

# SPRINT



Study of Public Relations Insights,  
Nuggets and Trends 2024-25

**PRCAi**

PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANTS  
ASSOCIATION OF INDIA



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# >> About the Study

**T**he Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) has launched the second edition of the Study of Public Relations Insights Nuggets and Trends (SPRINT) 2024-25. The results are a combination of primary and secondary research.

## Methodology

The study provides a thorough understanding of the public relations (PR) industry. It documents the current state of the industry, explores trends shaping it, identifies emerging opportunities and examines the challenges it faces. It estimates the size of the PR industry in terms of revenues. For the first time, data on the number of PR professionals by hierarchy and a gender split, is covered in the study.

## Study Process

The study was conducted in two phases:  
**Phase 1:** Qualitative, in-depth interviews of professionals in the communication industry to understand the industry and cull out insights.

**Phase 2:** Quantification of the qualitative insights to measure the extent of agreement with insights

and trends from the qualitative phase.

## Scope of the Study

While the previous survey, SPRINT 2022-23, covered senior decision-makers from consultancies and corporate communications, the scope of SPRINT 2024-25 has been expanded to include middle-level and entry-level professionals from PR firms. In addition, this study includes opinions of Corporate Communication leaders, select Human Resource and Finance Heads in PR consultancies, reaching a robust sample base of 220 professionals from the PR industry.

## Our Partners

The study was conducted and insights generated by Ipsos, a leading research agency. PRCAI, partnered with Astrum, India's first science-based specialist reputation advisory, to build a narrative from the survey. ●

**Dezma de Melo**  
Research Consultant, PRCAI

# >> Executive Summary



**Deeptie Sethi**

**Chief Executive Officer, PRCAI**

## The New Face of Indian Public Relations: Business Outcomes, AI, and Gen Z in Focus

**T**he Indian public relations industry continues to grow in significance, reflecting the country's expanding economic landscape and PRCAI's SPRINT 2024-25—Study of Public Relations Insights, Nuggets and Trends— paints a compelling portrait of a sector and space in the throes of significant transformation. The Indian PR industry grew more than three times compared to global PR, reaching ₹2,500 crores in revenues in 2023. Its share in the Asia-Pacific market increased from 15.4% in 2022 to 17% in 2023. While publicly available data tells us that advertising grew 7%, PR clocked 11%—sign of a shifting communication landscape.

### Impact Over Quantity

Many trends uncovered in SPRINT 2024-25 present a newer outlook. The PR value is

shifting towards business impact, rather than the common measurable yardsticks of media quantity. For instance, in the quantitative study, an overwhelming 90% of respondents from the corporate communicators set prioritized tangible business impact with PR, highlighting a shift towards outcome-driven PR. The study highlighted that, with a 46% share, private corporates remain the largest revenue contributors; but start-ups are quickly rising, now accounting for 22% revenue share, while NGOs have grown to a 11% share, showcasing the growth of purpose-driven PR.

In today's VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) world, the role, planning and execution of communications has evolved dramatically. Brands aim to connect with audiences in relatable, purposeful ways. They want to reach their audiences where they are, and communicate with them differently. This shift is seen in the rise of regional PR, influencer marketing, public affairs and social media trends, all of which emphasize a move away from commoditized media relations.

For example, in the SPRINT 2024-25 study, 88% of professionals believe that cultural sensitivities are critical in regional storytelling and PR. Further, while

## Executive Summary

influencer marketing is rising, 88% respondents feel it needs accountability for business outcomes, and 73% respondents stress the need for fresh storytelling approaches by going hyperlocal. Purpose-driven PR is gaining traction, with key sectors like social impact and NGOs, energy and environment, healthcare and pharma, consumer goods and retail, and technology are prioritizing their narrative alignment with brand philosophy and values, tied to the trend of value shift in PR.

### Global Signals

Some findings are riding on the global trends that promise to reshape the PR industry. Like, artificial intelligence (AI) will fuel the growth of the communication industry, and also present it with new challenges to manage. The SPRINT 2024-25 study notes that the top two applications of AI in the Indian PR industry will be research and strategy (82% of respondents) and conversational AI (77%). At the same time, respondents also flag risks of AI: while 90% of respondents believe AI and big data will propel PR, an identical percentage warns of threats and reputational risks of AI-generated misinformation and deepfakes. As AI adoption grows, maintaining strategic differentiation will be a key challenge due to the widespread accessibility of similar data insights.

The 11% revenue growth of Indian PR in FY 2024 (incremental revenues of ₹400 crore) means this is the eighth year of double-digit growth in the last 10 years. Still, it is below the past decade's CAGR of 12.5%. The industry is realigning from only soft growth, and challenges persist, particularly in talent management and quality of work. One in six corporate communicators expects that specialization will boost the quality of work and fuel growth, but it will also increase costs for consultancies as the industry is seeing some firms establish regional offices, expand video production or tailor creative AI solutions. But client PR budgets are not necessarily keeping pace with this greater value provided, and the costs it entails? Navigating this balance will be important for this dynamic industry.

### Managing Talent

Another significant headwind is the whirlpool of talent. The PR industry added 1,300 professionals in FY 2023 (and 4,700 over five years), but it averages an attrition of 16%. Among consultancy staff, work-life balance (64% of respondents) and poor work culture (54%) are some of the major causes of dissatisfaction besides compensation (61%). With low entry barriers in the profession, continuous upskilling and training-on-the-job will be vital.

PRCAI remains committed to this through learning and development initiatives such as the Writing Pen, accreditation of PR professionals, AcademiaConnect, and several aspirational thought leadership and knowledge exchange initiatives such as PRologue, PRana and PRCAI Dialogues.

The SPRINT study, for the first time, deep-dived into Gen Z perspectives. It found many struggles with established work cultures, the notion of flexibility and peer-level treatment. Leaders must adapt to foster a more inclusive and collaborative environment to retain this dynamic talent pool. Gen Z is rapidly changing the employee mix of most PR firms, which will shape future work environments.

For instance, the attrition challenge may still have a long tail as all respondents believe that Gen Z's curiosity and eagerness to explore often result in frequent job changes, and 93% feel that recognizing and rewarding Gen Z talent can boost their morale and retention.

SPRINT 2024-25 underscores the rising influence of Indian PR. The voice of the Global South will become more significant and public relation's evolving role in boardrooms will solidify its strategic value in the 21st-century communication landscape. So, let's buckle up for a strong ride. ●

# » Message from the President



**Atul  
Sharma**

**President, PRCAI**

India's economic landscape is experiencing a period of remarkable resilience, particularly after emerging from a high-stakes election cycle. The country's GDP grew 6.7% year-on-year in the April-to-June quarter, positioning it among the fastest-growing large economies globally. Government measures and emerging sectors are driving job creation and increased consumer spending.

As the country progresses on this economic path, its public relations industry follows suit—growing rapidly and driving impactful communication strategies. Over the last decade, India's PR industry has expanded at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12.8%, outpacing global growth by three times. This growth reflects a shift towards data-driven, strategic public relations practices focused on delivering measurable business outcomes.

The 2024-25 edition of Study of Public Relations Insights, Nuggets and Trends (SPRINT) serves both as a mirror and a map—reflecting the current state of the industry while pointing us towards the path ahead. It is a reminder that while challenges abound, so do opportunities. It highlights key trends that are going to define the entire public relations landscape.

## **Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam**

As the country's top 100 cities become economic powerhouses, the need for hyperlocal storytelling, regional outreach and influencer-driven narratives is becoming critical. While media relations will remain important, it is evident that digital and social media, purpose-driven campaigns, and influencer marketing are gaining prominence. In short, PR is no longer just about “getting the word out”—it's about building meaningful engagement with audiences across diverse platforms.

## **Authentic Stories; Under 8 Seconds**

As today's PR professionals, we have the most exciting opportunity to connect with our audiences



through multiple channels. Especially, while addressing the Gen Z and Gen Alpha cohort who are prone to relate to brands that resonate with their values and ethos—and ally behind them. But with opportunity comes complexity. In an era where content consumption is increasingly fragmented, attention spans have shrunk to a mere 8 seconds. This means our content needs to be shorter, visually dynamic and designed to capture attention instantly.

### AI is Not the Future; AI is the Present

From automating content creation to real-time media monitoring and in-depth data analysis, AI will change the conventional operating structures of agencies. It will also streamline processes like campaign reviews and performance measurement, enabling PR teams to focus more on strategy than execution. However, while AI may enhance efficiency, it cannot replace the human touch required for building trust, managing crises and offering strategic counsel.

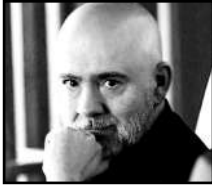
### War for Talent

With clients increasingly seeking consultative partnerships over mere execution, the demand for skilled professionals who can deliver strategic counsel is higher than ever. However, attracting and retaining such talent remains a challenge, particularly given the industry's traditionally high attrition rates and under-investment in talent development. To remain competitive, agencies must prioritise not just recruitment but also continuous learning and upskilling, while fostering a work environment that is both rewarding and aspirational.

I am hoping this report will spark meaningful conversations, inspire innovation and encourage all stakeholders—PR professionals, corporate communicators, brands and the media alike—to think differently about the role of public relations in today's world.

Let's get ready to sprint forward. ●

# >> Foreword



**Paul  
Holmes**

**Founder and Chair,  
PProvoke Media**

**T**he PRCAI's SPRINT (Study of Public Relations Insights Nuggets and Trends) research provides some fascinating perspectives on one of the world's fastest-growing public relations markets—and also delivers a warning for PR agency leaders, as it becomes clear that PR in India is at a crossroads.

A compound annual growth rate of 12.8% over the past decade makes it clear that the Indian PR business has been outperforming the global growth numbers over the same period, and our own experience in the market makes it clear that the quality of work on the sub-continent has improved dramatically: it is more data-driven, more strategic in its planning, more creative in its execution, and more effective in terms of business impact than ever before.

But one does not need to delve too deeply into the 2024-25 SPRINT study to identify potential risks to continued success.

First of all, there's the price pressure that agencies are feeling. More than four out of five respondents (81%) agreed with the statement that “client budgets are not growing as fast as PR consultancy costs,” up from 54% two years ago. And 77% agree that “intense competition, drives undercutting and price wars.”

This problem is not, in our experience, unique to India. The fact is that some of the core services offered by public relations firms around the world—and I am thinking here of traditional publicity and media relations—are increasingly seen by clients as a commodity, to be purchased on price rather than value.

With the exception of the crisis realm, public affairs, and capital markets communications, clients are not convinced that media relations is a strategic function. And PR firms seem to recognize this reality: while they predict that digital media, public affairs, influencer marketing and more will deliver more revenue over the next three years, they see the contribution from media relations declining.

The research suggests two possible solutions to this problem.

Not surprisingly, the biggest single cost of running

a PR agency is “manpower,” which accounts for more than 50% of spending, regardless of agency size. It is possible that new technologies, and artificial intelligence in particular, might offer some relief from this payroll burden—a possibility that has been widely discussed within the global public relations industry.

And in this respect, Indian firms would appear to have plenty of scope for reducing costs. Just 13% of SPRINT respondents indicate that they have made significant investments in AI—although a majority of the firms participating in this research see a role for AI in research and strategy (82%), conversational AI (77%), and personalized content creation (57%).

However, while this may reduce costs, it seems to me that it is more likely to exacerbate the core problem: leading to greater commoditization of some core functions. Investing in AI may help campaigns reduce costs, but it will do little to differentiate them in a market where their competitors are making similar investments.

Fortunately, the research identifies a second path forward. The vast majority (90%) of corporate communicators believe that value is shifting from “media quantity” to “business impact.” (I am not sure what to make of the 10% who apparently believe counting clips will continue to be more important than driving business success.)

The same number of respondents believe there

is a need for comprehensive, integrated solutions (spanning paid, earned, shared and owned channels) and 66% expect to seek strategic insights from the PR consultancies (up from 56% two years ago).

From this, two things are clear.

The first is that true differentiation will stem from the ability to deliver core strategic (data-driven) insights. To make themselves valuable to and valued by clients, firms will need to be problem-solvers first, and excellent communicators second.

The second is that firms need to move away from defining themselves in terms of traditional products and services (publicity, media coverage, even “building awareness”) and instead adopt a mindset that what they are really selling is business impact, competitive advantage, enhanced relationships, and “building advocacy.”

The 2024-25 SPRINT report points to a future in which firms that continue to see public relations as synonymous with earned media and press coverage will find it difficult to stand out and to deliver consistent profits. Those who see themselves as business consultants with a specialization in communications will have the opportunity to add greater value and earn improved margins.

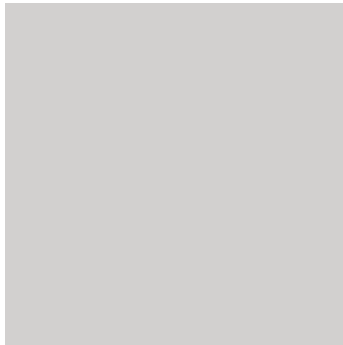
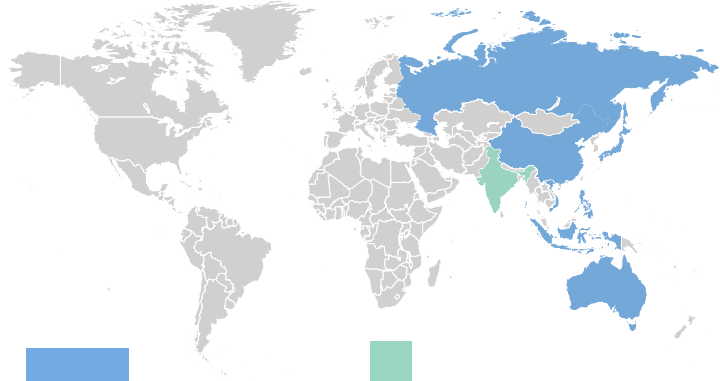
To a certain extent, the choice is simple: do firms want to be “agencies” or true consultancies? ●



## Chapter 1

# Overview of Indian PR Industry

» **India's revenue share in Asia-Pacific is up from 15% in 2022 to 17% in 2023**



### Global PR revenues

INR **168,000 crore**

(U.S.\$ 21 billion)

**Growth:** Steady 5% increase from U.S. \$20 billion in 2022 to U.S. \$21 billion in 2023

**Key market:** U.S. PR firms accounted for more than half the PR market in 2023



### Asia-Pacific PR revenues

INR **14,800 crore**

(U.S.\$ 2 billion)

**Share:** 8.8% of the global PR market

**Key markets:** China, India, Australia, Japan and Russia

**Emerging markets:** Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam



### Indian PR revenues

INR **2,500 crore**

(U.S.\$ 305 million)

**Share:** Increased share in APAC from 15.4% (2022) to 17% (2023)

**Growth:** 19% in 2023, against 13% in 2022. In 2023, India's PR growth is nearly 4 times global PR growth

**Key markets:** North & West regions of India remain the two big markets, but South & East regions are emerging and growing at a faster pace

Note: Revenue data for 2023 | Source: PRCAI & Ipsos estimates

# Overview of Indian PR Industry

There are presently about **180 PR companies** in India

Company category	Giant	Large	Mid-Sized	Emerging	Micro
Number of companies	3	7	18	150	500+
Turnover (FY22)	Above Rs 100 crore	Rs 50-100 crore	Rs 10-50 crore	Rs 1-10 crore	Below Rs 0.2 crore
Operational presence	Presence in 8+ cities	Presence in all metros	Presence in 2-3 locations	Present majorly in North & West	Present in one city



## Well Developed

All major global PR consultancies are operating in India.



## Acquisitions to Consolidation

Large global PR consultancies entered India through multiple acquisitions. Now, they are integrating operations of these multiple entities.

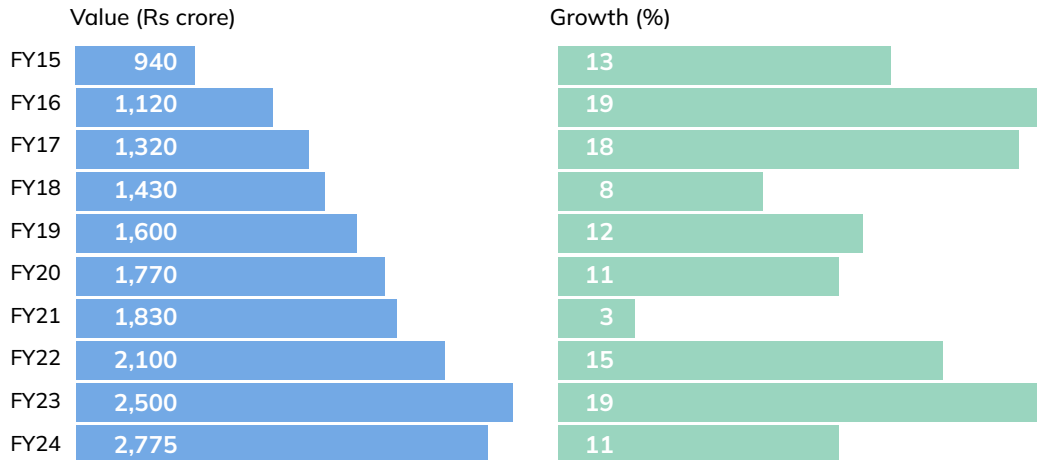


## Growth Gears

The segment of Giant PR firms has grown at 22% in FY23, whereas the large and mid-sized segments have grown at 29% and 22%, respectively.

» In FY2024, Indian PR industry is expected to deliver **double-digit growth** again

### Indian PR industry size and growth



FY = Financial Year (April to March). Eg: FY 22 = April 2021 to March 2022. Data for FY24 is an estimate.



#### Growth Drivers

68% of PR consultancy heads agree that acquisitions and collaborations are key drivers of industry growth, fuelled by global expansion, service diversification, competitive advantage, and talent acquisition.

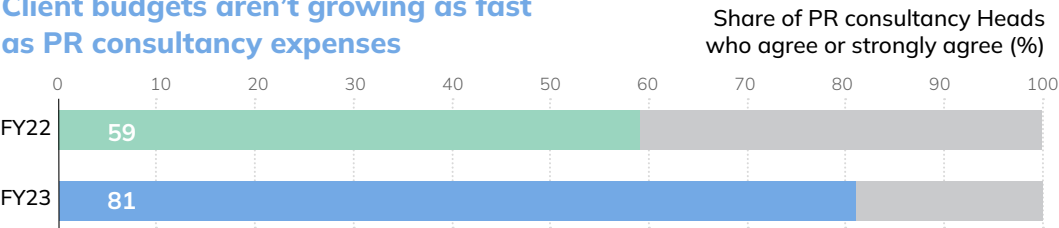
**FY23  
revenues**  
**Rs 2,500  
crore**

**Decadal  
CAGR**  
**12.8%**

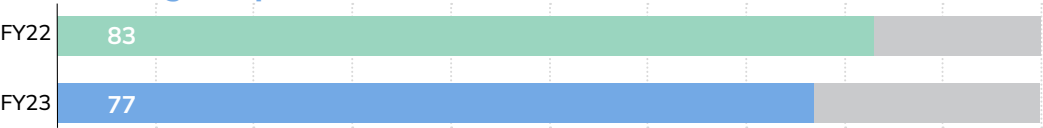


» Indian PR is facing growth pangs. It is also dealing with cost pressures


Client budgets aren't growing as fast as PR consultancy expenses



Intense competition in retainerhip drives undercutting and price wars




Client budgets are not growing, but their needs are



“The dichotomy is that clients are cutting budgets, but expecting more. So, that is the issue. Brands want you to be domain experts, they want you to be problem solvers, they want you to be on top of tech and PR, but budgets do not increase.”

Vineet Handa,  
Founder & CEO, Kaizen PR

Retainer fee needs to improve drastically

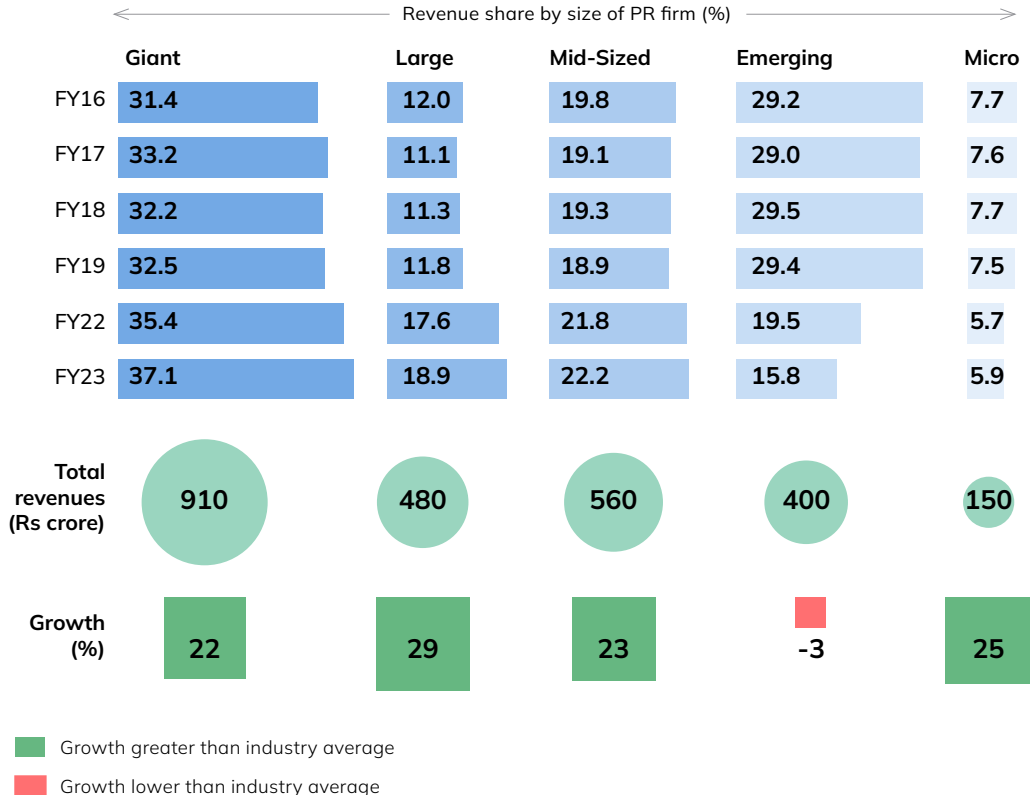


“Our service level agreements and scope of work are not water right, as a matter of fact, a 3-lakh retainer and a 10-lakh retainer depending on client requirements and urgencies, might end up requiring similar support. Also, over the last decade, our talent-mix and cost structures have changed drastically. It is high time to start re-looking at our rates and cost structures.”

Atul Sharma,  
CEO, Ruder Finn India



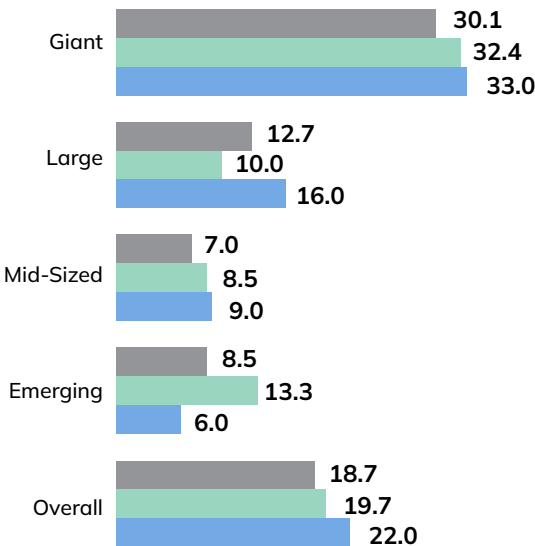
## The Indian PR market is consolidating towards larger Consultancies



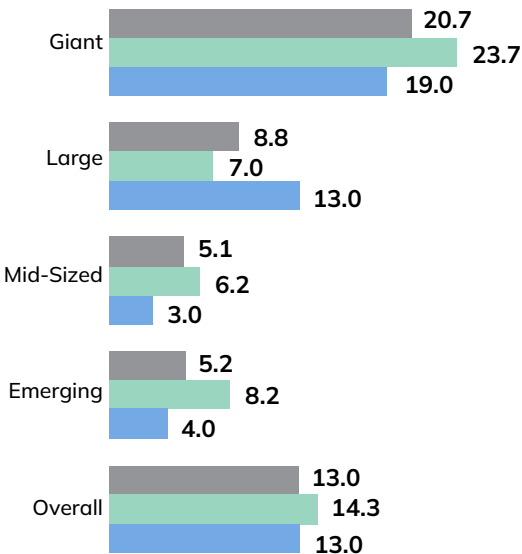
» Giant and large PR firms in India leveraging economies of scale to improve margins

FY20 FY21 FY23

EBITDA margin of PR firms (%)



PAT margin of PR firms (%)



Note: Above analysis is based on Annual Report information of 98 companies in FY 23.

The size advantage

Better rates with vendors and paid media

Offer diverse services

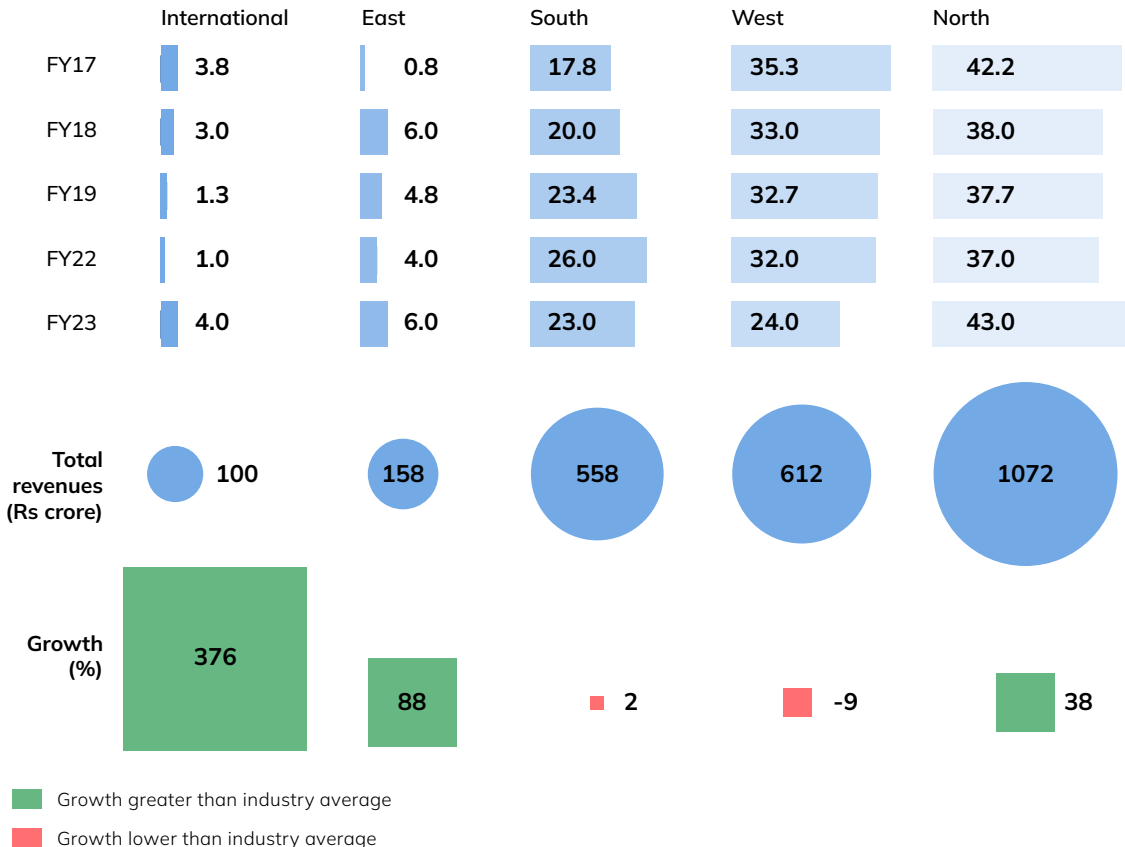
Effective talent deployment

Utilize technology

Maintain extensive networks

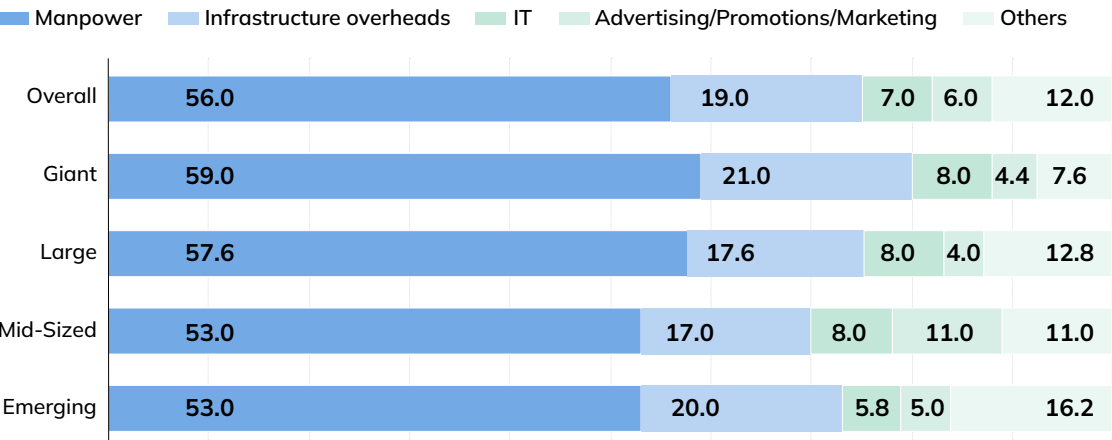
## North Region has bounced back as the key driver of revenues

### Revenue share by geography (%)



» People remain the main cost head. Mid-sized firms are big on marketing (2.75x of large firms)

Breakup of costs incurred by the organization in FY23 (%)



The right people, at the right time



“ People, process and technology are the key drivers of our business. In an AI-driven world, the misinformation and disinformation problems are going to grow exponentially. This, in turn, will demand news skills to help build and protect reputation. Getting the people piece right will create a sustainable and differentiated value proposition for the PR industry. It is imperative that we keep innovating and find ways to attract a new breed of talent who embrace the opportunities that public relations offer. People will always be at the heart of our profession.”

Nikhil Dey, National Chair, Talent and Academia, PRCAI

## Emerging Perspectives on the Indian PR Industry

PRCAI SPRINT 2024-25 report provides an in-depth analysis of the Indian Public Relations (PR) industry, highlighting significant trends, growth drivers, and challenges, offering a comprehensive understanding of the PR landscape in India. Here are some major trends. **By Deepak Hanumantharayappa**, Partner & Country Lead, Ipsos Strategy3



### 1 Size, Structure & Industry Growth

The Indian PR industry has seen a growth rate of 19% in 2023, outperforming the global PR industry's growth. The North and West regions of India are key markets, with the South and East regions emerging rapidly. The industry is also in consolidation mode, where large firms with revenue > Rs. 50 crs control 56% of the market.



### 5 Gen Z Workforce Changing Demands

Gen Z employees prioritize work-life balance, flexibility, and transparent communication. About 86% demand more engagement, recognition, and alignment with organizational values.



### 2 Changing Revenue Streams

While private corporates remain major contributors, there is a notable increase in revenue from start-ups (22%) and NGOs (11%). Digital media, influencer marketing, and social media are becoming significant revenue drivers.

### 3 Changing client preferences in a competitive market



PR is not taking away marketing budgets unless it shows higher value. Measurable KPIs—obtainable through data-driven insights—are critical to demonstrate impact.



### 6 AI and Technology as an enabler

The adoption of AI and big data is set to drive industry growth, enhancing capabilities in research, strategy, and personalized content creation. However, 90% agree that challenges like AI-generated misinformation require attention.



### 4 Need for Talent to keep up to the Growth Potential

The PR industry employed 13,300 people in FY23, with a significant portion being women. By FY30, the workforce is expected to grow to 22,700. Talent acquisition remains a challenge, particularly in creative and specialized services.



### 7 PRCAI's Role Becoming Prominent

Expectations from PRCAI include standardizing industry practices, enhancing training and leadership development, and promoting the industry with governmental support.

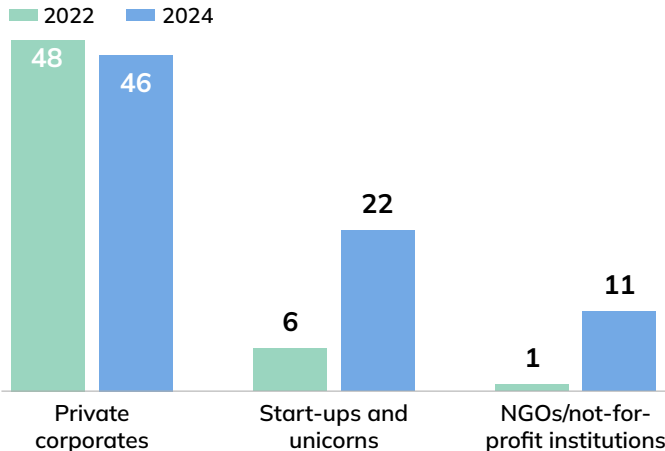


## Chapter 2

# 7 Key Trends Driving Growth

## » Trend 1. While private corporates remain the big contributor, start-ups and NGOs have gained share

### Revenue share by client category (%)



Note: Opinions of PR Consultancy Heads and Finance Heads. The numbers do not add up to 100, as only the top 3 client categories are shown.



“We’re now seeing growing demand for advocacy-related work. I’m not sure if this is part of industry growth or a factor of us becoming more capable of taking on this kind of work. Advocacy work is not just promoting a brand, but is taking the entire ecosystem along on a journey, to either believe in something or behave in a certain way or create a favourable environment, for a certain cause to be addressed or an issue to be better understood.”

**Girish Balachandran**, Founder, On Purpose

#### New Pathways



Increased NGO and startup engagement signals opportunities to expand purpose-driven PR services.

#### Mainstays



IT continues to lead private sector contribution. Auto OEMs and auto components are other major contributors now, as opposed to FMCG and financial services last year.

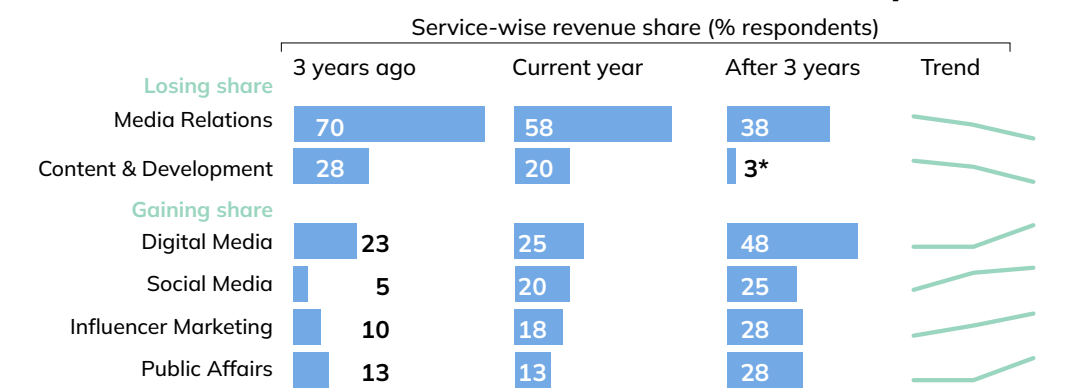
#### Margins



Operating margins have increased by about 8% this year, with most of it coming from emerging and mid-sized PR consultancies (14%).



Trend 2. Digital and social media will drive revenues, media relations will see a steep decline



Services arranged in descending order of current year figures within category.  
Note: Data shows responses from a survey of PR Consultancy Heads, HR and Finance Heads



\*Content Shifts

Content is transitioning to shorter, dynamic formats on digital and social media, driven by strategic reallocation, shortage of expertise and expectations from AI to take over.



Seeking Synergies

Revenue contributions of Public Affairs, Influencer Marketing and Social Media are on the rise, reflecting PR's pivot to diversified and integrated engagement.



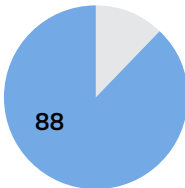
SPRINT 2024-25 has captured many hues of our industry. Some are known and understood, while some emerging topics including purpose-driven PR, adoption of artificial intelligence and talent evolution, are fresh and riveting. I am certainly excited about the future of PR and communications in India.”

**Madan Bahal**, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Adfactors PR

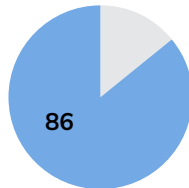


## » Trend 3. Influencers will continue to grab attention, but they will need to also show results

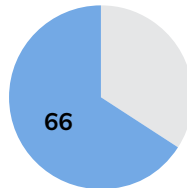
Share of PR Consultancy Heads & Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



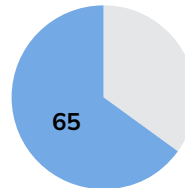
Influencer marketing needs more accountability for business outcomes



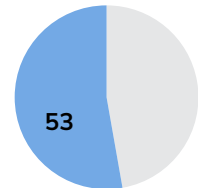
Regional influencers and local dialects gain traction



Tier 2 and Tier 3 city influencers rise with engaged followings



Micro-influencers are key to target niche markets



Key opinion leaders are preferred over influencers



### Influencer Divide

While PR Consultancies predict growth in influencer marketing share, corporate communicators see a major decline due to concerns around accountability and credibility in achieving business results.

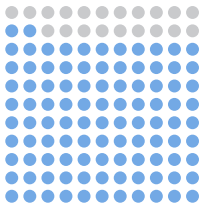


PR is actively using influencers, both micro and macro, and this trend will continue. However, a shift is needed, where influencers costs must be balanced with clear accountability, not merely based on number of followers. Right now, it's not easy to align with business interest and there's a pressing need for influencers to demonstrate measurable impact."

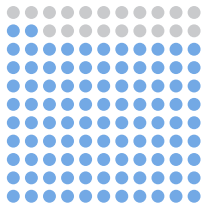
**Minari Shah**, Brand & Communications Consultant

Trend 4. Regional PR will continue to grow.  
Cultural sensitivities are important to consider

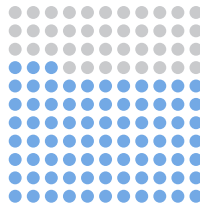
Share of PR  
Consultancy  
Heads & Corporate  
Communicators  
surveyed who agree  
or strongly agree (%)



88 Cultural nuances  
are essential  
for tailored PR  
strategies



84 Regional  
storytelling  
has gained in  
importance



73 Need to explore  
storytelling from a  
fresh perspective by  
going hyperlocal



Regional PR:  
A Mixed View

Corporate communicators are not very positive about growth in regional PR share because of a lack of understanding of cultural nuances and regional storytelling, as well as a shortage of regional PR talent—a challenge that has intensified by 10 points compared to last year.



“The role of regional agencies is poised to grow as brands needs to go local and hyperlocal. Information from across the globe is available to everyone with a few clicks, but readers are more interested in what is happening in their city, their town or even their street. Regional agencies are the only ones that can bring these local and hyperlocal contents and updates.”

**Shailesh Goyal**, Founder Director, Simulations PR



“Regional PR is not just about translating national press releases into local languages from metro cities. The real transformation is happening in India’s regions. It’s more important to discover authentic, ground-up stories that resonate with the culture and unique flavour of each region, while adding meaning to national narratives.”

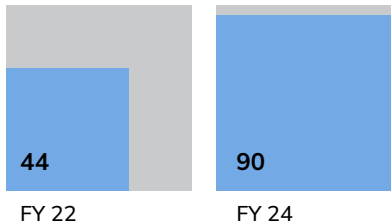
**Atul Ahluwalia**, Founding Partner, First Partners

## Trend 5. Big data and artificial intelligence will drive PR industry growth, led by research and conversational AI



Share of PR Consultancy Heads & Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)

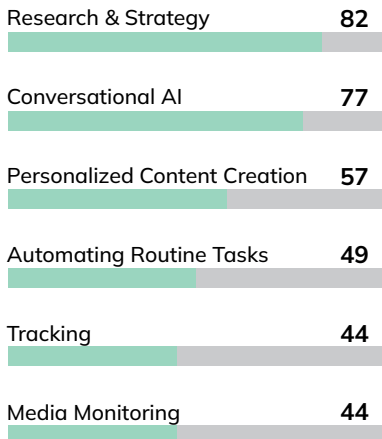
**Big data and AI will drive PR industry growth**



### Investment Deficit

Only 13% respondents said their organizations had made significant investments in AI. About 47% have made moderate investments, while 30% have made no/little investment. Consultancy leaders & CCOs need to consider further investments.

**Ways in which AI is enhancing PR Industry**



### The AI Impact

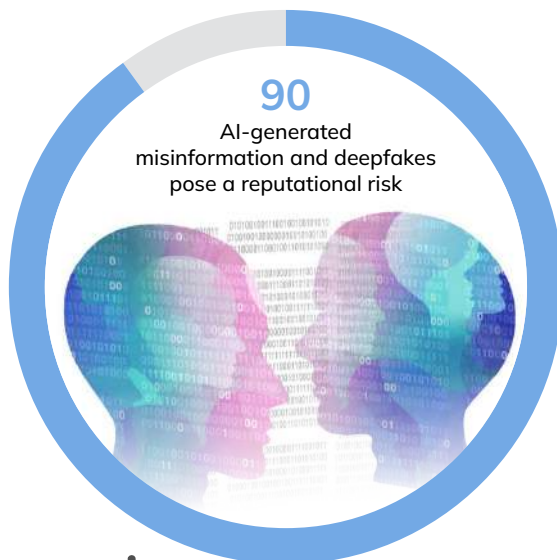


Technology has revolutionized communication. Generative AI, combined with human ingenuity and social science insights, empowers communicators to be faster, smarter, and better. If used responsibly with adequate guardrails against risks, it has the power to transform the communications game enormously.”

**Ashwani Singla,**  
Founding Managing Partner,  
Astrum Management Advisory

### » Trend 6. AI deepfakes and maintaining differentiation a key challenge

Share of PR Consultancy Heads & Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



#### Data as a Commodity

With growing AI adoption, maintaining strategic differentiation will be challenging as similar data insights become widely accessible.

#### Reputation Management of Fake News



“With AI making information easily accessible to everyone, the real challenge lies in how you differentiate yourself—not by what you know, but by how creatively and strategically you apply that knowledge.”

**Kunal Kishore**, Group CEO & Co-Founder, Value 360 Communications

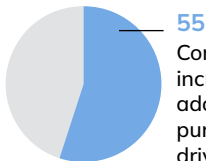


“It is crucial to explore the reputational impact of misinformation and deepfakes, especially in the context of AI. Current risk assessments tend to overlook the importance of AI vulnerability mapping. While some organizations are starting to include these threats in their risk frameworks, we need to emphasize the need for preparedness with clients.”

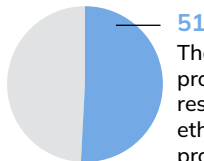
**Deepshikha Dharmaraj**, CEO, Burson Group India

## » Trend 7. There's growing emphasis on purpose-driven PR. It's important to distinguish genuine initiatives from 'greenwashing'

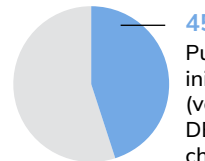
Share of PR Consultancy Heads & Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



Corporates are increasingly adopting purpose-driven PR

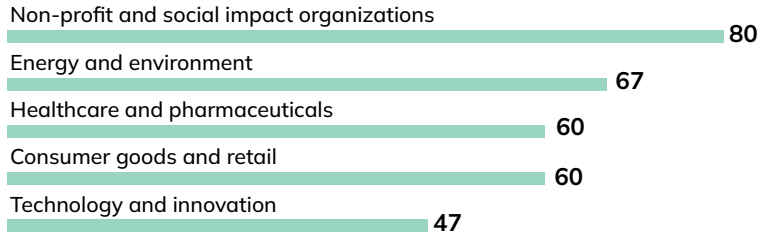


The shift towards professionalism resonates with ethical and progressive values



Purpose-driven initiatives (vocalism/ DEI/ESG) are challenged by investors

### Top 5 sectors adopting purpose-driven PR



### Question of Authenticity?

Brands may tend to use purpose to drive profit—and that's not what purpose is for. Your purpose is genuine if it comes at the cost of profit. You can either be purposeful or profitable. You can't have both.

One must be very skeptical about demands made of PR agencies. How much of this ask to make us sound purposeful is coming from a genuine place? The industry otherwise will be awash with greenwashing.



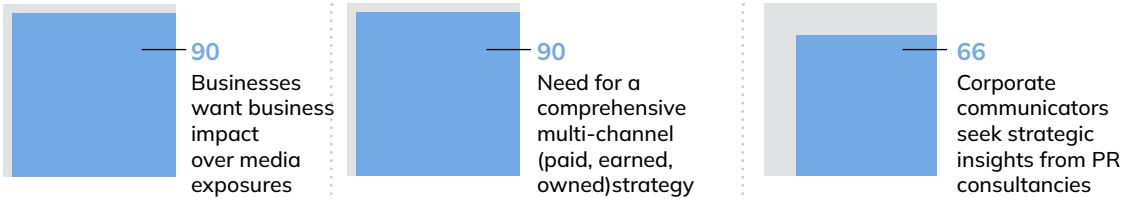
## Chapter 3

# What will Drive Preference in a Competitive Market?



## >> Demonstration of value by driving business outcomes

Share of Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



**Growth/  
expected  
growth in PR  
budget**



### Measure, Show ROI, and Get Budgets

Communicate strategy, communicate success. This will help marketers seek higher budgets.

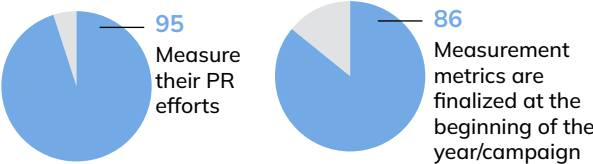
PR is not taking away marketing budgets unless it shows higher value.

Vanity metrics are redundant today if they have no correlation to business. Business results are different. For example, if PR can lead a talent campaign, and company can get a greater number of job inquiries on LinkedIn or can attract better quality candidates, results can be measurable directly for business. It could be related to job, talent acquisition, or corporate sales.

# What will Drive Preference in a Competitive Market? .....

## Measurable KPIs—obtainable through data-driven insights—are critical to demonstrate impact

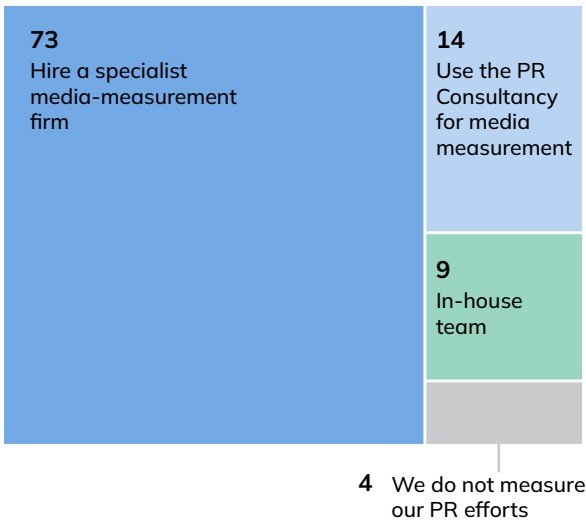
Share of Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



### CCO Perspective

Talk RoI for the business—like, explain why should they spend on it? if you can convince leadership about the RoI, you'll get the money.

### Ways of measuring PR efforts



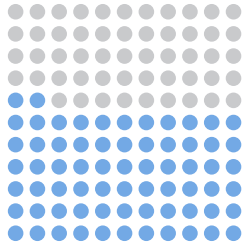
The upcoming decade needs PR consultancies to provide deeper industry insights, data-driven strategies and proactive trend analysis to assist our PR efforts more strategically. Enhanced support in crafting tailored narratives that resonate with our diverse audiences, along with measurables KPIs to track success, would be invaluable.”

**Pooja Trehan,**  
Head, Content & PR,  
Jio World Centre

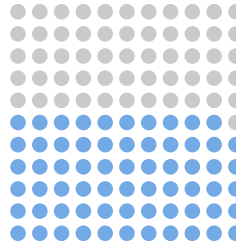


### >> Specializations and expertise will be in demand—and will attract a premium

Share of Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



**62** Consultancy specializations will boost work quality and fuel growth



**59** Corporate communicators are willing to pay more for new services or ideas

### Specialization Stands Out



“Working with specialized agencies could lead to better results. Many consultancies now combine sector expertise with strategy professionals, which is a great step forward.”

**Nandini Chatterjee,**  
Chief of Corporate Brand and Communications, Shree Cement



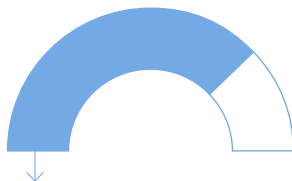
“Agencies focused on areas like tech or startups often outperform generalist firms by leveraging their expertise to meet client-specific needs effectively.”

**Senjam Raj Sekhar,**  
Head-Global Communications, MPL & M-League Head

## What will Drive Preference in a Competitive Market?

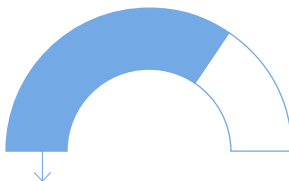
» Emphasis on earned media and digital-first strategy, while print media will stay important

### Share of Corporate Communicators surveyed who agree or strongly agree (%)



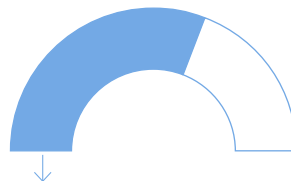
76

With consumers becoming increasingly aware of paid media, PR consultancies should prioritize organic/earned media



69

Digital-first approach necessary for all PR campaigns



62

Importance of traditional media will remain, in spite of growth of digital

## The physical...

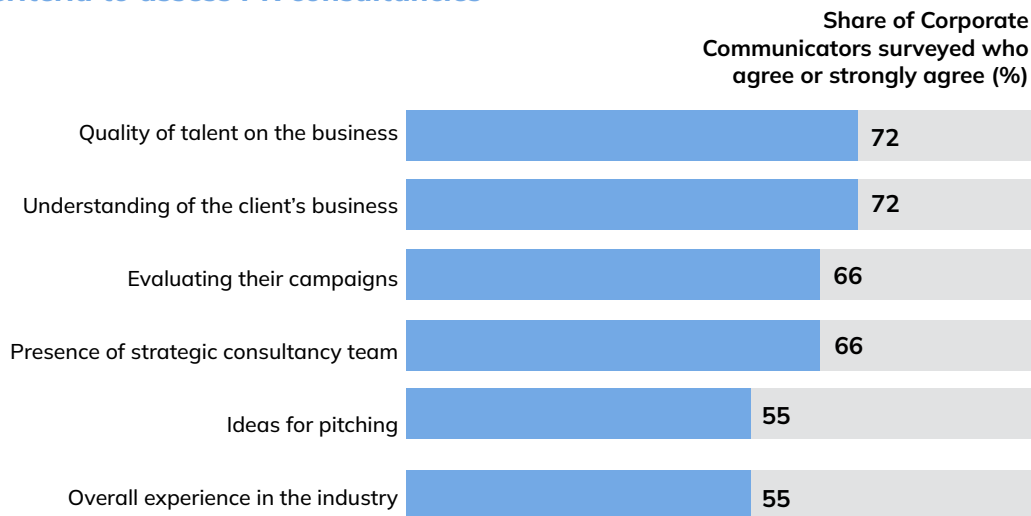
The numbers (circulation, readership) are increasing. Local language publications continue to be very important; digital penetration in tier-II and tier-III markets is not as much. People still take newspapers, and they are reading.

## ...and the digital

The time for social and owned channels is more important than ever before, as it is directly related to the current state of the media landscape and media credibility. This is a major trend, and companies need to pay greater attention to it rather than merely ticking the box.

## >> Quality of talent, rooted in a deep understanding of the client's business

### Criteria to assess PR consultancies



### » Clients want PR to adopt a **strategic, outcome-focused approach** that aligns with business goals and supports C-suite decision-making

#### Support the C-Suite



“Think beyond media. Understand the client’s business to extend timely support and recommend better strategies. Think from the lens of an integrated approach and how PR can add value to the C-suite decision-making.”

**Kapil Sharma,**  
Communications Director,  
Ford Motor Company



#### Short and Speedy

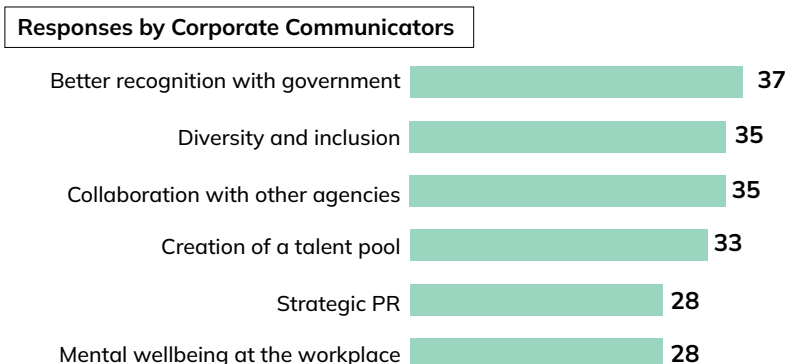
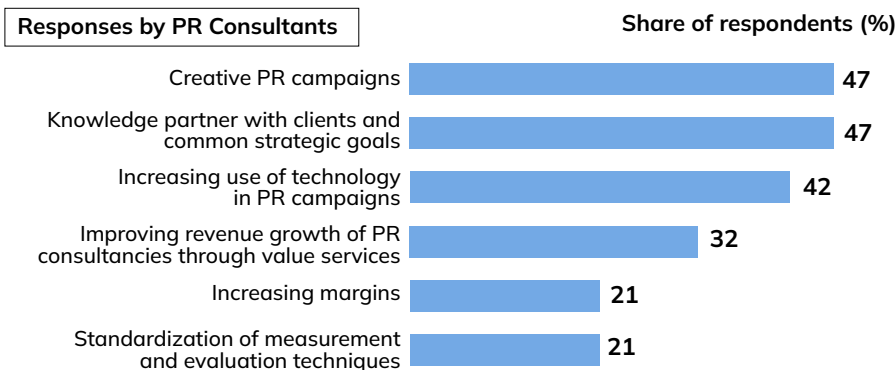


“For C-suite narratives, it’s not about the length of the document, but having concise intel tailored to their needs and delivered exactly when they require it. For instance, consider the budget announcement. Now, with tools integrated into platforms like ChatGPT, you can instantly generate the top 10 highlights of the budget. But, if you understand the business well, you have to deliver the personalized message in real-time value for the CEO.”

**Aman Gupta,** Managing Partner and Health Practice Asia Lead,  
SPAG FINN Partners

## Adopting international best practices can help businesses do better

### What comes in the ambit of international best practices?







## Chapter 4

# The State of Talent in the PR Industry

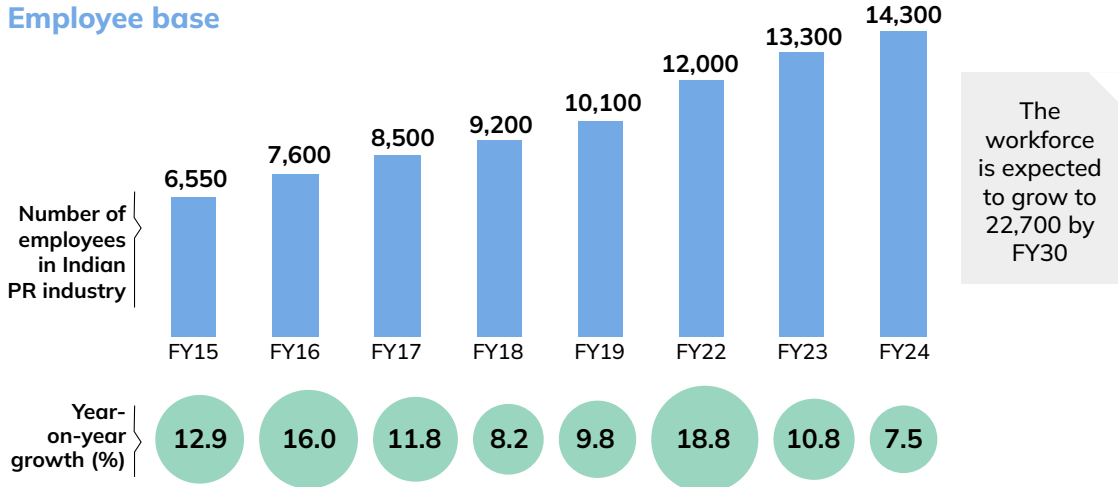


**WORK**

**LIFE**

» The Indian PR industry employed 13,300 people in FY23 and added 4,800 in the last 5 years

### Employee base

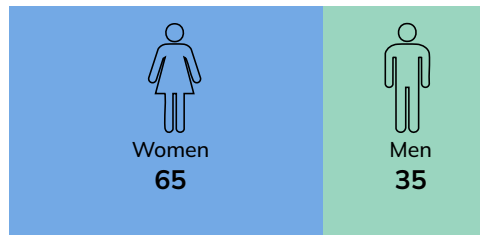


FY = Financial Year (April to March). Eg: FY 22 = April 2021 to March 2022. Data for FY24 is an estimate.

### Diversity Share

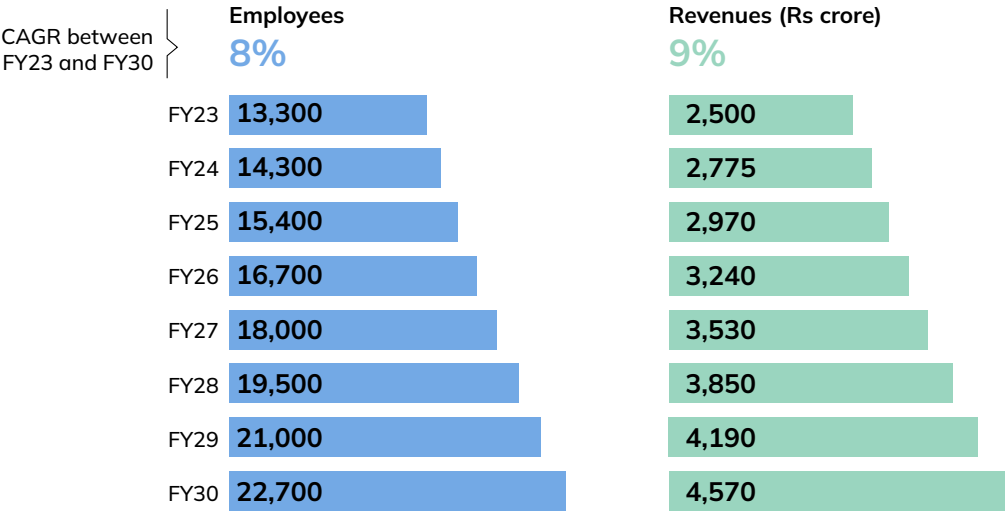
About two-thirds of PR employees are women.

#### Share of employees (%)



Till FY30, the Indian PR industry is expected to see headcount grow at a CAGR of 8% and revenues at 9%

Staff and Revenue Projections



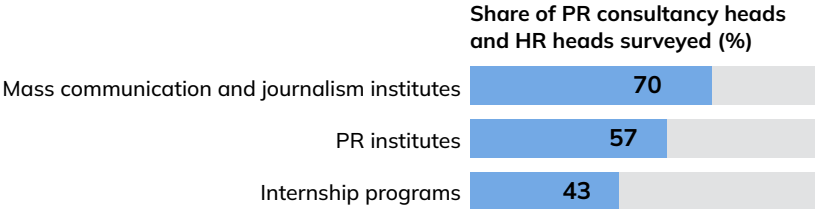
FY = Financial Year (April to March). Eg: FY 22 = April 2021 to March 2022.



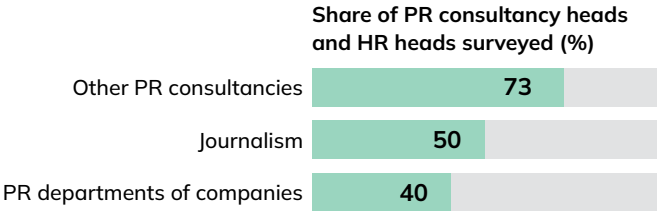
» **Mass-comm and journalism institutes**  
**are the key source of talent at the entry level and**  
**other PR firms at the mid and senior levels**

**Addition to  
headcount in FY2023** } **1,300**

**Sourcing of entry-level talent in 2023-24**



**Sourcing of experienced candidates in 2023-24**



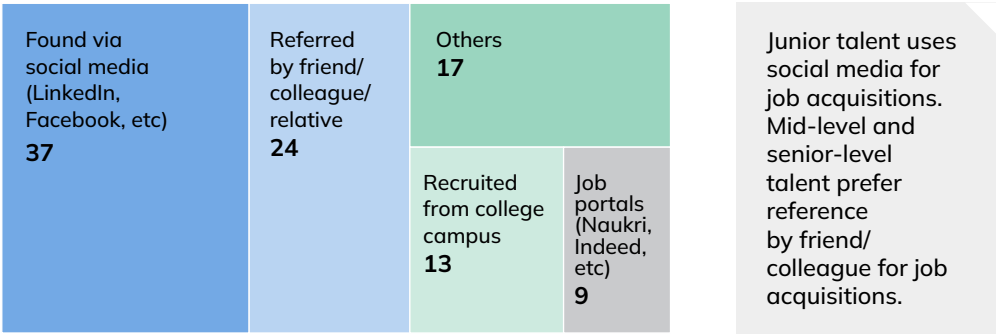
The number of consultancies recruiting experienced journalists has gone up from last year.

Note: Based on sample PR firms covered

» Social media and referrals most trusted avenues. Compensation, reputation, culture and leadership are key considerations for potential employees

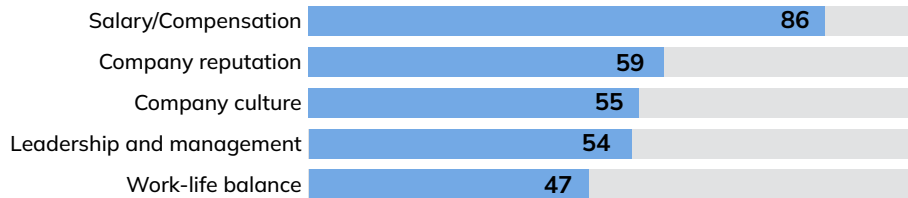
Job acquisition channels

Share of PR firm employees surveyed (%)



Factors considered by talent while evaluating an employer

Share of PR firm employees surveyed (%)

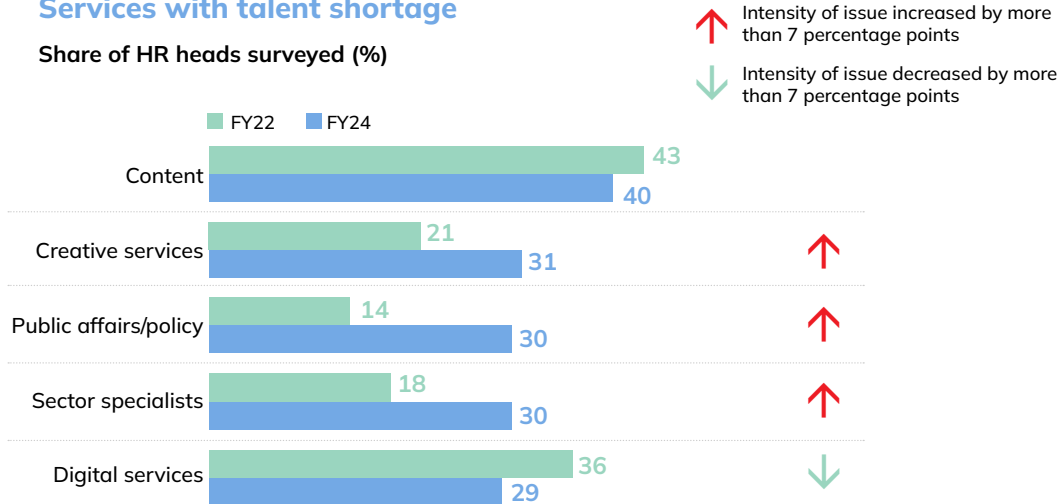


Note: Based on sample PR firms covered

## The challenge to find good talent in creative, public affairs and sector specialists has increased

### Services with talent shortage

Share of HR heads surveyed (%)



Sector specialists will help identify future trends and opportunities.



54% of respondents flagged a shortage of regional-level PR talent.



### Strategy as a Function

By bringing creative and strategy to the table to address the clients' challenges— independent of structures and siloes—client teams can unlock even more powerful ideas and experiences, positioning clients at the heart of culture and the events shaping the world in real-time.”

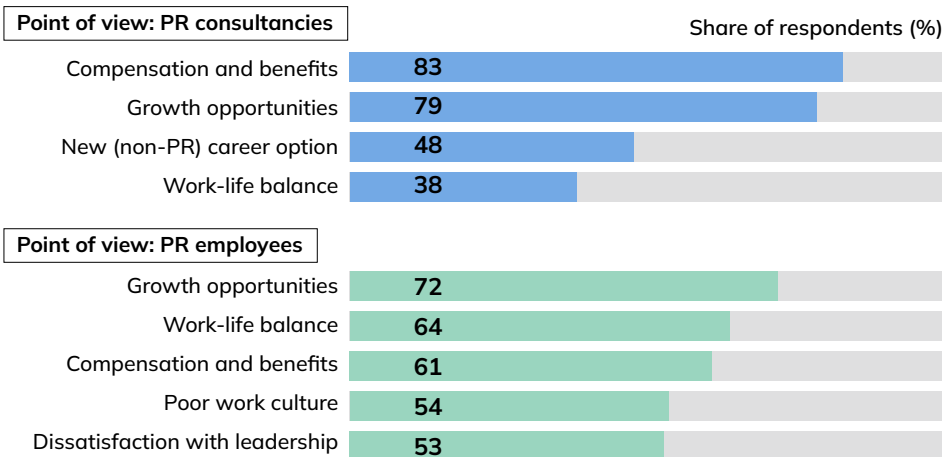
**Pankaj Suri**, Director of Human Resources, Edelman India Group



## Consultancies overlook poor work culture and leadership, which half the respondents cite as **key exit factors**

Average attrition rate **16%**

### Top reasons for attrition



Note: Respondents were PR Consultancy Heads, junior/mid/senior consultants and HR Heads.



### Addressing Attrition: Strengthening Workplace Foundations

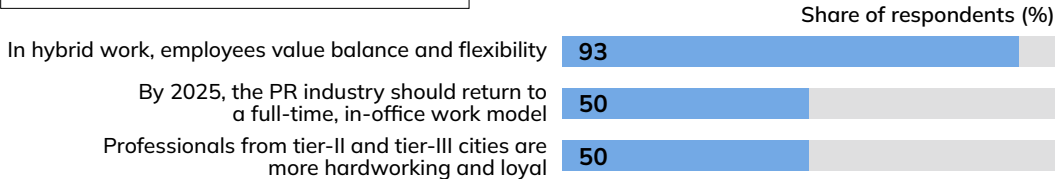


The Sprint survey underscores the need for consultancies to improve workplace culture and leadership. Just as the PRCAl's standardisation charter fosters seamless client-consultancy relationships, a similar framework could help address workplace challenges effectively.

**Neha Mehrotra**, National Chair Standardization, PRCAl

# Due to work pressures, PR firms can have a lopsided work-life balance. Firms can use flexible work models as a differentiator to draw talent

### Point of view: HR Heads of PR consultancies



### Point of view: PR employees



## Work-Life Mix



In 2025, a growing number of organizations are likely to mandate a return to the office five days a week. This shift is being driven by clients that have already transitioned to a full-time, in-office model and expect the same from their business partners to ensure seamless collaboration, alignment, and responsiveness in business operations. This trend highlights the interconnectedness of industries and the need for organizations to adapt to client expectations while balancing employee preferences and productivity.”

**Ajay Tyagi**, Director, Human Resources,  
Adfactors PR

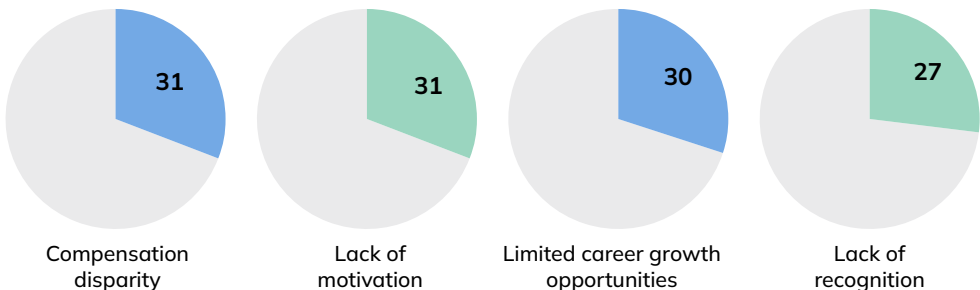


A slightly better work-life balance, maybe. Currently, it is not ideal. PR consultancy requires constant listening and awareness, and working beyond designated hours is not an issue. However, the line must not be blurred permanently.”

**Aditya Joshi**,  
Mid-Level Consultant,  
Adfactors PR

» **Staff dissatisfaction** accentuated by lack of motivation and recognition. The **expectation** is of a clear career path and good compensation

Share of respondents (%)



Note: Respondents were Junior, Mid & Senior Consultants.

## Compensation Lag

“ Compensation has not increased in the same proportion as my growth in the organization.”

Anonymous  
Mid-Level Consultant  
in PR firm

## Motivation Drivers

“ Fair compensation, opportunities for growth and learning, opportunities to move across India in network offices or abroad.”



**Yashica Shetty,**  
Junior Consultant,  
Archetype India

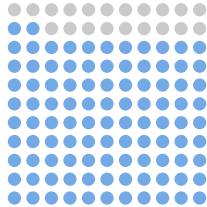


“ My expectations from my employer include a fair and accurate evaluation of my work, leading to better opportunities for promotion, and appraisal based on merit and contribution.”

**Sohani Yadav,** Junior  
Consultant, Ruder Finn India

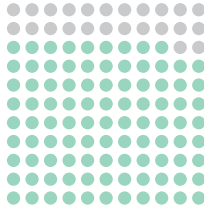
### >> A focus on **learning and development** is important to attract and retain talent

Share of respondents (%)



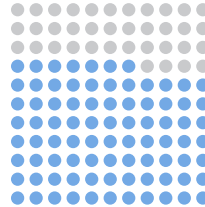
82

Continuous upskilling and on-the-job trainings are essential



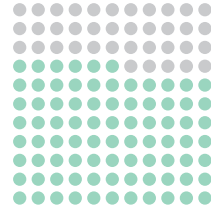
78

Senior management needs specialized training to enhance leadership skills



76

Educational institutions need to overhaul curriculum to match industry demands



75

Domain knowledge is essential to be a good PR professional

Note: Respondents were PR consultancy heads, junior/mid/senior consultants and HR heads.



“The Public Relations industry is rapidly evolving, and our greatest asset in navigating this change is our talent. Success depends on fostering growth of skilled and a compassionate talent in a merit-driven environment that promotes continuous learning and upskilling. Leadership styles must adapt to engage Gen Z, who value recognition, rewards, and flexibility, while respecting their ambition and need to be seen as collaborators. At PRCAI, our number one goal is continuous learning and development for our members and across levels.”

**Deeptie Sethi**, CEO, PRCAI





## Chapter 5

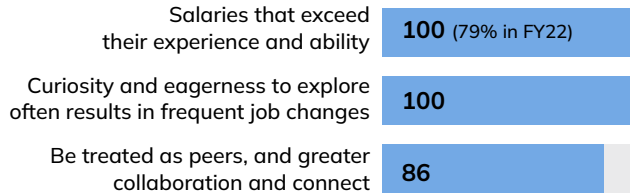
# Decoding the Gen Z Workforce



## Gen Z struggles with set work cultures. They are ambitious, curious and collaborative, and seek recognition, rewards and flexibility

### What do Gen Z want?

Share of respondents who agree or strongly agree (%)



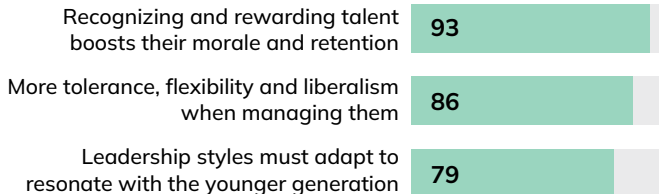
### Recognize, Reward, Respect



Engagement, reward and recognition. All these are equally important when one talks to Gen Z talent, who are fast changing the composition of workforce in PR firms.”

**Santanu Gogoi,**  
National Chair, Thought Leadership, PRCAI

### How to get the best from Gen Z?



Note: Respondents were HR Heads.



Most important is being transparent as a firm. What is the vision in five years? How is the next year looking? My growth, the organization's growth is important. Respect is a very important piece today.”

**Oeindrila Biswas,**  
Mid-Level Consultant, AvianWe

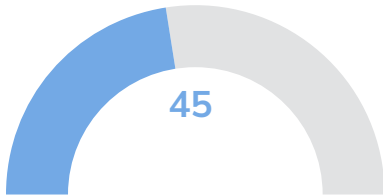


Gen Z is **concerned** about workload, motivation and micromanagement. The **way of giving feedback** to Gen Z has to be different

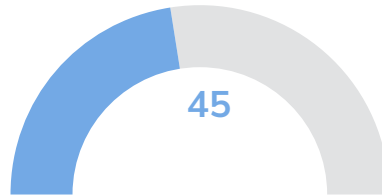
### What are Gen Z's concerns?

Share of respondents (%)

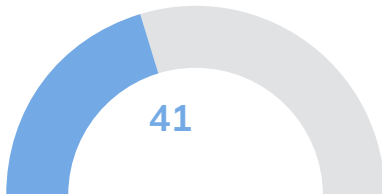
Overwhelming workload



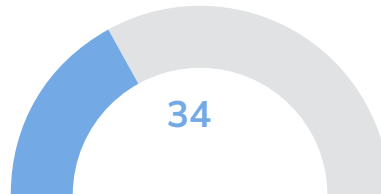
Lack of motivation



Micro-management



Poor work-life balance



Note: Respondents were junior consultants.

### » Along with appreciation and method, a **healthy work-life balance** matters a lot to Gen Z

#### Mid-Level Consultants on Junior Consultants (Gen Z)

Young people are more methodical and predictable, which is not necessarily how the PR industry operates. Hence, attrition is high. They want to talk to bosses. Industry will have to adapt.

Topmost is an appreciation mechanism. The only way to keep them motivated is an appreciation mechanism, where you figure out small ways, like a start-of-the-month newsletter or callout on what that person has done.

A lot of them are very, very serious about work-life balance. Like they are going home at 6, they are not answering client calls after 7. You can't expect them to be available all the time. Even if something is pressing, it can wait for the next working day.



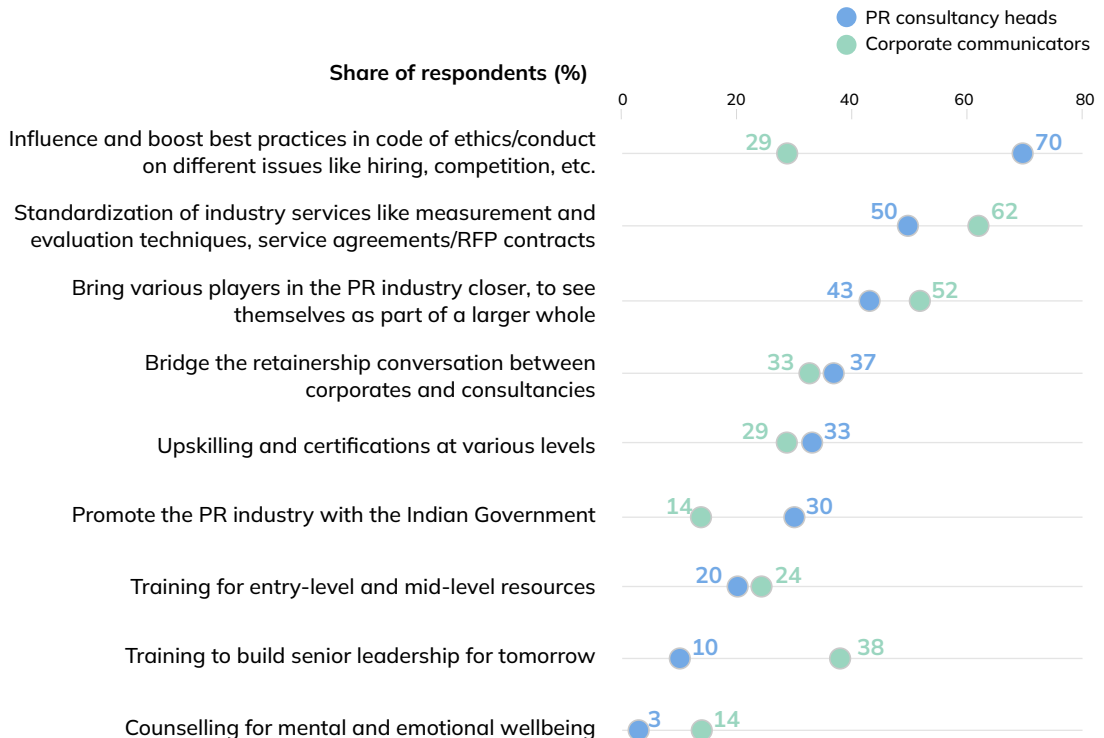




## Chapter 6

# Expectations from PRCAI

## Standardization of industry services, bringing the industry together, upskilling at multi levels are key expectations from PRCAI





# PRCAI Initiatives



Bharat ki Baat Report Launch at  
PRCAI PRana 2024



PRCAI Code of Conduct Launched  
at Standardization Workshop



SABRE South Asia 2024 Jury Meet



First Guinness World Record Win  
by PRCAI at PRologue 2024





The Public Relations Consultants Association of India is the most influential communications body in India. It was formed more than 2 decades ago with the aim to progress the Indian PR industry to be one of the most sought-after industries to work for.

We represent a diverse and strong gamut of PR professionals in the country and advocate excellence and merit in Public Relations. We empower our members to succeed at every stage of their business and career goals in the industry. We believe in building an ethical, professional and progressive community to further the cause of the PR industry.



## CONTACT

**Atul Sharma**, President PRCAl | [president@prcai.org](mailto:president@prcai.org) | +91 9811062855

**Deeptie Sethi**, CEO PRCAl | [ceo@prcai.org](mailto:ceo@prcai.org) | +91 9811101383

**Dezma de Melo**, Research Academia and Training Lead | [dezma.demelo@prcai.org](mailto:dezma.demelo@prcai.org) | +91 9821231549



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