

**Above the fold:** A term used to refer to a prominent story; it comes from placement of a news story in a broadsheet newspaper above the fold in the middle of the front page.

**Actual malice:** A reckless disregard for the truth or falsity of a published account; this became the standard for libel plaintiffs who were public figures or public officials after the Supreme Court's decision in *New York Times v. Sullivan*

**Advertising:** Defined by the American Marketing Association as "any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor."

**Advertorials:** advertising materials in magazines designed to look like editorial content rather than paid advertising.

**Advocacy ads:** Advertising designed to promote a particular point of view rather than a product or service. Can be sponsored by government, corporation, trade association, product or nonprofit organization.

**Aggregator site:** An organizing Web site that provides surfers with easy access to e-mail, news, online stores, and many other sites.

**Alien and Sedition Acts:** Laws passed in 1798 that made it a crime to criticize the government of the United States.

**Al Jazeera:** The largest and most viewed Arabic-language satellite news channel. It is run out of the country of Qatar and has a regular audience of 40 million viewers.

**Alternative papers:** Weekly newspapers that serve specialized audiences ranging from racial minorities, to gays and lesbians, to young people.

**ARPAnet:** The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network; the first nationwide computer network, which would become the first major component of the Internet.

**Authoritarian theory:** A theory of appropriate press behavior that says the role of the press is to be a servant of the government, not a servant of the citizenry.

**Bay Psalm Book:** The first book published in North America by the Puritans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The book went through more than fifty editions and stayed in print for 125 years.

**Big Four networks:** The broadcast news outlets ABC, CBS, NBC and the Fox Network (as distinct from Fox's cable organization).

**Big Three networks:** The original television broadcast networks: NBC, CBS, and ABC.

**Bloggers:** People who post their thoughts, typically with the most recent posts at the top of the page, on a regularly updated Web site.

**Breaking news:** A news story, happening right now, that journalists rush to cover and that usually requires frequent updates as the events unfold.

**Broadband networks:** High-speed channels for transmitting multimedia content into the home via cable or wireless connections.

**Broadband service:** A high-speed continuous connection to the Internet using a cable modem from a cable television provider or a digital subscriber line from a phone company. Broadband service is also available in many offices through Ethernet lines. Broadband connections are typically ten or more times faster than dial-up services using a modem.

**Broadsheet newspapers:** Standard-sized newspapers, which are generally 17 by 22 inches.

**Business-to-business (trade) ads:** Advertising that promotes products and services directly to other businesses rather than to the general consumer market.

**Chains:** Corporations that control a significant number of newspapers and other media outlets.

**Channel:** The medium used to transmit the encoded message.

**Citizen journalism:** Journalism created by people other than professional journalists, often distributed over the Internet.

**Clutter:** The large number of commercials, advertising, and other non-programming messages and interruptions that compete for consumer attention on radio and television, and now also on the Internet.

**Communist theory:** A theory of appropriate press behavior that says the press is to be run by the government to serve the government's own needs.

**Community antenna television (CATV):** An early form of cable television used to distribute broadcast channels in communities with poor television reception.

**Community press:** Weekly and daily newspapers serving individual communities or suburbs instead of an entire metropolitan area.

**Consumer magazines:** Publications targeting an audience of like-minded consumers.

**Cookies:** Tiny files Web sites create to identify visitors and potentially track their actions on the site and the Web.

**Coverlines:** Teaser headlines on magazine covers used to shock, intrigue, or titillate potential buyers.

**CPM:** cost per thousand exposures to the target audience-a figure used in media planning evaluation

**Demographics:** The study of audience members' gender, race, ethnic background, income, education, age, educational attainment and the like; a method typically used to analyze potential markets for products and programs

**Development theory:** A theory of appropriate press behavior that states that developing nations may need to implement press controls in order to promote industry, national identity and partnerships with neighboring nations

**Direct broadcast satellite (DBS):** A low-earth-orbit satellite that provides television programming via a small, pizza-sized satellite antenna, DBS is a competitor to cable

**Drive time:** The morning and afternoon commute in urban areas; the captive audience makes thus a popular time to advertise on radio

**E-book reader:** A portable device for viewing, and sometimes selling, electronic books and other texts. Among the most popular are the Amazon Kindle and the Sony eReader.

**Electronic mail (e mail)** a message sent from one computer user to another across a network

**Entertainment:** Media communication intended primarily to amuse the audience.

**Equal time provision:** An FCC policy that requires broadcast stations to make equivalent amounts of broadcast time available to all candidates running for public office.

**Ethics:** A rational way of deciding what is good for individuals or society. Ethics provide a way to choose between competing moral principles and help people decide where there is a clear-cut right or wrong answer.

**Fairness doctrine:** A former FCC policy that required television stations to "afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views on issues of public importance."

**False light:** Invasion of privacy in which a journalist publishes untrue statements that alter a person's public image in a way that he or she cannot control.

**Federal Communications Commission (FCC):** The federal agency charged with regulating telecommunications, including radio and television broadcasting.

**Font:** All the characters of a typeface in a particular size and style. The term font is typically used interchangeably today with the word typeface.

**Format radio:** A style of radio programming designed to appeal to a narrow, specific audience. Popular formats include all talk (hosts, guests and callers commenting on news reports), all sports, plus musical genre formats: country, Oldies, alt rock, hip-hop.

Golden age of radio: From the late 1920s until the 1940s, radio was the leading home entertainment medium.

Hacker ethic: The core value of early Internet culture, the Hacker ethic held that users should have absolute control over their computer systems and free access to all information on those computers. Net Neutrality rules emerge from this point of view.

Halftone: The process by which photographs are rendered into a series of dots suitable for reproduction on a printing press.

HD radio: High-definition radio broadcasts CD-quality signal and allows for expanded channels of programming.

High-definition television (HDTV): A federal standard for digital broadcasting that matches equipment to display high-resolution picture, wide-screen format, and enhanced sound.

Hypertext: Material in a format containing links that allow the reader to move easily from one section to another and from document to document. The most commonly used hypertext documents are Web pages.

Hypertext markup language (HTML): The programming language used to create and format Web pages.

Hypertext transfer protocol (http): A method of sending text, graphics, or anything else over the Internet from a server to a Web browser.

Instant messaging (IM): E-mail systems that allow two or more users to chat with one another in real time, hold virtual meetings that span multiple cities or even countries, and keep track of which of their "buddies" are currently logged on to the system.

Internet: "A diverse set of independent networks, interlinked to provide its users with the appearance of a single, uniform network"; the Internet is a mass medium like no other, incorporating elements of interpersonal, group, and mass communications.

Intranets: Computer networks designed to communicate with people within an organization.

Libel: A published statement that unjustifiably exposes someone to ridicule or contempt; for a statement to be libel, it must satisfy the three elements of defamation, identification, and publication.

Linotype: An obsolete typesetting machine by which printers could set type using a keyboard rather than pick each letter out by hand. Linotype was the standard for typesetting until the 1970s.

**Listserves:** Internet discussion groups made up of subscribers that use e-mail to exchange messages between as few as a dozen people to as many as several thousand.

**Literary magazines:** Publications that focus on serious essays and short fiction.

**Local advertising:** Advertising designed to get people to patronize local stores, businesses, or service providers.

**Local cable television systems:** The companies that provide cable television service directly to consumers' homes.

**Long tail:** An idea made popular through the writings of Chris Anderson at Wired Magazine to describe how even obscure books and music could be part of a profitable business if they were delivered digitally. The “tail” is part of an economist’s distribution curve where a limited number of people are interested in buying a lot of different products.

**Magazine:** A periodical that contains articles of lasting interest. Typically, magazines are targeted at a specific audience and derive income from advertising, subscriptions, and newsstand sales.

**Mainstreaming:** The effort by newspapers such as the Los Angeles Times to include quotations by minorities and women in stories that aren’t about minority issues.

**“Mean world” syndrome:** The perception of many heavy television watchers of violent programs that the world is a more dangerous and violent place than facts and statistics bear out.

**Media relations:** The practices by which PR professionals (spokespersons for government, corporations or private organizations) deliver information to members of the press: interviews, press conferences, press releases, video news releases, or interviews. Typically, media relations involve the placement of unpaid messages.

**Misappropriation:** Invasion of privacy by using a person’s name or image for commercial purposes without his or her permission.

**Mobisodes:** Short video episodes designed to be viewed on the small screens on mobile phones or personal digital assistants (PDAs). These can be brief entertainment, news, or commercial programs.

**Mosaic:** The first easy-to-use graphical Web browser, developed by a group of student programmers at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

**MP3:** Short for Moving Picture Experts Group audio layer 3; a standard for compressing music from CDs or other digital recordings into computer files that can be easily exchanged on the Internet.

**Muckrakers:** Progressive investigative journalists typically publishing in magazines in the early years of the twentieth century.

**Narrowband service:** A relatively slow Internet connection using a modem and conventional copper phone lines. Although it is acceptable for viewing text and graphics, it is generally considered too slow for video and audio service.

**National advertising:** Advertising designed to build demand for a nationally available product or service and that is not directing the consumer to local retail and service outlets.

**Net neutrality:** Rules that would require Internet service providers to give equal access to all online content providers.

**Network:** A company that provides common programming to a large group of broadcast stations.

**Noise:** Interference with the transmission of a message. This can take the form of semantic, mechanical, or environmental noise.

**Obscenity:** Sexually explicit material.

**Ombudsman:** A representative of a publication's readers who takes the point of view of those who purchase or consume the news; also known as a reader's representative or audience advocate.

**Packet switching:** A method for breaking up long messages into small pieces, or packets, and transmitting them independently across a computer network. Once the packets arrive at their destination, the receiving computer reassembles the message into its original form.

**Paper:** The writing material (ground rags or wood) invented in China between 240 BC and 105 BC.

**Papyrus:** An early form of paper made from the papyrus reed, developed by the Egyptians around 3100 BC.

**Parchment:** An early form of paper made from the skin of goats or sheep, which was more durable than papyrus.

**Penny press:** inexpensive, widely circulated papers that became popular in the nineteenth century. They were the first American media to be supported primarily through advertising revenue.

**PeopleMeter:** An electronic box used by the ratings company Nielsen Media Research to record which television shows people watch.

**Photojournalism:** The use of photographs to portray the news in print.

**Pod cast:** An audio program produced as an MP3 compressed music file that can be listened to online at the listener's convenience or downloaded to a computer or an MP3 player. Pod casts sometimes contain video content as well.

**Postal Act of 1879:** Legislation that allowed magazines to be mailed nationally at a low cost. It was a key factor in the growth of magazine circulation in the late nineteenth century.

**Press agency:** An early form of public relations that involved sending material from the press agent to the media with little opportunity for interaction and feedback. It often involved conduct that would be considered deceptive and unethical today.

**Prior restraint:** A judicial order that stops a media organization from publishing or broadcasting a story or image.

**Privilege:** A legal defense against libel that holds that publication or broadcast of statements made in government meetings, in court, or in government documents cannot be the grounds for a libel suit.

**Product placement:** The practice by which someone pays to have their product or service written into movies or television shows. Also found in books, magazine articles, Web pages, and songs.

**Psychographics:** A combination of demographics, lifestyle characteristics, and product usage; a method typically used to analyze potential markets for products and programs.

**Public access channels:** Local cable television channels that air public affairs programming and other locally produced shows.

**Public Broadcasting System (PBS):** A nonprofit broadcast network that provides a wide range of public service and educational programs, which is funded by government appropriations, private industry underwriting, and viewer support.

**Public relations (PR):** The practices by which PR professionals (spokespersons for government, corporations or private organizations) seek to establish and maintain a positive relationship with voters, customers or the general public. In addition to seeking free coverage in the news media, PR professionals buy advertising, sponsor events and get their message out via publishing and broadcasting services independent of news outlets

**Public service ads:** Advertising designed to promote the messages of nonprofit institutions and government agencies. The messages are typically produced and run without charge by advertising professionals and the media. Many of these ads are produced by the Ad Council.

**Rating point:** The percentage of the total potential television audience actually watching a particular show. One rating point indicates an audience of approximately 1.14 million viewers.

**Rotary press:** A steam-powered press invented in 1814 that could print many times faster than the older hand-powered flat-bed presses.

**Satellite radio:** The radio service provided by digital signal broadcast from a satellite. This service covers a wider area than terrestrial radio, is supported by subscribers, and offers programming that is different from corporate-owned terrestrial stations, but is costly and doesn't provide local coverage, such as traffic and weather reports.

**Scoop:** A news story that a news organization reports ahead of its competitors.

**Scriptoria:** Copying rooms monks prepared early hand-copied books.

**Sensationalism:** News coverage that panders to audiences with lurid and highly emotional accounts of crime, sex, violence, or celebrity missteps.

**Service magazines:** Magazines that primarily contain articles about how to do things in a better way; such articles include health advice, cooking tips, employment help, or fashion guides.

**Share:** The percentage of television sets in use that are tuned to a particular show.

**Shield laws:** Laws that give journalists special protection from having to testify in court about their stories and sources.

**Spiral of silence:** A theory that suggests that people want to see themselves as holding a majority opinion and will therefore remain silent if they perceive that they hold a minority opinion. This tends to make the minority opinion appear to be less prevalent than it is.

**Standard digital television:** A standard for digital broadcasting that allows six channels to fit in the broadcast frequency space occupied by a single analog signal.

**Status conferral:** Academic term for the phenomenon by which media coverage makes an individual gain prominence in the eyes of the public.

**Sweeps:** The four times during the year that Nielsen Media Research measures the size of individual television station audiences.

**Tabloid laundering or tabloidization:** When respectable media report on what the tabloids are reporting as a way of covering sensationalistic stories on which they might not otherwise report.

**Tabloid newspapers:** Technically, a newspaper with a half-page (11-by-14-inch) format that usually presents a photo-dominated cover like a magazine rather than a text-heavy front page like the larger broadsheet papers. "Tabloid" is sometimes used as a derogatory term to connote a sensationalized approach to news.



**Targeting:** The process of trying to make a particular product or service appeal to a narrowly defined group. Groups are often targeted using demographics, geographics and psychographics.

**Telegraph:** The first system for using wires to send messages at a distance' invented by Samuel Morse in 1844.

**Television network:** A company that provides programs to local stations around the country. The local affiliate stations choose which programs to carry.

**Terrestrial radio:** AM and FM broadcast radio stations

**Trade magazines:** Magazines published for people who work in a particular industry or business.

**Typemold:** A mold in which a printer would pour molten lead to produce multiple, identical copies of a single letter without hand-carving each.

**Uniform resource locator (URL):** One of the three major components of the Web; the address of content placed on the Web

**Usenet:** The Users Network is the original Internet discussion forum that covers thousands of specialized topics. It is a worldwide bulletin-board system that predates the World Wide Web.

**Vertical integration:** Controlling all aspects of a media project, including production, delivery to consumers in multiple formats, and the promotion of the product through other media.

**Video news release (VNR):** A taped or digital video message that serves as a press release to the broadcast and online media. VNRs are often broadcast or streamed without notice of who produced the program.

**Watergate scandal:** A burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office and apartment building, authorized by rogue White House staffers. The subsequent cover-up led to the resignation of President Richard Nixon in 1974. Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, two reporters from the Washington Post, covered the Watergate scandal.

**Weblog (blog):** A collection of links and commentary in hypertext form on the World Wide Web that can be created and posted on the Internet with relatively little effort. Blogs can be public diaries, collections of photos, or commentaries on the news.

**Wireless telegraph:** Guglielmo Marconi's name for his point-to-point communication tool that used radio waves to transmit messages.

**World Wide Web:** A system developed by Tim Berners-Lee that allows users to view and link documents located anywhere in the world using standard software.

Yellow journalism: A style of sensationalistic journalism that grew out of the newspaper circulation battle between Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst.

Zoned coverage: When a newspaper targets news coverage or advertisements to a specific region of a city or market.