



“Insightful” Media Leadership Up For Grabs Among U.S. Business Elite

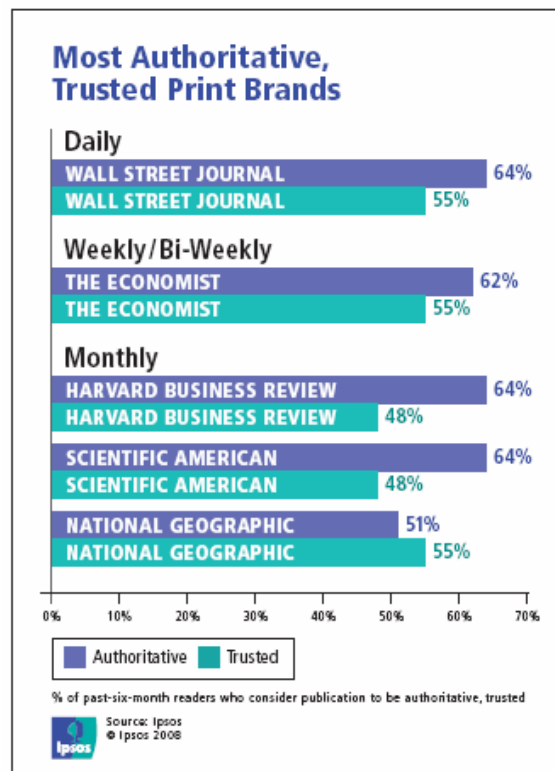
“Authority,” “Trust,” And “Influence” More Often Tied To Legacy Marquee Media Brands

New York, NY, March 10, 2008 – America’s business elite – senior executives, CEOs and other C-suite officers from mid- to large-size companies, including many from the Fortune 500 – see no clear media leaders as sources of “insight,” according to the recent BE: USA survey carried out by Ipsos Media.

As part of a much broader profiling study, Ipsos Media asked these elite purchasers and influencers to assess a wide range of media properties in terms of their (1) authoritativeness, (2) trustworthiness, (3) influence, and (4) insightfulness as information sources. Media properties included leading business and current events periodicals, as well as daily and weekly news and current events TV programming, and web properties.

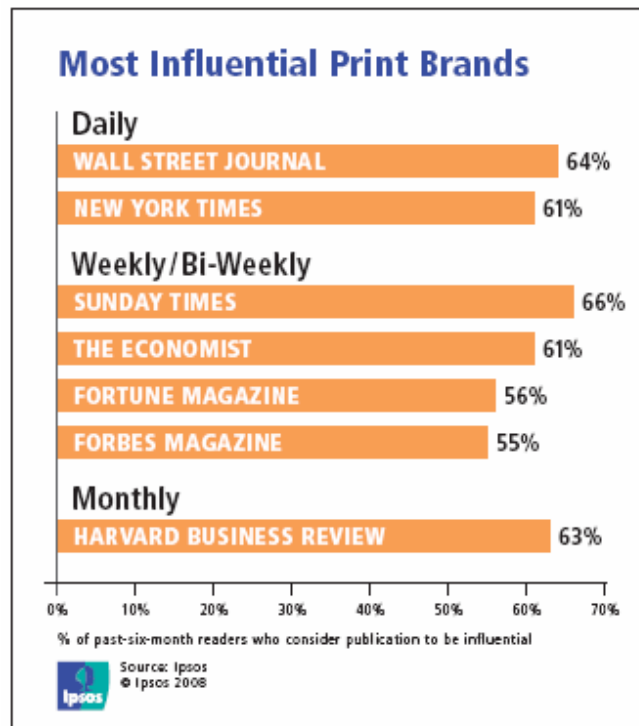
Print Media – Clear Leaders, Except For Broad Competition On “Insight”

Among readers of different print media, the Wall Street Journal is most often seen as “authoritative” among major daily publications, while The Economist is the most authoritative weekly/bi-weekly publication, and Harvard Business Review (HBR) and Scientific American vie for the lead among monthlies (among their respective readership bases). Similarly, the Wall Street Journal and The Economist are rated by those who read them as the most “trustworthy” daily and weekly/bi-weekly media brands, while National Geographic leads HBR and Scientific American by a modest margin among monthlies, again considering their respective readership bases.





When U.S. business elites assess “influence” of leading media that they read, a similar cluster of marquee media brands is joined by Forbes, Fortune, and the New York Times, with the Sunday Times the most influential weekly/bi-weekly.



However, when asked to assess the quality of “insight” provided by various print media, perceived leadership is more broadly dispersed across various publications. Says Todd Board of the Ipsos Media practice, “Overall we see good, healthy competition among a number of print media perceived as high performers in delivering ‘insight.’ Broadly speaking, the ‘insight’ scores for many print media brands are higher than their scores on authority, trust, and influence.”

Continues Board, “There is a positive and a negative spin regarding the marquee media brands. On one hand we clearly see their superior performance as sources of authoritative, trusted, influential information – linked to their similarly strong profile as providers of insight. On the other hand, one could argue that their strengths in these other areas have not paid off in terms of delivering superior insight.”

TV And Web Media – Similar Leadership Profiles To Print Media

Compared to print, leadership among a wide range of news and current events TV programming is somewhat more fragmented. The News Hour with Jim Lehrer and Special Report with Brit Hume vie for leadership as the most authoritative among their viewers (57% and 53%, respectively) and trusted TV news sources (55% each). While NBC’s Meet the Press leads the pack in terms of influence (mentioned by 58% of viewers), various competitors are in a close 2nd tier, each mentioned by between 44% and 55% of U.S. business elites who view them, including: PBS’ News Hour with Jim Lehrer, CNBC’s Mad Money and Power Lunch programs, and The O’Reilly Factor and Special Report from Fox.

Again in terms of ‘insight’ provided by TV news and current events programming, no one property or brand dominates, with similarly high scores for a variety of programs. As with print media, the insight scores for many TV programs are higher than their scores on authority, trust, and influence.



The websites seen as strongest on these four key measures echo the media brands above. The Wall Street Journal website is seen as most authoritative (71%) and trusted (56%) by its users, and vies with the HBR, the New York Times, and Investors.com websites as most influential (62-66% for each). Regarding the most 'insightful' websites, these properties are very strong, though again joined by a number of other strong contenders as well.

Dynamics Of Insight, Influence, Authority, And Trust

Says Board, "This overall pattern underscores the different value and meaning underlying the dimensions we measured. 'Authoritativeness' and 'trust' seem closely linked, which probably makes intuitive sense. If we think in terms of politicians, we might say I 'trust' a politician if I believe the person says what he or she means – and that person's 'authoritative' if what he or she says is backed up by facts."

Board continues, "Influence takes on a more subjective cast, since my assessment of a news media's influence reflects my perception of what goes on in other people's minds, not just my own. At the same time, like authority and trust, influence has a strong 'heritage' element – generally speaking, the ability to be authoritative, trusted, and influential requires an established track record."

In conclusion, Board notes, "Finally, we see in the dimension of 'insight' the critical forward-looking aspect – while certainly there is value in historical perspective, without clear relevance to future decisions it's useless to the business elite. It's striking how many news brands are seen as strong purveyors of insight, without having the same perceived strength in authority, trust, and influence."

"The venerable brands we see here as strong on all dimensions shape and condition the broader discourse on topics important to the business elite – the space within which others' (and their own) insights can be voiced and validated. The ability of other media brands to generate insight is arguably 'standing on the shoulders' of these trusted, influential brands, along with other key newsgathering entities like the AP and CNN."

For more information on this news release, please contact:

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