



Seven recommendations for smarter, safer AI understanding and use.

The AI genie is out of the bottle. The challenge now is how we use it and police it.

bbs

COMMUNICATIONS
GROUP



In brief...

AI can no longer be seen as emerging. It's embedded. Across communications, media, business, professional services, and more. AI has changed and continues to change the way professionals research, write, edit, ideate and deliver.

Drawing on original survey findings, direct commentary from industry professional and a review of current AI policies and frameworks in Australia and globally. Our findings indicated most professionals were confident using AI for low-risk, time-saving tasks. Writing first drafts, summarising meeting, and editing copy were the most common uses. However, there was a near-universal agreement that human review remained essential for final messaging, reviews and strategy. AI was seen as a powerful tool, not a human replacement.

Respondents called for stronger policy and guidance. Some businesses had detailed rules, others were working in what one participant dubbed as "the wild west." Questions around transparency, disclosure, risk, and fair use were raised frequently. Deeper concerns were also raised and addressed, with several professionals flagging an over-reliance on AI eroding originality, confidence, and critical thinking skills. This was further supported by global research, including studies from MIT, showing regular use of AI tools changed the way our brains process information.

The AI genie is out of the bottle. The challenge now is how we use it and police it.

AI was seen as a powerful tool, not a human replacement.

Recommendations for smarter, safer AI understanding and use.

AI has already become part of the modern professional's toolkit. A technical and cultural shift to how business is conducted, and professional communication is created and consumed.

Follow our recommendations for smarter, safer AI understanding and use across your organisation.

- 1. Know your baseline:** Everyone is using AI, but not always openly or consistently. Start with a check-in across teams. Find out what tools are being used and for what.
- 2. Take the Responsible AI Self-Assessment:** Use the 2025 index tool to benchmark your AI maturity and get a tailored report on next steps.
- 3. Build a policy grounded in real work:** Move beyond IT-only policies. Address content creation, client work, disclosure, and review processes specific to your teams.
- 4. Decide where disclosure is required:** Not all AI use needs a disclaimer, decide on your line in the sand. Clients expect transparency where it matters. Use clear examples.
- 5. Human oversight:** Set rules to protect all outputs. Even small errors in research or lapses in transparency or disclosure can harm credibility.
- 6. Protect originality and skills:** Offer training, not just tools. Help teams sharpen their thinking and not lose touch with the core skills AI cannot replace.
- 7. Monitor long-term impacts:** Stay alert to how AI changes thinking and behaviour over time. Encourage critical reflection, especially among early career staff.

1. Know your baseline

Everyone is using it, but not always openly or consistently. Start with a check-in across teams. Find out what tools are being used and for what.

AI isn't new. It's been working quietly behind the scenes for years, correcting spelling, predicting the next word in our sentences and suggesting when might be a more appropriate time to send an email.

Our survey found the most used tools were ChatGPT (89%) and Microsoft Copilot (60%), followed by Grammarly (31%) and Google Gemini (26%).

In terms of use from these applications, the clear front runners were brainstorming and ideation (92%), Improving human generated copy (73%), writing copy (63%), summarising meetings and transcription (47%), followed by proofing or grammar edits (44%), graphic, movie or image generation (26%), media monitoring or sentiment tracking (18%), and SEO or content repurposing (10%).

2. Take the Responsible AI Self-Assessment

Use the 2025 index tool to benchmark your AI maturity and get a tailored report on next steps.

Developed by Fifth Quadrant in association with The Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the National AI Centre, the **Voluntary AI Safety Standard (VAISS)** consists of 10 voluntary guardrails relating to the responsible implementation of AI that apply to all organisations throughout the AI supply chain.

In their **Australian Responsible AI Index 2025**, Fifth Quadrant found adopting these guardrails would allow organisations to create a foundation for safe and responsible AI use, while mitigating and managing the risk that it may pose to organisations, people and groups.

“At its core, AI refers to the technology that simulates human thinking and is multi-faceted in its applications.”

3. Build a policy grounded in real work

Move beyond IT-only policies. Address content creation, client work, disclosure, and review processes specific to your teams.

Fewer than half of respondents (39%) reported their organisation had an AI policy in place. Of those who did, many said these policies were still in development, limited in scope or focused too heavily on data security and IT frameworks. One respondent intimated, the lack of unified governance presented operational, reputational and ethical risks. “Blanket rules of no AI usage won’t cut it. It’s here and consideration needs to be given to its ethical use.”

Respondents who lacked internal AI guidelines called for structure, not restriction. They wanted clarity on how to use it ethically, when to involve human oversight, and where disclosure was required, especially those in client-facing roles.

4. Decide where disclosure is required

Not all AI use needs a disclaimer, decide on your line in the sand. Clients expect transparency where it matters. Use clear examples.

Organisations and professionals are mixed on whether the use of AI should be expressly disclosed or if it’s now just expected.

Of all respondents, none stated they were opposed to agencies or partners using AI in their service offerings. One executive even stated they would have concerns if agencies weren’t using AI. “I would expect that an external agency would use AI as it is modern too. I would worry if they did not as it would mean I had contracted an outdated agency.”

Disclosure should be addressed within your comprehensive AI policy.

“Australia’s media, communications and business sectors aren’t just watching the AI shift, they’re living it, and actively shaping their responses to the ever-changing landscape.”

5. Human oversight

Set rules to protect all outputs. Even small errors in research or lapses in transparency or disclosure can harm credibility.

Even with the widespread adoption and usage of AI, human oversight is still required, and many argued more essential than ever.

Several respondents noted, “AI gives the skeleton. We still need to add the muscle,” and “AI helps me start faster, but I never let it finish the job.” Another described it as “a partner in pace,” someone to bounce ideas off in the early stages of a project or writing.

Organisations and professionals expect human oversight and professional judgement on final versions of strategic content.

6. Protect originality and skills

Offer training, not just tools. Help teams sharpen their thinking and not lose touch with the core skills AI cannot replace.

Emerging research suggests the rise of generative **AI is reshaping how we think.**

Recent studies from MIT found frequent reliance on tools such as ChatGPT can reduce cognitive engagement, reasoning, how we structure information, our problem-solving capacity, and encourage mental shortcuts.

Respondents flagged the biggest cause for concern was graduates or junior staff who haven’t fully developed these skills in a professional sense before handing them over or seeking assistance from a machine.

 **Emerging research suggests the rise of generative AI is reshaping how we think.** 

7. Monitor long-term impacts

Stay alert to how AI changes thinking and behaviour over time. Encourage critical reflection, especially among early career staff.

As AI's capabilities and our reliance on it continue to grow we need to ensure we maintain objective analysis and critical thinking.

AI cannot replace human experience, and with the right guardrails in place, AI can continue to be an asset to our profession, not a threat. The challenge is in shaping its role and not letting it continue to shape ours.

AI cannot replace human experience, and with the right guardrails in place, AI can continue to be an asset to our profession, not a threat.

About BBS...

BBS Communications Group is one of Australia's most respected strategic communications agencies.

We are trusted advisors in corporate communications, issues and crisis management, media relations, stakeholder and community engagement, financial communications and executive training.

Our team creates, promotes and protects our clients' brands and stories.

We launch the campaigns which put our clients at the forefront of their market.

We develop the plans which engage, excite and establish valuable relationships for organisations and their critical stakeholders.

Our advisors work with senior executives to set strategy and manage reputational risk, and our consultants implement the programs which drive brand and business value.

We are proud and energised to continue our work, leading the evolution of the communications profession which is so critical to business, government and community.

We are agile and responsive to client objectives, economic shifts, new techniques and technologies.

Our success continues to be defined by how we work, by our commitment to being an energetic and trusted partner focusing on opportunity and outcomes.

BBS (b.b.s) *adj.* insightful, creative, passionate



Head Office

L6, 144 Edward Street
GPO Box 2902, Brisbane Qld 4001

t + 61 7 3221 6711
e info@bbscommunications.com.au
w www.bbscommunications.com.au

