
Communication and Social Media

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TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Objectives of Session

- ▶ Develop your Message
- ▶ Communicate your Message
- ▶ Tools and Platforms
- ▶ Getting the Desired Results



Ralph Yarborough campaigning on courthouse steps, Denison, Texas. 1954.

Photos by Russell Lee/Courtesy the Center for American History, UT-Austin







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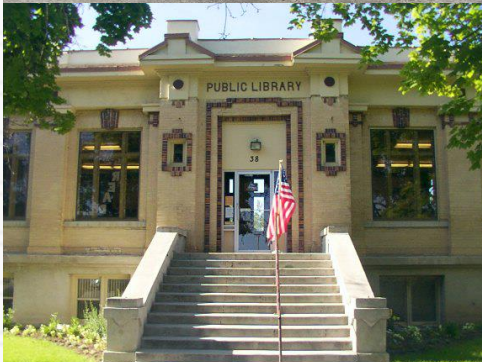
facebook
LIVE



Why is it Important to Communicate Public Value of County Expenditures?

- ▶ It's Part of the Job
- ▶ It's Your Duty
- ▶ Gain Public Support
- ▶ Increase the Satisfaction of Constituents
- ▶ Build Trust Through Transparency
- ▶ Educate Citizens About County Government

County Expenditures





Tell your Story

Develop Your Message – Overview

- ▶ Identify audience(s)
- ▶ Anticipate audience concerns & interests
- ▶ What is the objective of your message?
 - ▶ What you say is not always what others hear.
- ▶ Discuss and share with others – **NO SURPRISES!**

Identifying your audiences

- ▶ Who is your audience(s)?
- ▶ Civic organization
- ▶ Neighbor
- ▶ Concerned taxpayer
- ▶ ...



Anticipate Concerns and Questions

- ▶ Road Construction & Maintenance
- ▶ County Budget Expenditures/ Tax Rate
- ▶ Who is opposing your efforts?
- ▶ Who will be most negatively affected by court actions?

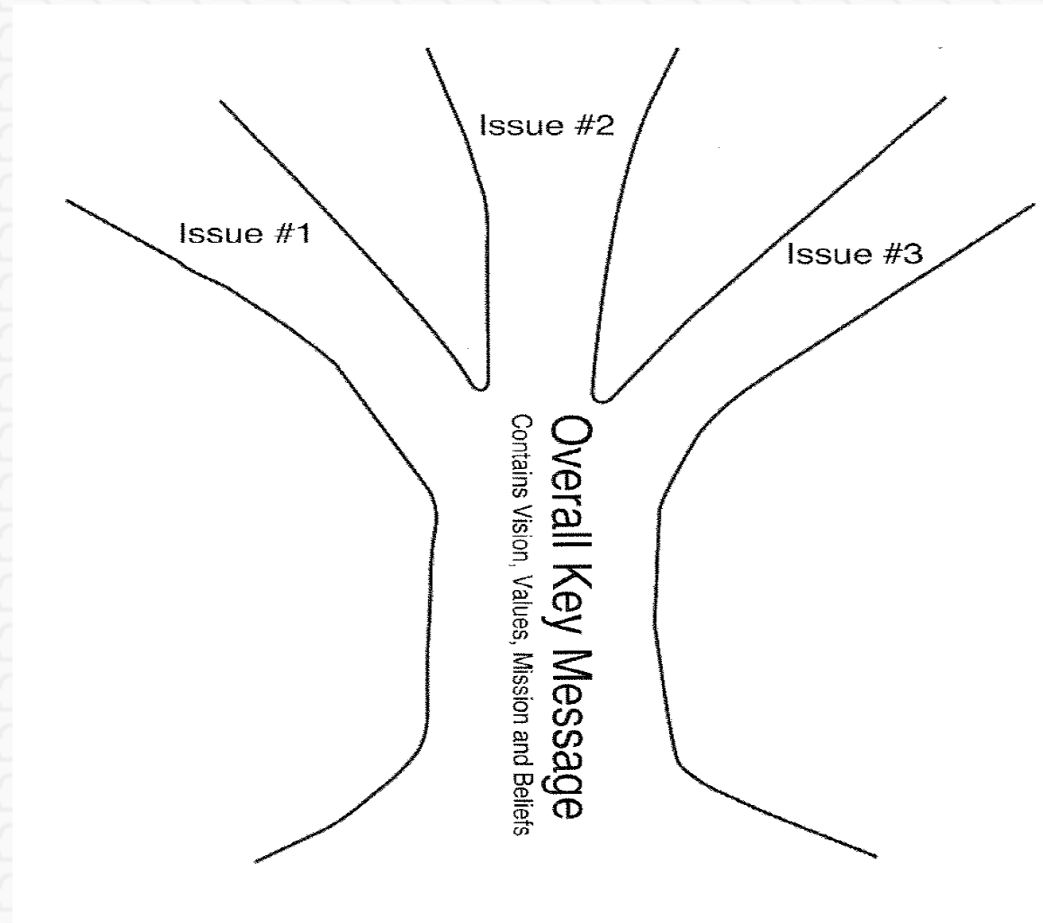
Crafting the message

- ▶ Take the time to put the words on paper
– if you don't write it down, you don't know what your message is going to be.
- ▶ Don't placate to the audience
- ▶ Be objective





Key Message Tree



Message Tree

- ▶ Use Simple 1-2-3- explanations
- ▶ Make every additional sentence quotable and able to stand on its own
- ▶ No technical jargon or acronyms
- ▶ Use analogies to explain complicated issues
- ▶ Never give long list of examples- cluster of 3
- ▶ Don't bore anyone with your details – They Don't Care!

At _____ County our goal is to _____,

We do that by _____;

We do that by _____;

And we do that by _____.

Branch Issue #1:

Branch Issue #2:

Branch Issue #3

At Cowpuncher County our goal is to be a place that folks want to make home,

We do that by Providing for public safety;

We do that by Maintaining safe county roads;

And we do that by Providing services that are important to our families.

Branch Issue #1:

In the area of public safety, we aim to provide our Sheriff with the resources that he needs to keep our communities safe and keep criminals off of the streets by maintaining our jail and providing for our County and District courts.

Branch Issue #2:

We strive to provide safe all-weather road surfaces for our growing rural populations by developing a highly skilled road and bridge workforce and providing the tools and equipment they need to ensure that your family and mine can travel safely around the county.

Branch Issue #3

We are proud of the services, such as the county parks and library in Cowpuncher County. This along with the services offered by our great county departments make this county a great place to live and raise a family.

Best Practices For Crafting The Message

Do

- ▶ Be compassionate, understanding and empathetic (People want to be Heard)
- ▶ Be ready with your message. Practice it to perfection
- ▶ Be positive!

Do Not

- ▶ Blame Others.
- ▶ Make an issue out of something that no one else is.
- ▶ Build a platform for debate where one does not exist.

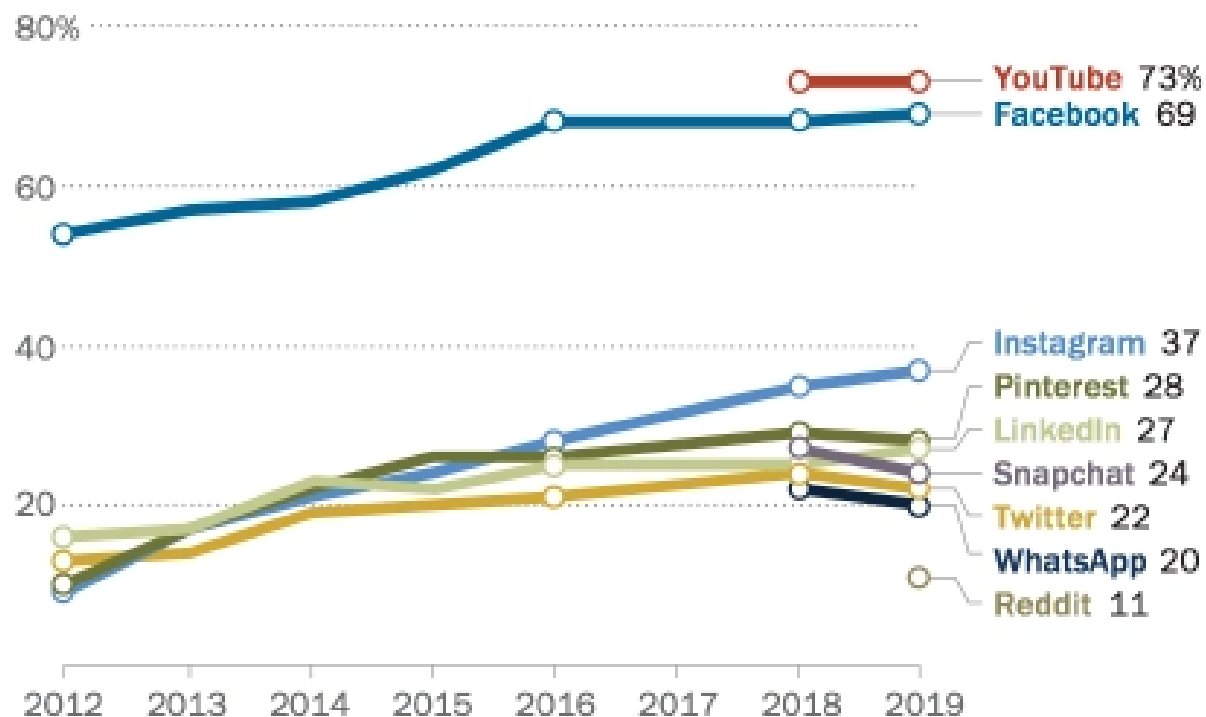
Communicate Your Message - Media

- ▶ Consider current platforms – radio, t.v., newspaper, website, email, social media
- ▶ Where do you expect to hear from your constituents?
- ▶ Age demographics and platform considerations

Social Media

Facebook, YouTube continue to be the most widely used online platforms among U.S. adults

% of U.S. adults who say they ever use the following online platforms or messaging apps online or on their cellphone



Note: Pre-2018 telephone poll data is not available for YouTube, Snapchat and WhatsApp.

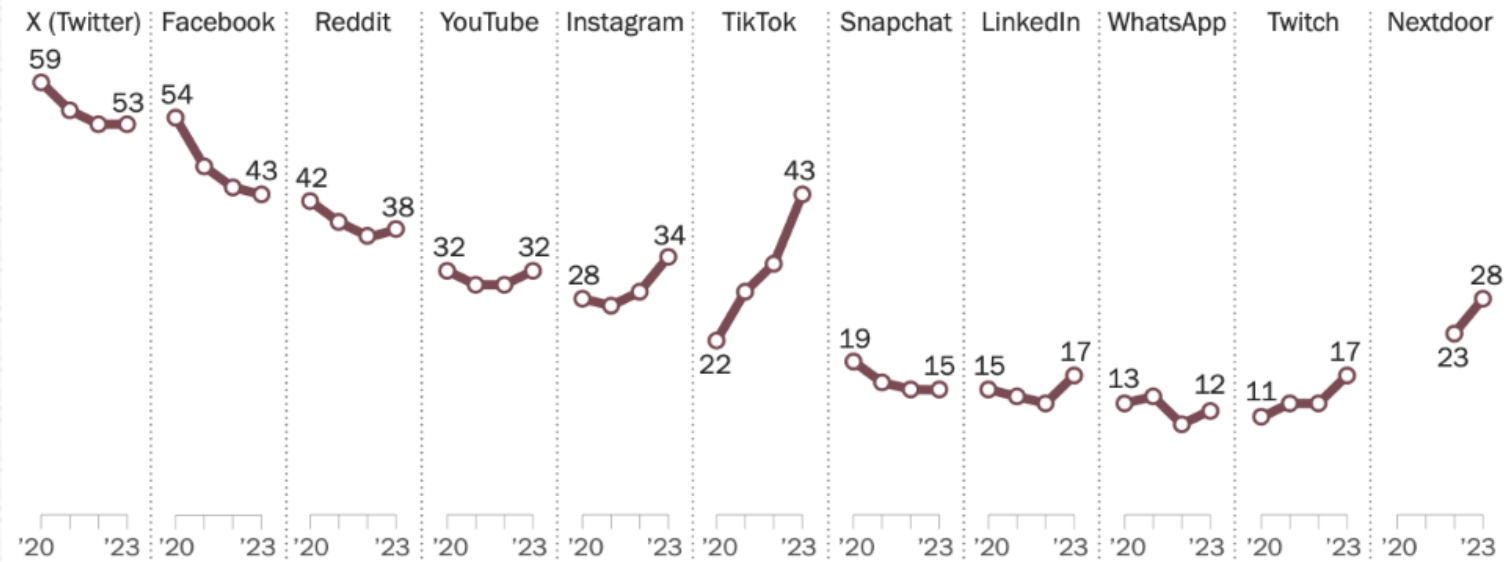
Comparable trend data is not available for Reddit.

Source: Survey conducted Jan. 8-Feb. 7, 2019.

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Share of TikTok users who regularly get news there has nearly doubled since 2020

% of each social media site's users who **regularly** get news there

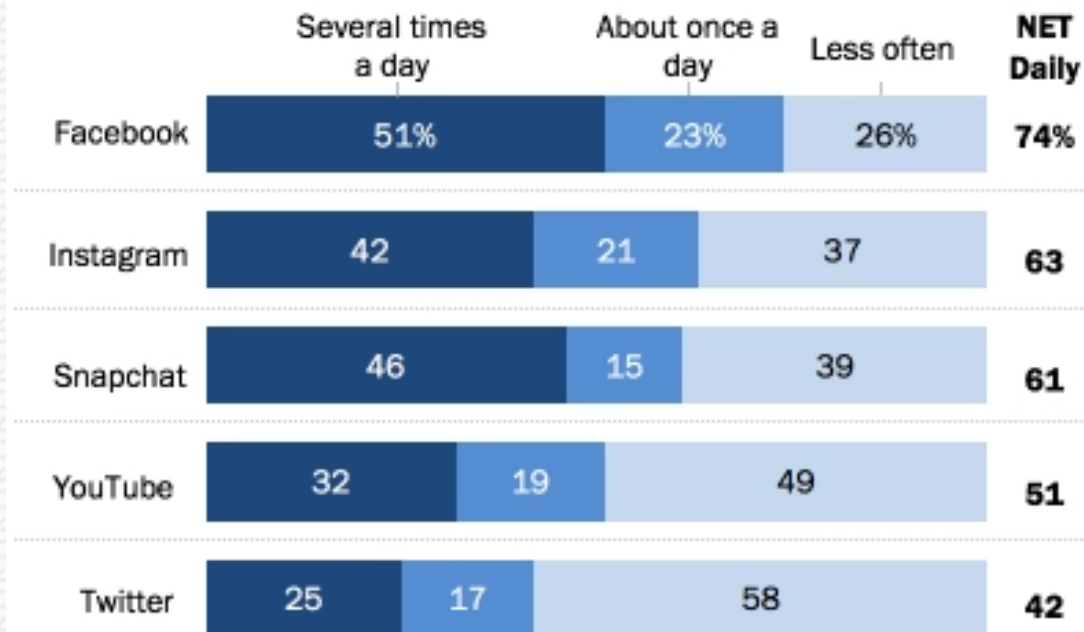


Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 25–Oct. 1, 2023.

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Roughly three-quarters of Facebook users visit the site on a daily basis

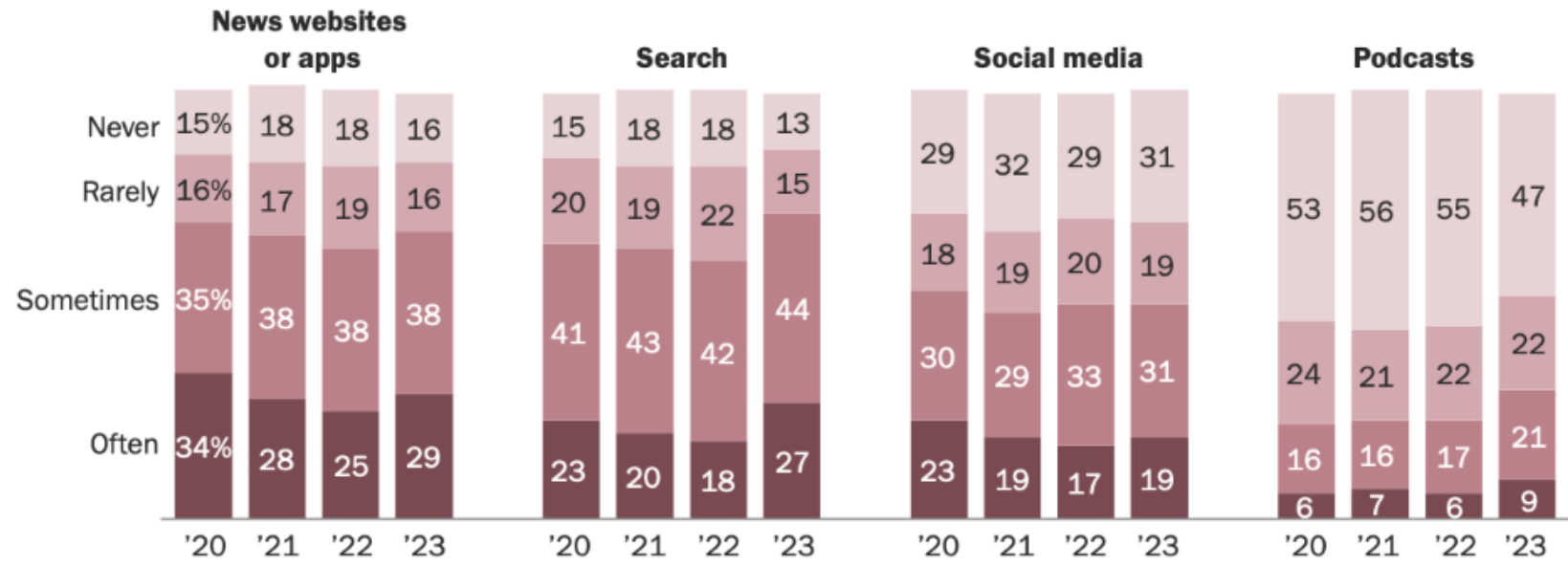
Among U.S. adults who say they use ____, % who use each site ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. "Less often" category includes users who visit these sites a few times a week, every few weeks or less often.

Source: Survey conducted Jan. 8-Feb. 7, 2019.

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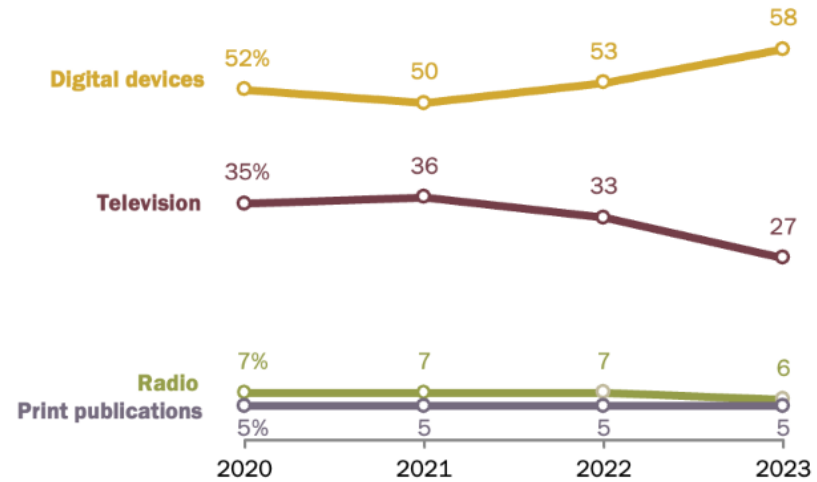


Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Respondents who do not have internet access at home did not receive these questions; they are included with those who said “Never,” along with those who say they do not get news from digital devices.
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 25-Oct. 1, 2023.

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News platform preferences

% of U.S. adults who **prefer** ____ for getting news

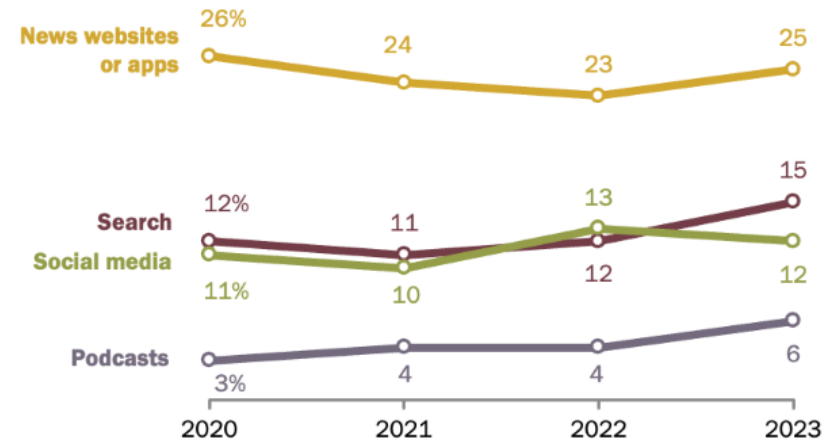


Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 25-Oct. 1, 2023.

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Digital news platform preferences

% of U.S. adults who *prefer* ____ for getting news



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 25-Oct. 1, 2023.

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