AI in Marketing & Communication | Best Practices

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly growing and evolving field and can improve efficiency and workflow, but like any tool, requires thoughtful use. The following guidelines are for use in marketing and communications work at Portland State University, and are not intended to inform practices in the classroom or student use. Portland State University maintains guidelines dedicated to student, faculty and staff use as well as tools to learn how to use Generative AI appropriately and efficiently.

Guiding Principles

- Portland State believes in a human-centered approach. As a research institution, we embrace technology, but understand that people are central to any outcomes or products created using AI.

- We will never knowingly use Generative AI technology to deceive or spread misinformation.

- We acknowledge that AI-generated content has a high-probability of using copyrighted materials, and will ensure all content is reviewed by a human for factual accuracy and to avoid plagiarism or misinformation.

- We recognize the potential for bias in AI-generated content and the significant impact that biased prompts can have on outcomes. It is essential to craft clear, neutral and inclusive prompts that promote fairness, accuracy and respect for diverse perspectives. By being mindful of our language and intentions, we can help ensure that AI-generated content reflects a balanced, impartial viewpoint and supports equitable representation for all. (See below tips for writing prompts.)

- Transparency about AI use is key to maintaining institutional trust. Accordingly, all work produced using AI should be labeled as such. The PSU Library also has a citation guide that may be helpful.
    - *For copy: "Portions of this story were created or edited using generative AI."*
    - *For images: "This image was created or edited by image-to-image or text-to-image generative AI."*

- Users must carefully consider all information shared with AI tools to ensure the protection of proprietary data and compliance with state and federal regulations like Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability

[and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)](#). It is essential to avoid disclosing sensitive, confidential or regulated information and intellectual property that could jeopardize security, privacy or legal compliance. By exercising caution and responsibility in their interactions with AI, users help safeguard both organizational and individual interests.

Use Applications in Marketing and Communications

Content Generation: AI is a useful tool for creating draft content, generating headline ideas, subheadings and marketing taglines.

Content Editing: AI can edit content for clarity, grammar and style. It can also condense lengthy material, making it easier to communicate key points without losing important information.

Research Summaries: AI can condense research into concise summaries, providing a solid foundation for understanding key topics.

Bias Review: AI can assist in reviewing content for implicit bias, helping ensure that messaging is fair and inclusive. It is also important to have human review for bias, in case the AI tool is biased itself.

Content Organization: AI can help outline and organize content ideas, streamlining the creative process.

SEO Support: AI aids in keyword research and analyzes factors such as readability, keyword usage and relevance to improve webpage quality and search engine performance.

Audience Personalization: AI can help tailor messages for specific audiences — students, staff, faculty, donors or the media — by suggesting language adjustments, shortening text or emphasizing targeted messages. It can also present both sides of an argument to think through possible outcomes and discussion points.

Crisis Response: AI can monitor global media, draft response templates and provide sentiment analysis to support timely and appropriate crisis communications. *While AI can generate content, human oversight is essential to ensure accuracy, maintain the university's tone and empathy and preserve quality.*

Productivity Enhancement: When privacy policies are followed, AI tools can handle routine tasks such as summarizing interview transcripts, analyzing data and drafting outlines or presentations. AI can assist with drafting emails, but it's important not to rely solely on AI for communication.

Image Editing/Creation: AI tools like content-aware fill in platforms such as Photoshop and Canva can assist with owned images, but they should be used sparingly. They are best suited for generating base layers while ensuring the final image remains authentic and true to context.

Editorial Planning & Scheduling: AI can help with editorial content planning and scheduling social media posts, ensuring timely and organized content delivery.

Social Media Drafting: While AI can help draft social media posts, final content should always be reviewed and refined by a human to ensure it aligns with brand values and voice.

Stakeholder & Media Interaction: AI can assist in preparing responses to questions from stakeholders or journalists and suggest potential questions that may arise. It can also assist in curating media lists to identify outlets that may be missing from a list.

Thesaurus Functionality: AI can serve as a virtual thesaurus, suggesting alternative wording when needed to enhance clarity or creativity.

Inappropriate Uses

Fully AI-Generated Stories or Images: Exercise caution when using AI to generate complete stories or images, ensuring that they are factually accurate and align with the [university's ethical standards](#).

Sincere Messaging: AI may not always capture the depth of sincerity or empathy required for certain messages, particularly those that need a personal or heartfelt tone.

Memorials and Obituaries: AI should be used carefully, if at all, for memorials or obituaries, as these sensitive topics require a human touch to ensure respect and empathy.

Recommended AI platforms

Gemini
PSU has access to Google's generative AI tool Gemini, which is covered by the university's data privacy and security agreement. [Learn more about using Gemini](#) from the Office of Information Technology. [Review these resources from OIT](#) to learn more about responsible AI use and data privacy.