

SABRE Awards SOUTH ASIA 2025

THE REPUTATION ERA
Redefining Influence

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Redefining Influence

THE WESTIN

Gurugram | Thursday, July 24, 2025

Time

Program Theme

4:00 pm

Delegate Registration Begins

Flaunt your 'Red is the New Black' look at #PRologue2025 as we reimagine influence.

4:00 pm - 4:55 pm

The Reputini - Pre-Award Mixer kicks-in

Raise a toast, break the ice, own the room.

4:56 pm - 5:12 pm

Doors open inviting you for a sit down (*entry for Ballroom closes sharp at 5:05 pm*)

Discover the inspiring stories of our partners.

5:15 pm - 5:21 pm

PRCAI Welcome

Introduction remarks by **Neha Mehrotra**, Vice President, PRCAI.

5:22 pm - 5:32 pm

PRCAI - What's Next?

Updates from **Kunal Kishore**, President, PRCAI.

5:33 pm - 6:03 pm

Mindshift - A Mentalist Act by **Karan Singh**

The mentalist and mind reader explores how perception and narrative shape reputation.

6:04 pm - 6:10 pm

PRologue and SABRE Preface

Paul Holmes, Founder, CEO and editor-in-chief, PProvoke Media, shares key insights into Asia's evolving communications landscape.

6:11 pm - 6:45 pm

Section 1: SABRE SA Awards

The night takes over and spotlight takes the lead.

6:46 pm - 7:05 pm

Fireside Chat

Deeptie Sethi, CEO, PRCAI in conversation with CEO of the Year.

7:06 pm - 8:00 pm

Section 2: SABRE SA Awards

8:01 pm - 8:34 pm

Section 3: SABRE SA Awards

A group tribute honouring the recipients of 'Certificates of Excellence.'

8:35 pm - 8:42 pm

Vote of Thanks

Closing remarks by **Santanu Gogoi**, Associate Vice President, PRCAI.

8:43 pm onwards

Cocktails & Dinner

A Night of Stories, Conviviality and Spotlight.



Kunal Kishore
President, PRCAl
Group CEO and Co-Founder
V360 Group

Reputation on the Age of AI: The Rise of Algorithmic Trust

In today's trust-driven world, reputations aren't shaped only by human experiences or emotional narratives. They are increasingly defined by how machines interpret your brand—how algorithms read, rank, and reproduce your identity. Welcome to the era of algorithmic trust, where your reputation must not only be earned—it must be machine-readable, discoverable, and verifiable.

The End of Reputation Gaming?

For years, search engines were seen as the great equalizer, but savvy marketers knew how to **game the system**. Brands could dominate perception through paid **SEM, negative keyword bidding, or search engine saturation tactics**. You could push down negative news, inflate visibility, and manufacture digital authority through spend and SEO tricks.

But AI is changing the rules.

AI-powered search tools like Google SGE, Perplexity, and ChatGPT don't just display what's paid—they **summarize reputations** using content drawn from **verified, credible media platforms, peer-reviewed sources, and high-authority websites**. These LLMs are trained on what's real and trustworthy, not what's boosted. In this world, **PR is not optional—it's foundational**. Earned media, third-party credibility, and consistent brand narratives are now the core ingredients AI uses to evaluate and present your identity to the world.

From Storytelling to Structured Trust

Traditional PR built reputations through perception and influence. But in the AI era, **data integrity and structure** become equally crucial. Algorithms interpret you based on how organized, consistent, and contextually rich your content is. What's your schema markup? Do your brand facts align across platforms? Is your CEO's thought leadership appearing on indexed, credible media? Reputation now has a backend.

Being credible means being crawlable. The stories you tell must live in places algorithms trust—reputable news media, thought leadership platforms, and well-structured digital ecosystems.

Authenticity, Machine-Verified

AI doesn't assess emotion. It assesses signals: verified handles, backlinks, sentiment trends, domain authority, and consistency across touchpoints. If your praise lives in private conversations or offline interactions, it's invisible. **If it's not in the data, it doesn't exist for the machine.**

Perception now hinges on both compelling storytelling and the credibility of its sources

From Google Ranking to AI Summarization

The real tipping point? AI doesn't just show search results. It **summarizes you**. Before a consumer buys, an investor evaluates, or a journalist investigates—they often ask an AI tool to "tell me about this brand."

If your narrative hasn't been shaped through credible PR and strategic digital visibility, AI may default to outdated headlines, surface-level noise, or worse—content from your competitors. **What AI says about you is now your new digital reputation.**

The Communicator's New Superpower

In this environment, PR reclaims its strategic seat. Not as a soft-skill silo—but as the **primary architect of trust in the AI age**. Communicators must master not just storytelling, but also how that story is structured, surfaced, and summarized by machines.

Because in the Reputation Era, **trust isn't just earned. It's engineered.**





Deeptie Sethi
CEO, PRCAI

Redefining Influence: The Unimaginable Power of One Industry, One Voice

In an era where reputation is not just an asset but a currency, the role of public relations has never been more vital or more scrutinized. Living, breathing communications for 29 years, I have enjoyed every bit of it, seeing it shifting its role every half a decade and becoming mainstream, cementing its true position in the boardroom. The paradigm shifts from message control to meaningful creation, from influencing some to reputation building for multi stakeholders, and from an individual craft to a collective force.

The power of collective, unified force will redefine how we future proof public relations. An industry association is right at the centre of it, representing collective voices, diverse perspectives, reimagining the very purpose of the industry. PRCAI is ready than ever before to build a cohesive, empowered community—one that speaks not as many, but as one. Because, when one industry finds one voice, its power to influence, advocate, and lead becomes truly unimaginable.

Being part of PRCAI and seen such passionate members excelling in their domains, the realization was instant that we cannot build anything in isolation, but build this platform to have a shared vision for our industry - with public relations firms, in-house leaders, and practitioners, contributing to a progressive industry. However, to navigate today's complexities, such as fragmented media, rising mistrust, AI disruption, and inconsistent standards, what we need most is alignment and uniformity of thoughts, shared values, and coherence of purpose.

As PRCAI enters its next chapter, with renewed leadership and vision, we stand at the confluence of transformation—ready to scale our collective presence with clarity, credibility, and conviction. Whether it is in imparting skill development skills, identifying trends that will change us for good, creating and embracing ethical codes of conduct, the time has come to evolve from being independent players to becoming architects of industry-wide values. Only if we embrace ethical practices, are champions to standardize industry norms and adopt them, will we become a force to reckon with.

PRCAI is bringing one **voice to the industry** and our recent efforts on code of conduct, client-consultancy charter for RFP, AI guidelines, and this will only need to further accelerate by understanding what best practices, process innovations can help us redefine the right influence of our industry. A unified code is how we collectively raise the bar—and how we gain a seat at decision-making tables.

Together, we can solve for the industry.

The future of public relations isn't just about reach—it's about relevance, responsibility, and results. And, with PRCAI leading the charge, India's Public Relations industry is ready to shape the global narrative.



**Paul Holmes**Founder, CEO and
editor-in-chief,
Provoke Media

For all of my 40 years writing and thinking about public relations, there have been two significant obstacles to our profession taking its rightful place as a management discipline, shaping policy decisions rather than simply communicating them.

The first is our inability to predict, with real accuracy, the consequences of our actions. While financial experts can crunch their numbers, and legal advisors can point to established precedent, PR practitioners have long relied on their experience and judgment—which more rigorous disciplines find unsatisfactory.

The second is our inability to demonstrate a cause and effect relationship—first between specific PR activities and their impact on stakeholder relationships, and second between the strength of shareholder relationships and an organization's financial performance. Again, we have often found ourselves asking CEOs to accept on faith that "good PR" is a worthwhile investment.

But the widespread adoption over the past few years of a more disciplined approach to data and analytics has helped us underpin both PR planning and PR measurement with more structure than it has had in the past. And the advent of artificial intelligence promises to accelerate our progress in this area—and perhaps even deliver the kind of proof that eluded us in the past.

While much of the discussion around AI has focused on the impact of generative AI on written and visual content—and on the cost and time savings that might result—I believe that the greatest promise of this technology is in allowing us to test the effectiveness of messages in advance, predict which narratives and which channels will have the greatest positive impact, and then demonstrate a causal link between our activities and our organizations' success.

AI will help us sort signals from noise so that we can predict with a higher degree of certainty whether an issue that we are monitoring will turn into a full blown crisis (in which case intervention is critical) or is more likely to wither and die (in which case, intervention risks making it worse).

We can also use synthetic personae—AI generated versions of our stakeholders—to test messages before committing massive resources, to anticipate how real people are likely to react, to understand what messages will be most credible and which might provoke a backlash.

And once we can do this, we can also find evidence that our activities enhanced our reputation, and that our reputation contributed significantly to our success. With massive data sets at our disposal, there will be clear evidence of linkages that until now have been almost impossible to prove.

Our profession, which has made great strides in the use of data, now needs to invest in these new tools, which I believe can deliver predictability and provability—and elevate our profession to the seat at the table it needs in order to be able to function effectively.





Vineet Handa
Founder and CEO, Kaizzen

The Reputation Era: Redefining Influence

From being influenced by a role model or by using, exploring, and acquiring practical knowledge to being influenced by just about anybody—that's the shift we're living through. The rationale behind who or what we follow is increasingly hard to define. Is it irrational? Or are we just evolving?

Until just about a decade back, it was word of mouth (WOM) that was considered the best kind of influence. You used a product or service, really enjoyed the same and talked about it to a friend, family or colleague without expecting anything in return; but just the joy of sharing something good with someone you cared about. Then there were role models, mostly centered around Bollywood and sometimes sports icons or cultural figures. They wore it, we wore it. We saw an ad featuring our favorite stars and flocked to the nearest store to get the same.

They did it and inspired us to aim for the same. It was a time when influence had a face, a name, and it was aspirational. But today one need not be a popular figure to carry the clout of influence. As long as one can connect with their audience, influence follows. It is funny or even aspirational at first. That is only until you realise what it really says about our times. That language, geography, and even context no longer define influence. Algorithms, curiosity, and infinite content do. And more importantly, anyone can be influenced by anything.

Redefining Influence and why not?

And why would it not since the world spends more than 11 billion hours daily on social and digital media platforms. In this context, data shows that the more time people spend on social media, the more the returns of these influencers. This is only going to grow. Recent reports say that **5.07 billion people around the world** now use social media, this is almost two-thirds of the total population, with average **daily time spent using social media being 2h 20m. From 2024 to 2025, 259 million new users have come online.**

We are living in a world where influence is no longer confined to celebrity endorsement or polished brand personas. Real power today lies with those who are believed, not just seen. From lifestyle, influence has now seeped into every part of our lives. What was initially limited to fashion has now entered aspects like food, travel and even something as intimate and personal as spirituality.

Rajesh Rawani, a truck driver gained popularity and two million followers on YouTube by cooking food alongside his son while driving through Indian highways. Alongside popular names there are creators who emerge from diverse backgrounds and make it big and inspirational for everyone.

In this new Reputation Era, influence is being redefined by authenticity, values, and action. It is no longer just about how many people you reach, but about how you consistently resonate. Whether you are a global brand, a small business owner, or a creator who puts out a specific segment of your life out there, your audience expects more than messaging, they expect integrity.

As all kinds of content, from educational to entertaining, controversial to confusing- floods our feed it becomes more important to know 'who' is behind the message. Consumers are asking: Is this person credible? Is this brand walking the talk? Does this story align with what I believe in?

Even children, as they mimic accents or behaviors from the screen, are absorbing more than just language; they are learning who to follow, what to value, and how to engage with the world.

The future belongs to those who understand that reputation is not built overnight. In a world of endless noise, influence is no longer about who shouts the loudest, but who is trusted the most. And that is what defines this Reputation Era.





Manisha Sharma

AGM, Corporate
Communications,
Pernod Ricard India

If Reputation Isn't What You Say, What Is It?

Years ago, I joined a company where I had barely spent three months working under the CEO. I was new, still finding my rhythm, when the news came that he was stepping down. I had worked with him only briefly. But what I had heard, from peers, colleagues, even support staff, painted a picture of someone exceptional. A leader of rare class, quiet charisma, and most importantly, character.

On his farewell day, I witnessed something I'll never forget. From the shop floor to the C-suite, every single person was crying, some openly sobbing, others quietly wiping away their tears. Even I, standing quietly on the sidelines, couldn't hold back my own tears. The air was thick with a shared sense of loss and gratitude. His leadership had created something lasting, something that reached even someone on the fringes like me.

That's when it hit me, the real gamechanger in building reputation is what you leave behind in the hearts of others. Not the statement, but the sentiment. It isn't declared. It has earned its stake in silence and echoed in the stories others tell about you.

From Perception to Strategic Asset

Today, reputation is no longer a passive reflection of public perception, it has become a strategic business asset. It shapes market value, influences investor confidence, drives talent retention, and determines the strength of partnerships. And it's being shaped constantly, across internal channels, social media, platforms, and even in hallway conversations.

This evolution has fundamentally reshaped how communicators operate. We're no longer just crafting messages, we're informing business decisions, anticipating stakeholder sentiment, cascading strategy, and managing risk in real time. But while the results are visible, the real work often happens behind the scenes. Today, the communicator's role is built on trust, relationships, and quiet credibility. Every positive story we help bring to life is the result of time, understanding, and the trust others place in us to tell it truthfully.

Tech Helps, But Trust Is Human

One of my most powerful reputation moments didn't come from the media, it came from employees. During an internal brand advocacy campaign, over 80 percent of the workforce voluntarily shared positive stories and sentiments about the company. No scripts. No pressure. Just shared belief. That single initiative drove a significant uptick in our digital reputation metrics, proof that when employees feel seen, heard, and inspired, they become authentic brand ambassadors.

And yes, we have dashboards, social listening tools, and AI-generated reports. They're useful. But no algorithm can replicate genuine sentiment. Technology can guide strategy, but it can't earn trust. And trust, that quiet, cumulative force, is the currency of modern reputation.

Reputation today is shaped in moments, but it's anchored in meaning. The pace of news is faster than ever, but values can't be rushed. It starts from the inside. From consistent action. From leaders who listen. From cultures that care. And from people who carry the story forward, long after the campaign ends.

Because in the quietest moments, when no one's watching, that's when reputation is truly taking shape.





Nitin Mantri
President, APAC,
We. Communications
Group CEO, Avian We.

The Power of Being Understood

In conversations with clients and teams these days, one theme keeps coming up: *Are people still listening?*

That question speaks to the reality of the moment we're in. The world is crowded with voices. Trust is thinner. And people are losing patience with brands that talk but don't listen.

Why People Tune Out

We explored this further in the 2025 We. Brands in Motion (BiM) report. We asked over 4,000 professionals across seven countries how effective they felt brand communications were. While 81% of communicators believed they were getting it right, that confidence drops when the message gets complex — only 61% still think they're doing a good job.

But here's the catch: the audience sees it differently. Just 39% agreed. That's a 22-point confidence gap. In APAC, it's even wider: 26 points, the biggest in the world. That's not a creative challenge. It's a credibility one.

One reason is that the environment has changed. People aren't just looking for what you say. They're looking at how you behave. How you show up when it's inconvenient. What you do when no one is tracking the hashtags.

No Gloss. Just Good Work.

That shift was clear in the Box to Beds campaign we worked on with Amazon India. Faced with a harsh North Indian winter, delivery boxes were turned into sleeping kits for pilgrims at Maha Kumbh Mela. No campaign tagline. No big moment. Just a useful, thoughtful idea rooted in empathy and delivered at scale. It wasn't loud, but it was noticeable.

We saw a similar commitment from Corteva Agriscience in India. Their #The 2Million Initiative set a long-term goal: empower two million women across the agri-value chain. Instead of telling a story, they built partnerships and got to work. In the first three months, 100,000 women were reached through training, tools, and support. That's what credibility looks like when it's earned.

Three Things That Still Work (and always will)

We've spent too long perfecting messages. Now it's time to focus on meaning. From BiM 2025, and from the work we see succeeding, here's what's clear:

1. Don't just track sentiment, listen. Feedback isn't a metric; it's where trust starts. Audiences don't just want to be heard, they want to see how their voices shape action. Dove has spent nearly two decades evolving its Real Beauty platform based on cultural feedback. Its 2025 campaign took that one step further, inviting users to upload real images to retrain AI beauty algorithms. That kind of participation transforms listening into credibility.

2. Don't simplify, clarify. The top reason audiences tune out is vague, jargon-heavy messaging. Otsuka faced this head-on by teaming up with Salary.com to calculate the dollar value of unpaid caregiving (\$1.5 trillion annually in the U.S. alone). By putting hard numbers behind an overlooked issue, they turned a complex human challenge into something people and policymakers could act on. That's how clarity earns attention.

3. Use emotion with intent. BiM 2025 shows that audiences respond most when communication taps into emotion, which doesn't always need to be feel-good. Vulnerability, discomfort, even fear or levity, when used with purpose, can cut through noise. The New Zealand Herpes Foundation nailed this with its Best Place in the World to Have Herpes campaign by using warmth and wit to disarm stigma, making 76% of viewers more comfortable talking about a taboo subject. It worked because it didn't flinch; it felt real.

And it's not just brands. Leaders must embody that same clarity in how they show up, speak up, and take accountability. In an era where people trust people more than platforms, leadership is a reputation in motion.

In Conclusion: Strong Brands Speak Human

In the end, the goal isn't to be louder. It's to be understood. People don't remember perfect phrasing; they remember how a brand made them feel: seen, respected, maybe even surprised. So in this Reputation Era, let's trade polish for presence. Show up with clarity. Stay curious. Be human. That's how influence lasts — one honest moment at a time.





Deepshikha Dharmaraj
Chief Executive Officer,
Burson Group India

From Perception to Precision

How data-driven insights, predictive intelligence, and sharper ROI measurement are redefining reputation management in the AI era.

As communicators, we know that reputation matters. We have built brands, defused crises, and shaped cultural narratives. But here's the uncomfortable truth: in boardrooms across industries, reputation still needs to prove its impact. Not for lack of power, but because its impact isn't consistently tied to quantifiable business outcomes.

Until now, evidence has been too indirect or anecdotal. And in a world increasingly judged by numbers and driven by algorithms, dashboards, and shareholder demands, that's no longer enough. The opportunity for communicators is to stop presenting reputation as an intangible and start demonstrating how it drives shareholder value. And the good news is that we can now prove it with AI.

From data to foresight

To end with precision, we must start with it too. So, the first step is to tap into data to uncover intricate patterns, emerging trends and critical narratives. Overlaying that with understanding the target audience, we arrive at key insights on which to build our programme. With AI today, we can identify which stories are gaining traction, which signals indicate a potential risk, and where the whitespace lies for building meaningful conversations. AI tools now allow us to go further: modelling the potential reputational impact of business decisions, anticipating cultural shifts before they go mainstream, and assessing how global or regional dynamics will land in a hyperlocal context.

Take a startup entering a new market. Instead of launching blind, it can analyse real-time stakeholder sentiment, anticipate friction points, and shape communications that speak to local values, not just brand values. That's not just PR—it's precision architecture for building credibility and trust.

From insight to impact

It isn't enough to just design and deliver reputation programmes based on insight. Measuring the impact has been the weak link. To do that, there are two aspects of reputation that we need to understand—one, that reputation is not a static absolute. It keeps changing and we need to monitor it at all times, not just at the end of a campaign. And second, that reputation is not a singular dimension. It has many levers, like corporate integrity and governance, or creativity. This means that to measure the impact, we need intelligence on all dimensions and understand which lever is impacting what. And then recalibrate our programme, if needed, to change the outcomes.

The centrality of reputation as an engine for business growth and leadership - fundamental. But it is now, with technology, that we are able to pinpoint its empirical impact. The takeaway: Reputation is a powerful currency for businesses—one that must be earned and nurtured, not merely managed.

Facing the unpredictable currents of geopolitics and the rapid rise of digital threats, a brand's true legacy - its reputation - is defined more by its ability to adapt, communicate with transparency and uphold its core values. The future belongs to those who move from perception to precision, where every reputational decision is informed, data-driven and impactful.





Vivek P Rana
Managing Partner,
Gnothi Seauton Advisors

Reputation Without Attribution is the New Currency of Influence

On a Tuesday afternoon last week, a single slide appeared on a WhatsApp group of communications professionals. White background. No logos. In plain sans-serif font, it read: "The best-performing companies don't talk about ESG. They just do it." It was forwarded again the next morning, this time in a corporate Slack. By the end of the week, it had made its way into a CEO's townhall deck. Nobody knew where it came from.

There was a time when such a statement would have required an author. A name. A platform. A context. Someone to ask follow-up questions. But this one stood alone, unclaimed, and somehow more powerful for it.

We may be entering a phase of cultural life where reputation no longer belongs to the visible. In place of well-known names or institutions, influence now gathers around disembodied signals, memes, slides, anonymous posts, ambient phrases passed from one context to another. They are not owned so much as encountered. We read them, repeat them, sometimes believe them, and rarely remember who said them first.

This shift didn't happen all at once. For much of modern history, reputation was tied to the slow accumulation of work in the open. A name on a building. A masthead. A voice behind a column. One built it by showing up, again and again, over years. It was earned through endurance and made durable through familiarity.

But something changed. Maybe it was the noise. Maybe it was the algorithms. Or maybe, in a world where everyone is performing, the audience began to look for signals not attached to performance at all. It's not that trust disappeared. It simply changed its carriers. The most believable things now come from elsewhere, from places where there is no obvious motive, no personal brand, no corporate watermark. Authority has become more diffuse. And in that diffusion, strangely, it has become more believable.

This complicates the work of those who once traded in attribution. Communicators, brand builders, public figures who relied on presence, repetition, and authored voices. The tools still exist, but the terrain has shifted. The question is no longer just how to build trust. It is whether trust now grows best when no one is seen to be trying.

None of this is entirely new. Folklore, after all, never required a press release. Movements rarely began with names. What feels different now is the velocity and the vacuum. Influence spreads faster than credit can follow. Reputation lands before context arrives. We are, in some ways, back to oral culture. But now the mouths are invisible.

And perhaps that is the irony of this moment. The most powerful reputation you can build today may be one you never claim. It moves, quietly, without you. And that is what makes it trusted.





Shipra Singh

Head of Communications,
GE HealthCare - South Asia

Beyond the Peripheral – The Frontiers of Reputation

We live in a hyper-connected world where Reputation is the most valuable currency. From what was once a peripheral vision for any brand, or a quick note on crisis management, reputation management is no longer waiting in the wings. It's about delivering Trust before crisis, building confidence and value in real time, influencing customer trust, employee pride, and strategic foresight for brand positioning. The trick is to make Reputation the most intangible asset in this ever-evolving world where the trust gap is widening, and authenticity is becoming a non-negotiable when we speak about business reputation. The question in one word— how?

Purpose with profit— Master the Paradox

We live in a world where the question, “What’s in it for me?” goes beyond the dollar. The pursuit of profit has gone beyond the paycheck. People want to feel inspired and work for a company that adds to a cause that matters in the grand scheme. There is a clear shift towards people caring for the environment, mental health, diversity, and more. Business of the future will thrive on one principle – becoming accountable for purposes that go beyond a strong balance sheet. Business strategies must converge with ‘a more equal world’ and ‘a greener planet’.

CSR & ESG are not just a Policy on Paper

While purpose is a promise, we need initiatives that take purpose beyond a lofty tagline. CSR and ESG initiatives are those promises in Action- the most critical levers in the ‘trust economy’. CSR and ESG efforts bring a brand’s purpose to life, striking a chord with the customers. “Over 31% of 4,818 U.S. online adults say that a company’s social responsibility reputation influences their purchasing behavior, according to a study by Forrester.” If there’s one thing that the world learned from the global economic crisis of 2008, the pandemic, is that supernormal profits must also make the world a better place. Are we solving for a sustainable future? Many companies now embed ESG into their core strategy instead of a few initiatives, building trust and credibility.

AI is not only an Algorithm; it’s Trust.

We live in a time when data-driven insights are building perceptions and shaping strategies. That said, AI, data privacy, and algorithm fairness are the litmus tests for businesses. They go a long way in building trust and upholding Reputation. However, a fallout in AI ethics can harm reputational goals. Using AI with transparency, strong governance, responsible data practices, and accountability is imperative.

Cut through the Noise with Authenticity

Don’t fall for the optics, it doesn’t count. At a time when the world is swamped with irrelevant information and brand voice that dissipates in the noise around us, only authenticity wins. And authenticity in practice means taking measurable action towards commitments, sharing progress, communicating transparently, humanizing the brand, empowering colleagues to speak their truth, and, most importantly, staying resilient in times of crisis.

In today’s complex world, reputation management is not a ‘could have’ but a ‘must have’ percolating through every business tenet. Perceptions go beyond the idea of perception alone. Perceptions are about authenticity, trust, and consistency. These are interesting times as reputations command more trust than ever before. And trust is fragile.





Swati Khandelwal

SVP & Head
Group Communications,
Mahindra Group

The Reputation Era – Redefining Influence

We are now firmly in what I call The Reputation Era, a time when influence is no longer defined by power, position, or profit, but by purpose, trust, and authenticity. Reputation has become the new currency of leadership. And it is being redefined, not just by what we say, but by what we consistently do.

Having spent over two decades as a journalist, I've had the privilege of witnessing leaders and institutions rise, stumble, recover or sometimes fall based not only on their actions, but on how they were perceived. I learned early that perception isn't just a matter of storytelling, it is deeply tied to truth, integrity, and credibility. In journalism, we chase facts but we also chase trust. And the same is true in the world I inhabit now.

Today, as I've transitioned from journalism to the corporate world, I see with greater clarity how reputation isn't just a matter of communications, it is a strategic imperative. It touches every decision, every interaction, and every stakeholder relationship. In this hyperconnected world, influence is no longer top-down or unidirectional. It's participatory, peer-driven, and shaped by values as much as by value.

We've entered an era where consumers, employees, investors, and even regulators are asking not just what a company delivers, but how it behaves. What does it stand for? How does it treat its people? Is it creating inclusive opportunities? Is it part of the climate solution or the problem? These questions are no longer peripheral, they are central.

Technology has accelerated this shift. Information is instant. Narratives are co-authored. Transparency is demanded, not optional. And with that, reputation has become both more fragile and more powerful than ever before. A single act of accountability can inspire widespread trust. A single misalignment between words and actions can unravel years of goodwill.

This transformation is also changing what leadership means. Today's influential leaders are not just strategists or operators, they are stewards of culture, ethics, and impact. They bring empathy to boardrooms and authenticity to their engagements. They champion sustainability, equity, and resilience not as buzzwords, but as business fundamentals.

At Mahindra, where I now work, we understand that reputation is not managed, it's earned. Our purpose 'Rise for a more equal world' guides us to act responsibly across every business, from green mobility to rural empowerment. Whether it's skilling underserved youth or building inclusive workplaces, we know that influence stems from integrity.

My years in journalism taught me that credibility is hard-won and easily lost. In the corporate world, I've seen that this principle holds truer than ever. Reputation isn't a story we tell the world. It's the story the world tells about us shaped by our choices, lived values, and impact.

In this Reputation Era, influence is not held - it is conferred, moment by moment, by those who watch us lead.





Pravin D Shiriannavar
COO, BrandcomPR,
A Unit of Madison World

Reputation is a More Strategic Brand Asset Than Ever

Reputation has always been a strategic renown for humanity. History is replete with examples of the value of reputability we grew up listening to and reading about. From Bhishma Pitamaha and Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas, to the many great kings who ruled this land, we continue to cherish them for the honesty, trust, and reputation they built even after thousands of years after their times.

Role of communicators: The communicators of those eras played a pivotal role in upholding values that still shape human destiny, ensuring that their deeds were documented and become an inseparable part of the land's progressive history. These stories remind us how deeply reputation and trust were embraced as a way of life. We remember not only the personalities who lived by these ideals but also those who ignored them and paid the price.

In today's world, reputation and trust are undisputedly critical for organizations. They must earn the confidence of customers, retain the commitment of shareholders, inspire their employees to stay focused, and gain the encouragement of governments and regulators.

Warren Buffett says it takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently with heightened conviction. Several brands have ruined their reputation when they stopped being vigilant about it.

Brand custodians to safeguard reputation: Just as it takes a village to raise a child, so does it take many to build a brand's reputation. Brands require dedicated custodians to safeguard this valuable asset. Consider Japanese giants like Toyota, who have meticulously cultivated their reputation over decades, earning profound customer trust. Conversely, a prominent Indian EV two-wheeler brand, in its zealous pursuit of market share, has inadvertently eroded years of hard-won reputation. This is not restricted to its own brand image, for in doing so, it has also wrecked the trust of EV customers. Similarly, a series of over-hyped IPOs in the past two to three years have hurt the retail investors sentiments as many of the stocks have slid down the graph.

One of the big players in the Edtech space recently faced turmoil after an employee recorded an internal review meeting that exposed the wrongdoings of the company. This eroded the reputation of the brand to an irreversible point. Today, reputation is not just an external perception; it is an internal understanding too.

Reputation is not built overnight; it requires a dedicated team working relentlessly to earn it and an equally committed effort to preserve and protect it over time. To make this possible, the senior leadership and communications teams must come together to create a clear roadmap for building and safeguarding the organization's reputable standing. A positive reputation is a valuable asset for brands — influencing investment and acquisition decisions, driving rankings for educational institutions, and shaping consumer choices during purchase decisions.

Technology to monitor and assess reputation erosion: Today, vigilant brands' reputation management teams increasingly rely on modern tools and technologies to constantly monitor what customers are talking about it, its competitors, products, and services across media and new media platforms. AI tools are being used to assess risk, based on what is being written by the media and social media. It has become essential to proactively feed the market with key messages, continuously track conversations, educate media and social influencers on facts, thereby preparing strategies to address and counter any negative sentiment that may arise.

Reputation has always been a strategic asset. Today, leadership teams must take the responsibility of guiding their organizations with consistency and integrity, fostering an ethical foundation that builds long-term resilience. Forward-thinking leaders are also investing in training their teams to understand the value of reputation, while implementing robust frameworks to monitor, manage, and report on it effectively.





Girish Balachandran
Founder and Managing
Director, ON PURPOSE

When Causes Become Brands: Redefining Influence in the Reputation Era

Not long ago, a CEO at a global brand asked me a simple question: “How do we get more people to talk about us?”

My answer surprised him: “Maybe stop trying.”

In today’s reputation era, the brands people trust most aren’t the ones talking about themselves. They’re the ones talking about something that matters.

We’ve seen this shift play out across sectors. A few years ago, we partnered with a global foundation to launch a platform addressing gender and workplace health. Our client’s logo wasn’t splashed across every banner. Their leadership didn’t open every session. Instead, they chose to convene voices from healthcare, academia, and advocacy, letting frontline workers and changemakers lead the conversation.

The result? Their reputation grew, not because they demanded attention, but because they earned credibility. By stepping back, they moved forward.

This is the paradox of influence today. Brands that give up chasing the spotlight, often win the trust game in the long-run.

But this goes deeper than communication strategy. Reputation itself is being redefined. It’s no longer tied to what you sell, but to the stand you take, and the conversation you’re brave enough to lead.

Whether it’s sustainability, diversity, inclusion or gender equity, the most influential brands today are those that own an issue. They become known not for their products, but for the problems they chose to highlight.

Of course, this isn’t easy. It means ceding control, listening more than speaking, and building ecosystems where many voices, not just your own, shape the narrative. But this approach builds something no marketing campaign can buy: Trust.

As communicators, it’s time we asked ourselves harder questions - Are we measuring visibility, or credibility? Are we chasing noise, or building trust? Are we selling a story or leading a conversation? Because in the reputation era, what you stand for matters more than what you sell.

And brands that understand this shift won’t just be talked about. They’ll be remembered.





Shashikant Someshwar
Managing Director,
The Weber Shandwick Collective

The Modern CEO: Voice, Values, And Visibility

In today's hyperconnected business ecosystem, a CEO's influence extends much beyond quarterly earnings or operational metrics. It is now the foundation of organizational reputation. A single speech, post or stance, can catalyse market movements, redefine employee morale, or alienate entire consumer bases overnight. The reputational stakes have never been higher, nor has the demand for leaders who wield influence with intentionality.

These dynamics reflect what I call "reputational convergence" – where corporate performance and CEO visibility has become inextricably linked.

After 25 years of counseling leadership teams at multinational corporations across industries, I've observed this interdependence redefines competitive advantage. Leaders who recognise its strategic value early gain tremendous influence in shaping their organisation's trajectory.

The data validates this transformation. Weber Shandwick's latest research shows that 54% of executives view the 2025 business climate as "growing" with 51% describing it as "prosperous." Yet over two-thirds cite market volatility as their primary concern, with fewer than 25% feeling adequately prepared for potential disruptions. This tension defines the modern CEO's mandate - navigating cautious optimism while meeting unprecedented demands for transparency and accountability.

The Stakeholder Complexity Crisis

The days of stakeholder primacy are over. Today's CEOs must harmonise a cacophony of voices – employees demanding purpose, investors prioritising ESG alignment, customers scrutinising values, and communities expecting meaningful engagement. Each constituency operates on distinct platforms, timelines, and expectations, turning leadership into a high-stake balancing act.

The "ivory tower" executive is extinct. In an era of 24/7 news cycles and algorithmic amplification, passive leadership risks ceding control of the corporate narrative. In my experience working with global enterprises, I've seen how CEOs who proactively shape their stories drive measurable outcomes. Those who hesitate become subjects of others' storytelling - a position that's both strategically dangerous and commercially costly.

This reality elevates public relations beyond crisis management. Modern PR is strategic reputation architecture, blending stakeholder insights with business outcomes to transform CEO visibility into tangible impact.

The Three Pillars of Reputation Architecture

The most effective leaders I've counseled - from tech unicorns to legacy conglomerates - understand that authentic voice amplification requires three non-negotiables:

Strategic Clarity: Purpose-driven messaging that truly connects with all stakeholder groups, aligning perfectly with business goals. It's not about using corporate jargon; it's about turning complex strategies into engaging stories that people care about. Besides clearly defining what they do, CEOs who shine in this area shares why it truly matters, making their message more relatable and inspiring.

Operational Courage: Willingness to take a stand on issues that matter to their stakeholders, even when it's uncomfortable. ESG, for instance, is no longer a compliance checkbox but a key competitive advantage for those who genuinely adopt it. The most successful brands are driven by CEOs who lead with conviction, not consensus, building lasting trust.

Consistent Execution: Reputation resilience demands sustained, coherent communication across all touchpoints. Sporadic statements don't build trust; sustained engagement does. The leaders who master this understanding that reputation is built in drops and lost in buckets.

The Authenticity Paradox

Here's the unspoken truth - authenticity at scale is a CEO's greatest challenge. In our hyper-connected world, authentic voices amplify, but artifice accelerates failure. The CEOs who excel in this area go beyond protecting their reputation and craft comprehensive public relations strategies across earned, owned, and paid media.

They invest in sophisticated listening systems, develop robust crisis communication protocols, and align internal culture with external messaging. More importantly, they understand that effective public relations is not a support function, but a boardroom priority that drives value creation.

The Competitive Imperative

At The Weber Shandwick Collective India, we've seen transformative results when leaders embrace this paradigm shift. Whether working with global brands or emerging market leaders, the evidence is clear: organisations that treat reputation as a strategic asset consistently outperform peers. In an era where a substantial percentage of a company's market value hinges on intangible factors, CEO visibility isn't optional—it's existential.

The reputation era demands more than media training or reactive crisis management. It requires a paradigm shift where communications leaders serve as strategic partners, shaping narratives that align with business goals and stakeholder expectations.

For CEOs poised to lead in this new landscape: your influence is your organisation's most valuable currency. The question isn't whether to invest in it, but whether you'll do so with the rigour and foresight this era demands.





David Lian
Regional President,
Zeno Asia Pacific

From Messaging to Meaning: A new Blueprint for Reputation

Reputation used to be “manageable.” A few good press relationships, a clear corporate voice, a steady hand in a crisis – that was the playbook.

That playbook doesn’t work anymore.

The textbook definition of reputation – “being highly regarded or esteemed” – hasn’t changed. But the way it has earned, kept, or lost? That’s a different story.

Influence now lives outside traditional channels. It shows up in employee Teams messages, customer forums, creator communities— places where brand narratives don’t always have a seat, but perception gets built anyway. And once that perception takes hold, it’s hard to change.

People today are looking for proof, not promises. They don’t just want to hear what a company stands for. They want to see it in action. And every action gets judged not in isolation, but in context – social, environmental, cultural.

It’s now clear that reputation is much bigger than a communications function. It’s a reflection of how a business behaves. How it decides. How it reconciles “business goals” with responsibility.

That puts the C-suite front and center. Because reputation isn’t built on statements; it’s built on decisions. On AI. On climate. On talent. On how you treat people behind the scenes.

One bold move can raise your profile. But if the ethics don’t land? It can unravel just as fast.

CEOs are operating in a more exposed environment than ever. Fast-moving technology shifts, a tough economy, regulatory complexity, rising public expectation – it’s a lot. And reputational risk is baked into all of it. Because these aren’t just operational decisions. They’re cultural signals that send meaning. And they ripple quickly, especially when internal conversations become external headlines in a matter of hours.

That’s why comms can’t be an afterthought. Communicators need to be in the room early shaping the thinking, not just polishing the message. That means bringing a different kind of value: cultural awareness, stakeholder insight, a sense of how things will actually be perceived.

This isn’t just about instincts anymore. It’s about visibility. We’re now living in a world where digital communications allows us to ‘look’ closely into sentiment, patterns and understand where new issues might next arise. Leveraging data & intelligence tools isn’t just a ‘nice option’ anymore. It’s mandatory. Every communicator should use AI and data analytics tools to ensure they get in on the narrative at the earliest possible moment.

Creativity matters too. But not the old kind that chases buzz. What cuts through now is intention. The kind of clarity that makes people feel, “This makes sense. This feels right.” That’s what earns attention – and trust.

Reputation today isn’t something you declare. It’s something you demonstrate. It’s not about saying the right thing. It’s about making the right choices – and being understood for it.

Our role, as communicators, is to help shape that understanding. Not reactively. Not after the fact. But in real time – with integrity, with influence, and with eyes wide open.





Shaily Vaswani
Senior Vice President
Group Communication &
Brand at Aditya Birla Group

The New Rules of Reputation: Building Belief in the Age of Doubt

When I began my journey in PR and communications over two decades ago, reputation was something you built steadily. It took years of careful messaging, media interactions, and relationship-building. You knew the journalists, you shaped the story, and the pace gave you time to think and respond.

That world doesn't exist anymore.

Today, reputation moves at the speed of the internet. One tweet, one clip, one unverified post — and suddenly, everything you've built can feel like it's at risk.

We're living in a time where influence and reputation are constantly being reshaped — not just by what you say, but by what others say about you, and how fast it travels. And that's not always a fair game.

Technology has made storytelling easier, but it's also made distortion easier. AI can write a statement, fake a photo, clone a voice. It can manufacture a version of the truth that looks and sounds real. And most people won't stop to check. They'll forward it, react to it, and form opinions within seconds.

This is the world we now work in. A world where trust is not a given — it's a question. And often, it's the first thing to break when something goes wrong.

So what does that mean for communicators, leaders, brands?

It means we need to do more than tell good stories. We need to make sure they are true, and that they hold up — not just in headlines, but in people's lives. We need to pause and ask: is this accurate? Is it verified? Will it build trust or chip away at it?

It also means we need to be quicker, sharper, and more prepared. We can't wait for things to go wrong and then figure out what to say. We need to pre-empt. To know what the risks are. To be ready with clarity and solutions before the noise begins. That agility — the ability to respond with purpose, not panic — is what protects reputation today.

For public figures, founders, influencers — anyone who carries a public reputation — the responsibility is even more personal. It's not just about staying visible. It's about staying believable. People today have sharp filters. They notice when your words don't match your actions. They can tell when something feels too scripted, too polished.

The good news? You don't have to be perfect. But you do have to be real.

Reputation today is not built in boardrooms. It's built in everyday decisions. In how a company treats its employees. In how a leader speaks after a setback. In whether people feel seen, heard, and respected.

Influence isn't about volume anymore. It's about trust. And trust, once lost, is hard to earn back.

We're in the Reputation Era — where facts matter more than flash, where presence doesn't always equal credibility, and where every message carries weight. Not because it's loud, but because it's true.

And in a noisy world, that kind of truth — consistent, quiet, and clear — is what lasts.





Amit Nanchahal
Head of Corporate
Communications, PepsiCo
India & South Asia

Reputation is the New Currency: How Strategic Communications Shape and Safeguard Brand Trust

In today's India—where public sentiment can shift in minutes and digital platforms amplify every voice—reputation has become one of the most valuable assets an organization can possess. It is also one of the most fragile. In this environment, strategic communications is no longer a support function; it is a core business imperative.

Reputation today is not just about legacy or market share. It is about perception—how stakeholders experience a brand across every touchpoint, from social media to customer service to corporate conduct. In a country as diverse and vocal as India, where consumers are increasingly values-driven, reputation is shaped as much by what a company stands for as by what it sells.

The communications function has evolved dramatically. It now plays a central role in shaping business strategy, managing risk, and building long-term equity. Whether navigating regulatory changes, responding to misinformation, or engaging with communities, communicators are expected to anticipate challenges and craft narratives that resonate with authenticity and clarity. Trust is built from the inside out. In India's complex organizational ecosystems—often spanning multiple languages, regions, and cultures—internal communications is foundational. When employees are informed, aligned, and empowered, they become credible ambassadors of the brand. This internal coherence is critical in times of crisis, when external trust hinges on internal unity.

India has seen numerous examples where communication—or the lack of it—has defined a brand's trajectory. Companies that have responded to crises with transparency, empathy, and speed have often emerged stronger. Conversely, those that delayed or deflected have faced long-term reputational damage. The lesson is clear: silence is not a strategy.

Today's stakeholders—especially younger consumers—expect brands to be real, responsible, and responsive. They reward honesty and call out hypocrisy. This means communications must go beyond messaging to reflect genuine intent and consistent action. In India, where social issues are deeply intertwined with business realities, authenticity is not optional—it's essential.

The lines between public relations, digital engagement, and corporate responsibility are increasingly blurred. A press release, a tweet, and a sustainability report are all part of the same reputational ecosystem. In this integrated landscape, communicators must be agile, data-informed, and culturally attuned to navigate the fast-moving currents of public opinion.

While reputation is intangible, it is not immeasurable. Tools like sentiment analysis, stakeholder surveys, and media impact assessments are helping organizations quantify trust and track reputational health. In India's dynamic media environment, these insights are critical for staying ahead of the curve and course-correcting in real time.

Reputation is no longer a by product of business success—it is a driver of it. In a country as diverse and connected as India, strategic communications is the bridge between intent and impact, between values and value. As communicators, our role is not just to tell stories, but to build trust—consistently, credibly, and courageously. That means telling authentic stories that spark impact and inspire change—narratives that go beyond promotion to reflect purpose, responsibility, and action. In today's landscape, where scrutiny is constant and trust must be earned every day, these stories become the cornerstone of lasting brand credibility.





Atul Sharma
CEO, Ruder Finn India and
Head- Middle East

From Attention to Adoption: Rethinking influence in the Trust Economy

At a recent summit, one of the RF leaders chalked out a simple model that instantly resonated with me;

- **Owned media builds retention**
- **Earned media builds influence**
- **Paid media drives adoption**

It's a simple framework but it reflects something deeper about how brand-building and reputation are evolving. And more importantly, how influence has changed shape.

Earlier, we'd think of influence as something you chase with big celebrity campaigns or flashy ad budgets. Today, we're seeing a shift. Brands start by creating their own content universe through newsletters, YouTube, podcasts, and LinkedIn, to hold attention. Once that base is warm, it's the earned media that drives influence with stories that feel credible, voices that feel authentic. Only after that comes paid, once you've already earned a place in someone's head (and maybe heart).

This middle layer, which is the earned influence, is where the real shift is happening.

We're living in a time where trust is harder to win and even harder to hold. People are more sceptical, more informed, and more selective. And that's not a bad thing. It's just a reality we need to work with. I often tell our teams: people may scroll past an ad, but they'll pause for a story that feels like it's meant for them.

And that's where new-age influence comes in. It's not about big faces anymore. It's about people who feel like us- micro-creators, subject matter experts, niche community voices. They're not aspirational, they're attainable. And that makes all the difference.

At Ruder Finn, we've seen firsthand how reputation isn't just a shield during a crisis. It's a differentiator in crowded markets. And it's being built not through campaigns, but through consistency. **The era of one-way communication is over. This is the age of earned engagement.**

Because in a world where one post can go viral (in either direction), your reputation is what people fall back on when they decide whether to trust you again. And that trust doesn't come from paid placements. It's earned in the in-between.

This reputation era isn't about visibility, it's about credibility. And that's a much longer game. But it's one worth playing.





Srishty Chawla
Co-founder, One Source

Living in The Reputation Era Not Another Goodreads Quote About Authenticity

Quite akin to legacy, reputation has always been a tough nut to crack, and a Sisyphus-like endeavour to sustain. Today though, things are different; as Gen Z says – it's not giving anymore.

Truth be told, what started as clout has now metamorphosed into cringe. Influence was a rare thing to come across, and reputation took years to build. It meant something. Today? Everyone from LinkedIn monks peddling personal brands to that guy on YouTube who believes Diet Coke is carcinogenic are 'influential' in their own right.

Welcome to the Reputation Era; it'll take all the neuroplasticity you can exhibit, just to survive here. It's definitely not for the faint of bandwidth (or heart).

Of reputation and errr...

Today, reputation is built in between the lines. It's not about that elaborate, jargonised holding statement your PR team used five different LLMs to create. It's what people say after you've released a statement and believe you've won the game. It is shaped by the work no one claps for and unfortunately, also by that one treacherous tweet that now lives on six Reddit threads and a meme account named @brandfailslol.

Take BluSmart – disruptor, great messaging, a very cool EV fleet, glowing headlines. All of it, a smokescreen for alleged financial misappropriation.

Then there's Byju's. What started as India's most celebrated ed-tech unicorn gradually descended into chaos. From celebrity-backed campaigns to Super Bowl ads, the company nailed visibility but underneath the glitz were employee burnouts, missed timelines, and lawsuits.

After all, good branding can't cover bad books forever.

Which brings me to the point – most brands aren't building reputation; they're contouring perception. Creating a buzzword-cloud hoping no one notices the cracks on the ceiling. But Gen Z? Their BS detector runs on nuclear power. They'll sniff out that vulnerability dump in the media before one can say 'edtech'; and cancel your entire legacy in the same breath.

Influencing right

Look at Amul – a 77-year-old dairy brand with the meme reflex of a 21-year-old Twitter admin. Or Zomato – the only brand that delivers panini, puns, and policy takes in the same push notification. That's reputation; the stuff that makes you smile like an idiot while looking at the lit lockscreen of your phone.

Influence today doesn't scream from the rooftops. It lurks in the silent nooks of meaningful communication. It is what makes for great dinner table conversation.

We're watching the watchers; the PR folk, strategy wonks, designers who once illustrated their way through life, suddenly becoming full-blown culture shapers. Reputation isn't just earned media anymore. It's a memory slot in the neural network of your target audience (good luck quantifying that).

Real reputation? It's about transparency, authenticity, and creativity. Not to be confused with performative realness.

Remember Burger Singh's most recent statement to Entracker? Hits all the right notes, emotes in all the right places. No #DoBetterJournalism hashtags. Just quiet confidence and clarity of thought. That's the influence. The kind you don't measure by reach, but by recall.

Reputation today (and tomorrow)

So yes – welcome to the Reputation Era. Where the lifespan of relevance is just as much as that of an adult mayfly, and the algorithm forgets you faster than your X. But reputation? Reputation lingers. Like a signature scent. Or that one text message you wish you hadn't sent in the aftermath of a 2.00 am drinking session.

For those of us in the business of perception – PR, comms, design, memes, vibes, even strategy – the brief isn't branding. It is belief. And that takes more than jargon and trending audio.

The future isn't what you say when you're speaking.

It's the remnants that make your audience feel things after you've exited stage left.



THE **SABRE** AWARDS **2025** SOUTH ASIA



#PROlogue2025 #SABREAwardsSA #REDefiningInfluence

Innovation SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Winners

The Innovation SABRE Awards winners will be honored during the South Asia SABRE Awards ceremony on 24 July at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.

For further details please contact the PRCAI.

IN2 SABRE Awards

Experiential Marketing

Live Events

Winner:

- The Undekha Eye Test — Godrej Consumer Products with Eyebetes Foundation, Cumulus PR, Godrej Creative Lab

Certificate of Excellence

- Levi's x Dil-Luminati India Tour 2024 — Levi Strauss & Co. with PR Pundit Havas Red
- Nautical Trail - Celebrating India's Maritime Heritage — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners

Finalists

- The Undekha Eye Test — Godrej Consumer Products with Eyebetes Foundation, Cumulus PR, Godrej Creative Lab

Certificate of Excellence

- Adani Ahmedabad Marathon — Adani Sportsline with Wordswork Communications
- MPL Dev Days: Powering the Next Wave of Game Makers — Mobile Premier League (MPL)

Earned Media

Digital/Print Media

Winner:

- Gatorade Turf Finder Powered by Google Maps — Gatorade - PepsiCo India with Edelman India, Leo India

Certificate of Excellence

- A 45th Anniversary Special Event by SriLankan Airlines (UL) — SriLankan Airlines
- India from the prism of Localization: Building a brand story with Viksit Bharat's Vision 2047
GE HealthCare with Ruder Finn India
- Sprite Joke In A Bottle — Coca-Cola India with Weber Shandwick

Finalists

- When the Future Came Looking for a Job — Indeed with Archetype India

Broadcast Media

Winner:

- Birla Opus: Challenger turns disruptor — Aditya Birla Group with AdFactors PR



Innovation SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Winners

Finalists

- Building Tomorrow's Political Leadership for India! — School of Ultimate Leadership (SOUL) with First Partners
- Seva Hi Saadhna Hai — Adani Group

Earned Media with Influencers + Communities

Winner:

- Ice Stupas: #WaterWonders - Save Water like Ladakh! — HDFC Bank with First Partners

Certificate of Excellence

- Serving for the Girls - Transforming lives in Assam's Remote Villages Through Sport — Mobile Premier League (MPL)

Finalists

- Godrej Professional Spotlight - A Platform Celebrating and Empowering Hair Stylists — Godrej Professional with Godrej Industries Group
- Great India Drive: Unveil The Unseen - India Uncharted! — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners
- Mabel Addis Women in Games Month — Mobile Premier League (MPL)

Persuasive Content

Winner:

- Steel of India — Jindal Steel and Power

Certificate of Excellence

- Attracting Endowments through Research Excellence — BITS Pilani with Burson Genesis
- Project Hilldaari — Nestle India with GCI Health a Burson Company

Finalists

- Embed's Answer to Fever Mysteries: An Algorithmic Breakthrough — Godrej Consumer Products with Godrej Industries Group
- Vedanta Limited - A Year of Transformation — Vedanta with Adfactors PR

Sponsored & Paid Media

Product Placement

Winner:

- Safe is Sexy - India's First Shadow Art made from Condoms — KamaSutra with Godrej Industries Group

Digital Marketing/Advertising

Winner:

- Choose Your Changi Adventure — Changi Airport Group with MSL

Finalists

- Make Life Beautiful — Birla Opus Paints with Burson Genesis
- Together in Travel: A Global Reboot of the Tourism Sector, Powered By Purpose — Together in Travel: A WTTC initiative with SPAG - A FINN Partners Company

Social Media & Community Management

Social Visual

Winner:

- Change the Game — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers



Innovation SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Winners

Certificate of Excellence

- Aangan Se Aasmaan Tak — Gates Foundation India with Organic by MSL
- Celebrating Acceptance — Godrej L’Affaire with Godrej Industries Group
- Instruments of Change — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers

Finalists

- Reverse Interview — Providence India with Burson Genesis

Social Publishing / Blogs

Winner:

- 10 Years, 10 Crore Smiles – HDFC Bank Parivartan – A Decade of CSR — HDFC Bank with First Partners

Owned Media

Websites & Mobile apps

Winner:

- Seva Hi Saadhna Hai — Adani Group

Certificate of Excellence

- Empowering Women, Evolving Lives — Miss Bangladesh US Organization with Hiam Hafizuddin (Independent Strategist and Founder)

Finalists

- Redefining Real Estate: Housing.com’s Digital Disruption in PropTech — Housing.com with Value 360 Communications

CSR, ESG and DEI Reporting

Winner:

- Jo Jode Wohi Samajhdaar — Aditya Birla Group

Annual Report

Winner:

- Reliance Industries Annual Report — Reliance Industries

Documentary Film and Video

Winner:

- Great India Drive: Unveil The Unseen – India Uncharted! — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners

Certificate of Excellence

- Green Mahakumbh – Winning the Environmental Challenge! — Coca-Cola India & Southwest Asia with First Partners
- Ice Stupas: #WaterWonders – Save Water like Ladakh! — HDFC Bank with First Partners

Finalists

- 30 Years of Energising India — Cairn Oil & Gas - Vedanta Limited
- A Nation on the Move — Tata Consultancy Services



Innovation SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Winners

Tools and Tactics

AI/Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality/Immersive Technology

Winner:

- Immersive Technology in Social Impact Storytelling: A 360° VR Journey of Women in Fisheries — Reliance Foundation

Certificate of Excellence

- Gurugram Crackdown: AI Police Tracking Fake Number Plates! — Staqu Technologies with First Partners

Finalists

- Colgate's Oral Health Movement — Colgate- Palmolive with MSL
- Jeet Ka Vishwas – India's first AI-generated corporate anthem by ICICI Lombard — ICICI Lombard General Insurance
- TripSecure plus - Simplifying travel insurance with AI-created music — ICICI Lombard General Insurance

Audio: Podcasts + Music

Winner:

- Cricket Connects: Beyond the Game — Wise with 80 dB Communications

Certificate of Excellence

- Instruments of Change — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers

Finalists

- TripSecure plus - Simplifying travel insurance with AI-created music — ICICI Lombard General Insurance

Real-time Engagement

Winner:

- Tray It Right - A Traveler's Quest for Airport Hygiene — Anand Nichani with Concept Public Relations India

Certificate of Excellence

- D-KYC: Don't Know Your Customer — Digi Yatra with Value 360 Communications

Finalists

- CRUX Market Day — Pernod Ricard India with Value 360 Communications

Data in Campaign Planning and Development

Winner:

- AI for All: Realigning Perception, Reclaiming Recognition — Lenovo India with Zeno Group

Finalists

- Mabel Addis Women in Games Month — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- The Gold Standard of Investing — World Gold Council with Burson Genesis



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

The 2025 SABRE Awards South Asia shortlist was selected from among more than 850 entries in this year's competition, which recognizes Superior Achievement in Branding, Reputation and Engagement. The campaigns were evaluated by a jury of industry leaders.

The winners will be announced at the SABRE Awards South Asia Awards ceremony on 24 July at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.

For further details please contact the PRCAI.

Diamond SABRE Awards

Agency CEO of the Year

- Winner will be announced during the SABRE Awards ceremony

Company CEO of the Year

- Winner will be announced during the SABRE Awards ceremony

Company of the year

- From Stories to Leadership: Building Reputation the Godrej Way — Godrej Industries Group with GIG Corporate Brand & Communications
- MPL: A Year of Creating Business Impact — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Reliance Industries — Reliance Industries

The SABRE Award for Superior Achievement in Brand-Building

- #ResumeLife — Boston Scientific India with GCI Health a Burson Group India Company
- 10 Years, 10 Crore Smiles – HDFC Bank Parivartan – A Decade of CSR — HDFC Bank with First Partners
- Gatorade Turf Finder Powered by Google Maps — Gatorade - PepsiCo India with Edelman India, Leo India
- Green Mahakumbh – Winning the Environmental Challenge! — Coca-Cola India & Southwest Asia with First Partners
- Steel of India — Jindal Steel and Power

The SABRE Award for Superior Achievement in Reputation Management

- Building Trust Amidst High Volatility and Regulatory Ambiguity — Giottus Crypto Platform with Burson Genesis
- Digitizing Indian Banking — Airtel Payments Bank with Burson Genesis
- Every Miner Deserves to Return Home Safe! — Vedanta Sesa Goa with First Partners
- From Niche to Necessity - Redefining Quick Commerce in India — Blinkit with Burson Genesis
- Green Mahakumbh - Winning the Environmental Challenge! — Coca-Cola India & Southwest Asia with First Partners

The SABRE Award for Superior Achievement in Research and Planning

- AI for All: Realigning Perception, Reclaiming Recognition — Lenovo India with Zeno Group
- Guardians of Mental Health Empowering Youth Resilience and Well-Being — Mpower with Concept Public Relations India
- Mabel Addis Women in Games Month — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- MPL: A Year of Creating Business Impact — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Pioneer DJ India Ambassador Program — Pioneer DJ with Burson Genesis



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

The SABRE Award for Superior Achievement in Measurement and Evaluation

**No winner will be named in the Superior Achievement in Measurement and Evaluation category*

- AI for All: Realigning Perception, Reclaiming Recognition — Lenovo India with Zeno Group
- Gurugram Crackdown: AI Police Tracking Fake Number Plates! — Staqu Technologies with First Partners
- Namak Ho Tata Ka...Tata Namak — Tata Consumer Products with Adfactors PR

The SABRE Award for Superior Achievement in Creativity

- Celebrating Acceptance — Godrej L'Affaire with Godrej Industries Group
- Instruments of Change — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers
- Launching 'Legends of Shiva with Amish' — Warner Bros. Discovery with Archetype
- MPL: A Year of Creating Business Impact — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Sextember by Bold Care — Bold Care with Value 360 Communications

Geographic

India

- A Force for Good — Aditya Birla Group
- Making Healthy Possible in India — Amneal Pharmaceuticals with Ruder Finn Thunder India
- Mettle of India — Jindal Steel and Power
- Navigating the Cheese Crisis — Westlife Foodworld - McDonald's India (W&S) with Avian We.
- Vedanta Limited – A Year of Transformation — Vedanta with Adfactors PR

Bangladesh

- Winner: Empowering Women, Evolving Lives — Miss Bangladesh US Organization with Hiam Hafizuddin (Independent Strategist and Founder)

Nepal

- Winner: Spirofy: Access to COPD Diagnosis — Cipla EMEU

Sri Lanka

- Winner: A 45th Anniversary Special Event by SriLankan Airlines (UL) — SriLankan Airlines

South/Southeast Asia

- A Force for Good — Aditya Birla Group
- Asia-Pacific Myopia Management Symposium (APMMS) — CooperVision with SPAG - A FINN Partners Company
- Birla Opus: Challenger turns disruptor — Aditya Birla Group with AdFactors PR

International

- Breathefree Digital Educator — Cipla EMEU
- Empowering Women, Evolving Lives — Miss Bangladesh US Organization with Hiam Hafizuddin (Independent Strategist and Founder)
- Instruments of Change — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers
- Making Big Bets for Climate Action — The Rockefeller Foundation with Edelman India
- Together in Travel: A Global Reboot of the Tourism Sector, Powered by Purpose — Together in Travel: A WTTC initiative with SPAG - A FINN Partners Company



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

Practice areas

Business-To-Business Marketing

- From Pixels to Principles: Adobe's Ethical AI Journey — Adobe with Ruder Finn
- Gurugram Crackdown: AI Police Tracking Fake Number Plates! — Staqu Technologies with First Partners
- JSPTechCatalyst — Jindal Steel and Power
- MPL Dev Days: Powering the Next Wave of Game Makers — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Nautical Trail - Celebrating India's Maritime Heritage — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners

Corporate Image

- From Stories to Leadership: Building Reputation the Godrej Way — Godrej Industries Group with GIG Corporate Brand & Communications
- Ice Stupas: #WaterWonders - Save Water like Ladakh! — HDFC Bank with First Partners
- MPL: A Year of Creating Business Impact — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Novo Nordisk: Reframing Chronic Disease Care in India — Novo Nordisk with SPAG - A FINN Partners Company
- The Lighthouse Project — Mondelez India with Value 360 Communications

Corporate Culture & Change

- CRUX Market Day — Pernod Ricard India with Value 360 Communications
- Green Mahakumbh - Winning the Environmental Challenge! — Coca-Cola India & Southwest Asia with First Partners
- Iron Ladies India 3.0 - The Making of Iron Ladies! — Vedanta Sesa Goa with First Partners

Corporate Social Responsibility

- #StandUpForLearningGaps — P&G Shiksha with Madison PR
- Empowering 2 Million Women in Agriculture by 2030 — Corteva Agriscience with Avian We.
- Global Month of Volunteering (GMV) — Amazon with Gnothi Seauton
- Seva Hi Saadhna Hai — Adani Group
- The Undekha Eye Test — Godrej Consumer Products with Eyebetes Foundation, Cumulus PR, Godrej Creative Lab

Crisis/Issues Management

- Filaria Se Fight — Gates Foundation India with Organic by MSL
- From Crisis to Opportunity: Nestlé Cerelac — Nestlé India with Weber Shandwick
- Navigating the Cheese Crisis — Westlife Foodworld - McDonald's India (W&S) with Avian We.

Digital and Social Media Campaign

- #NIVEAForLocal - A Small Business Community Programme — NIVEA India with MSL India
- Aangan Se Aasmaan Tak — Gates Foundation India with Organic by MSL
- Choose Your Changi Adventure — Changi Airport Group with MSL
- Elevating RPSG Group's Sport's Portfolio - Lucknow Super Giants and Mohun Bagan Super Giant — RPSG with Avian We.
- Launch of 6 Ballygunge Place, Delhi — 6 Ballygunge Place with 80 dB Communications



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

Diversity Communications

- A Universal Language to Order India's Favourite Food — KFC India with Edelman India
- Change the Game — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers
- Inclusion Starts with Awareness — Shiranee Joseph De Saram Foundation with Adfactors PR Lanka
- Increasing Women's participation in labour force — Udaiti Foundation with Avian We.
- Mabel Addis Women in Games Month — Mobile Premier League (MPL)

Employee and Workforce Engagement

- Celebrating You — Diageo India with Burson Genesis
- Jeet Ka Vishwas – India's first AI-generated corporate anthem by ICICI Lombard — ICICI Lombard General Insurance
- Unlock the Player In You — Dream 11 with Edelman India

Employer Branding

- Mettle of India — Jindal Steel and Power
- Reverse Interview — Providence India with Burson Genesis
- The World of Reliance — Reliance Industries

Financial and IPO Communications

- Hyundai Motor India Limited IPO | Accelerating the next phase of growth — Hyundai Motor India with Adfactors PR
- The Gold Standard of Investing — World Gold Council with Burson Genesis
- Vedanta Limited – A Year of Transformation — Vedanta Limited with Adfactors PR

Integrated Marketing

- Dettol Banega Swasth India — Reckitt with Avian We.
- Gatorade Turf Finder Powered by Google Maps — Gatorade - PepsiCo India with Edelman India, Leo India
- Hellmann's Mood Burger — Hellmann's with Edelman India
- Legacy of Sewa — School of Education and Systems Change with Gnothi Seauton
- Maternity Insurance For Women — Policybazaar.com

Marketing to Consumers (New Product)

- Milky Verse - Launch of Godrej My Farm — Godrej My Farm with Godrej Industries Group's Corporate Brand and Communications Team
- Mahindra Unlimit India – Launch of Electric Origin SUVs — Mahindra Electric Automobile with Adfactors PR
- Make Life Beautiful — Birla Opus Paints with Burson Genesis
- The Good Craft Co.'s Flavour Lab Experience Centre — Diageo India with The Outlier
- Toast Of the Town: Launching A New Microbrewery in India's Beer Capital — ICB Indian Craft



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

Marketing to Consumers (Existing Product)

- Durex The Birds and Bees Talk — Reckitt with Avian We.
- Instagram- Close Friends Only — Meta- Instagram with Ruder Finn
- Jagruk Baniye, PYNA Chuniye by Godrej Agrovet — Godrej Agrovet with Godrej Industries Group's Corporate Brand and Communications Team
- Redefining Pet Care Through ITC Nimyle's PetFed Collaboration — ITC Nimyle with Burson Genesis
- Sprite Joke In A Bottle — Coca-Cola India with Weber Shandwick

Media Relations

- Birla Opus: Challenger turns disruptor — Aditya Birla Group with AdFactors PR
- From delivery to defense: Transforming Akamai from a CDN player to Security & Cloud powerhouse — Akamai with Archetype India
- Launch of India's First AI Spam Detection Feature by Bharti Airtel — Bharti Airtel with MSL India
- Media Relations - Gujarat Giants || Women's Premier League — Adani Sportsline with Wordswork Communications
- When the Future Came Looking for a Job — Indeed with Archetype India

Public Affairs/Government Relations

- Building Tomorrow's Political Leadership for India! — School of Ultimate Leadership (SOUL) with First Partners
- Embed's Answer to Fever Mysteries: An Algorithmic Breakthrough — Godrej Consumer Products with Godrej Industries Group
- Nautical Trail - Celebrating India's Maritime Heritage — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners
- Safe Blood, Safe Lives — Thalassemia Patient Advocacy Group with Avian We.
- The Next Move: AIGF Driving Policy and Industry Synergy in India's Skill Gaming Sector — All India Gaming Federation with Kaizzen

Public Education

- #GenerationsTogether — HelpAge India with GCI Health a Burson Company
- D-KYC: Don't Know Your Customer — Digi Yatra with Value 360 Communications
- Self Care for New Moms and Kids Under 5 — Reckitt with Avian We.
- Serving for the Girls - Transforming lives in Assam's Remote Villages Through Sport — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- To cook or not to cook is not a question — Godrej Appliances with Adfactors PR

Special Event

- Advancing India's Global Tech-Telecom Role — India Mobile Congress 2024 with Kommune Brand Communications
- Bringing India to the World — Reliance Foundation
- Great India Drive: Unveil The Unseen - India Uncharted! — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners
- MPL Dev Days: Powering the Next Wave of Game Makers — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Safe is Sexy - India's First Shadow Art made from Condoms — KamaSutra with Godrej Industries Group

Emerging Markets

Emerging Markets

- 108 Total Parenting Solution — Kalorex Group with Simulations PR agency
- Cup of Goodness — Wagh Bakri -Tea Group with Simulations PR Agency
- The Lighthouse Project — Mondelez India with Value 360 Communications



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

PR Aspirant/Student of the Year

PR Aspirant/Student of the Year

- #WeArePR: The Voice You Don't See — Amrutha Palepu, Manipal Institute Of Communication
- #WeArePR: Invisible Architects — Tanushree Sengupta, Xavier Institute of Communications
- #WeArePR: Shaping Narratives, Shaping Futures — Surabhi Shah, Apeejay Institute of Mass Communication
- The Invisible Ink Project — Shamit Shankara, St. Joseph's University

Industry sectors

Associations

- #SugarToSustainability — Indian Sugar & Bio-Energy Manufacturers' Association (ISMA) with Media Mantra
- Mumbai Tech Week 2025 — Tech Entrepreneurs Association of Mumbai (TEAM) with Value 360 Communications
- Urban Air Mobility Expo 2025: From Vision to Visible Impact — Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) with 80 dB Communications

Consumer Products/Services

- #EVolveForAGreenerFuture — OPG Mobility (Formerly Known as Okaya EV) with Media Mantra
- Colgate's Oral Health Movement — Colgate-Palmolive with MSL
- IKEA IKONIC 2.0 — IKEA India with MSL India
- Kia Syros - A New Species of SUV — KIA India with Value 360 Communications
- Paw Protecc — Mars Petcare and Swiggy Instamart with The Practice

Fashion & Beauty

- Godrej Professional Spotlight - A Platform Celebrating and Empowering Hair Stylists — Godrej Professional with Godrej Industries Group
- Levi's x Dil-Luminati India Tour 2024 — Levi Strauss & Co. with PR Pundit Havas Red

Financial & Professional Services

- Attracting Endowments through Research Excellence — BITS Pilani with Burson Genesis
- Digitizing Indian Banking — Airtel Payments Bank with Burson Genesis
- Ice Stupas: #WaterWonders - Save Water like Ladakh! — HDFC Bank with First Partners
- The Legacy & Leap: Powering India's Workforce for 25 Years — Teamlease Services Limited with Value 360 Communications
- TripSecure plus - Simplifying travel insurance with AI-created music — ICICI Lombard General Insurance

Food & Beverage

- A Milky Verse - Launch of Godrej My Farm — Godrej My Farm with Godrej Industries Group's Corporate Brand and Communications Team
- Celebrating You — Diageo India with Burson Genesis
- Project Hilldaari — Nestle India with GCI Health a Burson Company
- Sunfeast Mom's Magic 'Will of Change' Campaign — Sunfeast Mom's Magic with Avian We.
- Ways to Lay's — Pepsico India with Edelman India & Leo Burnett India



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

Healthcare

- Beyond the Pandemic Shadow: Rebuilding Reputation Through Innovation and Advocacy — AstraZeneca
- India Detects to Defeat — Johnson & Johnson (J&J) Innovative Medicine India with Avian We.
- India from the prism of Localization: Building a brand story with Viksit Bharat's Vision 2047 — GE HealthCare with Ruder Finn India
- Novo Nordisk: Reframing Chronic Disease Care in India — Novo Nordisk with SPAG - A FINN Partners Company
- Obesity in India: From Myth to Science — Eli Lilly and Company with Adfactors PR

Industrial/Manufacturing

- Change the Game — Aditya Birla Group with Brandmovers
- Every Miner Deserves to Return Home Safe! — Vedanta Sesa Goa with First Partners
- JSPTechCatalyst — Jindal Steel and Power
- MG Drive.Bharat: Shaping India's EV Future — JSW MG Motor India with Ruder Finn
- Sankalp 2024- Building the India for tomorrow — Ola Electric with RF Thunder

Media, Arts & Entertainment

- 30 Years of Energising India — Cairn Oil & Gas - Vedanta
- Iron Ladies India 3.0 - The Making of Iron Ladies! — Vedanta Sesa Goa with First Partners
- Run for Zero Hunger — Vedanta Group with Avian We.

Not for Profit

- Building Tomorrow, One Changemaker At A Time — Salaam Bombay Foundation with Concept Public Relation India
- Integrated Leaders Forum Against Trafficking (ILFAT) — Kaamonohashi Project with Chase Avian
- The Undekha Eye Test Campaign (Unseen Eye Test) — Eyebetes Foundation and Godrej Consumer Products with Cumulus PR
- Tray It Right - A Traveler's Quest for Airport Hygiene — Anand Nichani with Concept Public Relations India
- Wadhvani AI: India's Scalable Model of AI for Public Good — Wadhvani Institute for Artificial Intelligence with The Mavericks India

Public Sector/Government

- D-KYC: Don't Know Your Customer — Digi Yatra with Value 360 Communications
- Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP) - Accelerating India's Clean Energy Transition with a Human-Centric Approach — Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP) with On Purpose
- International Conference on Green Hydrogen — Ministry of New & RENEwable Energy with Avian We.
- Karnataka For India: Positioning it as the investment destination for the country — Invest Karnataka with Avian We.
- Nothing is truly lost, until it's forgotten — SPAG - A FINN Partners Company

Startup Communications

- Agnibaan SORteD launch — Agnikul Cosmos with 80dB Communications
- Serving for the Girls - Transforming lives in Assam's Remote Villages Through Sport — Mobile Premier League (MPL)
- Sextember by Bold Care — Bold Care with Value 360 Communications



SABRE Awards South Asia 2025 Finalists

Technology

- AI for All: Realigning Perception, Reclaiming Recognition — Lenovo India with Zeno Group
- D-KYC: Don't Know Your Customer — Digi Yatra with Value 360 Communications
- From Pixels to Principles: Adobe's Ethical AI Journey — Adobe with Ruder Finn
- How PR enabled Cisco's hardware to software pivot in India — Cisco with Archetype India
- Swiggy IPO Delivered...From ringing door bells to ringing the NSE bell — Swiggy Limited with Adfactors PR

Travel & Leisure

- Airbnb introduces Janhvi Kapoor as India's 'Icon' — Airbnb
- Flight Plan: India to the World — Powered by People, Connected by AirAsia — Air Asia with AdfactorsPR
- From Trips to Trends: Decoding India's Travel Stories — MakeMyTrip with AVIAN We.
- Great India Drive: Unveil The Unseen - India Unchartered! — Hyundai Motor India with First Partners
- The BIAL Experience I Terminal 2, BLR Airport — Bangalore International Airport - BIAL with Avian We.



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