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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Communication professionals say the biggest challenges to the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) and digitalization in communications are human, not technical.

TUSCALOOSA, Ala., April 16—The 2023-2024 edition of the North American Communication Monitor, sponsored by The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, affirms that the digital transformation of communication is dependent on human behavior, not technology. Senior communication leaders in the United States and Canada are experiencing challenges of understanding human emotions, the strong need for human interaction in the creative process, and the high cost of training staff and upskilling. They point to issues with tasks and processes not being curated for digitalization (40%) and with those who lack experience in data and teach competencies (39%).

Roughly 20% of the respondents describe their communication units as being advanced in AI usage and communication technology. Slightly more, 23%, say their units are above average in communication technology use (19% above average for AI use). Only 14% describe their communication units as being below average in AI and communication technology use.

Other key findings from the 2024 North American Communication Monitor include:

* Diversity, equity and inclusion efforts still focus on ethnicity (63%) and age (60%) more often than religious and spiritual beliefs (50%). Communication departments and agencies are most heavily involved internally in celebrating and creating DEI (64%) and implementing (63%) DEI policies and less involved in informing external audiences about DEI-related matters (56%).
* More than two-thirds of communication professionals in North America report that their communication leaders had increased levels of empathy during the last year (68%) and are generally empathic when communicating with colleagues (71%).
* Overall, communication professionals are committed to their organization (70%), are engaged at work (68%), and experience positive mental health (50%). However more than one-third intend to change jobs in the coming year (37%). Younger communication professionals appear less satisfied, reporting lower commitment, engagement and positive mental health. They also have the highest turnover intentions.
* Trust is dropping as the most important strategic issue for communication management in the United States and Canada. In 2018-19, 50% of respondents cited trust as the top strategic issue. That fell to 35% in 2020-21 and 34% in 2023-24.
* In the United States, strengthening the communication function’s decision-making role with top management (33%), building trust (33%) and supporting DEI (30%) are the three most important strategic issues reported this year.
* In Canada, supporting DEI (40%), building trust (36%) and strengthening the communication function’s decision-making role with top management (27%) are the top three most important strategic issues reported.

To download and read the NACM 2023-24 full report, visit [The Plank Center’s website](http://plankcenter.ua.edu/north-american-communication-monitor/).

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**About The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations**

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations is committed to empowering and advancing the next generation of emerging leaders in the profession through mentorship, programming, education and fostering meaningful connections. The Center ensures future leaders possess the knowledge, skills, history, ethics and empathy to foster strong relationships between institutions, organizations and the public they serve for mutual benefit. Established at The University of Alabama in 2005, the Center is named in honor of Betsy Plank, the “First Lady of PR.” For more information, please visit plankcenter.ua.edu and follow our social media channels (@PlankCenterPR).

**About the North American Communication Monitor**

The North American Communication Monitor (NACM) is a biennial study organized and sponsored by The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations. The 2023-24 NACM surveyed 1,055 communication professionals in the United States and Canada. The NACM is part of the Global Communication Monitor series, the largest regular global study in public relations and strategic communications. The series covers over 80 countries with similar surveys conducted in Asia-Pacific, Europe and Latin America.

**Study Report**

Results of the NACM 2023-2024 is published as a PDF report and can be downloaded [here](http://plankcenter.ua.edu/north-american-communication-monitor/):

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For more information about the Global Communication Monitor series, please visit [www.globalcommunicationmonitor.com](http://www.globalcommunicationmonitor.com).