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MARKET RESEARCH

Who do British Columbians trust the most to give them news?

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A survey on media consumption and trust from Mustel Group and FleishmanHillard has determined that while less than one-third (30 per cent) of British Columbians pay for news, nearly two-thirds (62%) trust professional media over their personal networks (39%) to help form their opinions. Nearly all respondents (99%) believe fair, independent journalism is essential for a healthy democracy, and check several sources to form an opinion.



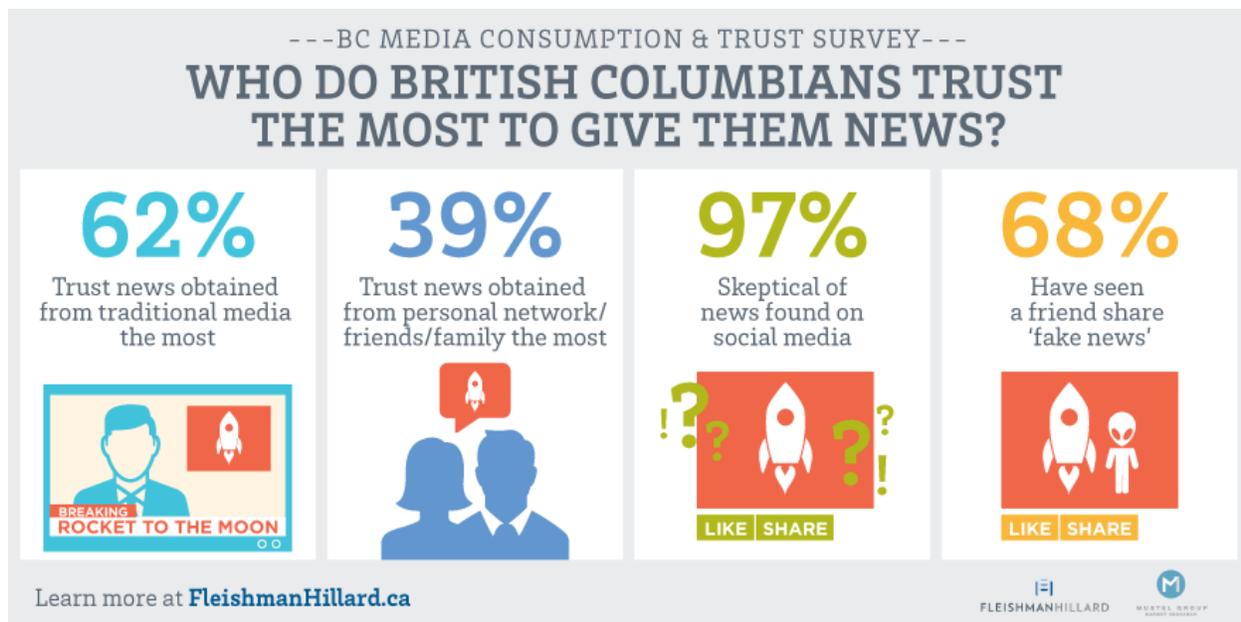
Anna Lilly, FleishmanHillard and Evi Mustel, Mustel Group

The survey shows that journalists play a big role in shaping opinions. Despite significant changes in the media landscape and layoffs in newsrooms, most British Columbians trust the news media and they want to consume their product. However, most people don't believe they should have to pay for news.



While more than half of respondents consume news through social media, British Columbians are significantly more skeptical of information they see on social channels compared to obtaining information directly from traditional media sources. Additionally, the original news source, and whether the story is balanced, are seen as more important factors than who posted or shared the story.

Many respondents are getting their news on social media, but these channels are merely conduits for stories published by bonafide reporters at respected outlets. Our survey revealed some confusion over so-called fake news, and a healthy degree of skepticism about stories posted to social media.



KEY FINDINGS

- 30% of British Columbians pay for news, subscribing to two sources on average
- Older residents are significantly more likely to pay for news (50% aged 55+ vs. 9% under age 35)
- When asked which information source they trust the most, 62% of respondents choose the media while 39% are more likely to trust their personal networks
- While those under age 35 commonly use social media for news, a significant proportion of older residents also get news from social channels (52% aged 35-54, 43% aged 55+)
- Women are more inclined to obtain news from social media than men (58% vs. 48%)
- 97% of British Columbians are skeptical of news found on social media
- 68% of respondents have seen a friend share 'fake news', increasing to 85% for those under 35
- One in four report having difficulty distinguishing between 'fake news' and legitimate news stories

TOP NEWS SOURCES (% listing as among Top 3 sources)

	TOTAL	18-35 YEARS	35-54 YEARS	55+YEARS
Television	58%	35%	54%	79%
Social media	53%	69%	52%	43%
Radio	51%	41%	58%	50%
Media website	42%	44%	46%	37%
Newspaper	30%	7%	27%	49%

Backgrounder

Additional survey findings and analysis are available on the accompanying [backgrounder](#).

Methodology

Research was conducted in March 2017 using 500 online interviews with a random sample of B.C. residents 18 years of age or over. Statistics carry a margin of error of +/-4.4% at 95% confidence. The sample was weighted to match Statistics Canada census data on gender, age and area of residence.

About FleishmanHillard

FleishmanHillard is a worldwide leader in strategic communications with more than 75 offices around the globe. Our Vancouver office, established in 1995, provides a full complement of strategic communications, public affairs, consultation, community relations, campaign development and marketing services to a range of local, national and international organizations.

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About Mustel Group

Established over 25 years ago in Vancouver, B.C., Mustel Group offers a full range of quantitative and qualitative research services including telephone, internet, email, mail, mall intercept, on-site surveys, depth interviewing and focus groups. The Mustel Group is a team of collaborative experts delivering customized market research solutions for clients in both the public and private sectors.

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