



U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20416

August 18, 2014

The Honorable Tom A. Coburn, M.D.  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Coburn:

Administrator Contreras-Sweet has asked me to respond to your recent letter regarding the how the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) tracks media coverage of the Agency. Specifically, your letter requested whether SBA uses outside vendors for monitoring of news coverage; your questions, and our responses are below.

1. Does the Administration employ an outside vendor to monitor and track news articles, editorials, and other journalism publications that implicate the Administration?

**SBA's Response:**

Yes.

2. If the answer to Question 1 is "yes," please also provide answers to the questions below:

- a) Is the vendor instructed to rate each news publication or story as positive, negative or neutral?
- b) How does the Administration utilize the information compiled by the vendor?
- c) What vendor did you hire to complete this task?
- d) What was the cost of hiring such a vendor in Fiscal Year 2014?

**SBA's Response:**

- a) No. The vendor is not instructed to rate each news publication or story as positive, negative or neutral.
- b) SBA utilizes news clips provided by the vendor in addition to internet searches and news subscription sites to prepare a daily (M-F) news clips package for the internal workforce.
- c) PR Newswire is under contract.
- d) SBA paid PR Newswire a total of \$25,625. This price includes not only the media monitoring service, but also access to the media database, and unlimited wire service press release distribution.

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3. Are any full-time employees at the Administration responsible for monitor and tracking news articles, editorials, and other journalism publications that implicate the Administration?

**SBA's Response:**

No.

We appreciate your support of SBA and America's small businesses. If you have additional questions, please contact Thad Inge, Acting Assistant Administrator for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, at (202) 205-6700.

Sincerely,

Mina A. Wales  
Acting Assistant Administrator  
Office of Communications and Public Liaison