

Journalism in the Digital Age: Analysis of Implementation, Change and Social Impact in Guatemala

María Gabriela Batres, José Guillermo de León

Universidad Galileo, Guatemala City, Guatemala 01010, GT.

gabriela.batres@galileo.edu

Abstract – In a fast-paced world. In the peak of globalization. In between the never-ending expansion of the 4th industrial revolution; imagine a work field that allows you the possibility of having firsthand experience in real life events as they happen and then providing you with a platform to tell the rest of the world about it. Anyone, who is willing to be your audience for at least a couple of minutes. Digital Journalism or “online journalism” is a modern way of sharing curated information through the Internet and social media platforms. Once the investigative work is done, journalists nowadays need to ensure that their content is striking enough that it will be worth over the average 1 minute and 30 seconds that internet users dedicate to online reading to validate the time they invested before posting their work. Just 20 years ago, Journalism used to be that activity which allowed people’s voices to be heard. Its sources? Newspaper, radio, magazines, and television. The boom of Industry 4.0 and the decrease for barriers in content sharing and consumption brought with it the biggest change that Journalism has experienced to date: adapt and overcome.

Keywords – *Journalism, Digital Journalism, Technology, Social Networking, Communication, Audience.*

1 Introduction

Journalism as the practice of recollection, preparation, and distribution of information has been around as far back as 59 B.C., in Rome, where news got recorded in a circular known as Acta Diurna. Later, during the Tang dynasty in China (618 A.D. to 907 A.D.), a court report named Bao was distributed to government officials with the intention of keeping them informed of relevant events and continued that way until the end of 1911, with the demise of the Qing dynasty.

Recurrent news publication was firstly introduced by Germany in 1609 and the first ever English version, Weekly Newes, appeared around 1622. By 1702, The Daily Courant became the first paper for public consumption.

Technology has always played a pivotal role in the distribution of information. For Journalism, back then, this represented the ability to reach a bigger audience amongst the growth of literacy within

the population. Governments pretended to restrict freedom of press by taxing publishers and therefore, keep society in the dark of important decisions. But the introduction of printing became the first “boom” for news distribution, and publications saw their numbers quadruple in the span of next months and years, as such, Journalism has reigned as the pioneer for freedom of speech.

Fast forward to the 20th and first decade of the 21st century, Journalism has now become a more popular profession with its expansion of career development in universities and its diversification of platforms such as television, radio, and the most recent contender; the world wide web.

Non-printed or “online” media has now become the number one source of information for the public. The introduction of computers and cellular has allowed an almost immediate access to events as they develop. Modern journalists now can perform several techniques with just one gadget: smartphones.

From gifs to online polls, Journalism has reinvented itself to become a more audiovisual source of information. Texts don't sell, but pictures and audios do. Consumers now focus on the easiest to understand and fastest to digest ways of information. As such, Journalism's challenge has become to salvage its "responsible storytelling" from becoming a fast-paced barely-able-to-check profession.

2 Related Works

A 2022 study published by Hootsuite (a social media management tool invented in 2008) revealed that 82% of the news audience consumes their daily dose of information online and directly from their preferred news outlet's website. About 61% of them prefer the good old television and 57% jumped into the social media bandwagon. Meanwhile, 26% of the population listen to radio news channels and only 23% are sticking to old fashioned printed newspapers and magazines.

Additionally, 72% of those online consumers use their smartphone to reach their preferred sources of information, 42% uses a computer, and a small portion of 16% navigates with their tablet.

A quick after thought of our day-to-day internet consumption and navigation could provide a solid demonstration of online information being the preferred source of navigation in our modern times. However, an August publication from Statista (an online platform specialized in data gathering and visualization created in 2007) revealed that two thirds or 5.18 billion of our global population is currently connected to the world wide web.

This same platform also shared that the revenue market for Digital Newspapers and Magazines is expected to reach US\$38.60 billion in 2023 and its users, are expected to increase to 1.9 billion by 2027. By then, the user penetration will be expected to reach 23.7% from its current 21.2% in 2023.

Growth, expansion, and many more implementations will be shaking the journalistic world for the next few years. With the introduction of new technologies and resources to reach audiences by mass, we can only expect several more reinventions from the profession that is keeping the world informed in a 24/7 connectivity world.

3 The Study: The development of digital journalism in Guatemala

3.1 Methodology

Based on the aforementioned information found within written documents, reports, publications, and study bibliography; research was conducted with a sample of 15 modern journalists working in the Guatemalan field. A survey created in Google Forms platform was shared amongst the participants to gauge their opinion and better understand their current experience in the career.

The study yielded a variation of preferences from professionals developing a similar workforce in the same geography. All 100% of participants admitted that their one true statement of work is to "validate and defend the truth", as for many other journalists all over the globe.

3.2 Results

About 85% of the participants responded that they use digital tools to disseminate their content and to

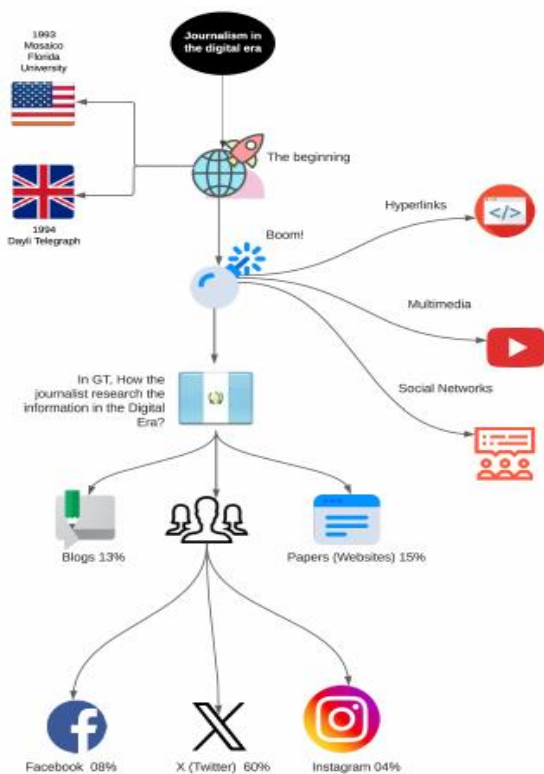


Figure 1 The evolution of digital journalism in Guatemala

reach a broader audience. The same percentage of participants also expressed that they would rather be known by their audience by their own name and

picture, as this helps them connect with their end users and generates a sense of familiarity between the content consumer and the producer.

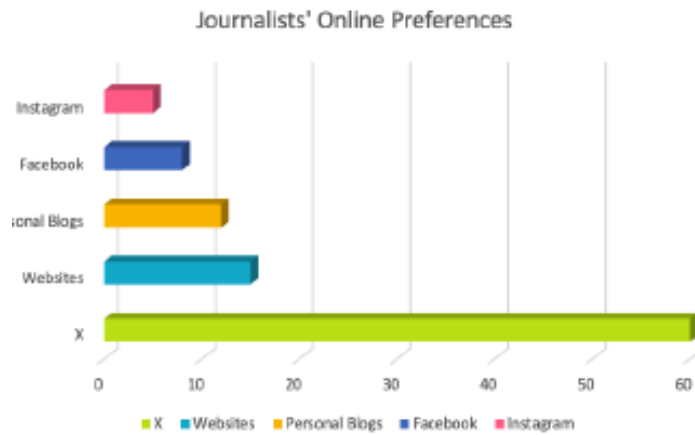


Figure 2 Preferred media and digital networks for the dissemination of journalist content.

On the other hand, 75% of respondents said that they find a high benefit from engaging in social media platforms as it expands their audience reach within the original digital platforms (media outlets) and 90% of them agreed that they will keep up their fight to ensure the social responsibility of accurately informing the population is not lost in the sea of false narratives thrown left and right to all audiences, as they have noticed that social media is a key fake news driver (fake news: information that's shared without being fact checked or validated as true).

texts with pictures and audios, journalists also find that live sessions can positively impact an audience.

With the introduction of pre-recorded podcasts and their evolution to live shows, some modern content creators believe that radio and television have simply migrated to the internet with a new and very important addition: the ability of end users interacting, live, with the broadcasters. This important evolution has brought a new sense of empowerment, freedom of speech, and connection to a worldwide audience and its content creator, that has not been experimented before.

According to the participating journalists, the best way to generate impact through digital content is divided into two aspects: audiovisual and interactive. Besides focusing in always complementing their

This study shows how digital tools have undoubtedly become a vehicle for the dissemination of information and have provided dynamism to the interaction of users with the content.



Figure 3 Journalism in the Digital Era

In addition, Journalism has become a multimedia practice that mixes creativity with the rigor of credibility and the exhausting search of truth. For citations of references, we prefer the use of square and consecutive numbers.

For citations using labels or the author/year convention are also acceptable. The following bibliography provides a sample reference list with entries for journal articles [1], an LNCS chapter [2], a book [3], proceedings without editors [4] as well as a URL [5]. (Eugenia Siapera, n.d.; 2023002, 2023; Villalobos, 2005; Kemp, 2022; Linp, 2023; Segura, 2005; Class, 2005; Carlson, 2003; Statista, 2023)

References

2023002. (2023). Journalism, media, and technology trends and predictions
2023. <https://doi.org/10.1109/PROCEEDING.2017.63>.
- Carlson, D. (2003). History of online journalism.
- Class, U. (2005). The beginning of journalism.
- Eugenia Siapera, A. V. (n.d.). Introduction: The evolution of online journalism.
- Kemp, S. (2022). The global state of digital. In Proceedings of the 14th international
conference on interaction design and children (p. 3).
- Linp, M. (2023). A primer for journalism students: What is digital-first strategy?
- Segura, G. F. F. J. H. (2005). A digital journalism blog in Colombia.
- Statista. (2023). Internet usage worldwide - statistics and facts.
- Villalobos, F. (2005). Periodistas para la era digital.