

Report: Journalists respond to 3.15% of pitches, podcast pitch volume surges by 22%

Propel has released the *Q1 2024 Propel Media Barometer*, finding that overall, journalists responded to 3.15% of the over 425,000 pitches sent through the platform in Q4 of 2023. Meanwhile, podcast pitch volume continued to increase, growing by 22% in Q4, and 45% overall from the beginning of 2023.



Source: www.unsplash.com

While there was a 5.41% decrease in journalist responses between Q3 2023 and Q4 2023, this decrease is in line with what has been seen over the past several years during Q4 as both PR professionals and journalists work less over the holidays.

Decrease

In fact, the decrease in responses is less than in previous years around this time and coincides with an uptick in responses between Q2 and Q3 2023. This is following communicators' increased adoption of genAI into their workflows. Propel will continue to monitor these numbers to understand if and how response rates change.

Tuesday is still the best day to pitch, with 35.69% of pitches sent being responded to. Interestingly, despite receiving half as many responses, Monday was the most popular pitching day in Q4 2023, with 24.67% of all pitches sent on this day. PR professionals sent the fewest pitches on Wednesdays, with only 17.11% of all pitches going out on this day, which also had the second smallest response rate at only 15.89%.

Meanwhile, subject lines of between one to five words had the highest response rate of 3.88%, and pitches with subjects between six to nine words were sent the most (34.99% of all pitches). Consistent with previous barometers, it was found that pitches whose bodies were between 51-150 words saw the highest number of responses at 7.13%, while those between 501-1,000 words, despite being sent the most, only saw a 1.45% response rate.

Responding less

The barometer also revealed that pitches to podcasts increased by 22% since Q3 and 45% since the beginning of the year, continuing the quarter on quarter growth in the volume of podcast pitches. However, these pitches were only responded to 13.45% of the time. This is also in line with the continuing trend of podcasters responding less frequently, possibly due to the influx of PR pitches they received.



Influencers were also increasingly pitched and are open to receiving emails from PR professionals. In fact, over 90% of pitches to influencers were opened, and 28% were responded to. Just like podcasters, influencers are looking for content and are willing to work with people in comms to get interesting ideas.

Seed funding

In addition, there were half as many pitches mentioning AI as in Q3, yet they were responded to 3.77% of the time. And in an interesting turn of events, pitches mentioning Twitter/X skyrocketed by over 3,700% compared to Q3 2023, garnering response rates of 4.23%.

Finally, Q4 2023 saw a 21% reduction in the amount of Seed Funding investment rounds being pitched, while responses to pitches about Series B's dropped by over 70% compared to Q3 2023. However, Series A pitches increased 50%, but garnered 35% fewer responses. There were 9% more Series C pitches in Q4 than in Q3, and these pitches were responded to 15.1% of the time.

"It's important to understand the PR challenges facing PR professionals so that we can all have a prosperous new year," says Zach Cutler, co-founder & CEO of Propel.

"New media and freelancers seem to be becoming increasingly attractive targets for PR professionals as mainstream media layoffs increase. As shown with pitch volumes, it's also important to note that response rates are also falling among these forms of media. Therefore, by understanding what makes a pitch great, people in comms will be able to stand out from the crowd and get mentioned in any publication they set their minds to."

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