



UMB.FYI

PULSE CHECK

2025 | 2026

01. PREFACE

Every community has a rhythm — a pattern of conversations, releases, meetups, and surprises that mark the passage of a year. A year ago, the first UMB.FYI Pulse Check set out to capture that rhythm. This second edition gives us something new: a chance to see not just where the ecosystem stands, but how it has moved since we last listened.

What follows is a story stitched together from UMB.FYI's public signals: blog posts, newsletters, package updates, product releases, events, and more. By comparing this year alongside the last, it becomes easier to see where the heartbeat is steady, where it quickens, and where new pulses are just beginning to emerge.

As before, think of this Pulse Check less as an exhaustive census and more as a snapshot. The aim is to highlight movement: the trends gaining momentum, the shifts in energy, and the signals worth paying attention to. It doesn't claim to capture everything, but it offers some perspective on the bigger picture of where Umbraco is heading.

— *Matt Brailsford*

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02. YEAR IN BRIEF

Every year leaves its own fingerprint on the Umbraco ecosystem. If last year's was a steadying rhythm, this year's feels more like a quickening. Between October 2025 and October 2026, almost every product and platform signal picked up pace, while the community conversation gathered itself around a smaller, more dedicated core.

Within that quickening, five themes stood out.

AI: from a rising tide to the main current.

Last year AI was one theme among several. This year it became the thread running through almost everything — the top trending tag for both HQ and the community, joined by new names like Umbraco AI, Automate and Compose.

Security: a steady beat, with a sharper edge.

Advisories rose modestly, from 17 to 23, but the weight of them shifted. Several more high-severity issues appeared, along with one critical, suggesting that teams will want patching to feel routine rather than reactive.

Community output: a smaller, busier core.

Last year more people published, each a little less. This year the picture reversed — fewer voices (159 → 149) and slightly fewer posts, with a handful of prolific contributors carrying more of the conversation.

Events: the busiest year yet.

Meetups rose from 105 to 137, with both in-person and virtual groups growing, and attendance grew by 39%. Hackathons more than doubled, hinting at a community that increasingly wants to build together, not just listen.

Marketplace: from consolidation to a surge.

After a year of fewer, more focused packages, new arrivals jumped sharply, with AI appearing as a real category for the first time and v17 and v18 support close to universal.

Metric	2024-25	2025-26	Change
Security Advisories	17	23	+6
Breaking Changes	5	9	+4
Community Posts	444	407	-37
Events Activity	242	270	+28
New Packages	99	478	+379

Pulse Meters Snapshot

Takeaway:

The year's pulse quickened — more releases, more packages, more meetups and a sharper security rhythm — while the community's voice gathered around a smaller, busier core.

03. TAG PULSE — HQ VS COMMUNITY

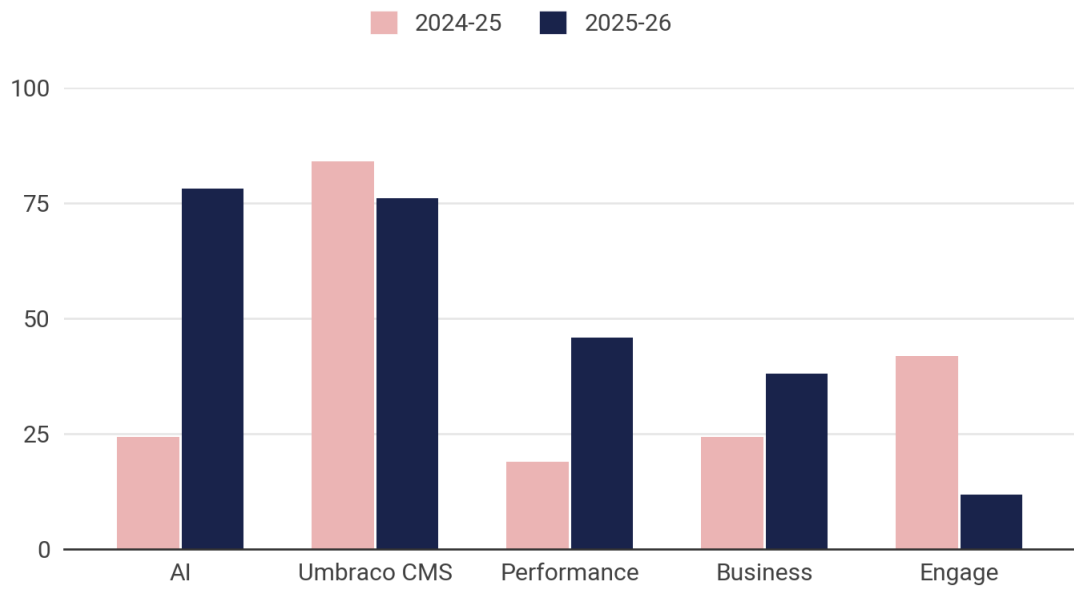
Tags tell the story of what people cared about this year — and where attention shifted. Last year, HQ and the community seemed to be heading in slightly different directions. This year, they appear to have found the same beat.

For HQ, AI moved from one signal among many to the leading theme, appearing more than three times as often as the year before. Performance, automation and Umbraco Compose rose alongside it, while integrations and Umbraco Automate emerged as fresh HQ signals. Engage, last year's breakout, quietened considerably now that its launch has passed — a natural settling once a product moves from announcement to everyday use.

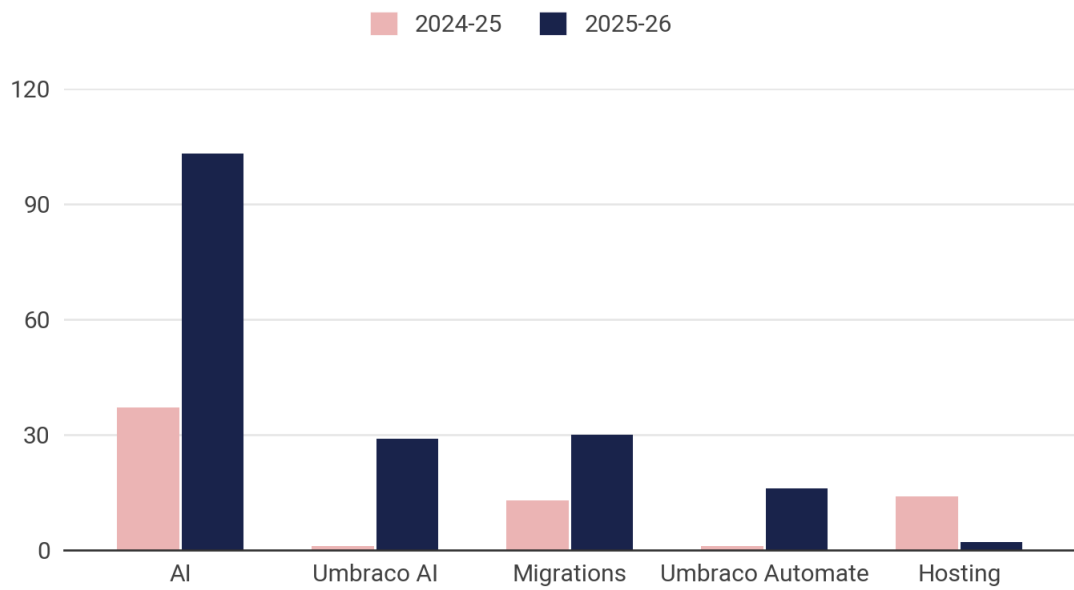
In the community, Umbraco CMS remained the anchor, but AI was close behind, drawing posts from 57 different sources. That breadth matters: this looks less like a few enthusiasts and more like a genuine shift in what people are exploring. Migrations also rose sharply, suggesting that many teams are finally making the move onto the new backoffice, while topics like hosting and SEO faded from view.

Cross-cutting signals reinforce the sense of alignment. AI, Umbraco AI, migrations and Compose trended on both sides. Only two tags pulled in opposite directions — business content and Umbraco Forms rose for HQ while easing in the community — a small reminder that HQ and the community still bring different lenses to the same platform.

Top HQ Tags (Strength)



Community Tag Shifts



Takeaway:

HQ and the community found a shared rhythm this year, with AI, automation and migrations rising on both sides, while last year's spotlight on Engage gave way to a new generation of AI-led products.

04. EVENTS & MEETUPS

Events are where the Umbraco community's energy becomes visible — and this year that energy was hard to miss. The calendar stayed busy from start to finish, and meetups had their strongest year in the data so far.

Seasonality followed a familiar shape: a lively autumn, a quiet December, and a steady climb back through spring. This time, though, the summer kept building, peaking in June 2026 with 36 events around Codegarden season. Compared with last year, the quieter months felt less quiet.

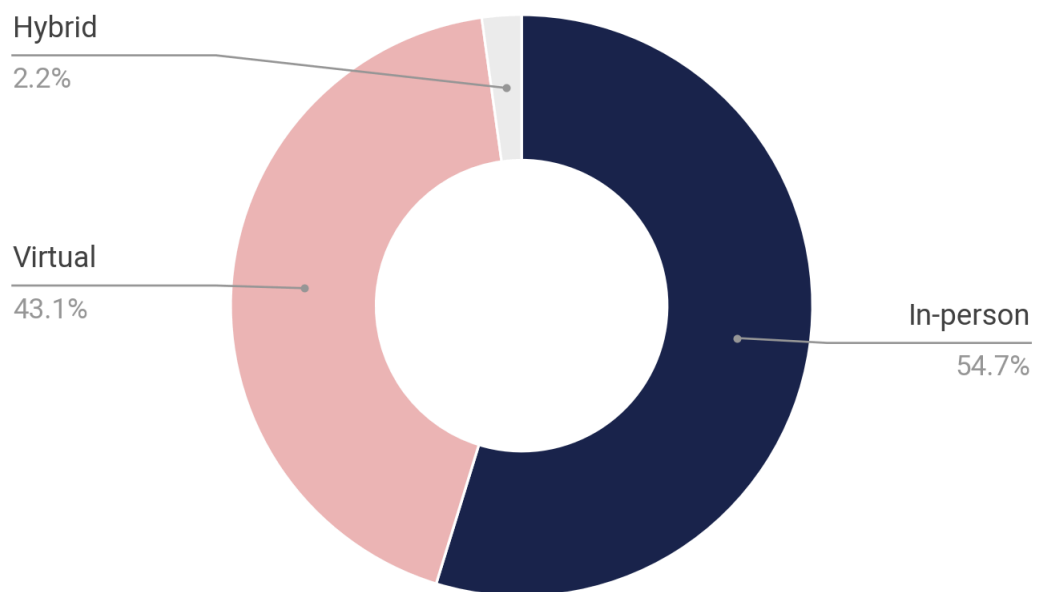
Meetups grew from 105 to 137, and the growth came from both directions. In-person gatherings rose to 75, while virtual meetups climbed to 59, with Umbraco Virtual alone hosting 21. New names joined the map too, from Portland to Kathmandu. Umbraco's DevRel team also reports that meetup attendance grew by 39%, suggesting the rise wasn't just more dates on the calendar, but more people in the room. Hackathons more than doubled, a sign of a community that increasingly wants to roll up its sleeves together.

The ripple effect of festivals also grew. Codegarden sparked 30 follow-on signals, up from 25, and Umbraco Spark 10, up from 7. These ripples show how flagship events keep the conversation going long after the stage lights dim.

Events by Month



Meetup Formats



Takeaway:

The events pulse is the strongest it has been — more meetups in person and online, more hackathons, and bigger ripples from Codegarden and Spark.

05. SECURITY & STABILITY

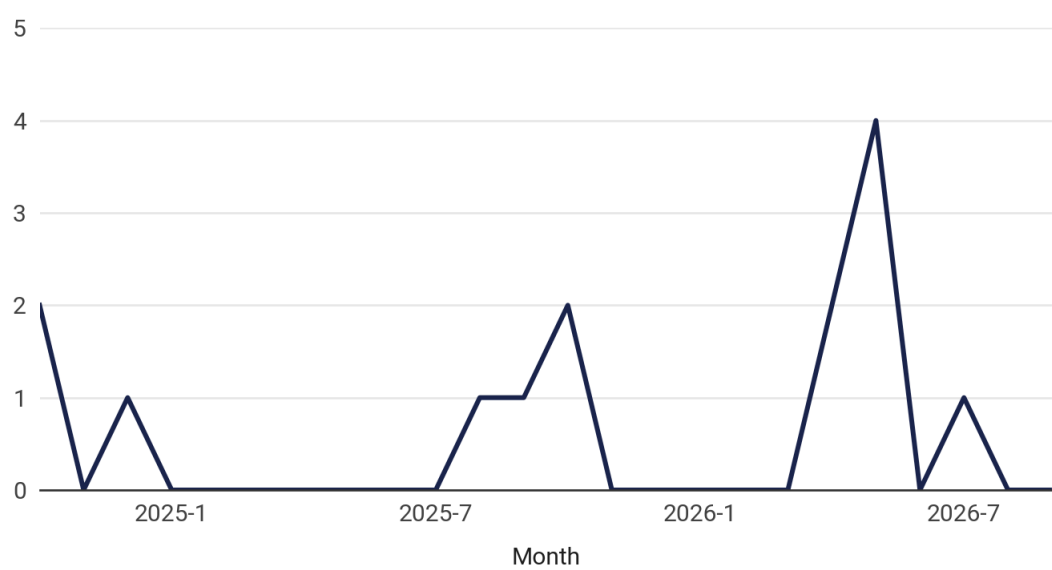
Security remained one of the clearest rhythms of the year, but the beat grew a little heavier. There were 23 advisories, up from 17, and while most were still medium severity, five were rated high and one critical — a noticeable change from the single high-severity issue the year before.

After a quiet start to the period, advisories arrived steadily from December onwards. Umbraco Forms featured more often than before, with seven advisories, while Umbraco AI recorded its first two. Many of the more serious issues shared a theme: users being able to reach data or actions beyond their permissions. The versions affected also moved forward with the platform. v17 appeared in nearly every advisory, while older versions like v10 faded from the list — a sign that attention, and scrutiny, has followed teams onto the new LTS.

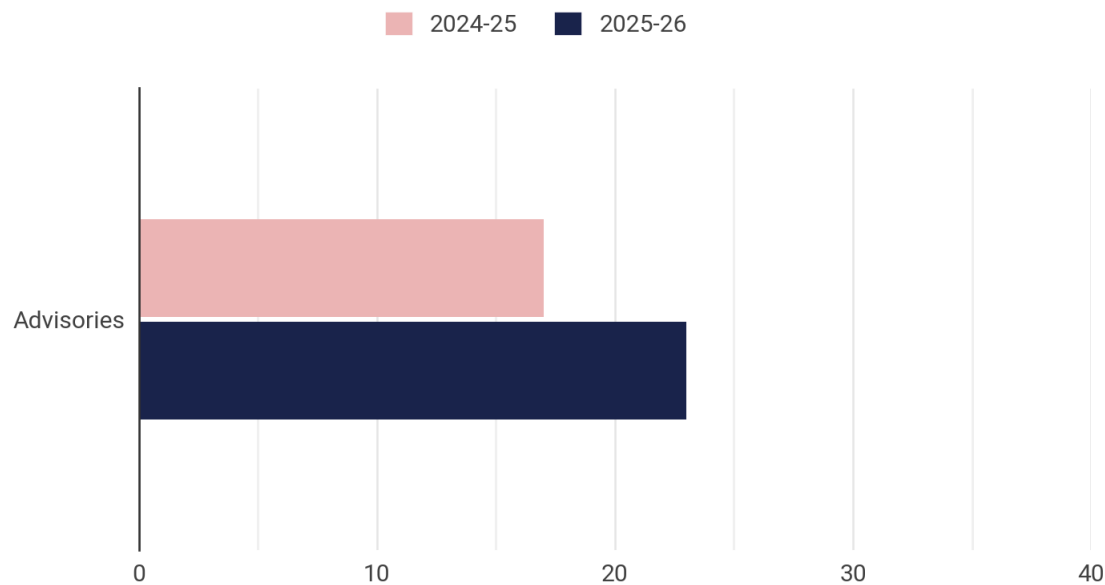
Breaking changes rose too, from five to nine, but the story here is less about turbulence and more about tidying up. Most were deliberate modernisation: retiring backoffice tours and Razor runtime compilation, consolidating the UI Library, and moving to Microsoft's own OpenAPI tooling. Forms contributed for the first time, clearing out older front-end dependencies like Bootstrap 3 and jQuery Validation.

Taken together, these signals suggest a platform that is maturing in public: more issues found and fixed, and older foundations being cleared away. The operational load is real, but much of it is the cost of moving forward.

Breaking Changes Timeline



Security Advisories by Year



Version	2024-25	2025-26
v10	9	1
v13	10	7
v14	10	3
v15	9	2
v16	2	6
v17	—	20
v18	—	12

Security Advisories by Version

Takeaway:

Security is still a constant pulse, now with a sharper edge, while breaking changes rose mainly to clear away older foundations — signs of a platform modernising in the open.

06. PRODUCT RELEASE CADENCE

Releases are the clearest signal of how fast each product team is moving — and this year the tempo picked up across much of the product line.

The CMS once again set the pace, with a release roughly every five days. Its total rose from 72 to 94, though nearly half were release candidates and previews, offered for community testing ahead of stable builds. In practice, that points to around 50 production-ready updates — still a brisk and dependable rhythm.

The bigger surprise came from the add-ons. Umbraco Forms more than doubled its releases, sitting alongside its busiest year for advisories and its first breaking changes — the picture of a product in the middle of a refresh. Workflow and Engage also sped up noticeably, with Engage moving from launch into regular feature work.

Elsewhere, the beat was calmer. Commerce eased slightly, with most releases being patches, while Deploy and UI Builder held close to last year's levels. Rather than a slowdown, this steadiness reads as maturity — products that no longer need frequent disruptive change.

The product line also grew. Umbraco AI arrived in February and has already shipped 51 releases, the same number as the Umbraco MCP server, while Automate followed in June with 15. AI and Automate leaned heavily towards new features, while the MCP server's steady flow of patches hints at a tool already being refined through everyday use. Together, they show what a product sounds like in its first year: fast, busy and still finding its shape.

Product	Total Releases	Features (Majors + Minors)	Maintenance (Patches)	RCs & Previews
CMS	94	20	32	42
Forms	97	17	48	32
Workflow	59	10	27	22
Commerce	55	9	38	8
Engage	50	14	23	13

UI Builder	41	8	29	4
Deploy	32	6	12	14
AI	51	27	16	8
MCP	51	10	33	8
Automate	15	12	0	3

Product Release Focus

Takeaway:

Release rhythms quickened this year — the CMS kept its fast pace, Forms, Workflow and Engage accelerated, and mature tools like Deploy and UI Builder held a steady, maintenance-led beat, while newcomers Umbraco AI, MCP and Automate arrived at a lively pace.

07. MARKETPLACE

The Marketplace is often a mirror of developer confidence — and this year that mirror showed a surge of activity.

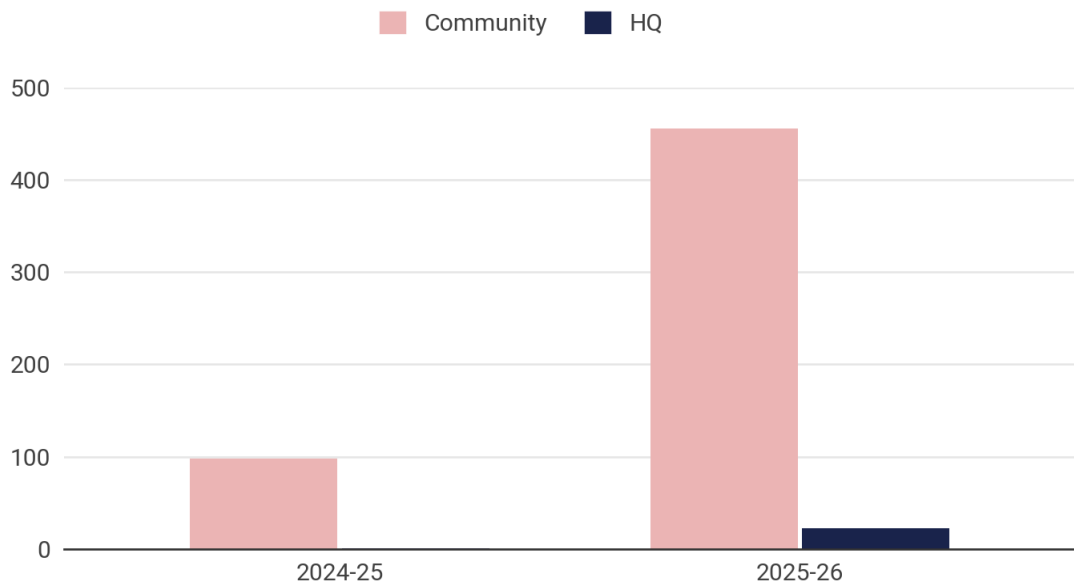
Last year's story was consolidation, with fewer new packages and a sharper focus. This year, new arrivals jumped from 99 to 478. Some of that is likely a wave of authors catching up with v17, the first LTS on the new backoffice, and the numbers bear that out: the vast majority of new packages support v17, and most support v18 too.

Part of that surge also came from a handful of prolific publishers, some of whom released whole waves of packages within a single week. It's hard to say from the outside what has made that possible. It may be teams opening up tools they have long used in-house, or it may be a sign of AI changing how quickly a package can go from idea to release. Either way, it hints at a Marketplace where the pace of publishing is shifting, and where the next challenge may be helping people find the packages that best fit their needs.

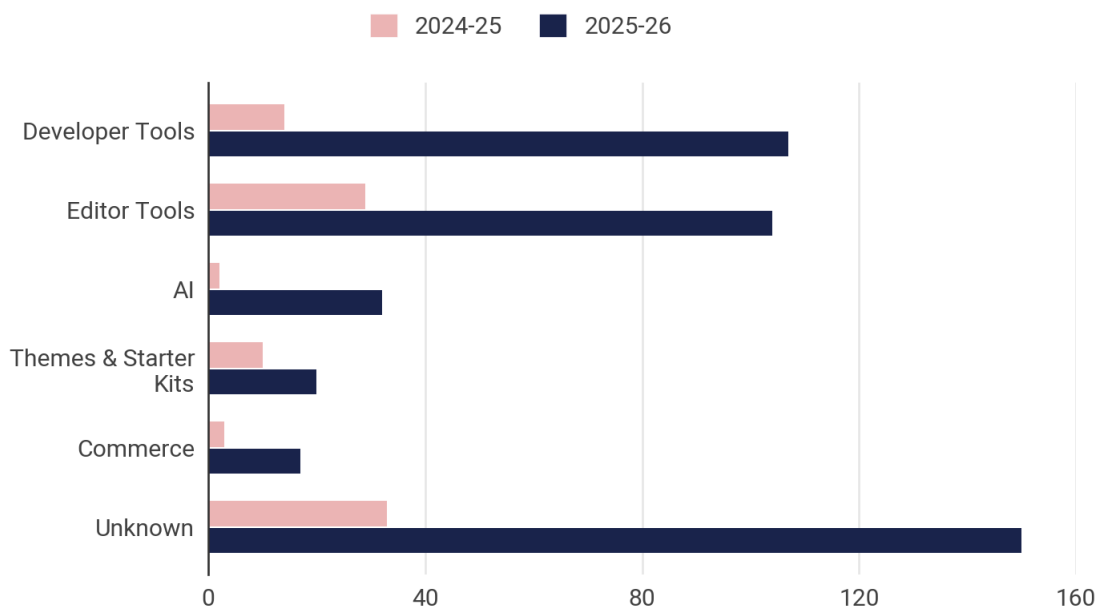
Category trends tell a similar story. Developer Tools and Editor Tools led the way, as they did last year, but the most striking shift was AI. Only two AI packages arrived the year before; this year there were 32, split evenly between the community and HQ. Categorisation remains a soft spot, though, with around a third of new packages still landing in "Unknown".

Activity rates held steady. Three in four packages have been updated since launch, and nearly one in five saw an update in the final month of the period — a healthy sign of ongoing care.

New Packages by Year



Marketplace Categories



Takeaway:

The Marketplace pulse surged this year — far more new packages, partly driven by a few highly active publishers, a real AI category for the first time, and strong alignment with v17 and v18.

08. COMMUNITY VOICES

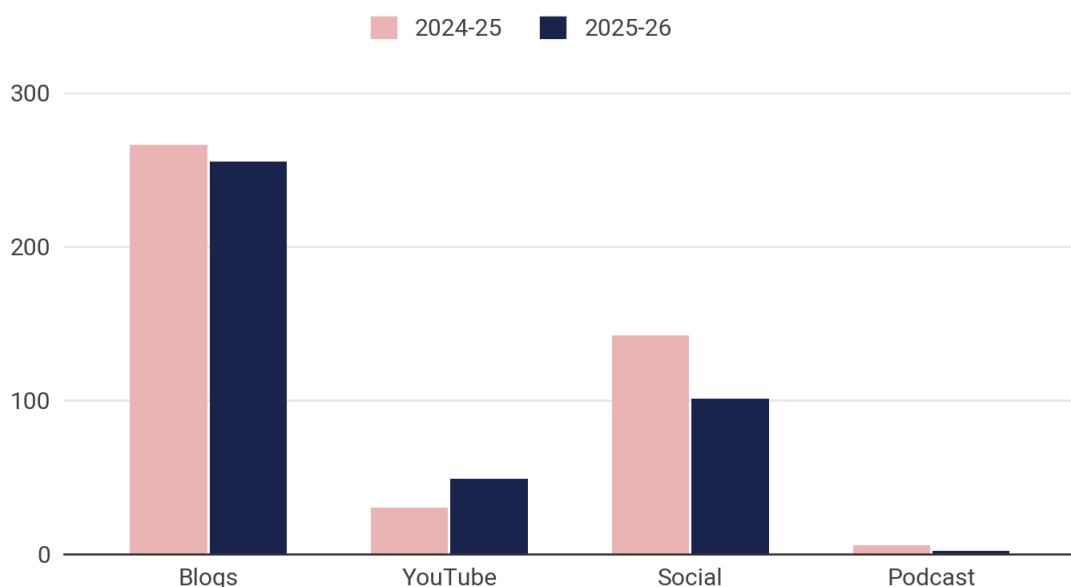
The community's voice this year was a little quieter, but more focused — fewer people published, while those who did often published more.

In total, 149 unique contributors shared 461 posts, down from 159 voices and 444 posts the year before. Last year, breadth grew even as volume dipped. This year both eased, suggesting the conversation is being carried by a smaller, more committed core — something worth gently watching.

Blogs remained the heart of it, holding almost level with last year. Social posts dropped back noticeably, while YouTube recovered after last year's dip. Podcasts became rarer still. It seems people are favouring formats with a bit more depth over quick updates.

The balance between continuity and renewal was still clear. Owain Williams was by far the most prolific voice, alongside familiar names like Matt Brailsford, Søren Kottal, Kevin Jump, UmbraCoffee, Skrift, Joe Glombek and Paul Seal. And fresh voices kept arriving — 65 first-time contributors, including Justin Neville — a reminder that new energy continues to flow in.

Community Content by Medium



Category	Count
New Voices	65
Returning Voices	51

New vs Returning Voices

Takeaway:

The community's pulse narrowed this year — fewer voices, a strong core carrying the conversation, and a gentle shift toward deeper formats — while new contributors continued to find their way in.

09. THE WATCHLIST

Last year's watchlist pointed to v17 as the migration trigger, AI as a rising tide, and integrations as a theme to watch. Looking back, all three signals held. So where might the next waves land?

On the product side, v19 is already casting a shadow, with Umbraco Search flagged as a breaking change. For teams who have only just settled onto v17, it will be worth keeping an eye on how large that next step turns out to be. Meanwhile, Umbraco AI, Automate and Compose are moving from new names to products that teams will increasingly be asked about.

On the thematic side, AI feels less like a question of whether and more a question of how. The coming year may bring more practical, production-focused stories — and, alongside them, more attention to how AI features are secured and governed. It will also be worth watching how the Marketplace adapts to faster publishing, and whether new ways to surface quality and long-term care start to matter more.

Operationally, the security rhythm remains the clearest watch item. With more high-severity issues and a recurring focus on permissions, patching on a schedule looks set to matter more than ever. And with Forms in the middle of a refresh, teams with custom form themes may want to keep a closer eye on its release notes.

Takeaway:

The watchlist ahead is shaped by AI moving into production, v19 and Umbraco Search on the horizon, and a security rhythm that rewards teams who plan ahead.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

This year's signals highlight where teams can act with confidence. Regular patching, keeping pace with a quicker release rhythm, and showing up where the community gathers will help everyone move with the ecosystem.

For site owners

Plan around rhythm, not just releases. With more high-severity advisories this year, many of them about permissions, a regular patch window is worth building into your operations. If you are still on an older version, now is a good time to map your path to v17. And if you rely on Umbraco Forms, a quick review of any custom themes against this year's changes could save surprises later.

For package authors

The Marketplace is busier than ever, so clarity matters. Supporting v17 and v18, keeping packages maintained, and giving them a proper category will all help your work stand out. Interest in AI and developer tooling is clearly growing, and there may be room for more thoughtful packages in both.

For community organisers

Meetups had a record year, both in person and online, and hackathons are on the rise. Keeping a steady schedule, experimenting with build-together formats, and timing events near Codegarden or Spark can all help ride the wave. And with fewer people publishing this year, inviting new speakers and writers could do a lot to keep the community's voice broad.

Takeaway:

Whether you're running sites, writing packages, or organising meetups, the safest strategy is to move with the new rhythm — patching on a schedule, keeping pace with v17 and beyond, and helping new voices join the conversation.

11. METHODOLOGY

This Pulse Check is built on signals, not on a full census. The data comes from UMB.FYI's newsletters and aggregated public sources — covering product announcements, package updates, security advisories, meetups, events, and community contributions. By design it captures what's visible and structured, rather than everything that happens across the Umbraco world.

Comparisons are year-over-year: the period from October 2025 to October 2026 is set against October 2024 to October 2025. Each span is exactly twelve months, giving a like-for-like snapshot of change over time. Both years were calculated fresh using the same method, so a few of last year's figures differ slightly from those in the previous report.

Trends (such as "trending," "emerging," or "declining" tags) are calculated based on relative share and movement, but the report does not explain the classification rules in detail. Instead, the focus is on what those shifts mean in practice — for teams, contributors, and the ecosystem.

Readers should treat this as a signals snapshot rather than an exhaustive record. Some categories remain fuzzy (e.g. packages tagged "Unknown"), version support reflects where packages are today rather than when they launched, and Umbraco Compose is not yet part of release tracking. Despite these limits, the trends surfaced here are reliable indicators of where energy is rising, steadying, or fading.

12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The UMB.FYI Annual Pulse Check exists only because of the contributions of the Umbraco community. Every blog post, meetup, package, podcast, video, or social update adds another signal to the dataset that makes this report possible.

Thanks are due to the community organisers who keep meetups and festivals alive, to the authors and speakers who share their knowledge openly, and to the package developers who continue to extend the platform. Equally, recognition goes to Umbraco HQ, whose cadence of releases, advisories, and product announcements provide the anchor for this ecosystem.

Without this steady flow of contributions, there would be no Pulse Check to write. This report is a reflection of a collective effort, and it belongs to everyone who participates in the Umbraco story.

13. DISCLAIMER

This report was generated using artificial intelligence, guided by structured datasets collected by UMB.FYI. The narrative, analysis, and storytelling were produced by AI, while a human review ensured that the facts, interpretations, and framing were accurate and responsible.

The insights here should be read as a reflection of visible signals, not as a complete picture of every activity across the Umbraco ecosystem. Some content and discussions inevitably fall outside the scope of what UMB.FYI can monitor.

Readers are encouraged to treat this report as a guide to momentum and direction, rather than an exhaustive census, pairing the insights here with your own context, judgement, and experience.