

# In Crisis, UK Consumers Trust Established Organizations for Information

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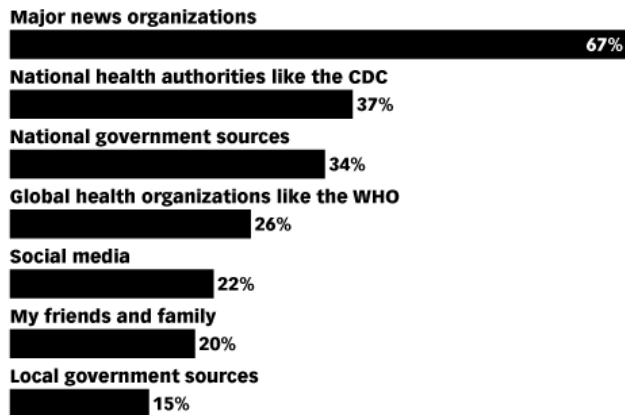
**Bill Fisher**

**D**igital media and the spread of misinformation often go hand in hand, and as the coronavirus pandemic takes hold in the UK, consumers are turning to tried-and-true methods of acquiring necessary information. With a less splintered and partisan media than in the US, the BBC and other traditional media continue to be go-to information sources.

According to a March 2020 report from [Edelman](#), 67% of UK adults are getting their coronavirus information from major news organizations.

### Where Are UK Adults Getting Most of Their Information About Coronavirus?

% of respondents, March 2020



Note: among respondents who have heard of the coronavirus  
Source: Edelman, "2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report: Trust and the Coronavirus," March 18, 2020

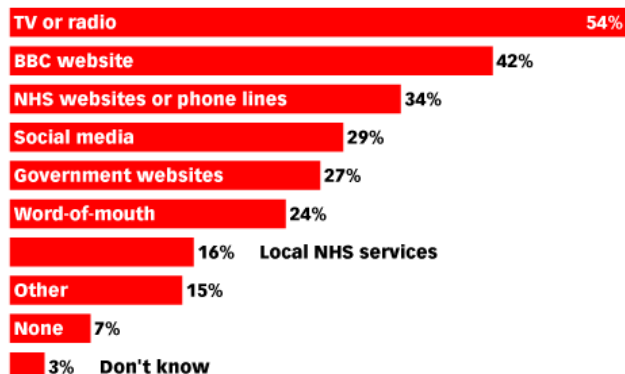
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Separate data from [YouGov](#) and [The Sunday Times](#) shows that nearly half (42%) of adults in Great Britain turn to the BBC's website for coronavirus information. The majority of respondents said they turn to TV or radio, and social media was used by less than a third.

### Which Sources Have Adults in Great Britain Used to Get Information About the Coronavirus?

% of respondents, March 2020



Note: ages 18+  
Source: YouGov and The Sunday Times, March 16, 2020

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BBC's website may be a digital medium, but its roots are in the traditional, and as part of the public service broadcaster's media properties, it is viewed as a trusted source by UK consumers. In a

separate survey conducted by [Havas Media Group](#) cited by [Campaign Live](#), 64% of individuals in Great Britain said the BBC is a reliable source of information.

The role that the BBC plays in the UK's media landscape is significant. Funded by a license fee, the corporation's media footprint covers everything from national *and* local TV and radio, to most-all digital properties—all without advertising. It's stated mission is "to act in the public interest, serving all audiences through the provision of impartial, high-quality and distinctive output and services which inform, educate and entertain."

That impartiality clearly engenders trust in the output, unlike the partisanship displayed across news networks in the US, for example. A [Gallup](#) survey published in September 2019 found that just 41% of US adults trusted newspaper, radio and TV media to report news accurately and fairly.

But while a heavily-BBC-influenced media retains a good degree of trust among UK consumers, social media platforms are viewed with more skepticism, particularly when it comes to news coverage. A November 2019 survey from [Intuit Research](#) and [Norstat](#) asked UK internet users which sources they thought contained fake news. Facebook, Twitter and "other social networks" topped the list, with almost three-quarters of respondents citing Facebook as a conduit for fake news.

## Sources that Contain Fake News According to UK Internet Users, Nov 2019

% of respondents

	Great deal of fake news	Some fake news	Total
Facebook	35%	36%	71%
Twitter	33%	34%	67%
Other social networks (e.g., Instagram)	28%	40%	68%
Digital communities (e.g., reddit)	20%	46%	66%
Websites/apps that aggregate news from multiple sources	14%	40%	54%
Non-newspaper websites/apps	11%	37%	48%
Magazines	12%	34%	46%
Newspapers (via print or websites/apps)	9%	34%	43%
Word-of-mouth (family/friends/colleagues), in-person or by phone	20%	20%	40%
Word-of-mouth (family/friends/colleagues) —via email or messaging	10%	30%	40%
TV	6%	23%	29%
Radio	4%	17%	21%

Note: n=1,108 ages 18+

Source: Intuit Research and Norstat - UK, "Fake News Dividing Society"; eMarketer calculations, Dec 5, 2019

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Unsurprisingly, TV and radio were seen by much smaller proportions as carrying fake news — only single digits felt that either media carried a great deal of it. Traditional media may be on a downward curve in time spent and engagement rates, but they remain the trusted fallback for consumers searching for the facts. And in the current climate, facts are more important than ever.