

News, Staff & Profit
by Bob Papper

Another growth year for TV news and staff ... but not for radio news.

For television news, almost all the signs are positive in the latest RTNDA/Ball State University Annual Survey. The average total amount of local TV news time per week set a new record this past year, and staffing rose, overall, to tie the all-time peak staffing level of 2000. The percentage of TV news operations making a profit rose to a near all-time high, and the percentage of station revenue produced by news is also at the high end.

On the negative side, for the first time ever, the total number of TV stations originating local news fell. The drop was small—from 778 last year to 772 this year—but it's the first time that the total hasn't gone up from year to year. On the other hand, another 133 stations get local news from one of the 772. That's up 52 from a year ago.

In contrast, there's little positive news on the radio side. Both the average amount of news and average staff size fell from a year ago. While consolidation makes it difficult to track radio news over time, it's clear that the overall trend is down. The typical radio news director oversees three to four stations, and more than three-quarters of radio news directors also have non-news responsibilities.

TV Staff Size – 2006

| | Avg full-time | Median full-time | Maximum full-time | Avg part-time | Median part-time | Maximum part-time | Avg total staff | Median total | Maximum total staff |
|---------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| All TV | 36.4 | 30.0 | 150 | 4.7 | 3.0 | 110 | 41.2 | 33.0 | 162 |
| Big four affiliates | 38.1 | 31.0 | 150 | 4.8 | 3.0 | 110 | 42.9 | 36.0 | 162 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| Other commercial | 20.0 | 9.5 | 89 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 11 | 23.6 | 16.0 | 92 |
| Market size: | | | | | | | | | |
| 1-25 | 64.4 | 56.5 | 150 | 8.1 | 4.0 | 40 | 72.4 | 74.0 | 162 |
| 26-50 | 51.0 | 54.5 | 104 | 5.0 | 3.5 | 23 | 56.0 | 60.0 | 113 |
| 51-100 | 37.5 | 36.5 | 110 | 4.7 | 3.5 | 17 | 42.2 | 42.0 | 110 |
| 101-150 | 24.2 | 25.0 | 45 | 4.2 | 2.0 | 110 | 28.4 | 27.0 | 124 |
| 151+ | 17.9 | 17.0 | 47 | 2.8 | 1.0 | 14 | 20.6 | 20.0 | 54 |

The median staff size remained the same as a year ago (and two years ago), but, once again, the average staff size went up – this year to 36.4. That’s the second highest full time TV news staff level ever—just behind the record set at the end of 2000. Coupled with an increase in part timers, the total average TV news staff ties the highest level ever. The biggest markets led the way, but most markets rose. A year ago, Fox-affiliated newsrooms moved up in size and were not meaningfully smaller than the others. This year, they’re statistically the same and sometimes larger. Newsrooms in the Northeast and South tended to be larger than those in the Midwest and West.

Staff Size Changes ... the past year

| | Increase | Decrease | Same |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|
| All TV news | 36.2% | 15.1% | 48.7% |
| Big four affiliates | 38.6 | 13.3 | 48.2 |
| Other commercial | 12.5 | 37.5 | 50.0 |

Markets 1-25 were the most likely to increase in staff size, and the smallest markets (150+) were the least likely. Generally, the bigger the staff, the more likely it was to get bigger still. Less than 6 percent of the biggest newsrooms saw any decrease in staff. There was no meaningful variation by network, but stations in the West were most likely to see staff expansion.

Planned Staff Changes ... the next year

| | Increase | Decrease | Same | Not sure |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|
| All TV news | 33.2% | 3.6% | 55.7% | 7.5% |
| Big four affiliates | 34.4 | 3.2 | 56.0 | 6.4 |
| Other commercial | 12.5 | 12.5 | 75.0 | 0 |

Most TV news directors expect no change in staff size, but the percentage of news directors expecting staff increases in the next year is 50 percent higher than a year ago, and the percentage of news directors who expect to see staff cuts dropped by two-thirds. Interestingly, the biggest and smallest markets are the least likely to expect staff growth, but news directors in the biggest newsrooms are the most likely to say they expect staff growth. News directors in the West are most likely to say they expect to see staff increases.

Hours of Local TV News per Day – 2006

| | Average weekday | Weekday maximum | Average Saturday | Saturday maximum | Average Sunday | Sunday maximum |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| All TV news | 3.8 | 15.5 | 1.5 | 6.5 | 1.5 | 11.0 |
| Big four affiliates | 4.0 | 15.5 | 1.6 | 6.5 | 1.6 | 6.0 |
| Other commercial | 1.8 | 6.0 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 1.0 |
| Market size: | | | | | | |
| 1-25 | 4.6 | 10.0 | 2.3 | 6.5 | 2.7 | 11.0 |
| 26-50 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 1.9 | 5.0 | 1.9 | 5.0 |
| 51-100 | 4.1 | 10.0 | 1.7 | 5.0 | 1.5 | 4.5 |
| 101-150 | 3.6 | 15.5 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 0.9 | 2.5 |
| 151+ | 3.1 | 5.5 | 0.9 | 3.0 | 0.8 | 3.0 |
| Staff size: | | | | | | |
| Staff 51+ | 5.3 | 10.0 | 2.7 | 5.0 | 2.8 | 5.5 |
| Staff 31-50 | 4.1 | 15.5 | 1.4 | 4.0 | 1.5 | 11.0 |
| Staff 21-30 | 3.6 | 5.5 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 0.9 | 2.0 |
| Staff 11-20 | 2.4 | 5.0 | 0.8 | 3.0 | 0.8 | 3.0 |
| Staff 1-10 | 2.2 | 5.0 | 0.7 | 3.5 | 0.6 | 3.5 |
| Affiliation: | | | | | | |
| ABC | 3.7 | 7.0 | 1.5 | 5.0 | 1.5 | 6.0 |
| CBS | 4.2 | 15.5 | 1.6 | 5.0 | 1.5 | 5.5 |
| Fox | 3.5 | 10.0 | 1.1 | 4.0 | 1.3 | 5.0 |
| NBC | 4.2 | 10.0 | 1.8 | 6.5 | 1.7 | 6.0 |
| Other commercial | 1.8 | 6.0 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 0.3 | 1.0 |
| PBS | 3.0 | 9.0 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 1.0 |

The average amount of local TV news set a new record this past year – up two-tenths of an hour (12 minutes) to 3.8 hours per weekday. The average amount of news rose on

both Saturday and Sunday as well (6 minutes each). Stations in the Northeast average the most news, and stations in the Midwest averaged the least.

Amount of News Changes ... the past year

| | Increase | Decrease | Same |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|
| All TV News | 36.0% | 1.8% | 62.2% |
| Big four affiliates | 37.5 | 0.8 | 61.7 |
| Other commercial | 25.0 | 37.5 | 37.5 |
| Market size: | | | |
| 1-25 | 42.5 | 0 | 57.5 |
| 26-50 | 28.8 | 3.8 | 67.3 |
| 51-100 | 30.4 | 4.3 | 65.2 |
| 101-150 | 44.6 | 0 | 55.4 |
| 151+ | 32.6 | 0 | 67.4 |

Over 60 percent of TV news directors reported running the same amount of news as the year before, but the percentage of stations reporting more news went up almost 7 percent over the year before, and the percentage of stations reporting a decrease fell by almost 8 percent. Stations with the smallest staff (1-10) were the least likely to increase news, but there was no other consistent pattern by staff size. Among network affiliates, ABC stations were the least likely to increase the amount of news, and stations in the West and Midwest were the most likely to add news.

Amount of News Planned ... the next year

| | Increase | Decrease | Same | Not sure |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|----------|
| All TV news | 36.3% | 1.4% | 55.9% | 6.4% |
| Big four affiliates | 36.7 | 0.8 | 56.6 | 6.0 |
| Other commercial | 12.5 | 0 | 62.5 | 25.0 |
| Market size: | | | | |
| 1-25 | 30.0 | 5.0 | 57.5 | 7.5 |
| 26-50 | 40.4 | 1.9 | 50.0 | 7.7 |
| 51-100 | 40.0 | 0 | 52.9 | 7.1 |
| 101-150 | 38.7 | 1.3 | 56.0 | 4.0 |
| 151+ | 27.3 | 0 | 65.9 | 6.8 |

Although most TV news directors expect the amount of news to remain steady, there's a 50 percent increase over last year in the percentage of stations expecting growth in the

amount of TV news and a huge drop from last year in the percentage of stations expecting to decrease the amount of local news. As with the year before, stations in the largest and smallest markets least expect to see an increase in the amount of news. Otherwise, there are no patterns by staff size, affiliation or geography.

TV News Budget ... the past year

| | Increase | Decrease | Same | Don't know |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|------------|
| All TV news | 45.8% | 11.6% | 35.3% | 7.3% |
| Big four affiliates | 47.6 | 11.4 | 34.6 | 6.5 |
| Other commercial | 37.5 | 25.0 | 12.5 | 25.0 |
| Market size: | | | | |
| 1-25 | 46.2 | 5.1 | 38.5 | 10.3 |
| 26-50 | 60.0 | 12.0 | 18.0 | 10.0 |
| 51-100 | 42.9 | 17.1 | 37.1 | 2.9 |
| 101-150 | 43.2 | 8.1 | 44.6 | 4.1 |
| 151+ | 38.1 | 14.3 | 33.3 | 14.3 |

The TV news budget picture improved from a year ago. Not because more stations increased their news budget – which they did not —but because the percentage of stations that cut their news budgets dropped by about 40 percent. The percentage of stations with the same news budget as the year before went up by about a third. The bigger the news staff, the more likely that the station increased the news budget. ABC and NBC affiliates were more likely to see budget increases than CBS or Fox stations. Stations in the Midwest were the least likely to see budget increases.

TV News Profitability ... 1997 to 2006

| | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 | 2001 | 2000 | 1999 | 1998 | 1997 |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Showing profit | 57.4% | 44.5% | 58.4% | 55.3% | 54.9% | 56% | 58% | 57% | 63% | 62% |
| Breaking even | 8.1 | 24.2 | 10.4 | 13.6 | 11.6 | 13 | 11 | 9 | 11 | 6 |
| Showing loss | 10.0 | 12.1 | 9.2 | 9.2 | 11.2 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 8 |
| Don't know | 24.4 | 19.2 | 22.0 | 21.9 | 22.3 | 21 | 20 | 23 | 16 | 24 |

The percentage of news departments reporting a profit went back up to its usual range after a dip last year; it's the second highest level of newsroom profitability in the last six years. The smallest newsrooms (1-10 and 11-20 people) were far less likely to show a profit than larger newsrooms—with the very smallest at about one-third the profitability level of newsrooms with at least 21 people. The 11-20 staff newsrooms were half as likely to show a profit as larger newsrooms. Stations in the Northeast were most likely to report making a profit, followed by news departments in the South, with stations in the Midwest and West well behind the other two areas. We cannot compare these numbers before 1997 because the wording of the question changed.

TV News Profitability ... by Size and Affiliation - 2006

| | Showing profit | Breaking even | Showing loss | Don't know |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Market size | | | | |
| 1-25 | 57.5% | 12.5% | 12.5% | 17.5% |
| 26-50 | 56.0 | 6.0 | 14.0 | 24.0 |
| 51-100 | 61.8 | 11.8 | 8.8 | 17.6 |
| 101-150 | 59.4 | 7.2 | 11.6 | 21.7 |
| 151+ | 48.8 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 46.5 |
| Staff size: | | | | |
| 51+ | 62.7 | 5.9 | 9.8 | 21.6 |
| 31-50 | 75.8 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 12.1 |
| 21-30 | 63.3 | 8.3 | 10.0 | 18.3 |
| 11-20 | 34.3 | 2.9 | 20.0 | 42.9 |
| 1-10 | 19.2 | 15.4 | 11.5 | 53.8 |
| Affiliation: | | | | |
| ABC | 61.4 | 14.0 | 7.0 | 17.5 |
| CBS | 58.9 | 5.6 | 8.9 | 26.7 |
| Fox | 65.2 | 8.7 | 0 | 26.1 |
| NBC | 64.4 | 4.1 | 6.8 | 24.7 |
| Big four affiliates | 61.7 | 7.4 | 7.0 | 23.9 |
| Other commercial | 12.5 | 12.5 | 50.0 | 25.0 |

Almost every category increased in news department profitability, and almost every category dropped in the likelihood of losing money on news.

Percentage of TV Station Revenue Produced by News - 2006

| | Average | Median | Minimum | Maximum | Not sure |
|---------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| All TV news | 44.9% | 45.0% | 0 | 85.0% | 75.0% |
| Market size: | | | | | |
| 1-25 | 36.2 | 40.0 | 10.0 | 60.0 | 75.8 |
| 26-50 | 41.7 | 40.0 | 0 | 85.0 | 74.5 |
| 51-100 | 48.7 | 50.0 | 30.0 | 70.0 | 73.8 |
| 101-150 | 48.3 | 42.0 | 25.0 | 70.0 | 74.0 |
| 151+ | 43.3 | 50.0 | 10.0 | 60.0 | 78.6 |
| Staff size: | | | | | |
| 51+ | 46.4 | 42.5 | 28.0 | 85.0 | 70.0 |
| 31-50 | 49.9 | 50.0 | 30.0 | 70.0 | 67.7 |
| 21-30 | 41.3 | 40.0 | 10.0 | 70.0 | 75.4 |
| 11-20 | 38.1 | 40.0 | 0 | 60.0 | 80.6 |
| 1-10 | 38.3 | 35.0 | 15.0 | 65.0 | 88.5 |
| Affiliation: | | | | | |
| ABC | 50.4 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 70.0 | 74.5 |
| CBS | 45.6 | 45.0 | 28.0 | 85.0 | 71.3 |
| Fox | 33.3 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 40.0 | 86.4 |
| NBC | 47.1 | 50.0 | 10.0 | 70.0 | 71.0 |
| Big four affiliates | 46.6 | 45.0 | 10.0 | 85.0 | 73.4 |
| Other commercial | 5.0 | 5.0 | 0 | 10.0 | 75.0 |

The median revenue from news remained at 45.0 percent, but the average rose to 44.9 percent. That's on the high side for the last 10 years, and almost all categories of stations rose from a year ago.

Radio

Nearly three-quarters (70.5 percent) of radio station news directors said there was a centralized newsroom for all or most of their stations that air local news. The average centralized newsroom supplied news to 3.3 stations within the local market and 0.6 stations somewhere else (the median was 3.0). That "somewhere else" category led to news directors in the survey supervising the news at as many as 14 stations.

Radio Staff Size - 2006

| | Avg. full-time | Median full-time | Max full-time | Avg part-time | Med part-time | Max part-time | Avg total staff | Med total staff | Max total staff |
|--|----------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|----|
| All radio news | 2.0 | 1.0 | 30 | 1.2 | 0 | 10 | 3.2 | 2.0 | 30 |
| Market size: | | | | | | | | | |
| Major | 3.1 | 2.0 | 14 | 1.6 | 0 | 6 | 4.7 | 2.0 | 19 |
| Large | 2.2 | 2.0 | 5 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 5 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 10 |
| Medium | 2.4 | 1.0 | 30 | 1.4 | 0 | 10 | 3.7 | 2.0 | 30 |
| Small | 1.5 | 1.0 | 4 | 0.9 | 0 | 9 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 12 |

The numbers show a noticeable drop in radio staff size from last year. Last year represented the first up-tick in radio news staffing in some time, but this year's numbers reflect a full retreat—not quite to the low point of two years ago, but not much above that either. Non-commercial stations and group-owned stations are each marginally larger in staff, but the difference is small. The staff in the biggest markets were only slightly bigger than in smaller ones. Stations in the Northeast had the largest average staff size, but the median numbers were similar across the board. Consolidation makes long-term comparisons difficult, but the general trend is clearly down.

Average Minutes of Locally-Produced Radio News - 2006

| | All radio | Major market | Large market | Medium market | Small market |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Weekdays: | | | | | |
| AM drive | 20.2 | 27.3 | 24.8 | 17.6 | 19.7 |
| Midday | 7.0 | 5.6 | 5.7 | 5.0 | 9.4 |
| PM drive | 8.2 | 8.3 | 7.8 | 5.5 | 10.7 |
| Night | 1.7 | 0.8 | 3.2 | 0.9 | 2.1 |
| Total weekday | 37.1 | 42.0 | 41.5 | 29.0 | 41.9 |
| Saturday: | | | | | |
| AM drive | 6.6 | 1.3 | 8.9 | 4.3 | 8.9 |
| Midday | 3.3 | 0.2 | 3.6 | 1.7 | 5.2 |
| PM drive | 1.8 | 0.2 | 2.4 | 0.8 | 2.8 |
| Night | 0.7 | 0.2 | 2.1 | 0.2 | 0.7 |
| Total Saturday | 12.4 | 1.9 | 17.0 | 7.0 | 17.6 |
| Sunday: | | | | | |
| AM drive | 2.9 | 0.8 | 3.9 | 1.7 | 3.9 |
| Midday | 1.7 | 0.2 | 2.3 | 0.9 | 2.5 |
| PM drive | 1.4 | 0.2 | 2.1 | 0.5 | 2.1 |
| Night | 0.6 | 0.2 | 1.8 | 0.2 | 0.5 |
| Total Sunday | 6.6 | 1.4 | 10.1 | 3.3 | 9.0 |

The amount of radio news in small and medium markets rose, but the amount at major and large markets fell more—leading to an overall drop in the amount of radio news from a year ago. That drop was especially pronounced after morning drive on weekdays and on Sundays, generally. A larger staff might have improved the quality of the news, but it didn't translate into more news on the air; there was no difference in the amount of news based on staff size. Stations in the West tended to run less local news than those elsewhere in the country.

Changes in Radio News, Staff and Budget in the last 12 months and planned for the future – 2006

| | Increase | Decrease | Same | Note sure |
|--|----------|----------|-------|-----------|
| Total news staff the past year | 16.3% | 6.1% | 77.0% | 0.5% |
| Plan to change amount of staff next year | 13.3 | 0 | 77.6 | 9.2 |
| Amount of news the past year | 32.1 | 7.1 | 58.7 | 2.0 |
| Plan to change amount of news next year | 28.1 | 1.0 | 66.8 | 4.1 |
| Change in news budget from the year before | 16.1 | 2.6 | 56.0 | 25.4 |

Stations in the largest local groups and those with the biggest staffs were most likely to have added staff. Stations in the Midwest and West were less likely to have added staff. Non-commercial stations were much more likely to say that they plan to add staff, but they say that every year, so maybe they're just more optimistic. As usual, the largest staffs and the largest local groups were most likely to say they plan to add staff. The smallest markets were less likely to plan to add news as were stations in the Midwest. The percentage who said they increased the amount of local news in the past year fell from 40.2 percent to 32.1 percent. The number decreasing remained the same, but more stations said the same as a year ago. Stations with the very largest staffs and the biggest groups were more likely to have increased news in the past year. Stations in the Northeast and South were more likely to have increased the amount of news; stations in the very biggest markets were less likely to have added news. Non-commercial stations

are far more likely to say they plan to increase news—as do stations with three or more news employees, standalone stations or ones in the largest groups. Stations in the very largest markets were less likely to say they expected to increase the amount of news in the next year.

Radio News Profitability ... 1997 to 2006

| | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 | 2001 | 2000 | 1999 | 1998 | 1997 |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Showing profit | 18.1% | 19.6% | 22.5% | 25.2% | 15.2% | 17% | 25% | 19% | 22% | 23% |
| Breaking even | 17.6 | 14.4 | 17.1 | 13.8 | 13.9 | 17 | 15 | 18 | 14 | 20 |
| Showing loss | 6.4 | 3.1 | 7.2 | 2.4 | 7.3 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Don't know | 58.0 | 62.9 | 53.2 | 58.6 | 63.6 | 66 | 53 | 57 | 58 | 51 |

Most radio news directors really don't know about radio news profitability. We cannot compare these numbers before 1997 because the wording of the question changed.

Radio News Profitability by Market Size - 2006

| | Showing profit | Breaking even | Showing loss | Don't know |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Major market | 19.0% | 14.3% | 0 | 66.7% |
| Large market | 16.7 | 8.3 | 4.2 | 70.8 |
| Medium market | 21.9 | 26.6 | 3.1 | 48.4 |
| Small market | 15.2 | 13.9 | 11.4 | 59.5 |

Major markets are those with 1 million or more potential listeners. Large markets are from 250,000 to 1 million. Medium markets are 50,000 to 250,000. Small markets are fewer than 50,000.

Number of Stations Where the Radio News Director Oversees the News – 2006

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| One | 17.1% |
| Two-Three | 33.6 |
| Four | 15.1 |
| Five-Six | 20.5 |
| Seven-Eight | 13.7 |

| | |
|---------|------------------------------|
| Average | 3.3 (locally) +0.6 elsewhere |
| Median | 3.0 |
| Maximum | 14 |

The percentage of news directors overseeing one station's news department is down again this year—from 26.8 percent last year. But a big jump in the percentage overseeing two or three stations actually led to a slight decrease in the average and median number of stations supervised—although it's still the second highest level ever. Note that the maximum number of stations overseen jumped from eight a year ago to 14 this time around.

What Else Radio News Directors Do – 2006

A record-high 77.3 percent of radio news directors said they had additional non-news responsibilities at their station. News directors at independent stations were a little more likely to say they had other duties, but all categories of stations were high. What else they did:

| | |
|---|-------|
| Announcing (including sports and weather) | 30.2% |
| Program Director | 23.8 |
| Other | 22.2 |
| Talk show host | 18.3 |
| Sales | 13.5 |
| Public Affairs | 12.7 |
| General Manager | 12.7 |
| Production | 9.5 |
| Operations | 8.7 |

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About the Survey

The RTNDA/Ball State University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2005 among all 1,617 operating, non-satellite television stations and all U.S. radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,120 television stations (69.3 percent) and 209 radio news

directors and general managers representing 613 radio stations. Data for the number of TV stations originating local news and getting it from others is based on a complete census and is not projected from a smaller sample.

Sidebars & other material:

Percentage of TV News Departments Providing Content to Other Media – 2006

| | Station website | Other website | Another TV station | Cable TV channel | Local radio |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| All TV | 79.7% | 6.8% | 20.6% | 13.9% | 44.1% |
| Big four affiliates | 81.3 | 7.2 | 20.3 | 13.9 | 47.0 |
| Other commercial | 50.0 | 12.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Market size: | | | | | |
| 1-25 | 92.5 | 10.0 | 25.0 | 22.5 | 37.5 |
| 26-50 | 80.8 | 5.8 | 30.8 | 21.2 | 42.3 |
| 51-100 | 80.0 | 8.6 | 20.0 | 11.4 | 50.0 |
| 101-150 | 74.7 | 6.7 | 20.0 | 12.0 | 44.0 |
| 151+ | 75.0 | 2.3 | 6.8 | 4.5 | 43.2 |

Generally, the larger the market and the larger the staff size, the more likely the station supplied news to another TV station or a cable TV channel. That was true to a lesser extent for radio and web site. Fox affiliates were less likely to feed news to a cable TV channel, and stations in the West were less likely to supply news to another station and a little less likely to supply news to a radio station.

Convergence

Almost 40 percent (38.6 percent) of TV news directors said that they're doing something they consider convergence— down just a hair from last year. Most commonly, convergence meant working with a newspaper.

| Type of Convergence Partner | Percent of the stations of those involved in |
|-----------------------------|--|
|-----------------------------|--|

| | convergence |
|------------------|-------------|
| Newspaper(s) | 59.8 |
| Web site(s) | 30.4 |
| Radio station(s) | 27.5 |
| Other television | 8.8 |
| Cell phone | 2.9 |
| Podcasting | 2.9 |
| Magazine | 2.0 |
| Other language | 1.0 |

News Director Tenure and Age ... 2006

News directors are not nearly as nomadic as they once were. The average number of years as news director at the same station increased again. The average is now up to 7.4 years, and median is up to 5 years. Generally, both average and median go up as market size drops. There's no consistent relationship by staff size, although the smallest newsrooms (1-10 staff) have news directors who have been there the longest. News directors at Fox affiliates have been news director there for less time than at other stations, but many of those stations may not have run local news for very long. News directors in the Northeast have the longest longevity.

In TV, the age ranged from 23 to 68, with the median and average age at 44. That's exactly the same as last year. There was no meaningful variation based on market size, staff size, network affiliation or geography.

The average and median age for radio news directors was 45, with little variation by commercial versus non-commercial, group versus independent, market size or geography. The average age is up three years from a year ago.

When Do TV Stations Run Local News?

Percentage of stations that run news at various times:

| Time | Weekdays | Saturday | Sunday |
|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| 4:30 am | 2.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| 5:00 am | 47.1 | 2.7 | 2.3 |
| 5:30 am | 65.0 | 3.0 | 1.9 |
| 6:00 am | 77.6 | 13.3 | 8.0 |
| 6:30 am | 75.3 | 11.8 | 8.7 |
| 7:00 am | 31.2 | 14.1 | 13.7 |
| 7:30 am | 26.2 | 14.1 | 14.1 |
| 8:00 am | 21.3 | 14.4 | 10.6 |
| 8:30 am | 18.6 | 11.8 | 8.7 |
| 9:00 am | 11.0 | 7.6 | 6.1 |
| 9:30 am | 3.8 | 4.9 | 4.6 |
| 10:00 am | 4.6 | 1.1 | 2.7 |
| 10:30 am | 1.5 | 0.4 | 1.9 |
| 11:00 am | 6.8 | 0.4 | 1.5 |
| 11:30 am | 6.5 | 0 | 1.1 |
| 12:00 n | 49.8 | 2.3 | 2.7 |
| 12:30 pm | 12.5 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| 1:00 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1:30 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2:00 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2:30 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3:00 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3:30 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4:00 pm | 4.9 | 0 | 0.4 |
| 4:30 pm | 4.9 | 0.4 | 0.8 |
| 5:00 pm | 74.5 | 16.0 | 20.5 |
| 5:30 pm | 27.0 | 3.8 | 12.5 |
| 6:00 pm | 76.8 | 58.9 | 32.3 |
| 6:30 pm | 11.8 | 6.5 | 6.5 |
| 7:00 pm | 3.8 | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| 7:30 pm | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0 |
| 8:00 pm | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| 8:30 pm | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9:00 pm | 7.6 | 6.5 | 6.5 |
| 9:30 pm | 4.6 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| 10:00 pm | 59.7 | 52.5 | 52.9 |
| 10:30 pm | 12.2 | 8.0 | 14.1 |
| 11:00 pm | 39.5 | 35.4 | 36.1 |

We collect this detailed data every three years, and it again shows significant growth in local news from 1997, 2000 and 2003. Almost every single hour of almost every single day finds a higher percentage of stations running local news than three years ago. The biggest growth is in the morning, especially on weekday mornings, but weekend

mornings doubled from three years ago. Every hour of the morning rose, with 4:30 am and 7 am – 9:30 am each roughly doubling from three years ago. The other morning hours were already high, but they rose, too. The noon hour also rose, as did every early evening half hour except 5:30 pm, which slid slightly (although growth at 5 pm was almost triple the slide at 5:30 pm). The 11 pm news dropped slightly, but the growth at 10 pm was more than double the slide at 11pm.