



A Global Leadership Perspective on the IPREX State of Communications & Marketing Report 2023



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As the Executive Director of IPREX, the top global communications and PR network, I evaluated The State of Global Communications and Marketing Report from a global perspective. The results of this study are powerful as they reveal three significant findings that define our time and have significant implications for the future.

1: Optimism in the Face of Global Communication Challenges

The IPREX Report found 50% of global communicators believe communicating across borders will become less difficult in the coming years. Furthermore, 29% of the respondents stated they expect the difficulty of cross-border communication to remain about the same. This is a positive indication that the industry is aware of the challenges and is actively working to address them. This positive outlook could be attributed to the advancements in technology, including AI, and the increasing number of communication platforms that enable seamless global connectivity. Further, growing trust between organizations and their local partners, as well as the industry's leaps in cultural understanding, means organizations can remain optimistic about the future of cross-border communication.

2. The Unfulfilled Expectations of Centralization & The Response: Trust in Networks

The Report discovered global organizations have found a localized approach is necessary to effectively engage with stakeholders in different regions. While a localized approach makes sense, it also rails against the projections that globalization would mean communications from a singular place (centralization). What we're hearing is some centralization is to be expected, but now more than ever people demand local context and cultural understanding.

All global organizations surveyed have adopted a hybrid approach, combining centralized functions with local teams and partners to ensure they can effectively engage with customers and stakeholders in different regions. In fact, IPREX's report found it is more likely an organization will have local agency partners on the ground than local employees. However, there were nuances across regions - for example, organizations based in EMEA are more likely than the Americas or APAC to develop their strategy in their local offices.

About

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By far the majority of organizations rely on third-party providers, whether that be a network, global communications agency, individual agencies, or freelancers, to assist them with their external communications. While there are some regional nuances - for example, two-thirds of APAC organizations use a network, like IPREX - twice as many as EMEA- and American-headquartered organizations. This demonstrates how organizations are placing their trust in networks like IPREX to effectively navigate diverse regional communication landscapes.

3. Global Organizations Are Making Positive Strides in DEIB Efforts

The organizations we heard from, particularly larger ones, are prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) efforts across their global operations. It's heartening to see this strong commitment to promoting a diverse and inclusive workplace, and notable that C-suite executives are active in driving DEI efforts. It shows leaders view investing and driving change as a business priority.

Interestingly, organizations in APAC lead the way in implementing global DEIB programs, with over two-thirds having consistent programs across their companies. This is a positive sign that the region is taking steps towards a more equitable industry culture.

The majority of DEIB training is implemented internally in the Americas and EMEA, while APAC-headquartered organizations contract out about half of their DEIB training. Whether using third parties or relying on internal resources, companies are taking ownership of their DEI efforts.

While there is still room for improvement, it is heartening to see many organizations are prioritizing DEIB efforts. It's reasonable to expect this will impact how organizations communicate and show this commitment internally, externally, through marketing programs and more - because clearly these efforts are critical in building a better future for workplaces across the globe.

Navigating Tomorrow

As the head of a global network, I envision an era defined by global collaboration around decision-making and communications. Organizations are dismantling traditional centralized communication models and continuing to embrace a new approach - one that marries local insights with the expansive reach of global networks. While consistency in global messaging will be apparent, it will be tailored in a way that is more authentic to local audiences. A focus on DEIB will only enhance this trend, especially as organizations work to truly understand the lived experiences of their employees and customers, and make decisions through a lens of equity and understanding.

IPREX stands as the premier global communications and PR network, uniting over 2000 professionals across 100+ markets. Our heartbeat is the entrepreneurial spirit of independent PR, communications, and marketing agencies. For four decades, IPREX has curated an unrivaled client experience, adeptly navigating projects from single-market endeavors to expansive international campaigns.

As the world evolves, IPREX stands unwavering, shaping a future where collaboration knows no bounds, and communication transforms the 21st century.

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