WORLD

# Media pay princely sum to cover royal wedding

By Jennifer Collins

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Media and TV crews speak to royal fans camped outside Westminster Abbey waiting for the start of the Royal Wedding on April 27, 2011 in London, England. - Matt Cardy/Getty Images

**Kai Ryssdal:** While this is in fact a news program, I feel no obligation at all to let you know that the much-awaited royal wedding is just 48 hours away. I figure we're off the hook because A) really? And B) pretty much every other news organization in the known universe is keeping track.

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Jennifer Collins reports.

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**Jennifer Collins:** The networks have been waiting for the big day since Wills popped the question.

**Media Montage:** One hundred days until the big royal wedding. It's now four days, nine hours, three minutes, 14 seconds or so. All right, three days to go until Britain's royal wedding. Can we skip this story?

Ah no, says media consultant Shari Anne Brill.

**Shari Anne Brill:** When everyone else is going to be there, you can't not be there.

CNN will have a 125 journalists on the ground. Fox is sending 50. NBC's broadcasting the "Today" show from London. Even Al Jazeera's on it. There are reports the networks are spending up to $10 million each to cover the event. And that's in a year when shrinking news budgets have also been squeezed by the natural disaster in Japan and uprisings in the Middle East.

Still, Brill says the wedding is actually coming at a good time.

**Brill:** It's manna from heaven for the networks, especially because this is the all-important sweeps measurement period.

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Toby Miller is a media professor at the University of California, Riverside.

**Toby Miller:** It's about showing that this is the natural home for viewing big events.

For Americans, though, it's likely to be a big event for their DVRs. The coverage kicks off at 4 a.m. on the East Coast.

I'm Jennifer Collins for Marketplace.