

A STUDY BY
MUCK RACK

The State of Journalism 2023

Social media habits, reporting strategies,
PR pitching preferences and more

Research Partners



**ONLINE NEWS
ASSOCIATION**



**SOCIETY OF
PROFESSIONAL
JOURNALISTS**



SOCIETY *for*
ADVANCING
BUSINESS
EDITING *and*
WRITING



The Association of
LGBTQ Journalists



PressGazette



Methodology

We surveyed 2,226 journalists from January 4th to February 6th, 2023.

The goal of this survey is to understand the current state of journalism and the future outlook of the industry by speaking to the people who produce the news. The self-administered online survey survey collected 2,226 responses.

Muck Rack distributed the survey with the help of 14 research partners including Society of Professional Journalists and Online News Association.

Survey responses were primarily sought through email and most respondents came from email outreach directly to journalists in Muck Rack's database. The survey was open from January 1 until February 6, 2023. The majority of responses came from U.S.-based journalists, and Asia, Africa and Europe were well represented as well. Survey responses were checked for duplicates as well as inconsistent or low-effort responses.

The conservative estimate of the margin of error for this survey is +/- 2.4%. There are two exceptions to this. First is the salary question which only uses responses from journalists from the U.S. and has a smaller sample size. The margin of error for this question is 3.3%. The second is two questions regarding freelancer pay. The margin of error for these questions is 3.7%

Executive Summary

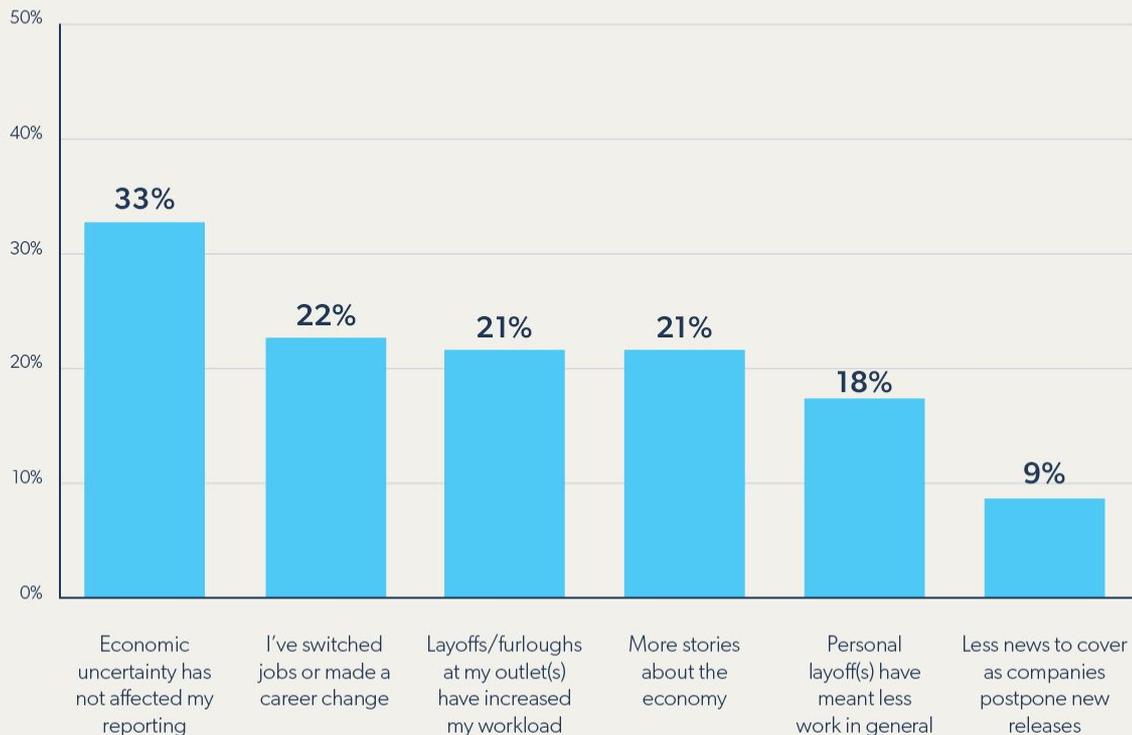
- Economic uncertainty has impacted the work of around two-thirds of journalists.
- The number of journalists who say they're more likely to respond to pitches now compared to last year has increased by about 7%.
- Journalists plan to spend more time on Youtube, LinkedIn and TikTok.
- About half of journalists considered leaving Twitter, but only 28% say they plan to spend less time on the social network this year.
- Fewer journalists find CEOs to be credible sources. 74% found them credible in the 2021 report versus 62% this year.
- Millennials and Gen X are the most commonly reported target audiences for journalists
- Journalists cite lack of funding and disinformation as top concerns for the industry.

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Journalism trends, challenges and events

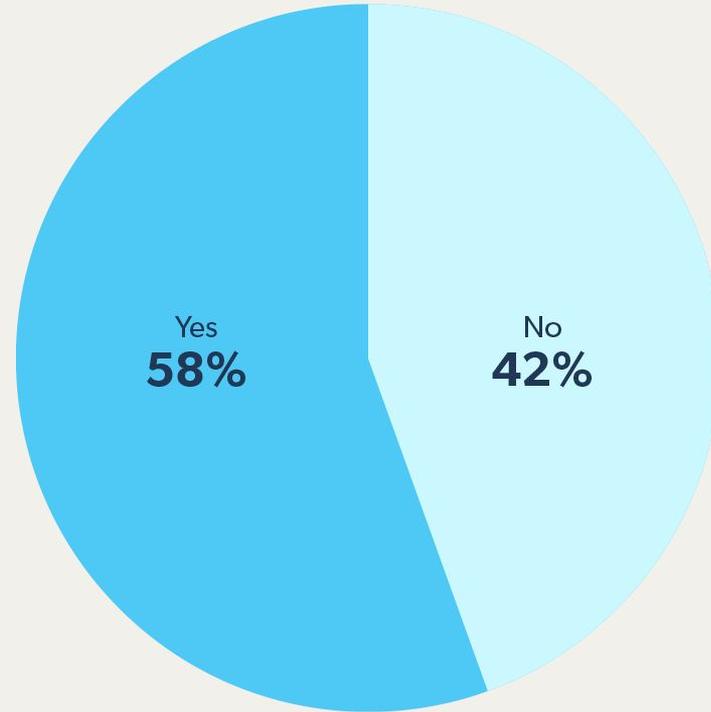
Two out of three journalists say their work has been impacted by economic uncertainty

How has economic uncertainty affected your work? (select all that apply)



**More than half of
journalists are
optimistic about
their profession**

Are you optimistic about the journalism profession?

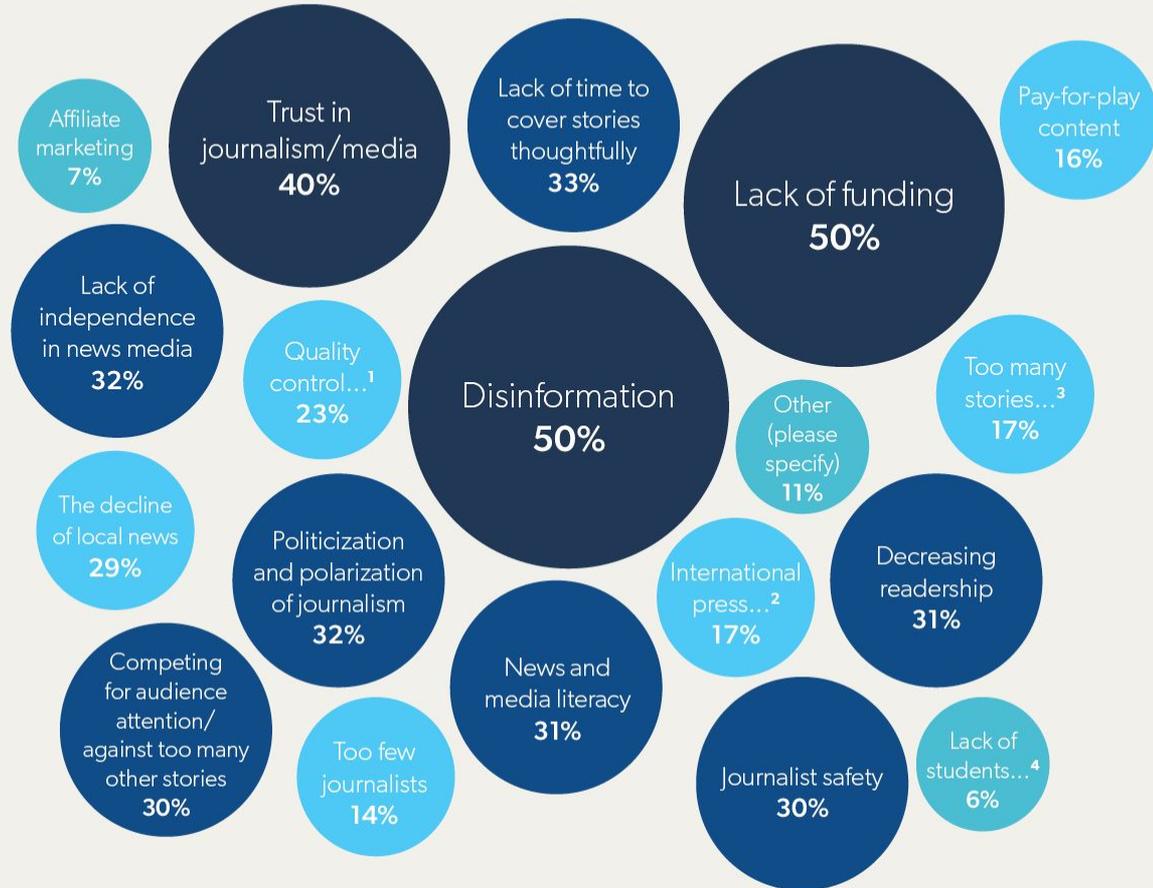


Disinformation and lack of funding are the top two concerns of journalists

The **third most cited** concern is trust in journalism, and the **least cited** is a lack of new students and job seekers in the industry.

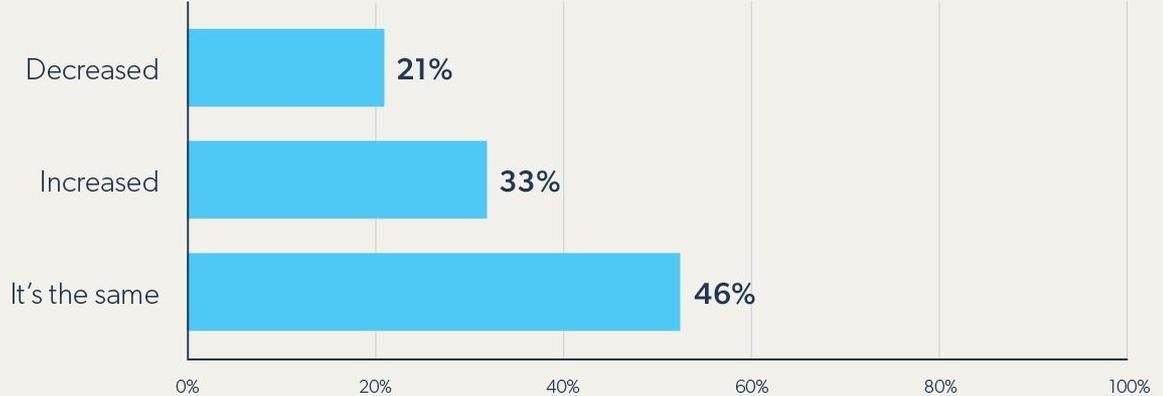
1. Quality control/fact-checking support in newsrooms
2. International press freedom
3. Overwhelming news cycle/too many stories to cover
4. Lack of students/new job seekers interested in journalism

What issues facing journalism are most concerning to you? (choose your top 3)



Nearly 80% of journalists say trust in the their area of coverage has increased or stayed the same

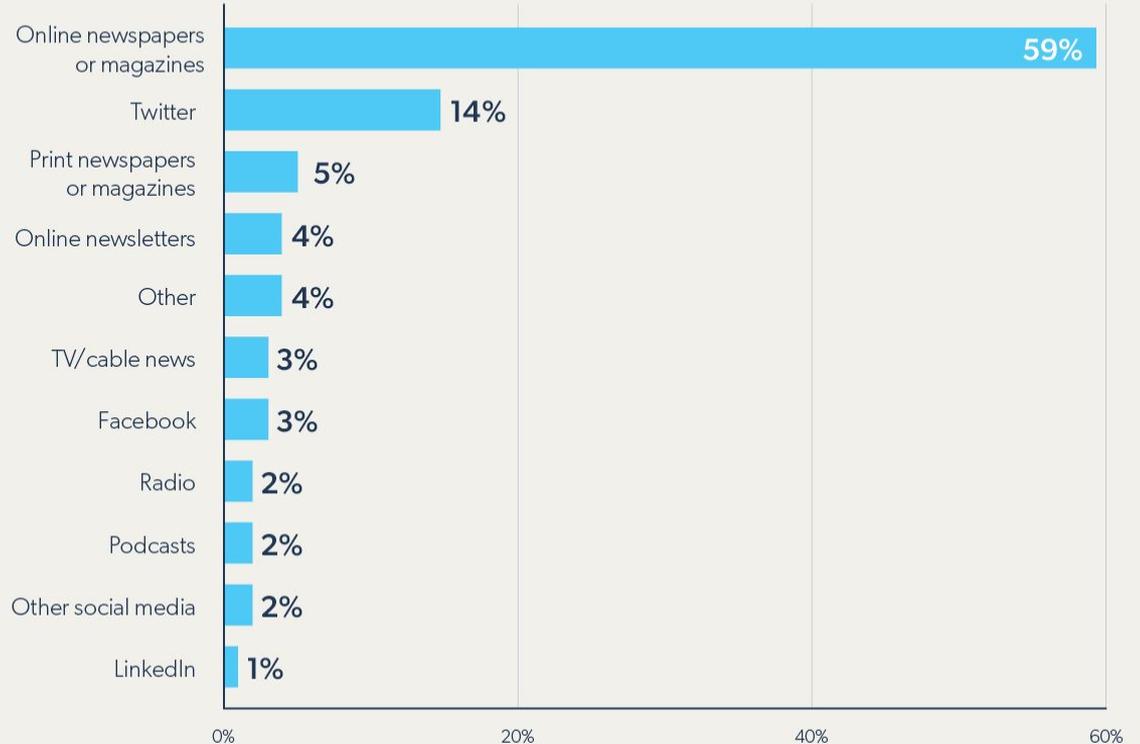
Do you feel that your audience's trust in coverage of your area of journalism has increased or decreased in the past year?



Most journalists get their news from online newspapers, followed by Twitter

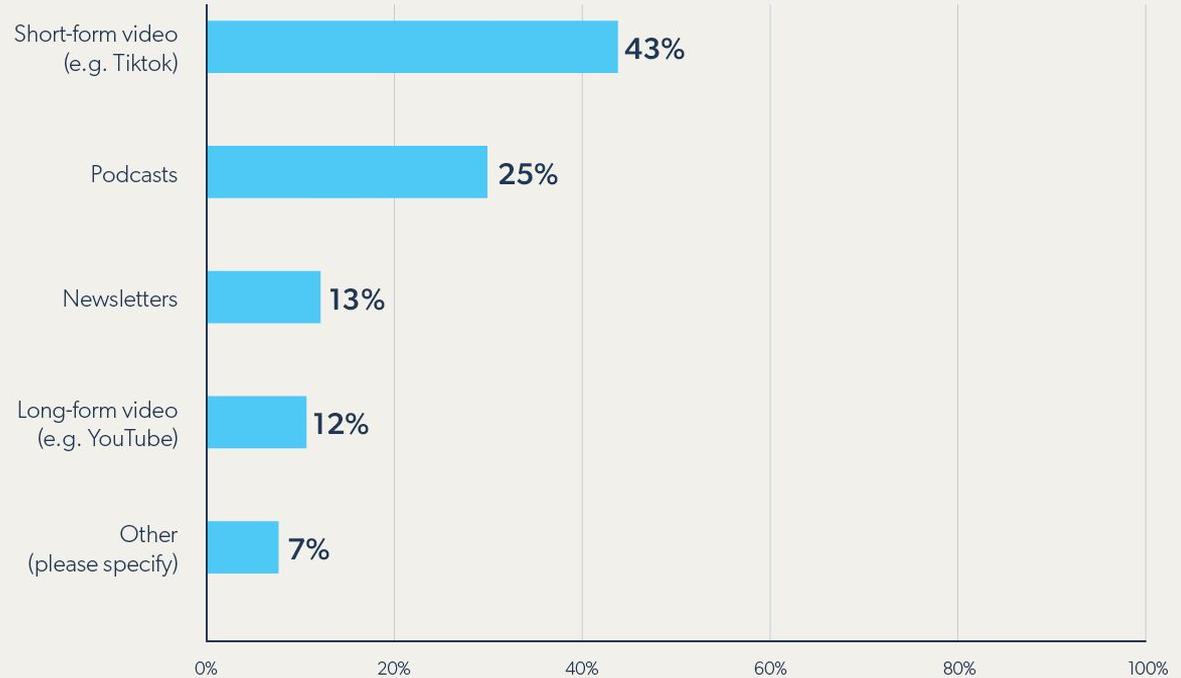
While the ranking stayed the same, the number of journalists who turn to Twitter for their news decreased by **4%** compared to last year.

In general, where do you go first for your news?



Almost half of journalists believe short-form video will grow in popularity in 2023

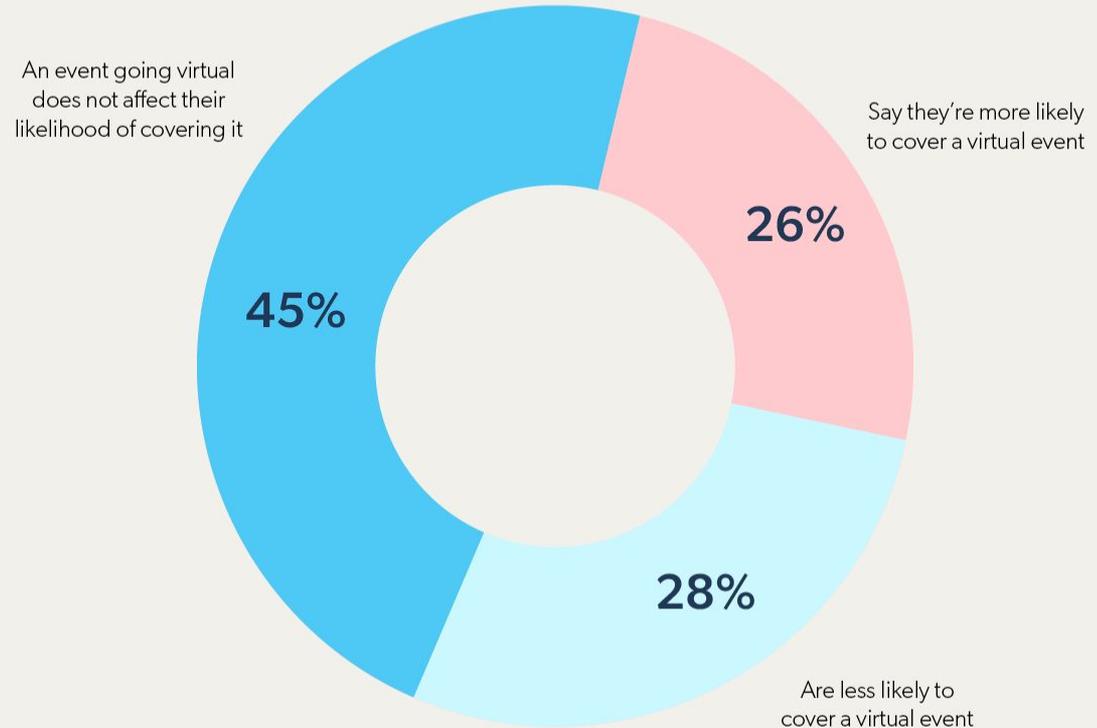
What medium do you think will grow in popularity in 2023?



Virtual events may be falling out of favor

Compared to last year, journalists who say they are “more likely to cover virtual event” dropped by **8%** while those less likely to cover them rose by **7%**.

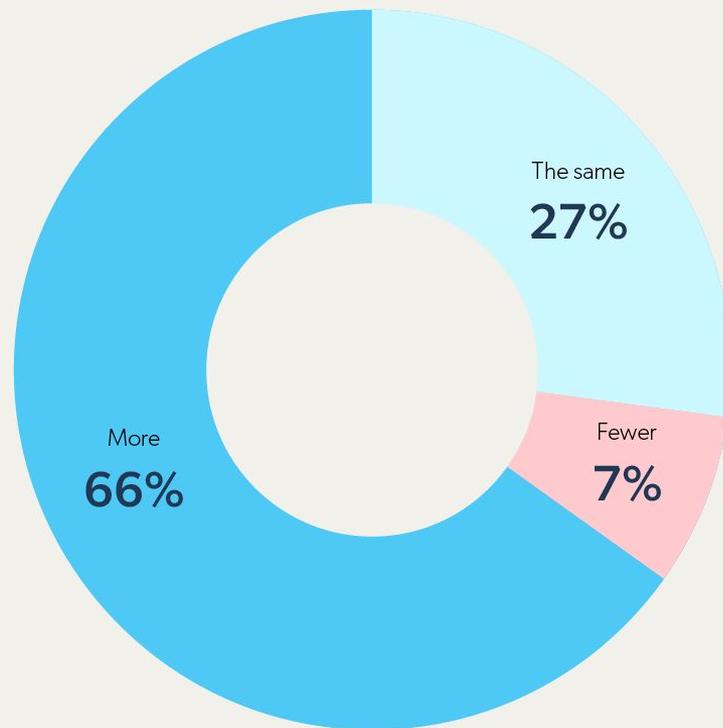
How likely are you to cover a virtual event in 2022?



In-person events are seeing a comeback

The number of journalists who plan to attend more in-person events in 2023 rose by **13%** compared to last year.

Compared to 2022, do you plan on attending more or fewer in-person events in 2023?



Top 10 events journalists plan to cover in 2023

1. UN Climate Change Conference (COP28)
2. World Conference on Climate Change and Sustainability
3. World Economic Forum
4. Government Social Media Conference
5. Comic-Con San Diego
6. TED
7. SXSW
8. National Civil Rights Conference
9. New York International AutoShow
10. E3

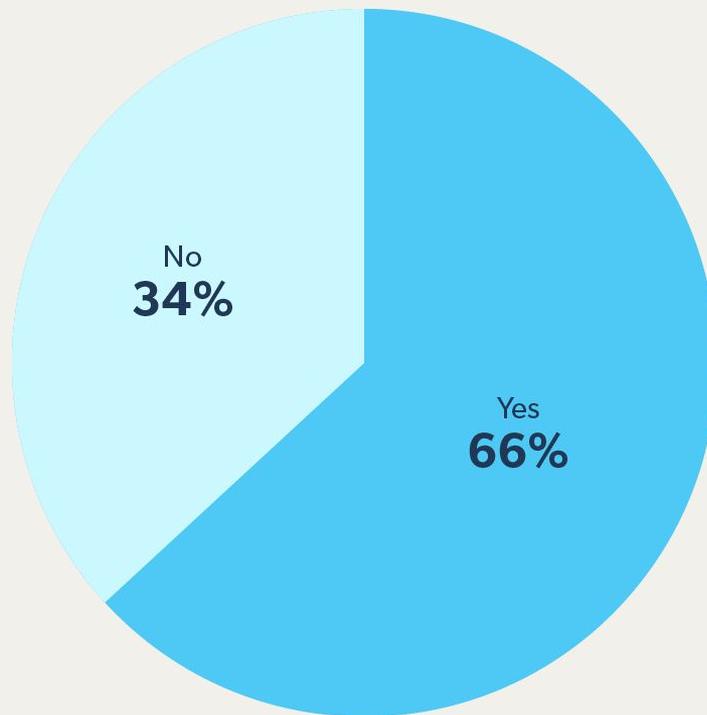
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Social media usage and habits

The number of journalists tracking their stories on social media is growing

This number has grown about **4%** since our 2021 State of Journalism survey.

Do you track how many times your stories are shared on social media?

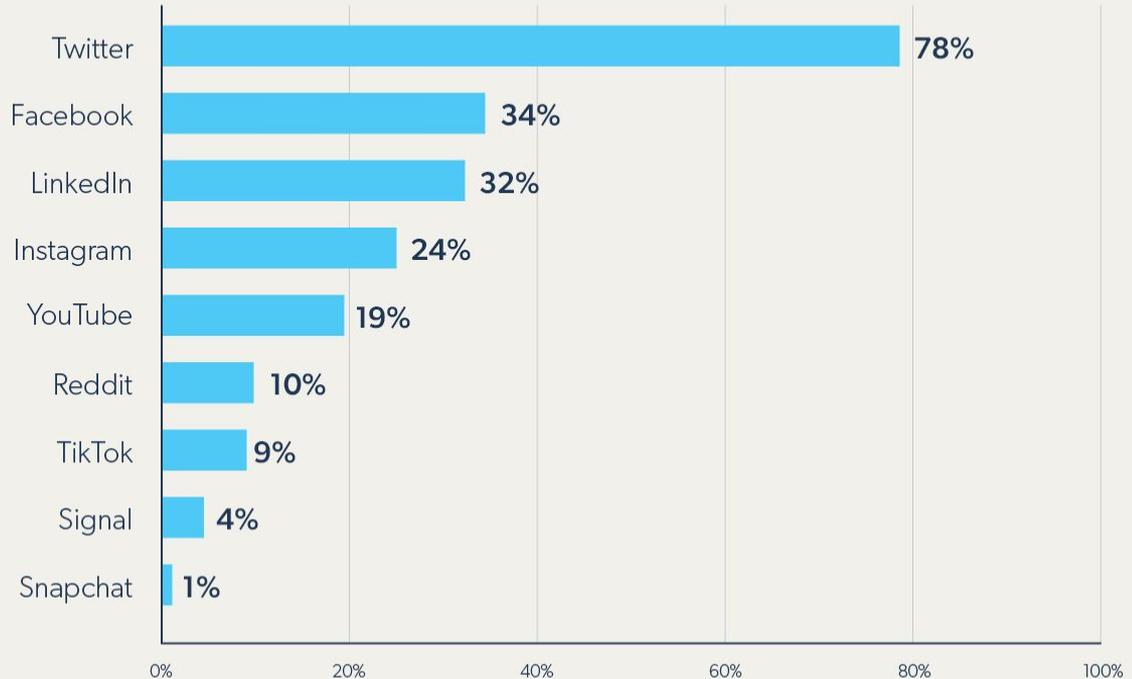


Twitter is the most valued social network, followed by Facebook and LinkedIn

While the rankings are the same as last year, a shakeup may be happening.

LinkedIn's popularity grew by **8%** this year and TikTok jumped up **5%**. Meanwhile, Facebook fell by **5%**.

What social network is most valuable to you as a journalist?

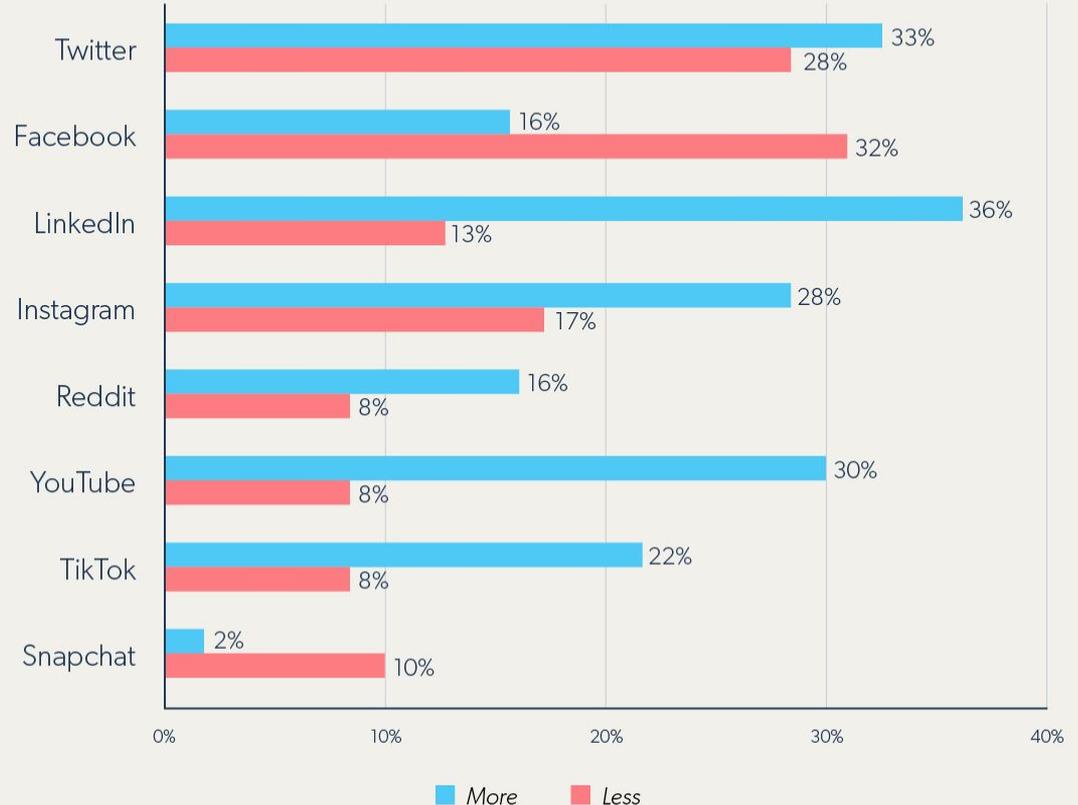


Journalists plan to spend more time on LinkedIn and YouTube, less time on Facebook

LinkedIn and **YouTube** will likely be winning a lot of journalists' attention this year. They have the biggest difference between those who will spend more time there vs. less.

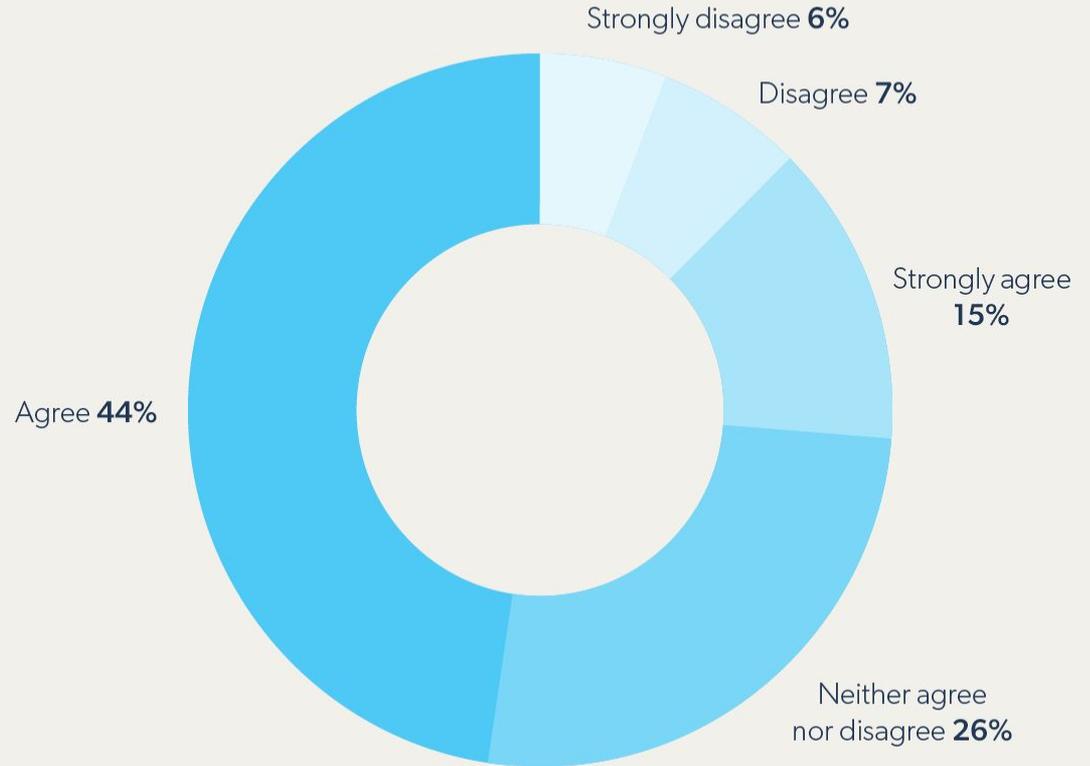
Snapchat and **Facebook** are the only platforms where it looks like more journalists are stepping back.

Do you expect to spend more or less time on the following social networks this year?



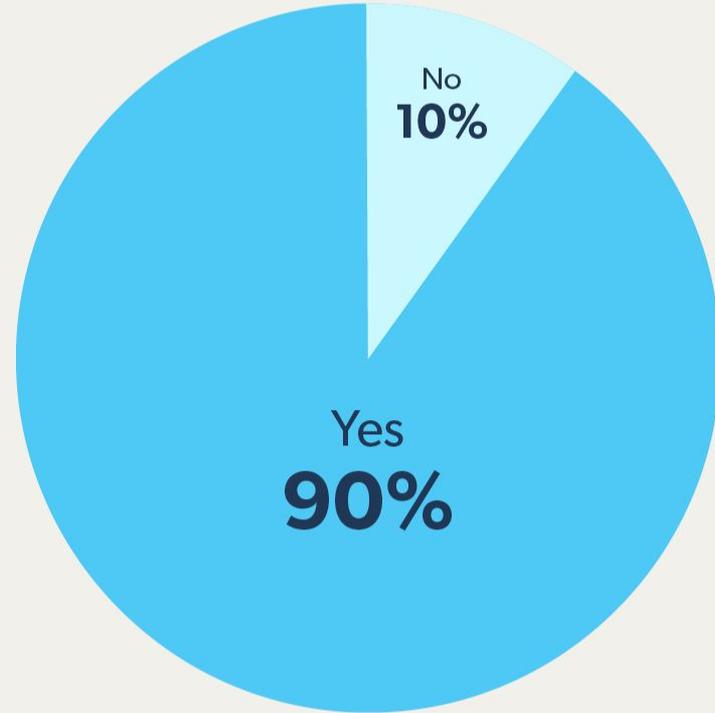
Most journalists consult a company's social media in their reporting

When reporting on a company,
I consult the company's social media



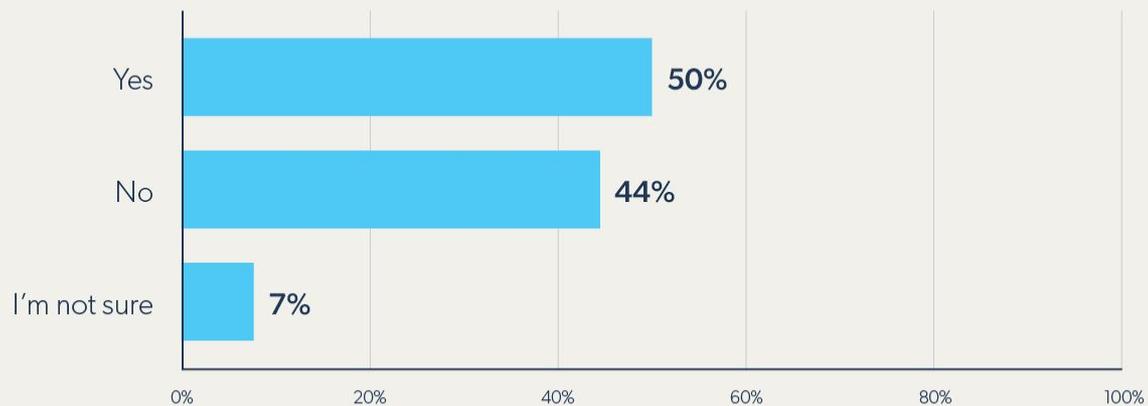
Nearly all journalists use Twitter

Do you use Twitter?



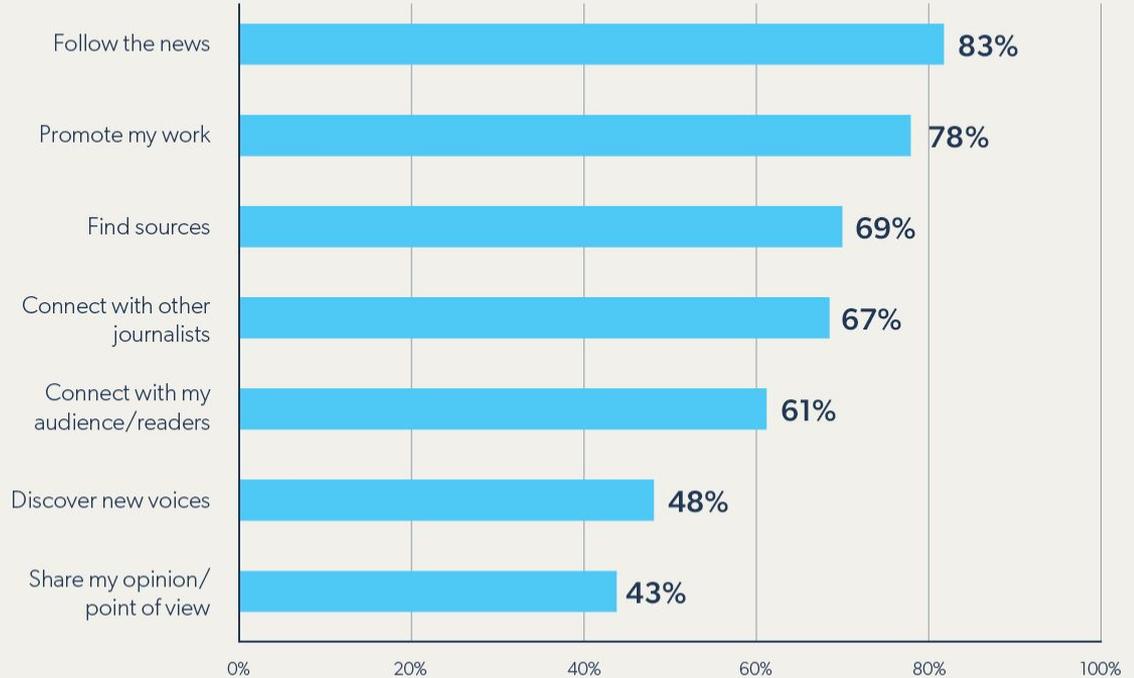
Journalists are split over leaving Twitter

Have you considered leaving Twitter in the last year?



Following news, promoting their work and finding sources are the top 3 ways journalists use Twitter

How do you use Twitter professionally?





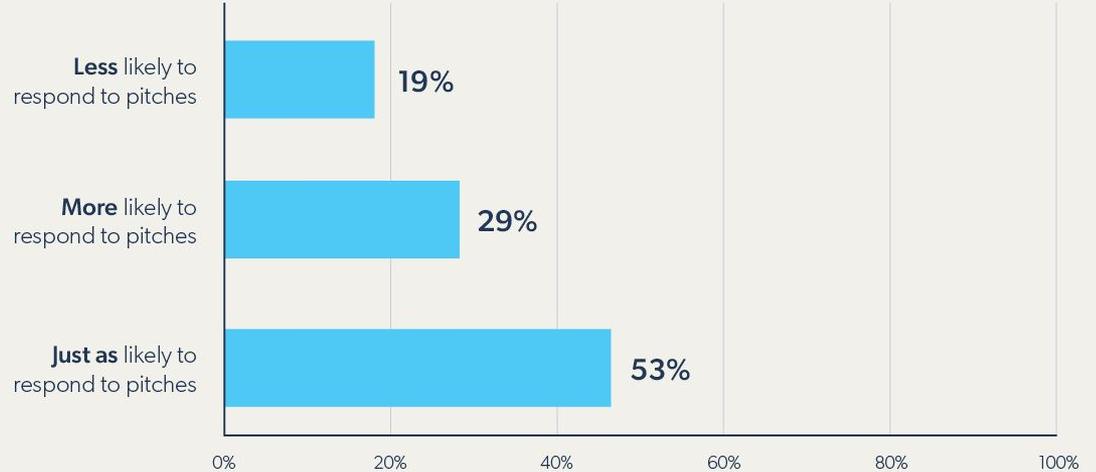
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Media relations and pitches preferences

Some journalists are more receptive to pitches this year vs. last year

This year **29%** of journalists are more likely to respond to pitches, which is a **6%** increase compared to last year's report.

Compared to a year ago, I am:

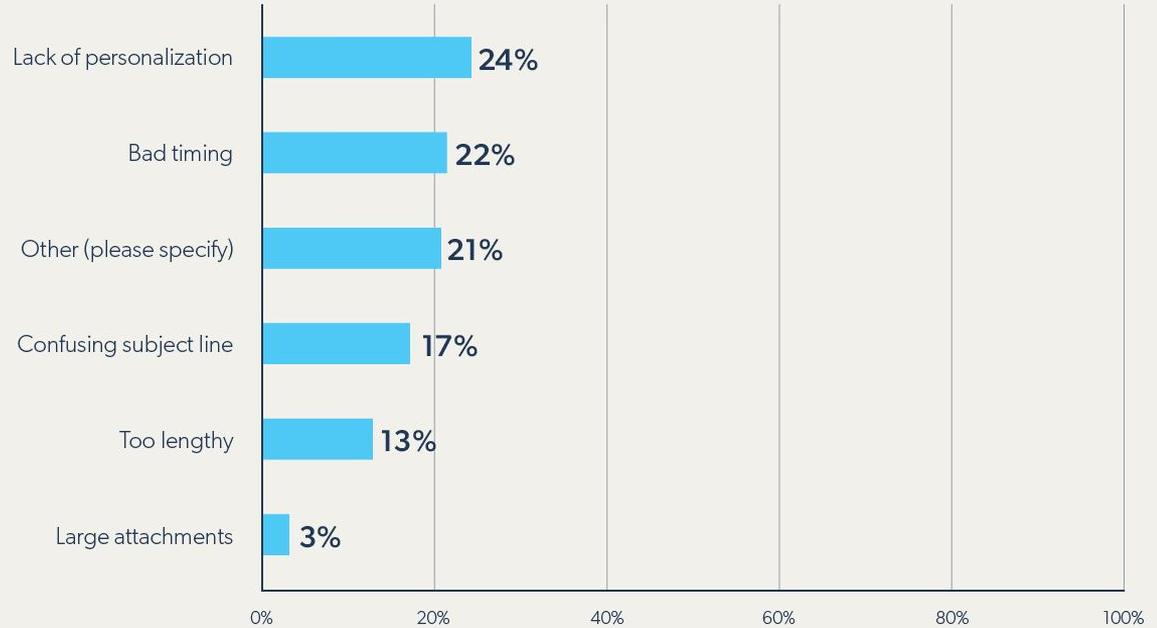


Many journalists lament the lack of relevant pitches

Year after year, journalists say the same thing: pitches get rejected if they **aren't personalized** or **come at a bad time**.

However, about a quarter of all “other” responses say the pitches they receive are unrelated to their beats.

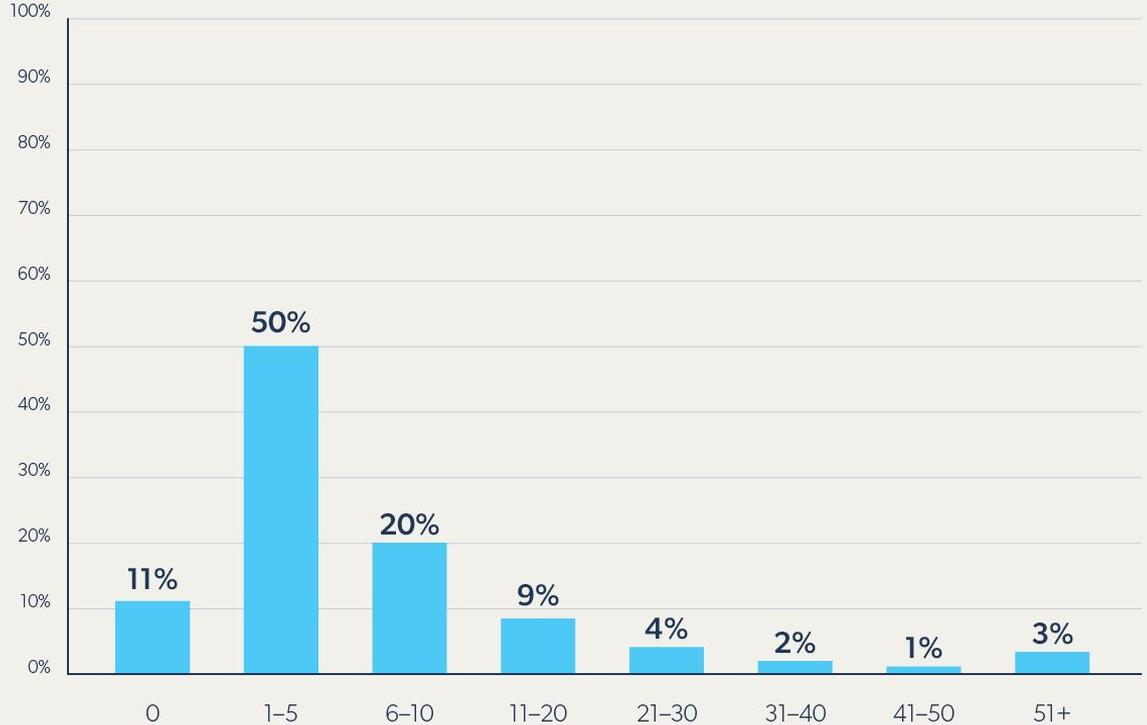
Why do you immediately reject otherwise relevant pitches?



Most journalists get up to 5 pitches per day

And about **60** people said their email is clogged with at least **255** pitches every week.

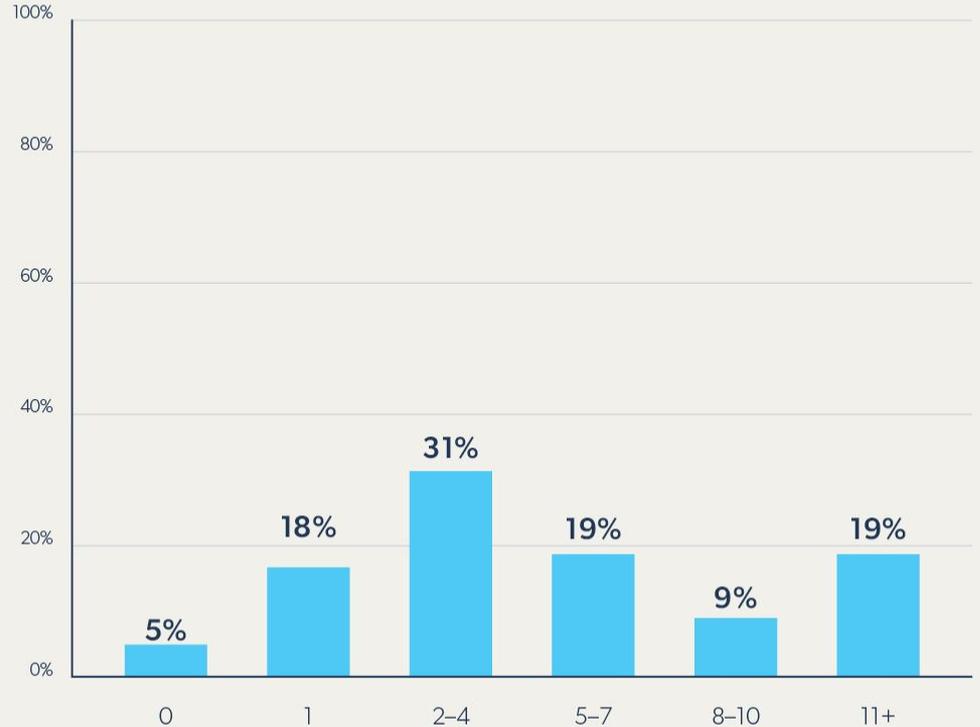
How many pitches do you receive on an average business day?



Many journalists put out 2–4 stories per week

But another **47%** create more than **5** stories a week.

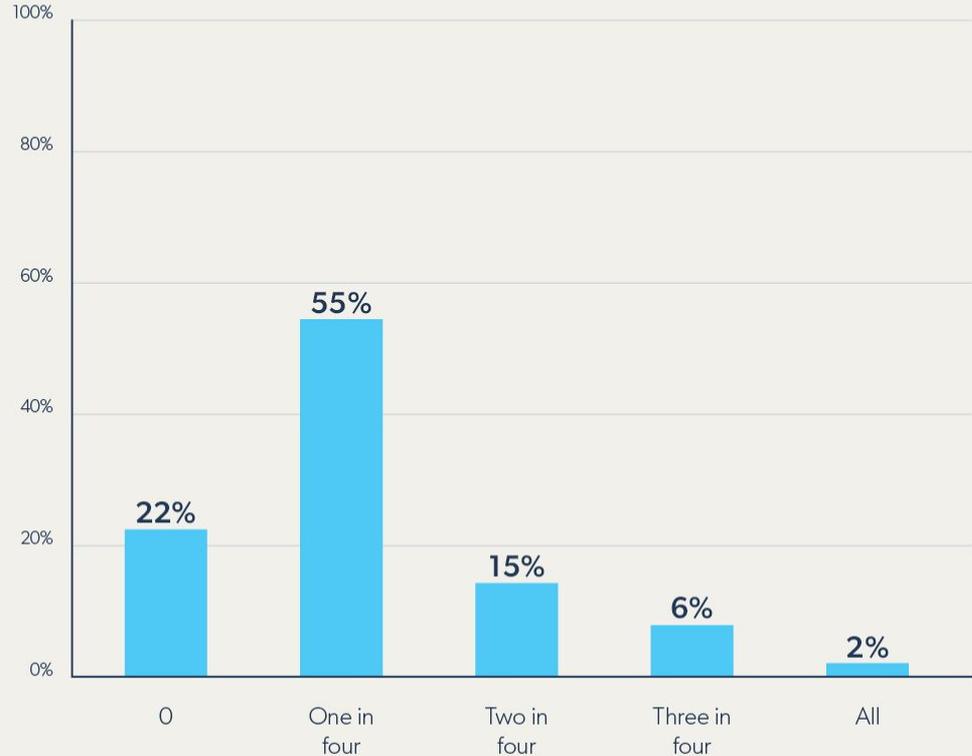
About how many stories do you publish in an average week?



Only about one in four journalists say none of their stories come from pitches

About the same amount say **half or more** of their stories come from pitches, while the majority get about a **quarter** of their stories that way.

About what portion of stories you publish originate from pitches?

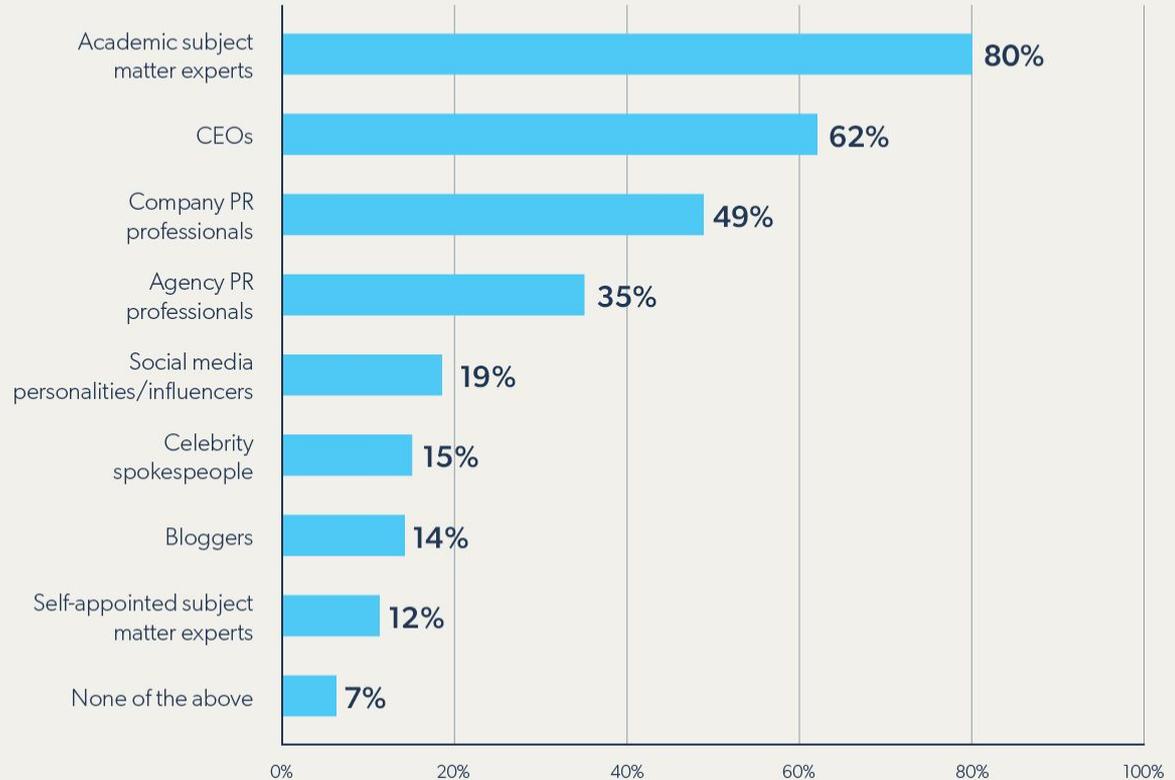


Academic experts reign supreme as the most credible sources

They may hold the second spot, but CEOs have fallen out of favor after dropping **12%** in two years, while social media personalities gained **7%** during that same time period.

Meanwhile, PR pros held steady year-over-year with about half of journalists finding them a good source.

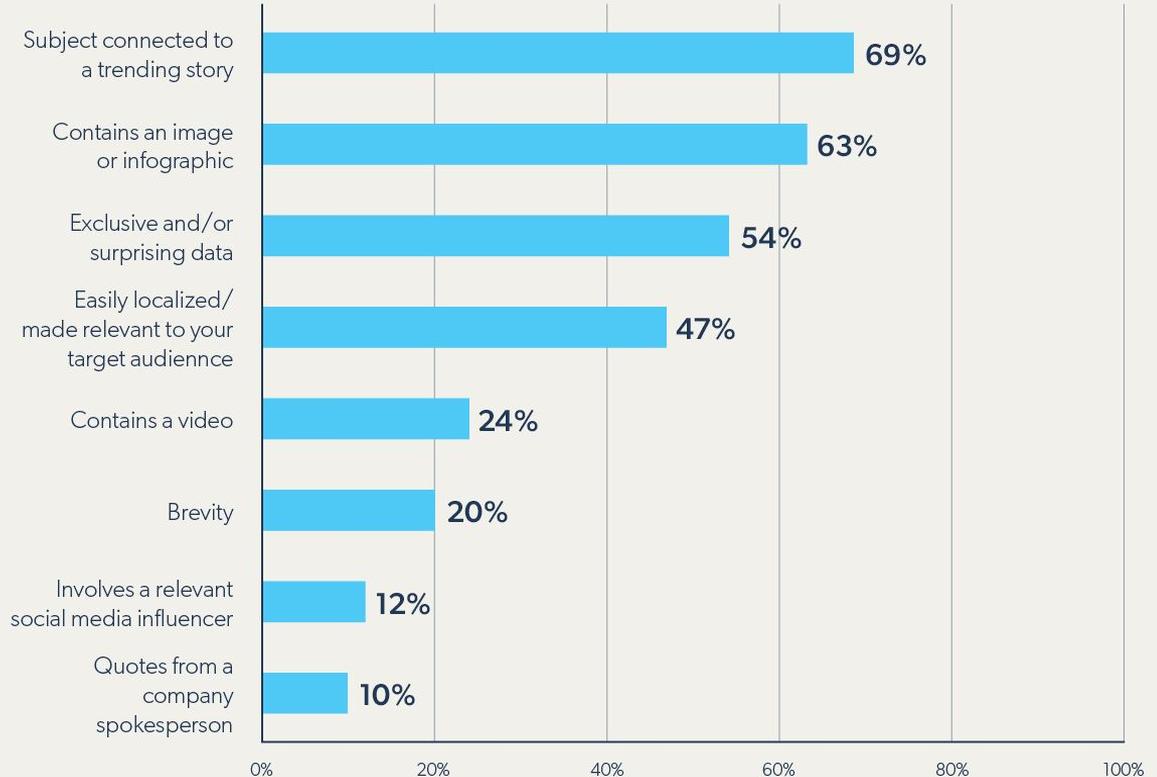
Do you consider the following to be credible sources for your reporting?



Localization was less important for shareability

Last year, **54%** of journalists said stories were more shareable when they are easily localized. This year, only **47%** say the same thing.

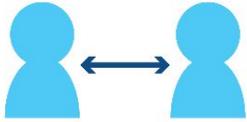
What makes a story shareable?



MUCK RACK

THE PERFECT PITCH

According to a survey of 2,000+ journalists



92% of journalists prefer to be pitched via 1:1 email



55% don't care which day they pitched—of those who do, **21%** prefer to be pitched on a Monday



61% want to receive pitches before noon



67% prefer pitches that are under 200 words

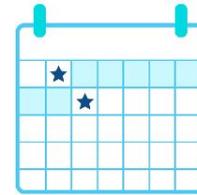


Now Trending

69% say pitches that connect to a trending story are the most shareable



76% are more likely to cover a story if offered an exclusive



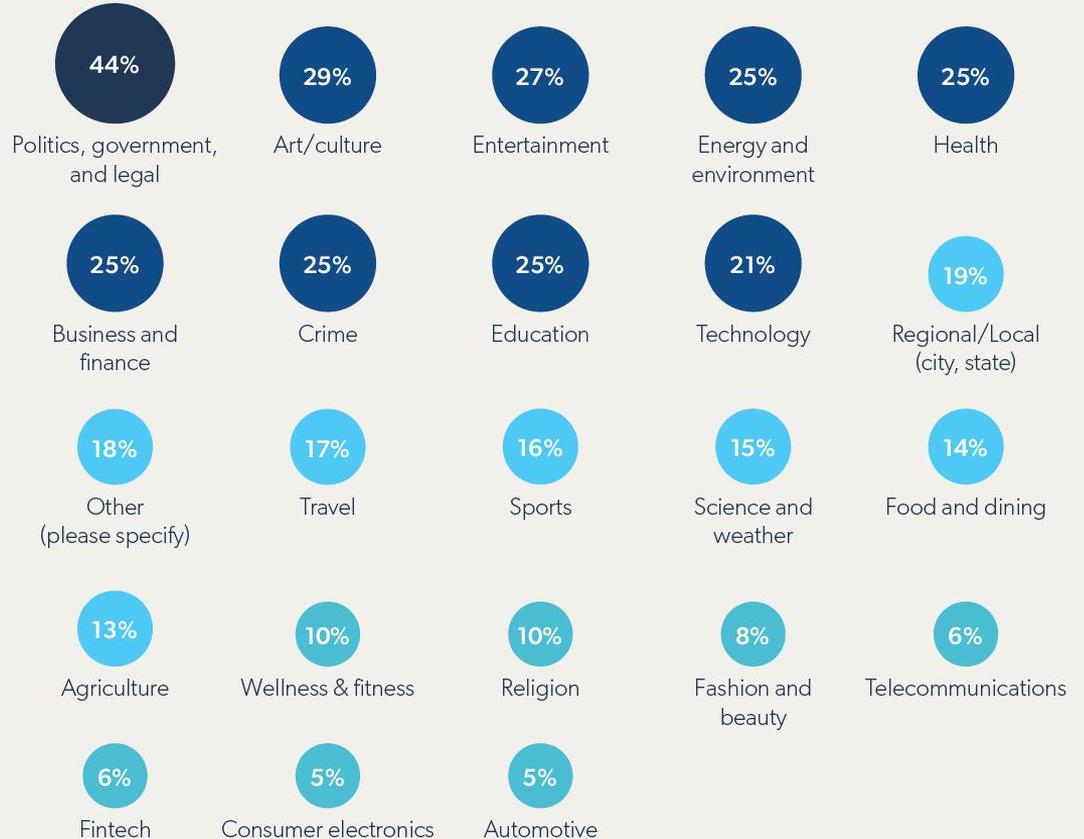
45% say one follow up is ideal and **51%** say it should come within 3–7 days later

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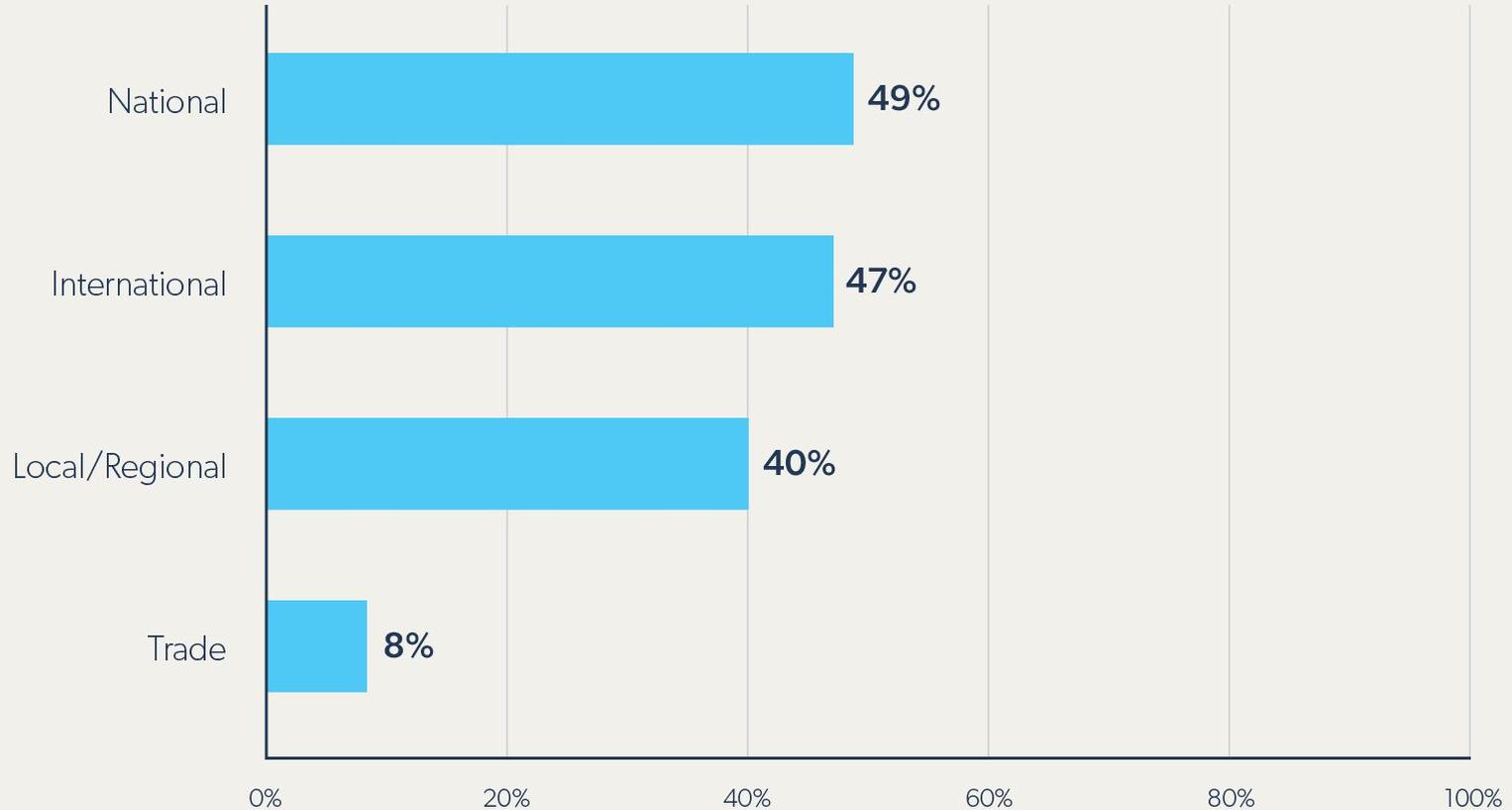
**Beats, mediums
and audiences**

Similar to last year, the average journalist covers 4 beats

What industries do you cover? (select all that apply)



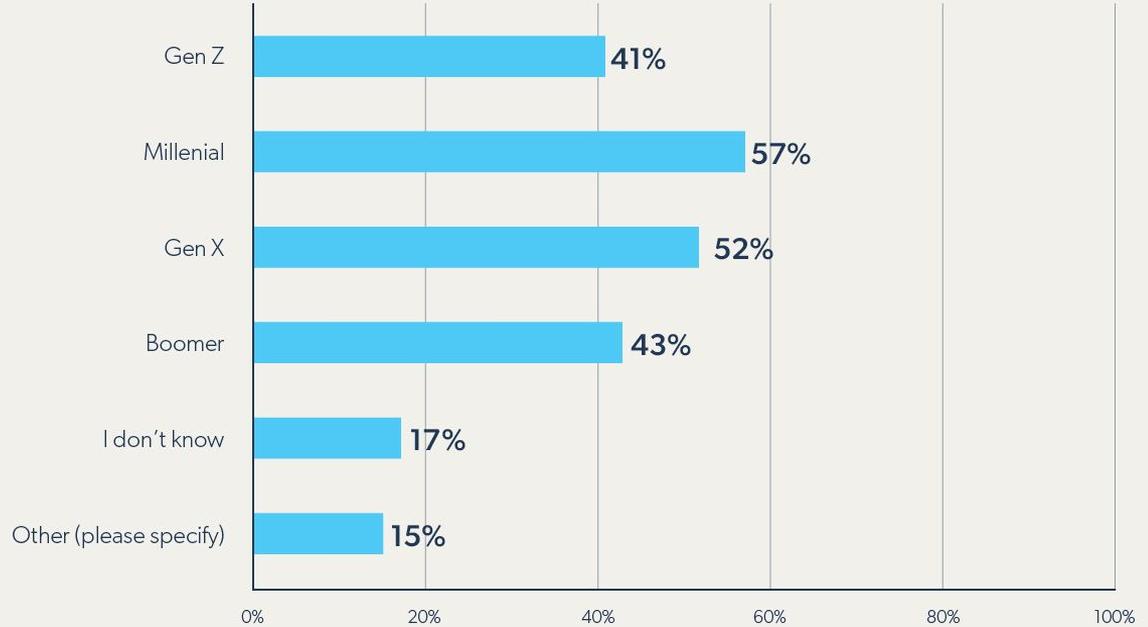
How would you categorize the scope of your coverage?



Millennial and Gen X are the most commonly reported target audiences for journalists

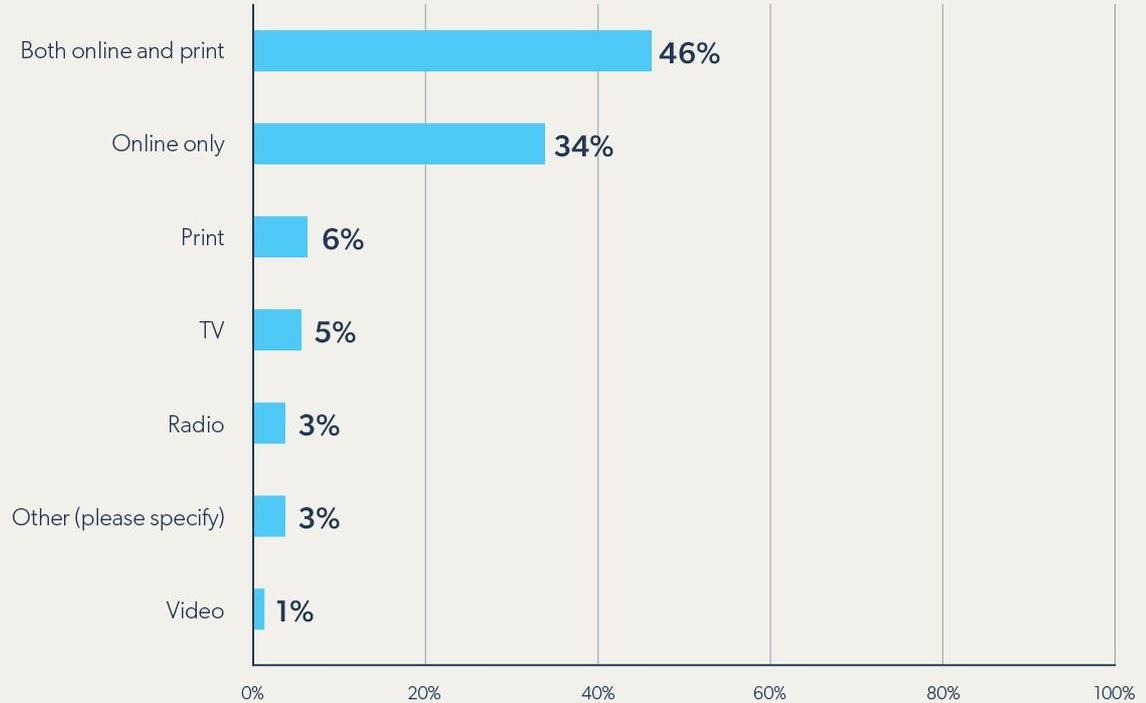
Many who responded “other” targeted based on geographies or said their coverage is for **all ages**.

Who is your target audience? (select all that apply)



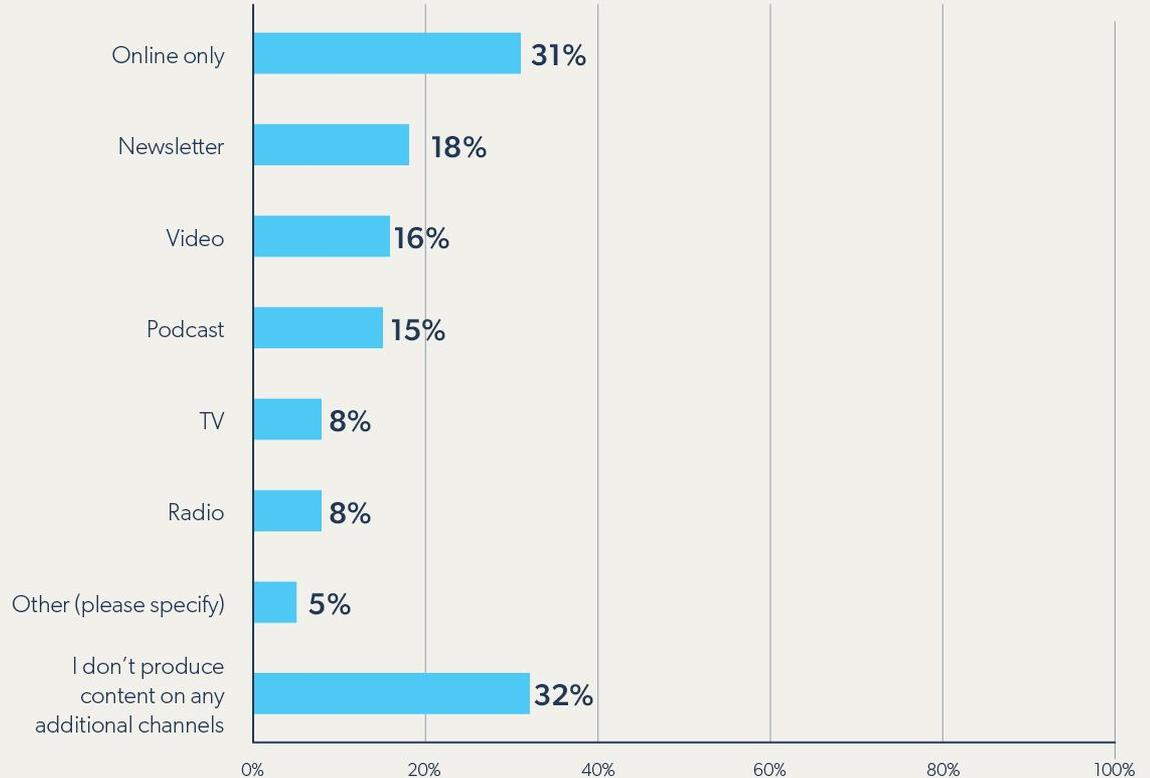
Most respondents primarily report online and just under half also work in print

Which medium do you primarily report in?



The majority of journalists produce content in two or more mediums

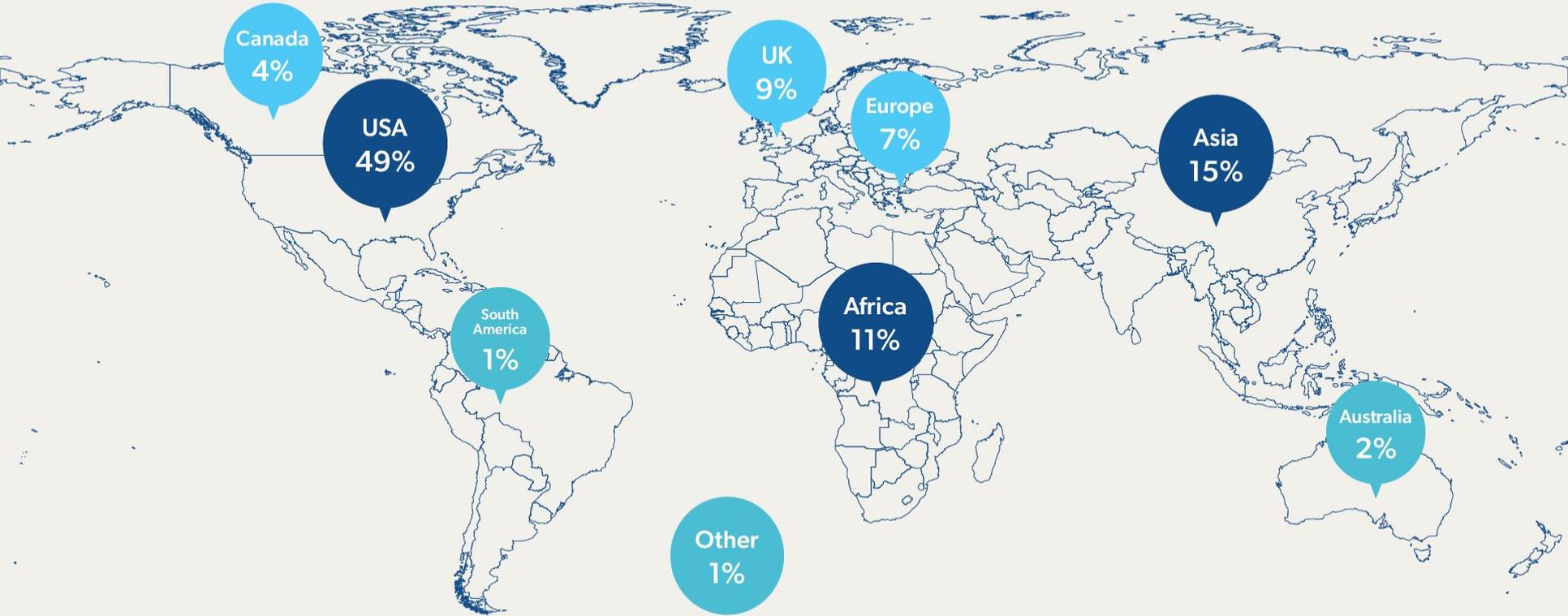
In addition to your primary medium, do you also produce content at least once a month in any of the following?





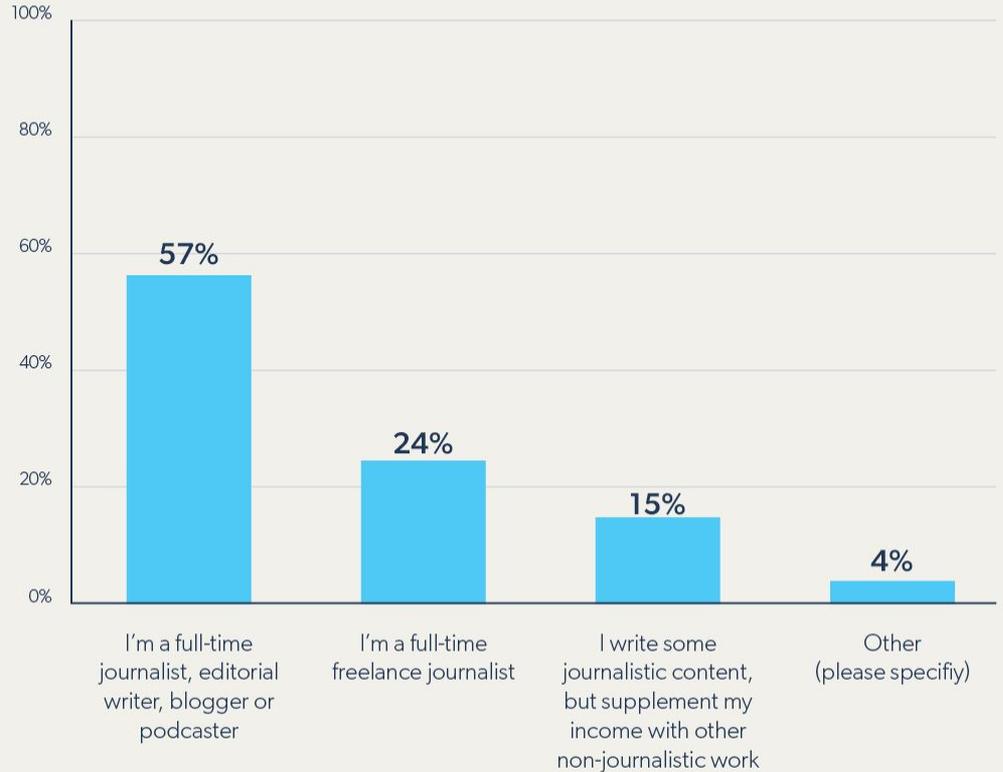
Demographics & salary

Where are you based?

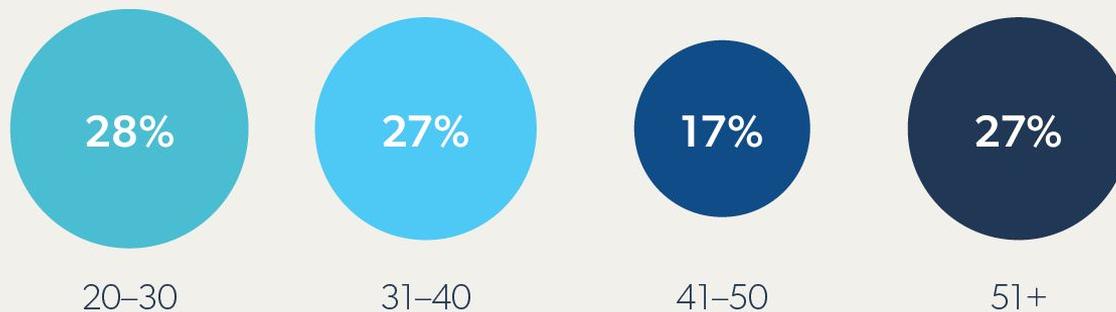


More than 80% of those surveyed are full-time journalists

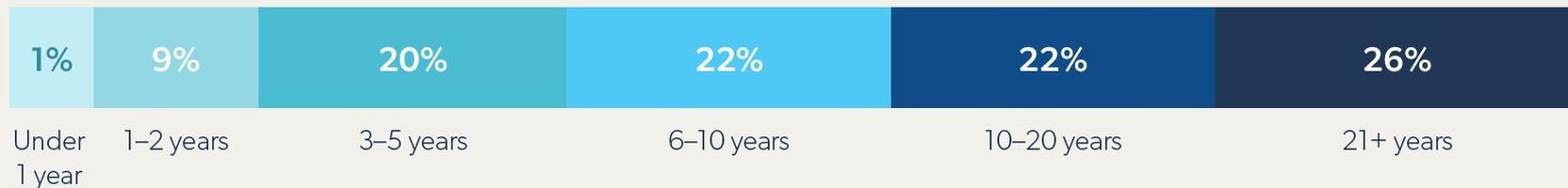
Which of the following best describes you?



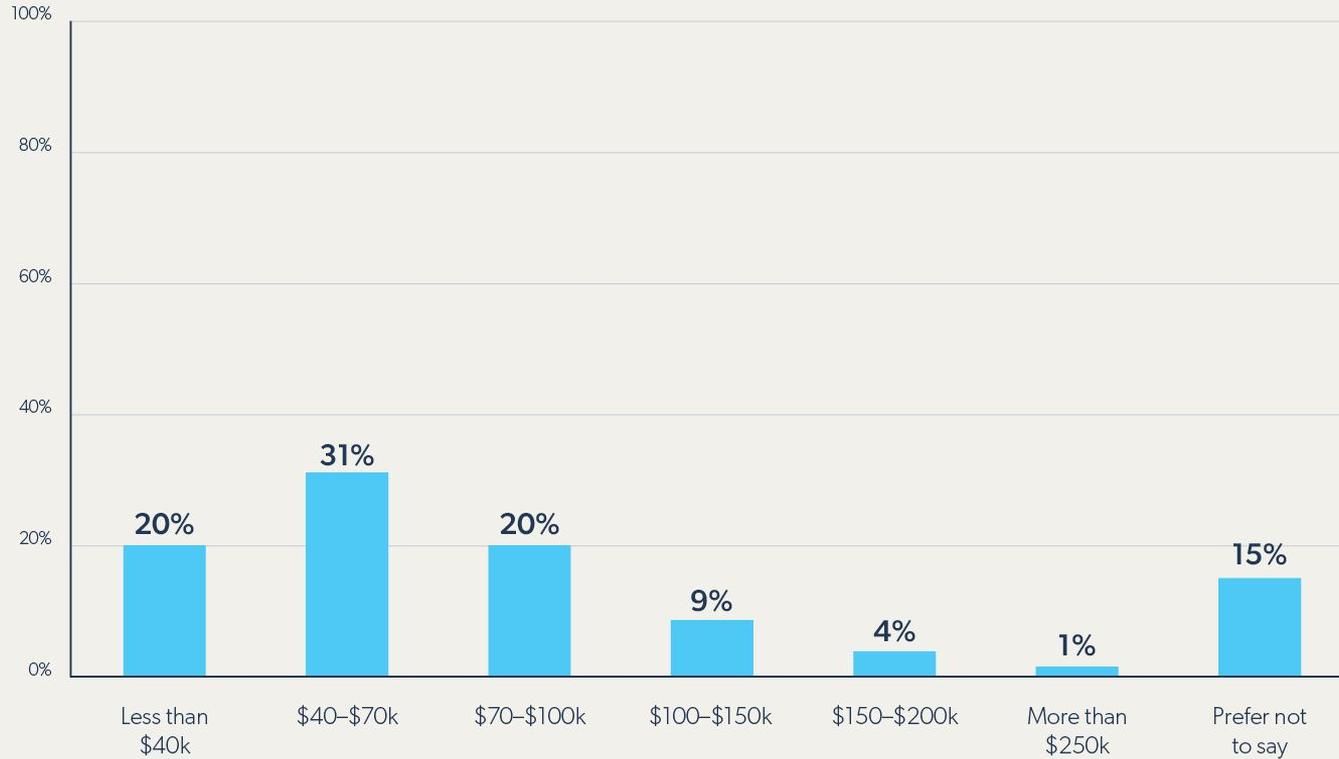
How old are you?



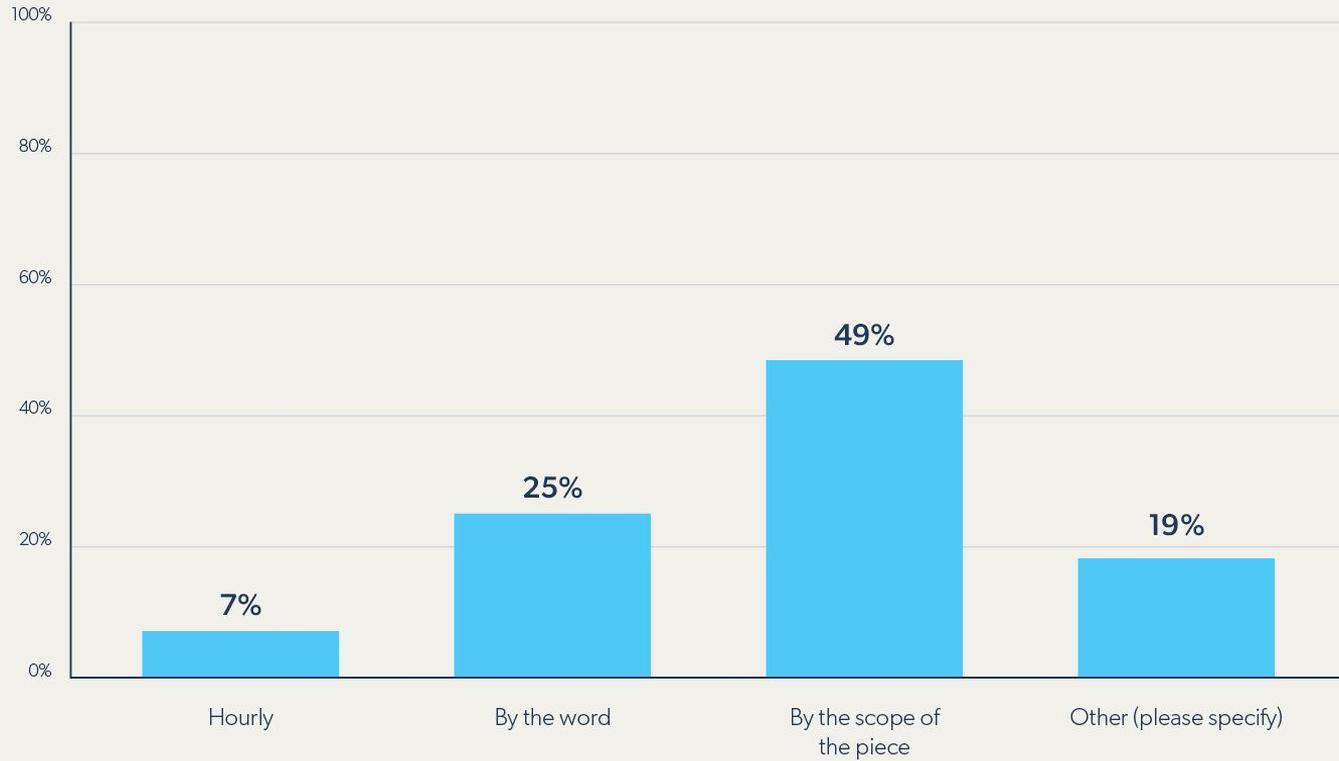
How long have you been a journalist?



How much do you earn a year including bonus? (US respondents only)

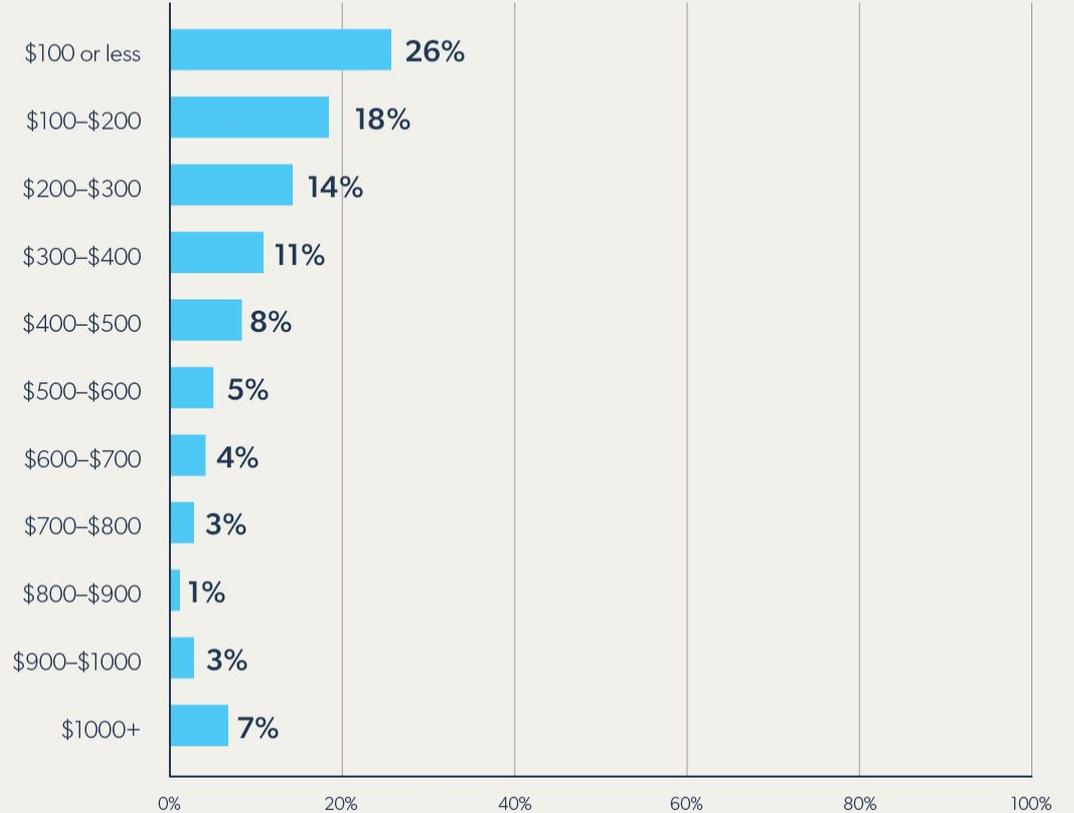


Freelancers: how do you charge for your work?



**Nearly 60% of
freelancers earn
less than \$300
per piece**

Freelancers: on average, how much do you earn per piece?



Thank you!

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