

DRPR Guideline on the Use of AI in PR

Preamble

The increasing integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into communication processes is fundamentally changing the PR industry and enabling efficiency gains: AI supports not only text and image generation, but also analysis, strategy, planning, distribution, and evaluation, linking these areas together.

Communicators must observe and comply with legal foundations when applying AI along the PR value chain (e.g., EU AI Act, General Data Protection Regulation, trademark, and copyright laws). The risk classification of the EU AI Act also applies to PR and communication.

In addition to existing legal regulations and communication codes, the DRPR specifies its AI guideline, particularly regarding content generation and editing, to provide guidance in daily PR practice. The guideline serves as a professional-ethical and strategic guardrail that helps PR professionals systematically, thoughtfully, and responsibly integrate AI along the entire value chain. In doing so, the DRPR does not view AI exclusively from the perspective of potential risks, but particularly as an instrument that, when used responsibly, can unfold positive societal and communicative impacts.

The DRPR recommends that companies, agencies, and institutions transfer the principles of the DRPR AI Guideline into their own guidelines—in dialogue with legal counsel, data protection officers, and communication strategists—and publish these guidelines in an accessible and transparent manner on their own channels.

The DRPR Guideline on the Use of AI in PR addresses the following points:

- Transparency and labeling of AI-generated content
- Responsibility and human oversight
- Shared responsibility of clients and agencies/service providers
- AI literacy to ensure AI competencies / education and training

I. Transparency and Labeling

Regardless of legal labeling obligations, special requirements for transparency and traceability apply to professional PR and communication. The DRPR therefore defines further professional-ethical standards for specific forms of AI-generated or AI-modified content. Labeling is always mandatory for PR and communication professionals whenever AI-generated content:

- a. **is created and published unverified** (e.g., AI-based simultaneous translation of a speech, unverified AI-generated social media post, unverified AI translation of a press release),
- b. **constitutes a deepfake** that can give recipients the impression that it represents or depicts reality (e.g., AI-generated images/videos/audio, even if manually post-processed, or human-created images/videos/audio whose message was intentionally altered or manipulated by AI). Deepfakes or synthetic media depicting identifiable real persons or simulating their voice, appearance, or behavior may generally only be used for PR purposes with their consent. Labeling does not exempt from the principles of truthfulness and avoidance of deception (see II.1).

In these cases, PR and communication professionals must label **the use of AI openly, transparently, and in a manner clearly recognizable to laypeople**, so that addressees of PR activities can identify it beyond doubt. Digital markings (e.g., watermarks) that cannot be directly perceived by the human eye are insufficient and must be supplemented by a clearly recognizable label. The DRPR recommends aligning the method of labeling with the proposals in the EU AI Act guidelines. Beyond this regulation, every organization is free to transparently label any use of AI in its communication work.

II. Responsibility and Human Oversight

The respective organization and its actors remain responsible for the selection and use of AI as well as the distribution of AI-generated content. The scope and intensity of human control, transparency, and organizational safeguards should be guided by the risk of the respective AI deployment. This responsibility specifically includes:

II.1 Truthfulness

The principle of accuracy and truthfulness anchored in the German Code of Communication (*Deutscher Kommunikationskodex*) also applies to working with AI tools. AI-generated content should be reviewed and controlled by humans in this regard, as the publishing

organization/person bears responsibility for this content. Before publication, AI-generated content must generally be subjected to human control appropriate to the respective risk. If prior human review is not possible due to the functioning of an automated or real-time system, this must be transparently recognizable to recipients (see Section I). Suitable control, escalation, and shutdown mechanisms must be provided in advance for such systems.

The AI-based creation and dissemination of fake news and deepfakes to manipulate stakeholders or for other improper purposes is impermissible. Content whose communicative impact relies substantially on misleading people about real persons, events, or facts remains impermissible even with labeling.

II.2 Avoidance of Discrimination and Bias

When publishing AI-generated content, it must be ensured that no discriminatory patterns are reinforced as a result.

II.3 Discursive Fairness

AI must not be used to feign public approval, rejection, or societal relevance. In particular, automatically generated or coordinated **fake accounts, comments, reviews, interactions, or other forms of artificially generated public resonance** are impermissible.

II.4 Human Oversight in Automated and Autonomous AI Systems

The fully automated deployment of AI, e.g., to derive entire communication strategies or through the implementation of autonomous AI agents, must be critically examined. AI can support strategic analysis, scenario development, and decision-making. However, responsibility for strategic decisions and their communicative, societal, and ethical consequences remains with humans. This applies in particular to the field of crisis communication.

II.5 Tool Selection

Anyone using PR tools with AI functionalities (e.g., for media analysis, stakeholder mapping, text adaptation) must critically reflect on how these function and what information underlies the AI output.

III. Shared Responsibility of Clients and Agencies/Service Providers

All provisions stated in the AI guideline apply to agencies, editorial offices, freelancers, semi-professional providers, and private individuals offering media-like platforms (influencers).

When companies or other organizations commission agencies or individuals to carry out PR measures, the provisions of the AI guideline apply to both the client and the contractor. Both sides bear equal responsibility here.

Agencies or platforms that make AI-generated content available for use in PR and communication must explicitly inform their clients about compliance with AI guidelines.

IV. AI Literacy / Education and Training

AI competence along the PR process must strictly be ensured. Communicators must be trained in using all everyday AI tools (e.g., for media analysis, KPI definition, research) in a manner that enables a responsible and reflective approach to AI in accordance with this AI guideline. This applies in particular to Functionalities and limitations, Hallucinations and source criticism, Bias, data protection, and confidentiality, Copyright and personal rights, Labeling obligations and secure tool usage, Human control and escalation processes. The principles of the AI guideline must be conveyed in education and training.

Status: September 17, 2026