# The Future of PR Lies with Media Targets, Not Media Lists



*Aaron Kwittken*, *Founder and CEO of PRophet*

When it comes to a core pillar of PR work — building out your media strategy ahead of pitching your story — we're still operating in the past.

Aside from tools like rolodexes, faxes and landlines being sunset, little has changed about how comms professionals go about their media engagement. Who to target, where and how are questions largely addressed through a mix of gut instinct and professional experience — with little rooted in concrete data or analysis. Since we never really know who will say yes to a story idea, the historical approach has been this: the bigger the media list, the better. This makes our efforts chiefly a numbers game in that the more shots we take, the more likely we are to net a few winners.

As we consider the future of our industry, there's a better way to get a narrative into the marketplace. New technology — augmented intelligence (A.I.), in particular — has the potential to overhaul our workflows and transform how we navigate an ever more competitive and transactional news environment. It's no longer enough to know who the media are. We need quick and thorough analysis of what they're covering,

how they're covering it, and why, so that we can tailor our outreach (and our clients' expectations) accordingly.

In this next major moment for our industry, adopting A.I. tools with features like natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning (ML) will place PR professionals in a better position to analyze past reporter behavior, and predict future reporting potential, than ever before. By doing this background work before going to market with a pitch, teams can build outreach strategies around news and emerging issues or threats, while armed with irrefutable data, resulting in a smarter, more refined set of media targets, rather than the traditional meandering list of journalists with loose interest, at best.

As creativity and data join forces, A.I. will only continue to improve our methods for engaging journalists and new media going forward. While our professional know-how and carefully honed instincts will continue to be invaluable, the ability to back up what we're pretty sure of is a true industry difference maker. Openness to new technologies such as A.I. will be key to navigating PR's rapidly evolving role in an integrated world — ensuring we have the know-how to give our clients the soundest counsel and drive real results.

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**PRophet** is the first-ever A.I.-driven platform, built by and for PR professionals, to use a proprietary combination of natural language processing and machine learning to predict media interest and story sentiment before you ever send a pitch.

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*Portions of this article were informed by a previously*

*published article by PRWeek (authored by Aaron Kwittken), which you can read here.*