

Public Relations for Industrial Technology

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How does public relations help me meet my business goals?



Although public relations (PR) is a well-established marketing tool, industrial technology companies are typically sales-focused, and product marketing managers demand sales leads from marketing programmes. With earned editorial content often offering little in the way of clicks, conversions and return on investment, making the case for public relations, even as part of a wider campaign, can be challenging.

Turning to my colleagues for a concise way of justifying the value of PR, the responses I got were: when you are looking for the latest information do you watch the news or listen to the commercials? Another said: which offers more credibility, you saying how great your own product is within an advert or a third party saying it within an article? Another colleague described PR as building brand reputation over time and used the delightful phrase “planting seeds that’ll grow into a forest of credibility.” Or put another way, PR is not about getting someone’s phone number, it’s about others preparing the ground, so that when you ask for the number, it’s more likely you are given it.

PR does have metrics of course, but they are different to those used for other marketing. For example, when gaining editorial coverage, a measurable metric would be the reach of the publication or the number of followers a journalist has on social media.

The different objectives of PR can be measured in different ways:

Awareness: reach or views

Reputation: surveys, polls, or viewing conversations about your technology

Behaviour: how many join an email list, register for an event, etc.

Although these may help, a little more depth to your argument probably won’t go amiss. So, first things first, what is PR? PR is the strategic management of how your business communicates with the world. PR can be one of the most cost-effective marketing tools helping companies to shape perceptions, build relationships and influence the way others see your brand. Making connections and building trust are essential for long-term business success and this is where PR delivers value.

PR provides a strong foundation for marketing efforts. It is crucial for building credibility, managing reputation, increasing brand awareness, fostering relationships and controlling the narrative. PR helps businesses stand out, attract investment and engage audiences by creating authentic content and positioning leaders as experts. It is generally regarded as more trustworthy and effective for long-term growth and sales than traditional advertising alone.

Improving reputation: Business success is enhanced through trust and having a good reputation. PR continuously helps to strengthen reputation and brand value. Should a negative event arise that could impact that reputation, crisis management in the form of strategic communications can be used to control the narrative, inform stakeholders and mitigate severe reputational damage. Existing relations with trade media can also help regain trust.

Promoting brand value: Promotion of your technology and services through reputed media can increase credibility. Delivering your desired message in a strategic way can influence potential customers and boost business growth. Press releases, articles and social media posts help you to connect with your existing and potential customers and allow them to discover the qualities and benefits of your solutions.

Improving online presence: The online presence of a business is critical, and PR can help increase traffic to your website and create new customers. Digital PR, which incorporates content, outreach and digital channels (social media, online publications, etc.) also helps to enhance the SEO ranking of your website, which can directly impact sales. SEO performance relies on high quality content, which itself helps attract website visitors.





Increasing sales: PR is an essential marketing tool that is used as part of wider marketing programmes to help garner customers and sales. PR helps sales by building credibility, increasing brand visibility, and accelerating the sales cycle through strategic storytelling and reputation management. By securing media coverage and thought leadership, PR fosters trust, allowing sales teams to overcome objections and engage prospects more effectively.

Media and technologies to support your PR

Trade media: Working with trade and technical media offers long-term benefits and opportunities to your business. The publishing of your news, application stories and thought leadership articles will assist your company and brand in reaching the appropriate target audience.

Broadcasting: Utilising video and podcasts that are hosted on your own website, social media or trade media allows you to promote your technology or service to your target audience in media that are more readily consumed by the latest generation of engineers.

Social media: Social media platforms such as Facebook, X and LinkedIN offer the opportunity to reach your target audiences. High-quality PR content creates the opportunity to interact with your customers and gain immediate feedback. Close relations with journalists and influencers can help amplify news and information.

AI tools: Artificial intelligence tools assist PR by enhancing the quality and speed of content creation.

Conclusion Although PR may not always be able to provide the desired metrics of clicks and conversions, it is an essential marketing tool offering the opportunity for a transformative impact on a business. Strategic use of PR will enhance your business reputation, credibility and trust, helping you to connect with your target audience and achieve your long-term business goals.

How to write for an engineering audience





Writing material specifically aimed at engineers demands similar skills to those required for any other audience, as producing high-quality copy is essential no matter who the reader might be. However, to engage engineers a writer needs the ability to not only understand often complex subject matter but also convey that understanding clearly and concisely. Having an engineering background can certainly help, but extensive technical knowledge doesn't necessarily convert into accomplished writing.

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For those with the dual skill set, time tends to be the biggest problem – they never have enough. The same goes for the target audience, so it's incredibly important to get the writing right. Engineers don't have lots of time to spare, so if you manage to grab their attention with an article that they are interested in, you had better not lose them through poor writing.

The first port of call when looking to get a message across to engineers is usually a trade journal or its corresponding website. When producing press releases, articles, case studies or white papers for this media, a writer needs to make sure that the average engineer can understand them and benefit from them. To achieve this, the writing should be crisp, comprehensible, and with a level of technical detail which is appropriate for its target audience's knowledge.

When trade media commission a technical article, they will usually give the author a strict word limit. With ever-diminishing levels of print advertising comes reduced editorial space, which means that even if you are trying to outline a potentially complicated challenge and explain its solution you will have very little space in which to do it, so you will need to be very succinct and incisive. Try not to use two words where one will suffice.



The use of slang, jargon and acronyms should be avoided. Just because you know what an industry-specific term means, or what an acronym stands for, don't assume that all your readers will know too. There are exceptions of course, with some terms or acronyms being almost universally recognised. However, to ensure greater clarity, always try to keep it simple and stick to plain, accurate English.

When it comes to technical detail, it's important to understand the level of knowledge the target audience has and not waste words on basic information that the readers are already likely to know. For example, if you were writing about level measurement in bulk liquid storage tanks, for a journal focused specifically on tank storage, there would be no need to give an overview of the different types of storage tanks available.

The readers already know about tanks, so tell them something they don't know. However, if the article was to be pitched to a magazine covering the oil and gas industry in general, the readership would be much broader and an overview of the different tanks to which the level technology can be applied might then be useful.

Another pitfall for technical writers is believing that just because you are writing for engineers, you need to sound like an engineer. However detailed your subject matter might be, it is still your responsibility to make your writing as captivating as possible for readers, rather than risk losing their interest by sounding like an instruction manual.

Adopting a lighter tone can often be helpful in this regard. Honestly. You see, you feel more comfortable reading this less formal style already, don't you?

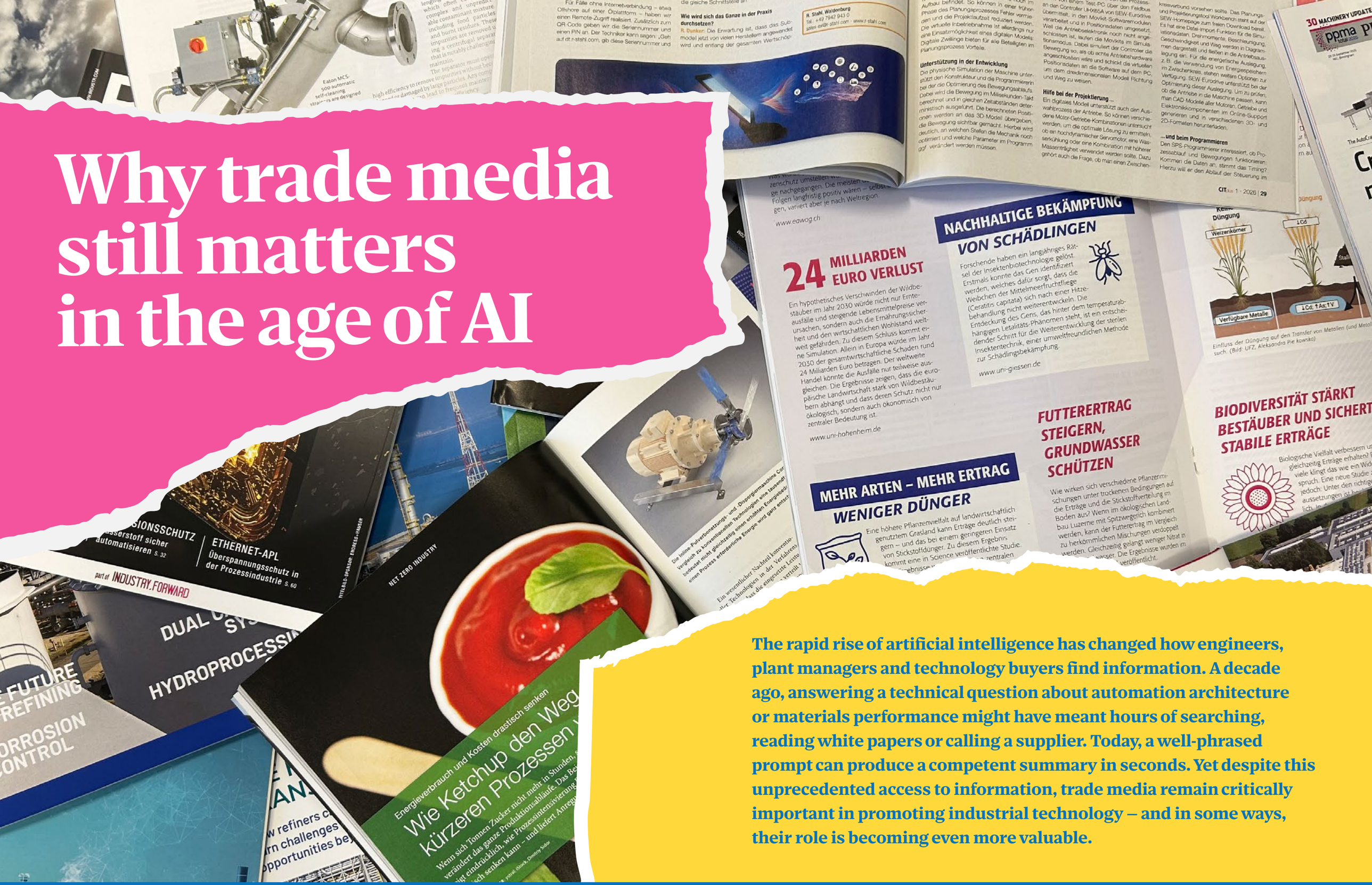
The best writers are those who know their audience, understand the subject matter, and can consolidate complex technical information and make it accessible to the average engineer.

At HHC Lewis we have one of the UK's most experienced and respected teams of industrial and technical public relations specialists.

It includes not only engineers, but also journalists, technical writers, editors and marketing professionals who have great experience writing for engineers and a technical audience.



Why trade media still matters in the age of AI



The rapid rise of artificial intelligence has changed how engineers, plant managers and technology buyers find information. A decade ago, answering a technical question about automation architecture or materials performance might have meant hours of searching, reading white papers or calling a supplier. Today, a well-phrased prompt can produce a competent summary in seconds. Yet despite this unprecedented access to information, trade media remain critically important in promoting industrial technology – and in some ways, their role is becoming even more valuable.



> **AI can explain how a technology works, but trade media demonstrate why it matters and how it succeeds in practice.**



AI excels at synthesising existing knowledge and providing quick, generalised answers. It can explain how predictive maintenance works or outline the principles of process optimisation with impressive clarity. What it cannot fully replace is the depth, context, and credibility that trade media bring to industrial decision-making.

Trade publications are deeply embedded in their industries. Their editors follow standards updates, capital spending cycles, workforce shortages and supply-chain constraints year after year. They know which 'breakthroughs' quietly disappeared and which incremental improvements genuinely changed plant performance. This context enables them to turn raw information into insight – something AI alone cannot consistently guarantee.

Credibility is equally important. In industrial sectors, decisions often involve high capital expenditure, safety risks, and long-term operational consequences. Engineers and executives need sources they trust. When a facilities director evaluates a new control system, the question is not just "How does it work?" but "Who else has deployed it, and what happened next?" Trade media rely on experienced journalists, industry experts, and rigorous editorial standards.

Unlike AI-generated responses, which may blend accurate data with outdated or unverifiable sources, trade media provide accountability, transparency, and fact-checking. Readers know who is speaking, why, and with what expertise.

Trade media also excel at showing technology in action. Seeing how a manufacturer successfully implemented predictive maintenance or transitioned to Industry 4.0 reduces perceived risk and builds confidence. A case study about a manufacturer reducing downtime by 8% after implementing condition monitoring carries weight because it reflects constraints, compromises and measurable outcomes. AI can explain how a technology works, but trade media demonstrate why it matters and how it succeeds in practice.

There is also the matter of discernment. Industrial technology is saturated with claims of disruption and transformation. Not every innovation reshapes a sector. Editors make choices about what deserves coverage and what does not. That filtering function is easy to underestimate, yet it saves readers time and protects them from noise disguised as insight.

Finally, trade media foster industry communities. Through events, webinars, awards and opinion columns, they create shared conversations about challenges and future directions. When a sector debates hydrogen viability or cybersecurity compliance, it is rarely an algorithm that sets the agenda – it is editorial leadership.

In an AI-driven world, trade media are not obsolete – they are essential. They provide trust, context and connection, ensuring that industrial technologies are not just understood, but responsibly evaluated and effectively adopted.

In this environment, access to trade media alone is not enough. Understanding how editorial decisions are made – and what genuinely earns coverage – has become increasingly important. PR teams with established relationships and a working knowledge of editorial priorities can play a pivotal role here. By shaping credible stories, aligning them with sector concerns and presenting them in a way that respects journalistic standards, they help ensure that valuable innovations reach the right desks – and ultimately, the right readers.

Contact HHC Lewis to see how we can maximise the potential of trade media.

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How to get heard above the noise

If industrial technology companies employ their own marketing departments, it seems reasonable to wonder why they would need to employ an external public relations agency. Could the public relations activity not be performed in-house, helping to reduce costs and maintain tighter control over output? The simple answer to this question is yes, it could, but there are often good reasons why they may prefer to work with a specialist agency, not least because they don't have the in-house skill set.

It has also become increasing hard to get heard above the noise. Very few companies overlook the opportunity that PR brings to a marketing campaign, which means that every media is inundated with press releases, abstracts and pitches. To gain the exposure you desire, it is important to provide the type of material that editors are keen to publish.



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This is an area in which a PR agency comes into its own. The most fundamental way is through the provision of high-quality technical writing. Specialist PR agencies employ experienced and knowledgeable writers, who produce engaging content based on often complex and highly technical subject matter. Critically, these PR professionals, often former journalists, understand what editors are looking for, and shape the material to make it as appealing as possible.

For example, a company might be keen to gain exposure for an existing product range. That is a common requirement and one that presents a challenge. The product is not new, so you can't write a press release announcing its launch. Perhaps the existing customers are reluctant to reveal their critical advantage, so won't permit an application story that shines a light on the benefits the product provides.



This limits options, but simply writing a 'puff piece' that describes how wonderful the products are will not interest the editor of a trade and technical journal. What is required is thought-provoking content that perhaps focuses on industry best practice or ways of solving a specific challenge. This kind of material offers something of educational benefit to the readers and thus will excite the editor.

PR agencies understand this and can produce material that achieves the delicate balance of meeting strict editorial requirements, while also promoting a client's product or service subtly, rather than in an overtly commercial fashion. By producing enlightening content, a PR agency can not only help the client to change perceptions within their industry, but also help to position them as a respected thought-leader.

Specialist PR agencies also have excellent editorial contacts across a wide spectrum of industrial technology media. Having in-depth knowledge of these publications, websites and journalists and their respective features schedules enables an on-the-ball agency to pinpoint the best editorial opportunities. Having established a trusted relationship with a magazine or journalist, it is not uncommon for them to seek the agency's services in providing an article or comment, thereby creating a valuable advantage for its client.

At HHC Lewis, we specialise in providing PR and media relations services for industrial technology, engineering and manufacturing clients. Our respected team of technical writers has great experience, especially in promoting factory automation and process control technology and services across a wide range of industries. This has enabled us to develop well-established, trusted editorial contacts in trade and technical journals, magazines and websites throughout Europe, the Middle East, Africa and North America.

Working with HHC Lewis will help your company get its message across to the widest and most appropriate audience. Our PR services include developing and distributing high-quality editorial content with educational value, which will appeal to both editors and their publications' specialist readership.

If you would like to know more about how HHC Lewis can help with your PR campaign, please get in touch.



The Rise of GEO: Why PR Matters More Than Ever

AI-driven search is changing how people find information, reducing the impact of traditional organic traffic. As the focus shifts from SEO to generative engine optimisation (GEO), brands must ensure their content is referenced in AI-generated answers. With approximately 90% of AI-cited links coming from earned media and third-party sources, public relations has never been more critical to visibility.

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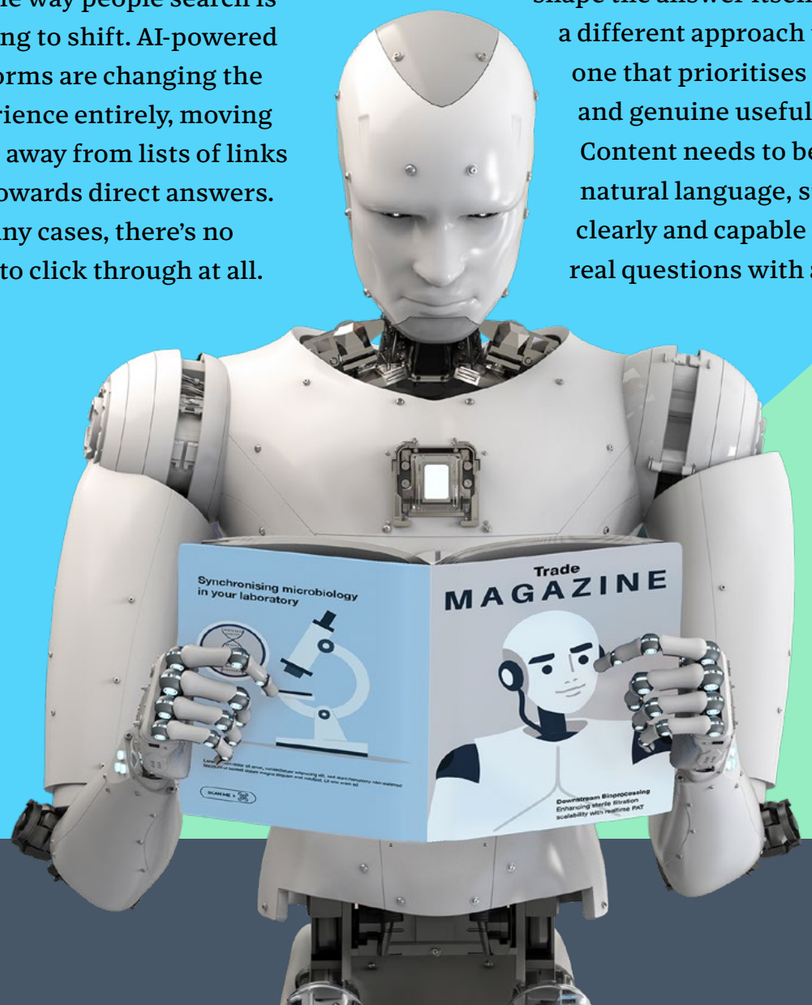
For years, SEO has been the backbone of digital visibility, driving traffic, shaping content and helping brands get in front of the right audiences. Websites have been carefully structured so search engines can crawl and index them, while messaging has been refined to align with what people are actually searching for.

PR has played a key role, helping to build authority through media coverage, backlinks and brand mentions – factors that have long influenced how search engines rank content. For PR professionals, SEO has also shaped how content is written – balancing readability, keyword relevance and search performance to attract qualified traffic.

But the way people search is starting to shift. AI-powered platforms are changing the experience entirely, moving users away from lists of links and towards direct answers. In many cases, there's no need to click through at all.

Zero-click searches now account for around 60–65% of queries, and some sectors are already seeing organic traffic fall by as much as 30%. At the same time, the traffic that does come via AI tends to be more valuable. These are users asking more detailed questions and often further along in their decision-making, which means while overall volume may decline, intent is increasing. This is where generative engine optimisation, or GEO, comes in.

Where SEO focused on rankings and clicks, GEO is about being cited. Visibility is no longer determined solely by where your website appears in search results, but by whether your content is used to shape the answer itself. That requires a different approach to content – one that prioritises clarity, depth and genuine usefulness. Content needs to be written in natural language, structured clearly and capable of answering real questions with authority.



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In simple terms, SEO was about being found; GEO is about being trusted. That trust, however, isn't built in isolation. AI engines tend to favour independent, authoritative sources – particularly established media, industry publications and expert commentary – rather than relying heavily on brand-owned content.

They draw from a broader ecosystem of credible voices to generate balanced responses, which is why earned media is becoming so influential. Coverage in trade publications, thought leadership articles and case studies provide the context and validation that AI models look for. It's this external reinforcement that helps position a brand as a reliable source of information.

As a result, visibility is becoming increasingly tied to reputation. Brands that are consistently referenced across credible outlets are more likely to be cited, shaping how they appear in AI-generated narratives.

There is also a clear recency bias, with AI models often favouring more up-to-date content, meaning a steady flow of high-quality coverage matters just as much as individual standout pieces.

PR has always been about building trust and credibility, but historically its impact has been difficult to measure, often sitting outside traditional attribution models. In an AI-driven search environment, that influence is becoming far more visible. If your brand is being talked about in the right places, it is far more likely to appear in the answers people are given.

In a landscape where answers are generated rather than searched, visibility is no longer just about ranking – it's about recognition. And increasingly, that recognition is built through PR. But earning that recognition at scale requires the right media relationships, consistent content, and a clear strategy – making a PR agency an essential partner in achieving visibility in the age of AI.

If you would like to know more about how HHC Lewis can help with your SEO PR campaign, please get in touch.

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Writing for GEO: How to Create Content That Actually Gets Used by AI









As Generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini and Google's AI Overviews become a more common way of finding information, the way we write content is starting to change. It's no longer just about getting a page to rank well in search results. Increasingly, the aim is to be included in the answer itself. So, what does that mean in practice? To write content that performs well in GEO, it needs to be clear, trustworthy and easy for AI systems to interpret and reuse.

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This is where Generative Engine Optimisation, or GEO, comes into play. While it is often described as the next step after SEO, it requires a slightly different approach. GEO is less about refining keywords and more about writing in a way that AI systems can clearly understand, trust and reuse.

One of the most noticeable changes is the need to be more direct. Generative tools are built to answer questions, so content that gets to the point quickly is far more effective. If the key message is buried or takes too long to come through, it is less likely to be picked up. This does not mean removing personality, but it does mean being clearer about what you are saying and why it matters. In simple terms, strong GEO content answers the question early, rather than building up to it.

Structure still plays an important role, but it does not need to feel rigid or formulaic. Content should flow naturally while remaining easy to follow. Clear sections, a logical progression of ideas and well-paced paragraphs all help. The aim is to make the content easy to read and easy to interpret, both for people and for AI systems that may be summarising it.

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Expertise is another important factor. Generative engines tend to favour content that shows real understanding. General summaries are easy to find and do not stand out. What makes a difference is content that explains why something matters, how it works in practice, or what it means in a broader context. For example, rather than simply stating that “clarity is important”, it is more useful to show how unclear content can prevent an AI system from selecting or reusing it.

There is also a move towards more natural language. People are asking full questions rather than typing short search phrases, and content should reflect that. Writing in a way that sounds natural and straightforward makes it easier for these systems to understand the intent behind it, which increases the likelihood of that content being used in a response.

Consistency matters as well. AI systems build a picture over time, not just from a single page. The way an organisation describes itself, the topics it focuses on and the language it uses all contribute to that picture. Keeping this consistent helps reinforce what the organisation is known for and makes it easier to associate it with specific areas of expertise.

It is also worth considering how content might be reused. Generative tools often incorporate information directly into their responses rather than simply linking to it. This means ideas need to stand on their own. Each section should be clear enough to be understood if it is lifted or summarised elsewhere, without relying on the rest of the article for context.

Alongside all of this, credibility remains essential. Well-written content on its own is not always enough. A wider presence across trusted sources helps reinforce whether that content is seen as reliable. This is where PR and content start to work more closely together, as external coverage strengthens the likelihood of content being used.

Writing for GEO is not about following a strict set of rules. It is about adapting to a different way of being discovered. Clear thinking, well-structured ideas and genuine expertise still sit at the centre of it. The difference now is that content is not just there to be found. It needs to be used—and that comes down to how clearly, confidently and consistently it communicates what matters.

There is also a practical reality behind all of this. Even well-written content will struggle to be picked up if it exists in isolation. If an article sits on a relatively unknown site, with little in the way of external mentions, limited backlinks and no PR support, it is far less likely to be surfaced by tools like ChatGPT, Gemini or Google’s AI Overviews. Not because the writing is poor, but because these systems tend to favour sources they already recognise and trust.

If that same article sits within a stronger environment, the picture changes. Content published on a credible site, supported by PR coverage or referenced elsewhere, and tied to a clearly defined organisation or expert is far more likely to be used. Consistency across related content only strengthens that further. In that sense, GEO is not just about how you write. It is about how your content is supported. Strong writing gives you a foundation, but credibility and visibility elsewhere are what increase the chances of being included. That combination is what ultimately determines whether your content is simply available—or actually used.



If you would like to know more about how HHC Lewis can help with your SEO PR campaign, please get in touch.

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How PR Companies Help Organisations Succeed with Generative Engine Optimisation

As online search continues to evolve, organisations are having to rethink what it really means to be visible. It's no longer just about appearing on a results page. Increasingly, people are turning to AI-driven tools for answers, recommendations and explanations—and those answers don't present a list of links. They present a single, synthesised response.

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This shift has given rise to Generative Engine Optimisation, or GEO. And while it may sound like a natural successor to SEO, it operates on very different principles. GEO isn't about ranking; it's about being included. The question is no longer "Are you on page one?" but "Are you part of the answer at all?"

That distinction changes everything, not least the role of public relations.

At a practical level, generative engines rely on signals of trust, authority and relevance. They draw from sources they consider credible—established publications, expert commentary and consistent references across the web. This is precisely the environment PR companies operate in. Their role has always been to place organisations in respected spaces, to shape narratives, and to build recognition over time. What's changed is how valuable that work has become in an AI-driven context.

When a PR company secures coverage in a well-regarded publication, it does more than raise awareness. It places the organisation into a trusted information ecosystem. These are the kinds of sources that generative AI systems are far more likely to rely on when forming responses. The result is that PR activity directly increases the chances of an organisation being referenced, quoted or summarised.

It's also worth noting that GEO is less concerned with links than traditional SEO has been. Mentions, context and consistency matter just as much, if not more. A brand that appears regularly in relevant discussions, across credible platforms, begins to build a recognisable presence. Over time, that presence turns into authority. And authority is what generative engines tend to favour.

PR companies are particularly effective at building that kind of presence because they focus on storytelling rather than optimisation. They ensure that an organisation isn't just visible, but understood. They help define what a company stands for, where it fits within its industry, and why it matters. These are the signals that allow AI systems to connect a brand to specific topics or areas of expertise.

Another important element is the role of individuals. Organisations that are represented by knowledgeable, visible experts tend to carry more weight. When senior leaders contribute commentary, offer insight or are quoted in the media, it strengthens the credibility of the business as a whole. PR companies play a key role in creating those opportunities and positioning individuals as authoritative voices.

There is also a practical advantage in the type of content PR produces. Well-written articles, interviews and opinion pieces are typically clear, structured and informative. They are designed to communicate ideas effectively, rather than simply attract clicks. This makes them particularly useful for generative AI, which needs content it can interpret, summarise and reuse with confidence.



All of this points to a broader truth. GEO is not something that can be solved through technical fixes alone. It depends on how an organisation is perceived across the wider digital landscape. Without credibility, without recognition, and without a consistent presence in trusted sources, it becomes very difficult to feature in AI-generated responses.

This is why PR companies are becoming central to GEO strategies. They bring the ability to build authority over time, to secure meaningful coverage, and to ensure an organisation is part of the conversations that matter. In doing so, they create the conditions that generative engines rely on when deciding what to include.

The organisations that understand this shift are already adapting. They are moving beyond a narrow focus on rankings and towards a broader view of visibility—one that includes reputation, expertise and trust.

PR is no longer a supporting function in that process; it is a driving force.

In an environment where AI is increasingly shaping how information is discovered and delivered, being present is no longer enough. Organisations need to be recognised, understood and trusted. PR companies help make that happen—and that is what makes them so valuable in the age of GEO.

If you would like to know more about how HHC Lewis can help with your GEO PR campaign, please get in touch.

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