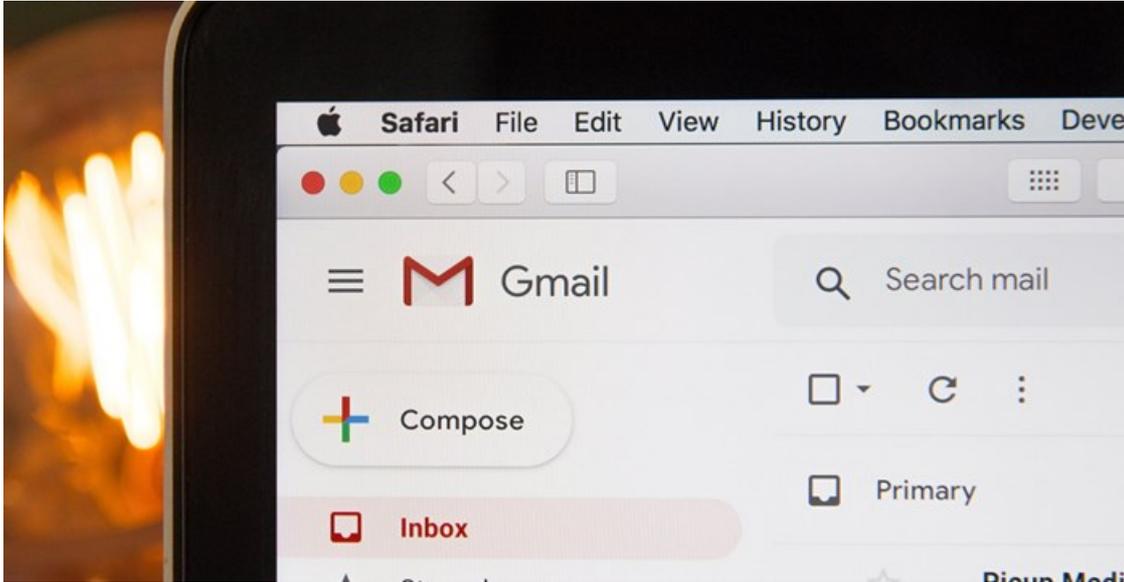


Report: Significant increase in journalist response rates to pitches

Propel, the creator of Artificial Media Intelligence (AMI), has revealed its Q3 2023 Propel Media Barometer. The report says that, in Q3 of 2023, journalists responded to just 3.33% of the more than 400,000 pitches transmitted through its platform.



Source: www.unsplash.com

Meanwhile, podcast pitch volume increased by 53.19%, with response rates for them at 15.18%.

Significant response

While there was an 11.37% increase in journalist responses between Q2 2023 and Q3 2023, there was also a 14.51% decrease in pitch volume.

This decrease in volume is similar to decreases seen year by year between Q2 and Q3 as PR professionals and journalists go on summer vacation.

However, what's different this year is the significant increase in pitch response rates. In fact, an increase of this magnitude has never been seen by Propel.

This is leading the company to believe that one of the drivers for the increased response rates has to do with PR professionals incorporating more generative AI into their workflows.

The common refrain among PR thought leaders is that by using genAI to take over the heavy lifting for the more monotonous tasks, people in communications can spend more time honing their messaging and personalising pitches. It seems that this is indeed what is happening. Propel says it will continue to monitor pitching and response rates to confirm this hypothesis.

Tuesday trumps all

In terms of PR pitching, the best day is still Tuesday, with 27.97% of pitches sent that day, of which 26.06% were responded to. In addition, subject lines of between one to five words had the highest response rate of 3.81%, but there were only approximately 27,000 pitches in this bracket sent.

Pitches with subjects between six to nine words and received an open rate of 50.31% and a response rate of 3.78%. Interestingly, the subject line tranche with the most pitches sent was between 10-15 words, but these only received response rates of 2.16%.



Report: Journalist response rate to pitches remains under 3%

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Meanwhile, pitches whose bodies were between 51-150 words yet again saw the highest number of responses at 7.49%, while pitches between 501-1,000 words saw only a 1.65% response rate. Pitches in the 51-150 word range comprised 2.95% of pitches sent, while those between 501-1,000 words comprised the largest tranche at 34.67%, likely due to them being full bylined articles or press releases.

The barometer also revealed that pitches mentioning AI only had a 57.66% open rate, down from 91% the previous quarter. Responses also went down, from 1.96% in Q2 to 1.72% in Q3. However, pitches mentioning the phrase “generative AI” had a 61.62% open rate and a 9.4% response rate - down from 11.34%. This suggests that generative AI pitches are becoming less popular as the technology becomes more mainstream.

Hard hitting news

Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, and Taylor Swift have also dominated news cycles, but despite hundreds of pitches mentioning them, none of them received any sort of a response. It appears that unless someone has real, hard hitting news about them, it's best not to use these celebrities as news hooks.

Finally, there was a nearly 85% increase in both the amounts of Series A and Series B funding round pitches, while seed funding and Series C pitches decreased by 22.22% and 46.68% respectively. Interestingly, there was a 152% increase in responses to seed funding rounds, with Series A and Series B pitches both seeing increased response rates of around 50%. Series C pitches saw an approximately 8% decrease in responses.

“Generative AI is perhaps the biggest game changer in PR since the internet,” said Zach Cutler, co-founder & CEO of Propel.

“For the past year, PR thought leaders have been touting the benefits of incorporating AI into their workflows. Specifically, how genAI can assist in creating first drafts of pitches, press releases, and media lists to free up communicators’ time to strategise and focus on the core aspects of PR.

“Today, given the increased adoption of genAI by PR professionals, and after looking at the combined decrease in pitching volume and increase in response rates over this past quarter, it appears these talking points can be backed up by hard data. The benefits of this technology’s incorporation into the communications industry are clear, and it’s quickly becoming a part of the standard PR toolkit.”

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