



# HOW TRADE MEDIA FUELS BUSINESS GROWTH AND INDUSTRY INFLUENCE

BROADSHEET  
STATE OF  
MEDIA REPORT  
Q2| 2024



# Welcome to the Broadsheet Q2 State of Media report.

The Broadsheet is a comprehensive study of the media landscape, with past editions focused on [forward-looking predictions and the rise of generative AI](#).

This edition focuses specifically on the value of trade media. Drawing from a survey of over 150 B2B industry leaders, including C-level executives, managing directors and senior vice presidents, this report demonstrates trade media's pivotal role in the business environment.

Trade media is not just about staying informed—it is a significant factor influencing decision-making, even at the highest levels.



Trade media coverage has a material impact on sales, with **82% of respondents** saying it directly impacts purchase decisions.

**59% of respondents** say that presence in trade media directly influences their brand's overall market position and identity.



**67% of executives** surveyed confirm that having a presence in trade media directly influences sales and revenue growth, with one in three stating it has a “a great deal” of impact on their sales figures.

The findings underscore trade publications' influence on driving sales, business strategies, and operational decisions.

## Trade Media—A Trusted Driver of Reputation and Business Growth

The Broadsheet surveyed top business executives across media and technology firms, examining their news consumption habits. Faced with an overwhelming amount of content to sift through, the latest Broadsheet survey indicates that respondents find trade media to be the most reliable source of information—more so than general business news. These dynamics are especially pronounced within fast-moving sectors like B2B technology and media. Dramatic structural changes to markets (e.g., innovation, privacy regulations driving signal loss in digital advertising) mean that up-to-date information and intelligence are at a premium and businesses need trusted industry voices in the trade media to stay informed and differentiate themselves from their competitive set.

## A Critical Part of the Business Process

Being featured in trade media enhances market awareness and directly drives sales. Because trade media delivers focused coverage to a naturally engaged audience, it resonates more than the national business press.

Trade media is likewise integral for professionals looking to understand complex industry shifts and adapt their strategies accordingly. In essence, trade publications are not only information channels; they are strategic tools that empower professionals to make informed decisions and maintain relevance in rapidly evolving markets.



**Nearly 70% of respondents** identify trade publications and newsletters as their primary source for industry news.

**Respondents overwhelmingly agree (83%)** that trade publications are crucial in helping them perform their jobs effectively.



**87% of respondents** use trade media to gain competitive intelligence, underscoring its crucial role in strategic planning.

## Willing to Pay

When businesses invest in industry publication subscriptions, it serves as a tangible reminder that the publications offer quantifiable value. Many trade media publishers that are moving toward paywall models are also sharpening their focus on providing accurate category intelligence. It's content that matters to people—to the point they are willing to pay for it. These results reaffirm that PR and trade media engagement are worth the price.

- More than half of respondents maintain at least one corporate subscription to trade media publications and nearly 50% have personal subscriptions, highlighting their commitment to staying informed and competitive.
- The majority of respondents have paid subscriptions and subscribe to multiple newsletters, underscoring the importance of visibility in industry trade publications for a brand's overall market position.

## Trusted More Than Other Media

Trust in trade media stems largely from its industry-specific focus and the contributions of subject-matter experts, which make these publications more reliable and useful than their mass-market counterparts. Specialized content, tailored to meet the needs and challenges of specific industries, provides readers with accurate and actionable insights.

Additionally, trade publications often host events that serve as vital hubs for industry professionals to network, share ideas, and collaborate. This community-building function fosters a deep sense of trust and reliability among its audience, reinforcing the value of trade media as a trusted source of relevant information.

A proactive and strategic approach to utilizing trade media should drive a culture of constant growth and innovation. It provides a foundation for staying informed and fosters a well-connected, knowledgeable professional community crucial for personal and organizational success.

# Key Findings: The Strategic Importance of Trade Media

## Trade Media as a Key Driver for Sales and Leads

- Over 58% of respondents say visibility in trade publications is critically important. Further, they maintain presence in trade media impacts their brand position and directly influences sales and revenue.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents stated (83%) trade media visibility is important for their company's overall market position.

## Central Role in Business Understanding and Decision-Making

- 87% of respondents use trade media to gain competitive intelligence, underscoring its crucial role in strategic planning.
- 88% of respondents read trade media to keep abreast of industry trends and competitors, indicating the significant reliance on these publications for operational and strategic guidance.

## Critical Influence on Brand Establishment and Business Development

- Industry-specific publications are trusted significantly more than general news platforms, and they primarily focus on delivering accurate and actionable insights.
- Trade media's focused exposure is a powerful tool for public relations, with a majority of respondents affirming that visibility in these publications directly influences their brand position and drives sales and revenue.

# Additional Findings:



**76% of respondents** engage with industry white papers, indicating the value placed on in-depth industry analysis. Additional research from Tech Target has found that white papers rank higher than videos, webinars and social media posts for driving leads.

**75% of business leaders** use LinkedIn to discover industry news and insights, reflecting the platform's unique position in professional networking and information dissemination.



Exposure to the right audiences puts the business in front of potential buyers in a context that enhances the likelihood of engagement. Businesses can consistently leverage trade media for PR to ensure a steady stream of qualified leads.

LinkedIn, in particular, dominates among social media channels for driving B2B lead generation and sales. Research from MoneyJournal shows that more than 80% of sales leads from social media come through LinkedIn. ■

# Strategic Recommendations

- 1** For companies and professionals that want to leverage industry intelligence to drive better outcomes for their firms, consider the following recommendations:
- 2** **Prioritize Multiple Types of Engagement:** Professionals should intensify their interactions with trade publications, not only as readers but also as contributors. By actively engaging, they can enhance their industry presence and influence.
- 3** **Incorporate Trade Media Engagement Into Integrated Marketing Plans:** Businesses should use trade publications as a platform for public relations and thought leadership. When combined with other lead-generation activities like content marketing, advertising, and events, trade publications can significantly drive lead generation and revenue.
- 3** **Invest in Media Relationships:** Building strong relationships with trade media editors and reporters can be invaluable. These connections can lead to enhanced coverage and potentially influence the industry narrative in ways beneficial to the business.
- 4** **Partner with Trade Publications for Sponsored Events, Webinars, and White Papers:** Many industry trade publications offer sponsorship opportunities beyond typical ad campaigns. To diversify revenue streams, they host industry events, webinars and will even collaborate with sponsors to have professional journalists and researchers help produce sponsored white papers and other content.
- 5** **Utilize Insights for Strategic Planning:** The insights gained from trade media should be integrated into business strategy and competitive analysis. The deep understanding of industry trends and competitor activities gleaned from these publications is vital for maintaining a competitive edge.
- 6** **Encourage Subscriptions and Regular Consumption:** Organizations should consider providing corporate subscriptions to relevant trade publications to ensure their teams are always equipped with the latest industry insights. Personal subscriptions should also be encouraged to deepen individual expertise and engagement.



**The Broadsheet survey clearly illustrates that trade media is not just a source of information, but a fundamental resource for business leaders to enhance understanding, establish brand presence, and drive decision-making processes.**

**The overwhelming trust and reliance on trade publications make them indispensable tools for those aiming to thrive in competitive business environments. This survey confirms that strategic public relations in trade media are key drivers of business success.**



We always welcome your feedback on these newsletters. Feel free to suggest topics, articles, research, and to offer opinions and feedback. Write Alex Wolf, VP of Strategy and Principal Analyst at: [alex@broadsheetcomms.com](mailto:alex@broadsheetcomms.com)

