

2008 WEB INFLUENCERS INTERNET MEDIA TOUR SURVEY



DS SIMON PRODUCTIONS INC

NEW YORK

CHICAGO

LOS ANGELES



Organizations are increasingly looking to Internet Media Tours to reach important audiences. While these tours combine digital media releases, video, web syndication and social media marketing, it's often the ability to earn media with "web influencers" that determines the success of the campaign. Smart communicators realize that these web influencers, or "webfluencers", as I like to call them, are actually growing in influence to where they have become part of the mainstream media themselves.

Even as they grow in importance, it has become very clear to us that very little is known about how to approach and work with these "webfluencers" to get your story told. What do they value most in PR people? What gets in the way? Are there differences between what web producers need if they work for a TV station, magazine, newspaper, website or blog? How is video being used across all of these mediums? Is outside video needed? We decided to find out.

We gathered the responses of 200 "webfluencers." While the individual respondents were guaranteed anonymity, we can tell you that we heard from top media outlets including USA Today, Entertainment Weekly, network affiliate TV stations in the top 10 media markets, WINS-AM Radio in New York (the highest rated radio station in the country), top media websites as well as one-person "Mommy-blogging" sites.

The result is the D S Simon Productions 2008 Web Influencers Internet Media Tour Survey. We hope the findings will validate your best thinking, inform, and, in some cases, surprise. Most of all, we hope it will help you do a better job for your organization or the clients you serve.

I welcome your feedback and hope you find the information of value.

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TOPICS OF INTEREST FOR WEB INFLUENCERS

We ranked topics of interest in order from highest to lowest as reported by TV, radio, newspapers & magazines, and "Web Media" (independent websites and blogs). The differences are important to consider as you target your media outreach.

TV	Radio	Print	Web Media
1. Politics	1. Politics	1. Technology	1. Technology
2. Healthcare	2. Technology	2. Business	2. Entertainment
3. Technology	3. Business (tie)	3. Sports	3. Business
4. Personal Finance	3. Entertainment (tie)	4. Entertainment	4. Travel
5. Entertainment	3. Food & Beverage (tie)	5. Politics	5. Food & Beverage (tie)
6. Sports	6. Healthcare (tie)	6. Healthcare	5. Politics (tie)
7. Fashion/Beauty	6. Personal Finance (tie)	7. Food & Beverage	7. Home Products
8. Business	8. Sports	8. Travel	8. Fashion/Beauty
9. Travel	9. Home Products	9. Personal Finance	9. Healthcare (tie)
10. Food & Beverage (tie)	10. Travel	10. Fashion/Beauty	9. Sports (tie)
10. Home Products (tie)	11. Fashion/Beauty	11. Home Products	11. Personal Finance

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAID THEY HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

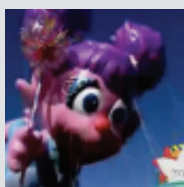
While it may seem redundant, this graph is important as it shows how coverage for websites becomes increasingly wide focused as we move from TV to radio to print and finally "Web Media".

	TV	Radio	Print	Web Media
HEALTHCARE	0%	12%	15%	33%
TECHNOLOGY	0%	2%	6%	7%
POLITICS	0%	0%	18%	28%
FOOD & BEVERAGE	27%	11%	16%	35%
HOME PRODUCTS	27%	13%	23%	42%
FASHION/BEAUTY	18%	20%	39%	43%
ENTERTAINMENT	0%	8%	17%	26%
SPORTS	5%	12%	29%	49%
TRAVEL	14%	13%	26%	27%
PERSONAL FINANCE	5%	11%	21%	48%
BUSINESS	6%	12%	9%	35%

INTERNET MEDIA TOUR

PLACEMENTS WITH WEB INFLUENCERS

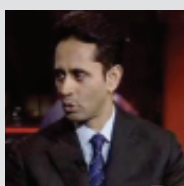
As organizations are looking to create Social Media Buzz™ for their initiatives, a key first step is understanding how different “Web influencers” are using content. The six examples below represent different types of placements and include links to video excerpts. It includes Webisode placement on a TV network site, a press junket for a leading business publication website, a satellite interview with a network’s online video program, web syndication, social media placements with StumbleUpon, as well as an actor’s charity work that is promoted through social media on a fan site. Click the samples below for video excerpts.



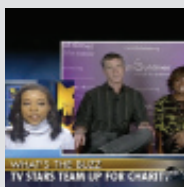
TWO “BEHIND-THE-SCENES-WEBISODES” OF MACY’S THANKSGIVING DAY PREPARATIONS ARE FEATURED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF NBC.COM



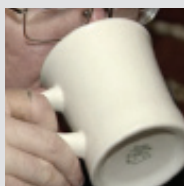
THE WEBISODE FOR ACTOR, DANNY PINO’S CHARITY INITIATIVE ON BEHALF OF CASA (COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN), IS PLACED ON FAN SITE THROUGH A VIRAL SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVE.



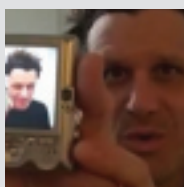
A GLOBAL SATELLITE MEDIA TOUR FOR TATA COMMUNICATIONS INCLUDES A PRESS JUNKET FOR FORBES.COM AS THEY WENT TO OUR STUDIO AND USED OUR GEAR TO CONDUCT THEIR INTERVIEW.



ABC NEWS NOW, A DIGITAL, BROADBAND, MOBILE AND CABLE TV SERVICE FROM ABC NEWS, INTERVIEWS TOM BERGERON AND SHERRI SHEPHERD VIA SATELLITE AS THEY REPRESENT MARCH OF DIMES FOR ITS MARCH FOR BABIES INITIATIVE.



VIEWERS “STUMBLEUPON” THIS STORY FOR THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS ON THEIR STUDY OF COFFEE AND LIFE EXPECTANCY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZ. IT WAS ALSO PICKED UP BY WEBMD.



ISAAC MIZRAHI’S ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS WEB TV SHOW WAS SYNDICATED ACROSS A DOZEN WEBSITES.

Transparency is key. Identify your organization as the source of the video with an on-screen graphic. As the video is shared, the source of the video will still be clear.

WEB INFLUENCERS AND PR PEOPLE

Do "Webfluencers" who report for websites and blogs have much in common with other media when it comes to their relationship with PR people? Yes and no. Here are some of their responses when we asked them for some "do's" and "don'ts" for PR people.

THESE ANSWERS COULD HAVE COME FROM ANY JOURNALIST...

Do...

"Keep communications to the point and minus all the ridiculous buzz words. My brain glazes over with stuff like 'up leveling the innovation of the next generation on-demand proaction oriented marchitecture.' No one understands that sort of c#@p and it does not communicate anything, yet probably 75% of the press releases out there are loaded with it."

DON'T...

"Give me bad information. Just today, I was contacted by a PR person who'd pitched a hotel package I'd written about. She'd provided wrong information. She wanted a correction. I will not be dealing with her again."

"Web Media" wants rights to use and share the information you provide and provide valuable links to its viewers.

Do...

"Include copyright free jpgs."

Do...

"Allow bloggers to republish their content - it only helps the client and helps to get your story in front of more readers and potential customers. Of course we should always link back to your clients."

Do...

"Always send links to stories or weblog posts. It saves me time that I have to spend searching Google for the link."

Bloggers and web reporters were more likely to raise technical concerns...

DON'T SEND...

"PDF files and large attachments, long press releases, mass mailing with no relevance to our sites, no links in press releases, not returning emails. The worst: Asking us to let YOU know when we've posted about your client. Add our site to your rss reader or set up a google alert. We're busy too you know..."

DON'T...

"Telephone without first sending a *short*, *individualized*, *ASCII text* pitch, summarizing their pitch and inviting me to call, e-mail, or visit their Website if I choose."

DON'T...

"Overstate the importance of the news; provide vendor quotes but not customer/user quotes; not provide direct links to the products, services or organizations under discussion."

There is a mercenary feel in the blogosphere and obviously, bloggers don't always respect journalistic protocols (but neither do some traditional journalists)

SEND MONEY...

"First be willing to send products and not expect them to be returned, secondly offer to pay for the services that we provide. Writing a product review is the same as advertising, you wouldn't advertise for free anywhere else why do you do it on blogs?"

...AND PRODUCTS

"For those of you that are not familiar with mom bloggers... that whole not getting paid thing is only partially true... the samples you send **ARE** the payment so don't send samples that are dirty or broken. I'd love to say that that's not happened .. or not happened more than once."

DON'T...

"Send me things 'under embargo' without asking. I will ignore any embargo that I didn't agree to in advance."

HOW WEB INFLUENCERS ARE USING VIDEO

DOES YOUR WEBSITE USE VIDEO TO COVER STORIES?

Not surprisingly, TV stations were most likely to use video at 79%. Websites and bloggers were second at 70%. More than half of all newspapers and magazines are using video on their sites.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
TV	79%	17%	4%
Radio	59%	41%	0%
Print	53%	44%	3%
Web Media	70%	28%	2%
AVERAGE	65%	32%	2%

DO YOU PRODUCE ALL OF THE VIDEO CONTENT FOR YOUR WEBSITE OR DO YOU EVER USE OUTSIDE VIDEO?

"Web Media" is the most open to using outside video (81%). Radio stations (69%) were next followed by print outlets (52%) and television stations (45%).

	IN-HOUSE CONTENT ONLY	OUTSIDE CONTENT ONLY	BOTH	USES OUTSIDE CONTENT (OUTSIDE ONLY + BOTH)
TV	55%	9%	36%	45%
Radio	31%	13%	56%	69%
Print	48%	12%	40%	52%
Web Media	19%	31%	50%	81%
AVERAGE	38%	16%	45%	61%

IF YOU CONSIDER USING OUTSIDE VIDEO, WOULD YOU USE:

(CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY)

The politicization of third-party video on television has carried over to station websites where they overwhelmingly are interested in using B-Roll compared to other content. What's compelling is the print space which is actually more interested in sound bites on their websites and is very open to scripted pieces. The strongest interest in outside video content was from "Web Media".

	B-ROLL	SOUNDBITES	SCRIPTED PIECE
TV	89%	6%	6%
Radio	55%	86%	28%
Print	62%	71%	43%
Web Media	72%	75%	55%
AVERAGE	69%	59%	33%

WHAT AMOUNT OF WEBSITE VIDEO CONTENT DO YOU THINK YOU WILL BE DOING IN A YEAR FROM NOW?

What's most clear is that all forms of media will be transforming themselves into online television stations over the next year. More than three-quarters of media outlets surveyed anticipate having more or much more video content on their site.

	MUCH MORE	MORE	SAME	LESS	MORE + MUCH MORE
TV	30%	52%	17%	0%	82%
Radio	24%	50%	24%	3%	74%
Print	18%	58%	24%	0%	76%
Web Media	21%	55%	23%	1%	76%
AVERAGE	23%	54%	22%	1%	77%

DOES YOUR WEBSITE USE VIDEO TO COVER STORIES SEPARATE FROM YOUR NEWSCASTS?

Nearly 60% of TV stations use video to cover stories online that don't air on the news. There are story placement opportunities independent of the broadcast.

	YES	NO
TV	58%	33%
Radio	56%	44%
AVERAGE	57%	38%

SHARING AND ACQUIRING CONTENT

DO YOU SHARE YOUR WEB VIDEO CONTENT WITH OTHER SITES?

As the online video community has evolved to become predominantly about sharing content and social media, the websites of television stations have been slow to respond. Barely one in five of them share their content with other sites. They also finished lowest in how much content they carry from other sites. What we found is the PR community is far more likely to have their story expand virally if it is placed on the websites of newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and bloggers, compared to those of TV stations. This is going to diminish the value of TV station websites in the future if they don't adapt.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
TV	22%	57%	22%
Radio	36%	46%	18%
Print	34%	59%	6%
Web Media	47%	33%	20%
AVERAGE	35%	49%	16%

DO YOU CARRY WEB VIDEO FROM OTHER SOURCES/SYNDICATORS?

Not surprisingly, the newspapers, magazines, websites and bloggers are more likely to carry video from other sources and syndicators. Our survey identified those sources and found differences between the four groups in whom they rely on for content.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
TV	13%	65%	22%
Radio	27%	50%	24%
Print	44%	44%	13%
Web Media	47%	39%	14%
AVERAGE	33%	49%	18%

ACQUIRING CONTENT

Our survey found digital distribution has not become the norm for television stations. More than two-thirds of them (68%) prefer to receive content by satellite, tape, or DVD. However, for the websites of radio stations (88%), newspapers and magazines (89%) and "Web Media" (89%), they overwhelmingly want content digitally through an FTP site, download, data disc, or embed code.

	SATELLITE	TAPE	FTP	DOWNLOAD	DATA DISC	DVD	EMBED CODE
TV	36%	24%	8%	24%	0%	8%	0%
Radio	0%	13%	31%	57%	0%	0%	0%
Print	0%	0%	32%	30%	19%	19%	0%
Web Media	0%	2%	23%	43%	9%	10%	14%
AVERAGE	9%	10%	23%	38%	7%	9%	4%

WHAT SOURCES/SYNDICATORS DO YOU USE?

Broadcasters and magazines are more likely to get their content from traditional sources, despite the inroads YouTube has made, but bloggers and websites are more likely to use new media.

TV	Web Media
Broadcast News Networks	YouTube
Cable News Networks	Broadcast News Networks
AP	Cable News Networks
Gannett	International News Networks
NNS	AP
Clear Channel Affiliates	MTV
Radio	Brightcove
Broadcast News Networks	Red Lasso
Clear Channel Affiliates	Google
AP	Entertainment Tonight
Print	The Onion
AP	Bravo
Gatehouse News Service	Yahoo!
Broadcast News Networks	Daily Motion
Gannett	BlogHer
YouTube	AlphaMomTV
Getty	Lifetime Network
Affiliates	MySpace
	Comedy Central
	Oxygen
	Fast Company TV
	AOL
	Hulu
	"Anyone who will give me video."

FINAL THOUGHTS

What's clear from the survey data is that all forms of media are in the process of transforming themselves into online television networks. As video has become dominant online, "Web Media" has been first to adapt and is growing in power and influence. From a communicator's perspective, reaching out to the "Webfluencers" has much in common with traditional media relations. You need to have a story that has value to their viewership. You need a knowledge base about their beat. You have to respect their deadlines, etc. What is different is their expectation that you will have content available that will work for them in their environment. And the biggest difference is that the content can live forever. The power of "Webfluencers" will continue to grow as we all look to increase the amount of positive information that shows up in searches of importance to our brands.

METHODOLOGY

We wanted to provide opinions from the broadest range of media in conducting this survey. To that end, we developed the survey online and distributed it via e-mail to our contacts using Survey Monkey as the backbone for data collection. Individual surveys were sent out to television, radio, print and "Web Media" so we could collect data individually by media type.

Social media motivators were used to increase response. We promised a small donation to the charity of choice of one respondent, who was picked at random. In keeping with web culture, respondents chose to opt-in and respond. We can't make inferences about how this approach may or may not have affected the data. Given that we received more than 200 responses, we're confident that much can be learned from this information.

ABOUT D S SIMON PRODUCTIONS INC

Established 22 years ago, D S Simon Productions, Inc., is a leading video communications firm that produces and syndicates content through the Internet, Broadcast News Media and to captive audiences through a variety of distribution channels. For years, the company was known primarily for its expertise in generating earned media coverage on broadcast outlets through the use of VNRs, SMTs, B-Roll, and PSAs, while also producing award-winning corporate video for clients.

As the media landscape has evolved, our company has expanded our offerings to take advantage of the explosion of online video and social media. While still providing some of the traditional Broadcast PR Services that we built our reputation on, the company is staking out further leadership positioning with Internet Media Tours and other new services aimed at helping the PR community take advantage of the public's new media consumption habits. In 2008, we have won 12 industry awards for excellence. Our blog can be found at: www.dssimonvlogviews.com.



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