

ONLINE MEDIA:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF JOURNALISM IN THE DIGITAL SPACE OF UKRAINE

MEDIOS EN LÍNEA: EL DESARROLLO DEL PERIODISMO EN EL ESPACIO DIGITAL DE UCRANIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the formation and development of electronic media in Ukraine, focusing on platforms distributed via the World Wide Web. Grounded in concepts related to the emergence of the information society and the Ukrainian information space, it emphasizes the need for a functional renewal of modern media and a reassessment of established approaches in light of global progress. The research combines general theoretical methods such as analysis of psychological, pedagogical, scientific, methodological, reference, and regulatory sources, interpretation, comparison, hypothesis generation, and pedagogical modeling with empirical methods including the study and synthesis of pedagogical experience, observation, interviews, analysis of students' activities, self, peer, and expert evaluation, communicative self-efficacy assessment, questionnaires, testing, and surveys, as well as statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, Fisher's F-test, Student's t-test, and Fisher's angular transformation (ϕ^* criterion). The article defines the role and position of online journalism within the media system during the development of the information society and modern information space, reveals similarities and differences in the evolution of online journalism in Ukraine and Europe, and identifies technological and social factors driving its transformation. It also analyzes the challenges of implementing online publication models, particularly differences in information presentation between traditional and interactive media, alongside economic and staffing constraints, and concludes with professional recommendations for the future development of Ukrainian online journalism, integrating new technologies and genre-specific approaches in digital environments.

Keywords: Socio-political information, Network technologies, Journalism, Mediatization, Convergence.

RESUMEN

Este estudio examina la formación y el desarrollo de los medios electrónicos en Ucrania, centrándose en las plataformas distribuidas a través de la World Wide Web. Basado en conceptos relacionados con el surgimiento de la sociedad de la información y el espacio informativo ucraniano, enfatiza la necesidad de una renovación funcional de los medios modernos y una reevaluación de los enfoques establecidos a la luz del progreso global. La investigación combina métodos teóricos generales, como el análisis de fuentes psicológicas, pedagógicas, científicas, metodológicas, de referencia y normativas, la interpretación, la comparación, la formulación de hipótesis y la modelación pedagógica, con métodos empíricos que incluyen el estudio y la síntesis de la experiencia pedagógica, la observación, las entrevistas, el análisis de las actividades de los estudiantes, la autoevaluación, la evaluación por pares y por expertos, la evaluación de la autoeficacia comunicativa, cuestionarios, pruebas y encuestas, así como técnicas estadísticas como la estadística descriptiva, la prueba F de Fisher, la prueba t de Student y la transformación angular de Fisher (criterio Φ^*). El artículo define el papel y la posición del periodismo en línea dentro del sistema mediático durante el desarrollo de la sociedad de la información y del espacio informativo moderno, revela similitudes y diferencias en la evolución del periodismo en línea en Ucrania y Europa, e identifica factores tecnológicos y sociales que impulsan su transformación. También analiza los desafíos de implementar modelos de publicación en línea, en particular las diferencias en la presentación de la información entre los medios tradicionales e interactivos, junto con las limitaciones económicas y de personal, y concluye con recomendaciones profesionales para el futuro desarrollo del periodismo en línea ucraniano, integrando nuevas tecnologías y enfoques específicos de género en entornos digitales.

Palabras clave: Información sociopolítica, Tecnologías de red, Periodismo, Mediatización, Convergencia.

Introduction

In a relatively short period, the Internet has witnessed the emergence of dozens of online publications, with their numbers continuing to grow at an unprecedented pace. Within an insignificantly small span by historical standards, a new form of journalistic culture has taken shape, born from the collective creativity of diverse contributors. This culture reflects not only technological advancement but also the social and generational dynamics shaping content creation. Notably, a significant portion of these websites are initiated and maintained by young people, and thus often carry the stylistic and thematic imprints of youth subcultures. These influences manifest in informal language, experimental or semi-amateur design, a

preference for humor and irony, and an unshakable belief in the intrinsic value and self-sufficiency of their work.

Many of these projects operate without the backing of large companies or corporate sponsors, relying instead on the initiative and passion of individual creators. This independence fosters originality and diversity but can also limit access to professional resources, resulting in the distinct visual and textual styles characteristic of grassroots online media. With the evolution of market relations and the integration of the Internet into daily life, an increasing number of specialists are transforming online information activities into professional careers. Today, political actors, socio-economic stakeholders, and other participants in public life are harnessing computer networks to establish their own publishing channels, expand public relations initiatives, and strengthen their marketing and advertising efforts.

In this context, questions about the role and significance of journalism in the era of networked information technologies become increasingly pressing. The formation and development of online or network journalism, considered a new branch of mass media, require examining both its unique traits and its shared characteristics with traditional journalism. This article explores online journalism as a specialized form of network information activity, involving the creation of digital products and services as well as the use of electronic resources in professional creative work. While it operates within a distinct technological framework, online journalism remains bound to the foundational principles of the profession, including accuracy, public interest, ethical responsibility, and the pursuit of truthful communication.

- reflects the world of social reality and the creative “I” of the journalist;
- bears the imprint of the source of information;
- is created taking into account the communication channel;
- can be regulated by criteria developed by the professional journalistic community.

In other words, journalism is an activity on formation and presentation of information images of relevance, and the carriers of these images can be not only a word, but also a picture, photograph, film, video, sound, web page - any object that can act as a carrier of information or text, in the broad sense of the word.

It follows that online journalism is a journalistic activity implemented with the help of telecommunication technologies.

Such an understanding of the results of network activity follows from the main methodological basis of this work

- the stable and innovative in journalism are in a state of mutual transition and interaction.

The degree of development of the research topic leaves much to be desired, since the formation of online journalism in Ukraine is a new phenomenon. Not many works have been written studying it. Moreover, these are the works of foreign authors. They consider individual aspects of journalistic activity when using the Internet and other network resources; the features of the online media market are studied; the features of existing network media are highlighted; steps are being taken to classify new network media, the material and technical base and information infrastructure of online journalism are being analyzed, etc. Thus, the book by American researchers provides practical recommendations on the application and use of new information technologies in journalistic activities. This manual equips with the necessary skills and abilities to work with network resources. The authors discuss the impact that this still new technology has on journalism, and raise legislative and ethical issues that arise in online journalism.

Among other works that constitute an important part of the research related to some problems of online journalism that have appeared recently, it is worth highlighting the works of Bakir & McStay (2017); Quandt & Singer (2009); Salaverría & García-Avilés (2012).

The works of Larrondo et al. (2016), in the field of social informatics are important for understanding and revealing the paths of formation and prospects for the development of online journalism. It is this direction that is increasingly attracting the attention of specialists, to one degree or another connected with the problems of informatization of society. The reason is that the process of informatization of society and, in particular, the development of new network technologies, which in some cases is still considered as a purely technological process, is also a deeply social process in its essence.

Therefore, we think that the definition of Bakir (2010); Chouliraki (2013); Costera-Meijer & Bijleveld (2016); García-Avilés et al. (2023); Larrondo et al. (2016); Quandt (2008); Tameling & Broersma (2013), are also successful, who proposed to classify the global process of informatization of society as a socio-technological revolution, emphasizing the complex socio-technological character of this process.

An analysis of the listed studies (Erdmann et al., 2016; Mellado, 2022; Mellor, 2023; Yang, 2024), allows us to conclude that a sufficiently large amount of material has been accumulated in the literature, revealing individual aspects of the emergence and functioning of new mass media, including online or network publications. However, up to now there is no study that would comprehensively examine the problems of that part of the new mass media that tends to become a specialized area in journalism.

Such work should contain not only a description of the current situation, but also outline the paths for the development of the media in the best national traditions of professional journalism.

The purpose of the study: to identify the causes of the emergence of online journalism, the technological and social factors that determine its development, as well as its trends and prospects, to determine the conditions for the formation of a new profession - an online journalist.

The object of the research is the formation and development of electronic media in Ukraine, the distribution medium of which is the World Wide Web. The subject of the research is online journalism as a promising type of media, which places specific demands on the specialty of a journalist, combining a professional journalistic approach to information sources with the skills of working in telecommunication networks.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of the article is formed by the provisions of the personal approach in journalism, actualizing the subject-subject nature of the relations of all participants, appealing to the value-semantic and emotional aspects of their communication; the dialogical approach, defining the communicative nature of the content and results of education; the competence approach in journalism, focusing on the development of graduates' abilities for reflection, effective action in new, uncertain, extreme situations, overcoming personal deformations and depersonalization, the acmeological approach, which allows considering a person as a subject in his or her desire for the highest professional and personal achievements. Research methods: general theoretical - analysis of psychological and pedagogical, scientific and methodological, reference and encyclopedic literature, regulatory documentation on the topic of research; interpretation, comparison, hypothesis generation, pedagogical modeling; empirical - study and generalization of pedagogical experience, pedagogical observation, conversation, analysis of students' activities, self-assessment, mutual assessment, expert assessment, diagnostics of the level of development of communicative self-efficacy; questionnaires, testing, survey; statistical - descriptive statistics, Fisher's F-test, Student's t-test and Fisher's angular transformation (Φ^* - criterion).

The theoretical basis of the work was the fundamental works on the theory of journalism, typology of the press, information science, Internet research, management and marketing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The revolution in information technology covers the entire area of human activity, and it is the starting point in the

analysis of the ways of formation of new types and forms of socio-economic life of society and its culture. However, this does not imply that new social forms and processes arise as a consequence of technological changes only. In the process of scientific discoveries, technological innovation and its social applications, many factors intervene, including individual ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit, so that the final result depends on the complex structure of their interaction. This is the fallacy of the dilemma of technological determinism. Technology does not determine society, it embodies it. But society does not determine technological innovation, it uses it. This is a dialectical interaction between society and technology (Chouliaraki & Georgiou, 2022). Although society does not set the course of technological changes, it can, using the power of the state, stifle the development of technology. Or, on the contrary, also through state intervention, it can begin an accelerated process of technological modernization, capable of changing the economy and social well-being in a few years. The article provides examples of such a policy of state intervention in the processes of historical modernization of China and Japan. The ability or inability of a society to manage technology, especially strategic technologies, largely shapes the fate of the society (Mellor, 2023).

The development process of modern Ukrainian media structures perfectly reflects the depth and dynamics of their changes. On the one hand, they have absorbed and continue to transform the global experience coming to the previously isolated Ukrainian reality. On the other hand, they have reflected the entire complex of problems of the transition period, becoming an indicator of change, a mirror, looking into which can easily see the achievements and failures of the country's modern history.

The structure of the Ukrainian information space is considered and the place given to new types of online journalism is designated. The development of the information space requires the availability of the necessary scientific and production potential in the country. This follows from the high science intensity of all technological components that ensure its effective functioning. This means that the profession of a journalist, gradually moving and mastering new network technologies, will acquire new specific forms of professional activity, which today can already include online journalism. But its activity in no way affects the foundations of journalistic skill, the public need for journalism as a special social institution that gives a person the opportunity to navigate the world around him. The main thing for a journalist is to learn to recognize news in reality, to see its changes and problems. Otherwise, the new emerging direction of online journalism will turn into a means of replicating the virtual world and will not fulfill its social role.

The analysis of the above works allowed us to conclude that online journalism, electronic periodicals should serve to satisfy information needs, maximally focused on current and specific, professional and personal requests. A modern information system should be perceived by the user as his personal system. Information needs are of a purely individual nature: they depend not only on the characteristics of the tasks being solved, but also on the psychological, educational and other parameters of the person making the decision. The fundamental factors of the formation and development of a new type of journalistic activity also consider the social environment itself, which makes up the audience of users of the products of this activity. For this purpose, the article presents the results of a sociological study conducted by the author.

Based on the results of the analysis conducted in this chapter, it is possible to draw a portrait of Internet users. They have needs for network services, which to a certain extent determine the development of a new type of professional journalistic activity, characteristic of central Ukraine. Nevertheless, with a small degree of error, this activity also characterizes the general state of the developing process of transformation of the information sphere. In relation to the entire media system, the Internet is an environment. It clearly demonstrates the diversity of interests and, if you like, realities in the audience. It is possible that as the number of network users increases, mass media will be able to find ways to interest their readers with a large number of professional electronic versions and the ratio of user preferences will change. But even such a picture suggests that a new type of journalistic activity exists on the Internet and is in demand - online journalism.

The development of market relations, the process of globalization of socio-political and economic processes have led to the fact that each member of society is increasingly becoming a subject (and not just an object) of social relations (Hermida & Young, 2019). With the complication of the socio-political stratification of society, a person has received more opportunities to change profession, education, social status.

A different mobility of the masses becomes the basis for the mobility of tastes, needs, interests, values throughout the life of one and the same individual. In the situation described above, the degree of sensitivity of the individual to the expectations and assessments of others increases sharply. This type of personality creates an unprecedentedly acute need for official prompts, constantly incoming advice on what is considered proper today. The demand for current information is intensifying, the consumption of which the individual himself (consciously or unconsciously) considers vital (Hooffacker & Meier, 2017; Kirchhoff, 2021).

The psychological mechanism of this phenomenon is that the threat of social isolation for an individual is more important than the loss of his own opinion. This manifests a certain mechanism of adaptation of the individual in a mass society, in which communication processes have taken a leading place. The main tendency of such a phenomenon is generated by the development of a civilization in which the tone is set by societies with a democratic way of life. The qualitative transformation of the information used by online journalists depends on feedback. Using the network greatly facilitates the fulfillment of the most important requirements for any information message, and above all - for efficiency and relevance.

The essence of any news is formed by a fact - something that took place in time and space. A fact is invariant. Talk about the scale, general significance of a fact is meaningless: its perception depends on the nature of the message, but most of all on the interests of the audience. Therefore, the fundamental task of any media is to provide the most representative flow of information that satisfies the needs of the audience.

Today it is already quite obvious that to the traditional journalistic specialties, such as newspaper, radio and television journalism, another one has been added: online journalism - journalism on the Internet. Among its distinctive features are efficiency, relevance, constant live contact with readers, the possibility of direct dialogue with them in real time.

Within the framework of the first strategy, the inclusion of information blocks - news feeds, etc. - with a variety of topics in the services looks more or less natural. The latest sociological surveys, including our research of the Internet audience, show that approximately half of active users (and an even higher percentage of people planning to connect to the Internet) consider the Internet primarily as a source of information («news» in the terminology accepted in sociological services engaged in Internet research).^{*} It cannot be said that the portal strategy turned out to be completely wrong, but the media inside the portal did not become a noticeable phenomenon in the corresponding sector of the Internet.

Projects of the second type accumulate texts or hyperlinks to texts published in other publications, dividing them into categories or offering them as an uncategorized feed. It was often within the framework of such a strategy that the information components of service and advertising portals were implemented. In addition, there are projects that combine the functions of a «news organizer» and a publication with its own content. The reason for the failure of projects of this type is connected, first of all, with the fallacy of the thesis about the overproduction of information, primarily news, since an extremely small number of market-leading publications produce more or less exclusive

content. Most of them, especially in the news section, duplicate information from central agencies. Thus, the truly impressive volume of news from various Internet publications is very poor in content.

The main task today is to organize the export of thematic news feeds of any level of complexity to interested resources, such as portals. However, the effectiveness of this kind of strategy is also questionable: even now there is no rush demand for such services. In the future, according to experts, as portal-type resources inevitably refuse to try to take positions within the media sector, it will only fall. In addition, even with the current level of demand, services of this kind can only exist as free ones. It is not necessary to assume that the situation will change in the foreseeable future. Interest in such services, as our research conducted in relation to Ukrainian sites has shown, can be shown by resources that should be classified as marginal. They are characterized by a low level of traffic and specificity of the audience. These are, as a rule, information resources and other projects focused on relatively narrow diasporas. In relation to the problems of the formation of online journalism at this stage of its development, there are two opposing points of view, both equally valid:

- the network form of information delivery provides opportunities that are inaccessible to traditional journalism (retrospective search, hypertext, multimedia, etc.);
- due to objective reasons, the human psyche is especially sensitive to an excess of information, which introduces certain limitations into information technologies.

Taking into account the designated contradictions associated with a large volume of information and valid for network media, the real place of online journalism in the media system is easily outlined: network publications make sense and develop if they fully satisfy certain needs that force the user, including a journalist, to turn to the network in search of specific information. The same Internet was created as a pragmatic system. It should remain so in the minds of both information providers and its consumers.

There are also other relationships built over time, based on various professional skills and abilities dictated by the specifics of a particular mass media. On the one hand, the WWW technology, which opened up the possibility of publishing data on networks, made it possible to combine the advantages of print systems and publishing on networks with the possibility of publishing data in print media. That is, «a Web site performs the functions of mass media» - this is the most important conclusion made by the authors of a practical guide to developing Web sites. On the other hand, traditional mass media that create an electronic version of their printed publications must inevitably resort to increasing the degree of structuring and formalization of materials posted on the site. In addition, when issuing an electronic version, the media are faced with the

need to differentiate information, select it in favor of information oriented towards its segment of consumers, which is mostly included in the online publication. Fulfillment of these conditions is mandatory due to the specifics of electronic methods of presenting information, the requirements of technical network systems using hypertext technologies*, i.e. ensuring maximum user comfort when forming and processing network links. No less important for the user is the ease of movement across the network, the ability to «read» hypertext in any order acceptable to oneself.

The implementation of any online publication implies the presence of two elements on the Internet:

1. The system of external presentation of the subject of information activity (newspaper, magazine, news agency, specialized information system, etc.), implementing it with a certain periodicity.
2. Search engine.

For an online publication, special forms of information presentation and work with SHMI are necessary, using as fully as possible the entire available amount of technologies (both informational and psychological). Only in this case the posted information will «come to life», i.e. will start working, and the site itself will turn from a bulletin board into an information organism, feeding on the efforts of its developers, but independently developing due to the use of global network resources. In other words, the correct solution for building the site architecture is rewarded by connecting the energy of the entire global information space to the solution of the problem set by the developers.

The fact that online journalism is developing according to its own canons, improving mainly the news component of published materials, is reflected in the design and technical features of news resources presented on the Internet. As has already been noted, online agencies give priority to news from the sphere of finance and politics. Newspapers, on the contrary, do not single out news, but make them equal with other publications, which is much more convenient when searching for the necessary material. The main online publications, with their appearance, created the foundations of network journalism, had a significant impact on its development. On the basis of the newspapers we are considering, existing only on the Internet or electronic versions of traditional media, as well as news agencies, other agencies and other newspapers have been created and continue to be created.

But the most important link in the development of online journalism is, of course, the appearance of the first online newspaper. Other publications were created on its basis, and it continued to remain the leader in the network. It was news resources that proved that “an Internet publication in its influence in society and citation index can far

outstrip any paper press.” An analysis of online publications showed that a significant number of traditional publications have online versions. But at the same time, they are practically not in demand by users, since most of the audience for which they are designed is focused on other sources of information.

CONCLUSIONS

This study confirmed the relevance of the theoretical and practical problem put on the agenda by the logic of the development of the information society and domestic journalism.

The process of development of modern structures of media, as in a mirror, reflects the depth and dynamics of changes occurring in the world as a result of the explosive development of information and communication technologies.

The vectors of development of Ukrainian mass media have already been determined. And this means that the profession of a journalist, gradually moving and mastering network technologies, will acquire new specific forms of professional activity, which today include online journalism.

In this regard, journalism as a whole and its component part - online journalism are faced with the task of building relationships with new information technologies so as not to lose the fundamental foundations of the science of journalism itself and its social, humanistic focus. Otherwise, the new emerging online media will turn into only a means of replicating the virtual world. It is possible that as the number of Internet users increases, mass media will be able to find ways to interest their readers in a larger number of professional electronic versions, and the balance of user preferences will change. But even such a picture shows that a new type of journalistic activity exists and is in demand on the Internet - online journalism. Today, the network is becoming more and more professional, giving rise to new forms of activity that are only feasible in it.

The article analyzes the main differences between online publications and existing traditional forms, distinguishing them as a full-fledged independent means of mass communication. Particular attention is paid to special forms of presenting information and working with it, using the entire number of technologies available at the moment. The genre and thematic structure of the main online publications is revealed. Practical recommendations are formulated that may be of interest for understanding the prospects for the development of online journalism by educational authorities and journalism faculties. The author believes that the development of online journalism should become a subject of state policy, part of a global program in building an information society. Today, it is no longer possible to deny the fact that a new type of information journalism exists and is developing in the media field - online journalism.

And its further development directly depends on the democratic form of government in the state, the maturity of market relations, and educational training.

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