



PRCA

DIGITAL PR AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT 2022

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INTRODUCTION

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Once again, the world of digital marketing and PR has seen a shake-up, which comes through powerfully in our latest Digital PR Report.

The Covid-19 pandemic up-turned marketing and comms teams overnight. Digital channels were clearly the winners with brands jostling to make the most of consumers stuck at home and, frequently, glued to their digital screens.

So, it's unsurprising to see in-house and agency teams substantially increase their budgets and time delivering digital activities.

Elsewhere in the report, trends that accelerated during the height of the pandemic have now steadied. The focus on social media platforms, like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, have reduced, if not, levelled. Only TikTok has seen a sharp 31% rise in usage amongst agency respondents.

2022 promises to be a year of consolidation after so much turmoil. But this report will leave readers with no doubt as to the direction we're travelling.

METHODOLOGY

3Gem partnered with PRCA to survey 146 agency and in-house PR professionals across business services, finance and banking, technology and telecoms, charities and NGOs, Government, and other sectors.

In-house respondents include Directors of Marketing/Comms, Heads of Marketing/Comms, Head of Press/PR.

Agency respondents include CEOs, MDs, Partners, and Directors.

The findings in this report were collected in June 2022.

ATTITUDES and RESPONSIBILITIES

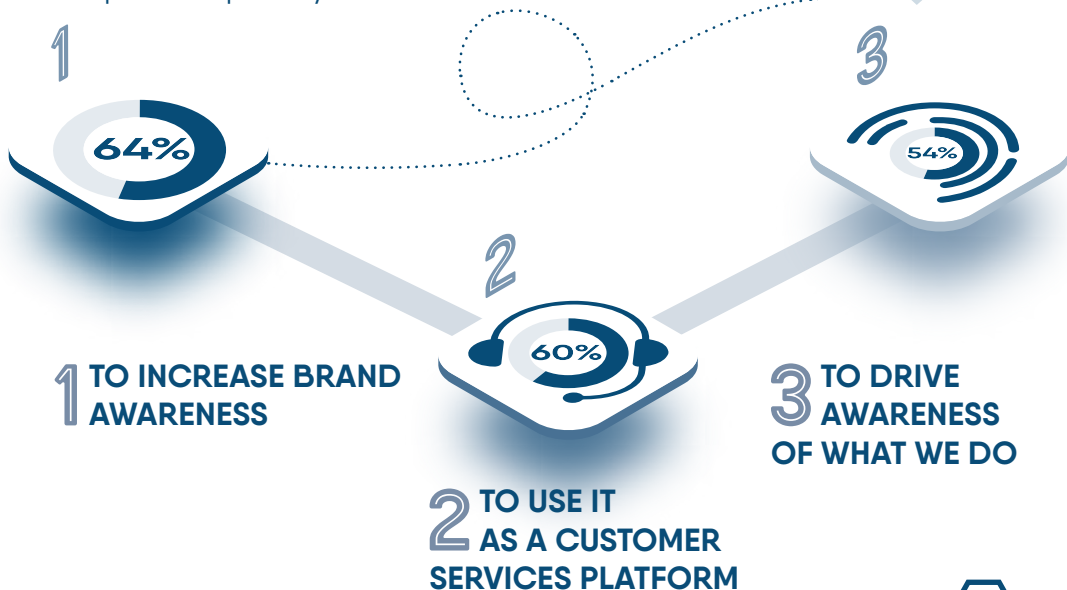


REASONS FOR BRANDS GOING SOCIAL

Survey respondents said increasing brand awareness (64%), using social media as customer service platform (60%), and driving awareness of what they do (54%) were the main reasons for establishing a brand's presence on social media.

There has been a notable shift in how digital and social media responsibilities are distributed inside organisations. PR and communications teams continue to be the dominant department running social media and digital accounts (32%); however, this is down considerably from 49% in 2020.

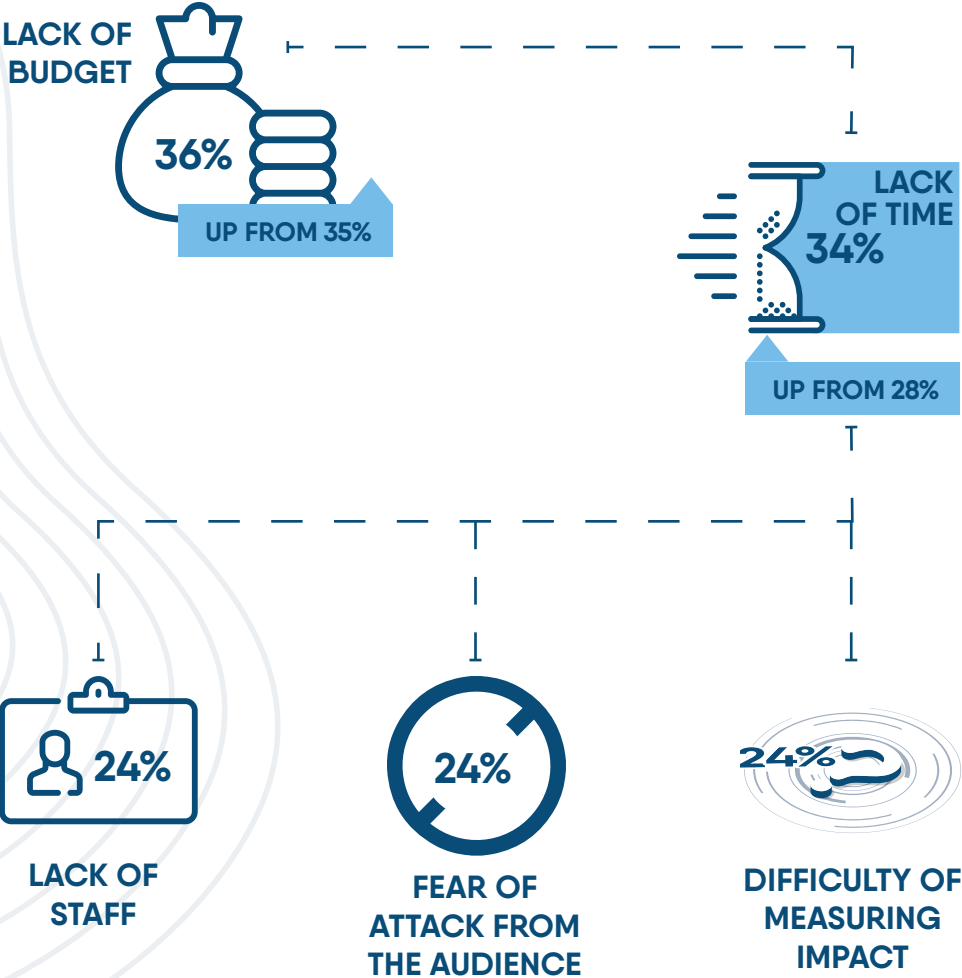
The PR and communications department is again taking a clear lead on digital and social media activities. Although down from 49% in 2020, 32% of respondents said that their PR and communications department is responsible for digital and social media content. This is followed by a dedicated social media team (24%) and marketing departments (22%), both of which have seen increases of three and nine percent respectively.



REASONS FOR NOT USING DIGITAL/SOCIAL MEDIA MORE OFTEN

When brands were asked why they did not use digital or social media more often, the most common responses were lack of budget (36%) and lack of time (34%).

Interestingly, the main barriers to increased social media use seem to stem back to the lack of resources.



IN-HOUSE BUDGETS

MAIN AREAS OF DIGITAL SPEND

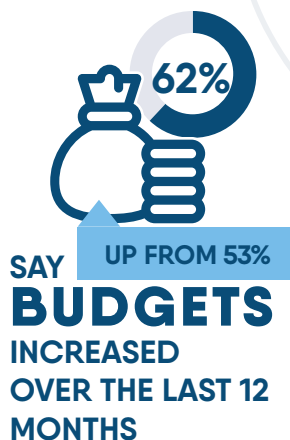
Digital and social media spend has increased significantly since 2020. 62% of respondents said their budgets had increased over the last 12 months, which is up from 53% in the previous iteration. 28% said their budgets had stayed the same and only 2% said their budgets had decreased, which is down from 9.2% in 2020.

Brands were equally upbeat about future budgets.

48% said they expected their budgets to increase in the next 12 months, and 38% said they expected their budgets to stay the same. Whereas, only 4% said they expected a decrease in budget.

Content creation has risen to the top of what brands are spending their digital and social media budgets on (54%), followed by paid social media activity (50%) and online advertising (46%).

Web design and build has declined from 48% in 2020 to 34%



CONTENT CREATION

HAS RISEN TO THE TOP FOR SOCIAL AND DIGITAL SPEND



PAID SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

50%
DOWN FROM 56%

Although brands are still less likely to budget for voice search/apps (8%), chatbots (12%), and digital crisis management (14%), there has been an uptick in this space.

In fact, the use of chatbots and AI have increased by 5% and 12% respectively.



**DIGITAL CRISIS
MANAGEMENT**

UP FROM 2%



CHATBOTS

UP FROM 7%



**VOICE/
SEARCH
APPS**



PR AND COMMUNICATIONS AGENCIES and HOW THEY ARE BEING USED

The most common services that agencies provide for clients has seen wholesale changes. The top three services are now content creation (71%), online media outreach/relations (69%) and social influencer outreach/engagement (66%). Although it is still in the top-three, online media outreach/relations has seen a decline of 14% since 2020. Both social network strategy (64%) and online press release distribution (63%) have also experienced a decrease, down 13% respectively since 2020.

CONTENT CREATION

71%

DOWN FROM 85%

ONLINE MEDIA OUTREACH

69%

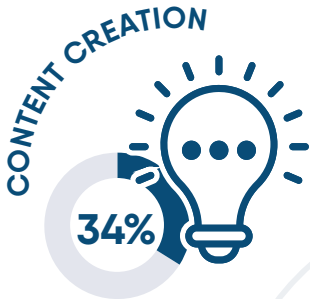
SOCIAL INFLUENCER ENGAGEMENT

66%



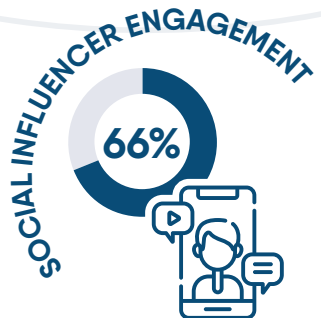
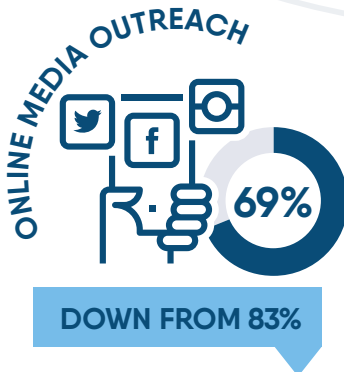
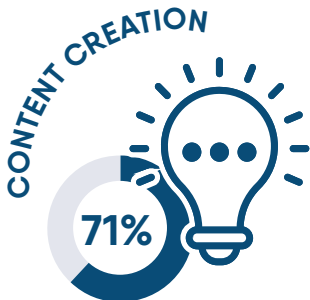
CLIENT EXPECTATIONS

Agencies are expected to deliver the following services for clients: content creation (34%), online reputation management (28%), monitoring and listening to customers (26%), and blogger outreach/engagement (26%).



MAIN DIGITAL SERVICE OFFERINGS FROM AGENCIES

The leading services that agencies are offering their clients are content creation (71%), online media outreach/relations (69%) – which is down from 83% in 2020 – and social influencer outreach/engagement (66%). Social network strategy (64%) has decreased by 13% since 2020, however, it remained the most common response (62%) when respondents were asked which services would be most sought-after by clients in five years.



MOST USED PLATFORMS

IN-HOUSE

The most used social media platforms amongst in-house brands are Twitter (72%), LinkedIn (60%), Facebook (58%), Instagram (54%), and YouTube (54%).

Twitter remains the most popular platform for in-house brands.



TWITTER
72%

DOWN FROM 88%



LINKEDIN
60%

DOWN FROM 86%



FACEBOOK
58%

DOWN FROM 79%

YOUTUBE
54%



DOWN FROM 75%



INSTAGRAM
54%

DOWN FROM 70%



AGENCIES

The most substantial difference between the choice of social media platforms for in-house brands and agencies is the utilisation of LinkedIn.

82% of agency based respondents said that they use LinkedIn, whereas for in-house brands, respondents only selected it 60% of the time.

LinkedIn is followed by Twitter (81%), Facebook (80%), Instagram (76%) and YouTube (60%).

Interestingly, TikTok is tipped to emerge as a major platform of choice. When asked which platforms they expected to use in the next 12 months, respondents selected TikTok 73% of the time, as opposed to 42% of the time in 2020.



TIKTOK
73%

UP FROM 42%

**HIGHEST GROWTH
IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS**



LINKEDIN
82%

DOWN FROM 86%



TWITTER
81%

DOWN FROM 88%



FACEBOOK
80%

UP FROM 79%



INSTAGRAM
76%

UP FROM 73%

YOUTUBE
60%



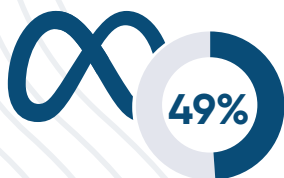
EDUCATION and INSIGHT

DEMAND FOR SUPPORT ON ALTERNATIVE FRONTS

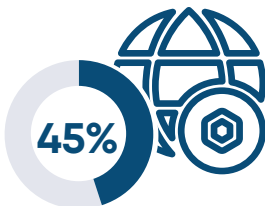
When asked about different areas that their organisations may support clients with, respondents stated that they would be likely to support with the Metaverse (49%), Web3 (45%), and NFTs (42%).

Respondents (48%) also stated that it is unlikely that their organisation would need to support with cryptocurrency.

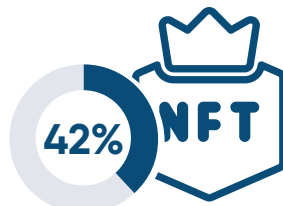
Nonetheless, this highlights a move towards different avenues and the need for sufficient training in these fields.



ORGANISATIONS
WANT TO SUPPORT
CLIENTS WITH THE
METAVERSE



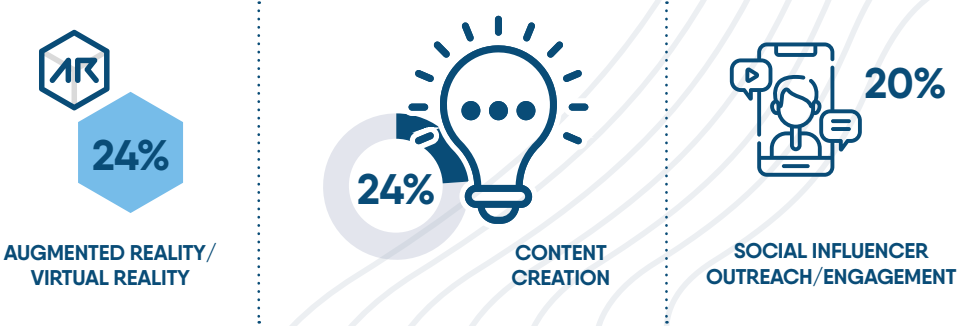
ORGANISATIONS
WANT TO SUPPORT
CLIENTS WITH WEB3



ORGANISATIONS
WANT TO SUPPORT
CLIENTS WITH NFT

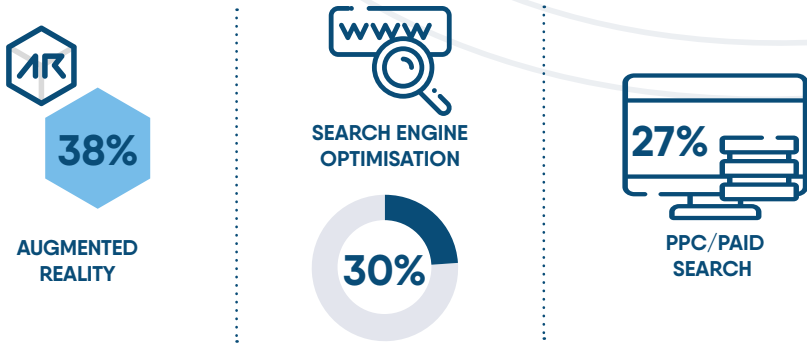
NEED FOR MORE EDUCATION/INSIGHT – IN-HOUSE

When asked which areas in-house respondents believed they needed more education on, they said Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (24%), content creation (24%) and social influencer outreach/engagement (20%).



NEED FOR MORE EDUCATION/INSIGHT – AGENCIES

When asked which areas agency respondents believed they needed more education on, they said Augmented Reality (38%), Search Engine Optimisation/SEO (30%) and PPC/paid search (27%).



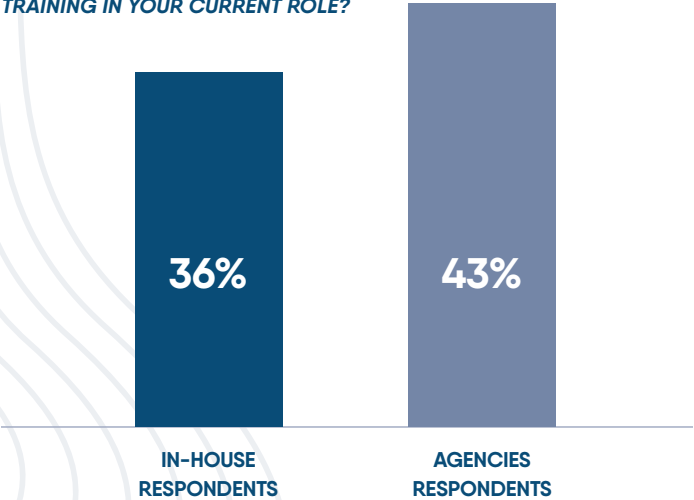
CONCLUSION

Practitioners are increasingly providing digital and social media services, but a lack of training is holding back the industry from realising its full potential. This is reinforced by 36% of in-house respondents and 43% of agency respondents believing they had not received enough digital/social media training in their current role.

The PR profession has the opportunity to provide professional advisory services on emerging technology, such as AR and VR. However, the barriers to achieve this are the same – education.

PROFESSIONALS WHO ANSWERED **NO**
TO THE QUESTION:

*DO YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE RECEIVED
ENOUGH DIGITAL/SOCIAL MEDIA
TRAINING IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE?*



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Not
impulse

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