

PRESS INFORMATION NOTE

Indian Public Relations Market to reach ₹4,500 crore by 2030: PRCAI SPRINT 2026

- Indian Public Relation industry grew 11% in FY26 to reach ₹3,230 crore; accounting for 12.6% of the Asia-Pacific market.
- Government's share of top client categories has nearly tripled, from 4% in 2022 to 11% in 2026, even as private corporates slip and start-ups surge nearly 4X, marking fundamental shifts in who is buying Public Relations in India
- Reputation now drives real business outcomes; 96% credit PR with building investor confidence, an equal 96% with customer loyalty, and 83% with crisis resilience
- AI investment has more than tripled in three years, from 2% to 7% of revenues, yet giants to mid-sized to emerging firms are placing entirely different strategic bets

New Delhi, Thursday, July 02, 2026: The Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) today unveiled its **SPRINT 2026** report, marking a decisive shift in how the Public Relations industry sees itself maturing in a new era dominated by AI. The Indian PR industry grew 11% in FY26 to reach ₹3,230 crore, accounting for 12.6% of the Asia-Pacific market and it's expected to reach ₹4500 crore by 2030. The moderation from a decade-long CAGR of 12% signals a maturing industry, one where *who* is buying and *why* now matter more than headline growth.

The most striking shift is that Government's share of top client categories has nearly tripled since 2022 to 2026, from 4% to 11%, even as private corporates that long the industry's mainstay, slipped from 48% to 42% over the same period. Start-ups have nearly quadrupled their share, from 6% to 22% over the same period. Overall, start-ups, education and ed-tech, Government and FMCG are the strongest sectoral gainers.

The role of Public Relations is also becoming increasingly strategic and central to organizations. 46% of communicators now say Public Relations plays a direct role in driving business outcomes, and more than 40% report that CEOs are actively seeking external strategic counsel from their communications advisors.

"PRCAI **SPRINT 2026** reveals that there is no longer a single story defining the Indian PR industry. There are several, and they are diverging rapidly. As expectations from communications continue to evolve, the profession must sharpen its strategic capabilities, adopt emerging technologies responsibly, and reinforce its role as a trusted business partner. The findings of SPRINT reflect this shift with remarkable clarity. What emerges most distinctly is that the profession is not facing a single challenge. Rather, it is undergoing a broader transformation that touches skills, structures, and self-perception alike," said **Kunal Kishore, President, PRCAI**.

The survey is conducted by *Ipsos*, a global market research and advisory company and PRCAI in collaboration with *Astrum Reputation Advisory*, India's first research-based strategic communications consulting firm for narrative and storytelling, capturing insights from 143 respondents, covering senior decision-makers from consultancies and corporate communication teams, and mid to senior level industry professionals.

The report's findings suggest key shifts underway in the PR industry: reputation is now valued as a driver of business rather than a value add; AI is fragmenting into divergent strategies rather than a single playbook; the rules of brand discovery are being rewritten by Large Language Models (LLMs), with earned media, regional PR and influencers all growing in significance; and the profession's client base, operating model and talent are being reshaped.

Reputation Moves from Problem-Solver to Business Driver

The evidence behind reputation's business value is compelling: 96% of corporate communication respondents agree PR helps build investor confidence, an equal share credit it with customer loyalty, 92% believe it aids strong stakeholder relations, 83% say it increases crisis resilience, and 75% concur it drives long-term revenues. As the boundary between PR and broader marketing dissolves, PR's share of marketing budgets has risen from 12% in FY25 to 14% in FY26, with 58% saying PR's role is expanding into marketing-performance outcomes and 53% saying it is gaining share from ad and digital agencies.

Same AI, Different Plays: PR Firms of Different Sizes Are Making Entirely Different Bets

Across ten distinct functions where AI is now deployed in Indian PR, research and intelligence gathering leads at 77%, ahead of written content creation (73%), note-taking and meeting summarisation (66%), and visual content, ideation and content versioning (55% each).

The deeper story is in how differently firms invest: 90% of mid-sized firms name training and upskilling their top AI priority; 78% of emerging firms prioritise AI-enhanced creative tools and 65% third-party platforms like ChatGPT, Gemini and Copilot; while 68% of giant and large firms prioritise AI-driven data analytics and 73% prioritise upskilling. Overall, AI investment as a share of revenue has tripled, from 2% three years ago to 7% in 2026, and is projected to reach 10% within three years.

The industry is clear-eyed about the risks. Fake-news incidents reported by corporate communicators nearly doubled, from 28% in 2024-25 to 46% in 2025-26; 80% now flag AI-generated misinformation and deepfakes as a top reputational risk, and 61% warn AI is commoditising creativity. 85% expect AI-governance frameworks to become mandatory, not as a constraint, but as the route to resolving the transparency crisis AI itself has created. The next competitive advantage, the report suggests, lies in the disciplined integration of AI with human judgement.

Earned Media's Golden Age: LLMs, Regional Media and Influencers Rewrite the Playbook

Large Language Models have become the new gatekeepers of brand discovery: 83% agree earned media is gaining importance because LLMs prioritise credible, third-party sources over paid placements, and 70% say Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) is becoming a distinct PR strategy.

Regional India is no longer peripheral with regional PR's share of total industry revenue rising from 10% three years ago to 19% in 2026, projected to reach 25%, and 65% of corporate communicators naming Tier-2 cities as the primary growth engine.

Influencer marketing has matured into an accountability-first discipline, its revenue share doubling from 8% to 16% and projected to reach 22%, even as 98% of respondents demand greater verification and regulation of influencer content. The blurring of paid and earned is creating a parallel credibility crisis and 66% respondents agree that positioning paid content as earned is weakening audience trust.

The Measurement Paradox

Measurement remains the industry's most stubborn contradiction. 92% of corporate communicators agree the Public Relations industry needs a clear, standardised measurement system, yet only 46% of corporate communication respondents allocate a separate budget for it, a gap that continues to limit Public Relations' ability to prove its full business value.

The metrics themselves are shifting. While, share of voice remains the most widely used metric (84%), followed by social listening and sentiment analysis (57%) and engagement rates (54%), a new generation of metrics is rising fast. 50% of respondents now use brand reputation and trust scores, 41% use return on objective, and 27% use discoverability inside AI and LLM search, an early sign that whether a brand surfaces in an AI answer is becoming a measurable PR outcome.

When asked what PRCAI should build next, 83% of consultancy heads and 75% of corporate communicators put measurement standards at the top of the list.

The Uni-Skilled PR Professional Is Obsolete; Right Sizing Teams is key

As client mandates broaden, the single-skill professional is being left behind. 77% of respondents agree being 'uni-skilled' is no longer sufficient for a PR professional.

53% of PR consultancy and HR heads, and 75% of corporate communicators, now actively prefer lean, dedicated teams aligned to their business needs, a step towards right-sizing and building talented and flatter team structures to balance sound strategy with exemplary execution.

Overall industry attrition stands at 15.2%, a marginal improvement from 16% two years ago, though 63% of consultancy and HR heads report rising difficulty retaining entry and mid-level talent.

"The Public Relations industry in India is at an inflection point. While the sector delivered double-digit growth of 11% in FY2026, the moderation from its decade-long CAGR of 12% reflects a maturing industry, in line with global trends. The findings of PRCAI SPRINT 2026 highlight the growing role of PR as a strategic business enabler rather than just a communications or crisis management function. Nearly half of respondents believe PR directly drives business outcomes, while over 40% say CEOs are increasingly seeking strategic counsel from communications advisors. As AI reshapes the industry and trust becomes more critical than ever, PRCAI remains committed to advancing the profession through research, upskilling, and higher industry standards," concluded **Deeptie Sethi, CEO, PRCAI**.

Editor Notes:

About PRCAI: Founded in 2001, the Public Relations Consultants Association of India (PRCAI) is Indian PR industry's flagship trade association and the members share a common goal to instil best practices for the greater progression of the PR industry in India and around the world. Over the years, through consistent efforts and a wide-ranging engagement approach for 150 plus member firms and practitioners, we have led the communications industry and also reiterated and showcased the Indian PR industry's strengths to global audiences. In line with this, PRCAI in association with globally renowned Holmes Report brings SABRE Awards which is the world's largest PR awards program, recognizing superior achievement in branding and reputation across South Asia, North America, EMEA, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. Visit <https://prcai.org/> to know more.

2026 SPRINT Methodology: The survey captures insights from senior decision-makers in the Indian PR industry, including PR consultancy heads, corporate communication leaders, HR and finance heads, and entry, mid and senior level PR professionals. The study was conducted by Ipsos, a leading global research agency. The results combine primary research, qualitative, and quantitative with secondary data analysis.

About Ipsos: Ipsos is one of the largest market research and polling companies globally, operating in 90 markets and employing over 20,000 people. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos has been listed on Euronext Paris since 1999. Visit www.ipsos.com to know more.

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