Topic 9: The Internet and News

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CS 6
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Outline

• The News
• News Sources
• News Media
• Blogs
• Usenet
• RSS
Traditional Media

- Newspapers
  - *Printing press, mid-1400s*
- Radio
  - *Popular in ‘20s & ‘30s*
- TV News
  - *First in early ‘40s*
  - *Gains popularity: ‘50s onward*
New News Media

• Cable TV News
  • CNN
  • Fox News
  • Daily Show

• Blogs
  • Professional bloggers
  • Private bloggers
The Spice of Life

- **Variety** of different sources
- *Offer different points of views*
- Can increase distrust in “major media”
- *Conflicting reports*
- *Questioning content*
- *Attack on viewpoints*
- Cross-checking news
- 77% use 3-4 sources
News Discovery

% Used Method Last Week

- Directly from news organizations: 90%
- Word of mouth: 60%
- Search engines: 50%
- Online news organizations that combine news: 40%
- Sharing news with friends: 30%
- Social media: 20%
- Electronic news alerts: 10%
News Discovery

• Polled group: avg. four different methods to discover news

• How do you hear about news?
  • News program? (e.g. on TV)
  • Web source? (Yahoo! News)
  • Word of mouth or social media?

• Do you trust what you hear?
Trusting the Source

![Bar Chart]

- Electronic news alerts
- Directly from news organizations
- Search engines
- Sharing news with friends
- Online news organizations that combine news
- Word of mouth
- Social media

% Among Users of Each Discovery Method

Legend:
- Trust very much or completely
- Trust slightly or not at all
News Organizations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>% Used Last Week</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly from news organizations</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search engines</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online news organizations that combine news</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing news with friends</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electronic news alerts</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Official News Sources

% Using Each Source in the Last Week

- Local TV news
- National network news
- Newspapers
- 24-hour TV news channels
- Radio news organizations
- Online-only sources
- Magazines
- Newswires
Official News Sources

• If you receive news from a [news] organization, mostly from TV (local, national, 24-hour networks)
  • *Decline of newspapers*
  • *Online-only [official] news still low %*

• Again… which one do you trust the most?
Tusting Official Source

![Bar chart showing trust levels of different news sources]
Trusting Official Source

% Among Users of Each Source

- Local TV news
- Newswires
- Radio news organizations
- National network news
- Newspapers
- 24-hour TV news channels
- Magazines
- Online-only sources

- Trust very much or completely
- Trust slightly or not at all
Age Matters

• Unsurprisingly:
  • Millennials prefer Facebook
  • Baby Boomers prefer local TV

• Younger gen. prefer Internet
• Cable TV shows that aren’t news networks
Accessing the News

• The perceived trend is
  • *Decline of physical media (newspapers, magazines)*
  • *Increase to online/digital media*

• Where does TV fall in this?

• Let’s get some more numbers…
Accessing the News

% Using Each Medium Last Week

- Television
- Laptop or computer
- Radio
- Paper newspapers or magazines
- Cell phone
- Tablet
- Smart TV or game console
- E-reader
Accessing the News
Newspapers

• Printed newspaper readership:
  • 45 million and falling
• Internet newspaper readership
  • 56 million and climbing

• Of readers who view newspapers online, over 60% also read print copy
  • Pew Research Center (2014)
Newspapers

• Despite decline in readership, profits only decrease from 30% to 21%...

• Twice of the average Fortune 500 company
Comparison

**Printed News**
- Paper costs
- Delivery costs
- Longer time to print
- Longer time to deliver

**Online News**
- Bandwidth costs
- Shorter time to post
- Posting = delivery
- Increased competition
- More prone to errors? (Less editing)
Comparison

Printed News
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10+ Years Ago

• Prediction for online news:
  • *Longer stories*
  • *More back information*
  • *Hyperlinks between (related) articles*
  • *Greater back-and-forth between reporters and consumers*

• Reality?
Bloggers

- Like independent news reporters
- More credible: free of Big Brother
- Less credible: less fact-checking
- Niche markets
- Celebrity, fashion, etc.
- Faster time-to-print (...spellcheck optional)
- Responsive to readers
- More “personal” news
Bloggers

• Are they journalists?
  • *California courts say yes*
  • *Newspapers say “no” (of course)*

• Information is at grassroots level
  • *Akin to diaries, that would only be read/publicized long after issue is over*
Bloggers

• Good for product reviews (purchases)

• But be careful
•  *Don’t believe everything you read*
•  *Bloggers don’t usually provide full disclosure*
•  Given an item to review for free, or even paid

• “Sentimental heart and skeptical mind”
Usenet

• “The original, text-only social network”
• “History of Internet”:
  • First online forum
• Arguably considered the “crème de la crème”
• Can be accessed with Google groups
Usenet

- Comp (computer)
- Humanities
- Misc (education, forsale)
- News (about Usenet)
- Rec (movies, music)
- Sci (research, physics)
- Soc (culture.african)
- Talk (religion, politics)
Usenet Decline?

• Blogs big competition
• Reddit the new Usenet?

![Usenet Traffic Per Day (Source: altopia.com)](chart)
XML

• Extensible Mark-up Language
• Information structuring
• *Human-readable AND machine-readable*
• *Accessible to alternative devices (e.g. phones)*
• *Not just webpages (also data transfers)*

**XHTML**: HTML that meets XML standard
RSS

- Really Simple Syndication
- Utilizes XML
- Subscribe to RSS feeds
- Receive updated headlines
- “Published” (released) in real time
- Condense all your feeds into one portal
- Head Line News, iGoogle
RSS Viewer

- “News aggregator” or “feed reader”
- Web-based
- Separate program
- In-email program
- In-browser program
- iTunes
Firefox Addon

• NewsFox
Podcasts

• Like TiVo for Radio
• *Browse, or [http://www.scpr.org/podcasts/](http://www.scpr.org/podcasts/)*
• Access through iTunes
• I recommend Podcast Addict for Android