

The State of Tech Journalism in 2020

How technology journalists are shifting focus, being pitched, and covering virtual events

A study by

MUCK RACK | **Panasonic**

In this report, we seek to answer:



1

How are tech journalists reporting during COVID-19?



3

How are tech journalists being pitched in 2020?



2

How has COVID-19 impacted events coverage?



4

Who took this survey?



Panasonic

Over half (**54%**) of tech journalists surveyed increased their coverage about remote work and virtual communication during COVID-19

How has the economic uncertainty related to the COVID-19 pandemic affected your reporting?
Select all that apply.

More story ideas/angles around tech for remote work and virtual communication



Less announcements/news to cover as companies postpone new releases



Layoffs/furloughs at my outlet(s) have increased my workload



Personal layoff(s)/furloughs have meant less work in general



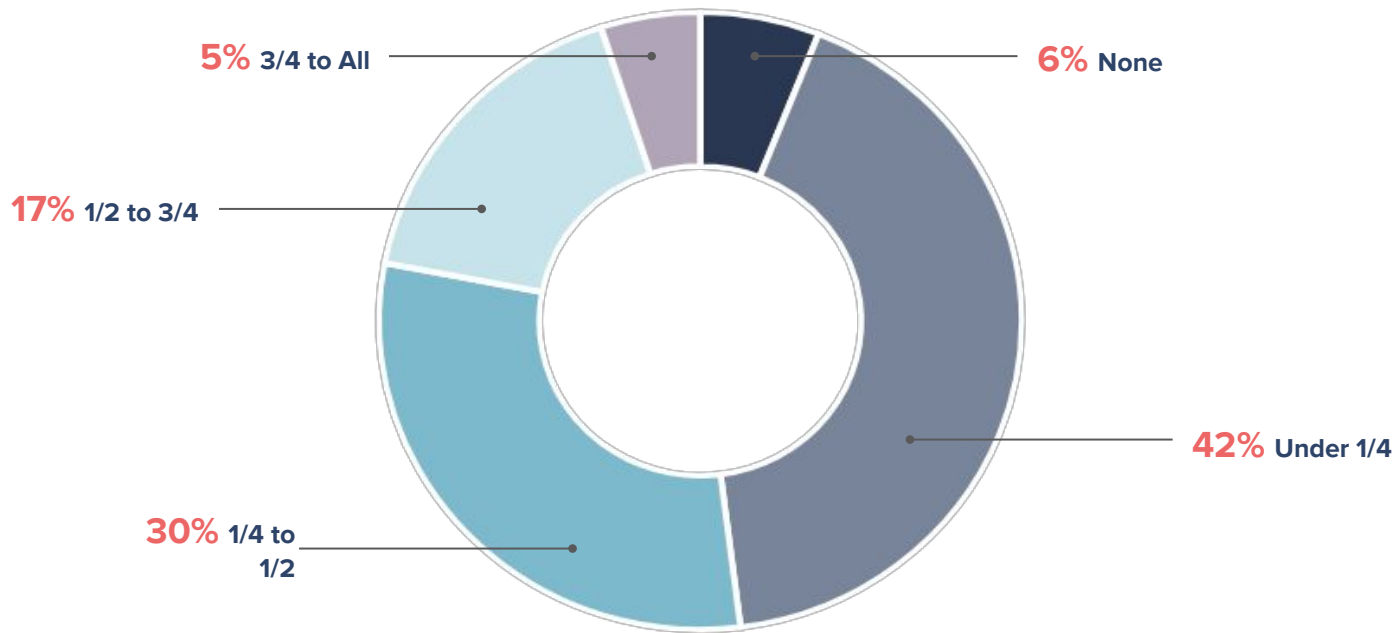
COVID-19 has not affected my reporting



Very few of those surveyed (**15%**) have had less work because of layoffs or furloughs.

Most (**78%**) said that under half of their reporting has pivoted to angles related to COVID-19

How much of your reporting has pivoted to angles related to COVID-19?



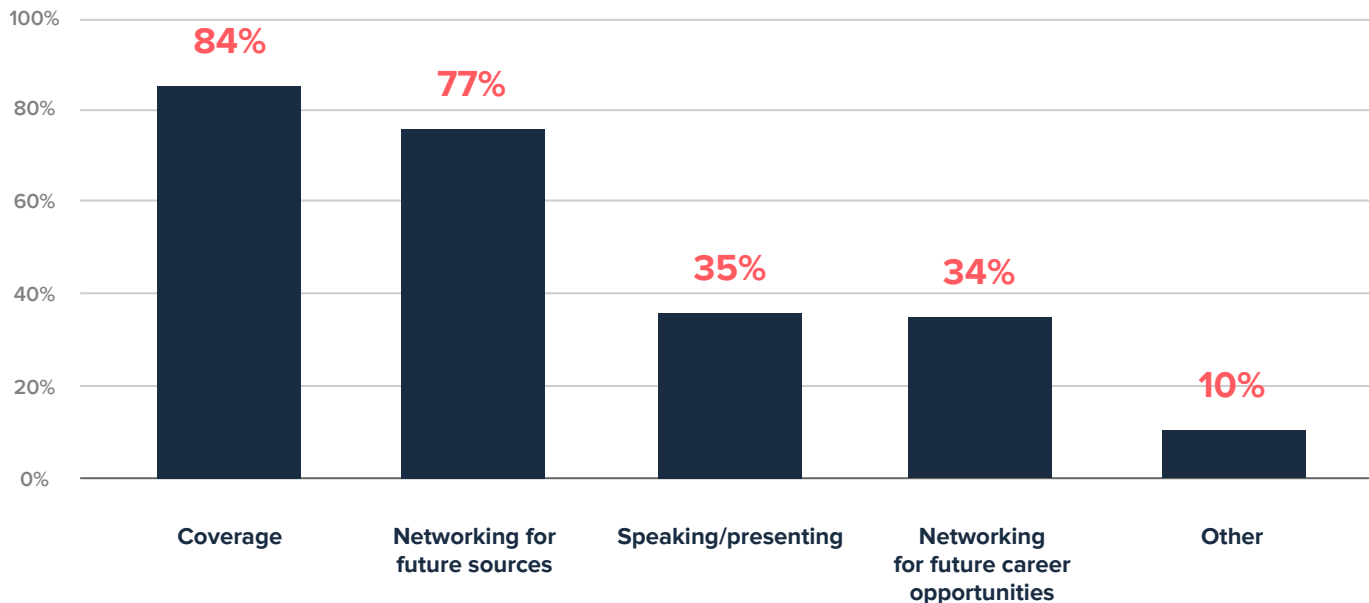


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How COVID-19 has impacted events coverage

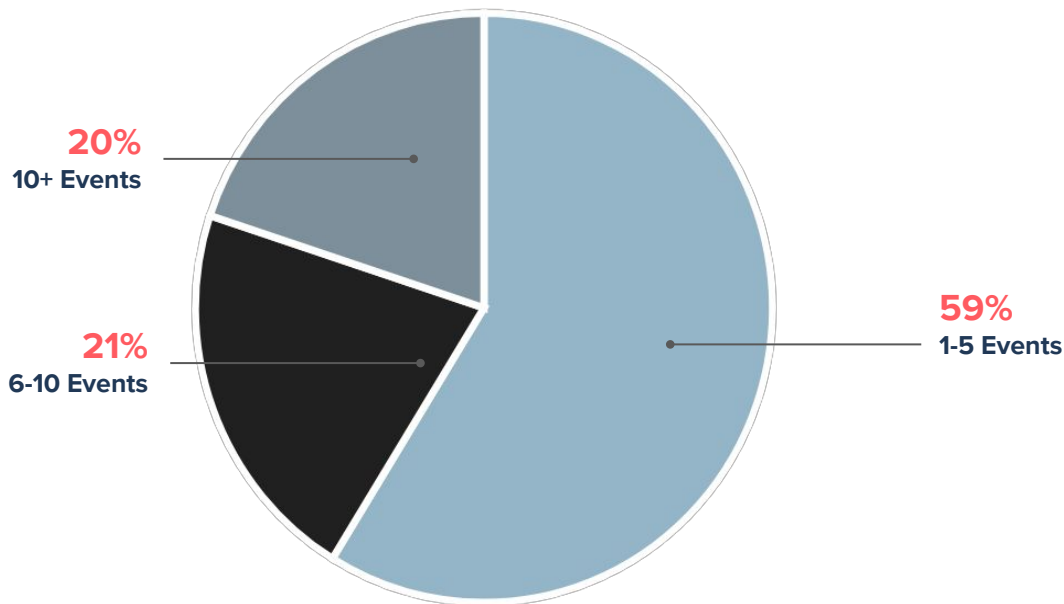
The top reasons tech journalists attend shows and events are for coverage (**84%**) and networking to meet future sources (**77%**)

Why do you attend shows, trade shows or other events? Select all that apply.



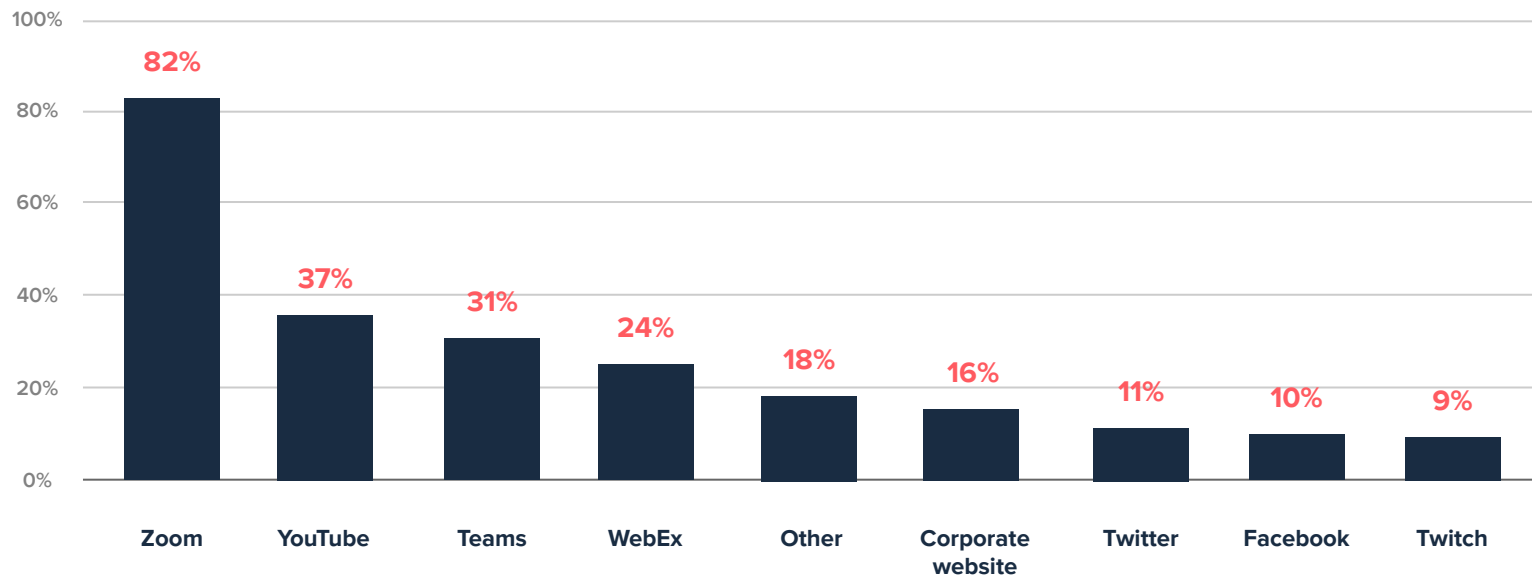
Over half (59%) attended five or fewer virtual events for work over the past year

How many virtual events did you attend for work over the past year?



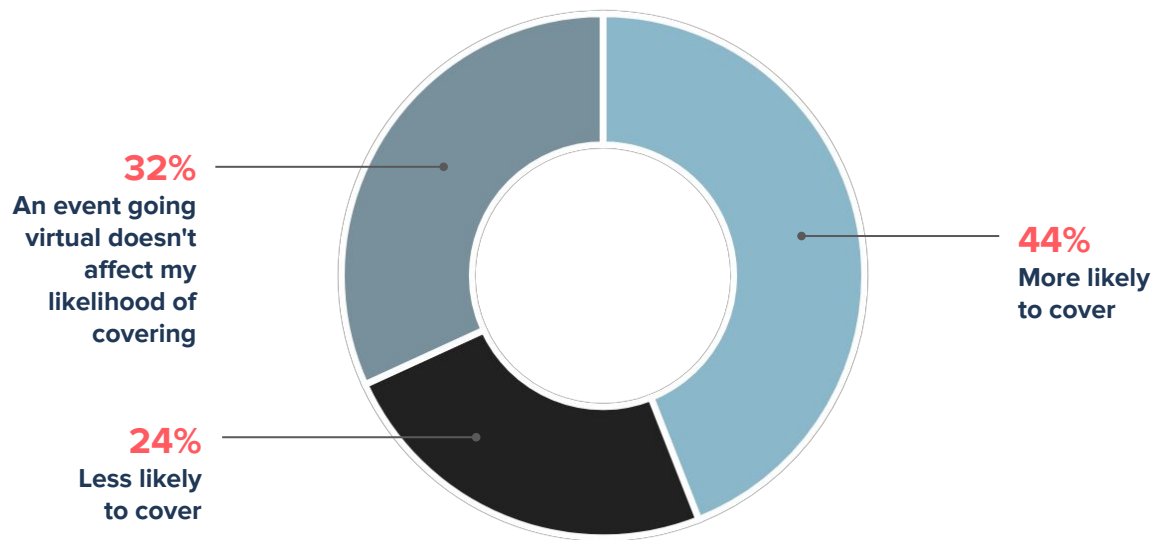
While **82%** prefer Zoom for virtual events, YouTube (**37%**) and Microsoft Teams (**31%**) were the second and third-most popular, respectively

What platform(s) do you prefer to use for virtual events? Select all that apply.



Almost half (44%) said that they are more likely to cover a virtual event over an in-person event over the next year, while **32%** said it doesn't make a difference

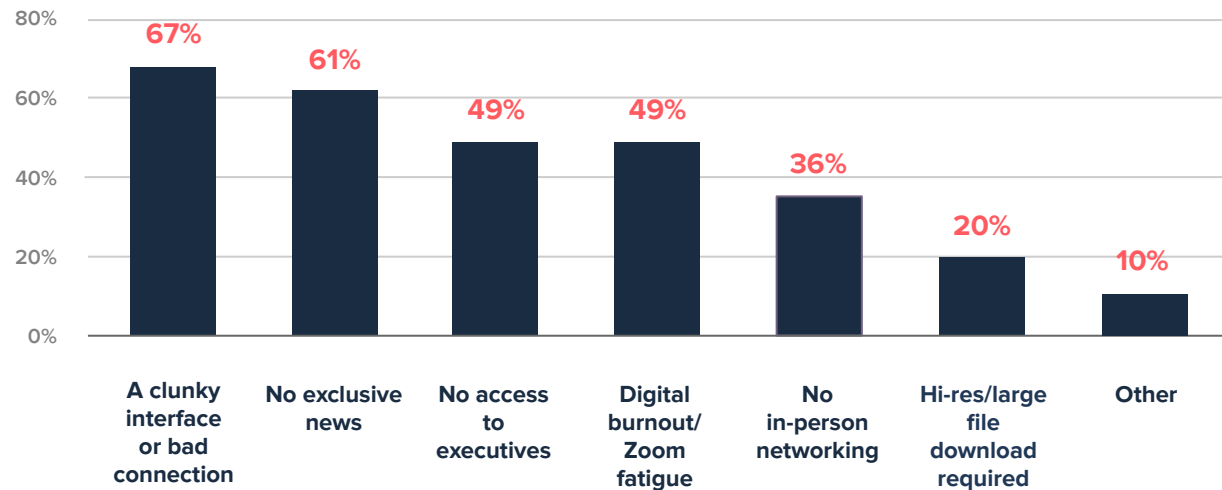
How likely are you to cover a virtual event versus an in-person event over the next year?



Most tech journalists are still apprehensive about attending in-person events in 2021.

67% said a clunky interface/bad connection might make them less likely to cover a virtual event, while **61%** said a lack of exclusive news was a key factor

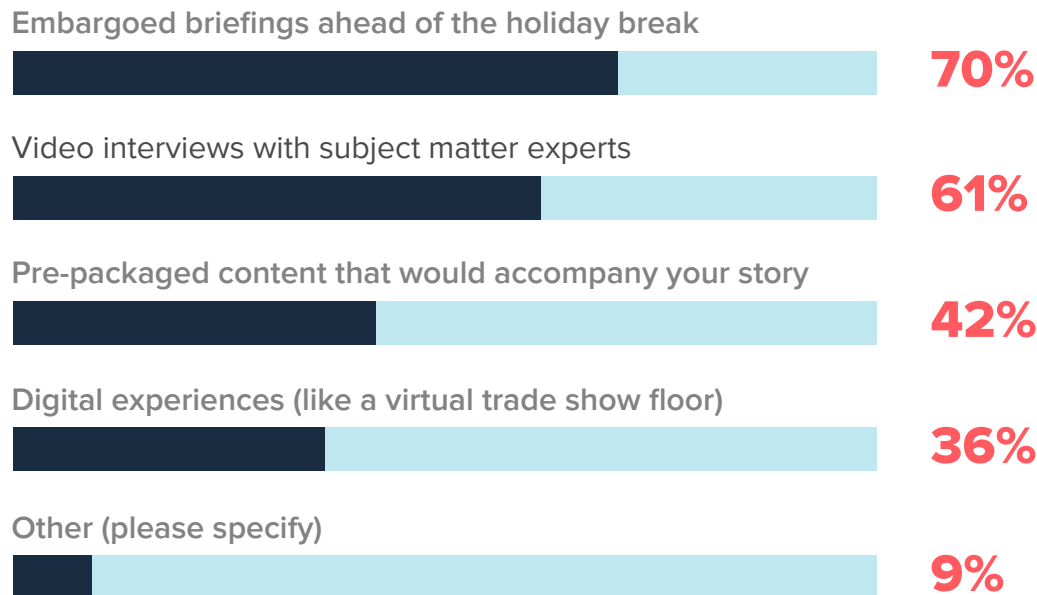
Which of the following factors would make you less inclined to cover one virtual event over another? Select all that apply.



"Other" included **bad timing** not in sync with their deadline schedule, **no opportunity for hands-on testing**, lack of interactivity (**the ability to ask questions**) and **relevance of the event**.

70% said embargoed briefings before the holidays would make it easier to cover events over the next year, while **61%** cited video interviews with experts

What would make it easier for you to cover virtual events over the next year?



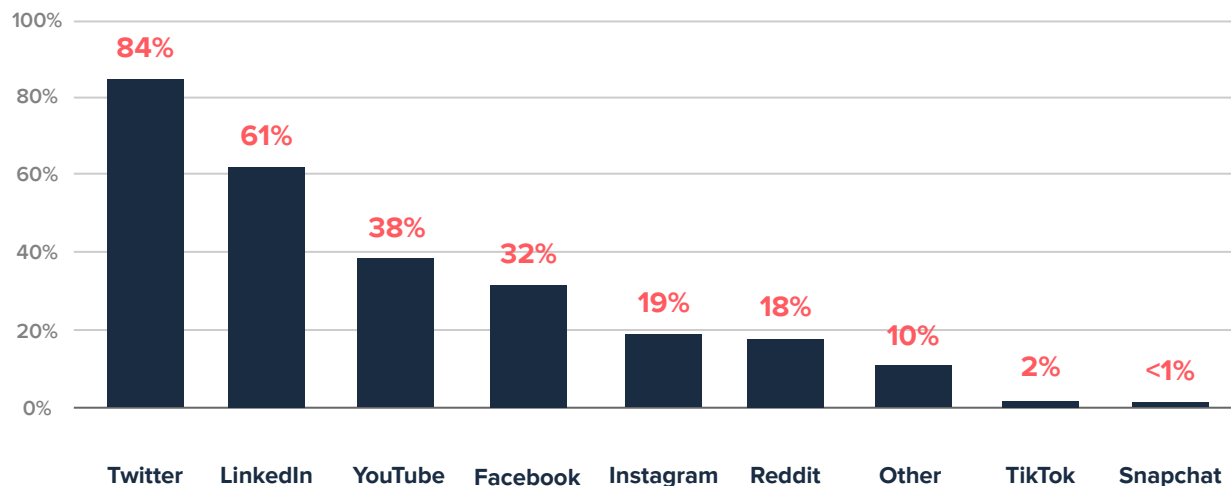


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How tech journalists are being pitched in 2020

Twitter remains the dominant network for company news with tech journalists (84%) followed by LinkedIn (61%) and YouTube (38%)

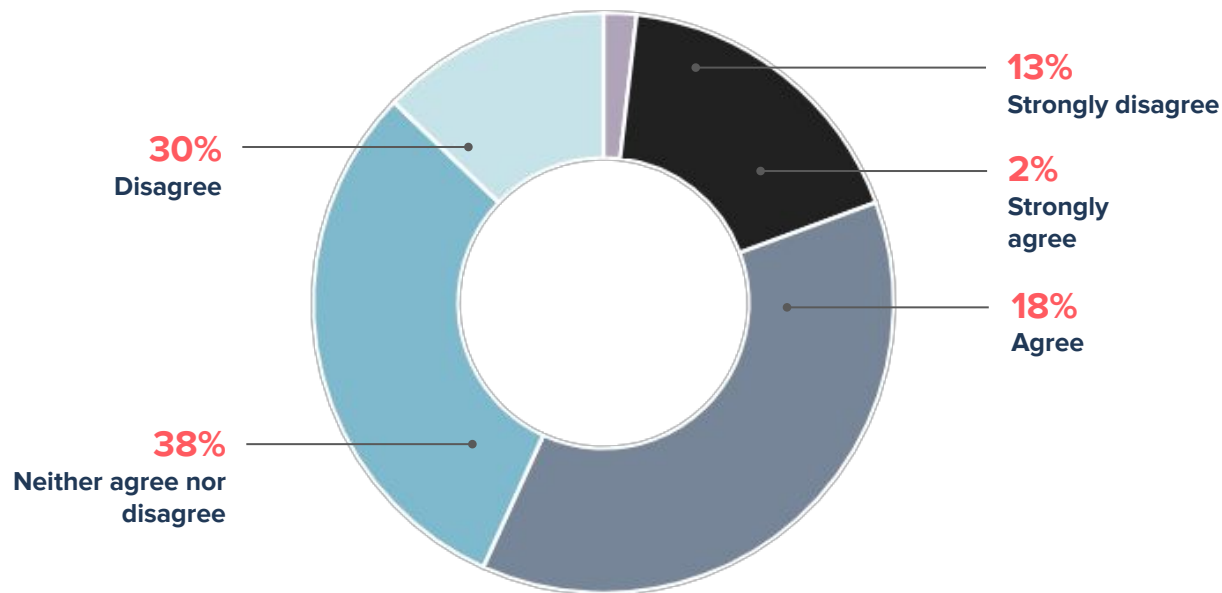
Which of the following social networks to you consult for company news?



In Muck Rack's [State of Journalism 2020](#), journalists also cited **Twitter and LinkedIn** as the networks they plan to use most professionally over the next year.

43% don't think that the pitches they receive for virtual events are personalized to them or their work, while only **20%** do

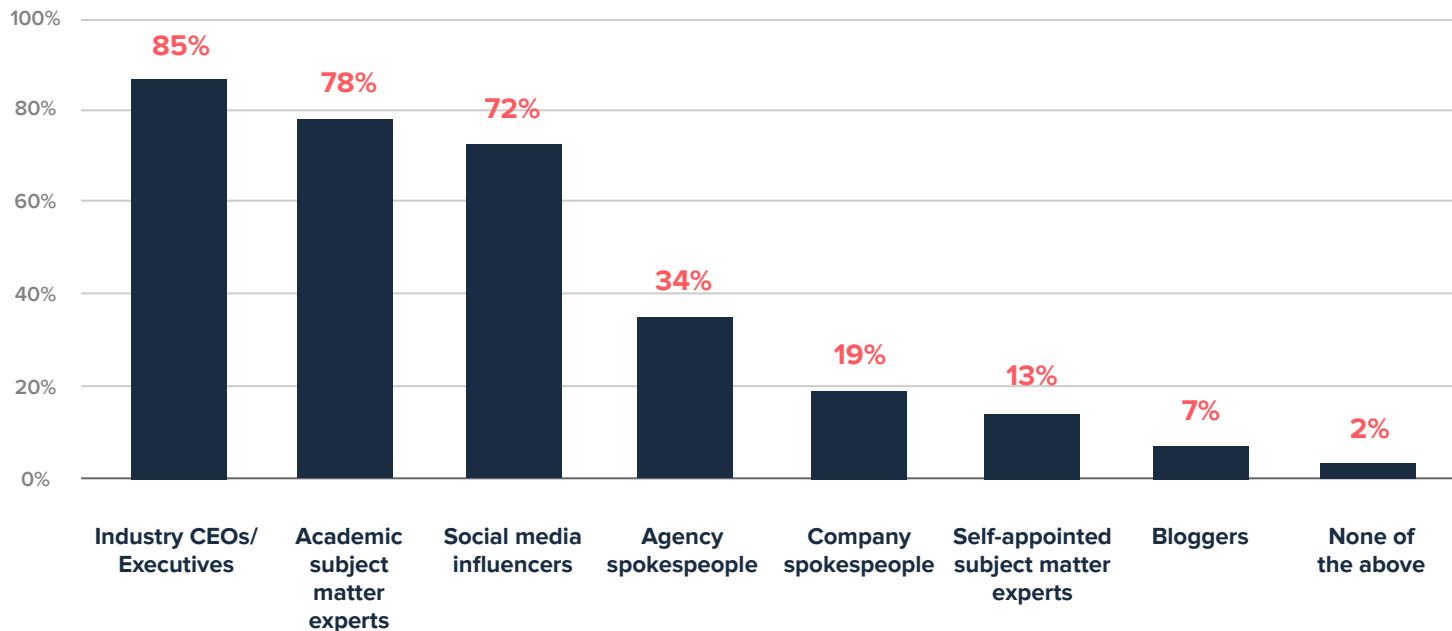
The pitches I've received for virtual events have been personalized to me and my work.



In The State of Journalism 2020, a **lack of personalization** was the **#1 reason** why journalists reject otherwise relevant pitches.

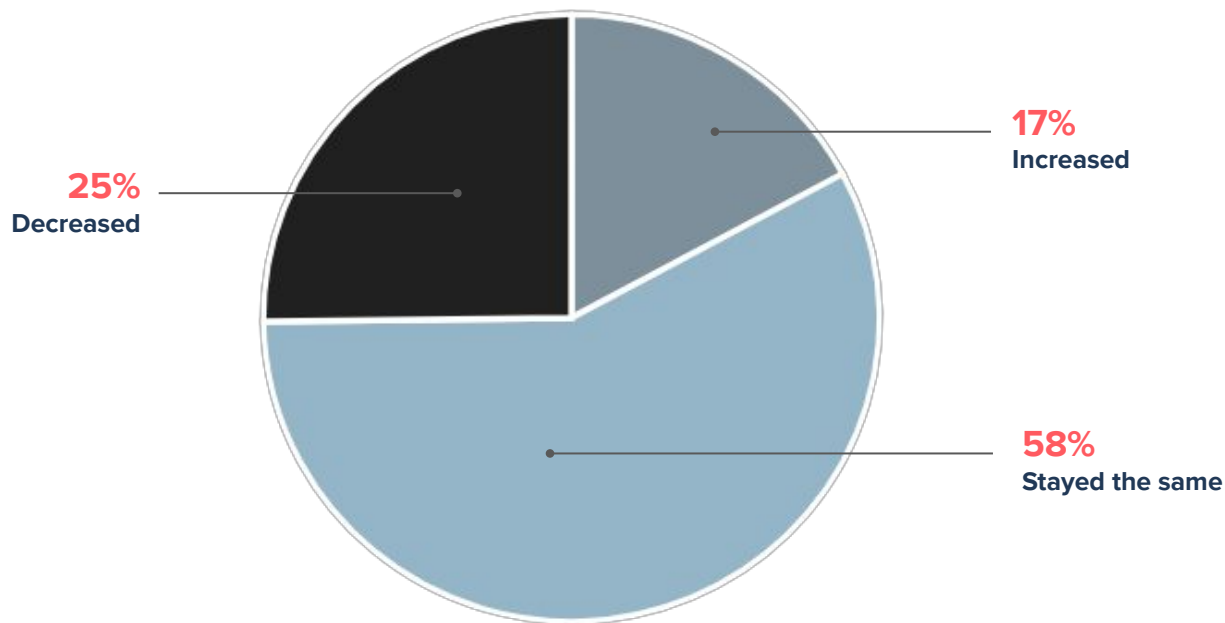
85% consider CEOs and C-Suite executives the most credible sources, followed by academic subject matter experts (**78%**) and company spokespeople (**72%**)

Who do you consider to be credible sources for reporting?



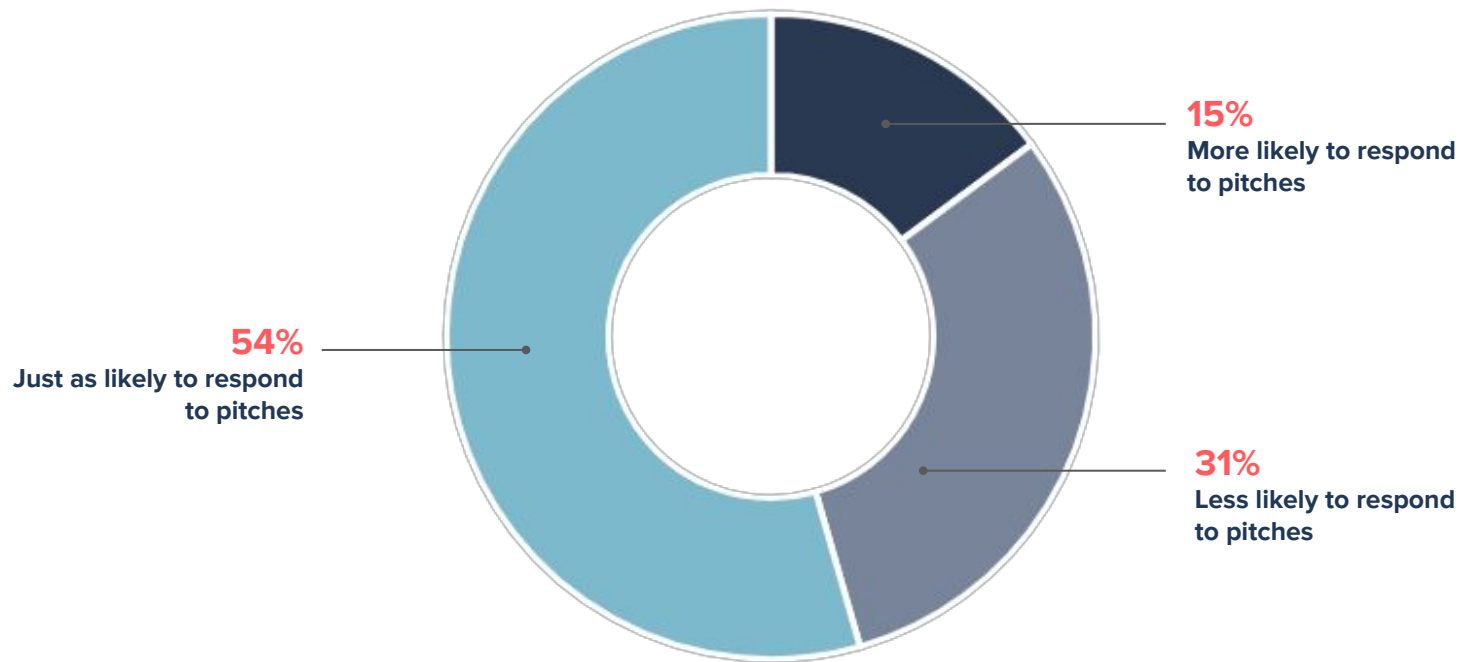
Most (**58%**) said the number of pitches they've turned into stories hasn't changed over the past year

Over the past year, the number of pitches I've turned into published stories has...



While about half (**54%**) said that they are just as likely to respond to pitches compared to last year, **31%** said they are less likely.

Compared to a year ago I am...



These top named technology companies are doing well with their media relations efforts.

1.  Microsoft

***“Microsoft**—Reaching out and maintaining relationships... access to senior execs... not expecting glowing coverage in exchange for access... avoids needless pitching of trivia.”*

***“Apple**—Clear about what you’re getting—including access... privacy focus... good virtual events.”*

2. 

3. 

4. 

***“Intel**—Timely access to experts ahead of embargo...open, ethical and supportive relationship.”*

***“NVIDIA**—High quality presentations, engaging...good interviews.”*

5. 

6. 

7. 

***“Google**—Quite honest when it came to the Pixel 4a launch about the delays etc, also just held pre-briefs and gave out all the info ahead of the launch date (under embargo) so you didn't have to hang around for a live event.”*

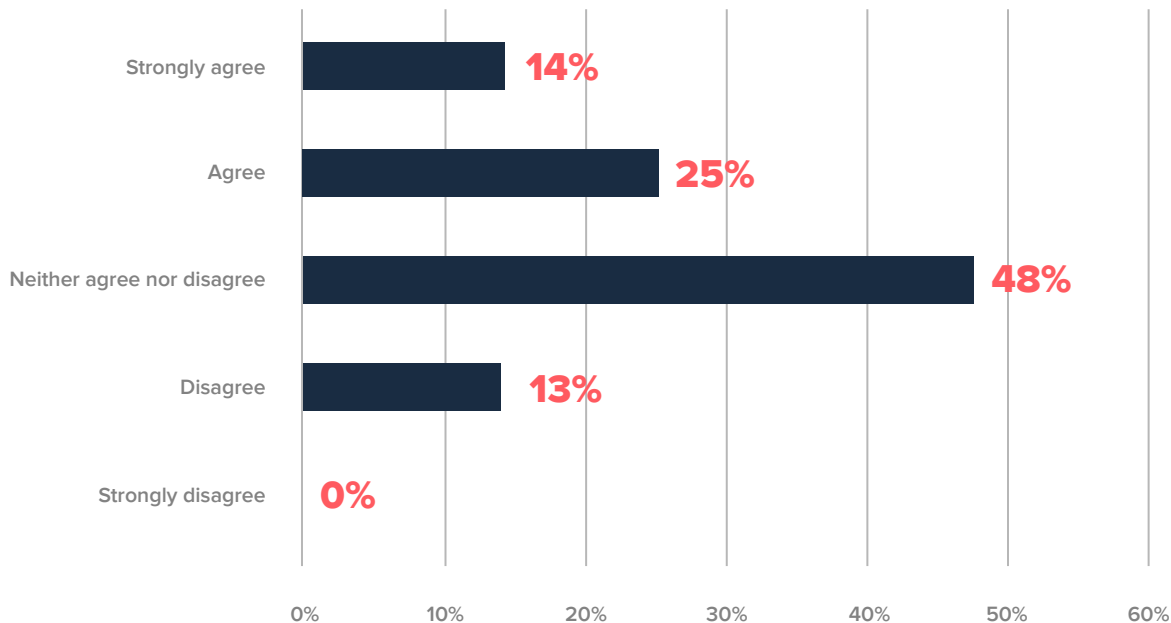
***“Samsung**—Sharing information in advance to avoid any misinformation being spread around. The details about the product are not hidden till the last moment, unlike some other companies.”*

8. 

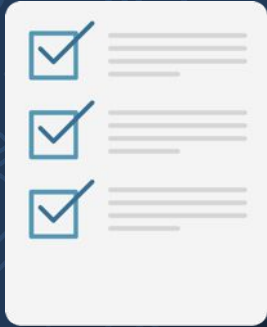
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Of those with an opinion, **39%** agree that the way most tech companies share information is outdated

The way that most tech companies share information is outdated



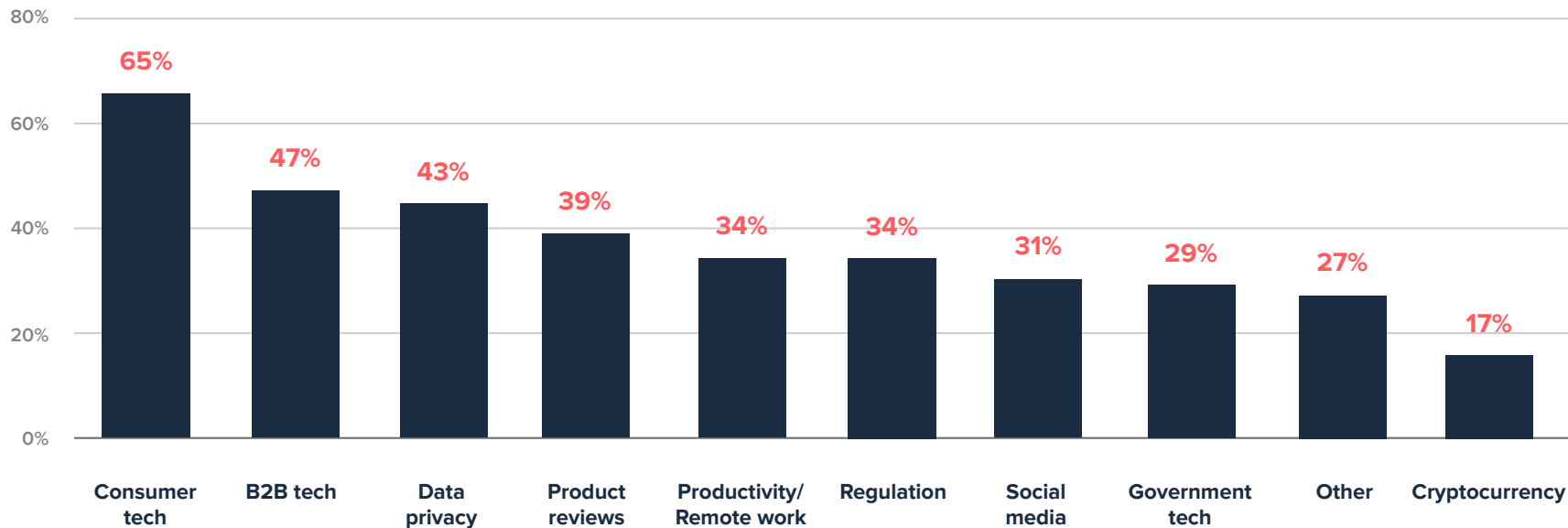
In the State of Journalism 2020, **30% agreed** that the way most general companies share information is outdated—suggesting that tech journalists are feeling it a bit more in their beat.



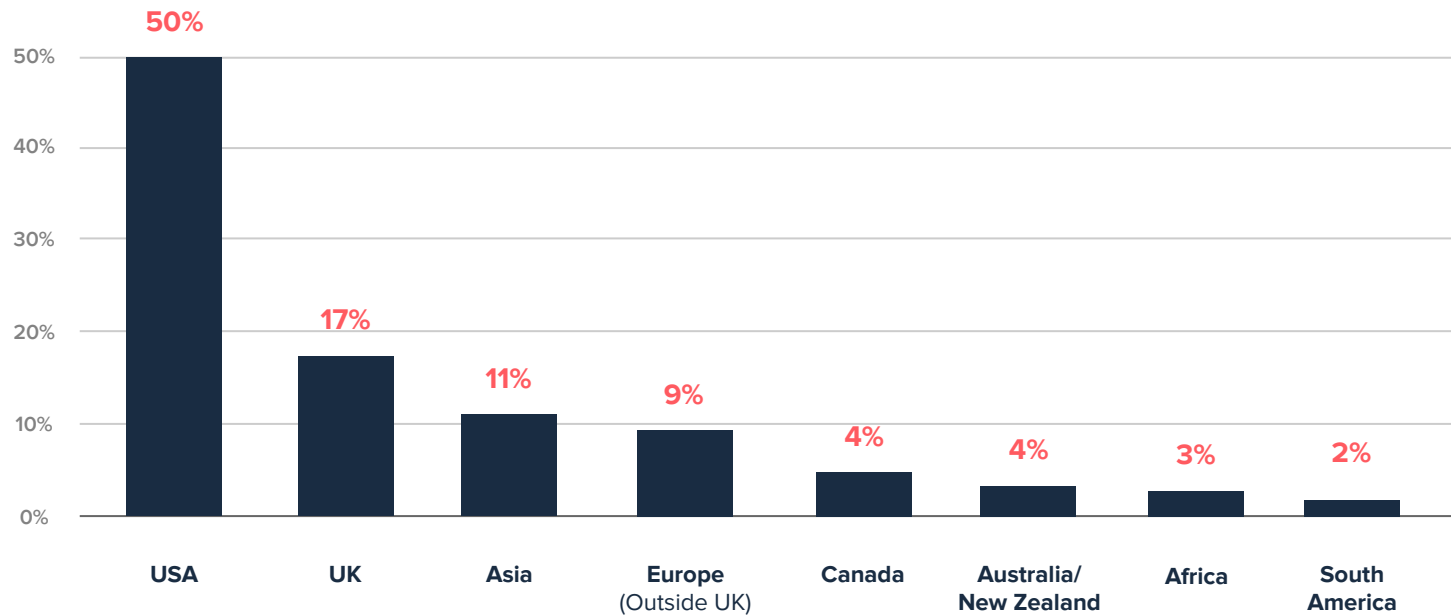
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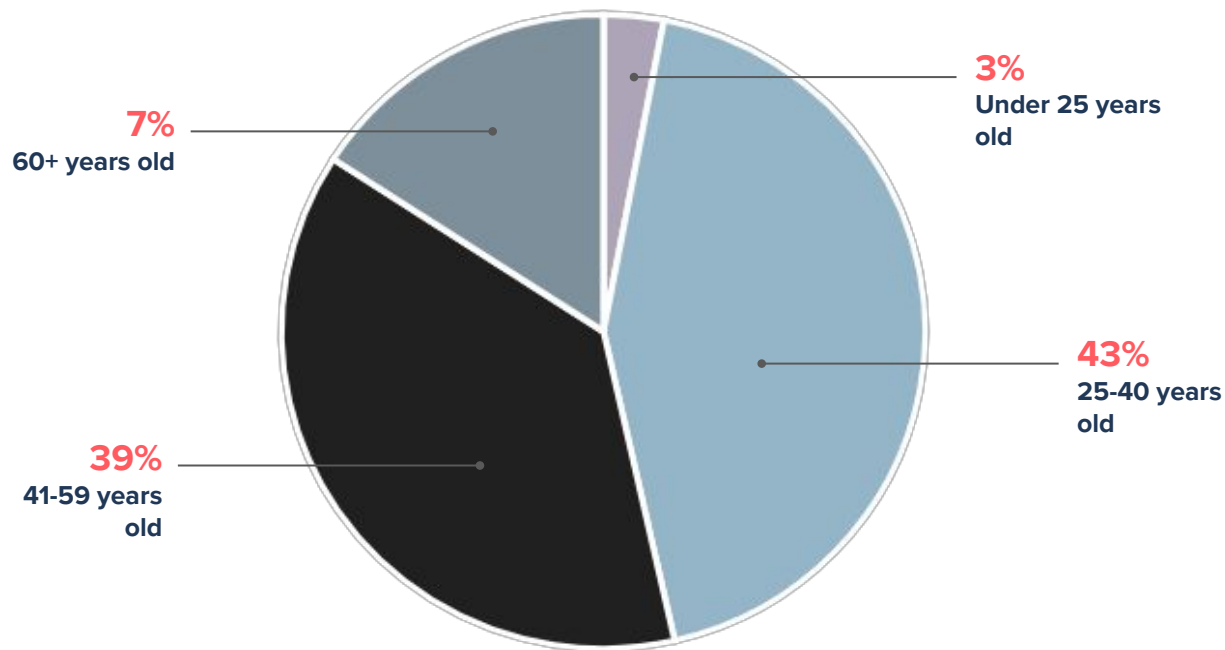
What specific beat(s) do you cover?



Where are you based?



How old are you?





Key Takeaways

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- 1** Over half (**54%**) of tech journalists surveyed increased coverage about remote work and virtual communication as a result COVID-19, though only **22%** said the majority of their reporting has pivoted to angles related to COVID-19.
- 2** **39%** said the way tech companies share information is outdated. **43%** don't think that the pitches they receive for virtual events are personalized to them or their work, while only **20%** do.
- 3** **31%** are less likely to respond to pitches this year than they were at the same time last year. Still, most (**58%**) said the number of pitches they've turned into stories hasn't changed over the past year.
- 4** **67%** said a clunky interface/bad connection might make them less likely to cover a virtual event, while **61%** said a lack of exclusive news was a key factor. **70%** said embargoed briefings before the holidays would make it easier to cover events over the next year.

Thank you!

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