



C-SPAN at 34:

A Bi-Partisan, Politically Active Audience that Continues to Grow

An estimated 47 million people watch C-SPAN at least weekly

(*March 19, 2013—Washington, DC*) Thirty-four years ago today, the U.S. House of Representatives went on camera for the first time and was transmitted across the nation via a brand new cable television network, C-SPAN. Today, a new Hart Research survey conducted for the C-SPAN network demonstrates a user base that continues to grow, trends younger, and while politically diverse, is actively interested in politics.

Nearly a quarter (24%) of people with cable or satellite subscriptions -- an estimated 47 million adults - report watching C-SPAN *at least* once a week, a four-point increase since Hart Research's last quadrennial survey of the C-SPAN audience. Hart Research lead pollster Allan Rivlin says, "This growth in C-SPAN viewership, especially among the youngest groups, is surprising in this time of generalized media fragmentation but it is not so mysterious in that C-SPAN offers the emerging group of information free-agents access to the raw uncut coverage of their political heroes, and sometimes perhaps their villains, they can then share on blogs and social networks."

C-SPAN Viewer Demographics

Among regular (past-week) C-SPAN viewers, Hart Research data report that the C-SPAN audience is 51% male and 49% female; 47% are college graduates. Viewership is highest among the 18- to 49-year-old demographic, with 28% reporting having watched at least once a week, compared with 19% for 50- to 64-year-olds. Twenty-two percent (22%) of frequent viewers are above age 65.

C-SPAN Viewers Demonstrate Their Political Interest and Involvement

C-SPAN's public affairs programming is now available in nearly 100 million cable/satellite households nationwide. Nearly half (47%) of cable/satellite viewers participating in this Hart survey report having watched C-SPAN at some time in the past six months. As consistently reported in past surveys of the C-SPAN audience, C-SPAN viewers are politically active, with 89% of them telling Hart researchers they voted in the 2012 presidential election.

In further measures of the political activity of C-SPAN viewers:

- 43% have watched their Member of Congress or home state U.S. Senator on C-SPAN
- 35% have written or e-mailed their member of Congress, senator, or local elected official
- 31% have contributed money to a political campaign
- 22% have visited or talked in person with their member of Congress or Senator
- 15% have actively campaigned for a congressional, senatorial, or presidential candidate

C-SPAN viewers also are using social and new media tools to participate politically. Nearly a third (27%) report connecting with a political campaign/group through a social networking site, and a similar 28% say they've shared political videos by uploading or linking them to a Web site.

The survey also demonstrates that C-SPAN continues to attract an ideologically diverse audience, reflecting public affairs content that appeals across the political spectrum. Twenty-six percent (26%) of all C-SPAN viewers describe themselves as "liberal," 31% as "conservative," and 39% as "moderate."

C-SPAN's Value: Nearly Three-Quarters Say C-SPAN Has "Made A Difference" in Americans' Views of Politics

Seventy-two percent (72%) of all C-SPAN viewers say the network has made a difference during its 34-year history in the way Americans view politics and current events. While a small proportion (5%) believe C-SPAN's coverage has "made things worse," more than 11 times as many (59%) believe C-SPAN has *improved* the way Americans view politics. And, eighty-nine percent (89%) of C-SPAN viewers describe the network as a "valuable resource" (up four percentage points from the 2009 Hart survey).

Asked to name what C-SPAN programming they like best, C-SPAN viewers cited these as the top three:

- 1) Presidential election coverage (59%)
- 2) House congressional coverage (47%)
- 3) Senate congressional coverage (47%)

METHODOLOGY: The nationwide telephone/Internet survey was conducted Jan. 10 to 17, 2013, by Hart Research Associates among 1,229 American consumers with cable or satellite subscriptions or who use the Internet to watch videos. Results are reported among 1,142 cable and satellite subscribers. The margin of error for the cable or satellite subscribers ± 2.9 percentage points for the national sample, and ± 3.8 points among 645 C-SPAN viewers.

About C-SPAN: Created by the cable TV industry and now in nearly 100 million TV households, C-SPAN programs three public affairs television networks in both SD and HD; C-SPAN Radio, heard in Washington DC and nationwide via XM Satellite Radio; and a video-rich website which hosts the C-SPAN Video Library. Visit <http://www.c-span.org/>.