

Troubles for Traditional Media – Both Print and Television

New 24/7 Wall St./Harris Poll on American media finds over half of adults online believe traditional media as we know it will no longer exist in 10 years

New York, N.Y. – October 28, 2010 – Traditional media is in trouble. Newspapers are struggling with circulation and magazines like *Newsweek* are being sold for \$1. And, while two-thirds of online Americans (67%) still agree that they prefer to get their news in more traditional ways such as network television and/or reading newspapers or magazines in print, over half of Americans online (55%) say traditional media as we currently know it will no longer exist in ten years. Additionally, half (50%) say they tend to get almost all their news online.

These are some of the findings of a new **24/7 Wall St./Harris Poll** survey of 2,095 U.S. adults surveyed online between October 8 and 12, 2010 by **Harris Interactive**.

Focusing on specific media sources, when Americans who use the Internet are looking for news, almost half (46%) say they go to local television news all the time while about one-third say they go to local newspapers (35%) and network television news (31%). Two in five online adults, however, say they never go to national newspapers like the *New York Times* or weekly news magazines (42% each) when they are looking for news.

Additionally, in looking at the amount of time people are spending with print media, one-quarter of online adults say over the past year, the time they have spent reading newspapers in print and reading magazines in print has declined (25% and 23% respectively). Conversely, three in ten online adults (28%) say the time they have spent visiting online news and information sites has increased over the past year.

Age matters for media consumption

One reason traditional media should be worried is that media consumption and attitudes towards media are very different by age, among adults who are online. Only one-third (33%) of those 55 and older who use the Internet say they tend to get almost all their news online compared to almost two-thirds (65%) of those 18-34 years old. And, while four in five of those 55 and older (81%) prefer to get their news in more traditional ways, just over half of 18-34 year olds (57%) feel the same way.

Where people go for news also changes by age. Online adults 55 and older are much more likely than 18-34 year olds to go to local television news all the time or occasionally (88% vs. 63%) and to local newspapers (81% vs. 56%) when they are looking for news. However over half of 18-34 year olds go to websites that aggregate news (52%) compared to two in five adults 55 and older (39%).

Network TV versus Cable TV versus watching online

Besides traditional print media, network television also has to face many battles – both against people watching more television online and watching more cable television shows. Currently, two-thirds of Americans (67%) say they watch television shows primarily on television, while 5% watch them primarily or mostly on their computer. If this is examined by age, again, there is a large difference with over four in five adults 55 and older watching primarily on television (84%) compared to less than half of those 18-34 (48%).

When it comes to cable versus network television, there is an even split. Three in ten Americans (30%) say they watch shows primarily or mostly on network TV while three in ten say they watch shows primarily or mostly on cable (29%); one-third (36%) watch cable and network shows equally. While four in five U.S. adults (82%) believe that network television shows will always be a large part of Americans’ viewing habits, two-thirds (65%) believe people will watch more television on cable than on the networks in the near future. One reason may be quality. Over half of Americans (51%) say cable television shows are much higher quality than network television shows.

So What?

While they might not have abandoned print media or network television completely, Americans are welcoming and embracing other media in leaps and bounds. And, as one might expect, younger Americans are setting the pace as they are getting their news online and not through local newspapers. In fact, for local newspapers, readership is clearly being driven by those who are 45 and older. Traditional media may need to reinvent themselves to give younger Americans a reason to buy local papers or turn on their local news. Network television may not be in as much trouble as print, but they also have to watch their backs as cable television is clearly winning eyes and the counter-programming they did that was once mocked by the networks is now being copied.

**TABLE 1
OPINIONS ABOUT NEWS**

“Thinking about news and information in general, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.”

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Agree (NET)	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree (NET)	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
While printed news will continue to decline, there will always be a need for newspapers in print.	81	37	44	17	14	3	3
I prefer to get my news in more traditional ways such as network television and/or reading newspapers or magazines in print.	67	33	34	29	21	8	3
Traditional media as we currently know it will no longer exist in 10 years.	55	15	40	42	33	10	3
I tend to get almost all my news online.	50	22	28	47	27	20	3
The day of the printed newspaper is gone.	43	10	33	54	36	18	2

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 2
OPINIONS ABOUT NEWS

“Thinking about news and information in general, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.”

Summary of those saying “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree”

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Total	Age				Education		
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	H.S. or less	Some college	College grad +
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
While printed news will continue to decline, there will always be a need for newspapers in print.	81	76	76	85	87	85	76	80
I prefer to get my news in more traditional ways such as network television and/or reading newspapers or magazines in print.	67	57	65	69	81	71	66	64
Traditional media as we currently know it will no longer exist in 10 years.	55	51	55	56	58	56	53	55
I tend to get almost all my news online.	50	65	54	41	33	43	54	53
The day of the printed newspaper is gone.	43	47	44	42	39	39	46	46

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 3
TV WATCHING ON TELEVISION VS. COMPUTERS

“Thinking about how you currently watch television shows, which of the following best describes you?”

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Total	Age				Education		
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	H.S. or less	Some college	College grad +
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Watch TV shows (NET)	96	94	97	96	96	96	95	96
Watch TV shows primarily/mostly on TV (NET)	85	72	90	90	96	90	82	83
I watch television shows primarily on television.	67	48	69	74	84	75	65	59
I watch television shows mostly on television, but sometimes on my computer.	18	24	20	16	11	15	17	24
I watch television shows equally on television and my computer.	5	10	5	4	*	4	8	5
Watch TV shows primarily/mostly on computer (NET)	5	12	3	3	1	3	6	8
I watch television shows mostly on my computer.	2	5	1	1	-	1	3	3
I watch television shows primarily on my computer.	3	7	2	2	1	1	3	5
I don't watch television shows.	4	6	3	4	4	4	5	4

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 4
NEWS SOURCES**

“Thinking now of when you are looking for news, how often do you go to each of these news sources?”

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Ever (NET)	All the time/ occasionally (NET)	All the time	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Not applicable
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Local television news	91	76	46	30	15	8	2
Cable TV news stations like CNN, MSNBC or FOX	82	60	26	34	22	16	3
Local newspapers	89	69	35	34	20	10	2
Network television news	84	66	31	35	19	13	2
Websites that aggregate different news sources	71	49	16	33	22	26	3
Websites for cable TV news stations	66	36	9	27	30	31	3
Websites for national newspapers	64	36	9	27	28	33	3
National newspapers like the NY Times or USA Today	55	25	6	18	31	42	3
Weekly news magazines, such as Newsweek or Time	55	25	6	19	30	42	3

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 5
NEWS SOURCES**

“Thinking now of when you are looking for news, how often do you go to each of these news sources?”

Summary of those who say “all the time” or “occasionally”

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Total	Age				Education		
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	H.S. or less	Some college	College grad +
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Local television news	76	63	74	85	88	82	73	72
Local newspapers	69	56	69	76	81	71	64	71
Network television news	66	52	61	72	81	72	62	61
Cable TV news stations like CNN, MSNBC or FOX	60	51	62	62	67	60	60	60
Websites that aggregate different news sources	49	52	59	45	39	38	49	61
Websites for cable TV news stations	36	36	40	41	29	31	37	41
Websites for national newspapers	36	40	38	36	30	29	35	45
National newspapers like the NY Times or USA Today	25	28	24	21	24	18	23	36
Weekly news magazines, such as Newsweek or Time	25	27	23	23	25	20	21	34

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 6
TIME SPENT WITH VARIOUS NEWS SOURCES

“Over the past year, how, if at all, has the amount of time you spend doing each of the following things changed?”

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Increased (NET)	Increased significantly	Increased somewhat	Has not changed	Decreased (NET)	Decreased somewhat	Decreased significantly	Not applicable
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Visiting online news and information sites	28	6	23	56	8	5	2	8
Listening to the radio	19	4	15	58	19	13	6	4
Reading newspapers online	17	4	14	53	12	8	4	17
Watching cable TV news	17	4	13	58	15	11	4	10
Watching TV network news	14	3	11	62	18	13	6	5
Reading magazines in print	13	3	10	58	23	16	7	6
Reading newspapers in print	11	3	8	60	25	15	9	5

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 7
TIME SPENT WITH VARIOUS NEWS SOURCES

“Over the past year, how, if at all, has the amount of time you spend doing each of the following things changed?”

Summary of those saying “increased significantly” or “increased somewhat” over the past year

Base: All U.S. adults online

	Total	Age				Education		
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+	H.S. or less	Some college	College grad +
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Visiting online news and information sites	28	29	34	29	22	25	28	32
Listening to the radio	19	24	21	15	13	18	20	20
Reading newspapers online	17	18	19	17	15	13	18	22
Watching cable TV news	17	13	17	17	22	15	18	19
Watching TV network news	14	12	14	12	17	14	14	14
Reading magazines in print	13	18	11	9	10	11	13	15
Reading newspapers in print	11	13	9	10	11	11	11	10

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 8
TELEVISION SHOWS**

“Thinking now of the television shows you watch for entertainment, which statement best describes you?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	Total	Income				Gender	
		Less than \$35K	\$35K-\$49.9K	\$50K-\$74.9K	\$75K+	Male	Female
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Watch shows on network TV (NET)	30	37	25	33	26	26	33
I primarily watch shows on network television	18	27	16	20	13	16	20
I mostly watch shows on network television, sometimes on cable.	12	10	8	12	13	11	13
I watch cable and network shows equally.	36	29	36	36	39	36	36
Watch shows on cable TV (NET)	29	24	32	26	32	33	25
I mostly watch shows on cable, sometimes on network television.	16	12	17	14	19	20	13
I primarily watch shows on cable.	12	12	15	11	14	13	11
Not sure	5	9	7	6	2	4	6

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 9
NETWORK VS. CABLE**

“Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.”

Base: All U.S. adults

	Agree (NET)	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree (NET)	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Network television shows will always be a large part of Americans’ viewing habits.	82	32	50	15	13	2	3
People will watch more television on cable than on the networks in the near future.	65	20	46	29	26	3	6
Cable television shows are much higher quality than network television shows.	51	13	38	42	35	7	7
It doesn’t matter if it’s cable or the networks, television shows today are just horrible.	48	13	35	48	30	18	5

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 10
NETWORK VS. CABLE

“Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.”
Summary of those saying “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree”

Base: All U.S. adults

	Total	Age			
		18-34	35-44	45-54	55+
	%	%	%	%	%
Network television shows will always be a large part of Americans’ viewing habits.	81	81	85	80	80
People will watch more television on cable than on the networks in the near future.	67	63	66	69	72
Cable television shows are much higher quality than network television shows.	53	57	57	46	51
It doesn’t matter if it’s cable or the networks, television shows today are just horrible.	48	42	47	46	56

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Methodology

This **24/7 Wall St./Harris Poll** was conducted online within the United States between October 8 and 12, 2010 among 2,095 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Where appropriate, this data were also weighted to reflect the composition of the adult online population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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