

23 Diversity

THE CHANGING MEDIA LANDSCAPE presents both challenges and opportunities for minorities. In traditional media, minority ownership and employment has, in recent years, gone backward. But the openness of the Internet offers the promise of new opportunities for innovation and minority viewpoints that may not have flourished via traditional media platforms. Both rural and urban, English and foreign-language minority communities can now access a wealth of information and resources via their broadband connections. New technologies also offer opportunities to some minority entrepreneurs who have found the barriers for entry into traditional media too high to scale. This chapter explores how the traditional and digital media environments are performing in terms of programming, employment, and innovation.

Traditional Media

Radio

In 1948, WDIA in Memphis launched the first radio station designed to appeal to a black audience.¹ Although white-owned, this bold programming decision made the station a forerunner, and its example was widely followed by stations across the country wanting to reach this underserved audience. WDIA is also credited with breaking a color barrier in its employment of black announcers and station personnel, as well as in its programming content, which included public service announcements geared especially to a black audience. The nation's first black-owned radio station was WERD in Atlanta.² Purchased by Jesse B. Clayton Sr. in 1949, the financially successful station offered a mix of news, community announcements, information, and music that black audiences could not get elsewhere in the local market.³ Other programming of interest could be found on the National Negro Network (NNN), a nationwide network of 40 stations that programmed news summaries, wire-copy, and music. NNN was launched in 1954 by a black ad executive from Chicago, Leonard Evans, who selected an interracial board of directors to help him reach his target audience.⁴ During the 1950s, black-oriented programming could be found on numerous broadcast radio stations.

Following the social unrest of the 1960s, the Kerner Commission concluded that a new national policy was needed to facilitate greater minority ownership of media, which would allow for more balanced depictions of black people and create entrepreneurial and employment opportunities for minorities. Former CNN journalist Bernard Shaw summed up the conclusions of the Kerner Commission:

“[I]t mattered mightily to other African-Americans. To read the byline, to read the copy written by people of color, and to see people of color on television, it confirms your vitality in this multiracial and multicultural society. It says we can do this too. It also mattered in the education of white people, in and out of government.”⁵

The findings of the Kerner Commission greatly influenced regulatory policy at the FCC and other federal agencies and helped spawn an increase in the number of black-owned stations.⁶

Today, over 90 percent of black consumers ages 12 and over listen to radio each week, according to broadcast radio ratings company Arbitron's *Black Radio Today 2010* report.⁷ Overall, the leading radio formats for blacks are urban adult contemporary (91.2 percent) and urban contemporary (78.9 percent).

All-news makes up 13.2 percent of programming formats.⁸ James Winston, executive director and general counsel of the National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters (NABOB), says that during the 1970s and 1980s, most black-owned stations had active local news departments and public service programming,⁹ but they decreased news content to contain costs when the Commission relaxed its public interest requirements in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁰ The American Urban Radio Networks (AURN)¹¹ is the largest African-American-owned radio network company, providing news, sports, information, and entertainment programming to more than 300 affiliated broadcast stations.

AURN programs include *Black College Football Weekly*, *Healthwatch*, *NewsWorld This Morning*, and *White House Report*.¹² Additionally, Sirius XM recently announced plans to expand its portfolio of satellite radio programming aimed at minority audiences, adding music and talk shows created by Howard University and other historically black colleges and universities; Spanish-language music and talk programming from Eventus, National Latino Broadcasting, and WorldBand Media; and Korean-language music and talk programming.¹³

While commercial broadcasters offer an impressive array of national news programming for black consumers, it is less common on the local level. Lisa Fager Bediako, president and co-founder of the media advocacy group Industry Ears, noted at a Commission localism forum:

“Over 75 percent of urban radio stations carry syndication and what this does is it limits our voices—it also limits jobs for people of color and others who want to work in radio, in urban radio. Syndication has not only caused a disproportionate loss of industry jobs, but more importantly, stifled news and information to local communities.”¹⁴

For Hispanic audiences, media consumption is split between those Hispanics who prefer to speak Spanish in the home, rather than English, and those who are bilingual. For example, in Los Angeles, among Hispanic adults ages 18 to 49 who watch the 6:00 evening news, 29 percent of Spanish-dominant and 61 percent of non-Spanish-dominant viewers prefer to watch English-language news. By contrast, 86 percent of Spanish-dominant and 14 percent of non-Spanish dominant viewers prefer to watch Spanish-language news.¹⁵

Radio remains a vital medium for Hispanics too,¹⁶ reaching 95 percent of Spanish-dominant Hispanics and more than 93 percent of English-dominant Hispanics.¹⁷ Mexican regional is the most popular format, according to Arbitron’s *Hispanic Radio Today 2010* report.¹⁸ However, the news/talk/information and talk/personality formats attract 4.3 percent of Hispanic radio consumers, and, at four hours and 30 minutes, their time spent listening is the highest among listeners of any English-language format.¹⁹ The Hispanic audience that listens to news/talk/information stations also has the highest rate of voter registration among listeners of any format assessed in the report (78 percent).²⁰

Though Native American–owned stations’ listenership is too small for Arbitron to measure, Loris Ann Taylor, executive director of Native Public Media (NPM), estimates that 90 percent of Native Americans on reservations listen to Native-owned radio stations.²¹ “Native stations have programming that could work well on public broadcasting outlets and would provide some needed diversity, but those relationships have not flourished,” Taylor says.²² Shows oriented to Native Americans include: *Native Voice One*²³ and *National Native News*,²⁴ which can be streamed online, and national call-in talk shows like *Native America Calling*, heard on 52 stations in the U.S. and in Canada by an estimated 500,000 listeners each week.²⁵ The Indian Country News Bureau (ICBN), which was formed to produce news reports and long-form features for local, regional, and national use, has access to local tribal council and government meetings that would not be available to nontribal journalists.²⁶ The organization, however, has scaled back its operations and coverage due to funding constraints. NPM praised the Corporation for Public Broadcasting’s Local Journalism Centers initiative, which will utilize newly hired, station-based reporters and editors.²⁷

Television

African-Americans rely more on TV news than other ethnic groups.²⁸ Some 85 percent turn to local TV news, for instance, compared to 78 percent national average.

NEWS CONSUMPTION ON A TYPICAL DAY (BY RACE/ETHNICITY)

	Local TV News	National Cable or Network TV News	Internet	Radio	Print (Local Paper)	Print (National Paper)	Avg. Number of News Sources per Typical Day	Share “Newsless” on Typical Day
All	78%	73%	61%	54%	50%	17%	2.85	3%
Whites	79%	72%	61%	55%	52%	17%	2.87	3%
African-Americans	85%	85%	48%	57%	42%	22%	2.94	3%
Hispanics	75%	75%	67%	51%	46%	14%	2.79	3%

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet and American Life Project January 2010 (Survey included Spanish-language option.)

As the Hispanic population continues to grow in the U.S., so does the number of Hispanic television-owning households. Hispanic households comprised 40 percent of new TV households for the 2010/11 season, according to Nielsen—a 3 percent increase from the 2009/10 TV season and equal to approximately 400,000 homes.²⁹ The television networks with the highest Hispanic viewership are Univision, Telemundo, FOX, TeleFutura, and ABC.³⁰

KMEX-TV Univision 34 often ranks as the number one station in late local news in Los Angeles. Nationally, Univision is the fifth largest network in America.

Univision, one of the top five television networks in America, provides network and local television, radio, and digital media for Hispanic consumers. Univision says that the top two reasons viewers watch its programming are: (1) it is in Spanish and (2) it is their preferred source for news.³¹ KMEX-TV Univision 34 in Los Angeles often ranks as the number one station in late local news in Los Angeles. Its news feature, *El 15% de los Estados Unidos*, which focuses on the impact of Latinos on the United States, won a Peabody Award in 2006, and the station has won its share of Emmys and Golden Mics in the Los Angeles market.³² A former *Los Angeles Times* reporter wrote in 2008:

“The sharpest coverage of state and local issues—government, politics, immigration, labor, economics, health care—is now found on Spanish-language TV. They compete hard on serious stories. As a labor reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* in 2006, the only competitors I routinely saw at major union stories were reporters for KMEX, KVEA and *La Opinion*, a Spanish-language daily newspaper.”³³

Almost 12 million Americans, 4.2 percent of the population, identify themselves as being of Asian extraction. They identify with a range of countries of origin and speak languages and dialects specific to that nation or region. Today’s Asian American community may comprise people of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, Laotian, South Asian, and Southeast Asian descent. Although Asian Americans possessed purchasing power of more than \$397 billion in 2009, the variety of languages and dialects among them have proved a barrier to broadcasters being able to tailor media information and services to serve their needs. According to one study, 41 percent of first-generation Asian Americans, when given a choice, prefer to speak English, compared to 87 percent of second-generation Asian Americans.³⁴ According to a survey conducted in Manhattan’s Chinatown, the most frequently used media for reading and accessing news are the web (64.7 percent), mobile media (64.7 percent), and television (52.9 percent).³⁵

AsianMedia Group, which owns KSCI-TV Channel 18 (serving the Los Angeles and San Diego markets) and KIKU-TV Channel 20 (in Honolulu, Hawaii), has built a successful business model based on multilingual programming. “We’re Chinese in the morning for about two hours of local news,” says Peter Mathes, chairman of AsianMedia Group, which owns KSCI.³⁶ At around 11:30 a.m., the station airs Taiwanese news; Vietnamese news comes on at about 3:00 p.m., followed by Filipino informational programming at 4 p.m. Mathes tasks his three or four news crews with developing and producing local news content of interest to Chinese, Korean, and Filipino residents. In addition, an agreement with local NBC affiliate, KNBC, allows his station to insert Chinese (Mandarin-language) captioning into KNBC’s 6:00 p.m. newscast and then air it at 11 p.m. on KSCI-TV.³⁷ Mathes says broadcast radio and TV are still the dominant information sources for the Asian community in his market, but he laments the paucity of advertising for his multilingual stations,³⁸ saying that the Asian market is the last to be added to advertisers’ TV buys and the first to be dropped when there are cutbacks. Mathes also operates a suite of multilingual channels offering Korean, Armenian, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Japanese programming.³⁹ DISH and DirecTV provide Asian-focused channels on satellite television, but they are primarily international channels.

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New America Media (NAM), a national collaboration of some 2,000 ethnic news organizations,⁴⁰ provides additional news and information resources for many ethnic communities through a variety of media platforms. Founded in 1996 by Pacific News Service, NAM is a nonprofit headquartered in California. According to NAM, over 57 million ethnic adults “connect to each other, to home countries and to America” through more than 3,000 ethnic media.⁴¹

Ownership and Business Models

Minority ownership of traditional radio and television broadcast media has been low, relative to the size of the overall minority population.⁴² When African-Americans comprised about 13 percent of the entire U.S. population, the group owned only six television stations (or 0.33 percent of total full-power television stations) and 240 radio stations (or 1.6 percent of total full-power radio stations).⁴³ Similarly, when Latinos comprised approximately 14 percent of the population, they owned only 1.11 percent of television stations and 2.9 percent of radio stations.⁴⁴ Asian Americans, who comprised 4 percent of the U.S. population, owned a total of six broadcast television stations (or .44 percent of all broadcast television stations).⁴⁵ A 2006 report by Free Press found that television stations owned by people of color reached only 21 percent of U.S. television households and only 30 percent of households occupied by minorities.⁴⁶ Latino-owned stations reached just 21.8 percent of Latino households, African-American-owned stations reached just 8.7 percent of African-American households, and Asian-owned stations reached just 10 percent of Asian households.⁴⁷

African-Americans own only 6 TV stations, or less than one percent of the total. Latinos own 1.1 percent.

For the country’s almost five million Native Americans, geography has often hindered the delivery of mass media. Most tribal lands are rural, and most broadcasters prefer to operate in densely populated areas, which are easier to monetize through advertising. Additionally, spectrum scarcity can limit the opportunities for new radio service in these areas.⁴⁸ The Commission recently concluded that Federally Administered Tribal Areas were insufficiently served by radio broadcast facilities.⁴⁹ The order explains that the nation’s 563 federally recognized American tribes are served by approximately 41 full-power noncommercial educational FM radio stations, which are licensed to federally recognized tribes and affiliated groups.⁵⁰ (Some 14,547 radio stations are licensed in the United States.)⁵¹ Loris Ann Taylor, of NPM, says that she would like to see the number of Native-owned radio stations “double...in the next three years,” with new regulatory efforts to increase tribal broadcast ownership and Commission approval of pending station license applications.⁵²

Bankruptcies have exacerbated problems for minority owners. In the past five years, some 500 broadcast stations have filed applications with the Commission to transfer their licenses to their equity lending partners or successor firms.⁵³ Washington, D.C., communications attorney Frank Montero, an expert in broadcast finance and FCC regulatory matters, predicts that more bankruptcies among minority owners “may be in the pipeline” because minority owners tend to be under-collateralized and therefore vulnerable to economic downturns.⁵⁴

Minority broadcast owners and their advocates largely attribute low minority broadcast ownership levels to the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which relaxed the local broadcast ownership rules and led to increased consolidation in broadcast media.⁵⁵ On the one hand, the minority owners who sold their stations to larger chains likely benefited financially. On the other hand, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and a number of media advocacy organizations have argued that media consolidation hurts small businesses in general, and minority-owned businesses in particular. They argue that NBC promised to enhance local programming when it acquired the prominent Hispanic broadcast entity Telemundo in 2002, but instead it closed news units at Telemundo stations and created regional news hubs.⁵⁶ As part of their 2011 merger deal, Comcast and NBCU committed to increasing local news programming on Telemundo stations and providing 10 new minority-oriented independent channels within eight years.⁵⁷

Some minority advocacy groups have focused their criticism on what they call “no Urban, no Spanish” dictates, arguing that some stations have inappropriately restricted their ad spending to avoid minority-owned media.⁵⁸ In 2008, the Commission adopted policies banning “no Urban, no Spanish” dictates,⁵⁹ and the Media Bureau recently revised its renewal form for commercial broadcasters, now requiring broadcasters to certify that their advertising agreements do not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity and that all such agreements contain nondiscrimination clauses.⁶⁰

Newspapers

In the early 1800s, America's black press arose out of a desire among free blacks to speak on their own behalf and from their own cultural perspective. In 1827, free black men in New York City founded *Freedom's Journal* to cover the political issues of the day, as well as community news, including births, deaths, and marriages.⁶¹

There are some 250 black-owned newspapers in the U.S. today, according to Danny Bakewell, chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA).⁶² Bakewell believes that black-owned newspapers rank high as a trusted source of news among African-Americans. "All stakeholders come to the black press when they want to get their message out to this community," Bakewell explained. The need for these news outlets to exist remains strong, in his view, due to the continuing lack of coverage of minority communities in mainstream media. "People want to see themselves reflected, warts and all," says Bakewell, arguing that most newspapers, even those serving large minority populations in urban centers, do not tend to cover or address the day-to-day issues in most communities of color.⁶³

Black newspapers will continue to be relevant in the lives of African-Americans, even as these papers transition to online and new-media platforms, Bakewell says. He sees the traditional newsprint format co-existing with digital newspapers for another 20 years or so, in part because African-Americans have lagged in broadband adoption on home computers. Bakewell says that most advertising that targets African-American consumers goes to mainstream media rather than to the black press.⁶⁴

Newspapers targeted specifically to Hispanic consumers are also a vital source of information, particularly for recent Latino immigrants from Central America and the Caribbean. Often, these consumers need information on housing, education, citizenship and legal matters.⁶⁵ Aníbal Torres Jr. publishes the free weekly Spanish-language paper, *Mundo Hispánico*, which serves the Atlanta region.⁶⁶ He estimates that the paper has a regular readership of 190,000. *Mundo Hispánico* often addresses issues not covered by the local mainstream media, such as the Dream Act, immigration, and local politics.⁶⁷ Latino immigrants tend to have a strong cultural connection to their country of origin, Torres says, and Hispanic-owned newspapers help keep them informed about daily life and events in their countries. *Mundo Hispánico* does periodic investigative reporting on government and public institutions, and occasionally teams up with other Hispanic-oriented news media, including local Telemundo and Univision broadcast outlets.⁶⁸ The transition to web distribution for such newspapers has been hampered by a lack of financial resources and the difficulty of getting their readers to adapt to accessing the news online, as they tend to be older, less fluent in English, and lack Internet access.⁶⁹ Nonetheless, the Pew 2009 State of the Media report notes a growing trend of minority- and ethnic-oriented newspapers abandoning their costly print versions to become web-only publications.⁷⁰

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News Coverage

Several studies have indicated that mainstream media do not adequately cover African-American and other minority communities. Some experts believe that this is linked to hiring practices and a lack of minority voices at the editorial table.⁷¹ Communications Workers of America has argued that "coverage of minority communities has been cut back substantially as reporters have been re-assigned to cover other general interest beats."⁷²

A recent Pew study analyzing 67,000 national news stories between February 2009 and February 2010 found that only 643 stories (filling a mere 1.9 percent of the news hole) were related to African-Americans in some way.⁷³ Coverage that focused more generally on African-American life tended, according to Pew, to paint a "downbeat picture."⁷⁴ Mainstream outlets focused on difficult issues facing the African-American community, including the AIDS epidemic, the economic crisis, budget concerns at minority universities, employment disparities, and poverty and crime.⁷⁵ Pew also said there were some stories that presented a more positive outlook on the lives of African-Americans today, such as improved race relations, urban renewal, and minority entrepreneurship.⁷⁶ The amount of African-American-oriented coverage varied by type of media: 2.5 percent of cable's air time was devoted to such coverage; talk radio, 2.4 percent; online, 1.9 percent; evening TV network, 1.9 percent; morning network, 1.5 percent; newspaper, 1.5 percent and news radio, 0.9 percent.⁷⁷

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For Hispanics, newspapers provide the most coverage of their issues and cable television the least, with just 1.9 percent of the total news time surveyed devoted to Hispanics or Hispanic concerns.⁷⁸

As the number of Hispanics who consume television and media content grows, so do concerns about negative stereotyping.⁷⁹ The National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC), a media advocacy organization, has petitioned the Commission to conduct an inquiry on hate speech in the media emanating from hostile commentary about immigrants on broadcast media and the Internet.⁸⁰ The Commission has not officially responded, though it is clear that the First Amendment constrains its ability to limit even offensive speech. Despite NHMC's concerns about the rise of hate speech, it is cautiously optimistic about Internet media overall, noting that more people of color are going online "to tell their own stories fairly and accurately."⁸¹

Minority Journalists and Employment

Minority journalists have lost ground in terms of employment in recent years, and industry experts doubt that the trend will reverse any time soon. Roughly 5,300 minorities worked at newspapers in 2010 compared with 7,400 in 2007, according to the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE). In the 2011 census, 441 newspapers had no minorities on full-time staff. Minorities made up about 12.8 percent of newsrooms. "At a time when the U.S. Census shows that minorities are 36 percent of the U.S. population, newsrooms are going in the opposite direction. This is an accuracy and credibility issue for our newsrooms," said Milton Coleman, former ASNE president.⁸² UNITY: Journalists of Color, an alliance of four national minority journalism organizations, says that minority journalists are laid off disproportionately during hard economic times.⁸³

One brighter spot: minorities are better represented online: according to the ASNE survey, nearly 18.72 percent of journalists working online are minorities.

Minority employment has been declining in broadcast too, according to the 2010 *RTDNA/Hofstra University Annual Survey*.⁸⁴ Robert Papper, the survey director, says, "We end the decade with no gains whatsoever for minorities in TV news, and the percentage of minorities in radio news is down substantially."⁸⁵ RTDNA data show that minorities comprise 35.3 percent of the U.S. population, but represent 20.2 percent and 5.0 percent, respectively, of the TV and radio workforce. RTDNA notes that in the last 20 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 9.4 percent, but the minority workforce in television news is up only 2.4 percent in that time, and the minority workforce in radio is "actually half what it was two decades ago."⁸⁶

Indeed, a consortium of three dozen diversity organizations wrote to the Commission in October 2010 requesting that it promptly collect and publish equal employment opportunity data for broadcast and cable companies and make the data publicly available in an "accessible and transparent format."⁸⁷ The groups noted that media firms were becoming less diverse in "an increasingly multicultural society."⁸⁸ Wade Henderson, president and CEO of the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights, has advocated for increased diversity in media employment:

"If racial and ethnic minorities, people of color, women, older Americans, and persons with disabilities are not employed at news operations at all levels of management, there are few who can speak with authority about their condition in the community. This means less or less complete coverage of issues that are important to them. Issues like economic inclusion, the struggle for quality public education, immigration reform, and the prevention of violent hate crime."⁸⁹

Since their implementation over forty years ago, the Commission's Equal Employment Opportunity rules have banned discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or gender and originally sought

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to ensure employment opportunities for minorities and women in the communications industry.⁹⁰ Specifically, the Commission’s current EEO rules and policies in effect since March 10, 2003, require broadcasters and multichannel video program distributors (“MVPDs”) to conduct broad recruitment for new employees in all sectors of their communities.⁹¹

The Commission maintains two employment reporting forms which require broadcasters and MVPDs to annually collect and file with the agency the racial, ethnic origin and gender composition of their workforces. The Commission annually collects these data to assess industry trends, provide reports to Congress and respond to inquiries from Congress, and not to evaluate EEO rule compliance.⁹² The annual employment reporting requirements were initially suspended in 2001 following judicial challenges to the Commission’s EEO rules.⁹³ In 2004, the Commission re-instated the broadcast and cable annual employment reporting requirements.⁹⁴ The Commission simultaneously continued the suspension of the filing requirements until it resolves concerns about the confidentiality of the data and station identification in the employment forms.⁹⁵

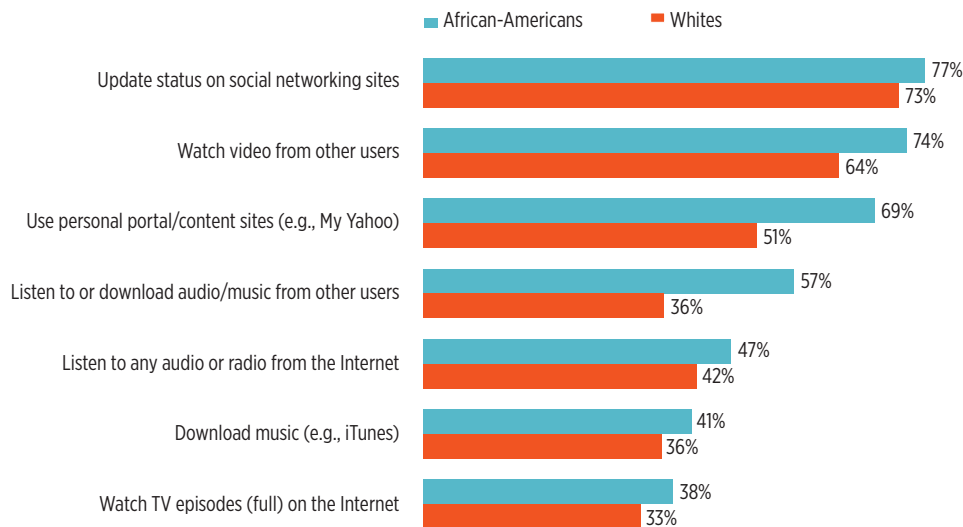
New Media

Digital media are presenting tremendous programming, employment, and ownership opportunities for minorities.⁹⁶

A BET survey revealed that African-Americans are more likely to get news from the Internet than anywhere else.⁹⁷ Specifically, 65 percent of African-Americans demonstrate a propensity to consume online news compared with 47 percent other groups; and 47 percent of African-Americans use current event and political blogs compared with 33 percent of other groups.⁹⁸

A March 2011 Pew study found that African-Americans, as compared with the general population, are more active in web 2.0 activities, such as social media⁹⁹ and are more likely to have created their own web content—by blogging, microblogging, and social networking—than members of other ethnic groups.¹⁰⁰ Almost a quarter (22 percent) of African-Americans created or worked on their own online journal or blog, compared with 14 percent of whites and 13 percent of Hispanics.¹⁰¹

COMPARING MONTHLY ACTIVITIES OF POWER/WEB 2.0 INDIVIDUALS BY RACE



Source: Forrester Research Technographics Q2 2010 Online Benchmark Study (n=26,749).¹⁰²

An April 2010 Edison Media Research study found that nearly one-quarter of people on Twitter are African-American—“approximately double the percentage of African-Americans in the current U.S. population.”¹⁰³ Researchers have found that minorities develop like-minded communities organically through their use of Twitter and other social media.¹⁰⁴ In 2010, 52 percent of African-Americans reported that they regularly or sometimes received news

through social-networking sites, according to a Pew Research Center survey.¹⁰⁵ By contrast, 40 percent of white and 33 percent of Hispanic respondents did so.¹⁰⁶

Social media and blogs may play a role in filling gaps left by traditional media. NPR's Michel Martin suggests, for example, that they brought national attention to the disappearance of Phylicia Barnes, an African-American high school honor student, whose disappearance had received limited local coverage in the mainstream media.¹⁰⁷

African-Americans also appear to be using mobile devices at especially high rates. In July 2009, Pew Internet observed, "African-Americans are the most active users of the mobile internet—and their use of it is also growing the fastest."¹⁰⁸ Daily mobile Internet usage by African-Americans increased by 141 percent between 2007 (when it was 12 percent) and 2009 (when it was 29 percent), roughly double the rate of increase among the general population.¹⁰⁹

On the other hand, minorities lag behind the rest of the population when it comes to *home* broadband. African-Americans not only trail whites in home broadband use, but they are less likely to own a desktop computer (51 percent of African-American adults do compared with 65 percent of whites).¹¹⁰ English-speaking Latinos use the Internet and home broadband at almost the same rates as whites, but foreign-born and Spanish-dominant Latinos trail both whites and English-speaking Latinos in their use of the Internet and home broadband.¹¹¹

For Native Americans, the growth of high-speed Internet connections may prove especially important. Because of the rural nature of tribal lands, Loris Ann Taylor, Executive Director of Native Public Media, recognizes that once broadband takes off in Native country, terrestrial broadcast stations may no longer be aggressively sought after.¹¹² When that occurs, she says, broadband will be the primary news and information facilitator on tribal lands.¹¹³

An increasing amount of news and information of relevance to minorities is finding its way onto the Internet, much of it flowing from traditional media, such as cable and broadcast TV.¹¹⁴ For instance, TV One, a cable and satellite TV entertainment and lifestyle network geared toward black audiences,¹¹⁵ operates a website with streaming video and hosts a news and information site for African-Americans: NewsOne for Blacks in America.¹¹⁶ Other sites that provide national news for black Americans include TheRoot,¹¹⁷ BlackAmericaWeb.com,¹¹⁸ BlackVoices,¹¹⁹ and Journal-isms.¹²⁰ David Wilson, managing editor of theGrio, says that while "news is at the center" of such online content, the real appeal is that, "it creates community... articles feed conversations."¹²¹ His website's aggregated offerings—which include video, news articles, and blog posts on national politics, business, and entertainment—draw some 500,000 unique visitors each month. Because NBCUniversal owns the site, reporters that work for theGrio have a number of additional potential outlets for their stories, including NBC network news programs, MSNBC cable programs, and MSNBC.com.¹²²

The Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA) launched the 2010/11 OurChinatown media demonstration project in New York City's Chinatown to test the efficiency of mobile devices as reporting tools.¹²³ AALJ envisions local residents using smartphones to capture images, text, and video, and teams of student journalists maintaining regular daily beats (culture, news, events) and fielding submissions from readers.¹²⁴ The project will provide "breaking newflashes, events coverage, features, civic/political reminders, arts/food/shopping/cultural alerts; and on occasion notice for town hall meetings within the community."¹²⁵

Cleveland Spears of iM4radio started his Internet radio network in reaction to the limitations of terrestrial radio formats.¹²⁶ Initially, he sought start-up funding from financial institutions, but was met with skepticism. Ultimately, he financed his venture with family loans and by liquidating his personal assets. Spears notes that while he could not afford to purchase an FCC radio license and construct a broadcast station, he did have enough money to launch an Internet channel.¹²⁷ Although Spears remains passionate about his web-based ventures, he admits that it has been challenging to attract investment, including advertising and foundation support. He has tapped into local advertising for small businesses in his Washington, D.C., market but says that national advertisers still "don't understand the business model" for Internet radio.¹²⁸

AOL's Hispanic Cyberstudy report found that, compared with the general market, Hispanics are more sophisticated technology users, and that their use of a wide range of devices (from smartphones to gaming devices) illustrates "a high level of comfort" with and willingness to try new technologies.¹²⁹ Hispanics prefer English-language

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online media resources, though it is unclear whether that is just because there are more English-language websites: 27.3 percent of web content is created in English; 22.6 percent is created in Chinese; and 7.8 percent—a distant third—is created in Spanish.¹³⁰ Of those Hispanics who prefer English marketing, 57 percent say that they prefer sites that have pictures of “people who look like me.”¹³¹ Among Spanish or bilingual speakers, the most frequented websites are mostly English-language, but topically targeted for Hispanics.¹³² The top sites are Univision,¹³³ Terra,¹³⁴ Yahoo! en Español,¹³⁵ MSN Latino,¹³⁶ and Batanga.¹³⁷ While it is clear that Hispanics are using web 2.0 technologies, the reported scope of usage varies among research entities. For example, according to Edison/Arbitron research data, Hispanics comprise 17 percent of Twitter users (Hispanics comprise 16 percent of the population).¹³⁸ But according to a July 2010 study by the Pew Hispanic Center, technology use by foreign-born Latinos lags significantly behind that of their U.S.-born counterparts.¹³⁹ Eighty-five percent of native-born Latinos ages 16 and older go online compared with just half (51 percent) of foreign-born Latinos.¹⁴⁰

News and information sources in both Spanish and English flourish on websites such as Hispanic News¹⁴¹ and MyLatino News.com.¹⁴² Hispanic newspapers such as *El Diaro*,¹⁴³ *La Prensa*,¹⁴⁴ *Hoy Nueva York*,¹⁴⁵ *La Opinion*,¹⁴⁶ and *El Nuevo Herald*¹⁴⁷ also have web presences. The owner of several of these newspapers, impreMedia, also provides Hispanic news content to MySpace.com, V-me TV, the McClatchy Company, AOL Latino, and ESPN Deportes.¹⁴⁸ *La Opinion*, published in Los Angeles, is the largest Spanish-language newspaper in the U.S. and the second-most-read newspaper in L.A., following the *L.A. Times*.¹⁴⁹ Many of the major topics of articles on *La Opinion*'s website are very similar to those on any major newspaper's website—news, sports, entertainment, and business, for example—but *La Opinion* also offers a channel on immigration.¹⁵⁰

New media outlets appear to have a slightly better track record on minority hiring than traditional media. A census of online-only news sites shows that about one in five full-time journalists employed by the 27 responding news sites was a journalist of color, compared with about one of every seven in the annual ASNE census of daily paper newsrooms.¹⁵¹ And that does not include part-time minority bloggers, some of whom are finding real audiences.¹⁵² African-American blogger Nikki Peele launched East of the River in 2007, after becoming frustrated by the lack of online information about her new neighborhood, Anacostia, in Washington, D.C.¹⁵³ Her site attracts some 40,000 monthly page views, with posts ranging from the location of fresh food trucks to local civic information. Since she started blogging, Peele says that about 30 new blogs focused on the Anacostia neighborhood have launched.¹⁵⁴

The web's lower barriers to entry are also enabling a range of minority ventures.

The web's lower barriers to entry are enabling a range of minority ventures. In 2004, Jonathan Moore, a longtime ad executive, launched Rowdy Orbit, a web destination for media content of interest to a multi-cultural audience.¹⁵⁵ Moore likens his site to the cable channels Sundance and IFC, which offer a platform for new, independent voices. Social media sites like Black Planet, MiGente, Twitter, and Facebook have allowed him to build an infinitely larger following than he could have with traditional media.¹⁵⁶

Despite the opportunities, minorities still appear to be lagging behind in terms of web start-up creation. According to a recent report by CB Insights, African-Americans account for just one percent of Internet company founders nationally.¹⁵⁷ Eighty-seven percent of Internet company founders are white, and 12 percent Asian/Pacific Islanders make up the second largest contingent of founders.¹⁵⁸ Venture capital has played an important role in technology entrepreneurship, but minorities may be at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting start-up funds. The report, which covers the period from January to June 2010, also found that the median amount of funding secured by an all-black founding team was \$1.3 million, compared with \$2.2 million for a racially mixed team, and \$2.3 million for an all-white team. Asian/Pacific Islander teams, according to the report, secured the most funding with a median range of \$4 million dollars.¹⁵⁹

Retha Hill, director of the New Media Innovation Lab at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication,¹⁶⁰ emphasizes the importance of high schools and colleges obtaining the new media resources need-

Pew Internet observed that “African-Americans are the most active users of the mobile Internet—and their use of it is also growing the fastest.”

ed to foster entrepreneurial skills in students and not just consumption. Further, she hopes media professionals can do more to mentor tomorrow's journalists and innovators from diverse backgrounds. "We need new business models as well as varied people and institutions that will support innovation in local settings," she adds.

All in all, the digital media is providing new sources of news and information for minorities and spurring optimism about openings for minority entrepreneurs. But whether the digital age will end up better serving minorities than traditional media has remains to be seen. While it may be premature to give a full-throated endorsement to new media platforms as a substitute for traditional media in addressing the information needs of minorities, there are definite signs of progress—both in the diversity of content on the Internet and in the business opportunities now available to new and small entrants.