

A time to make friends ...

... without news value:

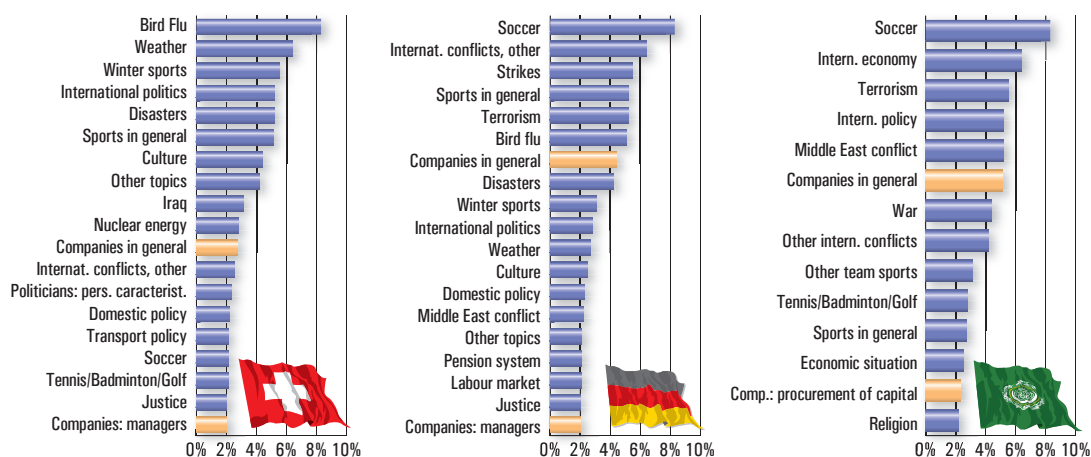
Company coverage in Swiss television

The World Economic Forum in Davos is a challenge of a particular kind for the Swiss media: Within less than a week, the key people from almost all the significant companies in the world arrive there. For journalists, this is a one-time occasion to analyze where the local economy stands in comparison to the Global Players, regarding management, organizational structures, IT applications, research and development. At the same time one can look at the media's relationship to businesses, since journalists are able to get first-hand interviews with the CEOs of Google, Microsoft, Mittal Steel or Siemens, instead of covering them from far away.

In order to approach the question whether or not such a big event has an influence on a mass medium, the television news of the Swiss channel **DRS** were analyzed for a few weeks before and after the mega-event in Davos. The first graph shows that, despite the event, compared to the newscasts of the German **ARD (Tagesthemen)** or that of **Al Jazeera**, the **Swiss Tagesschau** does not attribute a particular importance to the companies. Its share of a little more than 4% is significantly lower than that in the German television news or the news program of **Al Jazeera**. Editors of both stations offer a third more space for economic developments.

Those who expected that Swiss journalists would use their Davos home field advantage for a stronger focus on foreign companies, are proven wrong when looking at **graph 2**: There was no foreign company among the Top-10-companies presented in the Swiss television news program between mid-January and mid-March, although, aside from the WEF in Davos, two more events of news value took place. The yearly automobile exposition in Geneva could have suggested an increased interest by Swiss TV journalists in companies such as General Motors/Opel, whose European headquarters happens to be in Zurich. And the CeBIT in Hanover, along with Bill Gates' yearly presence in Davos, might have indicated a stronger focus of Swiss journalists on Microsoft. But throughout the period of Davos, Geneva and Hanover, the Swiss audience was mainly informed about Swiss corporations (the top-10 most frequently covered companies being Swiss). The Swiss Telecom, Steel as well as Railways come in first. **Graph 3** documents the uninhibited relationship of Swiss journalists to their economy: Some businesses are criticized, others are praised and yet others get something of both. In the German media, the resignation of the Head of the Railways would have created a very different kind of uproar and led to much stronger fluctuations on the opinion gage. However, the graph also shows a certain distance towards the Swiss banking sector. Yet it was announcing outstanding results during that period without receiving much applause for it from the DRS editorial team.

1 Topics in SF DRS Tagesschau, ARD Tagesthemen and Al Jazeera News

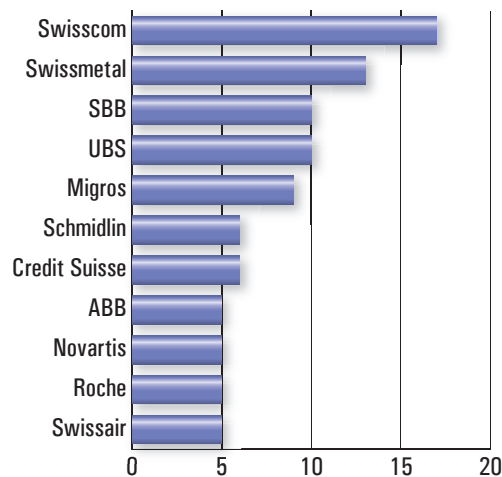


Share of each topic to the total coverage during this period

Source: Media Tenor
01/14 – 03/15/2006

Basis:
1,346 stories (DRS), 1,358 stories (ARD), 1,761 stories (Al Jazeera)

2 Presence of companies in the SF DRS Tagesschau 14.1.-15.3.06

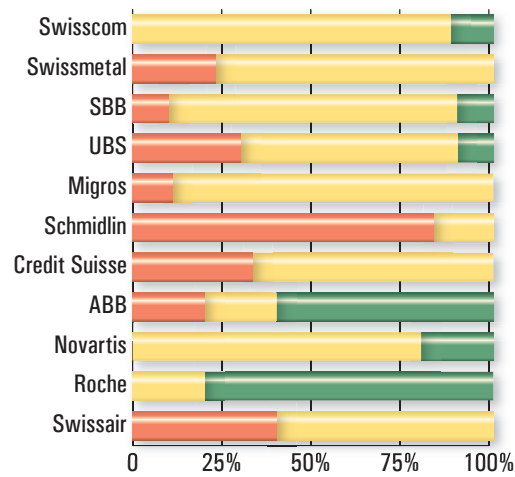


Number of reports

Source: Media Tenor
01/14 – 03/15/2006

Basis: 213 reports about companies
in Swiss Television

3 Assessment of companies in the SF DRS Tagesschau 14.1.-15.3.06



Share of negative/neutral/positive assessments

Source: Media Tenor
01/14 – 03/15/2006

Basis: 213 reports about companies
in Swiss Television

Additional studies should analyze to what extent this news selection enables Swiss audiences to form an opinion about the competitiveness of their employers. After all, value drivers that determine the future viability of, say, investment bankers or auditors, were not the focus of the business coverage in the TV news (see **graph 4**). Reports are not dominated by news on research and development, although native companies such as Novartis, Roche or Unaxis have to prove their fitness for survival in exactly that area. Investments and finances are only marginal topics as well. Yet the TV journalists

frequently question the strategy of the companies presented. Such a verdict only makes sense to audiences when they have access to relevant information on the product pipeline, the use of market opportunities through investments or profitability.

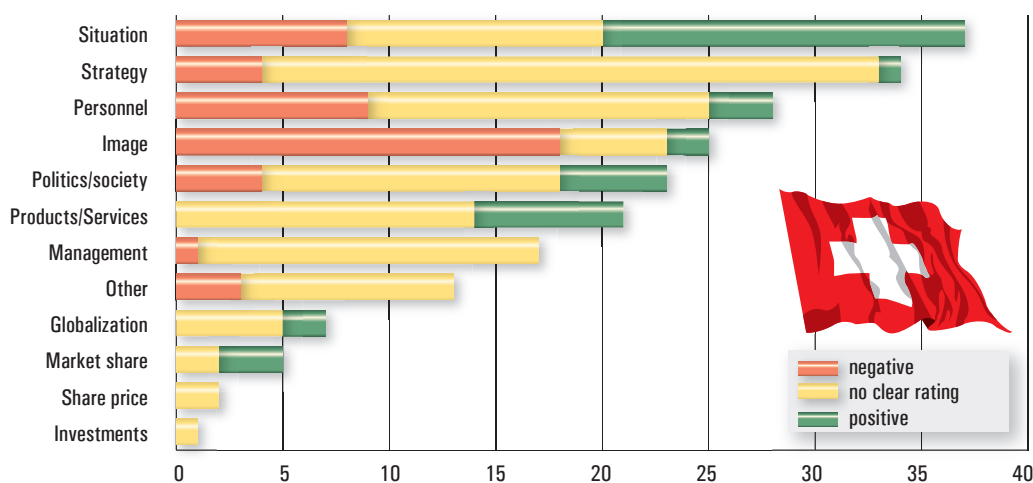
Basis:

Media: SF DRS Tagesschau, ARD Tagesthemen, Al Jazeera News

Time: 01/14 – 03/15/2006 (Al Jazeera – 02/27/2006)

Analysis: Main topics analysis on article level; all reports on companies and managers (at least 5 lines/seconds)

4 Company topics in the SF DRS Tagesschau 14.1.-15.3.06



Number of reports

Source: Media Tenor
01/14 – 03/15/2006

Basis: 213 reports about companies
in Swiss Television