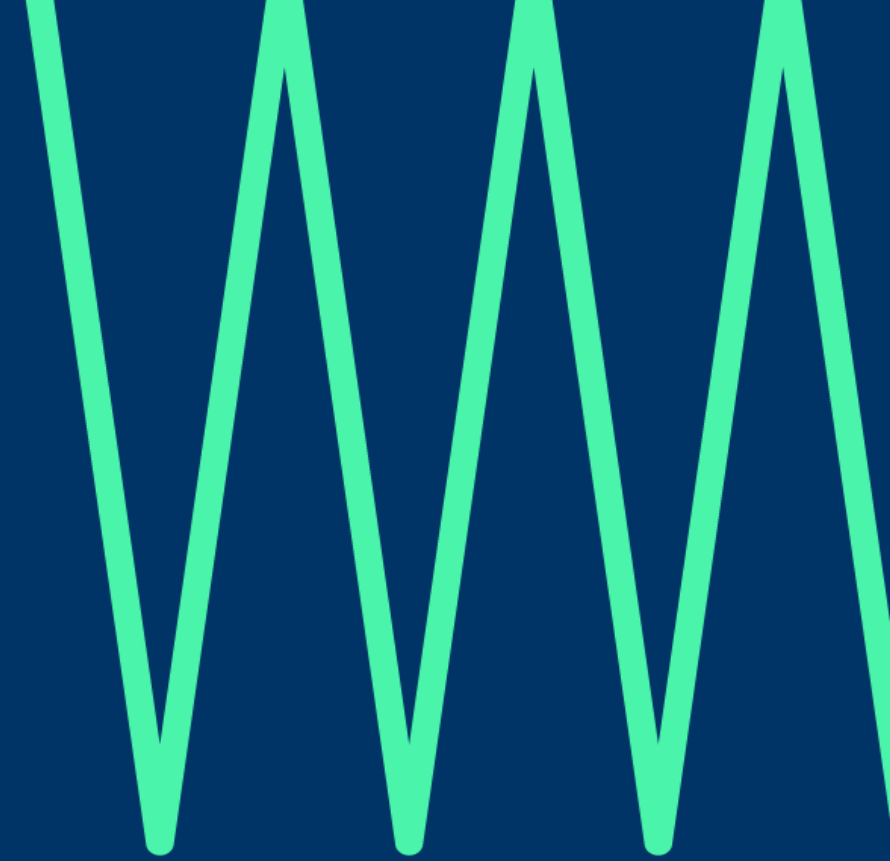
How AI is destabilising trust and reputation



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Audiences are finding out about you somewhere else first

Trust has shifted: people no longer take an organisation at its word. Instead, they check elsewhere first, and AI is increasingly where they go first. By the time your press office responds, your audience already has an answer.

Whether that answer is close to what your organisation would want to be out there depends on what LLMs (Large Language Models) can find. Strong brand equity, consistent content, and a presence in the places models already trust all shape what comes back.

How can comms teams control their own narrative in this information ecosystem?

In this report, we look at:

- Why trust has moved, and where audience conversations now happen
- What audiences talk about online, and how LLMs shape those conversations
- Why AI is a vital part of today's comms cycle
- How Vuelio's AI-built tools help you protect brand trust and reputation

Approach

Data collection period

1 June 2024 to 18 June 2026

Channels

Online news, X, forums

Markets

Worldwide

Languages

English

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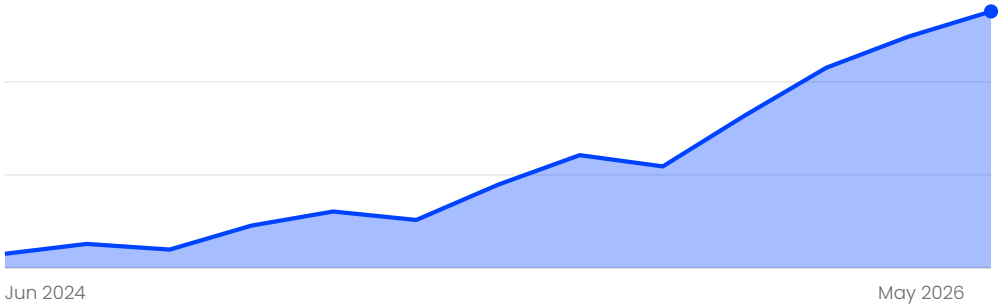
Audiences talk about brands, reputation, and AI in the same breath

Over the past two years, mentions of brand trust and reputation alongside AI have risen sharply. Audiences lean on AI for work and leisure, but that doesn't mean everyone fully trusts it.

Transparency is what audiences want, as they become increasingly savvy to organisations' use of AI, too.

Conversation on X and across online news suggests hiding AI use can bring reputational damage alongside possible regulatory risk. Users also noted how LLMs bundle sources and citations into fluent, apparently neutral answers, which cuts their reliance on traditional search.



Volume of mentions around brand trust and reputation in relation to AI, across X and online news, 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2026.

LiveWorld

More than 30% of patients are already using AI tools for health-related questions, and that number is rising fast. At the same time, HCPs are using AI-powered platforms for decision support, quick research, and product comparisons.

@AcolytAI

AI transparency is the new trust currency. 80% of global consumers demand clear AI-content labeling, with 62% explicitly linking disclosure to brand trust. Brands hiding AI use face regulatory risks and reputation damage.

@WillHughesx

AI for scale. Writing for clarity. Brand for trust.

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AI arrives packaged as a free and fluent first responder

Today's LLMs are easy and accessible, packaged as a fluent, neutral first responder.

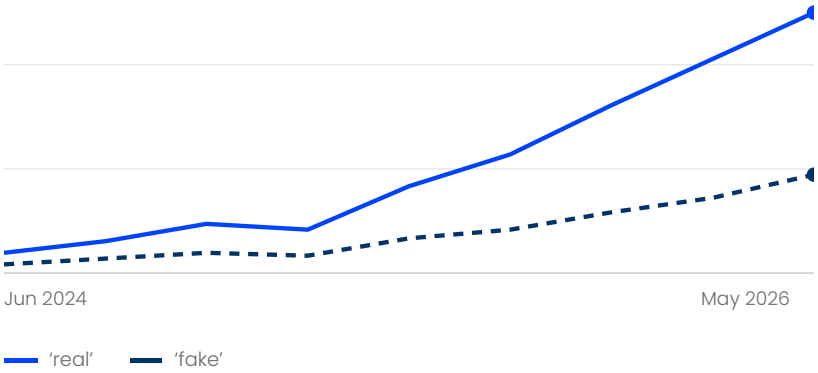
Audiences now use AI to confirm, not only to debunk. On X, people use Grok as a synthetic fact-checker to affirm rather than to challenge or explain why they are wrong. Search terms like 'is this real' and 'is this true or fake' show audiences looking to AI to reassure and reaffirm as a trusted source.

𝕏 @JustWordsBro

Anthropic accidentally leaked their entire source code yesterday. What happened next is one of the most insane stories in tech history. According to **@grok**, this is 100% real.

𝕏 @Longsleevs_

The only developer job in the near future will be if you know how to usefully, efficiently, and securely command large agent fleets **@grok** is this true?



Mentions of how audiences use **@grok** with the terms 'real' and 'fake', and the responses and conversations that follow, 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2026.

AI is treated as a first responder. Audiences generally use it to confirm what they already believe, not to be corrected.

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Trusted forums and media with high brand equity are the second layer of fact-checking

Forums have always been places where people rely on each other for information explained in straightforward wording. They're where new ideas are talked through first, but forums aren't the only place audiences go for extra fact-checking. High-trust publications also continue to be a port of call, from global Tier 1 outlets like The New York Times, to more localised subscriber models like the Manchester Mill and London Centric.

Right now, audiences are cross-checking whether the answer an LLM gave them holds up, and whether they can rely on it next time. They're going to the places they trusted before the emergence of AI.

These spaces continue to provide a real opportunity for organisations to build trust and provide assurance to their intended audiences, taking what AI models offer, keeping the quality, and releasing reassuring human-led content.

1) AI is used to confirm, not only to discover

AI is called on as a synthetic fact-checker. It is the first responder.

2) Peer communities verify AI outputs

Trusted forums and media are where people go for advice on AI summaries and analysis.

3) Verifiability supports engagement

The more content feels like it can be checked and confirmed, the more engaging it feels.

Individual forum user

Has anybody used chatgpt to flesh out a financial plan? I've been creating a financial plan and I just ran it through ChatGPT and I like the suggestions. Am I deluded? It is only telling me what I know, but making me feel more confident.

Personal finance forum

Tbh with AI, it's much more easier to budget now. Fire up claude, drop your statements in & ask for an interactive page broken down into categories for budgeting purposes. But, a spreadsheet still is goated.

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Looking deeper into audience AI behaviour

The data on how audiences use AI is complicated. Use does not mean complete trust, or comfort.

Generally, audiences use AI to validate what they already know, rather than for its accuracy. Most regular AI users will have experienced an AI hallucination, and expect it as an occasional glitch.

Trust in AI is fledgling, but fragile. Audiences may have moved away from intermediaries that have let them down in the past (like social media, even traditional media sources) and towards AI because it's still relatively new, and hasn't failed them too badly yet. Whether that trust will continue and strengthen in the long term remains to be seen, and is worth paying attention to.

46%

of UK adults don't use AI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, or Gemini[1]

74%

of UK consumers have used AI in the past six months[2]

84%

of UK Gen Z internet users used AI in the past month, compared with 37% of Boomers[3]

44%

of UK adults trust AI answers, close to double the 24% who trust social media influencers[4]

1 Ofcom's Adults' Media Use and Attitudes 2026 · 2 EY AI Sentiment Index 2026 · 3 GWI, Q4 2025 · 4 Purposeful Relations with 72Point, survey of 5,000 UK adults, 2025

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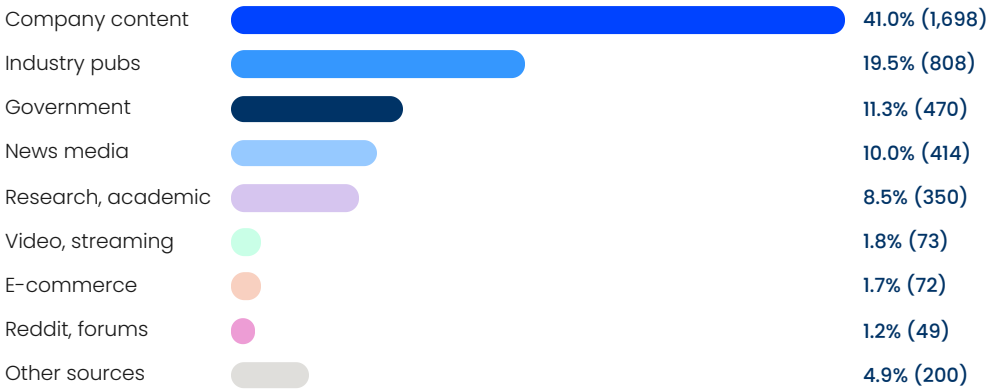
Mapping the new way audiences discover information

When looking at how AI models pull information, traditional news isn't the whole story. Large-scale sampling indicates that industry publications outnumber traditional news sources by at least two to one, and company content plus industry titles take more than 60% of the share of voice that LLMs cite.

That same sampling indicates negative sentiment about organisations is twice as likely to come from a traditional news outlet as from these niche industry sources. The 'risk' factor is, at this moment in time, asymmetrically spread across sources.

Because this environment moves so quickly, the best strategy for comms teams is to focus on what can be measured. Check which LLMs cite you most, how visible you are next to your competitors, and which of your products, services, and policy positions come up. Building high-quality brand content and industry presence will influence the models, which in turn will influence trust.

60% of cited share of voice is company content and industry publications



Data sourced from Lumina AI View.

2:1
At least a two to one ratio of industry publications against traditional news

2x
Negative sentiment is twice as likely to come from a traditional news source

6%
Overlap between the top 20 sources across sectors

8%
Overlap between the top 20 sources across countries

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When you think about how an LLM forms an understanding of an organisation, it mirrors a challenge the communications industry has been dealing with for years. We're still talking about building authority, getting the right messages into credible sources, understanding how narratives are developing, and measuring whether communications are having the impact we intend.

Amy Chappell
Head of Insights Strategy, Vuelio

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Lumina AI View shows what AI says about you, and where it learned it

1) See which sources matter

Track your source footprint over time and measure citation strength against your competitors, so you know where you hold authority and where the gaps are.

2) Get industry-specific insight

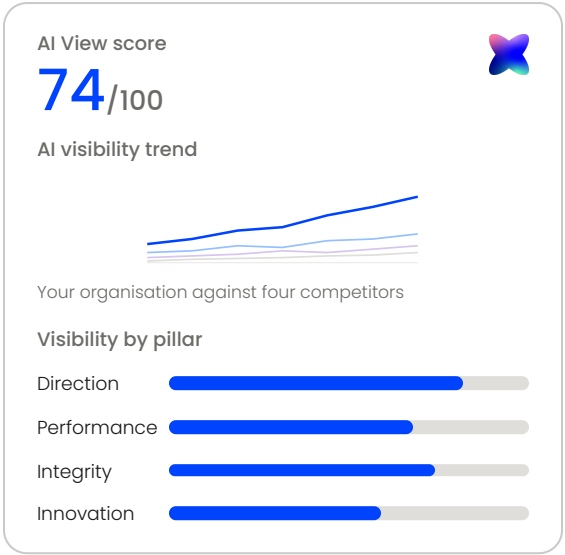
See whether AI leans on authoritative outlets or on forums when it talks about you, and target the sources that actually shape how you are represented.

3) Catch narrative shifts early

Get alerted when citation patterns change suddenly, before the shift reaches your stakeholders or a select committee inbox.

4) Measure your visibility

Weekly or on-demand scoring shows citation trends and competitive standing, building the baseline that makes sudden changes readable.



Lumina Stories & Perspectives

Clusters mentions into narratives rather than alerts, so you can see how a story is forming, which media and stakeholder angles are driving it, and the moment to add credible voices of your own.

Book a demo

Track how your AI visibility is shaped by media, political, and social citations all in one place

Before AI can cite you, the conversation has to exist somewhere. Vuelio captures the full earned media picture across print, broadcast, online news, and social, alongside political activity.

Print Monitoring

We track a vast number of print publications, with local, national, international, and multilingual coverage.

Broadcast Monitoring

Market-leading TV and radio monitoring, with voice-to-text and play-now so you get the full media picture.

Online News Monitoring

Scanning more than 1.4 million online items a day across local, regional, international, trade, and niche titles.

Social Media Monitoring

Track social conversation relevant to your organisation and react to issues as they happen, in real time.

Political Monitoring

Follow a story from a local planning debate to the floor of the House of Commons, with our in-house Policy Research team flagging what matters.

Vuelio Insights

AMEC-accredited analysis of share of voice and key message penetration, tying your coverage back to commercial and policy goals.

6M+ media sources tracked **1.4M+** items scanned daily **24/7** always-on coverage

Book a demo

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Vuelio is the UK platform for PR, comms, and public affairs. We bring media monitoring, political intelligence, media and political databases, stakeholder management, and AI-built insight into one place, so your team can see the whole picture and act on it.

Part of Pulsar Group, with Pulsar, ResponseSource and Isentia.

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