

Key findings from Africa's first PR and communications report

By [Ané-Sonet Bresler](#)

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The Africa PR and Communications Report 2023 represents a milestone as it is Africa's first PR and communications report of its kind. Developed by Nigeria-based agency BHM's Research Intelligence arm in collaboration with other African PR and Communications industry bodies - it's encouraging to see qualitative data like this in the market.



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Findings are based on focus group discussions, interviews, surveys, and essay contributions from over 500 industry practitioners in 29 countries across Africa.

Let's have a look at some of the areas that stood out in the report and what PR professionals should be looking out for in the industry in Africa.

Digital reigns supreme

72% of African PR professionals believe that digital communications are the most important channel for reaching their target audiences. This is up from 64% in 2021. The most popular digital communications channels in Africa are social

media, email, and websites.

Digital communications offer several advantages over traditional channels, such as printed newspapers, magazines, and television. Digital is perceived to be more cost-effective, they allow for more targeted messaging, and they provide a way to measure the impact of PR campaigns.



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The internet and mobile phones are becoming increasingly widespread in Africa and are one of the main reasons why digital communications are growing on the continent. According to the World Bank, 46% of Africans had internet access in 2021, up from 23% in 2016. And the number of mobile phone users in Africa is expected to reach 590 million by 2025.

The growing importance of digital communications has a number of implications for PR and communications professionals in Africa.

First, they need to be familiar with the different digital channels that are available and how to use them effectively. Secondly, PR professionals need to be able to measure the impact of their PR campaigns. And third, they need to be able to build relationships with journalists and bloggers who cover their industry – which brings us to the next key takeaway in the report.

Even though channels are changing to digital, relationships remain key

Despite the growing importance of digital communications, the *Africa PR and Communications Report 2023* found that strong relationships with the media are still essential for PR and communications in Africa. 84% of respondents said that having good relationships with journalists is important to their work.

The media still plays an important role in shaping public opinion in Africa. Journalists can help to amplify the reach of PR campaigns as they are often the first to break news stories. Good relationships with journalists can provide valuable insights into the media landscape and help PR professionals to develop effective strategies.



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As the media landscape continues to evolve, PR and communications professionals will need to adapt their strategies accordingly without neglecting the importance of relationships in the process.

The Importance of ESG

PR and communications professionals in Africa are also increasingly focused on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. ESG is a set of criteria that investors use to assess the sustainability and ethical impact of a project, commercial activity or investment.

A 2022 survey by the Public Relations Society of America found that 70% of PR professionals in Africa believe that ESG will become increasingly important in the years to come. The survey also found that 65% of PR professionals in Africa are already incorporating ESG into their work which is great if we consider ESG to be a global trend.

As ESG becomes more important, PR and communications professionals in Africa will need to develop expertise in this area. They will need to be able to understand ESG issues, communicate about ESG to stakeholders, and help businesses to draft and implement ESG-strategies in order to attract investment.

The *Africa PR and Communications Report* found that digital communications combined with strong relationships with the media are essential for PR and communications in Africa. The report also found that PR and communications professionals in Africa are optimistic about the future of the industry estimating that the industry will be worth \$10bn by 2025.

“The need for an exhaustive report that identifies, analyses and offers solutions to the challenges facing the PR and Communications industry in Africa with quality research and verifiable data is long overdue,” said Ayeni Adékúnlé Samuel, chairman of the APCR. I agree. This report is a valuable resource for PR and communications professionals in Africa as it provides insights into the latest trends in the industry and the challenges and opportunities that PR and communications professionals face.

We are looking forward to future renditions that will offer relevant research that we can tap into to be even better communicators.

The third annual World PR Day takes place on 16 July, this Sunday, with the theme *Harnessing The Power Of Public Relations*. Bizcommunity appreciates the hard work and dedication of PR professionals. Therefore on World PR Day, we would like to showcase you and /or your agency. Bizcommunity will be publishing World PR Day stories from Wednesday 12 July to Wednesday 19 July. Share your favourite moment, photos, campaigns, etc. as per the above with us and we will publish them in an article(s). Send to marketingnews@bizcommunity.com with the subject line: #WPRD Sharing.

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