


Innovative NetworkKing: The Synergy between
the Public Relations Industry and Multimedia
Newspaper

MERLE CAROL VAN DIEMEL

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Title: Innovative Networking: The Synergy between the Public Relations Industry and Multimedia Newspaper

by

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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Supervisor: Ms Marian Pike

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Declaration

I, Merle Carol Van Diemel, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and this thesis has not been submitted previously for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

December 7, 2011

Signed: Merle van Diemel

Date

Abstract

Title: Innovative Networking: The Synergy between the Public Relations Industry and Multimedia Newspaper

The purpose of this mini thesis is to investigate the research question, "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" It is obvious that the introduction of the multimedia newspaper has affected the role of the public relations practitioner and the role of the journalists. But has it changed the manner in which public relations practitioners practice public relations (that is the influence of the multimedia newspaper on the public relations industry) and its value in the eyes of the multimedia journalist

Main objectives

The study will measure the multimedia editorial staff's opinion and perceptions of the multimedia newspapers content and public relations practice's impact on that content. The research is interested in whether the introduction of the multimedia newspaper has affected the role of the public relations practitioner and the journalists and whether it has changed the manner in which public relations practitioners practice public relations (that is the influence of the multimedia newspaper on the public relations industry). The research reviews the perceived value of public relations to journalists operating within the multimedia newspaper context.

The main objectives of this research are:-

The multimedia journalist's perception of the public relation's practitioner as a news or information source

The multimedia journalists use of the public relations practitioner's press releases as a news source

The frequency of multimedia journalist contact with the public relations practitioner for news or information

The value of public relations to multimedia newspaper

The percentage of public relations press releases that are published as stories in multimedia newspapers

The demonstrable value of public relations practice to the multimedia newspapers

The impact, if any, of the multimedia newspaper on public relations practice

Design and Methodology

The research design of this limited scope thesis is empirical. The research will use a single, structured, self-administered questionnaire – given to a convenience sample of journalists and editor's currently in permanent or contract employment at *Die Burger*, one of *Media24*'s daily newspapers in the Western Cape – to gather primary data for analysis.

Key findings

The research found that:-

Journalists working for the multimedia newspapers attach importance to their relationship with the public relations practitioners

Journalists value public relations practitioners as a news source and consider them an asset to newspapers as a profession.

Journalists depend more on the social networks as a source of news than on public relations practitioners.

Journalists distrust public relations practitioners in general.

Conclusions

Therefore, it is clear that public relations practitioners need to enhance their journalistic skills, to ensure publication of the content of the (public relations practitioner's) press release. There are indications that technology will continue to shape the opportunities available to public relations practitioners to contact target markets with or without the interface of a traditional or multimedia newspaper.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a study be undertaken to evaluate whether public relations practitioners are using other methods (such as social media), in addition to the traditional media and multimedia newspaper, to connect with target audiences and to measure the success of these methods. Further investigation of the effectiveness of the social media press release is recommended.

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My Saturday Research Group members for their support and friendship.

A special thanks to Ms Marian Pike, the supervisor of this study, for her excellent guidance, encouragement and expertise.

The Lord Jesus for his grace and faithfulness.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my husband and children and in memory of my late parents.

Glossary

Terms/Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition/Explanation
Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC)	The ABC is a not-for-profit organisation established in 1914 to be the world's pre-eminent self-regulatory auditing organisation responsible to advertisers, advertising agencies, and the media they use, for the independent verification and dissemination of their members' circulation, readership and audience information (ABC homepage , 2009).
Communication	Communication is the deliberate sharing of meaning between two or more people (Verwey, 1994:57)
Digital	Communication transmitted in a computer-readable format. Digital information is easy to use in a variety of media (Guth & Marsh, 2009:551)
Hyperlink	Text produced in HTML that is tagged to be presented as a link to another element. Hyperlinks can take you to another part of the same page, another page on the same site, another Web site, a non-Web document or a multimedia element. Links that go to a multimedia element are often referred to as hypermedia (Holtz, 2002:421)
Internet	(Lowercase "i") are computer networks used for the exchange of messages and files. (Uppercase "I") is the global network most people access, referred to as "the Web" (Treadwell & Treadwell, 2005:294)
Multimedia	The web allows integration of all media – text, visuals, audio, motion and animation. (Treadwell & Treadwell, 2005:348)
Online	The state of being connected via a modem to the Internet (Haig, 2000:157)

Press agency	Press agency is creating newsworthy stories and events to attract media attention and to gain public notice (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 1994:13)
Public relations	Dr. Rex Harlow view public relations as “...a distinctive management function which helps establish mutual lines of communications, understanding, acceptance, and co-operation between an organisation and its publics” (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 1994:4)
Social media	Social media includes online technologies and practices that allow people to share information and opinions in the form of text, images, audio and video. It includes blogs, wikis, online social networks, and more (Guth & Marsh, 2009:560)
Webpage	A single document stored at a website. A single browser window displays a single web page at a time (Haig, 2000:158)
Website	A collection of web pages accessed via one URL (Haig, 2000:159)
World Wide Web	Made universally accessible through the web browser, the World Wide Web is a system of hyperlinked hypertext documents, which are connected or accessed over the Internet. It consists of billions of web pages, usually containing text, images and HTML links (Haig, 2000:159).

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1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this limited scope thesis is to investigate the research question "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" It is obvious that the introduction of the multimedia newspaper has affected the role of the public relations practitioner and the journalists, but has it changed the manner in which public relations practitioners practice public relations (that is the influence of the multimedia newspaper on the public relations industry) and its value in the eyes of the multimedia journalist. This study will measure the multimedia editorial staff's opinion and perceptions of multimedia newspaper's content and the impact of public relations on that content.

1.2 Background and motivation

Much has been written about the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists; as well as about the influence of the public relations practitioners on the shaping the news reported in traditional print newspapers (Bailey, 2006:317; Gower, 2007:221; Moloney, 2006:152 and Shin & Cameron, 2003:253). In 2004, Marmur, (2004:70) undertook a study to examine the impact of public relations practice on the content of newspapers in the Delaware Valley of the United States of America. The first phase of the study found that although public relations practitioners were seen as an asset and a resources, they did not play a major role in news formation. However, the second phase of the study found that the majority of information released through public relations practitioners was used.

Both Marmur, (2004:70) and Marnie, (2002:9) believe that successful public relations practitioners, are an influential source of information to journalists and are able to fulfil the strategic objectives of their advocacy role to organisations. This endorses Slater's claim (Slater, 2002:157) that the best modern public relations practitioners are motivated by a desire to serve the public good and contribute to news production.

1.3 Preliminary literature review

1.3.1 Environment

The traditional newspaper environment has expanded and today includes a multimedia newspaper that has many more characteristics than the text and still photographs of the traditional newspaper as portrayed by Cameron et al (1995); Deuze, (2004); Molina (1997) and The World Association of Newspapers (Anon, 2006; 2007).

According to Cameron et al (1995:10), the multimedia newspaper has, or is about to have, the following characteristics: moving images, animation, sound, voice generation as text is read to the user, switchable modality from multimedia at home to audio-only while commuting, and an array of interactive elements for navigating the publication. Cameron et al's study exams why the much publicized '*electronic*' newspaper failed in the 1980s, but later revived in the mid 1990s.

Making use of what was then a futuristic element, Cameron et al (1995:16) describe the '*electronic*' or multimedia newspaper as looking similar to a print newspaper page, but with this newspaper being visible only on the internet via the computer screen. In addition, with this newspaper, it would be possible to click on a photo to have a full motion video with CD quality stereo sound emerge and a click on a fact box would solicit a summary of the necessary factual details. However, today (2011) the multimedia newspaper is no longer an invention of the future; it exists and forms part of the mass communication world. Alfonso Molina (1997:197-198) declared the "*growth of newspapers on the World Wide Web (WWW) as nothing short of amazing*" with already 2,000 worldwide online newspapers, and a predicted with a growth rate of about 50 new online newspapers per month.

Following the re-emergence of the electronic newspaper, Cameron et al (1995:16), argue that an immense wave of innovation began. They contend that, awaiting further research and testing, electronic newspapers should provide unique opportunities for public relations, teaching and research. Curtin and Cameron (1995:14) highlight that electronic newspapers will provide public relations practitioners with another communication channel, which can be used to communicate with journalists, comment on stories, and rebut or pitch ideas to journalists. This is in addition to email and on chat boards on the World Wide Web / Internet. At the same time, research into what multimedia means for journalism (and

public relations) increased. (Deuze, 2004:143). Mark Deuze was one of the first to attempt to define multimedia journalism. He draws a clear distinction between online journalism and multimedia journalism. Deuze argues that the work of online journalist is presented through the Internet and the World Wide Web, while multimedia journalist deals with information through text, sound, picture and/or animation to different platforms, including the Internet (Deuze, 2004:141). Although Deuze marks the difference between the online and multimedia journalist, this research will use the broader term "*multimedia*" to include "*online journalism*" as presented through the Internet and the World Wide Web.

Innovation continued to sweep through the global mass communication industry, bringing success to those companies who are able to seize the opportunities and embrace change (Anon, 2006:1). One lesson highlighted at the 60th Congress of the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) held in Cape Town, South Africa in 2007 was, should newspapers (journalists) wish to seize the digital age, they need to embrace partnerships with external stakeholders. (Anon, 2007:3). The Congress speakers suggested that, as the Internet matures, so will it continue to change, and in this environment, newspapers will continue to need to diversify and extend their digital services and products to ensure deliver to their audience. This is what WAN (Anon, 2007:3) labelled a "new era of innovation" for newspapers, and this "*new era*" may also affect to the public relations industry. WAN's vision for newspapers serves as a reference point for this study, although much more research is needed to map out the impact of the multimedia newspaper on public relations, teaching and research.

John Pavlik (2007:3) agrees that the new digital technology has become the standard tools that continue to influence public relations practices and policies. According to Marmur (2004:1) the emergence of the multimedia newspaper in America, post 9/11 has created new opportunities for public relations practitioners to gain access to coveted column inches and resulted in a readership boom for daily newspapers, which has in turn created a need for fresh news daily. He believes that public relations practitioners often assist journalists with information and access to sources for articles (Marmur, 2004:18).

Over the last few years, South African media companies have accelerated their efforts to supplement their print newspapers with multimedia copies on the Internet (Frick, 2007:7). *Die Burger*, South Africa's biggest Afrikaans daily newspaper, has experienced similar developments as it attempts to match the international media

leaders such as New York Times and the Washington Post. *Die Burger's* multimedia editor, De Waal Steyn, said in February 2007, *Die Burger's* online newspaper received more than 80 000 hits daily and approximately 1.4 million readers visited the online version of the paper per month during 2007.

1.3.2 Public relations practitioners

In his study "*The impact of the internet on Public Relations, Journalism and the Public,*" Professor Donald Wright (Wright, 2001:37) has, *inter alia*, claimed there was virtually unanimous agreement amongst public relations practitioners that the Internet has impacted on public relations practice. In addition, an equally high number (97%) agreed that the internet affected the relationships between public relations practitioners and journalists. Most (86%) of the public relations practitioners interviewed believed this impact to be of a positive nature. This is in line with Grunig and Hon (1999:23) who believe that the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists, which is often exaggerated as being poor and untrustworthy, should instead be viewed as a good relationship as this is what is necessary for both professions to thrive.

Cutlip, Center and Broom (1994:280) hypothesize that access to media is competitive and becoming stronger daily. The rapid changing media, the impact of computers, innovations in signal transmission and new ways for sending and retrieving information and images are forcing public relations practitioners to adjust their practice. Agreeing with this statement, Shin and Cameron (2003:268) encourage public relations practitioners and journalist to improve their knowledge about various technologies and to engage in online source-reporter relationship to enhance their credibility and professionalism. They outline that the new media technology is transforming the source-reporter relationship providing both professions with opportunities for the efficient dissemination and gathering of news.

Gower (2007:219-220) posits that to go directly to their client's publics, is one of the benefits of the technological changes to practitioners. She adds that organisations and individuals can interact without a watchdog on communication vehicles such as web sites and blogs. She however states that an important component of public relations is, reaching a broad audience through credible sources such as the traditional media. The key, according to Gower, for journalist and public relations practitioners alike is fostering trust and credibility.

Presenting a different view, Wilcox (2006:80) argues that global corporations have to conduct themselves as if the whole world is watching by incorporating disclosure and transparency into their core values. New media, he states, provides public relations practitioners with an additional options to reach very specialized publics and groups without the need to use traditional media. If the newspaper exists in an expanded world of distribution and delivery options, the public relations practitioner exists in a world of expanded options and methods to reach their audience. The assumption here is that the expanded options will affect the traditional relationship between the public relations practitioner and the journalist and the relationship between the news office and public relations practice.

It is against the background of the multimedia newspaper that this mini thesis sets out to investigate the multimedia editorial staff's opinion and perceptions of multimedia newspaper's content and the impact of public relations on that content especially as the Internet / World Wide Web offer public relations practitioners many more distribution options than the traditional mass communication world.

1.4 Research topic and problem

There is no doubt that the Internet and the World Wide Web have changed the world of mass communication. It is equally is clear that the world of the traditional print newspaper industry has expanded to include the multimedia newspaper. The multimedia newspaper operates in a world of extended distribution options (print, broadcast, online, mobile etc) and an unrestricted world of delivery options (text, sound, video etc).

What the researcher does not know and wants to find out is whether this expanded world of multimedia has influenced the opinion and perceptions of multimedia newspaper's editorial staff of the value of public relations practitioners and the impact of public relations practice on the content of the multimedia newspaper? The assumption is that the value of the public relations practitioner to the journalist is linked to the value of the public relations practitioner's information and its relevance to the journalist. Equally, the value of the journalist to the public relations practitioner is linked to the influence the public relations practitioner is able to exert to achieve publication, but in a world of expanded distribution and delivery options does this value still apply?

It is clear that a gap exists between the role public relations practitioners play in news production and in the perception of the value of that role. There is a gap in understanding the new role of the journalist and their relationship with the community and their relationship with the public relations practitioner in an online multimedia environment. There is the gap in understanding the more technologically based environment and its impact on the role of the journalist and the role of the public relations practitioner. This research seeks to close these gaps by examining whether the multimedia online newspaper has influenced public relations practice and its importance and effectiveness in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper. In essence, what is the value of the public relations practitioner in news production?

1.4.1 Research question

This research question is

“What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?”

1.4.2 Sub questions:

The research sub-questions are:

“What is the opinion and perceptions of Die Burger multimedia editorial staff of the sources of the multimedia newspapers content?”

“What is the contribution of the public relations practitioners practitioner to that content?”

1.4.3 Research objectives

The research objectives are to ascertain:

The multimedia journalist's perception of the public relation's practitioner as a news or information source

The multimedia journalists use of the public relations practitioner's press releases as a news source

The frequency of multimedia journalist contact with the public relations practitioner for news or information

The value of public relations to multimedia newspaper

The percentage of public relations press releases that are published as stories in multimedia newspapers

The demonstrable value of public relations practice to the multimedia newspapers

The impact, if any, of the multimedia newspaper on public relations practice

1.4.4 Research benefits and significance

The benefits of this study include:

A perspective of the attitudes and opinions of the multimedia editors and journalists towards public relations,

A perspective of the contribution of public relations practice on multimedia newspapers,

Identifying the gaps between what the multimedia newspaper has to offer and what public relations has to offer, and

Uncovering how to foster greater synergy between the multimedia newspapers and public relations,

In answering the research question “*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*” the researcher hopes to uncover the value of the public relations practitioner to the multimedia journalists as a valuable source of information as well as a source of news events.

As the researcher was previously a member of the editorial department of *Die Burger* and personally witnessed the birth and growth of the multimedia newspaper at Media 24, the researcher believes that it will be to the benefit of both the public relations practitioner and the journalist to interact optimally. The benefits of this type of relationship would make the production and dissemination of news more efficient and effective. The average newspaper reader, as well as the public, is more sophisticated than ever before and will benefit from a sophisticated multimedia newspaper characterised by uninterrupted news flow. However, a continuous flow of news creates time pressures on the traditional news production model; and in a time

of shrinking newsrooms, the journalist will benefit, as will the public relations practitioners, if they are able to value each other's contribution to news production, which in turn would improve the relationship.

1.5 Research design and methodology

The research design of this limited scope thesis is empirical. The research has used a quantitative questionnaire to gather primary data for analysis. The research used a single, structured, self-administered questionnaire given to a convenience sample of journalists and editor's currently in permanent or contract employment at *Die Burger*, one of *Media24's* daily newspapers in the Western Cape. The questionnaire has obtained quantitative primary data to answer the research question (i.e. "What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?").

1.5.1 Population, sample and sample size.

The population of this research was the journalists and editors currently in permanent or under contract employment at *Die Burger*, one of *Media24's* daily newspapers in the Western Cape. The population comprised all 54 of the editorial staff of *Die Burger's* online multimedia newspaper and thus the unit of analysis was an editorial staff member on the staff of *Die Burger*.

The rationale for choosing this sample for this study is because the researcher was employed at *Die Burger* while planning this study. *Media24* was excited about this concept of multimedia and regarded themselves as pioneers of multimedia newsroom in South Africa. Many of the employees are highly motivated and committed to the success of the multimedia newsroom. It is clear therefore that the sample was a non-probability, convenience sample, which treated as a case study on multimedia newspaper practice, has offer insights into the affect of the multimedia newspapers on public relations practice. As a convenience sample is a non-probability sample, this insight cannot be representative of the multimedia newspaper industry as a whole.

The sampling frame of the multimedia newspaper consists of one editor-in chief, one deputy editor, two senior assistant editors, eight supplement editors, two multimedia journalists, one news editor, 14 news journalists, five political journalists (at parliament), three journalist in Stellenbosch office, three art journalists, seven sport journalists and seven publicity journalists. The sample was thus represented by

essential divisions in the *Die Burger's* online multimedia newspaper editorial department.

1.5.2 Questionnaire (measurement instrument)

A single, structured, self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data from the convenience sample of editorial staff at *Die Burger*. The questionnaire was adapted from a previous study by Mark R. Marmur at the Rowan University, who used this questionnaire in a Masters of Arts Degree thesis in May 2004. Marmur developed the questionnaire after a research through literature review and interviews with public relations practitioners to gather data to in his research to determine the value of public relations practitioners to editors and reporters in developing newspaper content. Academics at Rowan University in the United States of America, M. Larry Litwin (Professor), Joe Cardona (University Relations Director) and Donald R. Gallagher (Professor Emeritus) reviewed the questionnaire. Professor Litwin conducted a pilot-survey in his Introduction to Public Relations class of 35 Rowan University students (Marmur, 2004:23).

The researcher has adapted the questionnaire to shift the focus from traditional newspaper practice to a multimedia newspaper focus.

1.5.3 Data collection procedure

The second phase of Marmur's study (2004) determined the *percentage of public relations-related published stories in Delaware newspapers*. As this was a limited scope thesis, the researcher has only undertaken the first phase of the research into the opinions and perceptions of the multimedia editorial staff via a questionnaire for data collection. The questions for measuring these objectives are close-ended, and make use of multiple-choice questions with one possible answer in addition to two questions, which have multiple answers. All 54 journalists and editors were asked to complete the hand delivered scientific questionnaire that was aimed at measuring their attitudes and opinions about public relations. The survey instrument (questionnaire) is attached as Appendix B.

1.5.4 Data capturing and data editing

The completed questionnaires were collected and the responses coded before capturing them into Moonstats (c), for analysis. The data capture process commences by applying a numeric code to each response, thereby establishing

categories (responses) and coding for each question (variables). All the open-ended questions needed to have their responses coded while closed-ended questions responses were virtually pre-coded. The data collected was nominal data which has no inherent ranking therefore the coding could be 'arbitrary' and did not affect the results in anyway (Welman & Kruger 2004:309-313). A question-by-question breakdown was provided with frequencies and percentages.

1.5.5 Data analysis

The data was entered into MoonStats (c), a stand-alone statistical software program and analysed. Although data is coded and makes uses of numbers, data analysis is not about numbers, it is about using numbers to detect patterns, to describe facts, to develop explanations or to test hypothesis. Graphs of how the respondents answered will be used to present the findings.

1.5.6 Strengths of the research

The strength of survey research lies in the number of insights it might generate into the opinions and perceptions of the multimedia editorial staff member. It may be possible to compare the Marmur's (2004) results (the survey of print newspapers in Delaware) with the results of this survey of a multimedia newspaper.

1.5.7 Limitations of the research

The limitation of this research is its sampling method, which is a convenient sample and therefore not representative of the multimedia newspaper world. The non-probability sample represents a single view of the multimedia newspaper world, that of *Die Burger's* multimedia newspaper. Consequently, this research is bound and limited to the Media24 newspaper context; thus, the research cannot make claims with regard to all South Africans multimedia newspapers.

1.5.8 Ethical issues of the research

Confidentiality, privacy and company policies of the respondents in this research study will be respected. The participants of the study have access to the results analysis of the questionnaire, on request.

1.6 Outline of thesis

The research is divided into five chapters. A summarised outline of the chapters are presented in the proceeding paragraphs.

1.6.1 Chapter one: Introduction

This research is based within the context of the multimedia newspaper or online digital newspaper. It asks, "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" It aims to examine whether the multimedia newspaper, which operates in a world of extended distribution options (print, broadcast, online, mobile etc) and an unrestricted world of delivery options (text, sound, video etc) has influenced the public relations industry and how it practices public relations?"

The research made use of a single, structured questionnaire to a non-probability, convenient sample of *Die Burger's* multimedia newspaper editorial team. Whereas the questionnaire offers high measurement reliability and validity, the sampling choice does not allow for generalisation into the larger multimedia newspaper world, but offers insights into practice at *Die Burger*. It may be possible to compare the results from the original research, from which the questionnaire was adapted, to see what differences arose between the traditional newspaper world and the multimedia one.

1.6.2 Chapter two: Literature Review

The research question is "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" In reviewing the literature, the researcher has themed the literature according to the main areas of inquiry to gain insight into the following:-

Public relations, its definitions, roles, models and functions; particularly media liaison and media perceptions.

The media environment which is divided into traditional media and the environment created by the Internet / World Wide Web, especially the newly created media platforms, which continue to expand in number and diversity.

As this is a mini-thesis, the literature review will not cover any of the public relations theory relevant to issues management or crisis management.

1.6.3 Chapter three: Research design and methodology

The research design of this limited scope thesis is empirical. The research has used a single, structured, self-administered questionnaire to gather primary quantitative data for analysis. The questionnaire (appendix B: survey instrument) was given to a convenience sample of journalists and editor's currently in permanent or contract employment at the multimedia newspaper at *Die Burger*, one of *Media24's* daily newspapers in the Western Cape to obtain quantitative primary data to answer the research question. The research question is "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*"

1.6.4 Chapter four: Findings

This chapter highlights the more interesting findings of the research and is structured according to the literature review, namely public relations (corporate communications, media liaison and media perceptions) and thereafter the media environment. However, the full findings, presented chronologically as per the questionnaire, are attached as appendix C: survey results.

1.6.5 Chapter five: Interpretation, conclusions and recommendations

The analysis and interpretation are structured according to the literature review, namely public relations (corporate communications, media liaison and media perceptions) and thereafter the media environment. In this chapter, the insights gleaned from this research were linked to the existing literature as per the literature review structure, although they cannot, by nature of the sample be considered generalisations. Recommendations for future studies were made.

1.7 Summary

Chapter one provides an outline about what the researcher does not know (i.e the research question which is "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*").

Chapter one outlines how the researcher plans to find the answer (design and methodology of the research) as well as determine as to whom the researcher will look to for the answer (population and sample).

The rationale for the study is to gain insights into whether the multimedia newspaper, which operates in a world of extended distribution options (print, broadcast, online, mobile etc) as well as an unrestricted world of delivery options (text, sound, video etc) has influenced the public relations industry and how it practices public relations.

The focus of the study is how journalists in the multimedia newspaper attribute importance and effectiveness to public relations practitioners seeking coverage in the multimedia newspaper.

2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this limited scope thesis is to investigate the research question, “*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*” The study will measure the multimedia editorial staff’s opinion and perceptions of the multimedia newspapers content and public relations practice’s impact on that content. The research is interested in whether the introduction of the multimedia newspaper has affected the role of the public relations practitioner and the journalists and whether it has changed the manner in which public relations practitioners practice public relations (that is the influence of the multimedia newspaper on the public relations industry.) The research reviews the perceived value of public relations to journalists operating within the multimedia newspaper context.

In reviewing the literature, the researcher has themed the literature according to the following areas of inquiry to gain insight into the following areas;-

Public relations, its definitions, roles, models and functions; particularly media liaison and media perceptions; and

The environment created by the Internet / World Wide Web, especially the newly created media platforms, which continue to expand in number and diversity.

This literature review will explore definitions of public relations, its roles, models of public relations practice, as well as public relations functions within corporate communications. To this end the researcher has consulted James Grunig (1983, 1984, 1999, 2000, 2009, and 2010); Scott Cutlip (1979); John Ledingham (2003); Mary Ann Ferguson (1984) and Betteke van Ruler (2004) to describe the traditional models of public relations practice.

Media liaison and media perceptions, which can be seen as a sub-category of corporate communication and stakeholder communication, deals with the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists and the reputation of public relations practitioners within the journalist community. The researcher has examined papers dealing with media perceptions of public relations and the public relations practitioners including; DeLorme and Fedler (2003); Kim and Bae (2006); Sallot and Johnson (2006); Sterne (2010) and Tilley and Hollings (2008) amongst others. As

this is a mini-thesis, the literature review will not cover any of the public relations theory relevant to issues management or crisis management.

2.2 Background to study

Marmur's research "*Public Relations in Print*" (Marmur, 2004:i) examined the impact of public relations practice on journalists writing for daily newspapers in the Delaware Valley. His study found that although journalists perceive public relations as an asset and a resource to journalists, journalists did not believe public relations played a major role in news development. The second phase of this study, using a single case, showed that a public relations publicity strategy (press releases issued) were used as a major information resource in daily news formation in newspapers, thus contradicting the first phase findings. Based on the first phase of Marmur's research, this research looks at the impact of the multimedia newspaper on public relations practice.

2.3 Public Relations

2.3.1 Public relations as communication

Today's primary model of communication was introduced by Dr. Claude E. Shannon (1948:2) over 60 years ago. He introduced a mathematical theory of communication, which according to the schematic diagram of a general communication system comprised five parts; the information source, transmitter, the channel (which also contains the noise source), receiver and destination. Noise is defined as representing all the alterations to the transmitted signal that occurred between the sending and the receiving. Shannon's colleague, Weaver defined communication broadly to include all the procedures by which one mind may affect another (Weaver and Shannon, 1949:1) and stated that communication involves not only written and oral speech, but also music, the pictorial arts, the theatre, the ballet, and all human behaviour, a viewpoint that fits comfortably with the current multimedia environment.

Shannon believes that the concept of information applies not to the individual messages, but rather to the situation as a whole, the unit information indicating that in this situation one has an amount of freedom of choice, in selecting a message, which it is convenient to regard as a standard or unit amount. Shannon (1948:4) classifies communication theories into three main categories: discrete, continuous and mixed. Shannon describes discrete system as one in which both the message

and the signal are a “sequence of discrete symbols” such as letters. He describes a continuous system as one in which the message and signal are both treated as continuous functions, e.g., radio or television and finally the mixed system which is both discrete and continuous. (Warren & Shannon, 1949:4)

This model of communication continues to inform communication strategies for organisational internal communication, organisational external communication, interpersonal communication as well as mass communication and/or media liaison. Modern definitions of public relations centre have shifted away from being communication-centric towards acknowledging the *raison d'être* of public relations as ‘relationships’. Despite this shift away from the original communication focus, communication remains the method to achieve relationships.

2.3.2 Public relations as relationships

The definition of public relations management endorsed by the public relations professional body ‘The Institute for Public Relations and Communication Management of Southern Africa’ (PRISA) supports this statement. It states “*the management, through communication, of the perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders.*” Public relations guru James E. Grunig (1992:69) states succinctly that relationships are “*the substance of public relations*” and that successful organisations should develop relationships, which are appropriate and work towards achieving the corporation’s strategic goals. Grunig (1992:4) goes further to connect public relations management to communication management via the definition “*management of communication between an organisation and its publics.*” and succinctly brings stakeholder management, the modern name for ‘publics’, into contention. Similar assertions from Marx et al (1998:554); Skinner and Mersham (2002:4) and Steyn and Puth (2000:3) support Grunig.

Cutlip et al (1994:2), include the words “*establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between the organisation and its publics*” which is, in essence, an extension of Grunig’s definition (1984:6) “*the management of communication between an organization and its publics*” but which changes the emphasis to relationships from the previous emphasis of communication. However Lee Edwards (Tench & Yeomans, 2006:5) makes the point that it is possible to define public relations as in a number of different ways. These include: - a concept (“*communication management by an organization with its publics*”) or a practice

("mostly dealing with the media"), or according to societal effects ("a category of persuasive communication done through the mass media or through private lobbying groups to advance their material or ideological interests)."

On the other hand Algren and Eichhorn (2006:77) describe public relations as a profession; which has two levels of roles of expertise and responsibility, namely the strategic roles of the public relations manager; and the work activities of the public relations technician. It is these operational public relations functions, which separate the theory from practice, that form part of the strategic organisational objective, linking other strategic organisational functions such as marketing, structure, customers, shareholders etc., and merge to create corporate reputation, and, according to Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:43), is ". . . overall assessments of organisations by their stakeholders. They are aggregate perceptions by stakeholders of an organisation's ability to fulfil their expectations, whether these stakeholders are interested in buying the company's products, working for the company or investing in the company shares."

The literature suggests that for public relations regard relationships as inevitable and most importantly with journalists in order to manage communication with its publics. The review underlines the need to examine how journalists' value their relationship with public relations and also their perceptions on public relations as news or information source.

The following section will discuss the aspects in greater detail regard to public relations role and models.

2.3.3 Public Relations Roles and Models

Grunig (1992: 6) observes that both the perceptions and/or assumptions underlying the practice and purpose of public relations practitioners varies from "*manipulative*" to "*the dissemination of information, resolution of conflict or promotion of understanding.*" And it follows that the perception of public relations roles and models of practice would follow a similar theme. Grunig and Hunt (1984:14) discuss the role of the public relations practitioner based on a four-model theory with modus operandi (practice or purpose) as their base.

These models are, namely;-

the press agency/publicity model,

the public information model,
two-way asymmetrical model and
two-way symmetrical model

However, Grunig and Hunt dismiss their earlier press agency/publicity model, which is a one-way model; describing it as the role of public relations practitioners who are seeking attention for their organization in any way possible. Grunig and Hunt (1984:23). nominate the two-way symmetrical model, which consists more of a dialogue or conversation, to pigeon-hole today's contemporary practice of public relations, as it allows public relations practitioners to use research and dialogue (not feedback) to bring forth symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes and behaviours of both the organization and its publics. Bailey (Tench and Yeomans 2006:315) is critical of Grunig and Hunt's four-model classification system, especially the role "*media relations*" plays within Grunig and Hunt's press agency model, arguing that the very term '*media relations*' indicates that a relationship exists between an organization and the members of the press.

Ledingham and Bruning (1998:55) caution that "*Increasingly scholars and practitioners are defining public relations as relationship management*" supporting Ferguson's (1984:40) who introduced the concept that '*relationships*' are the central unifying element, i.e. the key to public relations and not, she says, "*the organisation, nor the public, nor the communication process.*" Wilcox (2006:68) confirms that modern public relations practice has come to mean more than one-way communication (i.e. Grunig's propaganda model) or the use of communication to deliberately influence stakeholders behaviour; and that in today's modern and sophisticated world organizations now must use dialogue or conversations to create mutual understanding. This form of dialogic communication, whereby all have the opportunity to create and share messages in two-way communication is facilitated by the Internet and more recently by Web 2.0.

The shift in terminology from communication to relationships suggests a movement from public relations being a neutral channel to a slightly more warm and fuzzy relationship. But according to Edwards (Tench and Yeomans. 2006:5) this does not reflect the persuasive nature of the public relations practitioner to manipulate public opinion or response to the advantage of the organization, while others have define public relations more in terms of its social effects including corporate social responsibility (L'Etang 1996; Moloney 2006).

The literature review highlights Grunigh and Hunts's term *media relations* which confirms the existence of a relationship between organisation and member of the press. Facilitated by the internet, the dialogue communication envisioned mutual understanding through the relationship. The review reveals the need to find out how the journalists experience the dialogue communication with public relations, is it only societal or also important as a news source.

2.3.4 Role and functions of public relations

Although separated in theory, in public relations practice, the line between reputation management, stakeholder management, corporate communications, marketing, customer / target audiences, relationship management and media liaison, is blurred, there is no doubt that the modern definition of public relations is relationship-centric. However, central to this stakeholder management / relationship management viewpoint is the relationship between public relations and journalists. According to Wragg (1993:11) media relations is *"important not just because it is a core activity in any public relations function, but because the media acts as a conduit to those other audiences, which are so important to an organisation."* If so, as stated above, *media relationships are a core activity of public relations, then the relationship between public relations practitioners and journalists is important, although it is a relationship often described as closely associated and uncomfortable."*

It is common knowledge that the everyday public relations practitioners simply refer to what they do as organizational communication, corporate communications, event management, media liaison, corporate affairs or as public relations. It is also common practice for public relations practitioners to describes their role and function according to their functional competencies (what they do well) and work categories (what they do often). The 2010 Practice Analysis (Sha, 2011), which examined public relations' professional competencies and work categories in practice today, concluded that these are: - *'general business skills, media relations and theoretical knowledge (the strategic planning process of research, planning, implementation and evaluation... ethics and legal issues'* remain important to the public relations capabilities.

Furthermore, the four main work category groupings (what they do often) for the public relations professional are

"Public relations management,

*Issues management,
Corporate communications and
Media relations”*

This confirms the importance of the media to the public relations practitioner as well as the importance of relationship building with the media stakeholder group in particular. Building on these principles, Grunig (2000:45); Tench and Yeomans (2006); Hutton (1999:8); Botan and Taylor (2004: 651-653) suggest that a major aspect of public relations relationships is the idea of dialogue as a theoretical framework for extending public relations theory from Grunig's symmetrical/excellence model to a dialogic orientation. This focuses on the second word in "public relations" and thus is a core function of its practice, the building of relationships (Ferguson, 1984).

2.3.4.1 Relationship and Models

If public relations is to focus on relationships and relationship building it follows that public relations practitioners require a good understanding of relationships and how they work, as well as an understanding on how to build trust, commitment and loyalty (Botan & Taylor, 2004:652; Covey, 2006 and Grunig and Grunig 2010:2) .

Botan and Taylor (2004:652) give further details about that the shift to relational communication and dialogue as frameworks for public relations. They say it is "*the most striking trend in public relations over the past 20 years is its transition from a functional perspective to a co-creational one.*" This transition focuses on the development of a long-term relationship between an organization and its publics as partners, co-creators or collaborators. Theories of media relations, the information explosion, agenda setting, and persuasion contribute to this perspective. Hutton (1999:8) suggests that public relations needs to seize the opportunity to provide leadership in both relationship building and complementary new interactive technologies. These, he considers, will be the most important organizing elements of the next century, whilst Grunig (2000:45) warns that public relations must rise above pure advocacy or blatant promotion and learn to value the more symmetrical form of public relations in which collaboration becomes the core of public relations. Identification of collaboration as a public relations management core value will allow public relations to move away from being viewed as professionally contemptuous and suspect.

However, according to Van Ruler (2004:127) "*early communication theories were focused on communication as a one-way process in which the sender does something to a receiver*" with the 'something' being undefined.

Other theories view communication as a dissemination of information with the focus on the flow (Shannon and Weaver, 1949), others still see communication as a method to create a predefined response, but as the proceeding diagram shows as communication moves from objective to subjective and from one-way to two way. The purpose shifts sharing information (one-way) and consensus building (two-way) and persuasion (one-way) to dialogue(two-way).

The Shannon and Weaver (1949) model of communication is called "*the traffic manager: public relations is transfer of information*" by Van Ruler (2004: 128) who constructed several roles for public relations practitioners from a communication theory perspective to create a communication grid of communication strategies. Michael Banton defines a role as "*the expected behaviour associated with a social position*" (Kuper & Kuper, 1996).

Van Ruler views communications as a fundamental two-way process that is interactive and participatory at all levels. The six other types which move from magic bullet to one-way to two way interactivity communication are:

"The town crier: public relations is broadcasting his master's voice;

"The steward: public relations is pampering;

"The traffic manager: public relations is transfer of information

"The conductor: public relations is harmonic performance;

"The creator: public relations is about creating a bond;

"The facilitator: public relations is hosting the dialogue;

"The seat-of-the-pants: public relations is art, not a profession."

Van Ruler uses public relations strategies and types to clarify the communication grid as a model of basic strategies in public relations, which she proposes is a "tool-kit" for everyday public relations practice.

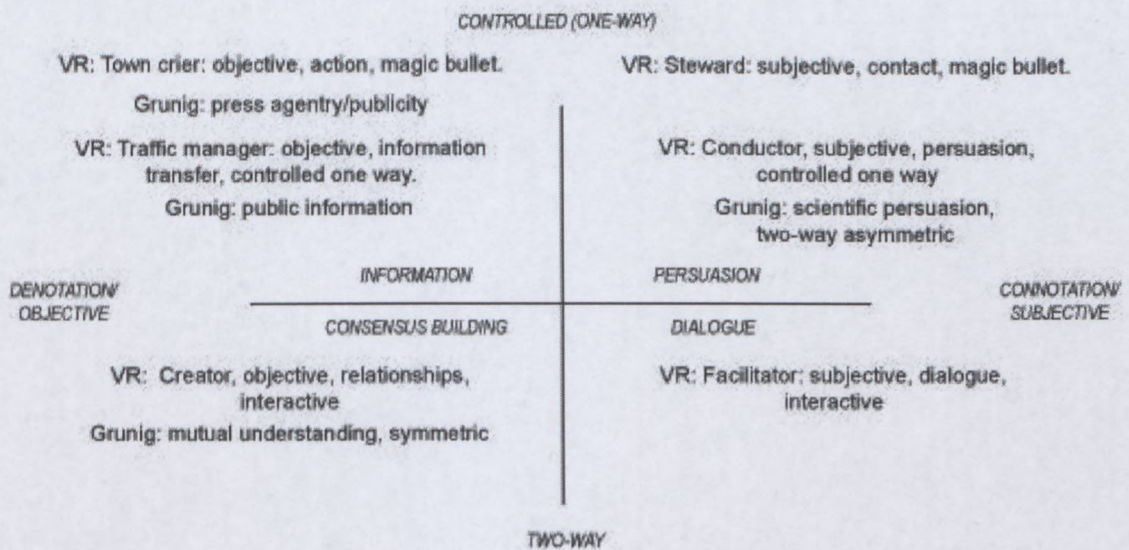


Fig 2.1: Van Ruler's communication grid, with six of her seven public relations strategies combined with Grunig's public relations models. (Van Ruler is abbreviated to VR on the grid.)

2.3.5 Public Relations theories

The main fields of practice within public relations management include corporate communications, stakeholder communication, issues management and crisis management. As stated previously this limited scope thesis does not cover issues management and crisis management and will touch on corporate communications as well as stakeholder management briefly as the basis for media relations and media perceptions.

2.3.5.1 Corporate Communication

According to Steyn and Puth (2000:2) "Corporate communication originated from a tradition of press agency and publicity. Various terms such as public relations, public affairs, corporate communication and communication management typify the development of both the academic discipline and the organizational practice." This simply states that public relations and corporate communication are two terms for the same thing and the definition of public relations, its models as well as its roles and functions has already been covered.

Corporate communications (public relations) is concerned with organisational internal and external communication as well as stakeholder management. Stakeholders are defined by Freeman (1984:4) as “*any groups or individuals who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisations objectives.*” Emerging from the foundations of relationship marketing in the 1980s, which was built on transactional marketing concepts of the 1960s – 1970s, stakeholder management includes the entire collection of people that engage with an organisation (Arrow, 1988; Murphy, 1988, Polonsky, 1995; Christopher et al, 2003). However, regardless of stakeholder qualification, the cornerstone of stakeholder theory is relationship management, which must balance company needs with integrity (Reynolds et al, 2006:285) and are based on the trust or confidence that the other party will respond with reliability and integrity (Covey, 2006).

Another aspect of corporate communications is reputation management, which is increasingly being touted as the news face of corporate public relations (Hutton et al, 2001). Although reputation management, like perception management or image management is difficult to manage as it cannot be wholly controlled, but it is a concept that can be measured although Hutton states there is no single measure that measure reputation across all stakeholders. However, there is little argument that the media (traditional or new) play a role as stakeholders within reputation management and are part of relationship management for a company with an active public relations or corporate communication strategy.

2.3.5.2 Media management

A sub-category of corporate communication and stakeholder management is media liaison or media relations. Media management could straddle reputation management thinking as well as the relationship management in terms of strategic management (Kotter, 1996) or could be as lowly as an extension of product advertising within press agency and publicity functions (Grunig, 1992). Ledingham (2003: 181-194) believes that embracing a more conversational approach would enable the public relations practitioner to manage the organization-stakeholder relationships and move towards Grunig's two-way symmetric communication and away from the manipulative, one-way propaganda or press agency style of earlier years in which the mass media or mass communication catalysts were enormously influential.

2.3.5.3 Mass communication

Mass communication is defined by the act of one person communicating (sending a message) to many over time and space making use of a media (channel) Suresh (2003) adds that mass communication studies the uses and effects of the media (press, radio, television, video and cinema to name the traditional tools). However, it is not that simplistic, Chaffee and Metzger (2001:365-368) point out that mass communication means different things to different people underpinned by three concepts, namely mass media institutions, societal problems and academe, and their impact. Baran and Davis (2009) sum up mass communication theory as taking place over four eras, each with distinct developments. In the first era of media theory development the focus was on the emergence of media industry and the arrival of mass society theory, which was underpinned by fears of a powerful media influence on the average person as well as fears that media influence to promote societal change would be seen as being greater than what it is. In the second era of media theory development, according to Baran and Davis (2009:42-125) was caused by yellow journalism, muckrakers and propaganda in the early decades of 1900s. This leads to the emergence of normative theory, as the importance of professionalism all lead to a limited effects media perspective based on scientific research. It shows that the influence of family and friends mitigated the feared all-powerful effect of the media.

In the third era of media theory development, the societal change worries re-emerged. Consideration was given to functionalism and children, including child development issues, children and violence, social cognition and social learning. During this stage there was considerable confusion between use and function. Wright (1974:200) believed that increased facilities for mass communication increase useage more people exploit the facilities. He suggests that the intrusion and expansion of the mass media will lead to changes in the society and social institutions, which would make the population and society more receptive to social change, as well as more modern and developed. Research in this third era took on a critical and cultural perspectives emerged, as did political economy theory. The influence of the media in creating a common worldview and dominant culture is considered, according to Baran and Davis (2009:128-225).

Finally, era four of media theory development saw the emergence of a meaning making perspective is accompanied by the belief that the media can be powerful, somewhat powerful or not powerful at all as more people create their own meaningful

content. According to Baran and Davis (2009:298-339) framing theory and media literacy movements emerge from active-audience theories. However Chaffee and Metzger (2001:369) believe "*the characteristics of new media are cracking the foundations of mass communication*" and changing the media environment extensively enough to cause an evaluation of all media theory, and at very least a name change from mass communication theory to media theory.

2.3.5.4 Media liaison

Within public relations practice, irrespective of the model, a major relationship, according to Botan and Taylor (2004:651-653) is between the public relations practitioner and the media which is termed either 'media relations' or 'media liaison'. Media liaison is about generation publicity through the mass media by preparing and sending the appropriate journalist press releases about an organisation to promote the organisation's reputation (Skinner et al, 2010).

Coombs and Holladay (2010:108) noted "*Media relations is the relationship between the organisation and members of the media. The goal of media relations has a narrower focus than public relations. Media relations is concerned primarily with just one public: the news media. Public relations, in contrast deals with a wide array of publics...*" Positively, this function of public relations has been called an "image shaper." Negatively, however, it has been referred to as "spin" another word for at best, 'propaganda' or at worst, 'deliberate deception'. Many public relations practitioners cringe at the idea that public relations has roots in press agency, but there is some truth to the claim (Slater, 2002:149). Grunig and Hunt (1984:14) claimed that the press agents of the mid-1900s were the first full-time specialists to practice public relations - they practiced the press agency/publicity model, which is still in use today. The relationship stems from the turn of the century, which brought about many changes in the field of public relations (Bernard & Swanson, 2010:8). Bernard and Swanson add that in 1900s the Publicity Bureau of Boston was created and companies like Ford and Chicago Edison began using product reviews, films, magazines and pamphlets put into their customers bills to promote their companies. According to Bernard and Swanson, it was also during this time that forerunners for public relations, such as Ivy Lee and Edward L. Bernays, emerged. Scott M. Cutlip (1979:9) validates that public relations practice was born with the emergence of a national news forum late in the 1800s and early in the 1900s and that the practitioner and journalist are essential elements in the public information system.

But the emergence of public relations practice lies with the news media according to Cutlip, who states that the lasting influences of public relations on society could only been achieved by utilization of the widening power of the news media. Cutlip (1979:10) offers a more tempered perspective and states that since its origins early in this century; the public relations practitioner and the journalist have functioned in a mutually-dependent relationship, sometimes as adversaries, and sometimes as colleagues cooperating in mutual self-interest. The bedrock of this relationship - Cutlip (1979) and Coombs and Holladay (2010) is symbiotic ('living together'). In a symbiotic relationship at least one-person benefits or there is mutual advantage. According to Coombs and Holladay (2010:109) the reason for this is that, "*there are times when public relations practitioners need to place information in the new media and there are times when journalists must have information from public relations practitioners to complete a story.*" Although the relationship between public relations and media is complex and contradictory, media liaison remains a core function of public relations management (Coombs and Holladay, 2010; Skinner et al, 2010).

Ipsos Markinor reports that 'good' public relations companies are a valuable asset to the media (Ipsos, 2011). The survey was undertaken to gain understanding of how the media, as the recipients and gatherers of information, perceives the performance of professional communications and public relations companies in South Africa, in February 2011. *The 2008 European Digital Journalism Study* goes further as it shows that news releases, emailed by public relations practitioners, remain crucial for journalists with more than 90% of the journalists surveyed, who said they find it useful to receive content from public relations practitioners (Oriella PR Network, 2008:3). *The European Digital Journalism Study* (an online survey of 347 journalists from broadcast, national, regional and trade media in Benelux, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and UK) in April – May 2008 was undertaken on behalf of the Oriella PR Network (an alliance of 15 communications agencies in 20 countries around the world). An earlier study, which focused on "*The Changing Face of Newspaper Journalism and Its Effect on Public Relations,*" showed that there was a greater emphasis on community involvement and interaction in news production; that journalists' role in news production in the region was changing; and subsequently the role of the public relations practitioner's role will change. (Manie, 2002:i).

The shift of public relations from a functional symmetrical model to a dialogic or conversational and co-creation model is accompanied with a relational perspective to the entire profession and a 180 degree shift as public relations practitioners cannot

manipulate the public or press and are forced to build longer-term relationships which are sustainable. However, it is not that simple.

2.3.5.5 Media perceptions

Antagonism between the public relations practitioner and the journalist is well documented (Brody, 1984; DeLorme & Fedler 2003; and Sterne 2010). Many, including Curtin and Cameron (1995:11) and Grunig and Hon (1999:23) argue that public relations practitioner aggravates the antagonism, as the public relations practitioner often does not trust the journalist, and is already unhappy with the relationship between the two professions. In many countries, the relationship between journalists and public relations practitioners is described as *"distrustful and contemptuous with a certain degree of social distance remaining between the two groups"* according to Cameron, Sallot and Curtin (1997:147), who reported on at least 150 such studies (media – public relations relationship) in the USA alone since 1960. But, the distrust is not one-sided, as many journalists do not believe that public relations practitioners are truthful news sources; neither do they believe public relations practitioners are committed to the relationship nor do public relations practitioners assist journalists to cover organizations. According to Grunig and Hon (1999:23) public relations practitioners believe that the media are out to get public relations practitioners organisations /clients, because the media have no commitment to the organisations they attack. Grunig and Hon (1999:24) explain that the media only want to file a story based on wrongdoing and conflict while public relations practitioners would like to pursue a more communal relationship with journalists.

Public relations practitioners, who were previously journalists themselves, want to be valued and respected by their former colleagues. More significantly, public relations practitioners judge that they have relinquished their control of what publics hear about their clients to the media, and thus they have lost control of their reputation (Grunig & Hon, 1999:24). Wyatt et al (1996:124) state that, although initially public relations practitioners and journalism share common interests and values, they have some conflicting goals leading them to a love-hate relationship. Shaw and White (2004:494) agree, saying, *"Many public relations [practitioners] may be former journalists with no true public relations training or education. Yet, notwithstanding employing similar skills . . . there are differences in terms of objectives."* DeLorme and Fedler, (2003:102-3) analysed this further and come up with six interrelated factors as the origins of journalistic disdain for public relations practitioners, namely:

"1) hunger for publicity; 2) situational context of publicity's origin; 3) methods of early public relations practitioners; 4) early criticism of public relations practitioners; 5) journalists' own problems and 6) journalistic goals and ultimate fate." While it is impossible to estimate the number of journalists who are now in public relations practice, it might be possible to suggest that the skills and abilities used by journalist overlap with those of a public relations practitioner. It is feasible that a journalist can convert to being public relations practitioner without additional training. But according to Delorme and Fedler (2003:101) who state, *"Several other investigations have found that many public relations practitioners are ex-journalists - a fact that may help explain journalists' and public relations' shared values (and the practitioners' success in placing stories)."* But, they add, *"a 'good journalists' adds value by verifying the information and looking around the corners to find an angle that will place the story in context for the public".*

Haywood (2009:17) feels the public relationship practitioner and journalist relationship is a cliché. Either the public relations practitioner is fond of journalists or terrified of the journalists. Both attitudes, he contends, are harmful for a business professional whose worth depends, to at least some extent, on being comfortable to liaise with the media, presenting them with valuable stories when all is going well and handling problems with equal honesty and integrity. Many public relations practitioners not only lack the trust of the media, they also, a greater accusation, do not enjoy the confidence of their own management colleagues and their bosses and Haywood suggests that antagonistic media coverage has affected negatively on countless companies.

"The European Digital Journalism Study" highlights that public relations practitioners need to understand that journalists are hungry for interactive content and the more stories journalists receive in formats they appreciate, the stronger the relationships between the two groups will become (Oriella PR Network, 2008:3). The relationship between journalist and public relations practitioners is both cooperative and fraught with conflict and implies a double negotiation: over the exchange of resources (publicity and information) and over the rules regulating this exchange (Charron, 1989:41, 50, 52). His study found that Public Relations favours collaboration and accommodation as a strategy but the collaboration is misunderstood by journalist as a deception. However, Charron found, that the process of negotiation over the rules is more complex and subtle, and involves the idea of exchange achieved through compromise through influence.

Charron emphasizes that the model in this research, *Relations between Journalists and Public Relations Practitioners: Cooperation, Conflict and Negotiation*, identify that influence is not a unidirectional phenomenon by which the public relations practitioner "manipulates" the journalist. It clarifies that in negotiation influence flow in both directions between public relations practitioners and journalists. Sterne quoting Allen (2004) states, "... an international study which involved interviews with 200 journalists from the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, the US, Holland, Italy and France found that most were appreciative of the value of public relations but were frustrated by the inconsistent approach and ability of the practitioners." Especially as Hunter (1997:56) asserts that, "Public relations practice, in many cases, is still being done by people who have no formal training. In most cases these people will be former journalists who, while being highly skilled in writing, lack the expertise to plan communication strategically."

Macnamara (2001:3) states that many journalists believe the public relations profession's only task is to manipulate the media, leading to negative and often paranoid attitudes towards the profession. Macnamara (2006:6) elaborates that public relations clutters the already bottle-necked channels of communication with the "debris of pseudo-events" which do not serve the interest of either sponsor or a public, and with "the distortions of half-truths and obfuscation that confuse rather than clarify". In 1928 Edward Bernays (1928:43) claimed that many people held the view that the public relations practitioner is a propagandist and little more. On the contrary, according to Bernays, the stage at which many suppose the public relations practitioner starts his activities may actually be the stage at which he ends the assignments. He continues that in some case the work of the public relations practitioner ought to be continuous to be effective. Bernays states that business calls in the public relations practitioner to advise it, to interpret its purpose to the public, and to suggest those modifications which may make it conform to the public demand and the newspaper remains always a primary medium which may make it conform to the public demand. He concludes that propaganda will never die out and it is the modern instrument by which their businesses fight for productive ends and help to bring order out of chaos.

Sterne (2010:7) says, "the overall impression ... was that the relationship between media and public relations in New Zealand was characterised by "mutual negativity, a low view of each other and accusations of deliberate obstruction." However, both professions are mediacentric (focused on the media) and according to Dorer

(2005:184) it is apparent that journalists and public relations practitioners differ in how they view and use the media. This difference in orientation might be an area of tension between the public relations practitioner and journalist. Furthermore, it can be argued that most journalists believe they have a responsibility to try to 'get it right', and 'to resist the efforts of those who seek to control what they write and broadcast in good faith' (Jempson 2004:268). But, says Marx et al. (1998:30) "good public relations attempts to influence public opinion in favour of the enterprise." The historical perceptions of the relationships between journalists and public relations practitioner, according to DeLorme and Fedler (2003:100), shows disdain from the journalists towards the public relations practitioner. They say, "Prior academic work has found that the hostility between journalists and public relations practitioners began at the end of World War 1, when the newspaper industry started a campaign against 'spacegrabbers' (primarily press agents)."

Although it is clear that media perceptions of the public relations practitioner are poor (to say the least); it is equally obvious that the two professions need each other, and that the media perceptions are perhaps more individual than global of the public relations practitioner, but the overall lack of standards and training in public relations tend to shift the perception from neutral or positive to negative.

2.3.6 Media Environment

Based on the assumption that the advent of the Internet changed the world, the review of literature will attempt to highlight some of the differences between the traditional newspaper environment and the current multimedia newspaper environment to contextualise the research question. However, the technological environment, which made new media possible, is not the focus of this research, which is a limited scope thesis in public relations management. Although the new media environment will not be examined to its full breadth and depth, the researcher has consulted Manuel Castells (1996, 2000); Jim Macnamara (2001, 2003, 2006), John Pavlik (2007) and David Wilcox (2006), amongst others to obtain an understanding of the changes that have taken place and their impact on the public relations and journalism working environment.

The impact of the information and communication technology (ICTs) upon the printed newspapers and public relations around the globe and in South Africa was far-reaching. The first serious manifestations of electronic 'newspaper' prototypes and services began to appear around the late seventies and early eighties (Molina,

1997:194). Molina outlines that it was during this time that the concept of a personalised, interactive news system making fully integrated use of text, audio, still image, animation and video began to take shape. Molina further explains that almost a decade and a half later, a wave of electronic products and services started to sweep two to three years, as a rapidly increasing number of newspapers seemed persuaded that this time they must had to enter the learning process or risk losing out on the future electronic multimedia newspaper. The way the internet has changed is a reflection of a much wider change in society (Brown, 2009:2). Examining the impact of the internet on the public relations, journalism professions as well as the public, Donald Wright, professor of Communications, argues that it (i.e. internet) provides the public relations with an exciting communication medium offering unlimited message dissemination potential (Wright, 2001:2). Undoubtedly, journalism and public relations were but two disciplines which stand to gain tremendous benefits from the advent of the ICT era. (Wright, 2001:2; Molina, 1997:194; Perry & Taylor, 2002:4)

2.3.7 Mass media replaces mass communication

It is interesting to note that mass media is still being defined in the 21st century. Suresh (2003) explains that discussion has been generated on the power of the mass media (termed by Daniel Learner as 'mobility multipliers' and by Schramm as 'magic multipliers'. A mass media, according to Schramm, is essentially a working group organized around some device for circulating the same message, at about the same time to large numbers of people. Suresh (2003) believes mass media is a collective phrase that represents not only the press, cinema, radio, television and internet, but also to some extent, books magazines, pamphlets, direct mail literature, posters, folk media, and natural communication methods such as rumours, education and preaching. It is termed this way because its reach extends to vast heterogeneous populations. Suresh explains that the mass media, in general, uses technological means to communicate to the masses and mass media are founded on the idea of mass production and distribution. The basic benefits of mass media include information, entertainment, symbolic function, development and advertising.

In Britain and Europe, neo-Marxist approaches were common amongst media theorists from the late '60s until around the early '80s, and Marxist influences, though less dominant, remain widespread (Chandler, 2007:1-3). Chandler conveys that Marxist theorists tend to emphasize the role of the mass media in the reproduction of the status quo, in contrast to liberal pluralists who emphasize the role of the media in

promoting freedom of speech. Therefore, according to the classical Marxist position, the mass media simply disseminate the ideas and world views of the ruling class, and deny or defuse alternative ideas.

Most consumers indeed view mass media as a source of diversion, information, and entertainment. The average consumer probably does not think about the cost of content or commercials but to the people who create the content, media is their business. (Plenkovic & Tomazic, 2007:39). Cutlip (1979:10) elucidates that improved techniques of printing, the increased literacy of a people achieving more education and aroused interest in public affairs combined both to reflect and stimulate the growth of the mass media. He adds that the mass circulation newspaper, made possible by the rotary press and the city, and the growing number of popularly priced magazines were coming to be important factors in accelerating these profound changes and in generating a militant public opinion. Cutlip explains that the modern AP, now the world's largest Press Association, dates from 1900 and the UPI from 1907. The advent of the national news wire brought a quickened exchange of news and opinion across the nation, facilitating the agitation for change. The popular magazine was mostly a Twentieth Century development; the silent motion picture followed and radio in the 1920s. Finally, the television in the late 1940s and early 1950s commenced. Out of these developments came the organized practice of public relations—and the nation's public information system, of which it is an integral part.

Phillip Npoli (1998:23) indicates that, historical evidence as well as recent actions suggests that policy-making institutions are likely to compel the Internet toward functioning as a mass medium. Furthermore, Npoli reveals that institutional communicators will establish and maintain a significant presence on the Internet, and that economic and audience factors compel the production and consumption of mass appeal content. The content and format of the Internet however resemble those of traditional mass media, and policy makers are applying a mass media framework to the development of this new technology.

Andrew Currah (2009:1, 61, 71) agrees that the independent 'push' of the traditional mass media approach is being splintered by customised 'pull' of web users, reinforcing the pressure on old media to maximise ratings and readership. Currah posits that the age of the mass media accelerated the development of a sophisticated public relations industrial complex, which was specifically designed to shape and manage the flow of specialist information into the public sphere. Thus,

according to Currah, the mass media model is now giving way to a more interactive and more democratised model which instead rest upon an ongoing and expansive conversation with the online audience.

Rob Brown, a public relations professional, asserts that the business world is in the midst of a communications upheaval more significant than the introduction of the printing press (Brown, 2009:1) The advent of what Goldman (2002:68) referred to as 'cyber PR' dates back to the technological innovation which followed the historic invention of the microprocessor in 1971 (Castells, 1996:44).

2.3.8 New media platform - additional options

Wilcox (2006:80) claims the new media platform, on which the multimedia newspaper operates, provides public relations practitioners with additional options to reach very specialized publics and groups without the need to use traditional media. If the newspaper exists in an expanded world of distribution and delivery options, the public relations practitioner exists in a world of expanded options and methods to reach their audience. The assumption here is that the expanded options will affect the traditional relationship between the public relations practitioner and the journalist and the relationship between the news office and public relations practice. It is against the background of the multimedia newspaper that this mini thesis sets out to investigate the multimedia editorial staff's opinion and perceptions of multimedia newspaper's content and the impact of public relations on that content especially as the Internet / World Wide Web offer public relations practitioners more distribution options than the traditional mass communication world.

2.3.9 Multimedia newsroom environments

Media is extraordinarily diverse, and send targeted messages to specific segments of audiences responding to specific moods of audiences (Castells, 2000:12) Castells expounds that the media are increasingly inclusive, bridging from one another, from network TV to cable TV or satellite TV, radio, VCR, video, portable devices, and the Internet. Castells' highlights that the whole set is coming together in the multimedia system, computer-operated by the digitalized set-top box that opens up hundreds of channels of interactive communication, which is able to reach people globally and locally. Dimova (2005) posits that the convergence made clear that this new media is not an online newspaper, as some authors tend to call it, but an entirely new mass

media type, which integrate all of the others, and only rearrange it, to create original content on its own.

2.3.9.1 Gatekeepers

“The traditional role of media gatekeepers remains is in a state of significant change. Moreover, a wide spectrum of other technologies, ranging from satellites, cell phones, to video news releases, have become the standard tools that continue to influence public relations practices and polices” (Pavlik, 2007:3). Pavlik (2007:4) puts forward that technology have long influenced the way public relations practitioners do their work. He illustrates this by referring to says that once typed on paper and sent via mail or fax, press releases are now produced on a computer and delivered via email.

Communication changes exploded further with the arrival of what Brown referred to as Web 2.0 (Brown, 2009:1 & 2). Brown’s definition of Web 2.0 refer to the sites and spaces on the Internet where users can put words, pictures, sound and video. He continues by saying that Web 2.0 represents a simple idea in theory but in practice it signifies the transfer of control of the internet, and ultimately the central platform for communications. Brown speaks about the democratizations of the internet.

After 2004, journalists and public relations started to recognise the potential of the internet and www as communication tools (Rob Brown, 2009:2). Pavlik (2007:4) says that on March 8, 1954, PR Newswire sent the first electronically transmitted press release and by 2007, a variety of competitors offer a wide range of online media services, ranging from an RSS (really simple syndication) feed to ProfNet expert sources services to free media monitoring. According to Pavlik (2007:4) video news releases are delivered digitally via satellite or the Internet, public opinion surveys are conducted via the World Wide Web and photography and videography are widely produced and delivered digitally.

Traditional press releases and bulletins have been limited to textual information However, the Internet changed history and organizations can post online photographs or video clips of an accident scene, or broadcast recorded or live news conferences and audio new briefings (Perry & Taylor, 2002:17). The enhanced images give a more complete, precise picture to key publics and the news media. News releases can be posted on a home page and organizations can also send news releases directly to individual reporters and online wire services (Perry &

Taylor, 2002:17). They highlight that crisis' such as hurricanes and other fast changing; life-threatening incidents guarantee the use of real-time monitoring, and sharing up-to-the-minute developments with key publics throughout the crisis. The global reach of the Internet enables these tactics to reach public around the world. (Perry & Taylor, 2002:18).

2.3.9.2 Impact of technology

Regardless of the fact that the impact of technology on the news industry is diverse, two general conclusions can be drawn (Deuze, 2008:11). Deuze explains that the process firstly, increases demand for and pressures on journalists who have to retool and diversify their skill set to produce more work in the same amount of time under ongoing deadline pressures for one or more media.

Deuze states a second conclusion in that technology is not a neutral agent in the way news organizations and individual news worker do their work – hardware and software tend to strengthen existing ways of doing things and are used to enhance rather than completely change whatever people were already doing and take a long time to sediment into the working culture of a news organization. As the media landscape of the 21st century changes, the media organisations and marketers need to rethink their forms of media planning (Schultz, 2006:13 & 24). Schultz adds that agencies and advertisers have to develop synergistic media programmes in order tap in the value and importance of media interactions.

2.3.9.3 Increased dependency of public relations content

Cutlip (1979:12) elaborates on the media's dependency on public relations, shown in the fact that some 40% of the content of media originates in public relations offices. Cutlip states that the news media do not have the reportorial and editorial manpower, either in terms of depth or in terms of specialized knowledge, to adequately and accurately report and interpret today's broadened, complex news spectrum.

However, Cutlip goes on to say that journalists are reluctant to admit their growing dependence on the public relations officer, yet is it a fact that if positive news of business, government, cooperatives, universities or voluntary agencies is to be fully, constructively told, these agencies must provide their own reportorial manpower. It is possible to conclude that today's news task has outrun the capacities of the media.

Cameron, Sallot and Curtin (1997:112) showed that “25-50% and even up to 80% of news stories came from public relations practitioners. In spite of this extensive dependency, journalists have negative perceptions of public relations sources and are reluctant to acknowledge their dependency on public relations sources because journalists may wish to show their independence and objectivity”. According to Sallot et al. (1998:373) it is possible that, “journalists are reluctant to admit the power that public relations put on news content.”

According to Sallot and Johnson (2006:151) on average, journalists estimated that 44% of the content of news media in the United States is influenced by public relations practitioners from whom, according to Charron (1994:52), journalists seek information while the practitioner seeks publicity from the journalists. Although journalists and public relations practitioners both work with media, these two professional occupations approach their work from different angles; have a dissimilar priorities, aspirations and unrelated challenges.

Author and public relations executive David Michie, of South African extraction and based in London, robustly argues that journalists greatly benefit from public relations practitioners as sources of information (Stanton, 1998:152). Michie posits that newspapers have become, effectively, the tool of the public relations practitioner, otherwise known as the doctors of spin. He goes on to say, “There may be one or two people within the public, cynical enough, who are able to attempt to quantify the degree to which the media is manipulated by these spin practitioners. But, he continues, very few would get close to the mark and fewer still would believe the real level to which spin has aspired in the western print media.”

2.3.9.4 Other influences

Ward-Johnson and Guiniven (2008: 788) surmise that journalists need to realize that public relations is not responsible for the downsizing that has occurred in the newsrooms; and public relations practitioners need to realize they have a vested interest in the credibility of the media. They pose that to take advantage of the downsized newsrooms is short-sighted because the only credibility public relations messages have when contained in the media – old or new – is the inherent credibility those media have. The dialogue of convergence, media cross-convergence and multimedia news work is increasingly becoming part of the vocabulary of contemporary journalism (Deuze, 2004). “Convergence” is not what it was, or what people thought it was, only a few years ago but instead, multimedia, cross-media,

transmedia and new media (Bhuiyan, 2010:121). He outlines that public relations call it whatever they want to call it. Bhuiyan suggest that "Adaptive media" is the term worth considering because public relations have adapted the media to their purposes and adapted to the opportunities and strengths of the new media as they have become available to us. Bhuiyan surmise that the "old" media are not going away, not even newspapers, through the hand wringing over declining circulation have endured for decades.

Roger Fidler (1994: 12) reveals that no one expects printing presses and paper to disappear entirely in the next century, but they are certain to be used quite differently and much more sparingly than they are today. The shift from ink and paper to digital media will not be sudden, as some people seem to believe. However, Fidler posits that for most publishers of newspapers, magazines, and other ephemeral printed products, the superior economics and attributes of digital ink and silicon paper will ultimately make total conversion to this form of publishing irresistible. Rob Brown (2009:8) claims that it is a historical fact that mass communication technologies are never replaced by new technologies. They co-exist, while continuing to evolve. According to Perry and Taylor (2002:4) the rising awareness in media relations and the new technologies in public relations soon became a reality. They further explain a domino effect as both the media and the public learn more about the internet, the number of people and organizations that will use the Internet as news and information source is expected to increase and the increased use of the Internet will influence media relations practices (Perry & Taylor, 2002:3; Wilcox 2006:85; and Kirat 2008:115 & 118).

Kirat elaborates on how the Internet has become an essential communications medium for public relations practitioners and underline that it is a powerful and integrated tool and a worldwide network with a broad applications internally and externally. Kirat points to the fact that excellent communications and public relations are those that serve to facilitate the relationship between an organization and its strategic publics. He states that the Internet can play a significant role in this kind of public relations and yet it has not been used to that end. Kirat therefore emphasises that Internet integration is a necessity for effective and successful public relations.

2.3.10 Digital exponential expansion

Communication technology in the 21st century is expanding digitally and exponentially (Fry, 2008:550). He notes that visual, aural, textual and hyper textual

are the essence of today's news. Fry elaborates that new media is available at all times, on demand, from any number of sources, from the highly trained professional journalist to the novice blogger or Youtube enthusiast (Fry, 2008:550). Melanie James (2008:139) has also indicated that these new and emerging media are facilitating person-to-person or person to persons communications through the availability of email, text messaging through SMS, multimedia messaging through MMS, instant messaging and chat online, online forums and blogging.

Contrary to having some kind of control over the flow of information in the public sphere, journalists today are simply one of the many voices in public communication. including but not limited to professions in public relations and marketing communications, advertisers, and citizens themselves through weblogs, podcasts, and using all kinds of other online publishing tools (Deuze, 2008:12).

Grunig (2009:1) suggests that Global Public Relations should fall in the middle between standardisation and individualisation regarding any country or culture. He adds that if digital media is to be are used to their full potential, public relations practice will be more global, strategic, two-way and interactive, symmetrical or dialogical and socially responsible. He augments the statement by saying that digital media have made most public relations global and force organisations to think globally about their public relations practice. Alas, he mentions that other practitioners use the new media in the same way they used traditional media. The new media facilitates the application of the principles and he believes therefore that practitioners will be obliged to use these principles.

Macnamara (2006:7-8) relates to Grunig's sentiment by referring to his demonstration of "the fork in the road of communication theory and practice" in the approach to new media within public relations/corporate communication. He states that a large part of the public relations has not yet engaged in any substantial way with new media and concepts such as Web2.0. Macnamara holds that public relations has lost its way in its journey to reach profession status. It has taken a fork in the road that has led to craft; to technicianship; to industry. He concludes that 'fork in the road' that describes, public relations has evolved to be predominantly intuitive, author-centric and concerned primarily with producing outputs, whereas communication scholars, researchers and social scientists take an approach that is scientific, audience-centric and concerned with outcomes. Macnamara suggests that as a solution universities have to play a leading role in ensuring that future graduates

emerge with a sound, broad understanding of social sciences and, specifically, of communication and media theory.

(Kirat, 2008:116) conveys that online public relations means interactivity. Kirat states that it is closer to direct than mass media and means that public relations should emphasize interaction with individuals online through two way symmetric communications. One of South Africa's top media researchers, Jos Kuper, points out that the pleasant solid tangibility of paper will always have its supporters, but resisting the online benefits of immediacy and easy selectivity is foolishness. He further posits that studies show that there is an increase in the total audience of a publication if the online and paper readerships are combined (Kuper, 2007).

Journalists can access current news releases, background information, fact sheets, and other materials about the organizations, courtesy of the Internet in public relations (Hallahan, 2004:772). Hallahan (2004:772) states that it is an easier task to incorporate web-supplied materials in stories as journalists and editors can transfer materials to a newsroom's word processing system. Hallahan adds that different types of files, in addition to text, include photos, audio and video are available. A problem with online newsroom, as suggested by Hallahan (2004:772), is that information is accessible to people other than journalists. Hallahan outline that journalists who deal with early deadlines are guaranteed with controlled access, which allows embargoed materials to be released selectively to them. There is a common denominator between online journalism and online public relations, both need each other and both use news, reports and data from each other (Kirat, 2008:111). Kirat explains that online journalism needs and uses online public relations: press releases, reports, company and managers' profiles, latest news and events, press clippings, video news items...etc. while public relations departments use online newspapers and publications to monitor the organization's corporate image, news coverage and public opinion. Kirat's case study of "24 UAE organizations' use of the Internet" show that public relations departments have to get more involved in constructing and updating the organization's Web site.

The study points out that more transparent, democratic, symmetric two-way communication should be adopted by the public relations practitioners and confirm that media relations online are not efficiently promoted and developed by public relations departments. James (2008:142) is alike that if new media are to be embraced, public relations practitioners will need more technical skills in areas such as web publishing, new software operation, online security, search engine

optimisation, web analytics and web trend analysis software operation. They will need enhanced online information architecture skills and skills related to managing an increasing amount of complex information digitally. Writing for cross-media delivery will continue as a major component of practice but the demands for multimedia elements will bring even more challenges in this area.

2.3.11 Social networks/media

Social media has directly impacted the processes of communication and relationship building, not just among individuals, but also between organizations and their publics (Burns, 2008:1). Moreover, Burns states that with communication and relationship building often the responsibility of public relations practitioners, these professionals have recognized their critical role in helping organizations succeed in this new environment as well as the need to rethink previous approaches. Burns explains that public relations practitioners employ social media tools to build and maintain a network of relationships with their publics. Added to that, blogs, wikis, podcasts, social networks, RSS feeds, and video-sharing sites offer unique opportunities for the field of public relations. Dating back to 1997, when Steve Gibson was hired by Ritual Entertainment to be their online public relations director, Burns states that social media applications for public relations started. Gibson blogged for the company and is credited with being the first hired blogger ever. *PRWeek* and *PR News*, the two primary industry publications for public relations, are the best sources for the documentation of the rise of the use of social media in public relations, as revealed by Burns.

To adapt to the needs of this digital age, the social media news release sometimes refers to as social media press release is becoming more an adjunct or a replacement for the public relations press release (Brown, 2009:125). SHIFT communications created the template for the first social media news release in June 2006. Ward-Johnson and John E. Guiniven (2008:788) describe the social media press release as, “a *Microsoft Word-based format that includes a free download that mixes elements from traditional releases with technological features which include company logos, video and links to blog posts and traditional media coverage on the release that the release is touting.*” They add that the social media press release is neutral, presenting neither a positive or bias view.

Bernard and Swanson’s (2010:13) general consensus is that traditional media, in combination with social media, is the most effective strategy for businesses who

hope to market their product/company the most effectively. Bernard and Swanson bring in perspective that an issue that came up in multiple articles was the "fear" of technology experienced by the older (45-55+) generation, which inevitably limits their public relations tactics significantly. In turn, many articles discussed the lack of public relations efforts focused specifically on the older generation.

2.3.12 Conclusion

This review of literature reveals evidence from theorists, emphasising the synergy between public relations and the multimedia newspaper.

The technological innovation brought about significant transformation in media relations. Consequently the inevitable shift from the printed to the multimedia newspapers necessitates a paradigm shift in the relationship between the news-office and public relations, from one directional to two directional (dialogue) which is facilitated by communicating through the Internet and Web 2.0.

Relationship is seen as the substance of public relations and as can be drawn from the literature review the digital innovation is benefiting public relations in terms of maintaining and developing source-relationship with media and with their broader stakeholders. Relationship management is included in stakeholder theory and demands trust and integrity of both parties. Stakeholder management constitutes one of public relations management's fields of practice.

Although various research indicate that public relations and journalists do not always trust each other, literature showed that journalists are dependent on public relations on news content because of the demand for news content. Although this is an excellent platform for public relations to thrive, it is revealing that public relations has not engaged enough with new media and thus require journalistic skills.

It is evident from the literature review that the multimedia journalists value public relations because of the fast pace and realtime that the online media brought about. Another dimension to note is the fact that the digital and social media, allow the broader public to communicate directly with their publics, friends and families. Consequently public relations and journalists are compelled to synergise in order to ensure that they stay abreast by rendering service to their stakeholders.

It is obvious that for public relations to obtain coverage in the multimedia newspaper, they have to amongst other: adapt faster to the digital phenomena and grow with it;

continue to enhance their journalistic skills; keep on fostering their relationship with journalists and finally, monitor, evaluate and review the relationship on a regular basis.

In the next chapter the research design and methodology are demonstrated.

3 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the design and methodology used in answering the research question "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" The study aims to measure and demonstrate the value of the public relations to the multimedia newspaper.

3.2 Background to Public Relations Research

Research in public relations is characterised by quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. These two approaches have contributed to the growth and sustainability of public relations as a discipline over the past two decades. Botan and Taylor (2004: 659) validate that public relations has developed significantly over the past 20 years and evolved into a major area of applied communication based in research of significant quantity and quality. Botan and Taylor express that public relations has become much more than just a corporate communication practice. Rather, they feel that it is a theoretically grounded and research-based area that has the potential to unify a variety of applied communication areas and serve different types of organizations, including non-profit organizations with pro-social agendas.

Public relations guru James Grunig (1983:28-29), in the 1980s showed concern about the lack of research in public relations, but acknowledged that the situation had begun to change dramatically as more young researchers were taking an interest in public relations and increasingly more public relations educators are engaged in research. He called on public relations education to be much more based on research and that practitioners should continue to read and use research. Grunig highlighted the need for public relations practitioners to increase ongoing programs of basic research for public relations practitioners to have the knowledge base to effectively evaluate their work. Jim Macnamara, journalism, public relations, advertising, and media research expert (2003:5) on the other hand, has strong views that public relations executives need to acquire far greater understanding of research to be able to function in the organisational environment of the late 1990's and in the new millennium. Macnamara is of the essence that there is a strong argument that the whole theoretical basis of public relations needs to be questioned and reviewed with further pure or basic research. Macnamara urge that at an applied level, public

relations academics and practitioners need to greatly expand efforts in both formative (strategic) and evaluative research. He points out that public relations evaluation research is much more than monitoring press clippings.

Hence, Macnamara affirms that as well as gaining greater knowledge of research, public relations practitioners need to make an attitudinal shift from the view that research is a one-off activity at the end of programs to an understanding that research is an on-going fundamental process.

3.2.1 Background to the research topic

It is against the background of the emergence of the multimedia newspaper that this mini thesis sets out to investigate the multimedia editorial staff's opinion and perceptions of multimedia newspaper's content and the impact of public relations on that content especially as the Internet / World Wide Web offer public relations practitioners many more distribution options than the traditional mass communication world.

3.3 Research Question

The research question is "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" The study aims to measure and demonstrate the value of the public relations to the multimedia newspaper, *Die Burger*.

3.3.1 Research Objectives

The research objectives are to ascertain:

The multimedia journalist's perception of the public relation's practitioner as a news or information source

The multimedia journalists use of the public relations practitioner's press releases as a news source

The frequency of multimedia journalist contact with the public relations practitioner for news or information

The value of public relations to multimedia newspaper

The percentage of public relations press releases that are published as stories in multimedia newspapers

The demonstrable value of public relations practice to the multimedia newspapers

The impact, if any, of the multimedia newspaper on public relations practice

3.3.2 Research benefits and significance

The benefits of this study include:

A perspective of the attitudes and opinions of the multimedia editors and journalists towards public relations,

A perspective of the contribution of public relations practice on multimedia newspapers,

Identifying the gaps between what the multimedia newspaper has to offer and what public relations has to offer, and

Uncovering how to foster greater synergy between the multimedia newspapers and public relations,

In answering the research question “*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*” the researcher hopes to uncover the value of the public relations practitioner to the multimedia journalists as a valuable source of information as well as a source of news events.

3.4 Research design

Research, as stated by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005: 2) is a process that involves obtaining scientific knowledge by means of various objective methods and procedures. The research design of this limited scope thesis is empirical as well as quantitative.

3.4.1 Qualitative and quantitative research

Although qualitative researchers seek to answer at least one central question and several sub questions, these questions normally begin with words such as *how* or

what and use exploratory verbs, such as *explore* or *describe*. In general qualitative research asks broad, general questions, which will allow the participants to explain their ideas (J Creswell, 2008:141). In a nutshell, the emphasis of qualitative research is on describing, giving meaning, and understanding what is being studied (Struwig & Stead, 2004:243).

On the other hand, quantitative research is empirical, and uses numeric and quantifiable data. Any conclusions drawn from quantitative research is based on experimentation and on objective and systematic observation/s (G Belli, 2009:60). Quantitative researchers make use of either either research questions or hypotheses, but forms of quantitative research include variables that are described, related, categorized into groups for comparison, and the measurement of independent and dependent variables is taken separately. (J. Creswell, 2008:141).

The research makes use of a quantitative questionnaire to gather primary data for analysis.

3.4.1.1 Research structure

The purpose of this research is analytical or explanatory as it refers to a continuation of descriptive research and aims to understand trends by discovering and measuring causal relations between public relations and the online newspaper (Collis & Hussey, 2009:6 & 7). The nature of my research question, "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" could best be answered by applying a quantitative approach by the way in which data were collected and analysed.

The outcome of the research is based on basic (pure) research, a study that is designed to make a contribution to general knowledge and theoretical understanding rather than solve a specific problem. Deductive research, describe as a study in which a conceptual and theoretical structure is developed and then tested by empirical observation; thus, particular instances are deduced from general inferences, is the logic of this research (Collis & Hussey, 2009:8).

3.4.2 Research Methodology

The author focussed this study on all the (around 56) journalists and editors in permanent or contract employment at *Die Burger*, one of *Media24's* daily newspapers in the Western Cape.

The research commence with secondary research by using databases, publications, journals, etc. to examine the relationship between the multimedia newspapers in general and the public relations. Primary research on the multimedia newspaper is narrowed down to the newspaper, *Die Burger*.

Quantitative research with an experimental approach is followed and a questionnaire used to examine the objectives of the study.

A survey is conducted by using a questionnaire to journalists and editors. Multichoice questions with one answer are used in the questionnaire. To ensure reliability and validity the statistical software program MoonStats analysed the results.

3.4.3 Issues of measurement

The research for this study was conducted doing previous literature on the theories, public relations, communications and media and by administering a structured survey on editors and journalists from *Die Burger*, one of *Media24's* dailies in the Western Cape as the sample.

The study utilized a questionnaire for measuring objectives is close-ended, using multichoice questions with one answer-type and also two questions containing multichoice questions with more multiple answers (Struwig & Stead, 2005:93). The survey instrument was adapted from a previous study; Mark R. Marmur at the Rowan University used this questionnaire in a Masters of Arts Degree thesis in May 2004. Marmur developed the questionnaire after a research through literature review and interviews with public relations practitioners. Academics at Rowan University in the United States of America, M. Larry Litwin (Professor), Joe Cardona (University Relations Director) and Donald R. Gallagher (Professor Emeritus) reviewed the questionnaire. Professor Litwin conducted a pilot-survey to his Introduction to Public Relations class of 35 Rowan University students (Marmur, 2004:23).

Research Instruments like this survey and response tracking allow public relations to implement benchmarking (Macnamara, 2003:20). Evaluation, as Jim Macnamara emphasise, is the long-sought key to the boardroom for public relations. Macnamara points out that research tools such as case studies can be used to monitor best practice; and understanding of inputs, outputs and outcomes enables practitioners to establish key performance Indicators (KPI's) for each stage, bringing public relations into line with management strategies and expectations in the 'Age of Accountability'.

3.4.3.1 Approval of questionnaire

Requirements of a questionnaire such as, logically divided in sections, easy to answer and made provision for "don't know: answers (Struwig & Stead, 2005:90) were incorporated in this study's questionnaire. Benchmarking this study against that of Murmur's regarding how many newspaper stories are from public relations submitting stories and the communication means of public relations and journalists, the author added more questions on social media. Consequently to best answer the study's theories: public relations theory; communication theory which cover mass communications theory and press agency; media theory which cover mass media, new media, online media and social media.

With the input of the author's supervisor and peer review of questionnaire a few items were added. In order to measure the dependence on social media and online sources, 2 more questions were added (question 16 and 18). Additional choices, related to social media were also added in questions 1 and 2. The percentages in question 11's choices were in rounded off to transition correctly, for example b = 16% - 30 %, c= 31% – 45 % rather than b=15% - 30%; c= 31% - 45%. Lastly, the wording "snail mail" in question 2 and question 9 were changed to "post".

Approval to use this specific questionnaire from the *CPUT* research department was obtained before 31 March 2011, prior to the commencement of the survey.

3.4.3.2 Questionnaire design

The first six questions and questions 10 and 13 dealt with relationships, as one of the core attributes of public relations, which look into source-relationship, and overall trust between public relations and journalists. The following two questions (7 & 8) relate to media theory and dealt with the journalistic skills of public relations in news generating followed by question nine which addresses the communication tool. Credibility is handled under newsworthiness in question 11. Question 12 asks if journalists value public relations as an asset. Question 14 measures the quantity of stories published and questions 15, 16, 17 and 18 determine dependencies on public relations and social networks. The last two questions (19 & 20) dealt with the individual characteristics by asking respondents to verify whether they are a newspaper editor or journalist; and how many years they are in the profession.

The survey package consisted of a covering letter, the instrument (4 page questionnaire), accompanied by a return envelope, addressed to the news desk

secretary and paper clipped together. A copy of the letter to the survey respondents is included as sample letter to survey participants in Appendix A. A copy of the survey instrument is found under Appendix B: survey instrument. A copy of the results of the survey is found under Appendix C: survey results.

3.4.3.3 Survey Method

This survey conducted a hand-delivered survey method. As posted surveys have great benefits like, low cost and ease of application, anonymity, and control over responding. Hand-delivered surveys add more value by securing a more satisfactory response rate (Welman & Kruger, 2005:146 & 147). The reason why the author decided on a hand-deliver the survey was that the majority of the journalists were seated in and around the newsroom on the same floor, mainly in open plan offices and easy assessable.

3.5 Sample Design and Sampling Methods

The sampling technique intended to use is the probability technique and on the simple random sampling basis. The intended sample size was 50 editorial members of a multimedia newspaper. The multimedia newspaper *Die Burger* was the core population.

The sample frame of the multimedia newspaper consisted of one editor-in chief, one deputy editor, two senior assistant editors, eight tabloid editors, two multimedia journalists, one news editor, fourteen news journalists, 5 political journalists (at parliament), three journalist in Stellenbosch office, three art journalists, seven sport journalists and seven publicity journalists. Respondents represented essential divisions in the editorial department.

The rationale for choosing the sample for this study can be illustrated as; the author was employed at *Die Burger* while planning this study. The stakeholders of Media24 were excited about this concept of multimedia and regarded themselves as pioneers of modern multimedia newsroom in South Africa. Furthermore, they are highly motivated and committed to the success of the multimedia newsroom and are not far behind the world trend of complimenting print media with online media (Swart, 2007:7).

Public relations will refresh their understanding of the workings of the multimedia newsroom. Through this research, the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables was established.

3.5.1 Data collection procedure

All journalists and editors were asked to complete a hand delivered scientific questionnaire that is aimed at measuring their attitudes and opinions about public relations and to investigate which gaps and benefits public relations and the multimedia newspaper has on one another.

Open negotiations were conducted between the author and the editorial staff of the newspaper *Die Burger*. Talks regarding the author's current study started when she was busy with her final subject, research methodology in November 2007 as part of the Masters Coursework in November 2007. Being part of the editorial team at *Die Burger* then, the author discussed the proposed study with the Editor-In-Chief and the Deputy Editor, assigned to Multimedia. With the study in the last phase the author liaised on 15 March 2011 yet again with the current Editor-In-Chief, who wished her luck with the study and referred her to the deputy editor who was previously informed about the study. The author communicated via telephone and e-mail with the Deputy Editor, to give him insight of the study, the approved questionnaire and about *Die Burger* editorial's involvement with the study. He pointed out that he was mindful of not enclosing sensitive information about their business. On 18 March 2011 the author then forward the background of the study to him and ensure him that it is a tested questionnaire. Final approval to go ahead with the survey at *Die Burger* was given on 29 March 2011.

Sixty questionnaires were prepared. After organising with the news desk secretary she assisted me with the handing out and receiving back of the questionnaires. The author delivered the surveys by hand to the secretary. Participants of the study received the survey package directly from the secretary on 5 April 2011.

The secretary briefed the participants on the study and about the author (ex colleague.) All the detail of how to participate was carefully explained in the package. 46 were handed out on the day. The idea was to get the response back immediately or in three – 4 days time, keeping in mind journalists that are out of town on assignments.

A follow-up phone call and e-mail were sent to the secretary on 14 April 2011 to increase the response rate, keeping in mind the branch offices. The survey responses were collected over a period of two weeks. This was longer than originally anticipated, but allowed for the return of 37 out of 46 completed surveys.

Although all the journalists and editors were targeted (including the Bellville and Stellenbosch representatives) in total 56 people, only 46 questionnaires were handed out. Some journalists were on holiday, while others were on assignments out of town.

3.6 Data capturing and data editing

Once the questionnaires were collected in May 2011, the author analysed it in order to capture the data. Nominal measurements for identification purposes, to classify the mutually exclusive categories is used for the different categories of each question (Welman & Kruger 2004:201, 309, 313). The process started by numbering each questionnaire (unit of analysis) and establishing categories (responses) and coding for each question (variables) The data were entered into MoonStats (c), a stand-alone statistical software program, during the same time. MoonStats condensed the data into manageable groups and tables for further analysis. The different categories of data are transformed into charts and tabulations.

One of the multichoice questions with one answer response had more than one on a number of respondents feedback. The author took the liberty to analyse the question not as prepared but as the situation effects, thus the question were use as a checklist choice question with more than one response.

3.7 Data analysis

MoonStats software was used to analyse the results of the survey.

Coded responses to the survey were captured/ recorded, on MoonStats for in-depth analysis. Data relationships, a question-by-question breakdown, with frequencies and percentage were analyse. Graphs of how the respondents answered in the study are attached as appendixes.

3.8 Shortcomings and sources of error

Two questions with numbers in the questions were not rounded off correctly, question 8 (e) "40 or more" should have been "more than 40" and question 14 (e) "20 or more stories" should have been "more than 20 stories"

3.9 Ethical issues to consider

A highly valued research design encompasses data integrity as the first priority. Moreover, safeguards against causing mental or physical harm to participants, exploitation and invasion of privacy and loss of dignity (Cooper & Schindler, 1998:16). Confidentiality, privacy and company policies of the respondents in this research study were respected. After concern of any confidential business information *Die Burger* were put at ease. Informed consent was received from the assistant editor after he was made aware of the type of information that was needed, for what purpose it would be, how they were expected to participate in the study and that the survey is voluntary. The author was not directly involved with the participants, hence adding privacy and confidentiality. The data was collected anonymously and coded and download by the authors' choice of service.

3.10 Validity and reliability

In terms of the internal validity of this study which can be compromised by the factors, such as, the history, spontaneous change, third-variable problems (Welman & Kruger, 2005:100), this study were based on an experimental approach. A survey is conducted by using a questionnaire to journalists and editors. Multichoice questions with one answer are used in the questionnaire. The study comply of external validity, meaning that to the extent to which the results of a study can be generalised the to other populations (Struwig & Stead, 2005:136). To ensure reliability and validity the statistical software program MoonStats analysed the results Reliability is the extent to which test scores are accurate, consistent or stable (Struwig & Stead, 2005:130; 136). The survey instrument was adapted from a previous study; Mark R. Marmur at the Rowan University used this questionnaire in a Masters of Arts Degree thesis in May 2004 and a pilot test was conducted with a public relations class of 35 Rowan University students (Marmur, 2004:23). A few adjustments to the questionnaire to adapt to the current study were approved by the *CPUT's* research department.

3.11 Summary

The chapter outlined the research design and methodology of this study to answer the research question: *“What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?”*

The study followed an empirical design. A quantitative questionnaire was used to gather primary data for analysis. The research used a single, structured, self-administered questionnaire given to a convenience sample of journalists and editor’s in permanent or contract employment at *Die Burger*, one of *Media24*’s daily newspapers in the Western Cape.

The next chapter, “Findings,” describes the results found from this study.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this mini thesis is to investigate the research question, “*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*” In the previous chapter, detailed explanations were given of the research strategy and methodology used to conduct this research. The research followed a quantitative approach, utilising a questionnaire as the survey instrument. This chapter presents the results of the survey distributed to a self-selecting sample of the entire (54) population of *Die Burger’s* newsroom.

4.2 Overview

The survey was distributed to population of 54 editors and reporters in *Die Burger* newsroom. This newsroom services *Die Burger* print issue as well as *Die Burger* multimedia online edition. A total of 37 ($n=37$) surveys were returned, which represents a 68.51% response rate of the self-selecting sample and it is therefore able to generalise.

4.2.1 Positions (Question 19) and length of service (Question 20)

Of the respondents 72,22% ($n=26$) respondents were newspaper reporters and 27,78% ($n=10$) newspaper editors . Of the 37 respondents, 40,54% ($n=15$) had worked as a journalist /editor (journalism profession) for longer than 15 years and 18,92% ($n=7$) being recent additions with 1-3 years within the profession. In conclusion it should be noted that there were 2, 6 times more reporters than editors. However all of the respondents are or have been journalists as per the recruitment policy of *Die Burger*. This sense of authority is entrenched by 40 % of the editors/ journalists having more than 15 years experience; thus it is possible to assume that they have a sound knowledge of their profession and have had extensive interactions with public relations practitioners over the years.

4.2.2 Average number of stories per month

1-3	4-6	7-10	11-20	20 +	Don't know
11,11%	11,11%	5,56%	11,11 %	58, 33%	11,11 %

Table 4.1: Average number of stories per month

With 58, 33% ($n=21$) journalist/editors publishing 20 or more stories per month, it can be concluded that they publish more than one story per day over the accepted number of 22 day per working month. Equally, it is assumed that the editors, especially the editor in chief and his two deputy editors, would not publish at the same rate as the journalists.

4.3 Media Liaison

The following survey questions relate to the interaction between journalists and public relations practitioners through the public relations function of media liaison. These questions numbers are 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 17.

4.3.1 Journalist's/editor's sources of news (Question 1)

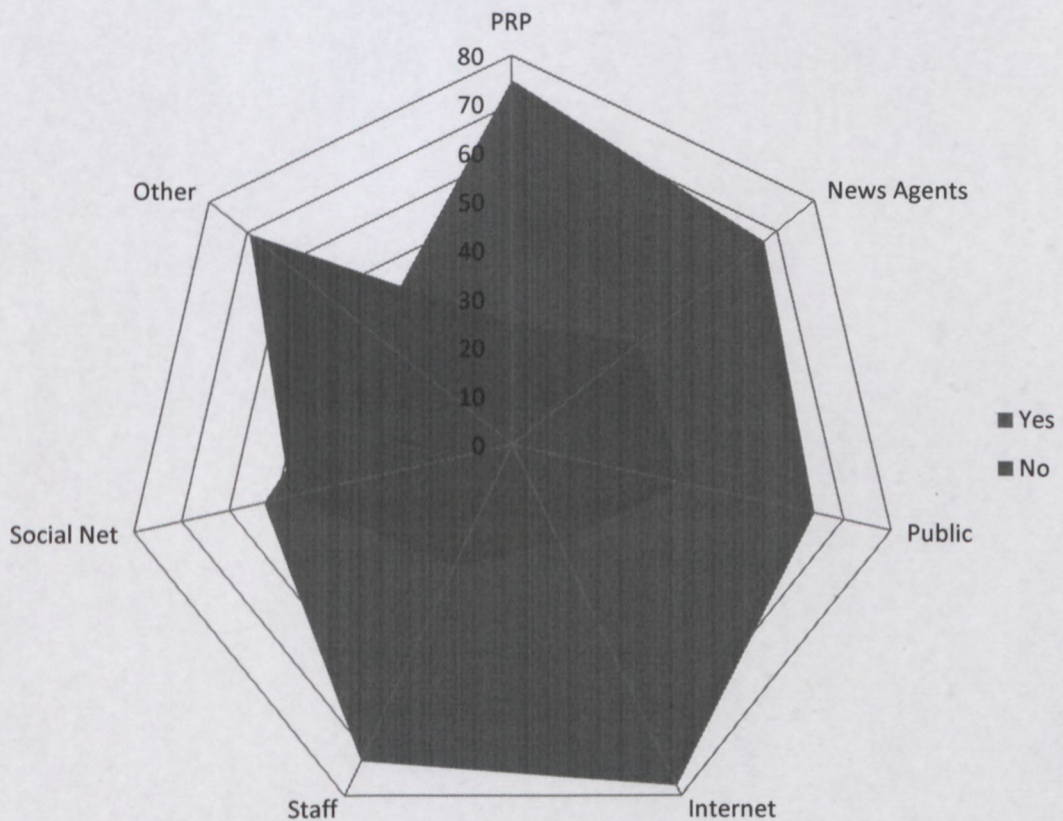


Figure 4.1: Journalists and Editor's sources of news

Question 1 were "When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use (Select all that apply). The respondents indicated that 75% ($n=27$) use public relations practitioners ; 66,67% ($n=14$) use other newspaper professionals or sources, 63,89% ($n=23$) uses the general public, 77,78 % ($n=28$) use the internet,

72,22% (n=26) uses editorial staff suggestions, 52,78% (n=19) use social networks and 30.56% (n=11) use other sources.

It is clear from the results that the survey question's suggested responses provided an almost complete picture of sources generally used by journalists and editors at Die Burger (as shown by the response to other). From the results 75% of *Die Burger* journalist /editor said that they used public relations practitioners as a source when developing newspapers story ideas. The only other source that scored higher than public relations practitioners was the Internet (77.78%).

4.3.2 Sources method of contact (Question 2)

In response to question, "How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you? (Select all that apply)." The results show that an over whelming number of sources contact the journals via e-mail 97,22% and telephone (69,44%).

4.3.3 Frequent use of public relations for hard news and soft news (Questions 3 & 4)

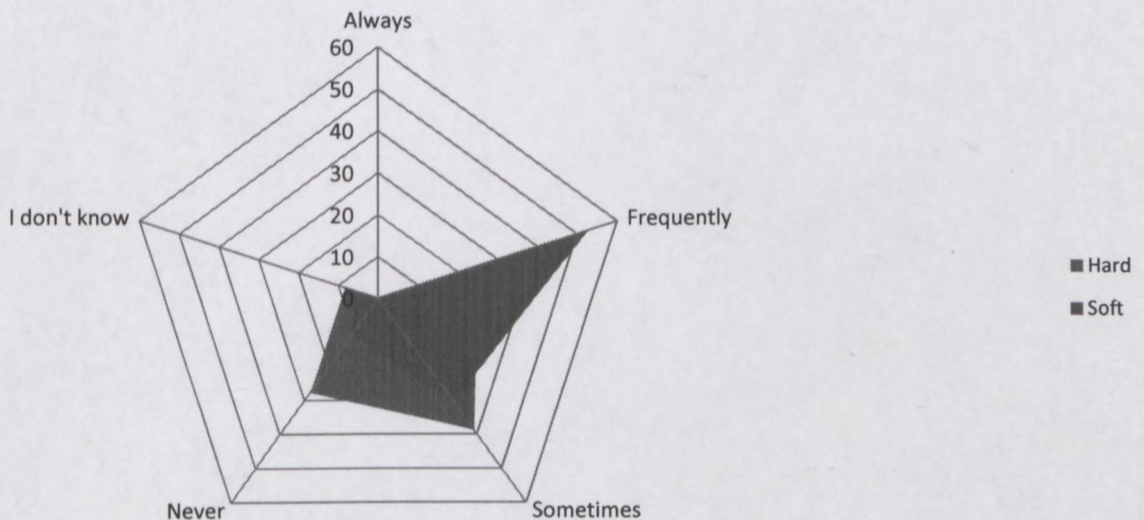


Figure 4.2: Public relations sources frequency for hard and soft news.

The questions, "How frequently do you use public relations practitioners for hard (breaking) news and soft (features) news?" were asked. The results are clear that journalist/editors frequently (52,78%) use public relations practitioners for soft news or feature stories, but only sometimes (38.89%) use public relations practitioners for hard news.

4.3.4 Quality of work (Question 7)

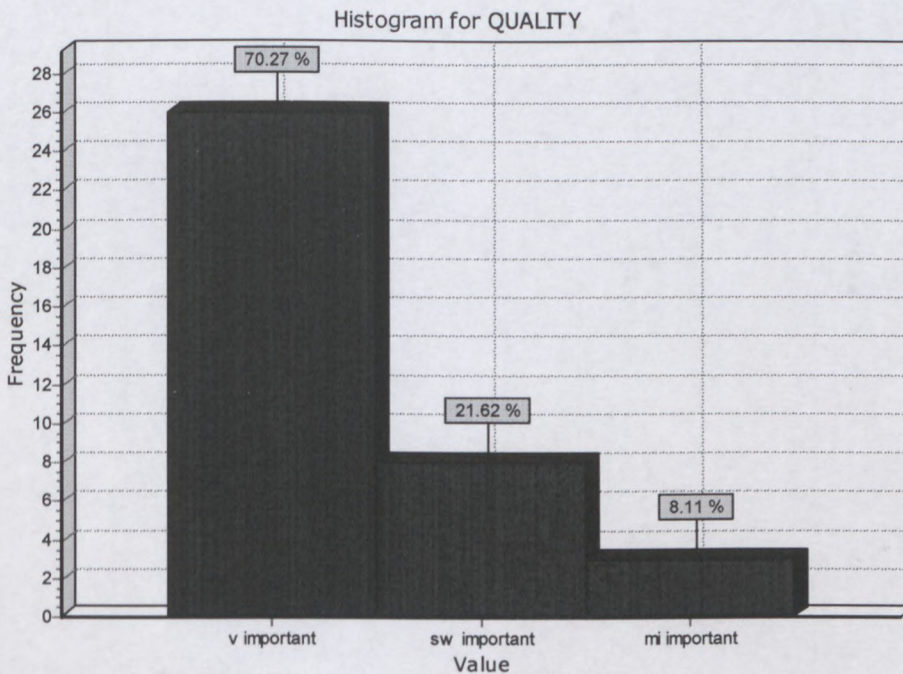


Figure 4.3: Quality of a news release sent by public relations practitioners

Die Burger journalists and editors responded on the written quality of a news release sent by public relations practitioners to them as shown in Fig. 4.3. 70,27% of the journalists and editors value the quality of a news release sent by public relations to journalists as very important. 21,62% indicated somewhat important and 8,11 % indicated that quality is of minimal importance.

4.3.5 Story ideas (Question 8)

Die Burger journalists and editors response on the question of „How many story ideas does journalist receive from public relations on a daily basis, were 77,78 % ($n=28$) receive (0-10) story ideas from public relations on a daily basis while 11,11% ($n=4$) receive (11-20) story ideas, 2,78% ($n=2$) receive (21-30) and 2,78% also receive (31-40) stories, and 5.6% ($n=2$) journalists/editors don't know how many story ideas they receive.

4.3.6 Journalists ideal communication tool (Question 9)

80,56 % ($n=29$) journalists and editors reported that “e-mail” is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch or recommend a

story idea to journalists, 47,22% ($n=17$) reported “telephone”, 5,56% ($n=2$) reported “fax” and 2,78% ($n=1$) reported “post”.

4.3.7 Public relations generated stories (Question 17)

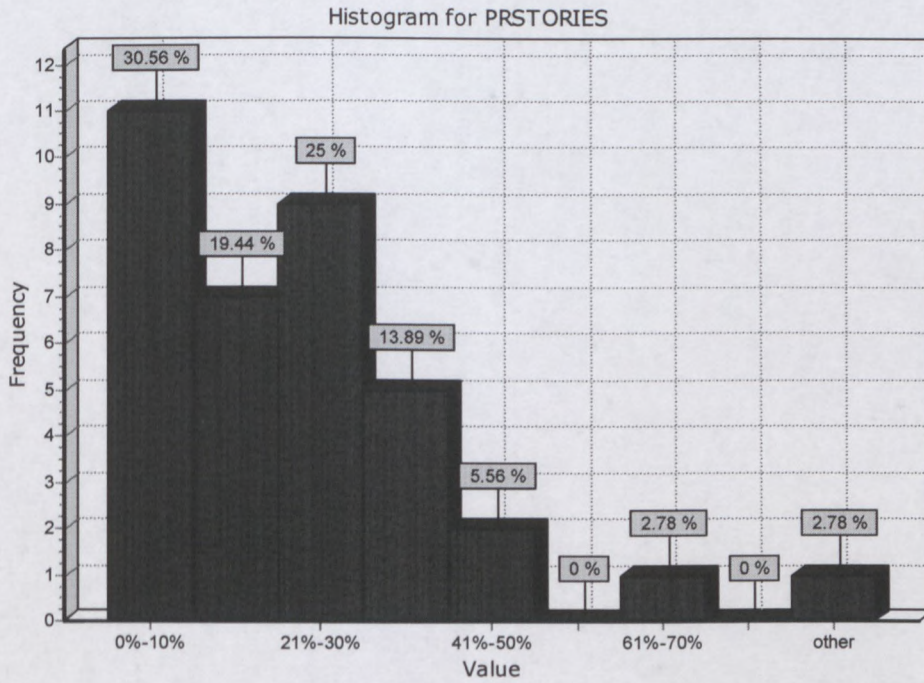


Figure 4.4: Public relations-generated stories appear in daily publication

Journalist were asked what percentage of stories appears in the daily publication is generated through public relations by practitioners and the results illustrate in Fig. 4.4.

The journalists and editors responses varied, 30,56% responded 1-10% public relations-generated stories appear in the daily publication, 19,44% reported 11-20% and 25% reported 21-30%.

4.4 Media perceptions

The following survey questions relate to the perceptions of public relations practitioners by journalists and editors operating with the online environment of *Die Burger*. These questions numbers are 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15.

4.4.1 Relationship development (Question 5 and Question 10)

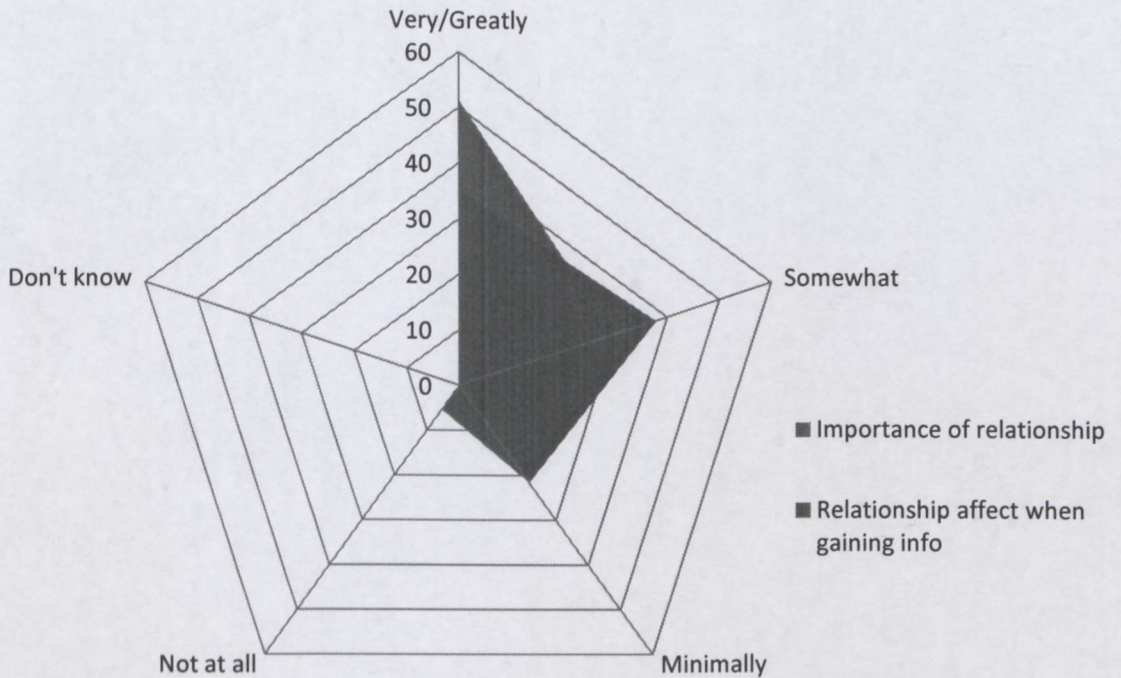


Figure 4.5: The importance of relationship development

The questions related to relationship were Question 5, “In your opinion, how important is the development of a relationship between a newspaper reporter and a public relations practitioner in working together,” and Question 10, “How important are public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters when gaining information and possible story ideas.” (Fig 4.5).

51,35% of the editors and journalists indicated that development of a relationship with themselves and a public relations practitioner is very important, while 29,73% indicated that it is somewhat important and 13,51 % indicated, minimally important. The importance of public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters when gaining information and possible story ideas, showed 37,84% ($n=14$) said somewhat important, 35, 14% ($n=13$) said very important, 21, 62% ($n=8$) said minimally important, and 5,41% ($n=2$) said not important.

4.4.2 Relationship affect coverage (Question 6)

Journalist and editors response to the question: "How does the relationship affect the public relations stories to get coverage," were 16,67% ($n=6$) said it I I affect and 11,11% ($n=4$) said that it has no affect.

4.4.3 Public Relations generated stories newsworthy (Question 11)

When asked, what percentage of stories released by public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters are newsworthy, the response showed, 38,89% ($n=14$) indicated (0%-15%), 16, 67% ($n=6$) indicated (16%-30%), 25% ($n=9$) indicated (31%-45%), 11,11% ($n=4$) indicated 46%-60%), and 8,33 % ($n=3$) indicated don't know.

4.4.4 Value and Distrust of Public Relations (Question 12 & 13)

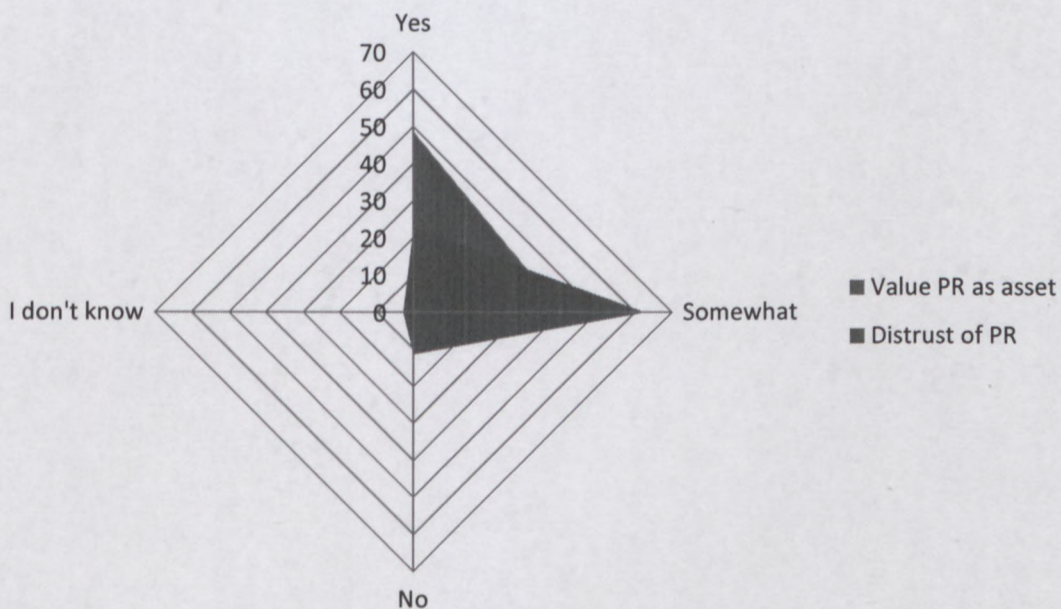


Figure 4.6: Editors and journalists value and distrust of public relations practitioners.

Journalists and editors indicated that they value public relations practitioners as an asset to them and their profession. The response were, 48,65% yes and 40,54% somewhat. When asked if as a journalist, they have a distrust of public relations practitioners on any level, the outcome was, 62,86% journalists and editors indicated somewhat and 22,86% indicated yes.

4.4.5 Depend on public relations (Question 15)

In answering the question, “Do you feel that you depend upon public relations practitioners to help you fill and/or shape news content in your publication?”, 8,11% ($n=3$) of the editors and journalists indicated that they depend upon public relations practitioners to help fill and/or shape their news content, at the same time as 45,95 % ($n=17$) believe they “somewhat” depend and 56,95% ($n=17$) indicated “no

4.5 Online

4.5.1 Depend on social networks (Question 16)

The question, “Do you feel that you depend upon social networks/online sources to help fill and/or shape news content?” were asked. Journalists and editors response were: 32,43 % ($n=12$) indicated “yes” they depend 37,84% ($n=14$) indicated “somewhat” dependence; and 29,73% ($n=11$) indicated “no” dependence.

4.5.2 Social media generated stories (Question 18)

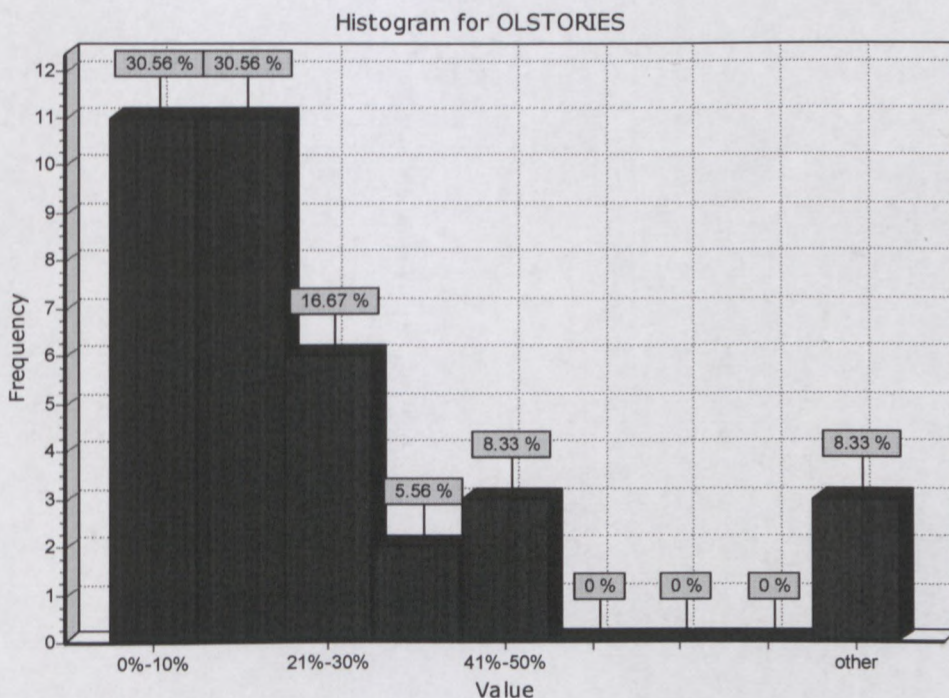


Figure 4.7 Social networks/online sources-generated stories appear in daily publication

The response on a question on what percentage of social networks/online sources-generated stories appear in the daily publication, the journalists/editors response indicated, 30,56% ($n=11$) for both 0%-10% and 11%-20% stories; 16,67% ($n=6$) for 21%-30% stories; 5,56% ($n=2$) 31%-40% stories; 8,33% ($n=3$) 41%-50% stories; and 8,33% ($n=3$) said "other".

A copy of the results is found under Appendix C "Survey Results."

4.6 Summary

The survey render a 80,43% response rate were achieved from which 72,22% were editors and the rest reporters.

The importance of the development of a relationship between a newspaper reporter and a public relations practitioner in working together is regarded as important for journalists. Journalist suggest that the relationship somewhat affect the coverage of public relations-generated stories. Journalists view the written quality of news releases from public relations to journalist as highly importantant.

Public relations are valued as an asset to journalists but somewhat distrusted. Journalist are divided in their dependency on public relations half of them said that they somewhat depend on public relations stories and the other half said they do not depend on public relations stories. About 0-30% public relations-generated stories are published in the daily publication. On the other hand, just over three quarters of the journalists believed that 0%-30% social networks/online sources generated stories appear in the daily publication.

In the next chapter, the conclusion and recomendations will be discussed with reference to the research objectives which the study follows.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This empirical study set out with the aim of measuring and demonstrating the value of the public relations to the multimedia newspaper. Secondly, to find out if and to what extent multimedia newspapers depend on public relations for news. The findings were presented in the previous chapter. The research followed a quantitative approach, utilising a questionnaire as the survey instrument. The survey results named Appendix B is included. The study went as anticipated with no unusual events that would have introduced error. In this chapter the results were analysed relating to the theoretical structure of this study, namely public relations, communications and media, in answering the research question: "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*"

5.2 Innovative networking

The study has given an account of how innovative networking is vital for the continued advancement of the multimedia newspapers and the public relations respective professions. The multimedia newspapers and public relations attach importance to relationships; hence public relations need to enhance their journalistic skills to ensure that more stories are published. Thus, public relations and journalist need to get on par with the innovative technology in order to connect faster and dialogically with their current audiences and to foster new relationships.

In this investigation, the aim was to measure and demonstrate the value of the public relations to the multimedia newspaper. Secondly, to find out if multimedia newspapers depend heavily upon public relations for news. The theories related to this study are, public relations -, communications- and media relations. In this section the conclusion and recommendations were interpreted. In answering the research question: "*What is the importance and effectiveness of public relations practice in obtaining coverage in a multimedia newspaper?*" the following conclusions can be drawn, with reference to the research objectives:

5.2.1 Research objectives

The multimedia journalist's perception of the public relation's practitioner as a news or information source

The study has shown that journalists depend somewhat on public relations but substantially on social networks to shape news content. In contrast, journalists in general distrust public relations. The importance of relationship is supported by the findings but the distrust of public relations remains an obstacle. Journalists in some way still equate public relations with propaganda, manipulation and "spin". As "trust" is one of the characteristics of a relationship it is inevitable that public relations needs to embrace the relationship and obtain a better understanding of the newspaper and the needs of the journalists.

The multimedia journalists use of the public relations practitioner's press releases as a news source

Slightly more than half of the multimedia journalists frequently use public relations practitioners' press releases as soft news. Almost a third of the journalists occasionally use press releases as soft news. One quarter of journalists frequently use hard news and almost 40% occasionally use public relations hard news. This supports previous research that public relations produce more soft news than hard news.

The frequency of multimedia journalist contact with the public relations practitioner for news or information

It is apparent that e-mail was the preferred mutual communication tool which journalists preferred to be communicated by public relations when pitching a story idea and likewise how public relations practitioners contact journalists. Public relations practitioners also contact journalists telephonically and nearly half of the journalists prefer public relations practitioners to contact them by telephone. An unexpected finding was that public relations are not really utilizing social networks to pitch stories; only one sixth pitched through social networks which show that public relations need to get to master the digital skills and use it in for the advantage of public relations.

The value of public relations to multimedia newspaper

There has always been a robust debate on the value of public relations to the journalists. This study clearly revealed that journalist's value public relations as an asset to their profession. More importantly, only a tenth of the journalist indicated that they do not value public relations as an asset to them and their profession.

The percentage of public relations press releases that are published as stories in multimedia newspapers

Though journalists receive (0-10) stories ideas from public relations practitioners on a daily basis, three quarters of journalists indicated that eventually only about 0-30% public relations-generated stories are published in the daily publication. On the other hand, just over three quarters of the journalists believed that 0%-30% social networks/online sources generated stories appear in the daily publication. In contrast, journalists indicated that they value public relations as an asset for journalism and as importance when sourcing story ideas. Thus, this low percentage could be linked to the fact that the quality of news releases is essential for journalists and that the majority of journalist indicated that 0-15% of public relations stories are not newsworthy. Hence public relations practitioners need to liaise continuously with journalists in order to understand what journalists expect from them.

The demonstrable value of public relations practice to the multimedia newspapers

A significant finding to emerge from this study was that journalists regard public relations as important to newspaper reporters when gaining information and possible story ideas. Simultaneously, it was established that those journalists value public relations as an asset to them and their profession. These findings, namely the journalist value public relations merge with the fact that journalists favour relationship are a step forward for both professions and can improve on the vital issue of trust from the journalist onto public relations.

A further indication that journalists value public relations is the exceptional number of journalists that are using public relations for soft news as well as the substantial number of journalists that utilise public relations for hard news. Furthermore, journalists are using public relations, the general public, and internet research as the types of sources when developing newspaper ideas and about 50% of the journalist uses social networks as types of sources.

The impact, if any, of the multimedia newspaper on public relations practice

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study was that journalists value the importance of developing a relationship with public relations practitioners.

An interesting revelation was that although journalists are in favour of a relationship with public relations, most of the journalists believe that the relationship somewhat affect public relations stories to get coverage. Therefore, it is imperative that public relations nurture the relationship in order to increase communication and simultaneously satisfying the needs of the newspaper, public relations and their respective stakeholders.

Journalists regard the quality of news releases as critical which validates the finding that the majority of the journalists judge that only 0-15% stories released by public relations are newsworthy. Consequently, this is a major stumbling block for public relations thus public relations need to improve their writing skills and use their relationship to be acquainted with the journalists' needs and requirements.

The findings revealed that because public relations does not recognize the critical role of social networks, they do not utilize it to their maximum benefit. Public relations must ensure that they explore and master the digital/online phenomena in view of the fact that the multimedia newspaper needs to keep the flow of news in "real-time" and are therefore awaiting stories on a 24/7 basis.

5.3 Recommendations

This study indicate that journalist place great emphasis on quality of public news, added to that, although journalist had mix feelings, the majority believed that only a small number of public relations-generated stories are newsworthy.

Another implication was that 0-30% public relations-generated stories are published daily. Although journalists value and somewhat depend on public relations, yet the majority of public relations-generated stories are not published. This implies that the basic communication process that public relations start, through the newspaper channel, in order to communicate to their stakeholders become blocked many times.

Evidence also showed that public relations is not using social networks regularly to pitch stories to journalists. Conversely journalists use social network as sources when developing stories.

In retrospect, this finding confirms that the public relations profession and public relations educators have a vital role to guide and shape public relations practitioners and scholars with their journalistic and liaison skills. Public relations needs to grasp the opportunities offered by the multimedia newspaper and emerging global technology in order to become more transparent and to foster symmetric two-way communication. Public relations must not stagnate but aspire to excellence in their relationship with multimedia newspaper journalists.

The current findings contribute substantially to our understanding of journalists' attitudes towards public relations.

This study confirms previous findings and contributes additional evidence that suggests that e-mail is a mutual communication tool for public relations and journalists.

It is evident that a positive relationship in which both sides benefit, in order to attain their respective objective are fostered.

In meeting the demands of the online newspapers and social networks offered, public relations get the opportunity to enhance the status of the profession.

The findings enhance our understanding of innovative networking. It is obvious that there will always be gaps because of the revolving nature of the ever-changing technology. Consequently, public relations and journalism must constantly benchmark their work with regard to innovation and technology forces.

5.4 Summary

Given the fact that relationship is fundamental for public relations the finding that journalist primarily favours the importance of a relationship with public relations is encouraging. This is the key to enhance synergy with the multimedia newspaper and the innovating networks - and public relations has nurtured this relationship and embraced the trust, commitment and mutual understanding.

Results showed that public relations practitioners are important to newspaper reporters when gaining information and possible story ideas.

Further research in order to obtain more information on public relations opinion would help to enhance a greater degree of accuracy on this matter.

Further studies over the next three to five years, regarding the impact of multimedia newspaper, social/online networks on public relations, to examine the growth of public relations in using the technology at hand would be beneficial to the public relations profession.

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Sample letter to survey participants

26 Hannes Louw Drive
De Tijger
PAROW, 7500
mvandiemel@hotmail.com
083 301 9400

4 April 2011

Die Burger
40 Heerengracht
CAPE TOWN
8001

Dear Journalism Professional

INNOVATING NETWORKING – THE SYNERGY BETWEEN THE MULTIMEDIA NEWSPAPERS AND PR

I am a graduate student at Cape Peninsula University of Technology studying Public Relations Management. I started with this study while I was employed at *Die Burger* and the Multimedia office at *Die Burger* inspired me to focus on this contemporary topic.

I need your assistance in completing my master's thesis project. My thesis is a study and analysis of newspaper content that is generated through public relations practice in *Die Burger*. I am attempting to study how much of a newspaper (how many stories) comes from public relations practitioners submitting a news release, pitching a story or possibly picking up the phone and calling a journalist.

It is in this regard that I would be very grateful if you could complete the attached scientific questionnaire measuring the perceptions and beliefs of journalists on this issue. The 20-question survey will help answer many questions about the relationship between public relations practice, journalists and newspaper content.

Thank you for your time and I thank you in advance for your cooperating with this project.

Yours sincerely

Merle van Diemel

Appendix B – Survey Instrument

"Innovative Networking - the synergy between the Multimedia newspapers and PR. (i.e. the impact of the multimedia newspapers on the PR practice)"

This questionnaire is being sent to you because you were chosen through a sampling of journalism professionals at Media24. Your responses will help measure the attitudes and opinions of journalists about public relations practice. Once you complete the survey, please hand it to the news desk secretary in the addressed envelope.

This survey is completely voluntary and confidential. Thank you for your time. This Study is Confidential. Please do not identify your name.

Please circle your responses to the following questions:

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use? (Select all that apply.)
 - a) Public relations practitioners
 - b) Other newspaper professionals or sources
 - c) General public
 - d) Internet research
 - e) Editorial staff suggestions
 - f) Social networks (e.g. Social media twitter, etc.)
 - g) Other:

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you? (Select all that apply.)
 - a) Phone
 - b) E-mail
 - c) Post
 - d) Fax
 - e) Social networks (e.g. Social media twitter, etc.)
 - f) I don't know

3. How frequently do you use public relations practitioners as sources for hard news (breaking news) stories?
 - a) Always
 - b) Frequently.
 - c) Sometimes
 - d) Never
 - e) I don't know

4. How often do you or your reporters use public relations practitioners as sources for soft news (feature) stories?
 - a) Always
 - b) Frequently
 - c) Sometimes
 - d) Never
 - e) I don't know

5. In your opinion, how important is the development of a relationship between a newspaper reporter and a public relations practitioner in working together?
 - a) Very important
 - b) Somewhat important
 - c) Minimally important
 - d) Not at all important
 - e) I don't know

6. In your opinion, how does this relationship affect the likelihood that a story pitched by a public relations practitioner to a newspaper reporter will get coverage?
 - a) Greatly affect
 - b) Somewhat affect
 - c) Minimally affect
 - d) Not at all
 - e) I don't know

7. How important is the written quality of a news release sent by a public relations practitioner to a newspaper reporter in gaining coverage?
- a) Very important
 - b) Somewhat important
 - c) Minimally important
 - d) Not at all important
 - e) I don't know
8. To the best of your knowledge, how many story ideas do you receive from public relations practitioners on a daily basis?
- a) 0-10
 - b) 11-20
 - c) 21-30
 - d) 31-40
 - e) 40 or more
 - f) I don't know
9. What is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch (recommend) a story idea to a reporter?
- a) Telephone
 - b) E-mail
 - c) Fax
 - d) Post
 - e) I don't know
10. How important are public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters when gaining information and possible story ideas?
- a) Very important
 - b) Somewhat important
 - c) Minimally important
 - d) Not important
 - e) I don't know

11. What percentage of stories released by public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters are newsworthy?

- a) 0%-15%
- b) 16%-30%
- c) 31%-45%
- d) 46%-60%
- e) 61%-75%
- f) more than 75%
- g) I don't know

12. Do you value public relations practitioners as an asset to you and your profession?

- a) Yes
- b) Somewhat
- c) No
- d) I don't know

13. Working in the journalism profession, do you have a distrust of public relations practitioners on any level?

- a) Yes
- b) Somewhat
- c) No
- d) I don't know

14. How many stories do you publish per month?

- a) 1-3 stories
- b) 4-6 stories
- c) 7-10 stories
- d) 11-20 stories
- e) 20 or more stories
- f) I don't know

15. Do you feel that you depend upon public relations practitioners to help you fill and/or shape news content in your publication?

- a) Yes
- b) Somewhat
- c) No
- d) I don't know

16. Do you feel that you depend upon social networks/online sources to help you fill and/or shape news content in your publication?

- a) Yes
- b) Somewhat
- c) No
- d) I don't know

17. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of stories appearing in your daily publication is generated through public relations practice by practitioners?

- a) 0%-10%
- b) 11%-20%
- c) 21%-30%
- d) 31%-40%
- e) 41%-50%
- f) 51%-60%
- g) 61%-70%
- h) more than 70%
- i) Other:

18. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of stories appearing in your daily publication is generated through social networks/online sources?

- a) 0%-10%
- b) 11%-20%
- c) 21%-30%
- d) 31%-40%
- e) 41%-50%
- f) 51%-60%
- g) 61%-70%
- h) more than 70%
- i) Other:

19. Are you a newspaper editor or reporter (please circle one)?

- a) newspaper editor
- b) newspaper reporter

20. How many years have you been a journalism professional?

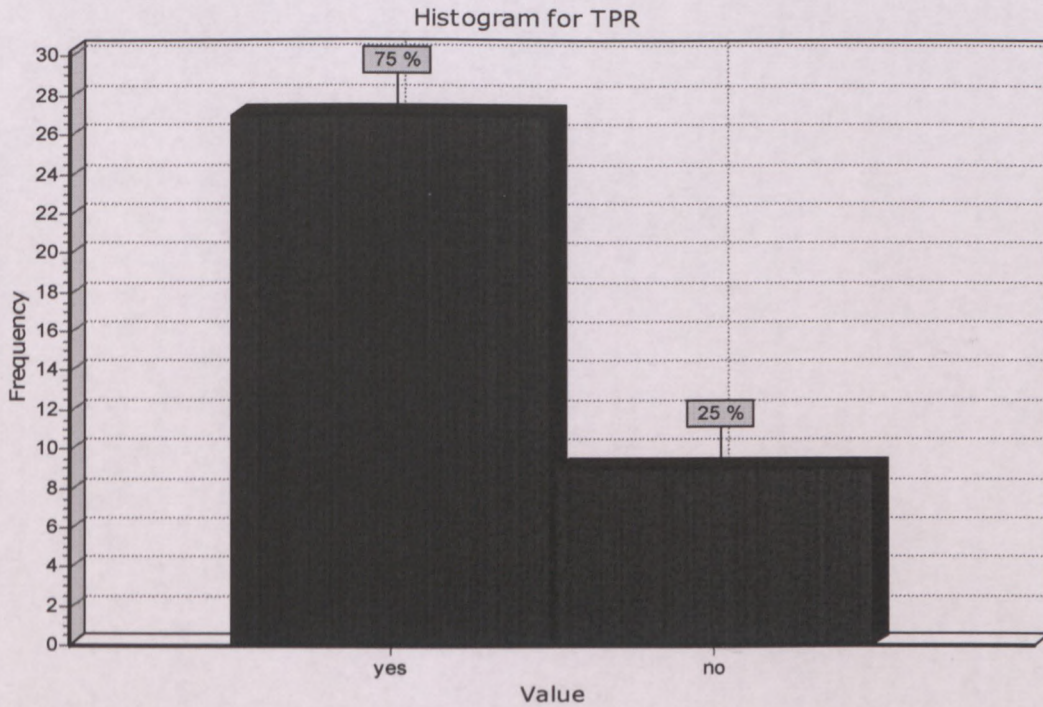
- a) 1-3 years
- b) 4-6 years
- c) 7-10 years
- d) 11-14 years
- e) 15 or more years

Thank you again for completing this questionnaire. Please hand the completed survey to the news desk secretary in the addressed envelope.

Appendix C – Survey Results

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

a. Public relations practitioners



Frequency table for TPR

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	27	75.00	75.00
no	9	25.00	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

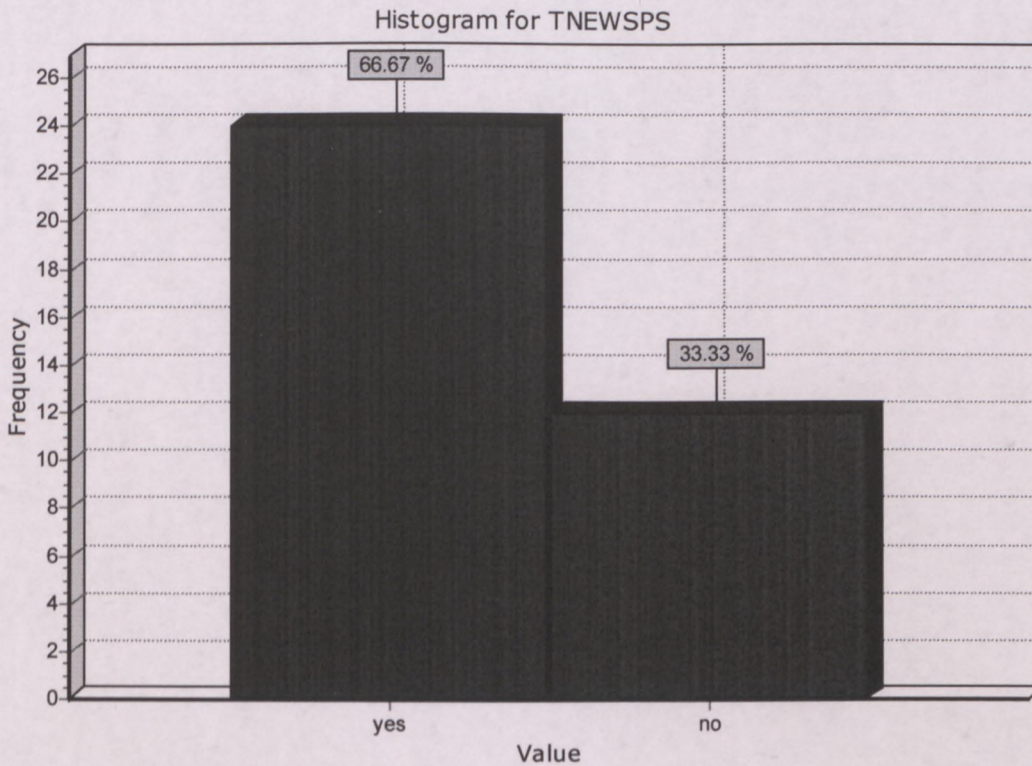
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Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TPR	36	1.25	0.44	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TPR	36	1.00

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

Other newspaper professionals or sources



Frequency table for TNEWSPS

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	24	66.67	66.67
no	12	33.33	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

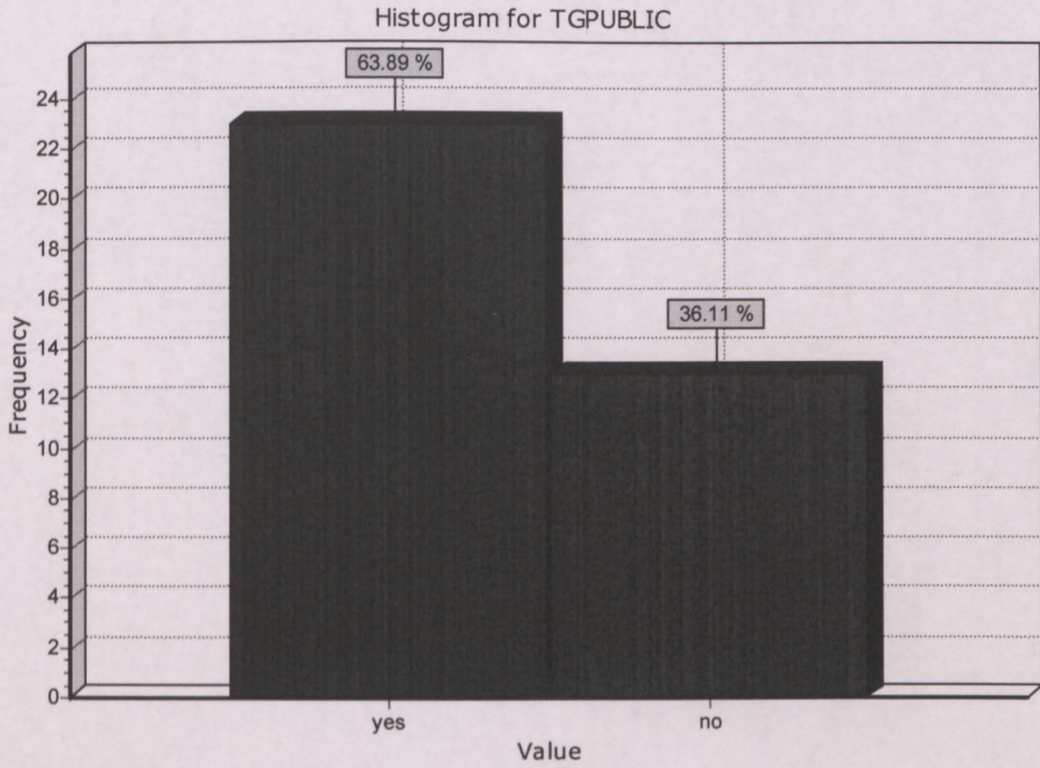
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TNEWSPS	36	1.33	0.48	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TNEWSPS	36	1.00

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

General public



Frequency table for TGPUBLIC

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	23	63.89	63.89
no	13	36.11	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

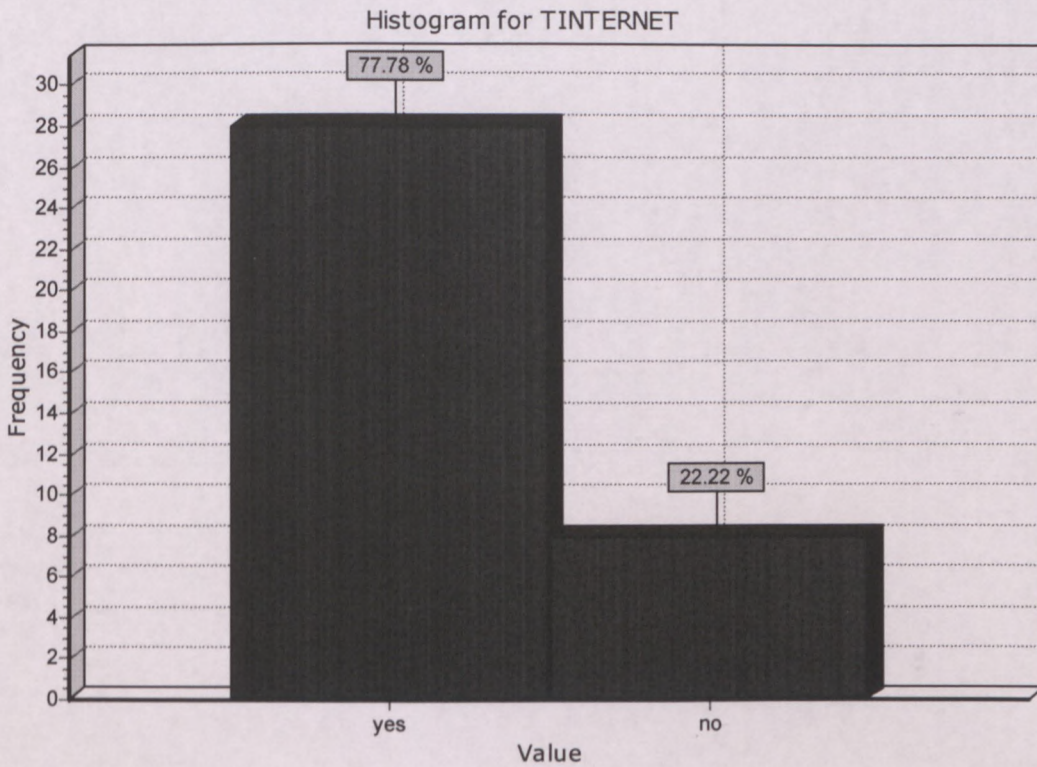
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TGPUBLIC	36	1.36	0.49	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TGPUBLIC	36	1.00

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

b. Internet research



Frequency table for TINTERNET

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	28	77.78	77.78
no	8	22.22	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

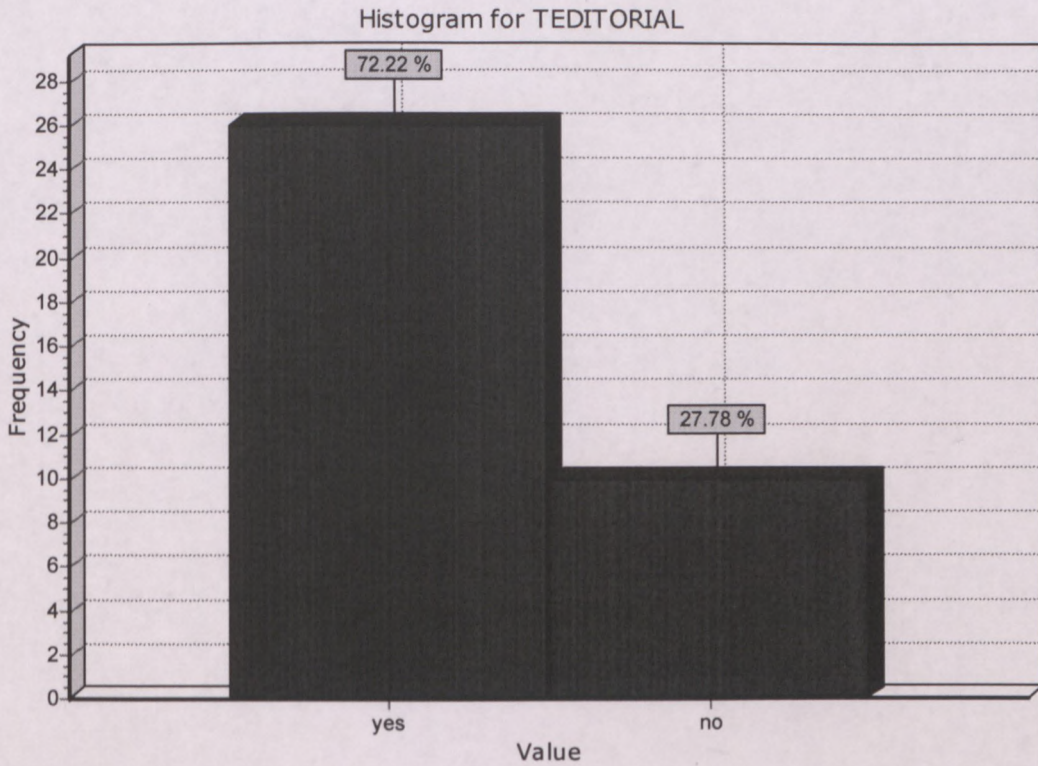
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TINTERNET	36	1.22	0.42	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TINTERNET	36	1.00

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

Editorial staff suggestions



Frequency table for TEDITORIAL

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	26	72.22	72.22
no	10	27.78	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

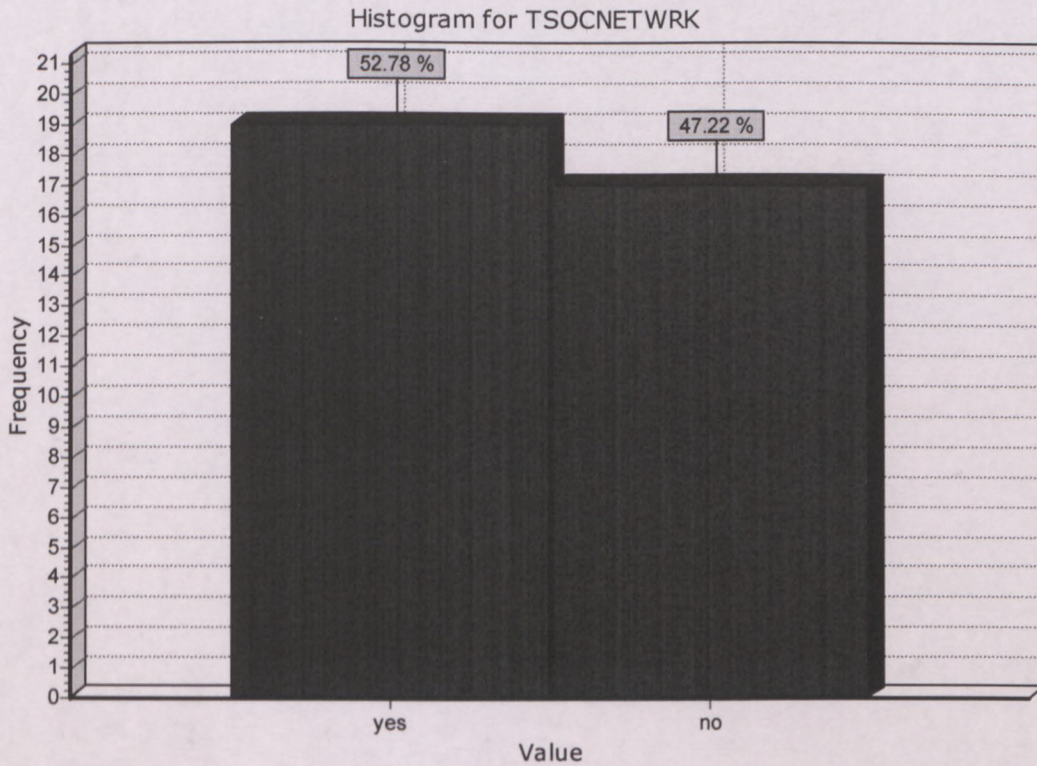
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TEDITORIAL	36	1.28	0.45	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TEDITORIAL	36	1.00

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

e. Social networks (e.g. Social media, twitter, etc.)



Frequency table for TSOCKETWRK

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	19	52.78	52.78
no	17	47.22	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

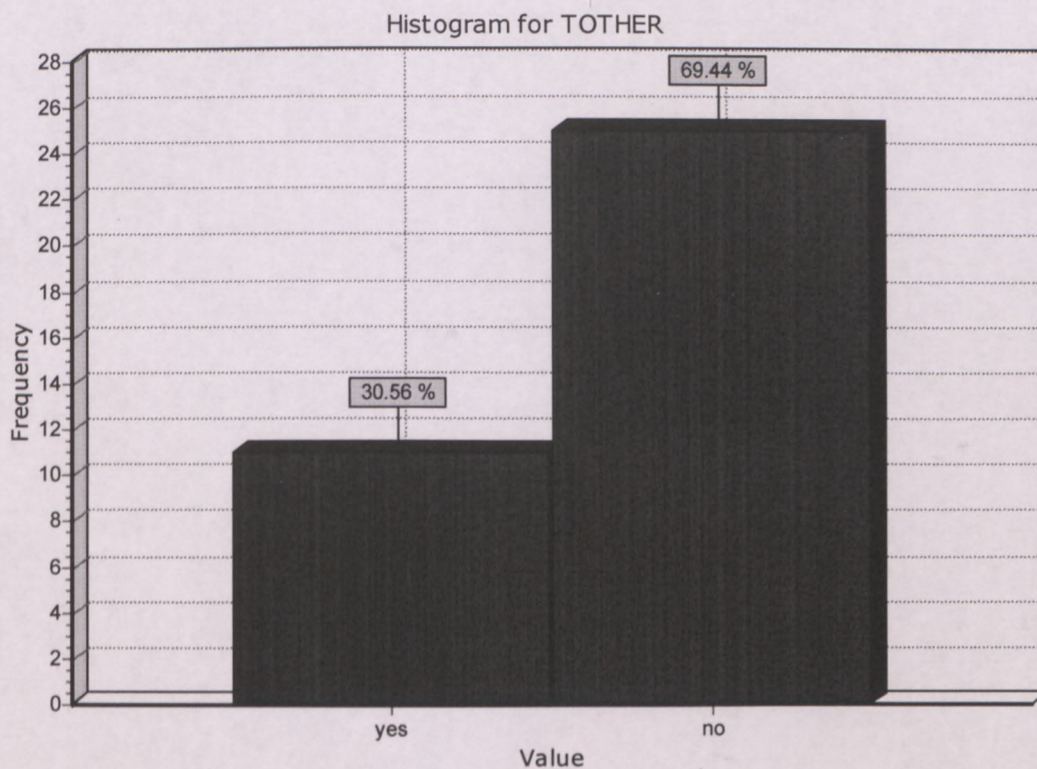
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TSOCKETWRK	36	1.47	0.51	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TSOCKETWRK	36	1.00

1. When developing newspaper story ideas, what types of sources do you use?

Other



Frequency table for TOTHER

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	11	30.56	30.56
no	25	69.44	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

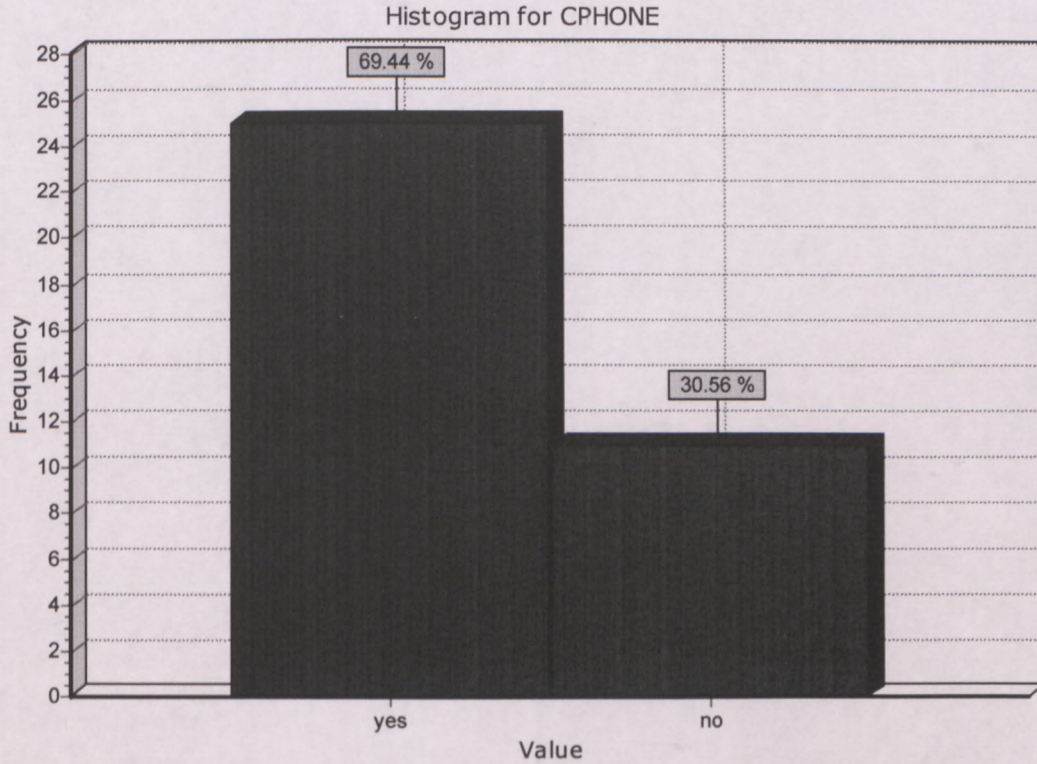
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TOTHER	36	1.69	0.47	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TOTHER	36	2.00

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you?

a. Phone



Frequency table for CPHONE

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	25	69.44	69.44
no	11	30.56	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

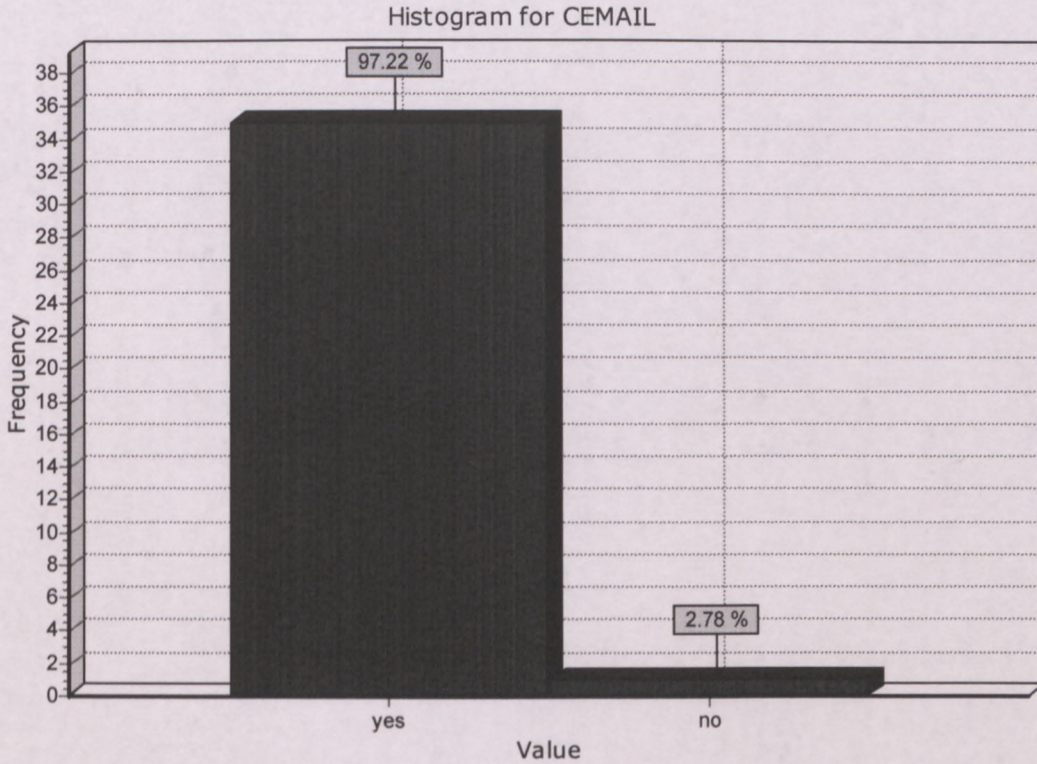
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
CPHONE	36	1.31	0.47	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
CPHONE	36	1.00

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you?

b. E-mail



Frequency table for CEMAIL

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	35	97.22	97.22
no	1	2.78	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

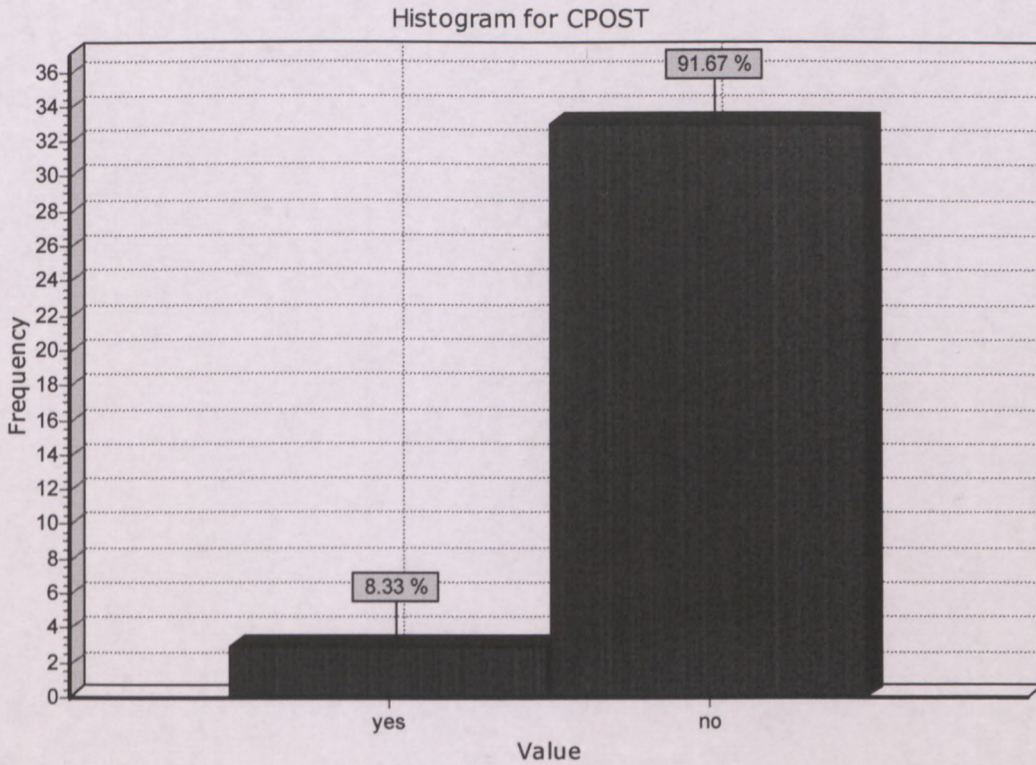
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
CEMAIL	36	1.03	0.17	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
CEMAIL	36	1.00

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you?

c. Post



Frequency table for CPOST

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	3	8.33	8.33
no	33	91.67	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

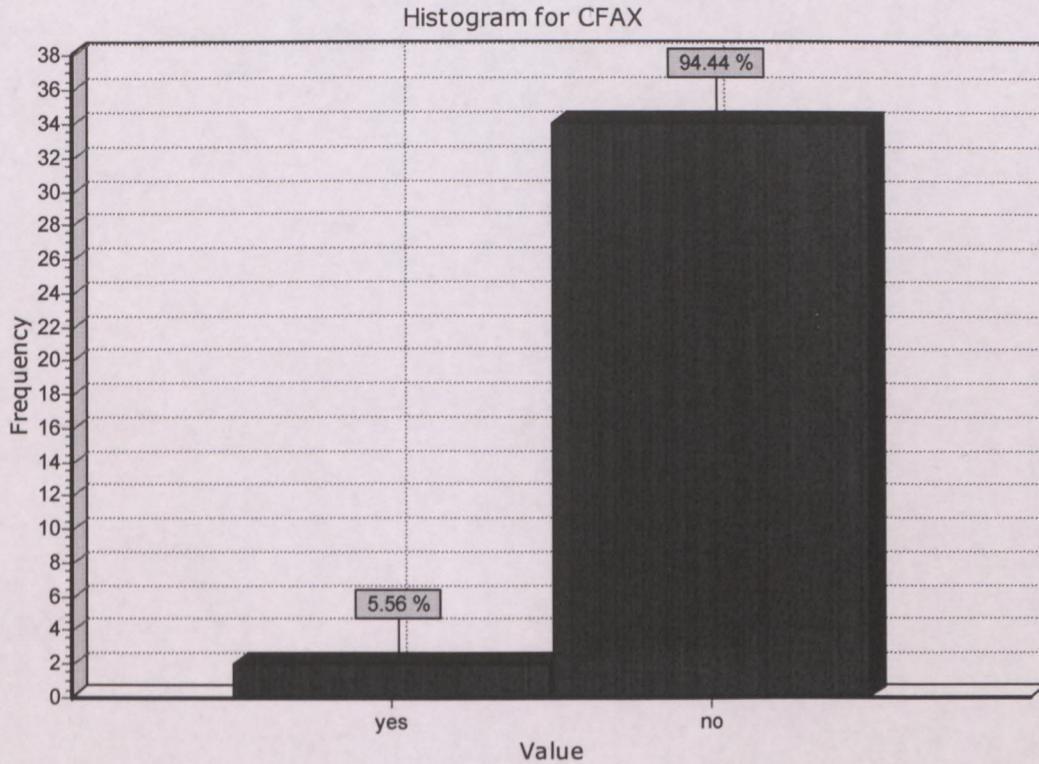
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
CPOST	36	1.92	0.28	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
CPOST	36	2.00

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you?

d. Fax



Frequency table for CFAF

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	2	5.56	5.56
no	34	94.44	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

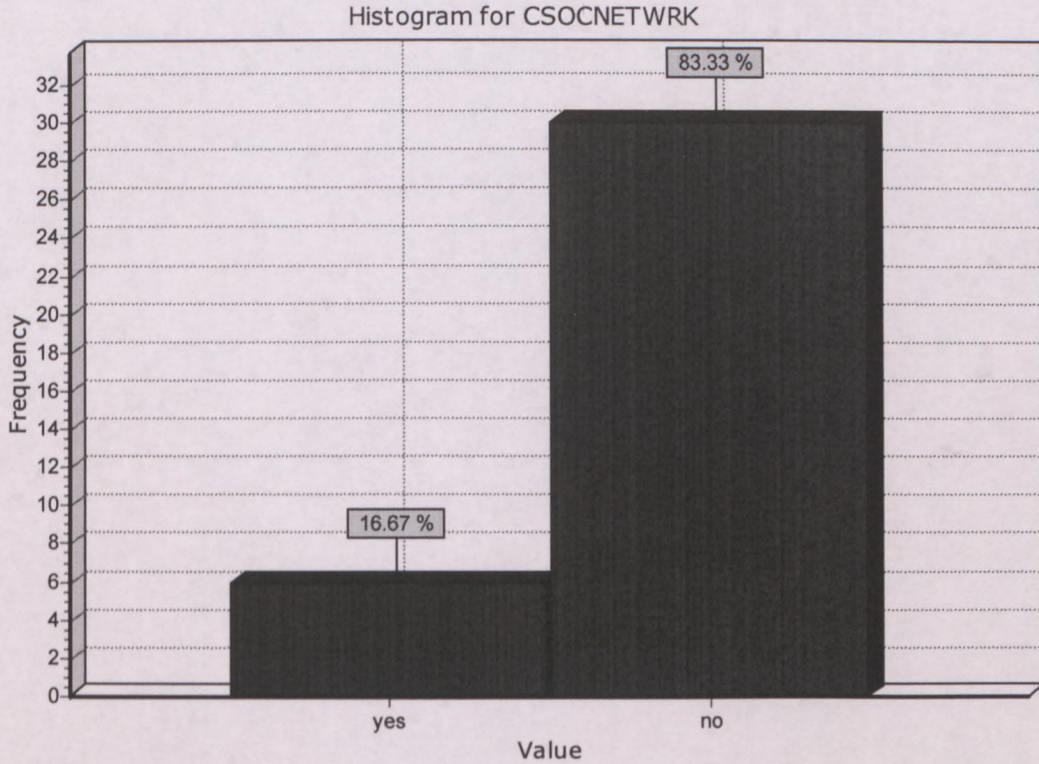
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
CFAF	36	1.94	0.23	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
CFAF	36	2.00

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you?

e. Social networks (e.g. Social media, twitter, etc.)



Frequency table for CSOCNETWRK

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	6	16.67	16.67
no	30	83.33	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

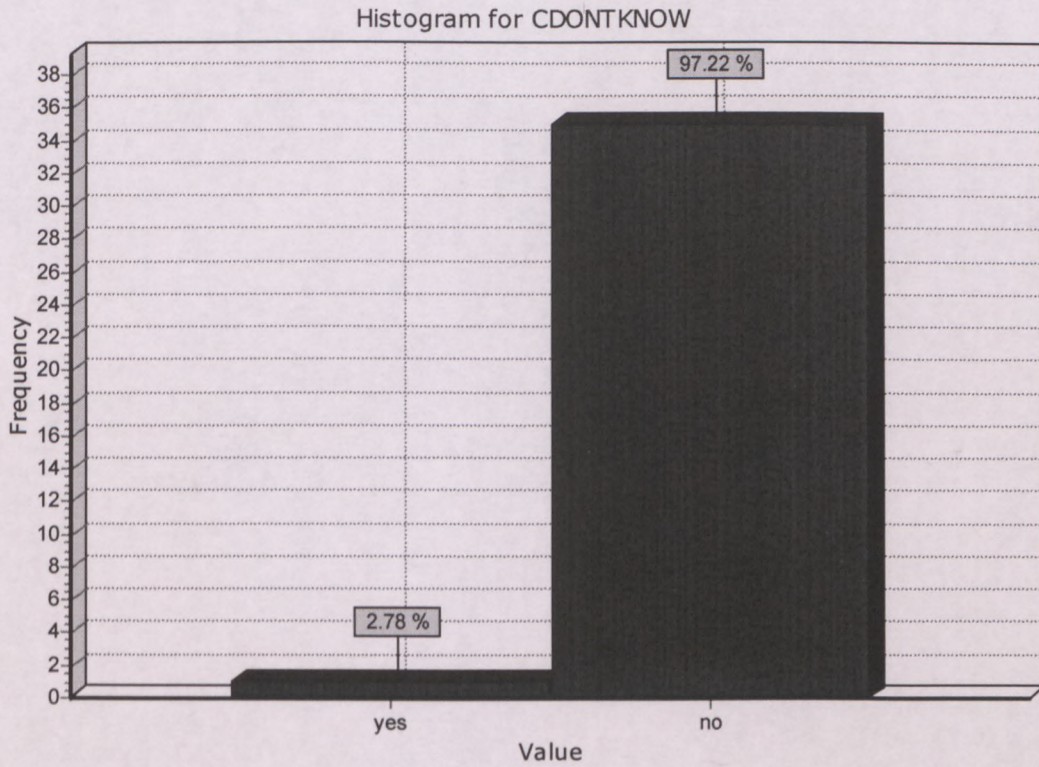
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
CSOCNETWRK	36	1.83	0.38	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
CSOCNETWRK	36	2.00

2. How do sources, such as public relations practitioners, contact you?

f. I don't know



Frequency table for CDONTKNOW

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	1	2.78	2.78
no	35	97.22	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

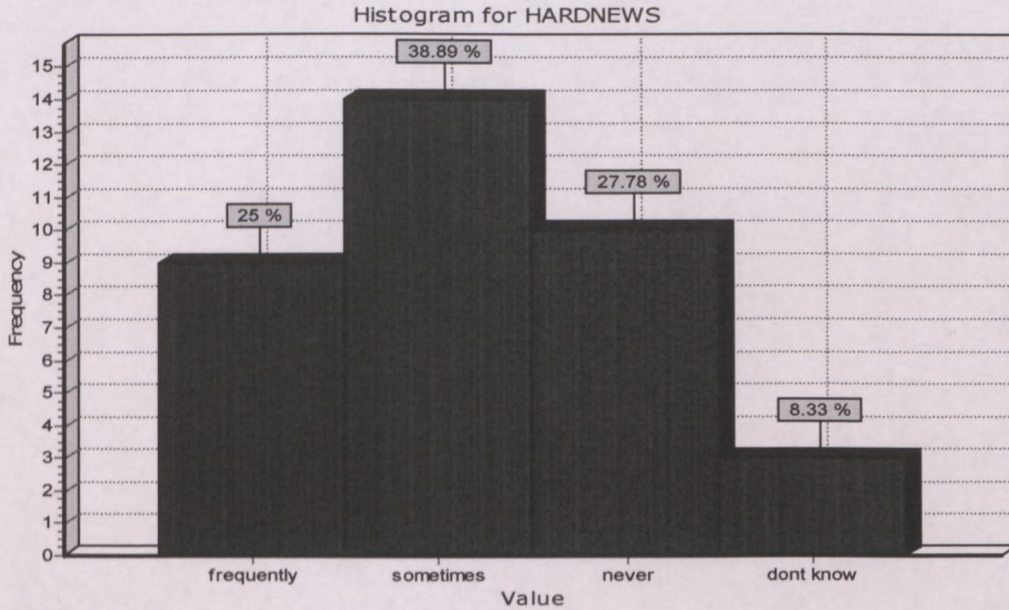
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
CDONTKNOW	36	1.97	0.17	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
CDONTKNOW	36	2.00

3. How frequently do you use public relations practitioners as sources for hard news (breaking news) stories?

- a. Always
- b. Frequently.
- c. Sometimes
- d. Never
- e. I don't know



Frequency table for HARDNEWS

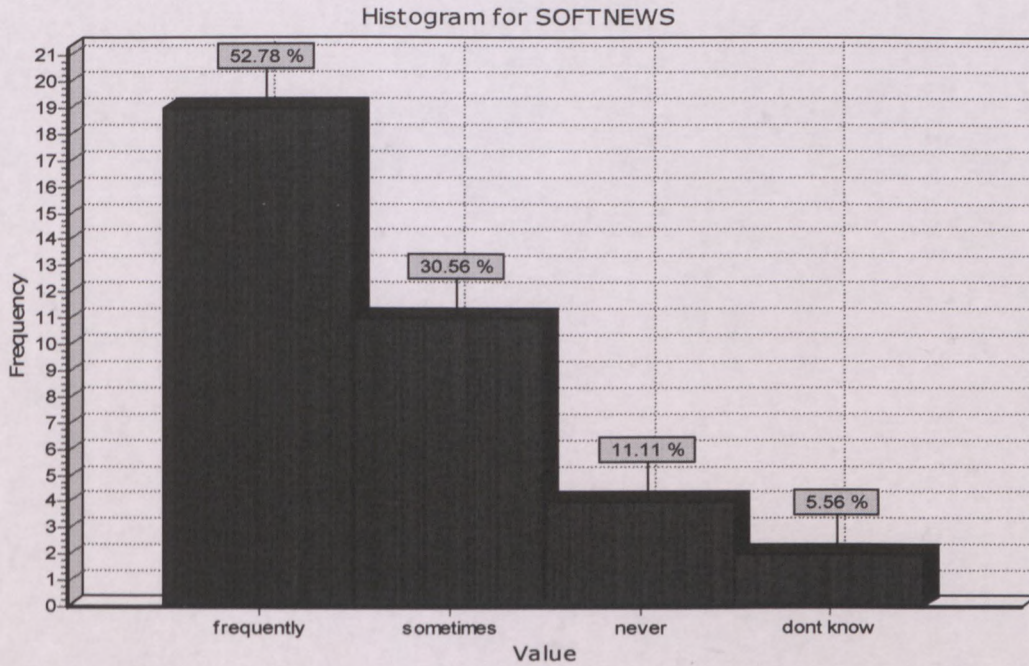
Value	N	%	Cum. %
frequently	9	25.00	25.00
sometimes	14	38.89	63.89
never	10	27.78	91.67
dont know	3	8.33	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
HARDNEWS	36	3.19	0.92	2.00	5.00

Variable	N	Median
HARDNEWS	36	3.00

4. How often do you or your reporters use public relations practitioners as sources for soft news (feature) stories?
- Always
 - Frequently
 - Sometimes
 - Never
 - I don't know



Frequency table for SOFTNEWS

Value	N	%	Cum. %
frequently	19	52.78	52.78
sometimes	11	30.56	83.33
never	4	11.11	94.44
dont know	2	5.56	100.00

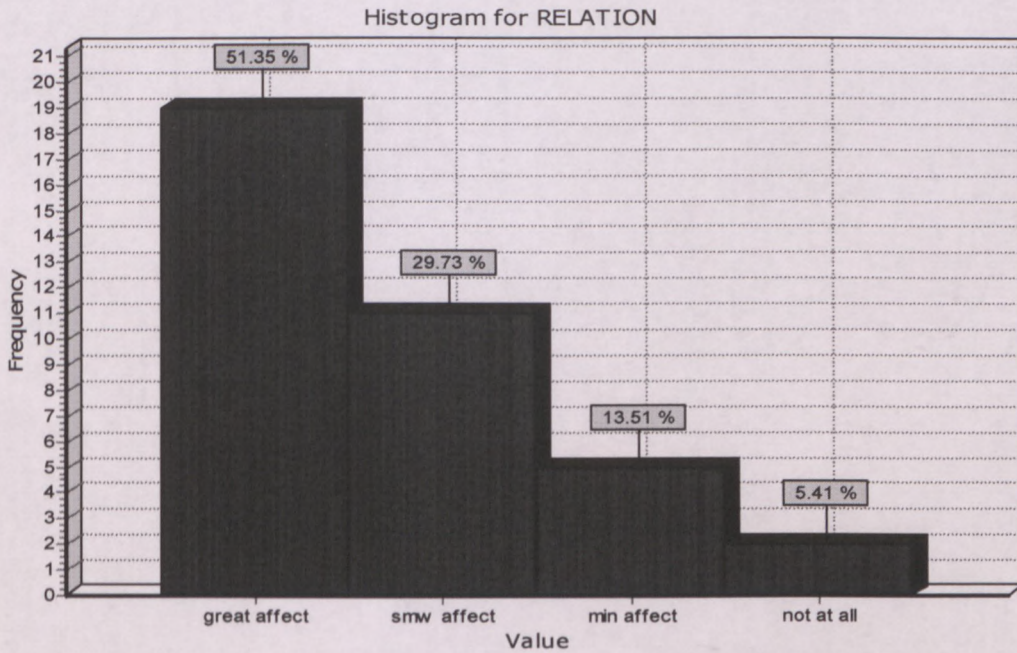
TOTAL 36 100.00

Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
SOFTNEWS	36	2.69	0.89	2.00	5.00

Variable	N	Median
SOFTNEWS	36	2.00

5. In your opinion, how important is the development of a relationship between a newspaper reporter and a public relations practitioner in working together?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Minimally important
 - Not at all important
 - I don't know



Frequency table for RELATION

Value	N	%	Cum. %
great affect	19	51.35	51.35
smw affect	11	29.73	81.08
min affect	5	13.51	94.59
not at all	2	5.41	100.00

TOTAL 37 100.00

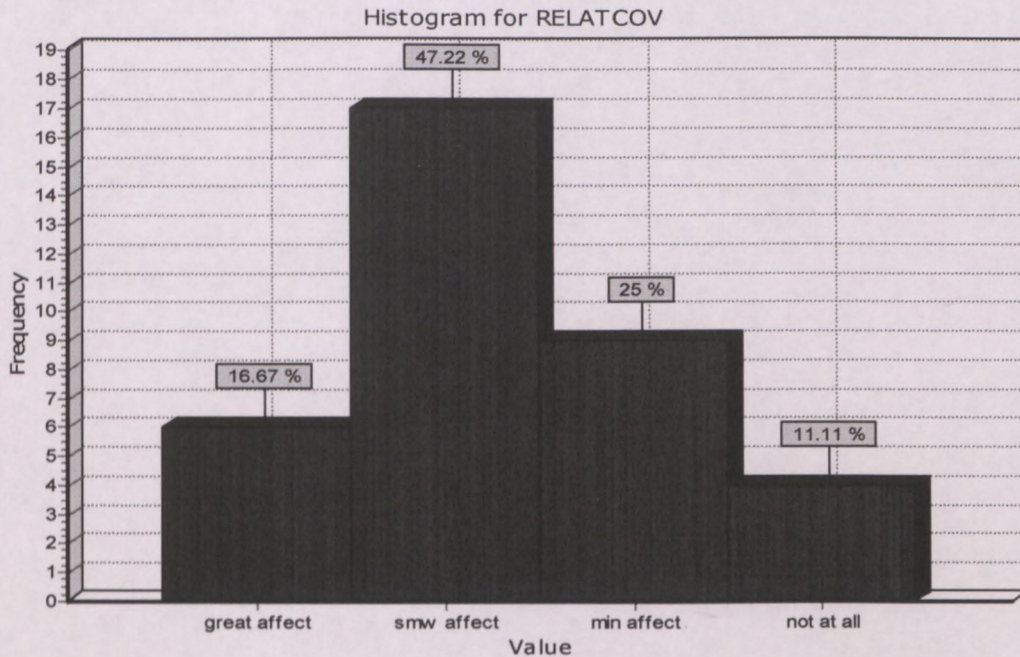
Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
RELATION	37	1.73	0.90	1.00	4.00

Variable	N	Median
RELATION	37	1.00

6. In your opinion, how does this relationship affect the likelihood that a story pitched by a public relations practitioner to a newspaper reporter will get coverage?

- a. Greatly affect
- b. Somewhat affect
- c. Minimally affect
- d. Not at all
- e. I don't know



Frequency table for RELATCOV

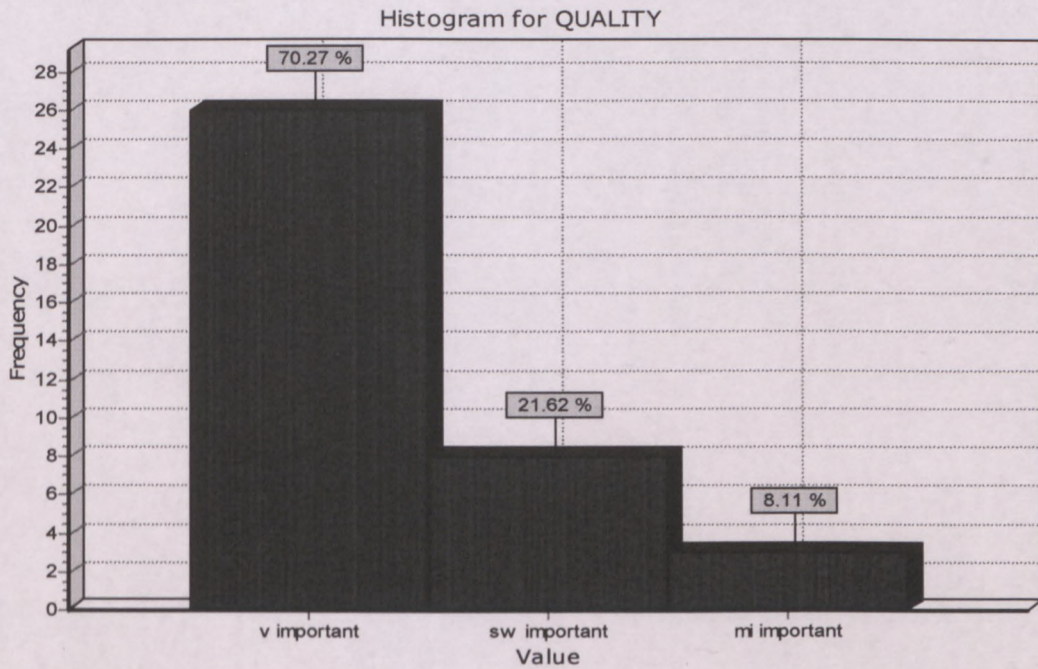
Value	N	%	Cum. %
great affect	6	16.67	16.67
smw affect	17	47.22	63.89
min affect	9	25.00	88.89
not at all	4	11.11	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
RELATCOV	36	2.31	0.89	1.00	4.00

Variable	N	Median
RELATCOV	36	2.00

7. How important is the written quality of a news release sent by a public relations practitioner to a newspaper reporter in gaining coverage?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Minimally important
 - Not at all important
 - I don't know



Frequency table for QUALITY

Value	N	%	Cum. %
v important	26	70.27	70.27
sw important	8	21.62	91.89
mi important	3	8.11	100.00

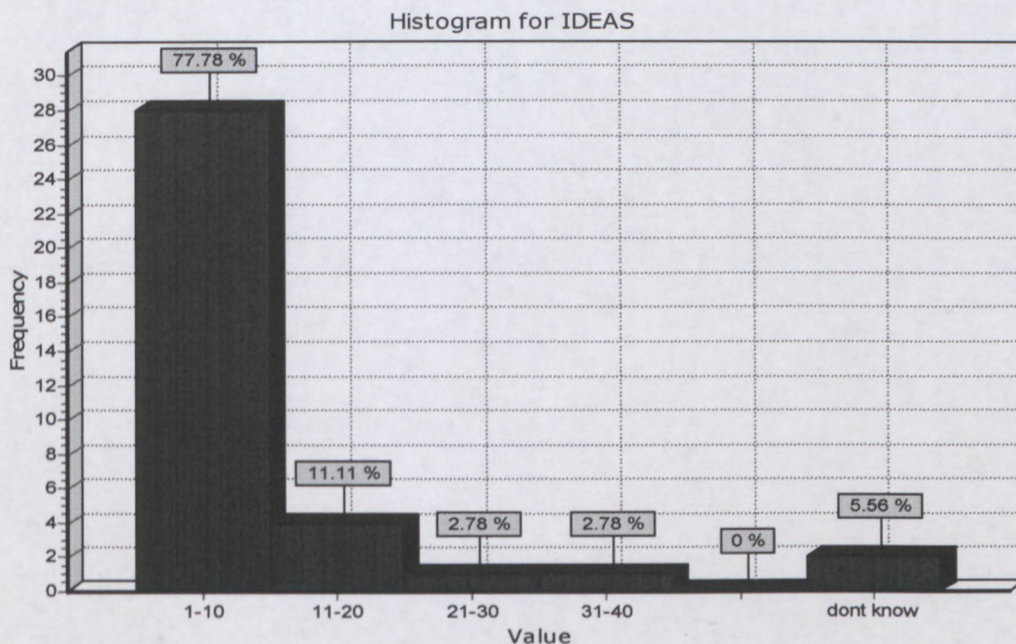
TOTAL 37 100.00

Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
QUALITY	37	1.38	0.64	1.00	3.00

Variable	N	Median
QUALITY	37	1.00

8. To the best of your knowledge, how many story ideas do you receive from public relations practitioners on a daily basis?
- 0-10
 - 11-20
 - 21-30
 - 31-40
 - 40 or more
 - I don't know



Frequency table for IDEAS

Value	N	%	Cum. %
1-10	28	77.78	77.78
11-20	4	11.11	88.89
21-30	1	2.78	91.67
31-40	1	2.78	94.44
dont know	2	5.56	100.00

TOTAL 36 100.00

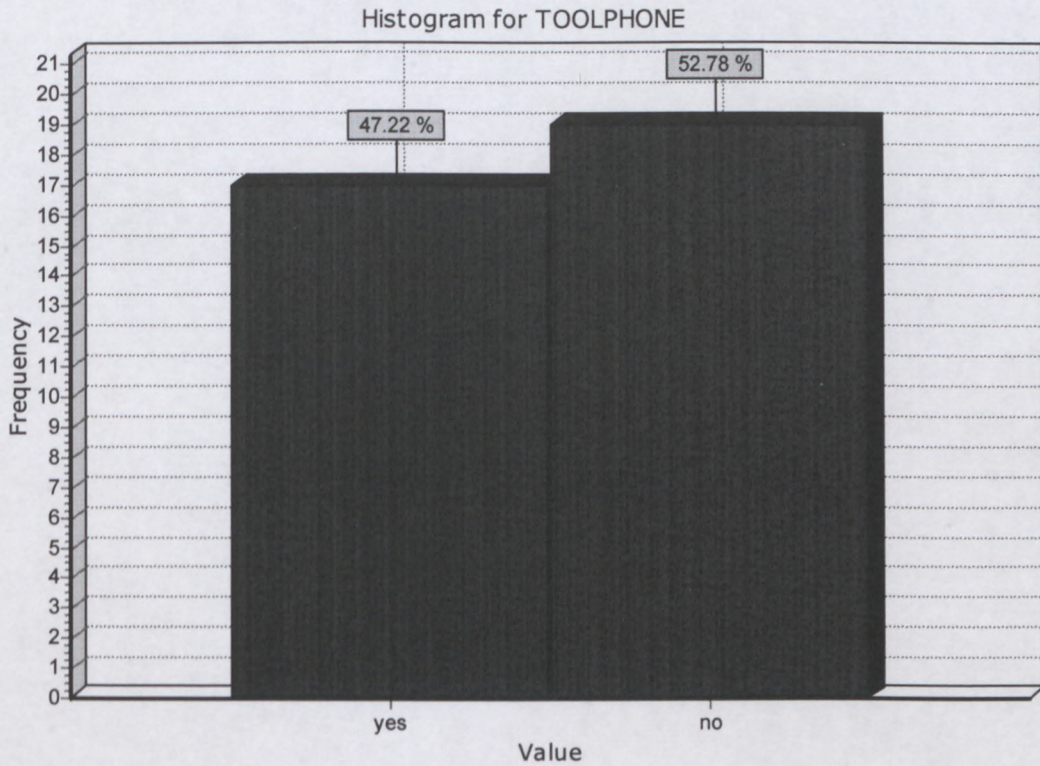
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
IDEAS	36	1.53	1.28	1.00	6.00

Variable	N	Median
IDEAS	36	1.00

9. What is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch (recommend) a story idea to a reporter?

a. Telephone



Frequency table for TOOLPHONE

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	17	47.22	47.22
no	19	52.78	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

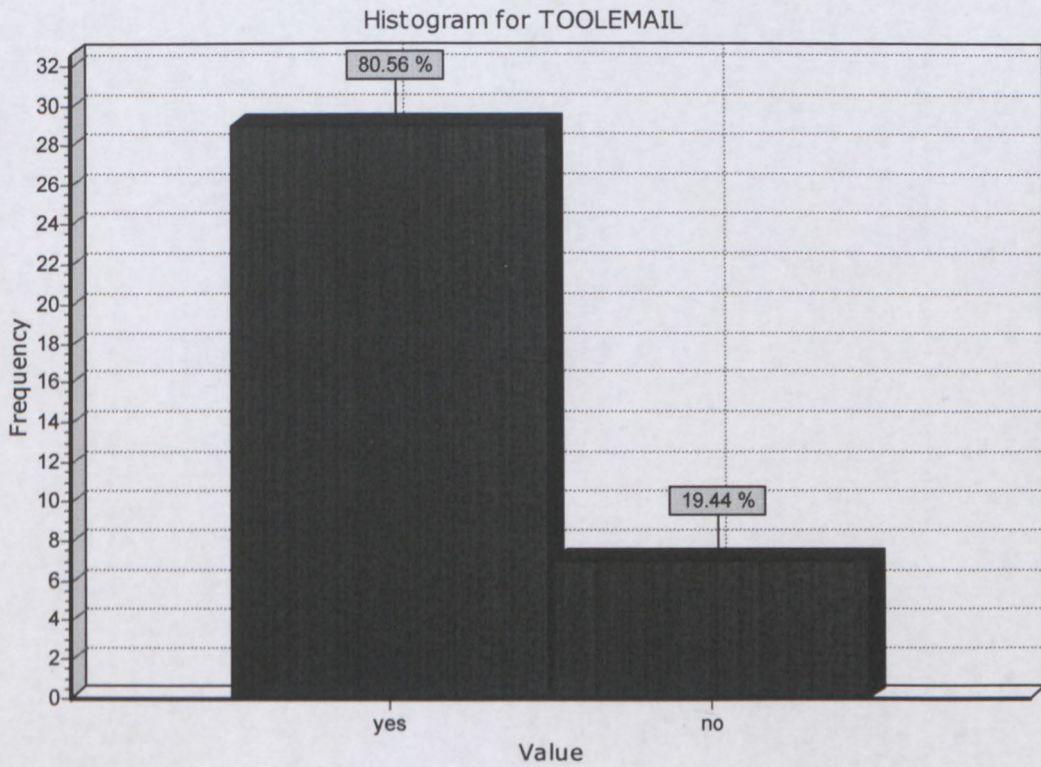
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TOOLPHONE	36	1.53	0.51	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TOOLPHONE	36	2.00

9. What is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch (recommend) a story idea to a reporter?

b. E-mail



Frequency table for TOOLEMAIL

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	29	80.56	80.56
no	7	19.44	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

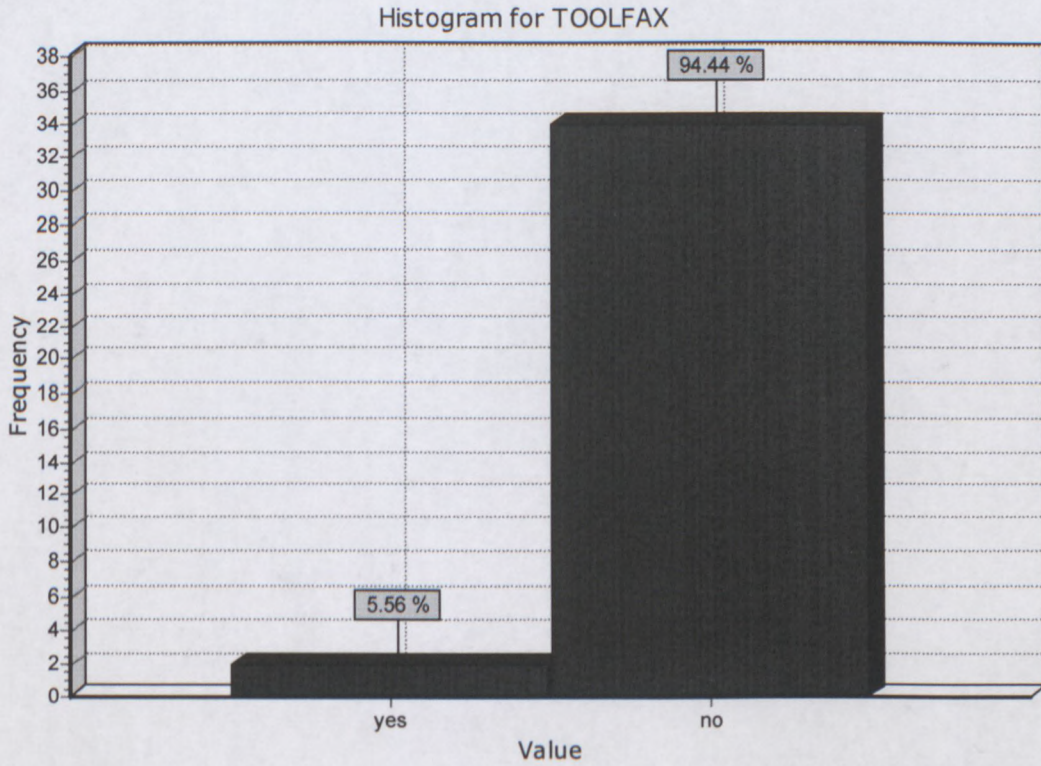
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TOOLEMAIL	36	1.19	0.40	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TOOLEMAIL	36	1.00

9. What is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch (recommend) a story idea to a reporter?

c. Fax



Frequency table for TOOLFAX

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	2	5.56	5.56
no	34	94.44	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

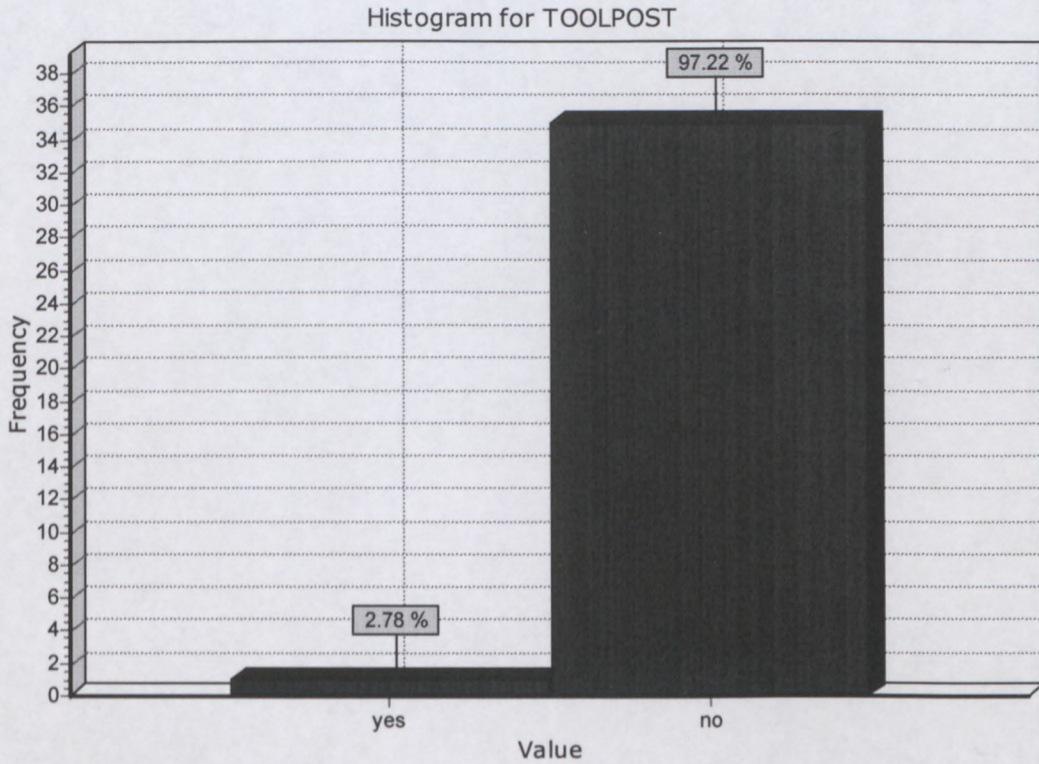
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TOOLFAX	36	1.94	0.23	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TOOLFAX	36	2.00

9. What is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch (recommend) a story idea to a reporter?

d. Post



Frequency table for TOOLPOST

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	1	2.78	2.78
no	35	97.22	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

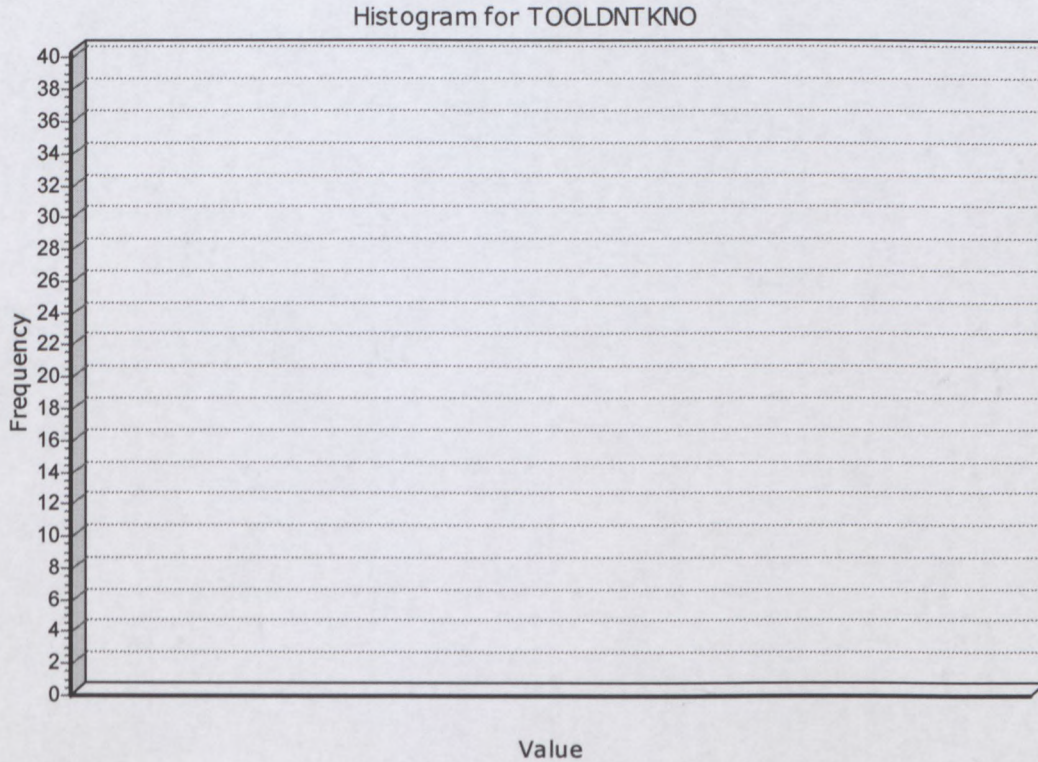
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TOOLPOST	36	1.97	0.17	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TOOLPOST	36	2.00

9. What is the best communication tool a public relations practitioner can use to pitch (recommend) a story idea to a reporter?

e. I don't know



Frequency table for TOOLDNTKNO

Value	N	%	Cum. %
no	36	100.00	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

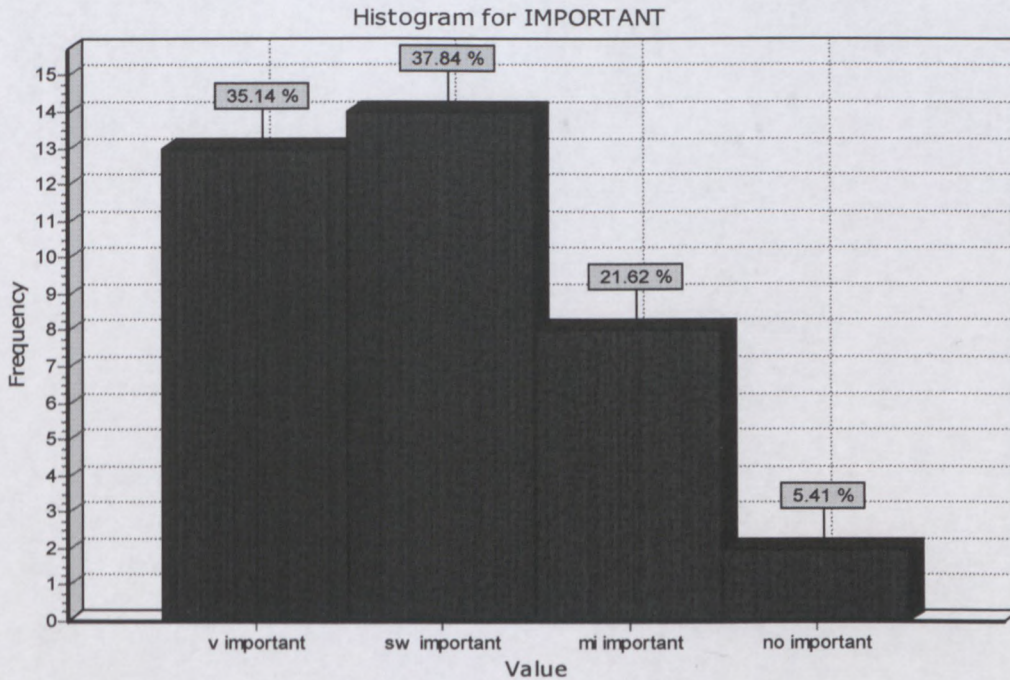
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TOOLDNTKNO	36	2.00	0.00	2.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TOOLDNTKNO	36	2.00

10. How important are public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters when gaining information and possible story ideas?

- a. Very important
- b. Somewhat important
- c. Minimally important
- d. Not important
- e. I don't know



Frequency table for IMPORTANT

Value	N	%	Cum. %
v important	13	35.14	35.14
sw important	14	37.84	72.97
mi important	8	21.62	94.59
no important	2	5.41	100.00

TOTAL 37 100.00

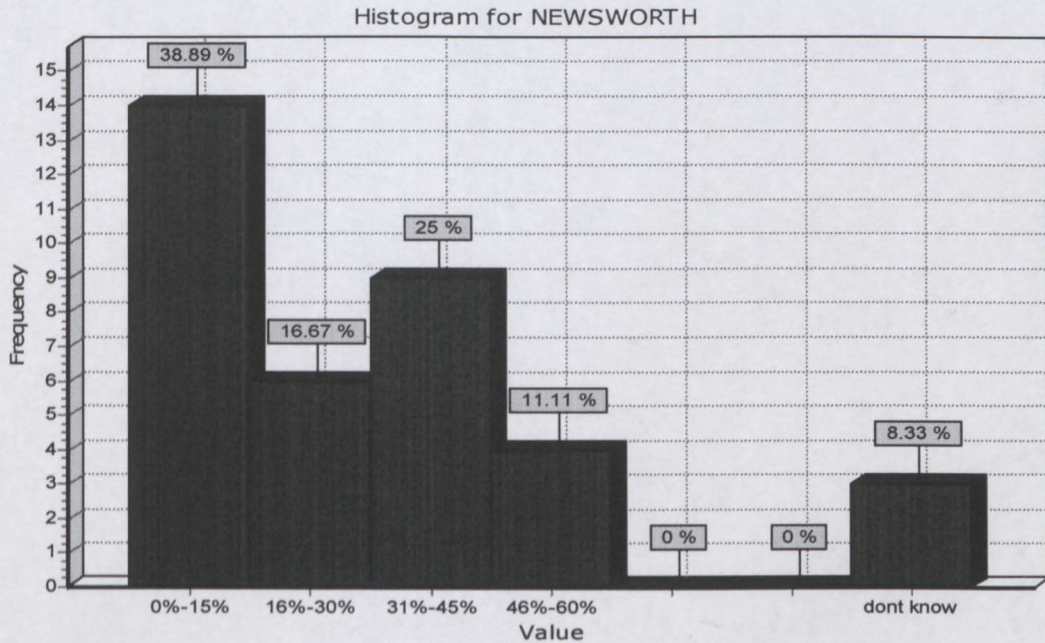
Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
IMPORTANT	37	1.97	0.90	1.00	4.00

Variable	N	Median
IMPORTANT	37	2.00

11. What percentage of stories released by public relations practitioners to newspaper reporters are newsworthy?

- a. 0%-15%
- b. 16%-30%
- c. 31%-45%
- d. 46%-60%
- e. 61%-75%
- f. more than 75%
- g. I don't know



Frequency table for NEWSWORTH

Value	N	%	Cum. %
0%-15%	14	38.89	38.89
16%-30%	6	16.67	55.56
31%-45%	9	25.00	80.56
46%-60%	4	11.11	91.67
dont know	3	8.33	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

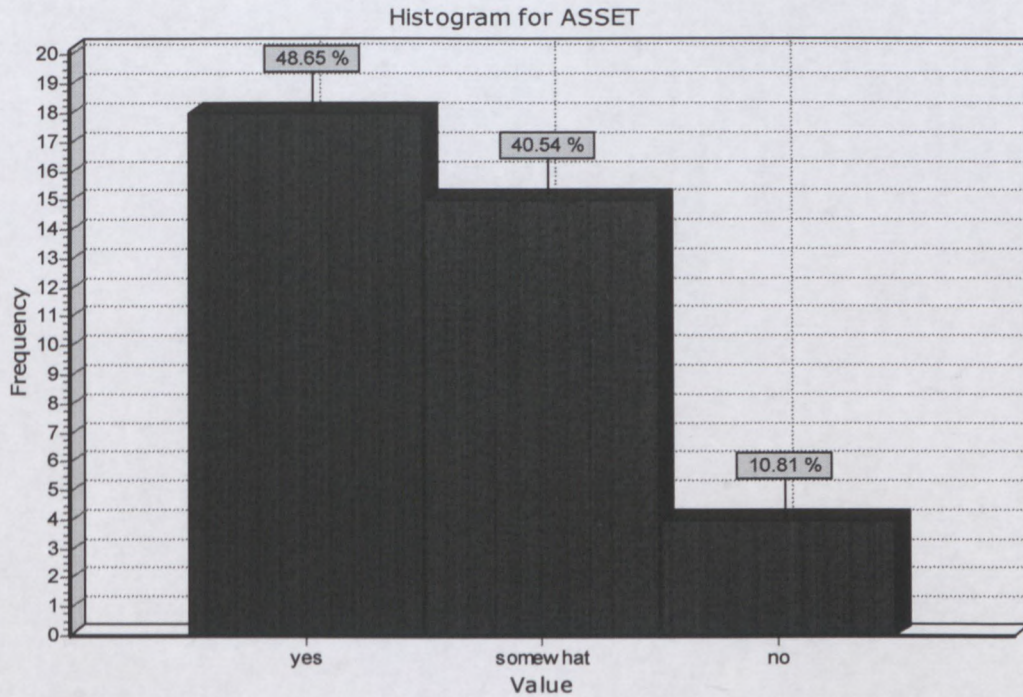
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
NEWSWORTH	36	2.50	1.73	1.00	7.00

Variable	N	Median
NEWSWORTH	36	2.00

12. Do you value public relations practitioners as an asset to you and your profession?

- a. Yes
- b. Somewhat
- c. No
- d. I don't know



Frequency table for ASSET

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	18	48.65	48.65
somewhat	15	40.54	89.19
no	4	10.81	100.00
TOTAL	37	100.00	

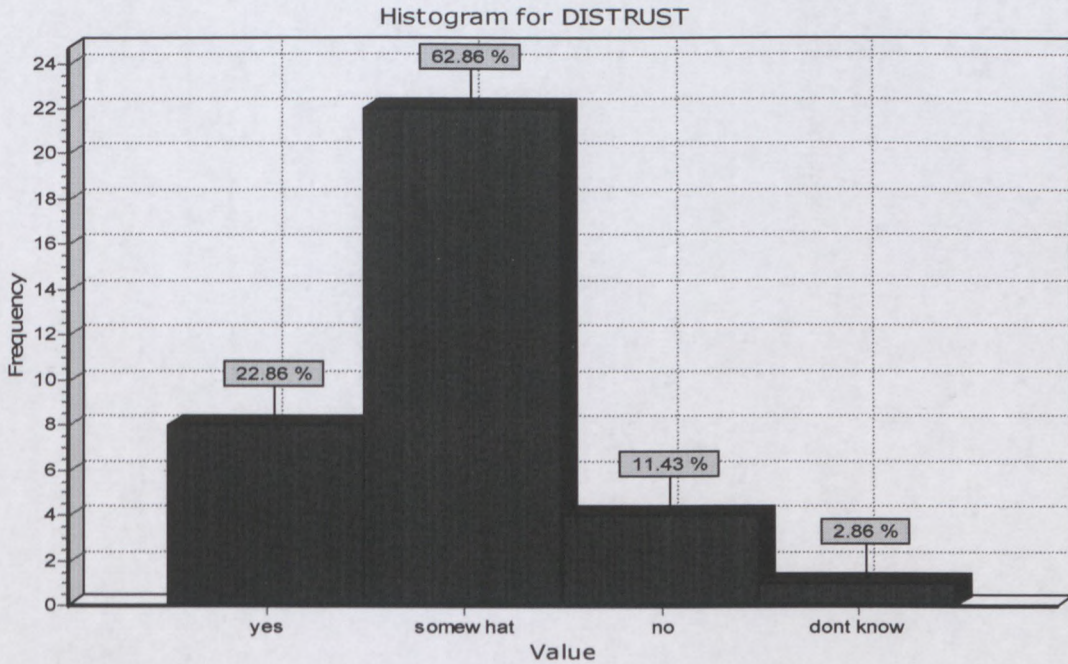
Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
ASSET	37	1.62	0.68	1.00	3.00

Variable	N	Median
ASSET	37	2.00

13. Working in the journalism profession, do you have a distrust of public relations practitioners on any level?

- a. Yes
- b. Somewhat
- c. No
- d. I don't know



Frequency table for DISTRUST

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	8	22.86	22.86
somewhat	22	62.86	85.71
no	4	11.43	97.14
dont know	1	2.86	100.00
TOTAL	35	100.00	

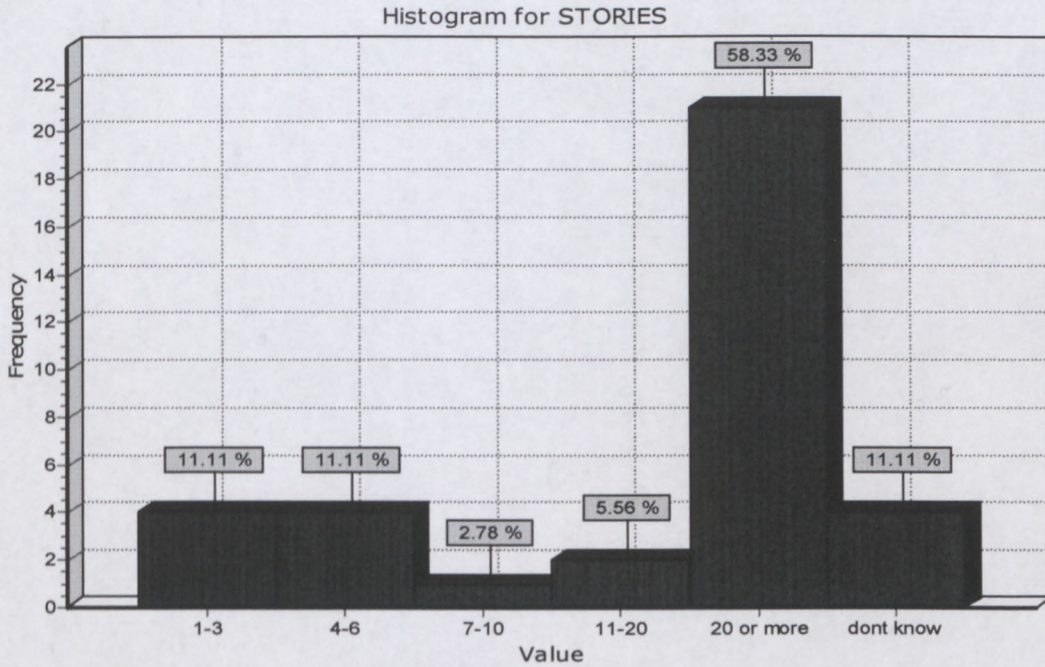
Missing cases: 2

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
DISTRUST	35	1.94	0.68	1.00	4.00

Variable	N	Median
DISTRUST	35	2.00

14. How many stories do you publish per month?

- a. 1-3 stories
- b. 4-6 stories
- c. 7-10 stories
- d. 11-20 stories
- e. 20 or more stories
- f. I don't know



Frequency table for STORIES

Value	N	%	Cum. %
1-3	4	11.11	11.11
4-6	4	11.11	22.22
7-10	1	2.78	25.00
11-20	2	5.56	30.56
20 or more	21	58.33	88.89
dont know	4	11.11	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

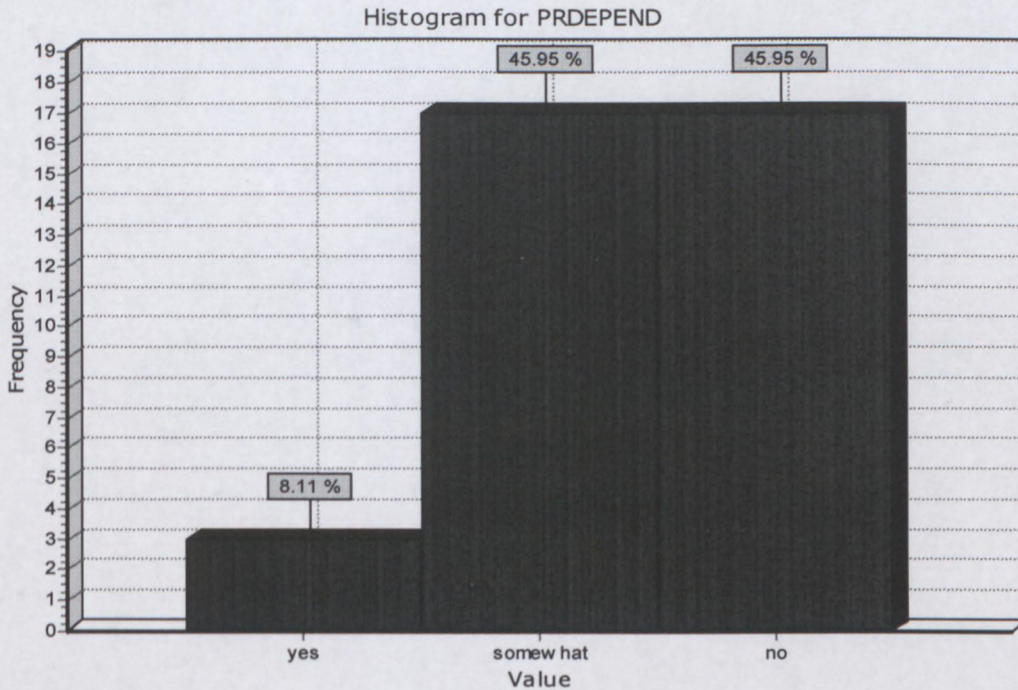
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
STORIES	36	4.22	1.59	1.00	6.00

Variable	N	Median
STORIES	36	5.00

15. Do you feel that you depend upon public relations practitioners to help you fill and/or shape news content in your publication?

- a. Yes
- b. Somewhat
- c. No
- d. I don't know



Frequency table for PRDEPEND

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	3	8.11	8.11
somewhat	17	45.95	54.05
no	17	45.95	100.00
TOTAL	37	100.00	

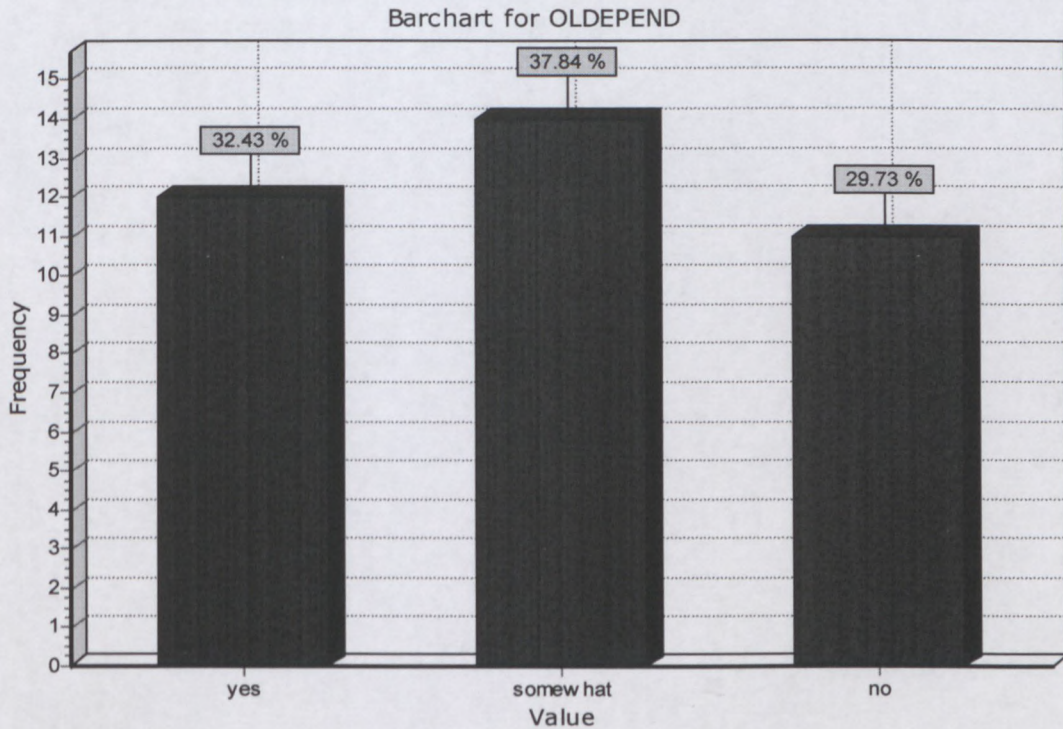
Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
PRDEPEND	37	2.38	0.64	1.00	3.00

Variable	N	Median
PRDEPEND	37	2.00

16. Do you feel that you depend upon social networks/online sources to help you fill and/or shape news content in your publication?

- a. Yes
- a. Somewhat
- b. No
- c. I don't know



Frequency table for OLDEPEND

Value	N	%	Cum. %
yes	12	32.43	32.43
somewhat	14	37.84	70.27
no	11	29.73	100.00

TOTAL 37 100.00

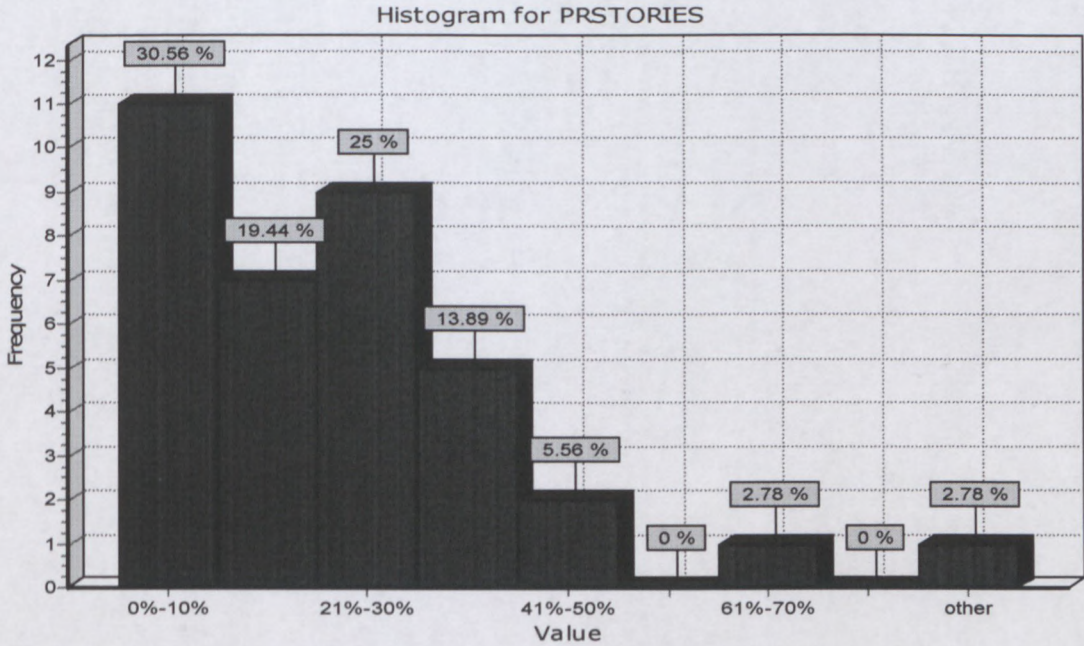
Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
OLDEPEND	37	1.97	0.80	1.00	3.00

Variable	N	Median
OLDEPEND	37	2.00

17. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of stories appearing in your daily publication is generated through public relations practice by practitioners?

- a. 0%-10%
- b. 11%-20%
- c. 21%-30%
- d. 31%-40%
- e. 41%-50%
- f. 51%-60%
- g. 61%-60%
- h. more than 70%
- i. Other:



Frequency table for PRSTORIES

Value	N	%	Cum. %
0%-10%	11	30.56	30.56
11-20%	7	19.44	50.00
21%-30%	9	25.00	75.00
31%-40%	5	13.89	88.89
41%-50%	2	5.56	94.44
61%-70%	1	2.78	97.22
other	1	2.78	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

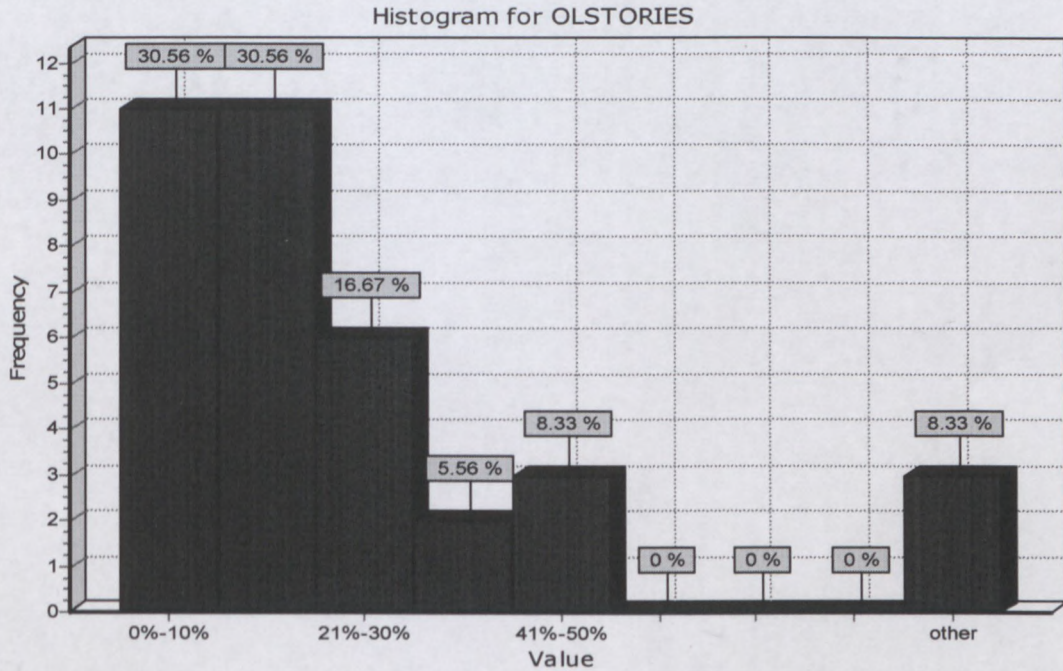
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
PRSTORIES	36	2.72	1.80	1.00	9.00

Variable	N	Median
PRSTORIES	36	2.50

18. To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of stories appearing in your daily publication is generated through social networks/online sources?

- a. 0%-10%
- b. 11%-20%
- c. 21%-30%
- d. 31%-40%
- e. 41%-50%
- f. 51%-60%
- g. 61%-60%
- h. more than 70%
- i. Other:



Frequency table for OLSTORIES

Value	N	%	Cum. %
0%-10%	11	30.56	30.56
11-20%	11	30.56	61.11
21%-30%	6	16.67	77.78
31%-40%	2	5.56	83.33
41%-50%	3	8.33	91.67
other	3	8.33	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

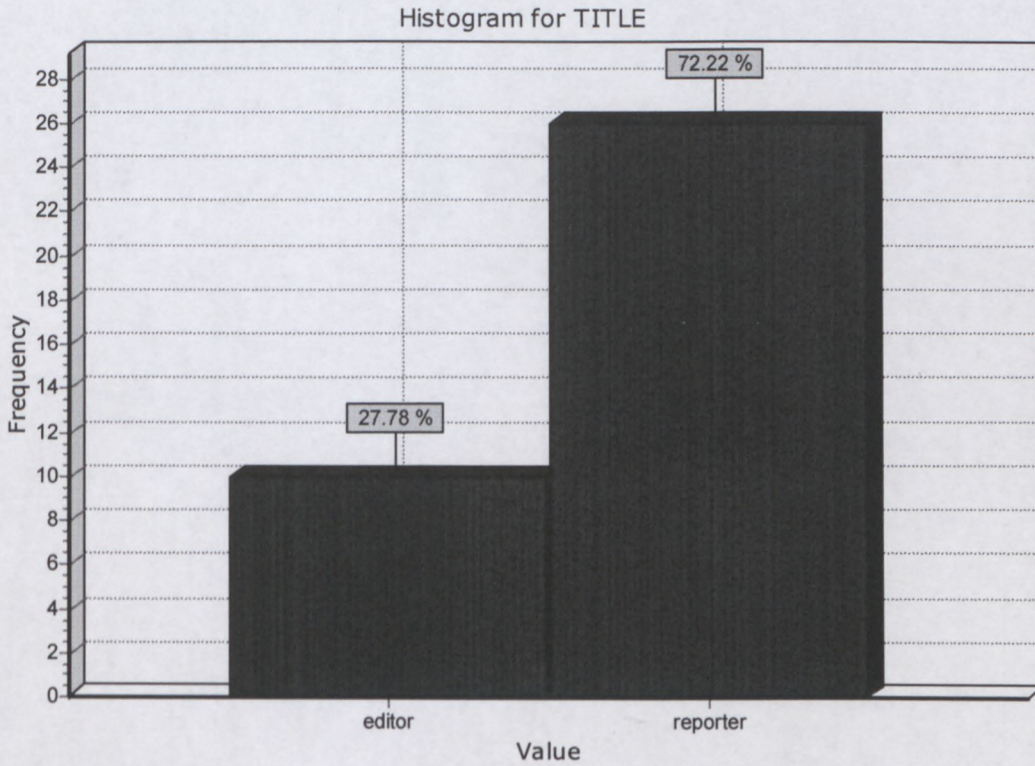
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
OLSTORIES	36	2.81	2.24	1.00	9.00

Variable	N	Median
OLSTORIES	36	2.00

19. Are you a newspaper editor or reporter (please circle one)?

- a. newspaper editor
- b. newspaper reporter



Frequency table for TITLE

Value	N	%	Cum. %
editor	10	27.78	27.78
reporter	26	72.22	100.00
TOTAL	36	100.00	

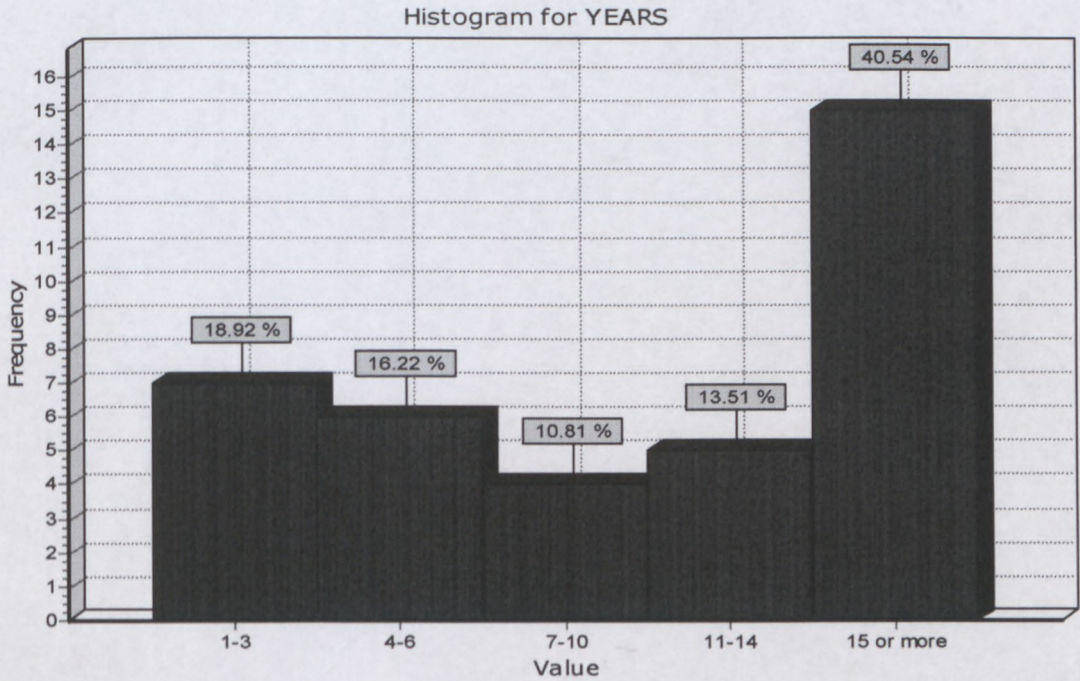
Missing cases: 1

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
TITLE	36	1.72	0.45	1.00	2.00

Variable	N	Median
TITLE	36	2.00

20. How many years have you been a journalism professional?

- a. 1-3 years
- b. 4-6 years
- c. 7-10 years
- d. 11-14 years
- e. 15 or more years



Frequency table for YEARS

Value	N	%	Cum. %
1-3	7	18.92	18.92
4-6	6	16.22	35.14
7-10	4	10.81	45.95
11-14	5	13.51	59.46
15 or more	15	40.54	100.00
TOTAL	37	100.00	

Missing cases: 0

Variable	N	Mean	StdDev	Minimum	Maximum
YEARS	37	3.41	1.61	1.00	5.00

Variable	N	Median
YEARS	37	4.00

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