

# the local TV news experience

Medill ■ Media Management Center ■ Northwestern University

## The local TV news experience

How to win viewers by focusing on engagement

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McCormick Tribune Center, Northwestern University  
Evanston, Illinois

Local TV news has seen competition for audiences increase as mass audience fragments, appointment viewing disappears, and Internet usage explodes. How can TV stations produce quality local news that draws and engages audiences in this ever-shifting landscape?

A new study by the [Medill School](#) and the [Media Management Center](#) at Northwestern University, funded by the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#), addresses this and other questions.

The study is designed to give TV stations practical tools to help them a) better engage their audiences, b) stimulate strategic thinking about their position and role in the market, and c) better connect with viewers in ways that can lead to improved civic behavior.

The study will be released on July 20, 2007 at a 1-day, invitation-only conference on Northwestern's Evanston campus.

In today's changing media world, it is critically important for the news media to understand what builds emotional connections and engagement with the audience, and how to use that understanding to attract, keep, and build audiences.

The Media Management Center has already applied its groundbreaking research on engagement to [newspapers](#), [magazines](#), and [online](#) media. With this new study, Medill and MMC are bringing this expertise for the first time to the challenges of TV news.

Results are based on a survey of close to 1,400 people in the Chicago metropolitan area and a content analysis of late-night news programs on five of the main commercial broadcasting networks.

### In this event, participants will be the first to

- Hear new research results about how people relate to local TV news and how engaged they are with it.
- Have an opportunity to ask researchers questions about the study and participate in a discussion about the findings.
- Learn new insights about how usage of local TV news relates to better knowledge of public affairs, voting, and involvement in the community.
- Hear what industry insiders think about the future of TV news.
- Hear a leading market research firm respond to this study.

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For more information, visit our Web site at:  
[www.MediaManagementCenter.org/localTV](http://www.MediaManagementCenter.org/localTV)

### Speakers:



#### John Lavine

John Lavine is the dean of Medill, where he is leading the school in a sweeping transformation. That strategic plan focuses on 21st Century quality journalism and integrated marketing communications and on understanding what motivates and inhibits audiences to use each medium. Lavine is also a professor of media management and strategy in Medill and in the Kellogg School of Management.



#### Hank Price

Hank Price is a senior fellow in Broadcast News Strategy at the Media Management Center at Northwestern University, where he teaches in both the domestic and international executive training programs. He is also President and General Manager of WXII-TV, the Hearst-Argyle owned NBC affiliate in Winston-Salem, NC.



#### Michael P. Smith

Michael P. Smith is the executive director of the Center. He oversees the Center's research projects as well as the faculty and curriculum for the Center's on-campus programs.



John S. and James L.  
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