

**PR  
PERCEPTIONS**

**VS**

**MEDIA  
REALITIES**

**2014**



**WIECK**  
eNEWSROOMS

Over the past year, the evolving media landscape has continued to alter the relationship between the media and corporate communicators, and the latest Wieck survey shows not only the changes but also the consistency of the underlying relationship.

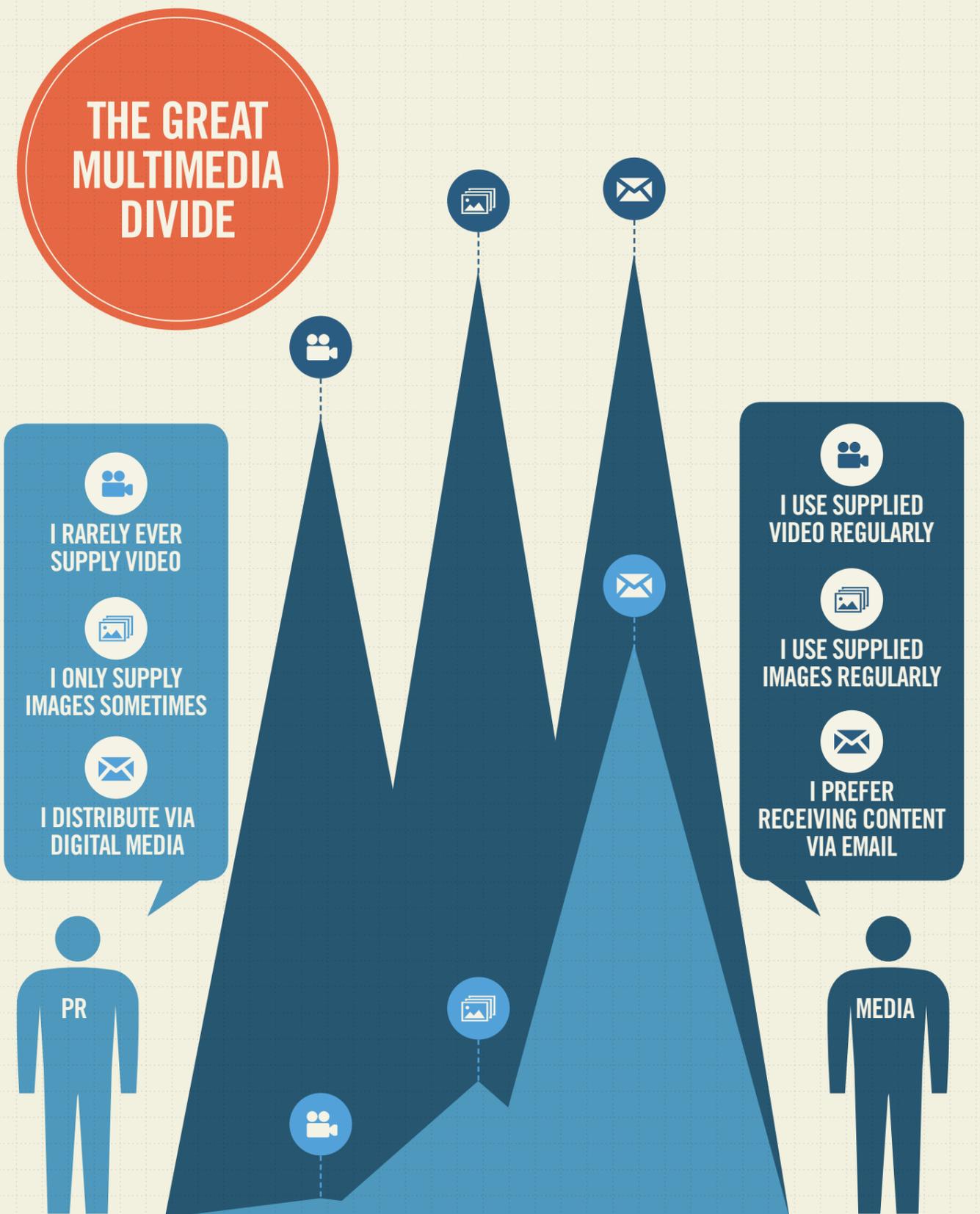
Journalists are overwhelmingly outnumbered by PR practitioners, and the world's appetite for instant news is exceeded only by the tide of PR material into newsrooms, and yet PR is still a welcome source of content.

Wieck's second survey of media realities and PR perceptions reveals clear opportunities for PR professionals to achieve their objectives by tailoring content and its distribution to the needs of the media.

The results confirm that PR can thrive in today's media environment by combining traditional skills with new technologies that can protect against your corporate news going straight into the spam folder.

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- ONLY 13% OF PRs SUPPLY VIDEO REGULARLY
- ONLY 18% OF PRs SUPPLY IMAGES TO MEDIA EVERY TIME
- 75% OF PRs THINK EMAIL IS THE BEST WAY TO SUPPLY CONTENT TO MEDIA CONTACTS

- 78% OF MEDIA USE SUPPLIED VIDEO
- 94% OF MEDIA USE SUPPLIED IMAGES
- 96% OF MEDIA PREFER TO RECEIVE CONTENT VIA EMAIL

# FOREWORD

**The flood of PR material that journalists receive every day has pushed some of them to the limit, and they are starting to take drastic measures to stem the flood.**

As ever-fewer journalists receive ever-more PR material, they are becoming increasingly tougher gatekeepers.

This is one of the more pointed findings of our second survey of the interaction between the media and PR industries. Last year most journalists opened the majority of their emails at least briefly; this year they are starting to delete some emails without opening them.

Our second PR Perceptions and Media Realities survey repeated last year's methodology: we surveyed 354 print, broadcast and online journalists and 181 PR professionals, seeking each group's responses on the same set of topics.

Most results showed only minor changes from last year, with similar points of agreement and divergence between the media and PR responses:

- **Email is the preferred medium for receiving releases: 96% of media prefer email, but only 75% of PRs think this is the best way to send them.**
- **Journalists want digital images and multimedia files to support releases: 63% are happy to receive them by email but 29% prefer direct download, whereas only 26% of PRs favour email but 50% of them are ahead of the trend with digital downloads.**
- **Media and PRs agree that online is the place for research: 67% of media and 72% of PRs favour company websites and online newsrooms as a key source.**
- **Social media channels are not popular for receiving PR material: only 11% of media want to receive releases this way, and for multimedia files the figure is 0% – but 12% of PRs want to deliver multimedia files by social media.**

The survey leaves no doubt that journalists need quick and easy access to quality words, images and video content – a real opportunity for good PR operators to win media attention by giving journalists what they want.

The three big concerns for media are poorly written releases; releases that are not relevant; and relentless follow-up phone calls soon after releases are sent. All three can be addressed effectively.

Traditional skills deliver well written releases and good judgment limits the follow-up phone calls, while the right technology can help busy PRs to match their distribution more closely to the journalists they want to reach.

# CHASING UP A STORY

When chasing up a story, journalists mostly prefer to do their own legwork, but they will welcome input from PR people if it is available through their preferred channels.

For everyday stories, **37% prefer to access PR material at an organisation's website or online newsroom**, with 27% turning first to Google and only 21% phoning a PR person.

It all changes in time of crisis, when **44% say a phone call to a PR person is their first choice**, while the website or online newsroom scores 21% and Google drops to just 8%.

Journalists rate social media low on their list of sources, with only **7% naming Twitter and 3% Facebook** as routine sources. A crisis will push these figures up to 12% for Twitter and 4% for Facebook – but **phone calls rate almost triple the social media total**.

This suggests that PRs can keep the media onside by having their online material up to date and easily accessible – and being ready for a flood of phone calls if there's a crisis.

**“IT INFURIATES ME WHEN THERE ARE NO MEDIA CONTACT DETAILS”**

## IN A CRISIS, JOURNALISTS NEED ACCURATE INFORMATION, FAST

Journalists' preferences for obtaining company information in a crisis tell the story.

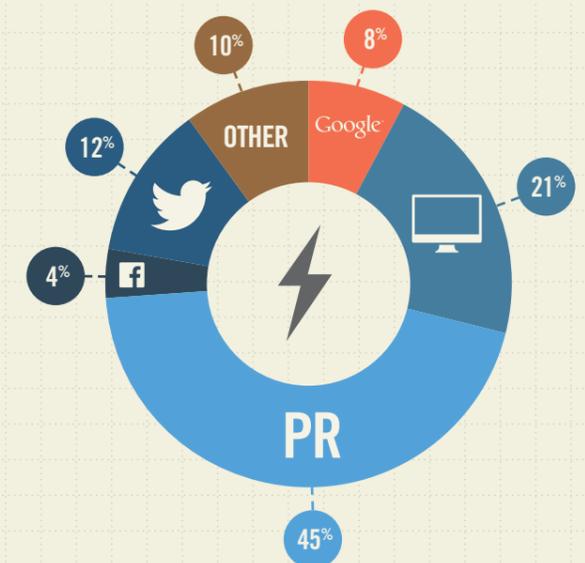
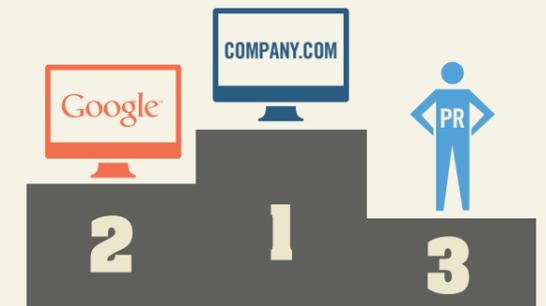
### PR PERCEPTION

**34 PER CENT OF PRs BELIEVE JOURNALISTS WOULD CONTACT THEM BY PHONE TO ASSIST IN RESEARCHING THE COMPANY THEY REPRESENT**



### MEDIA REALITY

**CALLING A PR REPRESENTATIVE IS TYPICALLY A JOURNALIST'S THIRD CHOICE WHEN CONDUCTING BASIC COMPANY RESEARCH FOR A STORY**



## GETTING NOTICED

With most journalists receiving 100-plus emails a day, and some receiving many more, PRs must do everything right to get a journalist's attention.

When journalists were asked how they felt PRs could do better, their advice was surprisingly consistent:

- **Make it relevant. They don't want releases that are irrelevant to their subject or location.**
- **Make the subject line meaningful. They want a headline in the subject line.**
- **Don't bury the lead. Journalists want the main story in the intro, just where they would put it.**
- **Give them helpful contact details. They want people who are willing and able to help, including after hours.**
- **Match their style. They want correct grammar and spelling with less hyperbole to minimise subbing or re-writing.**
- **Make supporting material readily available. Journalists need links to image and video downloads.**

If you ask the media, as we did, they want you to heed this advice and not to phone and ask if they got your release. If you don't phone, they are more likely to run your material.

## JOURNALISTS' BUGBEARS

According to the journalists who participated in our survey, these are the most common bugbears when it comes to PR pitches and media releases:

"BADLY WRITTEN RELEASES – IF THEY CAN'T BE BOTHERED, WHY SHOULD I?"

"PDFS SENT AS AN IMAGE RATHER THAN PLAIN TEXT – WHY MAKE US RE-TYPE SOMETHING THEY DESIRE US TO PRINT?"

"SOME RELEASES ARE VERY WORDY AND IT'S HARD TO FIND WHAT THE CRUX OF THE STORY IS"

"TOO MANY PR PEOPLE ARE NOT TRAINED IN THE CORRECT TIME TO CALL A RADIO NEWSROOM"

"I SEE TOO MUCH INCREDIBLE HYPERBOLE, UNSUBSTANTIATED CLAIMS, HARD SALES JARGON, POOR GRAMMAR, AND A LACK OF ANY REAL MEAT"

# CUTTING THROUGH THE CLUTTER

Getting through to busy journalists is a constant challenge in PR, and our second survey confirms the fundamental likes and dislikes of most media.

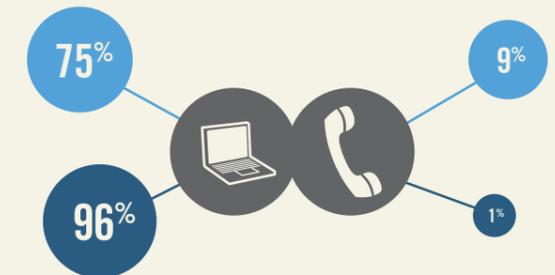
PRs and journalists agree that email is the best way to send releases to media, but only PRs think follow-up phone calls and social media distribution are good ideas.

Journalists hate follow-up phone calls to check if a release has arrived; they despair at poorly written or irrelevant releases; and they don't want to receive PR material via social media.

NOTHING MAKES ME HIT "DELETE" FASTER THAN A RELEASE I DON'T REALLY NEED THAT HAS ERRORS IN THE HEADLINE AND FIRST PAR'

## PR PERCEPTION

**75 PER CENT OF PRs PREFER TO NOTIFY JOURNALISTS ABOUT A STORY OPPORTUNITY BY EMAIL AND NINE PER CENT PREFER TO NOTIFY THEM BY A PHONE CALL**



## MEDIA REALITY

**96 PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS PREFER TO BE NOTIFIED ABOUT NEWS AND PR MATERIAL BY EMAIL, AND ONLY ONE PER CENT WANT TO BE NOTIFIED BY PHONE**

## SUPPLY vs DEMAND

### PHONE

- PRs who supply story ideas via a phone call
- Journalists who prefer to receive story ideas via a phone call

### EMAIL

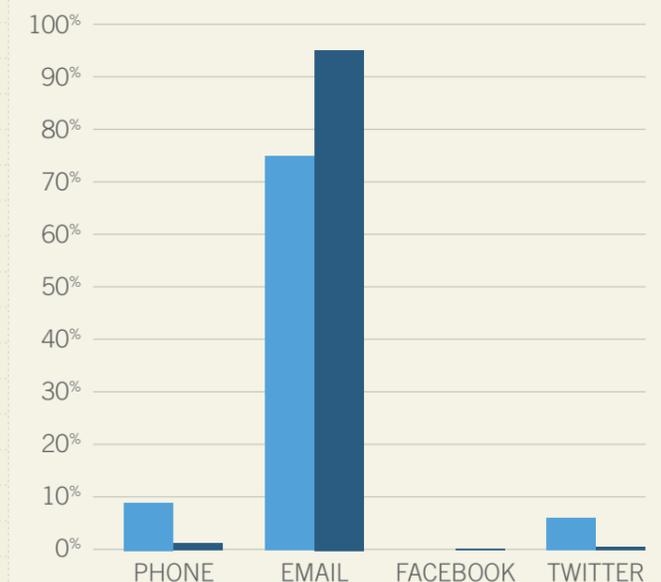
- PRs who supply story ideas via email notification
- Journalists who prefer to receive story ideas via email

### FACEBOOK

- PRs who supply story ideas via Facebook
- Journalists who prefer to receive story ideas via Facebook

### TWITTER

- PRs who supply story ideas via Twitter
- Journalists who prefer to receive story ideas via Twitter



# MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

Multimedia delivery is the area of greatest disparity between media and PR expectations, whether it be simple pictures or complete multimedia packages.

When asked about supplied images, **93% of surveyed media said they used them, yet only 53% of PRs said they supplied images** most or all of the time.

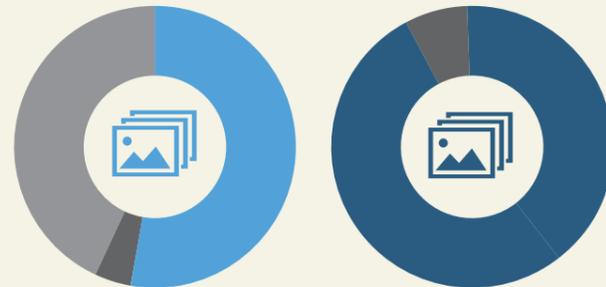
Compared with last year, there is a marked shift in the reasons given for not supplying images: last year 64% said there was no need, while 19% cited a lack of budget or resources, but this year **36% said no need and 39% said lack of resources**.

Video preferences show a similar disparity, although the numbers are lower: **42% of journalists use supplied video at least once a week, but less than 5% of PRs supply video** most or all of the time.

The figures for supplied audio content are lower still, but again show a major gap, with **29% of media using it at least once a week, but only 4% of PRs supplying it**.

## PR PERCEPTION

**53 PER CENT OF PR PROFESSIONALS SURVEYED SUPPLY IMAGES TO MEDIA MOST OR ALL OF THE TIME WITH 4 PER CENT NEVER SUPPLYING THEM**



## MEDIA REALITY

**93 PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS USE SUPPLIED IMAGES DAILY OR MOST DAYS**

**SENDING MULTIPLE EMAILS WITH SINGLE HIGH-RES PHOTOS ATTACHED BECAUSE OF THE LARGE FILE SIZES IS ANNOYING. IT TAKES FOREVER TO DOWNLOAD THEM AND PROCESS THEM INDIVIDUALLY.**

## JOURNALIST DEMAND AND PR SUPPLY OF MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

### AUDIO

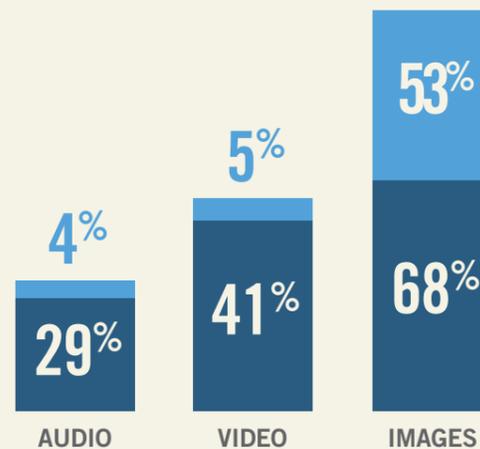
- PRs who always supply audio to media
- Journalists who use supplied audio a minimum of once a week

### VIDEO

- PRs who always supply video to media
- Journalists who use supplied video a minimum of once a week

### IMAGES

- PRs who regularly supply images to media
- Journalists who use supplied images a minimum of once a week



# THE RISE OF SOCIAL

Weaving social media into corporate communication programs is commonly a job for the PR department, and when Wieck asked journalists how they used social media, their answers gave a valuable insight into how PR people can make the most of this bold new world.

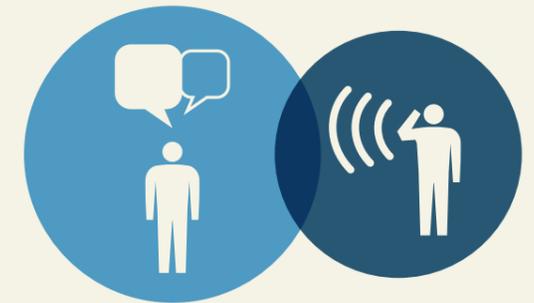
More than anything, **journalists use social media to promote themselves to the outside world**, but they don't use it to receive PR material in which the outside world promotes itself to them. Second on their list of uses was **crowd sourcing to get breaking news** – the very opposite of official channels.

Even though they don't want you to 'push' information through social media, they do want the ability to 'pull' content when it suits, and even share it. More than half of them want your online newsroom to give them access to your social media channels, and more than **40% want the ability to share your social media content**.

The fact that **83% of newsrooms offer access** and **71% enable sharing** is proof that the PR profession already understands the 'pull' process.

## PR PERCEPTION

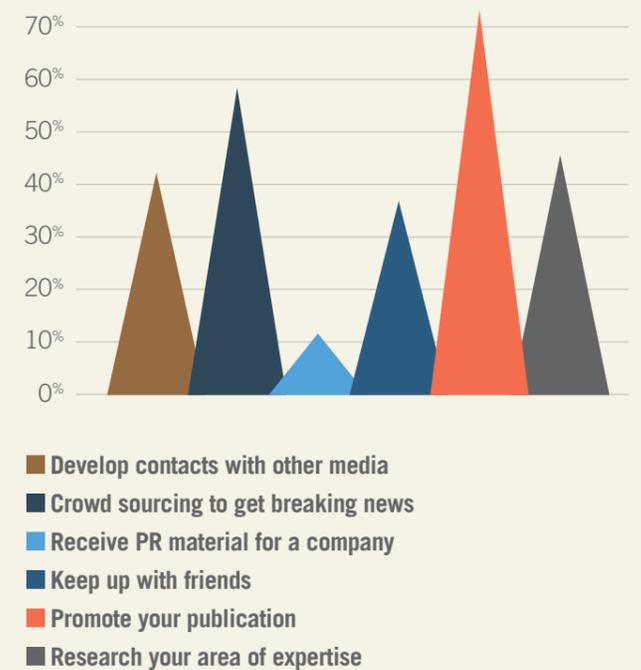
**83 PER CENT MAKE SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS AVAILABLE VIA THEIR NEWSROOM AND 71 PER CENT OFFER SHARE BUTTONS**



## MEDIA REALITY

**54 PER CENT WANT EASY ACCESS TO CORPORATE SOCIAL CHANNELS AND 41 PER CENT THINK ABILITY TO SHARE IS VERY OR EXTREMELY IMPORTANT**

The graph below shows the media reality for most common reasons to use social media.



"I USE SOCIAL TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH WHAT PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT"

"FREQUENTLY MY WORK IS CUT BY EDITORS – I USE THE BLOG AS AN ARCHIVE SO THE FULL, AUTHORISED VERSION IS ON RECORD"

# NEWSROOMS: WHAT MEDIA WANT



**“A GOOD PIC WILL SELL YOUR STORY BETTER THAN ANY WORDS”**

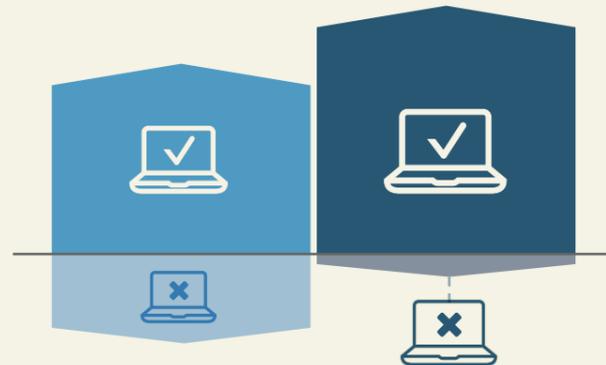
**So what do media really want to see in an online newsroom?**

While media and PRs are both embracing online newsrooms for information and images, their priorities vary. The two things they both consider to be most important are contact information and regular updates, while they also agree on the value of stock information and multimedia content.

The below table highlights the differing – but quite compatible – online newsroom priorities of PRs and media.

## PR PERCEPTION

**32 PER CENT OF PR PROFESSIONALS EITHER DON'T HAVE OR DON'T MAINTAIN AN ONLINE NEWSROOM**



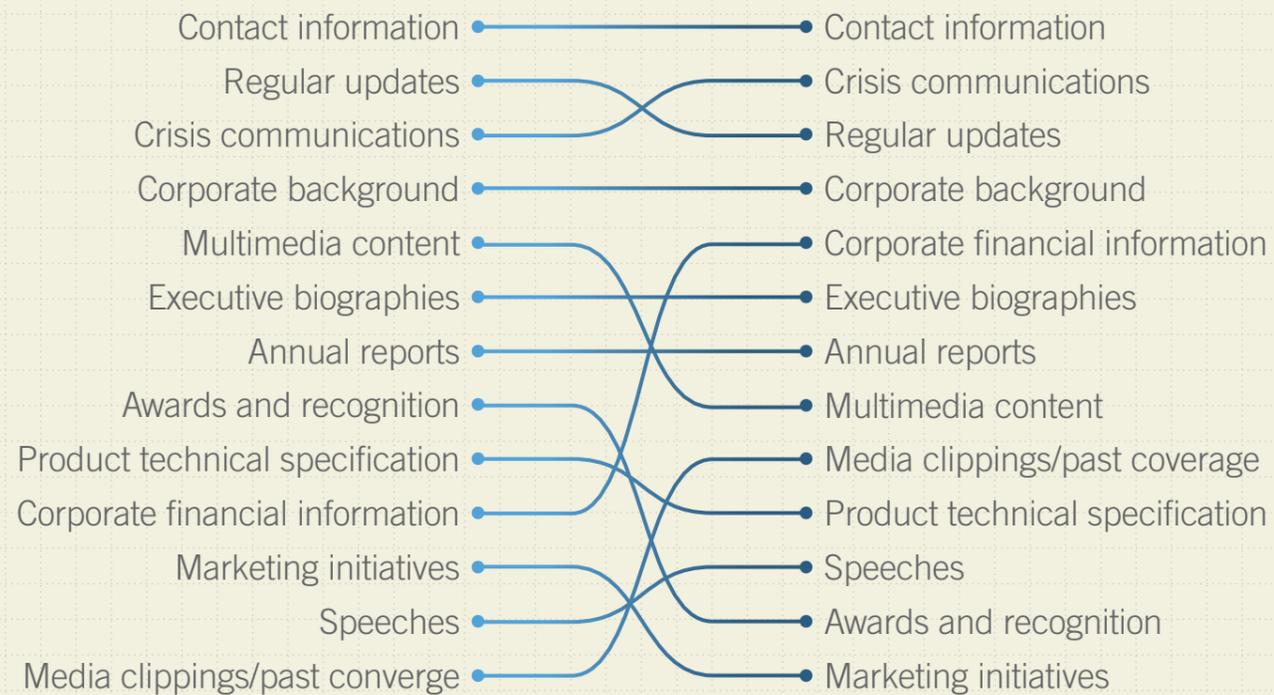
## MEDIA REALITY

**MORE THAN HALF OF JOURNALISTS USE ONLINE NEWSROOMS ON A REGULAR BASIS AND ONLY 4 PER CENT NEVER USE THEM**

## PR PRIORITIES

VS

## MEDIA PRIORITIES



# DIGITAL DELIVERY DOMINATES

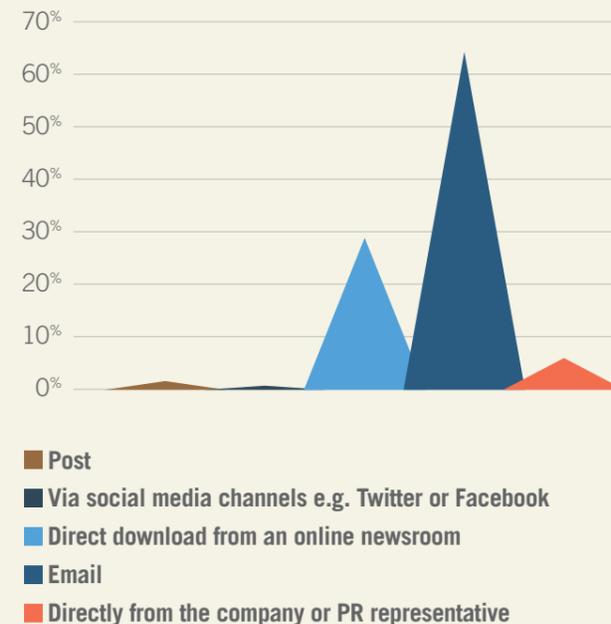
Long ago, when media releases were printed on paper, they came by mail or fax. Now those releases (and their multimedia files) come by email or direct download – and the balance between the two is shifting.

Journalists love email – **64% prefer multimedia content by email** – but more than half the PRs prefer direct download, up from a third last year.

Individual media comments suggest they may be moving in the same direction: they like multimedia content they can download directly from a link in a release, although they dislike download systems that require registration, passwords or special software.

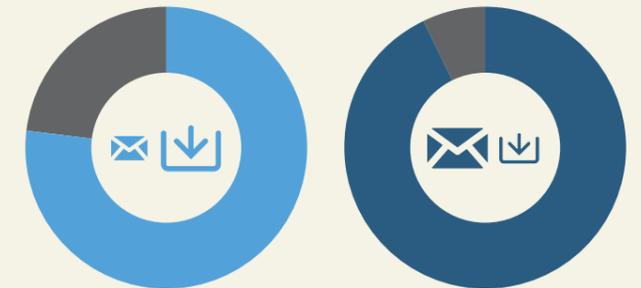
One thing is clear regardless of the technology: when journalists want multimedia content, it must be **easy to find and quick to download**.

The graph below shows the media reality for best distribution of multimedia content.



## PR PERCEPTION

**GIVEN THE CHOICE, 77 PER CENT PREFER TO SUPPLY MULTIMEDIA CONTENT EMAIL OR DIRECT DOWNLOAD – 23 PER CENT SUPPLY DIRECTLY OR VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**



## MEDIA REALITY

**GIVEN THE CHOICE, 93 PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS PREFER TO RECEIVE MULTIMEDIA CONTENT VIA EMAIL OR DIRECT DOWNLOAD VS 5 PER CENT FROM PR AND NONE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**

## MEDIA PET PEEVES

Media pet peeves when it comes to accessing multimedia and support content from websites or online newsrooms:

**“POOR QUALITY GRAPHICS, BROKEN LINKS, INCOMPLETE INFORMATION.”**

**“MEDIA RELEASES IN PDF FORMAT AS YOU CAN'T EASILY COPY AND PASTE.”**

**“DON'T SEND ME LARGE ATTACHMENTS; JUST SEND ME A LINK.”**

# WHAT MEDIA WANT ONLINE

As online newsrooms become more mainstream, PR and media are becoming more closely aligned in what they consider most important in a newsroom.

Latest media releases are considered extremely or very important by **93% of surveyed media, and are included in 96% of online newsrooms.**

**PR contact information scores 90% with the media and 89% with the existing newsrooms,** but a search function lags slightly, with **90% of media wanting it and 79% of websites providing it.**

Downloadable images are another feature where existing online newsrooms lag behind demand, **with 70% of media wanting them and 60% of newsrooms obliging.**

An area that is gaining interest for journalists is mobile access to newsrooms. The figures are climbing from an already strong base: last year 52% wanted **mobile access,** and **this year it is 57%. One fifth** of the media consider receiving **text messages** from newsrooms an important feature.

## NEWSROOM CONTENT AND FUNCTIONALITY

FUNCTIONALITY	% OF PR ONLINE NEWSROOMS THAT OFFER FUNCTIONALITY	% OF JOURNALISTS WHO BELIEVE FUNCTIONALITY IS EXTREMELY OR VERY IMPORTANT
Latest media releases	96%	93%
Search function for all content	79%	92%
PR contact information	89%	90%
Archive of media releases	93%	77%
Downloadable images	60%	70%
Direct link to newsroom from home page of public website	74%	69%
Content placed into categories	63%	59%
Compatibility with mobile devices	71%	57%
Access to the company's social media channels	83%	54%
Email notifications of new content added	46%	51%
All related multimedia bundled together with media releases	40%	49%
Downloadable video	49%	42%
Ability to share content with user's own social media channels	71%	41%
Ability for public and/or media to make comments on releases	25%	41%
Downloadable audio	30%	37%
Text message notification of new content	8%	20%

# EASY SHARING GAINS TRACTION

**According to National Corporate Affairs Manager at Subaru Australia, David Rowley, online newsrooms are an essential tool for catering to the ever-changing media landscape and provide a one-stop destination for journalists.**

“These platforms offer an investment in both our future and the media – with such diverse media audiences these days, newsrooms are a must to help maximise PR spend, brand and product exposure,” Mr Rowley said.

“Our Subaru Newsroom offers an instant, quick and efficient platform for communicating our messages to the vital media audience.”

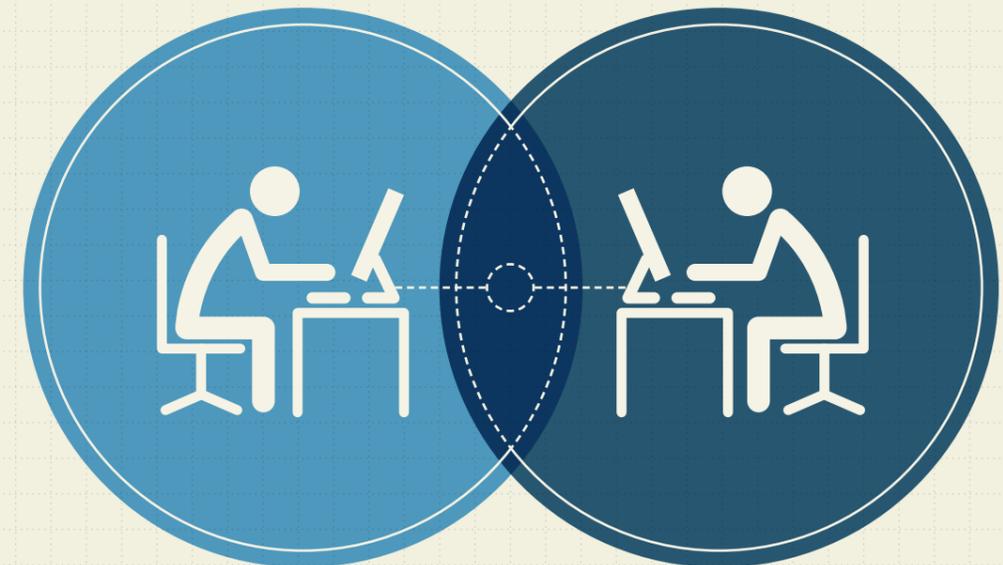
Mr Rowley believes being able to quickly source text, as well as multimedia elements, is a real asset to journalists and one of the many reasons Subaru uses the platform.

“The clean presentation of news, imagery and archive material also makes it easy for media to navigate – a bonus given the time pressure on journalists to service online, print and social media outlets,” he said.

“Increasing demand for easily downloadable video content makes the Subaru Newsroom our primary distribution outlet for this material to media.

“Our Subaru newsroom is an intrinsic part of our media comms. While it's still hard to beat one-on-one media relationships, the newsroom allows us to potentially communicate with scores of journalists in a consistent, efficient manner,” Mr Rowley added.

“The Subaru branding of our site integrates with our corporate image, for consistent messaging and presentation that's also in line with our public website, staff and dealer network intranet.”



**“I WORK WITH LOTS  
OF VERY EFFICIENT,  
PLEASANT, HELPFUL  
PR PEOPLE AND  
WITHOUT THEM  
I WOULD NOT FILL  
MY PROGRAM.”**



# ABOUT WIECK

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**ESTABLISHED IN 1991 BY VETERANS OF UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL, WIECK MEDIA AIMED TO FILL THE GROWING NEED FOR TIMELY, PRECISE DELIVERY OF DIGITAL IMAGES TO NEWS OUTLETS.**

In 2005, Wieck began Australasian operations with a team trained by Australia's leading media empires and experienced in public relations.

Today, Wieck uses leading-edge compression and editing techniques, advanced web technologies and searchable databases to keep up with the changing world of digital media — but it's Wieck's unmatched editorial experience that makes clients and their audiences breathe easier when deadlines are near.

Drawing upon decades of experience, Wieck's seasoned management team leads a talented, dedicated staff that delivers unmatched customer satisfaction.

Wieck specialises in building, populating and maintaining media-friendly Online Newsrooms that give editors fast access to print-friendly and broadcast-ready digital assets.

Unlike other software or in-house applications, Wieck solutions never require significant IT staff support, so clients can be sure that Wieck will enhance their capabilities without taxing their resources.

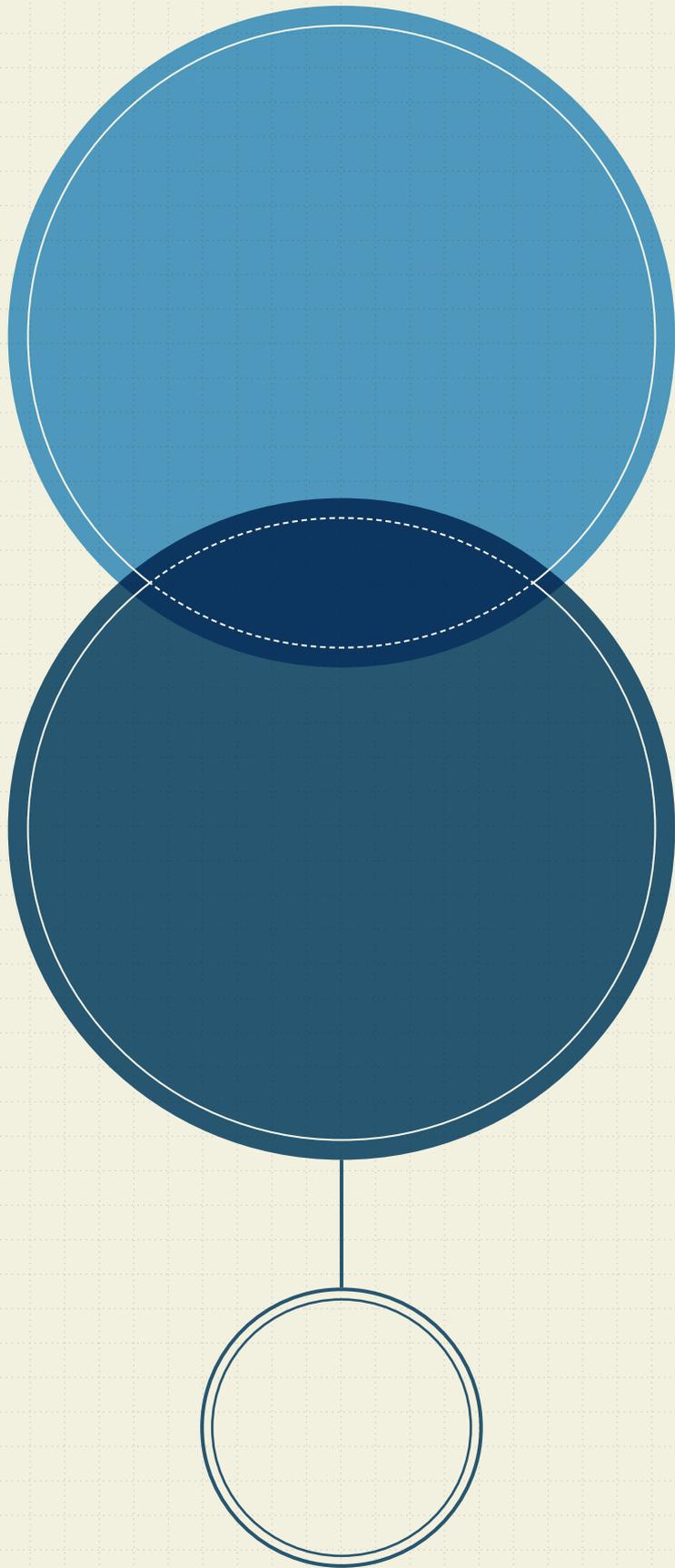
Our newsrooms comply with the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) to enable access for users of all abilities.



**For more information contact Warren Kirby at Wieck Australasia.**

Email [warren.kirby@wieck.com.au](mailto:warren.kirby@wieck.com.au) or call 1300 669 390.

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