

The Media is Changing – Are You Changing, Too?

Anyone who interacts with the media knows that newsrooms are smaller than ever today, and reporters and editors are spread thin. Long gone are the days when reporters could turn in a story a day, or a few a week. Today, most are being asked for multiple stories each day and to produce content to feed their publications' and personal social media channels.

Couple these pressures with the rise of “fake news” and the public’s questioning of the objectivity of media outlets, and it has never been harder to be in the media, or to be a media consumer.

With all of this in mind, [Cision](#) published its [2018 Global State of the Media Report](#), which provides some interesting insights into how reporters feel about changes facing the media. Let’s explore four of the most interesting takeaways.

Being accurate is more important than being first

Of the journalists who participated in Cision’s research, 75% said that it is more important to be 100% accurate in their reporting than it is to be first on a story. In the U.S., this number was slightly higher: 78%.

The speed of “news” appearing online is a challenge for traditional journalists and media outlets. The citizen journalist can produce content quickly due to limited or no review and vetting process – but the other side of the coin is that their information receives limited to no review and vetting. No one is checking these stories for balance, fairness or accuracy. For traditional journalists, this is an important differentiator. Traditional journalists pride themselves on their ability to be objective when presenting information.

Traditional media outlets are focused on maintaining high journalistic standards to foster and grow public trust and reliance on their outlets. Trust is the key element here. In a time when the public is becoming more skeptical about “news” reporting, having a focus on accuracy is paramount. In fact, of those surveyed, 71% said they felt the public has lost trust in media outlets.

Reporters are concerned about fake news, too

We are hearing a lot about fake news right now, but what is it really? It can be any information from a real or perceived media outlet that is presented as true – when it is, in fact, false.

According to Cision’s report, 56% of journalists said that “fake news is making readers



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more skeptical than ever about what they read and see.” This skepticism is hard for journalists, who pride themselves on their high standards and integrity. Having the public's trust in media eroded by incorrect information is damaging.

For this reason, and to have fair-and-balanced reporting, you should expect and welcome scrutiny of your reporters' information. A reporter who questions your information is doing his or her job. Should your organization balk, go back to the basics.

If you want to control what is written, buy an ad. But remember: Information that is presented by a trusted reporter or news outlet is trusted 3–12 times more than an advertisement.

Reporters still trust PR sources and the media release is king

It is not time to give up on the media release. Despite the number of ways reporters can develop story ideas and secure sources nowadays, those surveyed by Cision say that trusted PR pros and their media releases are still considered the gold standard. Of the reporters interviewed by Cision, 44% said media releases were their most “trustworthy source of brand-related information.” Spread the word – [the media release is not dead](#); far from it.

Of the reporters surveyed, 63% said that they *want* announcements and media releases from their PR contacts.

How PR sources can help

Many of the basic tenets of working with the media still hold true:

- Reporters need to be able to trust you.
- Make sure your information is correct.
- Know the reporter and what they cover, and customize your pitch accordingly.
- Know your hook and make sure you are clear – don't make the reporter fish for it!
- Make sure your sources are credible, and easily available.

Remember, in these times of fewer resources and higher demands on reporters, you can be a big help and welcome resource. But if you are not [giving reporters what they need](#), when they need it, these reporters will find another way and you will have lost your status as a trusted resource.

In addition to these tips, reporters are looking to PR pros for these specific things, according to those surveyed by Cision.

- Media releases
- Original research reports
- Follow-up media releases
- Content marketing/advocacy releases
- Video clips/B-roll/Livestream

- Blog posts

Change is happening in the media, and we, as PR pros, need to keep up. What is one observation you have that makes life easier for your media contacts? Send me a note at mmccormick@jaffepr.com to share or tweet me [@MichelleMcCorm](https://twitter.com/MichelleMcCorm).