

Homes Unhooked

2025-2026

Your essential PR and marketing guide
for the home and garden industry

UNHOOKED
COMMUNICATIONS





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Welcome to Homes Unhooked 2025-2026

Your essential PR and marketing guide for the home and garden industry

Homes Unhooked 2025-2026, brought to you by Unhooked Communications, is your practical guide for navigating the changing landscape of construction, property, interiors, home tech and garden retail. Packed with exclusive market insights, consumer trends and PR strategies, this report will help you reach your target audiences, build credibility and drive sales.

Backed by new market research, this report explores:

- The biggest market opportunities for home and garden brands
- What's driving consumer behaviour and how people make buying decisions
- Where customers go for inspiration and information, and how to be visible in the right places
- How to use PR, marketing and content to tap into emerging trends and stand out from the competition.

From smart home tech and sustainability to renovation trends and buying habits, this guide will give your brand the insights

you need to refine your PR and marketing strategies to achieve future growth.

In an industry shaped by rising costs, changing consumer priorities, sustainability pressures and digital transformations, brands that can connect with their audiences will be the ones that succeed – and this report will help you achieve this.

With decades of PR expertise in construction, property, and interiors, Unhooked Communications is here to help you develop your PR strategies, craft compelling stories, amplify your brand, and engage customers in powerful ways.

Claire

**Claire Gamble,
MD, Unhooked Communications**

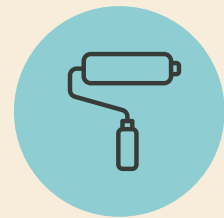
ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Commissioned by Unhooked Communications, this research was conducted in February 2025 with a sample of 2,001 UK adults. This follows our previous Homes Unhooked 2023-2024 study – where the research was carried out in July 2023 – allowing us to track key shifts in consumer behaviour and market trends over time.

Home improvement market trends

Over the next 12 months, 54% of consumers plan to invest in home and garden improvement, whether by hiring professionals or undertaking DIY projects. This marks a decline from the 63% recorded in 2023-2024, reflecting a shift in homeowner priorities and potential economic influences.

Key areas of planned investment include:



Soft home improvements

Decorating and minor upgrades, using external providers

19%



DIY home projects

Flexing DIY skills to make improvements around the home

17%



DIY garden projects

Self-led improvements for outdoor spaces

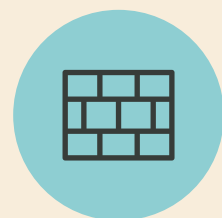
17%



Professional garden services

Hiring experts for general garden maintenance and enhancements

16%



Hard landscaping

Working with external providers for projects like decking, paving and raised beds

8%



Building work

Structural renovations, extensions, and repairs, using professionals

7%



Energy-efficient upgrades

Seeking government funding or incentives for sustainability-driven home improvements with professional support

6%

While consumer interest in home and garden upgrades remains strong, the decline in planned projects suggests shifting spending habits. Brands should consider strategies to support both cost-conscious DIYers and those looking for premium professional services and products, ensuring they align with evolving homeowner demands.

Consumer motivations for home improvements

Home improvement decisions are driven by a mix of emotional, practical and financial factors. The most common reasons include enhancing comfort and wellbeing (23%), optimising existing space (23%), and updating the look and style of the home (23%).

However, a growing number of homeowners are feeling trapped in their current property due to financial constraints. One in five (20%) say they would like to move but find it impractical, which is a significant increase from 13% in 2023-24. This suggests that high interest rates, market uncertainty and affordability challenges are encouraging more people to stay and improve rather than move.

How motivations have shifted

Reason for home improvements	2025-26	2023-24
Improve how I feel in my home	↓ 23%	35%
Make better use of existing space	↑ 23%	22%
Update the look and style	↓ 23%	32%
I'd like to move, but due to costs, mortgages, or property availability, I'm choosing to improve my current home instead	↑ 20%	13%
Repair broken fixtures, features or household items	↓ 17%	24%
Impress or inspire other people (friends/family/social media followers)	↑ 14%	7%
No specific reason	↓ 14%	15%
Increase my home's value	↓ 13%	16%
Improve my home's energy efficiency	↓ 9%	15%
Make more use of my outdoor space	N 8%	—
Create additional living space	↓ 8%	14%
Reduce long-term maintenance costs	N 6%	—
Changing household demographic (e.g. new baby, elderly parents moving in)	↓ 5%	9%
Repurpose space for new activities (e.g. home office, home gym)	N 5%	—
Enhance my enjoyment of the garden	N 4%	—
Reduce reliance on energy suppliers with smart technology	N 1%	—

KEY

- ↑ Figure has increased
- ↓ Figure has decreased
- N New option for 2025

PR TIP

Understanding these motivations helps brands refine their messaging. Balancing functionality, aesthetics and space optimisation will be key in appealing to potential customers looking for products and services to help them improve their homes in line with these internal drivers. Additionally, with a growing focus on social status and lifestyle-driven improvements, brands can position products and services around aspirational living while still addressing practical concerns.

Key trends and implications for brands



Emotional motives are declining:

The desire to improve how people feel in their homes has dropped since the post-pandemic period, suggesting changes in how our homes affect us emotionally and psychologically.



Financial concerns are increasing:

More consumers are staying put in their current homes due to cost pressures, reflecting shifting priorities.



Social influence is growing:

A 100% increase in people improving their homes to impress or inspire others suggests a rising focus on 'Keeping up with the Joneses' and aspirational living.



Energy efficiency and sustainability are lower priorities:

Despite a push for green initiatives, interest in energy efficiency upgrades has fallen, but as we'll see later on in the report, brands still need to consider this in their PR strategies.



Planned purchasing trends

Consumer planned spending on home and garden products has shifted over the past year, with some categories seeing a surge in demand while others have declined.

Key growth areas



Outdoor living remains a priority:

Planned purchases of plants and outdoor features have risen, with 35% of consumers planning to buy them, up from 27%. Similarly, outdoor seating and furniture spending is to grow to 20%, from 17%, indicating a continued interest in garden improvements.



Hard landscaping makes an entrance:

15% of consumers now plan to invest in paving, decking and other landscaping materials, a new category in this year's data, reinforcing the trend toward long-term outdoor improvements.



Sustainability and affordability influence purchasing habits:

Refurbished and second-hand furniture (10%) is a new entrant, highlighting a shift toward more cost-conscious and eco-friendly choices.



Smart technology is on the rise:

Plans for spending in newer categories such as AI-powered home assistants (8%) and home automation for energy savings (8%) indicate an increasing interest in technology-driven improvements. Additionally, smart appliances with subscription models (9%) are also new options, suggesting consumers are becoming more open to tech-enabled convenience and flexible payment structures.

Declining categories



Home decorating sees a downturn:

Fewer consumers plan to invest in wallpaper, paint, and decorating items (29%), down from 37% in 2023-2024.



Furniture demand softens:

Planned purchases of living room (20%) and bedroom furniture (16%) have dropped from 26% and 27%, respectively.



Entertainment technology spending is declining:

The appeal of TVs, home cinema, and music systems has weakened, with only 10% planning to invest, compared to 19% in 2023-2024.



Kitchen and small home appliances interest falls:

Fewer people are planning on purchasing kitchen utensils (19%) and small home appliances (17%).



What are you planning on buying for your home in the next 12 months?

	2025-26	2023-24
Plants and/or outdoor features for garden	↑ 35%	27%
Wallpaper, paint and/or other items for decorating	↓ 29%	37%
Living room furnishings or furniture	↓ 20%	26%
Outdoor seating and furniture	↑ 20%	17%
Kitchen utensils or cooking items	↓ 19%	24%
Small home appliances (e.g. kettle, toaster)	↓ 17%	21%
Tools for DIY	↑ 17%	16%
Bedroom furnishings or furniture	↓ 16%	27%
Paving, decking or other hard-landscaping materials for the garden	N 15%	—
Large home appliances (e.g. oven, washing machine)	↓ 14%	15%
Entertainment technology (e.g. TV, home cinema, music system)	↓ 10%	19%
Refurnished or second-hand furniture	N 10%	—
Smart appliances with subscription models	N 9%	—
Home gym equipment	↓ 9%	11%
Storage/equipment for a play room	↓ 9%	11%
Equipment/furniture for a home office	↓ 9%	11%
Wellness technology (e.g. air purifiers, lighting)	↓ 9%	12%
AI-powered home assistants	N 8%	—
Home automation for energy savings	N 8%	—

While consumer planned spending on decorating and traditional furniture is seeing a decline, there are still valuable opportunities for brands in these categories. Homeowners may be investing less in short-term style updates, but they are still looking for products that offer lasting value, multifunctionality and style. By refining messaging to highlight durability, timeless design and affordability, brands can continue to attract consumers who are making more considered purchasing decisions. The rise of smart home technology, outdoor living, and energy-efficient upgrades also provides an opportunity to reposition existing products to complement these trends. Brands that stay agile and align their marketing with evolving consumer needs will remain relevant and competitive in 2025 and 2026.

Home improvement opportunities

Consumer priorities in planned home improvements are shifting, with the data suggesting a move towards practical, long-term investments. While decorating remains the most common planned upgrade, at 31%, it has seen a decline from 41% for 2023-2024, indicating a reduced focus on purely aesthetic updates. Instead, homeowners are prioritising outdoor improvements, energy efficiency and multi-functional spaces.

Emerging trends



Outdoor living grows:

Garden landscaping (21%) has grown from 17%, and outdoor dining/entertainment areas (11%) remain stable, reflecting ongoing demand for functional outdoor spaces.



Wellness and functional spaces rise:

Plans to invest in home offices (10%), home gyms (9%), and garage conversions (7%) reflect a demand for multi-purpose areas that adapt to changing lifestyles.



Sustainability and smart home technology are in demand:

Smart home automation for energy management (7%) and water conservation systems (6%) are new additions, while electric vehicle charging points (7%) continue to see gradual growth. This highlights a consumer shift towards eco-conscious and energy-efficient living.



Structural improvements remain a focus:

Double-storey (6%) and single-storey extensions (6%), along with loft conversions (5%), remain stable as homeowners seek to expand their living space rather than move.

Declining areas



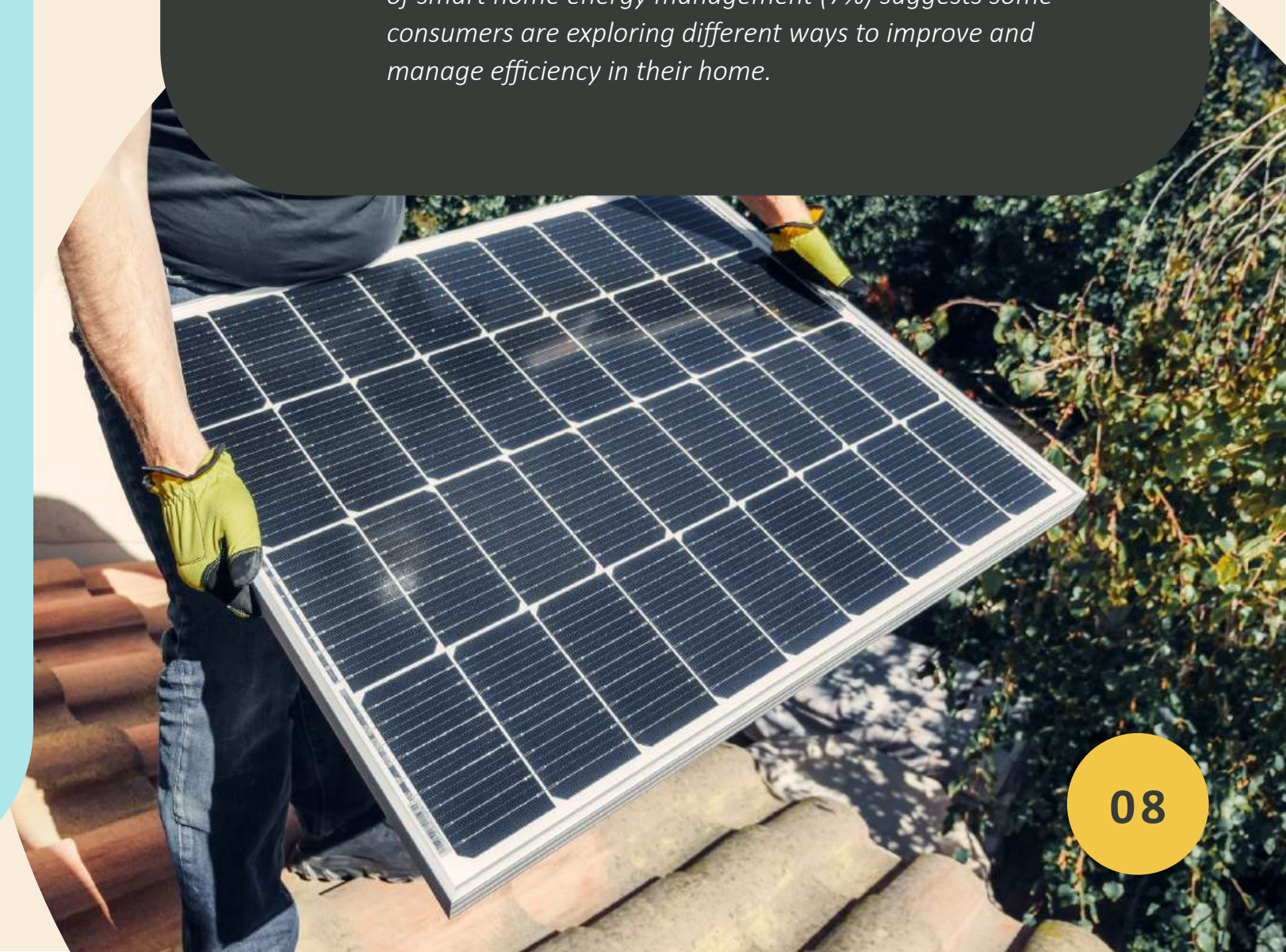
Bigger style changes aren't such a priority:

The percentages of consumers planning new flooring (12%, down from 17%), bathroom renovations (11%, down from 15%), and kitchen upgrades (11%, down from 12%) have decreased slightly, suggesting that changes to the home that require a bigger budget aren't a key focus for some.



Energy-efficiency upgrades fluctuate:

While plans for solar panel installations (6%) and new insulation (7%) have seen a slight dip, the introduction of smart home energy management (7%) suggests some consumers are exploring different ways to improve and manage efficiency in their home.



Home improvement plans for the next 12 months

	2025-26	2023-24
Decorating at least one room	↓ 31%	41%
Landscaping the garden	↑ 21%	17%
New flooring	↓ 12%	17%
New bathroom	↓ 11%	15%
Outdoor dining / entertainment area	↑ 11%	10%
New windows or doors	↓ 11%	14%
New kitchen	↓ 11%	12%
Home office / space to work	↑ 10%	9%
Home gym / area to exercise	↑ 9%	5%
Play area / space for children	→ 8%	8%
Garage conversion	↑ 7%	4%
Electric vehicle charge point	↑ 7%	5%
Smart home automation for energy management	N 7%	—
Hobby area	↓ 7%	8%
New insulation	↓ 7%	10%
Solar panels	↓ 6%	9%
Water conservation systems	N 6%	—
Double storey extension	↑ 6%	5%
Single storey extension	↑ 6%	5%
Heat pump and/or wastewater recovery pump	→ 5%	5%
Loft conversion	→ 5%	5%
Zone / room for pets	↓ 4%	5%

With fewer homeowners looking to move, the focus has shifted to making existing properties more functional, efficient and future-proof, so brands should prioritise communicating the long-term benefits of their home and garden improvement products and services. Even in categories where consumer plans are declining, opportunities will remain for brands that position their products and services in the right way and engage with potential customers during the research stage. By focusing on messaging and content that highlights durability, multi-functionality and added value, businesses can continue to capture consumer interest and drive demand.

Factors that influence buying decisions for the home

Businesses are still competing in a price sensitive market. When asked about the main factor that influences buying decisions for the home, cost remains the top factor (31%). This is a slight decline from 35% the year before, indicating that while affordability is still important, other considerations are starting to prevail.

Emerging trends



Price sensitivity remains dominant, but with more varied decision-making:

While cost and value is still the most significant driver, the percentage of consumers citing 'no main factor' has increased from 5% to 17%, suggesting that more people are open to balancing multiple considerations, rather than making decisions based purely on price or another factor.



Quality and longevity are slightly less of a priority:

19% of consumers say durability is a key factor, down from 23%, suggesting that while this is still an important consideration, some are prioritising other factors.



New factors are emerging:

Ease of installation (4%) and subscription-based pricing models (3%) are new options, highlighting growing consumer interest in convenience and flexible payment options.

Declining considerations



Sustainability is taking a backseat:

Only 5% of consumers prioritise environmental credentials, down from 7%, indicating that while still relevant, cost and practicality outweigh sustainability for most consumers in the current economic climate.



Design is becoming less of a driver:

Style and trends have dropped from 14% to 11%, supporting the idea that consumers are currently choosing products based on need rather than just to update the look.

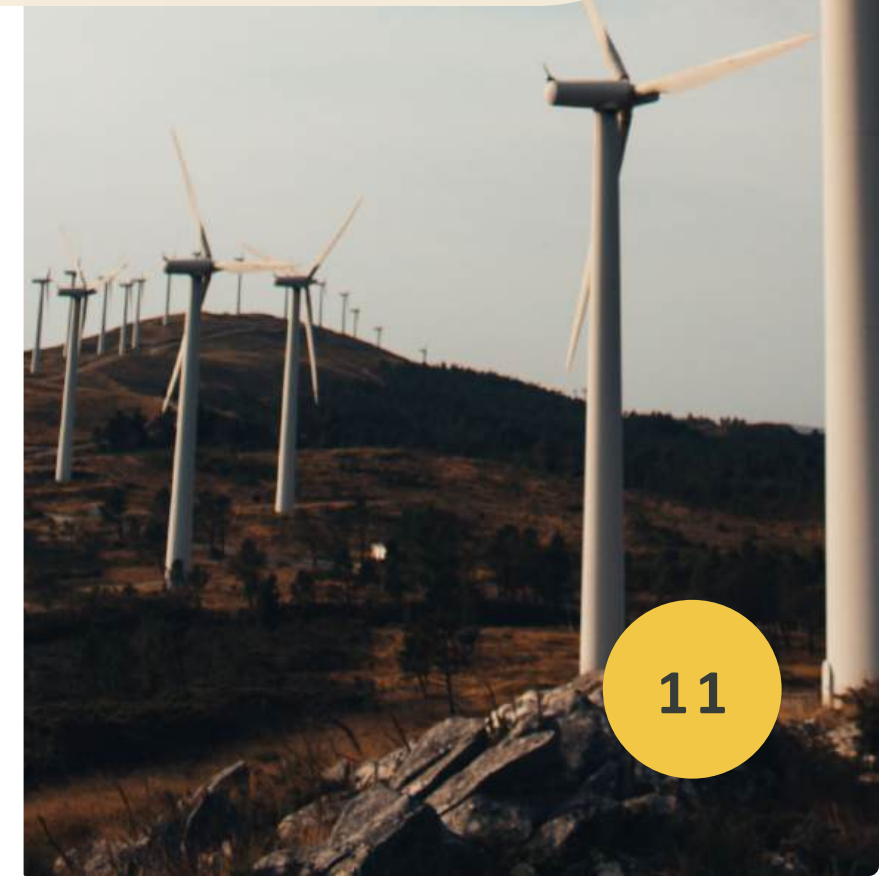


What is the main factor that influences your buying decisions for the home?

	2025-26	2023-24
Cost / value	↓ 31%	35%
Quality and how long it will last	↓ 19%	23%
No main factor	↑ 17%	5%
Style / appearance / look / trends	↓ 11%	14%
Functionality / how well it works	↓ 10%	15%
Sustainability / environmental credentials	↓ 5%	7%
Ease of build / installation	N 4%	—
Subscription-based pricing models	N 3%	—

As we can see when comparing the two sets of data, priorities and needs can shift year to year. But while a factor like sustainability has seen a slight drop in being the main factor that drives buying decisions for products and materials for the home, it's still an important consideration for many consumers as part of their wider research journey. It therefore shouldn't be dropped from brands' messaging and content. Instead, brands should make sure they have a holistic approach to their PR and marketing that balances different purchasing decisions.

58% of consumers would be willing to pay more for products or materials for their home if they're good quality and will last.



Sustainability in consumer purchasing decisions for the home and garden

Although sustainability isn't the top determining factor in consumer buying decisions for products and materials for the home, it is something that many people are thinking about, so should still be something brands consider in their PR and marketing activities.

Our research shows 21% of consumers are worried that their home, in its current state, is having a negative impact on the environment. Additionally, 42% want to buy products and materials for their home and garden from sustainable businesses that reduce their impact on the environment.

Examining specific product categories, we can see that most consumers would assess the sustainability and environmental impact of different items before making a purchasing decision:

APPLIANCES

63% would check the sustainability or environmental impact of appliances.

BUILDING MATERIALS

53% would check the sustainability or environmental credentials of materials before buying.

HOME FURNISHINGS

Similarly, 53% would check this information before purchasing home furnishings.

Consumers rely on multiple sources to verify sustainability claims. The most popular channels include websites, review sites, social media and packaging.

Where do you look for sustainability information?

	2025-2026	2023-2024
Website	↑ 35%	33%
Review sites	↓ 23%	24%
Social media	↓ 20%	22%
Packaging	↓ 16%	19%
News stories / media coverage	→ 16%	16%
Third party sources	→ 10%	10%
Award wins / accreditations	↓ 8%	9%
ESG reports	→ 8%	8%
Sustainability influencer reviews	N 9%	—
AI-powered tools	N 7%	—

PR TIP

With brand websites (35%) leading as the most popular source for sustainability information, brands must ensure their messaging on this channel is clear, accessible and compelling. But they also need to take a multi-channel approach. As well as considering sharing content on social media and their packaging, brands should ensure third party sources like review sites and media coverage are included in their sustainability comms.

Sustainability confusions and concerns

Consumers increasingly want to make sustainable choices for their homes and gardens, but our research shows there are some concerns and confusion when trying to do so. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for brands. The businesses that communicate their sustainability credentials clearly, credibly and confidently will gain a competitive edge. Our research highlights key consumer concerns:

COST

56%

56% want to buy sustainable products and materials but believe they are a more expensive option.

GREENWASHING

54%

54% worry that brands mislead or exaggerate their sustainability claims.

SOURCES

23%

23% don't know where to verify sustainability credentials.

JARGON

20%

20% struggle to understand the terminology used by brands to explain sustainability.

How to genuinely communicate sustainability credentials



Any comms around sustainability is meaningless unless it's backed by genuine business-wide efforts. From your business operations and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policies through to your manufacturing methods, investment strategies and supply chain improvements, make sure that sustainability is integrated throughout your business.



Consumers want evidence when it comes to sustainability. Thankfully, there are ways to access and utilise data which can then be shared in your comms to prove what you're claiming about your products and services. These include independent testing to validate energy efficiency and environmental impact; regular monitoring and reporting on areas like carbon emissions and waste reduction, and annual ESG reports to illustrate your policies, processes, progress and accountability.



Once you've achieved the first two stages, you can start to incorporate sustainability into your wider PR and marketing strategy. Effective comms will use the right messages to reach the right audiences in the right way. You should consider website content to educate and inform, media coverage to reinforce credibility, social media content to engage and inspire, and third party endorsements such as awards and accreditations to act as a real-life proof point.

Home technology trends

Market opportunities and consumer sentiments

The smart home market continues to grow, with 70% of consumers now having smart technology in their home, a slight increase from 2023-2024's 69%. This steady adoption highlights an ongoing shift towards connected, automated living.

The most popular tech in homes today

Our research shows that smart speakers (26%) and smart doorbells (20%) lead the way as the most widely adopted smart home products. However, interest is diversifying, with smart thermostats (14%) and external cameras/CCTV (14%) also seeing steady uptake.

Interestingly, the inclusion of energy management systems (5%) and AI-powered home automation (4%) suggests that consumers are increasingly looking beyond convenience and security, towards smarter energy consumption and AI-driven efficiency in their homes.



What tech do you currently have in your home?

	2025-26	2023-24
Smart speaker	↑ 26%	20%
Smart doorbell	↑ 20%	16%
Smart bulbs	↓ 14%	15%
Smart thermostat	↑ 14%	11%
External cameras / CCTV	↑ 14%	12%
Smart plugs	→ 12%	12%
Smart washing machine / dryer	↑ 11%	9%
Smart entertainment systems	↓ 8%	10%
Lighting control system	→ 8%	8%
Smart alarm system	↑ 8%	7%
Internal cameras	↑ 8%	7%
Smart fridge / freezer	↓ 7%	8%
Smart air purifier	↑ 6%	5%
Smart cooking appliance	↓ 6%	7%
Robot vacuum cleaner / smart robot cleaners	→ 6%	6%
Smart dishwasher	↓ 6%	7%
Smart lock	→ 6%	6%
Smart scales	↓ 5%	6%
Energy management systems that adjust consumption based on peak pricing	N 5%	—
Smart shower	→ 5%	5%
Smart security features with AI detection	N 5%	—
AI-powered home automation systems	N 4%	—
All-in-one home automation / smart hub	↓ 3%	4%
Smart window blinds / curtains / shades	↓ 3%	4%

What's next?

Despite already-high adoption rates, 51% of consumers still plan to buy new technology for the home in the next 12 months, with security and energy-saving products at the forefront of demand.

What are you planning on buying in the next 12 months?

	2025-26	2023-24
Smart doorbell	→ 12%	12%
Smart bulbs	↓ 8%	10%
External cameras / CCTV	→ 9%	9%
Smart alarm system	→ 7%	7%
Lighting control system	→ 7%	7%
Smart plugs	↓ 6%	7%
Robot vacuum cleaner / smart robot cleaners	↑ 7%	6%
Smart speaker	→ 6%	6%
Smart thermostat	→ 6%	6%
Smart lock	↓ 6%	7%
Smart fridge / freezer	→ 6%	6%
Internal cameras	↓ 5%	6%
Smart entertainment systems	↓ 5%	6%
Smart cooking appliance	↑ 6%	5%
Smart shower	↓ 4%	6%
Smart air purifier	↓ 4%	6%
Smart washing machine / dryer	→ 5%	5%
Smart window blinds / curtains / shades	→ 5%	5%
Smart dishwasher	↑ 5%	4%
All-in-one home automation / smart hub	→ 4%	4%
Smart scales	→ 4%	4%
Energy management systems that adjust consumption based on peak pricing	N 5%	—
Smart security features with AI detection	N 5%	—
AI-powered home automation systems	N 4%	—

What motivates consumers to invest in home tech?

Our research highlights three core motivators for consumers buying tech for the home:



Convenience and ease of use (17%)

The ability to automate everyday tasks seamlessly.



Enhanced security (16%)

Protecting homes with smart cameras, alarms, and doorbells.



Energy efficiency (15%)

Reducing energy consumption and cutting costs.

This presents a clear opportunity for brands to tailor their messaging, emphasising home tech's practical, security-enhancing and cost-saving advantages will drive consumer interest and engagement.

What is your main motivator for investing in smart technology for your home?

	2025-26	2023-24
Convenience / ease of use	↑ 17%	16%
Enhanced security	↑ 16%	15%
Improve energy efficiency	→ 15%	15%
Nothing in particular	↑ 13%	12%
Being able to operate the home remotely	→ 8%	8%
Increase home's value	↑ 7%	6%
Health and wellness	→ 7%	7%
Creating a home of the future	↑ 7%	6%
Enhanced entertainment	→ 5%	5%
Being able to customise my home / different rooms	↓ 4%	8%

To overcome consumer concerns about smart home tech, brands should clearly communicate the value of their products. This could be achieved by highlighting affordability by showcasing long-term cost savings, such as lower energy bills, or by simplifying adoption by making sure installation and operations are presented as hassle-free and user-friendly. There's also a clear need to address security concerns by emphasising protection features, and building credibility, which can be done through testimonials, case studies, testing, awards, reviews, influencer partnerships and media articles. Taking all of this into consideration, a well-crafted PR and marketing strategy can reassure consumers, inform them of key product benefits and encourage more confident smart home tech investments.

Addressing consumer hesitations

Despite interest in smart home technology, some consumers are hesitant due to concerns around cost, complexity and security.

39%

are worried about the cost
(compared to 43% in 2023-24)

35%

are overwhelmed with too many choices
(compared to 39% in 2023-24)

33%

are unsure how to install or operate it
(compared to 39% in 2023-24)

32%

have concerns over hacking/ security risks
(compared to 37% in 2023-24)

Behind the buying process

Online shopping is a common habit for many of us today. But when it comes to purchasing products and materials for the home, the buying journey extends beyond digital channels. Brands that understand how customers research, compare and decide which products to buy can map out their marketing strategies to reach people at each stage of the buying journey, using relevant channels and tactics.

Our research shows that:



61% of consumers research products or materials for their home online before purchasing – a slight rise from 60% last year.



50% rely on reviews, case studies and testimonials to inform their decisions, highlighting the importance of social proof and credibility.



61% still want to see products in person before buying, proving that physical stores, showrooms and in-person experiences remain important and relevant.



48% prioritise supporting local businesses when buying home and garden materials.



36% want to speak to industry specialists, such as architects, designers, retailers, or merchants, before committing to a purchase.

Key stages of the research and buying journey

	2025-2026	2023-2024
Researching products online before purchasing	↑ 61%	60%
Seeing products in person before buying	↓ 61%	64%
Reviews, case studies, and testimonials are important	↓ 50%	54%
Supporting local businesses is a priority	↓ 48%	51%
Speaking to specialists (e.g. architects, designers, retailers, merchants) before purchasing	↓ 36%	37%



PR TIP

What influences consumers' choice of retailer or supplier?

When it comes to choosing a business to buy from, trust, reputation and being able to see and interact with the product before buying remain top considerations. Trust in sustainability claims and circular economy initiatives (e.g., buy-back programs, recycling partnerships) have been included as new options in the research, and appeal to some consumers.

What is important for you when choosing a retailer, supplier or business to buy products or materials from?

	2025-26	2023-24
Recommendations and a positive reputation	↓ 35%	39%
Seeing and feeling products before buying	↓ 28%	38%
A wide range of services or products	↑ 31%	30%
Knowing someone who has had a good experience	↓ 25%	34%
Demonstration of expertise and knowledge	↓ 25%	30%
Trust in brand sustainability claims	N 25%	—
Reliable delivery times	↓ 24%	29%
Nothing in particular	↑ 18%	13%
Added value services (e.g. a free design consultation)	↓ 15%	19%
Case studies and testimonials of past projects	↓ 15%	21%
Circular economy initiatives (e.g., buy-back programs, recycling partnerships)	N 10%	—

Consumers engage with multiple sources, both on and offline, when researching products and materials for their home, meaning a multi-channel PR and marketing strategy is essential. Your own channels, such as your website and social media, should provide clear and engaging content, and these should be complemented by credible third party platforms, like media outlets, review sites and independent experts or partners, to build trust.

Shoppers want more than product specifications; they want to see inspiring projects and proof of quality. Case studies, testimonials, demos and awards all support these needs. And while many consumers will start their research online, there's a clear need for people to have in-person experiences. Brands that invest in showrooms, pop ups, in-store demos and knowledgeable staff can set themselves apart from competitors. Ecommerce-only retailers can offer a sample service or digital tools, such as room visualisers, to bridge this on and offline gap.

For brands in the home, garden and construction sector, creating an omnichannel experience combining digital convenience with real-world experiences will help to build trust, drive sales and nurture brand loyalty.

The top channels for information and inspiration and how PR can help

When consumers research home and garden products, they don't rely on just one source. Instead, they use multiple channels, from search engines and social media to review sites, retailers, and recommendations. For brands, this means a strong presence across these touchpoints is crucial to capture attention, build credibility and drive sales.

Our latest research reveals the most influential platforms across different home-related categories. We've used these insights and combined it with our own expertise to advise how a strategic PR approach can ensure your brand is visible where it matters most.

Our research shows that:

Across all categories, the top research tool remains a general online search. This reinforces the importance of SEO, strong brand content and placements in high quality online media outlets to help customers find you.

Other channels also play a significant role depending on the category:



YouTube is a key source for DIY, home technology and energy efficiency research. Brands investing in engaging video content, such as product demos, tutorials, and expert guides, can capture this audience.

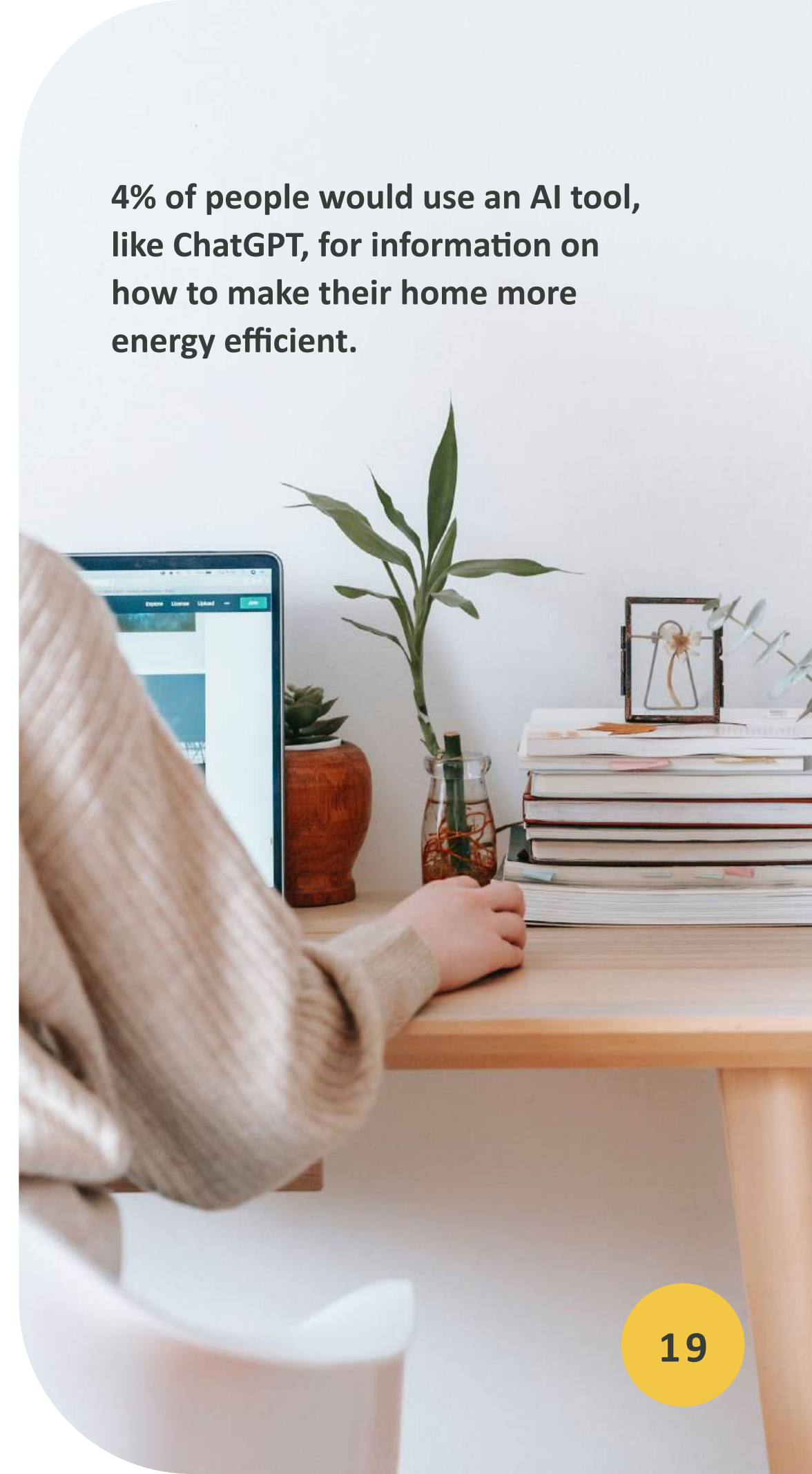


In-store research still matters, especially for home décor, appliances, and DIY projects, where consumers value seeing and testing products before committing.



Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok are influential for home décor, organisation and lifestyle inspiration, making visual storytelling and influencer collaborations essential marketing tools.

4% of people would use an AI tool, like ChatGPT, for information on how to make their home more energy efficient.



The top channels consumers use for information and inspiration for different home categories



HOME DÉCOR AND FURNISHINGS
(e.g. furniture, paint, soft furnishings)

	2025	2023
• General online search	25%	22%
• In store / retailers	20%	18%
• Instagram	13%	13%
• Company / brand websites	13%	12%
• Facebook	12%	11%



HOME RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
(e.g. extensions, building materials)

	2025	2023
• General online search	22%	21%
• YouTube	14%	13%
• Recommendations	13%	14%
• Instore / retailers	12%	11%
• Instagram	11%	10%



HOME ORGANISING / DECLUTTERING
(e.g. storage, ways to keep the home organised)

	2025	2023
• General online search	17%	17%
• YouTube	14%	13%
• Instagram	12%	12%
• Facebook	11%	11%
• TikTok	10%	10%



HOME APPLIANCES
(e.g. ovens, kettles, washing machines)

	2025	2023
• General online search	31%	29%
• In store / retailers	22%	19%
• Review websites	19%	15%
• Company / brand websites	16%	17%
• YouTube	11%	11%



DIY PROJECTS FOR THE HOME
(e.g. decorating, DIY home improvements)

	2025	2023
• General online search	22%	22%
• YouTube	18%	17%
• In store / retailers	14%	13%
• Recommendations	12%	12%
• Facebook	12%	12%



SMART TECHNOLOGY FOR THE HOME
(e.g. smart thermostats, smart speakers, smart air purifiers)

	2025	2023
• General online search	25%	20%
• YouTube	14%	13%
• Review websites	14%	12%
• Company / brand websites	13%	9%
• Recommendations	11%	11%



ENERGY EFFICIENCY INFORMATION FOR THE HOME

	2025	2023
• General online search	26%	26%
• YouTube	13%	13%
• TV (live)	12%	14%
• Facebook	11%	10%
• Recommendations	10%	10%

How PR tactics can make your brand visible, trusted, and a consumer's first choice

When developing your marketing strategy to make sure you show up in the places where your potential customers are looking, there are a number of PR and content tactics that can help you achieve your goals.

MASTER SEO AND BRAND-OWNED CONTENT

Your website needs to be optimised to ensure potential customers find the right information quickly. Use targeted keywords, publish engaging blogs and expert insights, and showcase case studies, testimonials, and high-quality images and videos to create an engaging experience, all while tapping into phrases and questions that your audience is searching for.

TAP INTO THE POWER OF MEDIA PLACEMENTS

Many media outlets have high domain authorities, relevant audiences and invest a lot into their own SEO, meaning they rank well in consumer searches. Securing features, expert comments, product placements, reviews or case studies in key media not only means you benefit from having brand mentions and/or links on these websites, but it also puts you in front of potential customers and builds trust.

ENGAGE WITH REVIEW SITES AND FORUMS

Platforms like Which? and Expert Reviews, as well as forums such as Money Saving Expert, Reddit and Mumsnet also tend to have high domain authorities and rank highly for keywords and phrases. Building a strong reputation, turning your customers into advocates and looking at ways to get your products or services reviewed across these sites can all help raise awareness, develop trust and credibility, and drive enquiries and sales.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA AND VIDEO

Increasingly, content posted to social media and other video-first channels, such as YouTube and TikTok, now ranks high on Google and other search engines. Develop relevant, engaging video content for these channels that tap into the needs and search trends amongst your target audiences, and you'll increase your chances of being found online. You could also work with influencers and industry experts to boost engagement and awareness on these channels.

For the first time, we asked if people use AI tools to research home-related topics. While adoption is still in its early stages, AI is emerging as a resource for energy efficiency and home technology research. Brands that explore how to use search tactics to influence AI tools, as well as explore their own AI-powered chatbots or recommendation tools on their own websites, could be early adopters of this trend, enhancing customer experience and positioning themselves as go-to resources for home improvement advice and solutions.

What would you use AI tools to research in relation to home improvements?

Energy efficiency improvements	4%
Smart home technology	4%
Home renovations & building materials	3%
DIY projects	3%
Home organisation and decluttering	3%
Home appliances	3%
Home décor and furnishings	2%



Thank you for reading!

We hope you've enjoyed our Homes Unhooked 2025-2026 report and found it useful!

If you want support with turning these insights into actions to deliver success for your construction, home or garden business, we'd love to chat to see how we can help.

Unhooked Communications was set up in 2017 to offer businesses a creative, flexible and results-driven PR service to help them manage their reputations, get in front of the right people and achieve their business objectives.

What makes us the best fit for our clients...

Specialists

We're all specialists in your sectors, meaning you get a higher level of consultancy and industry-specific knowledge.

Experts

We choose the best PR and comms experts to work on your day-to-day activity.

Innovative

Transforming the outdated traditional agency model, we work with senior practitioners with 10+ years' experience.

Creative

We have a creative campaign approach to PR and marketing, focusing on developing informative and inspiring content.

Leaders

We invest in our own research and insights, as well as deliver talks and workshops with organisations and universities, including Google Digital Garage, Brighton SEO, Digital Institute of London, Manchester Metropolitan, University and University of Salford.

Award winning

We were named Best PR Agency at the Construction Marketing Awards and we have multiple other award wins and shortlists under our belt.

Who we work with

Here are just some of the brands that we've worked with since Unhooked was founded:



JEWSON

H'A'FELE



CITY
PLUMBING

3M



OXFORD
INNOVATION



Marshalls



FS
FLOORING
SUPERSTORE.COM

YMCA



BAYFIELDS
— OPTICIANS & AUDIOLOGISTS —



thetranslationpeople
love language.

IPOS



thetranslationpeople
love language.

Training, workshops and events

We've also delivered training, workshops and events with organisations, businesses and universities including:



Google
Digital Garage



University of
Salford



Manchester
Metropolitan
University



STAFFORDSHIRE
UNIVERSITY
LONDON
DIGITAL
INSTITUTE



Blogon

Our Services



PR strategy

Strategic insights to work out the best approach for your PR and marketing, teamed with effective measurement.

Media relations

Coverage in print, broadcast, online. News, thought leadership, products and more.

Copywriting and content

From blogs to brochures, we craft your copy and manage the creative and design for impactful content.

Creative campaigns

Make your PR go further with creative, multi-channel campaigns that meet several objectives.

Events and exhibitions

Maximise your presence and investment at events and exhibitions through PR and marketing.

Launches

Whether launching a new brand, product or service, we can help you build awareness and drive interest.



Data-driven campaigns

Bespoke market research to fuel campaigns and feed into inspiring and informative content like reports, events and PR to amplify the insights.



Media training

Working with former journalists and producers, we can train your teams to make them confident in interviews and when presenting.



Sustainability and ESG

Identify your messaging, collate the evidence and share your values and activity in a meaningful way.



Award entries

We have a great track record of getting businesses shortlisted (and winning!) reputable awards.



Crisis comms

Planning the strategy and managing the comms for the worst case scenarios to look after your brand.

To set up a call or to request our full credentials, please email our MD, Claire Gamble:
claire@weareunhooked.com



To set up a call or to request our full credentials, please email
Unhooked Communications' Managing Director, Claire Gamble:

claire@weareunhooked.com

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