

How to build trust with your audience

11 March 2026, Florence

This session explored how media outlets and individual journalists can regain and maintain trust in an era of widespread misinformation, polarisation, and “infodemic”. It moved beyond simple marketing techniques to discuss the ethical foundations of trust: transparency, authenticity, consistency, and active engagement with the audience’s real-world concerns. The workshop examined the “two-way street” nature of digital communication, advocating for a shift from passive broadcasting to active listening and empathetic dialogue. It provided participants with strategies to demonstrate editorial integrity, acknowledge mistakes, and serve as reliable “helpers” rather than just sources of information in their audience’s daily lives.

Speaker

Francesca Festa

Associate Development Director at Médiannes and co-founder of the Sphera Network

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Trust is not a given; it is a long-term commitment that requires consistency, transparency, and integrity.
- Authentic, empathetic communication—listening more than talking—is the fastest way to bridge the gap between media and its audience.
- Transparency about editorial processes and even acknowledging mistakes can strengthen, rather than weaken, an outlet’s credibility.
- Trust grows when media acts as a “solution” for the audience—providing valuable, actionable insights that address their actual pain points.
- Consistency across all digital and social platforms is essential to prevent mixed signals that undermine institutional trust.

Check the presentation

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VOICES FESTIVAL — MARCH 2026

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- I have been working since 2019 in the European funds cooperation. I am supporting +50 media, traditional or emerging, in their development and management issues. I am steering the Sphera Network.
- Today I lead the Development and Business team at Médianes.

The “Trust Builder” audit & strategic canvas



Co-funded by
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