Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Digital WPI

Major Qualifying Projects (All Years)   Major Qualifying Projects

March 2017

Developing a Marketing Plan for the Christian Science Monitor

Brian Kerry Murtagh
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Jason Stuart Lamb
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Sean William Doncaster
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wpi.edu/mqp-all

Developing a Marketing Plan for the Christian Science Monitor

A Major Qualifying Project Final Report

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Science

Submitted by:

Sean Doncaster

Jason Lamb

Brian Murtagh

Submitted to:

Professor Purvi Shah

and

Professor Karla Mendoza Abarca

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Sponsoring Organization:

The Christian Science Monitor

Date: March 20, 2017

Abstract

The Christian Science Monitor is an unbiased, international news organization that has been operating since 1908. The problem that the Christian Science Monitor has begun facing is an inability to attract younger readers. The CSM hopes to attract these readers, which led our team to conduct market research to guide them through this. The goal of our project was to develop a marketing plan for the CSM that targets college students between the ages of 18-25 years. We collected insightful data and information during our research process. We then used these findings to create explicit recommendations for the CSM to attract younger readers.

Acknowledgements

We want to thank the CSM for all of their help and support throughout our research, and the completion of our project. Without the educational and financial assistance of the CSM the completion of our project would not have been possible. Specifically, we want to thank Susan Hackney, Chief Marketing and Financial Officer at the CSM, for her constant help.

We also want to thank WPI, as well as both of our advisors, Prof. Purvi Shah and Prof. Karla Mendoza Abarca. The presence of strong leaders in any successful group is essential, and that was no different here. Our advisors were with us every step of the way, answering any and all questions that we had. This project truly would not have been possible without our two advisors. We also want to thank WPI for providing us with the opportunity to conduct our project.

Authorship

Our team is proud to say that all authors have contributed equally to each of the sections throughout the report.

Executive Summary

<div align="center">**Objectives**</div>

The Christian Science Monitor (CSM) is an unbiased, international news organization that has been operating since 1908. According to the CSM, their website attracts over 7 million visitors every month, establishing them as one of the more powerful news media sources in the country. The problem that the CSM currently faces is the inability to attract younger readers. The CSM has a strong presence and wide readership among older age groups, and the company is now attempting to develop readership among younger generations.

The demographic that the CSM wanted our team to investigate was college students within the age range of 18-25 years. While there is data that shows how young adults are not utilizing newspapers as much as older generations, there is not much information as to why these generations have stopped reading newspapers as frequently. In an attempt to further research why such changes have occurred, our team sought answers to the following research questions:

Objective 1: What platforms would resonate with students to drive readership of the CSM?

Objective 2: Who are the opinion leaders? How important is it to be recommended by a professor to have students actually read the news source?

Objective 3: What would be the marketing costs and potential subscription revenue for the Worcester, MA market?

Objective 4: Are there partnership opportunities to make this work?

Objective 5: What angle on the news are students looking for?

Objective 6: Are there particular segments of students who may have an interest in news as part of their studies or as a way of becoming a more global citizen?

Our team sought to effectively answer these questions so that we could develop specific recommendations to the CSM in the hopes of engaging the college student market.

Methods

As a team, we believed that choosing the right methods would be a very important decision in order to provide the Christian Science Monitor with the best marketing plan possible. After discussions with our advisors, we came up with four methods to conduct our research. The four methods were: interviews, focus groups, surveys, and secondary research.

1.) Interviews – Interviews are a form of qualitative data collection. We interviewed students and professors to get data on students' media habits, and how professors used news and media in their classrooms. We interviewed five students and five professors.

2.) Focus Group – Focus groups are meant to bring small groups of 6 – 8 individuals together to have open discussion in order to gain data from multiple perspectives on a topic. We used the method to bring together a group of six students to talk about their media habits, news they read and why, and who were the main influencers in their media habits.

3.) Survey – Surveys are a form of quantitative data collection. We used surveys to be able to back up what we learned in our student interviews with concrete statistics. With students filling out the survey from all of the college campuses in Worcester, MA, we gathered a sample of 260 responses.

4.) Secondary Research – Secondary research was used to gather information we could not get from the other three methods. We used it for benchmarking competitive newspaper offerings in the education market of Worcester, MA.

Findings

Our research allowed us to cross analyze our data across all of our research methods and come to several conclusions. Through focus groups, student Interviews, professor interviews, and a student survey we were able to identify key findings that was consistent across all of our research methods:

1. Students access the news the easiest way that they can.

2. There is a minimal use of non-internet news sources with students.

3. Social media is a powerful and highly utilized source for accessing news.

4. Students prefer an unbiased news source.

5. Students are not willing to pay for a subscription.

6. Friends, Parents, and Professors are the main opinion leaders for students.

"My schedule is pretty packed with sports and school, so I don't really have time to watch news on the TV. It's just easy to take a look at my phone because it's always on me... I just prefer it [to use a mobile device] for news because it is right there at the click of a button."
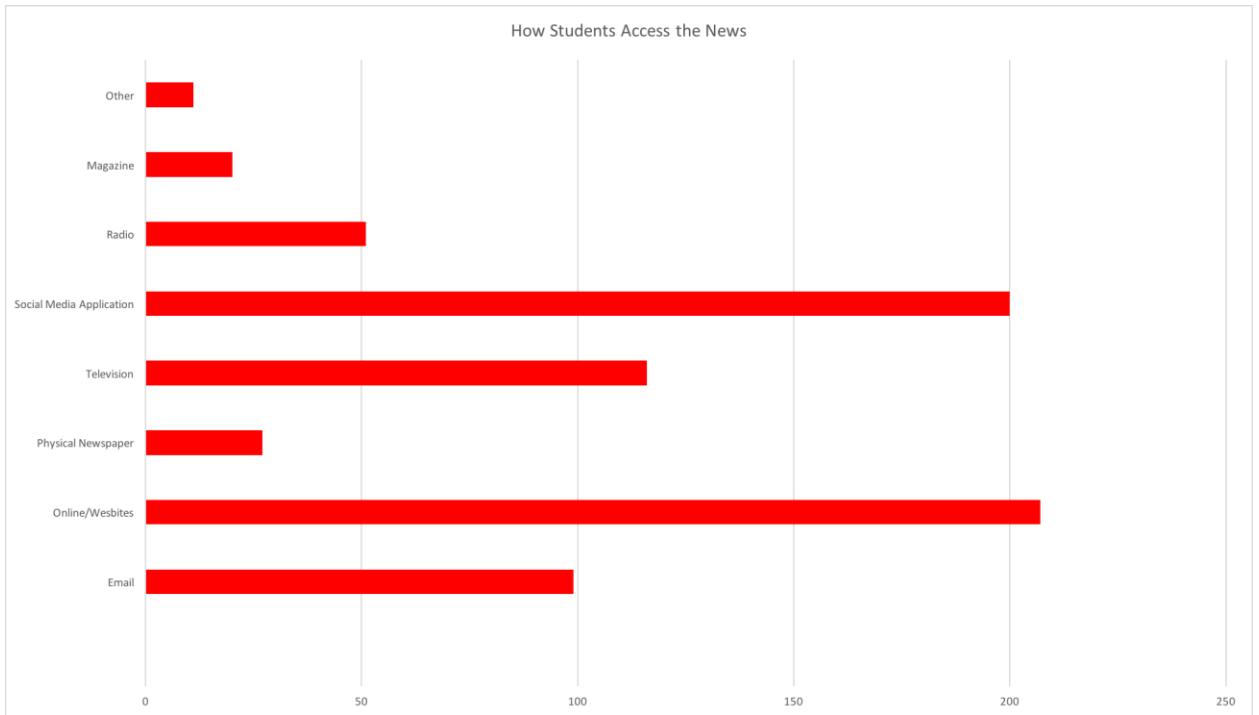
Figure 1: Bar Graph Depicting Student Media Usage

The survey showed that almost 83% of the respondents access the news online or through a website. Professor Thompson, a business professor at Clark University and Harvard University, claimed, "Direct print media is no longer effective. It's too slow, too cumbersome, and too expensive for students."
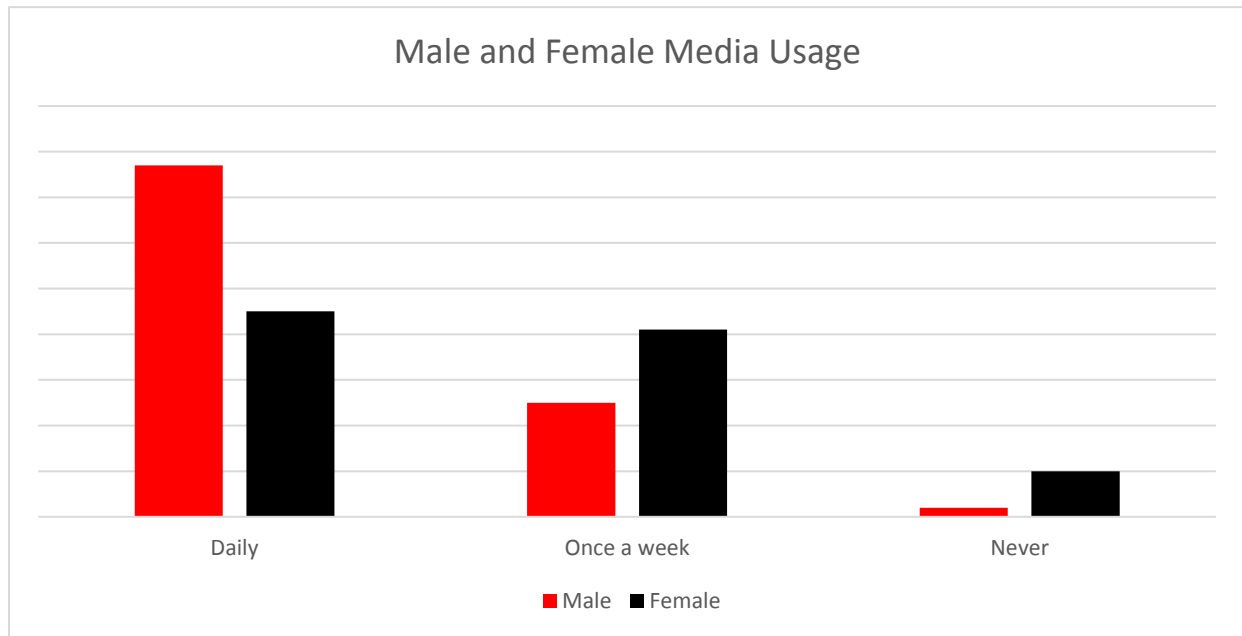
Figure 2: Bar Graph Depicting Student Media Usage

There was also a correlation between gender and how often news was utilized. 70% of male college students checked the news daily while only 41% of female students did the same. 23% of male students and 38% of female students checked the news only once per week. When it comes to the student segment that utilized news the most, it is clear from our research that the strongest was male students.

When determining the potential for subscription revenue in the Worcester, MA market, we focused on student opinions because that was our target market. We observed the responses from the survey pertaining to potential subscription revenue, and the results paralleled those of the student interviews and focus group. When asked in the survey if you would be willing to pay for a news subscription, 78% of students said "no," 7% said "yes," and 15% said "maybe."
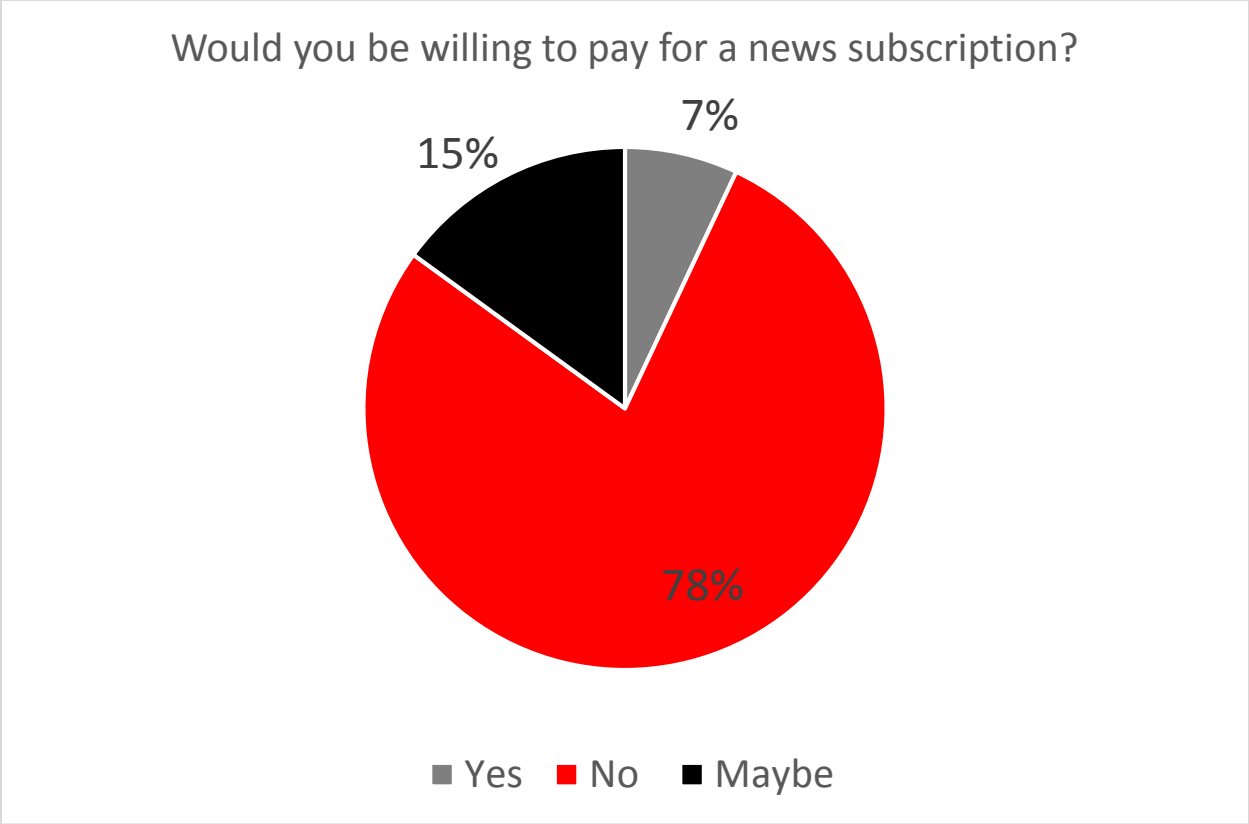
Would you be willing to pay for a news subscription?

7%

15%

78%

■ Yes ■ No ■ Maybe

Figure 3: Pie Chart of Student's Willingness to Pay for a News Subscription

Recommendations

After analyzing all of our findings we have come up with several recommendations. Our research allowed us to answer the six research questions, which we were able to use to generate these recommendations. Our recommendations are as follow:

1. Create a multi-platform and universal mobile application.

   a. Create a new layout for the mobile application interface.

   b. Inform and educate students about this application across college campuses.

2. Reposition the CSM brand across all social media platforms.

      a. Create a promotional video to expose college students to what the CSM provides.

      We recommend that the CSM create a cross platform capable mobile application. This is something that is extremely important for all media companies to have in this day and age as, students in particular, access the news frequently through mobile applications. Currently the mobile application of the CSM is not available for iPhone users which is a huge problem, so we suggest capitalizing on this particularly.

      After making this mobile application compatible for all devices, it will then be necessary to change the layout of the application. Users of the app have commented saying that the app is difficult to navigate, and does not allow for smooth use of the device. These are issues that younger generations will not accept with applications they use. Our suggested layout is provided in Appendix A, and it should provide a feasible layout for a new CSM mobile application.

      Following the implementation of this mobile application, and the new layout, the CSM will need to promote this newly designed application to the students. In order to inform and educate students about the CSM and this new mobile application it will be necessary to be on campus to conduct engaging activities with students. These activities are outlined in our recommendations, and should help to engage students, as well as create long term relationships with them.

The Christian Science Monitor name is something that cannot be changed or altered, but from our findings we believe it is a barrier to obtaining readers from the sought after demographic. To help with this problem our team has come up with the following recommendations:

1. The articles and videos on the Facebook page should be labeled "CS Monitor," or "The Monitor," (similar to the CSM Twitter).

2. A link to the CSM Twitter account should be embedded on the Facebook page to make it easier for the younger generation to connect and receive CSM content more regularly.

This type of social media repositioning will allow the CSM to not only grab hold, but it will allow the company to keep the attention of younger generations.

The final recommendation our team would like to make to the Monitor is creating a promotional video to be advertised on social media. We believe that the CSM lacks exposure to the college readers they are seeking. The video could be used as an introduction to those readers, and answer the big questions college students have about the Monitor such as the explanation of the religious affiliation the Monitor has with The First Church of Christ. Some strong points of the video should include:

1. The content is not altered or affected by the church

2. The CSM has no political ties

3. The CSM is bringing unbiased news to readers

4. Advertise the new CSM mobile application

To implement these recommendations we have outlined specific activities for the CSM to follow. We believe that with the use of above the line and below the line activities that the CSM will be able to follow our recommendations effectively. Among these activities are table sitting on college campuses, partnering with professors on campus, and creating a promotional video. These activities are further explained within our recommendations section.

Conclusion

This project was a very exciting and eventful learning process for all the members in our group. First, we all learned the fundamentals of market research. From conducting interviews, focus groups, and creating a survey we learned valuable techniques that we will never lose. We also learned how to analyze both qualitative and quantitative data. All of these learning experiences have given our team members valuable information that we will never forget. We also hope that our findings and recommendations will add value to CSM's future plans of attracting younger audiences to their news offerings.

Reflection

This Major Qualifying Project has provided our team with invaluable real world experience. Not only did we have to conduct research for a real company, on a real issue; we also had to utilize all of the skills WPI has taught us to prepare for the real world. As a team, we had to utilize communication skills in all three facets; on the phone, in person, and electronic through email. We had to use our computer skills in Microsoft for writing, data collection data analysis, and scheduling. With all this great experience, there were areas that were non-business related, despite it being a completely business based project.

The first non-business related issue we had to address was deciding which research methods best suited the objectives of our project. Since we were looking for insights into media habits of students, and learning how professors use media in the classroom, we landed on doing interviews and focus groups. Interviews and focus groups are forms of Social Science Qualitative Research Methods. We chose these methods of research because these would give us real accounts of students and professors habits regarding media as opposed to just clicking through a survey. For everything that was not touched upon in the interviews and focus groups, and for research objectives we wanted a lot of data on, we also used a Descriptive Research Method in the form of a survey. We wanted to use the survey to see if we could gather concrete statistics on what we learned from our focus group and interviews. The three worked together perfectly to put us in a position to do thorough analysis and put together a very good marketing plan for the Christian Science Monitor.

The three research methods also involved an economic aspect in the form of incentives, which we used to drive student and professors' interest in helping us with our project. For our incentive we provided Chipotle gift cards as a raffle to three students from the survey, and a gift card for each professor and student that participated in an interview or focus group. We chose this kind of incentive because we believe everyone enjoys a free meal, and Chipotle offers a wide variety of options for all the different diets of today's world.

Another non-business aspect of our project comes from a sociological point of view, where we looked at how peer influence, or "opinion leaders", drive the media habits of students. We looked at whether the group a student associates with had an effect on what kind of news sources they use, or news articles that they read. We were very interested to see, in general, how swayed students could be just off of the word of a friend, friend group, or professor suggestion.

All in all, the project was a great experience for us as a group. As aspiring young professionals about to enter the work force, it is important to understand the variables both in, and outside of business. This project has helped us see how research is conducted, and used to further advance a company. There are many different ways research can be done, and there are a lot of factors that go into that research, but when the right methods are applied to the research question at hand, the group's objective can be reached. We thoroughly enjoyed working on this project together as a team, and we know for a fact that these experiences will follow us into our professional careers.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One: Introduction

Every generation that has come and gone has had different habits, traits, characteristics, and viewpoints than others. Whether this was the "Baby Boomers," or the "Millennials," each generation has had different impacts on society. The media habits of recent generations have become a challenge for newspapers everywhere due to the lack of readership developing from younger age groups. According to Peiser (2000), readership of newspapers in both The United States and Germany have decreased over the past twenty-five years. Peiser (2000) also explains the idea that if children are being raised by parents that are not newspaper readers, then they will be even less inclined to read or follow the news. This creates a big issue for news sources of all kinds, as a lack of a youthful following could lead to a lack of any following in the future.

The Christian Science Monitor (CSM) is an unbiased, international news organization that has been operating since 1908. According to the CSM, their website attracts over 7 million visitors every month, establishing them as one of the more powerful news media sources in the country. The problem that the CSM currently faces is the inability to attract younger readers to their newspaper. The CSM has a strong presence and wide readership among older age groups, however the company has not been successful in developing readership with younger generations.

The biggest problem that companies like the CSM are facing is the lack of readership from young adults. Kohurt (2002) studied the media habits of younger adults. This study came to the conclusion that these individuals are reading the same amount of material as other generations, however the literature they read comes in the form of books and magazines

instead of newspapers. This type of research is an indicator that younger generations no longer utilize news the same way that older generations have.

While there is data that shows how young adults are not utilizing newspapers as much as older generations, there is not much information as to why these generations have stopped reading newspapers as frequently. In an attempt to further research why such changes have occurred, our team sought answers to the following research questions:

Objective 1: What platforms would resonate with students to drive readership of the CSM?

Objective 2: Who are the opinion leaders? How important is it to be recommended by a professor to have students actually read?

Objective 3: What would be the marketing costs and potential subscription revenue for the Worcester, MA market?

Objective 4: Are there partnership opportunities to make this work? (Partner with campus paper, partner with educational distributor, partner with another news or other content provider)

Objective 5: What angle on the news are students looking for? Unbiased, multiple perspectives, how we are viewed from abroad, progress and hope orientation, etc.

Objective 6: Are there particular segments of students who may have an interest in news as part of their studies or as a way of becoming a more global citizen?

After our team answered these research questions our next task was to guide the CSM through explicit deliverables so they can counter the lack of readership in younger generations. Our team researched young adult readers, particularly college aged students, to identify habits in regards to the news and the media for this market segment. We focused on finding out information about college students' interaction with the news media. To do this our team conducted surveys, which were dispersed to college students from multiple colleges in the Worcester area. These surveys included students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, The College of the Holy Cross, Clark University, Assumption College, and Worcester State University. To further study the college student market we interviewed professors' as well as students throughout the Worcester area. We also conducted a focus group with students from WPI, which created powerful dialogue pertaining to media habits of the students. Finally, we conducted secondary research to obtain information that we could not obtain through communication with students or professors from the Worcester area. All of these techniques gave our team significant information pertaining to the media habits of college age students.

These methods taught us many things about college students and their news media habits. Whether it was discovering how students access the news, or who student opinion leaders are, we came to some significant conclusions. These conclusions allowed our team to develop a plan which we believe will help the CSM engage the college student market.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Background research into the use and importance of news in education was a necessity for our team to ensure that we collected useful data. The goal of our literature review was to comprehend what research had already been conducted, and to understand how we could further this research. We accomplished these goals by studying the importance of news in education and how it is currently being used in education. The major news sources currently in the education market were also important to our team in this research.

2.1 Importance of News in Education

2.1.1 News's Effect on Student Learning

The newspaper can be a powerful educational tool for students to further their own education. In 1997 Penn State president Graham B. Spanier established the Penn State Student Newspaper Readership Program, which offered their students USA Today, The New York Times, and a local paper at no additional cost to the student. The goal of the program was to "enhance the learning environment on campus; increase students' knowledge of community, national, and world events; to encourage a lifelong daily newspaper readership habit, and to create citizens who are more engaged in their local communities."("Newspaper Readership Program"). The data from the study showed an overwhelmingly strong relationship between reading the newspaper and developing cognitive skills, student's ability to articulate and discuss current events, and developing civic-mindedness ("Newspaper Readership Program"). In addition, Gardner and Sullivan (2004) states that the newspaper can also "Increase students' interest and

motivation by providing study materials relevant to their lives". In other words the newspaper can motivate students to become educated because the content is about events that are going on in their world right at that moment. Both of the articles mentioned above also state that if the newspaper is used in the classroom, then that increases the likelihood that the student will read it in the future.

2.1.2 News's Effect on Professors' Teaching

From personal experiences amongst our team, we have seen that professors can strive to find new ways to engage students. In their article, Baechold, Culross, and Gray (1986) discussed that professors often struggle to find relevant, interesting and timely material for their students to read. The article states that the use of News Magazines create a unique and effective approach because "of its versatility" (Baechold, Culross, & Gray, 1986, p. 304). Another benefit of teachers using the newspaper as a teaching tool is that it can provide help for other assignments. Wheeler and Wheeler (1938) explain in their article how professors can encourage their students to use newspapers as a reference tool for school projects and political debates. Overall, the effect that the news has on professors' teaching is providing a unique tool that enhances student engagement. The student skills that were previously mentioned such as developing cognitive skills, articulating current events and developing civic-mindedness, all benefit from the use of newspaper as a learning tool, and their school work overall can improve if it is used correctly as a reference.

2.1.3 How News Affects Social Dynamics in the Classroom

One of the many ways in which the news and the media affect education is by changing social behavior of students and teachers alike. The news and the media can be a large source of controversy within the classroom, due to the types of opinions that are formed from these sources. Alongi, Heddy, and Sinatra (2016) point out that political news has been seen as a source of media that affects social settings, as well as behaviors of students and teachers. However, researchers have uncovered that the effects of political news in education may be more positive than negative. According to Alongi, Heddy, and Sinatra (2016), controversy and problems arrive less frequently when political topics are taught thoroughly in the classroom. The findings of this study revealed that students who took the time to research political news were able to obtain more knowledge about politics. This led to more discussions and open mindedness within the classroom. Ultimately, the education of students with the news can create a social setting in which listening, learning, and reacting to other students opinions can occur.

In their study, Segall and Schmidt (2006), the use of newspaper within social studies is investigated. Segall and Schmidt examined how the use of the newspaper in a classroom can create a social setting that is accepting of opinions and discussion, or it can create a social setting that is the exact opposite. These two researchers found that when professors used the newspaper as a source of opinion instead of a source of "truth," students were more open to discussing and listening to the opinions of others, which led to critical thinking and deeper knowledge of the subject. However, Segall and Schmidt (2006) claim that when professors

attempt to use newspapers as a source of what is definitely true or untrue, it creates a social environment in which students do not develop critical thinking skills for themselves. The effects of the news on social settings and human behavior in the classroom are displayed effectively in these cases, with each showing a different effect on the environment.

2.1.4 How News Media Improves Learning and Teaching

The use of news platforms in education provides both professors and students with tools to enhance their learning and teaching abilities. Students engaging more thoroughly with news, and professors creating stronger learning environments because of the news are both examples of the news increasing the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom. A recent study conducted by UK professors, Jarman and McClun (2001), displays how scientific classrooms have used the news within their curriculum. These two professors studied the use of newspapers in educational classrooms involved in sciences of many different natures. What they concluded was that there is a prominent use of newspapers as an educational tool by professors. These professors used the newspaper in order to support classroom work and assignments. This not only helped professors prove to their students that the class teachings were relevant, but it allowed students to understand how the educational material can be applied outside the classroom. The authors conclude that the use of newspapers in the scientific classrooms can increase the quality of both teaching and learning.

Two members of our team have experienced the use of newspapers as a method of education in the classroom. The Introduction to Macroeconomics course at WPI requires students to familiarize themselves with Wall Street Journal news articles pertaining to money,

the economy, and other economic matters. This course, taught by Professor Michael Radzicki, requires students to engage with online news articles in order to participate in class, and answer questions on exams. Economic news angles have shown to be useful for business professors in the classroom, but there has also been history professors who have utilized news in their educational environments. Vercellotti and Matto (2016), professors at Western New England University and Rutgers University respectively, studied the effects of political news on students' knowledge in the classroom. They found a strong correlation in the growth of political knowledge for students who read and discussed political news as opposed to those who did not. This shows the powerful effect reading the news can have on students learning within the classroom.

2.2 Use of News Media in Education

2.2.1 Courses Using News Media in their Curriculum

The news and the media offer a variety of subject matter, which can be used by many different course types in education. Our team examined the WPI Course Catalog to identify the different types of courses that attempted to utilize the news media in their curriculum. The WPI course *Introduction to Macroeconomics*, is one example of news media being used in the classroom as each of our team members took the course. Though each team member took the course with different professors, we all utilized the news in some capacity within the course curriculum. The WPI course catalog provides descriptions of the hundreds of different classes that are offered to students throughout the academic year. *Spanish American Film/Media* is

described in the WPI course catalog as a course that uses news media within the curriculum. The course catalog description (2016) states,

"Through Latin American and Caribbean films, and other media sources, this course studies images, topics, and cultural and historical issues related to modern Latin American and the Caribbean. Within the context and influence of the New Latin American Cinema and/or within the context of the World Wide Web, radio, newspapers, and television the course teaches students to recognize cinematographic or media strategies of persuasion, and to understand the images and symbols utilized in the development of a national/regional identity. Among the topics to be studied are: immigration, gender issues, national identity, political issues, and cultural hegemonies."

The course description of the class *Introduction to American Studies* indicates that history classes, such as this one, may use news media within the class as well. The description from the WPI course catalog (2016) reads,

"This interdisciplinary course introduces students to a number of basic American Studies methodologies. Emphasis will vary according to the instructor, but usually the course will cover the following: the textual and contextual analysis (at the community, national, and transnational levels) of literary works; the relationships between the literary, performing, and visual arts in a specific time period; the analysis of radio, film, television, and digital media forms at the level of production and reception; the mediation and remediation of cultural, social, and political history."

Whether it was a business course such as *Introduction to Macroeconomics*, a history course like *Introduction to American Studies*, or even a language course like *Spanish American Film/Media: Cultural Issues*, we found that the news was something that many different course types used in their teachings. Each of these courses represents a different department within education that use news media in the classroom.

Outside of college communities in Worcester, and the United States, there is research that shows how educators everywhere attempt to incorporate news media in their classroom. UK professors Jarman and McClun (2001) are examples of scientific professors that utilized news media in their courses. These two professors studied the use of newspapers in scientific classrooms throughout the country of Ireland. These researchers concluded that throughout the country of Ireland, many professors in scientific fields apply news media in their courses. Whether it was using the newspaper as a major part of a project, or merely using it as part of a lecture, Jarman and McClun (2001) showed the value educators see in using the news in scientific courses. This study further backs the idea that many different types of courses successfully attempt to use the news in the classroom. It's clear through all of these studies that the news and the media are prominent tools in education that are used in a wide range of courses throughout the world.

2.2.2 News Angles Education

News angles are the different types of points or themes that a news story follows, for example politics, business, and sports, or biased and non-opinionated news. Individual courses rely on different types of news angles in order to educate their students. The *Introduction to*

Macroeconomics course at WPI requires students to familiarize themselves with news articles pertaining to money, the economy, and other economic matters. A business course such as this is going to find more benefits from reading economic news angles as opposed to sports angles or celebrity angles. However, we believe that not all courses use the same type of news angles within their curriculum.

In order to find the answer to this, our team conducted background research on the types of news angles that have been used as a pedagogical tool in education. Vercellotti and Matto (2016), used political news in their classes to drive student knowledge about politics. They were solely interested in using political news in their classroom, as it was the only relevant news angle for their teachings. Jarman and McClun (2001), found that science professors used only the scientific news angle in their course and lectures.

"The learning Network," a popular section within the New York Times published a study conducted at The Bank Street College of Education in New York City. This journalism exercise required students to research the coverage of the immigrant's rights demonstrations in May 2006. Students were encouraged to read an article on the subject that was provided by the facilitators, Annissa Hambouz and Bridget Anderson. Next they would do further research in the New York Times database to see the other angles and stances that were taken by publishers within the newspaper regarding the demonstrations. This is another example of how professors can utilize a variety of different news angles within their educational settings.

2.2.3 The Opinion Leaders for Media in Education

According to Valente and Pumpuang (2007, p.105), "opinion leaders are people who influence the opinions, attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and behavior of others." Valente and Pumpuang are professors at the University of Southern California, Alhambra, and they conducted a study about opinion leaders and behavior change. It is important to understand just how big of an effect opinion leaders can have on those around them. Valente and Pumpuang (2007) stated that one type of opinion leader is someone who is considered an opinion leader based on their position or occupation. This is the category of opinion leader in which a college professor would fall under. Through this study Valente and Pumpuang (2007), also note that this type of opinion leader tends to have more power than others as they are agreed on by society to be in this role. When connecting this to the idea that professors can use the news and the media as an educational tool, they become extremely powerful in influencing young minds. This means if a professor sees some section within the news or the media that they feel is accurate, and decide to use it as a teaching tool, it could have an impact on the students in the classroom. As opinion leaders in education, professors have to understand that their feelings towards news media have a strong impact on their students' thoughts.

Professor Larry Braskamp from Loyola University Chicago, studied how professors are impactful leaders within education. Being a leader means that you are affecting the opinions of others, whether the leader has the desire to do so or not. Braskamp (2009), explains how professors cannot escape the fact that students view them as mentors. This puts a tremendous

amount of pressure on professors, as they end up playing an enormous role in the development of student's critical thinking and observational techniques.

In addition to professors, there are others opinion leaders in college aged students' lives. Andrews, Tildesley, Hops, and Li (2002), examined the effect peers had on the opinions and actions of young adolescents, aged 19-25, in regards to drugs and alcohol. They found a strong correlation in the uses, misuses, and opinions on these substances by young adults and their peers. Essentially these researchers found that peers have a strong impact on the opinions and actions of young adults. With the knowledge that peers play a strong role as opinion leaders on young adolescents, our team began to research whether parents could also be viewed as opinion leaders. Jennings and Niemi (1968) researched the types of effects parents political views can have on their early adolescent children. The results of this study indicated that parents do have a strong influence on the views and opinions of their children. This means that college aged students are more likely to be affected by their parents opinions than others in their life.

2.3 Major Players in the News Education Media Market

The research presented above indicates that students who use various types of sources for reading gain more in depth knowledge and ultimately a better understanding of the subject. A great tool for attaining this type of deep understanding and background knowledge is when students read current news or media sources. While there are so many great features that come from using newspapers in academics, it is also important to know the best news sources and major players in the news media education market.

We have also conducted a benchmark study including information relating to the major news outlets that were talked about in section 2.3. The benchmark study covers various topics such as the product offerings, platforms used, and distribution method. The benchmark showed us that The Wall Street Journal was the most expensive in comparison to the Boston Globe and New York Times. See Appendix B for details.

When it comes to integrating current events and news into the classroom discussion, some of the most widely circulated newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal (1,340,000 in circulation) New York Times (2,100,000 in circulation), and Boston Globe (382,000 local circulation) can be effective sources ("http://www.cision.com/us/2014/06/top-10-us-daily-newspapers/"). These news and media outlets are powerhouses outside of the education market which is why they're so appealing to assimilate into the education market. Although these media outlets are similar in some ways, they offer different prices and products to their consumers.

2.3.1 The Wall Street Journal in Education

The Wall Street Journal currently offers their newspaper for all levels of education exclusive to students and teachers. The Wall Street Journal offers both unlimited digital access and print delivery in one bundle. This bundle is for students and costs either $15.00 for 15 weeks or $49.00 for one year. Students also have the option of paying weekly at a rate of 1$ per week.

The Wall Street Journal also offers three months of complimentary digital access and a $25 Amazon gift card (if 25 or more students subscribe) as an incentive for professors to get

students to subscribe. Along with the digital access and newspaper bundle the Wall Street Journal also offers weekly tests pertaining to the assigned Wall Street Journal reading each week as a tool to gauge student understanding of the articles (https://store.wsj.com/v2/shop/60616004?inttrackingCode=aaqntpz8&icid=WSJ_ON_NA_ACQ _DSM).

To market these types of deals the Wall Street Journal targets professors with letters that contain pamphlets outlining the benefits of using the Wall Street Journal in class as well as order forms for students. There is also an online learning management software program that organizes professor's quizzes and makes it easy to see trends in student learning. The particular segments and classes that the Wall Street Journal targets include:

- Business Law & Ethics

- Entrepreneurship

- Finance

- Human Resources/Organizational Behavior

- Information Technology

- International Business

- Introduction to Business

- Leadership

- Macroeconomics

- Microeconomics

- Marketing

- Operations Management

- Political Science

- Strategic Management

2.3.2 The New York Times in Education

Similar to the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times offers special deals and prices for the news and media education market.   As teachers and professors started to understand the value of using news and media outlets in education, the New York Times started to offer several deals in order to move into the academic market ("www.nytimes.com/subscription"). Currently they have separate offers for students, faculty, and Universities.

In terms of students, the New York Times offers weekly unlimited digital access to the NYTimes.com and New York Times apps for just 1$ per week. This is a subscription and the $1 charge reoccurs each week until cancelled. For faculty the cost for unlimited digital access to the NYTimes.com and New York Times apps is $5 for 12 weeks and then $1.88 reoccurring each week after the 12-week period ends ("www.nytimes.com/subscription"). If either faculty or student would rather have a print copy then they would have to order so individually, but would receive a 50% discount on the print copy as well as unlimited access to the NYTimes.com and New York Times apps. If a student or faculty member prefers print, the exact price for print varies based upon where you live. The delivery options for the print copy include: 7-day (Monday- Sunday) delivery, Friday-Sunday, Monday-Friday, and Sunday Only; each one lowering price in succession.

In addition to both faculty and student options, the New York Times offers various options to Universities and Colleges as a whole. The first is in the form of an academic site license which provides campus wide access to all student and staff. This includes obtaining access the New York Times website and apps from any location on or off campus. The pricing for this is not set or specific and varies depending on factors such as campus size and location. Another option for universities is to allow Group Access to the New York Times websites and apps. This is more exclusive than the campus wide access as it only allows a certain department or pre-selected group of students and faculty to access New York Times content. How the selected groups gain access can be structured to the university's desires. Like campus wide access, the pricing for group access various depending on the size of the group and location ("http://nytimesineducation.com/?campaignId=3LF9W"). Another product that the New York Times offers to universities is their Readership Program. This program provides copies of New York Times in bulk to campus locations based upon the university's needs. They could be delivered to academic buildings, residence halls, or even dining halls. Along with the printed copy comes passes that allow access to the NYTimes.com and some select apps at no additional cost. The main avenues for the New York Times to distribute their content include online articles, print, and mobile applications.

The New York Times motto is "All the News That's Fit to Print," meaning they cover all types of news, which gives them a broad spectrum of education types to target, ranging from engineering to liberal arts schools.(http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/york-times-used-slogan-20412.html). They offer opportunities for universities to use their content, which in turn has given them a good hold on the news and

media education market. To promote their offers the New York Times often approaches administration directly.

2.3.3 The Boston Globe in Education

In the heart of the Northeast where there are countless Colleges and Universities the Boston Globe is the most circulated Massachusetts newspaper ("http://www.cision.com/us/2010/05/top-10-daily-massachusetts-newspapers/"). The Boston Globe does not give a specific offer for students, professors, or universities but states that the print version newspaper can be delivered to your classroom for 50% less than the regular price. You need to call a specific number in order to gain more information and exact pricing. The Boston Globe also offers a reduced rate for print delivery if students at colleges and universities are located within New England.

2.4 Conclusion

In summary, currently, news in education is being used in many different ways for specific curriculums. Whether it is a business professor having students read economic articles for tests, or a history professor attempting to have their students familiarize themselves with political topics, it is clear that news is used in education. The Christian Science Monitor has opportunities to integrate their newspapers into colleges and universities alike. There is a clear and consistent demand for news access in order to educate students, which is exactly what the CSM is looking to capitalize on. News and media continues to play a big role in how Universities attempt to educate their students.

News is used in many different ways in today's education systems. After conducting research and speaking with peers, it appears that all forms of news are used in a wide range of courses and curriculums. It is used in Finance, Journalism, History, Philosophy, and many other subjects. One thing that seems to be consistent is that the news can be a very powerful tool for professors. By helping students read and understand the news, and the various angles it presents, students are able to better comprehend different subjects and matters that are occurring in our world today. Though professors seem to be the most obvious opinion leader when it comes to suggesting news and media sources, an opinion leader can also come from a friend, coach, or family member.

Now that we have gained sufficient knowledge pertaining to news and education; we next further our knowledge through primary research including surveys, interviews, and focus groups of college students and professors.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The ultimate goal of our project was to develop a marketing plan to increase readership of the CSM within college students.

The CSM employees that we met with explained that currently the Monitor's audience is mostly affluent adults between the ages of 35 and 55, and the website consistently attracts millions of readers each month. In the past, the CSM was involved with college campuses and had professors assuring students of their unbiased and thought provoking articles. This connection to colleges and their students has almost gone as the Monitor has aged with their readers, leaving younger generations behind. Their focus today is to attract young adult readers (18 – 25 years old college students), to build readers for the future. Our team focused on researching college students and professors to discover reasons for the decline of the CSM's readership among young adults. Our team included both quantitative and qualitative data in order to truly understand the problem and to make recommendations about engaging students with the Christian Science Monitor. In order to obtain this data our team used secondary research, surveyed a sample population of students at WPI, conducted a student focus group, and interviewed college professors and students in the Worcester area. We carried out each of the six objectives so that we could accomplish the goal of creating a marketing plan for the CSM which would ultimately attract more college students in the ages 18-25 to the newspaper. Therefore, we mapped the objectives with the respective research methods ensuring triangulation of methods and addressing each objective (see Table 1).

Table 1: Methods and Research Questions

	Objective One	Objective Two	Objective Three	Objective Four	Objective Five-	Objective Six
Surveys	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interviews	X	X	X	X	X	X
Focus Group	X	X	X	X	X	X
Secondary Research	X		X	X	X	

3.1 Secondary Research

Secondary data not only offers valuable information to researchers, but it requires less time to obtain and analyze than actually gathering the information from a primary source, as the information is already available. It is important to take advantage of secondary research as most secondary data was originally generated through primary research done elsewhere (Hague, Hague, & Morgan, 2004). Secondary research is a vital source of data that allowed our team to gain a deeper understanding of how other newspapers are operating in the education industry, and how they attempt to maintain readership from college students. Our teams' secondary research also allowed us to look at competitors and analyze some of their student offerings, marketing strategies, and how they were able to reach partnerships with colleges and

universities, which is a rich source of data about the CSM's competitors in the education market (Hague, Hague, & Morgan, 2004). This gave our team an opportunity to see how The Christian Science Monitor compares to other newspapers such as The Boston Globe, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Times. The secondary research collected also allowed our team to gain a deeper understanding of and valuable insights into some of the marketing tools and techniques that these competitors are using to drive readership in college students such as, universities packages, student monthly discounts, or other opportunities.

Our team wanted to learn this information because we want to learn the ways that the Christian Science Monitor's competitors market to the world of education. Whether it be to students or straight to the universities, this knowledge will enable us to find a unique strategy that fits the Monitor's style and budget. We believe that secondary research helped us answer four of our six major research questions. The first was figuring out what platforms college students mainly get their news from, whether it be an app, online website, print, or other news media outlets. The second question it helped us answer was figuring out the potential marketing costs for the CSM if they decide to come to the Worcester college community. The third was partnership opportunities. Using secondary research conducted on the CSM's competitors to see how they partnered with colleges and universities. The fourth and last question secondary research helped us answer was finding what news angles college students and professors are particularly interested in.

There are, however, certain limitations of using secondary research according to Stewart and Michael (1993). For example, the secondary research may not exactly address our

team's research questions. Another downfall of secondary research is that the quality of the research could be questionable, or outdated. Our team addressed these concerns with secondary data by using reputable search engines such as Google scholar, and Gordon Library databases such as JSTOR. They are both great resources for finding reliable research studies and statistics, and both are commonly recommended by professors. As far as outdated sources go, unless it was during a time where news in the education market or classroom did not exist, we thought any study regarding the use of news in the classroom could be very useful for us. We thought this because any information on how news can effect students in the classroom will be important for us to understand regardless of time period.

3.2 Surveys

Rea and Parker (2014) state that surveys are a powerful tool as they allow researchers to let the information derived from a sample accurately represent the entire population. Our team understands that trying to gain insight into the entire population of college students in the U.S. and around the world is a challenge. For this project we focused on the population of college students in the age group of 18-25 years in Worcester, MA to represent the Massachusetts education market. Distributing our survey online offered many advantages for our team. Foremost, it is the simplest way to reach a large group of people in a small amount of time. There is also increased accuracy with online surveys compared to paper ones as the information is stored directly into the data analysis system. The data analysis system that comes with conducting an online survey is efficient and makes it simple to analyze data and devise conclusions. In addition to these advantages, using an online survey is free and allowed

us to obtain a wide variety of opinions because it is an unobtrusive method (Bethlehem & Biffignandi, 2012).

In order to establish a proper sample for a survey, three needs must be met concerning the population. These needs include identifying a target population, gathering a population list or sampling frame, and selecting the sample (Salant & Dillman, 2004). Our team recognized our target population as college students in the age group of 18-25 years. The population list consists of the people to whom the survey was sent to, and for this research project it was the entirety of the WPI, Clark, and Holy Cross student body. We targeted these three colleges because they represent a wide variety of majors and demographics which provided us diverse survey data. Finally, our survey sample was chosen through voluntary sampling. Essentially voluntary sampling is when the person taking the survey chooses to do so on their own accord ("http://stattrek.com/survey-research/sampling-methods.aspx?Tutorial=AP"). Voluntary sampling was advantageous to us because it was quick and easy to find people to create a sample. One of the downsides of voluntary sampling is that we as researchers have no control over the sample. To combat this weakness we decided to send the survey out to a variety of colleges in the Worcester area in order to reach a larger population. We aimed to gather a sample size of 250 college student's ages 18-25 years old regardless of race, gender, or academic background. At the end of the survey, students were asked their major, gender, age, race, clubs or activities, and class in order to gather more specific data pertaining to sample demographics. These questions were optional. The students were also offered an incentive i.e., to enter into a raffle by submitting their email ID at the end of the survey; which was also optional. Incentives acted as motivation to gather as many responses as possible. Besides the

alternative of students submitting their email for the gift card raffle, the survey was anonymous and it was clear that the student's survey will in no way be linked to his or her name. The logic behind this was so that we get the best and most accurate portrayal of the Massachusetts college population and what they truly thought. Once we obtained the desired responses of 250 students we analyzed the data. A detailed sample description is provided in chapter four.

In order to recruit students we sent out emails to the student bodies of the three colleges we are targeting (See Appendix C). The survey was designed in Qualtrics (a survey design and distribution software application) and will be sent to students via a web link in the introduction email.

The survey that was sent out allowed our team to gather enough information to begin thinking about reasons as to why readership and use of the CSM with college students is low, and how to combat this problem (See Appendix D). The quantitative data that resulted from this survey helped our team generalize the thoughts and ideas of the college student population in Worcester. This survey helped to provide concrete evidence that pertains to answering the question of why readerships among college students is so low. The purpose of our survey was to aggregate data that will help to answer several of the research questions that the Christian Science Monitor has provided us pertaining to platforms, opinion leaders, partnership opportunities, news angles, student segments, and potential revenue.

3.3 Interviews

Surveys provide powerful quantitative data, however quantitative data is not the only type of information available to researchers. Qualitative data provides researchers with an opportunity to immerse themselves in the script of their questions, and interpret data without using quantitative analysis tools (Hague, Hague, & Morgan, 2004, p. 176). Data, such as body language, that cannot be derived through simple statistics are possible to obtain with the use of interviews. The tools that researchers use in interviews include asking well organized questions, reading body language, asking follow-up questions, probing in-depth on the subject for more information. These tools, if applied properly, will bring impactful data to studies.

Interviews can be conducted in person or over the phone, with each method having unique strengths and weaknesses. Salant and Dillman (1994) explain that the prompt collection of results, as well as the ability to reach a population that does not reside in the areas close to the researcher are among the top strengths of phone surveys. The most relevant weakness of phone interviews is the inability to have any human interface, which is something that face-to-face interviews capitalize on. We attempted to only conduct face-to-face interviews, however we were unable to do so on some occasions, so we conducted Skype interviews instead. This allowed our team to still see and recognize some of the behavioral actions of the subject during the interview. Face-to-face interviews provide researchers with an opportunity to observe and react to any human emotion, whether it is physical or verbal. While this is a fundamental characteristic of this type of interview, Salant and Dillman (1994) are quick to note that the factor of time for both the researcher and the population being interviewed is a strong

deterrent. The interviews our team conducted with University professors and college students were only in the Worcester area. By interviewing only students and professors in the Worcester area we avoided the time deterrent, or at the very least, minimized the issue.

Our interview sample consisted of professors belonging to different departments, professors teaching different courses, and professors who use or don't use media in their classrooms as a pedagogical tool. We also interviewed students from different Universities that all were apart of different academic departments. By interviewing a variety of professors we were able to assure that our project best represents all college professors and students in the Worcester area. We provided these professors and students with assurance that their information will remain anonymous through our interview protocol (See Appendix E and Appendix F). To reach out to professors we utilized a recruitment email (Appendix G), but in order to reach out to students we used a different technique. Since we knew many students in the Worcester area, we decided to contact them directly instead of using a recruitment email. This was effective for us during our data collection process as we didn't lose time communicating through email.

The structure of interviews can vary from structured, to semi-structured, to un-structured. Structured interviews occur when researchers provide close-ended or prompted questions, while unstructured interviews consist entirely of open-ended questions that allow respondents to express their answers however they desire, while semi-structured interviews utilize a combination of both techniques (Hague, Hague, & Morgan, 2004, p. 100). Structured interviews can be useful when conducting surveys that require many respondents, however,

they normally do not provide in depth responses. On the other end of the spectrum are unstructured interviews, which give respondents the freedom and flexibility to answer questions to the magnitude that they wish. However, unstructured interviews can require much more time, which in turn makes them a more expensive and time consuming option. Finally semi-structured interviews fall in between both of these options while they attempt to collect both qualitative and quantitative answers. In attempting to come to a decision on the methods of an interview or survey all of this information is imperative.

Depth, legitimacy, and a greater accuracy in answers to questions are three of the advantages of using face-to-face interviews in market research (Hague, Hague, & Morgan, 2004, p. 124). The advantage of collecting in depth answers from interviews is that researchers are not limited to one-word answers such as "yes" or "no." The depth of answers allows respondents to elaborate on how they feel about the question, which in turn provides much more detailed information for the study. Legitimacy of answers refers to the idea that respondents willing to participate in interviews care enough about some aspect of the study to accurately respond to the questions. Finally, interviews provide a greater accuracy than surveys as respondents have time to reflect, and give a well thought response to the questions asked. The decision to conduct phone interviews or face-to-face interviews was made with the understanding that our team has the time and resources to conduct individual interviews. This eliminated the biggest weakness of face-to-face interviews while still allowing our team to analyze all of the qualitative results from the interviews.

The strengths of interviews left our team convinced that they would supply a plethora of information that would facilitate our research, and help us answer the research questions presented. The specific questions that were answered through the student and professor interviews are the ones regarding platforms, opinion leaders, partnership opportunities, news angles, student segments, and potential revenue. The professors and students that our team interviewed are displayed in the Tables 2 and 3 respectively. The names given are hypothetical in order to protect the privacy of the respondents. The information provided is accurate for each individual from the sample, except the names used are hypothetical in order to protect the identity of the individuals.

Table 2: Professor Interview Sample

Name	Gender	School	Department	Experience (Years)
Professor Jones	Male	WPI	Business	6
Professor Miller	Male	WPI	History	24
Professor Smith	Male	Assumption	Business	6
Professor Brown	Female	Holy Cross	History	11
Professor Thompson	Male	Clark/Harvard	Business	8
Professor Lee	Female	WPI	Business	9

Table 3: Student Interview Sample

Name	Gender	School	Major	Graduation Year
Sally	Female	Assumption	Elementary Education	2017
John	Male	WPI	Mechanical Engineer	2017
Dan	Male	Assumption	Environmental Science	2018
Hannah	Female	Holy Cross	Political Science, Art History	2017
Eric	Male	WPI	Mechanical Engineer	2017

3.4 Focus Group

Focus Groups are a popular technique for gathering qualitative data across many different research fields. The qualitative data that focus groups offer is rich in words and descriptions rather than numbers (Hague, Hague, & Morgan, 2004). In order to thoroughly answer our research questions we could not solely obtain quantitative data, which is why we chose to pursue focus groups along with our other techniques. It was necessary in our research to find out things such as how college students obtain news, who the opinion leaders are for these students, whether there are partnership opportunities that can be capitalized on, and what types of news angles students are looking for. Focus groups allowed our team to obtain research from a group of students, of different demographics, at once. By conducting focus groups we gained a plethora of information that will best help our team answer our research questions when we begin analyzing the information. To assure all focus group participants maintained anonymity and proper focus group etiquette we utilized a focus group protocol (See

Appendix H) .Table 4 below shows each of the participants (with hypothetical names) from the

focus group that we conducted. As displayed, the group consisted of members that were

seniors, juniors, and sophomores, while being split between males and females. To recruit all

focus group participants we utilized a recruitment email (See Appendix I).

Table 4: Student Focus Group Sample

Name	Gender	School	Major	Graduation Year
Mike	Male	WPI	Mechanical Engineer	2017
Ann	Female	WPI	Biology, Biotechnology	2017
Jason	Male	WPI	Management Engineer	2017
Audrey	Female	WPI	Industrial Engineer	2019
Jeff	Male	WPI	Mechanical Engineer	2017
Melissa	Female	WPI	Management Engineer	2018

According to George (2013), focus groups are best utilized when they are combined with

other techniques used in market research. This research technique not only allows for

moderators to dig deeper while asking questions, but they also allow for participants to react to

the comments and statements of others. This created a powerful tool that researchers like us

were able to utilize, which allowed us to compare these findings to what we find in interviews

and the survey. Another particular benefit that focus groups provide researchers with is the

ability to obtain a large amount of data on particular opinions and attitudes that may be

difficult to obtain elsewhere (Masadeh, 2012). This means that focus groups can help

researchers generalize the types of opinions that a large segment of a population has. This is

exactly what our team capitalized on when we were trying to find answers to who the opinion

leaders are for students, and what types of platforms students get their news from.

While focus groups have many benefits and strengths, there are some aspects of this

research technique that may not help our team as much as other techniques. Masadeh (2012),

stated that focus groups alone cannot accurately enough represent an entire population

without other data. This is something that our team looked into as we did not want to merely

collect data from a small segment of the population that may not reflect the thoughts of a

larger group of people. This is why we will employ other techniques such as interviews and

surveys to go along with focus groups. By cross-examining the information we receive from

both interviews, surveys, and focus groups we should be able to make powerful estimations

from the data. One other concern that has been argued about focus groups is that the data is

not necessarily easy for researchers to analyze. We avoided this issue by following up with

students during the focus group, as well as comparing the information collected in the focus

group to the data from our student interviews. This allowed our team to effectively analyze the

focus group data.

Overall there are many benefits to utilizing focus groups in market research. While there

are certainly detriments, our team feels that the benefits, and our other techniques helped to

diminish these worries. As we conducted our focus group in a manner that was organized and

effective, we obtained specific data that will help our team answer our research questions.

Each method we used provided us with valuable data and information that we will use to make recommendations. Each method has shown us varying informational results, but there was also similarities throughout the different methods we used. Obtaining these results through various lenses ranging from interviews to surveys allowed us to more completely understand themes and concepts that will in turn aid in completing our objectives. Next we decided to apply Operations and Project Management concepts, in order to best organize the completion of this project. The best way we could do this was to create a Gantt chart. The Gantt chart allowed us to track our progress more easily and provide clarity to the entire team in term of their responsibilities. The accountability and efficiency that the Gantt chart provides us will allow us to achieve our objectives. (see link:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B2Jim5FFYXwDT1hUVFlEanNaM0U).

Chapter Four: Findings

The research we conducted gave our team extensive data, which allowed us to answer most of our research questions. Through focus groups, student Interviews, professor interviews, and a survey we were able to collect enough information to provide the CSM with strong recommendations.

4.1 Platforms

To identify the different types of platforms that college age students use to access the news, we identified trends from all of our research tools. We found that:

1. Students access the news the easiest way that they can.

2. There is a minimal use of non-internet news sources with students.

3. Social media is a powerful and highly utilized source for accessing news.

All of these findings are backed by specific data from our research.

4.2 Ease of Use

Through our interviews of both professors and students we gained qualitative data that displayed how college aged students access the news. Dan, a junior studying environment science at Assumption College stated,

"My schedule is pretty packed with sports and school, so I don't really have time to watch news on the TV. It's just easy to take a look at my phone because it's always on me... I just prefer it [to use a mobile device] for news because it is right there at the click of a button."

John, a Mechanical Engineering major at WPI said, "Everyone nowadays is using their phones and mobile applications for news." This type of information shows-that students are accessing the news in the most convenient way that they can. The survey showed that almost 83% of the respondents access the news online or through a website (see Figure 4). It is clear that ease of access is a vital factor in determining the platforms that students obtain news.
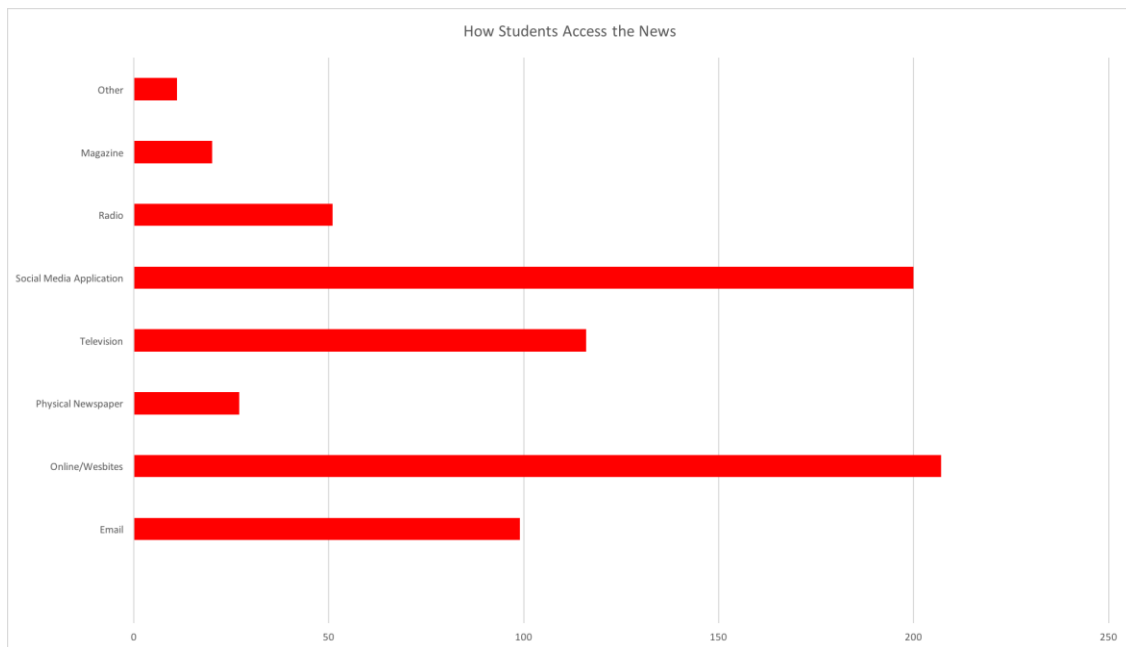
Figure 4: Bar Graph Depicting Student Media Usage

4.3 Internet Sources

Our findings showed that the internet, in some capacity, was the most important source of accessing news for students with 207 out of 250 students saying they used the internet to get news. This might be an explanation for why news sources such as print media and television are being less utilized by college-aged students. Professor Thompson, a business professor at Clark University and Harvard University, claimed, "Direct print media is no longer effective. It's

too slow, too cumbersome, and too expensive for students." This data not only shows how print media is no longer effective, but it also shows the ease of use factor that comes into play when identifying how students access the news.

Student's lack of interest in non-internet sources was very evident from each of the interviews we conducted. Non-internet sources include things such as television, print news, and any news that is not accessed on the news. John said, "I don't go out and watch TV that much. I do not subscribe to any newspaper, and for me, I'm too young to read the newspaper." He went as far as to claim that, "No one (I know) really watches news stations anymore." One question our team posed for students was whether they read the newspaper in any sort of capacity. Our results demonstrated that over 53% of the students interviewed never read the newspaper. All of the evidence we obtained shows students access the news via internet sources strictly.

4.4 Social Media

Our last finding about news platforms was that social media is a powerful tool that is frequently used by students. Social media is any website that allows users to share content and communicate over the internet or an application. Some examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Countless students, and even some professors, claimed that social media provides them with access to the news. From what our team gathered in our research we concluded that news articles being posted on social media platforms were widely accessed by students and professors. John professed, "I go on Twitter because it has a lot of

news," and "I would say that I get most of my (news) from social media websites." A

mechanical engineering student at WPI named Eric claimed,

"Twitter, if you follow news stations, will give you everything you need quick and easy. I

don't want to search through different channels on the TV to find different stations, so I just go

on Twitter to find news right away. This is the easiest way for me to get information"

The student interviews gave our team evidence that social media, specifically Twitter, is

used frequently by students to obtain news. This was also proved through our survey, which

showed that 64% of the 237 students who responded to our question asking how they access

the news, claimed they use social media applications as a means to accessing news (see Figure

5). It was clear from our research that students use social media applications to access the
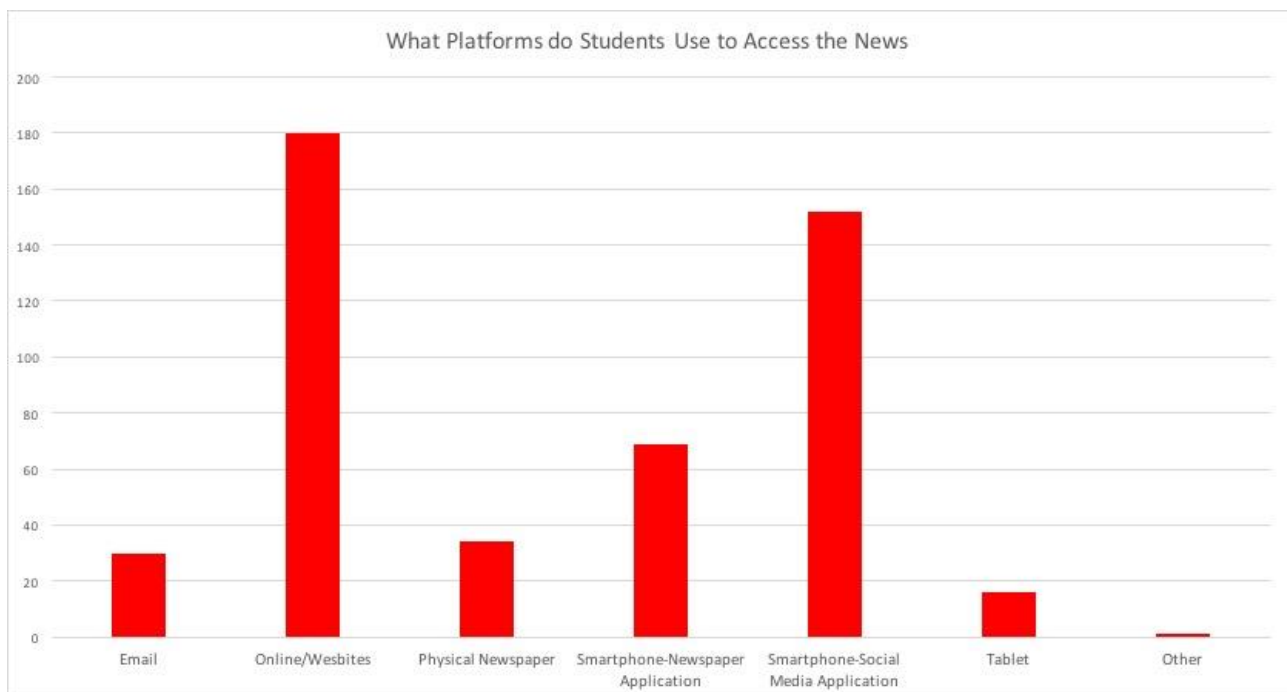
news.

Figure 5: Bar Graph Depicting Student Platform Usage

4.5 News Angles

Researching the types of news angles that students are looking for was very interesting for our team. The reason for this was that we came to some conclusions that we anticipated, and some that we were surprised by. We anticipated that students would express their desire to access unbiased and multiple perspective news angles, which we were able to validate. However, we unexpectedly found that when reading about sports or entertainment students did not care much about biases. Our team had assumed that no matter what students would always prefer to read unbiased and factual news, but in some cases they brought up good reasons to prefer other news angles. We collected a lot of data to back these findings, which will be helpful in recommending a course of action for the CSM.

The data that our team collected explicitly showed that students want to access news sources that are unbiased. Not only did the students themselves state that they preferred this, but our interviews with professors led us to the same conclusion. In response to being asked what news angles he found more important, Dan explained,

"It really depends on what I'm reading. I think reading unbiased news about current events is important so I can come to my own conclusions on the specific matter. So I would say unbiased news is important for more serious topics. But for sports I like opinionated news because it's not really important, it's just for pleasure."

Hannah, a political science and art history major at the College of the Holy Cross stated, "I definitely see the most benefit coming from an unbiased, factual angle." Clearly this is

evidence that students seek unbiased news angles when reading about current events, world news, and political news. Professor Thompson proclaimed, "My students prefer unbiased news as they do not want a political spin on their news angles." Not only did our interviews yield data that brings us to this conclusion, but our survey did as well. Over 82% of the 250 students interviewed stated that they are looking for unbiased news, while the next highest percentage was 58% of students saying they wanted multiple perspective news. After analyzing this data we came to the clear conclusion that students seek unbiased news over anything else.

The finding that we did not anticipate was that students, while reading particular news, do enjoy reading other types of news angles. While there was less data collected that pointed towards these findings, it was still evident in the student interviews. Eric talked about the opportunity to get ideas from other people's thinking and they said, "I find it important sometimes just to see how other people think instead of getting unbiased information." While this doesn't explicitly say that they dislike unbiased news, the student clearly saw value in accessing opinionated news. Eric later said, "If I am looking for entertainment then I'm not opposed to like a humorous angle or bias." This was a different example of a student showing that in certain cases they are ok with a news angle that could be bias. Dan also professed, "I like opinionated news for sports because it is not really serious topics but more for pleasure." All of these quotes suggest that in certain cases students do access news that is not unbiased. However, the majority of the findings we came to showed us that Students prefer unbiased news with multiple perspectives.

4.6 Opinion Leaders

The news can reach people in a variety of ways. It can come from the newspaper, surfing the internet, or a text from a friend saying "hey check this out!" followed by a link to some bizarre article from The Onion. The latter of the three is the one that interested our team the most. Through our research and data collection, we sought to understand who influenced college students the most in their media habits. We call these people opinion leaders. In our interviews, focus group, and survey we asked students who the most influential people were when it came to seeking out news sources. Was it a professor? Or was it a parent or family member?

After careful data analysis we found the following: the three main opinion leaders we found were family, friends, and professors. In the instance of family, to be more specific, it was either a parent or grandparent that made the suggestion. One student from our focus group, Jeff who's a mechanical engineer at WPI, stated that he learned about the news from "talking to his grandfather about it because he is really into it." When it came to parents our survey showed that 17% of students are extremely likely to view a specific news source or article if their parents recommended it, and 50% are somewhat likely to view the source.

When friends were discussed in our data collection process they were referred to as an interesting version of an opinion leader. A lot of students did say that they get news suggestions from their friends, but the students seemed to take their friends opinion and source and use the two to come up with their own opinion on the subject. A senior engineering student, Ann, from WPI said, "I try to take the opinions of everyone around me [on the topic]

into consideration, and then see how my opinion differs from theirs." Then Melissa, another student in the focus group, stated that they like "the popular interest among friends" who also share the same major as them. After looking at our survey, 20% of the respondents said they were extremely likely to view the news source if it was suggested by a friend, and 54% said they were somewhat likely. By comparing that to the survey responses about parents as opinion leaders, friends seem to be a bit more influential than parents in the media habits of college students.

The last of the three major opinion leaders are Professors. Professors are common opinion leaders due to the fact they have total control over their classroom and what the learning tools, and required text will be for their courses. Therefore, when students get required text from professors or suggestions for text that will aid them in the course they read the material. From the responses in the student survey, the most popular answer was that students are somewhat likely to view a news source when recommended by a professor at 52%. The second was somewhat unlikely at 12%, and extremely likely at 10%. We think that the extremely likely category was not higher due to the fact that students' interest in the course varies. Professor Miller from WPI History Department that we interviewed had this to say about his influence on students and dealing with the varying interest:

"Yeah I think that if I have a class of 30 students I think one third really plays the game and plays my game and gets excited to see the value and the learning they're getting. Another 30% is just going through the motions of finding articles and probably the last third is like 'I wish

[Professor] would think of something else I don't really see the point here.' But hey it's the top third that really excites me."

Last part of this finding is a quote from Dan's student interview that we believe summarizes the varying interest levels and influence of professors as opinion leaders. The quote reads: "Maybe if I respected the professor and I liked the professor enough, yeah I would take a look at it. But, I usually just stick to the sources that I have because that's what I like."

4.7 Partnership Opportunities

Another goal of our team was to find out if partnership opportunities with colleges and universities could be a lucrative possibility for the CSM. We handled this research in two ways. The first way was asking students and professors through interviews, and a student survey, what their views are on the effects that a partnership with a newspaper would have on the academic environment of their school. The second was to do secondary research on newspapers that have successfully secured partnerships with universities, and what the benefits of that partnership are. Being partnered with a university will certainly help get the name out there, but we wanted to know if there were any tangible benefits that make it worthwhile.

First we will start with the professor and student interviews. The overall consensus from the interviews seemed to be that a partnership would not be beneficial. One student in our focus group alluded to the fact that even though the subscription or paper would be free, they did not think it would be effective because, "It seems inconvenient based on the current

time commitments college students have." A professor from Clark University shared her thoughts on whether or not students would be interested in a free subscription to a paper from the University: ""Absolutely not. I don't think any student that I know of would actually subscribe or have it delivered to them (any type of magazine or newspaper)." Despite the general consensus being negative towards the partnership some people were optimistic about its potential, particularly one Assumption professor. This professor stated:

> "Yeah maybe that could be an easier way to fit information. At the same time, I'm thinking out loud here, for example there could be a lower subscription rate to the wall street journal or fortune and some of their business periodicals. Definitely with the online content and the online component, and maybe the department or the major and specifically [I am] thinking marketing should have access. You know again [I am] thinking out loud in todays world we have anything and everything and maybe each department, or major, or program and identifying key sources of information and making it cost effective for the students to access those sources that could be good. "

This shows that there is potential for the partnerships but even then the ability to make it beneficial for all parties seems bleak with this professor alluding to lowering the subscription rate.

Out of the professors we interviewed, WPI professors knew about solid partnerships they had with newspapers. In WPI's case they recently added a free subscription to the New York Times from the Foise Business School. Both Clark and Assumption, at least to the knowledge of the professors we interviewed, did not have solid partnerships with an outside

newspaper. Looking to our secondary research, the article *The Media Business: Press; Fearful of Losing the Young, Newspapers Look to Schools,* explains how the New York Times began to revamp its readership amongst young readers in 1989. The campaign was launched as "more of a promotional campaign program than an educational effort." (Scardino, 1989). The program was focused on schools in the Northeast, and from the recent partnership with WPI's Foise Business School this year (almost 30 years later), our team believes that the campaign effort is still very alive. We believe that the Monitor could benefit from such a campaign if executed properly. By that I mean the right schools are chosen to partner with, and the budget is manageable along with clear benefits for both parties.

4.8 Student Segments

We found information that translated across student and professor opinions, this consensus has led us to believe that the data is comprehensive and viable when making recommendations pertaining to student How involved students are with reading the news depends mostly on a student's major., In our interviews with college professors from various backgrounds we discovered that the correlation between major and frequency toward reading news was evident in the minds of professors. One WPI professor mentioned that "business students use sources in and out of the classroom." The theme of business students being more aware and involved in reading news was reoccurring across all of the interviews conducted with professors. Another recurring theme derived from ~~the~~ professor interviews was that graduate students use news sources more than undergraduate students. A professor from Harvard stated that "Graduate students use news sources more extensively than undergraduate

students." This made sense to us because graduate students have been off in the world and are more concerned with the world around them. In addition to this graduate student programs require more research thus exposing them to current events more often. There was one other major that read news more than others and that was history.

Most of the data received from the student interviews and focus group, pertaining to student segments, paralleled the findings from the professor interviews but in the history major. Many students, when asked if they recognized any segments who utilize the news more often, pointed to history majors. One WPI senior said "friends who are history majors use it a lot." In a focus group we conducted we asked students if they'd known of any student segments that utilize the news more than others, one student answered "certain students are interested in different things, it depends on their interest." The bottom line here being that similar to professors, students recognized that the history majors and business majors were more inclined to read the news.

The survey that we conducted which was sent out to several schools in Worcester, MA, also provided some insight as to if a particular group of students utilized the news more than others. There was also a correlation between gender and how often news was utilized. 70% of

male college students checked the news daily while only 41% of female students did the same.
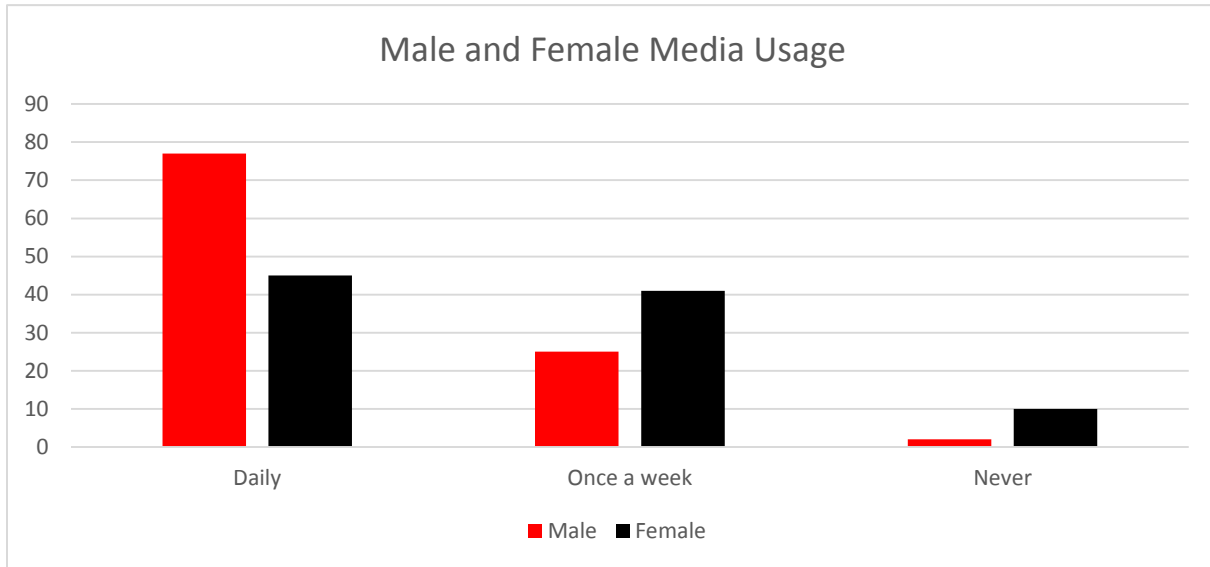
Figure 6: Bar Graph Depicting Male and Female Media Usage

23% of male students and 38% of female students checked the news only once per week (see Figure 6). When it comes to the student segment that utilized news most, it is clear from our research that the strongest was male students.

4.9 Potential Subscription Revenue/Marketing Costs

When determining the potential for subscription revenue in the Worcester, MA market, we focused on student opinions because that was our target market. To obtain this data we used student interviews, a focus group, and student survey that was sent out via email to several schools in Worcester.

The student interviews and focus group provided us with comparable and consistent data from which we have found one simple conclusion. Students would not pay for a news subscription, even at a discounted price. Many students said that any type of cost to read the news was unappealing. One student said "No, I don't have money or even really want one," when asked if they'd be interesting in purchasing a news subscription. Students pointed to having to worry about being charged constantly and that they had too much on their plate to be concerned with paying a subscription for a news source when most news is free. Similar answers and opinions were shared in the student focus group, for example a student stated "As a student I have free access to a number of different databases that offer news," when asked about paying for a subscription. It became very clear that if a student had access to the internet, then they would never pay for a subscription because they have free sources online.
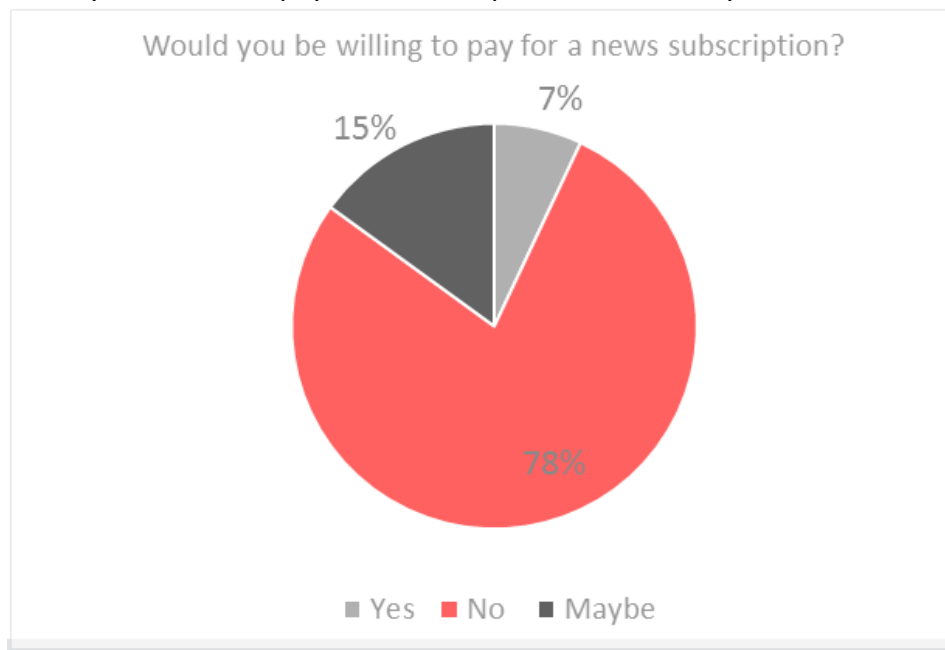
Figure 7: Pie Chart of Student's Willingness to Pay for a News Subscription

Next we observed the responses from particular questions on the survey pertaining to potential subscription revenue, and the results paralleled those of the student interviews and

focus group. When asked in the survey if you would be willing to pay for a news subscription, 78% of students said "no," 7% said "yes," and 15% said "maybe" (see Figure 7).

The results were very lopsided just as the interview and focus group answers. Students also were asked to give reasons if they selected "no" and almost all of them centered on "being a broke college kid," or even "not having the time to read news." The need and want for a paid news subscription among college students is very weak.

Chapter Five: Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations for the CSM

After analyzing all of our data our team had clear and specific recommendations for the CSM. All of the research allowed us to answer our research questions, which we were able to use to generate these recommendations. Our recommendations are as follow:

1. Create a multi-platform and universal mobile application.

    a. Create a new layout for the mobile application interface (See Appendix A).

    b. Inform and educate students about this application across college campuses.

2. Reposition the CSM brand across all social media platforms.

    a. Create a promotional video to expose college students to what the CSM provides.

The first recommendation our team came to was creating a multi-platform, universal mobile application. At this point in time the CSM has a mobile application that is strictly available for Android mobile device users. The data that we collected and analyzed proved that when students are accessing the news, they are most likely doing so from their mobile devices. Specifically, they are using their cell phones to access the news. This is an issue with the current mobile application that the CSM has available for consumers. The application cannot fit to screens on all devices, and is not available for all devices, such as apple products. The comment section in the Google Play Store laments all of these issues, showing consumers unhappiness

with the app. With these issues however, there are opportunities for the CSM to increase their readership.

The mobile application, as currently constituted, has issues with constantly crashing and not being applicable with many devices. However, the one thing that the users of the application said was that the content that the CSM provided their customers was unbiased and very neutral. As seen in our findings section, this is what college aged students are looking for when accessing the news. So the problem is not with the content of the CSM, but with accessibility and design of the application.

The second recommendation our team made for the CSM was to create an entirely new mobile application layout. Users of the application now have complaints about the structure and interface of the application as it currently is. This is not a problem that the CSM wants, as with younger generations, it is vital to have user friendly applications with pleasant interfaces. In Appendix A, we have created a new mobile application interface that will address this problem. While creating a new interface will not instantly spike popularity of this application, it is a necessary step in order to do so. Sections 5.2.1 outlines how we advise the CSM to do so.

Once the new mobile application is developed, along with the new interface our team has created, the application will need to be promoted to students. This will most likely prove to be the most difficult task, as media sources everywhere are seeking answers on how to engage with younger generations. However, our team believes we have developed multiple on campus activities that should help the CSM to only engage younger generations, but develop longstanding relationships with these readers.

As we talked about in our meeting with Susan Hackney, Chief Marketing & Strategy Officer at the Christian Science Monitor, the newspapers name is something that cannot be changed or altered, but we believe it is a huge barrier to obtaining readers from the sought after demographic. This leads us to our fourth recommendation, which is repositioning the CSM across all social media platforms. Students don't want a religious affiliation with their news, which is why the name, the Christian Science Monitor, may cause students to no affiliate with the company. To reposition the CSM on social media we recommend the following:

1. Name all social media accounts "The Monitor."

2. Label the articles and videos on the Facebook page "The Monitor," (similar to the CSM Twitter).

3. Embed a link to the CSM Twitter account on the CSM Facebook page to make it easier for the younger generation to connect and receive CSM content more regularly.

It is our hope that that the repositioning of the CSM brand on social media could help attract and retain younger news readers.

The fifth recommendation our team would like to make to the Monitor is creating a promotional video to be advertised on social media. We believe that the Monitor lacks exposure to the college readers they are seeking. The video could be used as an introduction to those readers, and answer the big questions college students have about the Monitor such as the explanation of the religious affiliation the Monitor has with The First Church of Christ, Scientist. As well as sharing articles and videos via Facebook and Twitter, both social media

platforms should be used to advertise the CSM application. Using these recommendations that we have outlined will help to garner readership among the targeted demographic.

5.2 Above the Line Activities

Above the line advertising is advertising to mass audiences by means of television, radio, print sources (newspaper), and the internet. The CSM can capitalize on a few above the line activities to more effectively brand their newspaper, and push their mobile application on college students. The recommendations we gave above can be put into place by using the listed activities below.

5.2.1 Brand Repositioning in Social Media

Promotion: The promotion will have the CSM attempting to reposition its brand on social media platforms. It should:

1. Name all of the social media platforms of the CSM "The Monitor"
2. Use the "About Us" page on the CSM website to explain things such as
   a. The content is not altered or affected by the church
   b. The CSM has no political ties
   c. The CSM is bringing unbiased news to readers
3. Inform and educate students on the new CSM mobile application

By following the steps in section 5.1.2 the CSM should be effective in informing and educating students on the new mobile application, and what it provides. These things are smaller tasks and jobs that can be used to positively affect how students view the monitor.

These changes should drive readership with college students, or at the very minimum, increase knowledge and awareness of who the CSM actually is.

5.2.2 Promotional Video Recommendations

Here are the full details for the promotional video recommended by our team. The video does not have to be created this exact way, we just wanted to give the Monitor an idea of what the video could be.

The duration of the video should only be one minute long, that way it is short and can be played on all social media platforms except for Snapchat.

The opening will be the question "have you ever heard of The Christian Science Monitor?" followed by a number of different students on camera answering the question with "No." That will be cut off, and on the next sequence will be Monitor employees with one simply saying, "Well let us introduce you."

That will most likely take up the first 10 seconds of the video. From there, there will be a voice over explaining who the Monitor is, and move into answer the FAQs. The background can be shots of the office and people working with some of the FAQs being answered on camera.

The last 10 seconds should be a sincere and welcoming message to make potential new readers dive deeper into the Monitor and potentially subscribe if they like what they find. The last image to be shown in the video should be the link to the Monitor's website, and all of its social media handles (i.e. Twitter and Instagram.)

5.3 Below the Line Activities

Below the line advertising is advertising which doesn't involve the use of mass media, things such as radio, television, and billboards. As the CSM wants to develop a stronger following from college students, we recommended creating an enhanced mobile application to drive this readership. Below are three different activities that we believe will allow the CSM to follow our recommendations effectively.

5.3.1 Student Raffle and Catering

<u>Promotion</u>: The promotion itself is simple, but effective. Here is what will be needed:

1. A table or booth

2. A CSM on campus, student Ambassador

3. A display banner or something to show that the booth/table is operated by the CSM

The promotion will have a CSM student ambassador advertising the new mobile application that can be used across any platform. This student ambassador could essentially be a spokesperson for the CSM on the given students' campus. The CSM could title the student ambassador as a marketing intern, which would provide incentive for the student to do become the ambassador. Having a student ambassador would also allow the CSM to avoid the problem of gaining permission to be on campus talking about the application, as well as saving time as the ambassador will be doing most of the work. As students walk by or come to the table the promotion will be explained. If the student downloads the CSM mobile application onto their mobile device, they will be entered into a raffle to win the decided upon gift cards. Should they

not wish to enter the raffle they could instead be given an option of a plate of catered food from a popular restaurant such as Chipotle. This is a simple incentive to drive students to add the mobile application on their phones, and drive usage of the app in these students. This promotion can take place on any College/University Campus. It can be anywhere from outside of a campus dining facility, the middle of campus, or anywhere in which students congregate. The price this event will cost the CSM will vary depending on the amount of gift cards being raffled (we recommend 2 $100 gift cards or 4 $50 gift cards), the cost of the catered food, and whatever cost could be incurred by hiring the student ambassador.

5.3.2 Professor Partnership

Promotion: This promotion will aim to have professor require their students to download the new CSM mobile application to their mobile devices. The plan with this below the line activity will be to offer professors a free subscription to the CSM if they require their students to download and use the mobile application for their class. If this incentive does not generate partnerships with professors then we suggest the CSM creates a tailored set of articles designed for that specific course type. If the CSM could create specific article filters for Business professors, History professors, and others than that could work as an effective incentive for professors. This is something our team found was an effective means for driving readership with students, which is having professors require them to read it. The CSM can get an idea of how this is working by requiring the students to sign up for the application using an access code from the professor. By doing this the CSM can review this to see if students are actually following through with this, and if it is working. If professors can have their students download

the application and use it for class, this will drive readership. The price this will not be as

tangible as the other two events. The CSM will offer a free subscription to professor who utilize

this promotion. The CSM could also offer professors grant money to be put towards their

specific department of study. This will be the only cost of this promotion

Chapter Six: Conclusion

While readership of physical newspapers has essentially died out within younger generations, reading of the news entirely has not. With over 56% of students in our survey proclaiming they check the news every day, it is clear, the news media will always be relevant in our society. However, the way that people access the news is constantly changing. Our team proved that students have moved away from print media and have begun using strictly online news sources. Whether this is mobile applications, the internet, or other online sources, younger generations are still actively involved with the news. These changes have caused news sources across the globe to adapt their business and strategies. Our team believes that all of the research we conducted allowed us to create powerful and effective recommendations to the CSM. If the CSM follows the marketing strategy we have recommended, we firmly believe that they can enter the college market. While entering the college market was the ultimate goal of our project, we believe our recommendation go beyond that. Should the CSM implement these recommendations effectively they will not only enter the student market, but they will build long-term relationships with these students to stay in this market for the foreseeable future.

Chapter Seven: References

Baechtold, S., Culross, T., & Gray, G. (1986). The News Magazine in the College Reading

Classroom. *Journal of Reading, 29(4),* 304-310.

Below The Line Advertising. (2010, Nov 10). Retrieved from

http://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/below-the-line-advertising.asp

Bethlehem, J. G., & Biffignandi, S. (2012). *Handbook of Web Surveys*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Davis, C.H.F, III., Deil-Amen, R., Rios-Aguilar, C., & González Canché, M.S. (2012). *Social media

and higher education: A literature review and research directions*. Report printed by the

University of Arizona and Claremont Graduate University.

Gardner, J. N., & Sullivan, B. L. (2004). The Newspaper as a Tool for Educational Empowerment:

Origins and Rationale. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from

http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/faculty/coll_mono_gard.html

George, M. (2012). Teaching Focus Group Interviewing: Benefits and Challenges. *Teaching

Sociology, 41*(3), 257-70.

Hague, P. N., Hague, N., & Morgan, C.A. (2004). *Market Research in Practice: A Guide to the

Basics.* London: Kogan Page.

Hambouz, A., & Anderson, B. (2006, May 4). What's Your Angle?. *The New York Times.*

Retrieved from https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2006/05/04/whats-your-

angle/?_r=0

Jarman, R., & McClun, B. (2001). Use the news: a study of secondary teachers' use of

newspapers in the science classroom. *Ireland: Journal of Biological Education*, *35*(2), 69

– 74.

Kerr, D.S., & Smith, L.M. (1995). Importance of and Approaches to Incorporating Ethics into the

Accounting Classroom. *Journal of Business Ethics, 14*(12), 987 – 995.

Masadeh, M. A. (2015). The Leading-Edge Manager's Guide to Success Strategies and Better

Practices. *International Journal of Applied Science and Technology.*

Newspaper Readership Program. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/assessment/newspapers.shtml

New York Times Education - New York Times. (n.d.) Retrieved from

http://www.nytimes.com/subscriptions/edu/lp8LQFK.html?campaignId=4X986

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Dickinson, W. B., Leech, N.L., & Zoran, A.G. (2009). Conducting and

Analyzing Focus Groups, A Qualitative Framework for Collecting and Analyzing Data in

Focus Group Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *8*(3), 1-21.

Rea, L. M., & Parker, R. (1997). *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive

Guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Salant, P., & Dillman, D. A. (1994). *How to Conduct Your Own Survey*. New York: Wiley.

Special Programs. (n.d.). Retrieved from

https://services.bostonglobe.com/subscribers/homedelivery/specialprograms.aspx?id=

4940

Stewart, D. W., & Kamins M. A. (1993). Secondary Research: Information Sources and Methods.

Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Vercellotti, T., & Matto, E.C., (2016). The Role of Media Use in the

Classroom and at Home in Improving News Consumption and Political Knowledge.

Journal of Political Science Education, *12*(2), 151 – 168.

Vockell, E.L., & Cusick, K. (1995). Teachers' Attitudes toward Using Newspapers in the

Classroom. *The Clearing House, 68*(6), 359 – 362.

Wheeler, L. R., & Wheeler, V. D. (1945). Newspapers in the Classroom. *The Elementary English*

Review, 22(8), 324-325.

WSJ UNIVERSITY Integrate - WSJ University. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://www.wsjuniversity.com/professors/integrate/

Appendix A: Mobile Application Layout
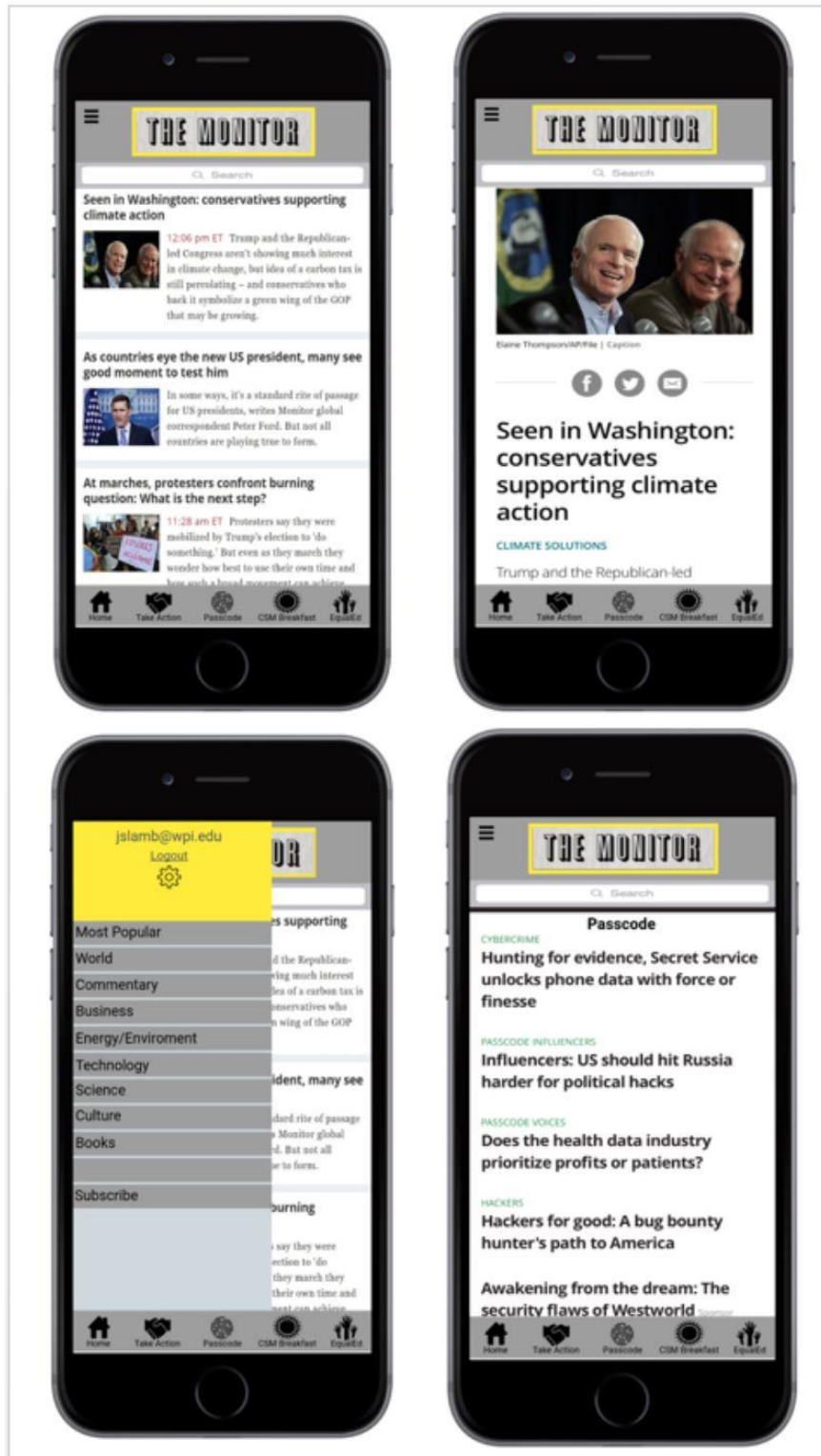
Appendix B: Benchmark Study

News/Media Sources in Education	Wall Street Journal	New York Times	The Boston Globe	The CSM
Company Mission	http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB1268415525319609199	The New York Times's core purpose is to enhance society by creating, collecting and distributing high-quality news, information and entertainment.	N/A	http://www.csmonitor.com/About/The-Monitor-difference
Product Offering	• 15 weeks - $15.00 • 1 Year- $49.00	• 12 Weeks - $5.00 (Teacher), $1.88/week after 12 weeks • 50% off print	• $5.00 for first 12 weeks • After 12 weeks $3.99/ week • $6.93 per week after 52 weeks	• $14.95-16 weeks(digital/print) • $8.95 16 weeks (digital)
Platforms	• Print • Online Website	• Print • Online Website • Apps	• Print • Online Website	• Print • Online Website • App
Target Market	• Business • Economics • Finance	• Metro • Sports (New York) • Business • Tech • Politics • Arts • Cars • Real Estate	• Metro • Sports (Boston) • Business • Tech • Politics • Arts • Cars • Real Estate	College Students 18-25
News Angles	N/A	N/A	N/A	Unbiased
News Themes	• World • U.S. • Politics • Economy • Business • Tech • Markets • Opinion • Arts • Life	• Metro • Sports (New York) • Business • Tech • Politics • Arts • Cars • Real Estate	• Metro • Sports (Boston) • Business • Tech • Politics • Arts • Cars • Real Estate	• World • USA • Business • Energy • Tech • Science • Culture • Books
Pricing	• 15 weeks - $15.00 • 1 Year- $49.00	• 12 Weeks - $5.00 (Teacher), $1.88/week after 12 weeks • 50% off print	50% off print	• $14.95-16 weeks • $8.95 16 weeks
Promotion Methods	• Free 3 month online access • Letters • Gift Card	Direct contact with administration	General Advertisements	General Advertisements
Distribution	• Print • Online Website	• Print • Online Website • Apps	• Print • Online Website	• Online Website • Print • App

Appendix C: Student Survey Recruitment Email

Dear Student,

Our names are Sean Doncaster, Jason Lamb, and Brian Murtagh. We are seniors at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. We are currently working on our MQP, which is conducting research on the media habits and news preferences of college students in the Worcester, MA area. Attached to this email you will find a link to a survey that will help us gather data on these topics. If you do decide to take the survey, your name will be entered into a raffle to win a $25 Chipotle gift card. We only need your name for the gift card raffle, your answers to the survey will remain completely anonymous, and your name will not be used in our data analysis. Thank you very much and your feedback is greatly appreciated.

Link: http://wpi.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3UA9fOAXLOdbQd7

Sincerely,

Sean Doncaster, Jason Lamb, and Brian Murtagh

Appendix D: Survey

Introduction

Welcome to the research study!

We are interested in understanding media usage. You will be presented with information relevant to media usage and asked to answer some questions about it. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential.

The study should take you around ten minutes to complete, and you will receive a chance at a $25 Chipotle Gift Card for your participation. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice. If you would like to contact the Principal Investigator in the study to discuss this research, please e-mail jslamb@wpi.edu.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason. The end of the survey will ask for your email in order to enter into the raffle and some questions pertaining to demographics. Both of these segments are voluntary and can be skipped. Your answers to all questions will be anonymous.

Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on a mobile device.

Questions

Q1 How do you get your news? Select all that apply.
- ❑ Email (1)
- ❑ Online / Websites (2)
- ❑ Physical Newspaper (3)
- ❑ Television (4)
- ❑ Social Media Apps (5)
- ❑ Radio (6)
- ❑ Magazines (7)
- ❑ Other (8) _____

Q2 How often do you check the news?
- ◯ Daily (1)
- ◯ Once a week (2)
- ◯ Never (3)
- ◯ Other (Please mention in the textbox) (4) _____

Q3 On average, in one sitting/instance how much time do you spend checking news?
- ◯ 0-15 minutes (1)
- ◯ 16-30 minutes (2)
- ◯ 31- 60 minutes (3)
- ◯ Longer than an hour (4)
- ◯ Other (5) _____

Q4 What aspects of the news interest the you most? Select all that apply.
- ❑ Political (1)
- ❑ Science & Technology (2)
- ❑ Business (3)
- ❑ Sports (4)
- ❑ Celebrity News (5)
- ❑ Race & Culture (6)
- ❑ International (7)
- ❑ Other (8) _____

Q5 What kind of news angle are you looking for? Select all that apply.
- ❑ Unbiased (1)
- ❑ Emotional (2)
- ❑ Multiple Perspectives (3)
- ❑ Progressive (4)
- ❑ Hope Orientated (5)
- ❑ New Development (6)
- ❑ Conflict (7)
- ❑ Drama (8)
- ❑ Other (9) _____

Q6 Do you read newspapers? If yes select all that you read.
- ❑ USA Today (1)
- ❑ New York Times (2)
- ❑ Wall Street Journal (3)
- ❑ Los Angeles Times (4)
- ❑ New York Post (5)
- ❑ Chicago Tribune (6)
- ❑ The Washington Post (7)
- ❑ Newsday (8)
- ❑ Daily News (9)
- ❑ AM New York (10)
- ❑ I do not read newspapers (11)
- ❑ Other (12) _____

Q7 How does reading the news benefit you? Select all that apply.
- ❑ Educational value (1)
- ❑ Understand the world around you (2)
- ❑ Pleasure (3)
- ❑ Personality Development (4)
- ❑ Improve thinking skills (5)
- ❑ Enhance Vocabulary (6)
- ❑ Other (7) _____

Q8 What platform do you prefer to read it on? Select all that apply.
- ❑ Email (1)
- ❑ Online / Websites (2)
- ❑ Physical Newspaper (3)
- ❑ Smartphone - Newspaper App (4)
- ❑ Smartphone - Social Media App (5)
- ❑ Tablet (6)
- ❑ Other (7) _____

Q9 Have you ever used a news source in class?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Q10 How was the newspaper used in your class? Select all that apply.
- ❑ For current events (1)
- ❑ Research purposes (2)
- ❑ Teaching tool (3)
- ❑ Writing example (4)
- ❑ Supplement to text (5)
- ❑ Other (6) _____

Q11 What course(s) was it used in? (e.g. History, Psychology, Science, etc.)

Course 1 (1)

Course 2 (2)

Course 3 (3)

Course 4 (4)

Course 5 (5)

Q12 How much of the grade was assigned for using the news source in that class?

Course 1 (1)

Course 2 (2)

Course 3 (3)

Course 4 (4)

Course 5 (5)

Q13 If your college/university offered a news outlet for free, how likely would you be to read it?

_____ 0 (0)

Q14 How likely would you to be read a newspaper it was recommended by a:

	Extremely likely (1)	Somewhat likely (2)	Neither likely nor unlikely (3)	Somewhat unlikely (4)	Extremely unlikely (5)
Professor (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Friend (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Person of Interest (e.g. celebrity, popular athlete, etc.) (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Parent (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Classmate (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q15 If you enjoyed reading a particular news outlet how likely would you be to recommend it to a friend?
_____ 0 (1)

Q16 Would you be willing to pay for a news subscription? Please elaborate for selected answer.
❍ Yes (1) _____
❍ No (2) _____
❍ Maybe (3) _____

Q17 How much would you be willing to pay for using the news in one class?

Q18 How would you prefer to pay for it?
❍ Daily (1)
❍ Weekly (2)
❍ Monthly (3)
❍ Yearly (4)
❍ Other (5) _____

Q19 How much would you be willing to pay daily (format ex. $0.00)?

Q20 How much would you be willing to pay weekly (format ex. $0.00)?

Q21 How much would you be willing to pay monthly (format ex. $0.00)?

Q22 How much would you be willing to pay yearly (format ex. $0.00)?

Q23 The next questions pertain to demographics. If you would like to answer these questions please do and know that your answers will be anonymous. If you would prefer not to answer these questions then simply skip them.

Q24 How old are you?

Q25 Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:
❑ White (1)
❑ Black or African American (2)
❑ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
❑ Asian (4)
❑ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
❑ Other (6) _____

Q26 What is your sex?
❍ Male (1)
❍ Female (2)
❍ Other (3)

Q27 What year are you?
❍ Freshmen (1)
❍ Sophomore (2)
❍ Junior (3)
❍ Senior (4)
❍ Graduate (5)

Q28 What is your major?

Q29 Please name some clubs or activities that you are involved in.

    Club/Activity 1 (1)
    Club/Activity 2 (2)
    Club/Activity 3 (3)
    Club/Activity 4 (4)
    Club/Activity 5 (5)

Q30 Thank you for your participation in this survey! If you would like to be entered for a chance to win a $25 Chipotle Gift Card please enter your email and name below, if not then go on to submit the survey. Your email or name will not be linked to your responses from this survey.

    Name (1)
    Email (2)

Appendix E: Professor Interview Protocol

Introduction Protocol

Faculty Interview Protocol

Institutions: (List school of professor)

Interviewee (Title and Name) :(Enter professor name)

Interviewer: Sean Doncaster and/or Jason Lamb and/or Brian Murtagh

Survey Section Used:

_____ A: Professor Background

_____ B: News Media in Their Classroom

_____ C: Platforms and News Angles

_____ D: Student Segments

_____ E: News Access for Students and Professors

_____ F. Conclusion

Other Topics Discussed:_____

_____

Documents Obtained: _____

_____

_____

Post Interview Comments or Leads:

_____

Introduction

"Hello and thank you very much for taking the time to speak with us today professor
_____. We appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to help us conduct our research. You will be asked a variety of questions in this interview, all of which will pertain to the use of news media in education. Should you feel uncomfortable or be unwilling to answer a question at any point during the interview please say so and the question will be skipped. Your identity will remain completely confidential, and your name will not be used in our data

analysis. The interview should last about an hour. Thank you, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. We would like to audio record our conversation for future reference. Do you provide consent for the same?

If yes, Ask: Thank you. Are you ready to begin?"

If no…. Stop the audio recording and start taking notes…Ask: Thank you, Are you ready to begin?

Section A. Professor Background

Q1- Please tell us a little bit about yourself, and your educational background.

Probes:

- What is your position in the department?
- How many years have you been teaching for, teaching at _____college for?
- What types of courses do you teach?
- Age, Gender, Race (take notes)

Q2 – What are some of the teaching tools and techniques you use to teach these courses?

Probes:

- Do you find that certain techniques resonate more with students' learning than others?
- Do certain techniques benefit your teachings more than others? Why?
- How do you measure which tools benefit your students the most, or which tools are effective?
- What types of pedagogical tools do you have your students use outside of the classroom?

Q3 – What kind of assessments do you use in these courses?

Probes:

- Do you find certain types of assessments to be more effective than others for these courses?

Section B. News Media in Their Classroom

If use of news media has NOT been mentioned in their responses:

Q4: The techniques you use in your courses seem very interesting. We know of some professors that use news sources in their courses. Have you ever thought of using news media in your courses?

Probes:

- If yes, why have you not used it yet?
- If no, why not?
- In your opinion, what could be some of the pros and cons of using news sources in your courses?
- Do any professors that you know or work with use news sources in their courses? If so, how?
  - How?
  - Do they find news media to be an effective tool in their courses?

If they HAVE mentioned news media in their responses:

Q5: So you have used news media in your course. I am interested in understanding why you chose to use news media in your course(s)?

Probes:

- Did news media increase the effectiveness of your teachings or students learning?
- Are there certain benefits for students' learning or professors' teaching that can be seen by using news media in your courses?
- Have you ever witnessed or heard from another professor about the news media detracting from course teaching or learning? (i.e. has there been times when the news media has had negative effects in the course?)

Q6: In your courses, what news sources have you used?

Probes:

- In what ways have you used that (or those) specific new(s) source(s)?
- Did you find any particular benefits or detriments in using these news sources?
- *How do you access these news sources?*
- *How do students access these news sources?*

Probes if they don't use news sources:

- Do you know of any ways that other professors have used news sources in their courses? If so, what ways?
- Can you think of any benefits or detriments that could occur if you used news sources in your courses?
- Is there a specific (or multiple specific) news source(s) that you would use if you did use news media in your courses?

Section C. Platforms and News Angles

Q7 – A news platform is any method that a consumer uses to obtain news. This could be an application on a mobile device, a newspaper, a television, or many other things. <u>When you use news sources in your teachings, what platforms you generally have your students use?</u>

Probes:

- In terms of content and subject, what do you specifically look for in the news media sources that you use?
- Do other professors you know of use similar platforms? Different platforms?
- Do you find certain platforms have different benefits or challenges in terms of students learning and teaching effectiveness? (i.e. newspaper vs. online)

Probes if they don't use news sources in their teachings:

- If you did use news media sources in class what platforms would you use? Why?
- Do you think that some platforms would resonate better with students than others? Why?
- What platforms do you think would work best to increase student learning and professor effectiveness?

Q8 – News angles are the main point, or theme of the article. For example a news article could have a political angle, local angle, or an unbiased, factual angle. <u>Having defined news angle, what types of news angles do you provide to your students with the news?</u>

 Probes:

- Do your students enjoy these news angles?
  Do your students find these news angle to be effective? How can you tell/measure?
- Do you find that your students seek other types of news angles to engage with class?
- Do other professors utilize different news angles into their classes?
- Are certain news angles more effective in providing education to students than others?

Probes if they don't provide students news sources:

- Do any professors you know do so?
  - If so, do the students enjoy these news sources?

- What news angles do you think could be effective in your teaching?
  - Is there any way you would be able to tell or measure?
- Have you ever found that students seek specific news angles for your courses?
  - If not, can you think of any news sources that could help students?
- Do you believe that if you did use news media in your courses that certain news angle would be more effective than others?

Section D. Student Segments and Opinion Leaders

Q6 – <u>Are there particular segments of students that you find utilize news sources more frequently?</u>

Probes:

- Are these students from a particular department?
- Are there 'typical' students in your courses that you find have more of an interest with the news?
- Are there any demographic trends regarding the types of news sources that are read by students?

Probes if they haven't seen this specifically:

- Can you think of any students from a particular department that might utilize news sources more frequently?
- Are there 'typical' students in your courses that you think may have more of an interest with the news?
- Can you think of any demographic trends in students that could allow you to hypothesize which news sources they use? Why?

Q7 – <u>When you recommend or assign a certain article or news source, do your students comply with reading it?</u>

Probes:

- Is it important to assign a grade to ensure they read it?
- Do they read it out of their own free will?
- Do you see an impact on the thought processes or opinions of students who utilize the news sources?
- Do you see any other people or things effecting which news sources that students use?

Probes if they do not recommend or assign news sources:

- Do any professors you know do this?
  - Do they assign grades to ensure students read?

- Do you think assigning news sources to students can affect the viewpoints or opinions they have?
- Have you ever seen students' viewpoints and opinions changed due to others who recommend news sources to them? In essence, are there certain people who you see can change which news sources students utilize?

Q8 – <u>When you recommend certain articles do you find that they affect students' thoughts or opinions (or learning experiences)?</u>

- Do you ever see the opinions of students sway or change if you require them to read a certain news source?
- Do you see yourself as someone who can affect the opinions or viewpoints of students?

Section E. News Access for Students and Professors

Q9 – <u>How is the news provided to both students and teachers in the classroom setting?</u>

 Probes:

- Does your university offer any type of deal for specific news sources?
- Does your department offer any type of deal for specific news sources?
- Does your university/department provide a discounted offer for students?
- Do you think students or professors would benefit from having some type of news source provided to them by the University or department?

Section F. Conclusion

Q.10 Is there anything important you would like to share with me that we have not discussed yet? *Students want there to be a right answer*

Q.11 Would you be willing to share a copy of your syllabus with us? (Ask this only to professors who have used news sources in a course. And ask of the syllabus of that course only.)

Q.12 We also desire to know student opinions on this topic. Is it possible to circulate a survey to your students? We have a survey web link. We can send it to you and it would be of great help if you would email it to your students.

Thank you for sharing your experiences and opinions with us. This is very helpful information for our project.

Appendix F: Student Interview Protocol

Institutions: (List school of Student)

Interviewee (Title and Name):(Enter Student name)

Interviewer: Sean Doncaster and/or Jason Lamb and/or Brian Murtagh

Survey Section Used:

_____ A: Background

_____ B: Platforms and News Angles

_____ C: Student Segments and Opinion Leaders

_____ D: News Access for Students

_____ E. Student Use of News in the Classroom

_____ F. Conclusion

Other Topics Discussed:_____

_____

Documents Obtained: _____

_____

_____

Post Interview Comments or Leads:

_____

Introduction

"Hello and thank you very much for taking the time to speak with us today _____. We appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to help us conduct our research. You will be asked a variety of questions in this interview, all of which will pertain to the use of news media in education. Should you feel uncomfortable or be unwilling to answer a question at any point during the interview please say so and the question will be skipped. Your identity will remain completely confidential, and your name will not be used in our data analysis. The interview should last about an hour. Thank you, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. We would like to audio record our conversation for future reference. Do you provide consent for the same?

If yes,… Ask: Thank you. Are you ready to begin?"

If no…. Stop the audio recording and start taking notes…Ask: Thank you, Are you ready to begin?

Section A. Background

Q1- <u>Please tell us about yourself, and your educational background.</u>

Probes:

- What is your Major?
- What school year are you?
- What types of courses have you taken thus far in your college experiences?
- Age, Gender, Race (take notes)

Q2- We are interested in learning more about your news habits. <u>Do you stay up to date with the news?</u>

Probes if YES:

- How often do you check the news?
- For what reason do you check the news? (i.e. academics, desire to learn about the world, ect.)
- Are there certain times when you check the news more often than others? Why?

Probes if No:

- Why not?
- Do your friends or peers follow the news?
- Do you feel like you are "out of the loop" when others talk about topics in the news?

Section B. Platforms and News Angles

Q3– A news platform is any method that a consumer uses to obtain news. This could be an application on a mobile device, a newspaper, a television, or many other things. <u>What platforms do you use to obtain your news?</u>

Probes:

- In terms of content and subject, what do you specifically look for in the news media sources that you use?

- Do you prefer certain platforms in comparison to others? Why?
- Do some platforms have specific benefits or detriments when compared to others?
- Do you obtain specific types of news from certain news sources, and other types of news elsewhere? Explain. (i.e. sports news from ESPN and political news from fox)

Probes if they don't follow the news:

- Do any of your friends or peers that follow the news use specific platforms?
- If you followed the news what platform(s) would you use? Why?
- Do you have any preferences concerning the different types of news platforms?

Q4 – News angles are the main point, or theme of an article. For example a news article could have a political angle, local angle, or an unbiased, factual angle. <u>Having defined news angle, what types of news angles do you look for in the news that you obtain?</u>

 Probes:

- Why do you enjoy these particular news angles?
- Do you look for different news angles depending on what type of news your obtaining?
- Do you think certain news angles are more beneficial than others?

Probes if they don't provide students news sources:

- Do any of your peers seek out specific angles in the news? Why?
- If you did follow the news what types of news angles would you seek out? Why?
- Do you think that certain news angles are beneficial for obtaining news about different things? (i.e. is an unbiased news angle good for politics)

Section D. Student Segments and Opinion Leaders

Q5 – <u>Are there particular segments of students at your university that you find utilize news sources more frequently?</u>

Probes:

- Are these students from a particular department?
- Are there 'typical' students in the courses you take that you find have more of an interest with the news?
- Are there any demographic trends regarding the types of news sources that are read by students?

Probes if they haven't seen this specifically:

- Can you think of any students from a particular department that might utilize news sources more frequently?
- Are there 'typical' students in the courses you take that you think may have more of an interest with the news?
- Can you think of any demographic trends in students that could allow you to hypothesize which news sources they use? Why?

Q6 – <u>Are there any people in your life that have an effect on the news sources that you read from or news angles that you read?</u>

Probes if they read the news:

- Are there social settings in which you aren't comfortable saying what news sources or angles you follow?
- Do you feel influenced by friends or family to follow specific news angles or sources? Why?
- Do the sources and angles that your peers utilize affect the ones that you use? What about professors?
- Who are the people in your life that have the greatest influence on the news angles and sources that you utilize? That is, who impacts the decisions you make on which ones to utilize?

Probes if they do not follow news:

- Do your peers ever feel affected by others in regards to the news sources and angles they follow? Why?
- Would you feel influenced by friends or family to follow certain news sources or angles?
- Would the sources and angles that your peers utilize affect which ones you would prefer? What about professors?
- Would a recommendation from a peer, family member, or professor impact the news source or angle you use?

Section D. News Access for Students

Q7 – <u>Do you currently utilize a news subscription to a news source?</u>

 Probes:

- What is the news source?
  - What type of platform is the subscription for?

       o   What are the costs involved?
- Does your university offer any type of deal for specific news sources?
- Does your department offer any type of deal for specific news sources?
- Does your university/department provide a discounted offer for students?
- Do you think students or professors would benefit from having some type of news source provided to them by the University or department?

Section E. Students Use of news in the Classroom

Q8 – A pedagogical tool is something that is used in teaching to aid student learning and professor's teachings. <u>Has any news source ever been used as a pedagogical tool in any of your courses?</u>

Probes if YES:

- How was it used?
- Did you find it to be beneficial to your learning?
- Did your peers feel the same way? Differently?
- Did you find the news source to be one that you enjoyed reading? Or was it strictly for educational purposes?
- Did you continue reading this news source after the course or assignment was completed?
- Are some tools completely ineffective?
- Are there tools you find more beneficial for learning when used outside of the classroom? Vice versa?

Probes if NO:

- Why do you think news was never used in your classroom?
- Do you know of any peers that have used news media in their courses?
  - How did they use it?
  - Was it beneficial?
- How could your professors use news media in your courses?
- Do you think using news media in your courses would be effective and beneficial?

 Q9: <u>What specific news sources have you used in these courses?</u>

Probes:

- In what ways have you used that (or those) specific new(s) source(s) in your courses?

- Did you find any particular benefits or detriments in using these news sources?
- How do you access these news sources?

Probes if they don't use news sources:

- Do you know of any ways that other students have used specific news sources in their courses? If so, what ways?
- Can you think of any benefits or detriments that could occur if you used news sources in your courses?
- Is there a specific (or multiple specific) news source(s) that you would prefer to use if your courses did require the use of news media?

Section F. Conclusion

Q.10 Is there anything important you would like to share with me that we have not discussed yet?

Q.11 Would you be willing to share a copy of any of the course syllabi that we talked about? (Ask this only to students who have used news sources in a course. And ask for the syllabus of that course only.)

Thank you for sharing your experiences and opinions with us. This is very helpful information for our project.

Appendix G: Professor Recruitment Email

Dear (ENTER PROFESSOR NAME),

Our names are _____, _____, and _____. We are seniors at WPI studying management engineering, and we are currently working on our Major Qualifying Project (MQP). Our project is conducting research on the media habits of college students, and what media outlets and news services professors use in the classroom and why. To gather this data we are looking to interview professors that use relevant news and media in the classroom for their teachings. We thought that you would be a good information source due to your position and experience at (name of school). Your answers to the interview questions will remain completely confidential, anonymous, and your name will not be used in our data analysis. The interview should be no longer than an hour, and attached you will find a when2meet invite with several times my teammates and I are able to interview. If you are interested in interviewing, but none of these times work for you, please email us back and we will be happy to schedule a time and date that is convenient for you. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Sean Doncaster, Jason Lamb, and Brian Murtagh

Appendix H: Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group

<u>Protocol</u>:

Good afternoon/evening. Thank you all for taking the time to join our discussion. My name is (X) and I will be the moderator for this Focus Group, while my partners (Y and Z) will be recording and taking notes.

We're conducting research on how news sources can be used in education. The questions asked will attempt to provide our team with an understanding of how the news media have impacted your learning experience.

This focus group will be recorded using this device (camera). We will only use first names during this conversation. None of our reports will link what you say to your names, majors, or other personal information discussed. Everything will remain confidential from our end, and in turn we ask that each of you respect the confidentiality of this discussion as well as the other participants. Please do not repeat what is said, or who is in this focus group when you exit the room.

Before we get started we would like to suggest some things in order to assure that this conversation maintains a smooth and efficient flow. Due to the fact that we are recording, it is important that each of you speaks clearly and not interrupt one another. Feel free to directly respond to the comments or questions of others. Having respect for each other will also be important for this to run smoothly, so we ask that you do not use your phones during the discussion.

As the moderator I will be asking questions to the entire group. X and Y will be listening and taking notes, however we will not be involved with any of the discussion surrounding the questions asked.

Our team is interested in viewpoints of all different kinds, so please do not search for what you may perceive as the "right" answer. Answer each question honestly, and however you feel represents each of your opinions or experiences the best.

We want everyone to be involved in the discussion so again, please speak your minds freely. At times throughout the discussion we may intervene in order to encourage someone to give their opinion, or ask someone to hold off for a few minutes.

If you have any other questions please ask them now, otherwise we will turn the recorder on and begin now.

QUESTIONS:

Q1: <u>Let's go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves. Please state your name, major, year level, age, any concentrations, and any extracurricular activities you are involved in.</u>

Q2: <u>Some people follow the news, while others do not. Do any of you follow the news regularly?</u>

Yes Probes:

- Why do you stay up to date with the news?
- How often are you checking the news?
- Is the news easy for you to access?

No Probes:

- Why don't you follow the news?
- Do you think you could learn valuable information from following the news?
- Is the news easy for you to access?

Q3: <u>Let's talk a little bit about how each of you obtains your news.</u>

Probes if they follow news:

- A news platform is any method that a consumer uses to obtain news. This could be an application on a mobile device, a newspaper, a television, or many other things. <u>What types of platforms do you use to obtain your news?</u>
  - What are the pros and cons of this platform?
  - What are some other platforms you know of?
- What platforms do you enjoy obtaining the news on the most?
- Do you spend money to obtain news? If so, how much?
- What kind of news are you interested in? (beats, angles….)
- What media outlets you use to obtain your news? (NY Times, WSJ, BG, etc…) Why?
- How do you access this news? (Subscription, Newspaper from home, ect.) Why (most convenient, easiest to read, ect.)?

Probes if they DO NOT follow news:

- Is there a specific platform you would use if you were to follow the news?
- Are there specific platforms that you would never use to obtain news?
- Can you think of pros and cons of these platforms?
- Would you consider spending money to obtain news?

- What specific news sources would be of interest to you if you followed the news? Why?
- How would you access this news? Why (most convenient, easiest to read, etc…)?

Q4: News beats and news angles are the different types of points or themes that a news story follows such as political news, unbiased news, ect. <u>Are there particular angles or beats that draw your interest?</u>

<u>(First Define Angles and Beats. Then ask this question)</u>

Probes as necessary:

- Do you enjoy opinionated news or neutral news?
- Do news and media biases affect how you obtain news?
- Are there specific news sources that you know have certain biases or agendas? How does this make you feel about the news source (i.e, do you still read it, or stay away from it)?
- Are there different times when

Q5: <u>Where did you originally hear or learn about the specific news source that you use?</u>

Probes as necessary:

- Is there anything that particularly drew you to this news source?
- Was there a certain person that brought this news source or platform to your attention?
- Has anyone ever persuaded you to obtain news from a specific news source?

Q6: Have you used news sources in your courses?

Probes if yes:

- What was the course?
- Who recommended you use it in the course? Was it required?
- How did you use it in the course? What was the assignment related to the news source? How much of the total grade was allocated to this news-related assignment?
- Did you find it beneficial to use the news source in the course? How? Why?
-

Probes if no:

- Do you know of any classmates who have used news sources in their courses?

- How did they use it in their course?
- Did they find it beneficial?
- Do you think the news could have been used in any of your past courses?
- Would using the news in any of your past courses been beneficial for your learning? Can you think of examples?

Q7: <u>Do you have access to a news source that is provided to you by your University or your major department?</u>

Probes if yes:

- Is this a subscription to the news source that you follow regularly, or do you follow a separate news source?
- Does this news source come at a cost? If so, how much and what is the billing period?
- Has a professor ever required you to follow the news in a course? If so, did you have to pay for it?
- Does having a news source provided by your university drive you to follow news?

Probes if no:

- Would you change the news source you follow if your university or major department offered you a free or discounted subscription to another news source?
- How much would you be willing to spend on a news source?
- What news source(s) would you recommend your university to subscribe to?
- Would a discounted or free subscription to a news source provided by your university or major department drive you to follow the news?
- Would it have to be a specific news source or news angle for you to read it?
- Do any of your peers (students, professors, ect.) use a news source provided by their university or major department?

Q8: <u>Do you find that students, or specific students groups, are looking for a specific type of news?</u>

Probes as necessary:

- Do students enjoy reading any specific news angles/beats? Do you find that specific groups of students are interested in certain news angles/beats?
- Can you think of any reasons for why this might be?
- Do you find any differences in men and women with regards to following news in general or following specific news angles/beats?
- Do different majors require students to use different types of news?

Q9: <u>Do you have any assignments or syllabi from these courses that you could share with us?</u>

Q10: <u>Do you have any other information that could be helpful in regards to our research?</u>

Thank you for sharing your experiences and opinions with us. This will be very helpful for our research project.

Appendix I: Focus Group Recruitment Email

Dear Student,

My name is _____, and I am Senior at WPI. I study management engineering, and two of my classmates and I are currently working on our Major Qualifying Project (MQP). Our project is conducting research on the media habits of college students, and what media outlets and news services professors use in the classroom and why. To gather this data we are looking to conduct focus groups of students at WPI and we thought that you would be a good candidate due to your major. Your answers to the focus group questions will remain completely confidential, anonymous, and your name will not be used in our data analysis. The focus group will last no longer than an hour. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Sean Doncaster, Jason Lamb, and Brian Murtagh''