

11/19/2014

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Research Insights | The Impact Of Multi-Platform Media On Opinion Leaders

Influencing opinion leaders is an effective business-to-business marketing strategy, and a crucial step is identifying the specific media properties that reach them. Although print and televised media are still important, opinion leaders are increasingly embracing digital and mobile media platforms. The Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leaders Study provides unique insights into media consumption by opinion leaders involved in business, professions, associations, and government.

Read on to learn which media brands on which platforms are most effective at reaching key business opinion leaders. The 4A's thanks Kathleen Schmidt, Market Research Consultant, and David March, Chief Revenue Officer, Erdos & Morgan, for this report.

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The Impact of Multi-Platform Media On Opinion Leaders

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Erdos & Morgan



The Impact of Multi-platform Media on Opinion Leaders

**By: Kathleen Schmidt, Market Research Consultant
David March, Chief Revenue Officer, Erdos & Morgan**

The latest Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leaders Study provides unique insights into the media consumption and technology tool usage of 573,936 influential Opinion Leaders involved in business, professions, associations, trade organizations and all branches of government. They count on media and its varied platforms to help drive and shape their major decisions on today's top issues.

These leaders shape public opinion in business, non-profit organizations and at all levels of government. They are industry leaders. Their names come up repeatedly in newspaper "letters to the editor". They are entrepreneurs that discover breakthrough ideas in technology, manufacturing and medicine. They are innovators and early adopters. They are blogging, tweeting, commenting, and opinionating on websites, social media and in business and public venues. They are agents of change. They know the issues and influence the debate. They expand the conversation. Their persuasive points of view are highly acknowledged. People know their names and seek them out. And: they are dedicated and eager media users.

Opinion leaders, with an average age of 60 years, rely heavily on the traditional print and televised media, but are fast embracing not only digital media but mobile media as well. This multi-platform media consumption provides perfect opportunities for media companies to reach these thought leaders in a number of different ways.

Before we delve into these myriad opportunities, let's recap the top Major Issue Categories, and opinion leaders' involvement in them.

Opinion Leaders' Involvement in 11 Major Issues

According to the 2013 Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leaders Study, virtually all opinion leaders (98%) are involved in at least one of the 195 Issues that were placed into 11 Major Issue Categories either personally or professionally. The top Major Issue Categories have historically and overwhelmingly been Business and Health/Education/Human Services. These two Categories include the greatest number of individual issues (**), all of which are highly accessible on both professional and personal levels. With the media and tech tools available today, these leaders have more options by which to become and remain involved.

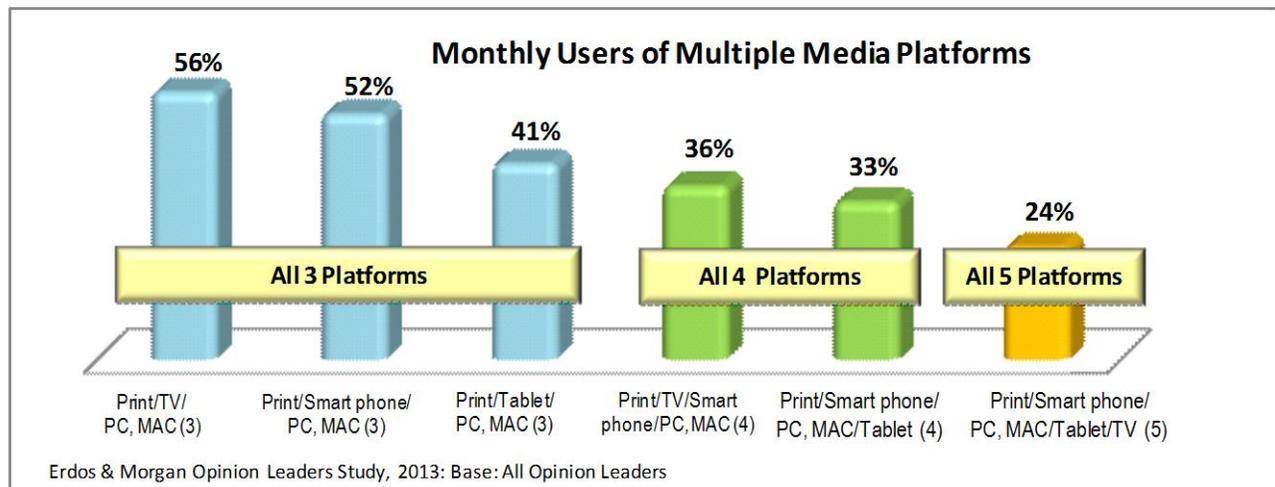
Percent of All Opinion Leaders Involved in Issues	
11 Major Issue Categories (**)	2013 Study
Business (28)	82%
Health, Education, Human Services (30)	79%
Law and Legal (23)	67%
Environment & Energy (22)	62%
Economic & Financial (21)	58%
Science & Technology (16)	57%
Legislative/Govt. Policy (22)	49%
Defense & National Security (14)	45%
The Arts & Media (8)	33%
Agricultural (5)	30%
Trade/Global Economic (6)	20%

ACCESS TO MEDIA THROUGH MULTI-PLATFORMS OFFERS AN ADVERTISING ADVANTAGE...

Media coverage of Opinion Leaders presents the opportunity to shift views and sway opinion. Getting the messages across through multiple platforms generates not only more reach but more exposure to targeted audiences, for ultimate impact. Print, broadcast and digital media need not be mutually exclusive, but can work synergistically to extend the reach and content format of the message. In the Opinion Leaders Study, respondents use tech tools (i.e. computers, smart phones or tablets) to access other media (print and/or TV) measured in this same study. For the purposes of this report, we are using monthly reach/coverage as the common denominator across the three media modes (print, TV, digital).

The Opinion Leaders Study measures the readership or viewership of media titles through five different platforms (print, TV programming and digital via desktop/laptop computer, tablet and smart phone). Each is used to access any of the 250 media titles measured in the Opinion Leaders Study. Digital (due to ease of access through multiple devices) has grown exponentially over the years.

When Opinion Leaders access multiple media platforms, we see the myriad ways advertisers have of promoting their messages—with optimal coverage through mass media sources such as print or TV programming, or with the flexibility of in-depth content, immediacy and interactivity through online and mobile platforms or vertical publications. Well over half of opinion leaders (56%) access at least three of these media platforms monthly.



Take a look at the monthly usage levels among these adaptable media enthusiasts:

- Over half (56%) are regular readers of one or more print vehicles *and* regularly watch one or more TV programs *and* used a PC/MAC computer – three media platforms.
- Over one-third (36%) read print *and* watch TV *and* use a PC/MAC computer *and* use a smart phone – four media platforms.
- One in four (24%) read print *and* watch TV *and* use a PC/MAC computer *and* use a smart phone and a tablet – all five media platforms measured in this study.

MEDIA BRANDS AND THEIR CROSS-PLATFORM OPTIONS

These are the top five print, TV and digital media delivering the most Opinion Leaders (ranked by % coverage):

Print	Rank	TV Program	%	Digital	%
New York Times	1	60 Minutes	1	New York Times – nyt.com	1
Wall Street	2	NBC Nightly News – Brian	2	CNN – cnn.com	2
USA Today	3	Anderson Cooper 360°	3	Huffington Post –	3
Washington	4	The Daily Show with John	4	Washington Post –	4
AARP Bulletin	5	PBS News Hour	5	Wall Street Journal – wsj.com	5

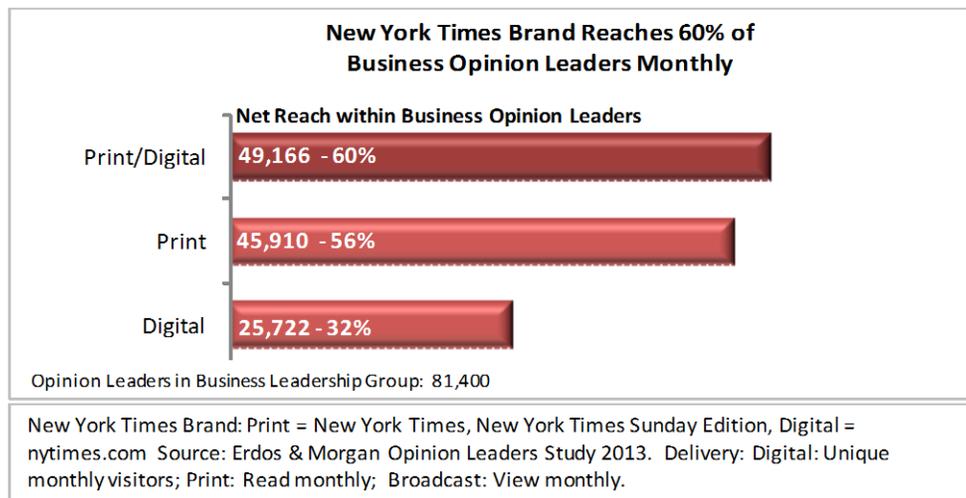
Erdos and Morgan Opinion Leaders Study 2013

The maximum impact of media is seen through the synergy of multi-platforms across a single brand. In the chart above, several major media companies and their top ranked vehicles prove this point. The New York Times brand ranks No. 1 in reaching all opinion leaders through print (The New York Times daily) and is No. 1 digitally as well (nyt.com). The Wall Street Journal brand ranks No. 2 in reaching all opinion leaders through print (Wall Street Journal) and is No. 5 digitally (wsj.com). The Washington Post ranks No. 4 in reaching all opinion leaders through its print vehicle (The Washington Post) and is No. 4 digitally through washingtonpost.com.

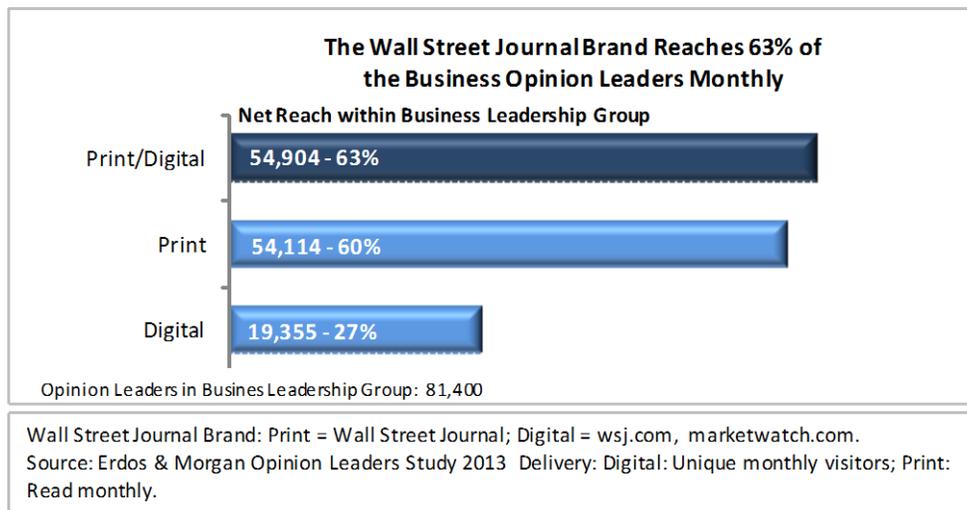
MULTI-PLATFORMS CREATE SYNERGY FOR SPECIFIC MEDIA BRANDS

Media synergy via multi-platforms increases a specific brand's reach as well. Here are a few examples of how the reach of the message is optimized with multi-platforms for some well-known media brands.

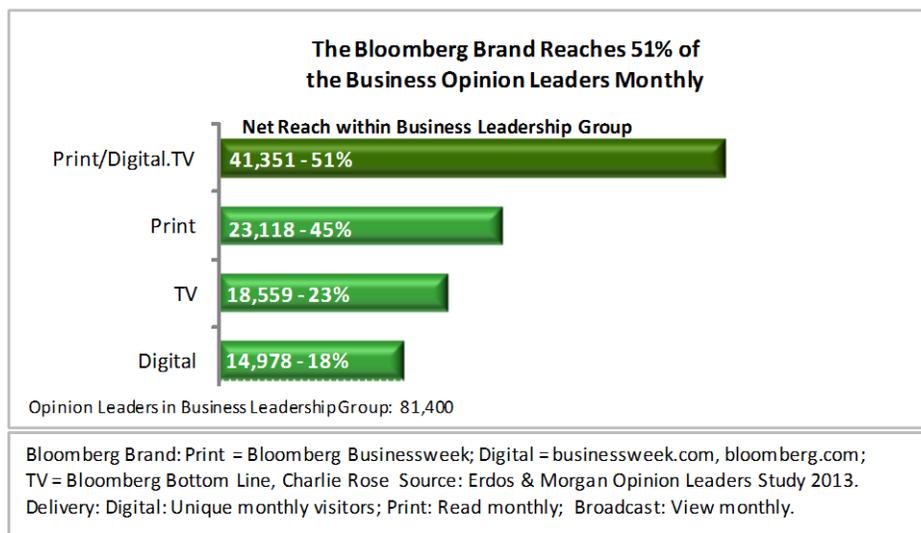
- The New York Times brand includes Print: the New York Times, New York Times Sunday Edition; and Digital: nytimes.com. All reach is within a one-month period.
- The three media sources of the New York Times brand reach 60% of the 81,400 opinion leaders in the Business Leadership Group.



- The Wall Street Journal brand includes Print: The Wall Street Journal; and Digital: wsj.com and marketwatch.com.
- The three media sources of the Wall Street Journal brand reaches 63% of the 81,400 opinion leaders in the Business Leadership Group.



- The Bloomberg brand includes Print: Bloomberg Businessweek; Digital: businessweek.com, bloomberg.com; and TV: Bloomberg Bottom Line, Charlie Rose.
- The five media sources of the Bloomberg brand reach 51% of the 81,400 opinion leaders in the Business Leadership Group.



MEDIA WITH GREATEST COVERAGE AMONG OPINION LEADERS INFLUENCING TOP ISSUES

These are the top media brands consumed by opinion leaders involved in Business issues and Health/Education/Human Service issues. Note the similarities in the media lists reaching opinion leaders involved in these top two very divergent issues. Selected major publications and TV shows repeatedly have the greatest reach among those involved in other vertical issues such as Communications & Media, Law & Legal Issues, Associations and the Executive and Legislative branches of the Federal Government. Similarly, the same digital media make their appearance as the most influential across most of the issue categories.

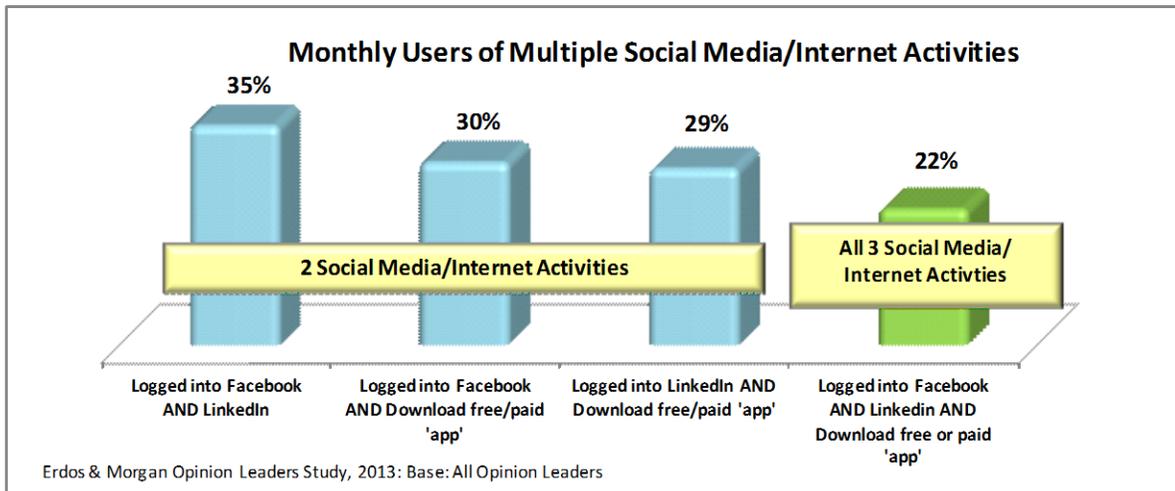
TOP MEDIA FOR THOSE INFLUENCING BUSINESS		TOP MEDIA FOR THOSE INFLUENCING HEALTH/ED/HUMAN SERVICES	
The New York Times	58%	The New York Times	59%
The Wall Street Journal	52%	The Wall Street Journal	49%
USA Today	49%	60 Minutes (CBS)	48%
60 Minutes (CBS)	47%	USA Today	48%
Time	35%	Time	37%
National Geographic	35%	AARP Bulletin	36%
NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams	34%	National Geographic	36%
AARP Bulletin	34%	The Washington Post	34%
The New Yorker	32%	NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams	33%
Anderson Cooper 360° (CNN)	33%	Anderson Cooper 360° (CNN)	33%
nytimes.com	31%	The New Yorker	32%
The Economist	31%	nytimes.com	31%
		The Economist	31%

ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA SITES AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. . .

The Study also measures access to social media sites and other related online activities. About half of these opinion leaders have logged into their Facebook or LinkedIn accounts and nearly that many download free or paid “apps”.

SOCIAL MEDIA SITES/ONLINE ACTIVITIES RANKED BY % USE	
Logged into Facebook	1
Logged into LinkedIn	2
Downloaded a free or paid “app”	3
Logged into Google +	4
Followed/written a blog	5

Similar to accessing media titles via multi-platforms and tech tools, opinion leaders are also accessing multiple social media sites and engaging in online activities. The use of one social media or online activity engenders the use of others.



Opinion leaders are multi-tasking in social media and online activities like these **on a monthly basis**:

- 35% logged into both their Facebook *and* LinkedIn accounts
- 30% logged into both their Facebook account *and* downloaded a free/paid “app”
- 29% logged into both their LinkedIn account *and* downloaded a free/paid “app”
- 22% logged into both their Facebook *and* LinkedIn accounts *and* downloaded a free/paid “app”

We begin to see the impact that technology tools and social media venues have on media access in general and on building and optimizing media brands in particular, and how this allows opinion leaders to become even more engaged with the issues of today, and even more empowered in influencing and affecting change.

WRAP UP

The Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leaders Study, a national study of contemporary issue involvement and media influence, has been published for over 25 years. Opinion Leaders Studies’ findings track the shifting accountabilities and involvement of opinion leaders in today’s most important issues. The study offers a comprehensive base by which to view the media consumption habits of the unique population of Opinion Leaders. As media platforms have changed and grown, so too has the study.

While we continue to see a decrease in print readership and an increase in web usage for some media brands, the two are not occurring at the same rate. Nonetheless, print should be viewed as a vital part of any media plan. Generally speaking, while we continue to see shifts in specific media platform usage, these platforms should be viewed as working together synergistically, rather than being mutually exclusive.