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Harris Poll Study Shows Political Effect On News Media's Brand Equity

Liberal-Leaning Consumers Double Down on The New York Times and CNN

TV Networks, Factual Entertainment TV and Internet Radio Lead Media Categories in Brand Equity; Video Streaming Services on the Rise

Netflix, YouTube, PBS, The Weather Channel, HBO, NPR, FX and More Take Brand of the Year Honors

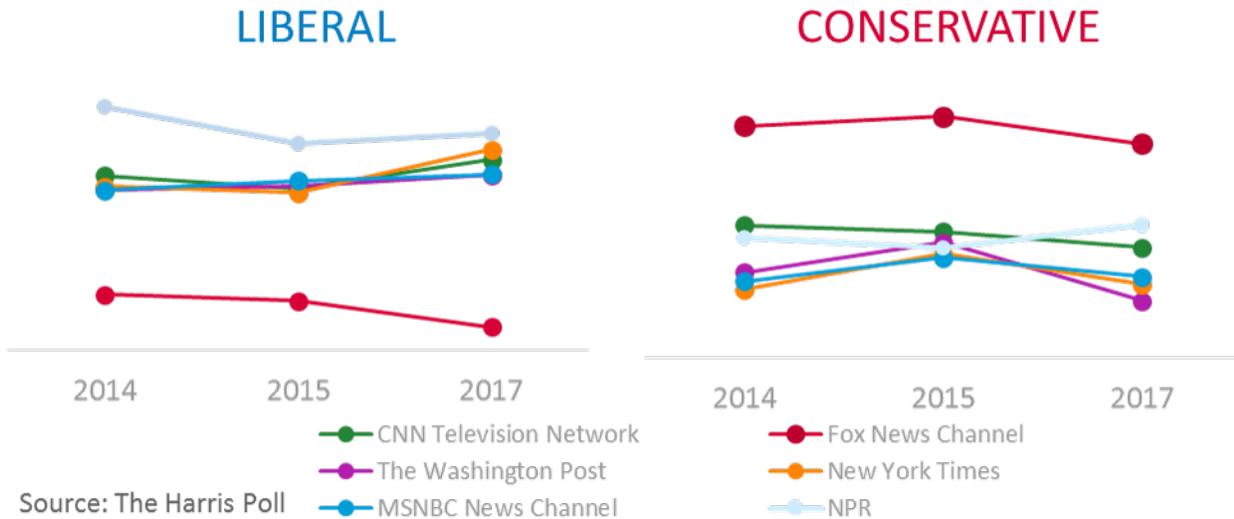
NEW YORK, May 2, 2017 – News media brands experienced a stark change in brand equity post-election, according to new research from The Harris Poll. Conservative support for TV News and News Services - including Fox News - declined across the board in the wake of "fake news." Liberal-leaning consumers boosted support for The New York Times and CNN, while their support of Fox News declined sharply.

"Liberal support of mainstream news has intensified, especially for The New York Times, which gained significant equity, despite attempts by the White House to delegitimize it," said Joan Sinopoli, vice president of brand solutions at The Harris Poll. "Conservatives have become more cautious of the media overall, including Fox News, which at the time of the survey, had already lost some of its star news personalities. The sharpness of the brand equity gains and declines we see among media brands is significant since brand equity tends to resist movement."

The Harris Poll's 29th annual [EquiTrend Study](#), which measures brand health over time, reveals the strongest brands across the media, travel, financial, automotive, entertainment, retail, restaurant, technology, household and nonprofit industries, based on consumer response.

According to Harris Poll's research, among liberal-leaning consumers, The New York Times' brand equity increased 10 points from 2015 to 2017, while support for Fox News dropped 6 points. CNN experienced a 7-point increase and The Washington Post and MSNBC each increased about 2 points during the same time period.

Among conservative-leaning consumers, The Washington Post's brand equity dropped 12 points from 2015, while The New York Times declined 6 points. Fox News fell 5 points among conservatives over the same period; CNN dropped 3 points. (See chart.)



While there is a significant gap in equity ratings between those expressing liberal (75) versus conservative (51) values, News Service Brand of the Year NPR shows somewhat increasing support from conservatives (+2 points 2014 – 2017).

"Despite prevailing political winds, NPR has not seen any notable wavering of support from liberals or conservatives," said Sinopoli.

The EquiTrend Brand Equity Index is comprised of three factors - Familiarity, Quality and Purchase Consideration - that result in a brand equity rating for each brand. Brands ranking highest in equity receive the Harris Poll EquiTrend "Brand of the Year" award for their respective categories. This year, more than 100,000 U.S. consumers assessed more than 4,000 brands across more than 450 categories. The full Harris Poll EquiTrend Brands of the Year list can be found at <http://www.theharrispoll.com/equitrend-rankings/2017>.

TV Networks Lead Media Brand Equity, PBS Reclaims Network Brand of the Year

According to Harris Poll's research, TV networks (equity rating of 67) maintain the equity leadership position among media categories, followed by Factual Entertainment TV (65) and Internet Radio (65).

"TV networks are the brand equity powerhouse of the media industry, primarily because these are such familiar brands," said Sinopoli. "TV Network Brand of the Year PBS, for example, forges a strong emotional connection with its viewers. Additionally, consumers tend to view factual entertainment TV, such as The History Channel and The Discovery Channel as having a stronger positive social impact than other players in the media space."

Netflix Owns Brand of the Year, Despite Stabilizing Equity

Netflix, with the media category equity high of 78, is the Video Streaming Subscription Brand of the Year for the fourth consecutive year. Once a fast-riser, (18 percent equity increase since 2013), Netflix's equity remains stable year-over-year, with no brand threatening its lead. Amazon Prime (equity score of 70), is a new fast riser, with a 16 percent growth rate since 2013.

"Netflix is actually becoming a 'mainstream' brand as streaming penetrates more and more households -- and fingertips," said Sinopoli. "Amazon Prime intends to be a worthy challenger as more original content, including Amazon hit movies, begin to penetrate its playlist."

The 2017 Harris Poll EquiTrend Media Brands of the Year

Award Category	Brand
Factual Entertainment TV	History Channel
General Entertainment TV	FX Television Network
Internet Radio Service	Pandora Internet Radio
Kids' TV	Discovery Family Channel
Music TV	Great American Country (GAC)
News Service	National Public Radio (NPR)
Pay Cable TV Network	HBO Television Network
Social Networking Site	YouTube
Sports TV	NFL Red Zone Television Network
TV & Internet Provider	Google Fiber
TV Network	PBS Television Network
TV News	The Weather Channel
Video Streaming Subscription	Netflix

Full category lists can be viewed at <http://www.theharrispoll.com/equitrend-rankings/2017>.

"With so many opportunities to consume, we see increased consumption across most Media Brands of the Year, but increased use doesn't necessarily equal increased equity – only five Brands of the Year show a year-over year equity increase," said Sinopoli. "Increased use can impact familiarity, but offering competitive content, user experiences and price is essential in driving stronger quality ratings."

Methodology

The 2017 Harris Poll EquiTrend Study is based on a sample of 102,617 U.S. consumers ages 15 and over surveyed online, in English, between December 30, 2016 and February 21, 2017. The survey took an average of 30 minutes to complete. The total number of brands rated was 4,052. Each respondent was asked to rate a total of 40 randomly selected brands. Each brand received approximately 1,000 ratings. Data was weighted to be representative of the entire U.S. population of consumers ages 15 and over based on age by sex, education, race/ethnicity, region, income, and data from respondents ages 18 and over were also weighted for their propensity to be online. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Poll surveys. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in our panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

The Brand Equity Index is the keystone to the EquiTrend program, providing an understanding of a brand's overall strength. A brand's Equity is determined by a calculation of Familiarity, Quality and Purchase Consideration. Brand of the Year is determined by a simple ranking of brands.

The Harris Poll EquiTrend methodology has been validated by academic business experts in the *Journal of Marketing Research* (1994) and *International Journal of Research on Marketing* (2012).

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

About The Harris Poll

Over the last five decades, Harris Polls have become media staples. With comprehensive experience and precise technique in public opinion polling, along with a proven track record of uncovering consumers' motivations and behaviors, The Harris Poll has gained strong brand recognition around the world. The Harris Poll offers a diverse portfolio of proprietary client solutions to transform relevant insights into actionable foresight for a wide range of industries including health care, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer packaged goods.

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