to deal with?

Some firms in the AI sector stand accused of exploiting cheap labour for data labelling essential to machine learning. Is this the equivalent of the issues of using child labour in clothes manufacturing, for example?

And there are legal issues involving using generative AI technologies. At the beginning of 2023, there are already a number of legal cases on copyright issues such as Getty Images suing Stability AI, creators of popular AI art tool Stable Diffusion, over alleged copyright violation and a trio of artists have launched a lawsuit against Stability AI, Midjourney, and artist portfolio platform DeviantArt, which recently created its own AI art generator, DreamUp.

The artists — Sarah Andersen, Kelly McKernan, and Karla Ortiz — allege that these organisations have infringed on the rights of "millions of artists" by training their AI tools on five billion images scraped from the web "without the consent of the original artists." No doubt many more legal issues will arise in relation to the fast pace of development and deployment of AI technology.

So, given all of these ethical and legal issues, how prepared are practitioners regarding their understanding of AI technology and their ability to provide the organisations they work for or represent, the best possible counsel and advice about their use and impact?

The AI and Big Data Readiness Report: Assessing the Public Relations Profession's Preparedness for an AI Future report published by the CIPR in 2021[8], provided an overview of the then current AI understanding and preparedness within public relations. At the time, a significant number of practitioners had limited knowledge of AI and lacked confidence in using it (43.2%), compared with only a small number who felt "very comfortable" (13.9%).

The report found that 41.5% of respondents claimed to understand what AI as a technology meant but did not consider themselves technical. Only around one in five practitioners were familiar with the relevance of AI in the public relations profession.

As stated at the time, AI was already impacting every aspect of public relations from strategic planning to writing content. Report co-author Anne Gregory said that public relations was in danger of sleepwalking into the technological future.

[8] Virmani, S and Gregory A, AI and Big Data Readiness Report - Assessing the Public Relations Profession's Preparedness for an AI Future, CIPR, November 2021
https://www.cipr.co.uk/CIPR/Our_work/Policy/AI_in_PR_/AI_in_PR_guides.aspx

Where now for the public relations industry?

Public relations is much more than communication - it is about building and maintaining sustainable relationships with all stakeholders. That in turn secures the future of our organisations. You can't communicate your way out of bad behaviour or poor decisions - and AI doesn't offer a solution to either of these issues. In fact it may make it worse if your bad decisions and what others say about them are the narrative from which AI tools draw their data.

Will professionals want to avoid what ex-Google engineer James Williams refers to in his book *Stand Out Of Our Light*[9] as the "treadmill of incompetence"? This is the situation in which users are in a constant state of learning and adaptation, but never so fully in control that they can prevent technologies from operating on them in unexpected or undesirable ways. And this is a real danger.

A sustainable future for the public relations profession means we need to be able to stand back and ask bigger questions beyond 'how do I learn to use this new advance?'. As suggested earlier, governance questions are crucially important: what does this mean for our practice and more widely, our organisations? What impact does this have on our stakeholders, for good and bad? What does this mean for the nature of the relationships we are developing: does it help make them more sustainable, or is making them more transactional?

One of the biggest dangers is that as we move towards using more tools, our actual contact with stakeholders becomes less. We lose the ability to sense and feel what those relationships are like. Stakeholders are much more

than the sum of their atomised data parts and we need to retain our ability to relate to and with the whole human being.

In conclusion, it's extremely difficult to make hard and fast predictions about the exact impact of AI on the public relations industry over the next 12 months, let alone the next five years. If anything can be said with any certainty, it is that AI technology will continue to offer ever more varied capabilities and use cases that will have an impact on the profession. At the same time, PR professionals everywhere will have to be constantly mindful of the ethical and legal considerations of how they might use AI - as well as advising their own organisations and clients around the reputational and other implications of wide scale deployment of AI for any purpose. The decisions that are made on technology tell a story about our organisations.

Ignoring AI isn't an option. At the same time, it seems wrongheaded and defeatist to assume AI will remove the need for human PR practitioners completely….. unless we let it. Our challenge is to keep up and make sure we dictate the role of technology and not

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[9] Williams, J., Stand Out Of Our Light, Cambridge University Press, May 2021
https://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/research/publications/stand-out-of-our-light/

the other way around. There'll always be a place for good governance, leadership, and management of AI resources in public relations, irrespective of the sophistication of the tools. And that requires informed human intervention. There'll always be a wider role for those questioning voices at the heart of organisational governance who ask those guardianship questions about the implications of technology use - it isn't something to be left solely to the technologists, just as ethical medical practice is never left solely to the medics. Those who are prepared to invest time and energy in understanding the role that AI technology can legitimately and ethically play in public relations practise and beyond are more likely to have lengthier and more fulfilling careers.
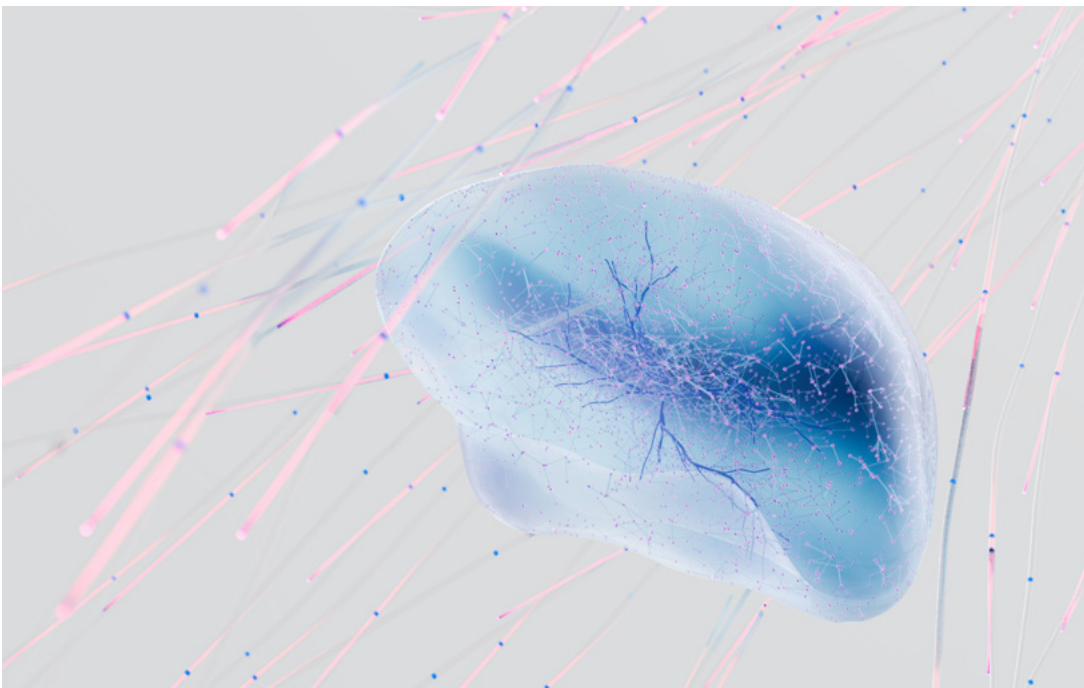
About the authors and contributors

Authors

Andrew Bruce Smith

Andrew Bruce Smith is a CIPR Fellow and a Chair of the CIPR's AI in PR Panel. He is a specialist digital PR, social media, SEO and analytics trainer and consultant with a career spanning 37 years.

In 2018, Andrew was cited by the CIPR as "one of PR's greatest thinkers" by members who were asked to name who had made an outstanding contribution to the Institute and the wider public relations industry.

He has consulted or provided training to more than 3,000 organisations in the last 15 years including NATO, the Department of Environment (DEFRA), NHS, Specsavers, Sky, Jaguar Land Rover, Disney and many others.

He has also provided analytics and digital marketing training to numerous charities and charitable foundations including Wellcome Trust, Alzheimers Society, Cure Parkinsons, Dogs Trust and Blesma.

Andrew has been a consistent digital innovator, being among the first UK communications practitioners to exploit e-mail (1990), the World Wide Web (1994) and Twitter (2007). Described as the "de facto godfather of PR blogging", he is a regular speaker and media commentator on the integration of PR with social media, search optimisation and analytics.

Stephen Waddington

Stephen Waddington is a business advisor and troubleshooter who helps organisations with planning, strategic decision making and execution. He is the Founder and Managing Partner of Wadds Inc.

Stephen has held the role of Visiting Professor in Practice at Newcastle University since 2015, supporting the university and students through teaching and mentoring. He is a PhD research student at Leeds Business School where he is investigating the contribution of public relations to management.

Stephen was previously managing director at Metia Group (2019-2020), an international digital marketing agency. It creates high performance campaigns using research, content, demand and earned media. His clients included Amazon, BMW, Capita, Salesforce and Microsoft.

He was Chief Engagement Officer at Ketchum (2012-2018), an Omnicom-owned agency, responsible for driving the integration of digital and social capabilities in client engagements across the agency's international network. He provided lead senior counsel on integrated global accounts including IBM, IKEA and Phillips.

Stephen originally trained as an engineer and a journalist before following a career in public relations. He co-founded, managed and sold two award-winning public relations agencies, Rainier PR in 1998 and Speed in 2009.

Stephen is Past President of the CIPR, Chartered PR Practitioner, a CIPR Fellow (Hon), a member of the IoD, and a member of the IPRA.

Contributors

Scott Brinker

Scott Brinker has been analysing marketing technology and its impact on marketing organisations for more than a decade as the editor of the chiefmartec.com blog. He serves as VP Platform Ecosystems at HubSpot, helping to grow and nurture the company's community of technology partners. Scott authored the best-selling book Hacking Marketing, about adapting software management practices — such as agile methodologies — to marketing teams. He holds degrees in computer science from Columbia University and Harvard University and an MBA from MIT.

Anne Gregory

Professor Emeritus of Corporate Communication at the University of Huddersfield, Anne is a Board member of the CIPR and serves on its AI in PR Panel and International Committee.

Anne is a passionate advocate for the profession and is past President of the CIPR and a former Chair of the Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communication Management. She is an influential thought-leader and author including co-authoring the CIPR's publications *The Effects of AI on the Professions: A Literature Review; Ethics Guide to Artificial Intelligence in PR and the AI Readiness Report*.

Professor Gregory is well connected with practice, running her own consultancy and working for clients such as the UK Cabinet Office, NHS and the World Health Organisation with a specialism in capability-building and leadership.

She holds a CIPR Honorary Fellowship and the Sir Stephen Tallents Medal for her contribution to the profession. International awards include the Institute for Public Relations *Distinguished Pathfinder* award for research, the Public Relations Society of America's *Atlas Award* for international work and the Canadian *Outstanding Achievement Award* for directing the work on the Global Capability Framework.

Jean Valin

Jean Valin is Principal at Valin Strategic Communications. A multiple award winner, he had a 30 year career as a senior executive. He's advised senior officials and ministers of the Government of Canada on communication matters throughout his career.

He's worked on several high profile national issues such as Canada's gun control program, anti-terrorism and organised crime legislation, same sex marriage legislation, the launch of Service Canada-Canada's one-stop for all government services- as well as transportation policy for air, road and marine safety and security issues.

Mr. Valin is active in his professional association- the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS). He was awarded his accreditation (APR) in 1987 and was called to the College of Fellows in 2001 becoming the youngest member to achieve the highest level of recognition. He served as national president of CPRS in 1996-97 and has received several national public relations awards throughout his career. He is the 2014 recipient of the CPRS highest individual award: the Philip Novikoff award for lifetime achievements.

In 2000, he became a founding member of the Global Alliance for public relations and communication management- a confederation organisation of more than 70 major PR associations around the world representing over 160,000 members.
He was Chairman of the Global Alliance for 2004 and 2005 and continues to serve in various capacities on the Global Alliance board. In 2008 he received the President's medal from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations in the UK. He is a co-author of the official definition of public relations adopted by the CPRS in 2008.

Co-editor of "Case studies in Public Relations from around the world" (publication 2014 and 2018). He is the 2022 recipient of the PRSA Atlas award for lifetime contribution to international public relations. His research interests include artificial intelligence and ethics in public relations.

List of AI tools

This is a list of the AI tools mentioned within this report.

Tool	Application	URL
ChatGPT	Chatbot built on the GPT-3 dataset	https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt/
FutureTools	Fully searchable online database of over 800 AI tools covering a wide variety of use cases including copywriting, generative image and video AI, prompt engineering and productivity.	http://futuretools.io/
Midjourney	Generative images based on text descriptions	https://midjourney.com/home/
Simple ML for Sheets	Machine learning extension for Google Sheets	https://workspace.google.com/marketplace/app/simple_ml_for_sheets/685936641092
Stable Diffusion	Generative images based on text descriptions	https://stablediffusionweb.com/
Synthesia	Synthetic video content	https://www.synthesia.io/