



What's the story?

The 2014 UK Newsroom Report: how top UK organisations in five key sectors are using online newsrooms to tell their stories

mynewsdesk™

www.mynewsdesk.com/brandnewsroomreport2014

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1. Introduction

In 2013, Mynewsdesk carried out the first ever benchmark study of online newsrooms of the world's top 100 brands. We found that while a handful of top brands were performing extremely well, too many had newsrooms that contained out of date information, failed to connect with a broad range of stakeholders via social channels and in many cases, failed to provide even the basic level of information the press would expect.

This year, we decided to focus on five key sectors in the UK; local government, travel, high street, grocery and universities - and find out what, if anything, had changed.

Especially over the last year, smartphone browsing has brought the online newsroom closer to consumers and we wanted to find out if brands were responding to the opportunity to engage their audiences directly, an increasingly important function of the brand newsroom in a digital world.

”Newsrooms should be at the heart of a company’s online presence. There’s no need to have separate social media and “traditional” newsrooms – they have or should have merged together. Companies need to think how their news is being consumed. This needs a strategy. A content strategy that includes both external and internal audiences.”

-Keith Childs
Manager of Digital and New Media at **Opel Europe**

Why does a newsroom matter?

The days when PR would consist of merely sending news releases to a handful of publications and hoping they'd write it up are long gone. Today, companies are publishers too. Just look at how many have blogs, communities and web pages designed to directly engage with their various target audiences. In the social world, anyone can be an influencer. Therefore a brand's online newsroom (or media centre) is no longer just a place for the media but is somewhere that your stakeholders – bloggers, investors and even customers - can go to find out more about your organisation.

This changes what a newsroom is all about. And it changes what it needs to deliver. This report takes a look at the key areas for success and where some of The United Kingdom's biggest companies are falling short. It includes lots of best practice advice so that businesses of all types and sizes can learn from these examples - good and bad – and tell their brand stories more effectively.

About Mynewsdesk

Mynewsdesk empowers users to manage the entire online media centre function without any need for IT support. It offers a single platform to manage an organisation's content, news, social media channels, multimedia assets and influencer outreach. It is used by organisations of all sizes and sectors, from lifestyle to manufacturing, government, multinationals and SMEs.

For more information, visit www.mynewsdesk.com



Methodology

Based on a decade of experience developing newsrooms for companies across the world, the Mynewsdesk team devised a set of best practice criteria, in conjunction with professionals from across the communications industry.

We evaluated the top 10 UK organisations from five different sectors against our criteria and assigned each a score. We picked the top 10 based on a range of third party analysis:

- Local Government – We ranked the local authorities by population and picked the top 10
- Grocery – We looked at the top 10 UK companies as ranked by the respected trade magazine, [The Grocer](#)
- Travel & High Street – We looked to industry experts Which and took the top 10 UK names from their [respective lists](#)
- Universities – Simply enough, the top ten UK universities according to the latest overall Times Higher Education World Universities Rankings list.

With 56 points available, we were then able to create a benchmark based on how well they performed. The full rankings can be seen in Appendix 1.

The criteria used are listed below. Our full best practice checklist can also be seen in Appendix 2.

Section A. Discovery

- How easy is it to find the brand's newsroom? Whether this is directly via the website or using a search engine.
- Does the brand take steps to organise and catalogue the information it hosts?
- Does the newsroom provide a search function to help find relevant information? How much does it allow users to refine their search query?

Section B. Newsroom content

- What information does the brand host in its newsroom?
- Who is the content targeting? Is the newsroom being used solely to host resources for journalists or to engage with other interested parties?

Section C. Multimedia

- What multimedia resources does the newsroom hold?

Section D. Social media

- Does the brand's newsroom link to and/or integrate their various social media channels?
- Does the brand encourage readers to share their content on social bookmarking services?

Section E. Contact

- What personal contact details are supplied to assist visitors with additional enquiries?
- Does the newsroom allow users to request company updates via RSS and/or email?

Section F. Mobile

- Are brands using responsive design to reach users with mobile devices?



3.1 Executive Summary

Aside from a few notable exceptions, we found the vast majority of organisations are not taking their online newsrooms seriously and have a long way to go to fulfilling their potential. Just one in five of the organisations in our study offered responsive or mobile newsrooms. Surprisingly, the travel sector almost completely neglected mobile browsing with only one brand offering a responsively designed newsroom.

84% of the organisations we looked at had a newsroom on their website. Overall the scores were disappointing, with the average score for each sector ranging from 16.04% to 27.7%. This represents a generally below par performance, with only one or two shining examples of newsroom excellence. The overall average score in our 2014 study was 26.3%, a drop from last year's average of 38%, suggesting that for the sectors in our study there is some serious work to be done.

As the mobile web drives consumers to expect even closer engagement with the brands and organisations they deal with, the online newsroom needs to do more than just provide the information journalists need; it is going to increasingly sit at the heart of an organisation's communications strategy.

Below are the headline findings of our 2014 benchmark study

- 84% of the organisations in our study had newsrooms
- Only one in five newsrooms were optimised for mobile and tablet searching
- Just 84% linked to their newsroom from their homepage
- 86% appeared on Google for their name and news
- Over half of newsrooms were filled with out of date content
- Just 21.43% offered high resolution images
- Only 17% of brands included a video library, while only 1 in 3 brands had an image library.
- The overall average score was a disappointing 26.3%

There were also some interesting variations between the sectors in our study:

- Travel was the top performing sector (27.7%), closely followed by universities (24.6%) and local government (23.57%).
- Lagging behind the top 3 sectors were grocery brands (18.39%) and the high street sector (16%)
- Government newsrooms do the basics well, offering libraries and other features but are one of the worst for filling these with content
- Despite an overall respectable performance only one of the travel brands in our study had a device responsive newsroom to support mobile browsing
- Despite their high profile nature, High Street brand newsrooms are poorly designed for finding via Google - this is despite the SEO benefits of being more likely to be designed for mobiles

Local Government

Average score 2.38/10

What they did well

- Kept newsrooms updated with fresh content
- Above average use of multimedia such as video and image galleries

Where they fell short

- Missing a trick by not linking to social media
- Made the newsrooms difficult to search by category
- Only one Council had a responsively designed newsroom

Local authorities need to offer easy access to public services via their website as well as being fully accountable to the citizens they serve. They need to make information fully accessible for a diverse audience of all ages, occupations and nationalities. Faced with a continuing squeeze on public sector budgets, the newsroom should be a valuable asset for local authorities.

What we found

This was the second highest performing sector. Local authorities are clearly aware of the benefits of a good newsroom and invested substantial effort in developing a good newsroom infrastructure. It's also apparent that they are aware of the importance of multimedia content and making it accessible to citizens, with an above average number including image (30%) and video (20%) libraries. They also showed that they had considered the needs of different stakeholders, with one in five clearly indicating image usage rights to visitors.

However, they are struggling to deliver on this commitment. Despite making libraries available, local authority newsrooms performed significantly below average when it came to populating these with any sort of visual content. Similarly, the popularity of social media amongst constituents - and the ease with which organisations can communicate via these - would make them an ideal way for local authorities to connect. However, the reality was they performed poorly in providing links to their social media channels - Twitter was far and away the most common network linked to, but at 60% it was still below the average for our benchmark.

Finally, despite high profile government initiatives to improve accessibility - notably the award winning GOV.UK redesign - local authorities have done little to aid visitors in finding and navigating their newsrooms. We were surprised to find that 50% failed to link to their newsroom from anywhere on their homepage. However, what was most striking was not a single organisation filed their news stories by category, making it unnecessarily difficult for a visitor to find the information they are looking for.

Our picks

Manchester City Council – The Manchester City Council newsroom is one of the few mobile friendly newsrooms in this sector. Taking the clean, text based approach that earned the government's Gov.uk website accolades in 2012, it uses responsive design techniques to make stories clearly readable on mobile devices.

Edinburgh City Council – Edinburgh had neither the best designed nor most feature rich newsroom in our benchmark, however by adding a simple blog section to their website they were able to better provide the more informal information that their constituents can't get anywhere else.

Best practice advice

- By linking to the newsroom from the home page and providing social media links via their newsroom, local authorities can engage citizens even more effectively and possibly reduce calls to their contact centre at the same time.
- Local residents want to know what's going on and updating content via the newsroom is a cost-effective way for local councils to keep in touch with them.



TECHNICAL ISSUES

We are currently experiencing technical problems with some forms.
We are working to fix the problem. Sorry for the inconvenience.



[Home](#) / [Latest news](#) /

Residents urged to sign up and slash bills

Monday, 20 January 2014

Screengrab: University of Bristol's call for user submitted news

Cllr Hinds on Leith Plans: parking spaces

Transport and Environment Convener Councillor Lesley Hinds today responded to online comments about the Leith Programme plans.

She said: "Following comments on Facebook, I want to make it clear what the plans are for Leith Walk.

"The [draft Traffic Regulation Order](#), which is open for comments until 6 January 2014, sets out comprehensive plans which have been drafted in consultation with all users of Leith Walk.

"If you look at the drawings on the [Leith plans](#), you'll see that there will be 107 parking spaces, down from 141 at present. A number of the spaces which would no longer be available for parking would instead house communal refuse bins, freeing up the pavements for improved pedestrian access.

"We fully appreciate that it is essential for businesses and residents to have access to parking and

Screengrab: University of Bristol's call for user submitted news

”The days of PR being a one-way process, where consultants sent out news releases as a means of gaining press coverage, are long gone. Journalists and bloggers now work in the moment, using social media channels and the web to find the information and assets they require at a moment’s notice. If that information isn’t available for your brand, the chances are very high that they’ll simply move onto one of your competitors. So it’s shocking to read that so many newsrooms are out of date, inaccessible or contain poor quality information. Running a Facebook page or a Twitter account in isolation simply isn’t enough, and brands must wake up to that fact. Fast.”

-Paul Sutton
Head of Social Communications at **BOTTLE PR**



4.2. Universities

Average score 2.36/10

Where they did well

- Targeted their social media activities well, using offbeat methods to reach their student audience (eg: iTunes podcasts, Soundcloud uploads of music course compositions)
- An above average number of university newsrooms were responsively designed to provide all visitors with the best user experience across all devices.

Where they fell short

- Rarely keeping their blogs up to date, with one institution last updating theirs over 3 months ago
- Despite being a key source for university and campus news, only 20% actually provided news and content that was targeted at the students themselves

Whilst they may not be brands in the traditional sense, universities are of great interest to the general public - and particularly to students, past, present and future. To a large extent, their success and continued reputation depends upon having a repository of the latest news and information - applications, UCAS clearing, facility updates and exam results are just a few of the functions a modern-day university website needs to support.

What we found

Universities came out as the second best performing sector in our comparison with an average score of 24.64% - though this still left significant room for improvement. Universities also gained high marks for making content accessible and putting it in context, being the sector most likely to explain the usage rights for the images they provide (20%) and to link to supporting documentation for each of their news stories (40%).

Interestingly, whilst every institution we examined featured a newsroom of some sort, only 30% had a newsroom that had been responsively designed. Given the vast majority of their student base is leading the way in take up of mobile devices and mobile web browsing, this no doubt is limiting the accessibility and utilisation of their newsrooms.

Another interesting finding - one that was unique to universities - was that 20% linked

to their iTunes store listings alongside their social media presences. This is not only a smart way of connecting with their target audience, but also a great way of easily sharing the media that students were producing as coursework and in extracurricular activities.

Bearing this in mind, it was therefore somewhat surprising that universities were at the same time the least likely organisations to link to social media profiles. In fact Facebook was only linked to by 30% of those we examined despite a search of the service itself confirming that every single one of them had an active profile.

Our picks

1. ***University College London*** – Whilst the sheer quantity of social networks that Kings College links to is impressive – particularly when a cursory glance suggests they’re active on them all – what was more impressive was their use of two unusual, but fitting, services to connect with their audience: iTunes and Soundcloud.
2. ***University of Bristol*** - As well as an extensive selection of institutional announcement, departmental news and research stories, the University of Bristol took the interesting approach of requesting news from other sources for publication. This is clearly the result of wanting to be the “one stop” for all news relating to their business.

Best practice advice

- Universities differ to many traditional brands, and their newsrooms should reflect this. Institutional announcements as well as departmental research updates should both be available, as well as other types of news, like student union stories.
- The target audience of a university also differs to wholly commercial businesses, and an emphasis needs to be on students who will be the main people digesting these updates. Make sure your newsroom reflects this - think iTunes and Twitter, rather than LinkedIn



Screengrab: University College London's social network provision

[University home](#) > [All news](#) > Do you have a news story?

Do you have a news story?

If you have a story about the University of Bristol which you think is newsworthy, but are unsure who to contact, please consult our [flowchart](#) (pdf (27.4kb)).

Note: some of the documents on this page are in PDF format. In order to view a PDF you will need [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)



Screengrab: University of Bristol's call for user submitted news

”The challenge for the communications practitioner today is to work good content across a broader range of channels, making them work together rather than operate in silos. The only effective way to manage this and to fully understand the audience’s terms of engagement is through a multimedia newsroom platform – and when it comes to this Mynewsdesk lead the field.”

-Guy Bellamy
Founder of **Elephant Communications.**



4.3. Grocery

Average score 1.84/10

Where they did well

- Included a comprehensive selection of video and imagery that covered all areas of visual content visitors may require
- Provided a selection of contact details to help visitors get in touch

Where they fell short

- Despite all being recognisable brand names, the worst for linking to social presences - only 20% linked to Twitter
- Few had brand specific newsrooms, instead merging them with corporate newsrooms. This made them very hard to find, particularly when only 30% linked to their newsroom from their brand website.

Of all the companies in our benchmark, the grocery brands are perhaps some of the most well-known and include many household names. With customer loyalty being so vital to their business, you would expect each of them to have a well-stocked newsroom from which they can communicate their latest news and company updates in real-time.

This is especially important should issues arise with their products, such as if something should impact upon the supply chain, or if there is a need for recall, as consumer confidence will depend very much upon stakeholders being able to easily access open and honest information directly from the organisation themselves.

What we found

In spite of this, grocery brands lagged behind the top three sectors in our benchmark, with an overall score of 18.39% - only marginally ahead of the high street sector that came bottom. 80% of the brands we looked at offered any sort of newsroom, but the international stature of the brands that didn't offer one - Cadbury and Whiskas - was perhaps the most surprising aspect of this.

Those that did, featured some of the most inaccessible newsrooms in the benchmark. The vast majority were buried on a page that lived on their parent company's corporate site, with only 30% being accessible directly from the brand's homepage. Unsurprisingly, many of those that resided on a corporate page shared the newsroom with their sister brands and, as a result, this meant they were 30% less likely to feature brand specific information.

Clearly some grocery brands had made efforts to supply the content that their stakeholders require. Whilst only 30% of those surveyed offered either a video or image library, those that did provide a comprehensive range of content that would service the needs of anyone looking for brand related multimedia.

Our final finding was that not a single newsroom in the sector had posted about the brands we were surveying in the past three months. Above all else, this rendered any effort brands had invested in stocking their newsrooms in the past futile, as out of date content is of little use to anybody.

Our picks

1. **Hovis** - A nice idea from Hovis, by creating a leaderboard of their social media accounts, encouraging users to 'like' their preferred brands, in order to move them up the rankings.
2. **Lurpak** - Whilst Lurpak didn't have its own newsroom, the Arla Foods corporate newsroom easily rectified this by tagging all news stories with any relevant brands. Visitors can find all Lurpak stories by clicking a single button.

Best practice advice

- Remember many of your customers will have grown up with your brands and will be keen to engage with it directly, so if possible, give each brand their own newsroom and make it easy to find
- If your products are related to food and drink, it's particularly important that information is readily available to consumers - whether that's allergy advice, or to quickly publicise supply chain alerts.

Facebook Like Bread Leaderboard

- 1 Soft White Rolls Like 72
- 2 Granary Original Rolls Like 45

Screengrab: Hovis' Facebook leaderboard

Latest news

- growth 13
- arla 9
- strategy 2017 5
- merger 4
- china 4
- dairy production 4
- castello 3
- innovation 3
- dairy 3
- milk 3
- food safety 2
- muh 2
- cheese 2
- germany 2
- uk 2
- usa 2
- pronsfeld 2
- africa 2
- arla foods ingredients 2
- annual results
- investments 1
- arla kærgården 1
- awards 1
- csr 1
- strategy 1
- dairy products 1
- cravendale 1
- arla uk 1
- akafa 1
- lurpa
- middle east 1
- cooperative 1
- mengniu 1
- half year result 2013 1
- sweden 1
- unika by castello 1
- middle east & africa 1
- food
- specialty cheese 1
- fonterra 1
- high-end 1
- hollandtown 1
- milk powder 1
- cost reductions 1
- new york city 1
- traceability 1
- pop up store 1
- foss 1
- product development 1
- peder tuborgh 1
- afmp 1
- cofco 1
- half-year results 1

Screengrab: Arla foods newsroom tags



4.4. High Street

Average score 1.61/10

Where they did well

- One of the sectors most likely to have a responsively designed newsroom
- Regardless of how well they made use of them, High Street brands were also one of the most likely to include multimedia libraries

Where they fell short

- The worst for including press contact details in their newsroom, with only 20% supplying even a phone number
- Linked to social networks that were poorly designed for targeting their target audience, such as the business-orientated LinkedIn

High Street brands are under immense pressure to adapt to the age of multi-channel shopping. It is not enough to have a tempting website, or a fantastic bricks-and-mortar presence anymore; successful retailers need to make their products and brand information accessible to their customers by their preferred channel, in real-time, 24/7. The brand newsroom offers high street retailers a fantastic opportunity to engage with their customers, wherever they are.

What we found:

The High Street was the lowest performing sector in our study. The most immediate issue we encountered was that 40% of brands lacked any sort of newsroom at all – a disappointing result given those that did have a newsroom were better than a number of other brands in the benchmark.

However, even these still suffered from some major flaws and omissions. Shockingly, only a single brand in this sector was optimised for discovery via search, Dunelm Mill.

Furthermore, only 20% of those we assessed linked to their newsroom from their homepage and some were so hidden away that visitors would find it if they took some time to properly hunt it down, but the reality is very few people would do so.

There were also other issues which suggested that the brands' online activities extended beyond the newsroom alone. Despite being wholly consumer orientated brands, 40% of those who supplied a newsroom connected to the social network LinkedIn. Given this is a network designed exclusively for business users this was highly unexpected and would indicate the brands are wasting their efforts in targeting their audience through irrelevant channels.

Follow Us



Twitter



Facebook

Screengrab: John Lewis' social and subscription widget



The Body Shop UK

Newsroom

About:

We believe true beauty comes from the heart. For us, beauty is much more than a pretty face. We make our products with love and care. We source some of the finest raw ingredients from the four corners of the globe. We harness the skills of artisan farmers and add our expertise to create effective products that are wonderful to use.

We trade fairly so communities benefit as well as you. We never test on animals, and all our products are 100% vegetarian. We

Company Contact:

The Body Shop UK

T. 02072087966
E. uk.socialmedia@thebodyshop.com
W. <http://www.thebodyshop.co.uk>

Screengrab: Body Shop range of contact options

Our picks

1. **John Lewis** - John Lewis' social media widget, which remains in the left hand sidebar on all pages, allows visitors to not only quickly visit their various social media profiles, but also to quickly subscribe to the most popular RSS feeds - keeping their visitors connected, even when they are not visiting their newsroom.
2. **Body Shop** - Thanks to its clean, minimal design, the colourful social media widgets on the Body Shop's newsroom are clearly visible. However, the main distinguishing feature here is the range of contact options provided - telephone, email, social media and a live chat feature to instantly speak to their press office.

Best practice advice

- It might seem basic, but our high street results prove that it needs to be reiterated: having a newsroom is not only useful, it's essential if you want to communicate important information to your relevant stakeholders.
- When adding content to your newsroom, whether it's a new story or a social network, always consider whether it is relevant to your target audience. Is a consumer audience going to be interested in the fact a fabric store is on LinkedIn?

”In the real-time social web, the news agenda moves faster than ever. Organisations need a quick way to be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with key stakeholders. It is particularly worrying to see from the MyNewsDesk study that branded newsrooms contained information that was out of date or inaccurate. If companies themselves aren’t able to publish accurate information, then how can they expect consumers and the media to? Increasingly, as PR professionals, we need to ensure our entire ecosystem is adept at communicating our messages in a way that is easy for the myriad of different audiences that, these days, we are all looking to reach.”

-Danny Whatmough
Associate Director, Digital at Ketchum and Chair of the **PRCA Digital Group**.



4.5. Travel

Average score 2.77/10

Where they did well

- Highly social, being one of the most likely sectors to link to any given consumer-orientated social network
- The best sector for maintaining their newsrooms, with every brand successfully keeping content up to date

Where they fell short

- The number offering multimedia content was irrelevant when only 10% supplied it at a resolution the media could make use of
- Despite how crucial correct contact details can be for travel brands in the event of an emergency, only 20% provided any in their newsroom

The travel sector has long understood the value of online engagement. UK holidaymakers' easy familiarity with sites like TripAdvisor means that a travel company is only as good as its last customer review. So it makes sense that their own newsroom would be easy to find, making up to date information readily available to customers investigating their holiday or travel decision before making a purchase.

What we found

While travel was the highest scoring sector in our benchmark study with a score of 27.7%, we found much room for improvement.

Alarmingly, only one of the travel brands in our report offered a mobile-friendly design, a glaring omission given that three out of four mobile searches lead to a follow-up action, including an online purchase. For a sector like travel, where many purchases are made on the spur of the moment by customers, a huge opportunity is being missed.

Similarly only one of the companies in our benchmark included a video library in their newsroom. A few (30%) did include photo libraries, however they generally failed to keep these well stocked - and anything they did offer was rarely at a high resolution, with only 20% being of sufficient quality for media use.

On a more positive note, of the brands that had a newsroom only one failed to link to its social media profiles and, unlike the result we saw in the High Street sector, the networks were all relevant to reaching a consumer audience. There was also a positive effort being made by brands to maintain their newsroom, with 80% keeping content up to date.

Our picks

1. **Princess Cruises** - It isn't the prettiest search function we've looked at, however Princess Cruises' search results page restricts its options to the main features needed - sort by date, relevance, titles, descriptions and drilldowns for news categories. Sometimes less is more.
2. **Fred. Olsen** - This was the highest scoring newsroom in the report with 64.3%. It serves multiple audiences including the press and consumers, providing them with everything from blogs, press releases to high resolution images and videos. Their content highlights their cruises and service offerings as well as interesting tips, travel info and other general travel related stories their clients may be interested in.

Best practice advice

- Your customers are spending more time than ever browsing the web via their smartphone, whether at home or on the move, so make sure your newsroom is optimised for mobile or you will lose out on holiday bookings
- Make sure your newsroom features lots of fantastic visual images of holiday locations to inspire a purchase decision

Videos



You can 'tell the Captain where to go' with Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' new 'You Choose Your Cruise' concept in autumn 2015
Press Release • Mar 24, 2014 17:43 GMT

Packing for a cruise
Mar 27, 2014 11:06 GMT

You can 'tell the Captain where to go' with Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' new 'You Choose Your Cruise' concept in autumn 2015
Mar 24, 2014 17:43 GMT

A discovery of wine on board Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines' 'Iberian Sea & Gastronomy' cruise in Spring 2014
Mar 20, 2014 14:23 GMT

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines launches new 'Fly-Cruises Worldwide 2014/2015' brochure
Mar 19, 2014 22:54 GMT

First 'Aalborg Hotdog of Honour' for award-winning Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines
Mar 18, 2014 14:41 GMT

Images & Videos 158 images, 11 videos

Screengrab: Fred.Olsen's newsroom

Search Results

436 Search Results for:

All of Princess Cruises

[Sort By Date](#) | [Next 10](#)

[Princess Cruises Offers Rare Behind-the-Scenes Access to Ship Operations with "Ultimate Ship Tour" : Princess Cruises](#)
 Search Go Find a Travel Agent or Contact Us: Plan a Cruise Search Cruises Search Cruisetours Find a Travel Agent Cruise Tips Cruise Deals Learn About Cruising New...

[Princess Cruises and "The Love Boat" Connection : Princess Cruises](#)

Ready to Book?

-
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-
-

Screengrab: Princess Cruise's minimal search results

Appendix 1. Brand scores

		Social Media	Discovery	Newsroom Usage	Blog	Multimedia	Staying in touch	Mobile	Total
Local Government	Leeds	2	9	1	0	9	3	1	25
	Cornwall UA	3	1	5	0	10	2	0	21
	Birmingham	4	6	6	0	1	2	0	19
	Sheffield	0	2	3	0	10	2	0	17
	County Durham UA	2	6	5	0	0	1	0	14
	City of Edinburgh	3	2	5	1	1	2	0	14
	Manchester	4	1	1	0	1	1	1	9
	Glasgow City	0	4	2	0	1	1	0	8
	Bradford	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	5
	Wiltshire UA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Social Media	Discovery	Newsroom Usage	Blog	Multimedia	Staying in touch	Mobile	Total
Universities	University College London	5	7	4	1	7	3	0	27
	Imperial College London	1	7	5	0	7	2	1	23
	Oxford	1	9	3	1	2	3	0	19
	London School of Economics	1	2	5	1	7	2	0	18
	Bristol	1	9	1	0	0	3	0	14
	Durham	1	3	3	0	4	2	1	14
	Cambridge	6	1	0	0	0	1	1	9
	King's College	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Manchester	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	5
	Edinburgh	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	4

Social media

Local Government

Generally below average rate of linking to social networks, except for Twitter where they were slightly (2%) more likely than average

Universities

Made use of unusual networks like iTunes to reach their audience

High Street

Below average number link to consumer orientated social networks (FB, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr), but above average number targeting LinkedIn (20%)

Grocery

Worst for linking to social networks. Only two linked to Twitter, 40% Facebook and 20% to YouTube

Travel

Above average rate of linking to all social networks, apart from the business-centric linkedin.

Discovery

Local Government

Not a single council newsroom categorised their news articles, though one did use tags.

Universities

Despite the .ac.uk domain, below average number (80%) optimised for search

High Street

Poorly optimised for discovery via search engines (50%)

Grocery

Very hard to find, as most hidden away on corporate newsrooms. Worse, only 30% linked from their website towards the newsroom

Travel

Below average for organising newsroom articles and posts - 10% use tags, 20% categories. Also below average for offering a search function, making it difficult to find relevant stories

Newsroom Usage

Local Government

Best usage of any sector. 50% included detail local governance information and new posts added twice as often as other sectors (20.1 posts a month vs 10.1 overall average)

Universities

Whilst Universities were above average for including personnel bios (40%) and keeping content up to date (50%), not a single one offered content that targeted at their students themselves, whilst only 20% provided information about the university.

High Street

Badly used newsrooms, with below average rates of including any sort of content (50% releases). Also surprising only 20% offered content targeted at consumers

Grocery

Many relied upon corporate newsrooms, so were 30% less likely to include brand specific info. Far worse was the fact that not a single brand in our assessment had posted to their newsroom in the past three months

Travel

Generally poorly stocked - only 50% include press releases, none included bios of staff and 10% included fact sheets. However, all brands that included a newsroom kept them up to date (80% of all brands in sector)

Blog

Local Government

Only a single council provided a blog - Edinburgh- which means 90% missing an easy, effective opportunity to connect with constituents

Universities

Above average number included a blog, 30%, however these were poorly used; one had not been updated in the past three months.

High Street

Not a single brand had a blog.

Grocery

Not a single brand had a blog.

Travel

Two brands (20%) had a blog, each of whom typically posted a blog post each week

Multimedia

Local Government

Above average for including an image (30%) and a video (20%) library, as well as in making sure this was as usable as possible - all those with an image library included high res images, and 20% offered details of image usage rights. Also the best for including multimedia inside news stories themselves.

Universities

Most likely sector to provide valuable details like image usage rights and links to supporting media from releases

High Street

Whilst above average rate of including an image library and adding content to it, they were far worse at including video content. Infact, not a single brand in our survey had a video library.

Grocery

Most likely to include comprehensive image and video libraries in terms of content. However, libraries themselves are poorly designed and limited in their usefulness:

- Only 10% offer high-res images
- None list image usage rights
- Only 20% even offer thumbnails

Travel

None of the brands offered a video library and the few that offered image libraries (20%) were poorly stocked. When they had content, it was generally unusable - only a single brand (10%) had high-res imagery.

Staying in touch

Local Government

Only a single local council included contact details on press releases. A single other council included the option to subscribe to email updates.

Universities

Conflicting result.. Whilst an above average (90%) number included a contact number, not a single university offered the option to subscribe to email updates

High Street

The worst sector for providing contact details. 20% supplied a phone number, 0 a photo or social media details, and only 3 included details on releases

Grocery

Below average for options for visitors to keep in touch with updates - only 4 offered RSS, and a single brand offered email updates. However, above average rate for including contact details.

Travel

Despite how important media contact details can be for travel businesses in the event of emergencies etc, only 20% provided this.

Mobile

Local Government

Only one council newsroom was responsively designed. This is below average.

Universities

Above average - 30% - had a mobile responsive newsroom, likely due to their main audience being students

High Street

Above average number responsively designed - 30%

Grocery

Below average number responsively designed - 20%

Travel

Only one brand offered a mobile responsive newsroom

Appendix 2. Newsroom best practice checklist

Discovery

- Direct link to newsroom from homepage
- Newsroom appears on page one of Google

Content

- New content uploaded a minimum of every few days
- Executive biographies and company fact sheets hosted
- Content targets customers as well as press
- All content kept up to date

Images

- Image library provided
- Not behind registration wall

- Contains brand logos
- Contains infographics
- Contains imagery of staff and offices
- Preview images without downloading
- Images are provided at 300dpi resolution

Video

- Video library provided
- Not behind registration wall
- Contains B-roll footage
- Contains product demos and promos
- Contains thought leadership content

Finding information

- Stories categorised by type
- Stories tagged by topics
- Search function provided
- Search offers options to refine results

Social Media

- Newsroom lists social media presences
- Share and 'like' buttons in newsroom and on each story

Contact

- Phone number listed
- Picture of contact

- Link to their social media presence
- Regional contacts
- Visitors can register for email updates
- RSS feed available and advertised

Mobile

- Is the newsroom accessible from a mobile device?
- Does the layout of the newsroom adapt to fit a device's display?

Thank you!

If you'd like to see how our newsrooms can enhance yet simplify your comms strategy then get in touch by tweeting us@mynewsdesk_uk, email us at uk@mynewsdesk.com or call us on 020 7029 5761. We're located at Nexus Place, 25 Farringdon Street, London, EC4A 4AB, so feel free to pop into our office for a coffee and a chat.