

Royal Pains



New
Details
—

A Crisis of Trust for the Royal Family

How AI and Social Media
Affected a \$28 Billion Brand

£3.50



31024 32224



Source: Chris Allerton/Getty Images

“Arguably the most famous family in the world,” the British Royal Family represents centuries of British history and culture (Hall Meares, 2023, para. 3). Despite commanding significant influence and popularity within and beyond the United Kingdom, the royals face the challenge of managing public perception and reputation in an era of rapid technological advancements and misinformation spreading on social media.

This case study will explore digitally altered content involving Princess Kate Middleton, including questioning the royal press team’s communication strategies amidst a digitally manipulated image incident and deepfake-related speculation.

These actions threatened the Royal Family’s public image and credibility as an institution. This case examines the intersection of pop culture and emerging technologies, and how high-profile brands like the Royal Family and corporations must navigate uncharted territory to maintain their public image and credibility as organizations in the new digital age.

Reputation for the Royal Family is pivotal in maintaining its “license to operate.” An examination of this crisis provides insights into the importance of transparency in corporate communication amid the developing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deepfake technology.

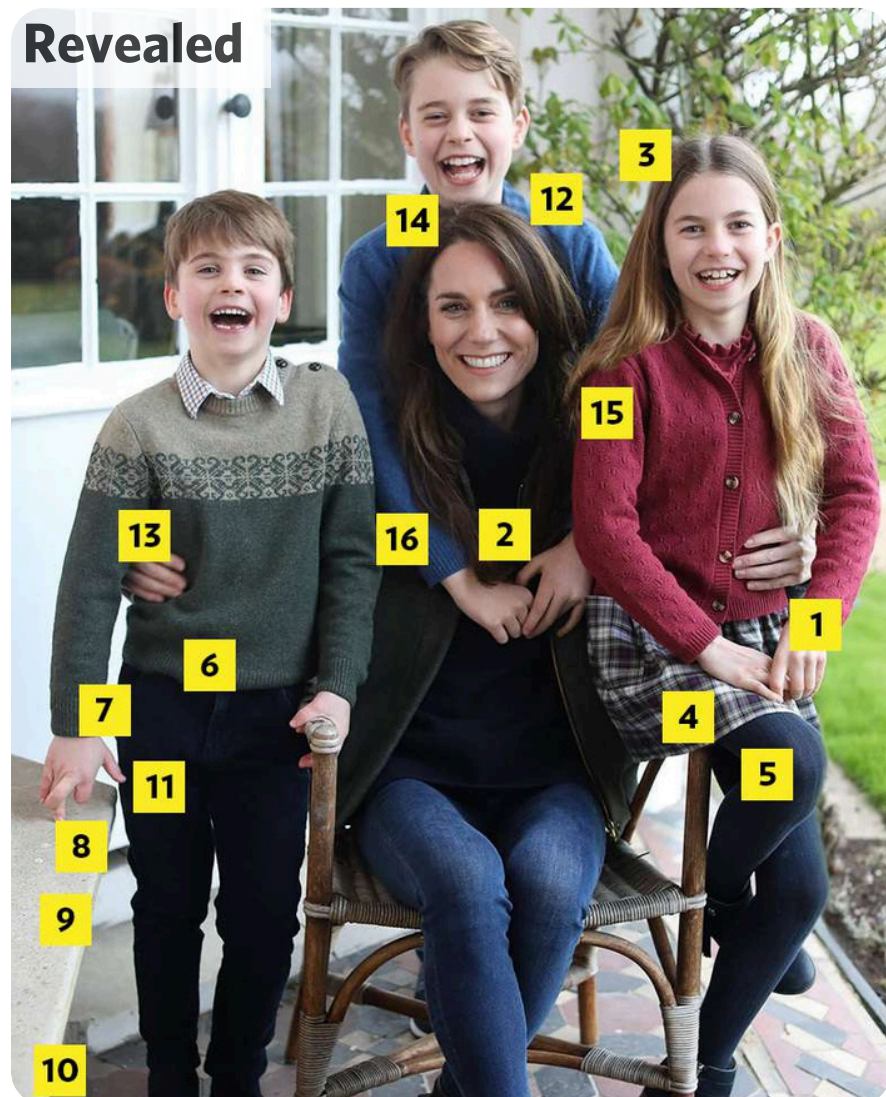
A Mother's Day to Remember

The Royal Family is valued at over \$28 billion, representing one of the world's most famous institutions and earning them the nickname "The Firm" (Landler, M. 2021, para. 4). However, maintaining public trust has become challenging for the family in the age of always-on social media and digital technologies. For instance, deepfake technology based on hyper-realistic, fake content represents a significant threat to institutions' credibility with stakeholders and the public.

"Royal Pains: A Crisis of Trust for the Royal Family" explores how the release of a digitally altered image of Princess Kate and her children on March 10, 2024, influenced the public's trust. It also explores the release of a video announcing Princess Kate's diagnosis of cancer on March 22, 2024, further fueling public speculation and skepticism.

This case highlights the importance of transparency, authenticity, and trust in corporate and brand communication, especially with emerging AI-related technologies like deepfakes. This case underscores the role of effective crisis management and reputation preservation when communicating in the fast-moving digital landscape.

The Royal Family's experiences amplify the importance of effective brand reputation management; the newfound influence of AI in communication crises; and the struggle to maintain public trust amidst online misinformation and manipulation.



Original: The Prince and Princess of Wales; Revealed: People

THE Scoop

What are you looking for?



MEET THE ROYALS

5

THE ROYAL TREATMENT

8

POP CULTURE CORNER

9

COMMUNICATIONS IN CRISIS

11

THE ROYAL RESPONSE

13



Source: Michael Stillwell, *Town & Country Magazine*, 2023.

THE WORLD REACTS

14

REPUTATIONAL IMPACT

21

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

25

LOOKING AHEAD

26

REFERENCES

27



Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales, YouTube, 2024.

Meet the Royals



Source: Cecil Beaton, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1953

The Royal Family's brand is built on prestige, family honor, and tradition. With a history spanning over a thousand years, the Royal Family focuses on "national identity, unity, and pride...and supports the ideal of voluntary service" (The Role of the Monarchy, n.d., para. 4). The family's primary role is serving as the monarchy, the oldest form of government in the United Kingdom (UK) (The Role of the Monarchy, n.d.).

They also influence the Commonwealth of Nations, an international organization of 56 member states, most of which were part of the British Empire including India, Canada, Australia, and Nigeria (The Commonwealth, n.d.). The Commonwealth accounts for "almost one-third of the world's population" and "a quarter of the world's land mass" (BBC, 2023, paras. 4 and 25). Approximately 2.5 billion people out of eight billion people worldwide live in a Commonwealth country (BBC, 2023). While the British Parliament controls passing laws in the UK, the Royal Family carries international social prestige.

The current reigning British Royal Family is King Charles III, his wife Queen Camilla, William, Prince of Wales, Catherine, Princess of Wales, Anne, Princess Royal, Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh, and Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh. They all carry out royal duties full-time, representing the face of the UK and its member states (The Role of The Royal Family, n.d.).



Source: Popperfoto, Getty Images

Queen Elizabeth II (1926-2022) ruled "longer than any other Monarch in British history" and is the most memorable British queen in recent history (Queen Elizabeth II's Life and Reign, n.d., para. 1). In December 1936, King Edward VIII abdicated the throne for love, clearing a path for Queen Elizabeth II to become the longest-reigning monarch in history (PBS, 2022). For 70 years, she served as the Head of the Commonwealth, connecting over two billion people globally (Queen Elizabeth II's Life and Reign, n.d.). Her 1953 coronation was the first televised event for the Royal Family and solidified television as a new mainstream medium. 27 million people in the UK (out of a population of 36 million) watched the ceremony on TV (50 Facts About Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation, n.d.). For many, it was their first time watching an event on television (The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, n.d.).

The 'Picture Perfect' Family

The Royal Family has been highly publicized since the 1980s

1



Image 1: Kent Gavin, Getty Images; Image 2: Jayne Fincher, Getty Images; Image 3: Jeff J. Mitchell, AFP, Getty Images

4



7

2



5



3



6



Image 4: Anwar Hussein, Wireimage;
Image 5: Getty Images; Image 6: Aaron Chown, AFP; Image 7: Tim Graham, Getty Images

The family gained global notoriety for the wedding of Diana, Princess of Wales, and King Charles III in 1981. The couple's divorce in 1996 and Diana's subsequent, sudden death in 1997 rattled the world. Years later, in January 2020, her youngest son, Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, and his wife, Meghan Markle, the Duchess of Sussex, "stepped back as working members of The Royal Family," a first for the Royals (The Role of The Royal Family, n.d., The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, para. 1). Given the family's high-profile status, influence, and popularity, the institution's communication strategy is under tight watch, especially with the rise of fast-moving social media.

"Never complain, Never explain"

Maintaining a "Royal" Reputation

King George VI positioned the Royal Family as a brand during the early 20th century, declaring, "We're not a family, we're a Firm" (Bonner & Owens, 2024, para. 4). His reign from 1937 to 1952 was the beginning of the "Firm's" agenda to modernize the monarchy, hoping to reflect the current state of society (Bonner & Owens, para. 4, 2024). King George became one of the most popular and beloved monarchs at the beginning of the 20th century because of his achievements in World War I and being a man of principle (History U.K., n.d.).

After his passing, his daughter, Queen Elizabeth II, succeeded him in continuing to shape the modern-day monarchy's reputation (Grady, 2022, para. 5). Throughout Queen Elizabeth II's reign, she embodied the "Firm's" unofficial motto, "Never complain, never explain" (Grady, 2022, para. 5). Practicing discipline and forming a blank-slate person made it difficult for the public to understand her position on various social and political issues (Grady, 2022).

During seven decades of upheaval, Queen Elizabeth remained a steadfast, timeless figure and a national symbol of longevity, resilience, and duty by adapting to public beliefs (Grady, 2022, para. 37). Her presence within the public's view and ability to navigate societal changes made her reliable, thus increasing the institution's trust and transparency.

Barack Obama compared Queen Elizabeth II to South African President, Nelson Mandela, stating that both were "leaders who have seen so much, whose lives span such momentous epochs" (Grady, 2022, para. 18). Obama added, "[they are] people who speak with depth and knowledge, not in sound bites. They find no interest in polls or fads" (Grady, 2022, para. 18).



Sources: Julian Parker, Getty Images; Saul Loeb, AFP via Getty Images

In the 1960s, the BBC was commissioned to conduct public opinion surveys on the Royal Family to gauge the U.K.'s interest in them, a first for the time (Ipsos, 2022). By the 1990s, polls questioning the monarchy's necessity and satisfaction with Her Majesty's ruling arose, with public opinion consistently showing a positive association with the "Firm" (Ipsos, 2022). For example, a 2023 Ipsos poll surveying 2,500 British adults reported that 67% favored maintaining the monarchy, reflecting trends where approval ratings for the Queen ranged from 60-90% from 1992 to 2022 (Ipsos, 2022). Overall, favor for the monarchy ranged from 60 to 80% between 1993 and 2023 (Ipsos, 2022).

The Royal Treatment

Navigating a House Divided



Sources: The Royal Family, Shutterstock

The immediate members of the Royal Family reside in two residences, Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace in London, England. While historic and artistic-driven teams exist in both palaces (households), the Royal Communications department employs small teams to operate the households' communications separately (Fortune Magazine, 2024).

King Charles III and Queen Camila of Buckingham Palace hired Tobyyn Andreae (depicted in the upper left corner), a former *Daily Mail* journalist, as their communications secretary upon ascending to the throne in 2022 (Hall, 2022, para. 2).



Sources: LinkedIn, Historic Royal Palaces

The decision sparked controversy as the *Daily Mail* is a British tabloid newspaper that often reports stories on the Royal Family, with or without their written consent (Hall, 2022, para. 6).

Meanwhile, Prince William and Princess Kate in Kensington Palace have employed Lee Thompson (depicted in the upper right corner), former Vice President of CNBC, as their communications secretary since 2022 (Noyen & Vlamis, 2024, para. 15).

In Prince Harry's memoir, *Spare*, he shared that he believes there is a constant battle between the palaces to one-up each other and leak damaging information to save face during scandals (Hall, 2024, para. 8).



Keeping Up with the Businesses



The Royals have monetized their name, image, and likeness to drive international impact. Similarly, American families like the Kennedys and Kardashian-Jenners have positioned themselves as more than families, but as brands. The Kennedys, an American political family associated with John F. Kennedy (JFK), the 35th U.S. President, is worth over \$1.2 billion (Kennedy Family, 2015). During the 1960s, JFK impacted American social and political culture through his “War on Poverty” initiative, found successes during the Cold War, and supported the civil rights movement (Selverstone, n.d., para. 2).

Beyond politics, the Kennedys attracted extensive tabloid coverage, establishing them as a family franchise (Selverstone, n.d.). The Kennedy brand represented “youth, glamour, and style to the American public and admirers abroad” (The Kennedy Center, n.d., para. 1). They recognized how the media and popular culture could serve as opportunities to connect with the American people. For example, First Lady Jackie Kennedy was considered a “style icon” and JFK documented his campaign during the Democratic Primary on television, a first for the time (The Kennedy Center, n.d., para. 5).



Scandals, such as the alleged affair between JFK and actress Marilyn Monroe, also surrounded the family’s reputation and piqued the public’s interest. The Kennedy’s brand and role in popular (pop) culture continue to be referenced today, with RFK Jr., having run as an independent candidate for president of the U.S. in the 2024 election.

In the late 2000s, the Kardashian-Jenner family rose to fame with their reality television show, “Keeping Up with the Kardashians.” Kim Kardashian, the face of the Kardashian-Jenner brand, is worth \$1.7 billion out of a family fortune estimated at \$2.1 billion (Bonner, 2024, para. 9).

She has attended international fashion weeks, represented Balenciaga as an ambassador, and has launched a successful shapewear business, Skims. She and her sisters, Kylie Jenner, Kendall Jenner, and Khloé Kardashian, are among the top 10 most followed people on Instagram, amassing over 1.3 billion combined total followers on the platform. With multiple successful business ventures, the Kardashians represent a modern-day family becoming a household brand, like the Royals.

Getting Deep(fake)

Source: Paul Morigi/Getty Images



Scarlett Johansson says she is 'shocked, angered' over new ChatGPT voice

Source: NPR



Source: Open AI



Celebrities have become easily accessible on social media; however, AI and deepfakes pose a threat to their personal and professional reputations. For example, following the Met Gala in May 2024, AI-generated images of Rihanna and Katy Perry surfaced, although they were not actually in attendance (Grantham-Philips, 2024, para. 1). While seemingly trivial, celebrities' likenesses have been used in harmful ways to manipulate people.

Two weeks after the Met Gala, Open AI (developer of ChatGPT) used a voice "eerily similar" to Scarlett Johansson's as part of a new AI Personal Assistant

feature (Allyn, 2024, para. 1). Johansson shared, "...my closest friends and news outlets could not tell the difference" (Allyn, 2024, para. 11).

Singers like Bad Bunny and Justin Bieber had AI-generated songs go viral in 2023. Additionally, although manufactured, sexually explicit photos of Taylor Swift surfaced in early 2024 (Grantham-Philips, 2024, para. 11).

As AI technology advances, governments, brands, and celebrities must prepare to debunk any digitally altered viral content before a major crisis occurs.

Communications in Crisis



Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales

Between March 10 and March 22, 2024, the British Royal Family faced a challenge that tested the public's trust in its communication strategies. This period was marked by a series of events that began on January 17, 2024, with the announcement of Princess Kate's planned abdominal surgery that same month. The initial statement from Kensington Palace was direct, noting that Kate would need time to recover and would return to her duties after Easter 2024.

However, the lack of detailed updates in the following weeks fueled the public's curiosity and speculation. On January 29, 2024, Princess Kate was discharged from the hospital and returned home to Windsor to continue her recovery. The situation intensified on February 27, 2024, when Prince William missed a memorial service for his godfather, King Constantine II of Greece, citing personal matters, which added to the public's concern about Kate's health and the overall transparency of the Royal Family. The palace reiterated that Kate was well and said they would only provide significant updates (Gibson, 2024).

The narrative escalated on March 10, 2024, when a photo of Kate with her children was released for the U.K. Mother's Day. The image was quickly scrutinized by media outlets like the Associated Press (AP) and social media users, who identified signs of photo manipulation (Melley, 2024). The following day, Princess Kate apologized, claiming to experiment with photo editing. This incident highlighted the Royal Family's questionable communication strategies in the digital age where transparency and authenticity are key.

On March 14, 2024, *Axios News* reported that this mishandling of information and the subsequent public backlash supposedly illustrated the Royal Family's struggle to adapt to modern media dynamics, where vague or misleading communications can quickly spiral into widespread misinformation and conspiracy theories (Hawkins, 2024).

Nearly a week later, on March 22, 2024, Princess Kate released a video on her and Prince William's official social media accounts (Instagram, X, and YouTube), revealing her cancer diagnosis and ongoing treatment. While this was a significant and personal announcement, it was met with skepticism by some segments of the public, who questioned the authenticity of the video, suspecting it might be a deepfake. The mixed public reaction was seemingly a consequence of the earlier photo scandal, showing how mishandling one piece of communication can have far-reaching effects on public trust. The Royal Family's traditional "never complain, never explain" approach seemed inadequate with the growing public demand for more transparency and honesty (Hawkins, 2024).

As reported by *People* magazine, the Palace continued to defend Kate's need for privacy, yet the lack of clear, timely updates only fueled further speculation and distrust (Gibson, 2024). The combination of questionable communication strategies and the rapid spread of misinformation through digital platforms left the Royal Family vulnerable to public skepticism and criticism.

The importance of developing modern communication strategies to maintain public trust in an era of social media and digital manipulation was apparent during the Royals' controversy. The incident underscores the importance of timely, transparent communication and the potential reputational damage that can arise from failing to meet these standards.

The Royal Timeline

★ = Kensington Palace official statement

★ = Royal Aide Tabloid Comment

2023

December 25:



Princess Kate
is last seen
publicly

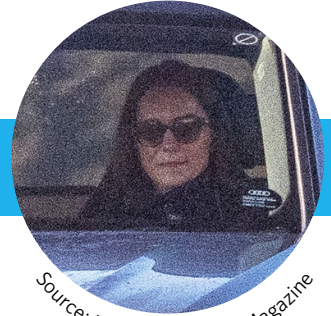
2024

January 17: ★



Princess Kate
has a planned
abdominal
surgery

January 29:



Princess Kate
is discharged
and returns
home

February 27:



2/29



Prince
William
misses his
godfather's
memorial

March 10:



3/11



A photo of
Princess Kate and
her kids is
released for U.K.
Mother's Day

March 22:



Princess Kate
announces
she has
cancer

The Royal Timeline

Continued

★ = Kensington Palace official statement

June 15:



Princess Kate makes her first public appearance since cancer announcement

September 9:



Princess Kate announces her remission and completion of chemotherapy in a video

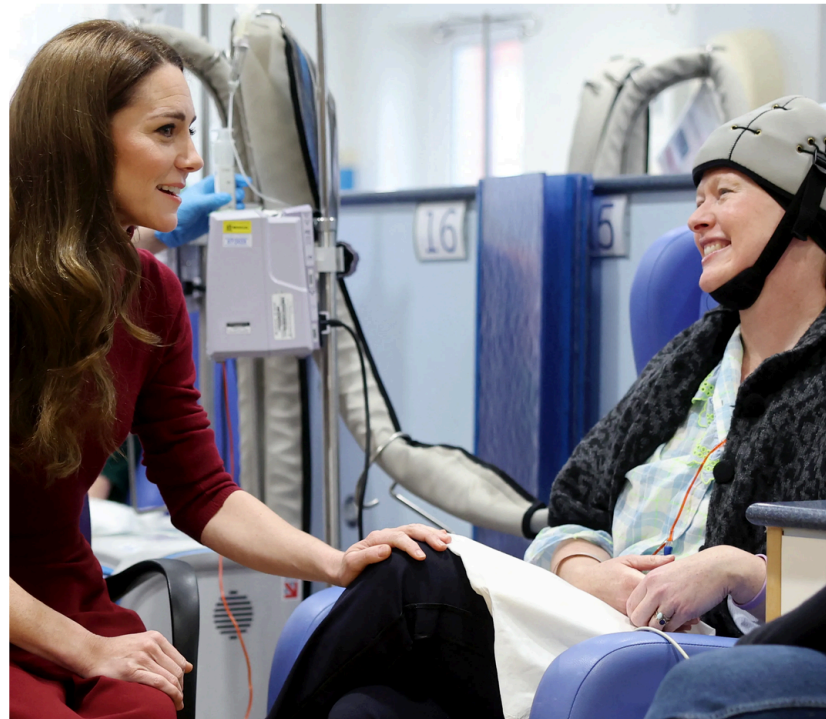
2025 January 15:



Princess Kate visits the hospital where she received treatment

Princess Kate made her first public appearance on June 15, 2024, nearly three months after announcing her cancer diagnosis, at Trooping the Colour, a ceremonial parade marking “the British sovereign’s official birthday” (CBS News, 2024). Later that summer in July, Princess Kate attended the Wimbledon Men’s Final and a family mass in August (Kindelan, 2025).

On September 9, Kensington Palace released a video announcing that Princess Kate was cancer-free and “gradually returning to work after completing chemotherapy” (Kindelan, 2025, para. 6). The video featured rare footage of the princess and her family (Kindelan, 2024). On January 15, 2025, Princess Kate visited The Royal Marsden Hospital where she received treatment (Kindelan, 2025). Her exact diagnosis remains unknown.



Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales, Instagram, 2025

Royal Response

March and May 2024



The Prince and Princess of Wales  @KensingtonRoyal · Mar 11
Like many amateur photographers, I do occasionally experiment with editing. I wanted to express my apologies for any confusion the family photograph we shared yesterday caused. I hope everyone celebrating had a very happy Mother's Day. C

9.1K 18K 55K 38M

Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales, YouTube and X, 2024.

Despite Princess Kate's remission announcement attracting over 2.4 million likes on Instagram and receiving an overwhelmingly positive reaction (see comments above) in September 2024, the Royal Family received immediate backlash for its Mother's Day photo. Social media users quickly noticed inconsistencies in the image, including hand placement and sleeve alignment, resulting in an altered photo warning on Instagram (Kindelan, 2024). Major publications and news outlets, including the *Associated Press* (AP), the *Agence France Press* (AFP), *Getty Images*, and *Reuters*, retracted the picture within 24 hours (Kindelan, 2024). What started as an attempt to shift the conversation away from Princess Kate's three-month-long absence from the public eye, turned into a communications crisis for the Royals (Smith, 2024).

Official responses came directly from Kensington Palace through the Royals' social media accounts, including Instagram, X, and YouTube (Crawford et al., 2024).

September 2024



mama_platty What a lovely video and great news. Love to you all. ❤️

regal_addy Wonderful news. Great editing. I love the interactions between the family. You can see the love. I like the way the Royal Family is moving. Showing us a more personal side of life in there world.

Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales, Instagram, 2024.

No member of the Royal Family is known to make public statements; an apology on behalf of someone is just as rare. A day after releasing the photo, Princess Kate released a brief statement on X, formerly Twitter.

12 days later, on March 22, 2024, Princess Kate announced she was undergoing cancer treatment through a video on her and Prince William's official social media accounts: Instagram, X, and YouTube. Kensington Palace confirmed that the video was created with BBC Studios, a British content company and a commercial subsidiary of the BBC (Coughlan, 2024).

Many people sent their condolences to the family, including then-U.S. President Joe Biden (Thomas, 2024). However, many royal watchers still questioned the validity of this video due to the Mother's Day photo incident. Some people even speculated that the video announcement was a deepfake, leaving the Royal Family navigating uncharted territory.

The World Reacts

The Royal Family's stakeholders from social media, news outlets, and technology companies followed the developing story, showcasing their impact on shaping public perception and trust. Amidst an ever-changing social and digital landscape, accurate and misleading narratives can significantly influence public opinion. The incidents involving deepfake-related speculation and the controversy surrounding Kate Middleton illustrate how digital platforms and news media can amplify crises and affect reputation management.

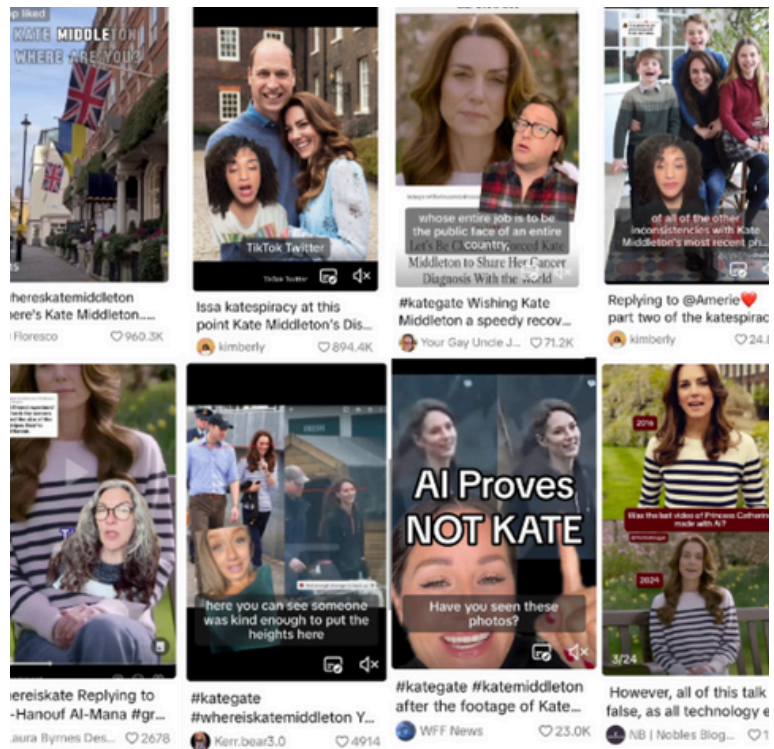
Global Perspective:

Social media played a key role in spreading and reacting to the controversies surrounding Kate Middleton. The digitally manipulated image of Kate and her children for Mother's Day was met with immediate backlash and criticism. Hashtags such as #KateGate, #whereiskate, and #katespiracy trended globally on TikTok, X, and Instagram.

Hashtag	Mentions
#kategate	236,340
#katespiracy	16,120
#whereiskate	8,720

Source: Brandwatch, 1 Jan – 8 Apr 2024.

Social Media Response:



Source: TikTok, 2024.



Source: Paul Ellis, AFP via Getty Images.

American celebrity involvement added an international dimension to the social media response. On March 16, 2024, Kim Kardashian, a media personality with over 363 million Instagram followers, posted a photo of herself in front of a luxury car with the caption, "On my way to go find Kate." Her post was perceived as a publicity stunt that mocked Kate's whereabouts and generated thousands of comments globally. Her influence, particularly in the United States, helped the story reach audiences who may not typically follow Royal affairs. As a result, the public continued to scrutinize the Royal family's handling of the situation.

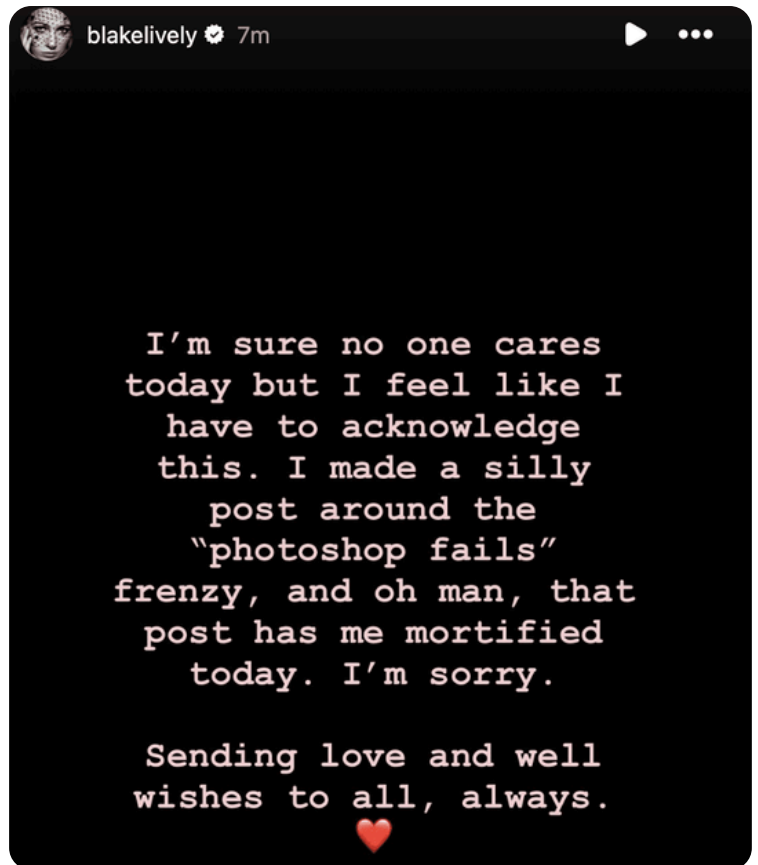
Stakeholders' Response



Liked by ssimply.mya and 1,827,002 others
kimkardashian On my way to go find Kate
View all 22,669 comments
March 16

Blake Lively, an American actress, and Andy Cohen, a Bravo television host and producer, also contributed to the social media conversation. Lively shared a post about her sparkling soda brand, Betty Buzz, featuring a heavily edited photo of herself making light of Kate's manipulated image. However, after facing criticism, Lively apologized in an Instagram story, regretted the situation, and extended well-wishes to Princess Kate.

Similarly, Andy Cohen commented on a video that showed the princess allegedly walking with her husband, Prince William. On March 18, 2024, Cohen tweeted to his 2.4 million followers, "That ain't Kate," in response to the video.



Andy Cohen @Andy · Mar 18
That ain't Kate....

1.4K

2.9K

34K

4.7M

Source: Andy Cohen, X, 2024.

Cohen later issued an apology, expressing regret for his comments, and sending prayers for Princess Kate and King Charles, who is also battling cancer.

Stakeholders' Response

The British Public and News Outlets React

Bubble MUFC @bubble72 · Mar 22

The British Press again shown up for what they really are....
There is really no point to you lot anymore...
Finally now leave her alone..when she's recovered we'll see her then..

Russell Howells @howellsrussell1 · Mar 22

Bloody press now need to leave the family alone to deal with . Give them some privacy

Jamie Rennie @JamieRe32942694 · Mar 23

Wishing the absolute very best, good health and happiness to Kate and her loved ones. You have and always will be a great inspiration to many for your lovely caring nature. 🙏❤️.

eileen hogg @scoobynanny · Mar 22

Well done for sitting there and being strong enough to tell the world! All the best to you and your family! Prayers be with you 🙏

Source: Daily Mirror, Status, X, 2024.

With a closer connection to the Royal Family, some British citizens and members of the Commonwealth quickly supported Kate over the altered image. However, many social media responses called for greater transparency and accountability from the Royal Family. Princess Kate's apology was dissected and analyzed. There were divided opinions on whether the apology fell short, attesting to the complicated issue today of maintaining brand trust and authenticity.

Former BBC correspondent and royal commentator, Peter Hunt, said, "This is bad for the royals. They knew there would be a lot of attention in any pictures they released of Kate...people will now wonder if they can be trusted and believed when they provide the next health report" (Merrifield, 2024, para. 15). Some British citizens were particularly vocal about the need for the Royal Family to maintain a higher standard of integrity.

For example, British public relations and crisis consultant, Mark Borkowski, called the fiasco a "massive own goal" and said the unedited photograph should have been released to regain trust (Stone, 2024, para. 51).

However, once Princess Kate announced her cancer diagnosis, the general reaction online was supportive, garnering over 5.1 million likes and 286,000 comments on Instagram (the highest engagement between the three posts, including the Mother's Day photo and her remission video announcement) (Daily Mirror, 2024).

Global News Perspective:

The news media's response to the Mother's Day photo involving Princess Kate was extensive and varied globally. The Associated Press (AP) News and five picture agencies quickly identified inconsistencies in the photograph. AP News retracted the first official photo of Kate since her abdominal surgery, sparking a wave of skepticism and distrust online amid concerns that the source had manipulated the image (Melley, 2024, para. 4)

Kate, Princess of Wales, apologizes for altering family photo that fueled rumors about her health

First photo of Princess of Wales since her surgery is retracted because image appeared manipulated

What is known about Kate's cancer diagnosis

Source: Associated Press News (AP), Website, 2024.

Other major international news outlets, like CNN and *The New York Times*, covered the initial controversy surrounding the manipulated Mother's Day photograph, with many editorials and opinion pieces questioning the Royal Family's approach to authenticity and transparency (Paton and Willingham, 2024).

News Outlets Respond

Did Sentiment in the News Differ Across the Pond?

U.S.-Based Perspective:

The Princess of Wales controversy has only gotten worse

How the Kate photo saga ballooned into a crisis

Source: CNN News, Website, 2024.

Media news outlets such as AP News, CNN, and *The New York Times*, emphasized the broader implications of deepfake technology, stressing its potential to undermine public trust in high-profile institutions worldwide.

What 'KateGate' Says About Royalty, Celebrity and Internet Culture

Kate Middleton's Story Is About So Much More Than Kate Middleton

Source: The New York Times, Website, 2024.

The ensuing announcement of Princess Kate's stomach cancer diagnosis was met with global sympathy, but also some skepticism, due to the recent altered photo. News organizations from various countries included expert opinions on the potential use of deepfake technology in the video, highlighting the technical challenges of detecting manipulations. International news coverage often compared the Royal Family's situation to other high-profile incidents involving deepfakes, providing a broader context for understanding the crisis (Ott, 2024).

British Perspective:

In the United Kingdom, the news response was covered by major British newspapers like *The Sunday Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Daily Telegraph*. The outlets extensively covered the manipulated photograph controversy and the subsequent cancer announcement.



Source: Mark Thomas, Alamy Live News, 2024.

British media was particularly critical of the Royal Family's communication strategies, with numerous editorials calling for stricter measures to ensure more transparency and authenticity (Fung & Murphy, 2024).

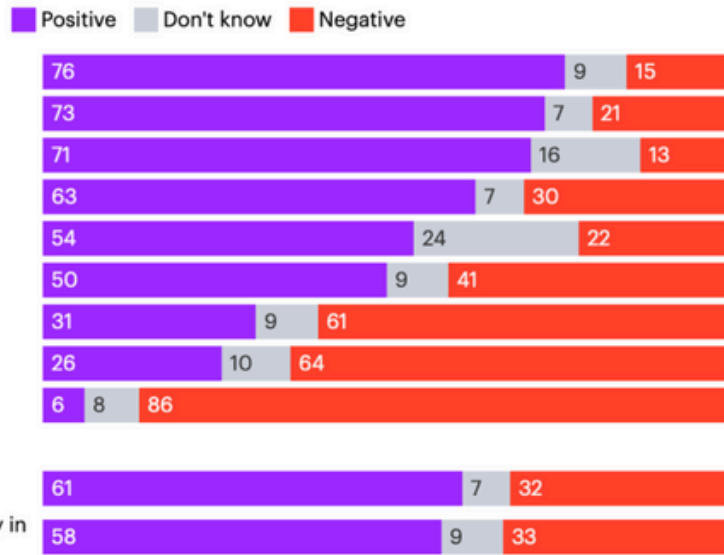
Television news programs, such as Talk TV, BBC News, and ITV News, ran special segments featuring Royal commentators and correspondents who debated the implications of the crises. These segments often included emotional appeals from the public and highlighted the Royal Family's integral role in British society. The coverage underscored the expectations placed on the Royal Family to maintain its credibility and the significant impact any perceived breach of trust has on its standing within the United Kingdom.

Stakeholders' Response

Did Sentiment Regarding the Royals Change?

Royal family favourability, April 2024

Thinking about the royal family, for each of the following please say whether you have a positive or negative opinion of them? %



Source: YouGov, Website, April 2-3, 2024.

Market research from Ipsos and YouGov revealed Princess Kate was Britain's favorite royal and had a *higher* approval rating after her cancer announcement ("Princess Kate is the Nation's Favourite Royal" and "Kate Middleton now UK's most popular royal"). For example, a survey conducted by Ipsos in March 2024 revealed that Princess Kate was Britain's favorite royal, chosen by 38% of respondents, narrowly ahead of her husband, the Prince of Wales ("Princess Kate is the Nation's Favourite Royal").

A British YouGov poll indicated that, between February and April 2024, Princess Kate's popularity rose following her cancer diagnosis, with her approval rating ticking up from 74% to 76%. Meanwhile, Prince William's rating dropped from 77% to 73% ("Kate Middleton now UK's most popular royal").

Simultaneously, the same poll found that 58% of British people hold a positive view of the monarchy as an institution, with significant variation across age groups. 79% of those over 65 supported the monarchy, compared to only 32% of 18 to 24-year-olds.

The data aligns with findings from the National Centre for Social Research, which showed that, from 1983 to 2021, a majority of the British public consistently expressed the importance of maintaining the monarchy. Between 1994 and 2021, on average, 67% of people in Britain felt it was important for the country to continue having a monarchy. In 2021, 55% of participants said the monarchy was 'very important' or 'quite important;' 18% said it was 'not very important;' 11% said it was 'not at all important;' and 14% believed it should be abolished (British Social Attitudes to the Monarchy, 2022).

Overall, the global and British responses emphasized the complexities of managing public perception in an era dominated by ever-evolving technology and rapid information dissemination.

In contrast, an earlier YouGov survey from 2011 demonstrated even higher favorability ratings for both Kate and William. In June 2011, shortly after their wedding, Kate had a favorability rating of 82 points, while William had an even higher rating of 87%.



Source: Max Mumby, Indigo, Getty, 2025.



Source: Chris Jackson, Pool, AFP, Getty, 2022.



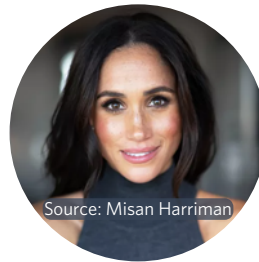
Source: WPA Pool, Getty Images, 2024.



Source: Chris Jackson, Getty.



Source: Samir Hussein, Getty Images.



Source: Misan Harriman.

Stakeholders' Response

Royal Regard by the Numbers

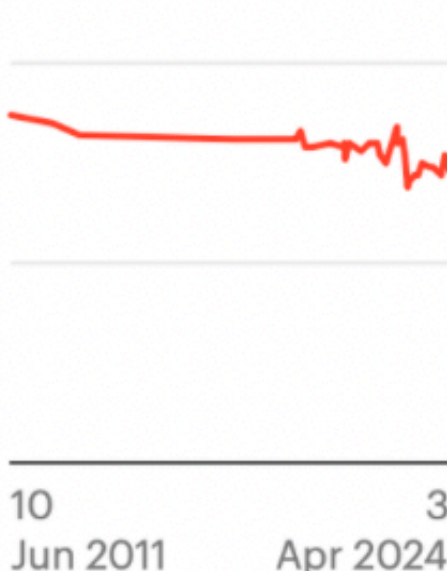
YouGov royal family favourability tracker, 2011 - April 2024

Thinking about the royal family, for each of the following please say whether you have a positive or negative opinion of them. % who say they have a positive opinion of each royal

Catherine, Princess of Wales



Prince William



Source: YouGov, Royal family favourability tracker, 2011 - 2024.

Source: Chris Floyd, Kensington Royal, 2021.

Over the years, these approval ratings have gradually declined but have remained quite high, with Kate's favorability dropping to 76 points by April 2024 and William's rating decreasing to 73 points (Smith, 2024). This contrast highlights the changing public perception of the royal couple over time and underscores the potential negative impact of recent events on their overall popularity.

The by-the-minute reactions on social media and in the news highlighted the interconnected relationship between digital and traditional forms of communication, illustrating the challenges high-profile institutions and public figures face in maintaining trust and credibility.



Source: Getty Images



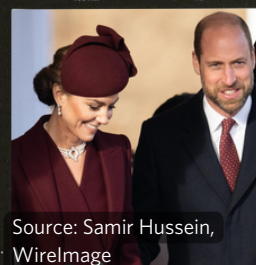
Source: Chris Jelf, Kensington Palace via Getty Images



Source: Chris Jackson, Getty Images



Source: Jeff Gilbert, Getty Images



Source: Samir Hussein, WireImage

AI Reputational Impact

Kate Middleton picture fiasco shows we're at the point of no return with trusting anything online

Source: Business Insider, Website, 2024.

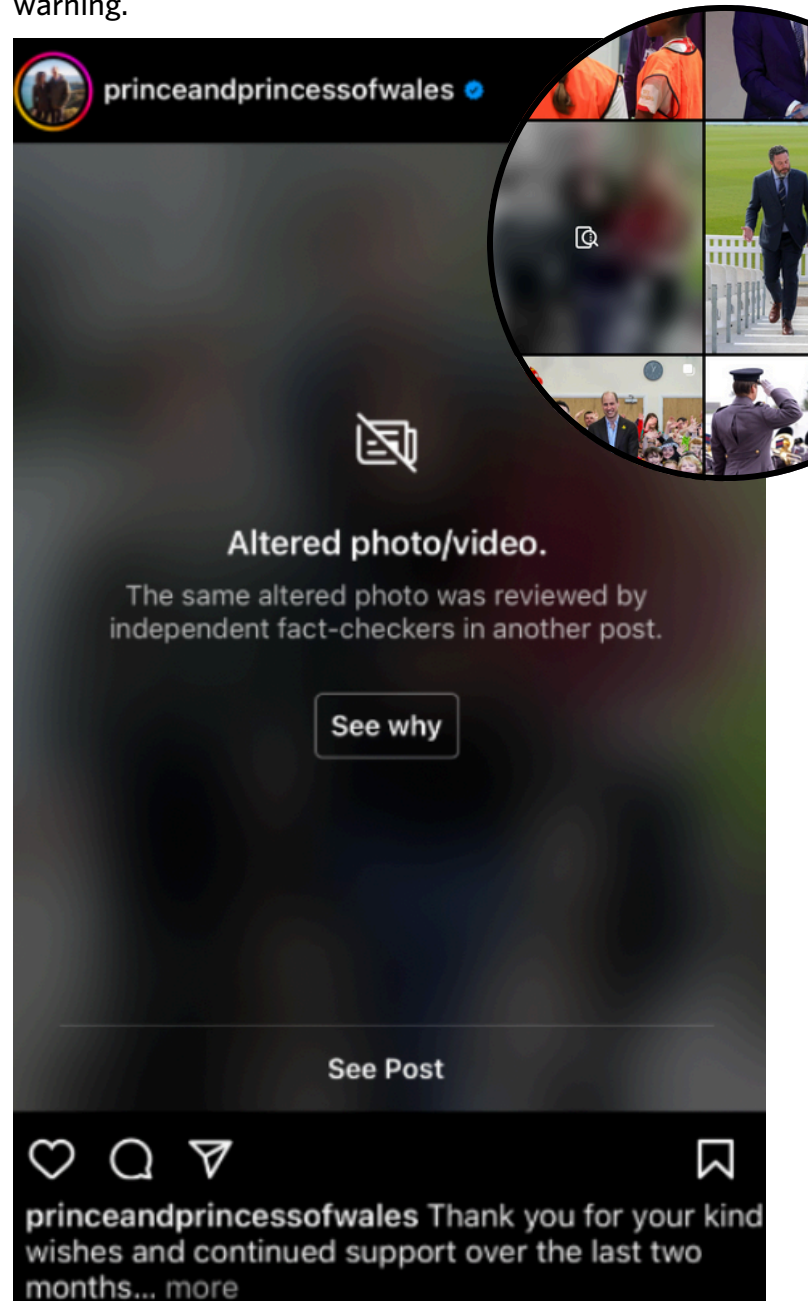
As the events surrounding the AI-altered photo of Princess Kate unfolded, the Royal Family's reputation with the press and the public was threatened, specifically the institution's trust and transparency with stakeholders. Princess Kate's seclusion from the public eye added to the crisis, gathering global attention and concern about the Princess's well-being (Hall, 2024).

Queen Elizabeth II's public relations strategy during her reign was, "The institution must be seen to be believed" (Serhan, 2024, para. 3). However, the lack of visibility of Princess Kate from January to March 2024, followed by inconsistent official statements regarding her health, and the altered Mother's Day photo, exposed the Royal Family to public speculation. It also contributed to a wider conversation of brand and media mistrust with the rise of AI and deepfakes.

News agencies, such as *Agence France-Presse (AFP)*, the oldest news agency in the world, held an emergency meeting and decided to issue a "kill notice" to publishers regarding the photo (Kindelan, 2024, para. 71). An industry-wide "kill notice" is a rare occurrence, and was a first for the Royal Family (Kindelan, 2024, para. 72). The *Agence France-Presse* global news director, Phil Chetwynd, cited a violation of 'rules' related to authenticity and transparency (Kindelan, 2024, para. 72). Furthermore, Chetwynd says that he requested the original, unaltered photo from the Royal Family and was met with no response (Kindelan, 2024, para. 78).

As a result of the retraction, Chetwynd said that news agencies must be vigilant in detecting photo manipulation, even from traditionally trusted sources like the Royal Family (Kindelan, 2024, para. 74).

After research was conducted into the photo's metadata, it was discovered that the original image was saved to the editing software, Adobe Photoshop (Thorpe, 2024, para. 19). The photo remains on the Prince and Princess's official Instagram page. However, Instagram, whose parent company is Meta (formerly Facebook), added a warning label to the AI-altered photo three days after the initial posting (Dass, 2024, para. 14). The Mother's Day photo appears blurred on their Instagram page but is visible after clicking past the warning.



Sources: Prince and Princess of Wales, Instagram, 2024-2025.

AI Reputational Impact

Life Through a Magnified Lens



Source: Prince and Princess of Wales/Kensington Palace/PA

Before the intense online scrutiny and wavering public trust following the Kate situation, the Royal Family could present images to the press without worry or doubt because of its trusted status. However, the so-called “KateGate” shed light on the increase in misinformation, with the Firm’s brand credibility being questioned more frequently, including prior photo releases. For example, on April 21, 2023, what would have been Queen Elizabeth’s 97th birthday, an image of Kate and her family bore similar inconsistencies to the Mother’s Day 2024 photo, following further inspection by Photoshop experts (Thorpe, 2024).

The repercussions of “KateGate” served as a wake-up call for news agencies, institutions, and public figures, emphasizing the need for stricter measures that identify and discern truth from AI-created content in media. For instance, Princess Kate’s remission announcement, released six months after her viral Mother’s Day photo, was shot differently than her cancer announcement in May. The three-minute “emotional family video” featured the Royals “playing outside, enjoying a picnic together and embracing in hugs and kisses” (Kindelan, 2024, para. 6). As the Royal Family navigates the evolving digital landscape, restoring trust and credibility is key to building and maintaining a trusted reputation for future situations.

Business Reputational Impact

According to the Page Principles

The Royal Family's actions throughout the controversy surrounding Princess Kate can be explained through the Page Principles, communication guidelines inspired by the life of Arthur W. Page, a public relations innovator.

The Royal Family **told the truth** after receiving backlash from news outlets and the public. The scenario cultivated a lack of trust for the Royals as a reliable institution amongst media agencies and the public. Instead of remaining quiet, Kate's apology to the public **proved it with action**, taking accountability for the edited photo.

The Royal communications teams did not initially **conduct public relations as if the whole enterprise depended on it**, as stakeholders were questioning the credibility of the royal's content due to the rise of digital misinformation. As a result of inconsistent updates from the palace on Kate's well-being for months, the Royal communications team did not fully **manage for tomorrow**.

After Kate's cancer announcement, the Royal Family **listened to stakeholders** by providing quicker and more informative official updates about the Princess. The Royal Family also became more publicly visible through subsequent Instagram posts. Moreover, Princess Kate and Prince William's public appearances reflected learning from previous shortcomings, demonstrating that **an enterprise's true character is expressed by its people**.

Finally, despite speculation and extensive news coverage of the altered photo and the cancer diagnosis, the Royal Family managed to save face despite their challenges, ultimately **appearing calm, patient, and good-humored**.



Acrothetics
@acrothetics

"kate gate" has me intrigued; the alleged photo manipulation, supposedly faking a family photo with kate middleton's head coming from a vogue cover. and now kate announces she is battling cancer, it's alleged this is an AI video. this part stood out to me...



Kate Middleton 'beelines' for 'extra special' therapy dog Scout during emotional visit to hospital where she was treated for cancer

Source: Daily Mail, Website, 2025.



Source: Chris Jackson/Getty Images

Business Reputational Impact

According to the Institute for Public Relations

The strategic pillars of the Institute for Public Relations (IPR), a source for research-based knowledge in public relations, can be used to understand how the Royals could have made data-driven decisions during “KateGate” and beyond.

For example, the Royals’ communications teams could have researched public sentiment regarding digitally altered content before the crisis to **predict** how the public might react.

The Firm’s initial delayed response after “KateGate” suggests they tried to **investigate** the best remedial approach. The Royals later recovered with higher engagement rates and positive feedback online (illustrated on the right).

Finally, the Royal Family **amplified** its message of service and credibility by changing the production style of announcements and returning to civic duties. They **engaged** with the public through consistent updates about Princess Kate’s condition and her gradual return to public appearances, including a visit in 2025 to the hospital where she received treatment (depicted below).



2 million likes on Instagram

*Comments are uncountable due to the post being flagged

March 10

Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales

85%

more likes on Princess Kate’s cancer announcement after the Mother’s Day photo



March 22

5.1 million likes on Instagram and 1 million views on YouTube



June 14

Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales

2.9 million likes on Instagram



June 15

Source: UK Press via Getty Images

2.6 million likes on Instagram



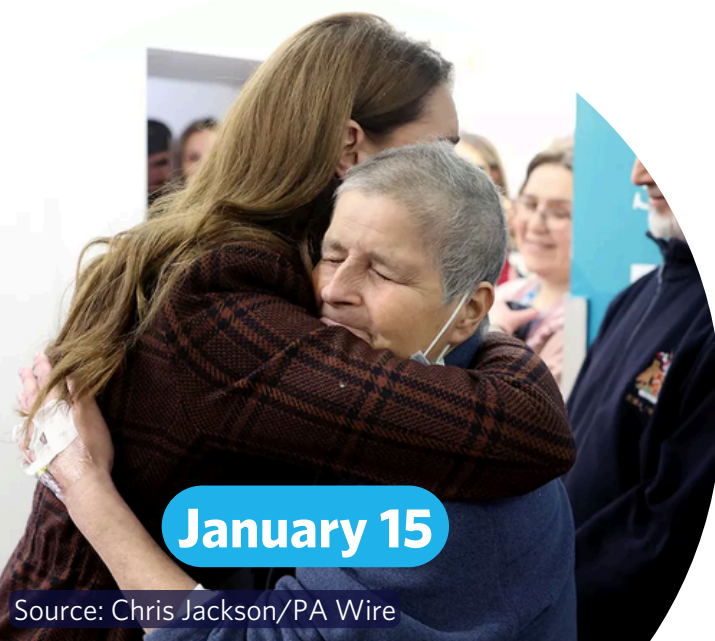
Sept 9

Source: The Prince and Princess of Wales

2.4 million likes on Instagram and 1.8 million views on YouTube

61%

more views on Princess Kate’s remission announcement than the cancer diagnosis announcement



January 15

Source: Chris Jackson/PA Wire

Future Implications

AI Regulations

This case is an example of how trust in high-profile brands, institutions, and companies is fragile in this age of misinformation and outright disinformation.

Furthermore, this case highlights the impact of AI's rapid growth in recent years. AI has both positive and negative aspects according to *Forbes* (Forbes, 2022), including:

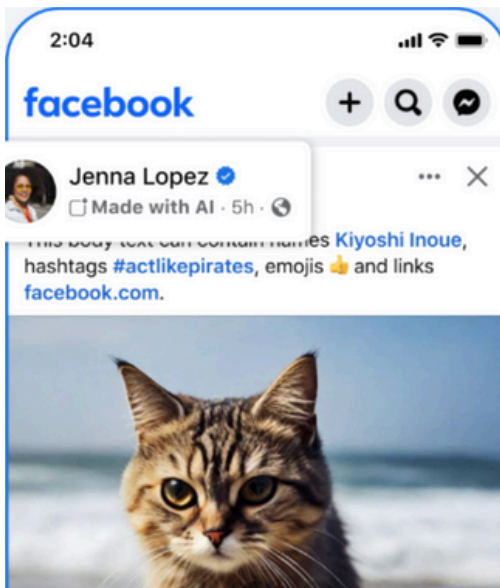
Positives:

- Fewer errors in work
- Quick data analyzing
- 24/7 Algorithms
- Streamline processes and tasks

Negatives:

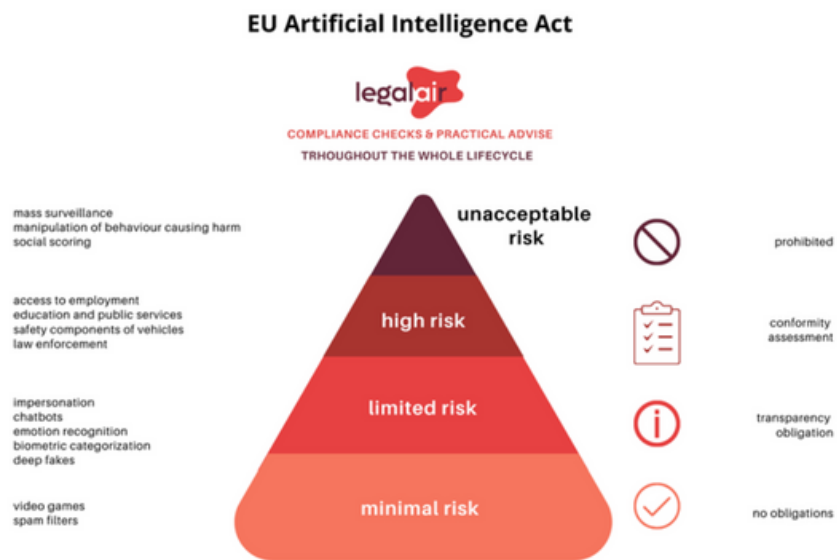
- Lack of creativity
- Potential for biased programming
- Poses ethical dilemmas

To combat AI's boom, there are policies and regulation being put in place. For instance, Instagram has added "Made with AI" labels to images, audio, and videos generated through AI and added labels to digitally altered content that poses a high risk of deception for important public matters (Bickert, 2024).



Source: Meta

Furthermore, the European Union (EU), which is comprised of 27 countries and states, enacted the first regulatory framework on AI called "The AI Act" on March 13, 2024 (European Commission, n.d.). This act focuses on ethical considerations and human-based principles regarding AI's usage. Specifically, it provides clear guidelines about risks associated with AI systems using tiers ranging from low to high risk (European Commission, n.d.).



Source: Legal Air, 2024.

The goal of "The AI Act" is to foster advancement through the AI system while minimizing risks and promoting trust in AI tools. Overall, this Act positions Europe at the forefront of AI regulation by providing parameters around the booming technology.



Source: @corund, Adobe Stock

Looking Ahead



Source: Kensington Palace/Will Warr

The Royal Family has since provided additional updates regarding Princess Kate. Since her cancer diagnosis video announcement, there has been an increase in official communications about her well-being. For example, on April 28, 2024, Prince William updated the public on his family's well-being at his first public appearance since Kate's controversy (Kindelan, 2024). While volunteering at a nonprofit focused on men's mental health in Surrey, England, William shared, "We are all doing well, thank you," when asked by a fan how his family is (Kindelan, 2024, para. 3).

The next day, the Prince and Princess of Wales posted a never-before-seen black and white portrait of themselves to commemorate their 13th wedding anniversary (Kindelan, 2024).

Four weeks later, on May 27, 2024, the *Daily Mail* announced that Princess Kate had been seen with her family throughout May, however, no official photos were released (English, 2024). In addition, a spokesperson for Kate commented on her ambition sharing, "The Princess of Wales was the driving force behind the business task force" (English, 2024, para. 15). The spokesperson emphasized that public service is Kate's focus, but she "needs the space and the privacy to recover right now. She will return to work when she has had the green light from doctors" (English, 2024).

Despite the photo controversy, the public's opinion of the Royal Family has not swayed significantly. The Firm may not be "future proof" but it is resilient.

References

- Allyn, B. (2024, May 20). *Scarlett Johansson wants answers about ChatGPT voice that sounds like 'Her'*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2024/05/20/1252495087/openai-pulls-ai-voice-that-was-compared-to-scarlett-johansson-in-the-movie-her>
- Associated Press. (2024, February 27). UK's Prince William pulls out of memorial service for his godfather because of 'personal matter'. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/britain-william-memorial-service-godfather-101a126732ed1962a5d4c442446d5640>
- BBC. (2023, April 25). Which countries are in the Commonwealth, and what is it for? BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-43715079>
- Bonner, M. (2024, May 21). Who Is the Richest Kardashian? Kardashian Net Worths, Ranked. Cosmopolitan. <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/entertainment/celebs/a60856506/who-is-richest-kardashian-family-net-worth/>
- CBS News. (2024, June 15). Princess Kate makes first public appearance since cancer diagnosis. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/princess-kate-appears-cancer-king-charles-trooping-the-colour/>
- The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. (n.d.). BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc/anniversaries/june/coronation-of-queen-elizabeth-ii/>
- Coughlan, S. (2024, March 22). Kate, Princess of Wales: I am having cancer treatment. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-68641441>
- Crawford, J., Kessler, H., Sabet, K., Goldfeder, M., Faris, D., Perry, D., Coleman, A. B., Hammer, J., & Kennedy, R. F. (2024, March 13). Everything the Palace Has Said About Kate Middleton's Photo Scandal. Newsweek. <https://www.newsweek.com/everything-palace-said-kate-middleton-photo-scandal-1878811>
- Davies, A. (2021, March 18). Love them or hate them, the Kardashians changed business forever. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/3/18/love-them-or-hate-them-the-kardashians-changed-business-forever>
- Dass, C. (2024, March 20). Where is Kate Middleton? What brands can learn about consumer trust from photoshop fail. <https://www.marketing-interactive.com/kate-middleton-brands-consumer-trust-photoshop-ai>
- English, R. (2024, May 27). Get well, Kate! Palace is flooded with 'tens of thousands' of get-well-soon cards and gifts for the Princess of Wales as she continues cancer battle. Daily Mail. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13465383/Kensington-Palace-thousands-cards-gifts-Kate-Middleton.html>
- Gibson, K. (2024, March 25). A Timeline of Kate Middleton's Surgery and Cancer Diagnosis. People. <https://people.com/kate-middleton-abdominal-surgery-cancer-treatment-timeline-8432059>
- Grady, C. (2022, September 8). The subtle power of Queen Elizabeth II's reign. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/culture/2022/9/8/22846451/queen-elizabeth-ii-death-96-obituary-reign-monarchy>
- Grantham-Philips, W. (2024, May 7). Katy Perry and Rihanna didn't attend the Met Gala. But AI-generated images still fooled fans. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/katy-perry-rihanna-met-gala-ai-3b3d2da6c57c0b0b563149c32851297f>

References

- Hall, E. (2022, September 30). King Charles Hired A Former Top Editor At The Tabloids That Published Critical Kate Middleton Columns And The Story That Was An Impetus For The Breakdown Of Meghan Markle's Relationship With Her Father. BuzzFeed. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/ellievhall/tobyn-andreae-royal-communications-secretary-daily-mail>
- Hall, E. (2024, March 7). It's getting weirder: BuzzFeed News' former royals reporter on Kate Middleton, Palace PR, and distrust in the media. Nieman Lab. <https://www.niemanlab.org/2024/03/this-is-just-weird-buzzfeed-news-former-royals-reporter-on-kate-middleton-palace-press-and-distrust-in-the-media/>
- Hall Meares, H. (2023, December 11). How the Royal Family Celebrates Christmas. Vanity Fair. <https://www.vanityfair.com/style/how-the-royal-family-celebrates-christmas>
- Incredibly tough couple of months': Princess of Wales undergoing cancer treatment. (2024, March 22). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTbluZKYIOo>
- Jenkins, T. (2022, September 19). Kate Middleton Leans On Her Favourite British Designer And Sentimental Jewellery For The Queen's Funeral. Grazia. <https://graziamagazine.com/articles/kate-middleton-queen-elizabeth-ii-state-funeral/>
- Kate Middleton now UK's most popular royal. (2024, April 9). YouGov. <https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/49089-kate-middleton-now-uks-most-popular-royal>
- The Kennedy Center. (n.d.). Art and Culture | Kennedy Center. The Kennedy Center. <https://www.kennedy-center.org/memorial/jfk/highlights/art-and-culture/>
- Kennedy Family. (2015, July 1). Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/profile/kennedy/?sh=12db33cb5007>
- Kindelan, K. (2024, May 1). Prince William shares 1st update on Kate Middleton since cancer diagnosis. ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Culture/prince-william-shares-1st-update-kate-middleton-cancer/story?id=109821614>
- Kindelan, K. (2024, May 23). Kate Middleton: A timeline of her cancer diagnosis, surgery, and absence from public duties. Good Morning America. <https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/culture/story/kate-middleton-surgery-photo-timeline-108017783>
- Kindelan, K. (2024, September 9). Kate Middleton says she has completed chemotherapy 6 months after announcing cancer diagnosis. Good Morning America. <https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/culture/story/kate-middleton-completed-chemotherapy-113156389>
- Kindelan, K. (2025, January 14). *Kate Middleton: A timeline of her cancer diagnosis, surgery and absence from public duties*. ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Culture/kate-middleton-surgery-photo-timeline/story?id=108017783>
- King, E. (2020, September 9). All The Ways 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' Changed Popular Culture. British Vogue. <https://www.vogue.co.uk/arts-and-lifestyle/article/kardashian-jenner-familys-impact-on-the-world>
- Landler, M. (2021, March 9). In Royal 'Firm,' the Family Business Always Comes First. New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/09/world/europe/royal-family-firm-meghan-harry.html>

References

- Melley, B. (2024, March 10). Why the AP retracted the first official photo of the Princess of Wales since her abdominal surgery AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/princess-wales-kate-surgery-photo-manipulated-3863e9ac78aec420a91e4f315297c348>
- Merrifield, R. (2024, March 11). Kate photo - Everything we know about edited image as picture agencies pull it. The Mirror. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/royals/kate-middleton-photo-everything-know-32322409>
- Mickle, T. (2024, May 20). Scarlett Johansson Said No, but OpenAI's Virtual Assistant Sounds Just Like Her. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/20/technology/scarlett-johansson-openai-voice.html>
- The Mirror. (2024, March 11). Exact times Kate Middleton edited Mother's Day picture on Photoshop - and what she used. X. <https://x.com/DailyMirror/status/1767288124273541634>
- Murray, C. (2023, December 14). Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/conormurray/2023/12/14/heres-how-big-the-crown-was-for-netflix-and-the-royal-family-as-its-final-episodes-are-released-today/?sh=149c2d8f2e52>
- Noyen, M; Vlamis, K, 2024, March 22). Meet Prince William and Kate Middleton's inner circle who may be part of the team helping them navigate her cancer diagnosis. Business Insider. <https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/meet-prince-william-kate-middletons-013311648.html>
- Ott, H. (2024, March 14). AI expert says Princess Kate photo scandal shows our "sense of shared reality" being eroded. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/princess-kate-middleton-photo-scandal-ai-sense-of-shared-reality-being-eroded/>
- Paton, E. (2024, March 29). What 'KateGate' Says About Royalty, Celebrity and Internet Culture. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/25/fashion/princess-kate-middleton.html>
- PBS. (2022, September 8). Uncle's abdication led to Queen Elizabeth's 70-year reign on the throne. PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/uncles-abdication-led-to-queen-elizabeths-70-year-reign-on-the-throne>
- Princess Kate is the nation's favourite Royal. (2024, March 13). Ipsos. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/princess-kate-is-the-nations-favourite-royal>
- Princess Kate Photoshop Furore: "A Mistake To Edit A Picture So Publicly Wanted" - Jennie Bond. (2024, March 12). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2-loMlyfVM>
- Princess of Wales: Kate apologises for Mother's Day photo 'confusion' | BBC News. (2024, March 11). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOSqWF-3BI0>
- 50 facts about Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation. (n.d.). The Official Website of the Royal Family. <https://www.royal.uk/50-facts-about-queen-elizabeth-iis-coronation>
- Queen Elizabeth II's Life and Reign. (n.d.). The Official Website of the Royal Family. <https://www.royal.uk/queen-elizabeth-iis-life-and-reign>

References

Serhan, Y. (2024, March 12). The Royal Family Has a Trust Problem. Time. <https://time.com/6900255/royal-family-kate-middleton-trust-media/>

Silverstone, M. J. (n.d.). John F. Kennedy: The American Franchise. Miller Center. <https://millercenter.org/president/kennedy/the-american-franchise>

Shapiro, A., & Çam, D. (2021, March 10). Inside 'The Firm': How The Royal Family's \$28 Billion Money Machine Really Works. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/arielshapiro/2021/03/10/inside-the-firm-how-the-royal-familys-28-bil>. (n.d.).

Smith, A. (2024, March 12). Princess Kate picture was meant to calm rumors but instead made them worse. NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/princess-kate-picture-photoshop-rumors-royals-surgery-rcna142917>

Stone, I. (2024, March 13). Kate Middleton is 'struggling to deal with Photoshop furore'. Daily Mail. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13191277/Kate-Middleton-Mothers-Day-photo-row-Easter-return.html>

Thomas, S. D. (2024, March 22). Biden, first lady send words of comfort to Princess Kate after cancer diagnosis. The Hill. <https://thehill.com/blogs/in-the-know/4551028-biden-first-lady-words-of-comfort-to-kate-middleton-cancer-diagnosis/>

Thorpe, V. (2024, March 17). 'People question everything now': how Kate's photo scandal rips up the rules for royals and the media. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/mar/17/people-question-everything-now-how-kates-photo-scandal-rips-up-the-rules-for-royals-and-the-media>

OWhatling, J. (2022, September 19). Kate Middleton at Queen's Funeral, Pearls, Veil & Black Coat Dress. Kate Middleton Style Blog. <https://katemiddletonstyle.org/princess-of-wales-pearls-queen-funeral/>

Willingham, A. (2024, March 16). Conspiracies around Catherine, Princess of Wales have reached a fever pitch. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/15/world/kate-middleton-news-controversy-cec/index.html>

Whitfill Roeloffs, M. (2024, March 14). Kensington Palace No Longer A 'Trusted Source' After Releasing Edited Kate Middleton Photo, AFP Says. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/maryroeloffs/2024/03/14/kensington-palace-no-longer-a-trusted-source-after-releasing-edited-kate-middleton-photo-afp-says/>

Acknowledgement
Visual design
inspired by the
tabloid design style
of *People* magazine.