

AUTHENTIC VOICE IS NOW THE STRATEGIC ASSET

“This isn't just about X, it's Y.” “Cutting-edge solutions.” “Let's shape the future, together.” “We can't wait to see where the journey takes us next.”

Does this sound vaguely familiar to you?

Spend enough time reading AI-generated copy and the pattern becomes unavoidable: posts that open with “We're excited to be part of this journey” and close with “Can't wait to see what the future holds.” Bios that describe someone as “driving change across the industry” with “innovative, world-class solutions.” Announcements that land three vague adjectives where one specific fact would do more work. The more of these markers cluster in the same body of text, the higher the probability a human didn't write it, or didn't edit it.

Audiences have learned to read the pattern too, even if they can't name it. The result is content that registers as familiar and generic, before it registers as anything else.

What LinkedIn's algorithm already knows

LinkedIn has been penalising this content for some time. Adam Walkiewicz, LinkedIn's former head of feed relevance, confirmed the platform has “robust defences in place to proactively identify low-quality, and exact or near-exact duplicate content” and acts to ensure it isn't broadly promoted. “We see AI as a tool that can help with review of a draft or to beat the blank page problem, but the original thoughts and ideas that our members share are what matter.”

The data demonstrates this, time and time again. An Originality.AI study of 3,368 LinkedIn posts found that more than half were likely AI-generated in 2025. Human-written posts generated 73% more engagement on average. Richard van der Blom's analysis of over two million posts found that original, human-crafted content sees 34% higher reach, while AI-generated comments receive seven times less audience engagement.

Reach is the visible consequence. Trust is the deeper one.

A KPMG global study of 48,000 people across 47 countries found that only 46% are willing to trust AI. Adobe's 2026 Digital Trends Report found that 33% of people disengage when they discover content was AI-generated. Consumer preference for AI-assisted creator content dropped from 60% in 2023 to 26% in 2026.

For executives on LinkedIn, the stakes are specific. The platform is where investors research leadership before meetings, where journalists assess spokesperson credibility, and where talent evaluates whether a company's culture is real or performed. A CEO whose posts read like a press release generated by committee signals something about how they think, and how their organisation communicates under pressure.

There's also a credibility problem that goes beyond detection. AI copy tends toward the generic because it's trained on consensus. True expertise comes with nuance, knowledge and specificity, and the occasional uncomfortable position.

When every post sounds like a synthesised view from nowhere, it erodes the sense that there's a real person behind it with something worth saying. Barron's recently put numbers to what many communications professionals have been sensing for some time: the “not just X, it's Y” construction alone appeared in 73 corporate documents in Q4 2025, up from a handful across the two prior decades.

The opportunity in the noise

The bar for authentic voice has never been higher, precisely because the floor has never been lower.

Audiences are also responding. After years of overly polished content, and a pivot to AI-generated sameness, people are craving human stories and the return of genuine storytelling, told by real people with real points of view.

For organisations serious about thought leadership, this creates a clear opportunity to stand out with quality content that is specific, well-argued, and written from genuine expertise. The same logic applies to format - specifically, video. Video rewards authenticity in ways text cannot, a leader who speaks with conviction, specificity, and the occasional unscripted moments signals credibility and it also travels further. LLMs increasingly surface video and high-quality long-form content when generating answers about industries, companies, and executives. Organisations that invest in genuine thought leadership today, build visibility that extends beyond LinkedIn feed.

The FGS Global Radar 2026, which surveyed nearly 20,000 people, identifies authenticity and storytelling as the defining leadership imperatives of the year. For organisations looking to build a communications approach that holds up in this environment, contact us at digitalinsights@fgsglobal.com or explore our latest thinking at fgsglobal.com/radar.