



An unfiltered look at what's percolating now

Below are key themes that dominated corporate communications news in October 2024.

PURPOSE HELPS CONNECT BRANDS WITH NEW GENERATIONS.

Purpose is no longer just a brand buzzword—it's a key factor in building loyalty, especially among Gen Z and millennials. [The Wall Street Journal](#) highlighted how younger generations are increasingly prioritizing purpose in both their personal lives and professional choices, seeking brands that reflect their values. However, as [Forbes](#) noted, while purpose is highly valued by Gen Z, it's not necessarily a dealbreaker. This generation will engage with brands that prioritize transparency and authenticity over perfection. HAVAS Red's latest white paper on [\(Re\)Defining Purpose](#) delves into how brands can transform purpose into tangible impact, exploring ways to integrate purpose into every aspect of a company's operations and messaging.

Bottom line: Purpose must be woven into every facet of a brand. While Gen Z and millennials may not expect brands to be perfect, they do expect honesty, alignment with values and a commitment to impact. Embracing purpose authentically can set brands apart and foster deeper connections with this values-driven generation.

DEI IS AT A CROSSROADS, PRIORITIZING GENUINE ACTION OVER ACRONYMS.

On a closely related note, DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) has reached a pivotal moment. While some companies are scaling back on DEI commitments, citing political pressures or budget constraints, others are doubling down on impactful actions that go beyond surface-level promises, as uncertainty looms over DEI's future in the U.S. under a second Trump administration. According to [Fast Company](#), DEI isn't doomed—rather, it's evolving. As highlighted in HAVAS Red's latest [white paper](#), companies are increasingly focused on building trust and resilience through genuine, measurable initiatives. [Fortune](#) suggested that the alphabet soup of DEI-related terms can be a distraction from meaningful progress. Simplifying messaging and focusing on outcomes, rather than labels, could strengthen DEI's impact and longevity in business strategy. Similarly, [PR News](#) emphasized the importance of staying true to purpose, especially when external pressures may challenge companies to veer off course.

(cont.) And as [INSEAD Knowledge](#) highlighted, genuine DEI initiatives driven by purpose, rather than optics, are more likely to generate sustainable results and avoid accusations of “DEI-washing.” [Adweek](#) further discussed the broken promises and credibility gaps brands face when DEI becomes more about PR than real progress. The message is clear: brands must align DEI with core values, or risk losing trust and relevance.

Bottom line: For communicators and business leaders, DEI can’t simply be a checkbox or acronym. The path forward lies in transparent, purpose-driven actions that are integral to the business rather than superficial commitments. As companies revisit their DEI strategies, prioritizing authenticity and measurable impact will be essential for building trust and long-term value.

MEDIA PLAYBOOKS ARE QUICKLY TRANSFORMING.

The media landscape is evolving, and brands are adapting fast. Traditional press engagement is giving way to more controlled platforms, where leaders can shape their narrative without the filters of mainstream media. [The Times](#) explored this new playbook that includes a stronger presence on LinkedIn, with CEOs increasingly using the platform to directly connect with investors and shape public perception. According to [Financial Times](#), podcasts are also on the rise as executives find them a powerful medium to deliver unfiltered messages to audiences. The trend towards self-publishing on platforms like Substack and leveraging corporate LinkedIn pages for thought leadership signals a shift from dependence on traditional media to a more direct, content-driven approach. As highlighted by [Axios](#), these new rules of engagement allow brands to control the message while building a loyal following.

Bottom line: For leaders and communicators, the takeaway is clear: own the narrative. As media channels fragment, platforms like LinkedIn, podcasts and Substack offer unique opportunities to reach audiences with unfiltered messages. Investing in these channels can help brands reach niche audiences, engage directly with stakeholders and build trust. For those yet to pivot, it’s time to rethink media strategies to include these emerging platforms as core elements of corporate storytelling.

LINKEDIN CONTINUES TO EVOLVE, EMBRACING AI AND PERSONAL BRANDING.

LinkedIn is rapidly evolving from a traditional networking platform into a powerful tool for personal branding, thought leadership and AI-driven engagement. According to [Red Connect](#) and insights from General Manager [Lisa Bjorksten](#), the platform's integration of AI tools is enabling professionals to create more personalized content that resonates with specific audiences. These new features are helping communicators amplify their messages with precision, fostering a deeper level of authenticity and audience engagement. [PR News](#) also highlighted how AI can support executives in strategically shaping their online presence, maximizing their reach and engaging meaningfully with followers in an increasingly crowded space. Together, these trends are reshaping LinkedIn as a central hub for digital influence.

Bottom line: For communicators and brand leaders, LinkedIn's new capabilities offer valuable tools for building authentic connections. Embracing AI-driven content personalization and leveraging LinkedIn's power as a storytelling platform will be key to standing out in the digital landscape. Staying ahead of these trends can help brands and leaders alike maximize their impact and build trust with their audiences.

EXPERIENCES ARE REDEFINING ENGAGEMENT FOR BRANDS AND WORKPLACES ALIKE.

In today's crowded market, experiences are becoming key to both brand differentiation and employee engagement. [The Wall Street Journal](#) reported that companies like Airbnb, Apple and even Taco Bell are investing in unique, immersive product launches to capture consumer interest and foster loyalty. This shift towards experiential marketing highlights the value of creating memorable moments that resonate deeply with audiences. Beyond products, the same focus on experiences is emerging within workplaces. According to [Harvard Business Review](#), strategic offsites are gaining traction as a powerful tool for strengthening team dynamics, building culture and encouraging collaboration. Similarly, [HR Executive](#) emphasized that providing employees with compelling in-person experiences—whether through engaging office events or well-planned offsites—can be instrumental in driving a more agreeable return to the office and boosting morale. However, it's not just LinkedIn that's gaining traction. Some executives are turning to platforms like TikTok — or borrowing similar tactics — to engage more casually and personally with employees.

Bottom line: For both marketers and HR leaders, the takeaway is clear: create experiences that matter. From captivating product launches to meaningful team gatherings, memorable experiences can drive engagement, foster loyalty and build lasting connections with both customers and employees.