

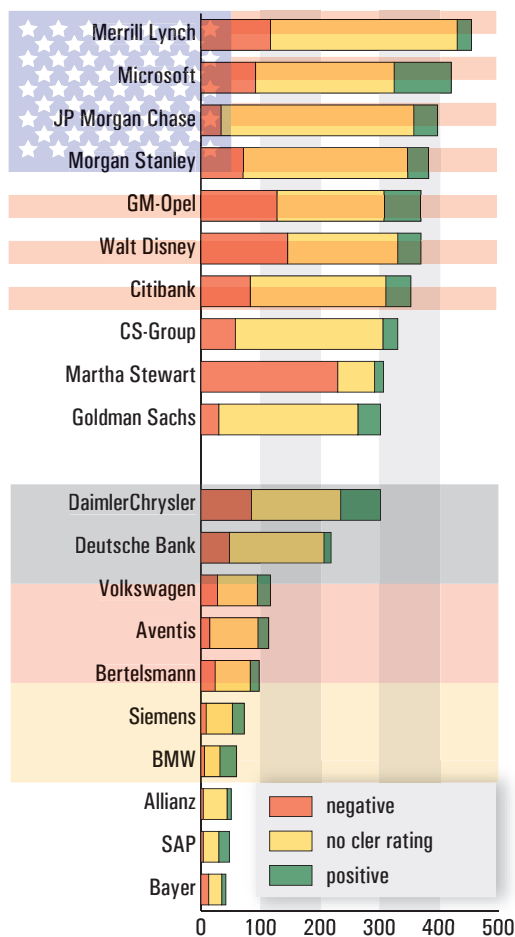
# Surf or sink

## German corporations are struggling for presence in US media

Most German corporations are barely noticed by the US media. This is the result of a **Media Tenor** analysis of the company coverage in six US media from January until October 2004. Daimler Chrysler and Deutsche Bank received the highest scores in media presence. However, the first, thanks to Chrysler, had a home advantage, while the latter primarily stood out with “bad news”.

Apart from these two exceptions, German corporations did not offer much news value to the **Wall Street Journal**, **Time**, **Newsweek** and the

### Presence and assessment of companies 01-10/2004



Number of reports (negative/no clear rating/positive)

Source: Media Tenor 01/01 – 10/31/2004

Basis: 48,385 reports on companies in 6 US-media

broadcasters **ABC**, **NBC** and **CBS**. Only Don Quixote would relish fighting this much disinterest. Yet the press spokesmen of German companies may stand a chance against the windmills of business journalism by “surfing the agenda”.

### Cooperation and mergers attract attention

Good news from “Old Europe” currently does not help German companies to enhance their image on the other side of the Atlantic when North America and Asia are easily grabbing the headlines on international markets.

This is why, in order to create an image with the help of US media, local news counts. When they are properly communicated, mergers or joint ventures with well-known US companies are one possible way of profiting from the partners’ reputation, and thereby improving media presence.

The “RQ-ranking” by Harris Interactive shows that, in order to be perceived by the public, this kind of “surfing” accompanied by a certain level of media coverage is crucial. In 2004, DaimlerChrysler was the only “German” corporation to make it into the top 60 “most visible companies” in the US.

Other options for generating (positive) media coverage are large-scale orders or innovative products. Companies such as BMW or SAP have successfully used those possibilities, though they still retain too low a presence.

In the absence of any such positive push, German as well as US companies run the risk of representing an all too easy target for one-sided coverage on legal battles or scandals. This tends to happen when bad news appears against the backdrop of virtually no previous media coverage. After all, coverage on the banking and automobile sector or the Martha Stewart trial shows clearly that, in 2004, US journalists followed the well-established practice of “bad news are good news”.

### Open question:

What other topics could German/European companies address, in order to create a stronger presence in US media?

### Basis:

**Media:** Wall Street Journal U.S. Ed., Time, Newsweek, ABC, NBC and CBS Evening News

**Time:** 01/01 – 10/31/2004

**Analysis:** 48,385 reports (at least 5 lines/seconds) on companies in 6 media

**Study:** Harris Interactive, Reputation Institute: Annual RQ 2004 – 6th Anniversary

### Research Links:

[www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com)

[www.pwc.com](http://www.pwc.com)

analyzed for this reports:

48.385 reports on

companies in 6 US media