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# 2019 News Release Benchmarks Report

First ever analysis of nearly 17,000 releases provides benchmarks and best practices for news release distribution.



# Background

Public relations (PR) and investor relations (IR) evolved dramatically over the years. Thanks to the explosion of digital media, influencers, social media and bloggers, news about your business can spread more quickly and broadly than ever. Or not.

Communications departments have long relied on a stable of tools to help disseminate critical and time-sensitive information about their business updates, new products and financial information. The most trusted of these tools is the newswire release, which can instantaneously put your announcement or disclosure in front of thousands of journalists around the world.

PR and IR teams have relied on tradition or intuition to inform the day and time these news releases were published. Though a large majority of releases are sent on the same days and at roughly the same times, hard data to support these strategies did not exist. Until now.

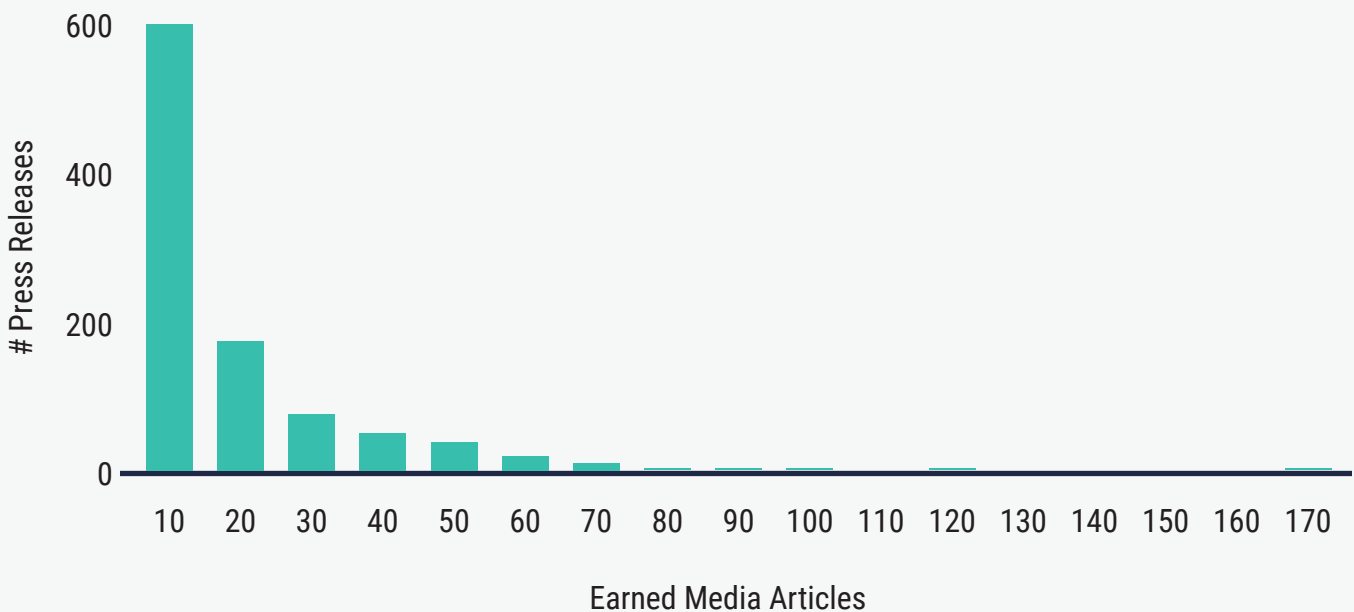
At the 2019 PRSA International Conference, **Business Wire**, the global leader in news release distribution and regulatory disclosure, and **Onclusive**, the data science company for communications, reported results from the first-ever impact analysis of nearly 17,000 news releases on generating syndicated pick-up, editorial coverage and social media engagement. The study reveals benchmarks for average social media and news engagement of news releases, the optimal days and times to publish a news release to maximize social engagement and earned media articles as well as best practices for boosting news release performance with multimedia.

# Benchmarking Editorial Coverage

Earned media articles are what PR professionals hope their news releases and media outreach generate and, according to the study, the average number of earned media articles each news release receives is 10. Does that mean that every news release receives 10 coverage pieces? No. This number can vary depending on the company (size, popularity, etc.), the content of the news being shared, and can be directly impacted by other breaking news of the day.

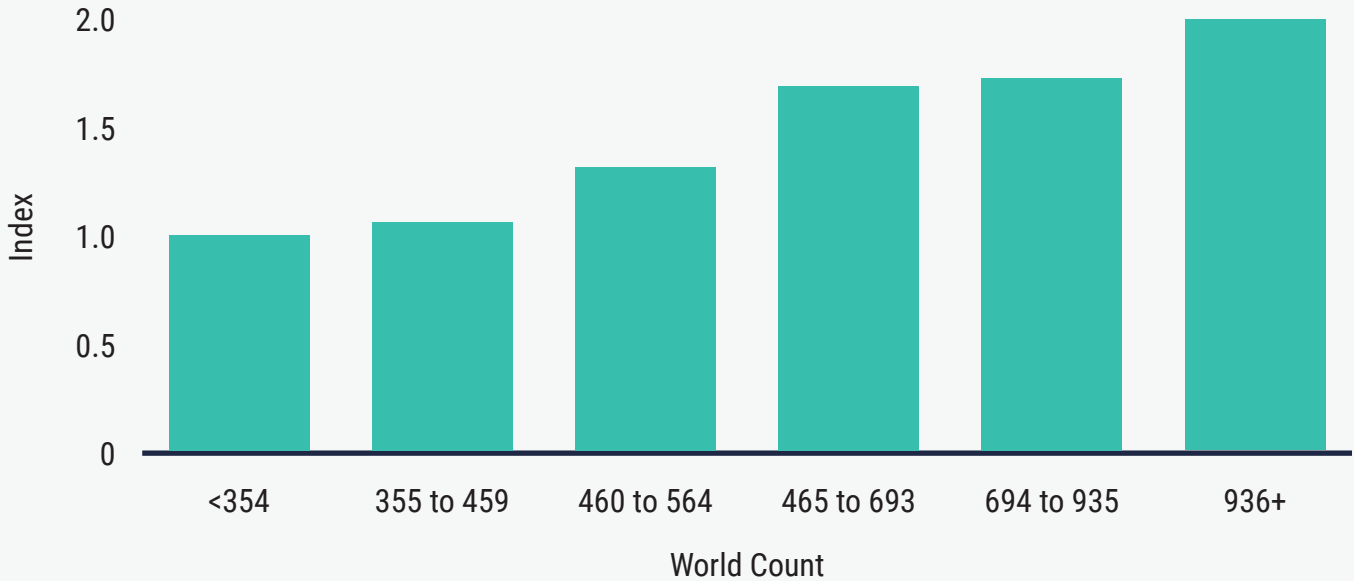
*“We found earned media articles into the hundreds for big companies with very newsy items like Apple launching the new iPhone,”* said Onclusive CEO Dan Beltramo. *“However, the average can show PR teams where they are relative to the norm and can help them to create realistic metrics.”*

## 10 Earned Media Articles Per Release



## Earned Media Coverage Index

How can PR pros increase their chances for editorial coverage?  
The biggest step is to add a visual component.

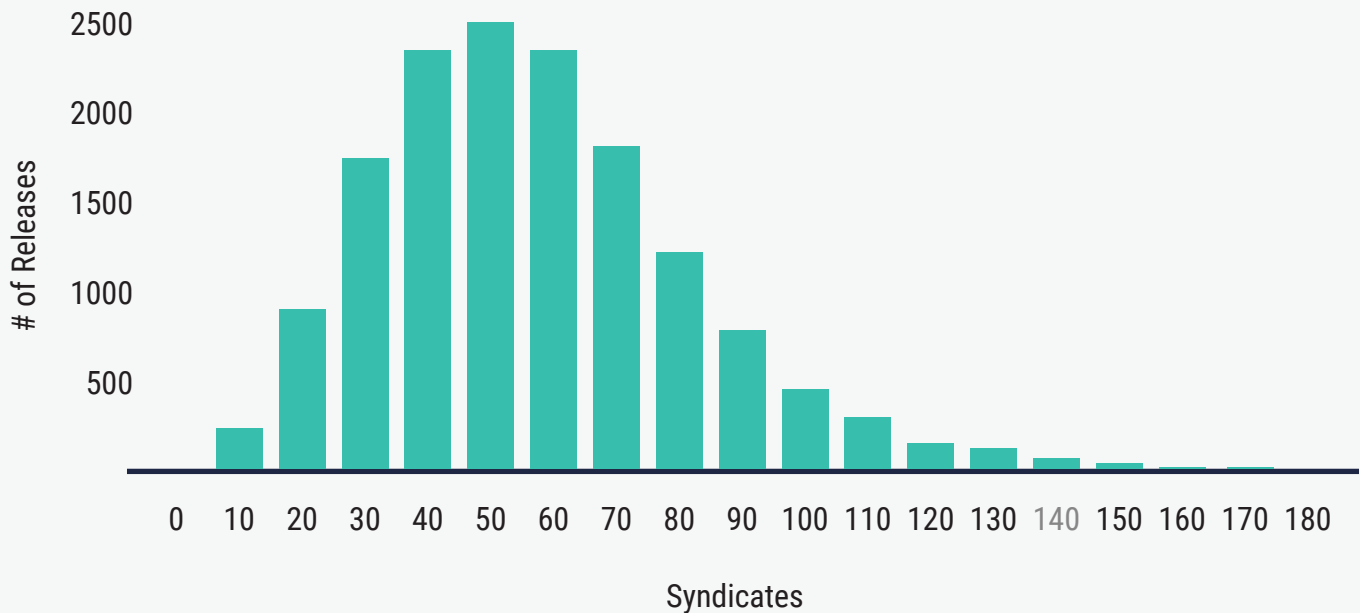


Adding multimedia increases the likelihood of generating earned media articles, and a longer-than-average word count may also be a factor. For this specific word count analysis, there is no separate data for investor and public relations releases.

## Benchmarking Syndicates

Today's news space doesn't just include editorial coverage, it includes syndicated versions of each release and coverage piece. Syndicates are duplicated content pieces – they are the exact news release or editorial coverage piece published on multiple sites. Syndicated news may not be new earned coverage pieces but they have a very useful place in the news industry; media points frequently use syndicated news content to round out their news offerings. Syndicated news releases and coverage pieces increase the reach of your news, increasing the likelihood of your news being seen by audiences.

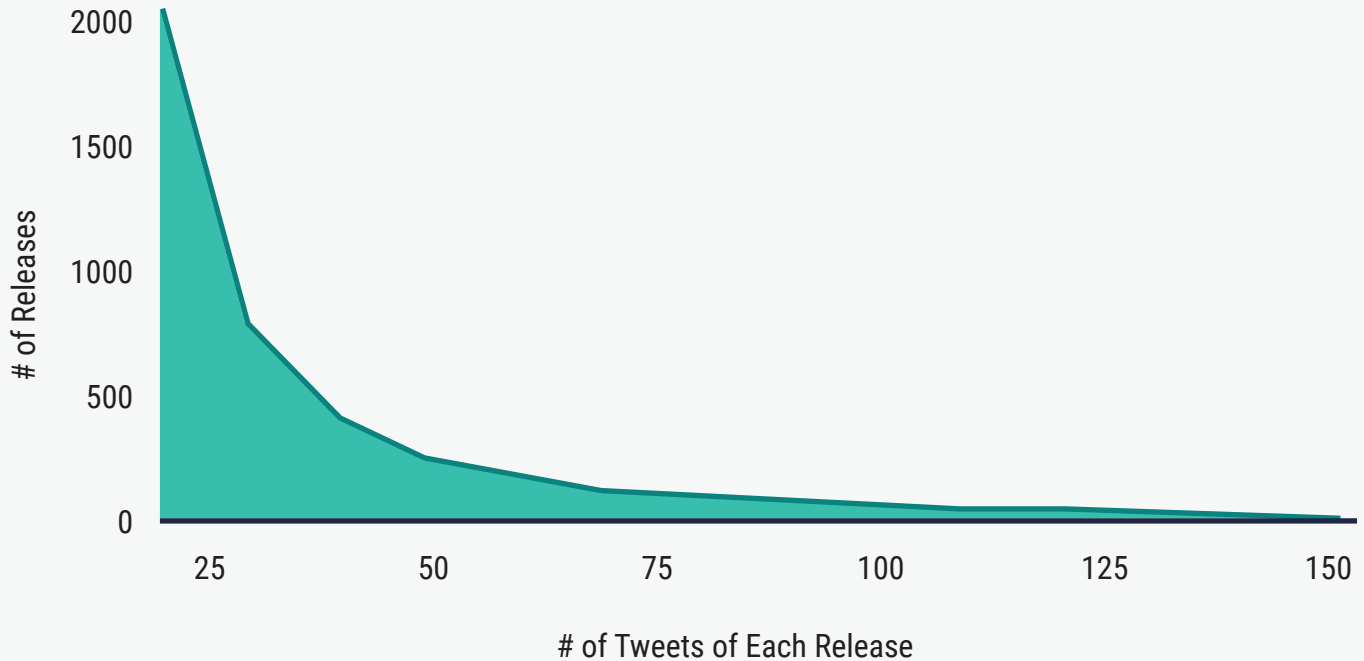
According to Onclusive's study, the average number of syndicates per release is 57, but this varies depending on both the company and the content of the release. "You'll sometimes see hundreds of syndicated articles depending on the importance of the news or size of company," said Beltramo.



## Benchmarking Social Media Engagement

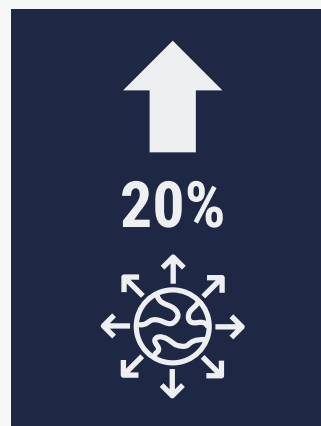
The study also analyzed the average number of Twitter engagements per news release. During the first seven days following the issuance of the release, there was an average of 23 tweets per release, with 12% of releases not receiving any Twitter engagement.

### Tweets Per Release (Average of 23 Tweets Per Release)

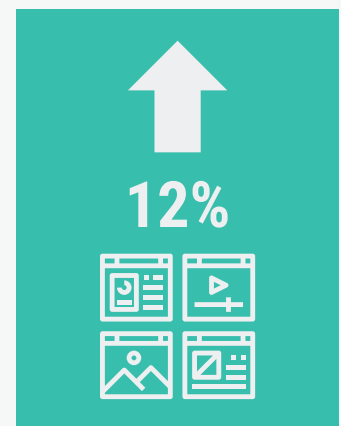


## Optimizing For Social Media Engagement

Given the power of social media and its potential reach, today's PR pros need to better maximize the socialization of their news. The study suggests that several factors can drive better social media amplification, starting with broader distribution. News releases distributed globally showed an average of 20% more social media amplification than releases distributed locally. Using multimedia assets in a release boosted social media amplification by an average of 12%.



Global Distribution



Multimedia

# The Impact of Timing for PR News Releases

The data revealed that the timing of a PR news release can affect the number of syndicates, social media engagement, and earned media article count. As you can see in the chart to the right, the most popular time for PR teams to post their news releases is Tuesday at 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. ET, which has more than 2 times the news release volume of any other hour for the rest of the week.

Because that time is so popular, it often leads to a release being lost in the crowd; making slight adjustments to send the release at 7:57 or 8:13 (rather than the top of the hour) can help it stand out in the feed.

Throughout this paper we make statements about the effect of Saturday and Sunday news releases, but the sample sizes on those days are considerably smaller. The smaller sample size results in statistical variance, making it more difficult to extrapolate data from those releases.

**It is extremely important to know that the most popular days and times for news release distribution are not necessarily the most effective at generating editorial coverage.**

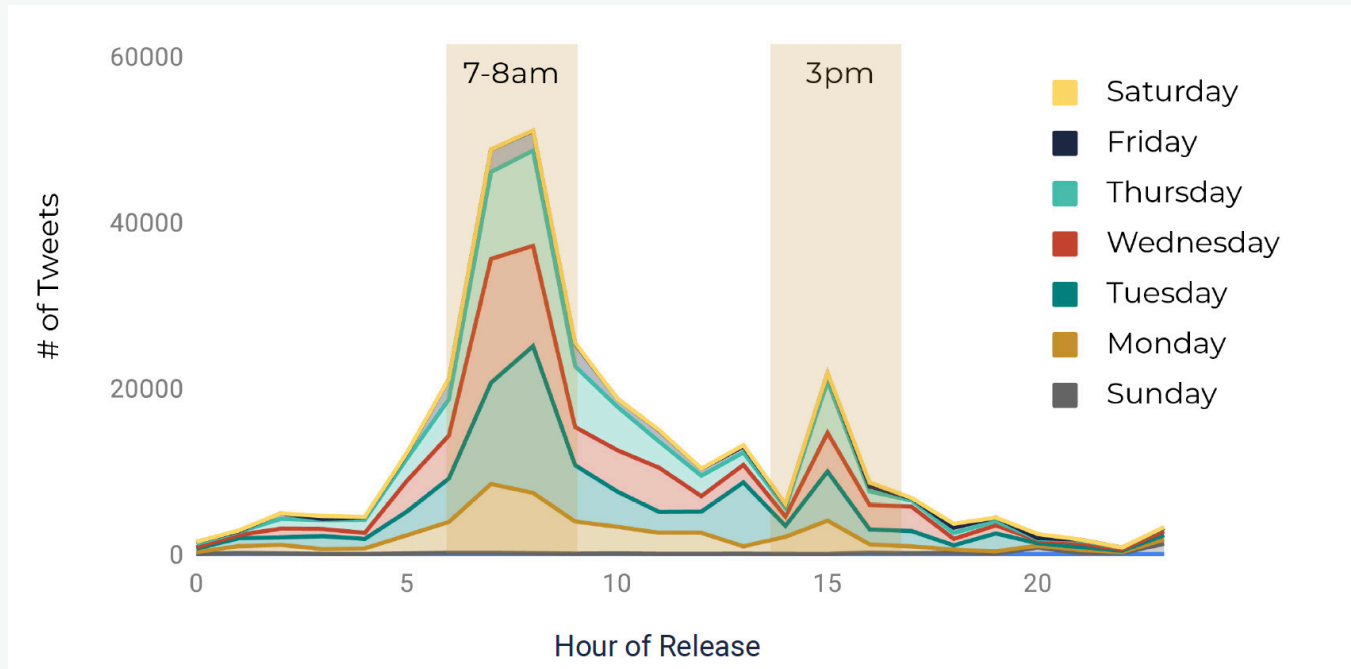
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Index
Midnight ET	0	15	20	11	16	9	0	10
1:00 a.m.	4	31	43	18	28	8	4	19
2:00 a.m.	3	39	44	38	53	21	0	28
3:00 a.m.	1	30	60	51	51	9	4	30
4:00 a.m.	0	40	36	41	48	21	3	27
5:00 a.m.	3	133	231	182	181	56	6	113
6:00 a.m.	4	155	295	278	272	92	1	157
7:00 a.m.	3	476	857	786	671	204	3	429
8:00 a.m.	3	514	1045	723	726	172	5	455
9:00 a.m.	3	219	379	311	360	109	13	199
10:00 a.m.	4	179	313	282	257	74	0	158
11:00 a.m.	1	134	194	203	181	90	4	115
Noon	1	114	150	157	137	68	1	90
1:00 p.m.	1	73	127	110	138	65	8	74
2:00 p.m.	1	66	114	90	107	38	3	60
3:00 p.m.	0	277	404	379	399	105	1	223
4:00 p.m.	4	81	140	129	139	58	1	79
5:00 p.m.	6	45	66	58	69	25	3	39
6:00 p.m.	14	30	43	45	35	19	4	27
7:00 p.m.	4	26	29	46	41	28	0	25
8:00 p.m.	9	19	20	30	15	8	1	15
9:00 p.m.	9	21	16	21	10	5	0	12
10:00 p.m.	8	9	13	5	9	8	0	7
11:00 p.m.	10	18	10	11	10	1	1	9
Index	4	114	194	167	165	54	3	100

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Index
Midnight ET	0	227	69	3	13	166	0	91
1:00 a.m.	581	108	51	17	69	106	0	80
2:00 a.m.	15	65	58	94	59	149	0	76
3:00 a.m.	0	17	49	27	20	162	319	41
4:00 a.m.	0	52	44	22	37	102	0	45
5:00 a.m.	44	93	127	158	122	58	17	121
6:00 a.m.	58	95	99	102	39	340	0	104
7:00 a.m.	0	85	76	44	58	70	0	64
8:00 a.m.	0	35	93	58	81	72	51	72
9:00 a.m.	29	134	37	42	64	21	136	60
10:00 a.m.	0	31	198	67	47	41	0	92
11:00 a.m.	0	53	46	51	49	241	6144	99
Noon	0	156	64	108	44	53	0	86
1:00 p.m.	116	93	146	129	55	92	0	102
2:00 p.m.	0	28	67	48	245	191	522	116
3:00 p.m.	0	165	297	185	200	762	0	253
4:00 p.m.	184	45	31	50	249	40	29	94
5:00 p.m.	23	144	37	44	36	30	0	55
6:00 p.m.	24	2	50	121	395	8	29	117
7:00 p.m.	0	198	32	200	182	649	0	234
8:00 p.m.	21	180	125	34	70	513	29	119
9:00 p.m.	37	915	96	292	47	109	0	346
10:00 p.m.	131	8	20	7	12	0	0	29
11:00 p.m.	0	17	65	100	472	0	3309	178
Index	58	91	105	80	93	170	501	100

As you can see in the chart on the left, the best days to put out news releases to generate coverage articles are Tuesdays and Fridays. And, although the indexes appear high on Saturdays and Sundays, there is more statistical variance for earned media articles to be accounted for. It is commonly thought that Tuesday is the better day for general releases and Friday works best for stories that are less about hard news because journalists have more time at the end of the week (or during the weekend) to consider such items. Again, the determining factor is likely to be newsworthiness.

# Volume of Social Media Engagement

When it comes to tying news releases to social reach, the total volume of social media engagement spikes for releases that go out at 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. ET, followed by a smaller spike in engagement for releases that go out at 3:00 p.m. ET.



## Afternoon Releases See The Highest Social Media Engagement

However, when indexed as an average against the number of releases overall, the rate of social media engagement is actually best for releases that go out in the later hours of 1:00, 5:00, 7:00 and even 11:00 p.m. ET. Also, the study shows that social media amplification for all kinds of PR releases is greater for weekend releases. This aligns with the mobile journey, highlighting times when people have more time to discover, consider and share (i.e., lunch time, commute time, after hours).

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Index
Midnight ET	0	90	113	96	139	167	0	118
1:00 a.m.	172	150	128	127	76	75	131	121
2:00 a.m.	149	153	117	159	128	181	0	142
3:00 a.m.	27	109	150	97	119	93	547	127
4:00 a.m.	0	95	182	99	191	81	105	135
5:00 a.m.	137	95	71	116	85	67	67	88
6:00 a.m.	215	137	102	107	92	154	46	110
7:00 a.m.	327	100	82	109	90	76	21	93
8:00 a.m.	204	81	97	96	91	79	64	92
9:00 a.m.	78	101	103	85	117	143	45	105
10:00 a.m.	105	102	78	101	117	75	0	97
11:00 a.m.	87	108	74	150	100	84	67	106
Noon	91	127	97	68	104	70	96	94
1:00 p.m.	123	70	348	110	62	65	120	144
2:00 p.m.	50	177	66	72	56	58	174	82
3:00 p.m.	0	83	84	71	89	54	78	80
4:00 p.m.	230	71	74	130	67	59	2181	89
5:00 p.m.	80	104	160	291	62	62	78	142
6:00 p.m.	60	73	69	99	115	195	726	110
7:00 p.m.	58	63	427	119	68	95	0	144
8:00 p.m.	493	72	84	70	58	82	2255	136
9:00 p.m.	73	101	124	123	190	131	0	121
10:00 p.m.	78	79	79	158	135	18	0	87
11:00 p.m.	701	163	305	249	237	50	293	302
Index	211	99	101	104	95	88	233	100



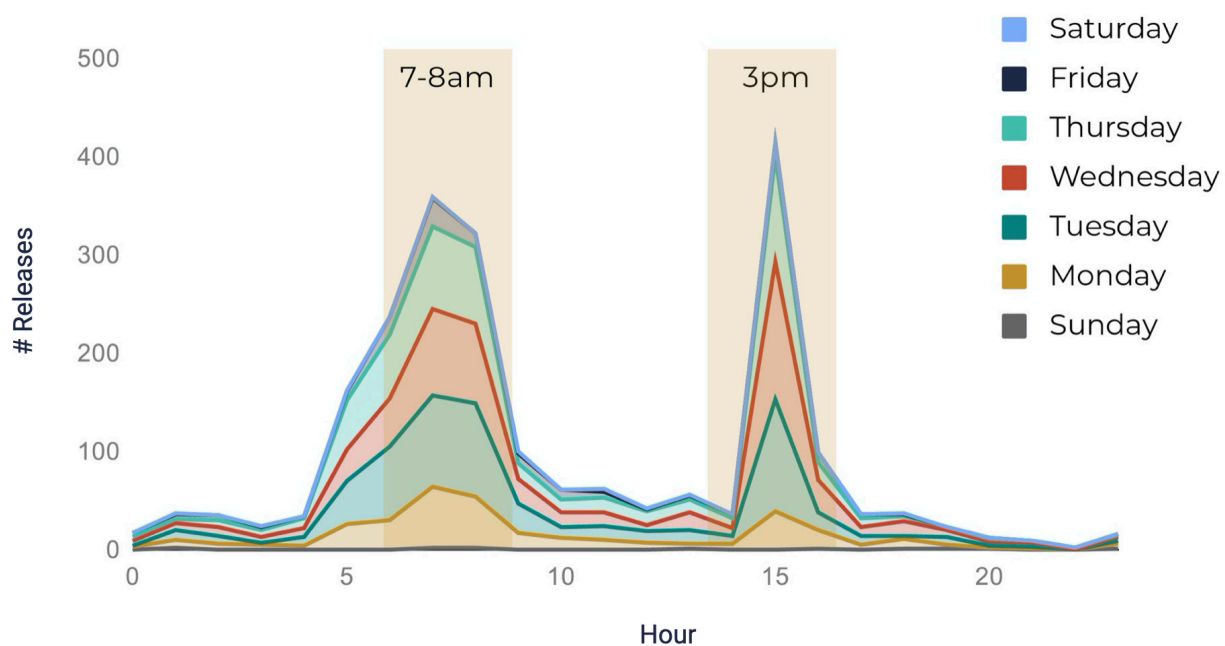
Which news release days and times generate the best rate of syndicated pick-up?

Heading into (and during) the weekend is best for generating syndicates, with less variance in performance during specific hours of the day.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Index
Midnight ET	0	176	114	115	120	164	0	135
1:00 a.m.	385	163	128	126	121	148	221	146
2:00 a.m.	202	130	111	105	124	106	0	118
3:00 a.m.	196	102	116	97	103	96	240	108
4:00 a.m.	0	103	97	90	98	112	117	99
5:00 a.m.	201	94	83	90	87	116	198	91
6:00 a.m.	229	83	86	88	88	106	127	89
7:00 a.m.	219	83	71	79	80	108	221	80
8:00 a.m.	341	86	71	81	83	118	179	81
9:00 a.m.	216	112	95	116	97	121	136	106
10:00 a.m.	184	109	105	108	112	123	0	109
11:00 a.m.	191	117	109	114	122	139	177	118
Noon	138	120	114	104	117	145	228	117
1:00 p.m.	224	113	121	114	108	131	195	118
2:00 p.m.	154	111	106	111	105	141	262	112
3:00 p.m.	0	110	101	98	104	127	194	104
4:00 p.m.	206	136	126	124	128	141	208	130
5:00 p.m.	174	149	147	133	144	178	219	148
6:00 p.m.	145	130	140	160	146	159	154	147
7:00 p.m.	150	108	174	148	166	155	0	151
8:00 p.m.	127	138	146	112	137	156	210	133
9:00 p.m.	145	180	137	150	195	148	0	160
10:00 p.m.	129	110	130	108	161	99	0	125
11:00 p.m.	133	166	167	174	158	208	136	161
Index	175	103	91	97	99	125	183	100

## The Impact Of Timing For Investor Relations Releases

According to the research, the most popular individual hour for IR news releases is around 3 p.m. ET on Wednesdays, but there are also big pushes at 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. early in the week. This timing reflects whether companies are trying to move the market with their results, trying to avoid market movement, or to simply give people more time to digest the information.



# IR News Release Syndication

The most syndicates of IR releases are driven by releases that come out on Friday and Monday and the study narrows down the most effective times being 6:00 p.m. onward.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Index
Midnight ET	0	130	184	157	148	187	0	159
1:00 a.m.	184	165	121	133	103	150	187	140
2:00 a.m.	0	121	138	114	137	151	0	130
3:00 a.m.	0	125	146	98	82	145	216	114
4:00 a.m.	0	136	102	109	100	109	0	108
5:00 a.m.	0	83	87	71	78	91	185	81
6:00 a.m.	0	81	83	75	84	92	0	82
7:00 a.m.	365	95	79	79	81	103	209	86
8:00 a.m.	183	92	73	91	93	112	0	88
9:00 a.m.	0	104	95	130	107	127	197	112
10:00 a.m.	0	114	126	105	137	133	0	122
11:00 a.m.	0	115	119	96	128	174	162	123
Noon	0	143	122	96	94	172	206	117
1:00 p.m.	247	130	129	118	114	114	220	125
2:00 p.m.	0	106	117	116	135	160	0	125
3:00 p.m.	0	98	89	85	88	121	0	89
4:00 p.m.	216	117	127	132	136	133	0	130
5:00 p.m.	0	105	111	147	155	184	0	138
6:00 p.m.	226	128	178	160	130	179	233	154
7:00 p.m.	74	114	155	175	202	0	0	156
8:00 p.m.	268	53	129	111	179	317	0	157
9:00 p.m.	0	223	104	113	173	0	0	137
10:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	114	0	0	114
11:00 p.m.	57	135	210	174	129	214	0	158
<b>Index</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

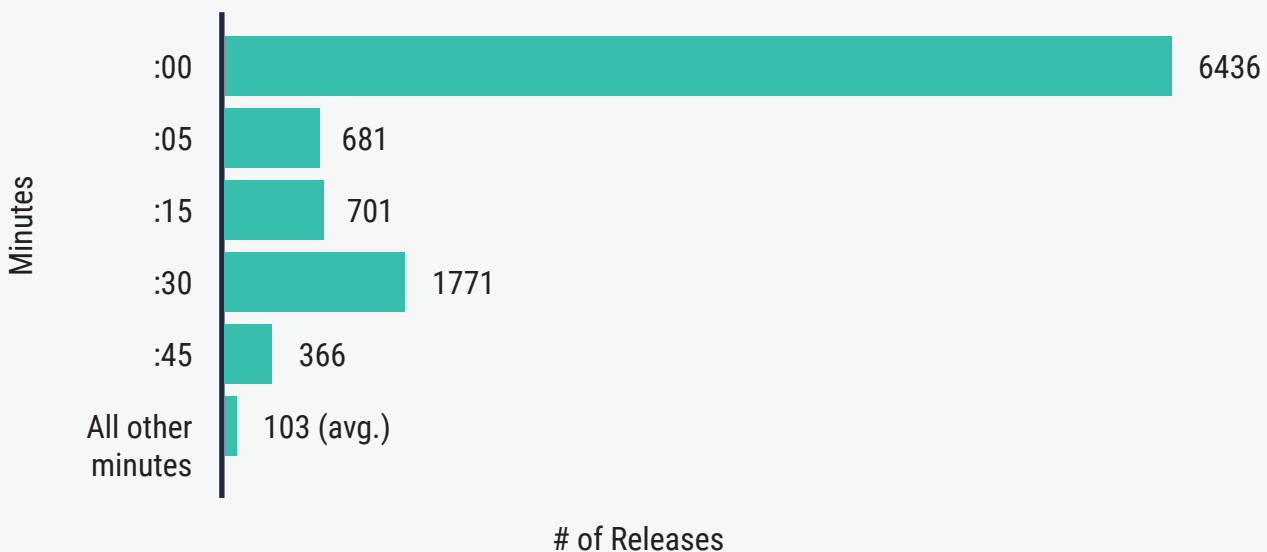
Tuesday and Friday IR releases enjoy the best social engagement rates.

When timing IR releases, noon Tuesday and 10:00 a.m. Friday are best for maximizing social media amplification.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Index
Midnight ET	0	87	123	55	46	65	0	65
1:00 a.m.	90	78	156	72	39	101	44	96
2:00 a.m.	0	44	52	180	70	43	0	86
3:00 a.m.	0	105	140	104	66	79	435	107
4:00 a.m.	0	80	129	108	82	57	0	100
5:00 a.m.	0	88	93	72	57	35	63	73
6:00 a.m.	0	126	105	87	49	45	0	84
7:00 a.m.	175	66	155	52	60	56	66	84
8:00 a.m.	83	71	74	126	132	40	0	99
9:00 a.m.	0	57	90	55	82	59	61	71
10:00 a.m.	0	227	117	48	381	1040	0	329
11:00 a.m.	0	145	195	165	124	131	50	150
Noon	0	125	1351	47	60	54	76	438
1:00 p.m.	126	52	135	104	200	77	224	130
2:00 p.m.	0	47	59	69	81	53	0	65
3:00 p.m.	0	58	51	65	47	44	0	55
4:00 p.m.	50	167	46	134	48	32	0	98
5:00 p.m.	0	25	93	110	44	514	0	122
6:00 p.m.	91	93	75	82	115	44	2574	154
7:00 p.m.	69	87	85	106	72	0	0	89
8:00 p.m.	72	35	287	24	30	148	0	85
9:00 p.m.	0	101	162	120	27	0	0	106
10:00 p.m.	0	0	0	0	57	0	0	57
11:00 p.m.	123	122	630	454	52	60	0	288
Index	102	89	126	87	80	130	313	100

## Minute by Minute

The data also show that at the 30-minute mark, the volume of releases is 30% of the volume of releases posted exactly on the hour; for releases at the 15- or 45-minute mark, the volume is 5-10% of those posted on the hour, improving the likelihood of any single release being seen.



# Conclusion

As the industry evolves, understanding all of the factors that impact successful distribution of news releases is increasingly important. By adding multimedia or modifying timing of their next news release, communications professionals can directly impact coverage and syndication opportunities.

This study was designed to surface unexpected methods that drive the best outcomes and to help communications teams refine their news distribution strategies for broader visibility and greater engagement.

## Study Definitions

### **PR release**

General news about a company

### **IR release**

A statutorily required release

### **Syndicate**

A direct copy of the news release shared in another venue

### **Earned media article**

An article that has some of the content of the news release but is editorially different—the most important measure for PR releases

### **Social media amplification**

Posts that feature a direct link to the article (Amplification is a narrow way to measure social media engagement and does not include hashtags or every post that mentions a company's name after the release. The study uses Twitter as a proxy for social media)

# Onclusive

Onclusive is the data science company for communications. We connect content to business outcomes for the first time, and leverage artificial intelligence to reveal which communications strategies drive actual brand engagement. The result is thousands of high-performance campaigns around the world. Onclusive developed the Power of Voice™ metric as a way to measure the quality of a brand's media coverage in relation to its competitors, and invented PR Attribution™ to measure the real impact that content is having on a company's bottom line. Onclusive was founded in 2011 and is headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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