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Millennials & Political News

*Social Media – the Local TV for the
Next Generation?*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

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About This Report

This report is part of a series by the Pew Research Center aimed at understanding political news and information habits in the American public. An initial report on these data explored these habits across the ideological spectrum. This study considers these habits across three generations. Data in this report are drawn from the first wave of the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel, conducted March 19-April 29, 2014 among 2,901 Web respondents. The panel was recruited from a nationally representative survey, which was conducted by the Pew Research Center in early 2014.

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Overview

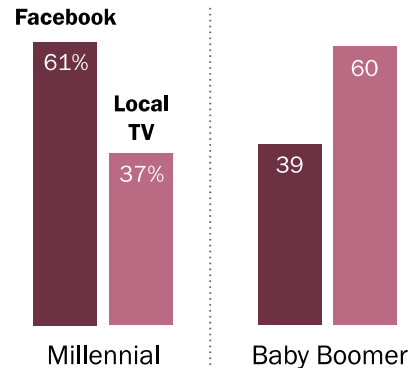
When it comes to where younger Americans get news about politics and government, social media look to be the local TV of the Millennial generation. About six-in-ten online Millennials (61%) report getting political news on Facebook in a given week, a much larger percentage than turn to any other news source, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis. This stands in stark contrast to internet-using Baby Boomers, for whom local TV tops the list of sources for political news at nearly the same reach (60%).

At the same time, Millennials' relatively low reliance on local TV for political news (37% see news there in a given week) almost mirrors Baby Boomers' comparatively low reliance on Facebook (39%).

Gen Xers, who bridge the age gap between Millennials (ages 18-33 at the time of the 2014 survey) and Baby Boomers (ages 50-68), also bridge the gap between these news sources. Roughly half (51%) of online Gen Xers get political and government news on Facebook in a given week and about half (46%) do so on local TV.

Millennials and Baby Boomers: A Generational Divide in Sources Relied on for Political News

% who got news about politics and government in the previous week from...



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q22, Q24A. Based on online adults.

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The Generations Defined

The Millennial Generation*

Born: 1981 to 1996

Age of adults in 2014: 18-33

Generation X

Born: 1965 to 1980

Age in 2014: 34-49

The Baby Boom Generation

Born: 1946 to 1964

Age in 2014: 50-68

* The youngest Millennials are in their teens. No chronological end point has been set for this group.

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This report, the latest in an ongoing study of political news and information habits, is based on an online survey conducted between March 19 and April 29, 2014, with 2,901 members of the Pew Research Center’s American Trends Panel. An initial report on these data explored the ways news consumption differs [across the ideological spectrum](#). Here, we consider political news habits across three generations. Because this is a survey of online adults, data is not reported on those in the Silent generation, ages 69 to 86 at the time of survey. This age cohort is considerably less likely to use the internet and, as a result, those who are online may not be representative of the generation as a whole.

Even looking just at members of each generation who are on Facebook, Millennials still stand out for seeing somewhat more political content on the site. Roughly a quarter (24%) of Millennials who use Facebook say at least half of the posts they see on the site relate to government and politics, higher than both Gen Xers (18%) and Baby Boomers (16%)

About the Survey

This web-based survey was conducted March 19 to April 29, 2014, among the 88% of the American Trends Panel — a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults — who have online access. The online format provided a unique opportunity to get both a depth and breadth of information about the media habits of our panelists in a way that could not have been accomplished through another mode. This is indicated throughout the report by references to “online” or “Web-using” segments of each generation.

Due to the reliance on Web respondents, this report focuses on three generations – Millennial, Generation X and Baby Boomer. The Silent generation, those 69 to 86 at the time of survey, is not included in the analysis because of the disproportionately large segment of that generation that is not online. Nearly one-in-three Silents in the first wave of the panel (29%) say they do not use the internet, much higher than the other three generations (2% Millennials, 6% Gen Xers and 14% Baby Boomers). Since all generations are not presented, figures based on all web respondents are also not shown in the text of the report; figures based on all web respondents can be found in the topline.

As a part of the survey, panelists were asked about their use and trust of 36 news sources (use, but not trust, was also asked of local television news and five social networking sites). The mix of sources is not meant to be exhaustive, but instead is meant to provide a range of news media, both in terms of platform and audience size. Most of the sources are drawn from those asked about in past Pew Research Center surveys on media consumption. From this initial list, researchers went through an iterative process to add additional sources to provide a greater range in the news media environment – including adding more international, radio and primarily digital sources. For more information on the sources, see Appendix C.

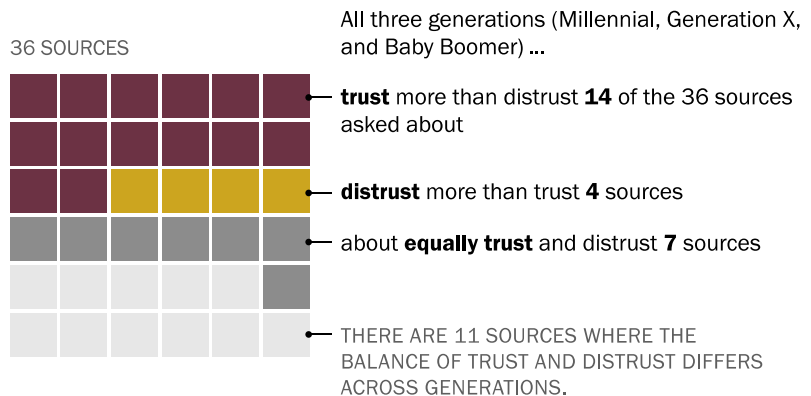
This report is part of ongoing research into political news and information habits in America. The [initial analysis](#) of this survey data examined differences across ideological lines. As a whole, differences across generations in levels of awareness and trust of the individual sources largely hold when accounting for ideological consistency. Many patterns also hold for news consumption, though ideological characteristics of Millennials helps explain their lower rate of use of niche sources that have right-of-center audiences. Similarly, the ideological characteristics of Gen Xers and Baby Boomers help explain their greater distrust of the more mainstream sources and niche sources with left-of-center audiences. To get a sense of how political ideology varies across the generations, please see this [follow-up blog post](#).

who use the social networking site.

This occurs even though Millennials express less interest in political news. Roughly a quarter of Millennials (26%) select politics and government as one of the three topics they are most interested in (out of a list of nine). That is lower than both Gen Xers (34%) and Baby Boomers (45%). Millennials also are less familiar with many of the 36 sources asked about in the survey, which range from USA Today to Rush Limbaugh to Slate.

The data do not suggest, however, that Millennials' relative lack of engagement with or awareness of sources is based on some sort of deep-seated mistrust of the news media. Of the sources they are familiar with, Millennials are no less trusting than older generations. All three generations trust, on average, about four-in-ten sources they have heard of and distrust about two-in-ten. There are also few differences when it comes to which specific sources are trusted and distrusted across generations. Fourteen of the 36 sources are trusted more than distrusted by all three generations and four are more distrusted across the board.

Much Consistency Across Generations When it Comes to Trust and Distrust of News Sources



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q21A, Q21B. Based on online adults.

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A longer-term question that arises from this data is what younger Americans' reliance on social media for news might mean for the political system. Understanding the nuances of the social media news environment is complicated: The experience is individualized through one's own choices, through the friends in one's network and their proclivities, and through algorithms – all of which can change over time. We are only beginning to understand these complex interactions.

Viewed in the context of the [ongoing debate](#) over political polarization in social media, for example, it is the Facebook users in the oldest of the three generations studied here who are most likely to see political content on the site that supports their own views: 31% of Baby Boomers on

Facebook who pay attention to political posts say the posts they see are mostly or always in line with their own views, higher than both Generation Xers (21%) and Millennials (18%). At the same time, though, Baby Boomers are the least reliant on this platform as a source for their news – meaning that at the moment, this affects a smaller share of them. And, across all three generations, most Facebook users who pay attention to political content do, in fact, see views on the site that aren't in line with their own.

As the research continues, these data suggest that younger and older generations espouse fundamental differences in the ways they stay informed about political news – differences that are of particular interest as the 2016 election campaigns ramp up.

Political Interest and Awareness Lower Among Millennials

Millennials lag behind older generations in their interest in government and politics. When asked to choose among a list of nine topics, only about a quarter (26%) of Millennials name government and politics as one of the three topics they are most interested in. By comparison, politics ranks among the top three interests for roughly a third (34%) of Gen Xers and 45% of Baby Boomers.

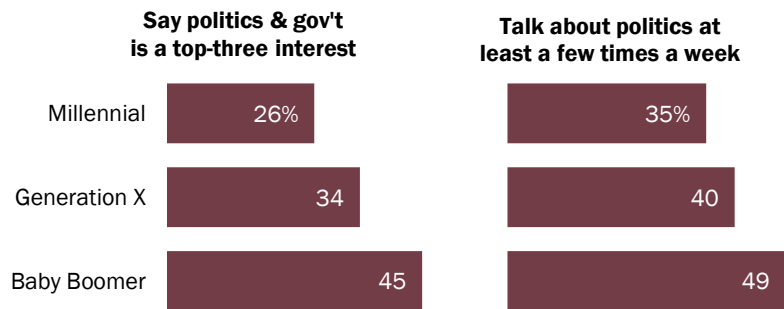
Millennials also talk about politics less frequently than Baby Boomers; while about half (49%) of Baby Boomers say they talk about politics at least a few times a week, just 35% of Millennials say this.

This lower interest in news among young adults is not unique to Millennials. For decades, 18 to 29-year-olds (who currently make up a majority of Millennials) have expressed [less interest in politics and political news](#).

Young adults consistently have followed news about political figures and events in Washington at lower rates than any other age group. For example, 18- to 29-year-olds in 1996 (then Gen Xers), were substantially less likely than older adults to say they followed news about political figures and events in Washington.

Millennials Less Interested in Politics Than Older Generations; Talk About it Less Than Baby Boomers

% who...



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q1, Q2, Q41. Based on online adults.

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Younger Adults Have Historically Followed National News Less Closely than Older Adults

% who very or somewhat closely follow news about political figures and events in Washington

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2012</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
18-29	49	58	50	58	57	51	58	43
30-49	60	67	59	65	70	60	66	56
50-64	64	69	67	74	76	68	71	65
65+	64	69	68	69	71	71	72	70

News Consumption Surveys (1996-2008, 2012).

Note: Question was not asked in 2010.

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This survey of online adults finds Millennials are also less aware of many news sources than are older generations. Of 36 sources asked about, Millennials have heard of 18 at substantively lower rates than both Gen Xers and Baby Boomers. These sources include three major newspapers (USA Today, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal), four radio programs and networks (NPR, The Rush Limbaugh Show, The Glenn Beck Program, The Sean Hannity Show), economic sources (Bloomberg) and sources [whose audiences tend to lean to one side of the ideological spectrum](#) (Drudge Report, Breitbart, Slate, The New Yorker).

There are two sources where Millennials display higher levels of awareness – Google News and BuzzFeed, two digital-only news sources. For the portion of each generation that has heard of each of the 36 sources, [visit the sortable table interactive](#).

Millennials Less Aware of 18 out of 36 News Sources

Sources Millennials have heard of at a lower rate than Gen Xers and Boomers **Sources Millennials have heard of at a higher rate than Gen Xers and Boomers**

Al Jazeera America	BuzzFeed
The Blaze	Google News
Bloomberg	
Breitbart	
Daily Kos	
Drudge Report	
The Glenn Beck Program	
Mother Jones	
MSNBC	
The New Yorker	
NPR	
Politico	
The Rush Limbaugh Show	
The Sean Hannity Show	
Slate	
USA Today	
The Wall Street Journal	
The Washington Post	

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20. Based on online adults.

Note: Sources heard of by at least 90% of each generation not included in this table.

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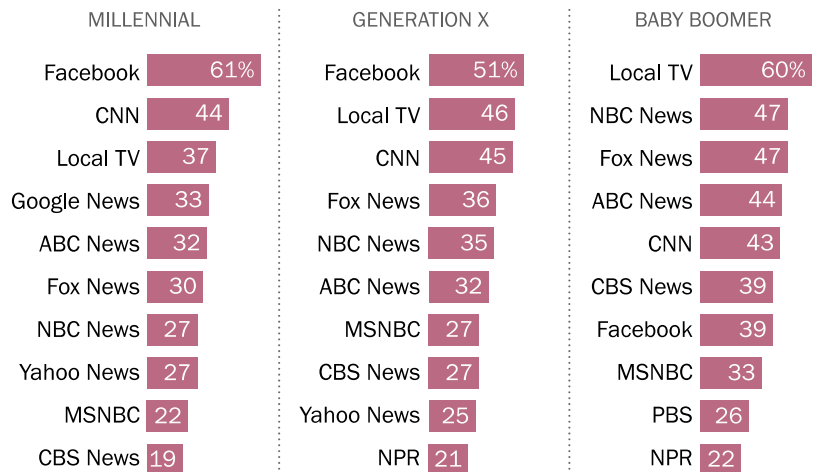
Facebook Top Source for Political News Among Millennials

Among Millennials, Facebook is far and away the most common source for news about government and politics. When asked whether they got political and government news from each of 42 sources in the previous week (36 specific news outlets, local TV generally and 5 social networking sites), about six-in-ten Web-using Millennials (61%) reported getting political news on Facebook. That is 17 points higher than the next most consumed source for Millennials (CNN at 44%).

Millennials' reliance on Facebook for political news is also almost exactly on par with Baby Boomers' reliance on local TV (60%). In fact, Baby Boomers and Millennials demonstrate nearly inverse habits when it comes to local TV and Facebook. Among Millennials, 61% got political news on Facebook and 37% from local TV. Among Baby Boomers, it's 39% from Facebook and 60% from local TV. Gen Xers fall in the middle for both, with 51% getting political news on Facebook and 46% doing so from local TV.

Among Millennials, Facebook Far Exceeds Any Other Source for Political News

% who got news about politics and government in the previous week from...



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q22, Q24A. Based on online adults.

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Millennials are also more reliant than other generations on Google News. A third (33%) get political news there, about twice the percentage of Baby Boomers (15%) and Gen Xers (18%). There is not, though, the same level of disparity when it comes to Yahoo News – perhaps tied in part to the early days of Yahoo as [an email domain and portal](#); 27% of Millennials get political news from Yahoo, on par with Gen Xers (25%), but somewhat higher than Baby Boomers (21%).

A source turned to at similar, and rather high rates across all three generations is CNN: 44% of Millennials got political news there in the past week as did 45% of Gen Xers and 43% of Baby Boomers.

Beyond local TV, other sources Baby Boomers rely on at higher rates than both Millennials and Gen Xers include Fox News, MSNBC, CBS News, ABC News, NBC News, PBS, the Sean Hannity Show, the Rush Limbaugh Show and the Ed Schultz Show.

While these data do not speak to the amount of time spent with news, they do suggest that the sources for and the pathways to political news vary substantially across generations. [The sortable interactive](#) provides the full breakdown of the rate at which each generation gets news about government and politics from each of the sources asked about.

When asked separately to name their *main* source for news about government and politics (before being asked about the 42 specific sources), only a handful of sources garner double-digit percentages within each of the three generations. CNN, for example, is named most often by both online Millennials and Gen Xers at 21% and 18%, respectively; and among Baby Boomers, 16% name Fox News and 11% name CNN as their main source. About one-in-ten in each of these generations name local TV. All other sources are named by less than 10%.

These findings also suggest the degree to which Facebook, even though it is by far the most common way Millennials get news about government and politics, is not top of mind as their main source for this type of news. Three percent of online Millennials volunteer Facebook when asked for their main source for political news (as do 1% of both Gen Xers and Baby Boomers). This is consistent with our previous research indicating that getting news on Facebook is largely an [incidental experience](#).

Main Source of Government and Political News Across the Three Generations

% whose main source for news about government and politics is...

Millennial	Generation X	Baby Boomer
CNN 21	CNN 18	Fox News 16
Local TV 10	Fox News 13	Local TV 11
Fox News 8	Local TV 11	CNN 11
Google News 7	NPR 7	Local Newspaper 7
Yahoo News 7	Local Radio 6	MSNBC 6

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q19. Based on online adults. Respondents were first asked what platform (TV, radio, etc.) they most use for news about government and politics, and then were asked to name the outlet they most turn to. Up to three answers were accepted.

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A Deeper Look at Facebook as a Source for Political News

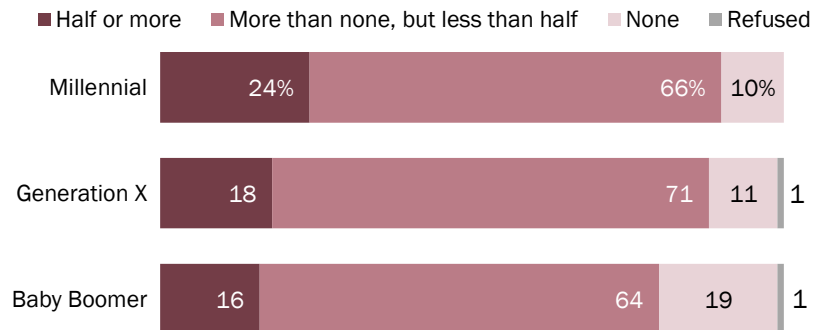
One factor shaping the extent to which Americans of different ages are relying on Facebook for news is the portion of each generation that is on Facebook in the first place. Looking across the total adult population (including non-Web users), nearly nine-in-ten Millennials (87%) are on Facebook, compared with 77% of Gen Xers and just over half (57%) of Baby Boomers.¹

But even taking into account these differences, and looking just at Facebook users within each generation, Millennials are still somewhat more likely to see political content there.

Nearly a quarter (24%) of Millennials who use Facebook say that at least half of the posts they see on the site are related to government and politics, higher than both Gen Xers (18%) and Baby Boomers (16%). At the other end of the spectrum, just 10% of Facebook-using Millennials see no political posts, on par with Gen Xers (11%), but both lower than Baby Boomers (19%).

Millennial Facebook Users Most Likely to See Political Content on the Site

% of Facebook users who say ___ of the posts they see are related to politics



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q33a. Numbers may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

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¹ Among online adults, Millennials are still on Facebook at higher rates than the older generations though the percentages change as follows: 86% of online Millennials, 81% of online Gen Xers and 71% of online Baby Boomers.

What’s more, both Millennial and Gen X Facebook users are more likely than Baby Boomers to follow news organizations via the social networking site. There is no real difference, though, in the portion of each generation’s Facebook users that follow political parties or candidates, or issue-based groups.

At the same time, while most Facebook users who pay attention to political content do, in fact, see views on the site that aren’t in line with their own, Baby Boomers are the most likely to see political content on Facebook that supports their own views: 31% of Baby Boomers on Facebook who pay attention to political posts say the posts they see are mostly or always in line with their own views, higher than both Gen Xers (21%) and Millennials (18%). But, as discussed above, Baby Boomers are the least reliant on this platform as a source for political news.

Baby Boomers Least Likely to Follow News Organizations on Facebook

% of Facebook users who “like” or somehow follow...

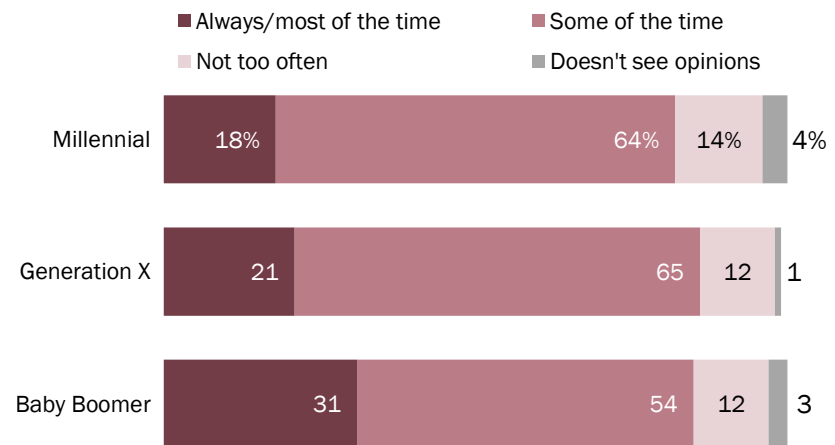
	News orgs., reporters or commentators	Political parties, candidates or elected officials	Issue-based groups
	%	%	%
Millennial	32	23	35
Generation X	29	24	31
Baby Boomer	23	23	30

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q33d.

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Baby Boomers Most Likely to See Political Posts on Facebook That Support Their Own Views

Among those who pay attention to posts about government and politics on Facebook, % who say these posts are ... in line with their own views



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q33e. Numbers may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

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The findings comport with our earlier research on Facebook and news, which revealed that [younger users get news on Facebook at greater proportions than older users](#), and tend to use it for a wider range of activities. Millennials, in other words, are more apt to turn to Facebook as a way to keep up with what is going on, day in and day out. In doing so, part of what they see is news – even more so than older users who have more dedicated news habits outside of Facebook.

Twitter – a Smaller Part of the Political News Diet for All Generations

Across all three generations, Twitter is a far less common source for political news than Facebook; 14% of online Millennials got political news on Twitter in the past week, slightly higher than both Gen Xers (9%) and Baby Boomers (5%).

But, there is no indication of difference in the portion of users across generations who follow news organizations, political parties or issues groups: Close to half of those on Twitter in each generation follow news organizations or reporters, about three-in-ten follow candidates or parties, and between 29% and 37% follow issue-based groups.

On Twitter, Little Difference Among Generations in the Portion That Follows Various Content Providers

% of Twitter users who follow...

	News orgs., reporters or commentators	Political parties, candidates or elected officials	Issue-based groups
	%	%	%
Millennial	45	32	29
Generation X	48	28	36
Baby Boomer	47	28	37

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q34d.

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When it comes to tweets users see, Baby Boomers are more likely than Gen Xers to say that at least half of them are related to politics (32% vs. 20%), but are on par with Millennials (24%). But users across the three generations are equally likely to say that none of the tweets they see are related to politics (24% Millennials, 21% Gen Xers and 21% Baby Boomers).

Millennials No Less Trusting (or Distrusting) of News Sources

At least as important as where people turn for political news is whose news they trust. Respondents were asked whether they had heard of each of 36 outlets.² Of the sources they heard of, they were then asked if they trusted or distrusted those sources.

Among the sources with which people are familiar, Millennials, Gen Xers and Baby Boomers express, on average, very similar levels of trust and distrust. Each generation trusts roughly four-in-ten of the sources they are familiar with and distrusts about two-in-ten.

Overall Trust and Distrust of News Sources Roughly the Same Across Generations

Of the sources heard of, % trusted and distrusted

	Trusted	Distrusted	Neither	
	%	%	%	
Millennial	41	21	38	=100%
Generation X	37	21	43	=100%
Baby Boomer	38	23	39	=100%

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q21. Based on online adults. Numbers may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

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² The trust and distrust questions were asked only of the 36 sources that respondents were asked if they heard of. Local TV and the five social media sites were not included in these measures.

Because awareness of many of these sources differs both across generation and from one source to the next, the total percent who can weigh in to express their trust or distrust also varies across generations and sources. For example, only 23% of Baby Boomers have heard of Slate, which means that only 23% of Baby Boomers could express whether they trust or distrust Slate. On the other hand, 95% of Baby Boomers have heard of ABC News, which means 95% were able to express whether they trust or distrust it. For this reason, the analysis of trust and distrust of the individual sources considers the relationship of trust to distrust, rather than the total percentages. By this measure, there is a good deal of commonality in trust and distrust of sources across the generations, but there also are some noticeable differences.

Measuring Trust

To get a complete sense of overall trust in various news sources, respondents were asked a series of questions. First, respondents were asked whether they had heard of each of the 36 sources. They were then shown the sources with which they were familiar and asked to indicate which of them they trusted for news about government and politics, as well as those they distrusted. If a respondent neither trusted nor distrusted a source, the response was considered “neither.”

Because the analysis considers this series of questions in combination, it is important to take the level of awareness of each source into account as substantial differences exist both from source to source and across generations. Millennials, particularly, are less familiar with many sources compared with Gen Xers and Baby Boomers. Thus, the portion that trusts a source is often based on a relatively small share of the generation. It is also important to consider trust levels alongside distrust levels. A source may, for example, have high levels of trust, but nearly just as high levels of distrust. Therefore, much of the analysis of trust and distrust in each generation relies on the balance of trust and distrust. For the total percent within each generation that trusts and distrusts each source, see the [sortable table interactive](#).

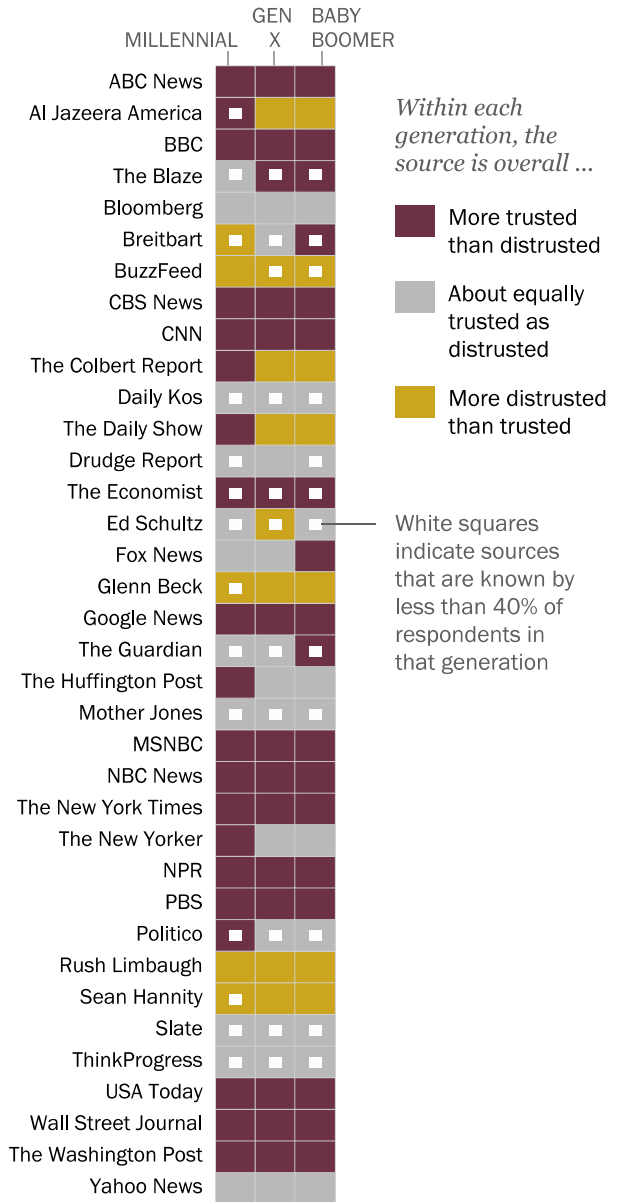
In total, 14 of the 36 sources are trusted more than distrusted by all three generations – a level of similarity not found in the [analysis conducted across political ideologies](#). Four sources are distrusted more than trusted by all three: The Glenn Beck Program, the Rush Limbaugh Show, the Sean Hannity Show and BuzzFeed. Additionally, seven sources are equally trusted and distrusted by the three generations: Yahoo News, Mother Jones, Slate, ThinkProgress, Bloomberg, Drudge Report and Daily Kos.

There are, though, some sources where the balance of trust and distrust differs across generations. Three sources are more trusted by Millennials, but more distrusted among Gen Xers and Baby Boomers: The Daily Show, the Colbert Report (which has recently gone off the air), and Al Jazeera America. Three others are more trusted by Millennials, but have about equal levels of trust and distrust in the other two generations: The New Yorker, Politico, and Huffington Post. All are sources whose [audiences](#) are left of center.

The only source that elicits more distrust than trust among Millennials but not among Gen Xers or Baby Boomers is Breitbart, a source [whose audience](#) falls on the conservative end of the spectrum.

There are also some sources where trust outweighs distrust among the older generations but not among Millennials, including Fox News, The Guardian and The Blaze.

Trust Levels of News Sources by Generation



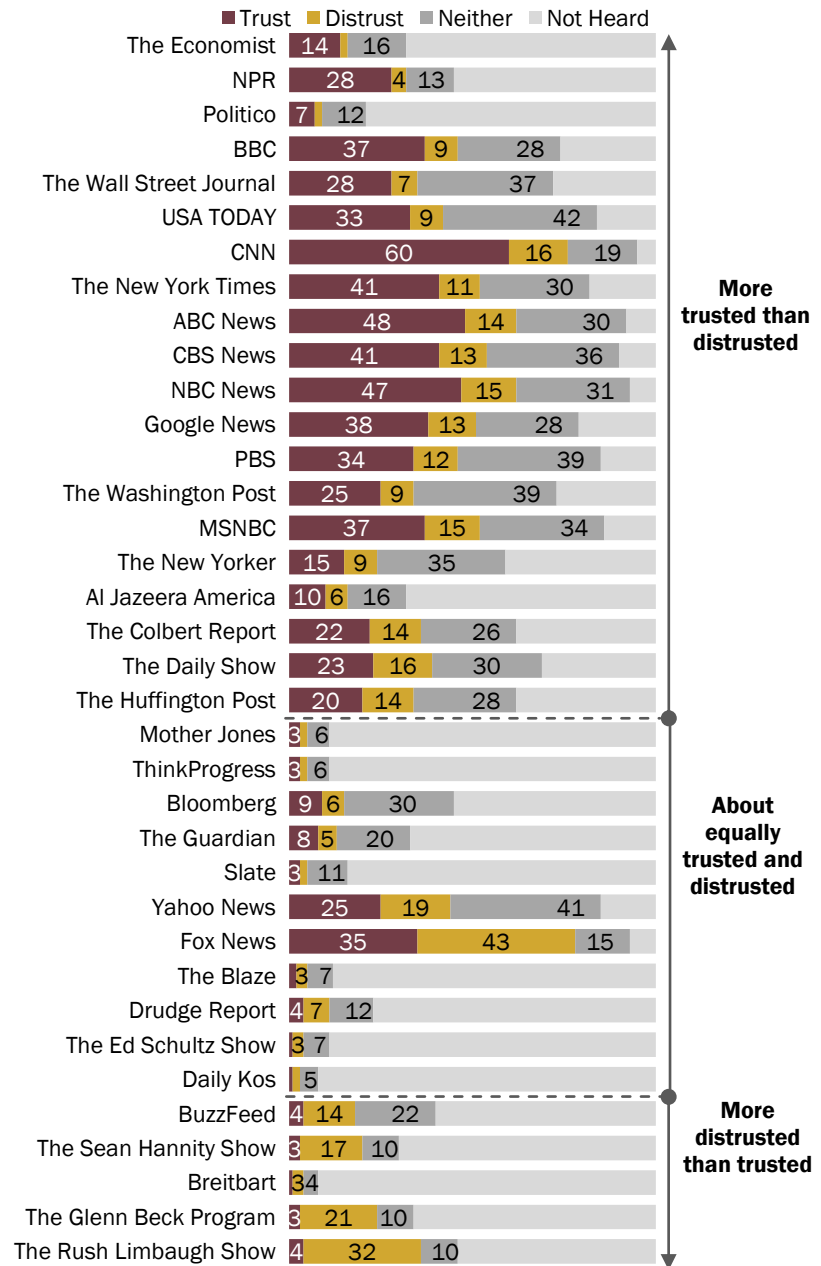
American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q21a, Q21b. Based on online adults.

Trust and Distrust of News Sources Among Millennials

% who trust or distrust each source for news about government and politics

Appendix B contains detailed tables showing trust and distrust as well as those who expressed neither sentiment and those who were not familiar with the outlet to begin with. These detailed tables can help put these data in further context.

Among Millennials, for example (the table for which is also shown to the right), CNN is known by 95% of Millennials, trusted by 60% and distrusted by 16% (with 19% saying they neither trust nor distrust it). NPR, on the other hand, is known by 45% of Millennials, trusted by 28% and distrusted by 4%. Even though NPR has lower percentages than CNN, Millennials express greater trust than distrust for both. Again, this shows the importance of looking at the relationship of trust to distrust for each source, taking into account differences in awareness.



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q21A, Q21B. Grouping of outlets is determined by whether the percent who trust each source is significantly different from the percent who distrust each source. Outlets are then ordered by proportion of those who trust more than distrust each. Numbers less than 2% and all "not heard" figures are not displayed. Based on online adults who are Millennials. N=679

Appendix A: Within Each Generation, More Similarities than Differences

One question we wanted to explore was the degree to which differences in political news habits exist *within* a generation. The Baby Boomer generation spans 18 years, Gen Xer spans 15 years and adult Millennials span 15 years.³

These data reveal strong levels of similarity between the younger and older cohorts within each generation when it comes to political news habits. Political interest among the young and old of each generation, for example, is roughly the same. But there are also some differences worth noting. Below are highlights of notable differences in awareness and use of news sources.⁴

³ No chronological end point has been set for this group.

⁴ Trust measures are not included here due to the complication of factoring in awareness. For the percentages of each intergenerational cohort that trust and distrust each source contact the Pew Research Center. When level of awareness is more than 90% between groups within a generation, any difference statistically is not considered substantive.

Young and Old Millennials (18-25 and 26-33)

Awareness of News Sources

Older Millennials are more familiar with 19 out of 36 sources than their younger peers.

Use of News Sources

Older Millennials turn to three sources at higher rates than younger Millennials: MSNBC (28% versus 15%), CBS (23% versus 16%) and Yahoo News (32% versus 23%).

Use of Social Media for News

Older Millennials turn to Google Plus at higher rates than younger Millennials (10% versus 5%). But younger Millennials turn to Twitter at higher rates than older Millennials (17% versus 10%).

Young vs. Old Millennials

Sources	% who heard of		% who got news from	
	18-25	26-33	18-25	26-33
ABC News	92	93	30	35
Al Jazeera American	23	41	5	4
BBC	71	77	14	18
The Blaze	10	15	1	3
Bloomberg	36	55	2	4
Breitbart	5	10	*	2
BuzzFeed	42	38	9	6
CBS News	88	93	16	23
CNN	95	95	45	44
The Colbert Report	58	66	17	12
Daily Kos	6	11	1	2
The Daily Show	64	74	15	17
Drudge Report	16	29	1	3
The Economist	28	37	2	5
The Ed Schultz Show	9	13	*	1
Fox News	89	95	31	30
The Glenn Beck Program	29	41	1	3
Google News	78	79	34	32
The Guardian	30	36	3	5
The Huffington Post	60	65	10	15
Mother Jones	7	16	1	2
MSNBC	82	91	15	28
NBC News	90	94	25	30
The New York Times	83	82	19	15
The New Yorker	55	63	3	4
NPR	40	50	15	21
PBS	85	85	7	12
Politico	13	29	2	4
The Rush Limbaugh Show	37	57	2	4
The Sean Hannity Show	22	39	2	4
Slate	11	22	2	3
ThinkProgress	7	15	*	2
USA Today	80	88	11	10
The Wall Street Journal	68	79	7	10
The Washington Post	68	77	6	11
Yahoo News	84	86	23	32
Social Media				
Facebook	n/a	n/a	60	62
Twitter	n/a	n/a	17	10
Google Plus	n/a	n/a	5	10
YouTube	n/a	n/a	25	20
LinkedIn	n/a	n/a	1	3

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q22, Q24A. Based on online adults who are Millennials. N=664

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Young and Old Gen Xers (34-41 and 42-49)

Awareness of News Sources

Young and old Gen Xers are on par for 34 of the 36 sources. The only two where older Gen Xers show a higher rate of awareness are MSNBC and Politico.

Use of News Sources

Older Gen Xers turn to five sources at somewhat higher rates: CBS (34% versus 20%), Fox (41% versus 30%), NBC (40% versus 30%), The Wall Street Journal (12% versus 6%) and USA Today (15% versus 8%).

Use of Social Media for News

Younger Gen Xers get news from Google Plus at higher rates than older Gen Xers (10% versus 3%).

Young vs. Old Gen Xers

Sources	% who heard of		% who got news from	
	34-41	42-49	34-41	42-49
ABC News	95	98	28	36
Al Jazeera American	47	46	5	3
BBC	77	80	16	16
The Blaze	19	23	7	7
Bloomberg	69	72	3	5
Breitbart	17	17	3	3
BuzzFeed	31	34	2	3
CBS News	92	97	20	34
CNN	94	95	47	43
The Colbert Report	69	66	8	8
Daily Kos	13	18	1	2
The Daily Show	73	68	9	10
Drudge Report	37	43	4	7
The Economist	39	36	2	3
The Ed Schultz Show	12	15	1	1
Fox News	94	94	30	41
The Glenn Beck Program	50	56	6	7
Google News	73	71	20	15
The Guardian	35	39	3	4
The Huffington Post	68	72	15	17
Mother Jones	20	25	1	2
MSNBC	88	95	24	30
NBC News	94	96	30	40
The New York Times	90	88	8	10
The New Yorker	68	69	2	2
NPR	57	57	23	20
PBS	90	93	12	12
Politico	32	42	2	6
The Rush Limbaugh Show	74	75	7	8
The Sean Hannity Show	50	50	7	9
Slate	26	25	3	4
ThinkProgress	10	11	1	1
USA Today	94	94	8	15
The Wall Street Journal	87	89	6	12
The Washington Post	82	86	6	8
Yahoo News	82	84	25	25
Social Media				
Facebook	n/a	n/a	55	47
Twitter	n/a	n/a	10	7
Google Plus	n/a	n/a	10	3
YouTube	n/a	n/a	11	10
LinkedIn	n/a	n/a	3	4

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q22, Q24A. Based on online adults who are Gen Xers. N=691

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Young and Old Baby Boomers (50-58 and 59-68)

Awareness of News Sources

Older Baby Boomers display higher levels of awareness than younger Baby Boomers for eight sources: Bloomberg, The Glenn Beck Program, The Sean Hannity Show, The Rush Limbaugh Show, Drudge Report, The Huffington Post, The New Yorker and The Blaze; Younger Boomers display higher awareness of The Washington Post.

Use of News Sources

Older Boomers are more likely to get political news from four sources: The Rush Limbaugh Show (17% versus 8%), The Sean Hannity Show (17% versus 10%), The Blaze (9% versus 5%) and The Glenn Beck Program (12% versus 6%).

Use of Social Media for News

Older Boomers are less likely to have gotten news on Facebook than younger Baby Boomers (31% versus 44%), and slightly less likely to get this news on Twitter (7% vs. 3%) and YouTube (12% vs. 7%).

Young vs. Old Baby Boomers

Sources	% who heard of		% who got news from	
	50-58	59-68	50-58	59-68
ABC News	95	95	44	44
Al Jazeera American	48	52	5	3
BBC	77	75	20	17
The Blaze	19	26	5	9
Bloomberg	63	72	6	6
Breitbart	18	22	4	5
BuzzFeed	27	25	3	2
CBS News	95	94	36	43
CNN	96	93	44	41
The Colbert Report	58	59	7	8
Daily Kos	14	16	2	4
The Daily Show	59	57	10	10
Drudge Report	36	44	6	7
The Economist	34	36	4	3
The Ed Schultz Show	17	22	2	3
Fox News	92	94	47	46
The Glenn Beck Program	53	65	6	12
Google News	66	65	16	15
The Guardian	36	39	4	2
The Huffington Post	63	70	13	13
Mother Jones	30	33	3	2
MSNBC	92	93	34	33
NBC News	96	94	46	50
The New York Times	84	82	13	12
The New Yorker	64	73	3	4
NPR	55	57	21	23
PBS	88	89	24	28
Politico	36	42	4	6
The Rush Limbaugh Show	73	80	8	17
The Sean Hannity Show	49	59	10	17
Slate	23	22	2	3
ThinkProgress	8	7	1	1
USA Today	93	92	16	12
The Wall Street Journal	84	85	12	13
The Washington Post	85	80	9	7
Yahoo News	78	76	21	21
Social Media				
Facebook	n/a	n/a	44	31
Twitter	n/a	n/a	7	3
Google Plus	n/a	n/a	4	5
YouTube	n/a	n/a	12	7
LinkedIn	n/a	n/a	5	3

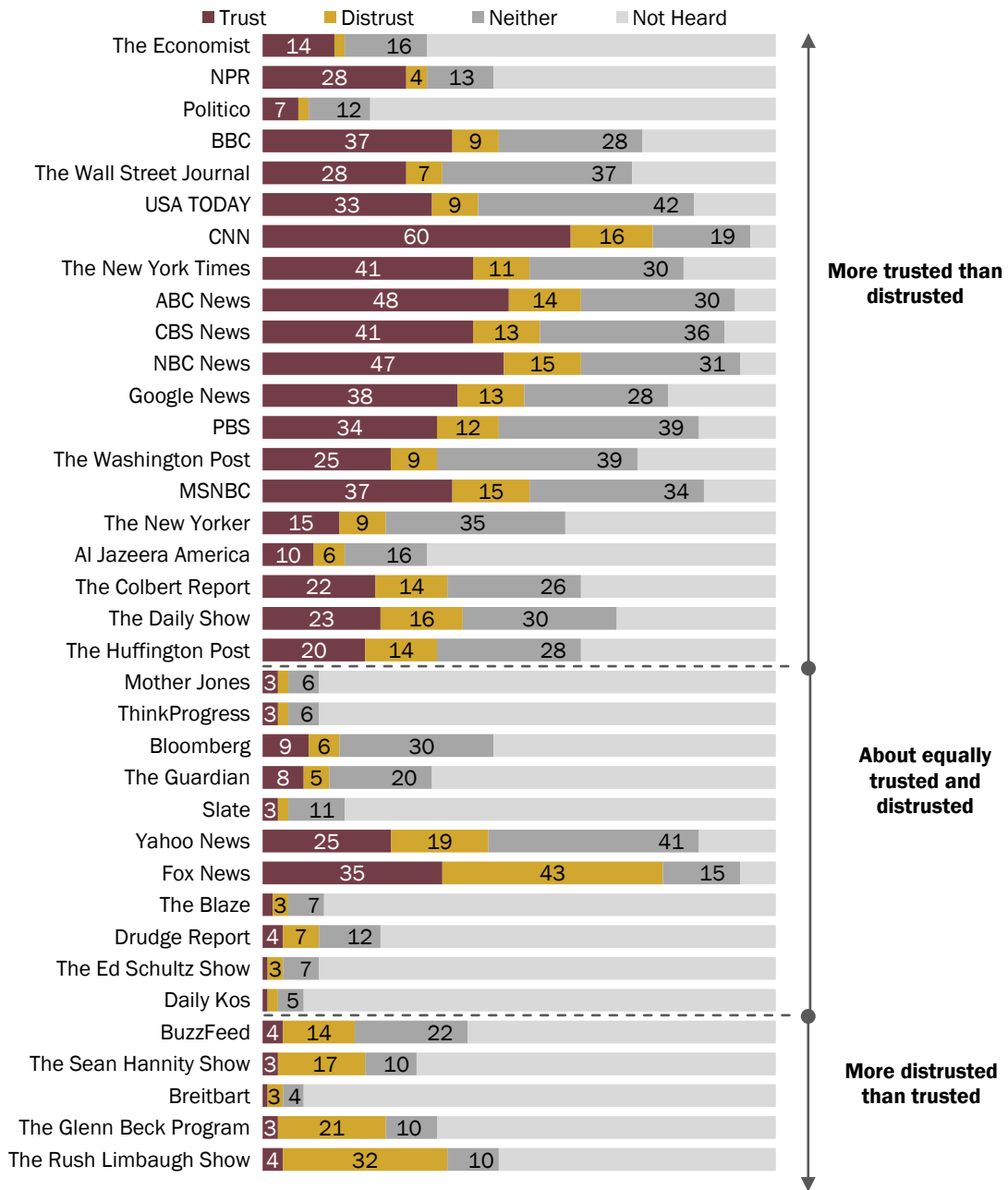
American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q22, Q24A. Based on online adults who are Baby Boomers. N=1,162

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Appendix B: Trust and Distrust of News Sources by Age Group

Trust and Distrust of News Sources Among Millennials

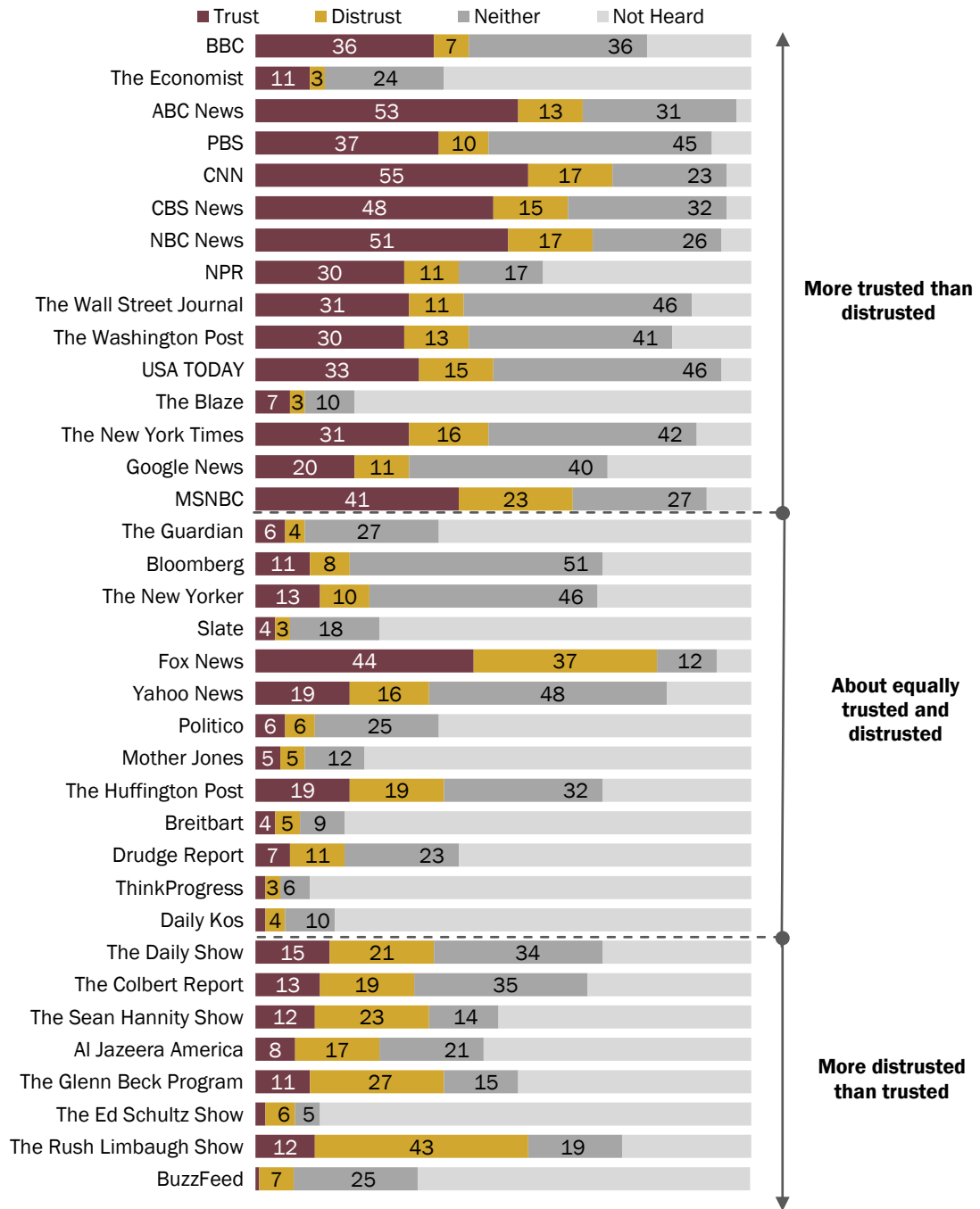
% who trust or distrust each source for news about government and politics



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q21A, Q21B. Grouping of outlets is determined by whether the percent who trust each source is significantly different from the percent who distrust each source. Outlets are then ordered by proportion of those who trust more than distrust each. Numbers less than 2% and all "not heard" figures are not displayed. Based on online adults who are Millennials. N=664

Trust and Distrust of News Sources Among Gen Xers

% who trust or distrust each source for news about government and politics

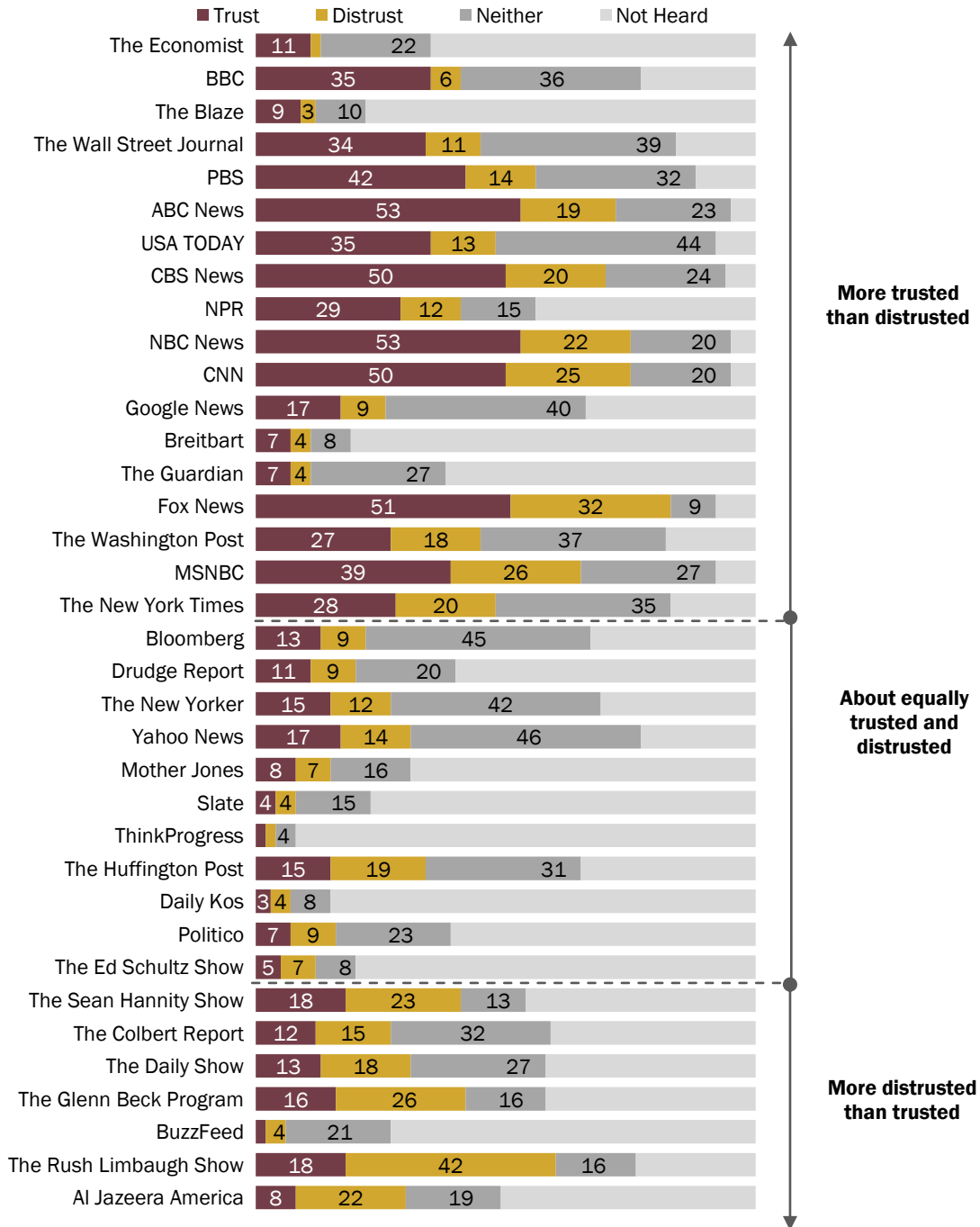


American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q21A, Q21B Grouping of outlets is determined by whether the percent who trust each source is significantly different from the percent who distrust each source. Outlets are then ordered by proportion of those who trust more than distrust each. Numbers less than 2% and all “not heard” figures are not displayed. Based on Web respondents who are Gen Xers. N=691

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Trust and Distrust of News Sources Among Baby Boomers

% who trust or distrust each source for news about government and politics



American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014. Q20, Q21A, Q21B. Grouping of outlets is determined by whether the percent who trust each source is significantly different from the percent who distrust each source. Outlets are then ordered by proportion of those who trust more than distrust each. Numbers less than 2% and all "not heard" figures are not displayed. Based on online adults who are Baby Boomers. N=1,162

Appendix C: The News Sources

In Wave 1 of the American Trends Panel questionnaire, Web respondents were asked a series of questions about news sources for information about government and politics. Respondents were first asked whether they have heard of 36 sources. Icons for the sources were arrayed on two screens of 18 sources each, randomized within each screen, as shown below.⁵ Respondents first clicked on the icons of the sources they have heard of. Of the sources that they had heard of, respondents were then asked whether they trust each source – again indicated by clicking on the icons. They then got another screen which showed the sources they had heard of but had not indicated that they trusted, and were asked if they distrust any of those remaining sources. If a respondent had heard of a source but did not indicate trust or distrust of it, the response was considered “neither.” Finally, respondents were asked if they got news about government and politics in the past week from any of the sources that they heard of, in addition to local television news and five social networking sites – Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Please click on all of the sources that you have HEARD OF, regardless of whether you use them or not. If you are unsure, please DO NOT click it. You can click anywhere in each of the boxes.

<input type="checkbox"/> BLAZE The Blaze	<input type="checkbox"/> abc NEWS ABC News	<input type="checkbox"/> DRUDGE REPORT Drudge Report
<input type="checkbox"/> SEAN HANNITY Sean Hannity Show (radio)	<input type="checkbox"/> CBS NEWS CBS News	<input type="checkbox"/> NBC NEWS NBC News
<input type="checkbox"/> Google news Google News	<input type="checkbox"/> THE NEW YORKER New Yorker	<input type="checkbox"/> npr NPR
<input type="checkbox"/> theguardian The Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> BREITBART Breitbart	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington Post Washington Post
<input type="checkbox"/> Rush Limbaugh Show (radio)	<input type="checkbox"/> The New York Times The New York Times	<input type="checkbox"/> THE HUFFINGTON POST Huffington Post
<input type="checkbox"/> BBC BBC	<input type="checkbox"/> THINK PROGRESS ThinkProgress.org	<input type="checkbox"/> DAILY KOS Daily Kos

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Again, please click on all that you have HEARD OF.

<input type="checkbox"/> Mother Jones Mother Jones	<input type="checkbox"/> FOX NEWS Fox News Cable Channel	<input type="checkbox"/> THE WALL STREET JOURNAL The Wall Street Journal
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily Show	<input type="checkbox"/> msnbc MSNBC	<input type="checkbox"/> CNN CNN
<input type="checkbox"/> USA TODAY USA Today	<input type="checkbox"/> The Economist The Economist	<input type="checkbox"/> PBS PBS
<input type="checkbox"/> BuzzFeed BuzzFeed	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICO Politico	<input type="checkbox"/> Glenn Beck Program (radio)
<input type="checkbox"/> COLEBERT REPORT Colbert Report	<input type="checkbox"/> ED SCHULTZ Ed Schultz Show (radio)	<input type="checkbox"/> Slate
<input type="checkbox"/> ALJAZEERA AMERICA Al Jazeera America	<input type="checkbox"/> Bloomberg	<input type="checkbox"/> YAHOO! NEWS Yahoo News

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⁵ This report includes the product, service and company names, as well as logos, of third parties. Such third-party designations are the trade/service marks of their respective owners and are included only to identify the relevant products or organizations. Neither Pew Research nor the report are endorsed or sponsored by, or otherwise affiliated with such third parties.

These sources (42 total, including local television news and the five social networking sites) were specifically chosen so as to ask respondents about a range of news media, both in terms of platform and audience size, including some sources with large mass audiences, as well as some niche sources. Most of the sources are drawn from those asked about in past [Pew Research Center surveys on media consumption](#). Many of these sources are widely known and have large audiences. From this initial list, researchers went through an iterative process to add additional sources to provide a greater range in the news media environment – including adding more international, radio and primarily digital sources. The final list is based on results of a pilot test by the Pew Research Center, along with audience estimates and whether the outlets are sources for government and politics.

The final list of 36 sources asked about in wave 1 of the American Trends panel Web questionnaire consisted of the following: all three major broadcast television stations (ABC News, CBS News and NBC News), the three major cable television news networks (CNN, Fox News and MSNBC), local television news, four of the largest circulated newspapers (The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal and USA Today), the two major public broadcast networks (NPR and PBS), international media organizations (BBC, the Guardian and Al Jazeera America), news aggregator websites (Google News, Yahoo News and BuzzFeed), news magazines (the Economist, Mother Jones and the New Yorker), economic news sources (Bloomberg [along with the Economist and the Wall Street Journal]), four political news radio programs with the largest audience bases (the Ed Schultz Show, The Glenn Beck Program, the Rush Limbaugh Show and the Sean Hannity Show), infotainment television shows (the Daily Show and the Colbert Report), and primarily digital sources, some with large audiences that rival some traditional media outlets' Web presence (the Drudge Report and the Huffington Post) and others with more niche audiences (the Blaze, Breitbart, DailyKos, Politico, Slate and ThinkProgress).

In addition to this series of questions about these specific sources, respondents were also asked in an open-ended question to volunteer their main source for news about government and politics. This allowed respondents to name any source, not limiting them to the specific ones asked about. Any outlet that was named by at least .5% of respondents is listed individually in the topline. All sources that were mentioned by less than .5% of respondents are grouped together as “other.”

Methodology

This report is part of a series by the Pew Research Center aimed at understanding of political news and information habits in the American public. An initial report on these data explored these habits [across the ideological spectrum](#). Data in this report are drawn from the first wave of the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel, conducted March 19 to April 29, 2014, among 2,901 Web respondents. The panel was recruited from a nationally representative survey, which was conducted by the Pew Research Center in early 2014.

The data in this report is based on a nationally representative group of respondents who were recruited from the Center's largest survey on domestic politics to date: the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey, a telephone survey of more than 10,000 Americans. A subset of these respondents was impaneled into the American Trends Panel (ATP) and most of the analysis in the report is based on the first wave of the ATP, a survey conducted by Web and telephone. As with the American public overall, the vast majority of panel members has Web access and has opted to take the surveys online. Indeed, data from the survey from which the American Trends Panel was recruited show that as of March 2014, 89% of American adults use the Internet. Similarly, 88% of this Wave 1 of the American Trends Panel completed the survey online.⁶ This report is based only on the respondents who completed the survey online.

The Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder. This report was made possible by The Pew Charitable Trusts, which received support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

About the American Trends Panel

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by the Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults living in households. Respondents who self-identify as internet users (representing 89% of U.S. adults) participate in the panel via monthly self-administered Web surveys, and those who do not use the internet participate via telephone or mail. The panel is being managed by Abt SRBI.

Data in this report are drawn from the first wave of the panel, conducted March 19–April 29, 2014 among 2,901 Web respondents. The margin of sampling error for the Web sample of 2,901 respondents is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points.

All current members of the American Trends Panel were originally recruited from the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey, a large (n=10,013) national landline and cellphone random digit dial (RDD) survey conducted January 23rd to March 16th, 2014, in English and

⁶ This percentage of wave 1 panel members who completed the survey online is unweighted; the figure is 81% if weighted.

Spanish. At the end of that survey, respondents were invited to join the panel. The invitation was extended to all respondents who use the internet (from any location) and a random subsample of respondents who do not use the internet.⁷

Of the 10,013 adults interviewed, 9,809 were invited to take part in the panel. A total of 5,338 agreed to participate and provided either a mailing address or an email address to which a welcome packet, a monetary incentive and future survey invitations could be sent. Panelists also receive a small monetary incentive after participating in each wave of the survey.

The ATP data were weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original survey selection probability and the fact that some panelists were subsampled for invitation to the panel. Next, an adjustment was made for the fact that the propensity to join the panel varied across different groups in the sample. The final step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, telephone service, population density and region to parameters from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 American Community Survey. It also adjusts for party affiliation using an average of the three most recent Pew Research Center general public telephone surveys, and for internet use using as a parameter a measure from the 2014 Survey of Political Polarization. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The Hispanic sample in the American Trends Panel is predominantly native born and English speaking. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The Web component of the first wave had a response rate of 61% (2,901 responses among 4,753 Web-based individuals enrolled in the panel. Taking account of the response rate for the 2014 Survey of Political Polarization (10.6%), the cumulative response rate for the first ATP wave is 3.6%.

⁷ When data collection for the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey began, non-internet users were subsampled at a rate of 25%, but a decision was made shortly thereafter to invite all non-internet users to join. In total, 83% of non-internet users were invited to join the panel.

The accompanying table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for selected groups discussed in the report.

Sample Size and Margin of Error for American Trends Panel (Wave 1)

	Weighted percent of sample	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
All Web respondents	100%	2,901	2.3 percentage points
<i>Web respondents who are in each generation</i>			
Millennial	34%	664	4.9 percentage points
Generation X	28%	691	4.8 percentage points
Baby Boomer	29%	1,162	3.7 percentage points

American Trends Panel (wave 1). Survey conducted March 19-April 29, 2014.

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