

The State of Public Relations in Canada (2025)



What's in a name?

● Business Leader ● Canadians

Common preference for communications.

I trust Communications Professionals

63% ● 50%

I trust Public Relations Professionals

51% ● 36%

Communications Professionals act ethically

66% ● 52%

Public Relations Professionals act ethically

52% ● 41%

Professionals prefer describing themselves as a Communications professional more than twice as often as a Public Relations professional.

29%

Public Relations professional

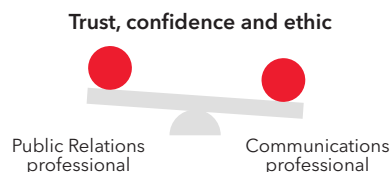
Men prefer Public Relations professional: (50% vs 20% of women)

67%

Communications professional

Women prefer Communications professional: (75% vs 50% of men)

And yet the split in results only occurs when asking about trust and ethical behaviour. All other answers are not statistically different.



What Canadians expect of Communications and Public Relations professionals

Knowledgeable



Countering misinformation



Acting ethically



Building and maintaining trust



Business Leaders top-priorities for Communications and Public Relations professionals

Strategy



Thought Leadership



Stakeholder engagement



Organizational listening



Artificial Intelligence

55%

of professionals report using AI weekly or more

73%

view AI as having a positive impact on their work

90%

of professionals say AI must be used ethically

Few report any formal oversight with only

27%

indicating they have a well-established and implemented AI policy

Canadians have concerns.

47%

Feel confident identifying AI-generated content

76%

Believe fake news impacts public opinion

79%

Canadians feel Communications and Public Relations professionals should address fake news and false information and 57% expect them to use AI ethically

Nearly all use AI but 55% use it weekly or more often.

Use of artificial intelligence for work:



55%

Weekly



34%

Monthly



10%

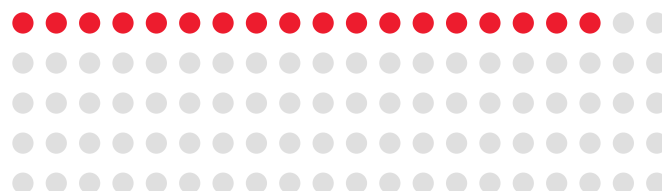
Never

Top five uses:

- 59% Creating content
- 54% Desk research
- 43% Data analysis
- 31% Strategy development
- 31% Automation of repetitive tasks

Business leaders not seeing us at the table.

Despite looking to Communications and Public Relations professionals for strategy, stakeholder engagement, organizational listening and thought leadership, only 18% felt that Communications and Public Relations professionals had a role helping their organization with AI adoption and transformation.



Role of associations

Ethics and accreditation improve trust.

83%

Canadians believe in ethics. In fact, 83% of Canadians believe communications management and public relations professionals should be governed by a code of ethics while 86% agree CPRS should help enhance and enforce professional standards.

97%

Professionals agree (97%) there should be a code of professional ethics and support enforcing ethical code violations (83%). CPRS members feel even strongly with 100% supporting the code of professional standards and 94% supporting enforcement actions for unethical behaviour.

Participants at the National Conference workshop agree *"we must be seen to be leading in ethics."* Another participant urged CPRS to *"take a stand and speak out when ethical lines are crossed,"* highlighting an expectation for visible leadership in ethical advocacy.

Role of professional associations.

	Professionals	Canadians
Enhance public trust, credibility, and respect of the profession	97%	87%
Be a champion for the industry	96%	86%
Advocate for the ethical practice of public relations	96%	85%
Enhance the code of professional standards with appropriate policies, education, and training	96%	85%
Provide direction on the ethical use of artificial intelligence	92%	83%
Enforce ethical code violations	83%	86%



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