

**PR
PERCEPTIONS**

VS

**MEDIA
REALITIES**

2013

Over the last 15 years, the evolution of the Internet has had a profound impact on the symbiotic relationship between the media and corporate communicators.

The world's ever-increasing appetite for consuming and sharing news online has driven significant change in the newsroom, from the type of content required, to who is now counted as a journalist and how they need to operate to create interesting and engaging stories.

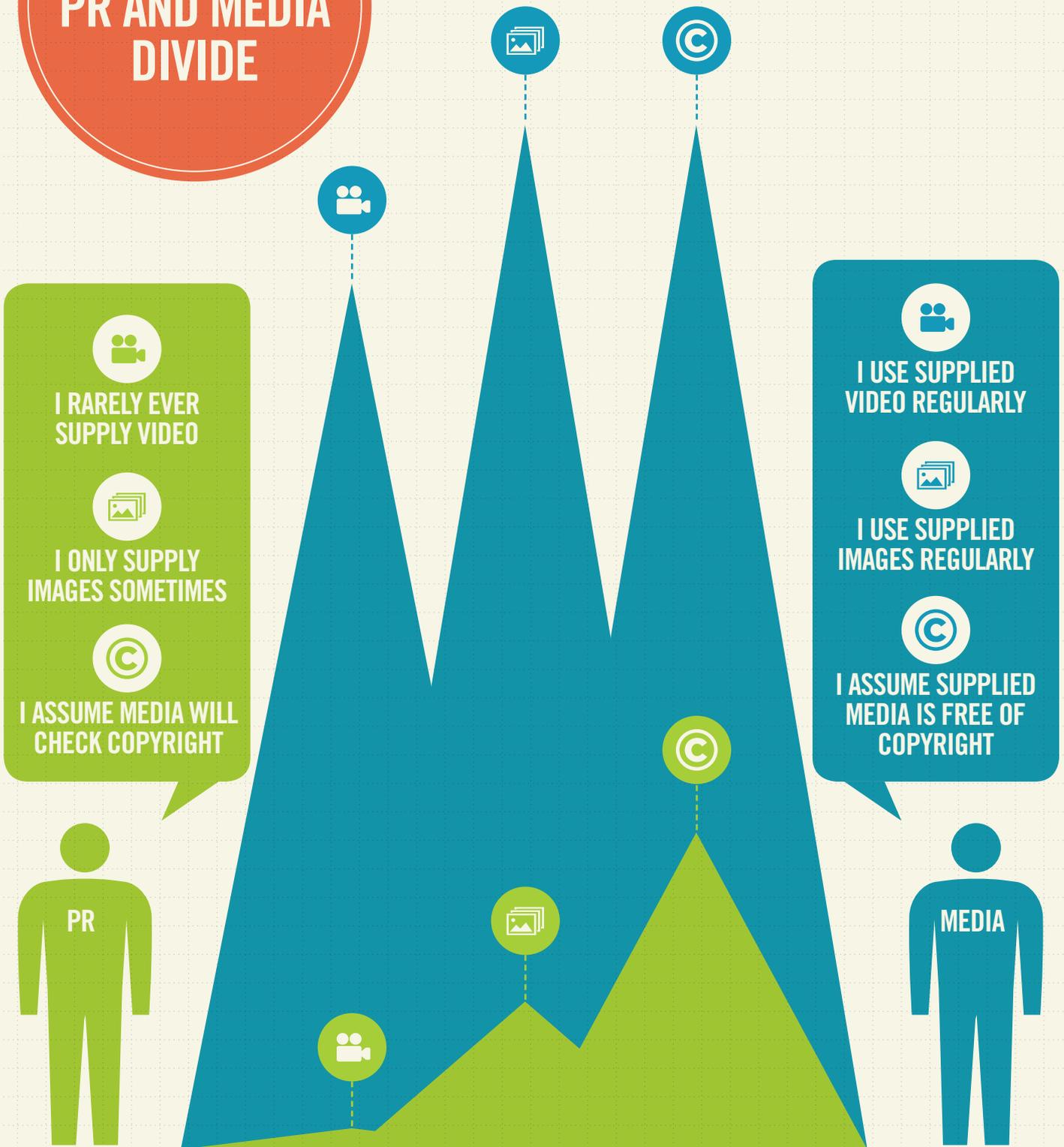
Wieck Australasia undertook a survey of the opinions and experiences of almost 800 journalists and public relations (PR) professionals in September and October 2013 to identify the current needs of media against the practices of communication professionals.

The results point towards new practices PR and communication experts can adopt to strengthen their media relationships and thrive in the new media environment.

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THE GREAT PR AND MEDIA DIVIDE



- ONLY 2% OF PRs SUPPLY VIDEO IN THEIR MEDIA KITS
- ONLY 14% OF PRs SUPPLY IMAGES TO MEDIA EVERY TIME
- 30% OF PRs THINK MEDIA WILL CHECK COPYRIGHT OF SUPPLIED IMAGES AND MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

- 82% OF MEDIA USE SUPPLIED VIDEO
- 97% OF MEDIA USE SUPPLIED IMAGES
- 97% OF MEDIA ASSUME COPYRIGHT IS OK WITHOUT CHECKING

FOREWORD

Protest as they may, the media's reliance on PR professionals to fuel story and feature ideas, offer access to industry commentators and even provide content has been increasing exponentially since the early 1990s.

The Internet, ongoing staff cutbacks and a lack of senior journalists to train the next generation of newsmen and women have all helped to position PRs as both instigators and providers of news.

Wieck Australasia surveyed 441 journalists from a cross section of Australian newspapers, magazines, television, radio and online news publications to better understand their editorial content requirements and preferences when it comes to working with PR professionals.

The same questions were posed simultaneously to 346 communication professionals, 49 per cent of which were either at a director or senior consultant level, to determine where the gaps are between current PR practices and actual media needs.

The results have shown that in today's modern newsroom, where online content is constantly in demand, another evolutionary process is in play. Journalists need more than just story ideas and words on a page from PRs; they require rich and meaningful images, video and other multimedia content on a daily basis.

The findings, which have been compiled in this whitepaper, also reveal significant differences between:

- **Day-to-day preferences when receiving/offering story ideas**
- **Preferences for sourcing basic company information**
- **Who is responsible for verifying multimedia copyright**
- **Use and access to multimedia content**

While almost every journalist agreed that they used PR materials and support on a daily or weekly basis, most would prefer to be able to access this information autonomously via a website or online newsroom.

The results of the survey echo a similar report undertaken in the USA this year that found that 97 per cent of journalists consider an online newsroom to be important.*

This survey also saw a 13 per cent increase on the previous year in media reliance on online newsrooms for content and a growing need to be able to access this content from mobile devices.

From the results of Wieck Australasia's survey, it is clear that journalists require ready access to news and information online. However, a static repository of text based releases and basic images is unlikely to be the answer.

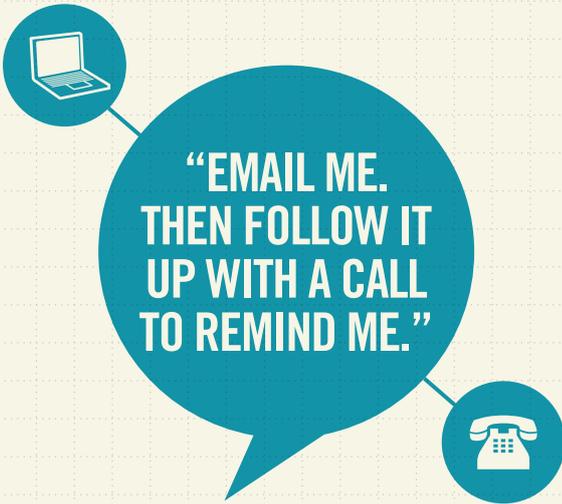
This whitepaper explores how PR professionals can refine their pitch approaches and bolster media relationships by providing materials to support today's 'always on' journalist.

PITCHING A STORY TO MEDIA

With media receiving hundreds of story ideas every day – gaining cut through to busy journalists is a challenge every PR professional faces.

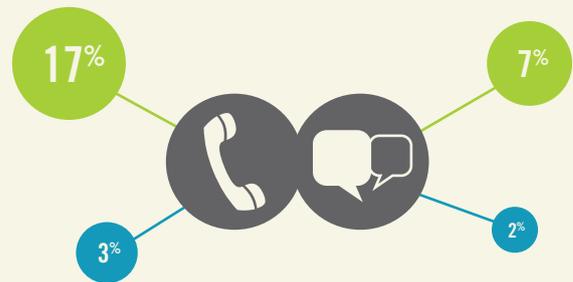
While both journalists and PRs agree that email is the best way to share story ideas and content, media are less enthusiastic about the use of phone calls and social media.

In fact, less than two per cent of media like to be notified of a potential news opportunity via social media!



PR PERCEPTION

17 PER CENT OF PRs PREFER TO NOTIFY JOURNALISTS ABOUT A STORY OPPORTUNITY VIA A PHONE CALL AND **SEVEN PER CENT** USE SOCIAL MEDIA AS A PITCH TACTIC.



MEDIA REALITY

ONLY THREE PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS LIKE RECEIVING PHONE CALLS ABOUT STORY OPPORTUNITIES AND **LESS THAN TWO PER CENT** BY SOCIAL MEDIA.

SUPPLY vs DEMAND

PHONE

- PRs who think they should supply story ideas via phone call
- Journalists who prefer to receive story ideas via phone call

EMAIL

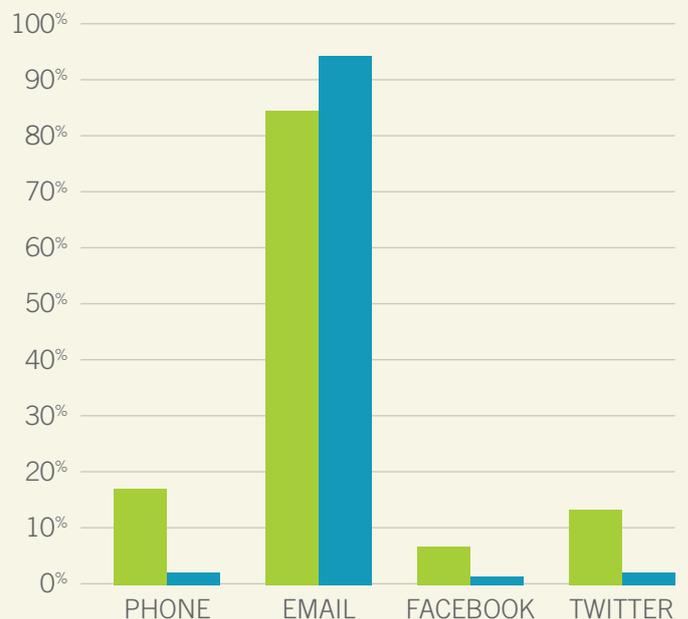
- PRs who think they should supply story ideas via email notification
- Journalists who prefer to receive story ideas via email

FACEBOOK

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

TWITTER

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



Email may be the preferred method for media to receive story ideas, but with some journalists who participated in this survey claiming to receive more than 150 emails a day, PRs need to ensure their email and their media release stands out from the crowd.

Below are a few key pointers from the journalists surveyed on how to write the perfect pitch:

- **Have a real story to tell, not just company updates with no news value**
- **Make sure you have supplied sufficient contact details so the journalist can follow up if they would like an interview or further information. This includes contact details for after hours**
- **Provide sharply written media releases that match the target publications editorial style. According to one reporter 'poorly written media releases are often ignored because it is too time consuming to re-write the information'**
- **Media releases should be no longer than one page**
- **Do not capitalise words that shouldn't be capped**
- **PRs should provide links to additional information, spokesperson bios and images so media can complete the story without having to call and ask for support materials**

JOURNO 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:

“EMAILS THAT SAY PHOTOS ARE AVAILABLE BUT WITHOUT PROVIDING LINKS TO THEM. PRs DON'T REALISE THAT ONLINE PUBLISHING IS AS IMMEDIATE AS RADIO – IF WE NEED SOMETHING, WE NEED IT RIGHT NOW.”

“NO SUPPORT CONTENT LIKE VIDEO OR IMAGES.”

“LARGE IMAGE FILES BEING SENT TO MY EMAIL – PLEASE JUST NOTIFY ME THAT IT'S ONLINE RATHER THAN CLOGGING UP MY EMAIL.”

“DISTRIBUTION OF MEDIA RELEASES IN PDF FORMAT WITHOUT PLAIN TEXT ALTERNATIVES.”

GETTING THE STORY TO BED

When it comes to researching or following up on a potential story, journalists prefer to do their own legwork.

While 70 per cent of PR professionals would expect to receive a phone call from a journalist conducting background research on a company they represent, only 40 per cent of journalists would consider calling them as a first or second step.

The majority of journalists surveyed (72 per cent) would prefer to be able to access information from the company's website or an online newsroom, followed by conducting a basic Google search (53 per cent).

Social media again proved to be less popular among journalists than PR professionals might think. While one in five PRs believe that journalists view Twitter as an important, or very important, source of information when conducting research, the reality is that only 10 per cent of journalists actually do.

Facebook was equally as unpopular with media as a source of information.

“THE MEDIA COULD BE BETTER SERVED BY HELPING THEMSELVES TO RESOURCES AVAILABLE EASILY ONLINE.”

IN A CRISIS, JOURNALISTS NEED ACCURATE INFORMATION, FAST

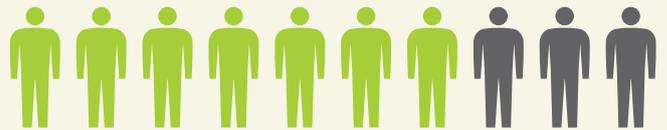
Journalists may prefer to do their own research for everyday news stories, however, in a crisis situation this preference is replaced by the need to access accurate information quickly.

In this instance, journalists consider a phone call to a PR professional or visiting an online newsroom as the top two preferences for accessing company information.

Social media is also viewed more favourably by media in a crisis situation, when speed is of the essence to filing the story. Media can also track stories as they develop more effectively using hashtags.

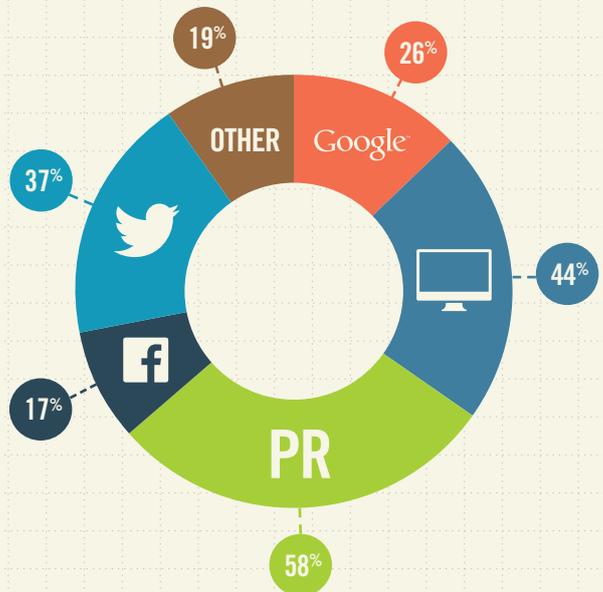
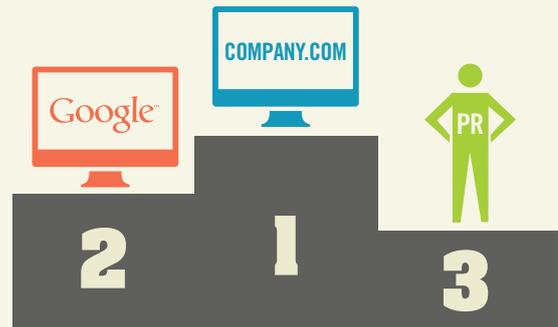
PR PERCEPTION

SEVEN OUT OF TEN 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



MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

With **97 per cent of media surveyed claiming to use supplied images**, most are in desperate need of graphics to complete their stories.

Yet, almost one in five **PRs almost never supply images** to media when pitching stories. The reason, according to 64 per cent of communication professionals that didn't provide images, is that there is simply no need. Budget constraints were also listed by 19 per cent of communication professionals as to why they rarely supply images.

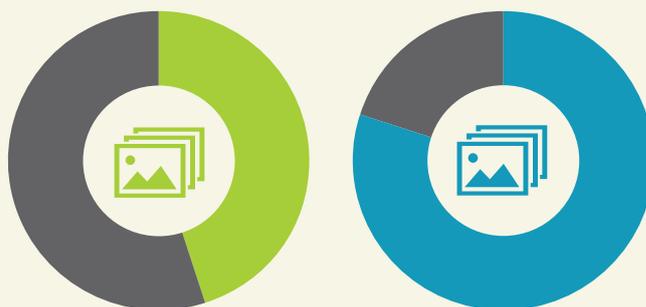
The need for video is also becoming increasingly critical for media. According to the survey results, **82 per cent of journalists use supplied video** content, but just **two per cent of PRs regularly include video** content in their media kits.

By comparison, a similar research study conducted in the US found that 75 per cent of journalists wanted access to video content on a regular basis.**

The graph below shows the disconnect between the media's reliance on supplied images, video and audio content to file their stories and the content that is actually supplied by the PR sector.

PR PERCEPTION

ALMOST HALF OF PR PROFESSIONALS SURVEYED SUPPLY IMAGES TO MEDIA ON AN AD HOC BASIS



MEDIA REALITY

ALMOST EIGHT OUT OF 10 JOURNALISTS USE SUPPLIED IMAGES AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

“THE ONLY REASON WHY WE DON'T USE SUPPLIED IMAGES IS BECAUSE THE QUALITY ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH, OR THE STYLE ISN'T RIGHT.”

JOURNALIST DEMAND AND PR SUPPLY OF MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

AUDIO

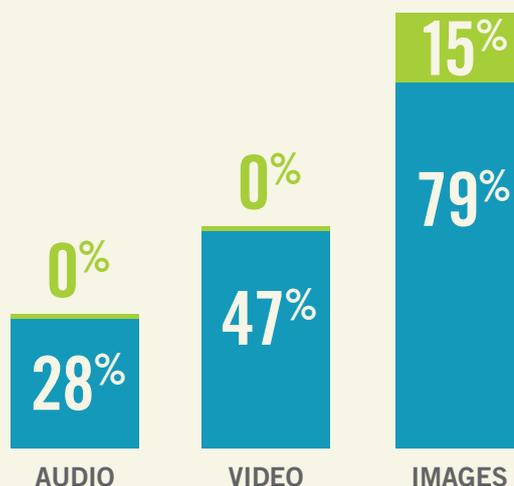
- PRs who always supply audio to media
- Journalists who use supplied audio a minimum of once a week

VIDEO

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

IMAGES

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



COPYRIGHT: DANGER FOR PRs

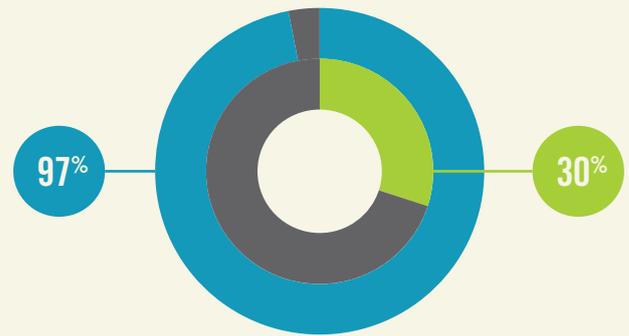
In 2013, several PR agencies have been issued warnings for potential copyright infringements.

Whether the images or multimedia materials are being used as editorial clippings on a website or are supplied to media for publication, it is the responsibility of the PR agency to ensure that no copyright infringement is occurring.

Upcoming changes from the Copyright Agency are also expected to apply to social media channels and PRs should be prepared to review content that has been posted to ensure that it can be legally shared too.

PR PERCEPTION

ALMOST 30 PER CENT OF PR PROFESSIONALS BELIEVE MEDIA WILL VERIFY THE COPYRIGHT STATUS OF SUPPLIED IMAGES AND MULTIMEDIA CONTENT



MEDIA REALITY

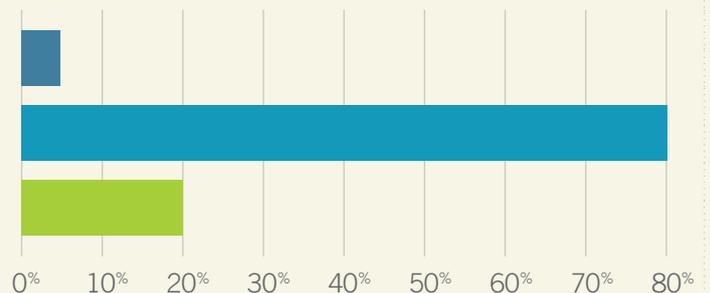
97 PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS PRESUME SUPPLIED IMAGES OR MULTIMEDIA CONTENT IS EITHER COPYRIGHT FREE OR COPYRIGHT FREE FOR MEDIA

MEDIA COPYRIGHT ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING SUPPLIED MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

Copyright applies and permission must be sought

Copyright free for media

Copyright free



DO PRs VERIFY THE COPYRIGHT STATUS OF SUPPLIED MULTIMEDIA CONTENT?

No

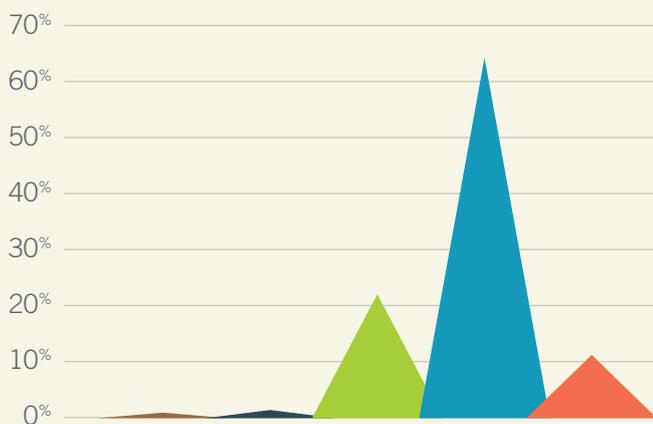
Yes



EMAIL IS KING FOR MULTIMEDIA

What PR professional hasn't heard a journalist complain that large, multimedia files are clogging up their email? Yet, email is still the preferred choice for many media professionals for receiving print-quality images and multimedia files.

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



- Post
- Via social media channels e.g. Twitter or Facebook
- Direct download from an online newsroom
- Email
- Directly from the company or PR representative

In today's fast-moving online world, journalists cannot let hours pass as they try to find, access or download multimedia content to support their stories. Images and video content should be accessible and easy to use.

With **six out of ten journalists accessing online newsrooms at least once a week**, readily available online content is clearly an important source of information for media.

However, it is clear from comments made in this survey that too many journalists have been burned by poor experiences when accessing support materials from a company website or online newsroom.

PR PERCEPTION

34 PER CENT OF PR PROFESSIONALS BELIEVE THAT JOURNALISTS' NUMBER ONE PREFERENCE TO DOWNLOAD MULTIMEDIA CONTENT IS DIRECTLY FROM A WEBSITE



MEDIA REALITY

64 PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS PREFER TO RECEIVE MULTIMEDIA CONTENT VIA EMAIL

MEDIA PET PEEVES

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

“WHEN PR MATERIAL ON THE COMPANY WEBSITE OR ONLINE NEWSROOM IS TAKEN DOWN DAYS AFTER IT IS PUT UP. IF CONTENT WERE TO BE LEFT UP FOR TWO OR THREE WEEKS IT WOULD ALLOW MEDIA TO USE IT FOR FOLLOW UP STORIES.”

“POOR DIRECTION TO FIND INFORMATION ON WEBSITES OR POORLY DESIGNED FRONT PAGES WHICH MAKE FINDING INFORMATION COMPLICATED AND TIME CONSUMING.”

NEWSROOMS: WHAT MEDIA WANT



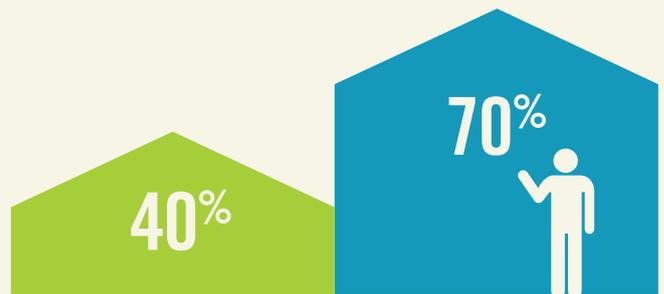
So what do media really want to see in an online newsroom?

While media are clearly using online newsrooms to access information and images for stories, there is a difference in opinion in when they should be used and what content should, and shouldn't be a priority.

The below table highlights the differences between PRs and media when it comes to prioritising online newsroom content.

PR PERCEPTION

ONLY 40 PER CENT OF PR PROFESSIONALS BELIEVE THAT JOURNALISTS VISIT THE ONLINE NEWSROOMS OF BOTH SMALL AND LARGE ORGANISATIONS



MEDIA REALITY

ALMOST 70 PER CENT OF JOURNALISTS BELIEVE IT IS VERY IMPORTANT OR IMPORTANT FOR ALL COMPANIES TO HAVE AN ONLINE NEWSROOM

PR PRIORITIES	VS	MEDIA PRIORITIES
Contact information		Contact information
Regular updates		Regular updates
Corporate background		Crisis communications
Crisis communications		Corporate background
Multimedia content		Multimedia content
Annual reports		Executive biographies
Executive biographies		Product technical specification
Awards and recognition		Corporate financial information
Product technical specification		Annual reports
Corporate financial information		Media clippings/past coverage
Marketing initiatives		Speeches
Speeches		Marketing initiatives
Media clippings/past coverage		Awards and recognition

WHAT MEDIA WANT ONLINE

The content PR professionals believe to be important, and the content PRs are currently including in their newsrooms also differs significantly.

For example, while **78 per cent of PR professionals state that they believe it is extremely or very important to provide images** in an online newsroom, **only 40 per cent actually do.**

Similarly for video, **59 per cent of PRs believe video content is very or extremely important** to include in a newsroom but **only 28 per cent provide this type of content.**

Journalists need to be able to access information quickly and be assured of efficient download functions when using company newsrooms.

The table below reveals the significant gaps in newsroom content and functionality among current PR-managed online newsrooms.

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	81%	97%
Search function for all content	57%	94%
PR contact information	77%	91%
Archive of media releases	77%	81%
Downloadable images	40%	80%
Direct link to newsroom from home page of public website	64%	80%
Content placed into categories	42%	62%
Email notifications of new content added	33%	53%
All related multimedia bundled together with media releases	23%	53%
Compatibility with mobile devices	52%	52%
Access to the company's social media channels	62%	51%
Downloadable video	28%	46%
Ability to share content with user's own social media channels	47%	39%
Downloadable audio	17%	32%

SELF-SERVICE SAVES TIME

Keeping pace with today's never-ending news cycle requires both journalists and PRs to take a different approach to their relationships.

It is clear that PR support is essential for the everyday running of even the most basic newspaper or magazine news hub. However, it is equally clear that the best results for media are achieved when journalists can easily access company information to conduct their own research.

A self-service option allows both media and PRs to concentrate on getting the important jobs done.

ING's Head of Corporate Affairs, David Breen, believes that having an online newsroom has had a significant impact on the way he and his colleagues interact with the media and even structure their campaigns.

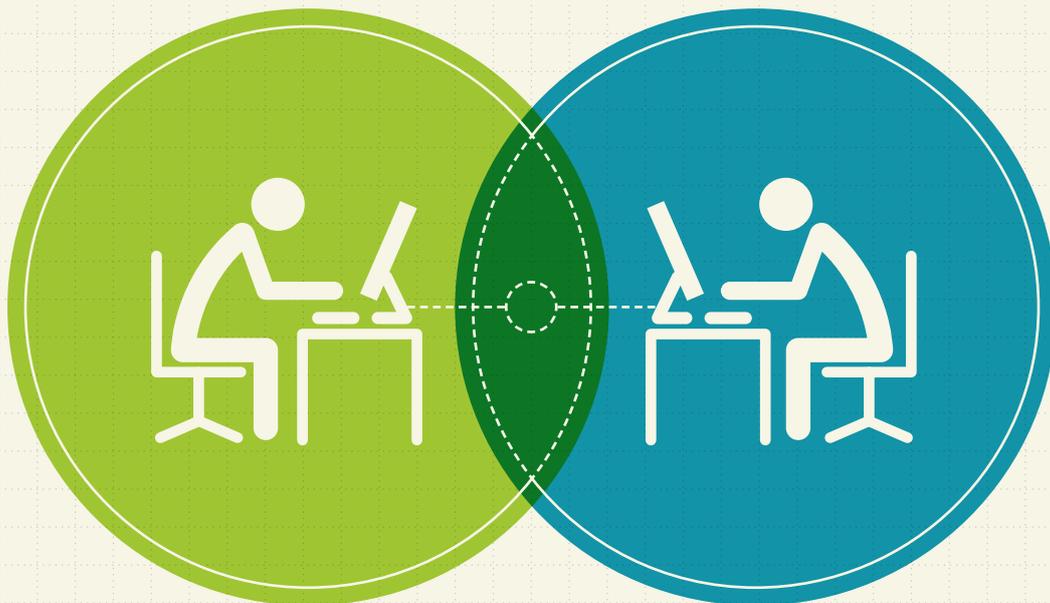
"ING introduced its online newsroom approximately three years ago to assist in housing high res images and video content on our website for media," says Mr Breen.

"Through the newsroom, journalists can choose to receive alerts about our updates, download multimedia content and search our archives for facts and comments to support their stories.

"As a result we've established our own distribution network of more than 100 engaged journalists who genuinely appreciate having access to our media archives and knowing that they will receive consistent updates from ING," says Mr Breen.

According to Mr Breen, having an online newsroom hasn't stopped journalists from calling to request comment and looking for story ideas, but it has refined the process for both the media and his team.

"Essentially, it is easier for journalists to plan story ideas when they know to expect content, supported by research, images and even video content. From our side, we spend less time supporting media to access the basics, so we can concentrate on securing more media opportunities," concludes Mr Breen.



**“GOOD PR CONTACTS
ARE LIKE GOLD.**

WE LOVE YOU.

**IF WE KNOW WE CAN RELY ON YOU
WE WILL CALL YOU WHEN WE NEED
A QUICK QUOTE OR A PHOTO.”**



ABOUT WIECK

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 Australasia began operations with a team trained by Australia's leading newspaper empires and experienced in public relations to fulfil the growing shift towards online technologies in the industry.

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.

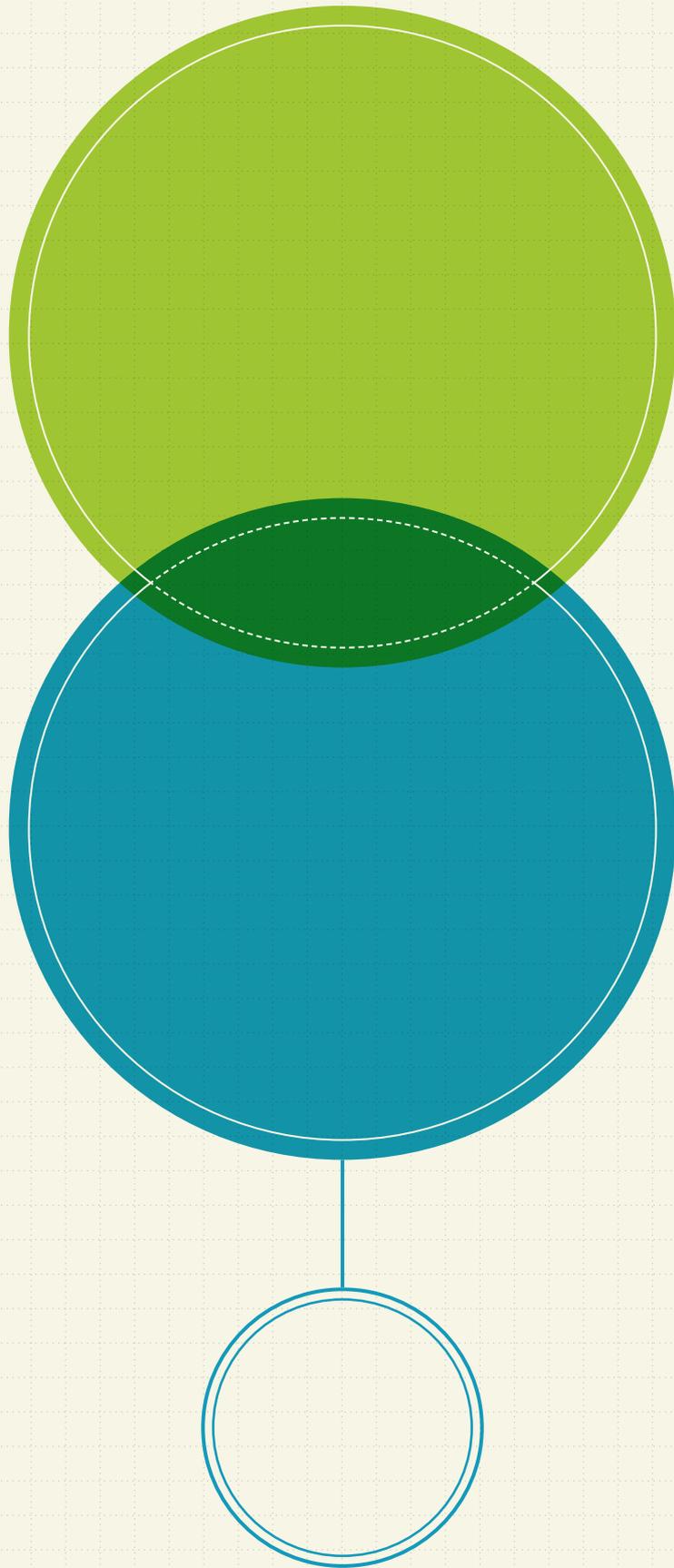
Wieck specialises in building, populating and maintaining media-friendly Online Newsrooms that give editors fast access to print and broadcast-ready digital assets.

Unlike other software or in-house applications, Wieck's solutions never require significant work or technical management from IT staff — so clients can be sure that a professional engagement with Wieck Australasia will multiply their capabilities without taxing resources.

For more information contact Warren Kirby at Wieck Australasia.

Email warren.kirby@wieck.com.au or call 1300 669 390.

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