

The State of PR 2019

How PR teams are spending their time,
money and attention

A study by

MUCK RACK

In this report, we seek to answer:



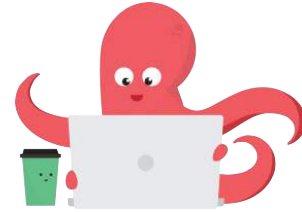
1

How are PR teams spending their time?



2

What are the top challenges PR pros face?



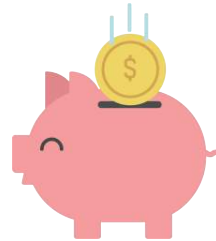
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How do PR pros try to reach journalists?



4

How do PR pros use social media?



5

How are PR budgets changing and how are teams allocating them?



1

How are PR teams spending their time?

Average daily productivity software usage: PR pros use email, spreadsheets and documents

Which of the following general productivity tools do you spend the most time using on an average day?

Email



Documents



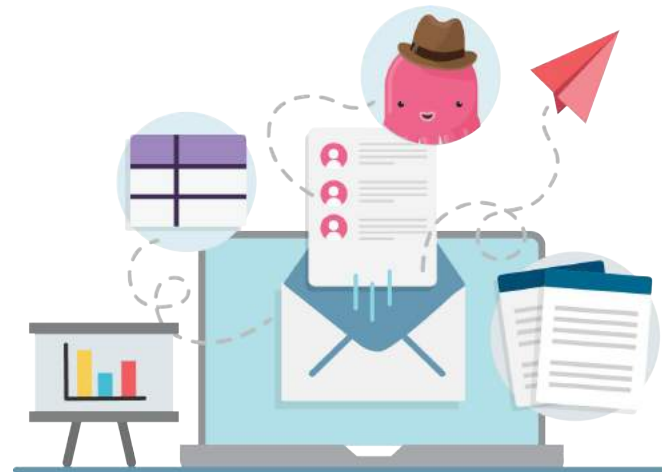
Spreadsheets



Presentations



None of the above



Average daily PR software usage: Media databases are the most used tool, followed by monitoring tools

Which of the following types of PR tools do you spend the most time using on an average day?

Media/Journalist database



Wire service/News wire



News monitoring



None of the above



17% of PR pros are not currently using *any* PR software!

On an average day: A healthy number of PR pros use Slack for chat and project management tools like Trello and Basecamp

Are there any tools you use heavily that we haven't mentioned?

Number of mentions



B2B messaging

59



Slack

7



Skype

7



Microsoft
Teams

Product management

11



Trello

7



Basecamp

6



Asana

Design

15



Adobe
(Photoshop
+ Illustrator)

6



Canva



PR pros use a mix of software on a daily basis, with email (98%), documents (87%) and media databases (69%) as the most popular tools used.

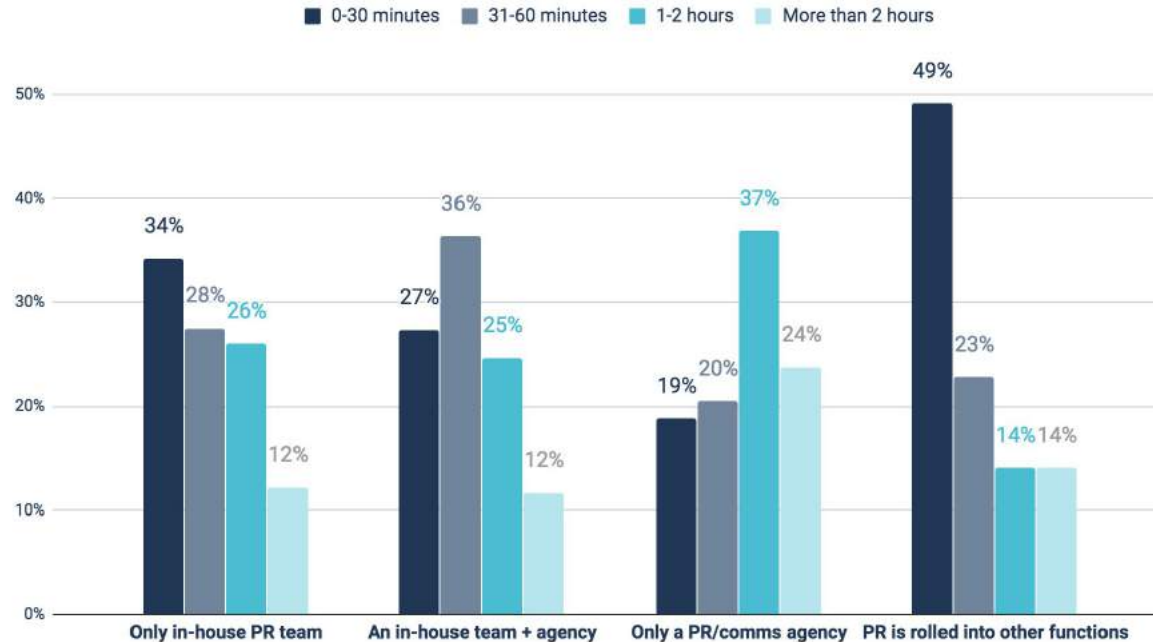
Meanwhile, about $\frac{1}{3}$ of PR pros use social media, web analytics and/or email marketing software daily.

Only 10% of PR pros use a CRM (without a media database), though nearly 60% of teams use spreadsheets daily (a common use case of which, especially for teams without a dedicated CRM for PR, is static media lists).

Across industries, roles and geographies, many PR teams are wasting over 2 hours a week on manual data entry

On average, how much time does the average person on your team spend performing data entry and manual work per day?

Average time spent on data entry per person by PR management distribution



Across brands, industries, titles and geographies, PR teams are wasting days—even months—a year

Time spent on manual data entry by team size per year



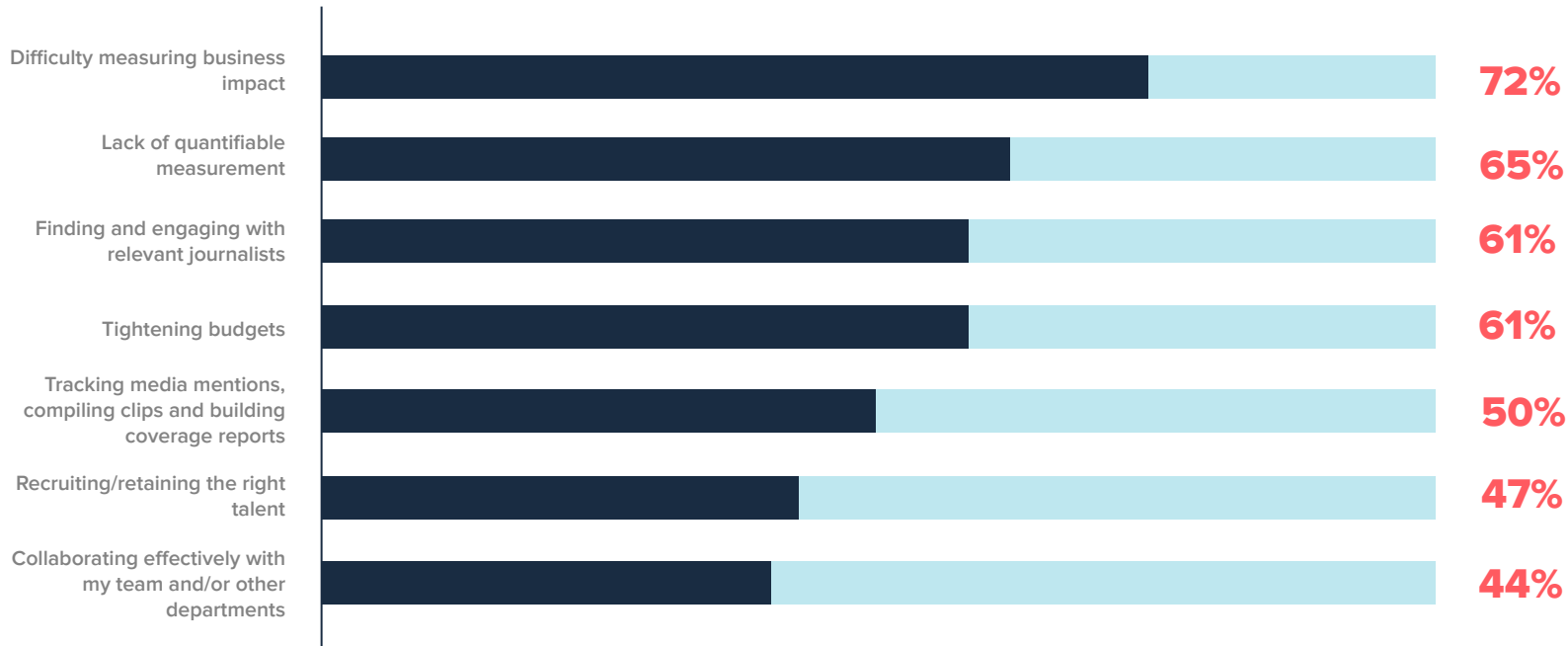


2

What are the top challenges PR pros face?

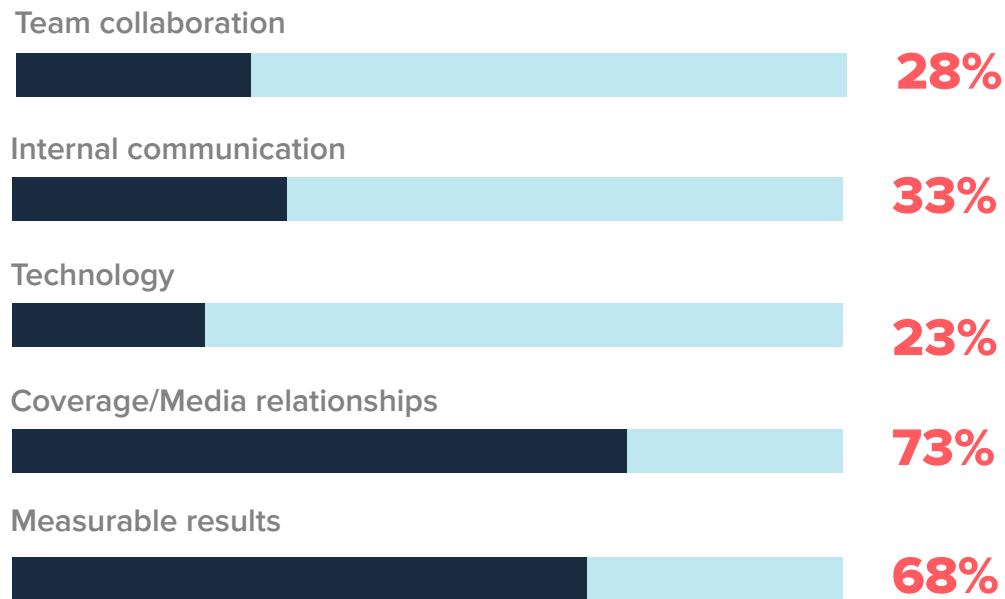
Top challenges: Measuring business impact, quantifiable measurement and journalist relationships

Rank the following PR/communications challenges your company faces



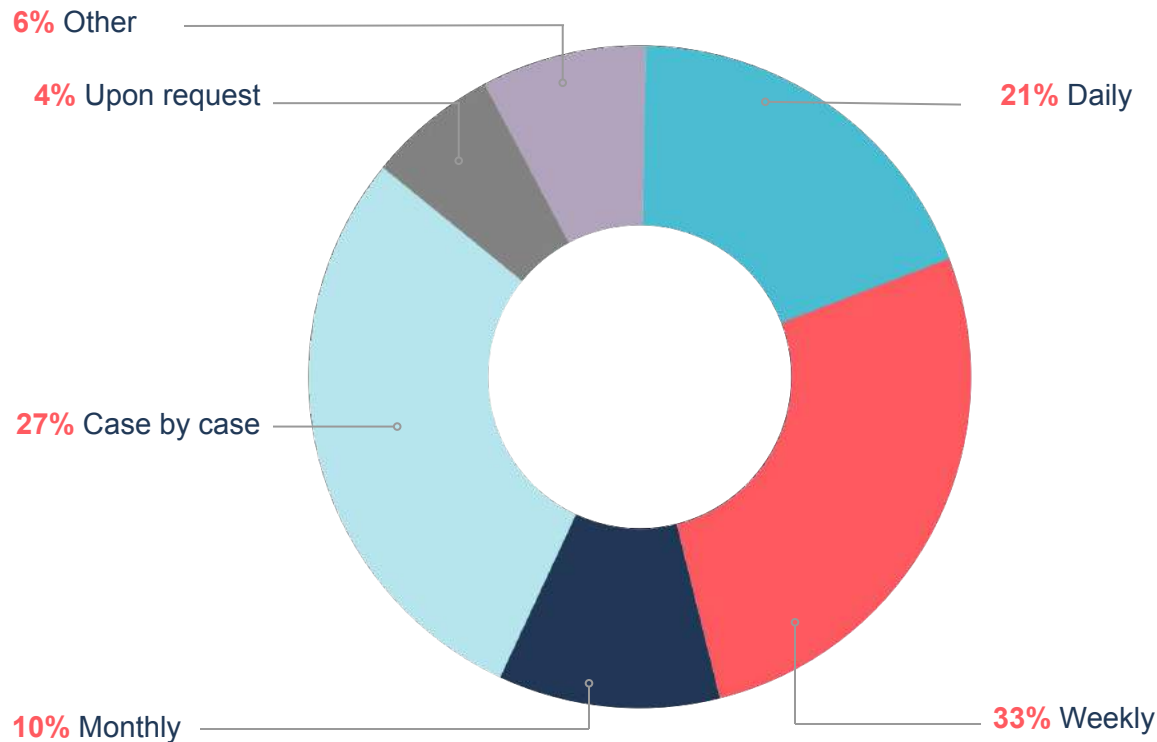
Top ways to show internal value of PR: media coverage and relationships, followed by measurable results of that coverage

How can PR increase it's value inside your organization?



Most executive teams get briefed on PR activities weekly

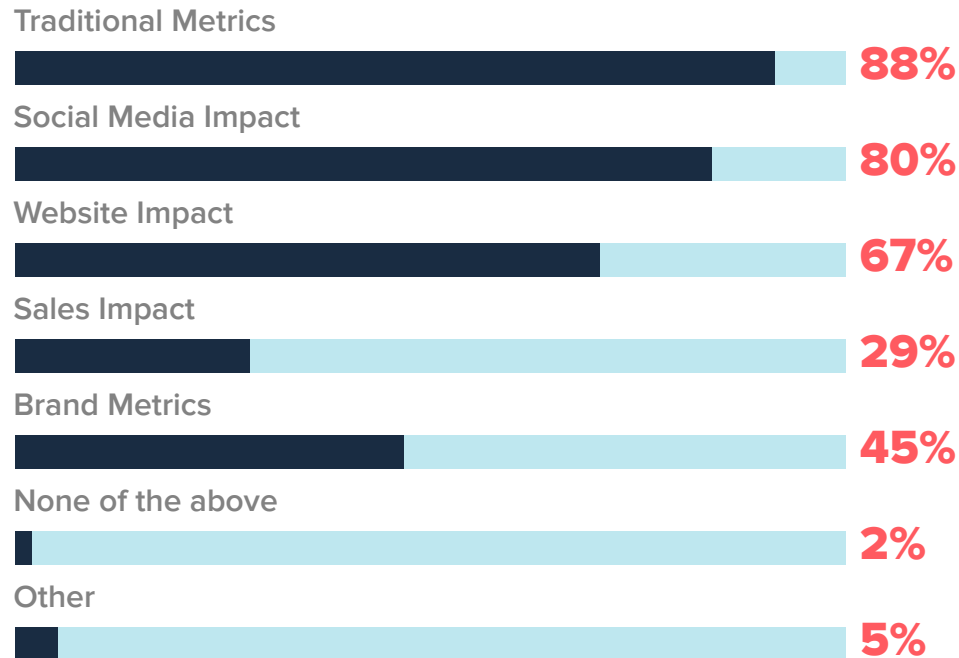
How often is your executive team briefed on PR and communications activities?



54% of executive teams are briefed at least weekly on PR and communications activities, with a little over 1/4 briefed on a case by case basis.

PR pros are using a variety of metrics to quantify impact of PR and comms efforts

Which of the following metrics do you use to quantify the impact of your PR and communications efforts? *(Select all that apply)*



98% of pros are at least measuring their PR in some way. The vast majority of pr teams track traditional metrics like coverage and audience reach, social media impact and website impact.

A little under a third look at sales impact. This might be much harder to measure for some businesses than others (based on scale, tech stack and type of sales conducted); also brand-specific

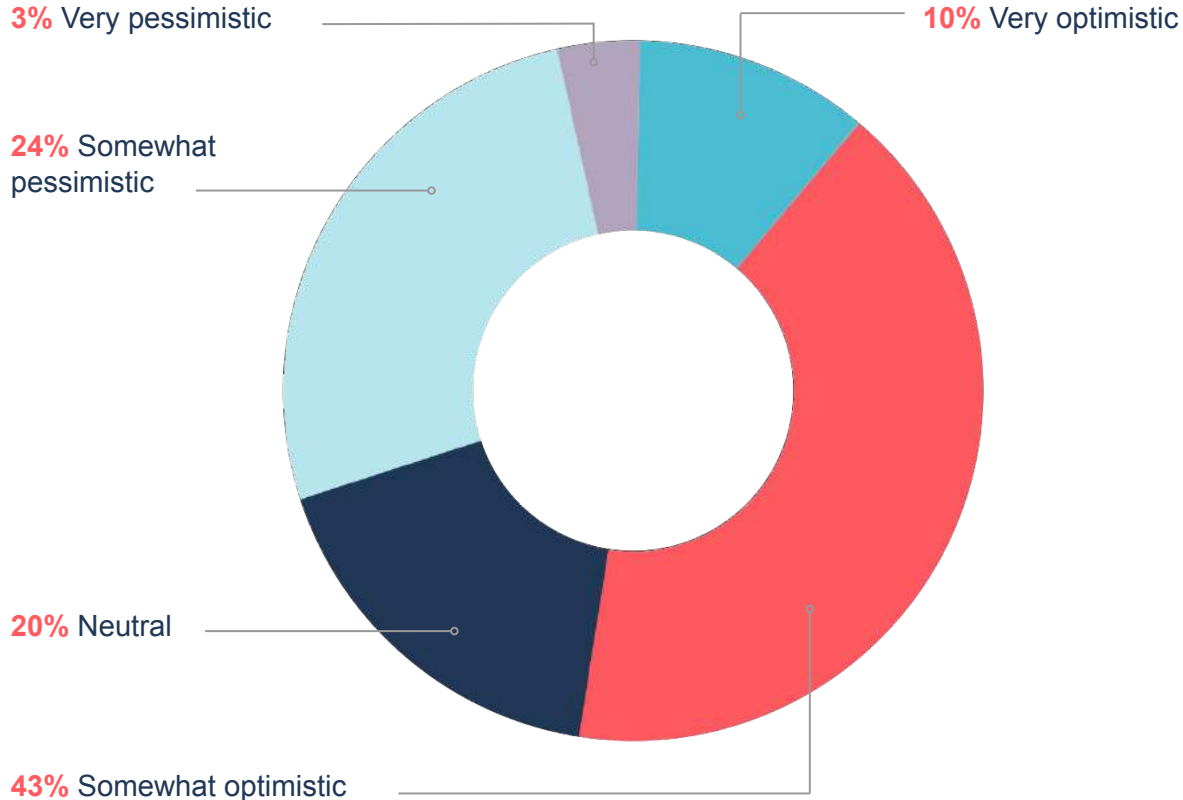


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How do PR pros try to reach journalists?

PR pros and journalists are similarly optimistic about the industry

Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of journalism?

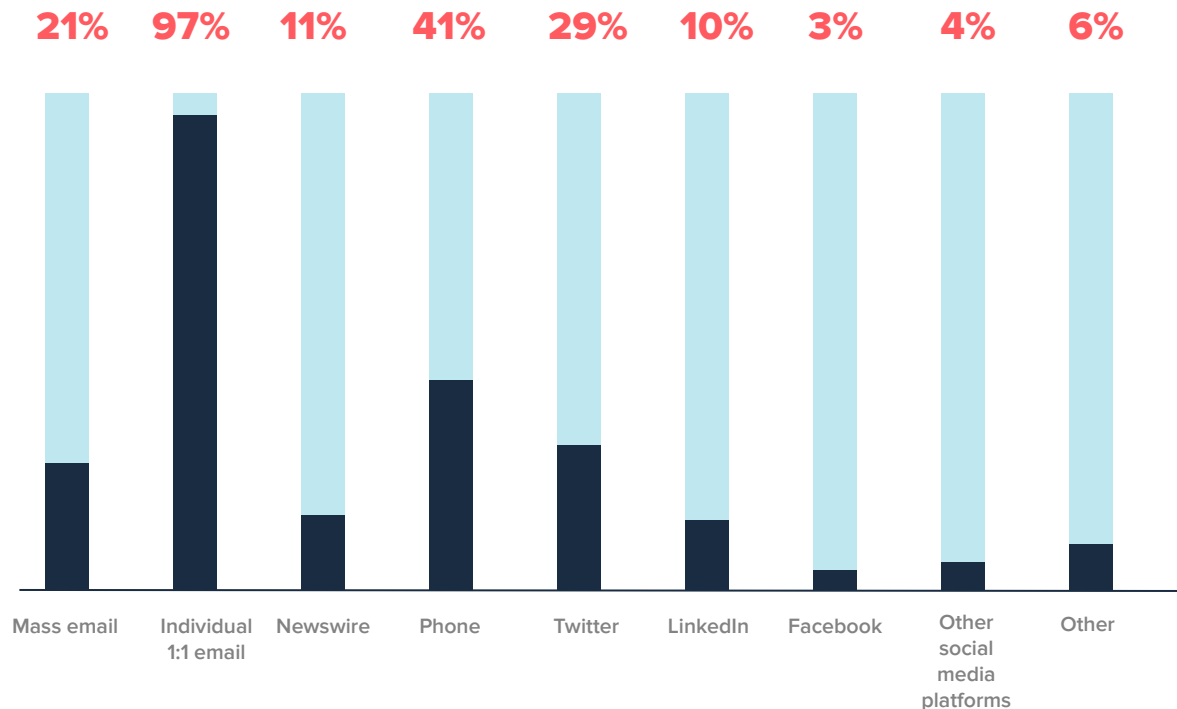


52% of PR pros are at least somewhat optimistic, about a quarter pessimistic and **20%** neutral.

This closely mirrors our annual Journalist Survey, which found that **55%** of journalists were either somewhat or very optimistic and **45%** were pessimistic.

PR pros try to reach journalists using a variety of channels

Which of the following channels do you find to be the most effective for pitching journalists?

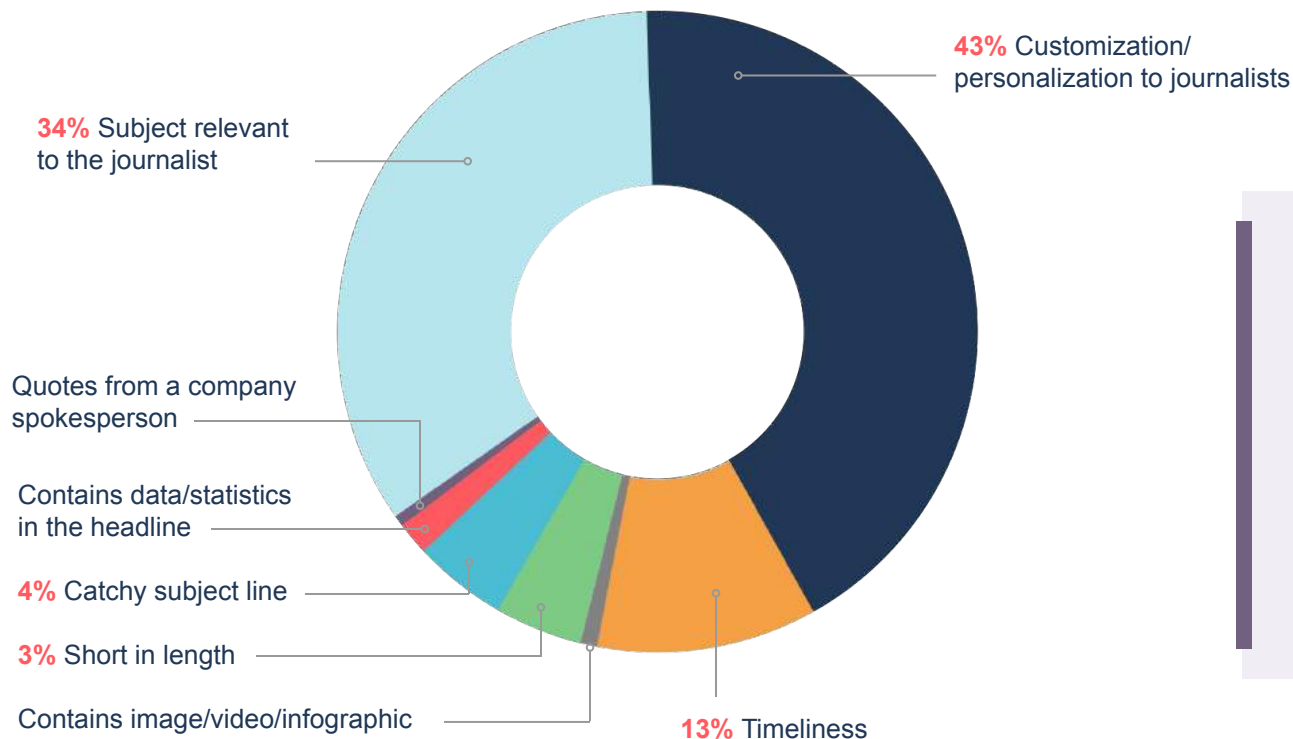


While PR pros might try a variety of channels to reach journalists, journalists really just want to receive relevant emails.

Our annual Journalist Survey shows that **93%** of journalists prefer to be pitched over email, **2%** phone, **2%** Twitter, **3%** other.

Personalization and timeliness are most important for a good pitch

Which of the following components do you believe is most important in a pitch?



Journalists say lack of personalization is the #1 reason why they reject otherwise relevant pitches

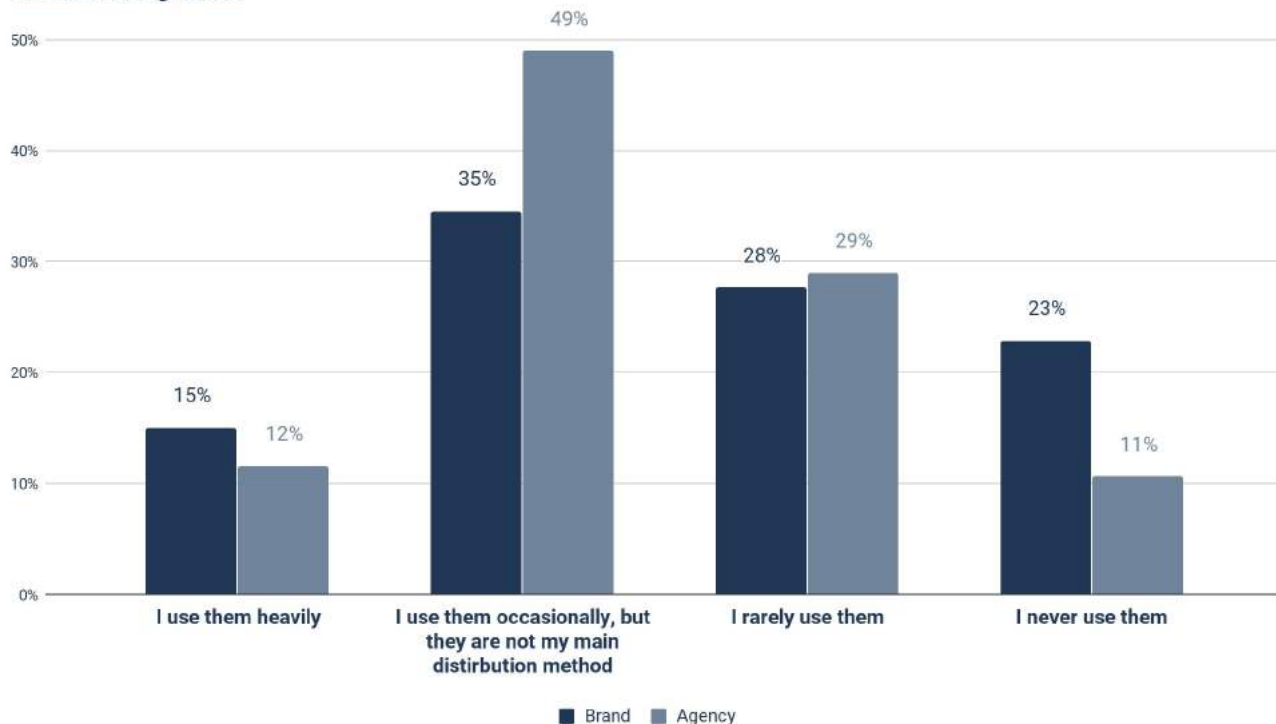
AND

PR pros say customization/personalization are the most important elements of a good pitch, followed by timeliness

Most PR Pros use newswires, though **only 3% of journalists** rely on them

How important are press releases sent via newswire services to your PR strategy?

Brands vs. Agencies



3% of journalists rely on newswires heavily, and **31%** rely on them somewhat. **50%** don't rely on them at all.

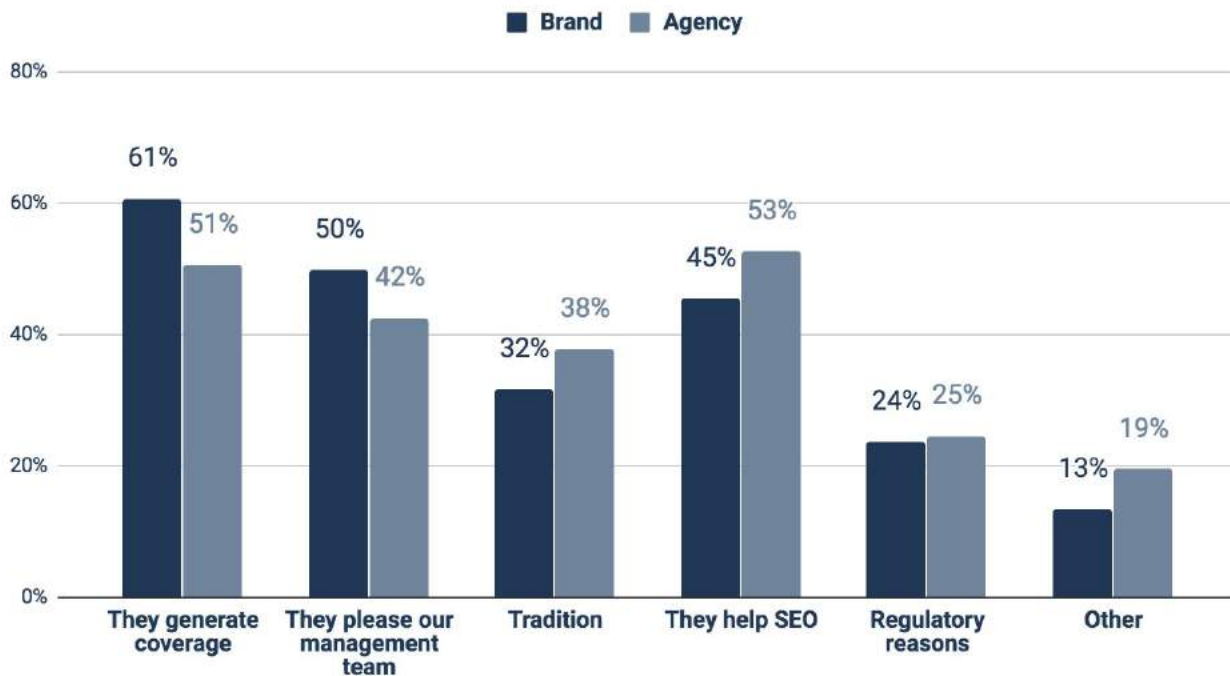
And for the vast majority, mass distribution from newswires is synonymous with 'PR spam'.

Meanwhile, **13%** of PR pros use newswires heavily and **82%** use them to at least some degree.

Generating coverage, SEO, and pleasing management are top reasons for using press releases

Which of the following are reasons for why you use press releases? (Select all that apply):

Brands vs. Agencies



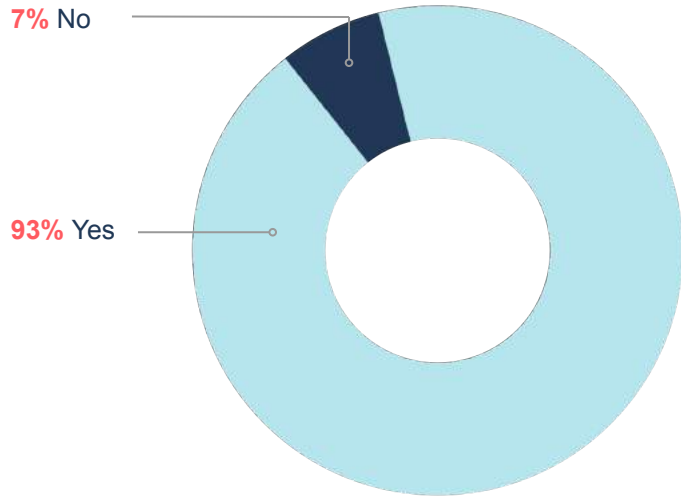


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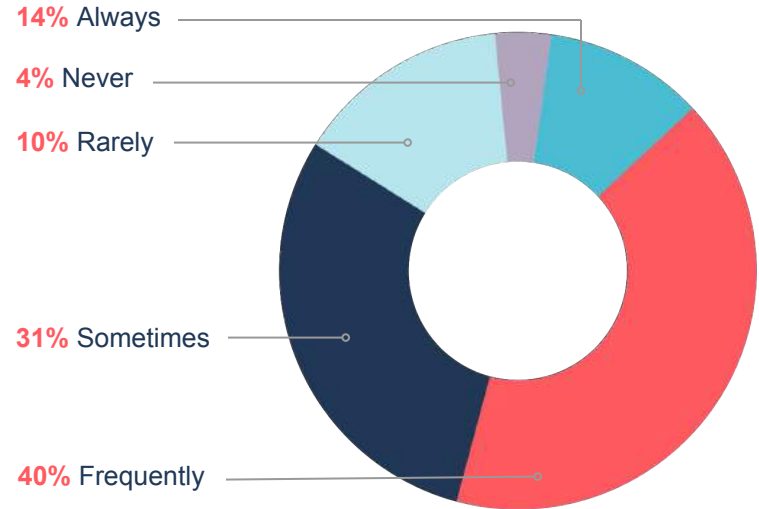
How do PR pros use social media?

Social media remains key to media relations. Almost all PR pros follow journalists on social media, but only a little over half usually follow journalists on social media before pitching them

Do you follow journalists on social media?

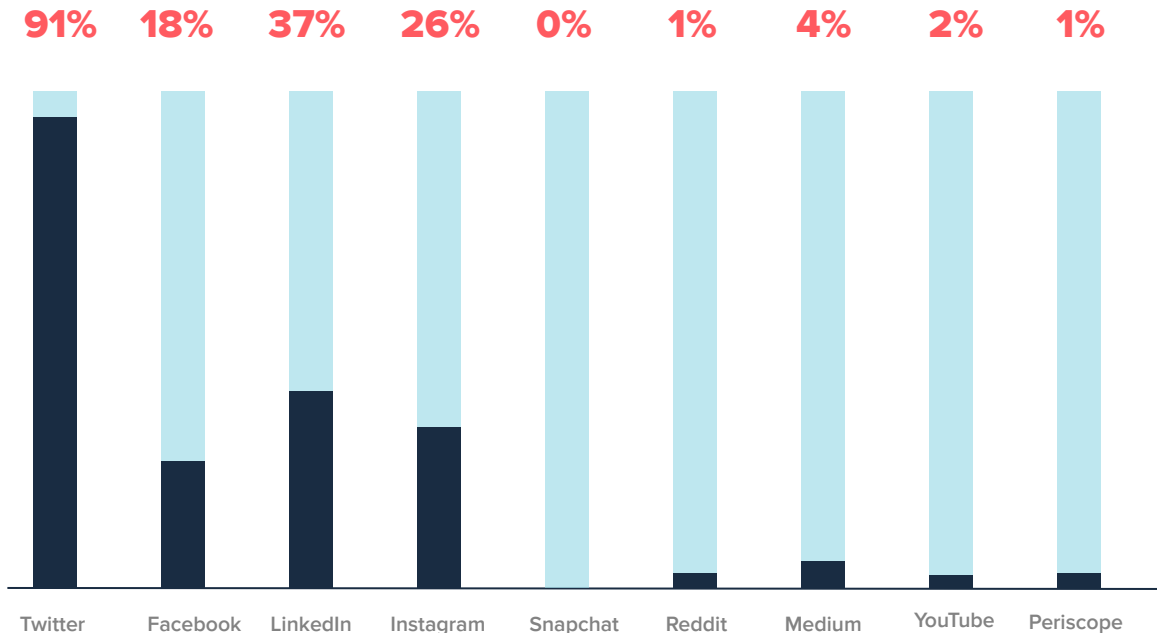


How often do you follow journalists on social media before pitching them?



Twitter on Top. Twitter remains the top social platform among PR pros and journalists alike

Which social network do you follow journalists on the most?

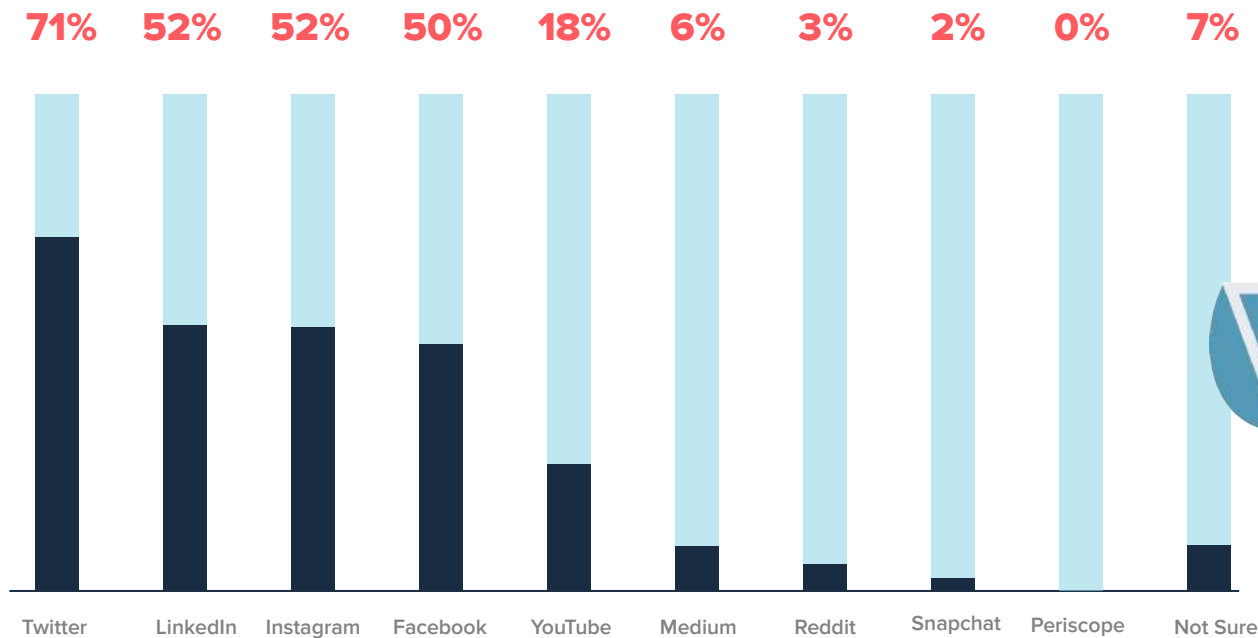


91% of PR pros choose Twitter as the number one platform for following journalists.

According to our Annual Journalist Survey, **70%** of journalists also chose Twitter as the most valuable social network to them.

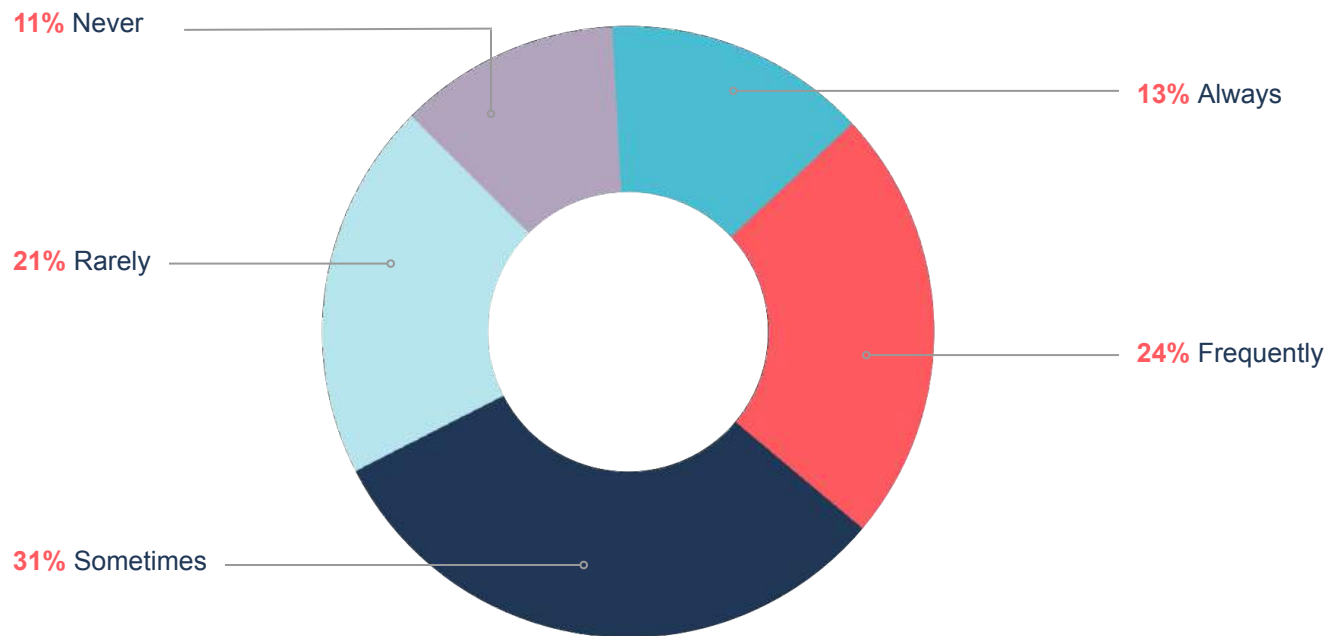
Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram are the leading social networks for social and communications strategy

Which of the following social networks will be the most important for your company's social media and communications strategy?



Only **37%** of PR pros use social media to track journalists at events

How often do you use social media to track which journalists are attending major events?





5

**How are PR budgets
changing and how are
teams spending them?**

Budgets remain the same for many PR teams, will increase for 25%

In 2019, my company's budget for PR compared to 2018 will:

Remain the same



Increase



Unsure



Decrease



Hasn't been discussed

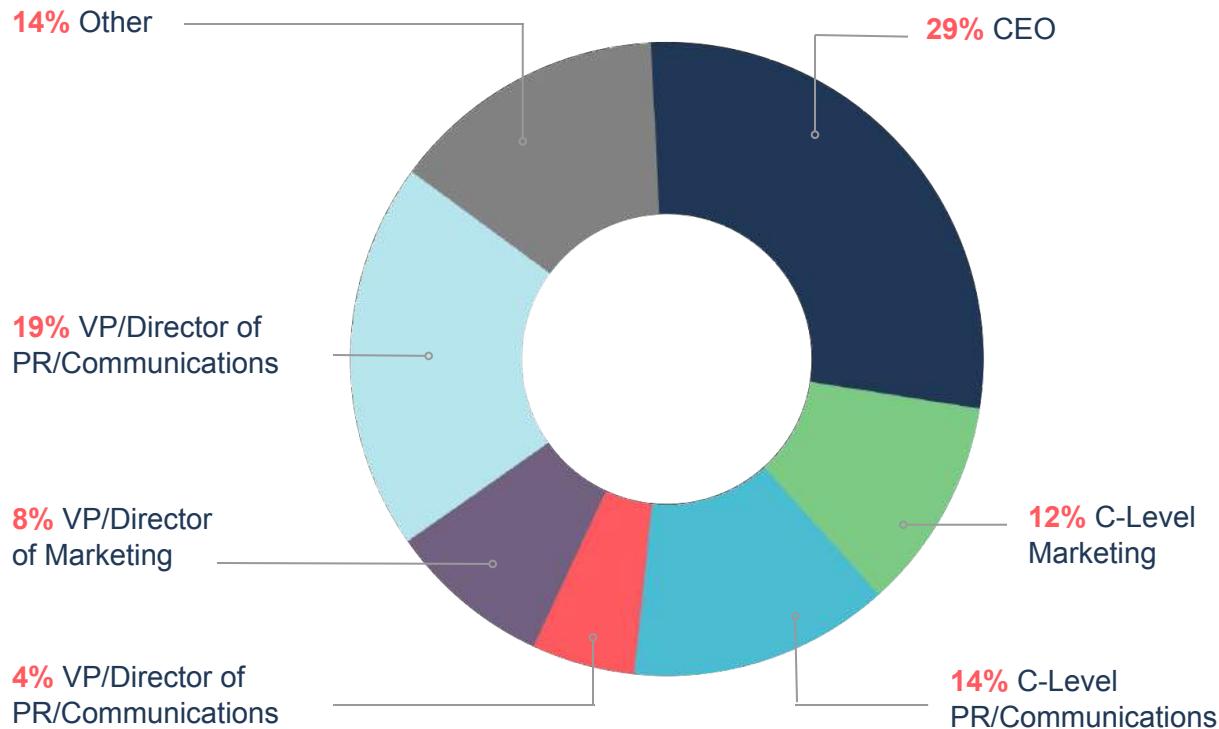


While showing business impact and measuring success are top challenges, most PR budgets are stagnant or increasing.

Still, per slide 11, **61%** of PR pros are concerned about tightening budgets in the future.

Most PR budgets are set by C-level executives

Who is your company's decision maker for spending on PR and earned media efforts?

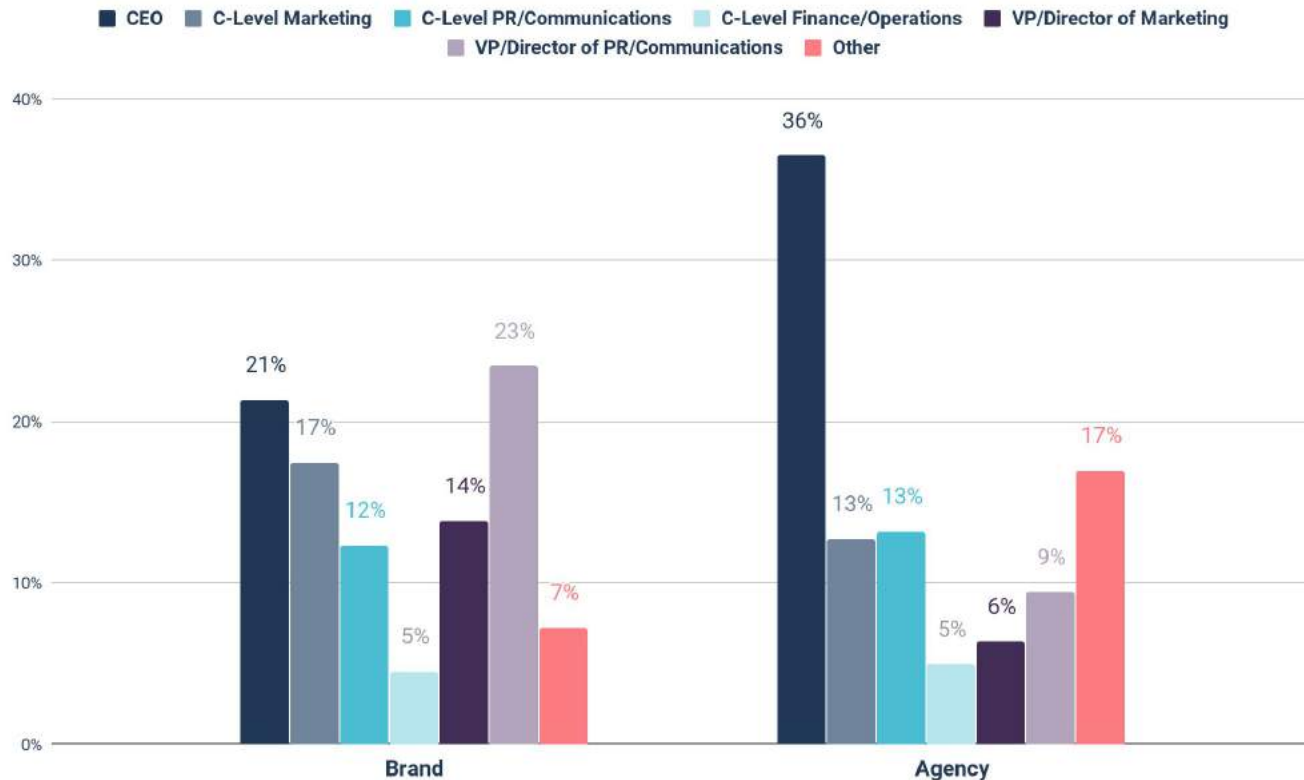


Budget sits with the C-level for most PR teams (**55%**), making it all the more important execs are kept in the loop. About a fifth of budgets are determined by marketing teams (CXO/VP/Director level).

About **1 in 5** PR teams have budgets determined by Marketing (CMO/VP/Director)

Brand PR budgets are mostly set by VP/Director of PR/Communications, while agency PR budgets mostly by CEOs

Who is your company's decision maker for spending on PR and earned media efforts?



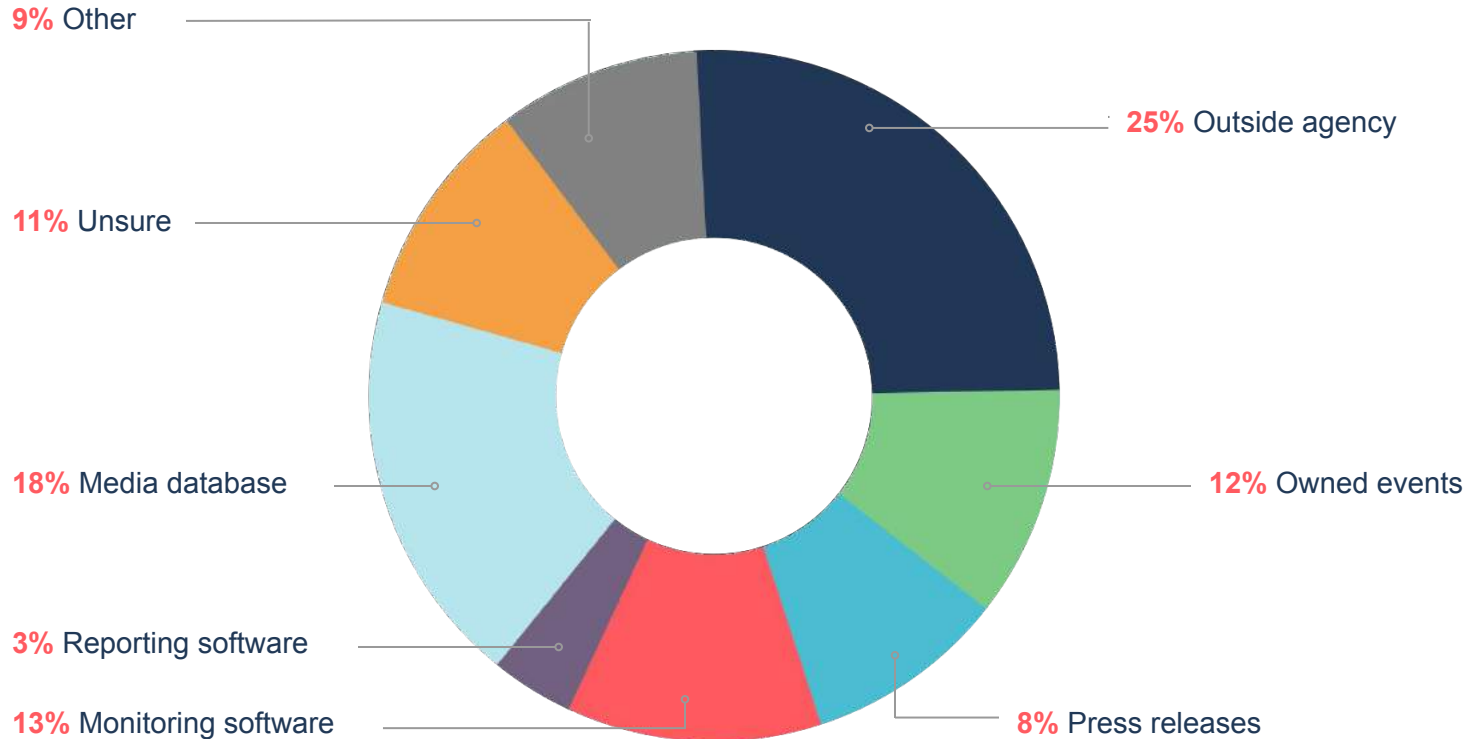
PR budget is mostly set by C-level or VP/Director of PR/communications at larger companies, and by CEOs at smaller companies

Who is your company's decision maker for spending on PR and earned media efforts?



Highest PR spend goes towards agencies and media databases

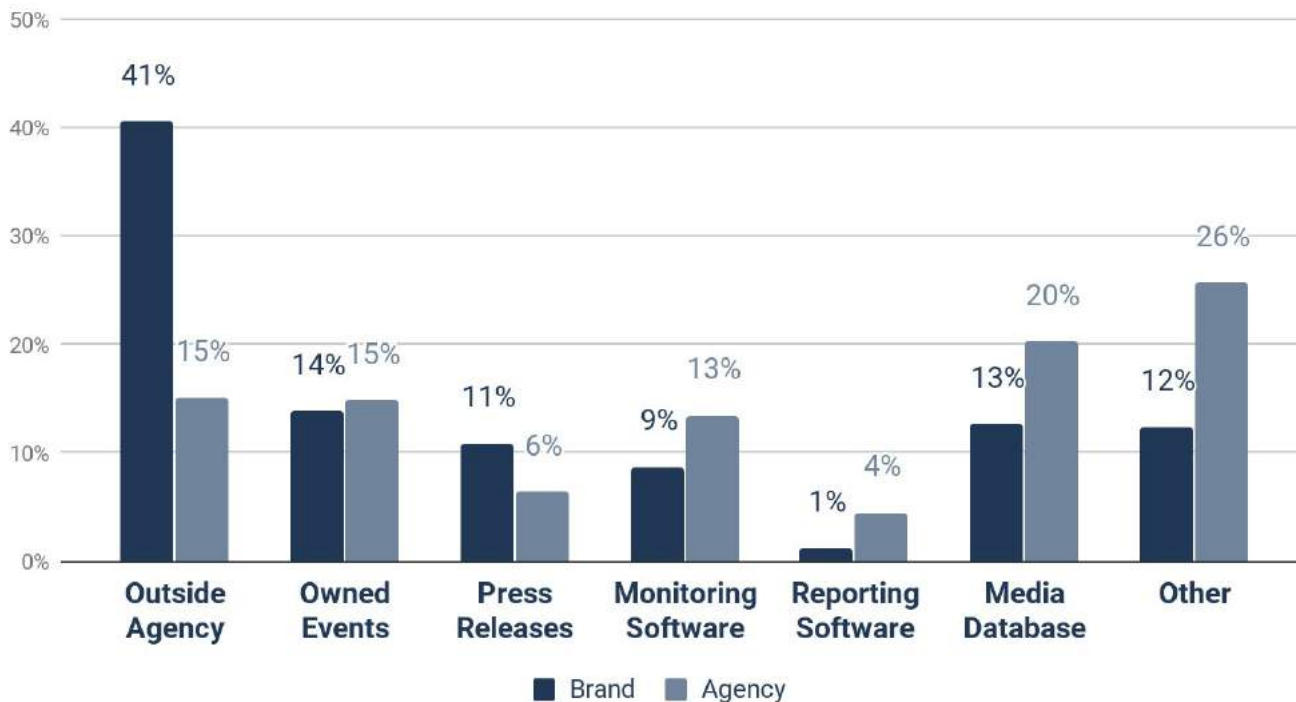
Where do you spend the highest % of your PR budget (not including employee salary)?

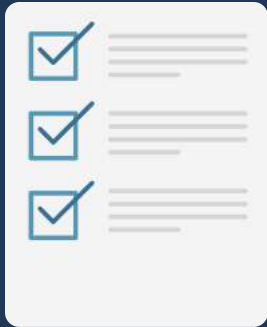


Brands are spending the most on outside agencies, while agencies are spending the most on databases

Where do you spend the highest % of your PR budget (not including employee salary)?

Brands vs. Agencies



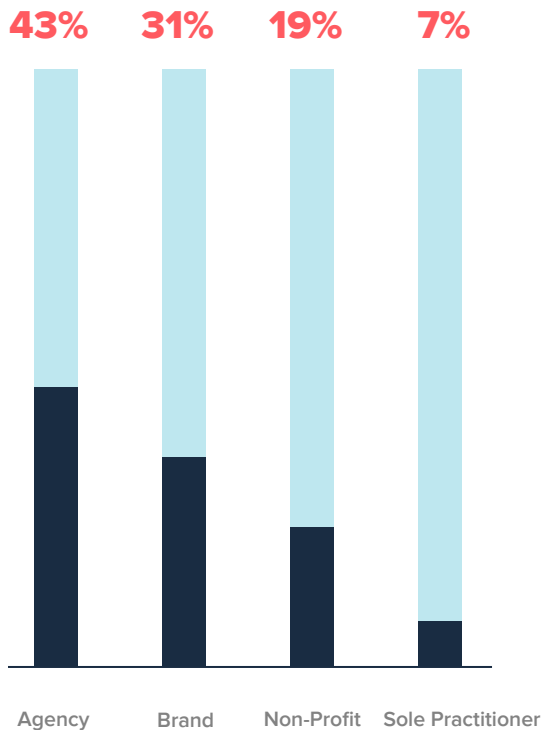


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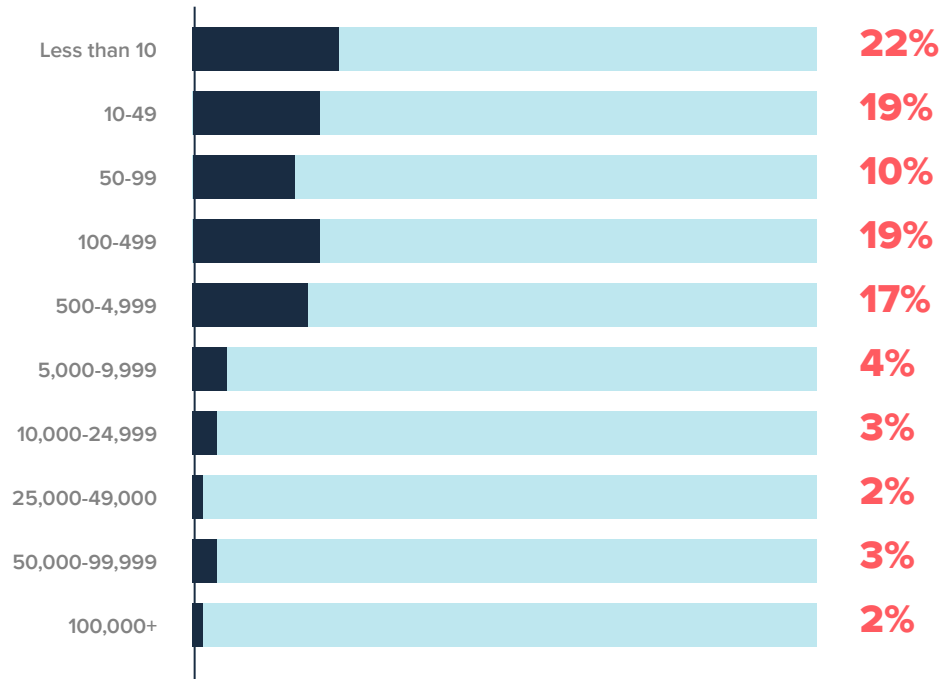
Who took this survey?

Company types and sizes

COMPANY TYPE

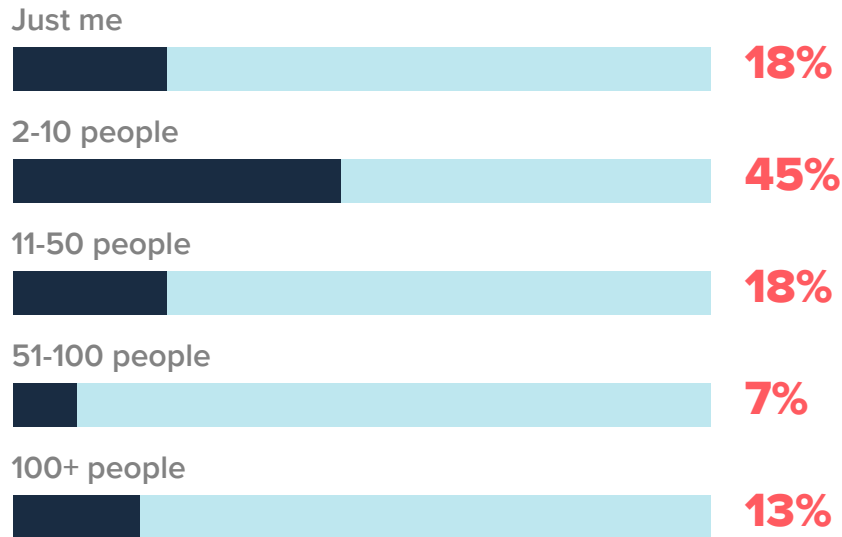


COMPANY SIZE (by number of employees)

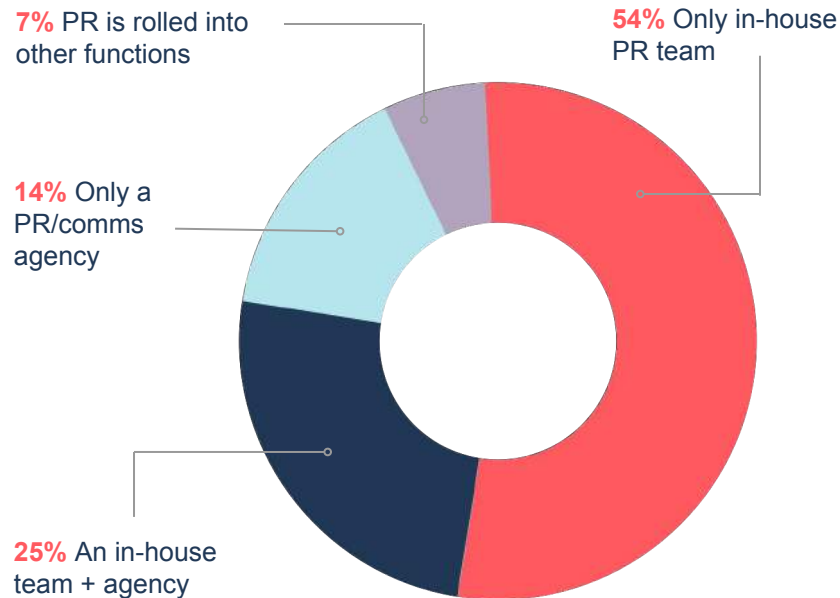


Size of PR team and company PR management

How large is your entire company's PR/communications team?

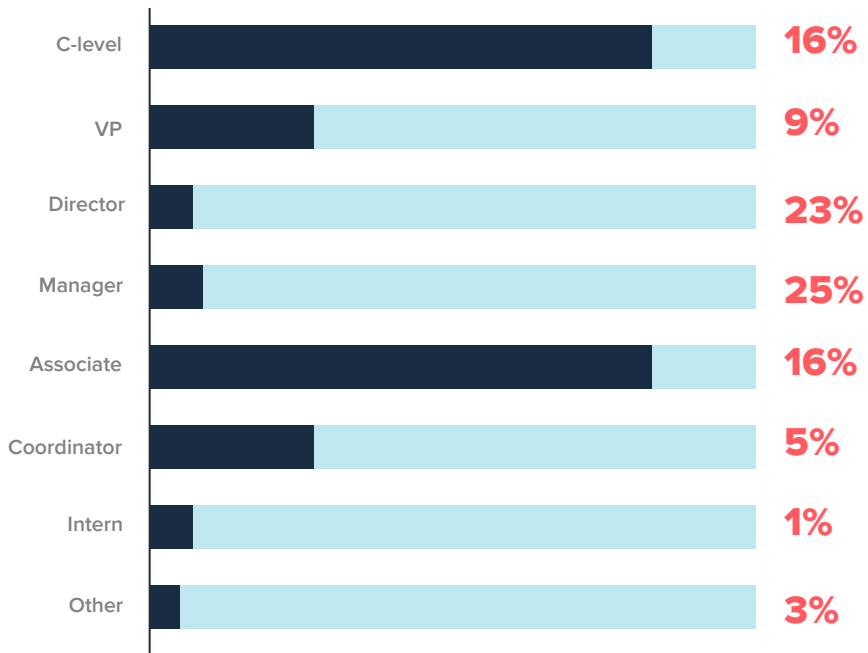


My organization's PR is managed by:

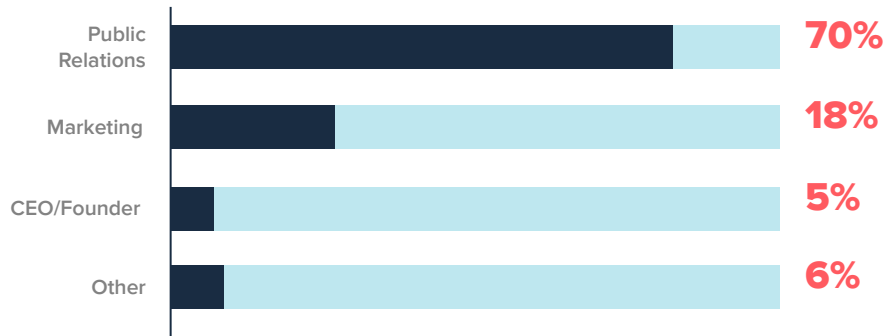


Individual titles and departments

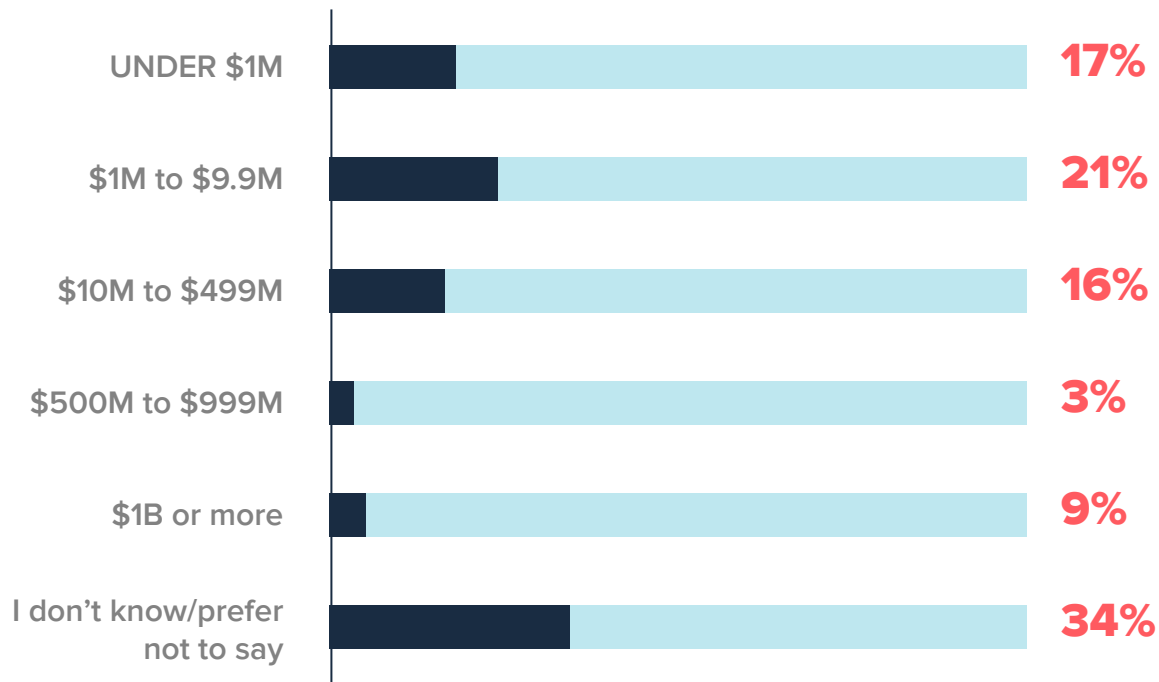
What best describes your level in your company?



Which department do you work in?



Annual company revenue





In conclusion

4 Key Takeaways

- 1 PR teams waste hundreds of hours a year on data entry
- 2 While most PR budgets remain relatively stagnant (with 25% increasing YoY), most PR pros are still very worried about their future ability to defend budget with measurable results.
- 3 PR pros meet journalists on their favorite social channels (namely Twitter), but are likely to use other social channels as part of their overall communications strategy
- 4 PR pros and journalists agree that personalization is the #1 thing that makes a good pitch, however PR pros often still pitch journalists on a variety of channels, whereas most journalists would just rather get pitched via email

Thank you!

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<https://muckrack.com>