

NEWS MEDIA

The news media provides a public forum that educates and informs the government and the governed. The tension between news as a business commodity and public good affects newsgathering and dissemination—what the public *wants* to know and what they *need* to know. Addressing this dilemma raises several challenges for the industry: maintaining credibility, managing consolidation, leveraging internet technology and fostering effective relationships. We recommend the federal government incorporate news media education and training for government leaders to better appreciate the industry and its impact on national security.

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Domestic:

Military Times, Springfield, VA
Gannett Publishing, Springfield, VA
Associated Press Broadcasting, Washington, DC
America Online, Dulles, VA
US News & World Report, Washington, DC
CNN Washington Bureau, Washington, DC
Freedom Forum, Rosslyn, VA
Voice of America, Washington, DC
Pentagon OSD Public Affairs, Washington, DC
National Public Radio, Washington, DC
***Washington Times*, Washington, DC**
WTOP News Radio, Washington, DC
Foreign Press Center, Washington, DC
New York Times, New York City, NY
Bloomberg News, New York City, NY
ABC News, New York City, NY
Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, New York City, NY
***Wall Street Journal OnLine*, New York City, NY**
Fox News/News Corps, New York City, NY
Associated Press Wire Service, New York City, NY
***Editor and Publisher Magazine*, New York City, NY**
Reuters America NY Bureau, New York City, NY

International:

Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom, London, UK
SkyNews, London, UK
British Broadcasting Corporation World Service, London, UK
***The Guardian*, London, UK**
***The Economist*, London, UK**
***The [London] Times*, London, UK**
TV2, Budapest, Hungary
***Magyar Nemzet* (Newspaper), Budapest, Hungary**
InfoRadio (News Radio), Budapest, Hungary
***Napszabadsag* (Newspaper), Budapest, Hungary**
KlubRadio, Budapest, Hungary
HIR TV (News), Budapest, Hungary
American Embassy, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Delo (Newspaper), Ljubljana, Slovenia
POP TV, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Public Affairs Officers - Office of the President, Office of the Prime Minister,
Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ljubljana, Slovenia
RTV (National TV and Radio), Ljubljana, Slovenia
MAG (Weekly Magazine), Ljubljana, Slovenia

INTRODUCTION

Utter “the news media” to anyone and chances are you will be offered an instant judgment of the institution: “Fair and balanced”—“defenders of democracy”—“biased liberals”—“watch dogs”—“attack dogs,” and let’s not forget former U.S. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew’s depiction, “nattering nabobs of negativity.”ⁱ The fervid competition among various established news media outlets, coupled with the virtual explosion of internet news publishing sources ensure there will be no lack of available information. What might lay victim of the mass media scramble for rating points, access, and speed could be accuracy and impartiality.

The news media provides a virtual town hall critical to informing and educating both the government and the governed. Governments attempt to educate and shape public opinion through the media. Likewise, the people provide their feedback and support of governmental policy to a great degree through the media. The government often plays a role in shaping the media, from taking complete control in a totalitarian state to safeguarding a free press in a pure democracy. In our society, the media is ubiquitous and powerful, a critical instrument influencing national security policy.

This report is the summation of a five-month study of the news media. The report provides a comprehensive summary of the industry, its current condition, challenges, outlook and implications for U.S. national security. The report concludes with a set of recommendations for what the U.S. government can do to affect the industry in a way that ensures our national security needs are addressed. This year the study group was comprised of a varied mix of students including one Pakistani and several US military officers, Department of Defense civilians, and various US governmental agency civilians. The study group was equally split with eight men and eight women; each with their individual viewpoints developed through long careers and varied backgrounds. Armed with this diverse make-up, the group gradually developed a broad perspective of the news media, gleaned through several sources and methods.

The group began its study in academic research and lecture, attempting to define “what is news,” the various methods of gathering news, where audiences get their news, and the journalistic standards and practices in establishing the quality of news. We met with several distinguished journalists, including Tom Rosensteil, Executive Director, Center for Excellence in Journalism; Frank Sesno, CNN Anchor/Author; Joe Galloway, veteran war correspondent; Jack Germond, veteran writer for the Baltimore Sun; and George Wilson, a veteran journalist embedded with U.S. forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom. We then visited a broad cross-section of Washington-area media outlets, followed by a visit to major news outlets in New York City. Finally, we compared observations of the United States market with visits to similar outlets in the United Kingdom, Hungary, and Slovenia.

Given the all-encompassing nature of the media and time/space limitations, the group narrowed the scope to study “hard news,” excluding “infotainment,” sports, entertainment, and “tabloid” journalism, except to consider the conditions and influences by which such “soft news” creeps into the national security and policy-making arena.

NEWS MEDIA INDUSTRY DEFINED

Before defining the industry, it is helpful to define the product: What is “news”? News is information, a story, of interest and significance that happened today—that didn’t happen yesterday.ⁱⁱ What makes the story “newsworthy” depends upon several factors: How many people does it affect? How many will be interested? Who will feel the impact of the reported

events? How many people *want* to know? How many people *need* to know?ⁱⁱⁱ Mrs. O’Leary’s cow going missing may interest a few local farmers, but let the cow kick over a lantern that ignites a citywide inferno in Chicago and you have a story. It is also noted that in the absence of obvious relevance, a good photo will sell most stories.^{iv}

Thus the news media industry provides news that serves a dual, often competing purpose. It is a commercial commodity providing profit to owners, but it is also a public good. Discussing the tension between business and journalism, one DC newspaper managing editor lamented that their business office believed, “News is the stuff that wraps around advertising.”^v Conversely, the Tribune Publishing Company president suggested, “The central purpose of journalism is to tell the truth so that people will have the information that they need to be sovereign.”^{vi} Pope John Paul II summed up the relationship when declaring, “With its vast and direct influence on public opinion, journalism can not be guided only by economic forces, profit, and special interest. It must instead be felt as a mission in a certain sense sacred, carried out in the knowledge that the powerful means of communication have been entrusted to you for the good of all.”^{vii}

News is disseminated through various mediums: print (newspapers and magazines), broadcast television and radio, cable and satellite television, and the Internet. Newspapers are categorized in the trade by format and content. Broadsheet journals such as *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* exemplify the more traditional formats, while London’s *Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* are common news tabloids. Tabloids differ from broadsheet in their more compact nature, but also have a reputation for producing articles of a more biased, sensational nature.

Broadcast media differs from the cable and satellite outlets in that the former is accessible to anyone with a receiver, while cable and satellite require subscription, a tacit agreement to accept the content with little filtering. Given that virtually anyone can receive broadcast television and radio, the U.S. government regulates basic decency guidelines, notably absent from the subscription medium.

The internet provides the most revolutionary news media information portal. Content and credibility vary, and few online news organizations conduct reporting operations. The *Wall Street Journal Online* is a notable exception in that it has a full staff of reporters who produce news specifically for the online operation. Additionally, the *WSJ Online* is one of the few news organizations to successfully charge a subscription fee for its online news reports. Rather, most news media companies offer their online news free. The news provided is primarily a redistribution of news from their parent organization and/or other media sources, such as the wire services.

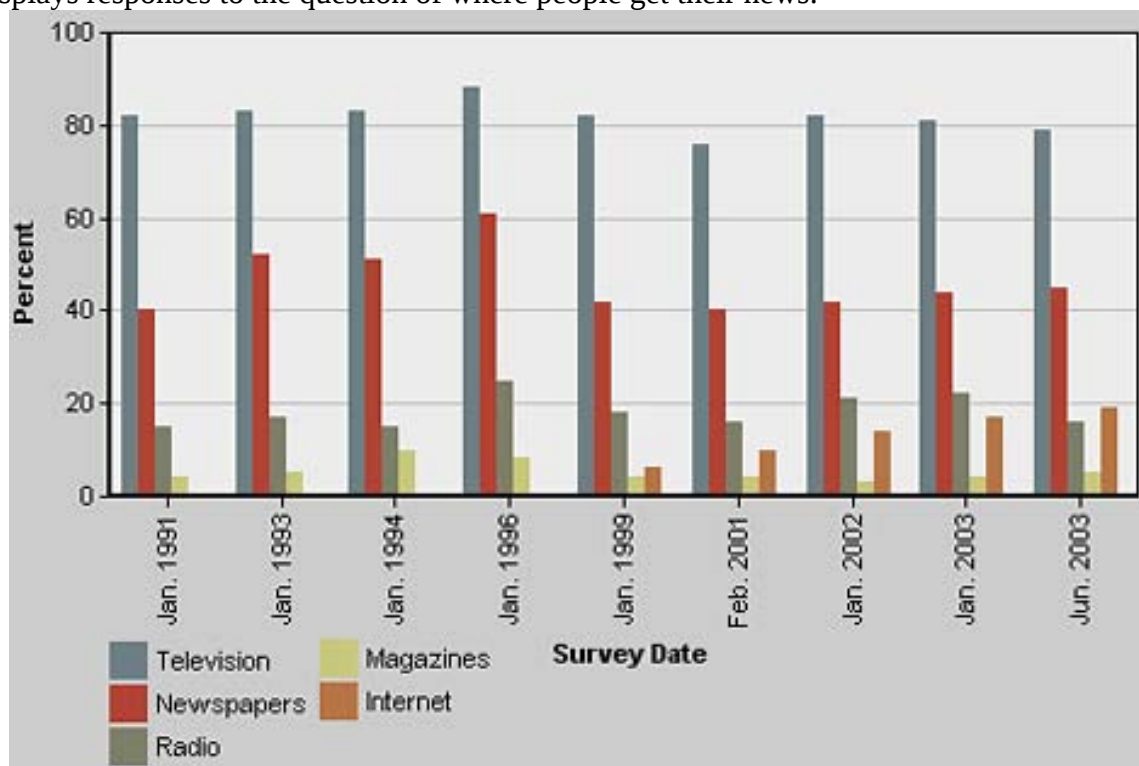
The news media industry uses a combination of in-house reporting (local and foreign correspondents), freelance reporters known as “stringers,” and wire services such as Associated Press and Reuters. Business pressures and advancing technologies prompt some news media organizations to pool their reporting assets or consolidate within their varied associated companies.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

“...[J]ournalism is in the middle of an epochal transformation, as momentous probably as the invention of the telegraph or television.”^{viii} So asserts *The State of the News Media 2004 - an Annual Report on American Journalism*, written by industry experts of The Project for Excellence in Journalism. This comprehensive review provides an excellent framework for reviewing the current condition of the news media industry. It describes several major trends

driving the industry. While we agree with the eight major trends listed in *The State of the News Media 2004* report, we have summarized them differently to suit our emphasis. This section outlines four overarching trends as we see them and their impact on the news and the industry in general.

Smaller, more fragmented audiences for news: In every major sector of the industry, news audiences are shrinking and becoming more fragmented. The following Pew Research Center chart displays responses to the question of where people get their news:



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As this chart indicates, television is the primary vehicle through which survey responders obtain their news, but according to *The State of the News Media 2004* report, “evening news ratings have dropped 59 percent since their peak three decades ago.”^x Cable TV News audience growth has stalled since its peak immediately following the September 11th terrorist attacks in 2001,^{xi} newspaper readership has been declining for two generations,^{xii} and radio and news magazine audiences are “largely flat.”^{xiii}

This trend in audience decline is particularly prominent among younger audiences. This worries media executives since younger audiences (18 through 49) are the targeted demographic for most advertisers.^{xiv} In newspapers specifically, readership has remained high for people over 45 years old, and very high for those over 65. However, by 2020 these age groups are projected to grow by 34 and 54 percent respectively, while the 18 - 49 age group will grow only 4.4 percent.^{xv} Anecdotally, news media professionals expressed concern that young people today are often getting their news from comedy and late-night talk shows.^{xvi} However, a June 2003 Newspaper Association of America report indicated that while only 40 percent of 18-to-24 year olds read the paper daily, 64 percent of people aged 12-to-17 read the paper at least once during the week.^{xvii} Still, a major online news department representative offered the opinion that

American young people with access to the Internet may be getting more news today through homepages and electronic news bulletins.^{xviii}

Research also indicates that audiences are not only becoming smaller, they are also becoming much more fragmented as news consumers turn to more and varied sources for their news.^{xix} We found the trend toward news audience fragmentation to be a common trend both in the United States and internationally. Supporting smaller geographic areas and smaller populations, the news outlets in the countries we visited overseas were able to have more “national” cohesiveness than their U.S. counterparts; however, journalists from those countries still expressed concern that news consumers turn to a variety of sources for their news. With the advent of the internet, in particular, there has been a surge in the number of news outlets available to consumers. This makes it difficult for traditional news outlets to attract and maintain audience share and has led to another trend within the industry – increased consolidation and cross-ownership. In contrast to the decline in news audience for traditional outlets, the markets for online, ethnic and “niche” news products are growing.^{xx}

Ownership consolidation: In response to increased audience fragmentation, news media companies are responding by diversifying to extend their reach across as many outlets as possible and provide more audience for their advertisers. Consequently, in the last decade, the trend toward consolidation has been increasing rapidly. Here are some of the facts according to the *State of the News Media 2004* report:

- Twenty-two companies represent 70 percent of the U.S. daily newspaper circulation.
- In radio, one company, Clear Channel, dominates, operating stations in 191 out of 289 most popular markets.
- The 10 biggest local television companies reach 85 percent of all U.S. households.
- One of the twenty biggest media companies owns some 69% of the twenty most popular news websites.
- In network and cable television, giant corporations own all the five major players: Disney owns ABC, Viacom owns CBS, GE-NBC, Time-Warner-AOL owns CNN, and News Corporation has FOX News and a number of other news outlets around the world.

In fact, given new rulings proposed by the FCC and endorsed, at least in part by Congress to relax media ownership restrictions, all of the large media conglomerates are seeking to expand their reach by buying up more local news outlets and establishing a presence across diverse media platforms. The trend toward consolidation lends itself to greater media concentration that presents its own set of industry challenges. These challenges are further discussed in the next section.

Thinning news product: Not only is audience decline driving increased consolidation, it is also putting more pressures on large, publicly-held news media companies to return higher revenues and profits for their shareholders. In response to these pressures, there is an increased trend among news organizations throughout the industry to cut costs, which in turn may lead to a much thinner news product.

Many of the news media organizations we visited mentioned they reduced their number of correspondents, especially in their foreign bureaus. *The State of the News Media 2004* report also indicates that newsrooms are cutting back “both in terms of staff and in the time they have to gather and report the news.”^{xxi} The report finds that companies may be diluting their products by varying their news agendas and trying to reach the advertising audience across different

platforms and through different programs.^{xxii} Some traditional newspaper reporters are spending their time providing television interviews while others are writing online journals. While these activities may provide more viewpoints to the audience, they may also prevent the reporter from having time to write stories in context. Gil Thelen, executive editor and acting publisher of the *Tampa Tribune* acknowledges a clear downside to cost cutting by news operations is the extra burden placed on reporters to file stories for multiple publishing platforms simultaneously with less time for in-depth, balanced investigative reporting in any one medium.^{xxiii} Such failure to invest the time and resources necessary to cover both sides of an issue adequately can reinforce the public perception that the news media is biased, non-objective and motivated more by financial interests than serving the public good.^{xxiv}

Increased Importance of Technology: A fourth major trend affecting the industry is the increased importance of information technology in newsgathering, reporting and dissemination. For example, in Operation *Desert Storm*, the equipment required to file a live report filled a truck. Today it merely fills a suitcase. Now a single reporter can witness the news in Iraq and file the story with video from his mini-cam, audio from his portable recorder, and print over his laptop. He can send it all through his cell phone—within minutes of an event.

Many aspects of modern information technology directly enhance news production. Satellite communications paths allow data to cross the globe quickly, and readily available encryption techniques keep the information secure. Satellite phones allow journalists to connect from remote areas. Wireless devices enable more access and mobility. Smaller and more sophisticated cameras and recorders allow journalists to capture sights and sounds as they happen, and digital storage technology eliminates the need for tape and film. The internet broadens a reporter's research base while email can keep them in touch. Satellite photography also adds access and reach into previously inaccessible areas. As these technologies become less expensive, even freelance journalists who are not associated with a large news organization will be able to afford them.

All of this technology adds up to new ways to produce news. In some situations, news organizations can reduce the number of people they send on assignment. A television company may not need as many camera, sound, lighting, and other technicians as they did previously. Reporters can file their stories for print, voice, and video all on the same phone. They can report "live" and send images at any time from almost anywhere in the world. The internet facilitates instantaneous communication, and websites and mass emails permit that instantaneous communication to reach large audiences. Nevertheless, while information technology provides new capabilities to journalists around the world, it exacerbates a traditional dilemma for reporters—that is balancing speed and "scooping" the competition against accuracy and fact checking. This dilemma is discussed further in the next section.

Technology is also changing the way news organizations distribute their product. In fact, "[m]uch of the new investment in journalism today – much of the information revolution generally – is in disseminating the news, not in collecting it."^{xxv} Digital formats allow compression and storage of data for easy transmission. Professional-quality print capability is now affordable. Cable television provides outlets for stations to run news programming all day. Other companies offer satellite television and radio direct to consumers who purchase the appropriate equipment. Instead of transporting bulky paper, newspaper companies such as *The New York Times* can digitize their content for easy transmission to printing presses across the country. Smaller newspapers, such as ones tailored to a specific ethnic group, can provide

professional print products even to small audiences or neighborhoods. With their continuous news stations, cable TV news stations can easily report new stories on the air any time of day.

A very specific impact of technology on the news media industry is that news organizations no longer center their news cycles to coincide with their morning edition or evening broadcast. They now not only gather news, but also can get that news directly to consumers 24 hours a day. Most of the news organizations have established or partnered with a website to provide continuous news coverage online. The previously mentioned *State of the News Media 2004* report contends: “At least for now, online journalism appears to be leading more to convergence with older media rather than replacement of it.”^{xxvi} This sharing of content also means many reporters contribute to different media, and the internet provides a forum that can look professional for even “non-journalists” to post news. Moreover, online news does not just reach consumers sitting at their desktop computers. It now reaches people on wireless devices such as cell phones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). Sophisticated consumers can tailor the news they access and receive. They can have breaking news delivered and decide what other topic areas they want delivered to which device.

CHALLENGES

The trends described above highlight a fundamental tension the news media faces in both meeting its business needs and serving the public interests. Addressing this dilemma raises several challenges for the industry, namely maintaining credibility, managing consolidation, leveraging technology and fostering effective relationships.

News Media is a business—and a profitable one. Print media’s average profit margin is about 20%,^{xxvii} and many local TV news channels bring in much more. The vast majority of the news media’s revenue comes from advertising. This dependence on advertising along with declining audiences, market fragmentation, and financial pressures creates tension in the industry. News media professionals must choose what stories to cover in a way that maximizes audience share while at the same time fulfilling their crucial public service role in providing a credible, impartial voice for the news people want and need to know. Many professionals we met with reinforced this concern, stating that business needs often pit “what sells” and entertainment against “hard news” and stories to inform the public. As a result, the industry faces critical challenges to maintain objectivity and credibility, and provide a fair and balanced perspective amidst staunch market pressures, and increased consolidation. A more detailed discussion of these two challenges – maintaining credibility and managing consolidation effectively to balance business and public interests is provided in the essay section of this report.

Competitive pressures and business drivers are also challenging media organizations to find more effective ways to leverage the internet in order to be “first to print” with breaking news that is both up-to-date and accurate. Today’s affordable information technology enables anyone with some form of recording equipment and access to the internet to report the news. This fact underlines the basic freedom of speech and the press guaranteed by the U.S. constitution’s first amendment, and moreover, makes it possible for all people, not only professional journalists, to reach mass audiences with 24/7 news and information that can have impact. Competing effectively in this environment finds journalists constantly torn between the business demands to beat this virtually unlimited competition with breaking news that is accurate and provides meaningful context. Of concern to many journalists we met with is the danger that pressures for speed over accuracy can lead to less fact checking, analysis, and editorial review that could ultimately have serious consequences and damage the credibility of the industry.

Hence, a key challenge for news organizations is to find ways to compete more effectively by exploiting the new technology while, at the same time, balancing both speed and accuracy in providing credible news reporting. The essay portion of this report contains a more detailed discussion of this challenge and the measures industry might take in addressing it.

Serving both business and public interests when it comes to fostering effective relationships with government officials raises another challenge for the industry and government. In this case, the industry's naturally skeptical stance toward government, originating from a desire to both scoop stories that promote audience share and fulfill its watchdog public service role, can often put journalists at odds with government counterparts, who, for a number of reasons, may desire more "control" over the message. Finding the proper and appropriate balance between media access and government control is a continuous source of friction and tension in the media-government relationship. For example, the ongoing Iraqi prison abuse investigation and release of photographs demonstrate the dynamic nature of the relationship and highlights the conflict between access and control. Insofar as the media plays a critical role in promoting the will of the American people to support government policies and strategies, it is critical for government leaders and military professionals to foster an effective relationship that promotes transparency and openness, while ensuring government activities and decisions are accurately depicted. Developing this type of relationship can be a challenge for both sides and is therefore discussed in more detail with specific recommendations included in the attached essay.

OUTLOOK

The news media industry, by its very nature, will continue to significantly influence national security policy. The government's success in engaging with the media to influence public will depends upon individual administration policies. The military embedded reporter program went a long way to engage the media. However, the military's reactive versus proactive stance to the Iraqi Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse story is perhaps more predictive of a continuing tenuous relationship between the military and the media.

Consumers will continue to seek their news from consistently credible media outlets. Industry concerns over falling readership within the younger demographics will most likely be assuaged as the next generation rises to executive decision-making levels. However, these technically savvy consumers will demand their news in more convenient formats.

The internet will become an increasingly important consumer news source as media outlets design formats that optimize the virtually limitless flow of data into cogent multimedia information packages. With some companies' internet sites already seeing some profitability, those that secure reputations for delivering credible and easily digestible news for decision-making consumers will quickly gain competitive advantage. Subscription-only income sites will still only apply to niche markets, such as the business sector served by the *Wall Street Journal Online*, but innovative advertising schemes coupled with rising market shares should propel the more traditional news companies into the black. That said, the consumer must continue to beware of information obtained from less credible sources.

Media consolidation will continue, bringing increasing return-on-investment to the owners while providing deeper pockets for news organizations to cover unforeseen events. Concerns remain over owner censorship/control of the editorial process, but the self-healing properties of the press will keep the issue at the foreground—and if necessary prompt government attention.

GOVERNMENT GOALS AND ROLES

The press has the unique distinction of being the only industry in American society to receive expressed Constitutional protection, and U.S. government officials continue to uphold this basic American right.

One example of the nature of the free press in the United States is that the news media industry operates unregulated for the most part. In fact, the U.S. does not regulate the news media industry to a high degree at all compared to many countries. The Federal Communications Commission regulates the use of the frequency spectrum and public decency over the airwaves; however, the U.S. does not dictate content and distribution requirements to the media. For FCC Chairman, Michael Powell, this lack of government regulation over the news media industry is most appropriate in a free market democracy. Powell argues, "Either you don't see enough of something you like, or you see too much of something you don't; . . . but at the end of the day you have to ask whether you want . . . [the FCC] saying, I want the public to see this but not that."^{xxviii} In our study of the industry, we found that market pressures do in fact prevail in that journalists and media executives appear to self-regulate in order to provide the type of credible news coverage audiences ultimately demand, and over time have been relatively successful.

Additionally, press in the U.S. has much more freedom of access to public information than its counterparts in other parts of the world. In our European travels, government officials consistently expressed disbelief that the U.S. Department of Defense provides Pentagon office space to news media correspondents. Our travels further highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of our system. The British news media have an effective mechanism to protect national security matters through the Official Secrets Act.^{xxix} Their "Defence-Notice," or D-Notice committee provides an avenue for an independent, unbiased decision regarding the proposed publishing of potentially classified information. British news media leaders unanimously endorsed the system during our interviews. While very successful for them, this model might be hard to implement in the U.S. In contrast to the existing freedom of access, this might be perceived as an attempt to censor or control the message.

An open and free press is also valued by the news media within the emerging democracies of Hungary and Slovenia. They expressed great admiration for the freedom the First Amendment affords the U.S. press, a level of protection that has not been written into their own constitutions. In the decade separating Hungary and Slovenia from their totalitarian past, the governments of these two countries still maintain some form of state-run news media.

Recommendations:

To leverage the press as an important tool within the information toolkit of our national instruments of power, U.S. government officials should establish sound, professional relationships with news media representatives and endeavor to be forthcoming with the press. *U.S. News & World Report* White House Correspondent Kenneth T. Walsh entitled his book *Feeding the Beast – The White House Versus The Press*. We believe government officials should not only feed the beast (the press) but should respect the beast.

To accomplish these goals, U.S. government entities should include more news media training and education in employee and leadership development programs. Strategic leaders--in fact all government officials--must become more "media literate." Training would consist of

leaders and others learning how to interact with reporters. Education includes knowledge and awareness at all levels of the impact of the news media. Specifically the education must include awareness of the media's affect on national will, the need to be proactive versus reactive, and the need to have a better relationship with the media. Both training and education are important in order to understand and engage the media.

We support programs that provide opportunities for journalists to experience and understand government operations. Agencies and Departments should establish orientation classes or introductory information briefings for journalists assigned to that "beat." Government executives and operational commanders must be proactive and work to establish a relationship with area media representatives before crises occur and they have to react. Along these lines, DoD and other government agencies should formalize the embedded journalist program into policy and doctrine.

CONCLUSION

The news media industry remains a critical component of national security in that it conveys information, i.e., "news" that stimulates public opinion and influences government policies. However, the evolving nature of news as a commodity as well as a public good often pits business managers against journalists—creating a tension between what consumers *want* to know and what they *need* to know. Revolutionary technological changes exacerbate the tension as varied-age demographic groups seek their news via diverse, sometimes radically different media. All the while, journalists cope with the insatiable 24-hour, 7-day a week demand for information. In response to these challenges, corporate media organization consolidation continues to place editorial content and control of newsgathering and distribution in the hands of fewer, more powerful executives. Nevertheless, previous barriers to traditional market entry (i.e., sizable capital investment for printing presses, broadcast equipment, *et al.*) have vanished with the advent of internet publishing. Anyone with a laptop computer and Internet access can create their own news site, blurring forever the lines between credible journalist and amateur pundit. News is now provided on a "let the consumer beware" basis. But are the consumers aware?

The government has been responding to the media evolution with mixed results. The U.S. Department of Defense's Operation *Iraqi Freedom* embedded reporter program received positive reviews from journalists and military members alike. The military has struggled to cope with the nearly instantaneous transmission of battlefield information, well outside the traditional conventional news cycle that previously allowed to some extent a greater ability to filter, control, and perhaps even provide context to the data. On the plus side, a new generation of military/journalist personal relationships was born on the battlefield—lasting associations as both soldiers and reporters climb the ranks of their professions.

The military's concern between media access and control of sensitive information continues to challenge DoD leaders. Proactive engagement oftentimes ameliorates the impact of bad news that may be embarrassing to the government. Over-control, however, oftentimes leads to reactive measures that may taint the government message.

Regardless, the news media is a ubiquitous force that government and military leaders must deal with—a force as real to the soldier as terrain and weather. The ICAF 2004 News Media Industry Study Group recommends incorporating news media training and education for government leaders as part of their professional education and development program with the goal of making soldiers better aware of how the news media operates and how to better engage with it. In addition, DoD should consider institutionalizing the embedded reporter program,

building upon the successes of Operation *Iraqi Freedom* to ensure future generations of soldiers and reporters generate an appreciation for each other's profession.

In the words of Joseph Pulitzer, "Our Republic and its press will rise and fall together." Therefore, it is critical that government and military leaders recognize their responsibility to actively engage the press, establish and maintain a positive relationship and respect the undisputable power, global reach and influence of the media and its ability to affect national will, international support and national security policy.

ESSAYS ON MAJOR ISSUES: The following essays amplify four major issues identified in our study that warrant further discussion.

MEDIA OWNERSHIP AND CONSOLIDATION: ARE WE HEADED FOR TOO MUCH CONCENTRATION IN THE INDUSTRY?

By Lieutenant Colonel Kimberly Crider, USAFR
and Commander Scott Jeff Tappan, USN

In June 2003, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposed new rules for media ownership that relaxed limits on the percentage of households any single owner of television stations may reach. At the same time, the FCC reduced restrictions preventing cross-ownership of radio, television and newspaper media. These proposals, while strongly supported by many both inside and outside the industry, ignited a firestorm of public disgruntlement and popular backlash that quickly attracted Congressional attention. Six months later, the Senate agreed to a compromise that would raise the cap on television ownership from 35% to 39%.^{xxx} Congress continues to debate the issue, and numerous appeals to the decision are now pending a ruling by the federal courts.^{xxxi}

At the center of these debates is the decades-old question of whether or not allowing for a concentration of media ownership places too much control into the hands of a powerful few. Neil Hickey, Editor-at-Large for the *Columbia Journalism Review*, points to *Associated Press vs. U.S.*, a 1945 case in which the U.S. Supreme Court wrote, "the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public." This guiding principle, according to Hickey underlies the current ownership debate.^{xxxii} Interestingly, there are activists on both sides of the issue who would argue for this principle. Yet, the questions remain: Is big media really "bad" for America? Do relaxed restrictions help or hurt vibrant competition in the industry? Do media mergers really mean an end journalistic pluralism? Who wins and who loses when it comes to media ownership? While the answers are not clear, a careful examination of the arguments on each side is important to understanding the issue, its risks and potential ways to manage those risks.

The Trend Toward Consolidation

Industry observers note that consolidation is an increasing trend across all sectors of the media industry. A recent report by the Project for Excellence in Journalism, entitled "*The State of the News Media 2004*" notes that in 1999 the three largest companies in radio owned less than 1000 stations; today, they own over 1600 stations^{xxxiii} – 1200 of which are owned by one company alone, Clear Channel Communications. Twenty-two companies now own 39 percent of

all newspapers in U.S, and even more importantly represent over 70 percent of the total circulation^{xxxiv}. In broadcast television, large media and non-media corporations own each of the major networks: Disney owns ABC, Viacom - CBS, General Electric - NBC, Time Warner/AOL - CNN, and News Corporation for FOX News. Increasingly, these corporations are also acquiring controlling interests in a variety of local television and radio stations, as well as many of the most popular news websites.

Is Bigger Better?

Proponents of consolidation say, “bigger is better” and applaud the FCC’s decision to relax ownership rules as good for the industry. They say consolidation provides much needed opportunities to achieve scale economies during a period of declining circulation, viewing audiences and revenues. The ability to share resources allows smaller news organizations to tap into greater information sources they wouldn’t normally have access to, thus leading to increased diversity and choices of programming for the consumer.

Proponents also claim that consolidation actually increases the amount of local news broadcasted. For example, in 1996 FOX News bought six stations in New York, Los Angeles, Dallas, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Houston that averaged 23 hours of local news. Three of the stations aired no news at all. Since acquiring those stations, FOX now produces and airs over 195 hours of local news each week.^{xxxv} In this case, these facts counter the argument that increased ownership jeopardizes local programming. In addition, FOX claims they hire station managers, news directors, anchors, reporters and technicians that live in the local market. These local employees are aware of community events, news and issues important to their viewers, furthering the claim that consolidation is good for local programming.

Meanwhile, the FCC, for its part, asserts the media industry would benefit from fewer restrictions and that the new regulations are grounded in law and competition policy.^{xxxvi} Given the rise of more diverse news and information from a variety of cable, satellite and online sources, FCC Commissioner Michael Powell argues that existing ownership limits, in fact, hinder competition and prevent media companies from achieving their full potential.^{xxxvii} He is confident that current anti-trust laws are sufficient to prevent untoward media monopolies.^{xxxviii}

Opponents Disagree

Nevertheless, a large number of activists, watchdog organizations, and journalists strongly disagree. They warn that increased consolidation will ultimately lead to “bland, one-size-fits-all news”^{xxxix} as media conglomerates strive to maximize their profits by extending their reach at the least possible cost. Many fear that the predominant providers of news within the industry will consequently produce a more homogenized, lower quality news product. Critics are also concerned that consolidation will lessen the quality and quantity of local news, and bring in corporate managers and editors who have less of a “local” slant to the stories they air.

It has been said that once “news” started to make money, it forever changed the business model for producing news. When the shareholder became an integral part of the business equation, the pressure to “make the numbers” and increase the bottom line became a major, if not primary focus of these news organizations. Circulation and viewership of nearly all forms of news is and has been on the decline for some time now, with a few exceptions.^{xl} For example, from 1988 to 2002, *Time Magazine* and *US News & World Report* circulation decreased by 13 percent.^{xli} Overall newspaper circulation is down by 11 percent since 1990 with classified advertisement revenues dropping 18 percent in 2001 alone.^{xlii} The Nielson ratings for the big

three broadcast nightly newscasts have declined by 34 percent in the last 10 years, and 44 percent since 1980.^{xliii}

This decline in revenues and constant pressure to “make the numbers” leaves editors and owners scrambling to make up the difference and forces them to make difficult choices. Many have attempted to offset lost revenues with price increases. Some have tried cost-cutting measures such as narrowing the width of their pages, forcing employees to take blocks of unpaid leave each year, or cutting overtime, travel and freelance expenses. These methods have not been able to balance the spreadsheets, and most have resorted to cutting costs by cutting labor. For example, in the last 20 years, *Time Magazine* decreased their staff by 15 percent, and *Newsweek* by 50 percent.^{xliv} From 1994 to 2001, radio stations have decreased fulltime newsroom employees by 47 percent and part-time staff by 71 percent.^{xlv} Newspaper staffs have been cut by 2,200 and the number of news bureaus has dramatically dwindled since 1990.^{xlvi} The end result is fewer reporters with more workload. This in turn, results in less fact checking, more reliance on newswires and freelancers, less journalistic investigation, an abbreviated editorial process, and ultimately a lower quality news product.

Implications

Regardless of which side is right in the consolidation debate, media ownership has an impact on what news is covered, how it is covered, and the ways in which the news is made available to the public.

With regards to improved quality, the verdict on consolidation is still out. As discussed above, many argue consolidation (and the resources it brings) is essential for many organizations in their ability to produce higher quality news. “You can’t be journalistically vigorous if you aren’t financially sound,” notes Michael Gartner, former president of NBC News.^{xlvii}

On the other hand, Tom Rosenstiel, Executive Director of the Project for Excellence in Journalism, raises concerns that as big media firms buy up local stations, they might apply a “cookie cutter mentality,” using those stations as “cash cows” to push out news at the least possible cost.^{xlviii} He adds, “There’s little reason, frankly, to believe that relaxing this rule will enhance the quality of local TV news. It may enhance the financial ability of the companies that own the stations, but there is no hard evidence that the journalism will get better.”^{xlix}

At a broader level, the implications are more worrisome as the potential for broadcast firms to generate profits with “a poorer quality news product”¹ may reduce the impetus by the news media to provide the depth and breadth of viewpoints required to inform citizens of the American democratic system. U.S. Senator Patty Murray conveyed this sentiment in her response to the FCC ruling, stating, “We have to ensure that the marketplace of ideas is not dominated by a few conglomerates at the expense of our citizens and our democracy.”^{li}

Recommendations

Given the pros and cons, there is no clear requirement for U.S. government to limit media consolidation at this time, but it must remain engaged and vigilant to monitor how the industry evolves. This could involve regular reviews commissioned by the FCC and Congress to assess the competitive health of the industry and the quality of news coverage across all sectors of the media. Increased emphasis on product quality by federal review commissions and independent watchdog groups maintains public interests at the forefront and helps consumers understand their role in demanding quality news coverage.

Conclusion

Despite the proposed FCC ruling, media consolidation is a trend that is likely to continue as organizations seek ways to compete in light of smaller, more fragmented audiences. Risks remain that consolidation gives fewer firms more control over content and distribution, and may drive profit-seeking decisions that favor efficiency over news quality and limit the diversity of viewpoints—so important in an open and informed democracy. While ownership caps should not necessarily be reversed, rigorous FCC monitoring, appropriate regulations, responsible ownership and a vigilant public will ensure the industry remains diverse, competitive and serves the public's local and national interest.

MEDIA CREDIBILITY

By Lieutenant Colonel Robert Castellvi, USMC
and Lieutenant Colonel Marilyn Wills, USA

This paper will explore the notion of objectivity, bias, and credibility. It's questionable whether anyone can address a subject like bias free from his or her own biases and preconceived ideas. Media credibility stems from an intangible connection with the public, linked to trust and integrity. A study of these topics requires defining them in a modern media context, with a closer look at media/public disconnection, perceptions, and diversity. If consumers arm themselves with a better understanding of media bias and objectivity, they can better address credibility issues that frequently emerge.

Objectivity and Bias Defined

Webster's Dictionary defines *Objectivity* as "the expression or dealing of facts or conditions as perceived without distortion by personal feelings, prejudices, or interpretations." *Bias* can be interpreted as the loss of objectivity and is defined as "giving a settled and often prejudiced outlook."^{lii} To present the news objectively, reporters and their editors should provide a fair and balanced representation of facts, opposing issues, and viewpoints.

Media – Public Disconnection

A fundamental issue in the bias debate is whether the media is reflective of society in its social and political views. Perceptions of bias or lack of objectivity can stem from the media and society looking at the world differently. Part of the answer can be found in data that contrasts the public's political foundation in comparison to that of the news media.

Public Beliefs - Political Leaning. According to a 2001 Gallup poll, 41% of Americans identify themselves as conservatives, 38% as moderates and 18% as liberals.^{liii} On four cornerstone domestic political issues - abortion, gun control, taxes, and the death penalty - the public demonstrates an edge toward conservative positions.^{liv}

Media Beliefs – Political Leaning. In contrast to the public, studies have shown a more liberal tendency among the media.^{lv} While partisan watchdog groups point to cases of bias, there are surveys by reputable, non-partisan groups that make the case more clearly. In June 2001, the Kaiser Family Foundation published the "[National Survey of the Role of Polls in Policymaking](#)", completed by Princeton Survey Research Associates in collaboration with *Public*

Perspective.^{lvi} The poll questioned 1,206 members of the public, policymakers, and media professionals, including reporters and editors from top newspapers, TV and radio networks, news services and news magazines. The results showed an inverse relationship between self-proclaimed conservatives and liberals, in comparison with the public polling. Members of the media were nearly four times as likely to refer to themselves as liberals than as conservatives. This reinforced a previous study conducted by Virginia Commonwealth University in 1998, entitled “*Journalists Views on Politics, Economic Policy and Media Coverage*,” which surveyed from a comprehensive sample of journalists across radio, print, and television.^{lvii} Across the spectrum of political, economic, and social issues, journalists are mostly centrist by over 50%. For the non-centrists, the study found a higher liberal versus conservative leaning on social issues; but on economic issues, the tilt was favored toward conservative beliefs.

Public Perceptions Of Bias In The Media

Whether or not bias in the media exists is less important than the public perception of such a state. In February 2003, The Gallup Organization polled 1,002 adult Americans about the media’s accuracy and objectivity. Key findings illustrated that more Americans say that the media are too liberal (45%) than too conservative (15%). Interestingly, the poll showed a difference in the way sub-groups within the public viewed the media. Only 18% of liberals thought a bias existed in the press, while 63% of conservatives and 43% of moderates felt that a liberal bias permeated the media.^{lviii}

A subsequent survey of 1,200 American adults in the summer of 2003 by the Pew Research Center For The People & The Press polled partisan categories of self-proclaimed Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Republican and Independent polling results were consistent with previous studies, with majorities of three-to-one and two-to-one, respectively, believing in a liberal media bias. However, in this poll, Democrats in large numbers believed in the existence of both a liberal and conservative media bias, with 41% believing in a liberal bias and 33% believing in a conservative bias.^{lix}

Media Perception Of Themselves

While a majority of the public perceives some level of bias, the media self-criticism has been mixed. Some champion the conventional conservative argument, while others rebuke conservative attacks and present opposing views. In his book, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*,^{lx} Bernard Goldberg argues that the media's tilt is not the result of a left-wing conspiracy but rather the product of like-minded people attracted to the same profession and reinforcing their existing views and values.

Eric Altman provides an opposing point of view in his book, *What Liberal Media? The Truth About Bias and the News in Newsrooms*.^{lxi} He counters that the media is not guilty of exercising a liberal bias; in fact, that it’s quite the reverse. The notion of the media's liberal bias, he contends, is a widespread and useful myth that's easy to buy into. He points to the fact that conservative commentators, such as Rush Limbaugh, George Will, Robert Novak, and Charles Krauthammer are routinely invited on mainstream media publications, to include those outlets conservatives attack for being liberal.

Neil Gabler, commentator on *Fox News Watch*, the only weekly television show dedicated solely to commenting on the media, argues that both conservatives and liberals have missed the real issue. “The real media war today isn't between liberals and conservatives but between two different journalistic mind-sets: Those who believe in advocacy, and those who

believe in objectivity.”^{lxii} Gabler also argues that the growth of cable and internet media, the drop in newspaper circulation, and growing pains of consolidation have resulted in fierce competition for profits which drives many organizations to embrace more advocacy in their journalism in order to attract a particular audience.^{lxiii}

Moreover, the 24-hour news cycle lends itself to advocacy and challenges to objectivity because of the need to rapidly post and update news on cable and internet sites. In an effort to break news in a highly competitive market, editors often have less opportunity to review stories for balance and objectivity.

Diversity And Bias

Like most industries, diversity within the news media industry is traditionally a measure of race, ethnicity and gender mix. However, for the news media industry in particular, the impact of neglecting intellectual and ideological diversity, if left unchecked, can lead to homogenous newsrooms. According to Kovach and Rosenstiel, in *The Elements of Journalism*, while ethnic, gender, and racial quotas are helpful means of ensuring more diversity and objectivity in the production of the news, that level of diversity is meaningless if the newsroom culture then requires people from different backgrounds to all adhere to a single mentality or perspective.^{lxiv} In other words, the local newspaper or TV station may look like America...but it won't think like the community and it won't understand it or be able to cover it.^{lxv}

Credibility

For decades, polls have reflected low public support for the press. A recent 2003 Gallup Poll by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press concluded that Americans rate the trustworthiness of journalists at about the level of politicians and as only slightly more credible than used car salesmen.^{lxvi} The poll suggests that only 21% of Americans believe journalists have high ethical standards, ranking them below auto mechanics but tied with members of Congress.^{lxvii}

The perception of bias and a lack of objectivity directly links to credibility—or the loss of it. Character and ethics, the traits that determine how a journalist writes and tells the story, are also factors that can influence credibility. Ethical scandals have tarnished newsrooms at home and abroad. The exposure of *The New York Times* reporter Jayson Blair led to the departure of two top editors. *USA TODAY* reporter Jack Kelley, a 2001 Pulitzer Prize finalist, was recently fired after it was determined he fabricated substantial portions of at least eight major stories and conspired to mislead superiors and the public. Foreign media have not been immune to scandal. Most recently, the editor of the London's *Daily Mirror* resigned after the newspaper published fake photos of Iraqi prisoner abuse. Journalists cannot function without trust between the journalist and the public, and between the journalist and the editor.

Conclusion

The news media bias, objectivity, and credibility debate is one that will remain an issue for the foreseeable future. As long as large segments of the population feel disconnected from those reporting, editing, and presenting the news, credibility will be questioned, and perceptions of bias will remain. With a more multimedia savvy consumer who is constantly adapting to new patterns of staying informed, the media cannot take the public for granted. Most importantly, the American press must be trustworthy to maintain its role as a vital institution of democracy.

THE INTERNET AND ITS IMPACT ON THE NEWS MEDIA

By Mr. Perry Holloway, U.S. Department of State

The Internet Invades Our Lives

No part of modern life goes untouched by the internet. Its speed and pervasiveness make it a perfect tool in today's world of globalization and immediate gratification. This speed and pervasiveness carry dangers. Anyone with a computer and minimal training can create a website and start producing almost instant news with little background or analysis. The consumer of this instant news has no guarantee regarding the accuracy, and there is often little or no editorial review on websites outside of the major media players.

The internet is now a vital tool for today's journalists. In addition to providing customers with news, the internet serves as a powerful research and productivity tool for today's journalists who have to write more and do it faster. In our newsrooms visits, we observed many computer screens with "Google" or some other search engine prominently displayed. This easy and quick access to news and related material could cause accuracy and credibility problems since less credible reporters might not always verify the information found on the internet.

The Ultimate Media

The internet multimedia capabilities allow it to compete with and complement the trinity of traditional media: radio, television, and print. What really makes the internet a transformational force is its ability to use the three traditional media simultaneously. You can read an article by a print journalist, listen to a related interview, and watch a video of the scene. A director of news operations and products at a major internet news company told us that this multimedia capability is the biggest advantage that his company has over traditional media companies.^{lxviii} A vice president of news & programming at a major all news radio station told us that the multimedia power of the web allowed them—a local radio station—to be a television station and newspaper from their website without all of the capital investment and regulations.^{lxix}

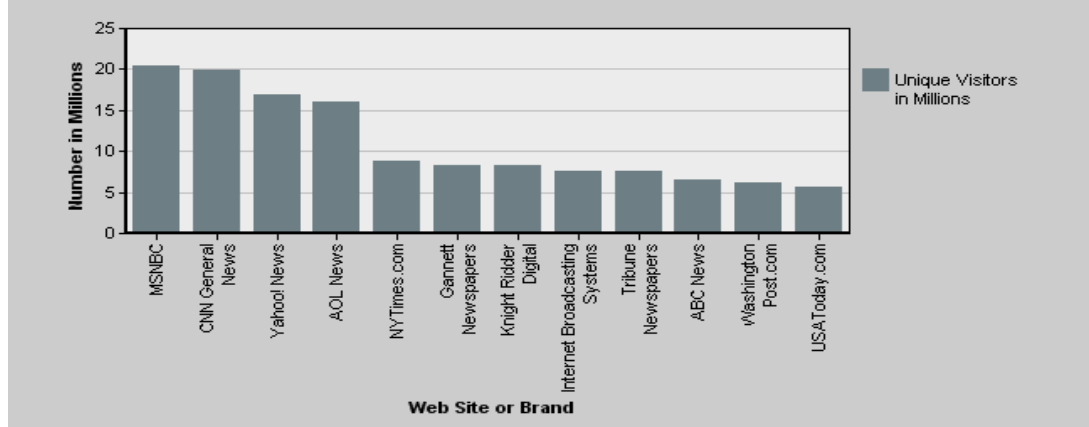
There is no country in the world that does not have internet access. Media outlets and their primary partners—advertisers—are elated that they can send you the news and ads to your cellular phone while you are on the subway or golf course.

When Did News Hit the Internet and Who are the Players?

There are many players on the internet. In fact, this is both the beauty and the bane of it. Almost anyone can start a website and begin to publish their version of the news or the truth. Unfortunately, pseudo news and falsehoods are ever present. Even so, a few major companies clearly are the leaders in terms of credible, innovative news. Below is a chart showing the top dozen online news sites. Conspicuously absent from the top twelve is CBS, whose site is not as successful as the other networks. CBS arrived late to the internet and has gone through a number of reorganizations. Only recently has it begun to pay attention to the internet and devote quality resources to it.^{lxx}

Top News Web Sites

By average monthly unique visitors, January through October 2003



Source: Nielsen//NetRatings data, Editor and Publisher Online

Knight Ridder figure does not include January through March; Tribune figure does not include January and February

lxxi

Who Uses the Internet?

Nearly two-thirds of Americans access the internet during the course of a year. In August of 2003 alone, 126 million people accessed the internet. This is an increase of 27% from the 86 million in March of 2000. The size of the online population in the U.S. on a normal day is 66 million people. While the internet seems pervasive, there are underrepresented demographic groups. The elderly, racial minorities, the lesser educated, the unemployed, and rural populations are much less likely to go online. Young adults clearly dominate the internet population. In August of 2003, 83% of young adults between the ages of 18 and 29 used the internet, followed by 73% of the 30 to 49 year old group that were online. This is an important statistic because advertisers who are the key to a profitable website are primarily targeting the ages of 18 to 49.^{lxxii} The group with the least amount of users on the internet is the 65 and older crowd, with only 22% using the net in August of 2003.^{lxxiii} This percentage should gradually move higher as current users move into this demographic sector.

Why Do We Need It?

The obvious answer is that we Americans cannot conduct business as normal without the internet. If it disappeared tomorrow, our systems of government, banking, education, and business would freeze up. Still, there is another aspect of the internet that is more philosophical and maybe more important—that is the internet's ability to provide a voice for free speech and diversity of opinion so important to a democracy. The internet is a tremendous source of information that allows almost anyone to have access to information. The challenge for America and its news media is to leverage the internet effectively to provide a means for the public to receive objective news and information amid the plethora of diversity.

THE MILITARY AND THE MEDIA

By Lieutenant Colonel Jill Chambers, USA
and Lieutenant Colonel Tyrone Woodyard, USAF

"I hate newspapermen. They come into camp and pick up their camp rumors and print them as facts. I regard them as spies, which, in truth, they are. If I killed them all there would be news from Hell before breakfast."

William Tecumseh Sherman -

The military and the news media's relationship dates back to the 1854 Crimean War.^{lxxiv} Like many long-term relationships there have been periods of cooperation and unyielding differences of opinion. Whenever and wherever military forces are engaged in combat, the media will spare no expense to be on the battlefield, talking to the troops and covering the action. Advances in technology, 24-hour news cycles, live global satellite broadcasts and the public's insatiable demand for news and information has forced the military and media to redefine their relationship.

Senior military and civilian leaders recognize how media coverage can shape and influence public opinion, sustain national will, and secure international support.

Over the years, the military has strived to shape media coverage by controlling access to the troops and movement on the battlefield with varying degrees of success. At the same time, reporters willing to accept the personal challenges and risks associated with covering combat operations, consistently push for unrestricted access with little or no censorship.

This institutional tug-of-war over control and access is an inevitable source of conflict and tension between commanders entrusted with the lives of troops and journalists devoted to reporting military operations and fulfilling a constitutionally protected right for a free press. Military leaders have recognized and reluctantly accepted the fact that the media—like the weather and terrain—are a ubiquitous force on the battlefield.

As a result, today's media savvy commanders have learned how to engage the media and leverage their global reach, resources, technology, and capabilities to successfully execute their mission. They have learned to employ a variety of media strategies to achieve this goal: embedding journalists with front line combat units in Operation *Iraqi Freedom* (OIF), providing national reporters unrestricted access to senior battlefield commanders, conducting interviews with foreign media, providing background interviews with subject matter experts, and granting timely interviews with senior DoD civilian and military leaders.

These inclusive and mutually beneficial tactics have improved the military-media relationship and generated favorable coverage. More importantly, these initiatives have shaped public opinion, influenced national will, and secured international support for U.S. military operations.

Commanders such as Major General William Nash, former 1st Armored Division Commander and Major General David Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division Commander during Operation *Iraqi Freedom*, understand and appreciate the value of positive media relations. They both invited *Washington Post* Pulitzer-Prize reporter Rick Atkinson to travel with their units in Bosnia and Iraq. Nash stated, "Embedded media is a good thing . . . we must engage the media before we need them."^{lxxv}

Regardless of the contentious or cooperative nature of the relationship, commanders and journalists have, and always will be, battlefield companions. Therefore, it is critical that present and future military leaders recognize their responsibility to actively engage the press, establish and maintain a positive relationship and respect the undisputable power, global reach and

influence of the media and their ability to affect national will, international support and national security policy.

Media's Influence: Successes and Challenges

The media's role is critical to national security and the effort to maintain American resolve and strengthen national will to support Global War on Terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Our senior leadership must understand that national will is "the popular dedication to the nation and support for its policies even when that support requires sacrifice."^{lxxvi} Moreover, in order to cultivate this intangible concept they must understand how the media handles the news and how to involve them in a military atmosphere.

One key strategic decision by the Department of Defense to incorporate the media is the embedded reporter program^{lxxvii} – an overwhelming success linked to our high state of national positive support for the Administration at a 75% approval rating for the war in April 2003.^{lxxviii} At the peak of combat operations more than 700 American and international reporters, photographers, and cameramen were embedded with U.S. troops in Iraq. Media reports from the battlefield provided near-real time independently verified information and details about events actually occurring on the battlefield. According to Bryan Whitman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, "giving the media direct access to the troops and allowing reporters to personally witness events as they unfolded on the battlefield was an effective strategy to neutralize Iraq's misinformation campaign."^{lxxix}

Recommendations

- Public Affairs Officers within the Department of Defense must take a more proactive role in identifying and using media - savvy "talking heads."
- Proactively engage the media to build mutually beneficial relationships. To accomplish this, Department of Defense and the individual services should establish an account system (similar to a journalist's "beat" or public relations account), which assigns senior Public Affairs officers to liaison with a specific news media organization such as CNN or New York Times. The assigned officers would be responsible for maintaining regular contact, and providing journalists with timely, accurate information and the context required to help understand ongoing operations and evolving events. These same concepts can be applied across all government agencies. Through strong professional relationships between strategic leaders (both military and civilian) and the news media, the government can more effectively leverage the news media's potential to rally national will and sustain domestic/international support.
- A final recommendation would be to develop a strategic level media industry course, directed toward senior leaders, such as the general officer orientation "CAPSTONE" course. Its goal would be to focus their attention on the power and reach of the media and understanding the importance of narrowing the gap between the military and media outlets. Media training and awareness should not be limited to strategic leaders. Recent events have shown that even the most junior level officers and enlisted may have the opportunity to interact with the media. Therefore, it is important that media awareness training be incorporated into all levels of professional military education in all services.

Conclusion

National will plays a decisive role in military success, particularly when US troops are deployed to fight America's wars. Our leaders must clearly understand that national will is an element of national power and must be harnessed in order to garner support for both foreign and domestic policy decisions. More effective use of the instrument of the media to help shape national will demands more dialogue with the media and means aggressively seeking opportunities to get the word out so that the public is more informed and will take pride and ownership for America's actions.

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ Paraphrased from a speech given by then Vice President Spiro T. Agnew in San Diego, CA on Sept 11, 1970 regarding the news media: “*In the United States today, we have more than our share of the nattering nabobs of negativity.*”

ⁱⁱ British Broadcasting Corporation World Service, interview, 5 May 2004.

ⁱⁱⁱ United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, Interview, 4 May 2004.

^{iv} Ibid

^v Francis Coombs, Jr., Managing Editor, *The Washington Times*, Interview, 26 March 2004.

^{vi} Jack Fuller, at Committee of Concerned Journalists Chicago forum, 6 November 1997.

^{vii} Associated Press, report of Pope John Paul II’s declaration of the Vatican’s Holy Year Day for Journalists, 4 June 2000.

^{viii} Journalism.Org, *The State of the News Media 2004: An Annual Report on American Journalism*, 2004, <http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/execsum.pdf>, March 2004.

^{ix} The State of the Media 2004, Overview page 4, http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/narrative_networktv_audience.asp?cat=3&media=4, March 2004.

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