



NERA COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

December 15, 2021
Communications Subcommittee Report

ASSESSMENT

- Developed to better understand communications assets and needs at member universities.
- Information will help guide creation of a Northeast Communications Network.

ASSESSMENT

- Administered by the Communications Subcommittee
 - Rick Rhodes (Rhode Island)
 - David Leibovitz (Rhode Island)
 - Lori Gula (New Hampshire)
 - Erin Miller (Maryland)
 - Matt Wilson (West Virginia)
 - Lindsay Willey (West Virginia)

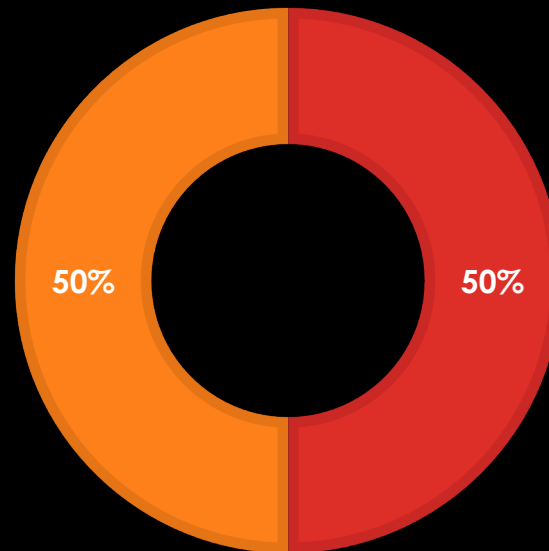
RESPONSES

- Nine (9) total responses
- Represented organizations
 - Cornell (AgriTech)
 - Cornell (Experiment Station)
 - Delaware
 - Maine
 - Maryland
 - New Hampshire
 - Rutgers
 - Vermont
 - West Virginia

RESULTS

DOES YOUR STATION HAVE A STRATEGIC PLAN?

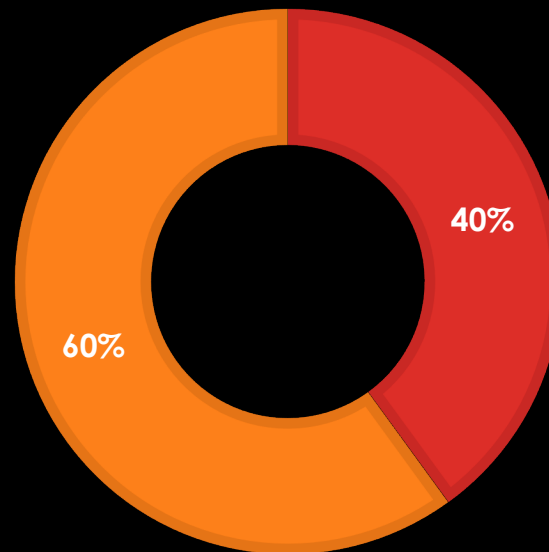
■ Yes ■ No



RESULTS

DOES YOUR STATION HAVE A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIC PLAN?

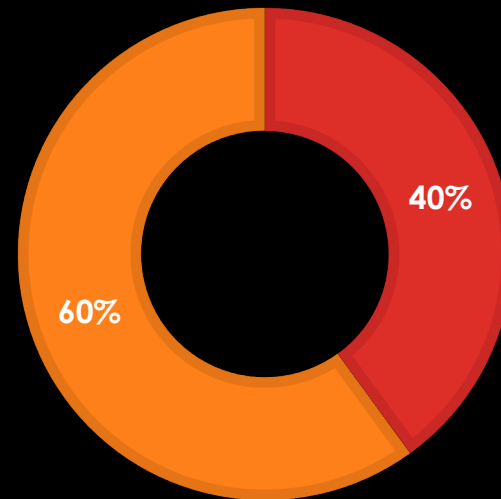
■ Yes ■ No



RESULTS

**DOES YOUR STATION HAVE A DEDICATED
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER/DIRECTOR?**

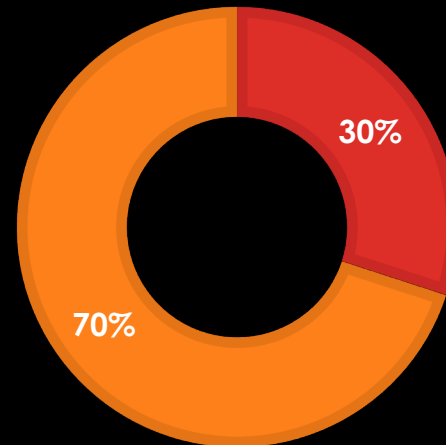
■ Yes ■ No



RESULTS

DOES YOUR STATION HAVE A DEDICATED COMMUNICATIONS STAFF FOR SOCIAL MEDIA, PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY AND GRAPHIC DESIGN?

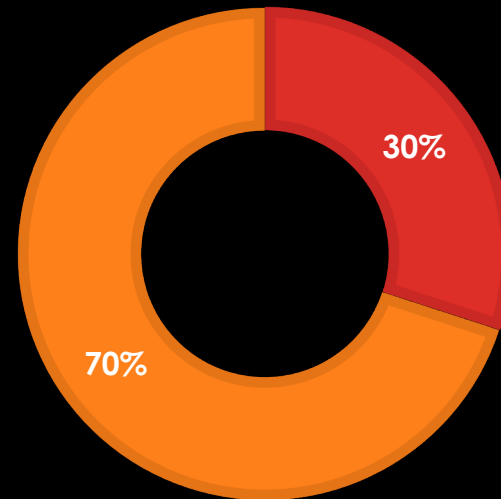
■ Yes ■ No



RESULTS

DOES YOUR STATION HAVE A SUBSCRIPTION TO A NEWS DISTRIBUTION SERVICE SUCH AS CISION OR MELTWATER?

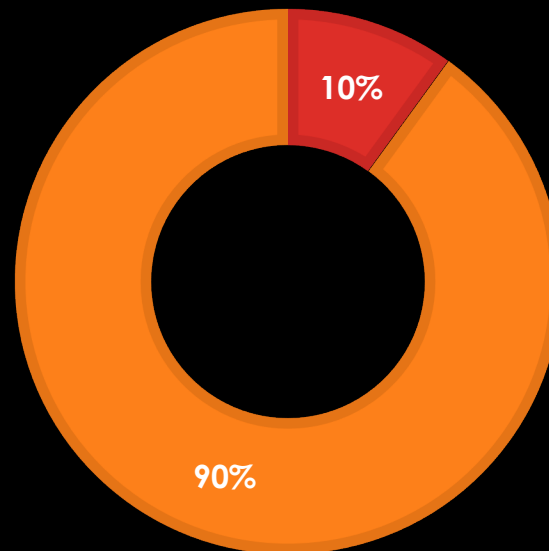
■ Yes ■ No



RESULTS

DOES YOUR STATION SUBSCRIBE TO A VIDEO SERVICE SUCH AS BITEABLE?

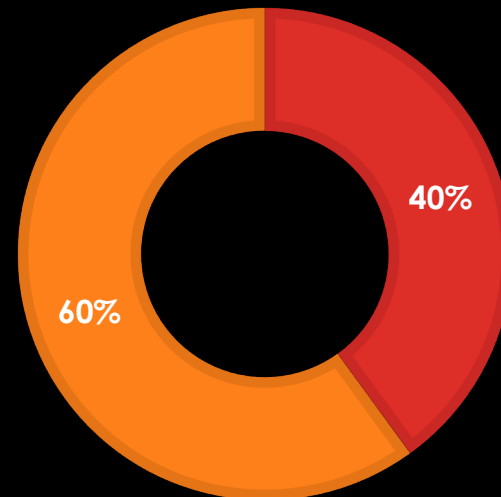
■ Yes ■ No



RESULTS

DOES YOUR STATION SUBSCRIBE TO A GRAPHIC DESIGN SERVICE SUCH AS CANVA?

■ Yes ■ No

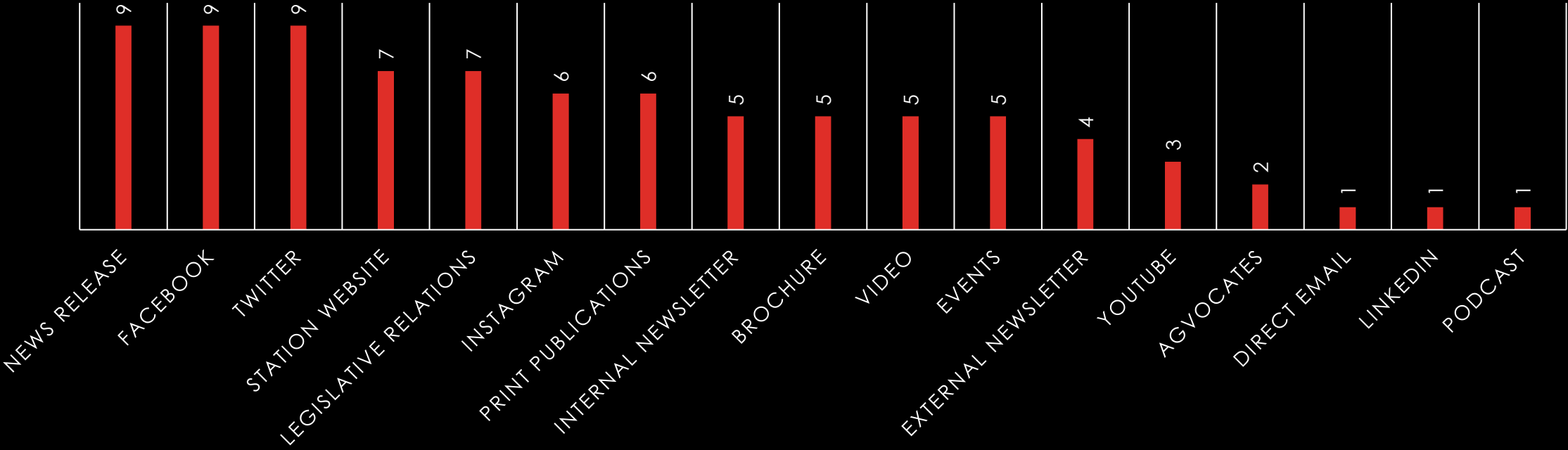


RESULTS

- Number of communications personnel dedicated to the Experiment Station:
 - Most was five (5); fewest was .2.
- At least four Experiment Stations rely on college communicators.
 - For example: The **Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station** relies on the college communications team of five. The **West Virginia Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station** relies on the college communications team of two.

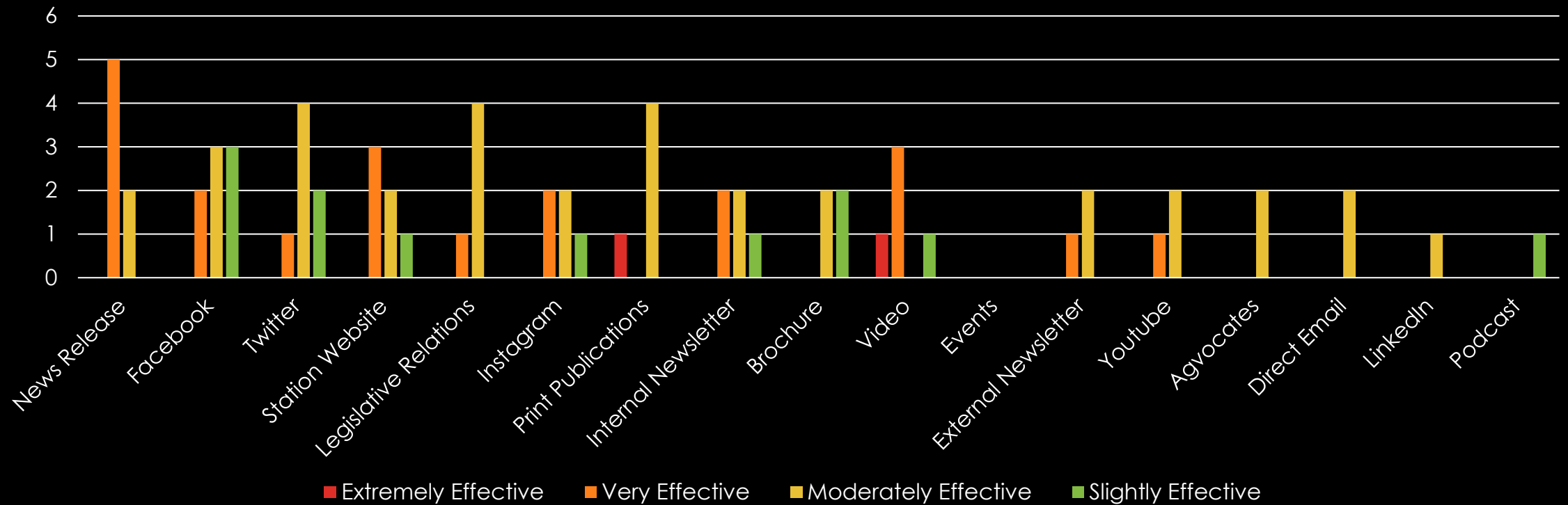
RESULTS

HOW DO YOU DISSEMINATE STATION COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.



RESULTS

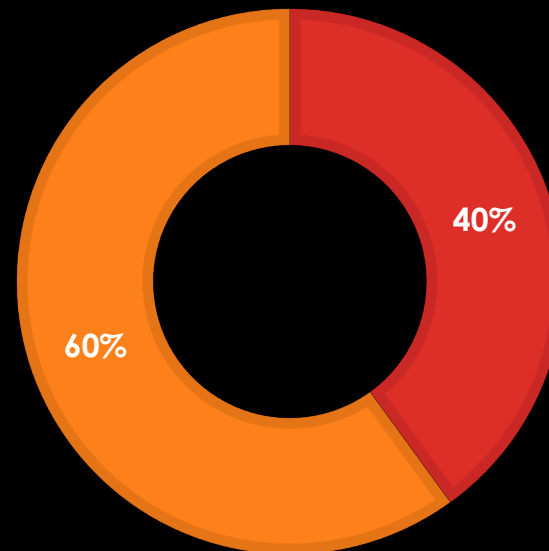
Please rate the effectiveness of each communications channel.



RESULTS

DO YOU TRACK COMMUNICATIONS EFFECTIVENESS USING METRICS?

■ Yes ■ No



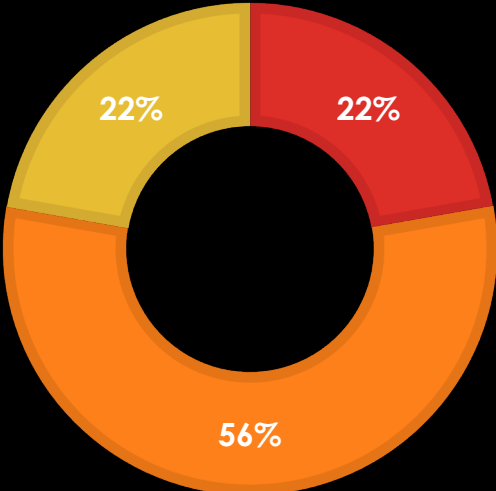
RESULTS

- Top three (3) metrics:
 - Google Analytics
 - Social Media Analytics
 - Cision Reports

RESULTS

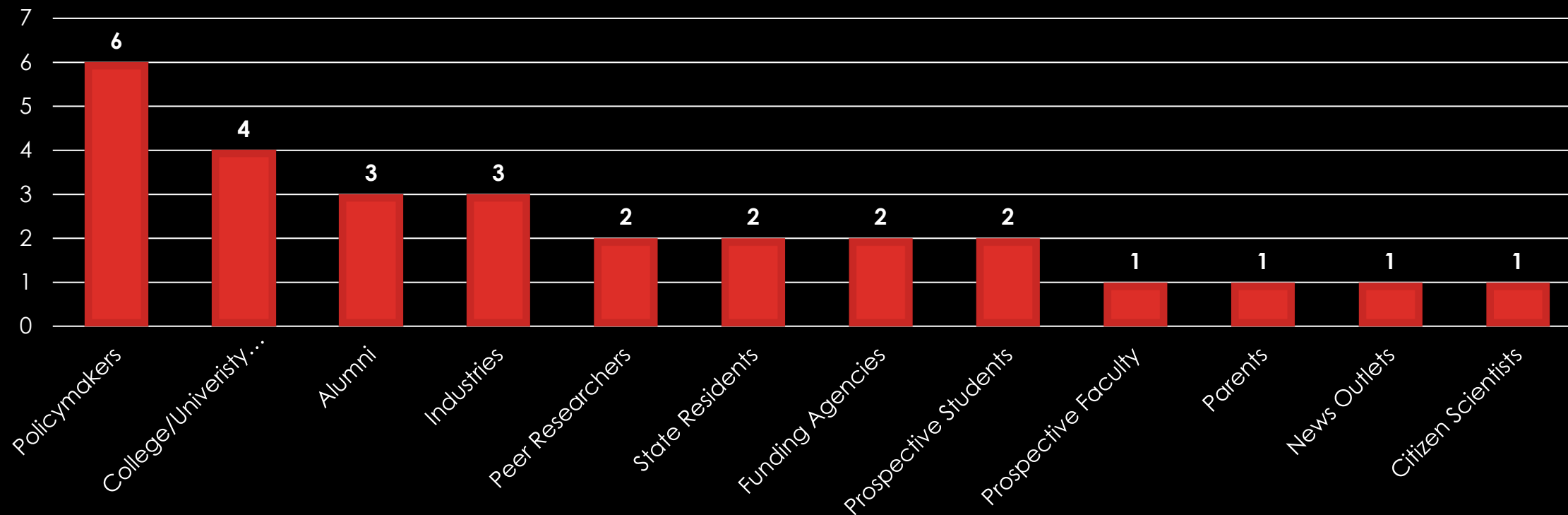
HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE COVERAGE OF STATION RESEARCH AND NEWS IN YOUR LOCAL AND STATEWIDE MEDIA?

■ Above Average ■ Average ■ Below Average



RESULTS

WHO ARE YOUR TOP FIVE STAKEHOLDER AUDIENCES?



RESULTS

- What resources are needed to effectively implement station strategic communications?
 - Staff
 - Videography
 - Photography
 - Graphic Design
 - Impact Writers
 - Funding
 - Strategic Plan
 - Regional Collaboration

RESULTS

- What areas/processes do you consider to be opportunities for improvement or change in helping to meet strategic communications goals?
 - Better relationship-building and collaboration
 - Internally
 - Communications professionals
 - Administration
 - Regionally
 - Resource Sharing
 - Benchmarking

WRAP-UP

- Brief review of assets:
 - Regional communicators would like to connect with each other.
 - News releases are still the most prominent and effective ways to share research stories/information.
 - There is some diversity in types of communication that are effective for each station.
 - Stakeholders across the region are similar if not the same.
- It will come as no surprise communicators see a need for more:
 - Staff
 - Money
 - Time



RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Theme:

Start small and focus on progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Commit to financially supporting increased NERA communications/Northeast Communicators Network.
 - Personnel
 - Professional design services (print, digital, etc.)
- Promote/Support connecting regional communicators.
- Discover our WHY. Use it to:
 - Guide the formation of communications goals and objectives.
 - Define target audiences.
 - Develop key messages.
 - Are they the same or different for all audiences?
 - How do we reach them?