Reimagining the Online Press Room

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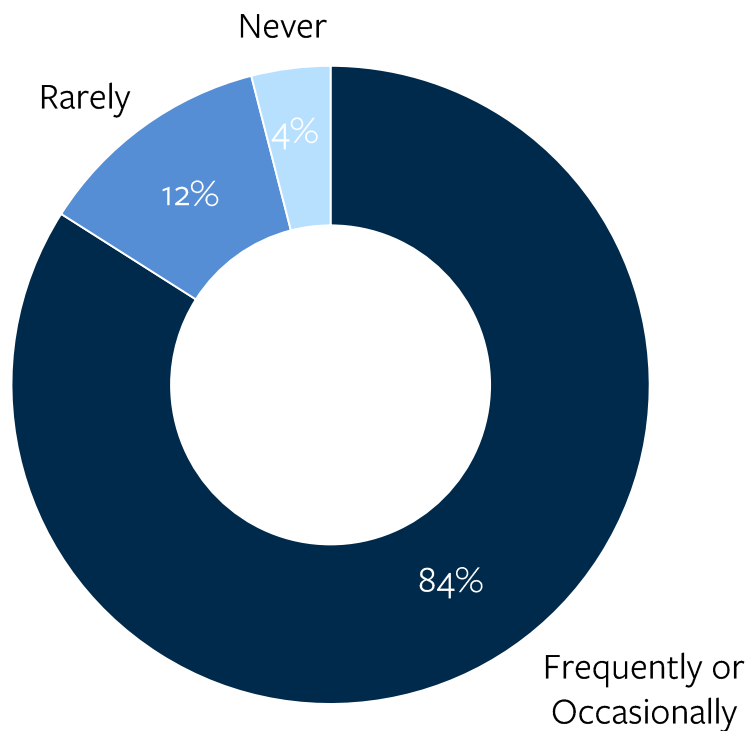#NJMediaU

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Washington Media Insiders Regularly Seek Association Content

More Often Than Not, Associations Win Journalist Attention Inside the Beltway

Frequency of Using Associations, Nonprofits or Think Tanks to Gather Information

Percentage of Media Respondents, WIA 2015

n=49

Never

Rarely

4%
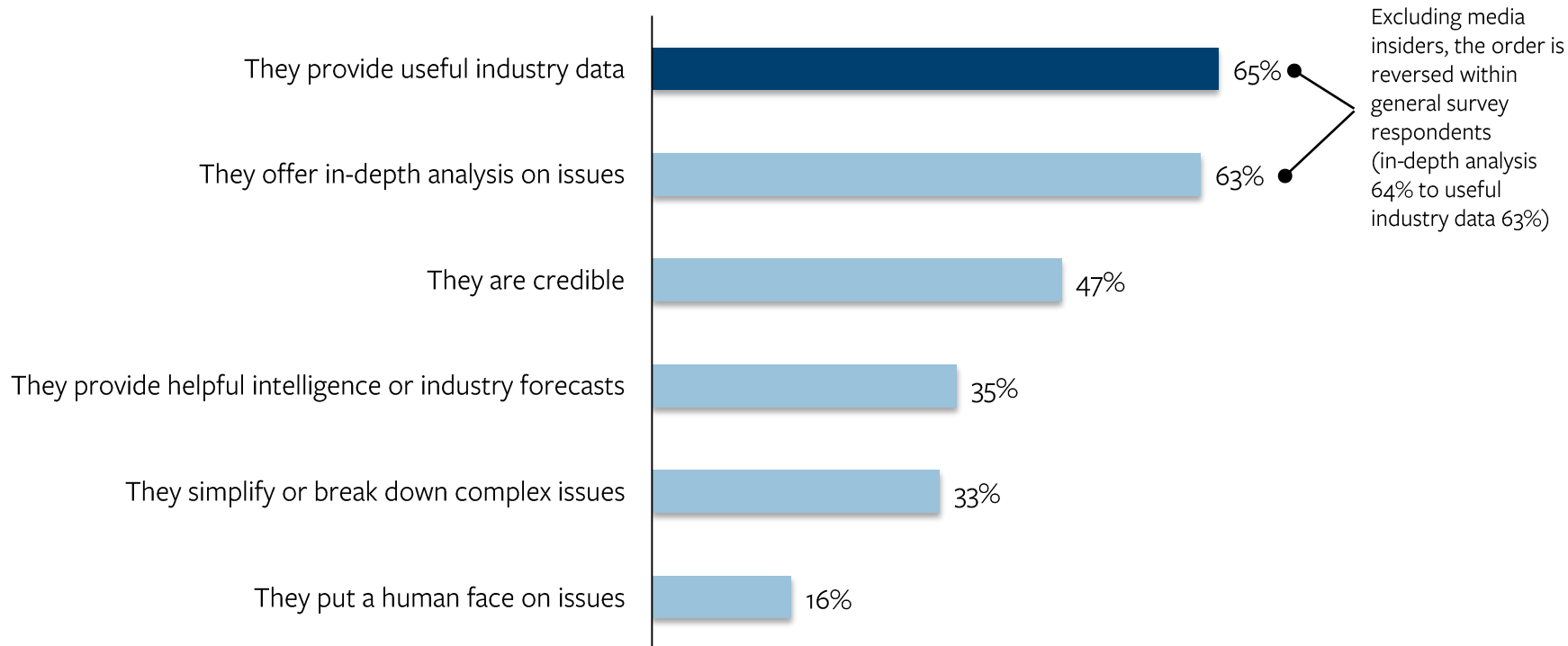
12%

84%

Frequently or Occasionally

Beyond the Norm: In looking at all other (non-media) Washington Insiders, **75 percent frequently or occasionally rely on associations,** nonprofits or think tanks to gather information (a -9% difference).

Data and Analysis Rule the Day

Association Content Primarily Pursued for Data Validation or Thought Leader-Driven Insights

Motivations for Utilizing Association, Nonprofit or Think Tank Content
Percentage of Media Respondents, WIA 2015

They provide useful industry data — **65%**

They offer in-depth analysis on issues — **63%**

They are credible — **47%**

They provide helpful intelligence or industry forecasts — **35%**

They simplify or break down complex issues — **33%**

They put a human face on issues — **16%**

Excluding media insiders, the order is reversed within general survey respondents (in-depth analysis 64% to useful industry data 63%)

In Their Own Words

"...[Associations] can 'talk', whereas people in government on the record have to hold specific official views. This does not necessarily mean that somebody from an association, nonprofit or think tank will be more truthful, necessarily, but that they offer a different than official perspective. This can sometimes help to counterbalance and/or challenge the official viewpoint." – Independent Female Journalist, from WIA 2015 Survey

Source: 2015 Washington in the Information Age survey data, National Journal Communications Council research and analysis.

Putting the Desktop First

In Spite of Reliance on Mobile, Washington Media Insiders Prefer Desktops to Access Online Content

While Media Respondents Acknowledge Necessity of Mobile...

"I regularly read work-related documents (e.g., reports, white papers) on my smartphone or tablet."
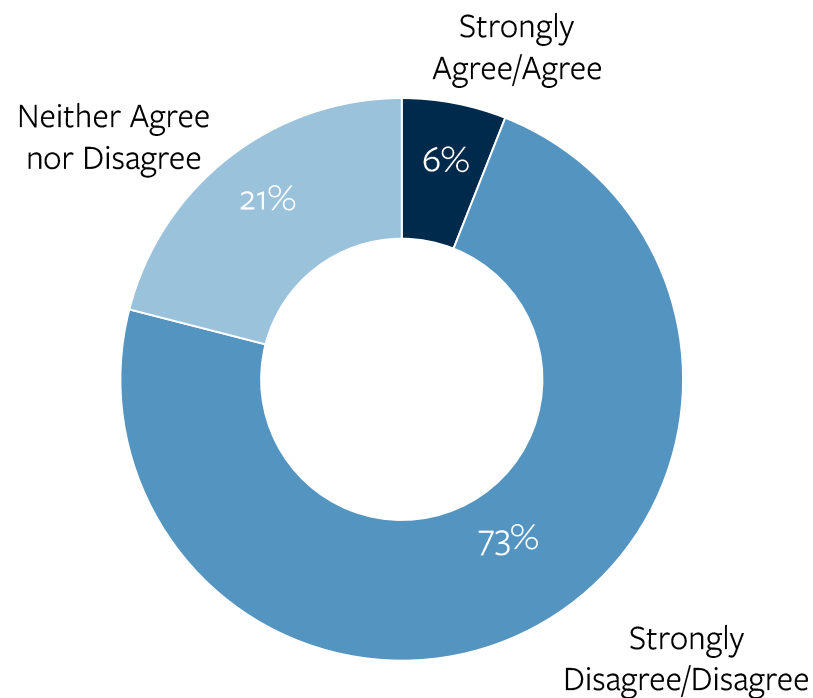
Percentage of Media Respondents, WIA 2015

Neither Agree nor Disagree — 21%

Strongly Agree/Agree — 43%

Strongly Disagree/Disagree — 36%
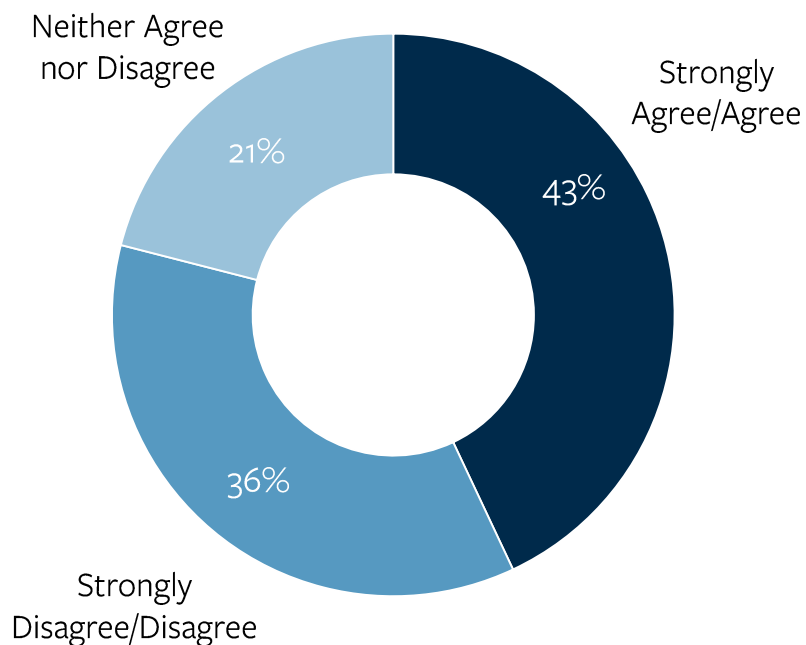
...Nearly 3x the Number Favor Desktop Use for Content Consumption

"I would **rather** read information on my smartphone or tablet than on a desktop or laptop."
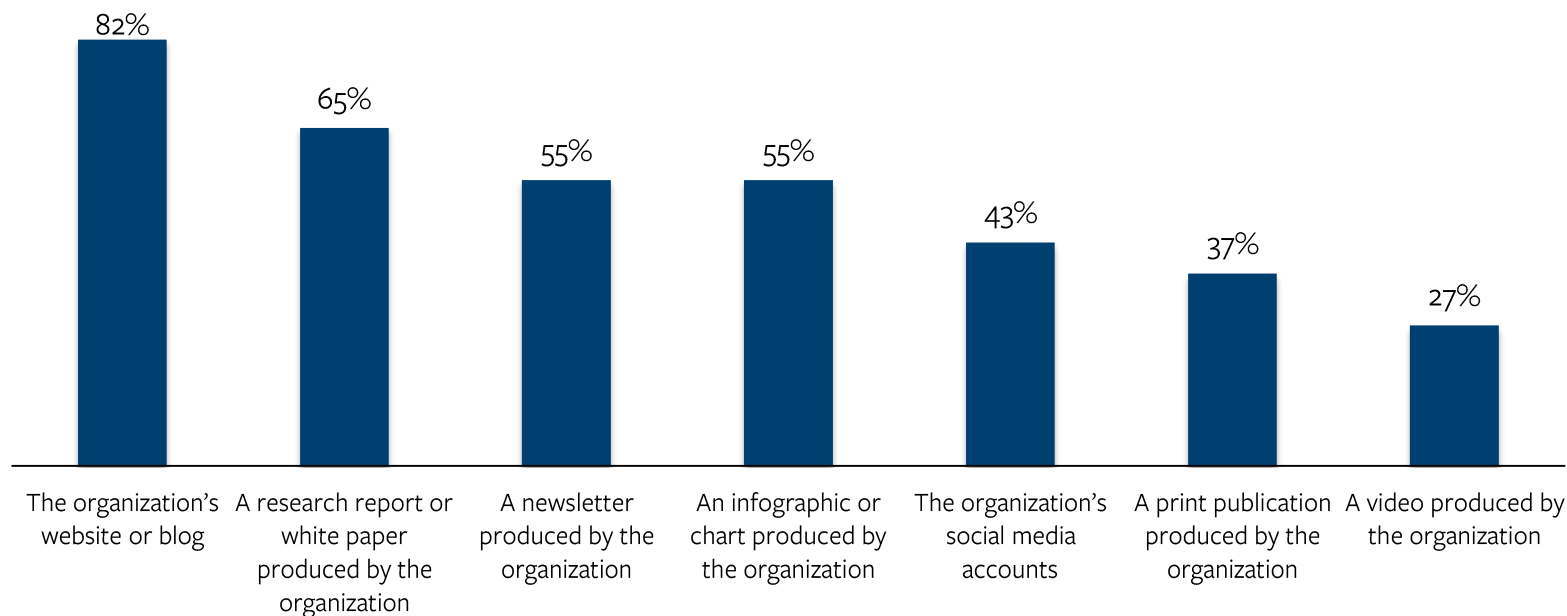
Percentage of Media Respondents, WIA 2015

Strongly Agree/Agree — 6%

Neither Agree nor Disagree — 21%

Strongly Disagree/Disagree — 73%

Source: 2015 Washington in the Information Age survey data, National Journal Communications Council research and analysis.

From Desktops, Websites Central Gateway for Insider Attention

Websites Most Relied Upon Resource in Spite of Mutually Dependent Content

Websites Most Sought After Channel for Association Content in Washington

Channels Used for Consuming Association Content
Percentage of Media Respondents, WIA 2015

Channel	Percentage
The organization's website or blog	82%
A research report or white paper produced by the organization	65%
A newsletter produced by the organization	55%
An infographic or chart produced by the organization	55%
The organization's social media accounts	43%
A print publication produced by the organization	37%
A video produced by the organization	27%

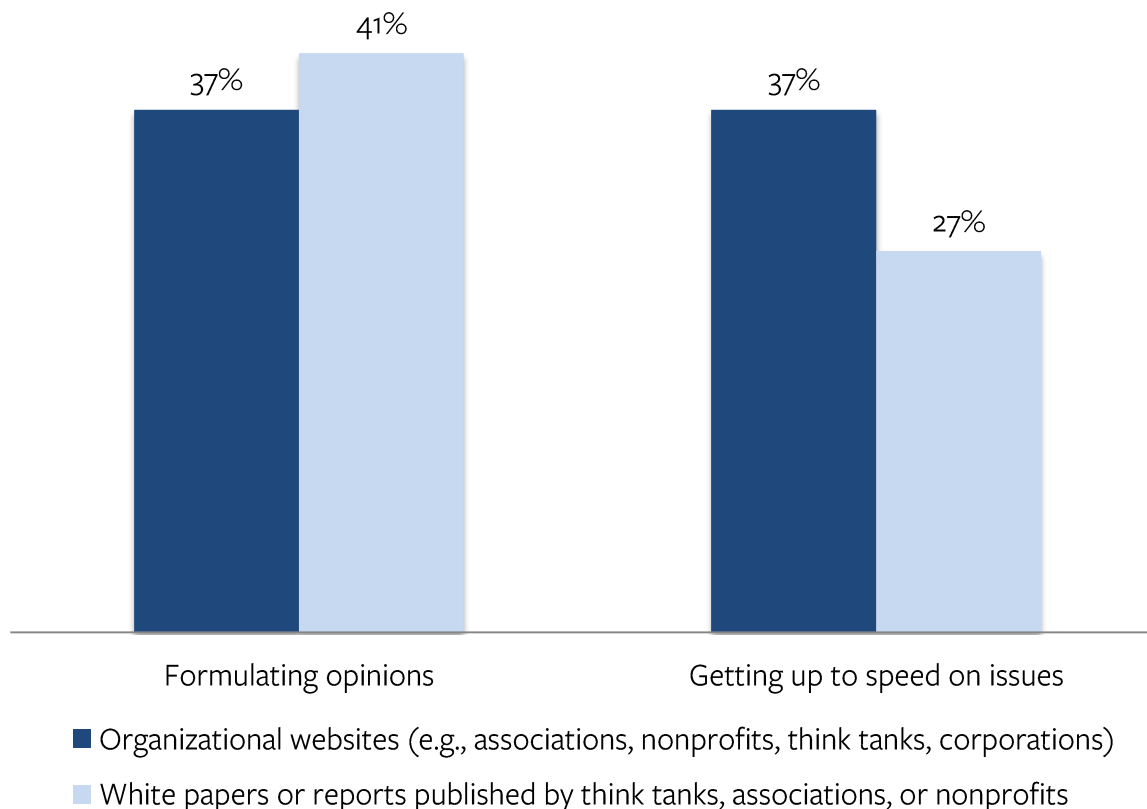# Tailoring Approach to Websites and White Papers

Each Medium Fills Certain Needs in Content Consumption Basket for Media Insiders

**Use of Association White Papers vs. Websites
for Formulating Opinions and Getting Up to Speed on Issues**
Percentage of Media Respondents, WIA 2015

*White papers have slight
advantage in forming
opinions...*

*...But websites much more
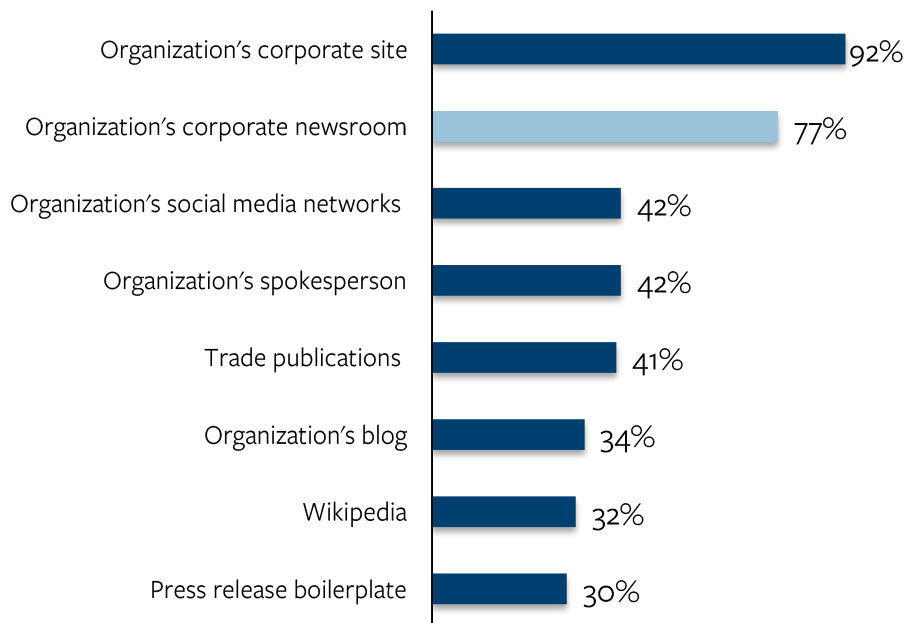important when getting up to
speed on hot-button topics*

41%

37%

37%

27%

Formulating opinions

Getting up to speed on issues

■ Organizational websites (e.g., associations, nonprofits, think tanks, corporations)
□ White papers or reports published by think tanks, associations, or nonprofits

Source: 2015 Washington in the Information Age survey data, National Journal Communications Council research and analysis.

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Online Press Rooms a Primary Tool for Journalists

Coupled with WIA Data, Third-Party Surveys Reaffirm Importance for Central Online Press Hub

Behind Websites, Online Press Room Most Sought-After Resource

"Where do you look when researching an organization?"
Percentage of Media Respondents, BusinessWire 2014 Press Release Survey

Resource	%
Organization's corporate site	92%
Organization's corporate newsroom	77%
Organization's social media networks	42%
Organization's spokesperson	42%
Trade publications	41%
Organization's blog	34%
Wikipedia	32%
Press release boilerplate	30%

Consistent with WIA, Desktops Stand as Preferred Access Channel

"From which platform do you primarily access an organization's online newsroom/media center?"
Percentage of Media Respondents,
BusinessWire 2014 Press Release Survey

Tablets   Smartphones

Desktops 97%
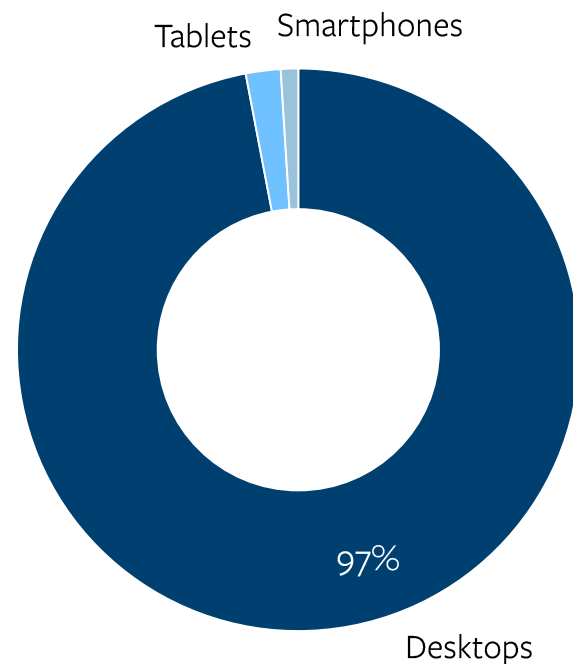
Separating the Wheat from the Chaff

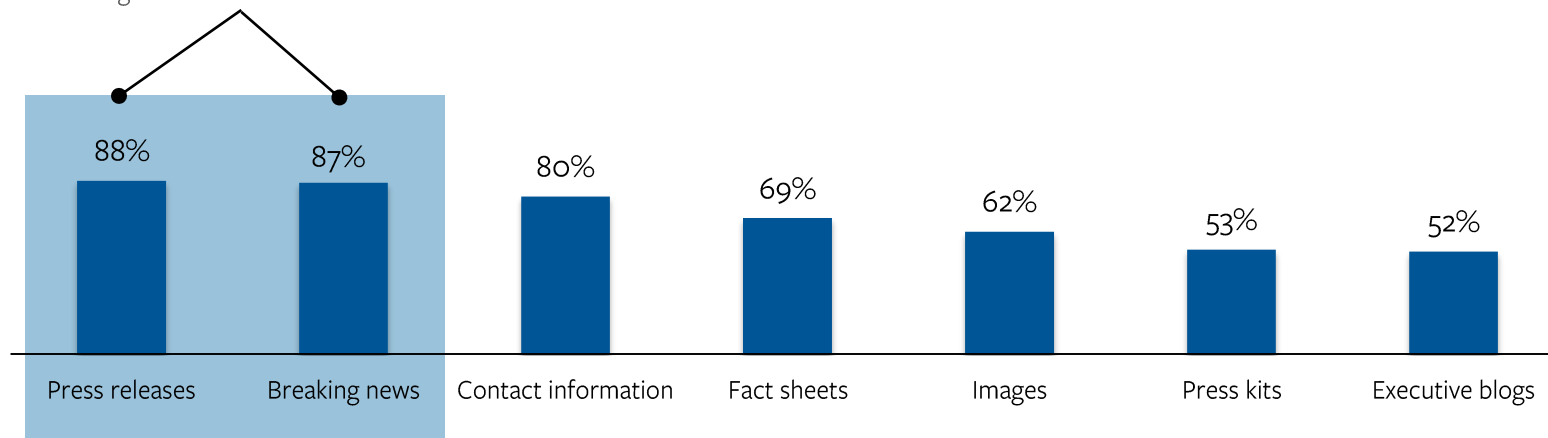## Online Press Rooms Should Focus on Displaying Data Most Desired by Key Audiences

Press Releases and Breaking News Most Important for Journalists

Which types of content do you want to access in an organization's online newsroom/media center?
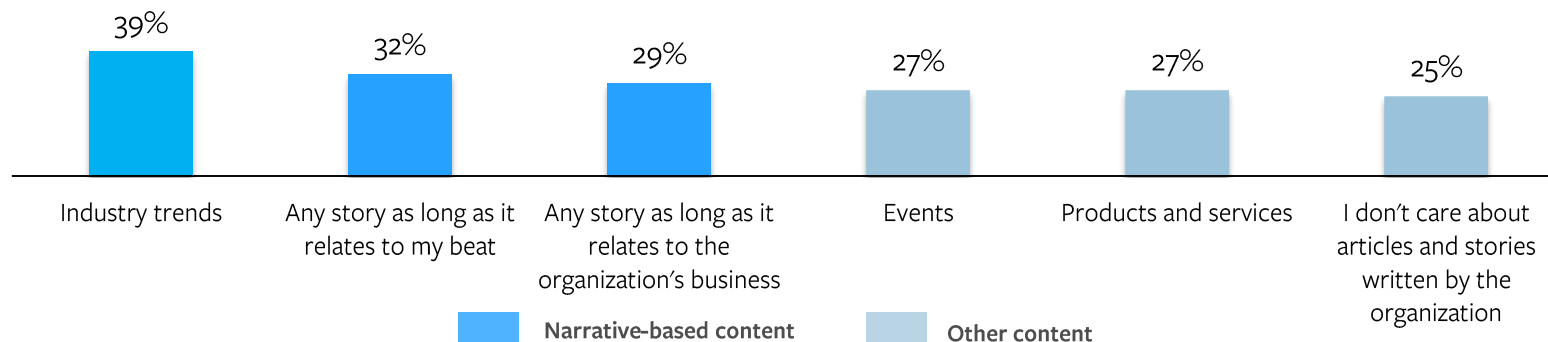*Percentage of Media Respondents, Business Wire 2014 Press Release Survey*

Connecting thread: both categories center around organizational narratives

Press releases	Breaking news	Contact information	Fact sheets	Images	Press kits	Executive blogs
88%	87%	80%	69%	62%	53%	52%

Organizational Narratives Key Components of Press Center

"What types of stories written/provided by the organization (i.e. brand journalism) do you want to see in an online newsroom/media center?"
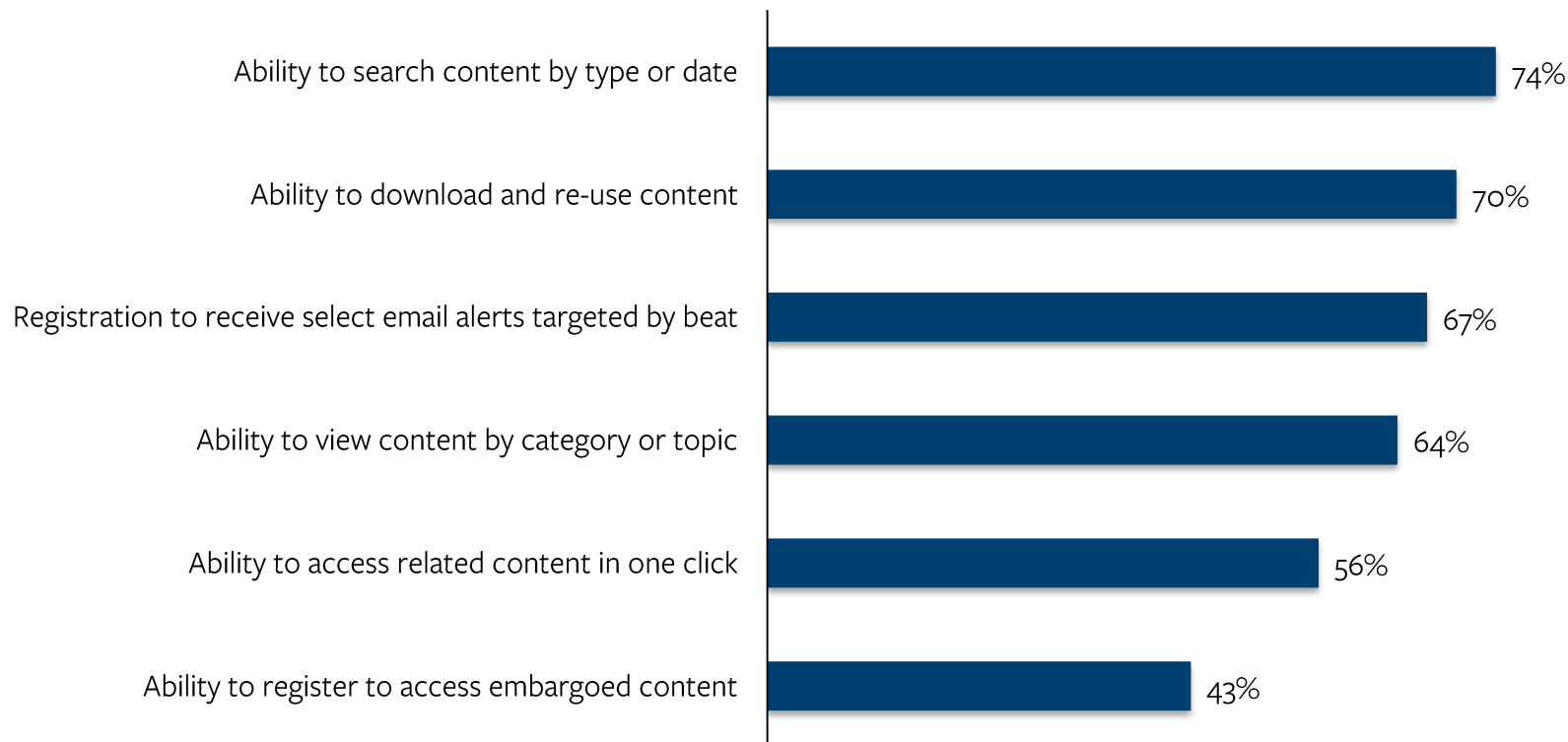*Percentage of Media Respondents, Business Wire 2014 Press Release Survey*

Industry trends	Any story as long as it relates to my beat	Any story as long as it relates to the organization's business	Events	Products and services	I don't care about articles and stories written by the organization
39%	32%	29%	27%	27%	25%

■ Narrative-based content   ■ Other content

Function Remains Key Component of Form

Ideal Online Press Rooms Should Combine Topical Content with Maximally Useful Interfaces

Personalization Takes Precedence Among Possible Online Press Room Features
"Which features do you expect to see and/or use in an organization's online newsroom/media center?"
Percentage of Media Respondents, Business Wire 2014 Press Release Survey

Feature	Percentage
Ability to search content by type or date	74%
Ability to download and re-use content	70%
Registration to receive select email alerts targeted by beat	67%
Ability to view content by category or topic	64%
Ability to access related content in one click	56%
Ability to register to access embargoed content	43%

Source: 2014 Press Release Survey, Business Wire, National Journal Communications Council research and analysis.

Picturing the Future of Press Rooms

New Approaches Respond to Journalists' Evolving Consumption Habits

#1	#2	#3	#4
Facilitating All-in-One Engagement	**Promoting Organizational Narratives**	**Anchoring Conversations In Social**	**Establishing Private Access Points**

#1 — Facilitating All-in-One Engagement

✓ Capture broad media attention with a diverse array of content

✓ Highlights include a robust blogging interface, references to breaking news, social media integration and detailed search functions

✓ Links back to journalists' appetite for personalized approaches to the press room (per Business Wire data)

? Focus on all-in-one approach could result in less focused strategy in other arenas (e.g., storytelling, social media engagement)

#2 — Promoting Organizational Narratives

✓ Amplify important trends, developments and news with clear opportunities to share

✓ Highlights include glossy images and videos complementing key stories, a vibrant landing page and well-organized subsections

✓ Reflects high media interest in key breaking news stories and related tales (per Business Wire data)

? Focus on organizational narratives could overshadow more straightforward treatments of key content (e.g., data presentations, standard press releases)

#3 — Anchoring Conversations In Social

✓ Consolidate social media feeds through central access page to keep tabs on relevant ongoing discussions

✓ Highlights include social media discussions sparked by internal and external stakeholders, snapshots of recent social media activity and links to engaged communities

✓ Underscores growing media attention to social platforms (per WIA and Business Wire data)

? Focus on social media could quickly backfire if organizations lose control over the message

#4 — Establishing Private Access Points

✓ Create tiers of media access to noteworthy or novel organizational content

✓ Highlights include password-protected media pages, special press kits, increased access to key influentials and priority access to breaking news or future developments

✓ Illustrates increasing nicheification of content channels and interest in tailored material (per WIA data)

? Focus on private access points may prove disadvantageous if barrier to entry is too high or restrictive (can't let users feel unduly left out of narratives)

Promoting a Broad-Based Approach

"Choose Your Own Adventure" Press Rooms Capture Diversity of Content Forms

1. Videos and Photos Take Users Beyond Breaking News
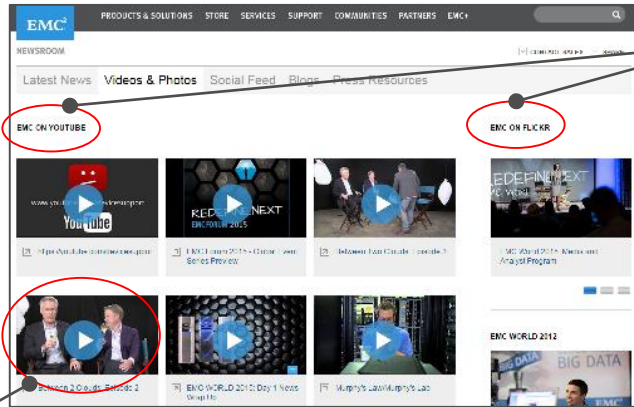
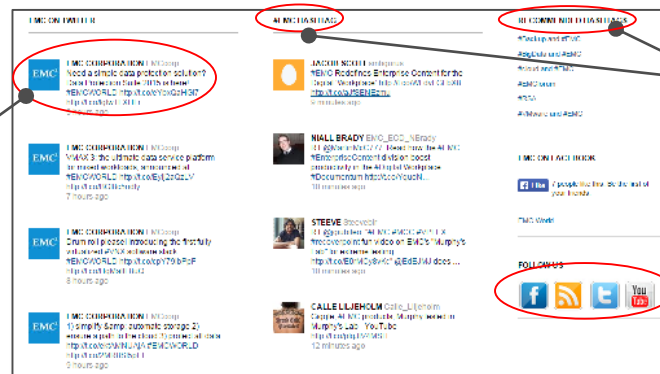Offerings clearly divided by platform for easy engagement

Clean interface highlights recent media activities with key stakeholders

2. Blogs Hosted by Influentials Add a Human Face

Spotlights entries from senior leaders, in turn raising profile with media community

Blog sections subdivided into "beats" that coalesce around particular themes or influentials

3. Social Media Page Centralizes Brand Discussion

Sections devoted to relevant hashtags simplify ability to follow important conversations

Organizational Twitter feed connects directly to website to create linkages across platforms

Clear links to organizational presence on social platforms

Case in Brief

EMC²

Profiled Company: EMC Corporation
Organization Type: Technology and Data Storage

Placing the Story at the Center
Press Rooms Starting to Emulate Mainstream News Sites to Emphasize Key Organizational Narratives

Coupling Vibrant Images with Vital Information

Large, bold subject headers call attention to narrative with supporting vignettes

Scrolling "Top Stories" feed acts to both amplify breaking news and highlight ongoing coverage

Using "the right image" sets the desired tone and prepares readers for more detailed textual treatment to come

Strategic Benefits of Press Room Stories

✓ **Expands the Audience:** Consider how a story-driven approach to press rooms will capture difficult-to-penetrate or disengaged demographics

✓ **Educates Potential Allies:** Provide a sufficiently broad story treatment so as to connect with consumers of all sorts, but incorporate moments that will debunk misconceptions or enhance general understanding of the organization's function (i.e., what value the organization adds to an industry or issue area)

✓ **Shares Success:** Recognize that excellent, well-written stories on corporate press rooms have the potential to travel into other targeted media outlets (e.g., social media), particularly if stories are made easily sharable

Case in Brief

facebook

Profiled Company: Facebook
Organization Type: Technology and Social Media

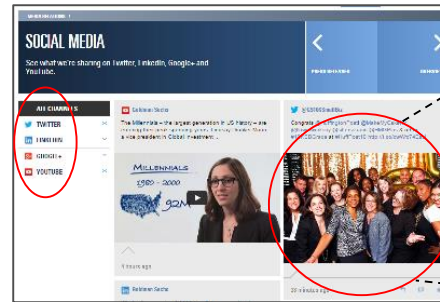# Channeling the Online Conversation

Modern Online Press Rooms Shape Dialogue by Aggregating Relevant Social Media Pipelines

Cultivating a Social-Savvy Press Room

| *#1: Put Social Media Out in Front* | *#2: Highlight Ongoing Conversations* | *#3: Drive Users to the Dialogue* |

✓ Main press room page features scrolling vertical side panel with updates on particularly active social media streams

✓ Upper right-hand corner presents a bold link to the social media page (for when the social media feed prompts further engagement with compelling topics and material)

✓ Social media page emulates elements of Twitter by hosting a "stream-of-consciousness"-esque series of snapshots pertaining to recent social media topics

✓ Links to most-used social media platforms allows users to quickly share compelling stories or loop others into ongoing conversations

✓ Ideally, social media page of press room encourages readers to tie content back to original source on social media

✓ Once on a particular social media platform, users "like" or "follow" organizational pages to receive regular updates that may drive them back to central press room, triggering a "virtuous cycle" of engagement
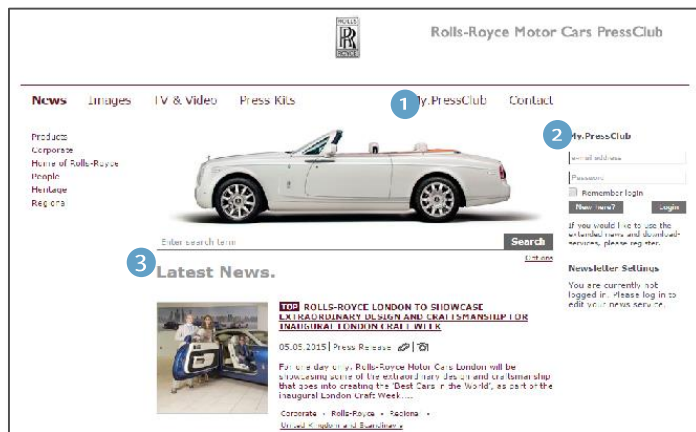

Case in Brief

Profiled Company: Facebook
Organization Type: Technology and Social Media

# Creating Arenas of Exclusivity

Conversely, Forward-Thinking Press Rooms Capitalize on Niche Audiences with Special Treatment

Public Press Room Encourages Access to Protected Content...

...While Private Press Room Emphasizes a Personalized Experience

1 "Press Club" tab at the top of the page stands apart from rest of header, drawing attention to the option

2 Login for privately-accessed information prominently displayed to right of main image

3 "Latest News" section oriented towards news stories that could be interesting to a broader audience of users
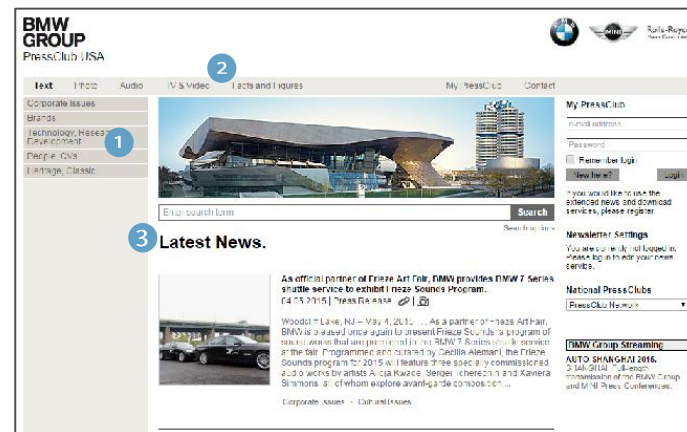
1 Detailed vertical dashboard subdivides key elements of corporate engagement platform for access to specific multimedia resources

2 Page headers linked to customizable elements of Press Club site, as well as downloadable images and toolkits

3 "Latest News" section geared towards insiders with more detailed assessments of industry-specific events and data

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Case in Brief

Rolls-Royce

Profiled Company: Rolls-Royce
Organization Type: Capital Goods and Automotives

Guiding the Association Press Room Forward
Washington Advocacy Organizations Should Maximize Multimedia Treatment of Online Press Rooms

Modern Press Rooms Publicize
Organizational Narratives with Diverse Media Channels

National Cable and Telecommunications Association

MEDIA LIBRARY

PHOTOGRAPHS

VIDEOS

INFOGRAPHS

Traditional press room data (e.g., press releases) located on separate page

Eye-catching graphics most prevalent (with minimal text)

Dedicated infographics section showcases experimentation with diverse content forms

Utility of Image-Driven Press Rooms

✓ **Catalyzing Engagement:** Visuals are processed 60,000 times faster than text, wasting no time in sparking audience curiosity

✓ **Capturing Character:** Images offer clearer insight into the nature of an organization (culture, tone, etc.) than text alone

✓ **Enhancing Output:** In lieu of multiple text-based press releases, images can be faster to produce while enticing users to engage more deeply in the future

Charting Press Room Development
Before Implementing Press Room Strategy, Ask the Right Questions

Key Process Consideration	Yes	No
1. Is there institutional agreement around what the online press room needs to accomplish (e.g., increased social media engagement, building niche communities of consumers, etc.)?		
2. Has the organization established preferred strategies for maximizing engagement (e.g., consolidated social media feeds, more access to videos and photos, stakeholder profiles, etc.)?		
3. Have you vetted the approach with key media influentials and members to confirm that proposed changes will reflect their needs and interests?		
4. Have you assessed which content areas are already popular with your users and incorporated market data into your press room strategy?		
5. If your organization relies on white papers for disseminating thought leadership, have you considered incorporating them into your press room strategy?		
6. Is the final interface clean, clear and easy to navigate for even novice visitors to your organization's site?		

NationalJournalCommunicationsCouncil

Media University

AMU 421: Digital Friendly Media Relations

Reimagining the Online Press Room

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