

**2020**

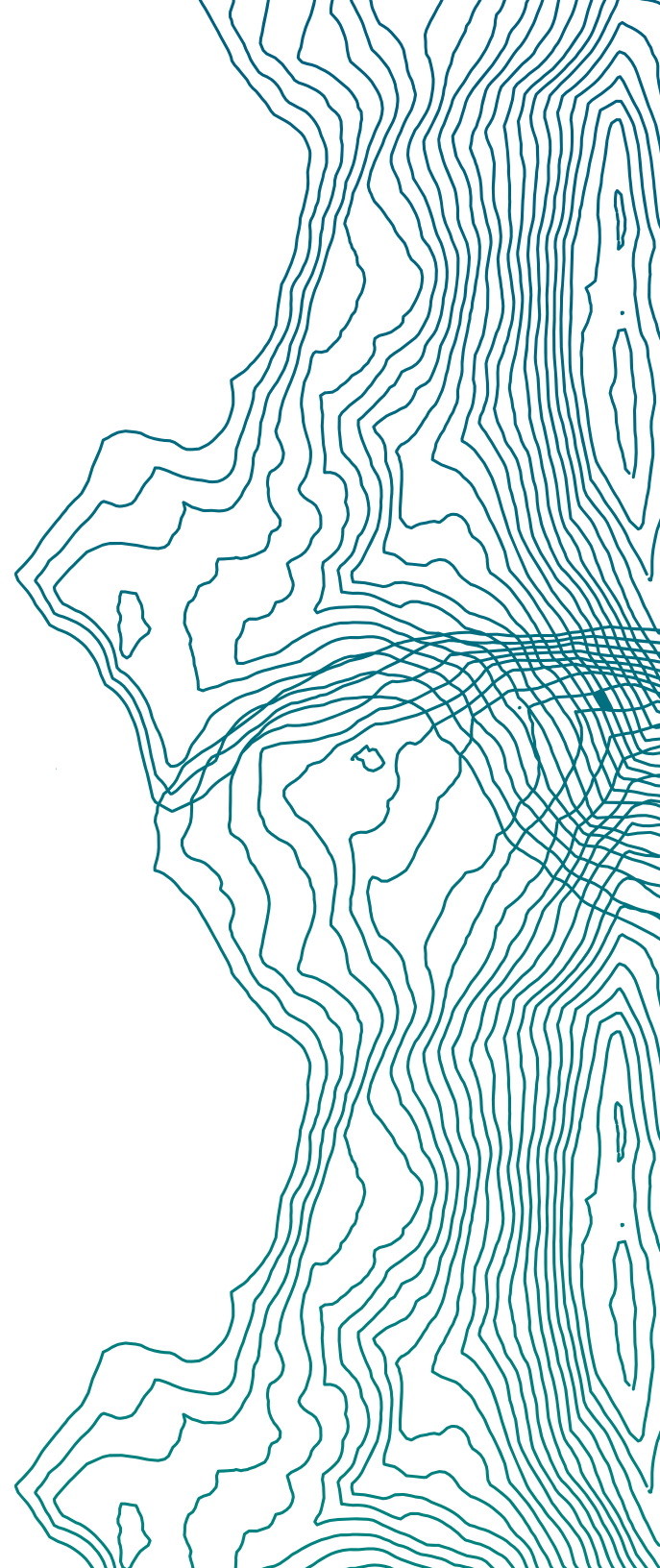
**STATE**

**UK EDITION**

**OF THE MEDIA**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year brings new challenges for journalists as the media landscape continues to evolve into an increasingly fluid digital ecosystem of competing platforms and outlets. Add to that a global pandemic that suddenly switched everyone's beat over to the novel coronavirus, and it has been an exceptional year for journalists — and it's only April.

While Cision sent out our State of the Media Survey prior to the declaration of the pandemic, we knew that was something we couldn't leave out of the overview of the media in 2020; it has affected us all and will continue to affect us for the foreseeable future. With that in mind, we sent out some follow-up questions specific to COVID-19, and we will address them in a special section of this report.

In a year of particular uncertainty and difficulty there are also good things to highlight: In the eyes of journalists, distrust in the media continues to decrease. More journalists are also grappling with bias in their field, which should inform their approach to their own reporting and benefit audiences everywhere.

And the relationship between PR professionals and journalists is more important than ever, as journalists continue to find themselves strapped for resources. That's a relationship that takes work to maintain the reliability and trust of.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- COVID-19 changed everything but also highlighted that many things have not changed for the media
- Distrust in the media continues to decrease in the eyes of journalists, but there is still work to be done on this front
- Bias is unavoidable in humans, and journalists are humans; we examine this relationship between bias and reporters (and what it means for PR pros)
- Social media continues to be complicated while the heady promise of AI continues to fade
- PR outreach needs to be more targeted and relevant than ever before to stand out



# COVID-19'S IMPACT ON THE MEDIA: A SPECIAL REPORT

When the novel coronavirus became a global pandemic and swiftly changed everyone's day-to-day life, we decided to reach back out to journalists to see how this was affecting them in particular. Their responses highlighted several main themes, some of which emphasised what hasn't changed after all:

- **Email, email, email.** Use email to pitch journalists; this is something we hear a lot from journalists in our pitching kits, but it's even more important now with a heavy workload and further reduced resources.
- **Making experts available for video interviews** is a plus in a time when we're all on video calls and watching more video on our devices at home.
- **Finding the local news angle** is especially important when pitching at the moment; as each state is handling the crisis differently, many of the respondents are only interested in local news pitches.
- **Look for new angles on COVID-19 stories and pitch positive stories.** As one respondent said, "We could all use a little positivity in this crisis."
- **PR professionals must continue researching outlets and journalists before pitching.** Some have transitioned entire staffs to cover COVID-19 and other types of stories have been put on hold. Make sure you understand a journalist's current coverage area.
- **Be patient right now.** Journalists are absolutely swamped, so it may take longer than usual to hear back from them.





## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

We asked journalists three questions around reporting and COVID-19:

1. What types of stories are you looking for?
2. How has the pandemic impacted your pitching preferences?
3. How can PR pros be most helpful right now?





## HERE IS WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT THE TYPES OF STORIES THEY'RE LOOKING FOR:



*"[The novel] coronavirus pandemic has changed every aspect of life, so stories that were previously in the works are on hold. Until we're past the crisis, pitches related to the pandemic and its effects are most relevant."*



*"Mainly COVID-19 related due to the nature of this pandemic; human interest pieces that make things more personal or show people coming together are especially meaningful now."*



*"We're trying to keep it local, but as the web editor, I'd love to see more timely/local stories that are NOT about the virus. Even just one a day would be refreshing."*



Journalists are realistic about COVID-19 fatigue setting in on audiences, but as this is a fluid situation most audiences still want regular updates, especially on a local level. One journalist mentioned that non-COVID-19 feature readership was also up, so if you have a feel-good local story don't be afraid to pitch it.



## HOW THIS HAS AFFECTED THEIR PITCHING PREFERENCES:



*"Email remains key, but noting whether a guest/expert is available for a FaceTime/Skype video interview is more helpful than ever."*



*"Emails are the least time consuming option for us. (Brief emails, without elaborate, teaser introductory paragraphs.)"*



*"I still prefer pitches via email; I'm more likely to open them over the weekend, when I'm not getting as many emails."*



Email for pitching remains the preference, as we've seen in countless pitching kits. As for timing, many journalists mentioned that early in the morning is a good time, before they get slammed for the day.

## AND FINALLY, HOW PR PROS CAN BE THE MOST HELPFUL RIGHT NOW:



*"Be even more proactive than ever with reaching out to media outlets. All of our normal coverage is now being looked at through the lens of COVID-19 and normal stories now take a different turn. The possibilities are endless right now."*



*"Offer experts related to the news of the day. Don't try to capitalise on the crisis by promoting clients in distasteful ways."*



*"Pitching COVID stories, making sure all pitches are relevant to the publication, understanding if it takes days for journalists to get back, following up if you don't hear back in a few days - we get buried in emails! (But after the first follow up, a second probably isn't needed.)"*



Thoughtful, targeted pitches are always a good idea and a little extra humanity and patience go a long way in the current environment. In the end we are all dealing with this unprecedented time together, and as one respondent put it:

**"Be aware that we're struggling just as much to figure out what comes next."**



# 1. MEDIA ECOSYSTEM

## JOURNALISM FACES A MYRIAD OF CHALLENGES IN 2020 (And that was *before* COVID-19)



**The media ecosystem in 2020 continues to be challenging for journalists** – and that was before a global pandemic changed everyone's lives. While that undeniably has affected what every journalist is dealing with on a global basis, it wasn't yet at pandemic levels when we sent out our survey and collected results. Viewing the results through a COVID-19 lens shows both just how different some things are around the pandemic- the emphasis on local news, for example- and how some things remain unchanged (send your pitches via email, please).

Compared to 2019, fewer journalists classified themselves as individuals and influencers in 2020. This could be part of a larger trend of journalists wanting the security of working for a larger outlet when possible in a tumultuous media landscape, or it could just be the shift of the specific journalists we collected responses from.

**Measuring success has also changed from last year:** More organisations are looking for direct links to revenue impact to measure the success of content- things like subscriptions or advertising- than the speed of a piece to market or sharing and promotion by third-party entities. Speed can backfire if it's not paired with accuracy, after all, and third parties are notorious for sharing things they might not have actually read. That does not do much to support an outlet or its staff in the long run. Being able to prove, as a journalist, that you can drive subscription numbers up in the era of the paywall is a valuable asset to any resume.

**“What's the biggest challenge in journalism?”** is a big question to unpack. Fake news and attacks on freedom of the press are less of a challenge this year, while staffing and general access to resources continues to be a mounting challenge. For the first time this year, we also allowed open-ended answers to this question.

## GLOBAL RESPONDENTS BY OUTLET



## QUESTION

### What do you believe was the biggest challenge for journalism in the last 12 months?

- Staffing and resources **(22%)**
- Social networks and influencers bypassing traditional media **(18%)**
- Ongoing conversation on “fake news” **(16%)**
- Attacks on freedom of the press **(13%)**
- Blurring lines between editorial and advertising **(13%)**
- Adapting to advances in technology **(8%)**
- Personal safety or security issues in this line of work **(1%)**
- Other **(9% — please specify)**

## OTHER ANSWERS

*“All of the above. These things are all happening at once and that’s compounded the problems.”*

*“Aging readership; attracting a younger audience.”*

*“PR folks focusing on UVPM’s instead of good content and the right audience.”*

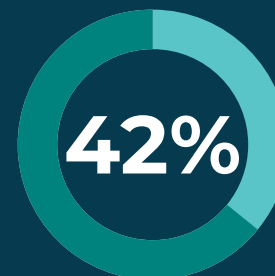
### To add to all of these challenges is the workload journalists face:

Many responded that they file 10+ pieces a week, up from last year. PR pros need to be mindful of this workload when pitching journalists and stick to all of the best practices frequently cited by journalists (concise pitches by email with assets included that don’t expire, with limited follow-up).

**What about timing?** 36% of journalists we surveyed plan their stories daily or more frequently, while 42% plan a week to a month ahead. Keep these time frames in mind when you’re crafting pitches, especially if you’re planning to follow up (once is enough).



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## 2. (DIS)TRUST IN THE MEDIA



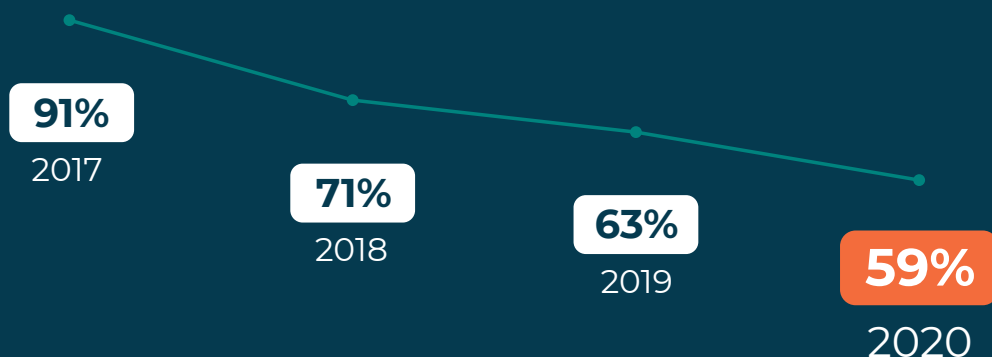
According to our 2020 global data, **59% of journalists** believe that the public has lost trust in the media over the last year. When viewed in context with the past four years, a trend continues to emerge: year over year, journalists believe that distrust in the media is decreasing.

In 2019's report we showed that trust had become a business model for the media and the numbers for this year are much the same: 51% of journalists again say that ensuring content is 100% accurate is more important than revenue, exclusivity, or being the first to publish. This has become an important foundation in the time of COVID-19.

Edelman's [Special Report on Trust and the Coronavirus](#) showed that major news organisations were the most-relied on information source around the virus, but employers were more trusted as a source of truth.

Trust, once lost, is not easy to rebuild, but this slow and steady decrease in the distrust of the media shows progress in that rebuilding. The special report's findings were in line with Edelman's other findings; according to the [Edelman Trust Barometer](#), 61% of the Informed Public (based on age, education, and income) trusts the media while only 47% of the Mass Population (all population not including Informed Public) does.

### DISTRUST IN THE MEDIA IS DECREASING



While the data shows marginal shifts from 2019 to 2020, one thing remains clear: distrust of the media is still a major issue for journalists, the Informed Public, and the Mass Population, and there is definitely more work to be done in rebuilding the trust between the media and the public.

# 3. BIAS



**Bias is a part of being human, and it affects journalists just as it does the rest of us.** As we looked through this year's survey responses, we noticed that bias was a recurring theme and we wanted to dig into that a little bit more. What do journalists themselves think about media bias? We reached out to get some more in-depth answers, and we received a range of responses, including those in such a highly specified field they felt bias didn't affect them or their work.

Others were very candid about how bias affects them, their employees and the industry as a whole.

## ANSWERS

*"Is there bias in the media? Sure, but much of the problem stems from people not knowing that there are differences between reporters, columnists and editorial page writers. They assume that everyone who works for a media outlet, especially a newspaper, is under some central direction that reflects the biases of its owner and views what's written through that distorted prism. I'm considered to be, and probably am, a bit more to the right than [my publication's] editorial stances, but the editorialists did their thing and I did mine and we almost never communicated."*

– 2020 State of the Media  
Survey Respondent

*"Media bias is 100% an issue. I find my employee reporters don't even notice their biases until after complaints are made, and then when I advise them to include another side to the story they say that is giving the other side a 'platform', and that because their side is the truth they should only tell their side. It is a difficult subject to navigate."*

– 2020 State of the Media  
Survey Respondent

## QUESTION

**One of the recurring themes in our survey so far is bias in the media. Does media bias seem like an issue to you? If so, how?**

*"Perhaps. I see the bias coming mostly from people who live elsewhere reporting in or about our local communities. You can see glaring stereotypes, which can lead to biases. I think hiring more reporters who are actually a part of these smaller communities on the national playing field would help things feel more realistic. They generally can see the complexities that a national reporter from Manhattan or Santa Monica are blind to. To me, a journalistic view with complexity fights bias."*

– 2020 State of the Media  
Survey Respondent

The tricky thing about bias is that even with bias training, human beings are terrible at identifying their own biases.

An entirely separate-but-related issue is misinformation; both intentional and unintentional. When disreputable journalists or journalistic outlets publish misinformation purposefully as fact for clicks or views, it damages the entire ecosystem in the form of public trust. It makes it harder for other journalists or outlets to make honest mistakes they correct in a timely manner — something that's very easy to do when you're filing 10+ stories a week and constantly on a deadline.

The entire issue of media bias is, perhaps, most succinctly put by this 2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent:

*“All media is biased because it's run by humans.”*

What can PR professionals do about bias? That's another difficult question that can't be easily unpacked, but the first step is recognising that no one is apart from bias, including PR and comms professionals. It's important to step outside of the perspective of any brand you may be working for and consider if someone who has never heard of that brand would be interested in the story you're pitching, for example. Try to read your pitch in the eyes of the reporter.





## 4. TECHNOLOGY'S IMPACT ON THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE



The intricate algorithms of social media continue to be the most important new technology impacting journalists today. In the 2019 State of the Media Report, **38% of journalists** agreed that social media algorithms will change the way they work the most. Now, in 2020, **41% of journalists** believe this to be the case.

Journalists are now competing with a much more generalised flow of content and information across social platforms. In order to do so, they require an understanding of how social media and its algorithms work. Often this finds the modern journalist with competing interests: reporting on the facts and the truth of a story, while seeking to increase readership and engagement of their work, often via social channels.

That highlights the fundamental disparity between these two systems: Social media platforms rely on algorithms (which also have a form of bias, in that they are built and “trained” by humans) and speed, while journalists increasingly say they rely on accuracy over speed and have to confront the role their own bias might play in their work.

***“They’ve made it much easier to create and distribute meaningful content. Technology evens the playing field, and that allows people to hear new voices and new perspectives.”***

–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent

While the importance of the social media algorithm is on the rise, the relevance of AI/machine learning seems to be impacting journalists significantly less. According to journalists in 2020, **only 15% see AI/machine learning as the most important technology to affect the industry**. This is down from 19% last year.

While technology continues to improve and have dramatic impact on the industry as a whole, there is also a premium being put on people, especially as newsrooms are forced to downsize. Technology and people go hand-in-hand. You can’t utilise software and algorithms effectively if you don’t have the right people for the job in place.

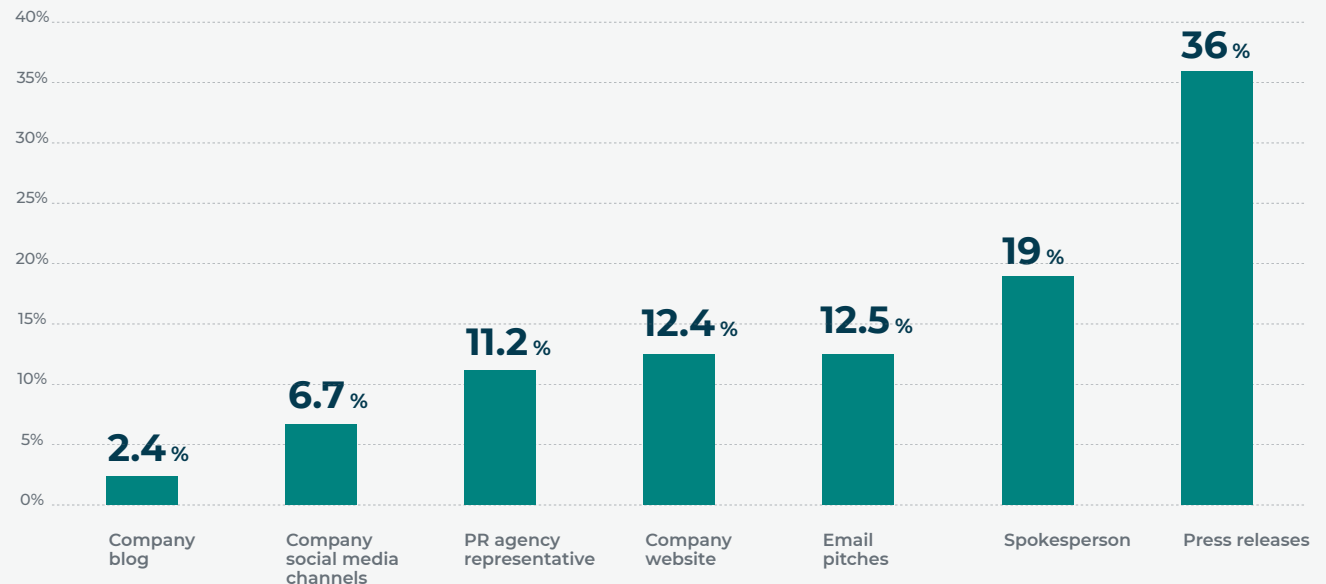
As the technology becomes more available, there is going to be a need for human contextualisation and insights to make sense of the data and numbers. (Robots are still very bad at sarcasm, after all.)

# 5. PITCHING BETTER



## MAKE IT RELEVANT

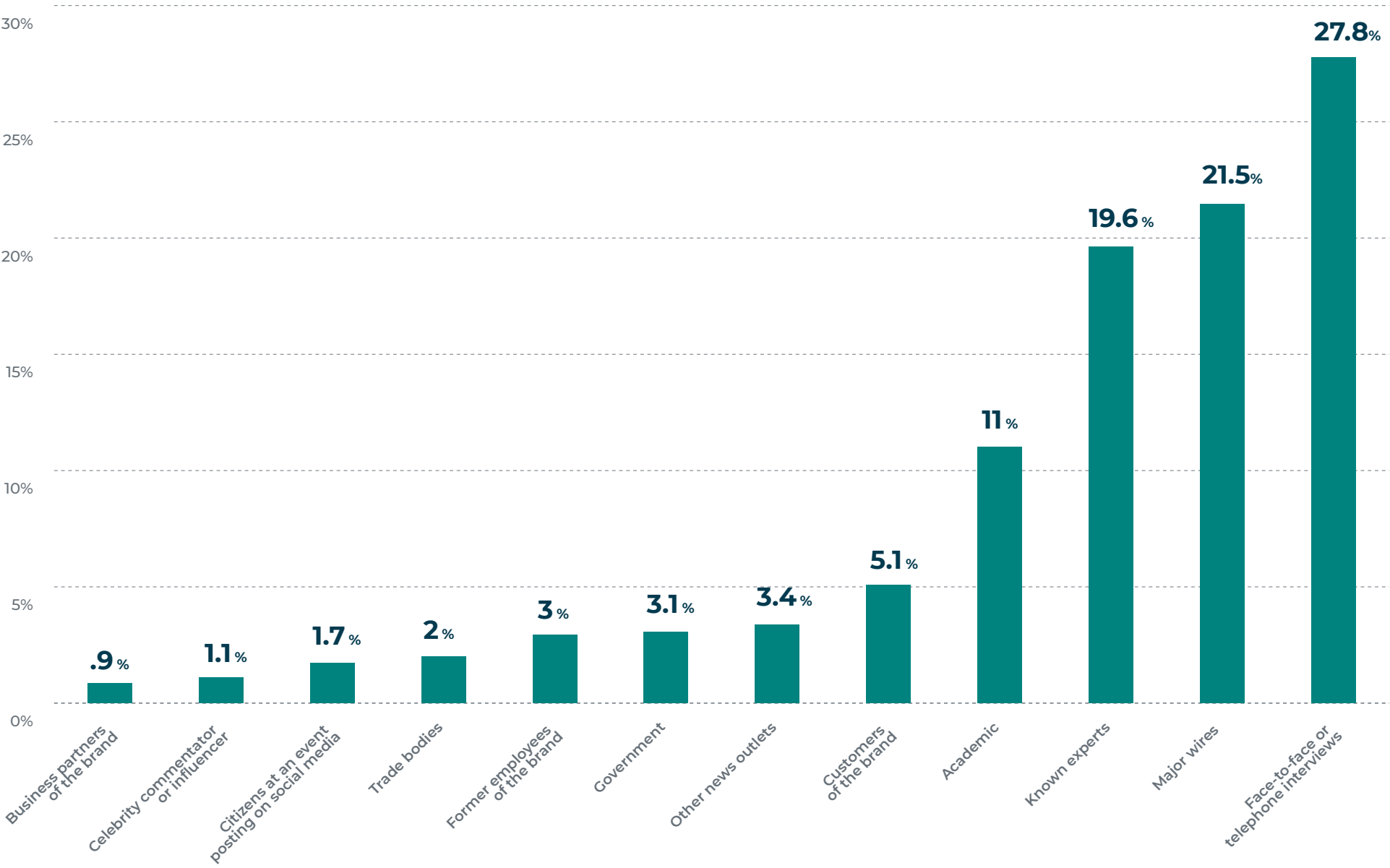
As any PR professional knows, a pitch can make or break the success of your earned media efforts. Something deemed newsworthy or interesting can get lost in a reporter's flooded email inbox if the right media strategy is missing. So when is the right time to reach out and what should your pitch involve in order to improve your chances of the story getting published? We see similar themes recur year after year, from the importance of relevance to providing the right context. To be a good PR professional you must understand what reporters actually want to receive. How do they prefer to get their news from you and what do they deem trustworthy?



**Source Relevance - Which brand source do you consider the most useful?**



Which non-brand source do you consider the most trustworthy?



## So what should PR pros send journalists and how can they ultimately pitch better?

- **It's apparent reporters have a real desire for additional information.** Can you offer a phone interview or an outside expert to discuss your story in further detail? 28% of respondents deemed interviews the most trustworthy non-brand source and 19% said spokespeople were the most useful brand source. Use people in your organisation as experts in your field. (Hint: depending on the topic at hand, this isn't always going to be the CEO.)
- **Keep pitches short and simple.** As one respondent said, "Don't come off as spam." Reporters are incredibly busy and it's crucial you get to your point quickly and clearly.
- **Provide context for why a journalist should care about your pitch/news.** How does it fit into their world? Make your announcement/story relevant to them and reposition your strategy and pitch angles when necessary to ensure you're sharing the most relevant story possible for that outlet's audience.
- **Do your research.** Is the reporter and publication you're pitching really the best target for your brand's audience and story?

## Here's the advice journalists gave about how to improve pitching:

***"Inclusion of data or resources that a writer can dig into for context and a unique angle that presents a larger story idea. Do not just tell me about the client."***

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*

***"Don't pitch 'ideas' that are blatantly self-serving to your clients. Pitch a trend they fit or offer their expertise on a timely issue I might be writing about."***

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*

***"Directly tell me in one or two sentences why this is important for the public to know about - not just why it's important for the company or client."***

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*

***"Most importantly get to know me, my publication, my readers and propose solutions to help us create great content that drives views."***

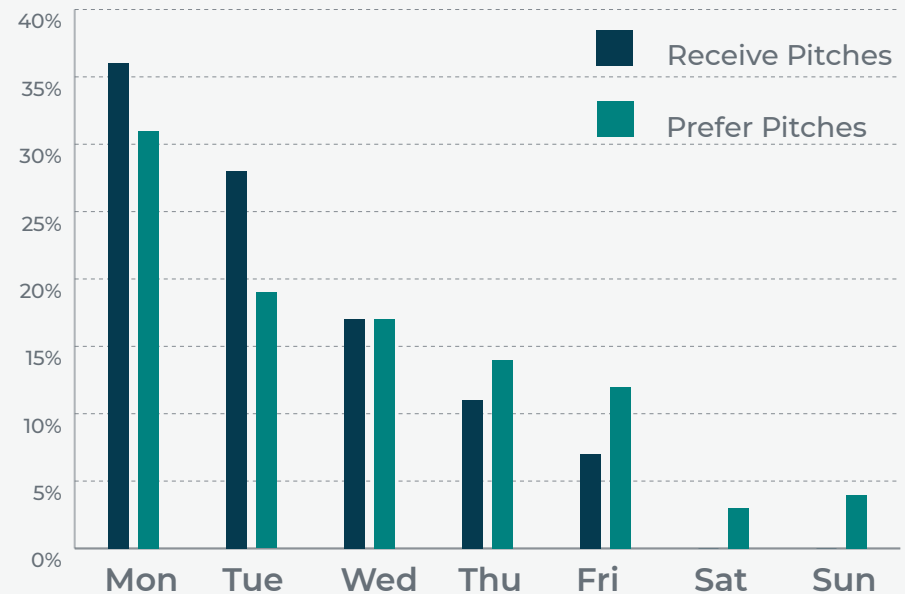
*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*



## TIMING IS EVERYTHING

**Knowing how to craft a better pitch is crucial, but it's also important to consider when you're pitching. Because as we all know, timing in life is everything.**

For the first time in Cision's State of the Media Report history, we asked reporters to share what days they receive pitches most and what days they actually prefer getting them. As many of us expected, Mondays proved to be the preferred day for reporters, and it was also when they got pitches most. However, many journalists reported they were still open to receiving pitches until Friday (a handful even on Saturday and Sunday). As the week progresses though, the number of pitches they receive declines. While their interest in receiving pitches did slightly decrease, the numbers weren't so significant that it should prevent publicists from reaching out.



*\* Respondents noted all days that applied.*

**What day of the week do you prefer to receive pitches vs days you do receive pitches?**

### PR TIP

Don't limit opportunities by only pitching on certain days of the workweek. With reporters receiving fewer pitches as the week progresses, the likelihood of your email being read may actually increase.

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTING

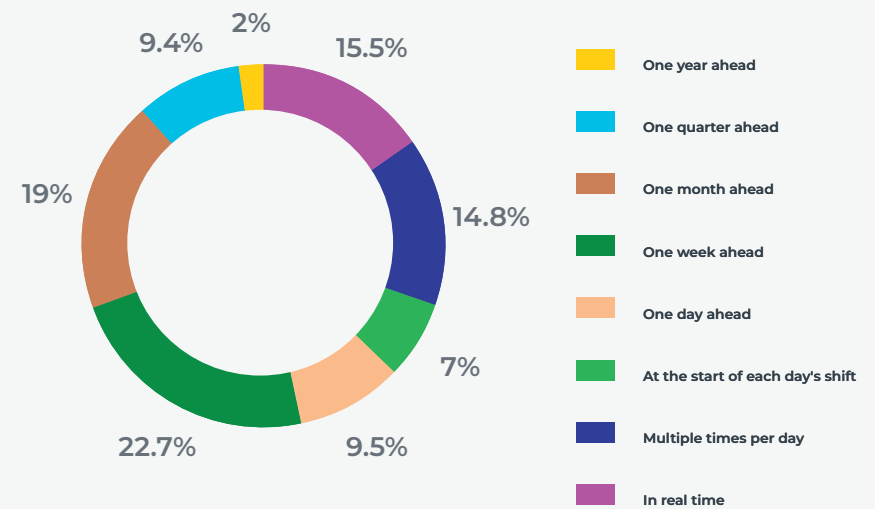
With journalists reporting a decrease in staffing and resources, they're busier than ever. PR pros have such a symbiotic relationship with reporters that it's important they have a sense of what a day in the life of a reporter looks like. How many pitches are they really getting? How often are they publishing stories and how far in advance are they planning for them? Ultimately this will help PR pros more strategically pitch media.

When it comes to the amount of pitches reporters get, it's no secret the numbers are high, especially in today's landscape. 51% of respondents said they get anywhere from 1 – 50 pitches a week, 25% reported getting 51 – 100 per week, 10% get 101-151 per week and 14% get over 151. This proves why PR professionals have to work even harder to stand out and make their case.



And sifting through pitches is just one part of the job. Most reporters are spending their time actually writing these stories after they've accepted pitches. The frequency of reporting does vary for each journalist, and this is something PR pros can get a sense of when they're doing their research before getting their pitch out. Is that reporter publishing meaty stories every few months or are you seeing them published in an outlet multiple times a week? 33% of reporters file 1-3 stories per week, 31% file over 10 stories a week and 24% file 4-6 per week.

Doing this type of due diligence can help give you insight into how much planning a reporter does before publishing a story. For instance, if you see their stories are published multiple times a week, it's fair to say you can likely reach out anywhere from a week to a day in advance.



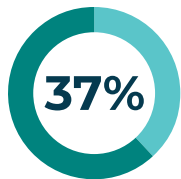
How far in advance do you plan for future stories?

Ultimately it is your job to support reporters in their roles. Crafting thoughtful, relevant pitches and keeping their schedules in mind- along with an appropriate timeline- is the best way to do just that.

## 6. AUDIENCE ANALYSIS



We are all very familiar with the age-old adage of “Know your audience,” but in this case we must emphasise its shift to “Know your journalist’s (or their outlet’s) audience”. There is no more important element in pitching than absolutely knowing that what you’re sending a journalist will resonate with their audience in some way. Otherwise you are wasting everyone’s time.



When we asked journalists for the number one thing PR pros could do to help, **37% responded “Understand my target audience, and what they find relevant.”**

### In journalists’ own words:

***“Understand yours and our target audience and make sure your story pitch works with our publication’s demographic, area of coverage, and subject matter. Random press releases and generic pitches not tailored to our publication are useless and annoying.”***

–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent

### And never forget the importance of personalisation:

***“Please address me by my name. I am so tired of getting email pitches that start with, ‘Hi there’ — start your email with ‘I noticed that in your story on XXX’...”***

–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent

Those questions about audience are deceptively easy to frame: **Who are they? What are they interested in? What do they need or want to know?**

The difficult part is actually analysing an audience – how, exactly, do you figure out who they are? What data do you need, and how do you get it?

If a journalist writes for a specific publication, chances are at least basic demographics about that audience are available. You can learn a lot from looking at a journalist’s followers on their social profiles, although that may differ from a publication’s audience. If they write for several different publications it’s likely that those audiences overlap, but some may be more niche. The best place to start is by consuming a lot of that journalist’s work and understanding the audience around it; who’s commenting, who’s sharing, what are they saying, who are they? Does that match the audience you’re trying to reach?

The point is that understanding an audience takes some work and depending on your resources you might be able to invest in tools that make that work easier for you.

If you take away nothing else from this section, take this: **Don’t blast your pitch to a massive email list. Customise your pitches and take the time to send individual emails.**



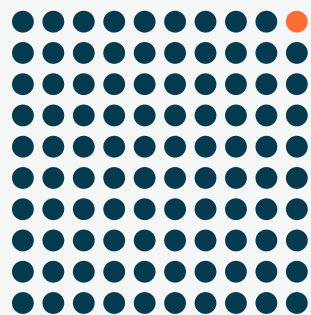


“  
**Understand my target  
audience, and what they  
find relevant.**  
”

## 7. SEND BETTER EMAILS, GET BETTER COVERAGE



PR pros, the quantitative and qualitative data points directly at the truth: Journalists want to receive better pitches. Aside from the press release, a big component of pitching better is sending better emails to your target journalists. The better the email you send, the more engaged and responsive the journalist will be, and the better the coverage you will get. It's a win-win for both parties, and it helps strengthen the journalist-PR bond.



only

1%

consider 75%-100% of the pitches they receive as relevant.

Journalists are tasked with reporting the truth, and the journalists who we surveyed certainly weren't shy about expressing honest critiques and advice for better emails from PR pros.

*"Put your point in the first five words. Skip all blandishments."*

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*

*"Don't bother me with unrelated topics – I am hitting the junk key faster to trim down my inbox."*

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*

*"Personalise your pitches to the organisations you're sending them to. A blanket email won't cover it."*

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*

*"We need to know the subject and location. Wasting prime real estate in the first line saying 'For Immediate Release.' Or, 'I hope this finds you well.' We need to see what it's about without having to open it."*

*–2020 State of the Media Survey Respondent*



## HELPFUL TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR EMAIL PITCH

- Keep your emails brief and **GET TO THE POINT**.
- The subject line of your email is crucial; **be succinct**.
- Provide all necessary materials for the story, including images and links. Assume that they're not going to reply back to your email, but that they are going to write a story based on all of the information provided from your email.
- **Include the press release** to provide additional context.
- Be strategic with the links that you are including.
- Provide timing. Is this news embargoed? Make sure it's clear if the news is not yet live.
- If you're able to offer an interview, make that clear.
- **Make sure the links work** outside of your organisation.

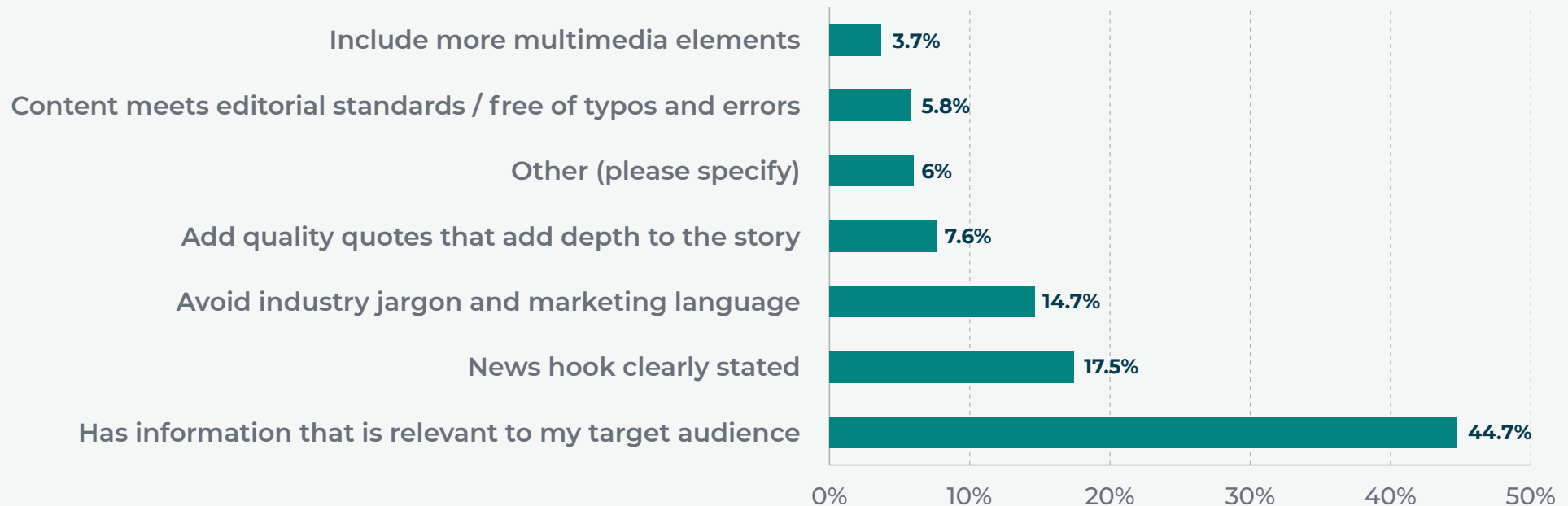


## 8. FINDING RELEVANCE IN YOUR RELEASE



The challenges that reporters and PR professionals face with traditional pitching are also proving to be increasingly similar when it comes to sharing press releases. The demand for press releases remains incredibly high (**72% of journalists said press releases and news announcements were one of the kinds of content they wanted to receive**). It's apparent, however, that there's a strong need for more clarity and appropriate targeting when PR pros are sending them.

The majority of journalists who responded to this question (45%) said press releases could be more effective if they had information relevant to their target audience. And following that, 17% of journalists said they'd be more effective if a news hook was clearly stated.





## **36% of journalists considered press releases the most useful brand source**

As journalists continue to get inundated with news, it's crucial PR professionals distribute press releases in ways that will resonate with media. That's what distribution services like PR Newswire are intended for, as they strive to maintain high standards for press releases, and therefore are a trusted source for media. If PR professionals choose to send press releases directly to reporters though, they must provide additional context when reaching out instead of just blasting out mass emails.

As one respondent said, *"Directly tell me in one or two sentences why this is important for the public to know about - not just why it's important for the company or client."*

Sending a press release without any further explanation will only decrease the likelihood of the story getting covered. Publicists must craft a clear, concise explanation of the news that's in the press release, that's free of industry jargon and marketing language (15% of reporters believed this would make releases more effective). Publicists should also share how the news provides value to that publication's audience and what the clear story angle is.

### **PR TIP**

Don't just send your press release to the masses. Provide reporters with relevant and thoughtful story ideas with your release.

*"Releases should state clear objectives so reporters actually understand how we can best leverage or support them."*







“

**Releases should state clear objectives so reporters actually understand how we can best leverage or support them.**

”

# UK SUMMARY

When asked, journalists in the United Kingdom distinctively mirrored the sentiment and thoughts shown in the global survey, with staffing and resources coming out as the number one challenge over the past year.



**of journalists in the UK believe that staffing and resources were their biggest challenge over the last 12 months**



**of journalists in the UK said that social networks and influencers bypassing traditional media was their biggest challenge**

A lack of resource and time combined with social media becoming more prominent as a 'fast' news distribution platform, fairly suggests that the media industry is juggling more than a few elements to remain relevant. The battle between creating content that is 100% accurate and being the first to break news continues to emphasise the demand for trustworthy statistics or an expert stance, while working with and understanding social media.

This highlights the gap in which PR professionals can support in an everchanging landscape, opening up an opportunity to focus on these elements and enhance the relationship between journalism and comms.

## QUESTION

**So, how can PR pros help journalists?**

## ANSWERS

**49% of UK journalists said, 'understand my target audience, and what is relevant to them.'** – a reoccurring theme throughout the 2020 State of the Media Survey. As well as crafting a personalised pitch with an outlet's audience in mind, there are some UK specific findings to consider in order to make a story stand out and adhere to the word of the moment: relevance.

**50% UK journalists said they used social media posts in their articles while 46% said they used video.** Supplying a journalist with these types of multimedia assets will support in the distribution across multiple channels.

**38% of journalists receive pitches on a Monday and 33% receive them on a Tuesday.** With journalists being inundated at the beginning of the week, it's important not to forget the other days too. Some even say they prefer pitches at the weekend, and this could be a sure way to get noticed.



# CONCLUSION

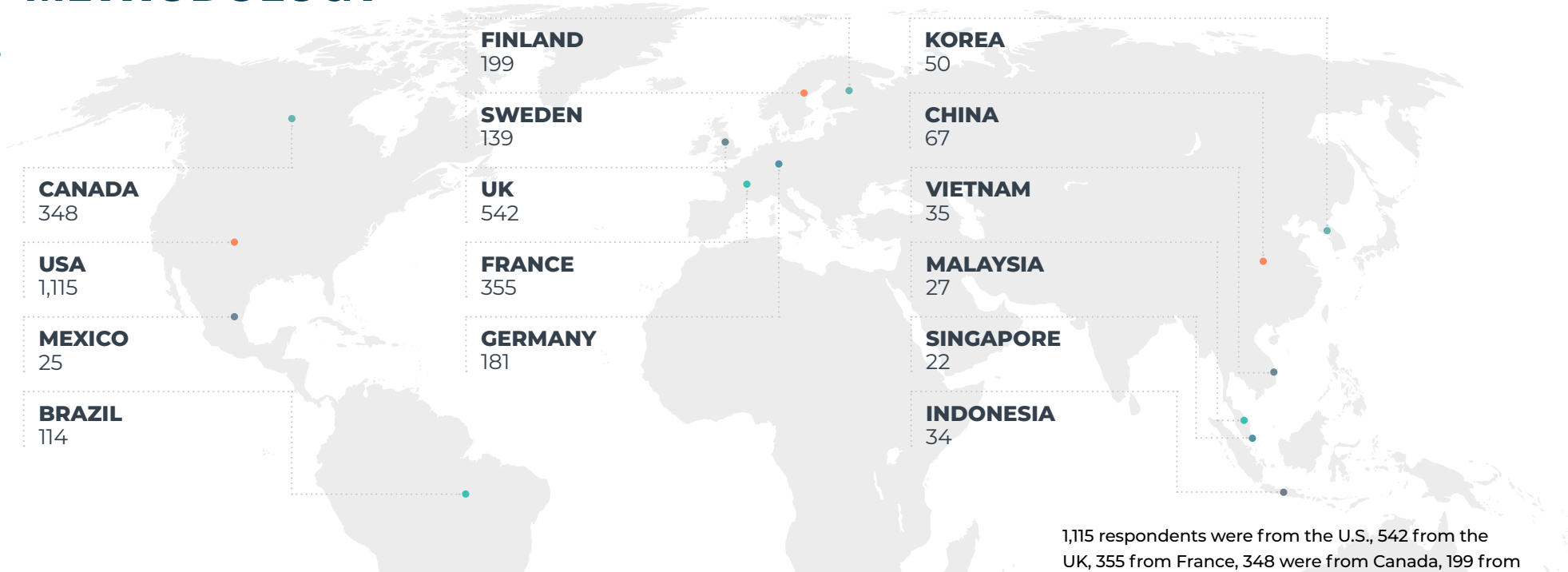
It's surprising to no one that journalism continues to be a tumultuous field, especially in the year of a global pandemic. In a difficult and uncertain time for everyone we saw that the trust the media has been working to regain with the public plays an important role in where people turn to stay up-to-date on the virus.

Meanwhile challenges like understaffed and under-resourced newsrooms were even more strained and tested when almost everyone's focus suddenly shifted to COVID-19. That didn't exempt journalists from dealing with the routine challenges presented by complicated and ever-changing social media algorithms or even acknowledging the role their own bias plays in their reporting.

2020 is a remarkable year in every way possible—and it's not over yet.



# METHODOLOGY



Cision conducted its 2020 State of the Media Survey between January 28 and February 20, 2020. Surveys were emailed to Cision Media Database members, which are vetted by the company's media research team to verify their positions as media professionals, influencers and bloggers. The survey was also available to media professionals in the PR Newswire for Journalists database.

This year's survey collected responses from across the media spectrum globally:



**45%**  
WORK IN PRINT



**19%**  
WORK IN BROADCAST (TV/RADIO/PODCAST)



**21%**  
WORK FOR A ONLINE-ONLY NEWS OUTLET



**12%**  
INDIVIDUAL BLOGGERS/FREELANCERS



**3%**  
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

1,115 respondents were from the U.S., 542 from the UK, 355 from France, 348 were from Canada, 199 from Finland, 181 from Germany, 139 from Sweden, 114 from Brazil, 67 from China, 50 from Korea, 35 from Vietnam, 34 from Indonesia, 27 from Malaysia, 25 from Mexico, and 22 from Singapore. The survey language was translated and localised for each country and market and then the results were tallied together to form this global report. Unless otherwise specified, results in this report reflect global totals.

Disclaimer: The graphical representation of the survey shows a variation of +/- 0.2%, with a 2% margin of error and 98% confidence level.



The COVID-19 special section was put together from a separate email campaign sent between March 25 and March 30, 2020 that returned 114 responses.

# ABOUT CISION

Cision is a leading global provider of earned media software and services to public relations and marketing communications professionals. Cision's software allows users to identify key influencers, craft and distribute strategic content, and measure meaningful impact.

Cision has over 4,000 employees with offices in 24 countries throughout the Americas, EMEA, and APAC. For more information about its award-winning products and services, including the Cision Communications Cloud®, visit [www.cision.co.uk](http://www.cision.co.uk) and follow Cision on Twitter [@CisionUK](https://twitter.com/CisionUK).

In an effort to support PR and communications professionals during these uncertain times, Cision has compiled these free [COVID-19 PR resources](#) to help guide you.

Cision's heart goes out to anyone who's been impacted by this global pandemic. For those who are sick, or know someone who is sick, we wish a speedy recovery.

