**MMJ Use Rising Again**

**by Bob Papper**

They’re called one-man-bands, multimedia (MMJ), backpack journalists and other names, and I’ve tracked their growth through the RTDNA/Lawrence Herbert School of Communication - Hofstra University Survey for more than a decade. After a year of leveling off and another year of decline, MMJ use is back on the rise … up 1.5 compared to a year ago. “Mostly Use” shot up almost 9 points, while “Use Some” and “Not Much” both fell. The biggest change came in the top 25 markets, where “Use Mostly” MMJs soared from 19% last year to 34.5% this time around … but all market sizes went up at least some.

**Percentage of TV Newsrooms Reporting Using One-Man-Bands - 2020**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Yes, Mostly Use OMB | Yes, Use Some OMB | Yes, But Not Use Much  | No, Do Not Use |
| All TV | 63.6%  | 21.1%  | 9.3%  | 6.1%  |
| Market size: |  |  |  |  |
| 1-25 | 34.5  | 27.6  | 20.7  | 17.2 |
| 26-50 | 25.6  | 46.2  | 15.4  | 12.8  |
| 51-100 | 63.6  | 21.2  | 10.6  | 4.5  |
| 101-150 | 81.5  | 13.8  | 1.5  | 3.1  |
| 151+ | 87.5  | 6.2  | 6.2  | 0  |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |  |
| 51+ | 20.4  | 50  | 18.5  | 11.1  |
| 31-50 | 71.4  | 20  | 5.7  | 2.9  |
| 21-30 | 87.5  | 8.9  | 3.6  | 0  |
| 11-20 | 91.7  | 4.2  | 4.2  | 0  |
| 1-10 | 75  | 5  | 5  | 15  |

The “do not use” category fell or stayed the same in every market and staff size. Stations in the Northeast and West are a bit less likely to use MMJs than stations elsewhere.

The tipping point for news reporter vs. MMJ is in markets 51 to 100. Bigger markets have more news reporters than MMJs, and markets smaller than that are overwhelmingly MMJs. In 51 to 100, the margin is 65 to 35 in favor of MMJs. That’s up 9 points from a year ago.

***Bob Papper is Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Journalism at Hofstra University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news. This research was supported by the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University and the Radio Television Digital News Association.***

**About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Lawrence Herbert School of Communication - Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2019 among all 1,702 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,427 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,313 television stations (77.1%) and 673 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,996 radio stations. Some data sets (e.g. the number of TV stations originating local news, getting it from others and women TV news directors) are based on a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.