

Independent Local News Web Sites Lack Original Content And Do Not Significantly Contribute to Source or Viewpoint Diversity

S. Derek Turner & Mark Cooper

Abstract

In order to investigate the influence of city-specific local websites operated by non-traditional media outlets, this study characterizes the content, traffic, and audience composition of 16 different city-specific websites operating in 15 media markets (11 Designated Marketing Areas and 4 sub-markets). Twelve of these city-specific local websites were cited by the Newspaper Association of America in comments to the FCC as being evidence for the need to relax media ownership regulations. The websites of local television and daily newspaper outlets were also analyzed to provide comparisons to the city-specific local websites.

The findings of this study demonstrate the following:

- The city-specific websites cited by NAA do not publish appreciable amounts of original local news content.
 - Only 18 percent of the stories from the city-specific sites in our sample were based on original reporting. However, over half of these stories were on subjects dealing with arts and entertainment, or food related topics.
 - Only 2.6 percent of the stories from the city specific sites in our sample contained original reporting on “hard news” topics.
 - The city specific websites rely heavily on the original reporting of traditional local news outlets such as daily newspapers or broadcast television stations.
- The city-specific websites have very small audiences. The median number of unique visitors in a single month to the city-specific websites was just 5,000. The median number of unique monthly visitors to the websites of the local newspapers in the same markets is over 100 times as large. Furthermore, the physical space presence of the traditional media outlets would make their viewership almost two thousand times as large.
- The audiences of the city-specific websites are very transient. Only 8 percent of the visitors to the city-specific websites viewed the site between 2 and 30 times in a month. However, 28 percent of the visitors to the websites of local newspapers were frequent users, viewing the sites between 2 and 30 times in a month.

The results of this study demonstrate that though the Internet provides another medium for the dissemination of local news, it has yet to actually compete with, or diminish the influence of the traditional newspaper and broadcast news outlets. Thus, the presence of these city-specific local websites does not provide a compelling reason to remove important ownership protections that maintain citizen’s access to a vibrant and diverse local news media.

Background

In their recent comments to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Newspaper Association of America (NAA) asserts that the Internet has changed the media marketplace to the point where FCC rules barring the common ownership of local newspaper and broadcast properties is no longer in the public interest.¹ NAA claims that “there is now a wealth of local news and information on the Internet that is fully independent from that provided by television and newspaper web sites”. However, the NAA provides absolutely no evidence that the actual *content* of these new independently owned websites is “fully independent” of local television and newspaper outlets.² In fact, close review of these city-specific local websites reveals that they rely heavily on the content of traditional local news outlets, with many of their “stories” hyperlinking to content hosted on the websites of local TV and newspaper outlets.

To support its claim of “a plethora of fully independent local news and information sources on the Internet,” NAA describes 12 city-specific websites.³ However, NAA does not describe the level of original reporting contained on these websites. They do not describe the topical content of these websites. They do not describe the audience size or audience viewing behavior of these websites, and do not describe how this compares to that of the websites of traditional local media outlets. And the NAA does not address what secondary effects media consolidation would have on these independent city-specific local websites.

This study does explore these issues in a systematic and quantitative manner, and demonstrates that these websites are at best a complement to traditional media, relying heavily on the content of local TV and newspaper outlets. Furthermore, the audiences of these city-specific websites are very small and transient, with all but a small percentage of the readers visiting these websites just a single time. These websites do not provide an independent source of local news, and thus do not compete with local broadcast and print news outlets. Their mere existence in no way justifies the abandonment of important FCC ownership rules. This general fact was rightly recognized by the *Prometheus* court in 2003, and has not changed in the three years since.⁴ In fact, given that these websites largely repurpose and comment on the original content of traditional local media outlets, consolidation in the mainstream sector would have secondary effects in these independent outlets, resulting in fewer sources of diverse local news available to the editors of these websites to present to their audiences.

¹ Comments of the Newspaper Association of America, In the Matter of 2006 Quadrennial Regulatory Review—Review of the Commission’s Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, MB Docket No. 06-121; In the Matter of 2002 Biennial Regulatory Review—Review of the Commission’s Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, MB Docket No. 02-277; In the Matter of Cross-Ownership of Broadcast Stations and Newspapers, MB Docket No. 01-235; In the Matter of Rules and Policies Concerning Multiple Ownership of Radio Broadcast Stations in Local Markets, MB Docket No. 01-317; In the Matter of Definition of Radio Markets, MB Docket No. 00-244, October 23, 2006.

² *Ibid.* page 60.

³ *Ibid.* pages 61-63.

⁴ *Prometheus Radio Project v. FCC*, 373 U.S. 372, 406 (3rd Cir. 2004), n. 34.

Methodology

All twelve of the city-specific websites listed by NAA were reviewed, and seven additional city-specific websites in an additional six markets were also reviewed. Qualitative observations were made on the ten most recent stories on each website, published as of 3pm on Tuesday November 21st 2006. Each website's archive was also searched to determine the total number of stories published for the entire month of November 2006. Traffic and audience data for each website was gathered from Alexa.com and Quantcast.com, two of the leading traffic monitoring services on the Internet. Data for the websites of local television news stations and local newspapers operating in the same media markets was also gathered from Alexa and Quantcast. Newspaper circulation figures as of September 2006 were obtained from the Audit Bureau of Circulations. Figure 1 details the websites contained in our sample.

Individual City-Specific Websites Cited by NAA

Gothamist

Gothamist.com is an advertiser supported professional weblog that covers the New York area. Like most weblogs, the site consists of hyperlinks to other websites -- primarily mainstream news websites, press releases, and other weblogs -- with accompanying text and commentary from a gothamist.com editor. The "stories" featured on the site are quite short, usually less than 200 words, and are almost always based on the primary reporting from another source, usually a local New York newspaper, local TV station, or national media outlet. Gothamist's original content primarily consists of the occasional concert or restaurant review, and there is no regular original "beat" reporting on the site. Only 30 percent of the Gothamist.com stories in our sample contained original reporting, the overwhelming majority of which were arts and entertainment stories. There were no original hard news stories in our Gothamist sample. For the entire month of November 2006, there were a total of 552 entries on Gothamist.com, or an average of 18.4 stories per day.

Figure 1: Websites Included in Sample

Website	Website Type	Source	Media Market (DMA)
austinist.com	City Specific Blog	Austinist	Austin, TX
keyetv.com	Broadcast TV	KEYE-CBS	Austin, TX
kvue.com	Broadcast TV	KVUE-ABC	Austin, TX
kxan.com	Broadcast TV	KXAN-NBC	Austin, TX
myfoxaustin.com	Broadcast TV	KTBC-Fox	Austin, TX
austin360.com	Daily Newspaper	Austin American Statesman	Austin, TX
austinchronicle.com	Weekly Newspaper	Austin Chronicle	Austin, TX
bostonist.com	City Specific Blog	Bostonist	Boston, MA
cbs4boston.com	Broadcast TV	WBZ-CBS	Boston, MA
myfoxboston.com	Broadcast TV	WFXT-Fox	Boston, MA
thebostonchannel.com	Broadcast TV	WCVB-ABC	Boston, MA
wgbh.com	Broadcast TV	WGBH-PBS	Boston, MA
whdh.com	Broadcast TV	WHDH-NBC	Boston, MA
boston.com	Daily Newspaper	Boston Globe	Boston, MA
bostonherald.com	Daily Newspaper	Boston Herald	Boston, MA
chicagoist.com	City Specific Blog	Chicagoist	Chicago
gapersblock.com	City Specific Blog	Gapers Block	Chicago
abc7chicago.com	Broadcast TV	WLS-ABC	Chicago
cbs2chicago.com	Broadcast TV	WBBM-CBS	Chicago
myfoxchicago.com	Broadcast TV	WFLD-Fox	Chicago
nbc5.com	Broadcast TV	WMAQ-NBC	Chicago
chicagotribune.com	Daily Newspaper	Chicago Tribune	Chicago
suntimes.com	Daily Newspaper	Chicago Sun-Times	Chicago
bloggingohio.com	City Specific Blog	Blogging Ohio	Ohio (multiple)
wkyc.com	Broadcast TV	WKYC-NBC	Cleveland, OH
19actionnews.com	Broadcast TV	WOIO-CBS	Cleveland, OH
myfoxcleveland.com	Broadcast TV	WJW-Fox	Cleveland, OH
newsnet5.com	Broadcast TV	WEWS-ABC	Cleveland, OH
cincinnati.com	Daily Newspaper	Cincinnati Enquirer	Cincinnati, OH
cleveland.com	Daily Newspaper	Cleveland Plain Dealer	Cleveland, OH
dispatch.com	Daily Newspaper	Columbus Dispatch	Columbus, OH
houstonist.com	City Specific Blog	Houstonist	Houston, TX
abc13.com	Broadcast TV	KTRK-ABC	Houston, TX
click2houston.com	Broadcast TV	KPRC-NBC	Houston, TX
khou.com	Broadcast TV	KHOU-CBS	Houston, TX
myfoxboston.com	Broadcast TV	KRIV-Fox	Houston, TX
chron.com	Daily Newspaper	Houston Chronicle	Houston, TX
laist.com	City Specific Blog	LAist	Los Angeles, CA
abc7.com	Broadcast TV	KABC-ABC	Los Angeles, CA
cbs2.com	Broadcast TV	KCBS-CBS	Los Angeles, CA
myfoxla.com	Broadcast TV	KTTV-Fox	Los Angeles, CA
nbc4.tv	Broadcast TV	KNBC-NBC	Los Angeles, CA
dailynews.com	Daily Newspaper	Daily News of Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA
latimes.com	Daily Newspaper	Los Angeles Times	Los Angeles, CA

Figure 1 (continued): Websites Included in Sample

Website	Website Type	Source	Media Market (DMA)
gothamist.com	City Specific Blog	Gothamist	New York
7online.com	Broadcast TV	WABC-ABC	New York
myfoxny.com	Broadcast TV	WNYW-Fox	New York
wcbstv.com	Broadcast TV	WCBS-CBS	New York
wnbc.com	Broadcast TV	WNBC-NBC	New York
nydailynews.com	Daily Newspaper	New York Daily News	New York
nypost.com	Daily Newspaper	New York Post	New York
nysun.com	Daily Newspaper	New York Sun	New York
nytimes.com	Daily Newspaper	New York Times	New York
phillyist.com	City Specific Blog	Phillyist	Philadelphia, PA
cbs3.com	Broadcast TV	KYW-CBS	Philadelphia, PA
myfoxphilly.com	Broadcast TV	WTFX-Fox	Philadelphia, PA
nbc10.com	Broadcast TV	WCAU-NBC	Philadelphia, PA
wpvi.com	Broadcast TV	WPVI-ABC	Philadelphia, PA
philly.com	Daily Newspaper	Philadelphia Inquirer	Philadelphia, PA
sfist.com	City Specific Blog	SFist	San Francisco, CA
abc7news.com	Broadcast TV	KGO-ABC	San Francisco, CA
cbs5.com	Broadcast TV	KPIX-CBS	San Francisco, CA
kqed.org	Broadcast TV	KQED-PBS	San Francisco, CA
kron4.com	Broadcast TV	KRON-MNTV	San Francisco, CA
ktvu.com	Broadcast TV	KTVU-Fox	San Francisco, CA
nbc11.com	Broadcast TV	KNIV-NBC	San Francisco, CA
mercurynews.com	Daily Newspaper	San Jose Mercury News	San Francisco, CA
sfgate.com	Daily Newspaper	San Francisco Chronicle	San Francisco, CA
seattlest.com	City Specific Blog	Seattlest	Seattle, WA
king5.com	Broadcast TV	KING-NBC	Seattle, WA
kirotv.com	Broadcast TV	KIRO-CBS	Seattle, WA
komotv.com	Broadcast TV	KOMO-ABC	Seattle, WA
nwsourc.com	Daily Newspaper	Seattle Times/Post-Intelligencer	Seattle, WA
dcist.com	City Specific Blog	DCist	Washington DC
myfoxdc.com	Broadcast TV	WTTG-Fox	Washington DC
nbc4.com	Broadcast TV	WRC-NBC	Washington DC
wjla.com	Broadcast TV	WJLA-ABC	Washington DC
wusa9.com	Broadcast TV	WUSA-CBS	Washington DC
herald-mail.com	Daily Newspaper	Herald-Mail	Washington DC (Hagerstown)
washingtonpost.com	Daily Newspaper	Washington Post	Washington DC
washingtontimes.com	Daily Newspaper	Washington Times	Washington DC
backfence.com	City Specific Blog	Backfence	Washington DC/CA/IL
baristanet.com	City Specific Blog	Baristanet	Northern NJ (not DMA)
nj.com	Daily Newspaper	The Star-Ledger	Northern NJ (not DMA)
westportnow.com	City Specific Blog	Westport Now	Westport, CT (not DMA)
connpost.com	Daily Newspaper	Connecticut Post	Bridgeport, CT (not DMA)
coastsider.com	City Specific Blog	Coastsider	San Mateo, CA (not DMA)
h2otown.info	City Specific Blog	H2O Town	Waterbury, MA (not DMA)

There are several daily newspapers in the New York market, and the websites of four of these were included in our sample: New York Times, New York Post, New York Daily News, and the New York Sun. These papers have daily circulations that range from a low of 45,000 (the *Sun*) to a high of over a million (the *Times*). Quantcast traffic data shows that the number of unique monthly visitors to their websites ranges from 120,000 (the *Sun*) to 4,000,000 (the *Times*), far above the 50,000 monthly visitors to Gothamist. Furthermore, while only 7.7 percent of the visitors to Gothamist view the site between 2 and 30 times per month, the range of this level of viewership for the New York newspaper's websites is 15.4 percent (the *Sun*) to 32.9 percent (the *Times*).

The lack of original content, small reach, and transient audience has not inhibited Gothamist's success. Of the independent local sites listed by the NAA, Gothamist by far receives the most traffic, ranking approximately 13,000 overall in Alexa.com's tabulation of most popular websites.⁵ The success of the Gothamist formula has led to its parent company, Gothamist LLC, establishing satellite "city-ist" weblogs in metropolitan areas around the U.S. and in several international locations, including Austin, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington.

But these other city-ist weblogs, like Gothamist, also lack much original reporting, following the typical "linking blog" style of the parent weblog. Furthermore, the frequency of new content at these satellite sites is often less than Gothamist.com, and viewership is far below that of the parent site (see below), which itself is quite low in comparison to the readership of the websites of traditional New York media outlets. For the eight other city-specific websites run by Gothamist, the average number of stories per day in the month of November 2006 was 8.4. The most prolific outlet was LAist, with 368 November stories, and the least output came from Bostonist.com, with a mere 42 stories for the entire month of November.

The success of Gothamist has not always translated to the satellite websites. The Miami Florida satellite, miamist.com, recently was taken down after a period of intermittent activity, where days passed before any new posts were added to the site.

Gapers Block

Gapersblock.com, a website covering the Chicago Illinois area is not laid out like the typical weblog, but the range of content is almost identical to that of Gothamist.com and other city-focused websites. The site contains several feature areas that at first glance makes it resemble the website of established print newspapers. It contains a weblog written in the typical fashion, relying on the original reporting of other sources. There is also a calendar detailing local events. What sets this site apart from most city-focused weblogs is the presence of a daily column that involves more long form writing that deviates from the typical link-heavy short-post weblog format. However, most of these long form columns are arts and entertainment reviews or first person opinion pieces accompanied by very little original reporting. Furthermore, as detailed below, Gapers Block, like all of the city focused sites listed

⁵ A lower number corresponds to a higher ranking, and thus a larger audience.

by NAA, does not have a significantly sized audience, and over 90 percent of its audience consists of users who visit the site only once in an entire month.

In our sample of Gapers Block blog stories, there were no stories based upon original reporting. Half of the stories in their long-form daily column were based on original reporting. However, all but one of these stories were arts and entertainment pieces, with the one remaining being an op-ed with some minimal original reporting. For the entire month of November 2006, there were a total of 154 entries on the Gapers Block "Merge" blog and 31 stories in their daily "Airbags" section, or an average of 6.2 stories per day.

The Gapers Block audience is small and transient. The site receives 10,000 unique monthly visitors, and only 7.2 percent of these view the site between 2 and 30 times per month. This is starkly different from the viewership of the websites of the two major Chicago dailies. Sun-times.com has 700,000 unique monthly visitors, with 29.6 percent viewing 2-30 times per month. Chicagotribune.com has 800,000 unique monthly visitors, 31.2 percent of whom are regular (2-30 times in a month) visitors of the website. Furthermore, the print circulation of these outlets is very high, with the Tribune having a Sunday circulation of nearly one million.

Blogging Ohio

This website, owned by AOL Time Warner's blog division, Weblogs Inc., is a typical blog, with content consisting of short form pieces primarily based on the original reporting of other local and national news sources. Readers are allowed to post comments to stories, though very few actually do so. The site is also not "local" in the same way more heavily trafficked sites like Gothamist are, as it covers events occurring throughout the entire state of Ohio. Of the ten bloggingohio stories in our sample, only two contained original reporting. One was a real estate story about the website realtor.com, and the other was a weather related story with an original photograph. For the entire month of November there were 173 entries on bloggingohio.com, or an average of 5.8 stories per day.

Furthermore, blogginohio.com is the lowest ranked advertiser supported local website listed by the NAA, with only 2000 unique visitors per month, over 97% of whom only visit the site a single time in a month (see below). This pales in comparison to the operations of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, an outlet that only covers a portion of the market supposedly covered by bloggingohio.com. The *Plain Dealer's* website receives 600,000 unique viewers per month, 38 percent of whom are visiting the site between 2 and 30 times per month. The print edition of the paper also has a daily circulation of 336,939 and a Sunday circulation of 446,487.

Phoenix Newsvine

Phoenix Newsvine, like other sites run by newsvine.com, is a news aggregator, consisting of AP wire stories and user-submitted articles that are from other traditional local or national news sources. There is absolutely no original content on this website. The national parent site, newsvine.com, does contain a few blog-post style columns written by "featured writers", but these posts contain very little original reporting, consisting mostly of op-eds or

arts and entertainment reviews. Phoenix.newsvine.com was excluded from the content and traffic analysis sample used in this report because it is a sub-domain of newsvine.com, the parent national website, and the Alexa and Quantcast traffic monitoring services do not provide data for sub-domains. However, it is worth noting that for the entire month of November 2006, there were only two user submitted stories.

Metroblogging Atlanta

Metroblogging Atlanta was excluded from the content and traffic analysis sample used in this report because it is a sub-domain of metblogs.com, the parent national website, and the Alexa and Quantcast traffic monitoring services do not provide data for sub-domains. However a review of the site reveals that it is similar to gothamist.com, and bloggingohio.com. It is advertiser supported with several "editors" providing content, which is overwhelmingly based on the original reporting of traditional news outlets. The site is not "hard news" focused, consisting primarily of arts and entertainment themed content. Furthermore, the frequency of stories on the site is low, with an average of 1.46 post per day for the month of November 2006.

Backfence Bethesda

Backfence.com is a user-submitted hyper-local website with sub-domains for several areas in the Washington DC metropolitan area, as well as three domains in California and three domains in Illinois. NAA cited backfence-bethesda, and content analysis was conducted on this sub-domain. Traffic analysis data was gathered for backfence.com, which includes all sub-domain sites. Thus the traffic data will overstate visits to backfence-bethesda, but is still miniscule and transient. The site only receives 4,000 unique monthly visitors, with 8.9 percent of these returning between 2 and 30 times in the month. This pales in comparison to the operations of the *Washington Post*, which have micro-local print inserts and online content for the various areas surrounding DC. The *Post's* website has 2 million unique monthly visitors, 31 percent of whom are regular (2-30 time per month) readers, and their Sunday print circulation hovers near 1 million. Even the less-read *Washington Times* vastly outperforms Backfence, with 40,000 unique monthly visitors to its website, 23.5 percent of whom are regulars, and a daily print circulation of over 100,000.

Backfence is like Gapers Block in that the homepage is laid out in a more newspaper type style as opposed to the typical blog style of most other city-specific sites. However, the content at backfence-bethesda remains void of original reporting. None of the backfence-bethesda stories in our sample contained original reporting, and 40% of the stories were weather reports taken from another website. Because backfence does not archive stories, we were unable to tally the total number of November stories. However, in the 14-day period from November 16th to November 30th, there were a total of 17 stories, or an average of 1.2 stories per day.

Cambridge Civic Journal

The Cambridge Civic Journal is another hyper-local website cited by NAA, with post in the typical blog-style layout. Unlike most of the websites listed by NAA, this site was actually primarily focused on local political events as opposed to the arts and entertainment fare common on most city-specific websites. However the Cambridge Civic Journal (www.rwinters.com) is more of a community calendar than a news outlet, with many notices of upcoming council meetings and civic events, listed without comment. None of the stories in our sample were based on original reporting, and the frequency of posts was few and far between. Though the posts on the site are not dated (making the counting process difficult), there were no more than five posts for the entire month of November 2006. In fact there were just 16 individual posts from September 4th to December 2nd, or about 1.2 posts per week.

The website's monthly visitor data from Quantcast shows approximately 800 unique viewers, with only 8 percent visiting between 2 and 30 times in the month. Though the website focuses on Cambridge (not the entire Boston area), the less-read of the area's two major dailies, the *Boston Herald*, still vastly outperforms [rwinters.com](http://www.rwinters.com). [Bostonherald.com](http://www.bostonherald.com) has 400,000 unique monthly visitors, a regular viewership of 26.5 percent, and a daily print circulation of over 200,000.

Westport Now

Westport Now is a hyper-local website focused on the Westport Connecticut area. Unlike all the other websites cited by the NAA, westportnow.com actually employs a reporter that goes out and covers stories and writes original content. Seventy percent of the stories from Westport Now in our sample contained original reporting. However, these stories were largely on non-hard news topics such as sports or arts and entertainment. Forty-three percent of the original stories were simply photographs accompanied with a short caption. For the month of November 2006, there were a total of 301 entries on westportnow.com, or an average of 10 stories per day.

Westport Now's largest local news competitor is the Connecticut Post, published in nearby Bridgeport Connecticut. The paper has a daily print circulation of 74,000 and a Sunday circulation of over 85,000 subscriptions. The Post's website, connpost.com, has approximately 60,000 unique monthly visitors, 28 percent of whom visit between 2 and 30 times per month. Contrast this to westportnow.com, which averages 5000 unique visitors per month, 18 percent of whom visit between 2 and 30 times per month. Westport Now is a welcome addition to the media market of Southeastern Connecticut, but its audience is very small and transient.

H2O Town

H2O town, the hyper-local website that NAA cited from the Boston-suburb, Watertown Massachusetts, is a typical blog consisting of short entries with links to other traditional news outlets. None of the h2otown.info stories in our sample were original reports. And 70 percent of the entries were promotions or notices from various community groups -- valuable

information to be sure, but most certainly not original reporting and not local news. For the month of November 2006 there were 128 posts on h2otown.info, or an average of 4.3 stories per day. The site has 1,000 unique monthly visitors with 7% regular viewership (2-30 time per month), far below that of all the Boston area broadcast and print outlets in our sample.

Coastsider

Coastsider.com out of San Mateo California is another hyper-local website listed by NAA that is published in the typical blog format. None of the stories from Coastsider in our sample contained original reporting, and those that focused on hard news subjects (like crime or politics) were excerpts from stories written by the San Mateo County Times and published on their website, the area's main hyper-local local news outlet. In November 2006 there were 68 posts on Coastsider, or an average of 2.3 stories per day. The site has 3,000 unique monthly visitors, far below the 30,000 evening print daily circulation of the San Mateo County Times.⁶

Barista of Bloomfield Ave.

Barista of Bloomfield Avenue is a blog listed by NAA that covers the northern New Jersey Area. The site is written like a typical blog, frequently linking to other news sources and inviting readers to comment on each story. Of the ten baristanet.com stories reviewed, three, or 30 percent contained original reporting. However, only one of these was hard news focused, a story about recent vandalism at a public train station based on a picture of the station taken by a baristanet.com editor. One of the two remaining original stories was a 49-word story with a photo of a crowded parking lot, telling readers that the shopping season had already begun. The final original story was a 146-word story about magnets for sale at a local mall. For the month over November 2006 there were 150 entries on baristanet.com, or an average of 5 stories per day.

The Northern New Jersey area is also served by the Star-Ledger, a print outlet with a daily circulation of 378,100 and a Sunday circulation of 580,640 copies. The Star-Ledger's website nj.com, receives over 600,000 unique U.S. visitors a month, compared to 8,000 for baristanet.com. Furthermore, 34 percent of the Star-Ledger's web visitors visit between 2-30 times per month, compared to just 11 percent of baristanet.com's visitors.

⁶ Audit Bureau of Circulations, data as of September 30th 2006 (29,391 average evening circulation).

General Results - Qualitative

A total of 18 local websites were reviewed, with 190 stories total. Stories in the sample were the ten most recent stories published before 3pm on November 21st 2006. The only exception to this was for Gapersblock.com, where 10 blog stories and ten daily column stories were reviewed.

The median word count per story was 238, far below the typical length of a local newspaper story, which is usually around 500 words.⁷ By far the most frequent type of story was arts and entertainment-focused pieces, accounting for nearly a third of all stories reviewed. This indicates that the focus of these local websites is not hard news, but lighter fare. In fact only 21 percent of all stories were classified as hard news (that is, focused on accidents, community governance, crime, labor issues, local politics, national politics, or transportation topics).

Few of the stories reviewed contained original reporting, defined by the typical characteristics such as quotes from anonymous or named sources, presenting conflicting opinions from several sources, reporting from an event attended by the author, and inputting some reporting effort beyond reprinting press releases verbatim. As Figure 2 shows, only 18 percent of the stories in the sample were based on original reporting. However, the majority of these stories were arts and entertainment or food related, accounting for over 56 percent of the entire sample. Only 2.6 percent of the entire sample consisted of original hard news reporting (1 community governance story, 3 crime stories, and 1 politics story). In this count we were very generous in assigning hard news status to some of the posts. For example, one of the stories classified as hard news original reporting was just an amateur video of a city street, accompanied by the sounds of gunfire in the background. There was no additional reporting, such as witness interviews or statements from local police officials.

Figure 2: Summary of Story Content on NAA-cited City-Specific Websites

Type of Story on City-Specific Blogs Cited by NAA	Percentage of All Stories in City-Specific Blog Sample
Non-Original Reporting	81.6%
Original Reporting	18.4%
Original A&E Reporting	9.5%
Original Crime Reporting	1.6%
Original Food Reporting	1.1%
Original Real Estate Reporting	1.1%
Original Sports Reporting	1.1%
Original Weather Reporting	1.1%
Other Original Reporting	3.2%
Original Hard News Reporting	2.6%

⁷ <http://www.patriot-news.com/search/faq.php>

General Results - Quantitative

The online traffic monitoring services Alexa and Quantcast were used to contrast the traffic and audiences of the NAA cited websites with the websites of local print and television news outlets in the same markets. Though these monitoring services are not perfect, they do provide useful information to compare the NAA-cited websites with the websites of traditional news outlets, many who have been somewhat slow in migrating content to the web-space.⁸ As Figures 3 and 4 show, the websites of local newspapers operating in same markets as the NAA city-specific websites have an average of over 700,000 unique U.S. visitors per month, which is far higher than the 9,500 average monthly visitors to the websites listed by NAA. Local TV stations have been somewhat less effective in migrating to the primarily written-word space of the Internet, given that their product is video, not print, and thus their web content is less of a direct competitor to the city-specific blogs than the websites of local newspapers. However, the local TV websites in our sample averaged over 80,000 unique visitors per month, nearly ten times the amount that visited the NAA-cited city-specific websites.

Figure 3: Summary of Traffic and Audience Profile for Local News Websites

Website Type		ALEXA TRAFFIC MONITORING DATA		QUANTCAST TRAFFIC MONITORING DATA				
		Alexa Traffic Rank (3 mo. avg)	Reach per million users (3 mo. avg.)	Quantcast Traffic Rank	Unique US Visitors per Month	Percent of Audience that Visited Once in a Month	Percent of Audience that Visited 2-30 Times in a Month	Percent of Audience that Visited >30 Times in a Month
City-Specific Blogs	Average Value	387,941	21	208,368	8,544	92	8	0
	Median Value	131,486	31	185,157	5,000	93	7	0
Newspaper Websites	Average Value	15,207	1,028	5,152	733,000	70	28	1
	Median Value	3,314	390	1,910	600,000	71	28	1
Broadcast TV Websites	Average Value	195,521	42	61,559	81,898	77	23	0
	Median Value	64,766	31	20,166	80,000	77	23	0

Quantcast also provides information about the site viewing/reading habits of the audience of websites. This data provides a very important distinction between the websites of established local media outlets and the websites listed in NAA's comment. Over 90 percent of the monthly audience of the city-specific websites visited the site just a single time in a month, far higher than that of local print and TV websites. This data indicates that the city-specific website audience is very transient, stumbling upon the site once, and never returning (see Figures 5 and 6).

⁸ See Comments of Consumers Union, Consumer Federation of America and Free Press, Part IV, Chapter 9, "Local Media and the Failure of Big Media's Conglomerate Model, pages 178-180.

Figure 4:
Audience Size of Local Media Websites
Median/Average Number of Unique U.S. Visitors per Month

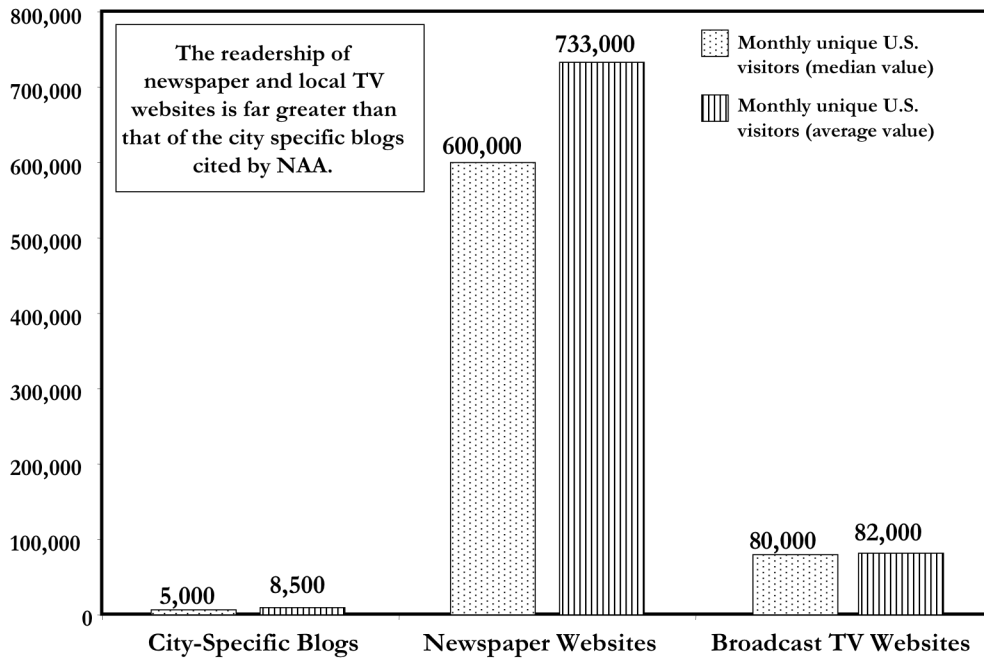


Figure 5:
Audience Composition of Local Media Websites
Type of Visitor by Viewing Frequency

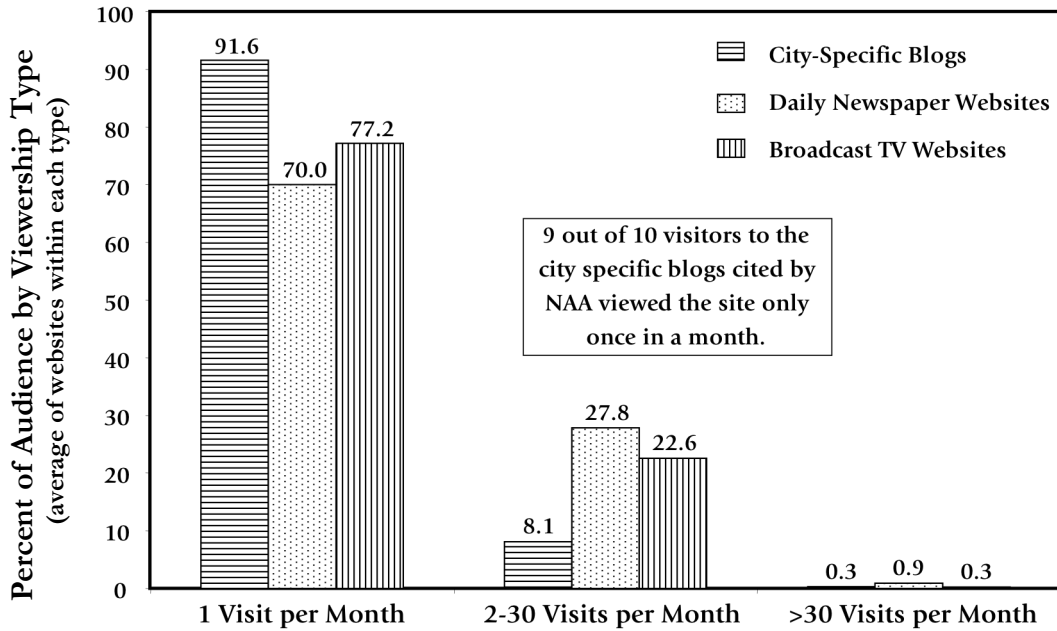


Figure 6: Local Website Audience Size and Composition by Media Market⁹

Media Market	Website Type	Average Unique US Visitors per Month	Average Audience Composition		
			Percent Visiting Once per Month	Percent Visiting 2-30 Times per Month	Percent Visiting >30 Times per Month
Austin, TX	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	4,000	92.5	7.5	0
	Local TV Station Websites	55,000	76	24	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	95,000	78	22	0
Boston, MA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	5,000	94.8	5.2	0
	Local TV Station Websites	73,000	75	24	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	750,000	72	27	1
Chicago, IL	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	11,000	93	6	0
	Local TV Station Websites	76,125	79	21	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	750,000	69	30	1
Ohio (multiple)	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	2,000	97.8	2.2	0
	Local TV Station Websites	62,000	73	27	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	271,667	66	33	1
Houston, TX	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	4,000	94.3	5.7	0
	Local TV Station Websites	65,000	72	28	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	950,000	73.4	25.7	0.9
Los Angeles, CA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	11,000	94.8	5.2	0
	Local TV Station Websites	60,450	79	21	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	650,000	73	26	1
New York, NY	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	50,000	92.2	7.7	0.1
	Local TV Station Websites	201,250	84	16	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,280,000	72	27	1
Philadelphia, PA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	4,000	95.5	4.5	0
	Local TV Station Websites	87,500	77	23	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	800,000	72.4	26.7	0.9
San Francisco, CA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	11,000	92.8	7.1	0.1
	Local TV Station Websites	66,333	83	17	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,100,000	78.5	20.9	0.7
Seattle, WA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	10,000	94.6	5.4	0
	Local TV Station Websites	130,000	75	24	1
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,100,000	71.2	27.7	1.1
Washington, DC	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	6,500	92	8	0
	Local TV Station Websites	46,250	74	25	0
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,075,000	72.0	27.3	0.8

Finally, the reach of the NAA-cited city specific blogs also pales in comparison to the circulations of the print newspapers in the markets where the city-specific blogs are located. As Figure 7 shows, even the circulation of the Hagerstown Herald-Mail Sunday paper (a small print publication serving a community of less than 40,000 persons, located 70 miles northwest of Washington DC, and is technically in the DC media market) is some 6-times greater than the number of monthly unique visitors to the DCist, the Washington DC blog cited by NAA, a website that ostensibly serves the 8 million metropolitan DC residents. Furthermore, 92 percent of those 6,500 visitors to DCist visit the site only once in the month.

⁹ This summary excludes the hyper-local sites in the Boston DMA (h2otown.info and rwinters.com), the hyper-local site in the San Francisco DMA (coastsider.com), and the hyper-local site in the New York DMA (baristanet.com), as these sites do not (ostensibly) serve the entire DMA. The data in this table are averages for each respective media platform in each market, not totals.

Figure 7: Circulation of Print Newspapers in Markets with City-Specific Websites Cited by NAA

Paper	Website	Daily Circulation	Saturday Circulation	Sunday Circulation
Austin-American Statesman	austin360.com	168,569	174,330	212,744
Boston Globe	boston.com	386,415	374,369	587,292
Boston Herald	bostonherald.com	203,552	155,442	115,214
Chicago Tribune	chicagotribune.com	576,132	501,324	937,907
Chicago Suntimes	suntimes.com	486,936	N/A	N/A
Connecticut Post	connpost.com	74,005	67,794	85,168
Houston Chronicle	chron.com	508,097	478,221	692,586
LA Times	latimes.com	755,766	896,904	1,172,005
LA Daily News	dailynews.com	151,215	136,466	170,434
New York Daily News	nydailynews.com	693,382	542,309	780,196
New York Post	nypost.com	704,011	472,839	427,264
New York Sun	nysun.com	45,000	N/A	N/A
New York Times	nytimes.com	1,086,798	1,042,321	1,623,697
Cleveland Plain Dealer	cleveland.com	336,939	335,183	446,487
Cincinnati Enquirer	cincinnati.com	197,962	182,320	288,030
Columbus Dispatch	dispatch.com	217,291	262,140	345,525
Philadelphia Inquirer/Daily Ne	philly.com	443,162	432,977	682,214
San Francisco Chronicle	sfgate.com	373,805	383,378	432,957
San Jose Mercury News	mercurynews.com	228,880	209,660	251,454
Seattle Times/Post-Int.	nwsourc.com	338,916	313,202	423,275
Star-Ledger (New Jersey)	nj.com	378,100	307,502	580,640
Washington Post	washingtonpost.com	656,297	615,231	930,619
Washington Times	washingtontimes.com	100,074	73,875	41,140
Herald-Mail (Hagerstown MD)	herald-mail.com	34,227	34,058	37,954
Average		381,064	363,266	512,036
Median		356,361	324,193	430,111

Chicago Suntimes circulation is from 2005 (current data withheld by Audit Bureau of Circulations)

New York Sun circulation is from 2004 (current data not available)

The Bottom Line on Traditional Local Media Compared to City-Specific Web Sites

The previous analysis has shown that the cyberspace presence of the traditional media outlets is much larger than the cyberspace presence of the city specific websites identified by the NAA as providing competition for and alternatives to local media. The physical space presence adds further weight to the traditional media. To gain perspective on the relative size of the audiences of these outlets, we compare the average monthly users of these media by transforming the website and television viewership data in a manner that renders it comparable to the newspaper circulation data (see Figure 8).¹⁰

Across the eleven markets in this sample, the city-specific web sites had just fewer than 140,000 unique monthly visitors in total. As noted, the vast majority of visitors used the site once a month. A small percentage visited between 2 and 30 times, and almost no one visited more than 30 times. If we assume that all the users who visited more than once visited on each of the 30 days in a month, we estimate a “circulation” of about 400,000 per month.¹¹

In contrast, the total average *daily* circulation of the newspapers in the specific cities is approximately nine million. Thus, the total monthly circulation is about 270 million.¹² The newspapers in our sample also have a huge advantage in cyberspace visitors when compared to the city-specific websites, with a “circulation” of over 170 million, calculated by the methodology described above. Thus, newspapers alone had almost 1100 times the usage (monthly “circulation” in cyberspace plus circulation in physical space).

¹⁰ These data are market totals for each media platform based on the individual websites, stations, and newspapers in our sample.

¹¹ For example, only 7.5% of the 4,000 visitors to Ausinist.com visited 2 or more times per month, or 300 visitors. Thus, in our methodology, these 300 visitors account for a circulation of 9,000, or 30 days of a “circulation” of 300. The remaining 3,700 visitors only viewed the site once in the month, so the total monthly “circulation” of Austinist.com is 12,700, or 9,000 plus 3,700.

¹² Circulation data as of September 30th 2006, obtained from the Audit Bureau of Circulations. For each market, the total average daily circulation was calculated for a 28-day month (by multiplying the weekday circulation figure by 20; adding this to the Saturday circulation multiplied by 4; and then adding this subtotal to the Sunday circulation multiplied by 4). To compute the total monthly circulation, this daily average was multiplied by 30. The data are for the newspapers in our sample, not for all newspapers in the market.

Figure 8: Traditional Media vs. Alternative Outlets

Media Market	Website Type	Cyberspace		Physical Space		Combined Physical + Cyberspace Circulation (thousands)	Ratio TV+Papers/Alternative Websites
		Total Unique US Visitors per Month (thousands)	Total Monthly "Circulation" (thousands)	Total Daily Circulation (thousands)	Total Monthly Circulation (thousands)		
Austin, TX	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	4	13			13	
	Local TV Station Websites	220	1,742	228	6,840	8,582	1,194
	Local Newspaper Websites	190	1,360	176	5,217	6,577	
Boston, MA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	5	13			13	
	Local TV Station Websites	365	2,874	534	16,020	18,894	4,046
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,500	13,915	597	17,924	31,838	
Chicago, IL	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	22	64			64	
	Local TV Station Websites	305	1,815	967	29,010	30,825	1,243
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,500	15,191	1,104	33,122	48,313	
Ohio (multiple)	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	2	3			3	
	Local TV Station Websites	248	2,192	468	14,040	16,232	15,254
	Local Newspaper Websites	815	9,651	803	24,088	33,739	
Houston, TX	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	4	11			11	
	Local TV Station Websites	260	2,501	569	17,070	19,571	4,123
	Local Newspaper Websites	950	8,278	530	15,906	24,184	
Los Angeles, CA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	11	28			28	
	Local TV Station Websites	242	1,831	1,495	44,850	46,681	3,220
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,300	12,540	987	29,617	42,158	
New York, NY	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	50	163			163	
	Local TV Station Websites	805	4,888	1,889	56,670	61,558	1,174
	Local Newspaper Websites	5,120	54,825	2,505	75,148	129,974	
Philadelphia, PA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	4	9			9	
	Local TV Station Websites	350	2,930	478	14,340	17,270	4,203
	Local Newspaper Websites	800	7,203	476	14,276	21,479	
San Francisco, CA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	11	34			34	
	Local TV Station Websites	398	2,521	593	17,790	20,311	1,616
	Local Newspaper Websites	2,200	16,193	613	18,389	34,582	
Seattle, WA	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	10	26			26	
	Local TV Station Websites	390	3,043	428	12,840	15,883	1,426
	Local Newspaper Websites	1,100	10,287	347	10,419	20,706	
Washington, DC	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	13	42			42	
	Local TV Station Websites	185	1,485	489	14,670	16,155	1,503
	Local Newspaper Websites	2,190	22,365	812	24,368	46,733	
Totals	City-Specific Websites (NAA)	136	404			404	
	Local TV Station Websites	3,767	27,823	8,138	244,140	271,963	1,762
	Local Newspaper Websites	17,665	171,809	8,951	268,474	440,283	

To estimate the number of physical space viewers of television news (i.e. the comparable "circulation"), we relied on a database of news hour market shares in each of the cities for which we analyzed city-specific web sites (See Figure 9). We assumed that half the viewers during news hours were watching news, reflecting the fact that about half the stations in the nation provide local news. To check this approach we compared our estimate to three cities for which we have actual ratings for news only viewing of the highest rated evening newscasts (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Estimated TV News Audience

Media Market	1/2 News Hour Audience, 2004 (millions)	Highest Rated Evening Newscast (millions)
New York	1.9	2.2
Los Angeles	1.5	1.6
Chicago	1.0	1.1

Thus, our methodology yields a very conservative estimate of news viewing. Across all the cities, we estimate over 8 million daily TV news viewers, or about 245 million monthly viewers. The websites of the TV stations in our sample had a collective monthly “circulation” of approximately 28 million (calculated by the methodology above). Still, television stations in our sample had about 700 times as much usage (viewers plus website “circulation”) as the city specific web sites.

Therefore, we estimate a “circulation” of almost 700 million per month to the physical and cyberspace outlets of the traditional media in our 11 market sample, and a “circulation” of far less than half a million for the cyberspace sites of the city-specific web sites cited by NAA in these 11 markets. The cyberspace sites of traditional media outweigh the sites of the alternative Internet media by a factor of 500, and when considering physical space usage, results in the traditional media outweighing the alternative by nearly 2000 to 1. And recall that this estimate is overly friendly to the city-specific websites, as it assumes each of the visitors that visit between 2 and 30 times per month visit the respective sites on a daily basis.

This relatively low weight of city-specific websites in comparison to the traditional local media is consistent with our survey research, which shows that the Internet, (more broadly defined than just these city-specific websites), plays a very small role (3 percent of total mentions) as a source of news and an influencer of opinion about local public affairs.

Rebutting Tribune

In their comments in the current FCC ownership proceeding, The Tribune Company makes similar claims of the importance of local websites and blogs.¹³ Tribune specifically cited 17 non-traditional media websites, 9 of which are weblogs with a Minnesota statewide focus. Two of the 17 sites specifically mentioned by Tribune were also mentioned by NAA. Of the remaining 15 local websites, we analyzed basic traffic data for 12.¹⁴ As Figure 10 shows, the usage of these sites is small relative to the websites of the major local newspaper in each market, and the audiences of these sites is also quite transient by comparison.

Figure 10: Local Website Audience Size and Composition by Media Market (Tribune)

Source	Website	Designated Market Area	Average Unique US Visitors per Month	Average Audience Composition		
				Percent Visiting Once per Month	Percent Visiting 2-30 Times per Month	Percent Visiting >30 Times per Month
Blog	voiceofsandiego.org	San Diego	8,000	79	21	0
Daily Newspaper	SignOnSanDiego.com	San Diego	800,000	78	22	0
Blog	newhavenindependent.org	Hartford & New Haven	7,000	86	14	0
Daily Newspaper	courant.com	Hartford & New Haven	200,000	67	31	1
Blog	phillyfuture.org	Philadelphia	6,000	88	12	0
Daily Newspaper	philly.com	Philadelphia	800,000	72	27	1
Blog	olyblog.net	Olympia, WA (Seat.-Tac.)	800	91	9	0
Daily Newspaper	theolympian.com	Olympia, WA (Seat.-Tac.)	90,000	68	31	1
Blog	indybay.org	San Francisco-Oak-S.J.	80,000	92	8	0
Daily Newspaper	sfgate.com	San Francisco-Oak-S.J.	1,500,000	77	22	1
Blog	hvt.com	Myrtle Beach-Florence	300	N/A	N/A	N/A
Daily Newspaper	morningnewsonline.com	Myrtle Beach-Florence	20,000	68	32	0
Blog	minnesotademocratsexposed.com	Minnesota (multiple)	6,000	71	29	0
Blog	checksandballances.com	Minnesota (multiple)	800	N/A	N/A	N/A
Blog	mnpublish.com	Minnesota (multiple)	950	80	15	5
Blog	mncampaignreport.com	Minnesota (multiple)	1,000	82	18	0
Blog	residualforces.com	Minnesota (multiple)	300	N/A	N/A	N/A
Daily Newspaper	startribune.com	Minneapolis-St.Paul	800,000	56	42	2

¹³ Comments of Tribune Company, In the Matter of 2006 Quadrennial Regulatory Review—Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, MB Docket No. 06-121; In the Matter of 2002 Biennial Regulatory Review—Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, MB Docket No. 02-277; In the Matter of Cross-Ownership of Broadcast Stations and Newspapers, MB Docket No. 01-235; In the Matter of Rules and Policies Concerning Multiple Ownership of Radio Broadcast Stations in Local Markets, MB Docket No. 01-317; In the Matter of Definition of Radio Markets, MB Docket No. 00-244, October 23, 2006, pages 21-25.

¹⁴ The three sites not examined were subdomains on the Google-owned blogspot.com service, which precluded gathering of accurate traffic information.

Conclusion

There is little doubt that an open and free Internet provides a space for people to enter into discourse within a larger sphere of discourse. And though it may one day lead to a fundamental shift in the media landscape, this sea change has yet to occur. FCC ownership protections remain vital to ensuring that there is a diverse set of local news and information in every media market across the country. In fact, given that the Internet blogs largely are a platform for distributing and commenting on original reporting by traditional newspaper and broadcast outlets, allowing further consolidation in local media markets would damage their utility. The local websites cited by NAA are merely a complement to the traditional sources of news. They do very little original reporting, and when they do it is usually not on hard news subjects. What's more, their audiences are very small, and very transient. Given that they produce very little original content, their inclusion in any kind of media market analysis must reflect their small audience and lack of contribution of original content. When they are included, as we did in our analysis, they should be given the proper weight. It would be absurd to conclude that Gothamist.com, the most read city-specific website, with a fraction of the audience and barely a hint of original reporting has the same influence as the New York Times. Failing to take into account the dominance of the traditional mass media was precisely the analytic error that scuttled the FCC's rule writing exercise the last time.

APPENDIX - ADDITIONAL DATA

Figure 11: Local Website Audience Size and Composition

Source	Website	Media Market (DMA)	ALEXA TRAFFIC MONITORING DATA		QUANTCAST TRAFFIC MONITORING DATA				
			Reach per million users (3 mo. avg.)	Alexa Traffic Rank (3 mo. avg.)	Quantcast Rank	Unique US Visitors per Month	Percent Visiting Once per Month	Percent Visiting 2-30 Times per Month	Percent Visiting >30 Times per Month
blog	austinist.com	Austin, TX	13.5	140,478	217,359	4,000	92.5	7.5	0.0
broadcast TV	keyetv.com	Austin, TX	26	73,226	34,766	50,000	81.4	18.5	0.1
broadcast TV	kvue.com	Austin, TX	26	68,892	21,853	80,000	75.1	24.8	0.1
broadcast TV	kxan.com	Austin, TX	28	66,234	21,745	80,000	74.3	25.4	0.3
broadcast TV	myfoxaustin.com	Austin, TX	2.5	406,561	83,626	10,000	72.9	27.1	0.0
daily newspaper	austin360.com	Austin, TX	59.5	26,758	12,983	90,000	71.5	28.4	0.1
daily newspaper	austinchronicle.com	Austin, TX	66	27,145	11,744	100,000	85.3	14.7	0.0
blog	rwinters.com	Cambridge, MA	0.5	2,778,233	763,207	800	92.0	8.0	0.0
blog	h2otown.info	Waterbury, MA	1.7	460,673	479,250	1,000	93	7	0
blog	bostonist.com	Boston, MA	13	146,518	222,858	5,000	94.8	5.2	0.0
broadcast TV	cbs4boston.com	Boston, MA	59	33,352	15,549	85,000	80.7	18.9	0.4
broadcast TV	myfoxboston.com	Boston, MA	8	152,217	57,924	20,000	68.6	31.4	0.0
broadcast TV	thebostonchannel.com	Boston, MA	70	24,914	10,581	100,000	72.4	27.1	0.5
broadcast TV	wgbh.com	Boston, MA	26	63,298	21,107	80,000	83.8	16.1	0.1
broadcast TV	whdh.com	Boston, MA	56	33,274	20,275	80,000	70.9	28.5	0.6
daily newspaper	boston.com	Boston, MA	1,480	634	464	1,100,000	71.3	27.5	1.2
daily newspaper	bostonherald.com	Boston, MA	325	3,876	3,820	400,000	71.9	26.5	1.6
blog	chicagoist.com	Chicago	30	65,848	55,047	12,000	94.7	5.3	0.0
blog	gapersblock.com	Chicago	18	96,837	60,817	10,000	92.0	7.2	0.8
broadcast TV	abc7chicago.com	Chicago	2	536,149	69,450	9,500	85.8	14.2	0.0
broadcast TV	cbs2chicago.com	Chicago	105	18,841	5,792	200,000	86.1	13.8	0.1
broadcast TV	myfoxchicago.com	Chicago	9	127,796	37,690	15,000	68.1	31.9	0.0
broadcast TV	nbc5.com	Chicago	57	24,317	11,795	80,000	77.3	22.6	0.1
daily newspaper	chicagotribune.com	Chicago	956	1,197	918	800,000	67.5	31.2	1.3
daily newspaper	suntimes.com	Chicago	580	2,516	1,466	700,000	69.7	29.6	0.7
broadcast TV	19actionnews.com	Cleveland, OH	0.2	644,033	112,925	8,000	72.5	27.4	0.1
broadcast TV	myfoxcleveland.com	Cleveland, OH	3	353,275	16,481	70,000	66.1	33.9	0.0
broadcast TV	newsnet5.com	Cleveland, OH	53	34,760	11,348	90,000	73.6	25.5	0.9
broadcast TV	wkyc.com	Cleveland, OH	25	72,927	12,543	80,000	78.3	21.3	0.4
daily newspaper	cleveland.com	Cleveland, OH	188	5,594	2,521	600,000	60.4	38.1	1.5
daily newspaper	dispatch.com	Columbus, OH	87	20,131	7,525	95,000	71.7	27.7	0.6
daily newspaper	cincinnati.com	Cincinnati, OH	89	7,268	4,886	120,000	66.5	32.7	0.8
blog	houstonist.com	Houston, TX	3	500,479	244,127	4,000	94.3	5.7	0.0
broadcast TV	abc13.com	Houston, TX	1	622,530	61,389	20,000	81.4	18.4	0.2
broadcast TV	click2houston.com	Houston, TX	76	19,063	9,165	110,000	67.0	32.1	0.9
broadcast TV	khou.com	Houston, TX	34	42,911	11,105	100,000	72.6	27.0	0.4
broadcast TV	myfoxboston.com	Houston, TX	3	325,283	43,015	30,000	67.1	32.9	0.0
daily newspaper	chron.com	Houston, TX	884	1,744	874	950,000	73.4	25.7	0.9
blog	laist.com	Los Angeles, CA	31	68,333	66,905	11,000	94.8	5.2	0.0
broadcast TV	abc7.com	Los Angeles, CA	0.5	2,050,932	66,021	11,000	84.4	15.6	0.0
broadcast TV	cbs2.com	Los Angeles, CA	83	20,472	7,316	150,000	79.9	19.7	0.4
broadcast TV	myfoxla.com	Los Angeles, CA	19	70,998	21,681	80,000	71.3	28.7	0.0
broadcast TV	nbc4.tv	Los Angeles, CA	104	12,241	1,325,802	800	N/A	N/A	N/A
daily newspaper	dailynews.com	Los Angeles, CA	112	16,431	6,364	200,000	77.8	21.8	0.4
daily newspaper	latimes.com	Los Angeles, CA	1,565	766	557	1,100,000	68.8	30.2	1.0

Figure 11 (continued): Local Website Audience Size and Composition

Source	Website	Media Market (DMA)	ALEXA TRAFFIC MONITORING DATA		QUANTCAST TRAFFIC MONITORING DATA				
			Reach per million users (3 mo. avg.)	Alexa Traffic Rank (3 mo. avg)	Quantcast Rank	Unique US Visitors per Month	Audience Composition		
							Percent Visiting Once per Month	Percent Visiting 2-30 Times per Month	Percent Visiting >30 Times per Month
blog	gothamist.com	New York	150	13,093	18,263	50,000	92.2	7.7	0.1
broadcast TV	7online.com	New York	2	519,365	143,581	5,000	88.7	11.3	0.0
broadcast TV	myfoxny.com	New York	23	71,590	52,831	10,000	78.5	21.5	0.0
broadcast TV	wcbstv.com	New York	127	17,466	11,458	90,000	85.8	14.1	0.1
broadcast TV	wnbc.com	New York	104	13,667	14,297	700,000	82.1	17.6	0.3
daily newspaper	nydailynews.com	New York	711	2,231	1,641	500,000	70.5	28.5	1.0
daily newspaper	nypost.com	New York	945	1,162	1,674	500,000	66.4	32.3	1.3
daily newspaper	nysun.com	New York	142	10,979	8,666	120,000	84.6	15.4	0.0
daily newspaper	nytimes.com	New York	8,825	95	121	4,000,000	65.5	32.9	1.6
blog	bloggingohio.com	Ohio (multiple)	1.2	722,674	277,309	2,000	97.8	2.2	0.0
blog	phillyist.com	Philadelphia, PA	3	491,924	286,346	4,000	95.5	4.5	0.0
broadcast TV	cbs3.com	Philadelphia, PA	37	66,997	12,539	90,000	76.9	22.7	0.4
broadcast TV	myfoxphilly.com	Philadelphia, PA	4	329,269	33,706	50,000	66.0	33.8	0.2
broadcast TV	nbc10.com	Philadelphia, PA	107	12,771	5,689	200,000	75.0	24.6	0.4
broadcast TV	wpvi.com	Philadelphia, PA	1	919,676	82,969	10,000	88.1	11.9	0.0
dailynewspaper	philly.com	Philadelphia, PA	390	3,314	1,873	800,000	72.4	26.7	0.9
blog	coastsider.com	San Mateo, CA	1.5	498,792	300,217	3,000	74.7	21.9	3.4
blog	sfist.com	San Francisco, CA	26	79,565	69,598	11,000	92.8	7.1	0.1
broadcast TV	abc7news.com	San Francisco, CA	3	471,209	122,010	8,000	89.7	10.3	0.0
broadcast TV	cbs5.com	San Francisco, CA	98	22,520	11,826	100,000	83.6	16.3	0.1
broadcast TV	kqed.org	San Francisco, CA	54	28,764	19,971	80,000	78.1	21.6	0.3
broadcast TV	kron4.com	San Francisco, CA	14	128,697	39,139	40,000	83.1	16.9	0.0
broadcast TV	ktvu.com	San Francisco, CA	53	32,361	14,847	90,000	78.2	21.4	0.4
broadcast TV	nbc11.com	San Francisco, CA	57	30,777	20,056	80,000	84.9	15.1	0.0
daily newspaper	mercurynews.com	San Francisco, CA	768	1,970	1,910	700,000	79.5	20.1	0.4
daily newspaper	sfgate.com	San Francisco, CA	1,750	636	508	1,500,000	77.4	21.6	1.0
blog	seattlest.com	Seattle, WA	18	122,493	84,277	10,000	94.6	5.4	0.0
broadcast TV	king5.com	Seattle, WA	78	19,599	12,938	90,000	72.7	26.7	0.6
broadcast TV	kirotv.com	Seattle, WA	78	21,810	10,338	100,000	72.7	26.8	0.5
broadcast TV	komotv.com	Seattle, WA	115	15,329	6,789	200,000	80.2	18.7	1.1
dailynewspaper	nwsourc.com	Seattle, WA	1,450	810	559	1,100,000	71.2	27.7	1.1
blog	backfence.com	Washington DC	21	62,196	166,512	4,000	91.1	8.9	0.0
blog	dcist.com	Washington DC	36	48,302	86,889	9,000	92.9	7.1	0.0
broadcast TV	myfoxdc.com	Washington DC	8	174,077	35,203	20,000	72.1	27.5	0.4
broadcast TV	nbc4.com	Washington DC	61	25,612	10,976	90,000	75.3	24.3	0.4
broadcast TV	wjla.com	Washington DC	36	48,201	14,492	60,000	79.1	20.3	0.6
broadcast TV	wusa9.com	Washington DC	13	125,735	45,094	15,000	70.2	29.5	0.3
daily newspaper	herald-mail.com	Washington DC	8	188,765	26,529	40,000	55.4	42.2	2.4
daily newspaper	washingtonpost.com	Washington DC	3,805	264	229	2,000,000	67.9	31.0	1.1
daily newspaper	washingtontimes.com	Washington DC	246	7,978	4,065	150,000	76.1	23.5	0.4
blog	baristanet.com	Northern NJ	7	25,096	147,833	8,000	88.7	11.3	0.0
daily newspaper	nj.com	Northern NJ	237	4,847	2,417	600,000	64.0	34.0	2.0
blog	westportnow.com	Westport, CT	1.9	661,397	203,801	5,000	81.4	18.1	0.5
daily newspaper	connpost.com	Bridgeport, CT	38	43,061	24,491	60,000	73.7	25.6	0.7

Figure 12: Qualitative Data from City-Specific Websites cited by NAA

Website	Story#	Type	Original Reporting?	Local Focus?	Word count	Links
austinist.com	1	A&E	No	Yes	222	3
austinist.com	2	A&E	No	Yes	183	6
austinist.com	3	A&E	No	No	968	16
austinist.com	4	A&E	No	Yes	261	3
austinist.com	5	A&E	No	Yes	128	4
austinist.com	6	A&E	No	Yes	261	28
austinist.com	7	Aggregate	No	No	119	6
austinist.com	8	Human Interest	No	Yes	1199	6
austinist.com	9	Op-Ed	No	No	1217	2
austinist.com	10	A&E Review	Yes	Yes	565	2
backfence.com/bethesda	1	Weather	No	Yes	101	1
backfence.com/bethesda	2	Weather	No	Yes	191	1
backfence.com/bethesda	3	Human Interest	No	Yes	568	1
backfence.com/bethesda	4	Notice	No	Yes	75	1
backfence.com/bethesda	5	Self Promotion	No	Yes	180	0
backfence.com/bethesda	6	Food & Beverage	No	No	640	2
backfence.com/bethesda	7	Weather	No	Yes	86	1
backfence.com/bethesda	8	Notice	No	Yes	135	0
backfence.com/bethesda	9	Promotion	No	Yes	106	1
backfence.com/bethesda	10	Weather	No	Yes	192	1
baristanet.com	1	Notice	No	Yes	108	2
baristanet.com	2	Sports	No	Yes	159	1
baristanet.com	3	Notice	No	Yes	282	0
baristanet.com	4	Crime	No	Yes	149	1
baristanet.com	5	Crime	Yes	Yes	197	2
baristanet.com	6	A&E	No	No	66	1
baristanet.com	7	Transportation	Yes	Yes	49	0
baristanet.com	8	A&E	Yes	Yes	146	3
baristanet.com	9	Real Estate	No	Yes	41	0
baristanet.com	10	A&E	No	No	76	1
bloggingohio.com	1	Human Interest	No	Yes	201	3
bloggingohio.com	2	A&E	No	Yes	249	5
bloggingohio.com	3	A&E	No	Yes	267	2
bloggingohio.com	4	Weather (photo)	Yes	Yes	39	1
bloggingohio.com	5	Sports	No	Yes	328	2
bloggingohio.com	6	Real Estate	Yes	Yes	382	3
bloggingohio.com	7	A&E	No	Yes	317	2
bloggingohio.com	8	Food & Beverage	No	Yes	210	1
bloggingohio.com	9	Weather	No	Yes	107	2
bloggingohio.com	10	A&E	No	Yes	166	1
bostonist.com	1	A&E Review	Yes	Yes	537	3
bostonist.com	2	Crime	No	Yes	133	5
bostonist.com	3	Sports	No	Yes	232	4
bostonist.com	4	Sports	No	Yes	448	2
bostonist.com	5	Transportation	No	Yes	493	4
bostonist.com	6	Food & Beverage	No	Yes	383	5
bostonist.com	7	Self Promotion	N/A	No	768	79
bostonist.com	8	A&E	No	Yes	707	28
bostonist.com	9	A&E	No	Yes	474	24
bostonist.com	10	A&E	No	Yes	311	2
chicagoist.com	1	Crime	No	Yes	342	3
chicagoist.com	2	Book Review	Yes	Yes	436	1
chicagoist.com	3	Politics	No	Yes	338	4
chicagoist.com	4	Sports	No	Yes	48	1
chicagoist.com	5	Food & Beverage - Recipe	No	No	1478	1
chicagoist.com	6	Transportation	No	Yes	337	7
chicagoist.com	7	Food & Beverage	No	Yes	281	7
chicagoist.com	8	Fashion	No	Yes	290	6
chicagoist.com	9	A&E	No	Yes	137	1
chicagoist.com	10	A&E	No	No	216	6

Figure 12 (continued): Qualitative Data from City-Specific Websites cited by NAA

Website	Story#	Type	Original Reporting	Local Focus?	Word count	Links
coastsider.com	1	Accident/Disaster	No	Yes	125	1
coastsider.com	2	Community Governance	No	Yes	144	1
coastsider.com	3	Accident/Disaster	No	Yes	286	1
coastsider.com	4	A&E	No	Yes	54	1
coastsider.com	5	Human Interest	No	Yes	178	2
coastsider.com	6	A&E	No	Yes	201	1
coastsider.com	7	Notice	No	Yes	17	0
coastsider.com	8	Promotion	No	Yes	101	1
coastsider.com	9	Self Promotion	No	Yes	105	0
coastsider.com	10	Promotion	No	Yes	237	1
dcist.com	1	A&E	No	Yes	386	11
dcist.com	2	A&E Review	Yes	Yes	439	1
dcist.com	3	A&E	No	Yes	1239	59
dcist.com	4	A&E Review	Yes	Yes	977	1
dcist.com	5	A&E	No	Yes	49	3
dcist.com	6	A&E Review	Yes	No	1008	6
dcist.com	7	Sports	No	Yes	548	12
dcist.com	8	Transportation	No	Yes	323	11
dcist.com	9	Food & Beverage - Review	Yes	Yes	422	0
dcist.com	10	Sports	Yes	Yes	639	8
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	1	Food & Beverage - Recipie	No	No	1501	2
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	2	Crime	No	Yes	749	9
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	3	A&E Review	Yes	No	4352	1
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	4	A&E	Yes	Yes	580	1
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	5	Op-Ed	Yes	Yes	1378	0
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	6	Sports	No	Yes	910	0
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	7	Food & Beverage	No	No	1640	1
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	8	Prose	No	No	1498	0
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	9	A&E Review	Yes	No	4184	5
gapersblock.com-airbags (daily)	10	A&E	Yes	Yes	636	1
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	1	Transportation	No	Yes	14	1
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	2	A&E	No	Yes	43	3
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	3	Transportation	No	Yes	55	2
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	4	Human Interest	No	Yes	44	2
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	5	A&E	No	Yes	48	2
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	6	Food & Beverage	No	Yes	69	1
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	7	Human Interest	No	No	53	3
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	8	Human Interest	No	Yes	58	6
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	9	Self Promotion	N/A	No	51	5
gapersblock.com-Merge (blog)	10	Human Interest	No	Yes	36	2
gothamist.com	1	A&E	No	Yes	277	9
gothamist.com	2	Politics	No	Yes	306	3
gothamist.com	3	A&E	No	No	242	2
gothamist.com	4	Weather	Yes	Yes	340	3
gothamist.com	5	A&E	Yes	Yes	310	3
gothamist.com	6	A&E	Yes	Yes	210	2
gothamist.com	7	Transportation	No	Yes	234	6
gothamist.com	8	A&E	No	No	264	8
gothamist.com	9	A&E	No	No	430	4
gothamist.com	10	Food & Beverage	Yes	Yes	121	2
h2otowninfo.com	1	Promotion	No	Yes	116	0
h2otowninfo.com	2	Notice	No	Yes	202	0
h2otowninfo.com	3	Media	No	Yes	424	1
h2otowninfo.com	4	Op-Ed	No	Yes	466	0
h2otowninfo.com	5	Media	No	Yes	48	5
h2otowninfo.com	6	Promotion	No	Yes	114	1
h2otowninfo.com	7	Promotion	No	Yes	79	1
h2otowninfo.com	8	Notice	No	Yes	165	3
h2otowninfo.com	9	Self Promotion	No	Yes	32	0
h2otowninfo.com	10	Notice	No	Yes	60	0

Figure 12 (continued): Qualitative Data from City-Specific Websites cited by NAA

Website	Story#	Type	Original Reporting	Local Focus?	Word count	Links
houstonist.com	1	Transportation	No	Yes	286	2
houstonist.com	2	A&E	No	Yes	390	48
houstonist.com	3	A&E	No	Yes	191	6
houstonist.com	4	A&E	No	Yes	178	4
houstonist.com	5	Crime	No	Yes	262	3
houstonist.com	6	Crime	No	Yes	184	2
houstonist.com	7	Labor	No	Yes	409	4
houstonist.com	8	Food & Beverage	No	Yes	330	2
houstonist.com	9	Travel & Leisure	No	Yes	222	10
houstonist.com	10	Food & Beverage - Recipie	No	No	215	2
laist.com	1	A&E	No	No	45	1
laist.com	2	A&E Review	Yes	Yes	399	5
laist.com	3	Crime	Yes	Yes	92	2
laist.com	4	A&E	No	No	316	5
laist.com	5	Crime	No	Yes	138	1
laist.com	6	Transportation	No	Yes	808	5
laist.com	7	A&E	No	No	140	2
laist.com	8	Sports	No	Yes	273	2
laist.com	9	Crime	No	Yes	252	7
laist.com	10	A&E	Yes	Yes	72	1
phillyist.com	1	A&E	Yes	Yes	57	1
phillyist.com	2	A&E	Yes	Yes	93	0
phillyist.com	3	Food & Beverage - Recipie	No	No	268	0
phillyist.com	4	Aggregate	No	No	424	20
phillyist.com	5	A&E	No	Yes	93	6
phillyist.com	6	A&E	No	Yes	239	4
phillyist.com	7	A&E	No	Yes	224	32
phillyist.com	8	Aggregate	No	Yes	281	7
phillyist.com	9	A&E	No	Yes	13	1
phillyist.com	10	Romance	Yes	Yes	481	0
rwinters.com	1	Notice	No	Yes	370	1
rwinters.com	2	Notice	No	Yes	399	2
rwinters.com	3	Notice	No	Yes	459	3
rwinters.com	4	Local Politics	No	Yes	747	0
rwinters.com	5	Politics	No	Yes	186	0
rwinters.com	6	Politics	No	Yes	18	1
rwinters.com	7	Local Politics	No	Yes	971	1
rwinters.com	8	Obituary	No	Yes	96	1
rwinters.com	9	Crime	No	Yes	281	8
rwinters.com	10	Politics	No	No	18	1
seattlest.com	1	A&E	No	Yes	457	28
seattlest.com	2	Labor	No	Yes	268	1
seattlest.com	3	Crime	No	Yes	228	1
seattlest.com	4	Transportation	No	Yes	376	4
seattlest.com	5	Sports	No	Yes	2	2
seattlest.com	6	Aggregate	No	Yes	175	10
seattlest.com	7	Human Interest	No	Yes	204	2
seattlest.com	8	Human Interest	No	Yes	328	2
seattlest.com	9	Sports	No	Yes	310	8
seattlest.com	10	Human Interest	No	Yes	344	3
sfist.com	1	Human Interest	No	Yes	29	4
sfist.com	2	Sports	No	Yes	418	12
sfist.com	3	Sports	No	Yes	671	5
sfist.com	4	A&E	No	No	183	2
sfist.com	5	Transportation	No	Yes	372	2
sfist.com	6	Sports	No	Yes	948	21
sfist.com	7	Sports	No	Yes	173	3
sfist.com	8	Local Politics	No	Yes	276	8
sfist.com	9	Aggregate	No	Yes	155	23
sfist.com	10	Crime	No	Yes	227	7
westportnow.com	1	Crime	Yes	Yes	317	0
westportnow.com	2	Sports	Yes	Yes	40	0
westportnow.com	3	Notice	No	Yes	58	0
westportnow.com	4	Human Interest	Yes	Yes	28	0
westportnow.com	5	Notice	No	Yes	34	0
westportnow.com	6	Community Governance	Yes	Yes	388	0
westportnow.com	7	A&E	No	Yes	713	1
westportnow.com	8	Politics	Yes	Yes	333	0
westportnow.com	9	A&E	Yes	Yes	101	0
westportnow.com	10	Real Estate	Yes	Yes	574	0