

Issues Watch

The global financial crisis has had a significant impact on media reporting. RL research supports the suggestions of NGOs that other issues – including the environment and obesity – have been squeezed out of the media debate because of the massive media focus on economic and financial issues, although not by the same degree as some have claimed.

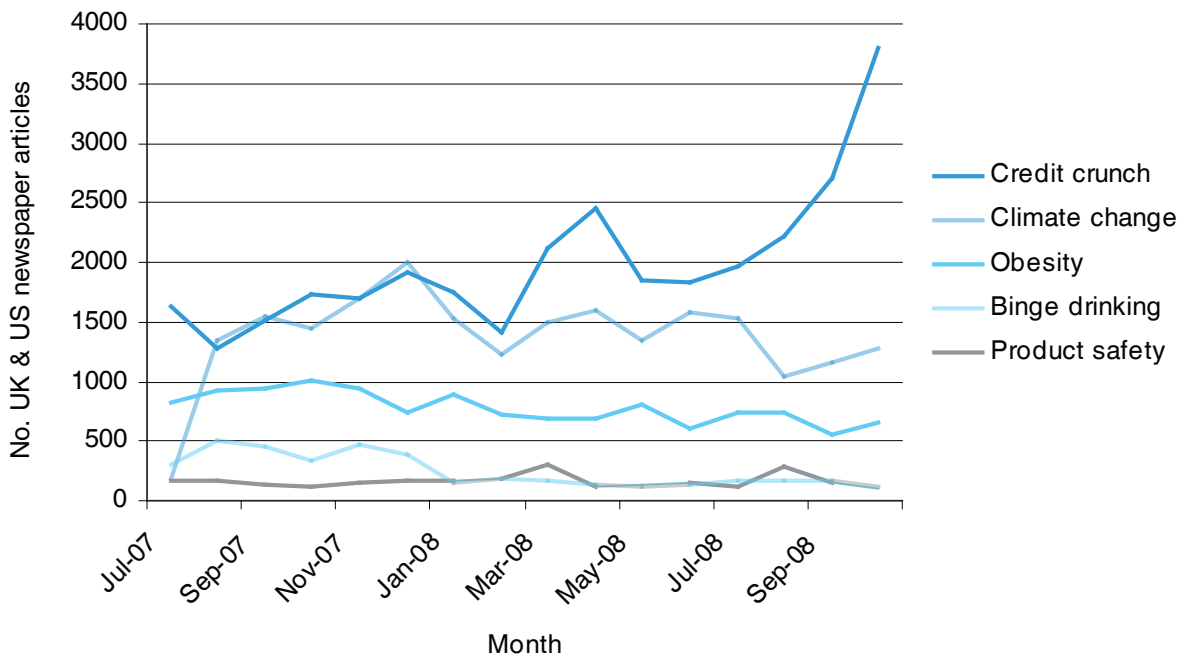
Looking at climate change, press coverage in the UK and US has dropped in the last quarter by 25%. Coverage of obesity has declined since this time last year by almost half, while binge drinking and product safety have managed to maintain their profile - though they are starting at a lower base than climate change.

RL analyst, Jonathan Howie, said: “The global economic situation is of course dominating the headlines, and this has – to a degree – taken the pressure off some of the difficult public policy and reputational issues that many companies face. But the pressure hasn’t gone away. Our research shows that these issues are still very much out there.”

“Some companies may see this as a chance for a light reputational breather on certain issues. Now is the perfect opportunity to take stock and prepare for their re-emergence and to make sure that your own house is in order in other respects.”

This edition of Issues Watch was a spotlight on UK and US media.

Issues tracker (Q3 2007 to Q3 2008)



I wish I hadn't done that

... It takes one concentrated effort to have profound effects. Just when fans of UK football club, Newcastle United, thought it couldn't get any worse, the club's interim manager went on the offensive during a press conference, unleashing a diatribe of profanities against the gathered media. Joe Kinnear felt that certain sections of the media were ridiculing him and he spectacularly let them know, leaving the club another difficult situation to manage. [Click here](#) to see the transcript. Viewer discretion advised.

... But some things are just out of your control. When Nhlanhla Nene, chairman of South Africa's Finance Portfolio Committee, agreed to be interviewed live on TV, he perhaps expected some robust questioning. He might also have expected a more robust chair to sit on. Midway through the interview, Mr Nene's chair gave way, leaving only the blank studio wall for the viewer to look at. Mr Nene has become an internet sensation since the unfortunate incident. [Click here](#) to see it.

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