PRINCIPLES FOR ETHICAL USE OF AI
IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

THE
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COMMUNITY

» Short version

PRINCIPLES FOR ETHICAL USE OF AI IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Ratified By C Square, The Corp Comm Community as a member of ICCO
March 2024

1. *Advice is always human*

Corporate communications professionals' work remains essentially communications advice and communications activities carried out by human professionals based on their professional experience. The deployment of AI technology is always in support of the human process. The communications expert remains fully responsible for the correctness of his/her advice.

2. *Accuracy, Fact-Checking, and Combatting Disinformation*

Corporate communications professionals ensure that AI-powered content is accurate, reliable, and fact-checked before dissemination.

Using AI tools for fact-checking and debunking disinformation and misinformation is encouraged; however, note that many publicly available generative AI tools regularly deliver inaccurate information, so fact-check in sources outside of AI tools as well.

Given the potential of AI to create and disseminate misinformation rapidly, Corporate communications professionals must be especially vigilant against the inadvertent or intentional spread of such information.

3. *Privacy, Data Protection, and Responsible Sharing*

Corporate communications professionals handle customer data and client-privileged information with utmost care and comply with data protection regulations.

Corporate communications professionals will not use private, protected, or sensitive client information to train public AI models. They have the responsibility of sharing verified and non-deceptive content.

4. *Bias Detection, Mitigation, and Inclusivity*

Corporate communications professionals actively identify and address biases that may arise from AI-powered content and explore the use of AI for more inclusive campaigns. Using diverse training data for AI models to ensure inclusivity is also important.

5. *Intellectual Property, Copyright Compliance, and Media Literacy*

Corporate communications professionals respect copyright laws and intellectual property rights when using AI in all forms. They are encouraged to promote media literacy about AI-powered content and deep fakes.

6. Human Oversight, Intervention, and Collaboration

Corporate communications professionals incorporate human oversight and intervention in the AI-powered content creation process and collaborate with AI specialists for insights and guidance.

7. Contextual Understanding, Adaptation, and Personalization

Corporate communications professionals must analyze the context and appropriateness of AI-assisted content for different channels and target audiences and explore the potential of AI for tailored experiences.

8. Responsible Automation and Efficiency

Corporate communications professionals leverage AI to automate repetitive tasks and enhance efficiency without compromising ethical standards and professional expertise.

9. Continuous Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback

Corporate communications professionals regularly monitor and evaluate the performance and impact of AI-powered content and create a feedback loop where stakeholders can voice concerns.

10. Ethical Professional Development, Education, and AI Advocacy

Corporate communications professionals engage in continuous learning and professional development to stay updated on AI advancements and ethical considerations. They are responsible for advocating ethical AI use and practices in the broader media landscape.

11. Transparency, Disclosure, and Authenticity

Corporate communications professionals transparently and proactively disclose when generative AI is used to create purely artificial content that might pose a threat of distorting the public's perceptions of reality.

Where appropriate, the organization will proactively inform its partner(s) of the AI rules to which it subscribes. This may include, for example, a right of veto over using specific tools.

More generally, it is recommended that all Corporate communications professionals use a disclaimer stating his/her practices regarding AI are in accordance with the rules of this industry charter.

» Long version

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Introduction

Whether working in agencies, freelance, or in-house, Corporate communications professionals increasingly use AI technologies to improve their work and achieve compelling results. However, as AI becomes more prevalent in the sector, it is crucial to establish guidelines that ensure AI's ethical and responsible use.

Recognizing that the application areas of AI will continue to expand and that its importance is likely to increase over time, C Square will update and clarify its position in line with the ethical charters and practices applicable to the members of the association.
As the umbrella organization for Corporate communications professionals in Belgium, C Square has ratified the following guidelines defined by the International Communication Consultancy Organisation (ICCO) in October 2023. Consequently, any C Square member can claim to be bound by this code of conduct as long as he or she respects its principles.

Guidelines for Corporate communication professionals

These guidelines provide corporate communications professionals with the necessary principles to navigate the complexities of AI while upholding ethical standards, respecting privacy rights and copyrights, and maintaining client confidentiality. C Square wants to guarantee the relationship of trust that binds its members to their many stakeholders. The advice and actions from its members must be high quality, reliable and relevant. These requirements are essential to ensure qualitative work and must remain our compass.

By adhering to these principles, corporate communications professionals can leverage AI effectively to deliver strategic consultations, produce a range of content, manage crisis and issues communications, and foster positive and trust-based relationships with media and other stakeholders.

What are the different sorts of AI interference?

AI-generated content refers to content or results produced entirely by artificial intelligence without direct human intervention in the generation process.

AI-assisted content refers to processes, decisions, or content where artificial intelligence plays a supportive or augmentative role, often enhancing or informing human decisions or efforts but not taking over entirely.

AI-powered term refers to any use of AI, including generative AI.

Principles

1.   *Advice is always human*

Corporate communications professionals' work remains essentially communications advice and communications activities carried out by human professionals based on their professional experience. The deployment of AI technology is always in support of the human process. The communications expert remains fully responsible for the correctness of his/her advice.

2.   *Accuracy, Fact-Checking, and Combatting Disinformation*

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Using AI tools for fact-checking and debunking disinformation and misinformation is encouraged; however, note that many publicly available generative AI tools regularly deliver inaccurate information, so fact-check in sources outside of AI tools as well.

Given the potential of AI to create and disseminate misinformation rapidly, Corporate communications professionals must be especially vigilant against the inadvertent or intentional spread of such information.

Examples:
- Confirm the accuracy of information, data, and analysis before incorporating it into client reports or media materials.
- Cross-reference information with timely and credible sources to validate authenticity and precision.
- Ensure AI-powered translation tools accurately render the intended meaning by cross-checking translations with native or native-level speakers.
- Ensure that AI tools designed to boost content reach do not inadvertently amplify disinfor mation or promote misleading narratives.

3.   *Privacy, Data Protection, and Responsible Sharing*

Corporate communications professionals handle customer data and client-privileged information with utmost care and comply with data protection regulations.

Corporate communications professionals will not use private, protected, or sensitive client information to train public AI models. They have the responsibility of sharing verified and non-deceptive content.

Examples:
- Ensure algorithms used for media monitoring respect privacy rights and refrain from accessing or storing personal information.
- Anonymize and aggregate customer data to preserve privacy while generating insights for strate gic communication campaigns.
- Take steps to protect the privacy of individual persons whose sentiments are analysed, guaranteeing their data isn't linked to their identity.

4.   *Bias Detection, Mitigation, and Inclusivity*

Corporate communications professionals actively identify and address biases that may arise from AI-powered content and explore the use of AI for more inclusive campaigns. Using diverse training data for AI models to ensure inclusivity is also important.

Examples:
- Evaluate AI-assisted media materials to identify and correct any potential biases in target selection or language.
- Regularly scrutinize AI algorithms to ensure they don't perpetuate stereotypes and politically or ideologically motivated biases in content recommendations.
- Use human judgment to select images, words, and videos from content created by Generative AI.
- Constantly monitor and assess AI algorithms to minimize biases in influencer selection, ensuring fair representation and diversity.

5.   Intellectual Property, Copyright Compliance, and Media Literacy

Corporate communications professionals respect copyright laws and intellectual property rights when using AI in all forms. They are encouraged to promote media literacy about AI-powered content and deep fakes.

Examples:
- Read the terms and conditions of AI tools you use and subscribe to understand their training source materials, IP, and copyright compliance commitments and other policies.
- Confirm that AI-generated images or videos don't infringe upon copyrighted material and secure necessary permissions for such assets.
- Cross-check written AI-powered content to ensure it doesn't plagiarize or violate copyright laws.
- Guarantee that AI algorithms for content curation comply with fair use policies and do not breach copyright restrictions.

6.   Human Oversight, Intervention, and Collaboration

Corporate communications professionals incorporate human oversight and intervention in the AI-powered content creation process and collaborate with AI specialists for insights and guidance.

Examples:
- Engage human experts to review and validate strategic insight and crisis response messages before dissemination.
- Share professional human insights and expertise in opinion pieces to guarantee accuracy and relevance.
- Incorporate human professionals to review and tailor AI-assisted media pitches, ensuring relevance and quality.

7.   Contextual Understanding, Adaptation, and Personalization

Corporate communications professionals must analyze the context and appropriateness of AI-assisted content for different channels and target audiences and explore the potential of AI for tailored experiences.

Examples:
- Adjust AI-assisted content to respect cultural nuances and sensitivities when engaging international markets.
- Tailor AI-assisted content to conform to varied social media channels' tone, style, and platform-specific requirements.
- Review and adapt AI-assisted content to cater to the preferences and expectations of diverse audiences.

8.   Responsible Automation and Efficiency

Corporate communications professionals leverage AI to automate repetitive tasks and enhance efficiency without compromising ethical standards and professional expertise.

Examples:
- Employ AI tools to automate media monitoring and analysis, thus allowing Corporate communications professionals to concentrate on strategic insights and decision-making.
- Use AI algorithms to create content calendars and schedule recommendations, optimizing workflow and resource allocation.
- Deploy AI to create content variations from approved source materials, as long as confidential information is not fed into AI tools.

9. *Continuous Monitoring, Evaluation, and Feedback*

Corporate communications professionals regularly monitor and evaluate the performance and impact of AI-powered content and create a feedback loop where stakeholders can voice concerns.

Examples:
- Continually assess the accuracy and effectiveness of AI-generated sentiment analysis to ensure it aligns with human interpretation.
- Monitor the engagement and response to AI-assisted media materials to measure their effectiveness and refine future strategies.
- Continually assess AI-assisted visual and written content for audience feedback.

10. *Ethical Professional Development, Education, and AI Advocacy*

Corporate communications professionals engage in continuous learning and professional development to stay updated on AI advancements and ethical considerations. They are responsible for advocating ethical AI use and practices in the broader media landscape.

Examples:
- Create education and discussion forums in your agencies/teams so employees at all stages of career development understand and can use AI frameworks.
- Participate in training programs and workshops focusing on the ethical use of AI, understand biases, and mitigate ethical challenges.
- Engage in industry forums, conferences, and discussions to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and encourage ethical AI adoption in the Corporate communications sector.

11. *Transparency, Disclosure, and Authenticity*

Corporate communications professionals transparently and proactively disclose when generative AI is used to create purely artificial content that might pose a threat of distorting the public's perceptions of reality.

Where appropriate, the organization will proactively inform its partner(s) of the AI rules to which it subscribes. This may include, for example, a right of veto over using specific tools.

More generally, it is recommended that all Corporate communications professionals use a disclaimer stating his/her practices regarding AI are in accordance with the rules of this industry charter.

Examples:
- Unambiguously announce when generative AI is employed to generate reality-like content to avoid misrepresentation and maintain ethical transparency.
- Understand the technology's limitations and biases and how they can influence decision-making.
- Clearly notify users when they're interacting with an AI chatbot rather than a human representative.
- Collaborate with associations, governing bodies, research-based organizations who are working in AI/ are AI experts to ensure the technology is being utilized in ways that align with ethical and professional standards.

These guidelines stress the importance of transparency, accuracy, privacy protection, bias detection, intellectual property compliance, human oversight, contextual understanding, responsible automation, continuous monitoring, and professional development by providing a framework to navigate AI technologies' challenges and opportunities.

Adherence to these principles ensures that corporate communications professionals employ AI effectively without causing harm or violating human rights, copyrights, privacy rights, or trademarks.

Furthermore, corporate communications professionals must act as a bulwark against disinformation, preserving the integrity and trustworthiness of corporate communications in the digital age.

AI, as powerful as it is, should complement and not replace the human touch, invaluable expertise, judgment, and creativity that corporate communications professionals bring to the table. AI and its implications will keep changing, so adaptability and vigilance are vital when facing rapidly evolving AI technologies.

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