



Carolina Observatory on Corporate Reputation

UNC Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Craig Carroll, Assistant Professor, School of Journalism and Mass Communication



Research Streams on Corporate Reputation and the News Media

1. Influence of news content on corporate reputation
2. Organizational influences on the production of business news
3. Media reputation as a proxy for corporate reputation



Influences of news content on corporate reputation



Agenda-setting theory:

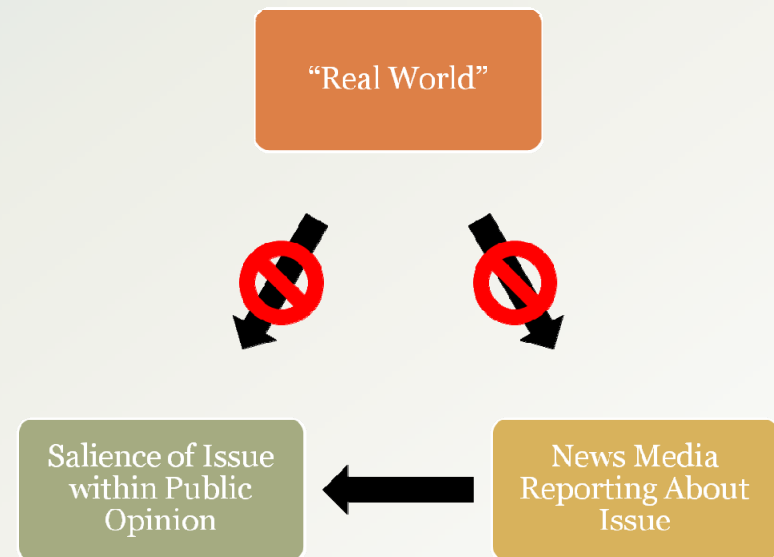
While the news media may not be successful in telling us what to think, they are very successful in telling us (the public) what to think *about*

Previous Research in Political Communication

1. “Most Important” Public Issues of the Day
2. Political Candidates:
 - 2a. Name Recognition
 - 2b. Image of Candidates

My Research on Organizations:

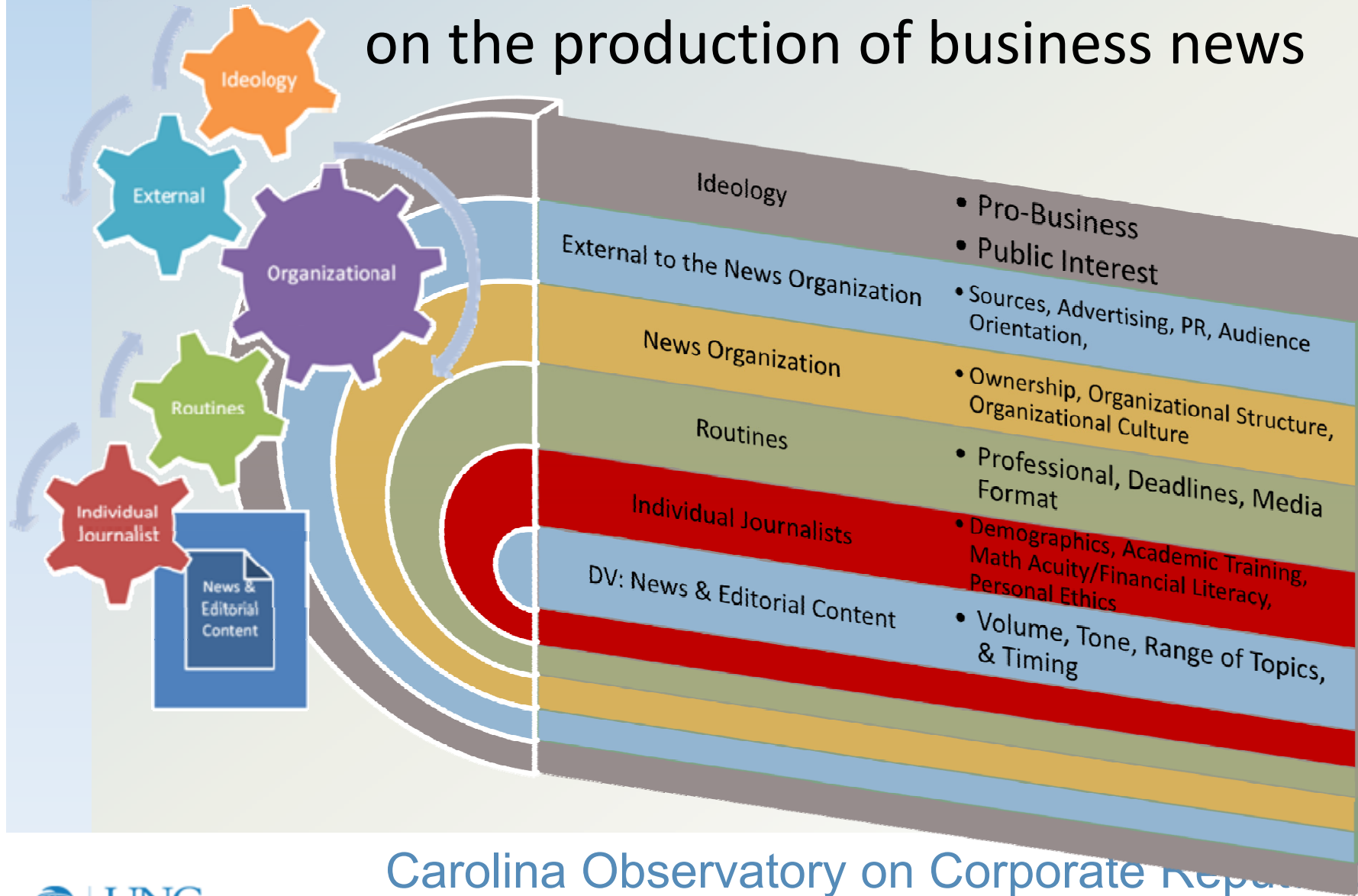
3. Companies’
 - 3a. Organizational Prominence
 - 3b. Organizational Image
 - 3c. Corporate Associations
4. Companies around the world



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Organizational influences on the production of business news



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Media reputation as a proxy for corporate reputation

Can we:

1. Learn about journalists by studying their content produced and without talking to them?
2. Recognize public relations-generated news based on content alone?
3. Approximate or predict the effects on corporate reputation without sampling the audiences?

Implications for theory, history, and criticism.



Research Tools

- ❑ Media Reputation 2.0
- ❑ DICTION 6.0
- ❑ Corporate partnerships at \$995K since arrival at UNC.

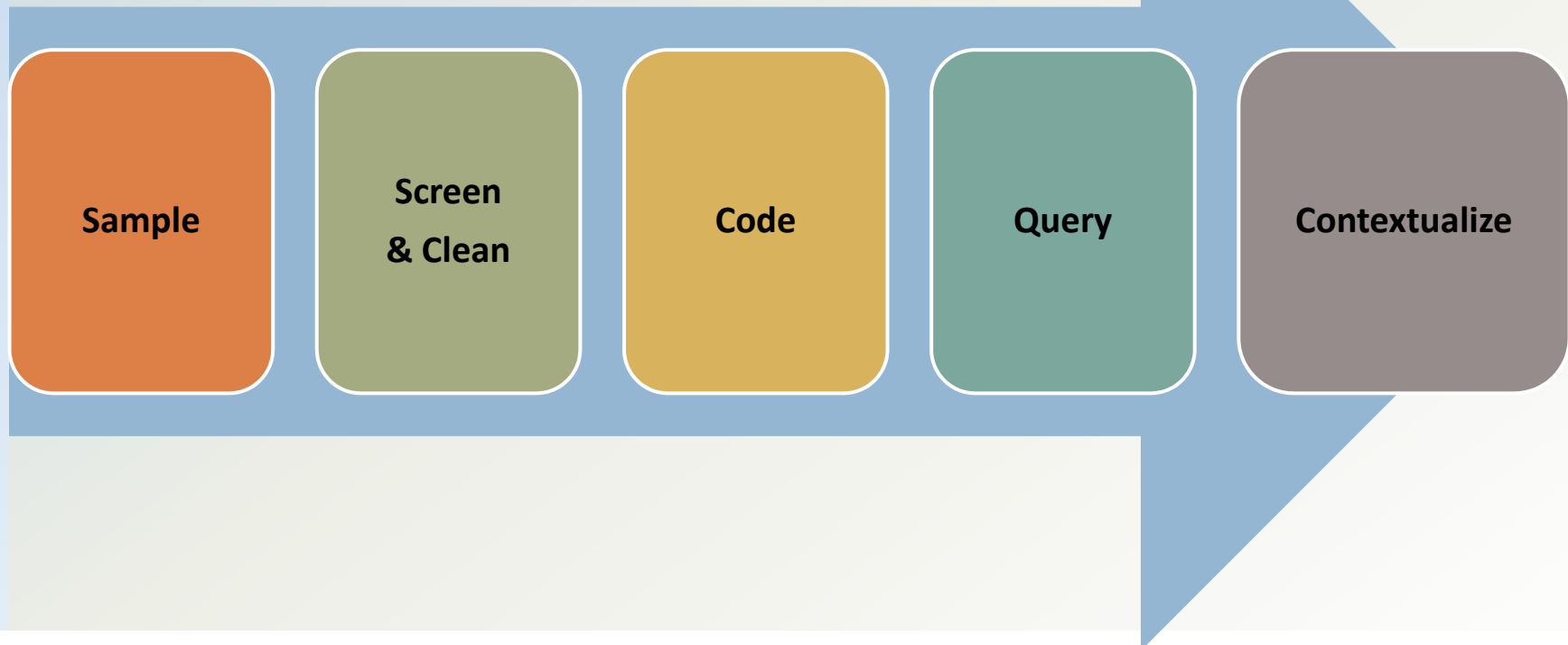
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Media Reputation 2.0

A methodology combining relational queries, machine coding, and human coding.

Quantitative → Qualitative



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Multiple levels of analysis from the population of newspaper articles developing a list of each company *mentioned, discussed, and featured*.

Honing in on how organizations are discussed in ways that allow for *retrospective analysis, benchmarking, contextualization, & prediction*.

For every company mentioned

Passing
Mention

Focus of
Story

Honing in on every company discussed

Focus on
Company

Focus on
Issue

To the nature of the conversation

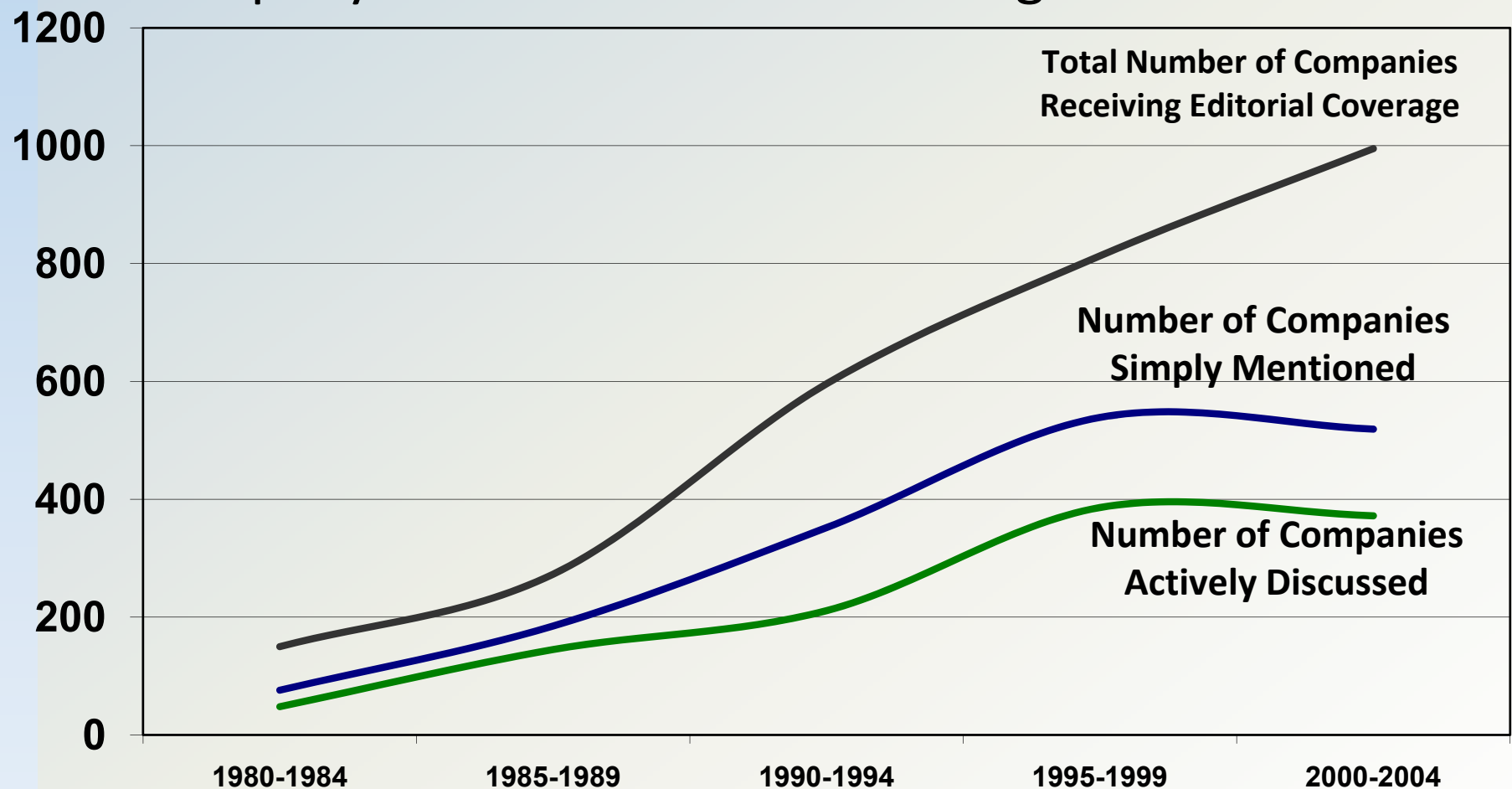
Cataloguing of Topics

Tone

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Discussion of Companies & Company Issues in Editorial Coverage



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Backing up for a moment: What types of coding is or could be done?

- **Manifest:**
 - ▣ machine based.
 - ▣ Capturing newspaper or TV name, date, location in the paper or time of day on TV, the companies mentioned, journalist name, to the presence or absence of particular topics
 - ▣ Black or white; little disagreement in what is captured
- **Patterned:**
 - ▣ Most models start with human coding and then programmed into machine coding.
 - ▣ Frequency of topic occurrence indicates the degree of presence for companies or their issues
 - ▣ Topical Index Terms by Lexis-Nexis or DICTION 6.0
- **Projective:**
 - ▣ The New Frontier
 - ▣ Requires human coders to verify machine coding.
 - ▣ Involves human interpretation to catch humor, irony, or unique expressions
 - ▣ Concerns about reliability, validity, and transparency.



The goal is to get to the point where 4 out of 4 coders agree 9 out of 10 times.
Fire the 5th coder...



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An example of inter-rater reliability check using online database with a focus group-style “mirror”

The color indicates the coder. The check mark indicates a “focal company.” The lack of check mark means the company was mentioned but is not substantially discussed.

Christopher Stern's June 20 front-page story, "WorldCom Opponents in Sync," lifted the veil from the telecommunications industry-funded campaign to manipulate public opinion by using so-called public interest groups to carry a message to unsuspecting consumers. I challenge Issue Dynamics and Verizon Communications to answer these questions:

* Who will benefit by having one fewer competitor in the market?

* Will long-distance rates increase or decrease if MCI (WorldCom's new name) is put out of business?

* What will happen to the thousands of MCI workers thrown out on the street if the company is shuttered?

The looting at WorldCom harmed investors; now let's not let it affect consumers, too. Instead of spending millions on a campaign to rid itself of a competitor, the industry should lower rates for consumers and challenge MCI to match those rates. That would be in the "public interest."

CHARLOTTE NEWTON

Chevy Chase

Select Companies in Article:

Company:	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 3	Coder 4	Coder 5
MCI WORLDCOM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VERIZON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ISSUE DYNAMICS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is the article more about the compan(y|ies) or about the issue, both, or neither?

☐ Compan(y|ies)

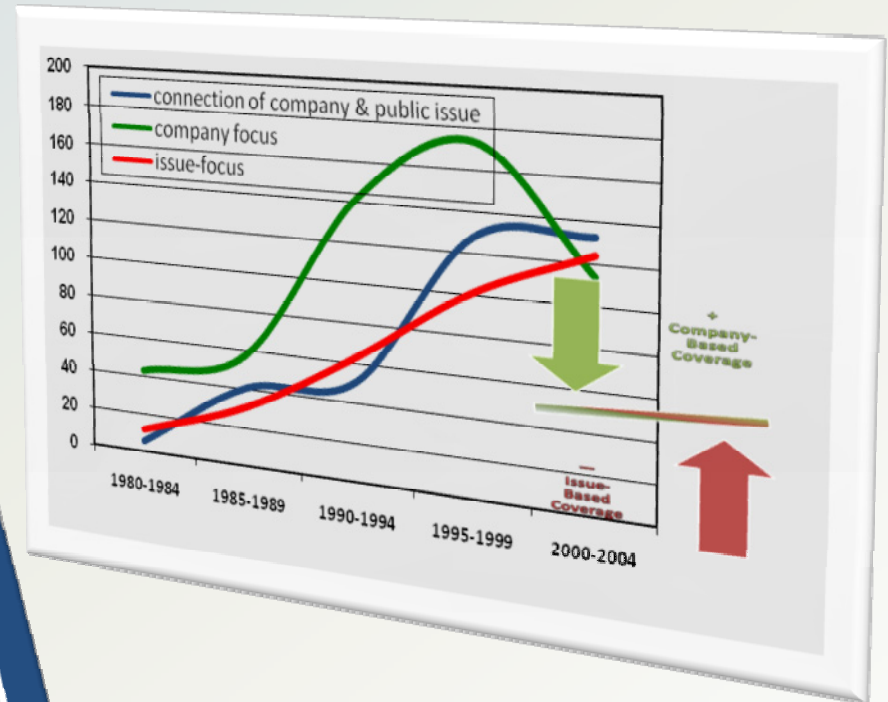
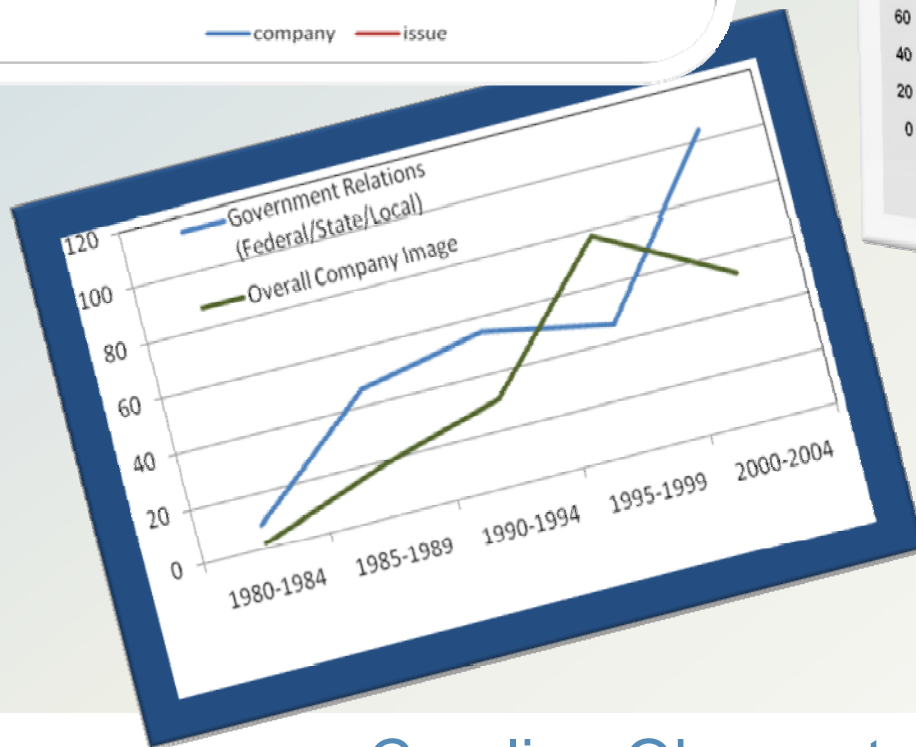
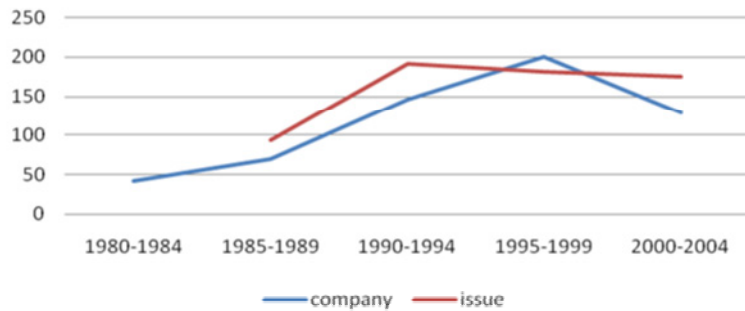
☐ Issue

☐ Both 

☐ Neither



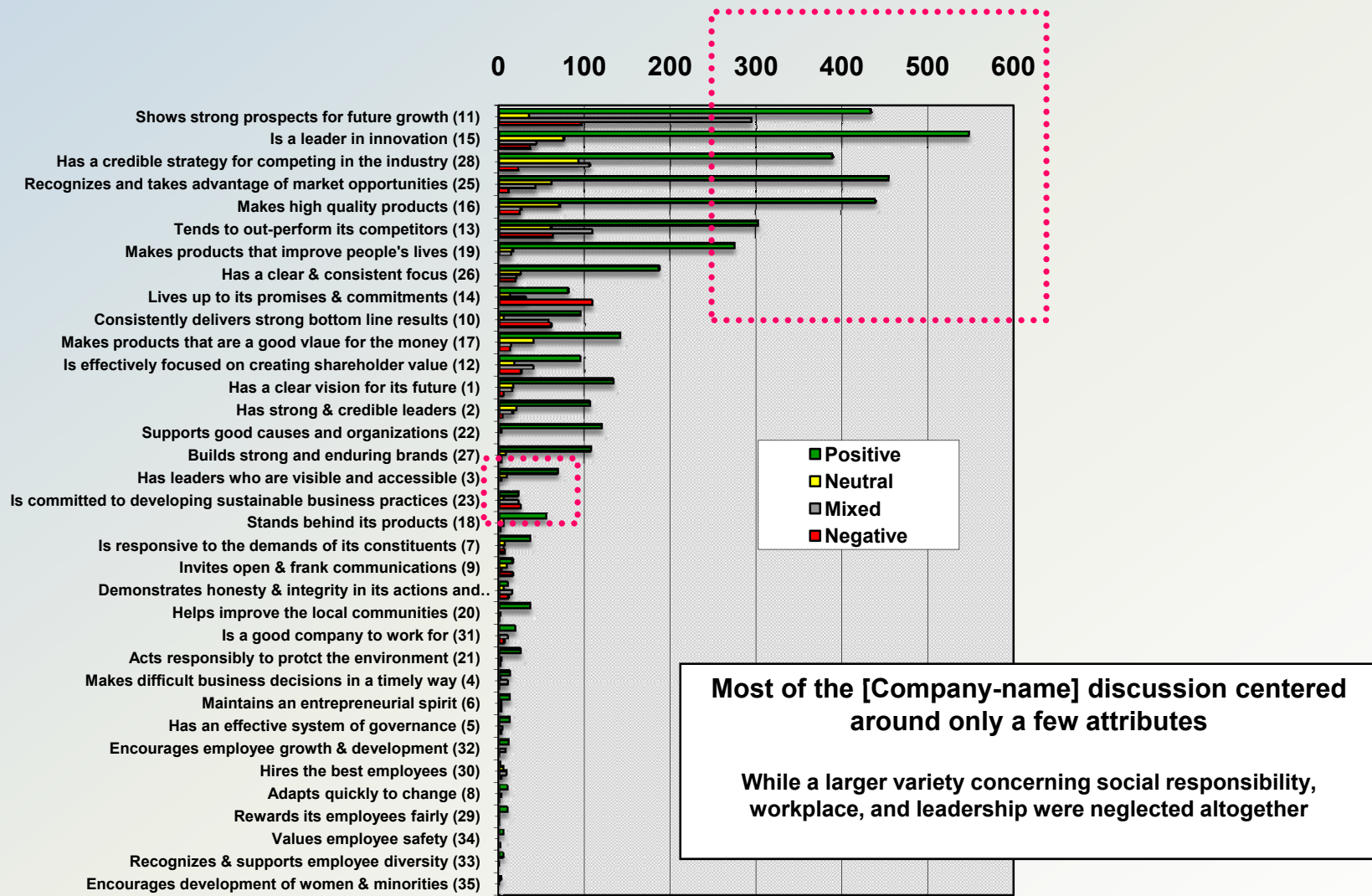
A Declining Focus on Companies; More on Public Issues



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Projective coding can be used to benchmark a organization's news coverage against its core values.



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Using a database of analyzed news & editorials,
means that we can examine different rhetorical strategies

News Outlet

Wall Street
Journal

USA Today

New York
Times

Washington
Post

Letters to Editor in response to news connecting companies to the
public interest,
written by...

Company
CEO or PR

3rd Party
Pro-Company

3rd Party Anti-
Company

Published in the section...

Front
Page

Front
Pg.
Business
Section

Business
Section

Editorial

Letters
to Editor

Advertorial



How Much Response-Time Does the Letters' Editor Give for Responding?

Letters Written
by Constituents

Letters Written
by Company
Representatives

Original
Content

?
Original
Content

1-5 Days

X

5-10
Days

5-10
Days

10 Days
to One
Month

10 Days
to One
Month

1-2
Months

X

To What Types of Content Are Company-Related Letters to the Editor Published?

Letters Written
by Constituents

Front
Page

Other
News
Page

Front
Page
Business

Feature
Article

Editorial

Letter
to the
Editor

Column

Guest
Contributor

Advertorial

Letters Written
by Company
Representatives

X

Other
News
Page

X

X

Editorial

Letter
to the
Editor

Column

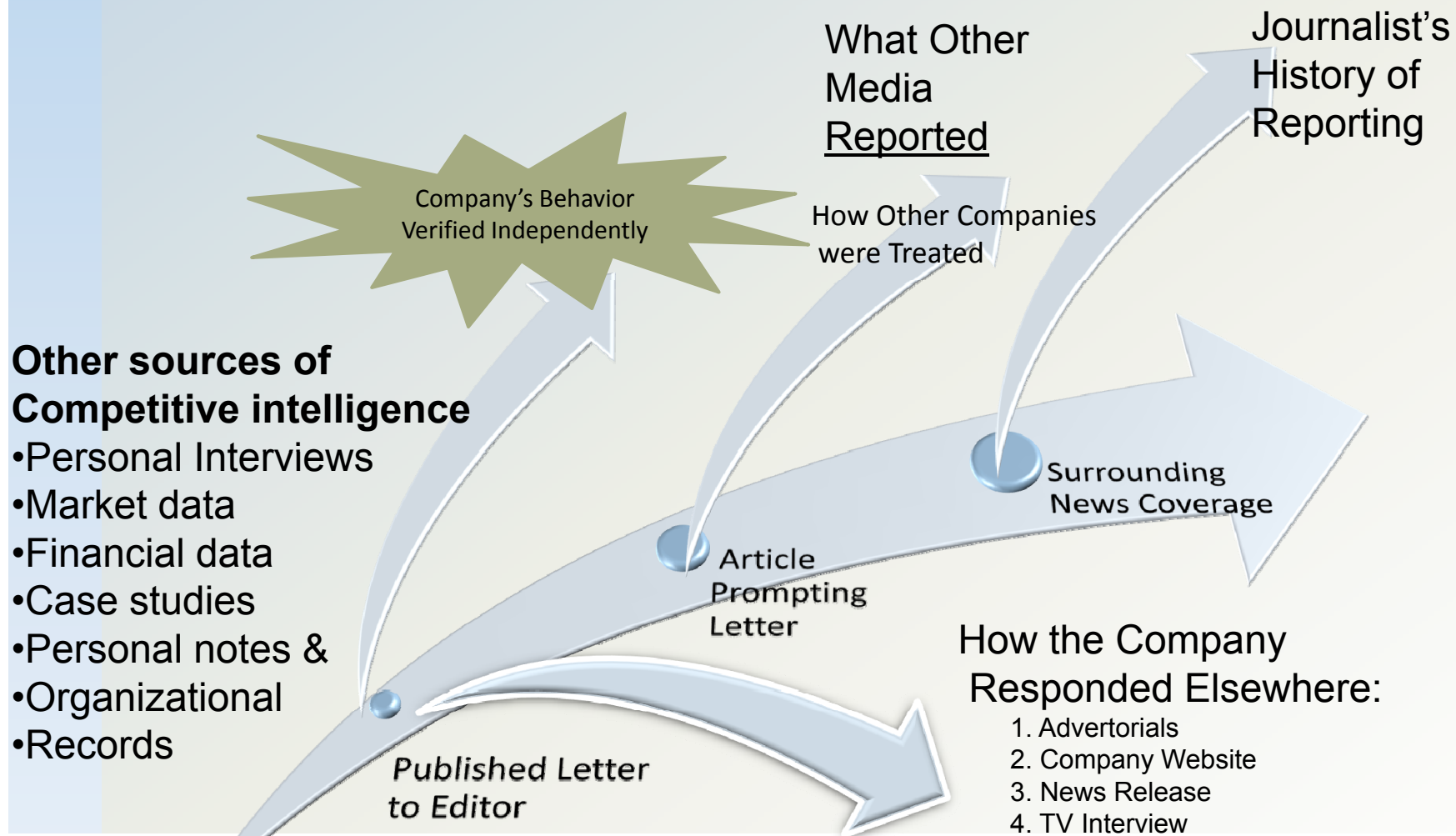
Guest
Contributor

Advertorial

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A data based approach means we can link our data (news & editorials) to other data sources...



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Through additional methods, we can link our news & editorial coverage to other sources of data that are relevant to the case at hand.



THE NEW YORK TIMES **FORUM** SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 1991

The Failures of A.T.&T Strategies

from the sale of products is product business seems and keen competitors. Shareholders vision of A business making

Robert E. Allen
550 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

OCTOBER 28, 1991

Dear Mr. Noll,

YOU MAY ENJOY SEEING YOUR NAME IN PRINT, AND OPINING ABOUT THE RECENT NETWORK FAILURE, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU HAVE THIS ONE DEAD WRONG!

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NCR ACQUISITION AND OUR ATTENTION TO OUR CORE NETWORK.

YOU DO HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPRESS A VIEWPOINT, BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO GET SOME FACTS THE NEXT TIME.

Sincerely,
R.E. Allen

First, it divested the long business. Now, making a mistake its raid on NCR.

international facsimile, and custom- services for residential and small- omers. Given its apparent losses, the ness should be sold or divested. y into financial and other nontele- service areas seems to make care.

be a candidate for acquisition. If acquired, management could be product business divested. The would double in value.

the premier long-distance net- a telecommunications service with a bargain price. Clearly, unication service is its ould build on that. Theodore the Bell System, had vision ance service as the key future. His vision is still, if rasping A. I. & I. 3 future for another Vail to show y.

A. Michael Noll, of A.T.&T., is on a School for Commun California, where as

Illustration by P. F. Payer



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Director: C

Journalism and Mass Communication, Carroll Hall, Chapel Hill NC 27599-3365

utation



On July 29, 1994, when a journalist for The New York Times, Gina Kolata, took remarks from an interview John had given her four months earlier on a completely different subject and put it in a page-one article about the possible conflict of interest that Merck, a pharmacy benefits management organization recently acquired by Merck, would henceforth face in handling prescriptions for patients. The powerful last paragraph of the article had the reporter writing "Mr. Doorley of Merck said critics have to consider the drug industry's point of view. Something has to be done to restore profits." The remarks were not printed as a direct quote but they appeared to have been written to produce that effect. Doorley had made such remarks—at least remarks to that effect—in an entirely different context, but when used in the July 29 article, they buttressed the conflict-of-interest theme and made Merck look like it put profits before patients. John and Merck appeared callous and greedy.

The New York Times refused to publish John's letter to the editor, even though he spoke with editors there and explained what had happened. He received a letter, dated August 17, from news editor William Borders: "As to the quotation from you with which the article ended, you don't seem to dispute that you said what she (Kolata) said you said, only the context. I am afraid I cannot agree. There is nothing wrong with using in July a quotation from an interview four months earlier, so long as the context is fair, and in this case I think it is. You were talking about the need for Merck to be more profitable, and certainly the Merck arrangement moves toward that goal."

John subsequently realized that this newspaper journalism (unlike national Public radio, for example) week.)

The New York Times
WILLIAM BORDERS
News Editor

JOHN DOORLEY
Aug 2 5 1994

August 17, 1994

Mr. John Doorley
Executive Director
Corporate Communications
Merck & Co., Inc.
One Merck Drive
P. O. Box 100, Kenilworth,
NJ 07033-0100

Dear Mr. Doorley:

Gina Borders has asked me to reply to your letter about Gina Kolata's July 29 article. I apologize for the delay in this response. But I wanted to look into the matter thoroughly, and that took time.

The article did not say or imply that drug companies were motivated solely by profits, to use your phrase. Indeed, it seems to me that it went due to its way at several points to credit the companies with other, more altruistic goals like the development of databases that benefit patients and the development of a drug.

In discussing the Merck-Medco connection, the reporter quoted people, including you, who defended the arrangement. It also quoted people, by name, who opposed it. In this, the piece followed generally accepted journalistic procedures.

As to the quotation from you with which the article ended, you don't seem

[2]
to dispute that you said what she said you said, only the context. I am afraid I cannot agree. There is nothing wrong with using in July a quotation from an interview four months earlier, so long as the context is fair, and in this case I think it is. You were talking about the need for Merck to be more profitable, and certainly the Merck arrangement moves toward that goal.

I hope this letter does not seem dismissive or arrogant. The New York Times takes the integrity of our news columns very seriously, as recognizes that correcting our mistakes is crucial to that integrity. It's just that in this case I do not see anything to correct.

Best regards,

William Borders

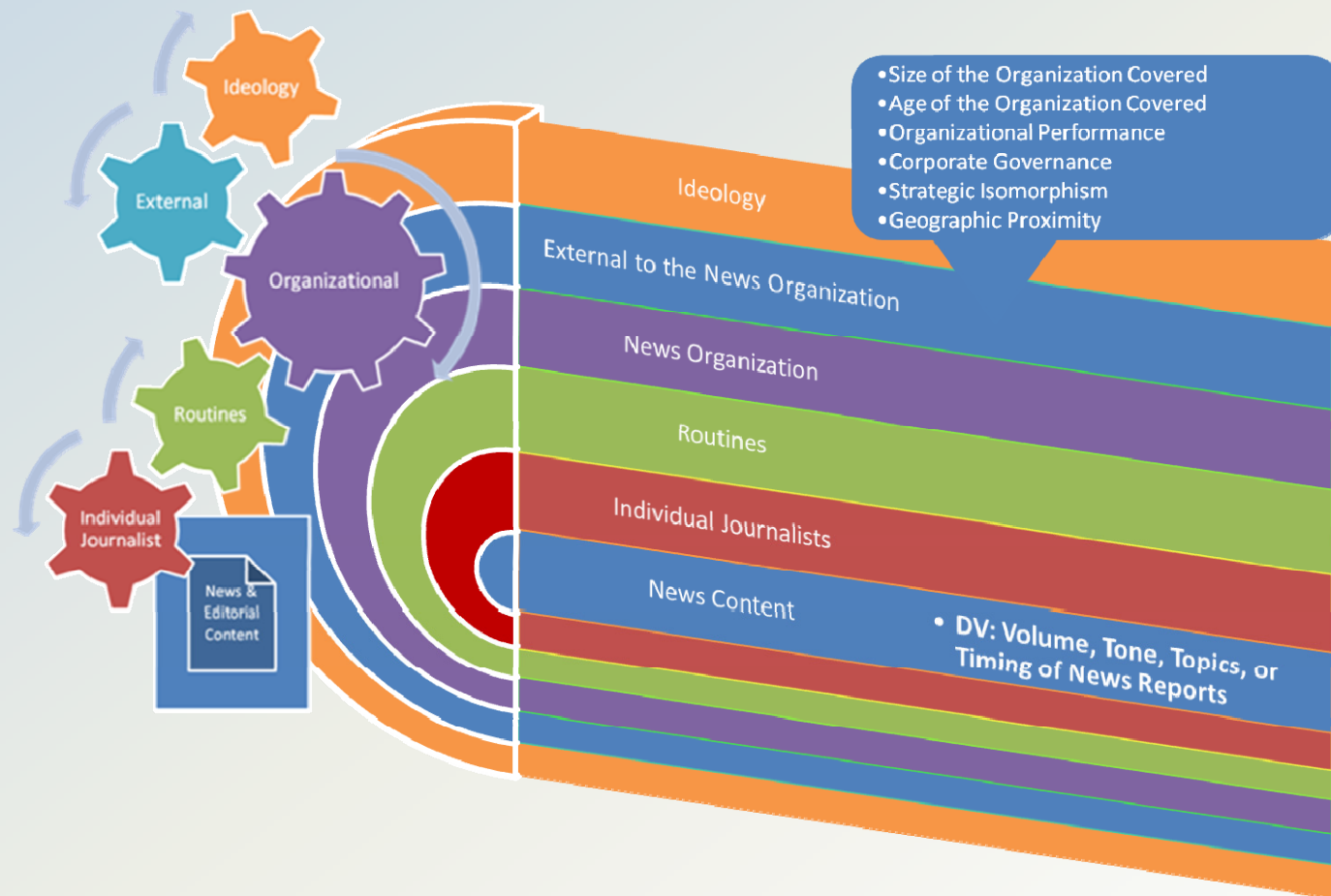
John Doorley and Helio Fred Garcia (2006). Reputation Management: The Key to Successful Public Relations and Corporate Communications.(pp. 79-80). New York: Taylor & Francis Group. Used by permission.

Carolina Observations

Director: Craig Carroll, Assistant Professor, UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication



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24,000 U.S. & International News Sources

- ❑ Pre-screened database includes the major wires, TV and radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers, trade journals, and magazines, in 18 languages and from 107 countries.

7,000 Government Sources

- ❑ Government websites from the U.S. government, all 50 states, and the European Union. We also scan the Federal Register and the registers of 39 states.

1,800 Policy Sources

- ❑ Websites of state, regional, and national think tanks, trade associations and advocacy groups.

250,000 Blogs

- ❑ Weblogs (blogs), including those focused on politics, news and technology.



Purpose

- To build a body of knowledge about public relations and corporate reputation that assists in the social, moral and economic development of North Carolina.



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Carolina Companies

- We have selected 100 North Carolina companies that we will be monitoring on an ongoing basis:
 - Fortune 1000 companies HQ'ed in NC
 - Fortune 50 with a significant presence in NC
 - Foreign companies with U.S. affiliates HQ
 - Private Companies

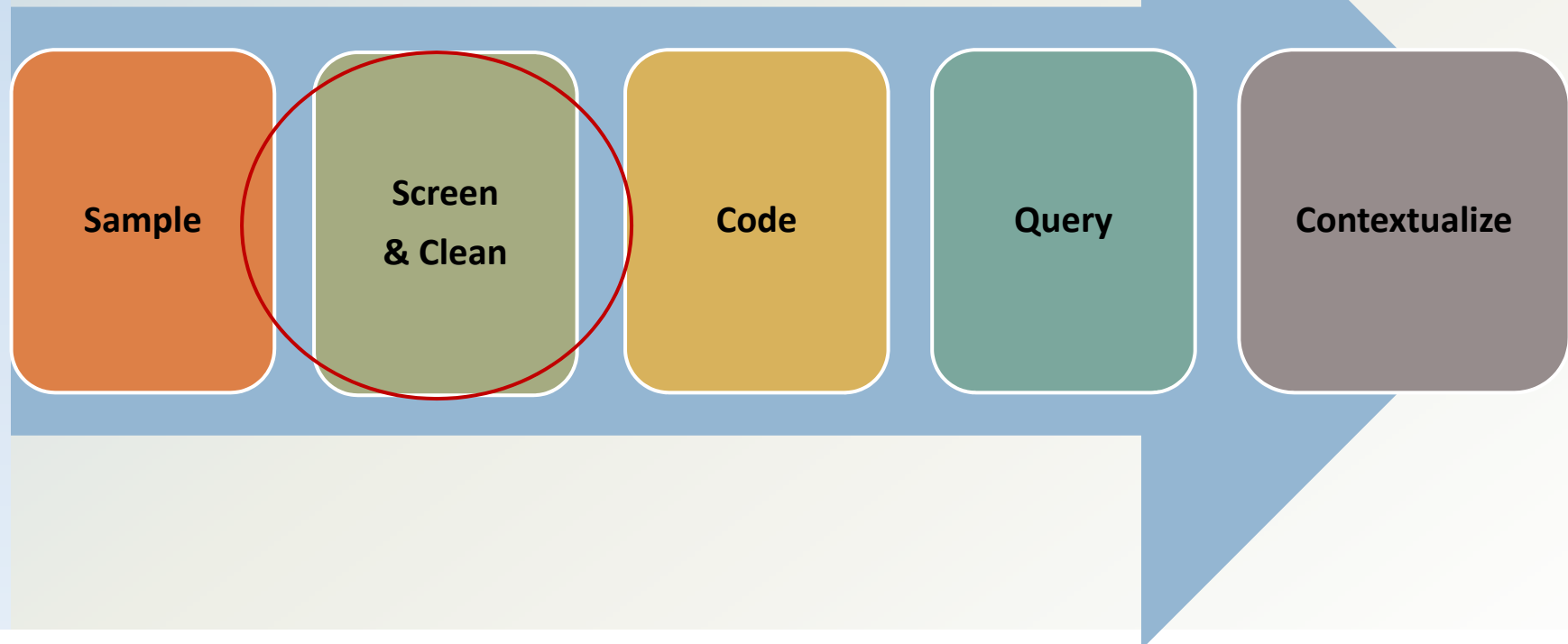


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Media Reputation 2.0

Returning to our methodology, contextualizing, querying are fine.



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OCR Membership Roster Fall 2008



Officer	Role	Students	Year
King, Marianna	Senior Editor	Lee, Sun Young	2nd Year Ph.D. Student
Sarah Frazier	Events	Huang, Nell	1st Year Ph.D. Student
Natalie Williams	Asst. Director, Undergraduate Research		
Josh Criscoe	Webmaster	May-Lynne Chen-Contino	Senior
Stephanie Nobles	Historian	Becca Denison	Senior
		CC Glenn	Senior
		Lauren Knight	Senior
		Tyler Williams	Senior
		Kellie Bennett	Junior
		Ariel Cochrane-Brown	Junior
		Meredith Cook	Junior
		Kelsey Crews	Junior
		Annie Ellis	Junior
		Kelcie Glass	Junior
		Leslie Gray	Junior
		Jennifer Mabe	Junior

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The OCR Coding Team Fall 2008

16 Media Analysts (Interns)

Officers

Natalie Williams, Asst. Director of Undergraduate Research

Meredith Cook, Intern

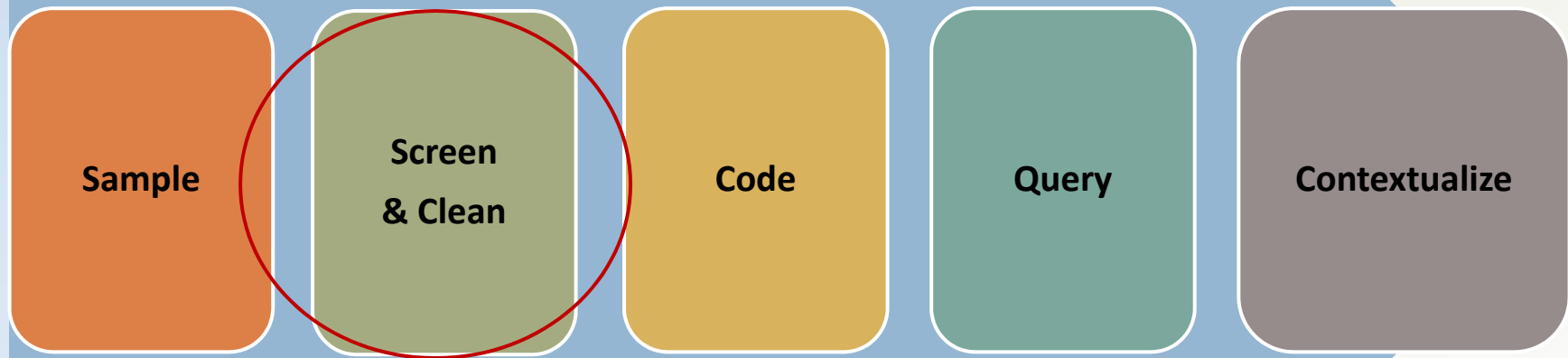
Media Analysts	Major
Miles Cotton	History, Geography, City and Regional Planning
Shirley Delgado	Sociology
Whitney Garrison	History, JOMC-Public Relations
William Green	JOMC-Electronic Communication
Jordan Harris	JOMC-Advertising
Madison Hipp	JOMC-Public Relations
Kelsey Jackson	JOMC - Electronic Communication
Laura Jones	JOMC-Public Relations
Morgan Marshall-Clark	History, Political Science
Amber Kepley	JOMC-Public Relations
J. Sawyer Lucy	Economics, Sociology
Juan Camilo Mendez	History
Emilie Moseley	JOMC-Advertising
Anna Loeschner	JOMC-Public Relations
Jenny Scholl	JOMC-Advertising
KT Wall	JOMC-Public Relations
Emily Widle	JOMC-Advertising

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Media Reputation 2.0

Our limitations: screening and cleaning.



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You can access your clips online at <http://my.customscoop.com>

3930 clips clips have been indexed since Thursday, August 14th at 8:00 AM ET.

Wachovia Corporation	1767
Bank of America Corporation	1437
Lowe's	300
Duke Energy	250

[BB\(and\)T](#)

[Nucor](#)

[Goodrich](#)

[Progress Energy](#)

[VF Corporation](#)

[Reynolds American](#)

[Commscope](#)

[Sonic Automotive](#)



You can access your clips online at <http://my.customscoop.com>

4901 clips clips have been indexed since Friday, August 15th at 8:00 AM ET.

Wachovia Corporation	3151
Bank of America Corporation	990
Lowe's	468
Duke Energy	265
BB(and)T	115
Progress Energy	43
Goodrich	33
Nucor	33
Reynolds American	16
VF Corporation	8
Commscope	6
Sonic Automotive	3

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Limitations

1. 20 Portals to capture daily news content about 150 companies (fine).
2. 7-Day Window for downloading content.
3. Requires daily .xls downloading across the 20 accounts. We can use Heritrix to download content.
4. The Screening and Cleaning