Memo: National Newspaper Association Readership Survey 2022

- Newspapers, as a medium used either as a "primary" or secondary" source of information has held steady. In the current poll, a combined 24% say they rely on newspapers as either their primary or secondary source of information for news (note: this # is NOT in the top line report, but a separate calculation we did combining data sets for Q1 and Q2). The rolling three year average for newspaper popularity from polls conducted 2017-19 was 26.3%.

- Television sources (cable, local, national, etc.) is cited as a primary/secondary medium by 35% of respondents, making this medium the most popular of any in the poll. TV reliance shows a small uptick from a rolling average of 31% from 2017-2019. By comparison, internet sources are cited by 16% as either a primary or secondary source of news, up from a 12% average from 2017-19.   Radio is cited by 10%, compared with an average of 8% from prior years, while social media is unchanged, at 5%.

- A combined 77% of respondents say they read a newspaper that covers their local community, which is an increase from a 65% average from 2017-2019. Because responses to the question in this year's poll were captured differently than in past years, by expanding the potential answers to include respondents who may have access to local newspapers via social media platforms or even through friends, it's difficult to say if the 77% represents a genuine increase that has statistical significance, or if we're simply capturing respondents more accurately and effectively by how response categories were changed. Remember we also "relaxed" wording in the current survey, by eliminating any reference to the term "community newspaper" and instead going with "local newspaper".

- Local newspapers continue to receive high metrics on things like "[it] informs me" (93% agree), "[it] provides valuable local shopping and advertising info (81% agree), and "my household relies on [it] for local news (83%). In addition, 66% agree they use local newspapers to research candidates running for local office, which is an increase from an average of 46% from 2017-19.   This is statistically significant.

- Local newspapers continue to be the most popular "to go" sources most respondents use to help with shopping and purchasing decisions (cited by 43%), followed by direct mailings (25%), TV stations (21%), in store promotions and social media sources (19% each) and radio ads (5%). Among readers of local newspapers specifically, 49% rely on their own newspapers for advertising information.

- In terms of the originator of news content when respondents read stories on the internet or social media, the poll shows nearly 4 in 10 (or 39%) think newspapers are the originators of the content, while 28% think it comes from TV. An additional 27% are not sure, which shows there is no real consensus on this.

- A combined 96% say it's very or somewhat important to have reliability and truth in local journalism, including 83% who think it's "very" important. It seems to us that voters are increasingly hungry for a higher level of professional integrity when it comes to journalism (both local and national) in today's age of constant cable TV news and partisan leaning news media outlets like Fox News and CNN. By way of background, in a recent national poll our firm conducted for the Federalist (released publicly), when Americans were asked if they trust the "corporate news media" to tell the truth when covering news stories, or if they misrepresent the facts to push a political agenda, 75% said the corporate news media cannot be trusted. Although we didn't define the term "corporate news media" for poll respondents, I thought I'd share this with you in the event that NNA and local newspapers can build its positive brand differently than what other corporate media may be doing. Just a thought..

- A combined 19% of respondents say they visit local government websites either "very" or "somewhat" often for public notices, a drop from a 26.5% average from 2018-19 (this question was not asked in 2017).   In terms of their overall importance on a 10-point scale, respondents rate access to public notices a 6.66, down from a 7.40 in 2019 (no data exists for 2018-17). Readers of local newspapers specifically rate access to public notices a slightly higher 6.72.

- When reviewing internet content, a combined 34% notice Google ads or other advertising banners "always" or "some of the time" (down from 48% in 2019), while 62% notice them occasionally or not at all.   This number surprises me.

- TV stations (70%) and local newspapers (68%) are most often relied on as news sources to make decisions about elections (either very or somewhat often), compared to much lower scores for direct mailings from candidates or political parties (44%), radio stations (40%) or social media platforms (19%). These scores cannot be compared to past years since the metrics have changed.

- Despite respondents' slightly higher "reliance" on TV stations for news than local newspapers (as cited above), it is local newspapers that are the most "trusted" source (of all mediums tested) when it comes to learning about candidates for public office. For instance, on a 10-point scale (with 10 being the "highest"), local newspapers are rated a 7.38, higher than TV stations (6.45), radio (5.58), political mailings (4.63) or social media platforms (2.65). Although the metrics and items in our list have changed from prior years, prior years also shows trust in "community newspapers" had consistently received higher mean scores than competitor sources. Moreover, readers of community newspapers rate trust in their local papers at an even higher 7.83 on a 10-point scale.

Jim Lee, President

Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc.

Also doing business as *The Bartlett Group*

C/O The Workplace HUB

2225 Sycamore Street

Harrisburg, PA 17111

Phone: (717) 233-8850

Email: james@susquehannapolling.com

Website: www.susquehannapolling.com

Twitter: http://twitter.com/SusquehannaPR

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Top Line Survey Results
NNA Community Newspaper Readership Survey
Sample Size: 1,001 [Head of] Household Telephone Interviews
Conducted March 7-14, 2022

TOP LINE SURVEY RESULTS AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is (YOUR FIRST NAME). I am calling on behalf of Susquehanna Polling and Research, a public opinion research firm. May I speak to (NAME ON LIST), or another adult 18 years of age or older in the household, please?

INTRO: We are conducting a survey of attitudes and opinions concerning some important issues facing local communities across the United States today. May we please have a few minutes of your time to complete the survey?

Great, thank you….

F1: Are you, or is anyone in your household currently employed by a television or radio station, or by a newspaper or internet news service of any kind?

1.	If Yes	--	THANK AND TERMINATE
2.	If No	1,001 (100%)	PROCEED TO Q1

Q1. Generally speaking, what is the *primary* source of information you rely on for news about your **local** community? (UNAIDED RESPONSE - DO NOT READ CHOICES – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

1.	Newspaper (print version and/or website/online)	351	35%
2.	Television (Cable News and/or local TV news)	433	43%
3.	Radio (AM/FM) and/or Satellite Radio	86	09%
4.	Internet/online sources (general)	68	07%
5.	Friends/relatives/neighbors/word of mouth/co-workers	17	02%
6.	Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	11	01%
7.	Magazine/other print publications	0	00%
8.	Other	22	02%
9.	No/None (SKIP TO Q3)	13	01%

Q2. Are there any other sources you rely on for news and information about your local community? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

[N=988]

1.	Newspaper (print version and/or website/online)	122	12%
2.	Television (Cable News and/or local TV news)	261	26%
3.	Radio (AM/FM) and/or Satellite Radio	111	11%
4.	Internet/online sources (general)	247	25%
5.	Friends/relatives/neighbors/word of mouth/co-workers	147	15%
6.	Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)	91	09%
7.	Magazine/other print publications	5	01%
8.	Other	0	00%
9.	No/None	211	21%

Q3. Do you read any newspaper(s) that cover your local community specifically? If yes, can you tell me if you obtain this content through a printed copy, or via the internet or through social media or some other way? (Check All That Apply)

1.	Yes, print version with a subscription	476	48%	PROCEED TO Q4
2.	Yes, print version, but purchased from store/vending machine	138	14%	PROCEED TO Q4
3.	Yes, Online version (at newspaper's website)	117	12%	PROCEED TO Q4
4.	Yes, Social Media Platform, Facebook	36	04%	PROCEED TO Q4
5.	Yes, Social Media Platform, Other	16	02%	PROCEED TO Q4
6.	Yes, YouTube, TikTok or other	2	00%	PROCEED TO Q4
7.	Yes, Friends/colleagues/neighbors, Family share link	4	00%	PROCEED TO Q4
8.	Yes, Other	34	03%	PROCEED TO Q4
	Yes, TOTAL:	**823**	**77%**	
9.	No/I do not read any local newspapers	232	23%	SKIP TO Q8

Please tell me if the following statements apply to you when you think about your local newspaper.

(ROTATE Q4-Q7)

[N=769]

Q4. [My local newspaper] informs me.

1. Yes/Applies	713	93%
2. No/Doesn't apply	54	07%
3. Not sure	2	00%

Q5. [My local newspaper] provides valuable local shopping and advertising information.

1. Yes/Applies	621	81%
2. No/Doesn't apply	128	17%
3. Not sure	20	03%

Q6. I or my household relies on [a local newspaper] for local news and information.

1. Yes/Applies   636   83%
2. No/Doesn't apply   133   17%
3. Not sure   0   00%

Q7. I use [a local newspaper] to help make up my mind about candidates running for public office at the local level.

1. Yes/Applies   509   66%
2. No/Doesn't apply   260   34%
3. Not sure   1   00%

Q8. When it comes specifically to the advertising mediums you rely on for shopping and purchasing decisions with local merchants, from the following list of six please tell me your top one or two primary sources of information – local newspapers (either the print copies or online platforms), TV stations, instore promotions, direct mailings, radio advertising or social media platforms (like Twitter, Facebook or Instagram) or others? (ROTATED LIST – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

1.	**Local newspapers**	**430**	**43%**
2.	TV stations	207	21%
3.	In store promotions	185	19%
4.	**Direct mailings**	**251**	**25%**
5.	Radio advertising	45	05%
6.	Social media platforms	195	19%
7.	Other	74	07%
8.	Undecided	152	15%
9.	None of the above	15	01%

Q9. When you read news stories on the internet or on social media platforms, to the best of your knowledge what is the original source for the content of what you are reading? In other words, does the original content come from newspapers, TV stations, a radio broadcast, or some other news source? (ONE ANSWER ONLY)

1.	Newspaper	386	39%
2.	TV stations	285	28%
3.	Radio	21	02%
4.	Other news source (verbatim)	22	02%
5.	Not Sure	273	27%
6.	Refuse	14	01%

Q10. As an informed reader, how important is reliability and truth in local journalism as a participant in democracy – very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

1.	Very Important	830	83%
2.	Somewhat Important	132	13%
	Total Very/Somewhat:	**962**	**96%**
3.	Not at all important	30	03%
4.	Not Sure	9	01%

Q11. How often do you visit local government websites to find information on public notices? Examples of public notices include meetings where zoning or planning matters are discussed, or announcements of home foreclosures, estate sales or school board meetings.   Would you say you visit local government websites for this information very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?

1.	Very Often	37	04%
2.	Somewhat often	158	16%
	Total Very/Somewhat:	**195**	**19%**
3.	Not very often	416	42%
4.	Not at all	390	39%
5.	**Total not very/not at all:**	**806**	**81%**

Q12. On a scale anywhere from 1 to 10, how important is it to have access to public notices in the print or online version of community newspapers? (A score of "1" means not at all important, while the highest score of "10" means extremely important)

1	68	07%
2	6	01%
3	44	04%
4	18	02%
5	195	19%
6	59	06%
7	113	11%
8	254	25%
9	57	06%
10	141	14%
11 (UND)	47	05%

Mean: **6.66**

Q13. How often do you notice Google ads or other advertising banners when you are reviewing content on websites – always, some of the time, occasionally or not at all?

1.	Always	161	16%
2.	Some of the time	179	18%
	Total Always/Some of the time:	**340**	**34%**
3.	Occasionally	291	29%
4.	Not at all	332	33%
	Total Occasionally/Not at all:	**623**	**62%**
5.	Undecided	11	01%
6.	Refuse	27	03%

Q14. How likely are you to vote in the upcoming elections this year for United States Congress, U.S. Senate and other federal and state elections – very likely, somewhat likely or not at all likely?

1.	Very likely	896	89%	PROCEED TO NEXT SECTION/Q15
2.	Somewhat likely	64	06%	PROCEED TO NEXT SECTION/Q15

3.	Not at all likely	39	04%	SKIP TO Q27
4.	Undecided	2	00%	SKIP TO Q27

I would like to read you a list of news sources many voters commonly turn to for information about candidates for public office at the federal, state, or local level. After each, please tell me how often you rely on this particular source of news to make decisions about elections.

(Rotate Q15 – Q19)

[N=960]

Q15. Local newspapers? […Do you rely on this news source very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?]

1. Very often	291	30%
2. Somewhat often	358	37%
Total Very/Somewhat Often:	**649**	**68%**
3. Not very often	101	11%
4. Not at all	208	22%
Total Not Very/Not at All:	**310**	**32%**
5. Undecided	0	00%
6. Refuse	2	00%

Q16. TV stations? [...Do you rely on this news source very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?]

1. Very often	322	34%
2. Somewhat often	353	37%
Total Very/Somewhat Often:	**675**	**70%**
3. Not very often	163	17%
4. Not at all	120	12%
Total Not Very/Not at All:	**283**	**29%**
5. Undecided	2	01%

Q17. Social media platforms, like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram? [...Do you rely on this news source very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?]

1. Very often	47	05%
2. Somewhat often	133	14%
Total Very/Somewhat Often:	**180**	**19%**
3. Not very often	232	24%
4. Not at all	543	57%
Total Not Very/Not at All:	**775**	**81%**
5. Undecided	5	01%

Q18. Radio stations, or satellite radio news programs? [...Do you rely on this news source very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?]

1. Very often	87	09%
2. Somewhat often	295	31%
Total Very/Somewhat Often:	**383**	**40%**
3. Not very often	305	32%
4. Not at all	268	28%
Total Not Very/Not at All:	**573**	**60%**
5. Undecided	1	00%
6. Refuse	3	00%

Q19. Direct mailings or emails from political candidates or political parties? […Do you rely on this news source very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?]

1. Very often	61	06%
2. Somewhat often	359	37%
Total Very/Somewhat Often:	**420**	**44%**
3. Not very often	266	28%
4. Not at all	252	26%
Total Not Very/Not at All:	**517**	**54%**
5. Undecided	22	02%

For the same list and using a 1 to 10 scale, please tell me how much you trust what this news source has to say when it comes to learning about candidates for public office (a score of "1" means you don't trust them at all, while "10" means you trust them a lot).

(Rotate Q20 – Q24)

Q20. How much do you trust…local newspapers?

[N=960]

1	32	03%
2	31	03%
3	8	01%
4	19	02%
5	41	04%
6	87	09%
7	190	20%
8	253	26%
9	104	11%
10	163	17%
11 (UND)	31	03%
12 (REF)	1	00%
Mean:	**7.38**	

Q21. How much do you trust….TV stations?

1	59	06%
2	14	01%
3	42	04%
4	7	01%
5	246	26%
6	58	06%
7	114	12%
8	228	24%
9	101	11%
10	71	07%
11 (UND)	20	02%

Mean: **6.45**

Q22. How much do you trust…Social media platforms, like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram?

1	535	56%
2	76	08%
3	45	05%
4	9	01%
5	116	12%
6	3	00%
7	45	05%
8	35	04%
9	18	02%
10	16	02%
11 (UND)	60	06%

Mean: **2.65**

Q23. How much do you trust…Radio stations, or satellite radio news programs?

1	68	07%
2	33	03%
3	56	06%
4	50	05%
5	291	30%
6	54	06%
7	95	10%
8	149	16%
9	59	06%
10	23	02%
11 (UND)	79	08%

Mean: **5.58**

Q24. How much do you trust…Direct mailings or emails from political candidates or political parties?

1	136	14%
2	102	11%
3	90	09%
4	76	08%
5	186	19%
6	146	15%
7	100	10%
8	72	08%
9	3	00%
10	37	04%
11 (UND)	12	01%

Mean: **4.63**

Q25. How often do neighbors, family or friends refer you to something they saw in the local newspaper – very often, somewhat often, not very often or not at all?

[N=738]

1.	Very often	137	19%
2.	Somewhat often	290	39%
	Total Very/Somewhat:	**427**	**58%**
3.	Not Very often	200	27%
4.	Not At All	111	15%
	Total Not Very/Not at All:	**311**	**42%**

Q26. How many friends, colleagues, co-workers, or those in your household do you share your community newspaper with?

[N=738]

1.	One additional person	208	28%
2.	Two people	67	09%
3.	Three people	71	10%
4.	Four people	29	04%
5.	Five or more	71	10%
6.	No one else/don't read newspaper	276	37%
7.	Not Sure	17	02%

We have a few remaining questions for demographic purposes, and we'll be through…

Q27. How long have you lived at your current primary residence?

1. < 1 year	20	02%
2. 1-4 years	23	02%
3. 5-9 years	72	07%
4. 10-19 years	215	22%
5. 20-29 years	196	20%
6. 30+ years	454	45%
7. Not sure	8	01%
8. Refuse	12	01%

Q28. What was your age on your last birthday?

1. 18-24	50	05%
2. 25-34	120	12%
3. 35-44	180	18%
4. 45-54	200	20%
5. 55-64	220	22%
6. 65+	230	23%

Q29. What is your highest level of formal education? (UNAIDED)

1. Less than high school	42	04%
2. High school diploma/GED	146	15%
3. Vocational/Technical School/CC	80	08%
4. Some college	304	30%
5. 4-Year College Degree	220	22%
6. Some graduate work/no graduate degree	29	03%
7. Masters/Doctoral Degree/J.D.	180	18%

Q30. Would you please share your total household income for 2021, according to the following income brackets?

1. Less than $25,000 annually	110	11%
2. $25,000 - $49,000 annually	131	13%
3. $50,000 – 75,000 annually	209	21%
4. $76,000 to $99,000 annually	89	09%
5. $100,000 or more annually	258	26%
6. Not Sure	52	05%
7. Refuse	152	15%

Thank you for your participation in this survey. Have a great day.

Gender (from observation)

1. Male	471	47%
2. Female	530	53%

State Groupings/Area (from record):

1. CT, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT	106	11%
2. DC, DE, KY, MD, NC, TN, VA, WV	177	18%
3. AL, FL, GA, MS, SC	92	09%
4. IL, IN, MI, OH, PA	149	15%
5. MN, ND, SD, WI	116	12%
6. IA, KS, MO, NE	93	09%
7. AR, LA, OK, TX	81	08%
8. AK, ID, MT, OR, WA	39	04%
9. CO, NM, UT, WY	30	03%
10. AZ, CA, NV	84	08%
11. HI, UT	35	03%

METHODOLOGY, PROCEDURES AND DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

This poll was conducted by Susquehanna Polling and Research[1] on behalf of the National Newspaper Association. Interviews were conducted March 7-14th Mondays through Fridays and at select weekend times as prescribed by state law. The sample frame was constructed and designed using a list of zip codes (supplied by Client) representing those areas in the continental USA where community newspapers are either available and/or commercially sold. Using these zip codes, a listed sample of telephone records is purchased using a random selection of households represented by these zip codes from Pollster's preferred list vendor[2]. The amount of telephone records acquired for each zip code is proportionate to the population of each zip code's unique area, with all zip codes ultimately combined into a composite universe so population parameters could be estimated, and a list of pre-assigned quotas could be generated. The number of interviews conducted within each geographic region or unit of measurement (i.e., zip code) is then monitored to ensure zip codes are sampled accordingly, thus not over or under sampled in relationship to their overall weight in the composite universe. Statistical weighting may be applied to ensure the demographic balance of the sample for 1,000n is a "representative sample" of the composite universe based on age, ethnicity and other unique demographic characteristics for the population universe of all zip codes combined. Zip codes are also grouped into eleven regional groupings with all states represented within a region of the USA to serve as a cross-check on balance.

The margin of error for a sample size of 1,001 interviews is +/-3.1% at the 95% confidence level.

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[1] Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc. is a nationally recognized polling and focus group company and conducts polling for political, media and corporate clients mainly in PA, NY, IN, FL, NJ, MD, DE, SC, NC and other states. SP&R's polling has been featured on many national platforms, including the Rush Limbaugh Radio Show, FOX News Channel, The O'Reilly Factor, the Bill Maher Show and MSNBC. The internet news service *Sunshine State News* of Florida referred to SP&R as "*one of the most prominent pollsters in the country*" for its accurate polling in the 2010 Florida Gubernatorial Republican Primary election. The website www.realclearpolitics.com lists SP&R's publicly released polling in Pennsylvania and other battleground states as some of the most accurate polling in the 2020 Presidential election. SP&R CEO Jim Lee was profiled on two episodes of CBS's Inside Edition for its unmatched accuracy in its battleground polling in the 2020 Elections.

[2] Aristotle International, Inc. P.O. Box 716045 Philadelphia, PA 19171-6045.