

**What's up with media? What's down?
What's holding steady?**

Google, Bing, Twitter, Facebook, CNN, *The New York Times*... for this *Cool News* survey, we asked readers whether the ability of various media brands to build national brands appears favorable, unfavorable or neutral these days.

Google scored highest (82% favorable) and MySpace the lowest (50% unfavorable) in our survey. That's not terribly surprising. Google also scored the lowest unfavorable (5%), followed by YouTube, one of its acquisitions, at 6%.

"If building traffic to a brand or its marketing initiatives can help build a brand, there are few more powerful tools than Google," said one survey respondent. "More utility than a medium, but indispensable the way that a water main is to an urban center," said another.

Our survey was taken shortly before the Microsoft-Yahoo deal was announced, but neither of the new partners finished particularly well. For Microsoft's Bing engine, the result was no doubt affected by its newness, with 66% rating Bing either "neutral" or "don't know."

The big issue for Bing is weaning people off of Google: "I have used Bing and like it, however I still return to Google for most of my search work," a reader wrote. Like Bing, Yahoo scored highest on "neutral," at 44%, with "favorable" at 33% and "unfavorable" at 18%.

Perhaps more surprising is how well *The New York Times* fared (66% favorable). *The Times* certainly has its business-model challenges like every other newspaper, but there seems to be a certain reservoir of good will toward the publication.

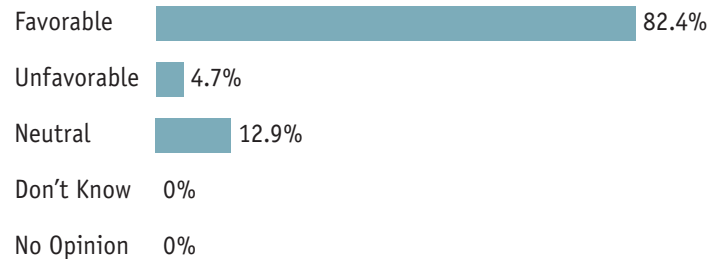
On the other hand, a number of respondents said the paper is hurt by a "liberal bias." As one reader put it: "Agenda-driven news outlets do not make a good news brand."

The political flavor of some of the responses was striking, and it came from both sides of the aisle. "Steve Forbes is the closest thing America has to a fascist 19th century robber baron, and it's reflected in the book's editorial," a respondent wrote, referring of course to *Forbes* magazine.

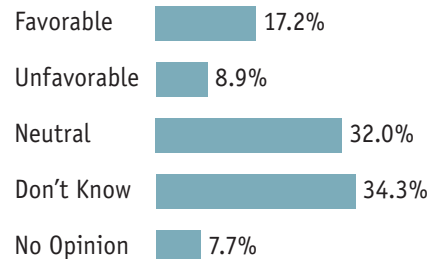
Even the mighty Google was not immune from such attacks: "China, censorship, big brothering... not cool," a reader commented.

The Media

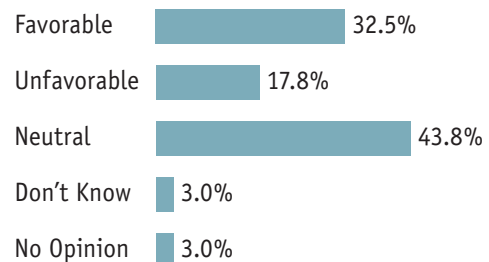
Google



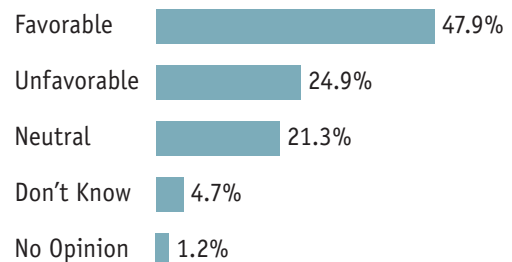
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Yahoo!

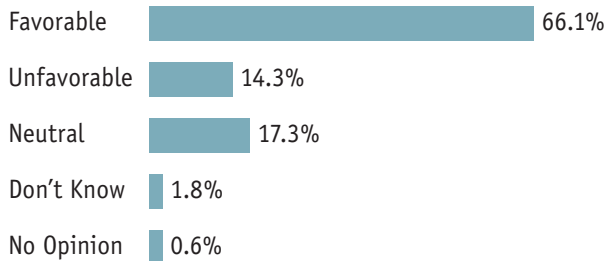


Twitter

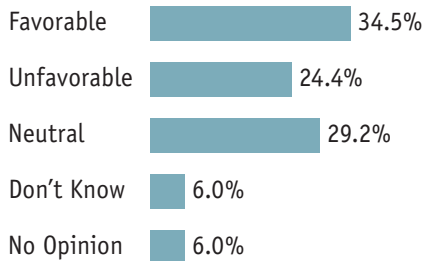


Feast

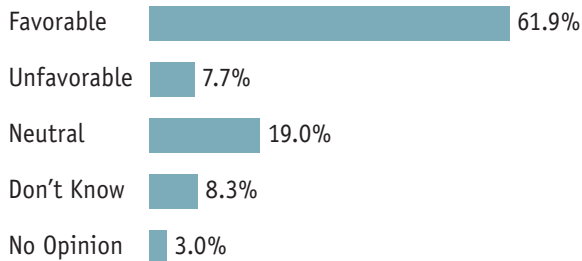
The New York Times



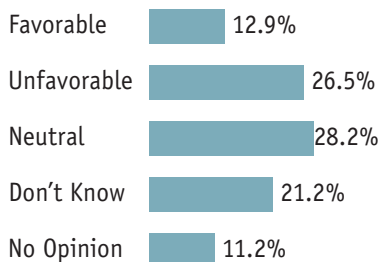
Walmart.com



Target.com



Clear Channel Radio



CNN also took its political lumps, although it fared reasonably well, garnering a 51% “favorable” and 20% “unfavorable” response. A few took issue with the quality of its reporting. “Can’t stand the repetition of the same old stories,” a reader complained.

Our readers continue to take Walmart to task—in this case, Walmart.com, with “favorable” at just 35% and “unfavorable” at 24%. This contrasted dramatically with Target.com, whose “favorable” score, 62%, was one of the survey’s highest, and its unfavorable, 8%, one of the lowest.

It’s a curious result, given Walmart’s extraordinary marketplace reach versus Target’s cheap-chic challenges in a depressed economy.

Many questions remain about Facebook (58% favorable) and Twitter (48% favorable) and their potential abilities to help build national brands. LinkedIn did better than either, with 60% “favorable,” perhaps a function of its appeal to our business-oriented readership.

Despite its relatively high “favorable” rating, Facebook faces questions. Some expressed concerns about privacy issues while others were conflicted about its value as a medium for marketing.

However, others credited Facebook for its ability to build fan clubs.

Twitter’s strong suit seems to be its potential as a customer service tool. But there are still plenty of folks who think both Twitter and Facebook are a waste of time. Twitter, especially.

Some of the Twitter-length comments were particularly amusing, such as: “The capability to assist in the building of a national brand encumbered by a 140 character limit is an interesting one. Few have the discipl...” And, ironically: “How can anything with only 140 characters communicate in a logical, meaningful manner? It cannot.”

RESPONDENT PROFILE

A total of 170 survey respondents included agencies (24%), brand marketers (24%) and consulting firms (18%). Twenty-five percent worked in packaged goods firms, 12% in media/entertainment and nine percent in retail. A majority were senior-level executives with 78% reporting more than ten years of experience in marketing.

Survey Results:

http://hubmagazine.com/survey/eating_media