Public Abstract

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Title:The study of the connection between TV meteorologists and their viewers during severe weather broadcasts

After the devastating tornadoes in Joplin, MO and in the Deep South in 2011, it seemed appropriate to look at the impact that broadcast meteorologists (and their TV coverage) have on their viewers during severe weather events. The reason this is important is because broadcast meteorologists play a vital role in providing weather information to the public during severe weather situations. To find out what TV meteorologists could do better during severe weather TV broadcasts, a survey was developed to ask TV viewers in Missouri a variety of questions regarding local severe weather broadcasts during threatening weather. From this research, viewers stated they want to see a local view of storms and want to know cities, streets and local landmarks in the path of severe weather rather than hearing the only the county that will be impacted by severe weather. Another finding was that viewers want to be constantly updated about weather that will threaten them via on-air broadcasts and on the internet (i.e. Facebook, twitter, etc.). The implications of this research are if TV meteorologists follow the above recommendations, viewers are more likely to seek shelter during severe weather, which in turn, could lower the casualty rate during severe weather situations.