

The PR Agency Insights Survey

(India Edition - 2025)

Curated By



PRPOI
PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS
OF INDIA

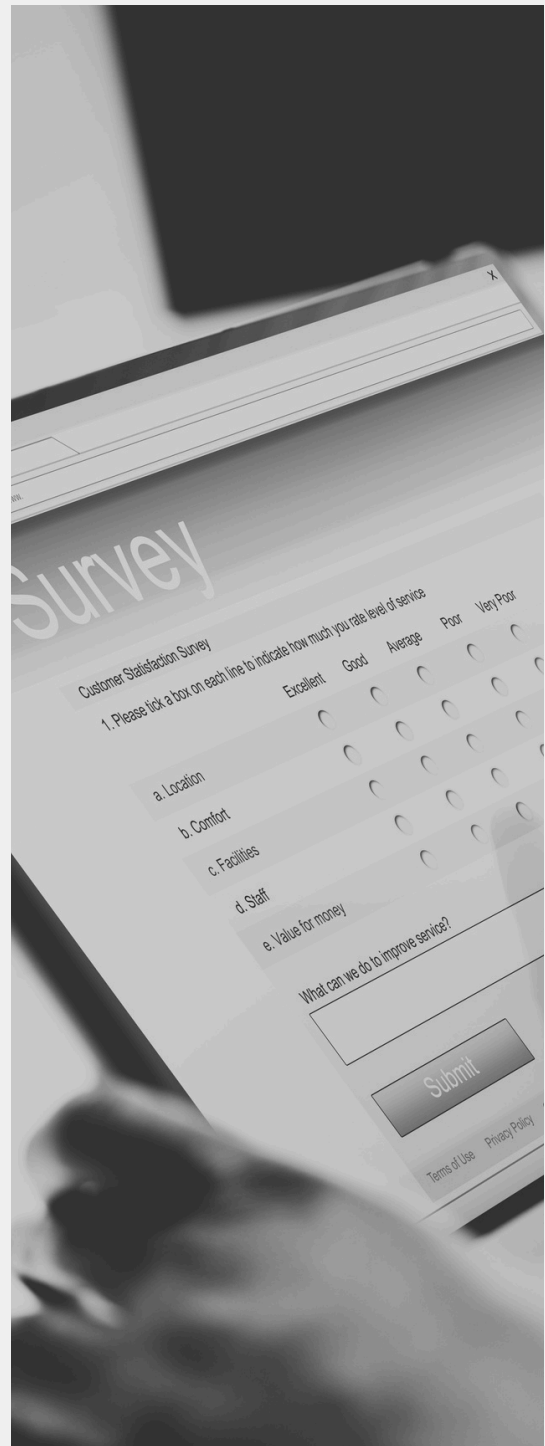
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Foreword

The PR Agency Insights Survey (India Edition), conducted by the *PR and Comms Collaborative (PRCC)* and the *Public Relations Professionals of India (PRPOI)*, represents a pioneering effort to examine the changing landscape of the PR agency sector in India. This inaugural edition moves beyond conventional metrics, examining the impact of AI, individual career aspirations, and the challenges faced by professionals in a rapidly changing industry. It stands as a testament to the power of community-driven initiatives, and marks a significant milestone as one of the first projects of its kind in the country. This survey puts people first, recognizing that the industry is built and driven by its professionals.

This survey was born from a shared vision to provide PR professionals and agency leaders with a comprehensive understanding of their industry and to empower them with insights that can guide their future. It reflects the community's collective commitment to fostering growth and innovation.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Tarunjeet Rattan, whose early support and collaboration were pivotal in making this survey possible. Her unwavering belief in the project brought it to life.

Special thanks to Nanda Padmanabhan, who played a crucial role in analyzing the survey data and deriving insights that will help shape the future of the PR industry.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the PR WhatsApp Groups—*IPRF*, *Media Connect*, *OneSource*, and *PRangers*—and their admins, whose support and facilitation ensured robust participation and the survey's successful execution.

As you explore this report, we hope it provides valuable insights into the current state of the PR industry, the role of AI, and the aspirations of professionals. This survey is a testament to the strength of our community, and we are excited to see its positive impact on the future of PR in India.

Shashank Bharadwaj

The Team

Tarunjeet Rattan

Founder – PRPOI & Managing Partner – Nucleus PR

With over two decades of experience in communication, Tarunjeet has honed her expertise at leading PR agencies and corporates before establishing a much sought after PR boutique firm that advises brands on the strategic use of PR. She now channels her efforts to amplify the PR community's voice by building PRPOI—a vibrant network of 13,000 professionals dedicated to industry-wide upskilling.

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Shashank Bharadwaj

Creator – PRCC & Managing Partner – WebX Integrated Marketing Solutions

Shashank, a seasoned Integrated Brand Communications specialist, has worked across diverse sectors & industries. Proficient in Public Relations, Corporate Communications, Digital Marketing, CXO Branding and Community building, he's been recognized as a PR Moment 30U30 Winner and acknowledged as 40 Young Turks by Reputation Today Magazine.

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Nanda Padmanabhan

Head – Corporate Communications, BankBazaar

Nanda is a versatile communications leader with two decades of experience in Integrated Communications. Her areas of specialization include Communications Strategy, Crisis Communications, and BFSI Public Policy and Thought Leadership. She also has a strong editorial background in developing and editing books, and in mentoring budding journalists, authors, and technology evangelists

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Community Collaborators



One Source



Indian PR Forum



Media Connect



PRangers

Survey Methodology

Led by the PR & Comms Collaborative and supported by PRPOI, this survey brought together vibrant communities to establish comprehensive industry insights. The PR Agency Insights Survey (India Edition) aimed to capture data on compensation, workload, job satisfaction, AI integration, and career progression within the PR agency sector.

Target Audience:

PR professionals across India, working in agencies of varying sizes—from boutique firms to large agencies—including freelancers.

Data Collection:

The survey, comprising 25 questions – both qualitative and quantitative, was circulated among members of six prominent communities: IPRF, Media Connect, One Source, PR & Comms Collaborative, PRangers, and PRPOI that brought in a pool of 50,00+ members in the community with overlaps.

It was distributed via professional networks, social media platforms, and direct outreach, ensuring a diverse participant pool.

Survey Participation:

This inaugural edition surveyed 200 participants from a potential pool of over 50,000+ community members. While acknowledging the modest sample size, the focus has been on sharing broader insights for this initial release. As more voices participate in future editions, the survey aims to explore deeper industry challenges, fostering meaningful discussions and collaborative problem-solving within these communities.

Confidentiality:

All responses were collected anonymously, with data aggregated to ensure participant privacy and maintain unbiased insights.

Insights

PR Industry

Income

44

% of people in this salary bucket (higher compensations of Rs.25L or more) prefer staying on in an agency compared to 22% who considered moving to an in-house role.

Satisfaction

12

% are fully satisfied with their salaries and only 16% are satisfied with their jobs. Regardless, one out of three professionals see a future in the agency and intend to continue.

90

% of people looking to move to in-house roles are highly dissatisfied with their compensation or their jobs.



Only 12% are fully satisfied with their salaries and only 16% are satisfied with their jobs. Regardless, one out of three professionals see a future in the agency and intend to continue.

However, the largest chunk of people (38.5%) are looking to transition to an in-house role. Almost 90% of people looking to move to in-house roles are highly dissatisfied with their compensation or their jobs. Two out of three people aren't happy with both.

Interestingly, folks with higher compensations of Rs.25L or more are the least reluctant to stay on. Close to 44% of people in this salary bucket prefer staying on in an agency compared to 22% who considered moving to an in-house role. 90% of men with an experience of less than 3 years earn a salary of Rs.10L or lower.

16.5% are also looking to transition out of PR and Comms altogether. Almost half of these are people who have said they are highly dissatisfied with their jobs. Given only 18.5% of them are very dissatisfied with their compensation, the salaries seem to be a smaller factor compared to the overall agency experience.

From an experience perspective, senior folks with experience of 16-25 years are the ones who are most keen on an agency career (63% and 43% resp.), followed by the freshers (38%).

The 12% dip in between, where 11-35% people would prefer to leave PR and Comms altogether or somehow transition to in-house roles indicates a clear area where the agencies need to exert themselves to retain talent and help them generate value both personally and professionally.

Insights

PR Industry

Future of PR

The PR landscape stands at a critical inflection point — a reality starkly highlighted by this independent study where just 200 professionals responded from a pool of 50,000+ members. This response rate tells its own story about the industry's current state.

We're witnessing a fascinating dichotomy: emerging talent seeking flexible work models while seasoned professionals navigate the complexities of an increasingly tech-driven communication landscape. As media, technology, and communication continue their intricate dance of convergence and divergence, our profession demands reinvention.

Concerning? Absolutely.
Addressable? Without question.

Success in this new era demands perpetual evolution. The days of mastering a static skillset are behind us – adaptability and continuous learning must become our north star. The challenge of attracting and retaining talent in this dynamic field can be partly addressed through robust upskilling programs and meaningful mentorship initiatives.

The future belongs to nimble, integrated ecosystems where traditional boundaries between agencies, corporate communications, and talent blur into collaborative synergies. Our solution lies in hybrid partnership models, where agencies become true extensions of client teams while maintaining their creative independence. This isn't just adaptation – it's transformation for a future-ready industry.

Tarunjeet Rattan

Founder - PRPOI (Group Strength - 10,000+)

Founder & Managing Partner - Nucleus PR



Community is the heartbeat of our industry. In my limited experience of working in PR and communications, I've seen how meaningful relationships and trust spark collaboration and growth. For Indian PR Forum (IPRF), whether it was Yahoo Groups in its initial days or now WhatsApp and Insta Pages, it's where we share, learn, network and lift each other up. Let's nurture our community — it's the key to a stronger, more vibrant profession.

Rahul Rakesh, Senior PR Professional
IPRF Admin (Group Strength 25,000)

Insights

PR Industry

Challenges

Editorial Placements: The New PR Unicorn

Two out of three respondents highlight the growing difficulty in achieving editorial media placements, which is becoming increasingly complex in the ever-evolving media landscape.

Impact: This trend signals the need for PR professionals to adopt more creative storytelling techniques and diversify their outreach strategies, as relying solely on traditional media placements is no longer sustainable.

Clients Stuck in the PR Time Warp

Two in three respondents expresses frustration with managing client expectations, as many clients still equate PR with media coverage, rooted in outdated definitions of the field.

Impact: This disconnect emphasizes the urgency for PR agencies to educate clients on the broader scope of PR, including reputation management, digital engagement, and thought leadership, to align perceptions with modern practices.

Disconnected Teams = Disconnected Messaging

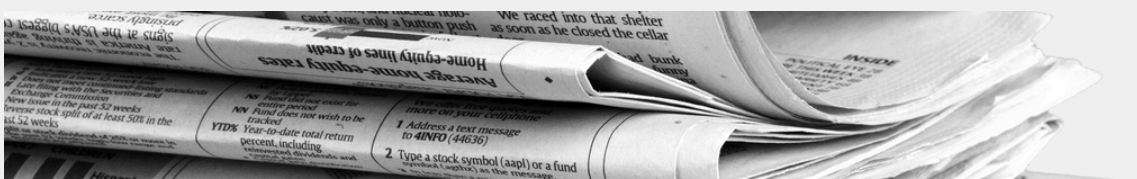
Two out of three respondents feel a lack of ownership in their roles, as they struggle to connect brand messaging to PR beyond press coverage.

Impact: This detachment highlights the critical need for agencies to foster a deeper understanding of strategic brand communication among team members, enabling them to see the bigger picture and contribute more meaningfully.

Mentorship: The Missing Chapter in PR

Creative thinking, ideation, emotional intelligence, empathy, relationship building are the most important skills for the future. More than half of the respondents (54%) rank creativity, storytelling, emotional intelligence and empathy as the key skills for the future. However, there is a clear mismatch in the people are going about acquiring them, with 41% looking at online courses to fill the gaps. That only 30% each look to workshops and industry mentorships is also an indicator of the gaps that need to be filled.

Impact: This gap underscores the necessity for the industry to invest in mentorship programs that not only nurture talent but also ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of PR as a profession.



Insights PR Industry

Future of PR

Of all the insights the PRPOI report presents, the most concerning I find is the number of people looking to either move out of the industry, or to the brand side which is a conscious jump from revenue-function to cost-function.

Across our 38,000-odd community members, the one thing I've found in common for the decade One Source has been around for, is the CEOs/Founders' gripe about talent shortage, and the team members' grouse with management's transactional I-pay-you-therefore-I-expect-you-to-do-clients'-rational/irrational-bidding approach.

A consultative approach to help our people with their financial, mental, and physical health gives them more 'Founders' Mentality' and a similar approach with our clientele helps them move beyond obsolete AVEs and a quantitative thought process, to qualitative business-outcome focused communication.

Neither is possible without a change in leadership outlook, and both are business pivots for the long haul. That, would be my actionable insight basis what I have seen of the report, and what I hope to see the needle moving on, when PRPOI presents the report for 2025.

Sandeep Rao

**Founder, One Source - the 38,000+ member community
CEO, One Source - the integrated marketing consulting firm**



Insights PR Industry

State of Affairs



64

% agency professionals work anywhere between 45 to 55 hours a week and handle 2-6 clients (68%) as per our data.

Average pitches per client per month

6

The average number of clients handled by an account executive on one end of the spectrum is 3.5 and at the Director / CEO level it at an average of 16.

India's PR industry is grappling with an imbalance—professionals work 45–55 hours weekly across multiple clients, yet satisfaction levels for both agencies and clients remain low, highlighting inefficiencies in output versus expectations. To thrive, the industry must recalibrate workloads, redefine success beyond media coverage, and invest in structured mentorship and experiential learning to drive sustainable growth and deeper value.



66%

of the respondents indicate that media relations and unrealistic client expectations still end up being the biggest challenges for agencies.

Creative thinking, ideation, emotional intelligence, empathy, relationship building are the most important skills for the future.

However, there is a clear mismatch in the people are going about acquiring them, with 41% looking at online courses to fill the gaps.

That only 30% each look to workshops and industry mentorships is also an indicator of the gaps that need to be filled.

Insights PR Industry

Future of PR

The two salary surveys, the first for corporate communications roles and this one for agency roles, unsurprisingly unveil a similar picture. Both suggest that compensation structures seem unfair and favour a few rather than the many and that the gender pay gap is real — a clear indicator that there's an urgent need to compensation structures.

Expectation mismatch is rife. There is a strong sense of not being adequately recognized. There's dissonance in how the successes and failures of the roles and the function itself is measured and evaluated. There is also uncertainty regarding the future and what it brings for us professionally as communicators.

I believe this is the time to go back to the basics as a community and focus on the skills that have made PR into the valuable profession it is. The heart of PR has been the ability to build meaningful connections and relationships and tell stories that need to be told and heard. This is the time to invest in innovation and creativity; in learning and mentorship; in diversifying skillsets and polishing powerful storytelling; and, as always, in building relationships across the board. As we welcome a new generation of PR professionals, we need to be ready to step up and take on the roles of mentors and lead by example.

Nanda Padmanabhan

Head - Corporate Communications, BankBazaar



Public Relations is a dynamic industry where trends shift rapidly, demanding adaptability and strategic foresight. To thrive, professionals must be proactive, continuously upskilling under the guidance of mentors who bridge the gap between raw talent and industry mastery. Mentorship an essential element of this bridge. Without structured guidance, many struggle with skill gaps, industry pressures, and evolving expectations. This challenge isn't exclusive to newcomers; even veterans must stay ahead of emerging trends and tools. The next generation of the workforce needs to be given this edge to not just move ahead in the industry but also create a strong reason to stay.

Shailesh K. Nevatia, Founder Director, Grandeavour Communication
Founder - Media Connect (Group Strength - 5000)



Insights PR Industry

Tech in PR

98

% people use AI one way or the other. This includes brainstorming and ideation for generating story pitches, campaign ideas, etc., and for research, in addition to content creation.

Roughly 74% of respondents have content responsibilities. Of these 80% use AI for content creation. Roughly half of those without content responsibilities depend on AI for content needs. Despite this, 67% fear the eroding creativity and 73% lack of human touch.

While it is true that GenAI has been able to reduce the burden of content creation, the writing is on the wall. Professionals themselves are not sure of the long-term implications of GenAI on not just their own ability to ideate and create compelling stories but also on quality and relevance. In a sector dominated by engagement, GenAI may be able to tell you what the top stories are, but professionals still believe they are needed if the story has to be told right.

Not surprisingly, more than half of the respondents (54%) rank creativity, storytelling, emotional intelligence and empathy as the key skills for the future. Interestingly, the importance of creativity also increases as you move up the hierarchy.

Data analytics ranks low on peoples' radar unless they are Partners or CEOs.

State of Affairs

Professionals with over 15 years in agency roles often remain in the field due to familiarity with agency life and lingering self-doubt about their ability to excel in corporate environments.

Over time, the routine nature of client management, coupled with the difficulty of upskilling at senior levels, contributes to a sense of stagnation.

Many mid-career professionals (aged 30–40) have pivoted to diverse fields like program management, product management, policymaking, or even entrepreneurial ventures such as starting a boutique — often unrelated to PR.

This shift is frequently driven by dissatisfaction with pay, work pressure, and uncertainty about the long-term demand for PR and communications roles.

Key Insight: The agency model must evolve to address career stagnation and proactively offer pathways for growth and diversification, or risk losing talent to more adaptable and future-oriented industries.



Insights

PR Industry

Community



72.5

% of PR agency professionals surveyed are not part of any official industry body, indicating a lack of collective representation and engagement in professional networks.

The top indicators pointed at limited awareness, accessibility issues, or a perceived lack of value. As industry bodies offer networking, learning, and advocacy benefits, this gap suggests missed opportunities for professional growth and sector-wide collaboration.

Insights

PR Industry

Future of PR

The PR industry has always celebrated resilience, but the new generation of professionals is redefining what that truly means. It's no longer about enduring long hours at the cost of personal well-being—it's about working smarter, setting boundaries, and ensuring that creativity and strategy don't suffer due to exhaustion.

The industry's greatest asset has always been its people. If we don't prioritize balance, we risk losing top talent not just to burnout but to industries that offer a healthier, more sustainable way to thrive. The future of PR depends on workplaces that respect both ambition and well-being.

Priyankita Praharaj

Co-founder- PRangers (Group Strength 3000)
Communications Manager- APAC, AVNET



The future of PR depends on empowering young professionals with the freedom to experiment. While PR operates within boundaries, agencies must encourage innovation and calculated risks to stay competitive. A culture that embraces fresh ideas will drive relevance and long-term success.

Compensation must also evolve. Beyond salaries and bonuses, agencies should introduce profit-sharing or equity-based incentives. When employees have a stake in the business, they develop stronger commitment, reducing attrition and enhancing overall performance.

Additionally, agencies should focus on wealth distribution rather than wealth concentration. Unequal financial rewards push professionals toward independent consultancies, leading to industry fragmentation that weakens retainers and stability. Instead, agencies must foster an intrapreneurial mindset—allowing employees to take ownership, innovate, and grow within the organization.

By championing experimentation, equitable profit models, and internal entrepreneurship, agencies can build a sustainable, thriving industry that attracts and retains top talent.

Shashank Bharadwaj - Managing Partner, WebX Integrated Marketing Solutions; Creator - PR and Comms Collaborative (PRCC) - Group Strength - 400

Insights

PR Industry

D i s c l a i m e r :

The number of members in the WhatsApp group includes professionals from across the broader PR ecosystem, including media, advertising, events, and other related industries. Therefore, this number should not be considered a direct representation of the PR industry's size. The findings in this report are based on the responses received from PR agency professionals who are part of those groups.

Insights

PR Industry

Thank You

We meet again in 2026