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2017 GLOBAL SOCIAL JOURNALISM STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The sixth annual Social Journalism Study is the latest installment in a series of national and international reports charting the changes in how journalists and media professionals use social media in their work and when communicating with PR and communications professionals.

This report focuses on findings from U.S. journalists and media professionals.

KEY FINDINGS:

1. Social networks are the most used platforms, and 42 percent of respondents use five or more types of social media regularly.
2. U.S. journalists fit into six distinct types of social media users. These 'Social Archetypes' are Architects, Promoters, Hunters, Messengers, Observers and Skeptics. The largest group (Observers, 39 percent) is relatively less active than other groups and is rather skeptical about social platforms.
3. Time spent on social media remains relatively stable. But the extent to which journalists use the platforms is influenced by their professional and demographic characteristics.
4. Publishing, distributing and promoting content are key drivers of social media use and activity.
5. Audience interaction is an important activity for many journalists on social media, with 19 percent of respondents engaging with their audience via social media every hour and a further 47 percent daily.
6. Experts and industry contacts remain key sources of stories for U.S. journalists.
7. Nearly half (48 percent) of respondents feel they could not carry out their work without social media.
8. Some 51 percent of respondents feel that fake news is a serious problem in their area of journalism.
9. Each of the six social groups the social media user types identified by the study - has unique characteristics in relation to social media use.
10. U.S. journalists are ambivalent about their relationship with PR professionals and have concerns over the quality of content and reliability of material they receive.

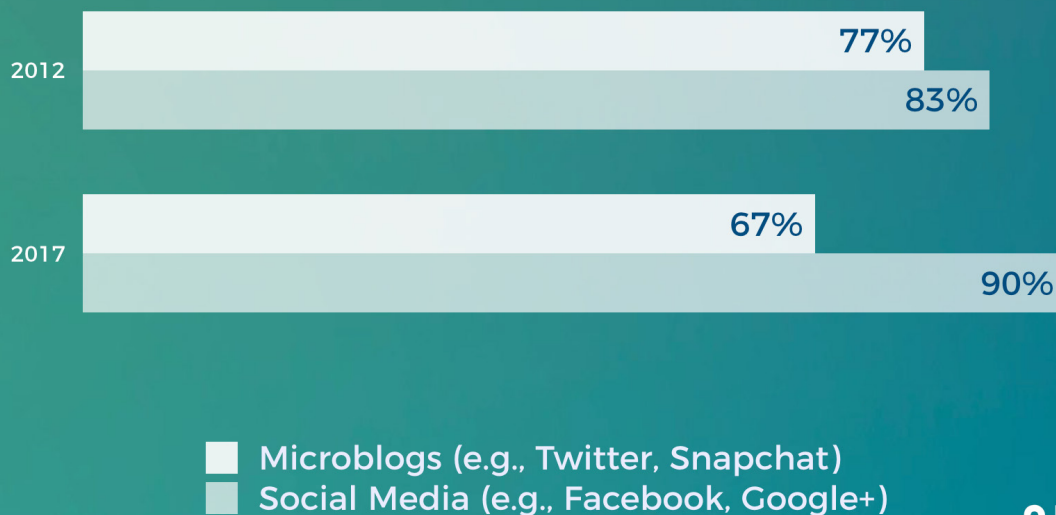
Nearly half of journalists can't do their work without social media, but 51% feel fake news is a serious problem. 

FINDING #1

Social networks are the most used platforms, and 42 percent of respondents use five or more types of social media regularly.

Social networks (e.g., Facebook and Google+) and microblogs (e.g., Twitter, Snapchat) have been the two most popular types of platforms ever since the first Social Journalism Study in the U.S. in 2012. But over the last five years, while the popularity of social networks has increased, the use of microblogs has declined somewhat (**Figure 1**). In 2012, 83 percent of respondents said they were using social networks for work at least once a week compared to 90 percent in 2017. While 77 percent of participants said that they used microblogs regularly for their work in 2012, that figure dropped to 67 percent in 2017.

Figure 1: Use of the two most popular social media platforms in 2012 and 2017 (percent of respondents who use it at least weekly)



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But a key feature of journalists' use of social media is that they regularly work with several platforms. This year 42 percent of respondents reported that they use more than five types of social media at least once a week for work. 80 percent used more than three kinds of platforms and only 5 percent worked with only one type of social media.

Table 1 illustrates the diversity of social media types journalists use in their work. While social networks and microblogs are the most widely used platforms, half of the respondents also use blogs (50 percent), and just under half use professional networks (45 percent) and image sharing services (44 percent) regularly. Messaging services, such as WhatsApp and VChat, and live video services are regularly used by smaller, and likely more avid user section of journalists with 14 percent of respondents reporting using the former at least weekly and 27 percent the latter.

**Table 1 – Use of social media types for work
(percentage of respondents who use it at least weekly)**

Social Networks (e.g., Facebook, Google+)	90 percent
Microblogs (e.g., Twitter, Snapchat)	67 percent
Blogs	50 percent
Professional Networks (e.g., LinkedIn)	45 percent
Image Sharing (e.g., Instagram, Pinterest)	44 percent
Video Sharing (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo)	41 percent
Content Communities (e.g., Wikipedia)	33 percent
Live Video	27 percent
Messaging (e.g., WhatsApp, VChat)	14 percent

FINDING #2

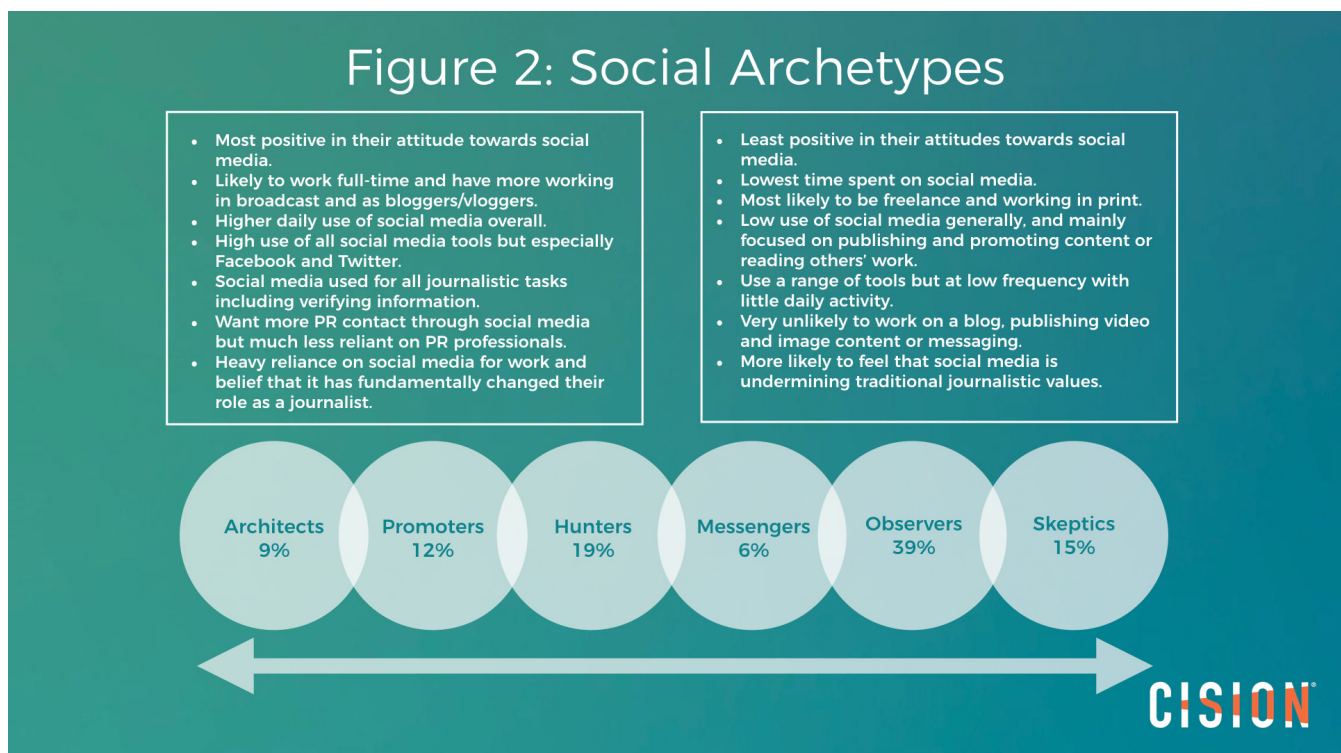
U.S. journalists fit into six distinct types of social media users. These ‘Social Archetypes’ are Architects, Promoters, Hunters, Messengers, Observers and Skeptics. The largest group (Observers, 39 percent) is relatively less active than other groups and is rather skeptical about social platforms. [🐦](#)

This year’s study – like other countries we surveyed – shows that U.S. journalists fit in to six groups of social media user types, each of which demonstrates specific patterns of social media use, views and attitudes.

These ‘Social Archetypes’ are: Architects, Promoters, Hunters, Messengers (an entirely new group this year), Observers and Skeptics. The Social Archetypes can be seen on a scale (**Figure 2**) with the most active social media users, the Architects on

the left, and the least active social media users, the Skeptics on the right.

What is noticeable is that more than half (54 percent) of all respondents are accounted for by Observers and Skeptics who have lower use and more negative attitudes. However, this scale is relative to the entire use of social media across the profession and therefore does not mean that journalists are turning their back on social media. Rather, more are being strategic in their use of social media, perhaps using it as just part of the toolkit of journalism work. [🐦](#)



FINDING #3

Time spent on social media remains relatively stable. But the extent to which journalists use the platforms is influenced by their professional and demographic characteristics.

Most respondents (73 percent) in our survey reported using social media for their work daily with 31 percent saying that they use the tools for three hours or more a day (**Table 2**). There have been some slight changes in relation to the extent of social media use since we started our survey in the U.S., including a four percent drop in the percentage of those who did not use the platforms for work between 2013 and 2017.


However, in general there have not been significant shifts, which is interesting given the growth in social media brands and changes in the media industries during the period. Overall, the figures indicate that social media is now embedded in the work of news and media organizations and the platforms have become part of the technological infrastructure of journalists. 

Table 2 - Time spent using social media for work (percentage of respondents)

	2013	2014	2015	2017
None	10 percent	6 percent	5 percent	6 percent
Up to 2 hours per day	53 percent	62 percent	65 percent	63 percent
3-4 hours per day	19 percent	17 percent	17 percent	16 percent
5-8 hours per day	14 percent	13 percent	11 percent	11 percent
More than 8 hours a day	4 percent	2 percent	3 percent	4 percent

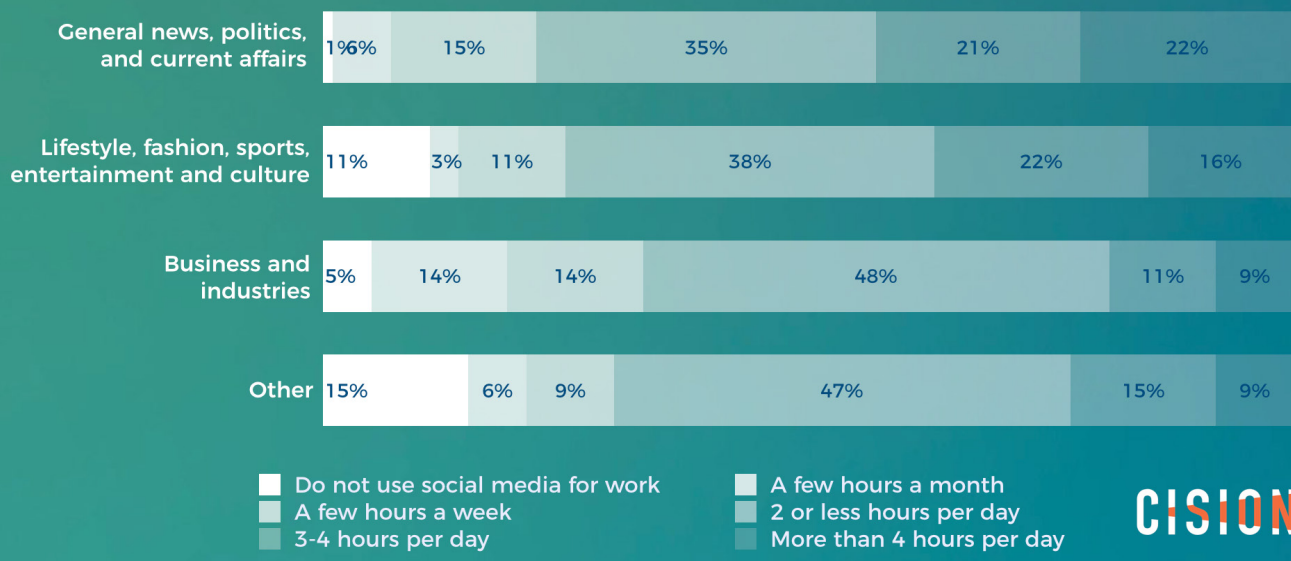
The extent to which journalists use social media is influenced by their professional and demographic background. But the factors that influence journalistic practices the most in this context, however, are shifting.

The media sector used to be a key variable that impacted upon how a journalist used social media (see previous years' reports in the Social Journalism study) in their professional work. But the traditional categorization of media sectors (i.e. newspaper, magazine, broadcasting, online journalism) is losing its relevance in the digital era as the boundaries between sectors are fading and journalists increasingly produce multimedia content for different platforms. The survey findings suggest that, in particular, professional and demographic characteristics are influential factors in relation to how journalists use social media.

Our study categorized journalists into four main groups in relation to their area of industry: 1. General news, politics and current affairs; 2. Business and industry specialist; 3. Lifestyle, culture, fashion, sports and entertainment; and 4. Other. News, politics and current affairs journalists emerged as the ones spending the longest time on social media with 43 percent staying on the platforms for three hours or longer a day [🐦 \(Figure 3\)](#).

Comparatively, while the majority (68 percent) of business and industry specialist respondents used the platforms daily, only 20 percent of them stayed longer than three or more hours a day. These figures and other differences revealed in Figure 3 suggest that area of industry is an important factor influencing how journalists use social media, possibly because of the variations in practices and content each area the industry requires.

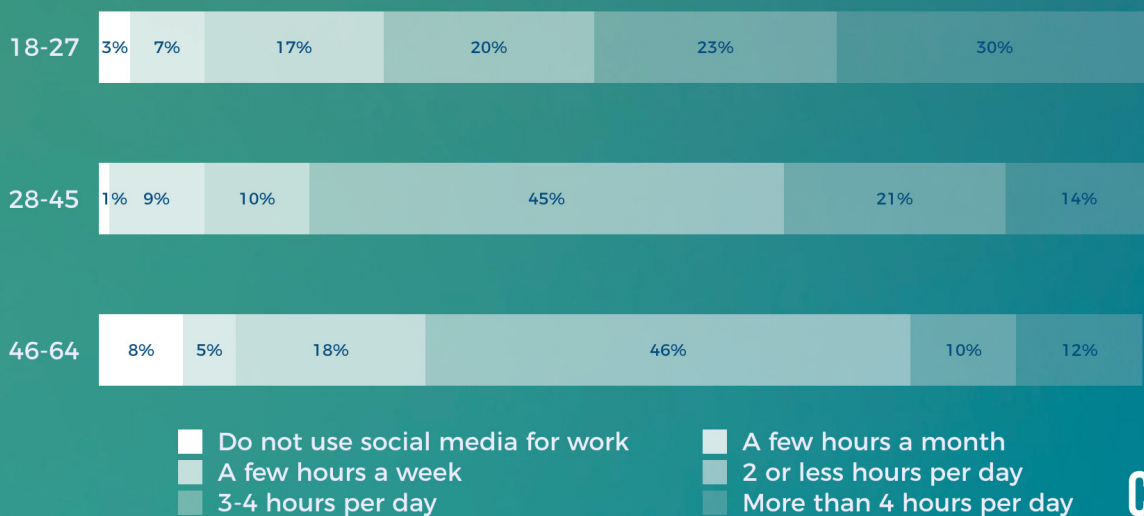
Figure 3: Use of the two most popular social media platforms in 2014 and 2017 (percent of respondents, use it at least weekly)



Age of respondent also emerged as an influential factor on the extent of social media use (**Figure 4**). The impact here was particularly noticeable in relation to how many hours journalists spent a day on the platforms. Younger respondents (those between the age of 18 and 27) were more likely to use social media for three or more hours a day than their

older counterparts (53 percent as opposed to 22 percent for those aged between 46 and 64), but differences in relation to non-use and non-daily use were less significant. This may be because younger journalists are more accustomed to a continuous flow of social media use given they had grown up in the internet age.

Figure 4: Use of the two most popular social media platforms in 2014 and 2017 (percent of respondents use it at least weekly)

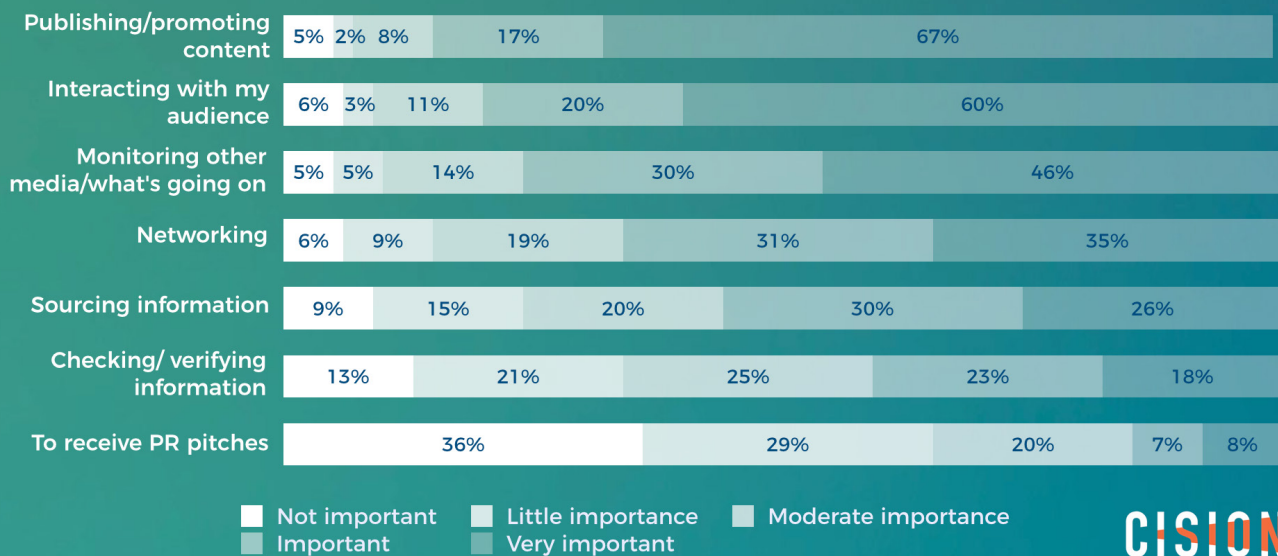


FINDING #4

Publishing, distributing and promoting content are key drivers of social media use and activity.

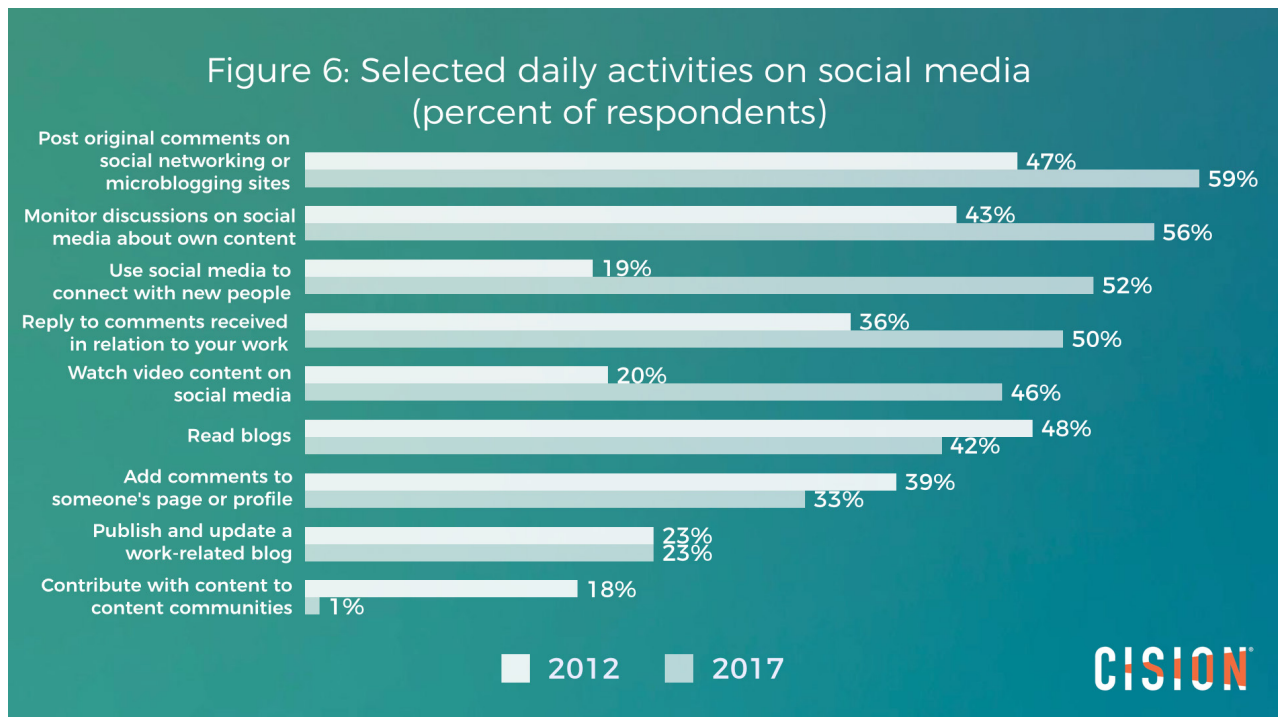
Although journalists use social media for a variety of reasons, the three key areas of importance are publishing/promoting content, interacting with the audience and monitoring other media/what's going on. [🐦](#) At closer look (**Figure 5**) the perceived importance of social media for publishing and promoting journalists' work becomes apparent. 67 percent of respondents thought that social media was very important for this task, while 60 percent thought the same way in relation to interacting with the audience and 46 percent in relation to monitoring purposes. So, the publishing and promotional aspects are currently key reasons for professional engagement with social media for journalists.

Figure 5: Perceptions of how important social media is in carrying out key professional tasks (percent of respondents)



When comparing this year's data to that of previous years it is notable that popularity of platforms and activities on them do change, and in this sense, social media use is constantly evolving. However, some particular patterns of change can be observed. Social networking and microblogging sites are used more regularly now to post comments compared to 2012 (59 percent and 47 percent

of respondents respectively reported posting daily) (**Figure 6**). Social media is also used more to monitor discussions about journalists' own content, connect with new contacts as well as watch video content (**Figure 6**). Blogs, however, are read less by journalists now compared to five years ago, and they also contribute less to content communities and crowdsourcing sites.



FINDING #5

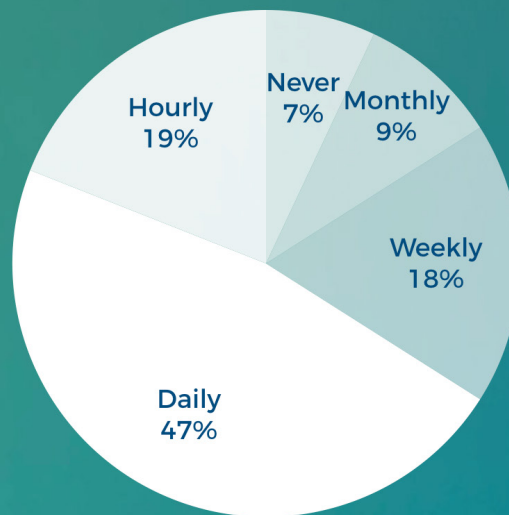
Audience interaction is an important activity for many journalists on social media, with 19 percent of respondents engaging with their audience via social media every hour and a further 47 percent daily.

One of the key reasons why journalists use social media is to interact with their audience. In fact, social media are perceived to have helped journalists with their relationships with the audience, and this view has been constant since the beginning of our Social Journalism study. In 2012, 74 percent of the respondents agreed that they were more engaged with their audience because of social media, while this figure was 76 percent in 2013, 78 percent in 2016 and 80 percent this year. 🐦 Many journalists frequently interact with their audience with 66 percent of respondents reporting they do it daily, 19 percent of those hourly (**Figure 7**).

Only seven percent of respondents said that they never interact with their audience on social media.

Many journalists felt completely or, to a large extent, reliant on social media for engagement

Figure 7: Frequency of interaction with their audience (percent of respondents)



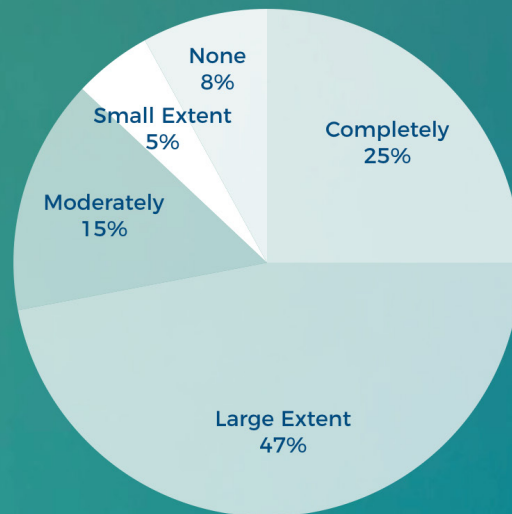
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with their audience. One in four, 25 percent of respondents felt that they relied completely on social media in this regard, 47 percent said they were reliant, to a large extent, and only three percent thought that they do not need social media for this purpose at all (**Figure 8**).

The nature of audience engagement, however, does not seem to focus on information gathering and sourcing.

Only 36 percent of respondents reported that they use user generated content regularly in their work, that figure stood at 35 percent last year indicating that journalistic practices are not changing in this regard.

Figure 8: Extent to which respondents feel reliant on social media for engagement with the audience (percent of respondents)



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The extent to which journalists interact with their audience is influenced though by their professional characteristics. **Figure 9** illustrates how the levels of audience interaction vary per area of journalistic industry specialty. News, politics and current affairs journalists are more likely to interact with their audience than their colleagues with other industry specialties. 75

percent of the news, politics, and current events group, while 61 percent of business and industry specialists reported such daily or hourly activity. This may be because the latter group produces content for different types of audiences who have different expectations and social media habits.

Figure 9: Frequency of interacting with the audience by area of industry specialty (percent of respondent by area of industry specialty)

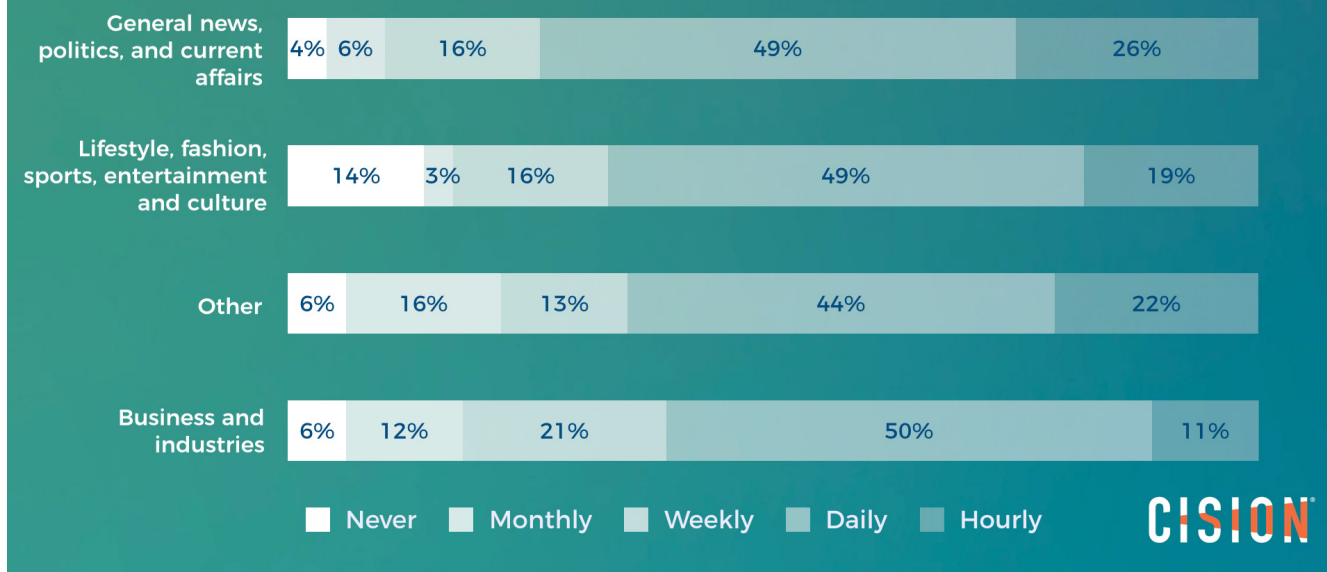
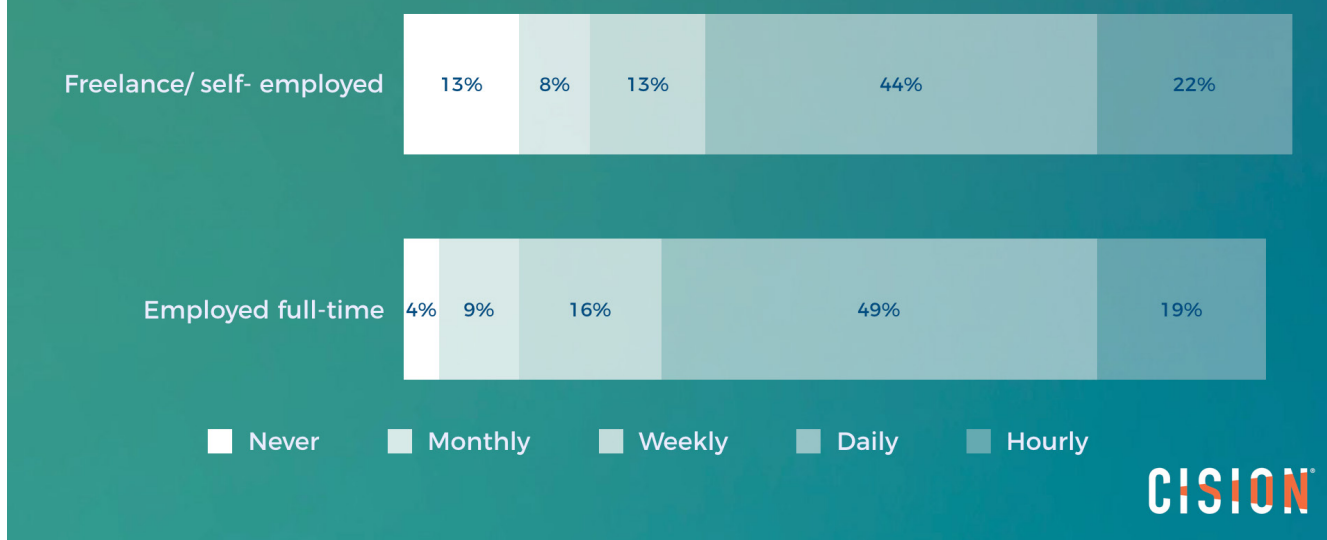


Figure 10 shows how employment type impacts upon how journalists interact with their audience. Full-time employed respondents were more likely to interact with their audience daily or hourly (72 percent) compared to freelance journalists (66 percent). Freelancers were more likely never to use social media for this purpose (13 percent compared to four percent for full-time respondents). This might be because some freelance roles specifically focus on audience interaction, while others do not include it at all.

Figure 10: Frequency of interacting with the audience by employment (percent of respondent by employment group)



FINDING #6

Experts and industry contacts remain key sources of stories for U.S. journalists.

When journalists were asked to choose their two most important sources of information “experts” and “industry and professional contacts” were the two favorites (**Table 3**). PR sources were the third most preferred type of source. The public has not become a key source of information with only 14 percent of respondents saying it was one of their two key sources of information, suggesting U.S. journalists are cautious about using the public for gathering stories.

Table 3 - Preferred sources of information for journalists (percent of respondents; two most preferred choice)

Source	2016	2017
Experts	47	52
Industry and professional contacts	51	51
PR sources/press releases/newswires	42	36
Other news outlets	25	16
General public	15	14

Unsurprisingly more than half (57 percent) stated that social media was the first choice of communication with the public – it affords journalists a unique method of communication with their audience. But it is equally evident that social media plays a minor role in communicating with other stakeholder groups (**Table 4**), and here journalists resort to other established forms of communication such as email, telephone or face to face communication.

**Table 4 - Preferred sources on social media (percent of respondents;
two most preferred choice for communicating with on social media)**

Source type	(Percent)
General public	57
Industry and professional contacts	31
PR sources/press releases/newswires	27
Other news outlets	24
Experts	16

FINDING #7

Nearly half (48 percent) of respondents feel they could not carry out their work without social media.

Journalists' views about the impact of social media on their work have been mixed in our previous surveys, and this trend continues this year. Almost half (48 percent) of respondents felt they could not carry out their work without social media, which is a higher figure than the 37 percent who said the same in 2012 (**Table 5**).

This indicates that social media is now more widely embedded in journalistic practices than five years ago.

Interestingly, however, the proportion of those who thought that social media improved the productivity of their work has declined somewhat over the period (from 44 percent in 2012 to 37 percent in 2017).


This suggests that social media does not necessarily make journalists' work easier and could add to their workload rather than ease it. The survey also found that a relatively high portion of journalists feel that their work has transformed because of social media. This year 71 percent of respondents agreed that social media has fundamentally changed their role as a journalist, while last year the figure was 65 percent.  An important aspect of the change has been the impact on journalists' relationship with their audience, which has been perceived significant in every survey we conducted. In 2017, 80 percent of respondents thought that they were more engaged with their audience because of social media, which figure stood at roughly similar level in previous years (**Table 5**).

Table 5 – Selected statements of views about impact of social media (percent of respondents)

	2012	2013	2014	2016	2017
I would not be able to carry my work out without social media	37 percent	41 percent	53 percent	48 percent	48 percent
Social media has improved the productivity of my work	44 percent	54 percent	57 percent	41 percent	37 percent
Because of social media I am more engaged with my audience	74 percent	76 percent	N/A	78 percent	80 percent

This year we included some questions on automation and analytics as they are increasingly

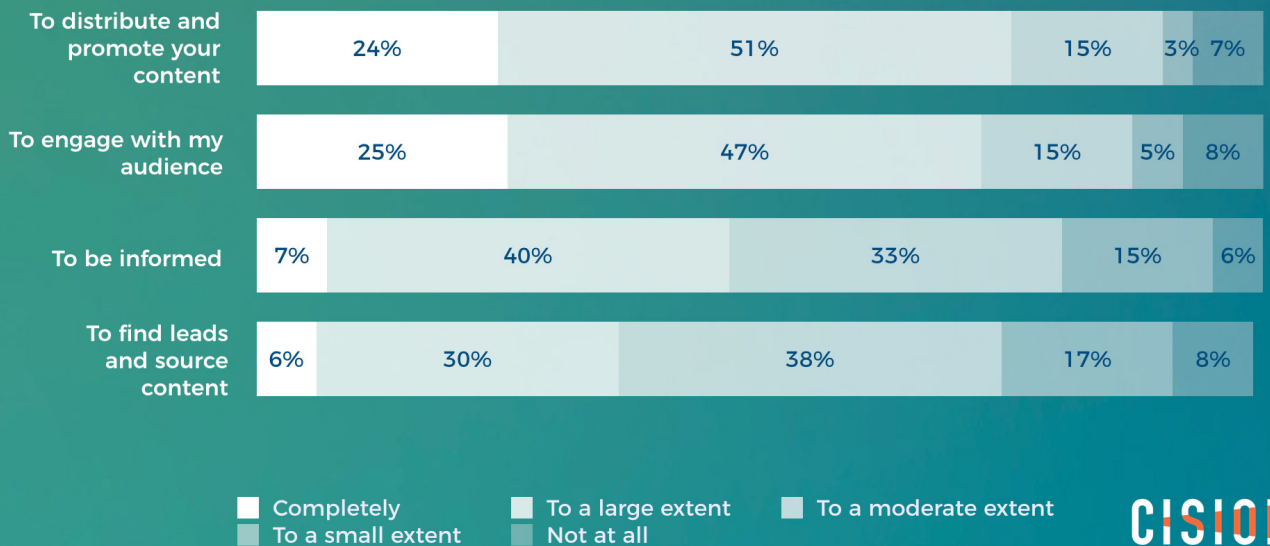
significant in relation to journalistic practices on social media. The results showed that many journalists regularly apply analytics in their work. 39 percent reported that they use analytics daily to understand the effectiveness of their content, an additional 22 percent do that weekly and a further 19 percent monthly. 🐦 Respondents were unsure though whether automation and algorithms make their work easier and more interesting with only 23 percent agreeing with that statement.

In general, U.S. journalists feel reliant on social media for many key professional

tasks (**Figure 11**). 24 percent of respondents felt completely and 51 percent felt to a large extent reliant on social media to distribute and promote their content. Only 7 percent said they do not rely on social media for this task at all. 72 percent of respondents felt to be completely or to a large extent reliant on the platforms to engage with their audience. Most respondents also felt to some extent reliant on social media to be informed as well as to find leads and source content. In general, these figures suggest that journalists feel that social media are indispensable for their work.

How journalists perceive social media, however, is influenced by how much they

Figure 11: Extent to which respondents feel reliant on social media (percent of respondents)



use the platforms. **Figure 12** shows how respondents' perceptions vary per frequency of use. In general, those who use social media more see the impact of social media more significant and have more positive attitudes towards the platforms. However, there is not always a direct correlation, as Figure 12 illustrates. There is a direct link between frequency of use and whether respondents felt they could not carry their work out without social media (22 percent of those who used the platforms less than daily thought that while the figure for those using social media for more than four hours a day was 80 percent). However, those who use the platforms the

most do not always have the most positive perceptions. For example, 94 percent of those who used social media 2-4 hours a day agreed that the platforms fundamentally changed their role as a journalist, while 80 percent of the most frequent users (more than 4 hours a day) thought that same. A similar trend emerged in relation the views about whether social media improved journalists' productivity. This suggests that constant use of social media may counteract some positive impact of the platforms on journalists' work.

Figure 12: Views about social media by time spent using the platforms (percent of respondents by frequency categories, selected statements)

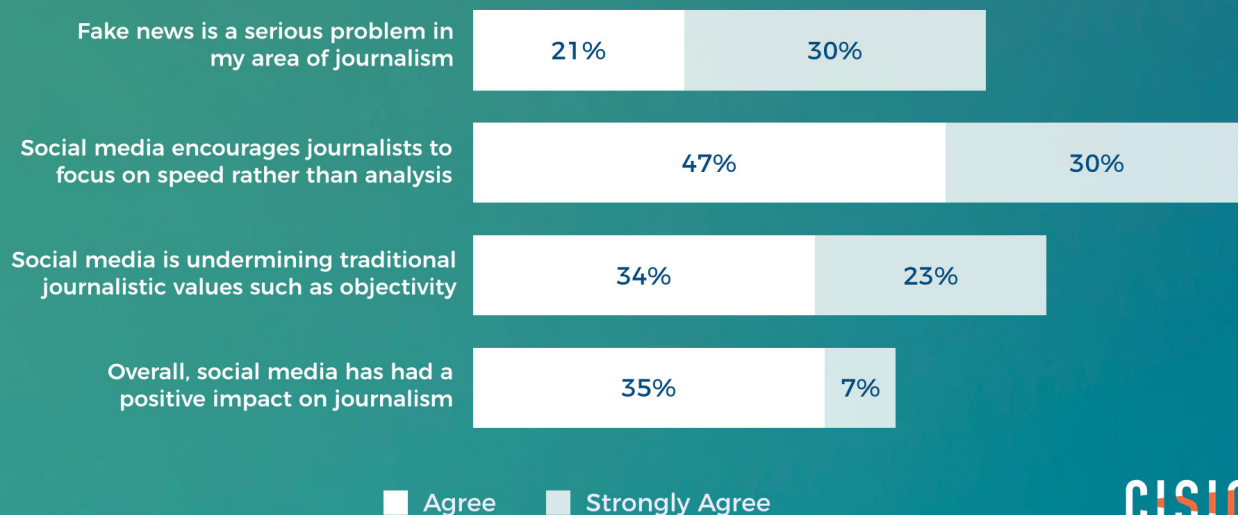


FINDING #8

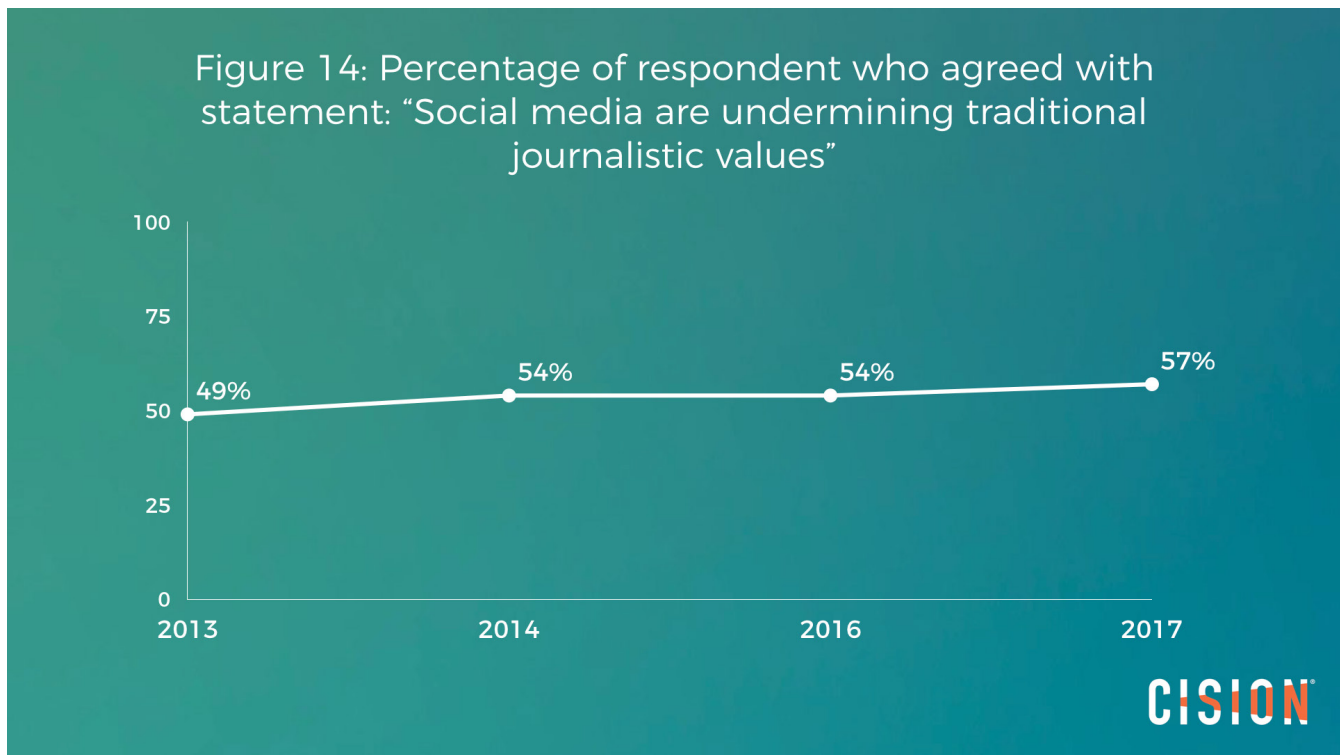
Some 51 percent of respondents feel that fake news is a serious problem in their area of journalism. [🐦](#)

Journalists' views about the impact of social media on their profession have been mixed, similarly to their views about the impact on their work and daily practices. Less than half of the respondents agreed that overall social media has had a positive impact on journalism (42 percent agreed, 26 percent disagreed and a relatively high 31 percent was undecided). There were particular areas of the impacts of social media on their profession journalists seemed to be concerned about (**Figure 13**). One of these was fake news. 30 percent of respondents strongly agreed, and an additional 21 percent agreed that fake news was a serious problem in their area of journalism and only 10 percent strongly disagreed. Another area of concern was the impact of social media on traditional journalistic values. 57 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that social media was undermining traditional values such as objectivity. The majority of respondents also thought (77 percent agreed or strongly agreed) that social media was encouraging journalists to focus on speed rather than analysis. These figures suggest that for journalists, social media is having significant impact on their profession altering traditional values and practices.

Figure 13: Views about the impact of social media on journalism
(percent of respondents, selected statements)



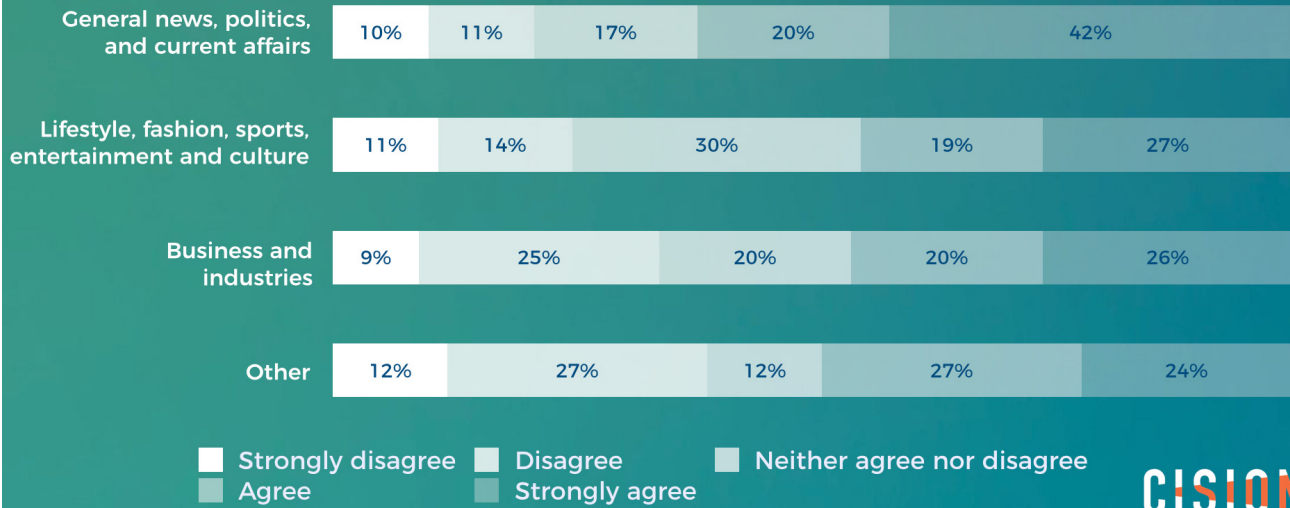
Comparing the data to previous years' results shows that U.S. journalists are becoming more concerned regarding the impact of social media on traditional journalistic values (**Figure 14**). While in 2012, 42 percent of respondents agreed that social media undermined traditional journalistic values, the figure increased to 57 percent by 2017.



However, views about the impact of social media are influenced by journalists' professional setting and demographic profile. Journalist's area of industry emerged as an influencing factor. **Figure 15** illustrates how respondents' replies in relation to the fake news issue varied depending on their area of industry. It is notable that news, politics and current affairs journalists were most

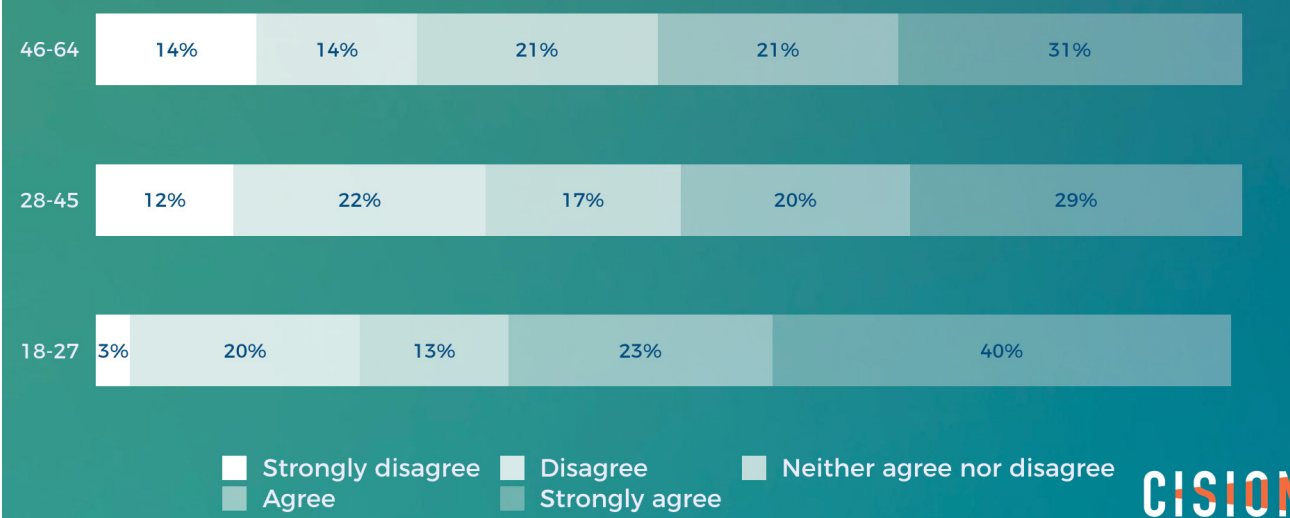
concerned about fake news being a serious problem (62 percent thinking that), while respondents with business and industries specialties were less worried (46 percent). This suggests that social media are used somewhat differently in the various areas of industry creating different issues and problems.

Figure 15: Views about statements 'Fake news is a serious problem in my area of journalism' by industry (percent of respondents by areas of industry)



Age also influences views about the impact of social media. Interestingly, younger respondents were more concerned about fake news compared to their older colleagues (**Figure 16**). 63 percent of those in the 18-27 age group agreed that fake news was a serious problem in their area of journalism, while the figure for the 28-45 age group was 49 percent and for the 46-64 age group 52 percent.

Figure 16: Views about statements 'Fake news is a serious problem in my area of journalism' by age group (percent of respondents by group)



FINDING #9

Each of the six Social Archetypes groups - the social media user types identified by the study - has unique characteristics in relation to social media use.

This year's Social Journalism Study found similar social media user types than in previous years, and these are evident in all the countries we carried out the survey. In previous years of the study, respondents could be split into five distinctive groups per their use, views and attitudes towards social media. Characteristics of five of these groups remain steadfastly since 2012 apart from the emergence this year of a new group, the Messenger, representing the instant messaging conversationalist (Table 6). What follows is a summary of the key characteristics of the Social Archetypes in 2017.

Table 6 - Size of each cluster as proportion of respondents (percent of respondents)

	2012	2014	2017
Skeptics	20	26	15
Observers	9	15	39
Messenger	-	-	6
Hunters	15	16	19
Promoters	36	22	12
Architects	20	21	9

What Social Archetype are you?

Take the Quiz!

ARCHITECTS (9 PERCENT)

Architects represent the most proactive of all the groups, active on a range social media and using it for all professional tasks. They could be described as the trailblazers in terms using social media to underpin their work as journalists. All Architects use social media to publish and promote content and monitor other media but with very high use for interacting with the audience and sourcing information (95 percent respectively) and all use social networks to publish and promote content. 40 percent of this group noted that social media is important for them to receive PR pitches, much higher than the other groups. More specifically on a daily basis this group is most likely to use social media to connect with new people/contacts and monitor discussions about their own content but they are also frequent daily users of social media to post original content, and share other's online content in their posts. Interestingly this group is also likely to read blogs (95 percent) and publish a work blog (80 percent) which is much higher than all the other groups, although this is not surprising as over a third (35 percent) reported to be a blogger/vlogger.

Of all the groups, the Architects were most like to report that they could not carry out their work without social media (85 percent) and that because of social media they are more engaged with their audience (90 percent).



However, their views are not all positive with only a half (50 percent) agreeing that social media has improved their productivity. Architects also reported that they completely or to a large extent rely on social media to promote their content (85 percent) and engage with their audience (80 percent) but were less reliant on social media to find leads and source new content (50 percent completely or to a large extent reliant). This group spends the most time on social media (**Table 7**), with 65 percent spending 5-8 hours per day and 35 percent eight hours or more on social media. This does not necessarily mean working solely on social media as media professionals are often multi-tasking, whilst social media remains 'on' in the background.

Table 7 - Time spent using social media for

work (percent of each cluster)

Number of Hours	Architects	Promoters	Messengers	Hunters	Observers	Skeptics
Never/ A few hours a month				6	6	68
A few hours a week			17	12	21	16
0-2 hours a day		4	50	61	60	16
3-4 hours a day		44	33	21	13	
5-8 hours a day	65	48				
More than 8 hours a day	35	4				

Overall, Architects have an ambivalent relationship with PR professionals with only 40 percent reporting that PR’s meet expectations and can be counted on to produce good content. The two most important types of sources for the group were experts (60 percent) and PR professionals (50 percent). This group is most likely to report that receiving PR pitches on social media is important (40 percent).

PROMOTERS (12 PERCENT)

In many ways, Promoters are similar to Architects, using a wide range of social media for different professional tasks, only they tend to use most aspects of social media slightly less. Key features of Promoters are that they use social media extensively for publishing and promoting their content (100 percent), and monitoring (100 percent) and interacting with the audience (95 percent) (**Table 8**).

Table 8 - Respondents who said that social media was important/very important for carrying out the following journalistic tasks (percent in each group)

Task	Architects	Promoters	Messengers	Hunters	Observers	Skeptics
Sourcing information	95%	84%	33%	66%	51%	19%
Checking/ verifying information	80%	68%	33%	44%	30%	19%
Interacting with my audience	95%	96%	67%	95%	87%	36%
Publishing/ promoting content	100%	100%	75%	95%	94%	39%
Networking	85%	84%	75%	71%	66%	26%
Monitoring other media/ what's going on	100%	100%	67%	88%	80%	19%
To receive PR pitches	40%	28%	25%	22%	6%	-

All Promoters spend time daily on social media with 44 percent claiming to spend 3-4 hours daily and almost half (48 percent) spending 5-8 hours per day across their preferred platforms, which are social networks (e.g., Facebook) (100 percent) and microblogs (e.g., Twitter) (84 percent). Looking at specific social media tasks, this group is active daily across a range of activities including monitoring discussions about content that has been posted (96 percent) and posting original content on social media (92 percent). However, Promoters are not keen on content communities (e.g., Wikipedia) and seldom read (4 percent) or contribute to it (none).

Promoters generally report positive views about the impact of social media on their work, with 96 percent saying it has helped them to be more engaged with their audience, 80 percent agreeing that they could not carry out their work without social media and 60 percent reporting that social media has improved their productivity. Of all the groups, Promoters were most likely



to report that using social media encourages journalists to focus on speed rather than analysis (84 percent). They too are ambivalent about their relationship with PR professionals, with only just under a quarter (24 percent) believing PR professionals produce high-quality content and a little over a third (36 percent) reported that they are reliable. In terms of their contact with PR professionals, just under a half (48 percent) reported that they would like to be contacted via social media, the highest of all the groups.

HUNTERS (19 PERCENT)

Hunters accounted for almost a fifth (19 percent) of all respondents and they include a group of journalists who watch what's happening on social media but are not as proactive in posting original content. They use social media to gather and share information, using it to see what others are saying and commenting or responding where necessary.

Hunters are not the heaviest users of social media compared to some of the other groups, but most (83 percent) engage at least daily, with almost half (48 percent) spending 5-8 hours per day on social media. Hunters have traditionally sat in the middle of the groups in terms of their use and views of social media. They are never as active as Architects and Promoters but are more active than Messengers, Skeptics and Observers. They are focused on a few platforms and tasks, tending to favor social media for publishing and promoting (95 percent) and interacting with their audience (95 percent). They are less likely to use it to for checking and verifying information (33 percent) or to receive PR pitches (22 percent). Their preferred platforms are social networks (e.g., Facebook) (95 percent) and microblogs (e.g., Twitter) (83 percent) which is marginally less than for Architects and Promoters and they are less likely to use messaging (15 percent) or live video services (39 percent) to promote their



own content.

Their most frequent daily activity is to read posts of people they follow (95 percent), posting original comments on social networking site (88 percent) and monitoring discussions (85 percent). Although they undertake a range of tasks on a daily basis. Like all the U.S. Social Archetypes, the relationship between the group and PR professionals is rather ambivalent, although Hunters are one of the most positive groups, with half (50 percent) claiming that they meet their expectations (**Table 9**) and 58 percent agreeing that they cannot always be trusted yet paradoxically 42 percent agree they are reliable.

Table 9 - percentage of respondents in each cluster who agreed/strongly agreed with the following views about their relationship with PR professionals.

	Architects	Promoters	Messenger	Hunter	Observer	Skeptics
Always meets expectations	40 percent	24 percent	29 percent	50 percent	25 percent	26 percent
Reliable	45 percent	36 percent	34 percent	42 percent	36 percent	45 percent
Cannot always be trusted	30 percent	28 percent	54 percent	58 percent	52 percent	48 percent

Messengers are using social media across a variety of platforms and for a range of work related

MESSENGERS (6 PERCENT)

tasks, but are generally less active than Architects and Promoters and more like Hunters. Their key focus is interacting with their audience and doing so via messaging services. Messengers are most likely to use social networks (e.g., Facebook) (92 percent) and secondly blogs (75 percent) but do so in line with their position on the continuum – so less than Promoters but more than Hunters. They report high use of social media for publishing and promoting content and networking (75 percent), like Architects and Promoters but are unique in their relatively high use of messaging (42 percent) to reach their audience and publish and promote content. Of all the groups, they are the second most likely to use messaging platforms (after Architects), using, for example, WhatsApp at least a daily basis (58 percent), much higher than the other four groups. However, Messengers are also keen to read blogs (67 percent), read posts of people they follow (67 percent) and watch video content on a social media site (67 percent).

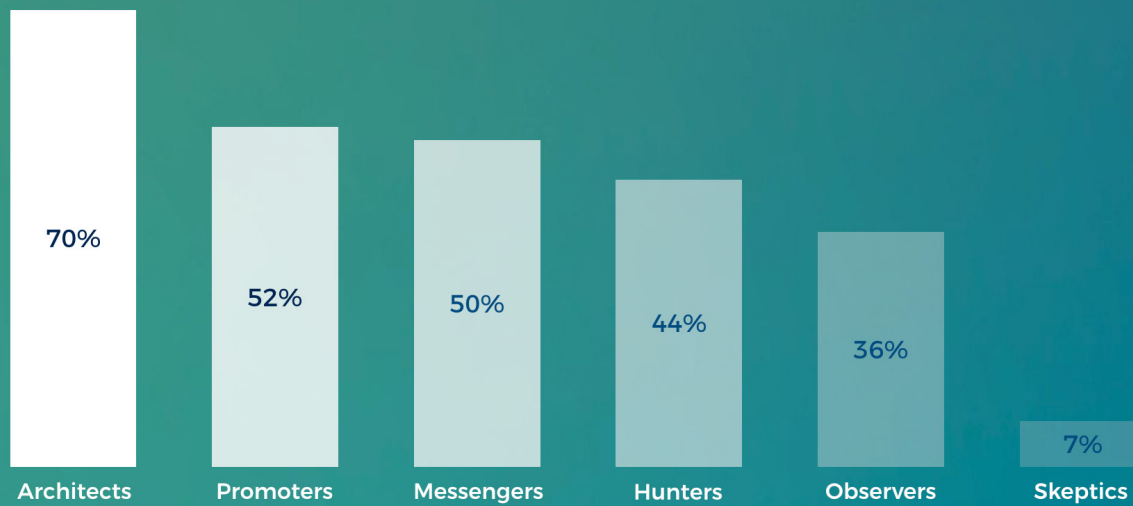
Messengers reported some benefits of using social media with 67 percent agreeing they are more engaged with their audience because of social media but only 42 percent reported that it improved their productivity. Messengers (4 percent), like all



the other groups, do not think their workload has decreased because of using social media. However, despite these views, overall Messengers are undecided about the impact of social media on journalism (**Figure 17**). Messengers were the only group to report PR as being most important sources of information (58 percent), but they are most likely to trust industry and professional contacts (67 percent) in contrast to PR professionals (25 percent).

This is the largest group of journalists in the U.S. this year and significantly bigger than in previous years. Observers use social media

Figure 17: Agreement that 'overall social media has had a positive impact on journalism' (percent of each cluster)



CISION

OBSERVERS (39 PERCENT)

for all aspects of their work particularly favoring the use of microblogs (e.g., Twitter) and social networks (e.g., Facebook) (**Table 10**), a consistent feature of all the groups but their overall use is less than the other groups. They are most likely to use social media for publishing and promoting (94 percent) content and interacting with their audience (87 percent).

They are less heavy users with 27 percent spending only a few hours per month on social media and 60 percent between 1-2 hours a day. Their preferred daily tasks include posting original comments on social networking or microblogging sites (57 percent), followed by monitoring discussions about their own content (46 percent) (**Table 10**). Activities related to video, images or messaging is particularly low for this group.

Table 10 - percentage of respondents in each cluster who said they undertook the following tasks for work on a daily or hourly basis (percent of respondents).

Task	Architects	Promoters	Messengers	Hunters	Observers	Skeptics
Use social media to connect with new people/contacts	95%	84%	66%	58%	39%	10%
Post original comments on social networking or microblogging sites	80%	92%	88%	58%	57%	3%
Monitor discussions on social media about own content	95%	96%	85%	8%	46%	3%
Use messaging sites (e.g., WhatsApp, VChat)	60%	12%	20%	58%	8%	-
Contribute to a video or image sharing site (e.g., Instagram/Vimeo)	40%	64%	34%	17%	7%	-

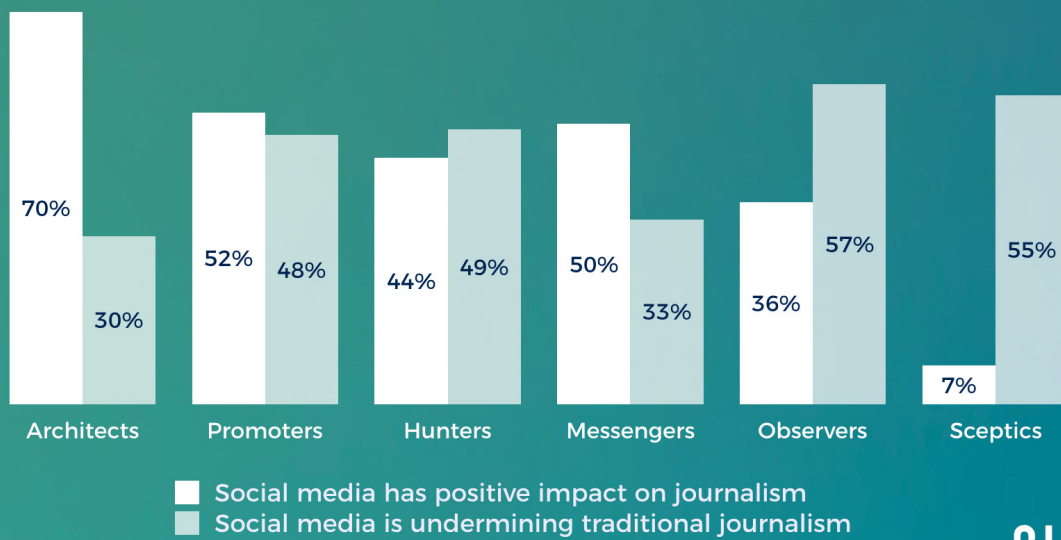
When sourcing information Observers prefer to source from industry and professional contacts (68 percent) and experts (53 percent), but when it comes to trust 60 percent feel experts are

the most trusted of all the sources (70 percent) with only 21 percent reporting that they find PR professionals trustworthy. In terms of attitudes, Observers have mixed views about the impact of social media particularly in relation to their profession. For example, 84 percent acknowledge that because of social media they are more engaged with their audience and that it has fundamentally changed their role as a journalist, but 57 percent of this group believe social media is undermining True to their name, the Skeptics consistently remain the least active and most cynical about the benefits offered by social media and although their use is growing, probably out of necessity rather than choice, their



journalistic values and only a third (36 percent) stated that social media has a positive impact on journalism (**Figure 18**).

Figure 18: Agreement with statements about the impact of social media on journalism (percent of each cluster)



SKEPTICS (15 PERCENT)

attitudes remain generally negative. Given that 36 percent of them reported not to use social media for work and 32 percent to use the platforms only for a few hours a month, it is not surprising they report that they do not rely on social media for their work. Whilst this group is not very large, together with the Observers they make up more than half (54 percent) of all respondents suggesting that a large section of US media professionals tend not to be very proactive on social media.



The Skeptics do not seem to identify any benefits widely acknowledged with social media with only 19 percent reporting that social media enables them to engage with their audience and less than a quarter (23 percent) supported the view that social media has fundamentally changed their role as a journalist (Table 11). This is not surprising given their low use overall. Of all the activities, this group felt that social media is most important for publishing and promoting

content (39 percent) but at around only a third (36 percent) of the whole group reporting that social media is important for interacting with the audience.

Of all the groups, Skeptics are the most worried about copyright, with 23 percent stating that concerns over copyright prevent them from using social media more. Perhaps better training and advice around copyright

Table 11 - Agreement with views on social media (percent of each cluster)

	Architects	Promoters	Messenger	Hunters	Observers	Skeptics
Because of social media I am more engaged with my audience	90 percent	96 percent	93 percent	67 percent	84 percent	19 percent
Social media has fundamentally changed my role as a journalist	75 percent	92 percent	83 percent	50 percent	76 percent	23 percent

rules might see an increase in social media use by this group. As with all groups, Skeptics stated that email remains their preferred communication method (94 percent) with PR professionals, although 13 percent stated that they would prefer contact face to face, higher than any of the other groups. For PR professionals to contact this group it is essential they don't use social media - only 3 percent stated of Skeptics would prefer to be contacted through this medium, much lower than all the other groups. Their relationship with PR professionals is rather mixed with almost half (45 percent) reporting that they are happy with their relationship with PR professionals but 45 percent find them reliable and 48 percent saying that they cannot always be trusted.

FINDING #10

U.S. journalists are ambivalent about their relationship with PR professionals and have concerns over the quality of content and reliability of material they receive.

Overall, 58 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were happy with their relationship with PR professionals. Those working in lifestyle, fashion, sports, entertainment and culture were most likely to report a good relationship (**Table 12**). However, those working in general news, politics and current affairs were less happy with their working relationship with PR professionals, which shows that there are sectoral variations in this regard reflecting different perceptions and ways of working in different areas of journalism.

Table 12 - percentage of respondents who are happy with the relationship with PRs by area of industry

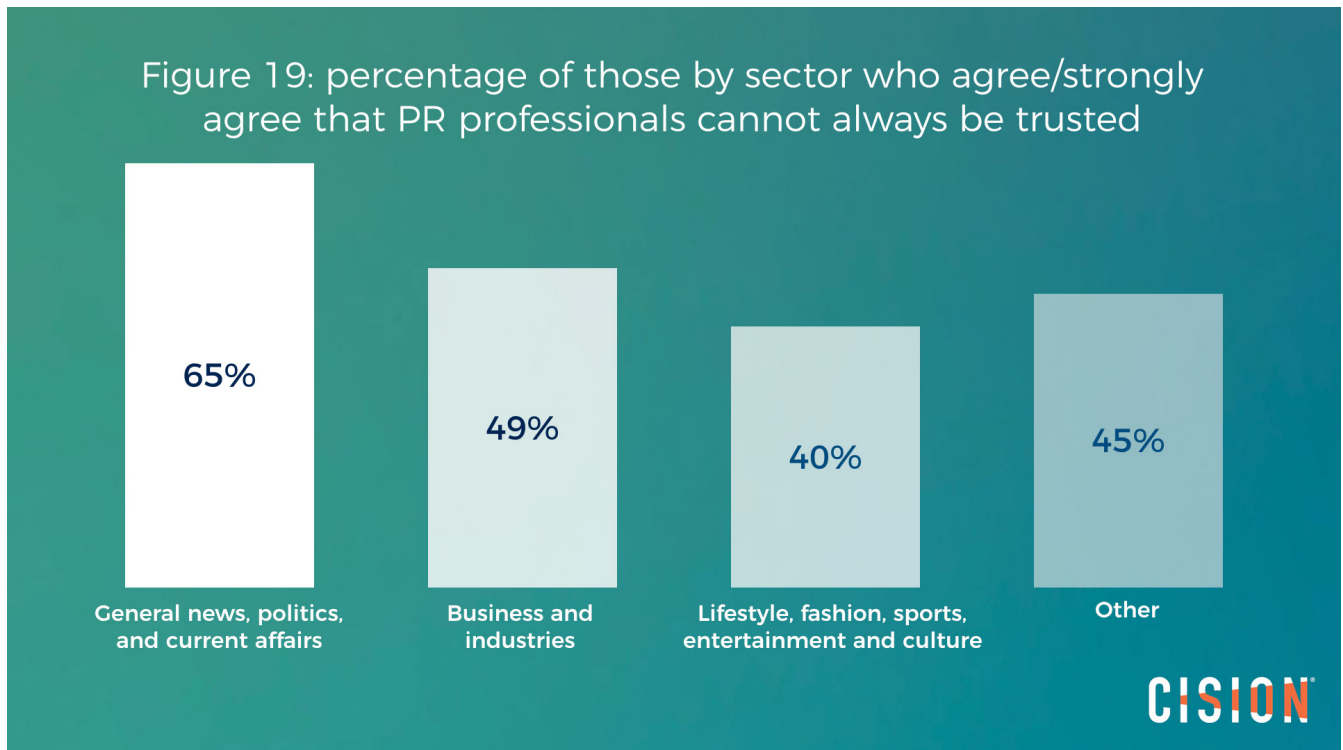
	Agree	Agree
Lifestyle, Fashion, Sports and Entertainment, Culture	49%	16%
Business and Industries	44%	15%
General News, Politics and Current Affairs	53%	3%

A large section of respondents was unsure about PR professionals which is shown by the relatively high undecided (neither agree nor disagree) responses in Table 13. For example, 51 percent of respondents were unsure about whether PR professionals provided high-quality content, while 21 percent agreed or disagreed and 28 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. These figures indicate that many U.S. journalists have an ambivalent relationship with PR professionals.

Table 13 - Respondents views about PR professionals (percent of respondents)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Always meets expectations	1 percent	30 percent	42 percent	21 percent	6 percent
Reliable	3 percent	37 percent	45 percent	11 percent	4 percent
Provide high quality content	2 percent	19 percent	51 percent	22 percent	6 percent

There are also some differences in relation to trust per journalistic area of industry. Over half (53 percent) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that PR practitioners cannot always be trusted and those in general news, politics and current affairs (65 percent) were particularly likely to report this (**Figure 19**).



About the Survey

Cision and Canterbury Christ Church University conducted an online survey about the uses, behaviors, attitudes and perceptions of social media among journalists. Respondents were taken from Cision's media databases of more than 1.5 million influencers globally. This report takes a closer look at the United States and is based on 257 responses from journalists and media professionals collected during April and May 2017. Throughout the survey, the term 'journalist' is used to include all media professionals, e.g., researchers, editors, bloggers, etc., who took part. The creation of the Social Archetypes is through using hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method.

The survey is designed to enhance the media industry's understanding of social media uptake and the impact of social media technologies and processes on journalists' work. Cision conducts this survey on an annual basis to continue to inform on best practice within the PR and communications field and to deepen the industry's understanding of how journalists and professional communicators use and value social media and other resources. The research examined patterns of social media adoption by journalists, how and what for social media is used in journalists' work, and how they view the impact of social media on journalistic practices and the profession.

About Cision

Cision Ltd. (NYSE: CISN) is a leading global provider of 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 3,000 employees with offices in 15 countries throughout the Americas, EMEA, and APAC. For more information about its award-winning products and services, including the [Cision Communications Cloud™](#). Follow Cision on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#) and on Cision's [blog](#).

The Cision logo features the word "CISION" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Each letter has a vertical orange stripe running through its center. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the top right of the letter "N".

About Canterbury Christ Church University

Canterbury Christ Church University is a modern, multi-campus University offering higher and professional education across key Kent and Medway locations: Canterbury, Broadstairs, Medway and Tunbridge Wells. It has a strong community of 17,000 students and 2,000 staff, studying and teaching across four faculties: Arts and Humanities, Education, Health and Wellbeing, and Social and Applied Sciences.



Christ Church was established in 1962 and is a Church of England Foundation University, welcoming all faiths and none. Today, the University continues to shape courses and research around critical social issues, the latest industry developments and public service need. Nearly 90 percent of its research submitted to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) was assessed as world-leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognized, and 95 percent of our UK undergraduates and 98 percent of our postgraduates were in employment or further study within six months of completing their studies, with nine out of 10 of our employed graduates in graduate level jobs three-and-a-half years after finishing their studies – higher than the national average.

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