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2026 Global State of the Press Release Report

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Executive Summary

A press release represents a piece of a brand’s story. Whether that piece marks a significant milestone in a brand’s evolution or shares news about its ongoing activities, the press release remains an effective vehicle to disseminate a brand’s story as it unfolds. The measures of success for sending a press release over a newswire may be evolving, but the one objective all brands have in common is to get their story in front of the right audience to shape perceptions and inspire action.

Over the past year, the influence of generative AI on communications has continued to grow, bringing new opportunities and considerations for how organisations create, distribute and measure the impact of their news. For this year's State of the Press Release Report, we once again surveyed communications professionals around the world to understand how they're responding to these changes, what's influencing their strategies and where they see opportunities ahead.

Looking ahead, more communicators are planning to increase their press release volume than in last year's survey, reinforcing the continued importance of press releases in their communications strategies. This growing investment also reflects an understanding that press releases have another important audience: the large language models (LLMs) that power AI-generated answers to search queries. As AI-powered search and multichannel strategies create more opportunities for organisations’ news to be discovered, the findings reinforce the enduring value of a compelling story and the growing number of ways communicators can use it to inform, engage and persuade audiences.

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Communications Planning & Strategy

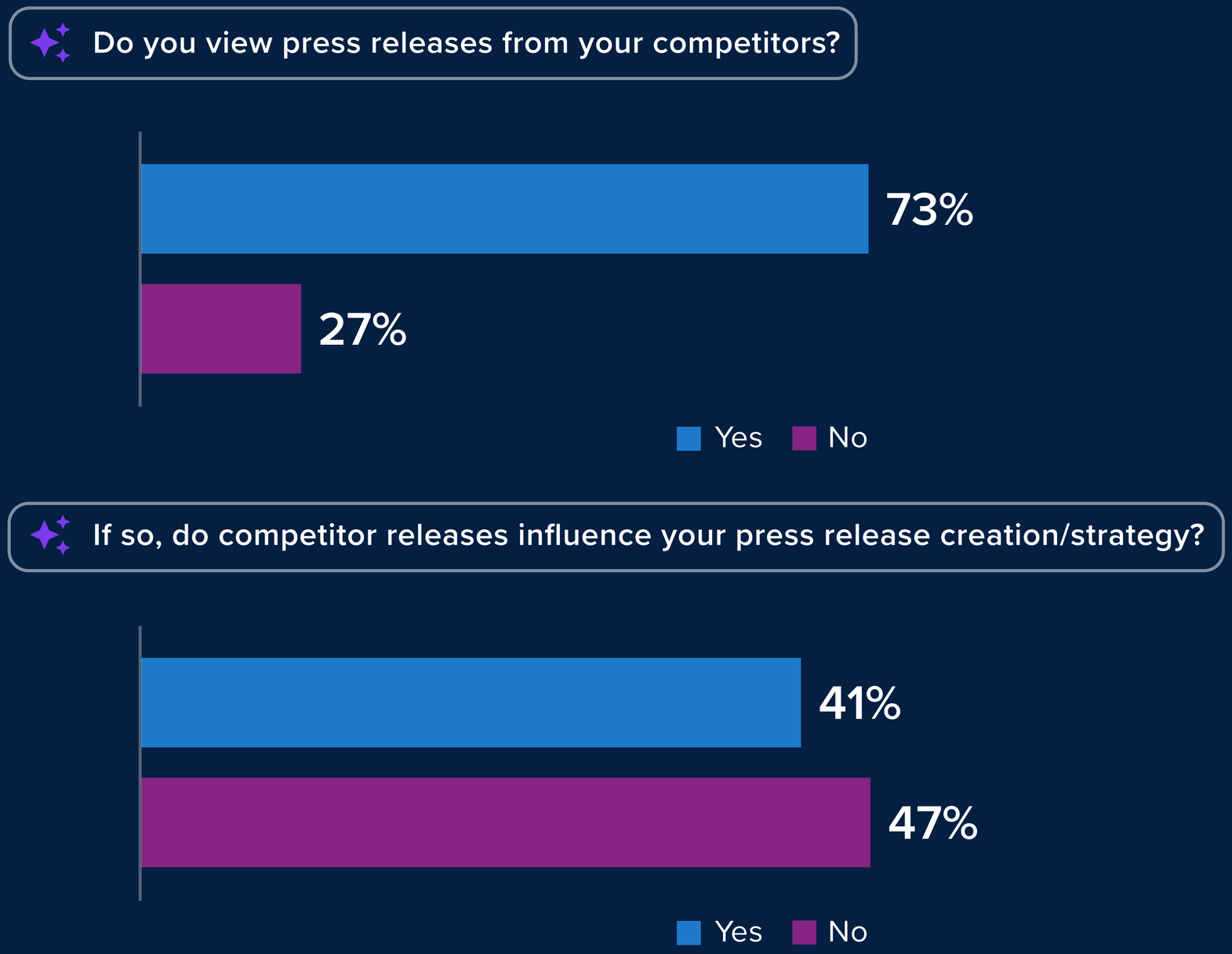
Behind every communications strategy are decisions about where to focus efforts, how to allocate resources and what to plan for next. As the communications landscape continues to evolve, organisations must balance established practices with emerging opportunities, all while making the most of their budgets.

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Keeping an Eye on the Competition

Communicators are clearly paying attention to what their competitors are announcing, but that doesn't necessarily mean they're following their lead. While 73% of respondents review competitor press releases, only 41% of those who do say the releases influence their own content or strategy.

Keeping tabs on competitors can offer valuable insight into industry trends, emerging topics and how other organisations are positioning their news. But the results imply that, for many communicators, competitor research is more about staying informed than changing course.



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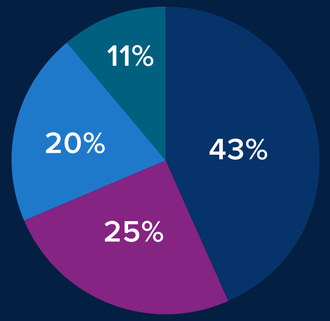
2026 Budget vs. Anticipated 2027 Budget

Communications budgets appear to be heading for a shift in 2027. Across the four regions we surveyed, fewer respondents expect budget reductions than those who reported cuts in 2026, while more expect budget increases than those who reported increases in 2026. Across all four regions, the decline in anticipated budget reductions suggests that some of the financial pressures experienced in 2026 may be easing.

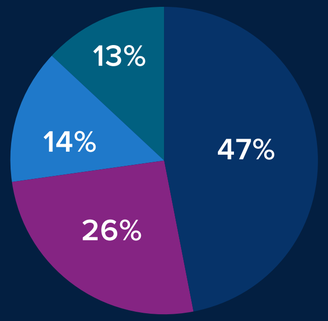
However, uncertainty is also prevalent. More respondents across every region are unsure what their 2027 budgets will look like, suggesting that while fewer communicators anticipate cuts, many organisations have yet to determine their spending plans for the coming year.

2026

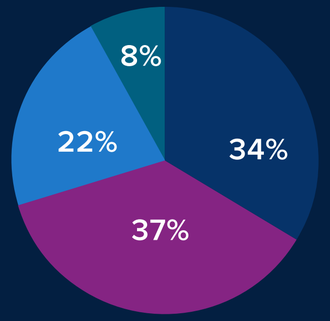
North America



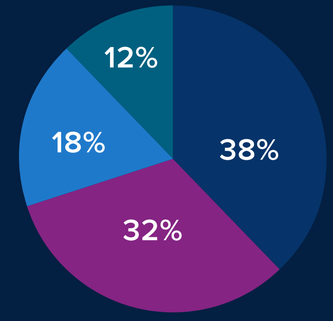
EMEIA



APAC

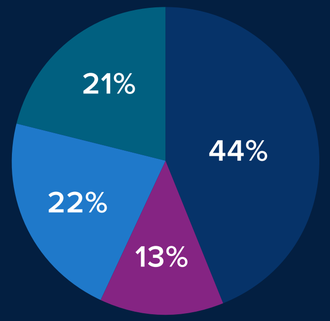


Central/South America

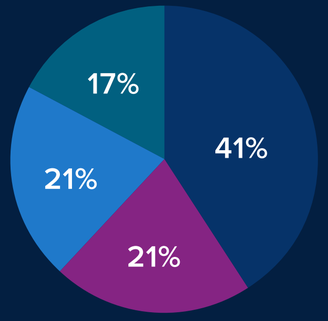


2027

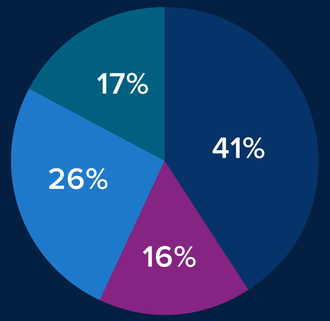
North America



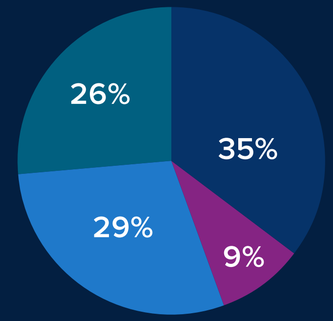
EMEIA



APAC



Central/South America



Our budget did not/will not change | We had/will have a smaller budget | We had/will have a bigger budget | Unsure

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Looking at the Year Ahead

Product and service news continues to be a major focus for communicators, with APAC showing a particularly strong increase over last year. Central and South America leads all four regions in this category, with 71% of respondents planning product or service announcements. APAC also saw growing interest in company growth and branding and marketing news.

Branding and marketing news is gaining traction in both North America and EMEIA. The increase suggests that communicators are seeing more opportunities to turn marketing initiatives into news worth distributing.

What is the focus of press releases you plan to send out in the next 12 months?

	North America	EMEIA	APAC	Central/ S.America
Product or Service News	59%	64%	68%	71%
Company Growth[1]	48%	47%	42%	56%
Branding/Marketing[2]	44%	43%	50%	68%
Events	45%	42%	43%	62%
Share Educational Content[3]	37%	41%	33%	38%
Policy/Public Interest/Political News	17%	25%	17%	18%
Financial	12%	20%	10%	15%
Employee News	14%	12%	10%	12%

1. Merger or acquisition, opening a new office, relocation, company milestone/anniversary
2. New campaign, spokesperson, rebrand, updated website, sponsorship, contest or competition
3. Thought leadership, research or survey results, tips, educational resources

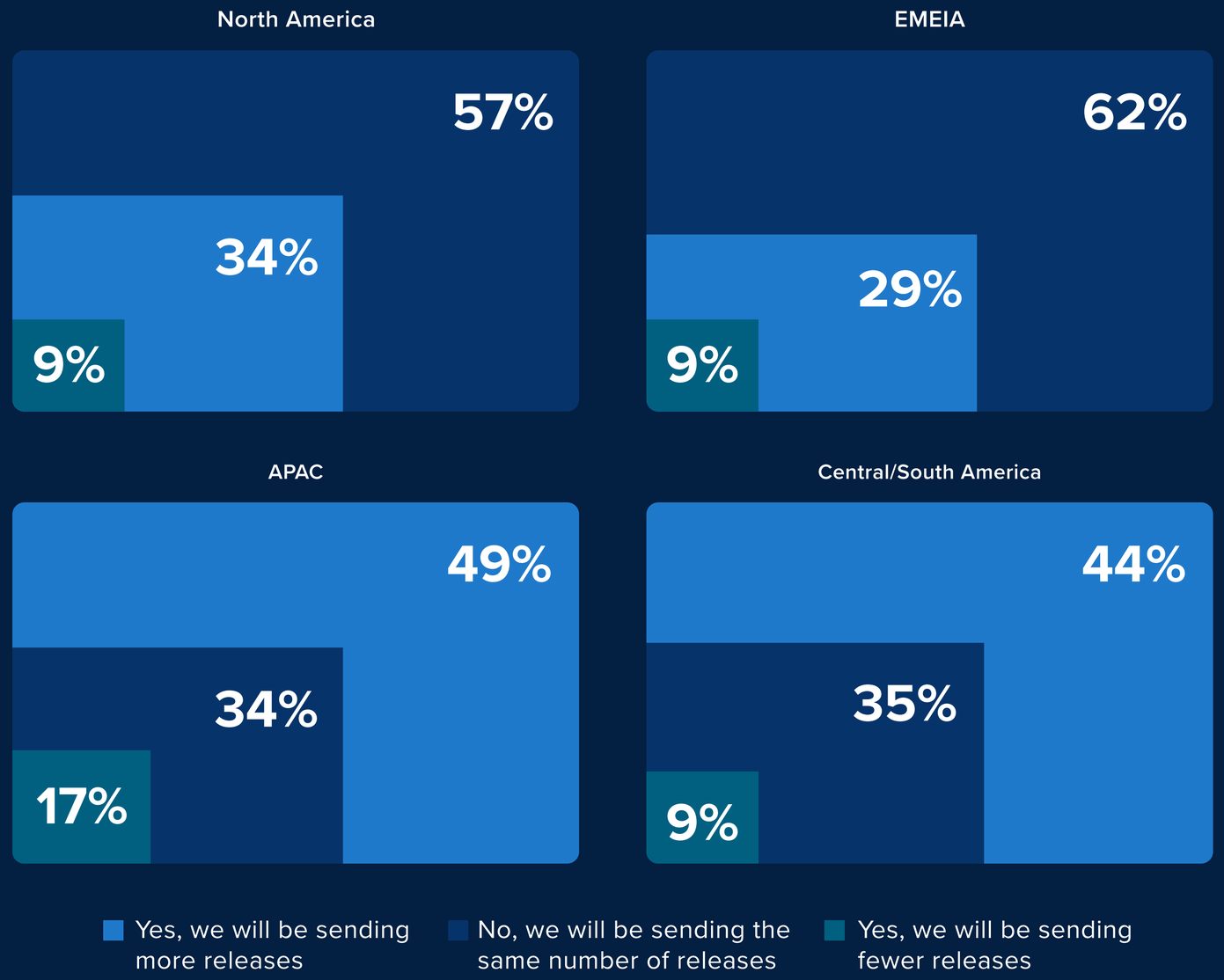
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Expected Annual Press Release Distribution Volume in 2027

The outlook for press release distribution is increasingly positive, with a greater share of communicators in North America, EMEIA and APAC planning to increase their release volume compared with last year's survey. The shift is particularly pronounced in APAC, where nearly half of respondents expect to distribute more releases in 2027, up from one-third in the previous year's report.

While most North American and EMEIA communicators still anticipate maintaining their current distribution volume, the growing percentage planning to issue more releases suggests continued confidence in the value of press releases as part of their communications strategies. APAC presents a more varied outlook, with the region also reporting the highest percentage of respondents planning to reduce their release volume.

Do you expect the volume of press releases your organisation distributes to change in the next 12 months?



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The Impact of AI-Powered Search

It has been shown that large language models (LLMs) consider press releases distributed through a major trusted newswire service, like PR Newswire, to be authoritative sources of information. As such, LLMs frequently cite news releases when they provide answers to queries. Communications professionals have begun to take this into consideration when constructing releases to attract LLM visibility.

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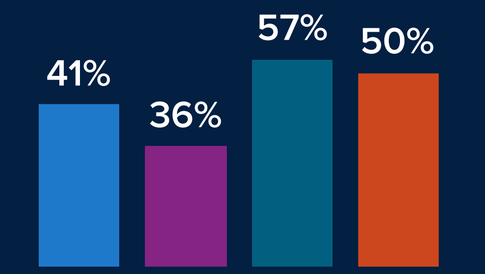
How AI Search is Changing Press Release Strategy

As AI-powered search becomes an increasingly important channel for information discovery, communicators are adjusting their press release strategies to improve visibility in AI-generated answers. These changes span multiple aspects of their approach, from how they write and optimise their content to how they distribute and repurpose it.

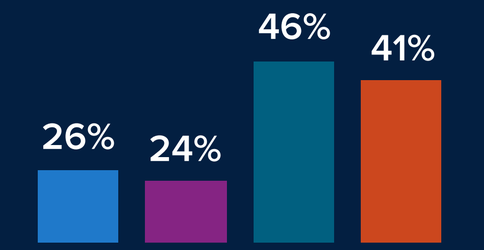
As demonstrated throughout this report, the APAC region is more AI-forward than the other regions. This may be due to the difference in how AI is positioned more favorably and regulated more strictly in that region compared to other parts of the world. With each option presented, APAC respondents indicated that they are adjusting their press release strategy to attract LLM visibility in myriad ways.

A similar pattern is emerging in Central and South America, where respondents are close behind APAC in their adoption of new strategies in the wake of AI search. Meanwhile, North American and EMEIA communicators are slower to evolve their press release strategy in response to the growing influence of AI-powered search.

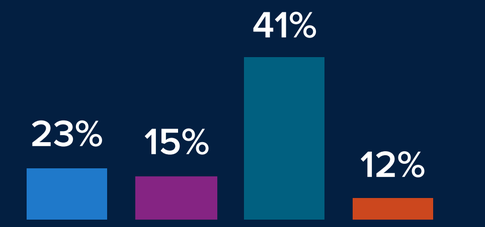
How has AI-powered search changed your use of press releases?



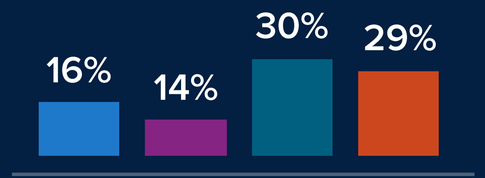
Changed how we optimise releases



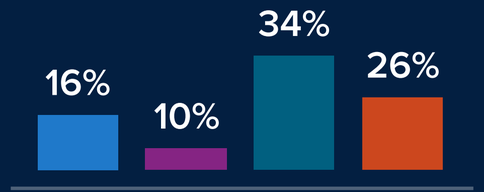
Prompted the adoption of AI tools for content creation/optimisation



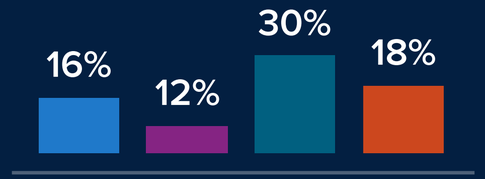
Caused us to track new metrics (i.e., AI overviews, AI citation volume)



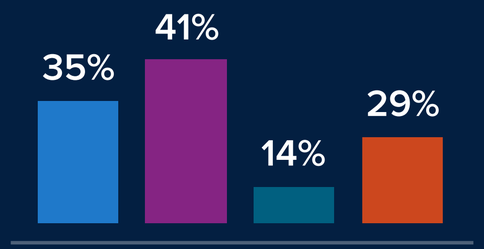
Changed the types of press release content we distribute



Increased the number of releases we distribute



Led us to repurpose releases into more types of content



We have not changed how we use press releases



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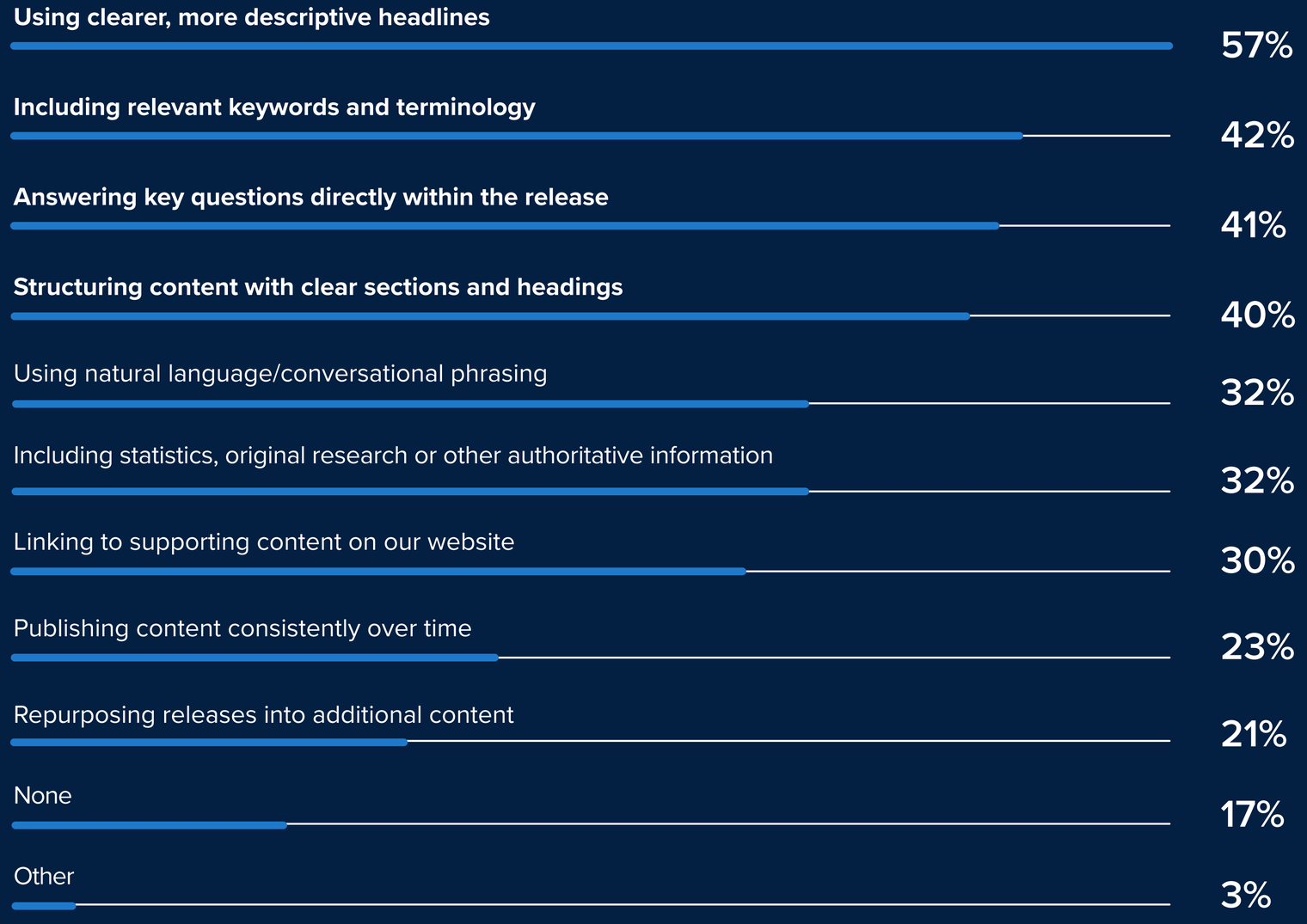
Adapting to a New Search Environment

For communicators, understanding what drives content discoverability in AI-powered search can feel like taking aim at a moving target. The algorithms are constantly evolving; the prompts users input can vary; the information available constantly changes. **However, one thing is clear: the established structure of a press release, with its headline, concise summary and clearly organised information, provides a strong foundation for LLM discoverability**. The challenge for communicators is understanding how to build on that foundation to maximise their chances of having their content answer the questions their audience is asking.

As more than half of respondents recognise, having a clear and descriptive headline is key. LLMs also demonstrate a preference for structured content with section headings and bullet points, natural language that sounds human, statistical information and providing clear answers to potential questions.

Some communicators listed other elements they include in their releases, such as a “key takeaways” section under their subheadline that summarises the main highlights of their story. Also, some respondents shared that they include multimedia, which has been shown to be a big driver of LLM visibility and engagement with press release content.

What steps have you taken to make your press releases more likely to be discovered, cited or referenced by AI-powered search tools?



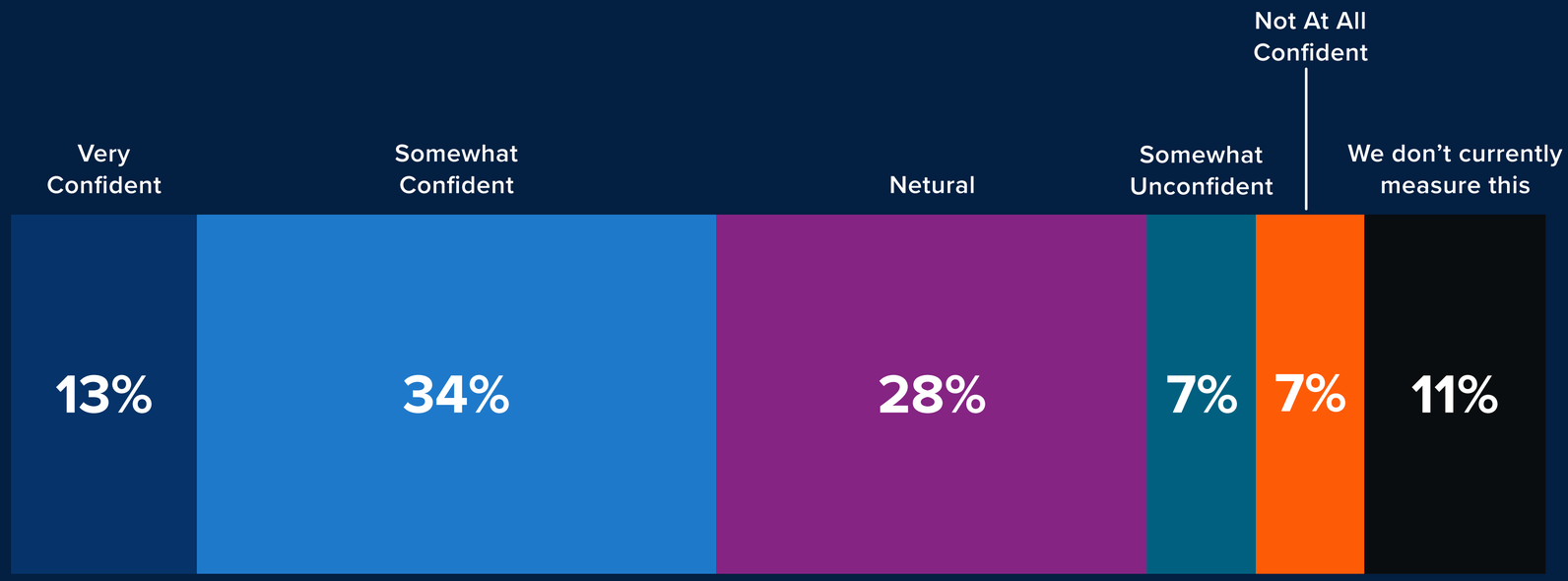
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Assessing Visibility in AI Search Models

Measuring the success of efforts to improve visibility in AI search is still in its early stages. However, it is encouraging that a third of respondents are somewhat confident that their press releases are being seen or cited by AI-powered search tools, suggesting that their efforts may be paying off.

The practice of optimising content solely to capture high-ranking keywords and coveted spots at the top of a search engine's results page remains important but is now part of a broader approach that also considers how content is referenced and summarised by AI-powered search tools. This shift also introduces new challenges for communicators seeking to assess visibility, as traditional search rankings offer little insight into how often their content appears in AI-generated answers. Measuring performance across these platforms requires additional methods and metrics that complement those communicators have traditionally relied on to evaluate search visibility.

How confident are you that your press releases are being discovered or referenced by AI-powered search tools?



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Constructing Releases for Engagement & Visibility

The fundamentals of press release visibility remain relevant in the age of AI search. Including multimedia assets and crafting a headline that immediately communicates why the story matters to readers can help capture human attention while making content more useful and accessible to AI-powered tools. By combining these tried-and-true practices with a focus on clear, relevant and well-structured information, communicators can support visibility across traditional search engines and AI-generated answers.

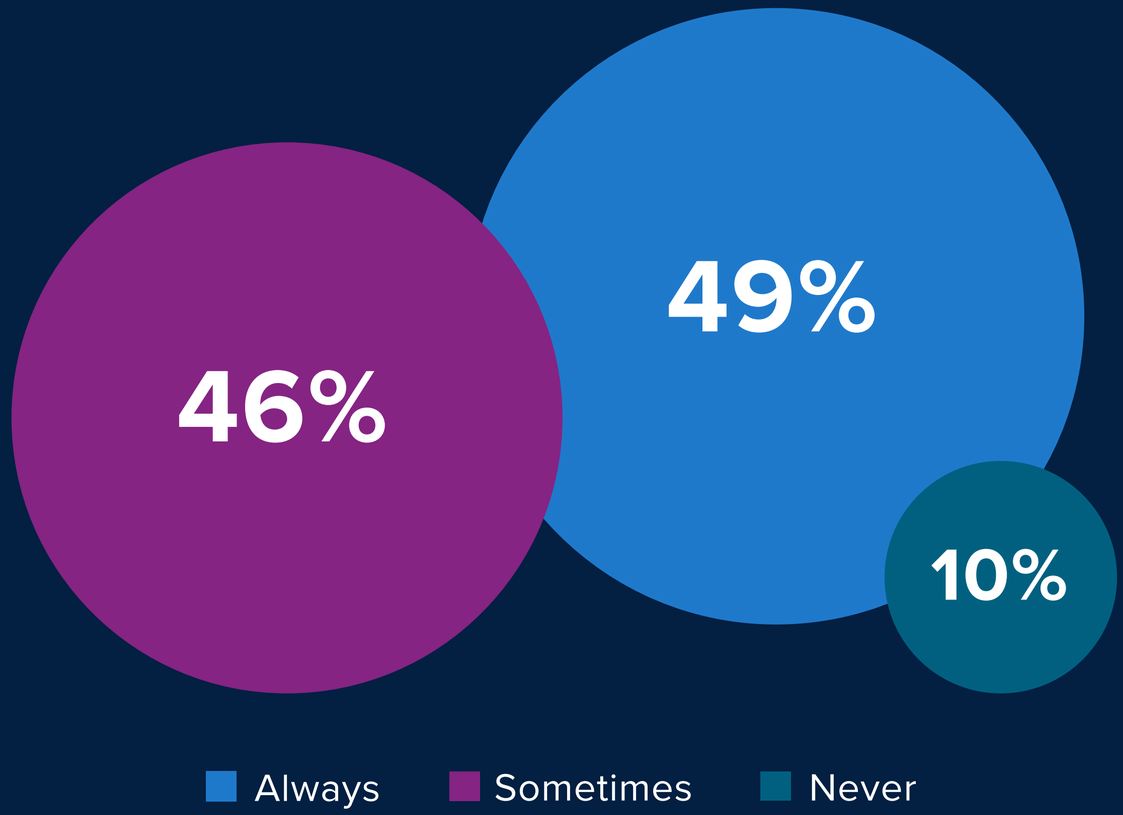
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Multimedia is Moving from Nice-to-Have to Must-Have

Over the years, communicators' reported rate of including multimedia with their press releases has inched up. While one out of ten communications professionals consistently declines to include multimedia with any of their releases, the percentage of those who say they only sometimes include multimedia with their releases has declined, giving way to more frequent inclusion of multimedia in press releases.

Rich imagery and video content that includes alt text, captions or other metadata can be easier for search engines to interpret, helping to measurably improve content discoverability across traditional and AI-powered search.

How often do you include multimedia in your release (photos, videos, infographics, etc.)?



Ranking the Parts of the Sum

Communicators appear to place a premium on elements that quickly convey a press release's news and key messages. The prominence of headlines, pull quotes and key takeaways highlights the importance of making a story's value immediately clear to readers. While multimedia ranked lower in perceived impact, its value may be underestimated, particularly as AI-powered search creates additional opportunities for visual content to contribute to an announcement's visibility and reach.

Rank these press release elements in order of impact on success:

1. Headline
2. Executive pull quote
3. Key takeaways section
4. Call to action
5. Subheadline
6. Photo(s)
7. Logo
8. Video(s)

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Use of Generative AI to Craft Press Releases Continues to Grow

When we first asked North American communicators two years ago if they were using generative AI to craft press release content, a mere 26% responded affirmatively. Two years later, the story is dramatically different, with 65% of North American respondents reporting the use of AI to create press release content.

This year, 80% of communicators in APAC answered in the affirmative, the largest percentage of any region. Last year, 63% of this cohort reported using AI for press release creation.

In 2025, EMEIA reported the largest adoption of AI for press release content creation at 65%, which rose to 73%, second behind APAC.

The global “never AI” cohort has remained relatively stable over the last year, coming in at 13% last year and 12% this year.

Are you using generative AI to craft any aspect of your press release content?

	Global	North America	EMEIA	APAC	Central/ S.America
Yes	70%	65%	73%	80%	70%
Not right now, but I'm open to using it in the future	18%	18%	19%	12%	24%
No, and I don't intend to use it in the near future	12%	17%	8%	8%	6%

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Regional Differences in How AI is Used for Press Release Content Creation

The idea of AI's potential to improve productivity has become ubiquitous. But for communications professionals, AI isn't limited to a single function or stage of the content creation process. Communicators across the globe are applying it across nearly every stage of press release development, from generating ideas and conducting research to drafting, editing, translating and optimising content for search.

While the most common reported use of AI for press release creation was in generating an initial outline or draft, adoption across the various use cases was diverse, with communicators applying AI to a range of tasks throughout the process. This suggests that communicators are looking beyond content generation and using AI to refine and optimise their releases for greater impact. Some respondents also mentioned using AI to develop different versions of a press release for different audiences and to add pull quotes from their content.

How are you using generative AI to help you craft press release content?

	North America	EMEIA	APAC	Central/ S.America
Creating an outline/first draft	41%	43%	55%	41%
Grammar/spelling/proofreading	41%	42%	52%	32%
Writing headlines	37%	37%	54%	44%
Editing a draft	37%	36%	53%	38%
Keyword guidance for SEO/AEO/GEO	31%	21%	39%	35%
Generating press release ideas	26%	37%	53%	53%
Performing research	24%	17%	19%	24%
Writing body copy	20%	19%	31%	24%
Language translation	10%	35%	34%	38%
Multimedia to accompany the release	6%	7%	23%	12%

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How Organisations Distribute Press Releases

Organisations take different approaches to press release distribution, from how frequently they issue announcements to whether they manage the process in-house or rely on external resources. The scope of distribution also matters, determining how broadly news is shared. Together, these choices provide a foundation for understanding how organisations approach visibility across traditional media and AI-powered search.

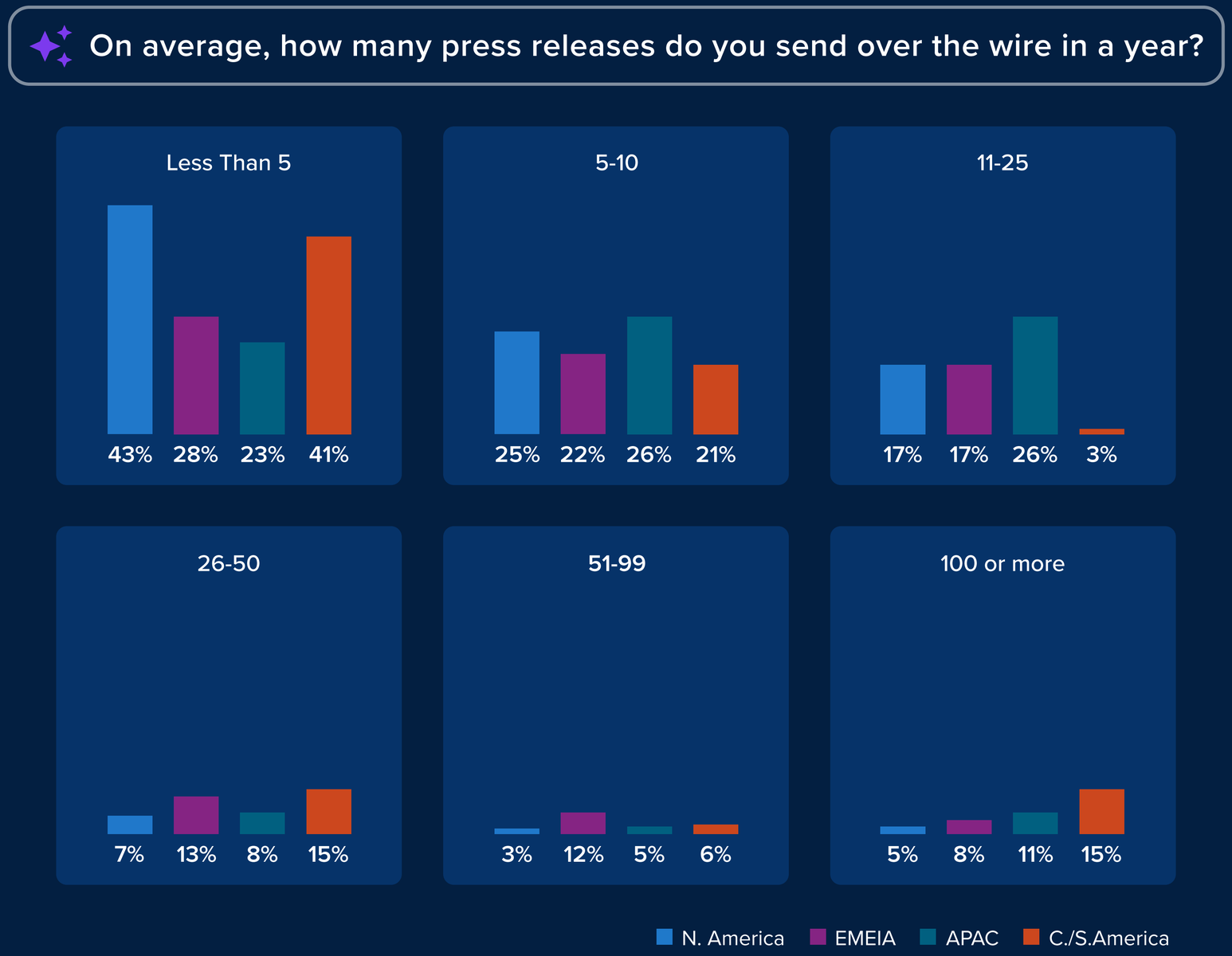
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Annual Press Release Volume by Region

Compared with last year, press release distribution frequency has remained relatively consistent in North America and EMEIA, but APAC shows a notable shift. Last year, more than a third of APAC respondents reported sending 51–99 releases annually. This year, that figure has dropped sharply, with respondents more concentrated in the 5–25 range.

While distribution practices vary by region and from year to year, organisations may begin issuing press releases more frequently as they gain a better understanding of their potential impact on AI discoverability and audiences increasingly turn to AI-powered search for information.

The volume of releases may be one factor in how often an organisation has opportunities to appear in search results. Frequency alone, however, doesn't determine visibility; the relevance, substance and accessibility of each announcement also matter.



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The Teams Behind the Press Release

In-house resources continue to play the primary role in the press release process globally, but the balance between internal and external support is shifting in some markets.

The most notable change is in APAC, where reported reliance on in-house resources has declined considerably since last year, while the use of external agencies and resources has doubled. North America and EMEIA, by comparison, have remained relatively consistent in their approaches. Central and South America stands out for having the highest reported use of external support, with half of respondents working with an agency or other outside resource.

These findings indicate that while organisations generally retain internal responsibility for press releases, external partners are beginning to take on a greater role in certain regions.

Does your organisation use an in-house resource or external agency/ resource to create and coordinate the distribution of press releases over the wire?

North America*

75%
In-house resource

29%
External agency/ resource

EMEIA*

71%
In-house resource

50%
External agency/ resource

APAC*

78%
In-house resource

28%
External agency/ resource

Central/South America*

61%
In-house resource

42%
External agency/ resource

*Participants were permitted to choose multiple answers, resulting in responses exceeding 100%.

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The Geographic Reach of Press Releases

National distribution continues to be the most common approach in North America and EMEIA, with results remaining relatively consistent with last year. Central and South America follows a similar pattern, with nearly two-thirds of respondents distributing their releases nationally.

APAC takes a different approach, as organisations in the region typically distribute releases across national or international markets rather than focusing on local or regional audiences. This preference for broader distribution may reflect a greater recognition by communicators in this region of the opportunities to reach new audiences, build visibility and expand into additional markets.

Regardless of geographic scope, these findings present an opportunity for communicators to evaluate how well their distribution strategies align with the audiences they want to reach and identify where expanding into additional markets could help achieve their communications goals.

How widely do you distribute press releases?

	Locally	Regionally	Nationally	Multi-nationally
North America	35%	40%	62%	22%
EMEIA	32%	35%	66%	36%
APAC	32%	25%	48%	40%
Central/South America	26%	29%	65%	18%

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Evaluating Press Release Performance

Decades ago, press release success was largely measured by the media coverage it generated. The rise of search engines introduced a new goal: securing a top position in search results. Now, as more consumers turn to generative AI tools for information, earning visibility in AI-generated answers is becoming another priority for communicators. At the same time, audiences are increasingly spreading their attention across different platforms and channels, creating more opportunities for organisations to connect with them and more touchpoints to measure. But across this evolving landscape, one thing remains constant for organisations distributing press releases over a newswire: the need to measure whether their efforts are making an impact.

What Press Release Distribution Delivers

While communicators ranked the benefits of press release distribution much the same as they did last year, responses were higher across most categories. This points to a notable increase in the perceived value of press release distribution.

The benefits communicators associate with wire distribution reflect the multiple roles a press release can play in a communications strategy. Beyond sharing news, it can help shape how an organisation is perceived and contribute to its visibility across both traditional search and emerging AI-powered discovery channels.

How has sending a press release over the wire helped your organisation?



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How Communicators Define the Success of Their Press Releases

For PR professionals, media pickup remains an important measure of press release success, but it only tells part of the story of today's communications landscape. As traditional media outlets continue to shrink and journalists face increasing demands on their time, earned coverage is just one of many ways a press release can generate value.

Website engagement, search visibility and citations in AI-generated answers offer additional ways to assess whether news is reaching audiences, even when it doesn't result in a traditional media placement. Broadening measurement beyond pickup is essential for communicators to understand and demonstrate the full value of their distribution efforts.

What metrics are you currently measuring to determine the success of a press release?



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Multichannel Amplification™ in Action

As organisations consider ways to increase the visibility of their content, implementing a Multichannel Amplification™ strategy, wherein a brand leverages multiple communication channels to deliver a unified message to the right audience at the right time, is increasingly important for extending reach. With Multichannel Amplification™, the press release serves as the foundation of a broader communications campaign, providing the core messaging that can be adapted for other channels. This helps keep messaging consistent across touchpoints while creating more opportunities for content to be discovered by a relevant audience. AI search tools also draw on information from multiple sources, so this approach increases the likelihood of a brand being cited when its content is distributed across channels.

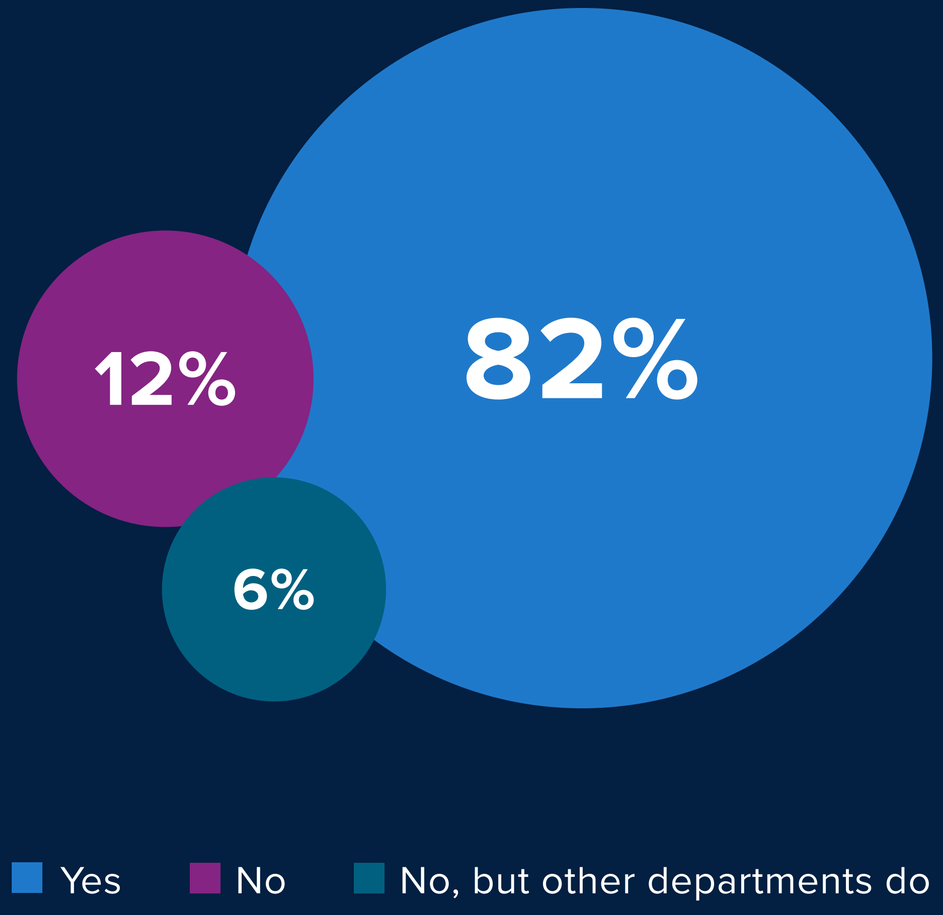
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Amplifying Press Release Content Beyond Distribution

Communicators clearly recognise the value of repurposing press release content, with an overwhelming majority extending their announcements across multiple channels. By adapting key messages and information for other channels, communicators can reach audiences in different contexts, reinforce important messages and extend the life of a story beyond its initial distribution. This approach also creates opportunities to connect with audiences who may never encounter the original release, while making more effective use of the content already developed.

When it comes to Multichannel Amplification™, communications professionals may not be going it alone. Amplifying a brand's story isn't necessarily under the sole purview of a comms department or PR agency. Content marketing, social media and other teams may also play a role in extending a story's reach across channels. When these efforts are coordinated, organisations can create a more consistent experience for audiences and more opportunities for their news to reach the right people.

Do you reuse your press release content on other channels?



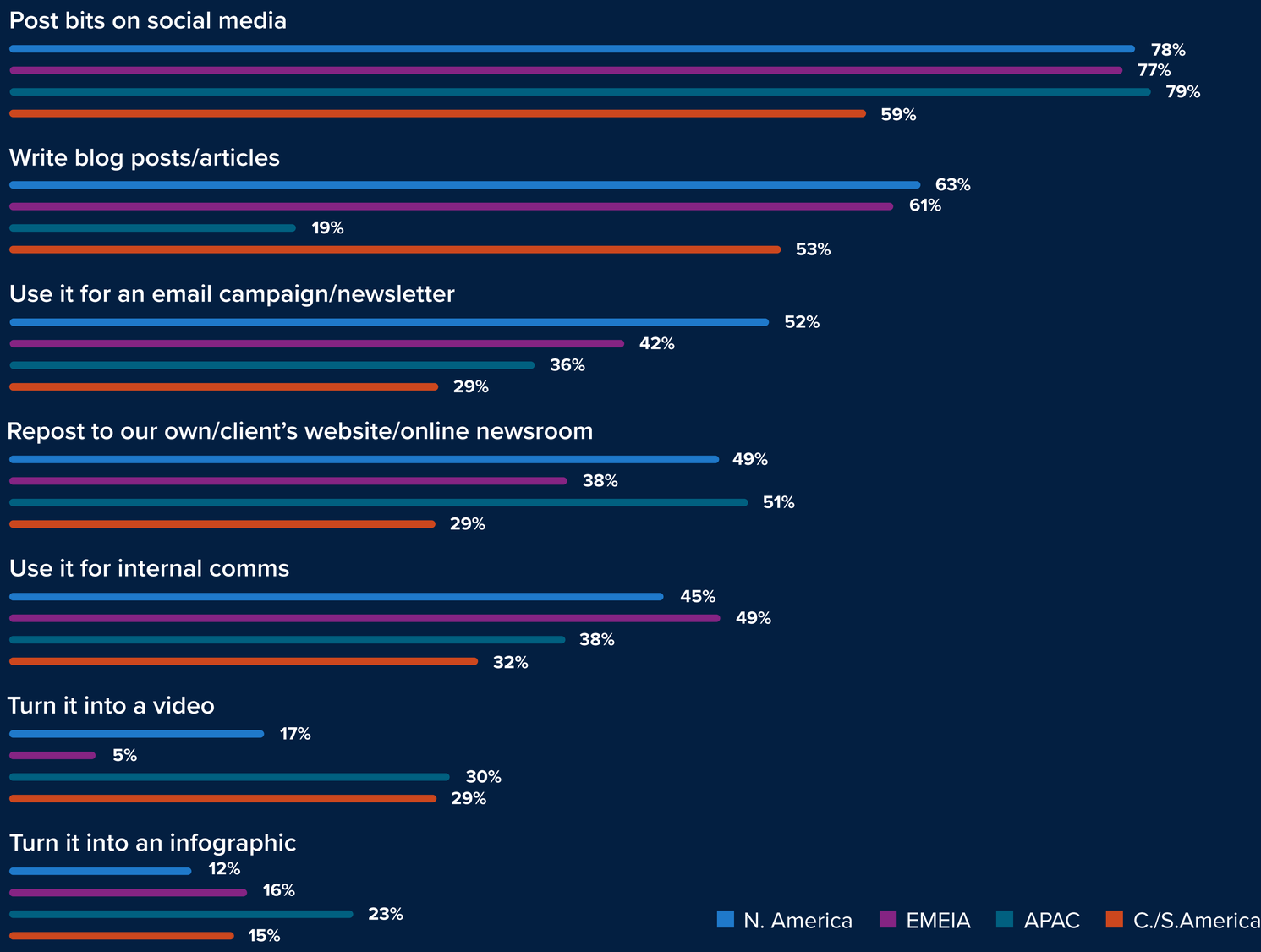
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Reusing & Reinforcing Release Content to Reach More Audiences

For the vast majority of communicators, a press release is a starting point for content that will appear in several other formats. While social media is a common channel across all four regions, other practices diverge. North American communicators are more likely to reuse releases in written formats, including blog posts, articles, email campaigns and online newsrooms, while APAC respondents show a stronger tendency to turn releases into visual content, such as videos and infographics.

A Multichannel Amplification™ strategy helps organisations coordinate these efforts, ensuring that content is adapted for different channels while maintaining consistent messaging. Rather than repurposing content in isolation, communicators can plan how each format contributes to the larger campaign and creates additional opportunities for their news to reach audiences.

How do you reuse your press release content on other channels?



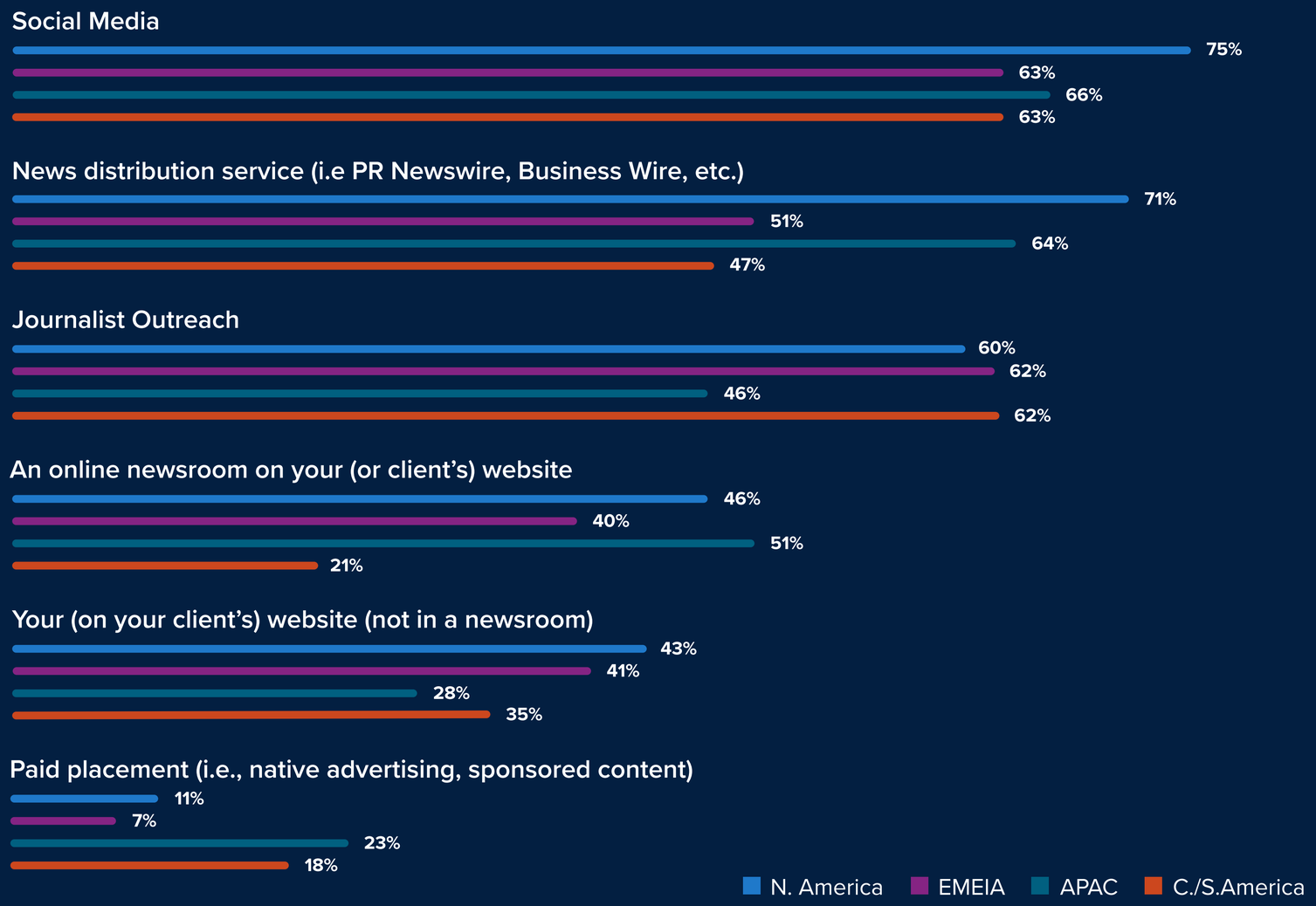
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Where and How News Gets Promoted

Social media is a popular channel for promoting press releases across all four regions, but the broader mix of tactics varies. North American respondents show a stronger preference for newswire distribution services, while APAC respondents are more likely to promote releases through their own or their clients' websites outside the online newsroom and through paid placements.

These differences may reflect regional variations in how audiences consume news and information, including the platforms they use, the formats they prefer and whether they're more likely to encounter content through news outlets, social media or company-owned channels.

What channels do you use to promote your press releases?



Key Takeaways

Communicators are structuring press releases for AI-powered search.

As AI changes how audiences discover information, communications professionals are adjusting how they structure and distribute their announcements to improve visibility. More than half of respondents (57%) are incorporating clear, descriptive headlines, while others are making their content easier for AI tools to interpret and reference. These changes build on the established structure of a press release, reinforcing its value in an evolving search landscape.

Repurposing press release content creates more opportunities for AI search visibility.

With 83% of respondents repurposing their press release content, communicators continue to recognise the value of extending their news across multiple channels. As audiences–human and machine–discover information through traditional media, social platforms, search and answer engines, it is essential to share content across channels for their news to be discovered, referenced and measured.

Press release volume is poised to grow in the year ahead.

Communicators anticipate distributing more press releases in the coming year, signaling continued confidence in their value. As press releases become increasingly valuable for reaching both human audiences and AI-powered search tools, communicators have more reason to increase the volume of news they share across trusted newswires. This reinforces the value of consistently sharing relevant, substantive news that continues to inform audiences and garner visibility where it matters most.

The findings in this report point to a communications landscape with more opportunities to reach audiences, alongside considerations about how and where to best invest time, resources and attention. The challenge ahead isn't simply to produce more content or distribute it more widely. It's to bring together the right tools, expertise and distribution strategies to give an organisation's story the greatest opportunity to make an impact.

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Methodology

PR Newswire conducted its 2026 State of the Press Release survey from September 9 through October 12, 2026. This year's survey collected responses from 1,016 communications and marketing professionals from more than 30 countries.

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