

AI FOR PR **CONFERENCE 2026**

Delegate Insights Report

HOSTED BY

COMMUNiCATE

Introduction

The inaugural AI for PR Conference, held on 18 June 2026, brought together almost 400 communications professionals for a day of discussion, debate and practical insight into one of the biggest issues facing the profession.

Following the conference, all paying delegates were invited to complete an online feedback survey. The survey was not sent to speakers, sponsors or event partners, ensuring the findings reflect the views of those who attended as delegates.

A total of 56 delegates completed the survey. Unless otherwise stated, all percentages in this report are based on those responses.

The purpose of the survey was not simply to measure satisfaction, but to better understand delegates' experience of the conference and to help shape the programme for 2027.

Executive Summary

The inaugural AI for PR Conference received an exceptionally positive response from delegates.

Almost four in five respondents (78%) described the conference as either one of the best conferences they had ever attended or an excellent conference that exceeded their expectations. No respondent said they regretted attending the event. The findings also demonstrate a strong appetite to return. Almost 95% of respondents said they would definitely or probably attend the AI for PR Conference again in 2027.

The conference attracted the senior audience it was designed for.

Three-quarters of respondents (75%) held senior leadership positions, including founders, owners, board members, C-suite executives, directors, partners and heads of department.

Delegates consistently praised four aspects of the conference:

- The calibre and credibility of the speakers
- The balance between strategic discussion and practical application
- The willingness to explore both the opportunities and challenges presented by AI
- The smooth organisation and delivery of the event

Delegates expressed a desire for even more practical implementation advice, additional networking opportunities and increased time to engage with sponsors and partners.

Overall, the findings suggest the AI for PR Conference has established itself as a valuable new forum for communications professionals seeking informed, practical and strategically focused discussion around artificial intelligence.

Who attended?

A senior audience

The survey confirms that the conference attracted a highly senior audience.

Three-quarters of respondents (75%) identified themselves as either Founder/Owner/Board Member/C-suite, Director/Partner or Head of Department/Account Director/Senior Manager.

This level of seniority reflects the strategic nature of the conference programme. Rather than focusing solely on AI tools and techniques, the event addressed the organisational, leadership and governance challenges facing communications professionals, making it particularly relevant to those responsible for setting strategy and influencing organisational direction.

The remaining respondents comprised managers, consultants, freelancers and communications executives, creating a healthy balance between strategic decision-makers and practitioners responsible for implementing AI within their organisations.

A broad cross-section of the profession

Respondents represented every major part of the communications industry.

More than a third (36%) worked in in-house communications roles, while 25% came from PR agencies and 20% from consultancies. Independent consultants and freelancers accounted for a further 11% of respondents, with the remaining delegates representing specialist organisations across the wider communications ecosystem.

This breadth of representation was one of the defining characteristics of the conference. Bringing together in-house teams, agencies, consultants and independent practitioners created a richer discussion than would have been possible with a more homogeneous audience.



~400

attendees



95%

would attend again in 2027



78%

said the conference
exceeded expectations



75%

held senior leadership
positions



60%

sponsor engagement



76%

conversations rated valuable



41%

said skills training are the
biggest AI challenge



AI STRATEGY

was the most requested
topic for 2027

Overall impressions

Delegates responded extremely positively when asked about their overall impression of the conference.

Almost four in five respondents (78%) described the event as either one of the best conferences they had ever attended or an excellent conference that exceeded their expectations. A further 18% considered it to be a good conference that was well worth attending.

Only 4% felt there was room for improvement and no respondent selected the most negative option, indicating that every respondent believed the conference had delivered value.

These findings are particularly encouraging given that this was the inaugural AI for PR Conference. Rather than simply meeting expectations, the event appears to have exceeded them for the vast majority of delegates.

Strong intent to return

The conference also generated a high level of loyalty among delegates.

Almost 95% of respondents said they would definitely or probably attend the AI for PR Conference again in 2027.

This willingness to return suggests delegates viewed the conference not as a one-off event but as one they intend to become part of their professional development going forward.

The Delegate Experience

Organisation and delivery

The operational delivery received exceptionally positive feedback.

More than six in ten respondents (61%) rated the organisation of the conference as Excellent, while a further 34% rated it Good. Only 5% considered it Satisfactory, and no respondent rated the organisation as either Poor or Very Poor.

These findings suggest that the logistics of the event—from registration and catering to the overall running of the day—supported rather than distracted from the conference experience.

As with any inaugural event, delegates identified a small number of areas where refinements could be made. These centred primarily on creating additional networking opportunities and allowing more time between sessions, rather than highlighting any significant operational shortcomings.

Sponsor engagement

Sponsors and partners are an important part of the AI for PR Conference, providing delegates with opportunities to discover new tools, services and ideas while supporting the event itself.

Almost 60% of respondents spoke with at least one sponsor or partner during the conference. A further 16% said they had intended to engage with sponsors but did not have the opportunity, while 25% chose not to do so.

Importantly, delegates who spoke with sponsors generally found those conversations worthwhile. Among respondents who engaged with sponsors, three-quarters (76%) described the conversations as quite valuable, very valuable or extremely valuable.

The findings suggest that the opportunity lies not in improving the quality of sponsor conversations, but in creating more time and space for delegates and sponsors to connect throughout the day.

AI Adoption

Beyond experimentation

One of the clearest findings from the survey is that communications professionals are moving beyond the exploratory phase of AI adoption.

Only 14% of respondents described their organisation as just exploring AI. By contrast, more than half reported that AI was already being used by some teams or had been embedded across communications or the wider organisation.

This represents an important shift in the profession.

The challenge facing communications leaders is no longer whether AI has a role to play. Instead, attention is turning towards implementation, governance and ensuring that AI delivers measurable value.

The audience profile helps explain why the conference resonated so strongly. Delegates were not looking for an introduction to AI; they were looking for practical guidance on applying it within their organisations.

The biggest challenges

When asked about the greatest barrier to adopting AI within communications, one issue stood out clearly.

Skills and training was identified by 41% of respondents as their biggest challenge—more than twice as many as the next highest response.

Governance and policy (18%) and choosing the right tools (16%) formed the second tier of challenges, while relatively few respondents identified leadership buy-in, security or content quality as their primary concern.

Taken together, these responses suggest the profession has largely accepted that AI will become part of communications practice. The challenge has shifted towards equipping teams with the knowledge, confidence and organisational frameworks needed to use it effectively.

What delegates want in 2027

What delegates want next

Delegates were asked which topics they would most like to see covered at next year's conference.

The responses point towards a profession seeking deeper, more practical discussion rather than introductory content.

The five most requested topics were:

1. AI strategy (selected by 46% of respondents)
2. AI agents (30%)
3. Measurement and analytics (29%)
4. Practical workshops (29%)
5. Search/GEO (27%)

These were followed by crisis communications, live demonstrations and media relations.

The findings suggest delegates increasingly want support with organisational implementation rather than experimentation. Strategic leadership, practical application and measurement have become higher priorities than learning about AI itself.

For the 2027 programme, this points towards a continued emphasis on real-world case studies, live demonstrations and practical workshops alongside strategic discussion.

Emerging Themes

While delegates selected a wide variety of topics, three themes emerged.

1. Strategy over curiosity

Delegates are looking beyond individual AI tools and towards organisational strategy. They want to understand how communications leaders should approach governance, investment and long-term adoption.

2. Practical implementation

There was strong demand for workshops, demonstrations and case studies that move beyond theory and show how AI is being used successfully in practice.

3. Measurement and value

The prominence of measurement, analytics and Search/GEO demonstrates an increasing focus on proving the business value of communications in an AI-driven environment.

The Delegates' Voice

The quantitative findings demonstrate that delegates valued the conference highly. The free-text responses explain why.

Across more than 100 written comments, several clear themes emerged. Delegates consistently praised the quality of the speakers, the balance between strategic thinking and practical application, and the willingness of the conference to tackle difficult questions around AI without resorting to hype.

At the same time, delegates offered thoughtful suggestions that will help shape future editions of the conference.

A conference that struck the right balance

One of the strongest themes was the conference's ability to combine strategic discussion with practical relevance.

Delegates repeatedly commented that the programme moved beyond the excitement surrounding AI to explore the real implications for communications professionals.

"This was a brilliant event - extremely useful and timely."

"It was such an insightful day - I got a lot more out of it than I tend to at industry events."

"The pace and energy were spot on. It was really important to bring people together to talk about it."

Several delegates also remarked that the programme avoided focusing exclusively on large organisations, making it equally valuable for consultants and independent practitioners.

"I liked that the content wasn't all focused towards large agencies. There was good advice that independent practitioners could use too."

The Delegates' Voice

Credibility mattered

Another recurring theme was the credibility of both the speakers and the discussions. Rather than promoting AI uncritically, delegates appreciated that speakers acknowledged both the opportunities and the challenges facing the profession.

"The generosity of the speakers to help move our industry forward was really appreciated."

"A flagship conference for an emerging sector."

"The event exceeded my expectations."

This sense of balance is an important differentiator for the conference.

A profession looking beyond AI basics

Perhaps the most interesting finding was not what delegates praised, but what they wanted next. Many comments suggested that communications professionals are already moving beyond introductory discussions about AI and are looking for deeper, more practical guidance.

Common requests included:

- More practical workshops and demonstrations
- More detailed exploration of AI agents
- Greater focus on Search/GEO
- Practical implementation case studies
- Measurement and evaluation
- AI governance and ethics

Several delegates asked for discussion around new commercial models for agencies and how AI will reshape communications teams over the coming years. Taken together, these comments reinforce one of the central findings of the survey: delegates are increasingly seeking implementation advice rather than introductory AI content.

The Delegates' Voice

Broadening the conversation

While delegates were overwhelmingly positive about the breadth of the programme, several identified opportunities to widen future discussions.

The most frequently mentioned suggestions included:

- Greater representation of internal communications
- More private sector case studies
- More B2B perspectives
- More examples from smaller agencies and independent consultancies
- Additional discussion around crisis communications

These comments did not suggest that existing content should be removed. Rather, delegates expressed a desire to broaden the range of perspectives represented within an already strong programme.

More conversation, less compression

The most common operational suggestion related not to the quality of the programme but to the amount of content packed into a single day.

Many delegates commented that they would welcome:

- Longer Q&A sessions
- More opportunities to speak with speakers
- Slightly fewer sessions with more time to explore each topic
- Additional networking opportunities
- Longer breaks between sessions

"More time for audience questions during each session."

"More time for exchanges with speakers and other participants."

"Slightly fewer sessions to allow for questions."

This is perhaps the clearest indication that delegates wanted more from the conference rather than less.

The Delegates' Voice

Small operational improvements

The operational feedback was notably constructive.

Very few comments related to significant organisational issues. Instead, delegates identified a number of relatively minor improvements that could further enhance the experience.

The most frequently mentioned were:

- Additional seating during catering breaks
- Improved wayfinding within the venue
- Slightly later start time for delegates travelling from outside London
- Better catering
- More networking space
- Clearer pre-event communications
- Additional opportunities to meet speakers

Importantly, these suggestions were typically accompanied by positive comments about the overall organisation of the day.

The overriding impression

Perhaps the strongest message from the written responses is that delegates want the conference to grow, not change.

Suggestions focused on expanding discussions, allowing more time for networking and exploring emerging topics in greater depth, rather than fundamentally altering the format.

One delegate perhaps summed up the mood best:

"It was such an insightful day – I got a lot more out of it than I tend to at industry events."

Conclusions

The inaugural AI for PR Conference set out to create a forum where communications professionals could explore the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence in an open, practical and balanced way.

The delegate feedback suggests that objective was achieved.

Across every measure included in the survey, delegates responded positively to both the quality of the programme and the overall experience. Almost four in five respondents described the conference as either one of the best they had attended or as exceeding their expectations, while almost all said they would consider returning in 2027.

The survey also confirms that the conference attracted the audience it was designed for. Three-quarters of respondents occupied senior leadership positions, while delegates represented a broad mix of in-house teams, agencies, consultancies and independent practitioners.

Perhaps the most interesting finding, however, concerns the profession itself. The responses suggest that communications professionals are moving beyond asking whether AI has a role to play. Instead, attention is turning towards implementation, governance, measurement and organisational change.

Delegates are looking for practical guidance, credible case studies and thoughtful discussion that helps them apply AI effectively within their organisations.

That presents both an opportunity and a responsibility for future editions of the conference.

Key Takeaways

The survey identified five clear conclusions:

1. The conference exceeded expectations

Nearly eight in ten delegates rated the event as either one of the best conferences they had attended or as exceeding their expectations.

2. The audience was highly senior

Three-quarters of respondents occupied senior leadership positions, reinforcing the conference's position as a strategic forum for communications decision-makers.

3. The profession is moving into the implementation phase of AI

Delegates are now seeking guidance on governance, measurement, organisational change and practical deployment rather than introductory AI content.

4. Sponsor engagement was valuable

Delegates who spoke with sponsors generally found those conversations worthwhile, suggesting future conferences should create even more opportunities for delegates and partners to connect.

5. There is clear momentum for the future

The exceptionally high intention to return, together with the quality of the written feedback, suggests delegates see the AI for PR Conference as more than a one-off event. There is strong appetite for the conference to continue developing as the communications profession navigates the next phase of AI adoption.

Closing remarks

We would like to thank every delegate who took the time to complete the survey and share their experiences.

Your feedback has already begun to influence planning for the AI for PR Conference 2027, helping to shape future programme content, networking opportunities and the overall delegate experience.

We look forward to welcoming you back on 17 June 2027.

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