

IN A DIGITAL AGE, HOW DO COLLEGE STUDENTS GET THEIR NEWS?

By Sid Elford

College students are surrounded, even bombarded by electronic media constantly – phones, television, computers, and social media. The way people have consumed the media and news stories has shifted dramatically as technology has evolved, and the invention of the Internet has made news media accessible in a way that has never been seen before.

With the busy schedules that college students tend to have, many students feel that they don't have the time to consume news media from conventional means, such as magazines and newspapers. The news has had to adapt to this generation, and has found success with online news, phone apps and online news.

According to a survey done by The Associated Press-NORC Centre for Public Affairs Research and the American Press Institute, “only 39 percent of the survey respondents said they typically actively seek out news, while 60 percent said they mostly ‘bump into’ that type of content as they do other things on Facebook and other sites.”

To put this survey to the test, I ran my own poll on my Twitter feed, asking my followers how they consume the majority of their news, and these are the results I found:

Of the 68 people that answered my poll, 58 percent of responders said that they received their news through a social media site like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, 19 percent use news websites like CNN, MSNBC, FOX News, etc, 8 percent watch their news on a television outlet of some kind, and the final 15 percent used other resources to consume their news.

It is important to note that my Twitter followers represent a very specific demographic and population, so there aren't as many points of view as the NORC survey. In the survey, "70 percent of young adults surveyed said that their social media feeds include a mix of viewpoints, increasing their chances of reading with a wider array of news content."

Overall however, it seems that college students still consume a large amount of news, despite the rumours that millennials don't care what's going on in the world. The increasing popularity of social media websites is offering more access to news media, and is a far more appealing way for college students to get their news.

The implementation of pages in sites like Twitter's trending topics and Snapchat's subscription and featured stories offer more opportunity for users to come in contact with news stories while browsing through their social media feeds.print