

Gather around

How do you get people who have a vested interest in you to understand who you are and what you do? We bring you the latest developments and practical recommendations on corporate reporting, digital, and branding.



Richard Costa
Editor and Consultancy
Director at Gather

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Hello,

Is it just me, or does the ongoing AI debate resemble the early stages of the ESG upswing? Today, it's not enough to simply claim that you are a force for Good; you must also demonstrate a clear plan and provide evidence of its effectiveness. Similarly, stakeholders will reward management teams that respond to the new technology with credible strategies and investment plans. This month, we discuss how conducting a double materiality assessment can help you develop the right sustainability approach and how AI will likely feature on your matrix.

Our Reporting Intelligence rubric highlights CEO trends in climate communication, CFO concerns about greenwashing, and new climate-related reporting standards. Are they just a coincidence? I think not! You'll also find the topline from our delegates at the Workiva 2024 Amplify Conference on CSR.

I'm thrilled to announce that Gather has been short-listed in several categories at this year's IR Society Best Practice Awards and Corporate & Financial Awards.

Enjoy,

Richard Costa



Beyond compliance: five ways double materiality empowers your sustainability teams

[Pages 2-3](#)

As sustainability regulations evolve globally, double materiality assessments have become more than just a compliance requirement – they're a powerful tool for driving meaningful change.



The AI conundrum – risk or opportunity?

[Pages 4-5](#)

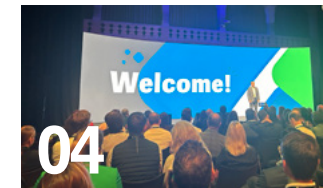
The world is split into two camps: AI lovers and AI haters. Which one are you? And do you really have to choose?



Reporting Intelligence

[Pages 6-7](#)

The latest sustainability reporting trends reveal mixed signals: while KPMG finds CEOs adapting climate strategy language, RepRisk reports UK greenwashing cases dropping but severe incidents rising. IPSASB introduces the first public sector climate reporting standard.



Gather news

[Pages 8-11](#)

We're delighted to share that several of our client projects at Gather have been short-listed for a number of awards at this year's IR Society Awards 2024 and The Corporate Reporting Awards. Plus, insights from the Workiva 2024 Amplify Conference.

Beyond compliance: five ways double materiality empowers your sustainability teams

As sustainability regulations evolve globally, double materiality assessments have become more than just a compliance requirement – they're a powerful tool for driving meaningful change.

Double materiality assessments are here to stay, especially with new legislation, such as ISSB and CSRD, that places materiality at the core.

While double materiality assessments can take up to six months to complete and involve extensive stakeholder interviews, the investment pays off. By fully engaging in the process, you can leverage every data point and opportunity to maximise benefits for your business.



By **Katy Fuller**
Senior Sustainability Consultant

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Beyond compliance: five ways double materiality empowers your sustainability teams
continued

Conducting a double materiality assessment will empower your sustainability teams in five ways.

1. Build a rock-solid foundation for your sustainability strategy

A good double materiality assessment will provide the foundation for a comprehensive sustainability strategy. The more you engage in the process and truly understand the outputs, the easier it will be to build a sustainability strategy.

The assessment's outputs will highlight key themes, impact areas, potential risks and opportunities that will drive your strategy forward. To achieve maximum benefit, share the outputs of the assessment with wider teams to create a holistic sustainability strategy.

2. Gain direct insights from key stakeholders

It is a rare opportunity for sustainability teams to hear directly from key stakeholders, especially on their opinions about specific sustainability issues.

Think carefully about who to engage as part of the double materiality process and what insights you can gain from each group. Consider how you can use the information gathered from this step to drive your strategy and initiatives forward.

3. Future-proof your reporting through regulatory alignment

CSRD and ISSB have double materiality at their core. If your business is in scope for these, you must conduct an assessment to comply. It's likely that even if you aren't in scope now, the requirements of these regulations will become reporting best practices over time, so it's best to familiarise yourself with them.

4. Accelerate impact through focused action

Sustainability teams spend significant time considering where their greatest impacts lie and how to mitigate them. A double materiality assessment does this for you, meaning your teams can focus on the details and delivery of the strategy rather than identifying what's important.

The stakeholder engagement phase of the double materiality process is essential to gain buy-in and allow you to focus on delivering against the agreed priorities.

5. We'll do the hard work for you

Conducting a double materiality assessment can take much of your sustainability team's time. We can do the heavy lifting, so you don't have to. At Gather, our tailored 4-stage approach helps sustainability teams get the most out of the assessment so you can focus on the critical things, like driving impact where it matters.

Reach out to Katy Fuller, our expert Senior Sustainability Consultant, katy@gather.london to discuss how Gather can conduct your double materiality assessment and help embrace your difference.

The AI conundrum – risk or opportunity?

The world is split into two camps: AI lovers and AI haters. Which one are you? And do you really have to choose?



The future with AI – scary, exciting or both?

We are being promised robots who may do our laundry in the foreseeable future for a \$20,000+ investment (thanks, Elon!). But there is also legitimate nervousness about the impact of AI, whether it will turn superhuman on us, use up all the energy in the world, or stop us from learning or doing anything at all. All this is mixed in with the excitement and dread about podcasts, images, and videos generated by Google, Co-pilot, Runway, or Midjourney.

So, what does AI mean for the future of communications and any industry?

“People feel excited about AI after our workshops, not fearful.”



By **Julia Scanlon**
Director of Digital

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The AI conundrum – risk or opportunity?

continued

Studies by the big consultancies highlight that GenAI has had its a-ha! moment in 2023, and the speed of change predicted over the coming months and years makes most of us feel queasy. Should we fret that our job will be taken by an uber-smart chatbot or someone who knows how to use it? As humans, we often fear the unknown. We don't understand how something works, so we put it in the scary bucket and hope we still have a job in three months. Approaching AI cautiously is sensible, but not without harnessing and exploring the opportunities.

What it means for businesses

How should businesses approach AI? Many companies have set up AI taskforce teams to look at AI and see what it can do. Some are truly innovating, others focus on off-the-shelf solutions with limited resources that end up in dead-end projects because it isn't up to scratch. Yet.

The reality is that AI will have a significant impact. How fast it will change the world around us is still unclear. Customer support teams are starting to feel the effect first, but what about your wider business and your people? AI isn't and shouldn't be the domain of the CTO alone, it should be firmly on the desk of any senior leader.

"I think that most people are underestimating just how radical the upside of AI could be, just as I think most people are underestimating how bad the risks could be."

Dario Amodei, CEO of Anthropic

If predictions from [CEOs of Anthropic](#) and [OpenAI](#) are true, we may have super intelligence to deal with sooner than we think, so as a business it's time to understand the opportunities and risks that are on our horizon and how to handle them. Not just on a 'how does Co-pilot work' level. You need to understand AI, have a strategy and a plan and you need to start executing fast.

What it means for communication

From a stakeholder communications perspective, AI will make its way into your double materiality assessment. You'll need to spot and communicate AI-related opportunities, risks and your strategy. If you haven't already, this is the moment to engage your workforce and get them AI literate and confident but in a responsible framework that you set up.

And you'll need to do it fast. It's time to act. And fear not; we are here to help.

Gather AI workshops

We are offering two types of workshops to help you on your AI journey:

1. AI C-suite one-day workshop – designed for business leaders and C-suites to bring you up to speed with AI trends, how AI works, and how to map out risks and opportunities. Level up on your AI knowledge across the board and explore how AI best fits into your business strategy and operations. You will finish with a plan, clear priorities and practical steps to start actioning.

2. Interactive AI team workshop – a half-day creative workshop to get sizeable teams to explore AI tools in a fun and engaging way. There will be a briefing pack with some of the latest AI tools, and we will facilitate the workshop for you on site or off site. Perfect for AI taskforce teams, HR, L&D, technical and communication teams who want to explore AI with a larger group of people to broaden everyone's understanding of AI and how to use it.

Get in touch

To find out more and discuss how [Gather](#) can help embrace your difference, contact [Julia Scanlon](#), Director of Digital, julia@gather.london

Reporting intelligence

KPMG survey finds that 69% of CEOs have retained the same climate-related strategies but have adapted the climate-related language



KPMG's 2024 CEO Outlook survey of 1,325 large company CEOs reveals that 69% of CEOs remain committed to their climate strategies but are adapting the language and terminology they use to communicate it.

The survey also found that while many are not confident that their companies will achieve their near-term climate goals (with critical barriers to the achievement of climate ambitions including the complexity of decarbonising supply chains, and a lack of skills and expertise to implement solutions successfully, each cited by 24% of CEOs), most anticipate significant returns from their sustainability efforts over the next five years.

Despite this, the research found that ESG remains high on the CEO agenda, with 'execution of ESG initiatives' remaining in the top three operational priorities for the next three years, tied with 'understanding and implementing generative AI across the business and upskilling their workforce,' and behind only 'advancing digitisation and connectivity' across the business.

Mixed signals: UK greenwashing cases drop 4% while severe incidents soar by 30% RepRisk find



A new report from RepRisk reveals a complex picture of corporate greenwashing in 2024. While greenwashing incidents have decreased for the first time in six years, high-risk cases have surged by 30% globally, indicating more sophisticated and serious breaches.

Greenwashing incidents in the UK have dropped by 4% this year. Despite the decline this still marks a 179% rise from 2018 levels, making the UK a significant hotspot for greenwashing. The number of greenwashing cases in the UK remains higher than in countries such as Australia, Brazil and China, with only the US, the EU, and Germany surpassing the UK.

More concerning is the shifting nature of these incidents: while minor breaches fell by 30%, serious violations rose by 21%. These serious violations often involve deliberate, systematic efforts to conceal significant environmental, social, and governance (ESG) violations that have substantial consequences for the environment, such as extensive pollution.

The report also highlights that 21% of UK companies involved in greenwashing are repeat offenders. Meanwhile greenwashing cases in the EU, with stricter regulations, have fallen by 20%, suggesting that enhanced regulatory scrutiny may influence. The findings emphasise the growing importance of authentic environmental reporting and compliance in the UK market.

Reporting intelligence
continued

Over half of CFOs fear greenwashing in sustainability reporting, EY survey finds



A new EY survey of 2,000 global finance leaders reveals that 55% fear their industry's sustainability reporting risks being perceived as greenwashing. The study highlights a significant gap between reporting requirements and capabilities, with 96% of finance leaders reporting problems with non-financial data, including issues with varying formats (39%), inconsistencies (35%), and incomplete data (34%). Less than half believe their organisations will achieve core sustainability targets like net zero.

While investors are increasingly focused on sustainability, with 43% employing full-time sustainability analysts, companies struggle with data integrity. Most finance leaders lack high-grade technology for data management, with only 32% having such systems in place. In response, companies are creating 'ESG controller' positions, with 36% already having this role and 58% planning to establish it. Investors remain optimistic, with 78% believing new reporting regulations and standards will improve disclosure accuracy.

This study highlights the importance of using tools such as double materiality assessments to drive meaningful change.

IPSASB unveils first-ever public sector climate reporting standard, open for comment until 2025



The International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) have released SRS ED 1, a groundbreaking draft standard for climate-related disclosures designed for governments and public sector entities. This initiative, supported by The World Bank, marks the first sustainability reporting standard tailored for the public sector.

The standard builds upon the IFRS Foundation's existing frameworks and responds to urgent demand identified through previous consultations. It focuses on entities responsible for climate-related public policy programmes, recognising governments' unique position to drive economy-wide climate action through policy tools like taxation and regulation.

The draft is open for public comment until 28 February, 2025, seeking input from various stakeholders including preparers of public sector reports, standard setters, and sustainability assurance providers. The ISSB Vice-Chair emphasises that alignment with global baseline standards will enhance cross-sector comparability and reduce reporting fragmentation.



Best capital markets day

Hunting PLC Annual Report 2024



Best Annual Report - FTSE 250

Workspace Group PLC Annual Report 2024



CORPORATE REPORTING AWARDS 2024

Our shortlisted work



Best Corporate Website - mid cap

Clarksons PLC
Best Corporate Website 2024



Best Annual Report - mid cap

Workspace Group PLC
Annual Report 2024



BEST ir society
PRACTICE
AWARDS 2024

Our shortlisted work

Gather news

Breakfast Event: Analysts don't read your annual report, AI does Navigating AI in Corporate Communications

In this dynamic roundtable discussion, we'll share insights and experiences of:

- How organisations are implementing AI tools to enhance their communications strategy
- Practical applications of generative AI, from content creation to stakeholder engagement
- Navigating challenges around AI governance, authenticity, and brand voice

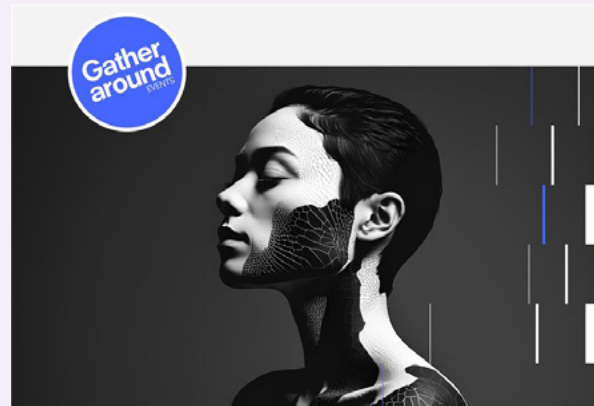
Latest developments in AI tools and their implications for corporate communications

This exclusive session offers a unique opportunity to benchmark your AI journey with peers and gain actionable insights for your organisation's AI strategy.

When & where?

Date: Wednesday 20th November 2024
Time: 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM
Location: Rooms 5 & 6, 210 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DA

Format: Interactive roundtable discussion over pastries and coffee

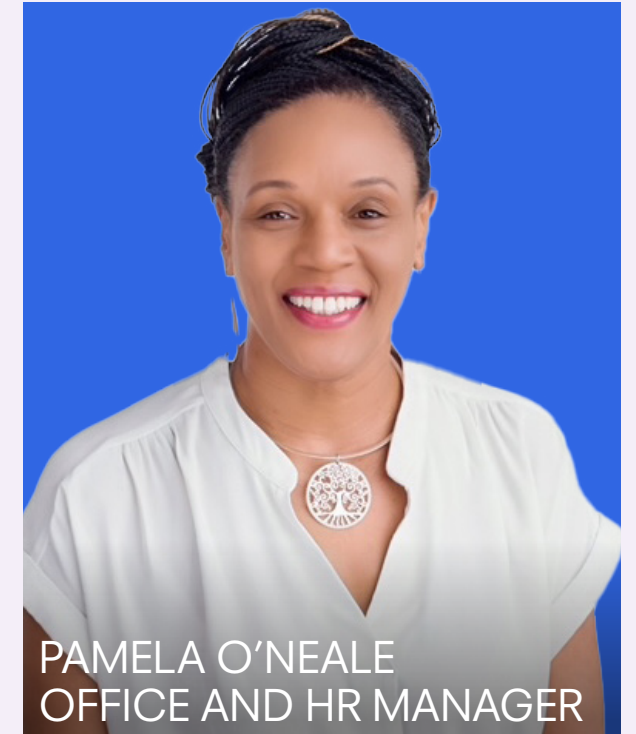


If you would like to attend please [RSVP here](#).

New Starter

Pam joins the Gather team as Office and HR Manager, helping to improve efficiency and productivity for our teams, while also promoting well-being and a positive culture. With a diverse background spanning real estate, construction, fashion, and PR, Pam is a business operations specialist.

Away from the office Pam is 'sun worshipper' and lover of food! food programs, food travel, and food documentaries (but hates doing the weekly food shop).



PAMELA O'NEALE
OFFICE AND HR MANAGER



Gather news
continued



Gather Attends Workiva Amplify 2024: Key Insights on CSRD Readiness

At the end of October, Tessa Murray (Gather CEO) and Katy Fuller (Senior Sustainability Consultant) attended the Workiva Amplify conference in Amsterdam. This year's event focused on the incoming Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and how businesses can best prepare.



The key takeaways centred on leveraging tools to streamline sustainability reporting and data collection, as well as engaging internal teams and leadership to drive success. CSRD will be a pivotal moment, marking a shift from sustainability reporting as a compliance exercise to one that enables businesses to demonstrate their value and share transparent, comparable data.

The conference showcased how CSRD will push businesses to become ones that create consistent, long-term sustainable value for all their stakeholders. CSRD is going to draw a line in the sand. As we've heard many times before, it's going to change everything. But change, in this example, will most definitely be a good thing.

As a Workiva Partner, we have extensive experience helping clients streamline their reporting process.

If you'd like to understand more about Workiva or learn about the work we have delivered using the platform, please reach out to either:
Tessa tessa@gather.london or
Katy katy@gather.london



Contact

Please do get in touch, we'd love to hear from you.

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Consultancy Director

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GATHER

Joined-up communications in a changing world.
Brand. Reporting. Digital. Sustainability.