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Journalists 'not keen on Facebook, Twitter for work'

By: Pauline Wong (Fri, 12 Nov 2010)

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PETALING JAYA (Nov 12, 2010): A survey has found that most media practitioners are still not keen on using social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter as a way to communicate, find sources or research information.

Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Institute of Journalism Studies and public relations (PR) training company Intelectasia conducted the Media Relations Practices Survey in Malaysia 2010 to determine the popularity of social media tools among press members.

After surveying 442 press members between April and September this year, it found that 40.4% of those surveyed do not use Facebook for story ideas or for research.

Micro-blogging site Twitter fared worse, with 51.9% responding that they have never used the site for work purposes. Only 33.5% and 23.3% of the participants preferred to hear ideas and pitches via Facebook or Twitter.

YouTube had some interest, but 50.4% still do not use it frequently for work. The survey also explored the usage of RSS feeds (real-time updates) among the press, and found that 48.1% have never used it at all for their work.

However, 68% of those surveyed read blogs frequently, stating that it is a source of alternative news. Also, the usage of social media was higher among the younger journalists.

The survey also discovered that social networking sites fared poorly as the mode of communication between PR practitioners and the media.

Only 35.7% chose Facebook and 21.4% picked Twitter as a way to receive media invites. This is in comparison to the 93.4% who said they preferred work email to receive invites, 63% who preferred calls to the office, and 55.9% who preferred faxes. Participants can pick more than one mode of communication.

The survey concludes that compared to other countries like the United States, Malaysian press have yet to embrace social media tools in their work, "said Intelectasia CEO Manminder Kaur Dhillon.

Besides that, the survey also found that 71.2% of journalists agree that PR practitioners do not understand the element of newsworthiness, while 50.4% agree that PR practitioners have poor media relation skills.

This survey is the first of its kind in Malaysia.

Although similar studies have been done on a smaller scale – student thesis or academia – this survey is the largest on media relations and practices, "said Manminder. We hope that it can be a reference to both future

PR and media practitioners."

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