

Executive Summary

Survey results and analysis “Reviewing the J-TAC student newspaper”

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Respondents took the survey from February 28, 2008 through May 2, 2008. Surveys were initially taken online, with limited response. They were later administered in-person to increase the sample size. The in-person survey data was then added to the existing online information and analyzed. 215 surveys were completed.

Respondent data:

Freshmen:	31%	Sophomore:	22.5%
Junior:	21.6%	Senior:	17.4%
Graduate Student:	2.8%	Other:	4.7%

Ages:

18-24:	89.2%	25-34:	8.0%
35-44:	1.4%	45-54:	1.4%

Gender:

Female:	53.3%	Male:	46.7%
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Key data points are bolded. Response and anticipated use of the data follows in normal type:

85.2% of respondents note that they read the J-TAC every week or most weeks

-- This indicates a good perception of the utility of the product and good market penetration. However, the J-TAC will develop and implement action plans to increase this number to at least 90% in the 2008-2009 academic year.

92.6% of respondents strongly agree or agree that the J-TAC keeps them informed on campus news and events

-- While initial information available during the 2005-2006 academic year was purely anecdotal, the sheer volume of mail, email and verbal comments regarding the perception of low utility and quality of the product indicated a widespread dissatisfaction. This current datum indicates a stronger product that is responsive to its readership.

90.9% of respondents strongly agree or agree that the J-TAC keeps them up-to-date on Tarleton and conference athletics

-- Initial information available was anecdotal. However, all of the information that was available was sharply negative. Steps were taken to address the issue, with several smaller surveys to gauge reaction and response. This datum indicates that these steps are garnering success. Additional plans will be developed and implemented to further increase coverage of this subject.

73.4% of respondents have looked at the J-TAC online (www.thejtac.com)

-- While a higher number than was initially expected (based upon ongoing data-gathering from the Web site), it follows national trends for commercial newspapers and broadcast outlets. Based on this datum, The J-TAC will develop and implement new initiatives to further expand the site's utility, with consistent measurements taken to gauge response.

83.6% of respondents would rather receive their news from The J-TAC's Web site than from the printed edition of the paper

-- A higher number than expected indicated that they prefer to receive their campus news from The J-TAC's Web site. Student Publications will develop and implement new initiatives and services in response, including consideration of major changes to the current weekly news cycle by either updating more frequently on a set timetable, or updating as reporters file their stories.

77.2% of respondents would rather get their campus news from Tarleton Web sites or email (such as The Gateway)

-- Our interpretation of this datum is as that of an indicator of how students prefer to receive information. Coupled with the strong response to receiving news via The J-TAC's Web site, additional data will be gathered regarding local student's perceptions and use of technology for information gathering purposes. This development should include other campus stakeholders so as to avoid duplication of efforts between divisions and departments.

87.9% of respondents note that the news in the J-TAC is up-to-date

-- This number is surprisingly high, considering that The J-TAC only publishes once per week.

77.1% of respondents would be satisfied if the J-TAC were only online

-- Based on this datum and associated data from other responses in this survey, The J-TAC will devote additional resources and efforts to further development of the existing site as well as marketing the site.

59.7% of respondents read another newspaper and the J-TAC on at least a weekly basis

-- This datum stands in contrast to national data gathered by the Pew Trust. The most recent surveys show readership at 42% (without breaking down by age group of the respondents). We expect that the number would be even lower if the 18-24 year old category were isolated, based on numerous surveys on their information gathering preferences. One mitigating factor on the Tarleton State University—Stephenville Campus may be the Collegiate Readership Program which brought free copies of USA Today, Dallas Morning News and Fort Worth Star-Telegram into the residence halls, library and a few other high traffic locations for the past two years. However, this program will not in the upcoming year. This provides an opportunity for The J-TAC, particularly the Web site, to provide relevant world and national news through its print and online channels. Action plans will be developed to this end.