

Involving the media

Presentation to



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What do we mean by the media?

- Real-time news agencies (Reuters, Bloomberg, Dow Jones)
- Pricing agencies (Platts, Argus, ICIS-LOR...)
- National news agencies (Xinhua, SPA, RIA, APO...)
- Television and business TV stations (CNN, Sky, CNBC, BBC...)
- Business-focussed newspapers (FT, WSJ, IHT...)
- National newspapers and magazines (Times of India, Gulf News, hundreds of others...)
- Specialist trade press periodicals (Interfax GGA/NGD are examples, but many competitors!)
- Increasing competition from Blogs, RSS Feeds, Twitter
- Increasing ambitions among the various incumbents to move up the food chain through selling data, providing consultancy

What are the levers?

- Impossible to say. Responses often unpredictable -- depends on workload, editorial priorities, individual interests.
- Some reporters like to report facts, others want a human “story” through which they illustrate a conceptual narrative
- Some agencies assign investigative reporters to a particular story who are primarily interested in “exclusives”
- Most reporters have long-term relationships with sources, others don’t want to cultivate that
- By and large “data” is of little interest unless it reveals a bigger picture that is compelling and interesting to read about
- But some journalists love data. Even BIG data.
- Most news agencies also becoming conduits for data sales.

So what motivates reporters?

- Most are also professionally independent and will not agree to report to prescribed narratives
- Many reporters are very ambitious and want to make their mark on the world by publishing ground-breaking narratives
- Exclusive interviews and stories are desired, but outcomes cannot be guaranteed
- Often reporters take a “different line” to set themselves apart from other reporters
- Most are overworked, few have the luxury to “trawl” through data to identify stories
- Most journalists are primarily interested in a narrative rather than data

How technology is changing the media

- In the past, most reporters communicated by telephone or through face to face meetings with “contacts”
- Nowadays, journalists typically supplement this discussion with Twitter and other social media (Linked In, Facebook)
- Press releases valuable, but many reporters will seek a different angle to differentiate their output
- The use of the Internet has made facts easily accessible, so getting a different angle is often a higher priority
- Data also is increasingly available (including energy data) so the So what? Is essential
- Different types of media organisation have different priorities. The “media” is no longer a single thing (arguably never was!)
- Many journalists now multimedia, in print, on radio/TV, and also sending info in multiple formats via Internet

Some personal suggestions

- Explain JODI data issues as clearly as possible, through direct contact with media (telephone, IM, meetings, interviews)
- Find ways to make data visually attractive: infographics can be used, either static or in video format
- Don't try to control media output, but be prepared to challenge if the reporting is short-sighted
- Don't channel contact with the media through single prescribed channels ... allow those on the ground to have their say
- Give a sense of the human effort involved in putting the data together especially in countries where data gathering not easy
- Also highlight the human impact of good quality energy data
- Be confident and believe in what you are doing. JODI has a really good story to tell. As Mr Barret said yesterday, BRAVO!

The Interfax logo, featuring the word "Interfax" in a white, sans-serif font with a stylized white arc above the "x".

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