



YOUNGSTOWN  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## Football Championship Report August 2016 – January 2017



prepared by **Agility** | PR Solutions



- **This report analyzes online and print sources for all relevant mentions of the Youngstown State Penguins football team, during the period August 2016 to January 2017, which included the team's run to the FCS championship game.**
- **2,103 print and online articles pertaining to the team were gathered and analyzed. Television broadcast listings in print and online content were removed from the analysis.**
- **The collected media was analyzed for several metrics including volume, coverage trend, equivalent advertising value (EAV), top regions, and top mentioned university players and personnel.**
- **Top outlets and top journalists were also analyzed using both article count and circulation to provide further insight into the Youngstown State Penguins' top stories.**



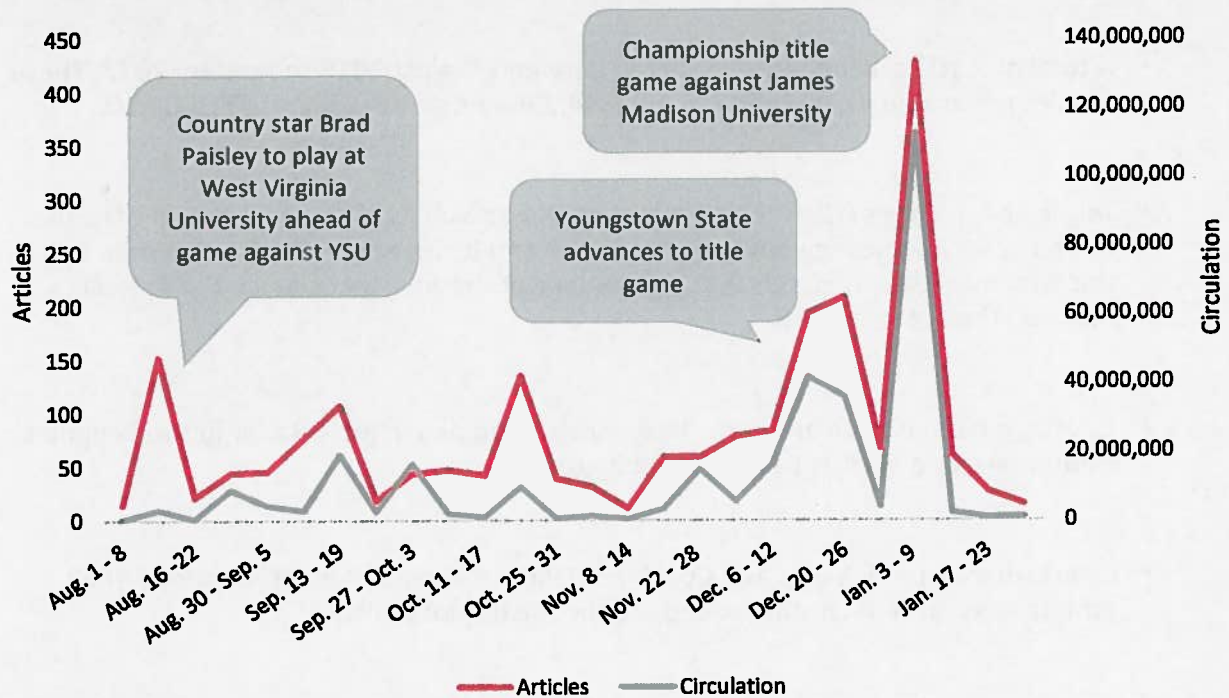
- A total of 2,103 articles were collected between August 2016 to January 2017. These articles generated a circulation of 307,844,296 and an ad value of \$7,306,910.
- Youngstown State's FCS title game against James Madison University generated the largest spike in coverage between January 3 and 9. Coverage often mentioned that this was Youngstown State's first appearance at the final game since Jim Tressel coached the team in 1999.
- Coverage was also driven by an "insane catch" made by Kevin Rader in the Penguins' semi-final game against Eastern Washington.
- Quarterback Hunter Wells and Coach Bo Pelini received the most mentions of all athletes and staffers. Both also topped the most quoted list.
- Local newspaper *The Vindicator* produced the most articles, focusing on fan support for the Penguins. *Yahoo! News's* coverage of the title game had the largest reach of all outlets.
- AP's John Raby and Steven Hawkins authored the most articles, partly due to syndication of their *Associated Press* stories. Marc Tracy of *The New York Times* was the journalist with the largest reach, reaching a circulation of 17,633,353.
- Ohio and its neighbouring states produced the most coverage from a regional standpoint.



Articles: 2,103

Circulation: 307,884,296

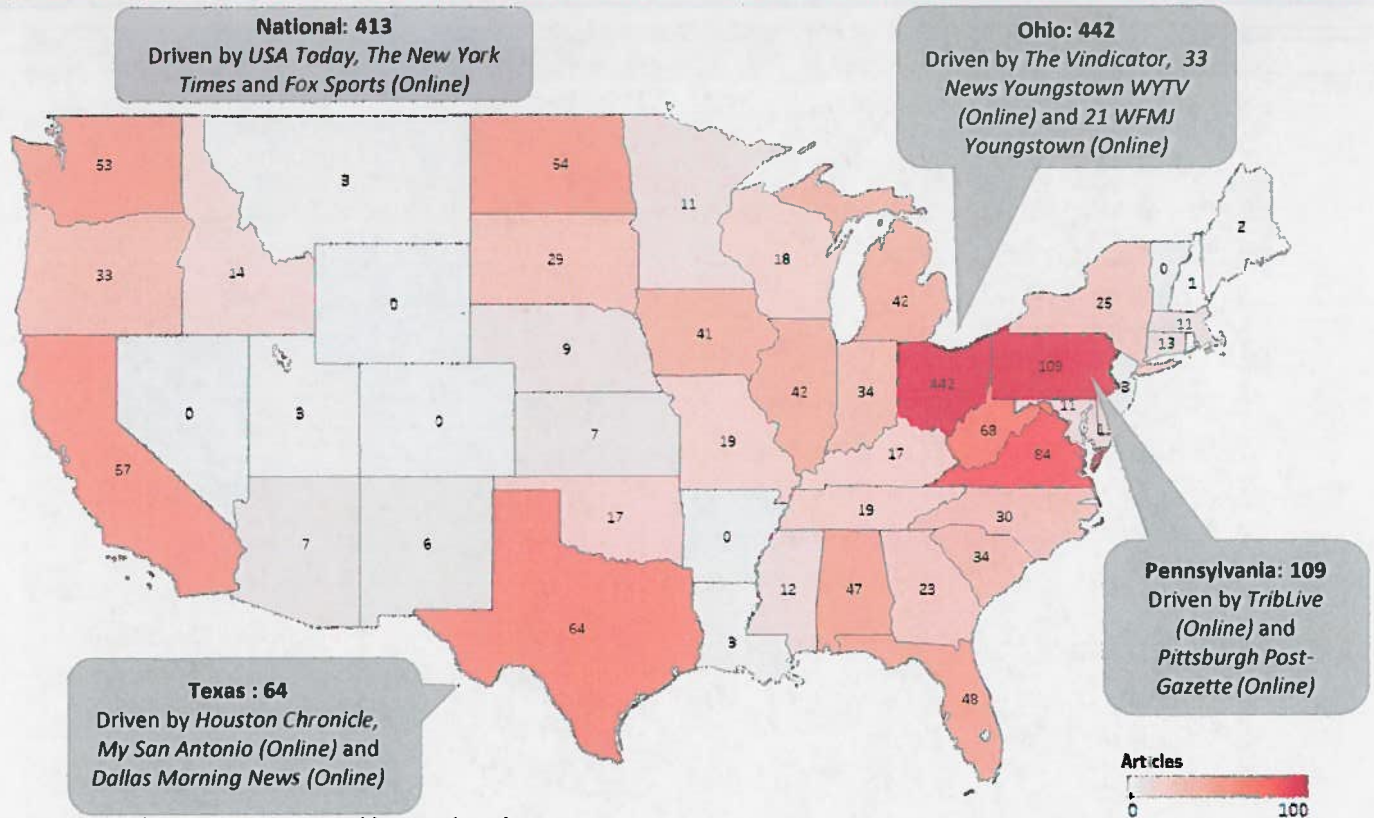
EAV: \$7,306,910



- Youngstown State's football team received the most coverage between January 3 and 9, at the time of the team's championship title match against James Madison University. During this time, 406 articles covered the FCS title game ("James Madison plays Youngstown State for FCS title" in *Washington Post (Online)*, Jan. 6).
- While James Madison took the title, 125 of these articles mentioned that this was Youngstown's first title game since 1999 ("Penguins' run at first title since 1999 falls short" in *Kent Record-Courier(Online)*, Jan. 8).
- There was also a bump in coverage leading up to the title game. Of this coverage, 177 articles focused on Youngstown's win over Eastern Washington, which allowed the team to advance to the title game.
- Many of these articles focused on the "insane catch" by Youngstown's Kevin Rader that helped win the game ("Youngstown State wins FCS semi on insane catch" in *CBS Sports (Online)*, Dec. 17).
- Coverage was also high between October 18 and 24 when 72 outlets republished an *Associated Press* story on Youngstown State's game against South Dakota State.



Story	Publications	Articles	EAV
Youngstown State's Kevin Rader makes winning catch against Eastern Washington	<i>NCAA Sports, NBC Sports Network and The New York Times</i>	188	\$608,753
James Madison suspends seven ahead of title berth	<i>Boston Herald (Online), The Associated Press and Fox Sports (Online)</i>	155	\$526,240
Youngstown State plays James Madison in title game	<i>The Washington Post (Online), San Francisco Chronicle (Online) and The Associated Press</i>	71	\$254,214
James Madison wins title game against Youngstown State	<i>Yahoo! News, Boston Herald and The Associated Press</i>	32	\$221,558
West Virginia enters bye week hoping to fix defensive lapses	<i>Miami Herald (Online), Fresno Bee (Online) and Boston Herald (Online)</i>	79	\$212,981
Youngstown plays against Jacksonville state	<i>Fox Sports (Online) and TribLive (Online)</i>	33	\$126,953

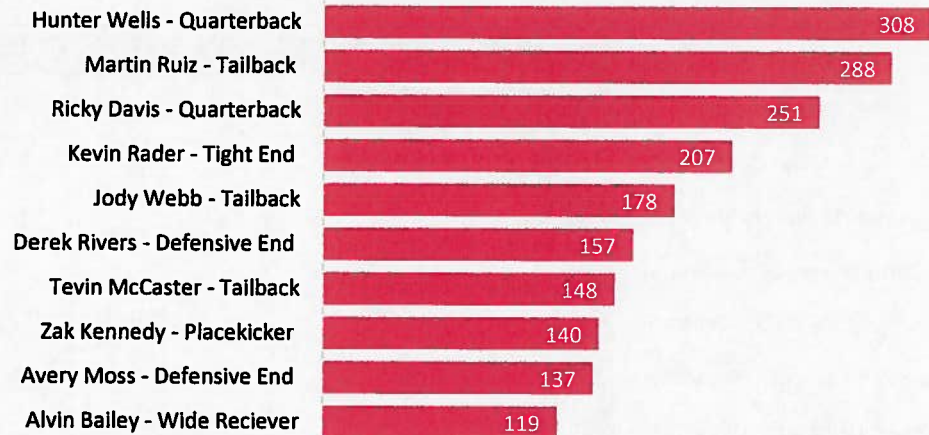


Regional coverage measured by article volume

- Ohio was the top region with 402 articles reaching approximately 6M people, driven largely by local online coverage. Many of these online sources were websites of broadcast outlets, such as *33 News Youngstown (Online)* and *21 WFMJ Youngstown (Online)*. Coverage focused on the support the team received from fans during the playoffs (“Road to Frisco: Wear Red Week continues at YSU to cheer on Penguins” in *21 WFMJ Youngstown (Online)*).
- Outlets reaching a national audience accounted for the second-highest article volume, with 413 articles reaching almost 196M. Half of these stories (207 articles) were related to the final game between James Madison and Youngstown State. Coverage of the title game appeared in *Yahoo! News*, *The Associated Press (Online)* and *CBS Sports (Online)*.
- Ohio’s neighbouring state, Pennsylvania, had the third-highest article volume with 109 articles reaching almost 5M. Shane Kuhn of Youngstown State was featured in a number of articles from this region. Kuhn is from Pennsylvania and articles featuring the tight end appeared in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Online)* and *TribLive (Online)*.
- Virginia had the fourth-highest coverage, with 56 out of 84 articles focusing on Youngstown’s title game against the state’s own James Madison University. West Virginia coverage was also focused on Youngstown’s game against a local university, as 61 out of 68 articles mentioned the West Virginia vs. Youngstown State game.

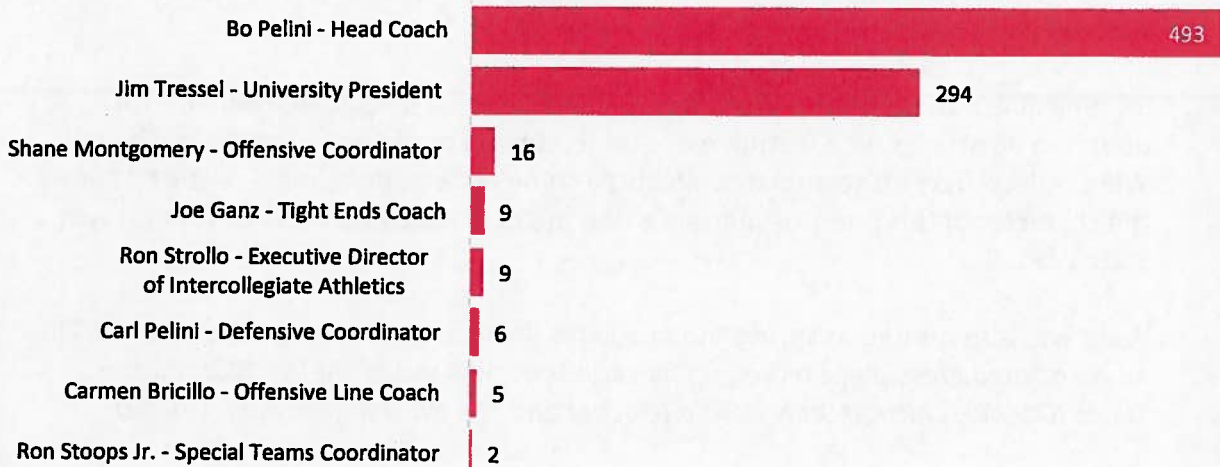


## Top Mentioned Athletes



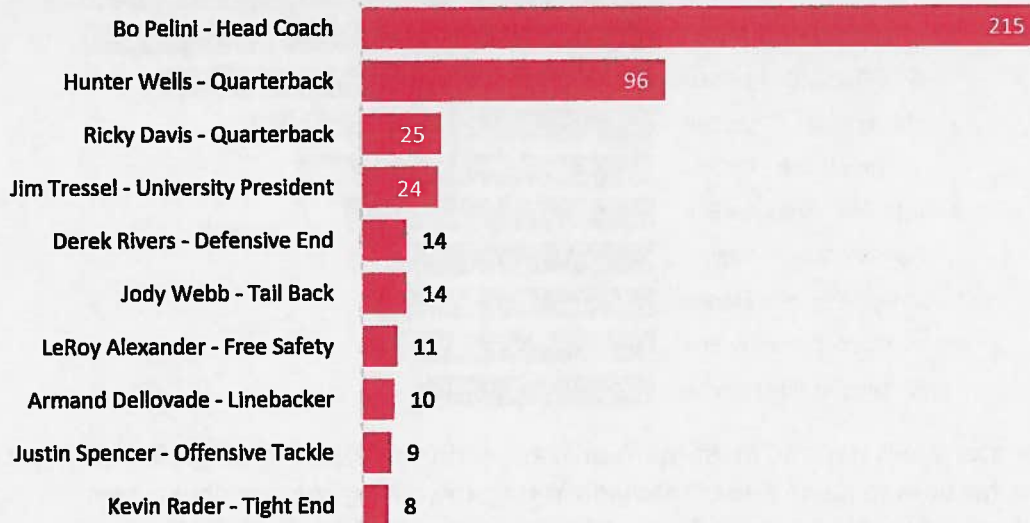
- Hunter Wells had the most mentions, appearing in 308 articles. Wells was mentioned for his pass to Kevin Rader that won Youngstown its game against Eastern Washington (“FireCollege Football” in *The New York Times*, Dec. 18).
- Martin Ruiz was the No. 2 player with mentions in 288 articles. He was most commonly mentioned for efforts in Youngstown’s game against South Dakota State (“South Dakota St. beats Youngstown St. 24-10” in *Sacramento Bee (Online)*, Oct. 22).
- Head Coach Bo Pelini was at the top of the personnel list, with 493 mentions. University President Jim Tressel was second with 294 mentions. Many articles reflected on how Tressel had led the Youngtown Penguins to the national championship four times during the 1990s (“YSU president recalls his first championship” in *Vindy.com*, Jan. 5).

## Top Mentioned Personnel





## Top Quoted

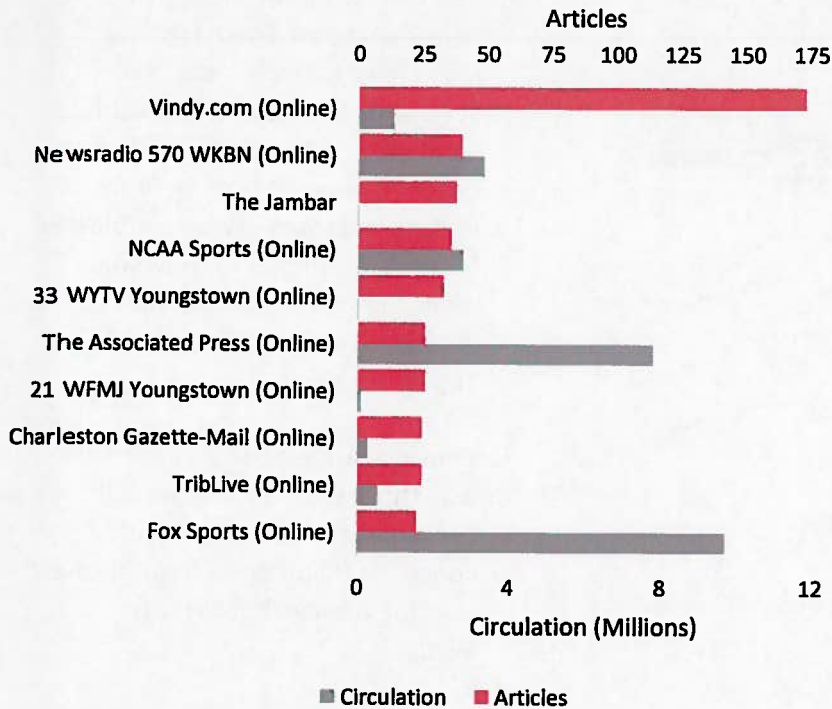


- Youngstown State Head Coach Bo Pelini was quoted in 215 articles during the study period. After winning against Eastern Washington, Pelini was quoted as saying “we had to overcome a lot...did enough to win the football game. That’s all that really matters” (“Bo Pelini moves closer to national title shot; Mount Union ousted from D3 playoffs” in *NBC Sports (Online)*, Dec. 11).
- Most of Pelini’s comments were related to challenges the team faced getting to the final game, but he was also quoted in reports of possible suspensions of Youngstown players for various transgressions, including firearms charges. Pelini was quoted as saying, “if there is discipline, for whatever reason, I don’t talk about it, I protect our kids. That’s how we go about our business here at YSU, and it’s always been my policy” (Pelini won’t confirm or deny possible player suspensions” in *Fox Sports (Online)*, Dec. 13).
- Starting quarterback Hunter Wells was the second most quoted individual, with quotes in 96 articles. In a feature piece on the team appearing in *Fox News (Online)*, Wells reflected on his teammates’ ability to come back from injuries, saying “it shows the character of this team” (“Special season might restore greatness at Youngstown State”, Jan. 8).
- Wells was also quoted as saying “no one cares if you almost win...you have to win” in an *Associated Press* piece picked up by various outlets including *The Washington Times (Online)*, *Chicago Daily Herald (Online)* and *The Washington Post (Online)*.



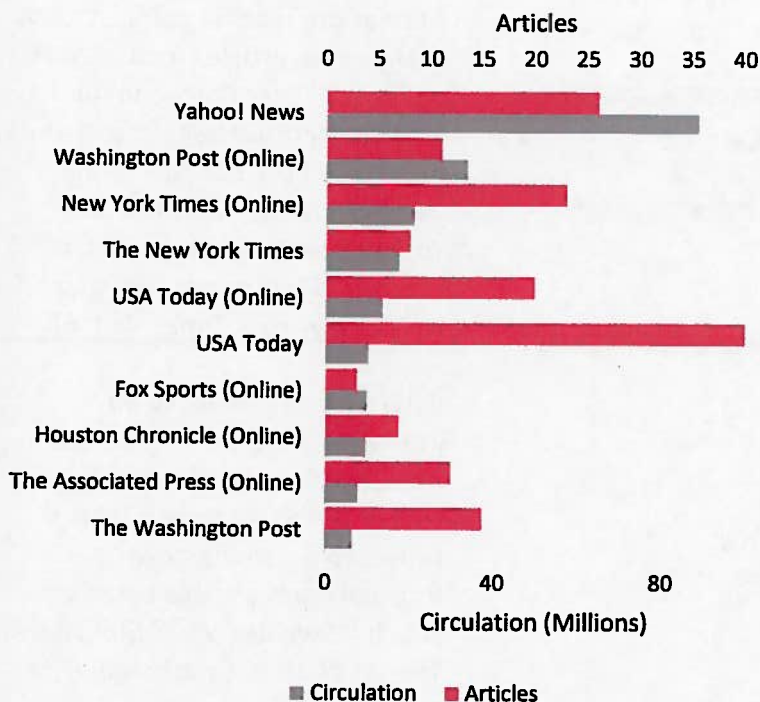


**Top Outlets (by articles)**



- Of the top outlets by article count, three were national outlets: *Fox Sports (Online)*, *The Associated Press (Online)* and *NCAA Sports (Online)*.
- *The Vindicator* was the top outlet by article count, publishing 173 articles. Many of these focused on the support the team received from fans ("Penguin pride evident at today's championship send-off rally for YSU football," Jan. 4).
- *NCAA Sports (Online)* was the top national publication with 36 articles. The majority of these provided coverage of the FCS quarterfinals ("FCS quarterfinals preview," Dec. 7).

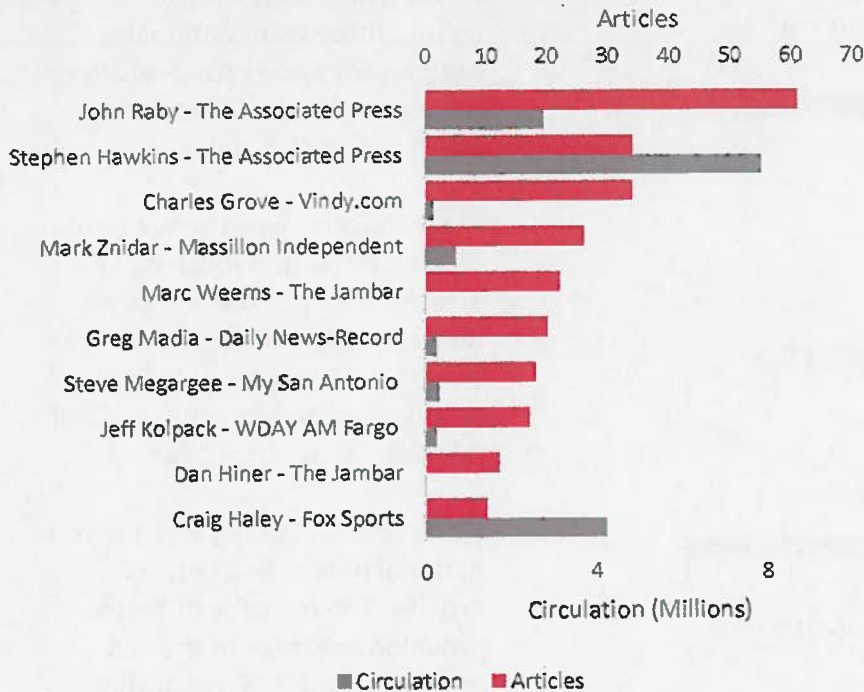
**Top Outlets (by circulation)**



- *Yahoo! News* was the top outlet by circulation, with its 26 articles reaching a potential readership of almost 89M people. The outlet's coverage focused on Youngstown's title game against James Madison ("FCS title is purple reign of James Madison," Jan. 7).
- *The Washington Post's* website had the second largest reach, with a circulation of almost 34M. Of the outlet's stories, four were *Associated Press* syndications ("No NDSU: James Madison plays Youngstown State for FCS title," Jan. 6).

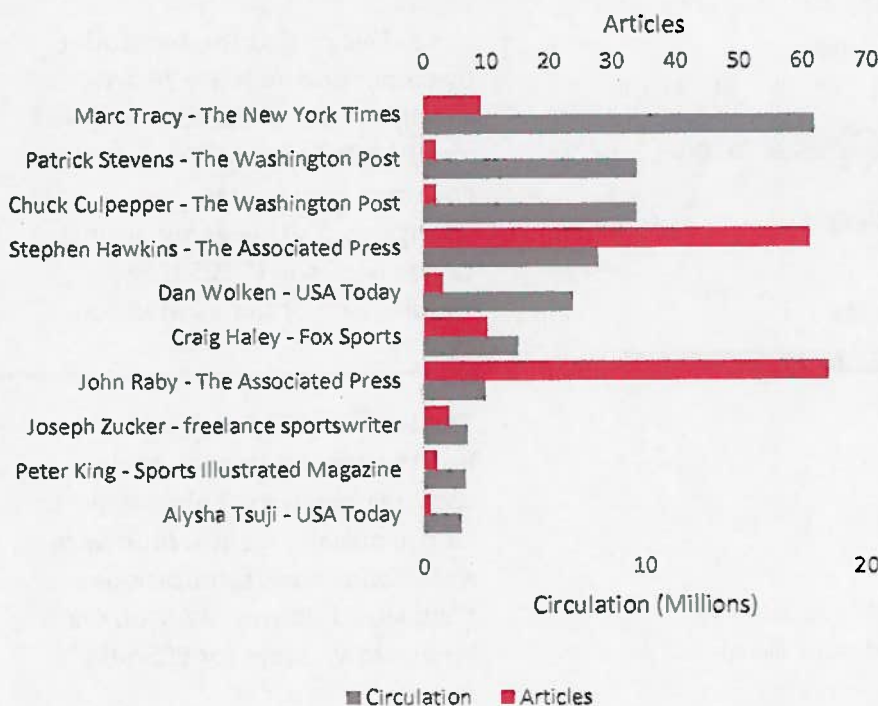


## Top Journalists (by articles)



- The top two journalists by article count write for *The Associated Press*, and had their stories syndicated across several outlets. John Raby's piece "West Virginia enters bye week hoping to fix defensive lapses" was republished 56 times, and Steven Hawkins's piece "James Madison plays Youngstown State for FCS title" appeared 52 times.
- Charles Grove of *The Vindicator* was third, with 34 articles. Of these articles, 26 mentioned coach Bo Pelini and 15 mentioned starting quarterback Hunter Wells.

## Top Journalists (by circulation)



- Marc Tracy of *The New York Times* was the top journalist by circulation, reaching almost 18M. Many of his articles focused on how the "Texas Bathroom Bill" could affect sporting events, and mentioned the FCS title game between James Madison and Youngstown ("Texas Could Lose Events if a Bathroom Bill Passes," in *The New York Times*, Jan. 6).
- Other articles featured an interview with Jim Tressel, the university's president and former coach. In this interview Tressel reflected on Youngstown's football team and his past as a coach ("Sweater Vest? Still There. Tressel's Itch to Coach Again? No Longer" in *The New York Times*, Nov. 27).



### **About Agility PR Solutions**

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