

ความท้าทายและโอกาสของ AI ในงานประชาสัมพันธ์ยุคใหม่: มุมมองเชิงวิพากษ์ และแนวทางปฏิบัติที่ยั่งยืน

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF AI IN MODERN PUBLIC RELATIONS:

A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

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บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้ศึกษาบทบาทของปัญญาประดิษฐ์ (AI) ในงานประชาสัมพันธ์ (PR) โดยมุ่งวิเคราะห์ทั้งโอกาสและความท้าทาย โดยเฉพาะในประเด็นด้านจริยธรรมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการใช้ AI ในกระบวนการสื่อสาร เช่น การสร้างเนื้อหาอัตโนมัติ การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลผู้บริโภค และการจัดการวิกฤตผ่านระบบอัจฉริยะ งานวิจัยนี้ใช้วิธีการสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกกับผู้เชี่ยวชาญด้านประชาสัมพันธ์จำนวน 12 คน จากองค์กรที่ตั้งในและต่างประเทศที่ตั้งอยู่ในกรุงเทพมหานคร โดยผู้ให้ข้อมูลทุกคนมีประสบการณ์ในสายงานไม่ต่ำกว่า 5 ปี ผลการวิจัยพบว่า แม้ AI จะสามารถเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน เช่น การคาดการณ์แนวโน้มของผู้ชมและการติดตามแบบเรียลไทม์ แต่ยังมีข้อกังวลด้านจริยธรรมหลายประการ ได้แก่ ความเอนเอียงของอัลกอริทึม ความไม่ชัดเจนของกระบวนการทำงาน การใช้ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลโดยไม่ได้รับความยินยอม และการขาดความเข้าใจด้านอารมณ์หรือบริบททางวัฒนธรรมของมนุษย์ ผู้ให้ข้อมูลเห็นตรงกันว่า AI ควรเป็นเครื่องมือที่ช่วยสนับสนุนการทำงานของมนุษย์มากกว่า ที่จะเข้ามาแทนที่ พร้อมเสนอแนวทางการใช้ AI อย่างมีจริยธรรมในงานประชาสัมพันธ์ โดยเน้นความโปร่งใส การปกป้องข้อมูล ความเป็นธรรมในการสื่อสาร และการมีมนุษย์ควบคุมกำกับอย่างเหมาะสม เพื่อรักษาความน่าเชื่อถือและความไว้วางใจจากสาธารณะอย่างยั่งยืน

คำสำคัญ: การประชาสัมพันธ์, ปัญญาประดิษฐ์, การใช้ AI อย่างมีจริยธรรม, ความโปร่งใส, การสื่อสารในงานประชาสัมพันธ์

ABSTRACT

This article explores the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in public relations (PR), focusing on both the opportunities and ethical challenges arising from its use in areas such as content creation, audience analysis, and crisis communication. The study is based on in-depth interviews with twelve PR professionals from Thai and international organizations in Bangkok, each with more than five years of experience in the field. The findings reveal that while AI can enhance efficiency, particularly in predictive insights and real-time engagement, several ethical concerns remain. These include algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, privacy risks, and the absence of emotional and cultural sensitivity. Participants emphasized that AI should be used to support, not replace, human expertise. They recommended that ethical AI practices in PR should prioritize transparency, fairness,

data protection, and human oversight to ensure responsible communication and maintain public trust.

Keywords: Public Relations, Artificial intelligence, Ethical AI Use, Transparency, PR Communication

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has changed the way public relations (PR) professionals work (Geetanjali Panda, 2019). With AI, PR teams can automate tasks, analyze data quickly, and personalize communication for different audiences. AI tools help create press releases, social media posts, and even customer responses, making PR more efficient. However, while AI offers many benefits, it also brings ethical challenges that cannot be ignored.

In recent years, the adoption of AI in the PR industry has grown significantly. According to a 2023 global survey by Statista, over 57% of PR and marketing professionals reported using AI tools in their daily operations, compared to just 25% in 2018. The Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA) also found that AI-related tools are now being used for media monitoring, content creation, and audience targeting in over 60% of mid-to-large PR agencies worldwide. This rapid growth highlights not only the increasing reliance on AI in strategic communication but also the urgent need to address its ethical implications (Statista, 2023, www.statista.com).

One major concern is algorithmic bias, which happens when AI makes unfair decisions based on flawed data. If PR teams rely too much on AI-generated content, they might unknowingly spread biased or misleading information. Data privacy is another critical issue (Ferm, 2022). AI collects and analyzes large amounts of data, raising concerns about how this information is stored and used (Ferrara, 2019). Without proper safeguards, AI could violate people's privacy and trust. Transparency is also a challenge. When AI creates content or makes decisions, it is often unclear how those decisions are made. This lack of transparency can reduce credibility in PR communication.

Another key concern is the ethical impact of automated communication. AI can generate messages, but it lacks human emotions and cultural sensitivity. This can lead to misunderstandings or messages that feel impersonal. While AI can assist PR professionals, it cannot replace human judgment.

This paper explores these ethical challenges and suggests ways to balance AI automation with human oversight. By developing ethical guidelines, PR professionals can use AI to enhance communication while maintaining trust, authenticity, and responsibility. The researcher aims to provide insights into how AI can be integrated into PR without compromising ethical standards.

Research Objectives

This research article aims to explore the ethical challenges of using AI in public relations (PR) and find ways to balance automation with human judgment. The main objectives are:

1. Identify Ethical Issues in AI-Driven PR

The research will examine key ethical concerns, such as algorithmic bias, data privacy, and transparency. It will explore how AI can sometimes lead to unfair decisions, misuse of personal data, and a lack of clarity in communication.

2. Analyze the Impact of AI on PR Communication

The study will investigate how AI-generated content affects trust, authenticity, and cultural sensitivity in PR. It will also look at the risks of automated messages lacking human emotion and understanding.

3. Explore the Role of Human Judgment in AI-Driven PR

The research will highlight why human oversight is important when using AI in PR. It will examine how professionals can balance AI automation with ethical decision-making to ensure responsible communication.

4. Suggest Ways to Improve Ethical AI Use in PR

The study will propose practical solutions for PR professionals to use AI responsibly. This includes guidelines for reducing bias, protecting privacy, and making AI-driven communication more transparent and reliable.

5. Ensure AI Enhances Trust and Authenticity in PR

The research will focus on how AI can be used to support, rather than replace, human-led communication. It will explore strategies for maintaining ethical standards, strengthening audience trust, and ensuring AI-generated content is accurate and culturally appropriate.

LITERATURE REVIEW

AI and Automation in PR

Artificial intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed public relations (PR) by automating key tasks, improving efficiency, and enhancing scalability. AI-powered tools such as chatbots, predictive analytics, and sentiment analysis have changed how PR professionals interact with audiences and manage campaigns (Mohamed Azmi, 2023). These technologies allow PR teams to monitor public opinion in real-time, respond quickly to crises, and personalize communication at scale. AI-driven chatbots (Mohamed Azmi, 2023) can engage with stakeholders, answer questions, and provide instant customer support, reducing the workload on human PR teams. Predictive analytics helps PR teams anticipate potential issues before they escalate, allowing for proactive crisis communication strategies.

Despite these advantages, the ethical concerns of AI automation in PR remain under-researched. Delegating key communication tasks to AI may result in messages that lack emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity (Shaikh, 2025). AI-generated content can sometimes appear robotic or inauthentic, making it difficult to build genuine connections with audiences. Additionally, AI can spread misinformation if it pulls from unreliable sources, harming an organization's reputation.

To address these concerns, PR professionals must balance automation with human oversight. While AI can enhance efficiency, human PR specialists must guide AI-generated communication to ensure it aligns with ethical standards and brand values (Pinto, 2024). Organizations must also clearly disclose when AI is used in communication to maintain transparency and public trust.

Algorithmic Bias and Data Privacy

One of the biggest ethical concerns surrounding AI in PR is algorithmic bias (Nobre, 2022). AI systems learn from historical data, and if this data contains bias, the AI can reinforce and amplify stereotypes. For example, AI-driven media targeting might favor certain demographics over others, excluding marginalized groups and leading to unfair representation. This issue is especially critical in PR, where reputation management and inclusivity are key to ethical communication.

Data privacy is another major challenge in AI-driven PR (Anjum & R., 2024). AI systems collect and analyze large amounts of personal data to create targeted communication strategies, helping PR professionals better understand audience behavior and preferences. However, concerns arise about how this data is collected, stored, and used. Without proper safeguards, AI may process sensitive information without clear user consent, leading to privacy risks. If data is mismanaged, it could result in misuse, security breaches, or loss of public trust. To maintain ethical standards, PR professionals must ensure transparency, secure data management, and clear privacy policies. Educating both professionals and audiences about how AI processes personal data can also help build trust and confidence in AI-driven PR communication (Seidenglanz, 2023).

To mitigate these risks, PR professionals must use AI responsibly by ensuring fairness in AI training data, continuously monitoring AI-driven decisions, and complying with privacy regulations. Transparency in data collection, obtaining explicit user consent, and regular audits of AI systems are essential for maintaining ethical AI practices in PR (Marina Vujnovic, 2025).

AI Ethics in PR

Recent literature highlights growing ethical concerns in the use of AI in public relations. Key issues include algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, data privacy violations, and the

erosion of human judgment (Buhmann & White, 2022; Vujnovic et al., 2025). Scholars argue that AI systems, while efficient, may reinforce social inequalities or disseminate misleading information if left unchecked. Ethical communication requires fairness, accountability, and respect for stakeholder rights. Transparency in AI-generated content and human oversight are essential to maintain trust and credibility (Vanel, 2023). As AI becomes more integrated into PR practices, addressing these ethical implications is critical for sustainable communication strategies.

Transparency and Trust

Transparency is a fundamental principle in PR (Marina Vujnovic, 2025), as stakeholders expect honesty, authenticity, and accountability in communication. The integration of AI in PR can either enhance or weaken trust, depending on how it is used. If AI-generated content or decisions are not clearly disclosed, audiences may perceive the communication as deceptive or manipulative.

A key challenge in AI-driven PR is that many AI algorithms operate as "black boxes", meaning their decision-making processes are not easily understood or explained (Preez, 2024). If PR teams rely on AI for media targeting, crisis management, or reputation monitoring without transparency, stakeholders may lose confidence in the organization. For example, if an AI system generates a press release or social media post without human review, it may include factual errors or tone-deaf messaging, leading to public criticism.

To maintain trust, organizations must clearly disclose when AI is involved in their communication. Labels such as "This message was generated with AI assistance" can help audiences distinguish between human- and AI-created content. Additionally, organizations should educate their stakeholders on how AI is used in PR to ensure transparency and accountability (Vanel, 2023). When AI is used ethically and openly, it can enhance trust rather than undermine it.

Human-AI Collaboration

Studies in organizational communication suggest that AI works best when used to support human decision-making rather than replace it (Ramirez, 2022). In PR, AI can assist professionals by providing data-driven insights, automating repetitive tasks, and optimizing communication strategies. However, AI lacks the human qualities of empathy, ethical reasoning, and cultural understanding, which are essential in PR communication.

One area where human-AI collaboration is essential is crisis communication (Yang Cheng, 2024). AI can monitor online discussions, detect early warning signs of crises, and suggest response strategies. However, human PR professionals must interpret AI-generated insights, adapt responses based on cultural context, and ensure messaging is empathetic and

appropriate. AI-generated crisis responses that lack a human touch may appear insensitive and damage public perception.

Despite the potential of AI, limited guidance exists on how PR practitioners can maintain this balance, particularly in ethically sensitive scenarios. Organizations should develop AI governance frameworks that define the roles of AI and human professionals in PR processes. Ethical training for AI developers and PR teams can also help ensure that AI supports rather than replaces human expertise.

Ultimately, PR professionals should view AI as a collaborative tool rather than a standalone solution. AI can enhance efficiency and decision-making, but human oversight is critical to maintaining ethical standards, emotional intelligence, and authenticity in PR communication (Luttrell, 2025).

The reviewed literature highlights five key areas: the efficiency of AI automation in PR, concerns over algorithmic bias and data privacy, the importance of ethical standards, the role of transparency in maintaining trust, and the need for human-AI collaboration. While these studies provide a broad understanding of AI in PR, most focus on theoretical discussions and lack practical insights from industry professionals. There is a clear research gap regarding how PR experts perceive and address ethical challenges in real-world settings. This study fills that gap by providing empirical data through interviews with experienced PR professionals, offering practical recommendations for ethical and responsible AI use in the field.

METHODOLOGY

1. Population and Sample

This study used a simple selection method based on specific criteria. The researcher selected 12 professionals who work in public relations, digital marketing, or media communication from companies located in Bangkok. Both Thai and international professionals were included. All participants had at least five years of work experience and were involved in using AI in their communication tasks.

The selection aimed to include people with different backgrounds, genders, and job roles. The participants included PR managers, digital marketers, media planners, and content creators. They worked in various types of organizations such as company PR departments, media firms, and international agencies. Their experiences covered areas like content creation using AI, connecting with audiences, handling communication during crises, and thinking about the ethics of AI use. This group helped provide useful and reliable information about how AI is used in real public relations work today.

2. Research Instruments

This study employed qualitative interviews to explore the ethical challenges of AI in public relations. The interviews were guided by four key questions to understand the perspectives of professionals regarding AI's role in corporate communication, its benefits, and potential risks.

Interview Questions:

1. How has AI changed the way PR professionals work, and what are its main benefits?
2. What ethical concerns do you face when using AI in PR, especially regarding bias and data privacy?
3. How do PR professionals ensure transparency and trust when using AI-generated content in public communication?
4. What best practices do professionals follow to balance AI automation with human oversight in PR decision-making?

3. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted over a period of four months, from September 2024 to December 2024. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with selected professionals using semi-structured interviews. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives on AI's role in public relations.

Interviews were conducted both in-person and online, with each session lasting approximately 45-60 minutes. The responses were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

4. Data Analysis

The interview data was analyzed using content analysis to identify trends, patterns, and key themes related to AI use in public relations.

The analysis involved multiple rounds of reviewing the data to categorize it into relevant themes such as AI benefits, ethical concerns, transparency strategies, and best practices for responsible AI use.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings from interviews with content creators and PR professionals working in digital marketing, public relations, or related fields. The interviews explored how AI is being used in PR, the challenges it brings, and how professionals manage AI responsibly. The results highlight the benefits of AI in automation, concerns about algorithmic bias and data privacy, the importance of transparency and trust, the need for human oversight, and the best practices for ethical AI use.

1. AI's Role in PR Automation

Most participants agreed that AI makes PR tasks faster and more efficient. AI-powered tools such as chatbots, predictive analytics, and sentiment analysis help PR professionals monitor media, track audience reactions, and manage crises in real time. AI also saves time by creating content like press releases and social media posts, making it easier for teams to focus on strategic planning.

However, while AI is useful, professionals warned that it cannot replace human creativity and emotion. One participant explained, "*AI is fast, but it doesn't think or feel like a human.*" AI-generated messages often lack personality and may sound robotic or unnatural, which can weaken audience engagement. Some interviewees also mentioned that AI sometimes fails to understand cultural context, leading to tone-deaf or inappropriate communication. PR professionals emphasized that human involvement is still necessary to ensure AI-generated content feels genuine and relatable.

2. Algorithmic Bias and Data Privacy

One of the biggest concerns raised by participants was algorithmic bias in AI-driven PR. AI learns from existing data, so if the data contains bias, the AI may reinforce stereotypes or exclude certain groups. Some professionals noted that biased AI-generated content can harm a brand's reputation, especially in cases where AI targets specific demographics unfairly. One interviewee mentioned, "*If the data is biased, the message will be biased too. That can create problems.*"

Another major concern was data privacy. AI collects and analyzes large amounts of personal data to create targeted PR campaigns. However, this raises ethical questions about user consent, security, and data protection laws. Interviewees highlighted that in places with strict privacy regulations like GDPR, companies must handle customer data carefully and ensure AI does not misuse or over-collect information. Many professionals stressed that brands should be honest and transparent about how they collect and use audience data to maintain public trust.

3. Transparency in AI-Generated Communication

All participants agreed that transparency is key in PR. If AI is used to create content or make decisions, companies should inform their audiences. Some interviewees mentioned that hiding AI use in PR can make audiences feel deceived, which could damage a brand's reputation. One professional said, "*Audiences want to know who or what is talking to them. That builds trust.*"

To build trust, professionals suggested that organizations clearly label AI-generated content with disclaimers like "*This message was created with AI assistance.*" They also recommended training employees and informing the public about how AI is used in PR to prevent misunderstandings.

4. AI's Impact on Public Trust and Authenticity

PR professionals stressed that authenticity is critical in PR, and AI-generated messages can lack the emotional intelligence and human touch needed to connect with audiences. While AI is great for analyzing public sentiment and predicting trends, it cannot replace human creativity and emotional understanding. One participant reflected, “*People connect with people. Not with machines.*”

Interviewees suggested that AI should be used alongside human input rather than replacing human communicators. AI can provide useful insights, but PR professionals should review and adjust AI-generated messages to ensure they feel natural, personalized, and culturally appropriate. Many professionals believed that AI works best when it assists human professionals rather than replaces them.

5. The Need for Human Oversight in AI-Powered PR

While AI can automate tasks and analyze data quickly, it cannot think critically or handle ethical dilemmas. Many PR professionals emphasized that AI should not make final decisions in crisis communication or reputation management. AI can identify problems, but humans must decide how to respond to ensure that messages are appropriate, ethical, and sensitive to different audiences. Participants recommended that organizations set clear guidelines and rules for AI use in PR. This includes having human professionals review AI-generated content before publication and ensuring that AI does not operate without human supervision.

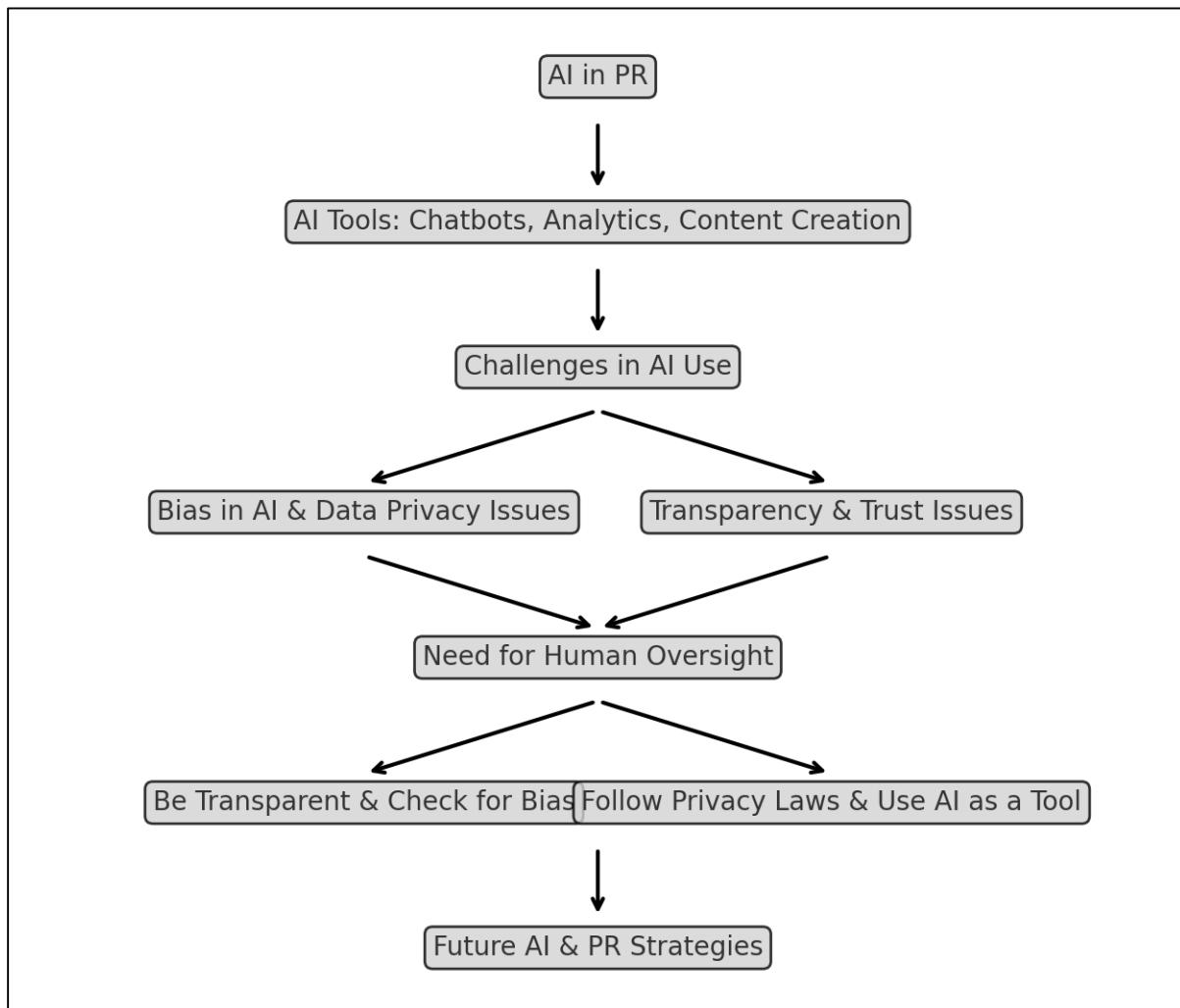
6. Best Practices for Ethical AI Use in PR

To use AI responsibly, PR professionals suggested the following best practices:

- Be transparent – Always inform audiences when AI is used in communication.
- Check for bias – Regularly review AI-generated content to avoid unfair or discriminatory messaging.
- Follow privacy laws – Ensure AI-driven data collection is legal and protects users' personal information.
- Use AI as a tool, not a replacement – AI should support human professionals, not replace them.
- Train PR teams on AI ethics – Educate employees on how to use AI responsibly and ethically.

Here is a flowchart framework (Flowchart 1) based on the results, summarizing the key aspects of AI in PR as identified by the researcher. The flowchart illustrates the relationship between AI tools, ethical challenges, transparency, data privacy concerns, the need for human oversight, and future strategies for AI in PR. It provides a clear and simple way to understand

how AI impacts PR practices and highlights the importance of balancing technology with ethical considerations. Let me know if you need any modifications.



Flowchart 1: Ethical Challenges and Strategic Use of AI in Public Relations

DISCUSSION

This study explored how AI is transforming public relations (PR) by making work faster, more efficient, and data-driven. AI-powered tools, such as chatbots, predictive analytics, and content creation software, are now widely used in PR to help with customer engagement, media monitoring, and crisis management. While AI brings many benefits, this study also highlighted important ethical concerns, including algorithmic bias, data privacy risks, lack of transparency, and the need for human oversight.

The interviews with PR professionals and content creators confirmed that AI cannot fully replace human expertise (Kasap, 2021). AI-generated content often lacks emotion, cultural

understanding, and creativity, which are essential for building authentic relationships with the public. Many professionals emphasized that AI should be used as a support tool rather than a replacement for PR specialists. The study also found that transparency in AI-generated communication is key to maintaining public trust (Bozkurt, Aras, and Ramesh C. Sharma., 2024). Organizations should clearly disclose when AI is involved in communication and follow strict privacy regulations to protect audience data.

These results are in line with previous studies that point out the importance of ethics in AI communication. For example, Buhmann and White (2022) explained that if AI works without human control, it may produce content that is unfair or not suitable for different cultures. This supports what the participants in this study said about AI lacking emotion and human understanding. Also, Vujnovic et al. (2025) noted that people may lose trust if they do not know that AI was used in communication. This supports the idea that being open and clear about AI use is very important. Overall, this study helps connect real experiences in PR with what past research has suggested, and shows the need for careful and responsible use of AI in the field.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study confirms that while AI helps improve speed and efficiency in public relations, it cannot replace human creativity, emotion, or ethical judgment. The findings highlight key concerns such as bias in AI systems, lack of transparency, and risks to data privacy. To use AI in PR effectively, organizations should be open about AI usage, protect personal information, and keep human professionals involved in the process.

For future research, it is recommended to include a larger and more varied group of participants from different industries or regions to gain broader perspectives. Long-term studies should be conducted to observe how AI in PR evolves over time. Researchers may also apply other methods, such as surveys or case studies, to support deeper analysis. Further studies could focus on reducing bias in AI-generated communication, understanding audience trust in AI content, and creating ethical guidelines that can be applied in real PR practice.

Finally, ethical guidelines for AI in PR should be developed to help organizations use AI responsibly (Germinder, 2024). Future research should focus on creating best practices that balance AI automation with human judgment, ensuring that PR remains ethical, transparent, and effective.

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