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January 2011

Online Newsroom Survey

Research Report



The final results of a national survey conducted by TEKGROUP International, a leading provider of online newsroom software solutions for the public relations industry, seem to underscore not only the importance of providing a robust online newsroom as part of a comprehensive media relations strategy, but insuring the site has the flexibility and functionality journalist need to compete their work.

The online survey - which specifically measured acceptance, use, and expectations of working journalists toward corporate/organizational online newsrooms - garnered nearly 1,500 responses in three waves from Nov. 15 – Dec 31, 2010.

### FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY INCLUDE:

95% of journalists think it somewhat important (12%), important (31%), or very important (52%) for a company or organization to have an online newsroom available to the press.

99% of journalists say it's somewhat important (10%), important (33%), or very important (57%) for a company to provide access to news releases within their online newsroom

98% of journalists surveyed said it is somewhat important (8%), important (24%) or very important (66%) to find PR contact information within an online newsroom.

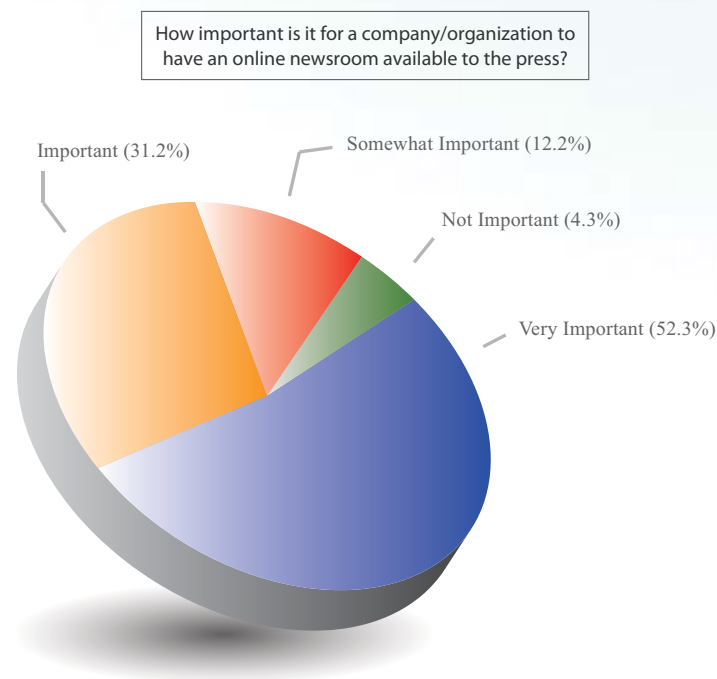
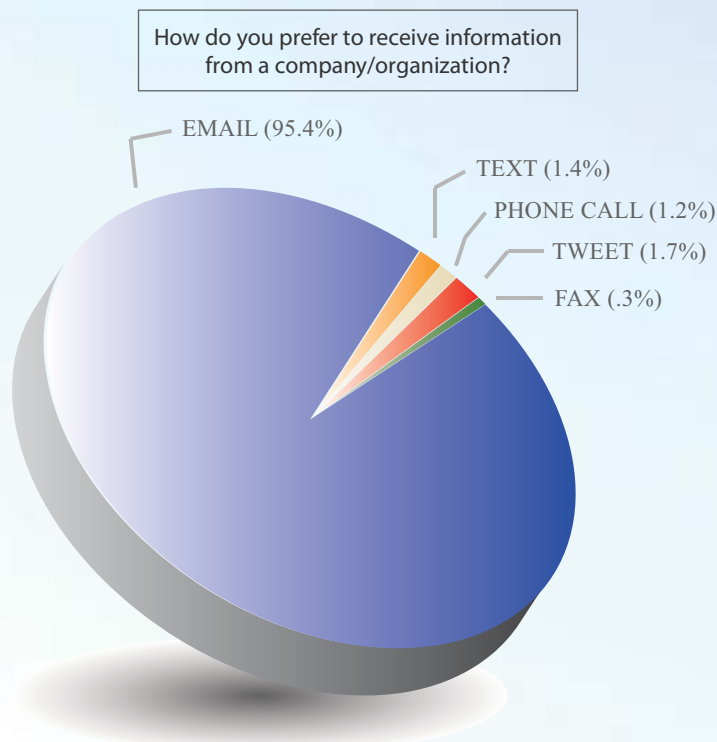
98% of journalists agreed the ability to search news archives within an online newsroom is somewhat important (11%), important (32%) or very important (55%) to their work.

94% of working journalists prefer to receive news, information and story pitches from a company via e-mail alerts with phone call (1%) and text message (1%) being the least preferred method of notification.

93% of working journalists indicate they believe it is somewhat important (13%), important (30%), or very important (50%) for a company to provide breaking news and information online.

77% of survey respondents think it is somewhat important (32%), important (28%), or very important (17%) to access links to a company's social media sites from within the online newsroom.

65% see the ability to receive news via their wireless device as important to their work – an increase of nearly 10% from the 2009 Online Newsroom Survey.

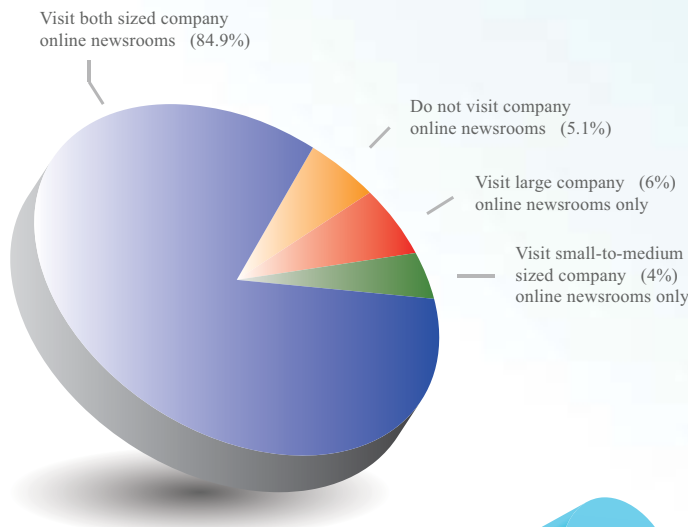


For this section the researchers sought to set baseline expectations for online newsroom acceptance and use. And, not surprisingly in today's digital media environment, expectations are understandably high.

95% of journalists think it somewhat important (12%), important (31%), or very important (52%) for a company or organization to have an online newsroom available to the press. Moreover, 28% of working journalists visit a corporate online newsroom once a week, with 25% indicating they visit every day.

Not surprisingly, 98% of journalists surveyed said it is somewhat important (8%), important (24%) or very important (66%) to find PR contact information within an online newsroom. What might be more telling is the difficulty with which this impossibly simple task is executed in online newsrooms across the web.

Do you visit online newsrooms for small-to-medium sized companies/organizations, as well as large companies/organizations?



Almost as important as locating PR contact information, 98% of journalists agreed the ability to search news archives within an online newsroom is somewhat important (11%), important (32%) or very important (55%) to their work.

Size does not seem to matter to journalists as 85% indicate they visit online newsrooms of both large and small organizations. And perhaps forecasting a coming trend in online newsroom use by non-journalists seeking corporate information and news, nearly 64% of journalists think an online newsroom should be accessed by anyone, with 27% saying newsrooms should be for media only.



For this section the researchers were attempting to gauge journalist's expectations for the distribution of news and information. The results point to a strong reliance on e-mail as the preferred method of news and pitch delivery.

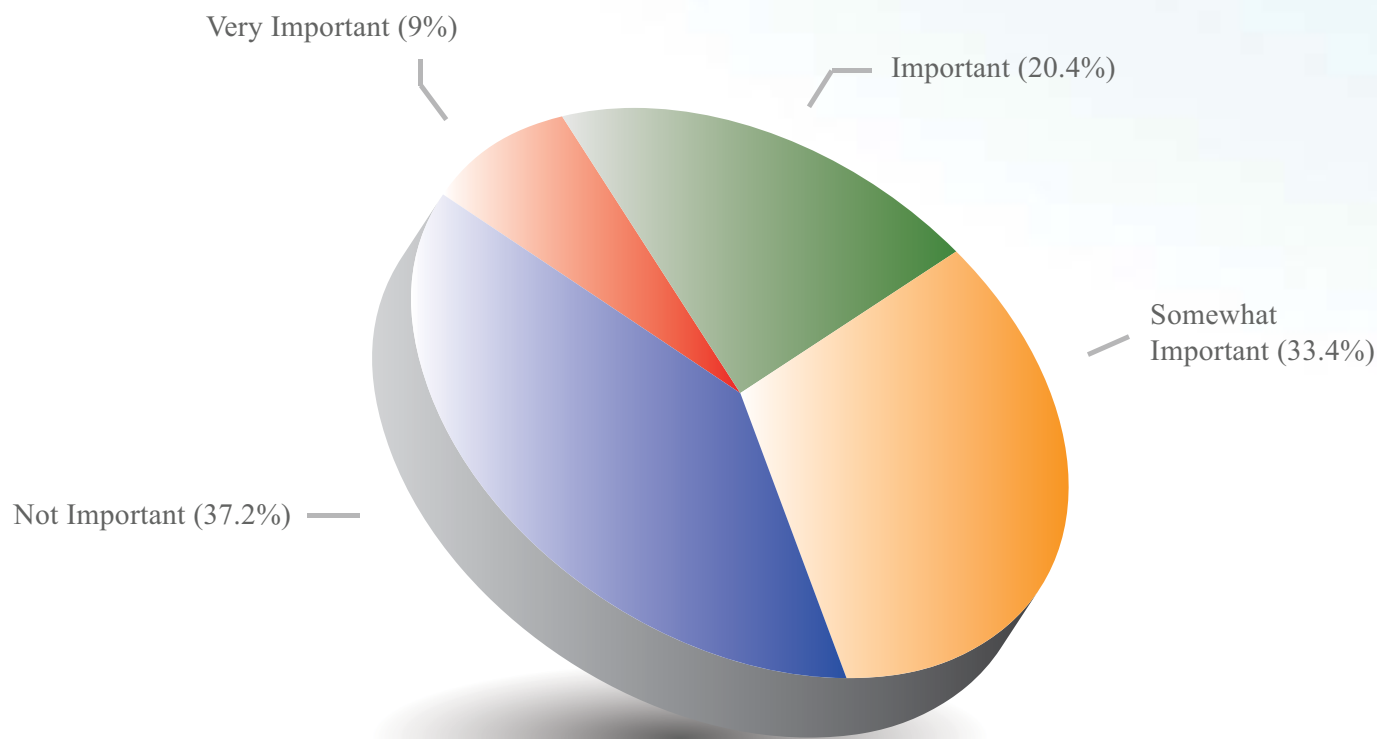


94% of working journalists prefer to receive news, information and story pitches from a company via e-mail alerts with phone call (1%) and text message (1%) being the least preferred method of notification. Related to distribution method, nearly 80% of journalists say they only want to get news and information that applies to their research or writing.

Journalists are united in their call for breaking news being available in an online newsroom with more than 93% indicating they believe it is somewhat important (13%), important (30%), or very important (50%) for a company to provide this information online. Journalists also see the ability to request interviews via a form provided within the online newsroom as somewhat important (23%), important (34%) or very important (30%).

Continuing with the distribution theme, almost 65% see the ability to receive news via their wireless device as important to their work – an increase of nearly 10% from the 2009 Online Newsroom Survey. About the same percentage rate getting news via an online newsroom RSS feed as somewhat important (35%), important (22%), or very important (7%).

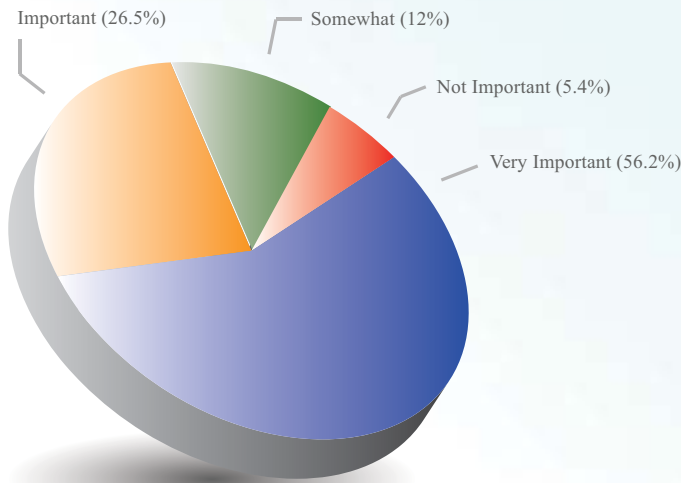
How important is it to receive news to a wireless device from an online newsroom?



Here the researchers were looking for journalist's content expectations when they visit a corporate online newsroom. And, quite frankly, the results were somewhat intuitive.

As expected, almost 99% of journalists say it's somewhat important (10%), important (33%), or very important (57%) for a company to provide access to news releases within their online newsroom. A bit unexpected was journalists' preference for news releases to be organized by type of news with 75% indicating the importance of newsroom organization.

How Important is it to access photographs (both high and low resolution) within an online newsroom?



95% of journalists say it's somewhat important (12%), important (27%), or very important (56%) to have access to photographs – both web and print ready – within an online newsroom. They also want access to product information within an online newsroom with 92% indicating the availability of such information would be somewhat important (26%), important (37%) or very important (29%) for their work.

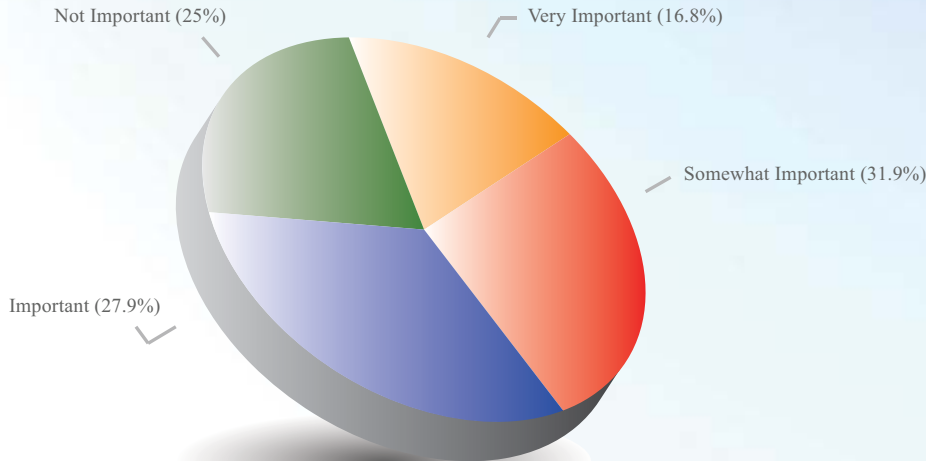
93% of journalists say it's somewhat important (27%), important (41%), or very important (26%) to access company background information within an online newsroom, with 89% of working journalists saying it's somewhat important (19%), important (30%), or very important (40%) to access crisis communications.

Interestingly, traditional journalists seem to be looking for multi-media digital assets in greater numbers when using the online newsroom with 63% saying audio files are somewhat important (38%), important (18%), or very important (7%) to their writing, and even more (75%) saying video files provide the same value to their research work. These numbers represent an encouraging (7%) improvement from the 2009 study.

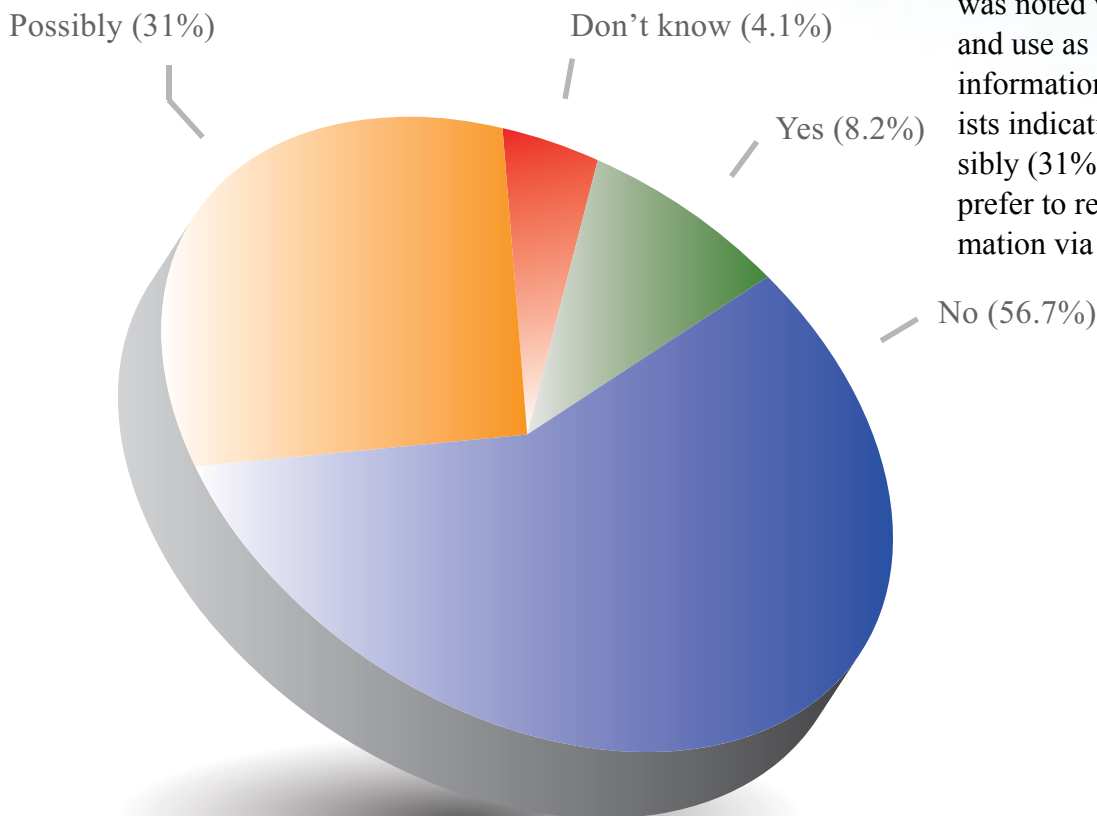
This finding is further supported by the cross-tabulation of respondents identifying themselves as Internet news producers (19% of the survey sample) and their rating of the importance of multi-media digital assets. A full 56% of this group rates audio and video file availability in an online newsroom as important (21%) or very important (35%).



How important is it to access a page within an online newsroom that links to all of a company/organization's social media environment?



Do you want to receive news from a company/organization's twitter feed?



Juxtaposed to the multi-media needs of traditional journalists, almost 77% of survey respondents think it is somewhat important (32%), important (28%), or very important (17%) to access links to a company's social media sites from within the online newsroom. Use of corporate blogs seems to be trending upward as well among this group with nearly 45% of respondents indicating they often (33%) or very often (11%) visit the corporate blog when researching a news story.

Moreover, roughly 25% of journalists visit a company's Facebook page when researching a story – that's a 10% increase from the 2009 study. A similar increase was noted with Twitter acceptance and use as a source of news and information with 40% of journalists indicating they would possibly (31%) or definitely (9%) prefer to receive news and information via a timely tweet.

The survey sample was predominantly print-oriented with 47% indicating they work in the newspaper industry and 29% indicating they work in magazine publishing. Nearly 20% of the sample indicated they work online.

The largest industry sectors reported by the survey sample were city/metro reporters (8%), business reporters (6%), government/politics (6%), technology (6%), healthcare (5%), and sports (5%).

Gender was evenly split in the survey sample between male (50.4%) and female (49.6%).

The largest age group for the survey sample was 46-55 (28.3%), followed closely by the 36-45 group (24.4%). The survey succeeded in capturing a wide range of age groups with the 26-35 group comprising 19% of the sample, and 56-65 year-olds capturing 18% of the pie.

Surprisingly, 63% of the survey sample indicated their general Internet experience and proficiency as advanced with 27% choosing the “about average” category. A full 10% of the survey sample rate themselves as technology “know-it-alls.”



TEKGROUP International, Inc. is an award winning Internet software and services company that develops online newsrooms with social media integration, and e-business software solutions. TEKgroup clients include AAA, Accenture, Carlson Hotels Worldwide, CIGNA, Detroit Lions, Ford Motor Company, PRSA, Prudential Financial, Starbucks, VMS, and Walgreens.

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Dura Automotive  
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Reystone  
Saleen  
VW Canada/India  
Toyota  
Jaguar/Land Rover

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Administaff  
Corporate Executive Board  
Fluor  
Pall Corporation  
Paychex  
Pitney Bowes  
Vantage Hospitality

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The Childrens Hospital  
CIGNA  
Cook Medical  
HIMSS  
HealthNet  
Inova Health  
Mary Washington College  
Regence

#### **AGENCIES**

AutoCom Associates  
Consensus Communications  
Delaware North  
D.S. Simon  
Newman PR  
PCG Campbell  
Peoples Ink  
Ogilvy  
2020 India

#### **FINANCIAL**

Ameriprise  
Conversus Capital  
FGI Finance  
NexTier Bank  
Northwestern Mutual  
Symetra Financial  
Vanguard

#### **EDUCATION**

DeVry University  
HACC  
Kent State University  
Oxford Schools

#### **TRAVEL**

Atlantis Resorts  
Florida Keys  
Kennedy Space Center  
Rock Resorts  
Vail Resorts  
Wheeling Island  
Disney  
Specialty Sports Ventures

#### **NON-PROFITS**

AMT  
PRSA  
New York State Police  
amFAR  
AACE  
ACRI

#### **FOOD/BEVERAGE**

Baskin Robbins  
Dunkin Donuts  
Starbucks

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Dollar General  
Klipsch  
Lowe's  
Marshalls  
TJ Maxx  
Walgreens  
Digital Landing

#### **LIFESTYLE**

BJCC  
Getty images  
Birmingham CVB  
MySpace  
Restaurant.com  
Scripps Networks  
Turner  
Curves  
Detroit Lions  
CBS Sports  
MiLB  
NFL

#### **TECHNOLOGY**

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Diebold  
DRS Technologies  
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Puget Sound  
Silicon Labs  
Sprint  
Windstream  
Lenovo  
Computer Associates  
Symantec India  
ADT