**Chapter One: Introduction to Online Journalism**

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**1.1 Introduction to Internet**

The internet is a computer network made up of thousands of networks worldwide. No one knows exactly how many computers are connected to the internet. It is certain, however, that these number in the millions and are growing. No one is in charge of the internet. There are organizations which develop technical aspects of this network and set standards for creating applications on it, but no governing body is in control. The internet backbone, though which internet traffic flows, is owned by private companies.

All computers on the internet communicate with one another using the transmission control protocol/internet protocol suite, abbreviated to TCP/IP. Computers on the internet use client/server architecture. This means that the remote server machine provides file and services to the users local client machine. Software can be installed on a client computer to take advantage of the latest access technology.

The Internet is not just the World Wide Web. There has been confusion in the past between the Web and the Internet. They are not the same thing. At the risk of oversimplification, the Internet is the infrastructure that allows computers to talk to each other throughout the world. The Web is the interface that allows people to exchange, data, text, pictures, graphics, audio and video on the Internet. There are other occupants of the Internet as well as the World Wide Web. The most well known is electronic mail or e-mail.

An internet user has access to a wide variety of service: electronic mail, file transfer, vast information resources, interest group membership, interactive collaboration, multimedia displays, real-time broadcasting, breaking news, shopping opportunities, and much more.

The internet consists primarily of a variety of access protocols. Many of these protocols feature programs that allow users to search for and retrieve material made available by the protocol.

**Internet Technologies**

Internet is the world’s largest computer network, the network of networks, scattered all over the world. The network of networks or “Internet” is a group of two or more networks that are:

1. Interconnected physically
2. Capable of communicating and sharing data with each other
3. Able to act together as a single network

**Internet Protocols**

Internet protocols are sets of rules that allow for inter-machine communication on the Internet. One of the few requirements of a computer connected to the Internet is that it must speak a common language (or protocol). This protocol, called Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol (TCP/IP), is what enables small desktop personal computers to converse with huge super-computers across this entanglement of network connections.

Internet connectivity is impossible without the communications standard TCP/IP Transmission Control Protocol and Internet Protocol. This universal standard allows different types of computers to communicate with each other, regardless of their make, model, or operating system. TCP/IP is actually a collection of protocols, rules, that govern the way data travels from one machine to another across networks. The internet is based on TCP/IP. TCP/IP has two major components: TCP and IP.

**IP:** the IP component does the following:

* Envelopes and addresses the data
* Enables the network to read the envelop and forward the data to its destination
* Defines how much data can fit in a single “envelope” (a packet)

The relationship between data, IP and networks is often compared to the relationship between a letter, its addressed envelope, and the postal system.

**TCP:** The TCP component does the following:

* Breaks data up into packets that the network can handle efficiently
* Verifies whether all the packets have arrived at their destination
* “Reassembles” the data

**Some major protocols accessible on the Internet:**

* **Http (hypertext transfer protocol)-**is a protocol used to access web documents
* **E-mail (Simple Mail Transport Protocol or SMTP)**- distributes electronic messages and files to one or more electronic mailboxes
* **Telnet (Telnet Protocol)** - facilitates login to a computer host to execute
* **FTP (File Transfer Protocol) -** Transfers text or binary files between an FTP server and client.

**Internet Addressing**

Very similar to the postal address system, Internet addressing is a systematic way to identify people, computer and the Internet resources. On the Internet, the term “address” is used loosely. Address can mean many different things from an electronic mail address to a URL.

When a new site is put online it has a specific network address that looks something like 207.70.128.240. In order to make the site easier to remember, a unique name is correlated with the number.

**IP Address:** An IP address is a unique number that identifies computers on the Internet; every computer directly connected to the Internet has one. An IP address consists of four numbers separated by periods. Each number must be between 0 and 255.

**Static vs. dynamic IP addresses**

When a computer is configured to use the same IP address each time it powers up, this is known as a static IP address. In contrast, in situations when the computer's IP address is assigned automatically, it is known as a dynamic IP address.

**Static IP addresses** are manually assigned to a computer by an administrator. The exact procedure varies according to platform. This contrasts with dynamic IP addresses, which are assigned either by the computer interface or host software itself, as in Zeroconf, or assigned by a server using Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP). Even though IP addresses assigned using DHCP may stay the same for long periods of time, they can generally change. In some cases, a network administrator may implement dynamically assigned static IP addresses. In this case, a DHCP server is used, but it is specifically configured to always assign the same IP address to a particular computer. This allows static IP addresses to be configured centrally, without having to specifically configure each computer on the network in a manual procedure.

In the absence or failure of static or stateful (DHCP) address configurations, an operating system may assign an IP address to a network interface using state-less auto configuration methods, such as Zeroconf.

**Uses of dynamic addressing**

Dynamic IP addresses are most frequently assigned on LANs and broadband networks by Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) servers. They are used because it avoids the administrative burden of assigning specific static addresses to each device on a network. It also allows many devices to share limited address space on a network if only some of them will be online at a particular time. In most current desktop operating systems, dynamic IP configuration is enabled by default so that a user does not need to manually enter any settings to connect to a network with a DHCP server. DHCP is not the only technology used to assigning dynamic IP addresses. Dialup and some broadband networks use dynamic address features of the Point-to-Point Protocol.

**Domain Name:** Most computers on the Internet have a domain name. A domain name always contains two or more components separated by periods, called “dots”. Some examples of domain names are: ibm.com, nasa.gov, aau.edu, telecom.net.et, etc. Once a domain name has been established, “sub-domains” can be created within the domain. For example, the domain name for a large company could be “vni.com” and within this domain, sub-domains can be created for each of the company’s regional offices.

The top-level portion of a domain name describes the type of organization holding that name. The major categories for top-level domains are:

* Com – commercial entities
* Edu – educational institutions
* Net – organizations directly involved in the Internet operations, such as network providers and network information centers.
* Org – miscellaneous organizations that do not fit any other category, such as non-profit groups
* Gov – united states federal government entities
* Mil – united states military
* Country codes – a two-letter abbreviation for a particular country for example et for Ethiopia, uk for united kingdom, or fr for France.

Each domain name corresponds to numeric IP (Internet Protocol) address.The Internet uses the numeric IP address to send data. For instance you may be connecting to a World wide Web server with the domain name www.microsoft.com,” but as far as the network is concerned, you are connecting to the web server with the IP address associated with that domain name. No two machines can have the same IP number.

**URL-**URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator. URLs are used to identify specific sites and files available on the World Wide Web.

All machines connected to the Internet agree to use the same scheme for establishing an address.

**Computer Networking**

A network is nothing more than two or more computers connected to each other so that they can exchange information such as email messages or documents, or share resources, such as disk storage or printers. In most cases, this connection is made via electrical cables that carry the information in the form of electrical signals. But in some cases, other types of connections are used. For example, fiber-optic cables let computers communicate at extremely high speeds by using impulses of light. Wireless networks let computers communicate by using radio signals, so the computers are not restricted by physical cables.

A network is a group of two or more computer systems linked together. It is an arrangement of computers where a sender transmits a message to a receiver over a channel consisting of some type of medium.

Machines on one network can communicate with machines on other networks, and send data, files and other information back and forth. The internet covers the globe and includes large, international networks as well as many smaller, local-area networks (LANs). The purpose of computer networking is in general to share resources. Resources in computer include:

* Hardware resources: Printer, Scanner, Hard Drive,
* Software resources: Application software like editing and data processing
* Data/Information resources: Documents, files, software

In addition to the hardware that comprises the network, a network also requires special software to enable communications. In the early days of networking, you had to add this software to each software on the network. Nowadays, network support is built into all major operating systems, including all current versions of Windows, Macintosh operating systems, and Linux.

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**Types of Networks**

There are many different types of networks. However, from an end user’s point of view there are two basic types:

1. **Local Area Networks (LANs):** the computers are geographically close together (that is, in the same building).

LAN is a computer network that spans a relatively small area. Most LANs are confined to a single building or group of buildings. However, one LAN can be connected to other LANs over any distance via telephone lines and radio waves. A system of LANs connected in this way is called a Wide-area network (WAN).

Most LANs connect workstations and personal computers. Each node (individual computer) in a LAN has its own CPU with which it executes programs, but it is also able to data and devices anywhere on the LAN. This means that users can share expensive devices, such as laser printers, as well as data. Users can also use the LAN to communicate with each other, by sending e-mail or engaging in chat sessions.

There are many different types of LANs-token-ring networks, Ethernets, and ARCnets being the most common for PCs. Most Apple Macintosh networks are based on Apple’s AppleTalk network system, which is built into Macintosh computers.

LANs are capable of transmitting data at very fast rates, much faster than data can be transmitted over a telephone line; but the distances are limited, and there is also a limit on the number of computers that can be attached to a single LAN.

2. **Wide Area Networks (WANs):** the computers are farther apart and are connected by telephone lines or radio waves.

A WAN is a computer network that spans a relatively large geographical area. Typically, a WAN consists of two or more Local-area networks (LANs). Computers connected to a wide-area network are often connected through public networks, such as the telephone system. They can also be connected through leased lines or satellites. The largest WAN is the Internet.

Long before computers existed in any form remotely similar to how we think of them today, there were people who conceived of a future where humans used machines to do the types of things that the Internet is now commonly used for, such as holding virtual meetings or going shopping without leaving home. Although these science fiction stories didn't perfectly predict the Internet, they forecast elements of how machines might change the way we live.

The Internet is a large collection of networks which run the TCP/IP protocols. They are tied together so that users of any of the users of one network can reach users on any of the other networks. Since existing computer networks lay the foundation of the internet, Local area networks are created when several computers say in an office or academic computer are connected together for the purpose of sharing files.

As computer information systems grow and evolve, especially in large organizations, the local area networks are often tied together by a larger network type known as a wide area network.

The internet started and developed when several academic institutions connected their wide area networks together.

**Intranets and Extranet and Internet**

Connections of networks, communicating using (TCP/IP) the protocols of the Internet, within an organization where by the organization have an overall authority (control) of the media is called an Intranet. Intranets have become very common in universities and organizations, commercial enterprises etc. Intranet is an internal network that uses Internet technology. It is basically an internal internet designed to be used within the confines of the university, Company, or organization Intranets are only logically "internal" to an organization. Physically they can span the globe, as long as access is limited to a defined community of interest. Intranet is based upon Internet technology, in particular WWW, to build information systems within organization or enterprise to accomplish standardization and automation.

Sometimes it may also be necessary for two or more institutions to share their data/information, or other resources. In this case the involved organizations agree on terms and rules and give access of their Intranet (network) resources for each other for specified reasons or business transactions. Such networks are called Extranets. Extranets are therefore connection of Intranets, based on an agreement between organizations for the purpose of sharing resources. An Extranet is a private network environment designed to allow clients, business partners, suppliers and other companies with which you do business to access data and applications inside the organization’s network. Vendors may check your inventory databases, partners might view your employee directories, or suppliers might search for Purchase Order details in your core administrative. Usually only a portion of corporate wide information is made available to business partners in this manner.

The requirement to share resources is sometimes global. People need to exchange mail, to discuss about issues, to read news, to advertise, to sell and buy, to exchange information etc. The network of networks that connects hundreds of thousands of networks, and tens of millions of computers around the world is called the **Internet**. The Internet is a network of networks that is extended all around the world. It is not controlled by anyone or any institution.

The Internet is a term used to describe thousands of computers connected with each other spanning over 70 countries. It is the largest network in existence. It is a network of networks acting as one. It is a worldwide communication to businesses, homes, schools and governments.

**1.2 Define Online Journalism /web Journalism**

**Basic Definitions**

**Online:**

The terms online and offline (also on-line and off-line) have specific meanings with respect to computer technology and telecommunication. In general, "online" indicates a state of connectivity, while "offline" indicates a disconnected state. In common usage, "online" often refers to the Internet or the World Wide Web.

**Journalism:**

Journalism is the craft of conveying news, descriptive material and comment via a widening spectrum of media. These include newspapers, magazines, radio and television, the internet and even, more recently, the cell phone (or mobile phone). Journalists—be they writers, editors or photographers; broadcast presenters or producers—serve as the chief purveyors of information and opinion in contemporary mass society.

**Online Journalism: can be defined as the craft of conveying news, descriptive material and comment via an internet, World Wide Web (WWW) and cellular technologies (mobile technologies).**

**1.3 Internet and Evolution of Online Journalism**

**1.3.1 Pre-History of Internet**

The Internet began way back in 1969 - but it was called the ARPANET then. It started out as a research project, and was developed by an agency called ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency) within the US Defence Department, in conjunction with a number of universities and military contractors.

Its purpose was to explore the possibility of a communication network that could survive a nuclear attack. This was achieved by having a network where data could take multiple paths from its source to its destination. If part of the network was destroyed, communications would still be possible through a different path.

**Developed also through research communities**

Although it started out as a research project, the ARPANET quickly developed into a communication tool. It was used for email, discussion groups and for exchanging files. In 1979 Usenet was born. The size of the network grew too, and it became increasingly popular - more and more universities connected.

**Internet Development**

The size of the Internet kept growing at a faster and faster rate.

 In**1983,** a standard communications protocol was established (called TCP/IP).

* All the separate networks started using the protocol, and connected to one another forming a network of networks. This became known as the Internet.

 In**1984,** there were 1,000 machines connected to the Internet.

 In**1987**, there were 10,000, and by 1989 there were 100,000.

 **1992**,the World Wide Web (WWW) launched

 **1994**: The first newspaper on the web launched, Netscape Navigator browser opened

 Incredible growth in short period of time

* **2009**: More than 1 billion users **How big is the Internet?**

**1.4Components of the Internet**

**1.4.1 World Wide Web**

The World Wide Web (abbreviated as the Web or WWW) is a system of Internet servers that supports hypertext to access several Internet protocols on a single interface. Almost every protocol type available on the Internet is accessible on the Web. This includes e-mail, FTP, Telnet, and Usenet News. In addition to these, the World Wide Web has its own protocol: HyperText Transfer Protocol, or HTTP.

The World Wide Web provides a single interface for accessing all these protocols. This creates a convenient and user-friendly environment. It is not necessary to be conversant in these protocols within separate, command-level environments, as was typical in the early days. The Web gathers together these protocols into a single system. Because of this feature, and because of the Web's ability to work with multimedia and advanced programming languages, the Web is the fastest-growing component of the Internet.

The operation of the Web relies primarily on hypertext as its means of information retrieval. HyperText is a document containing words that connect to other documents. These words are called links and are selectable by the user. A single hypertext document can contain links to many documents. In the context of the Web, words or graphics may serve as links to other documents, images, video, and sound. Links may or may not follow a logical path, as each connection is programmed by the creator of the source document. Overall, the Web contains a complex virtual web of connections among a vast number of documents, graphics, videos, and sounds.

Producing hypertext for the Web is accomplished by creating documents with a language called HyperText Markup Language, or HTML. With HTML, tags are placed within the text to accomplish document formatting, visual features such as font size, italics and bold, and the creation of hypertext links. Graphics and multimedia may also be incorporated into an HTML document.

HTML is an evolving language, with new tags being added as each upgrade of the language is developed and released. For example, visual formatting features are now often separated from the HTML document and placed into Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). This has several advantages, including the fact that an external style sheet can centrally control the formatting of multiple documents. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), led by Web founder Tim Berners-Lee, coordinates the efforts of standardizing HTML. The W3C now calls the language XHTML and considers it to be an application of the XML language standard.

The World Wide Web consists of files, called pages or home pages, containing links to documents and resources throughout the Internet.The Web provides a vast array of experiences including multimedia presentations, real-time collaboration, interactive pages, radio and television broadcasts, and the automatic "push" of information to a client computer. Programming languages such as Java, JavaScript, Visual Basic, Cold Fusion and XML are extending the capabilities of the Web. A growing amount of information on the Web is served dynamically from content stored in databases. The Web is therefore not a fixed entity, but one that is in a constant state of development and flux.

**1.4.2 E-MAIL**

Electronic mail, or e-mail, allows computer users locally and worldwide to exchange messages. Each user of e-mail has a mailbox address to which messages are sent. Messages sent through e-mail can arrive within a matter of seconds.A powerful aspect of e-mail is the option to send electronic files to a person's e-mail address. Non-ASCII files, known as binary files, may be attached to e-mail messages. These files are referred to as MIME attachments.MIME stands for Multimedia Internet Mail Extension, and was developed to help e-mail software handle a variety of file types. For example, a document created in Microsoft Word can be attached to an e-mail message and retrieved by the recipient with the appropriate e-mail program. Many e-mail programs, including Eudora, Netscape Messenger, and Microsoft Outlook, offer the ability to read files written in HTML, which is itself a MIME type.

**What Makes Email Different?**

Electronic communication, because of its speed and broadcasting ability, is fundamentally different from paper-based communication. Because the turnaround time can be so fast, email is more conversational than traditional paper-based media. In a paper document, it is absolutely essential to make everything completely clear and unambiguous because your audience may not have a chance to ask for clarification. With email documents, your recipient can ask questions immediately. Email thus tends, like conversational speech, to be sloppier than communications on paper.

**1.4.3 CHAT & INSTANT MESSAGING**

Chat programs allow users on the Internet to communicate with each other by typing in real time. They are sometimes included as a feature of a Web site, where users can log into the "chat room" to exchange comments and information about the topics addressed on the site. Chat may take other, more wide-ranging forms. For example, America Online is well known for sponsoring a number of topical chat rooms.

Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is a service through which participants can communicate to each other on hundreds of channels. These channels are usually based on specific topics. While many topics are frivolous, substantive conversations are also taking place. To access IRC, you must use an IRC software program.

A variation of chat is the phenomenon of instant messaging. With instant messaging, a user on the Web can contact another user currently logged in and type a conversation. Other types of real-time communication are addressed in the tutorial Understanding the World Wide Web.

**1.4.4 FTP**

FTP stands for File Transfer Protocol. This is both a program and the method used to transfer files between computers. Anonymous FTP is an option that allows users to transfer files from thousands of host computers on the Internet to their personal computer account. FTP sites contain books, articles, software, games, images, sounds, multimedia, course work, data sets, and more.

If your computer is directly connected to the Internet via an Ethernet cable, you can use one of several PC software programs, such as WS\_FTP for Windows, to conduct a file transfer.

FTP transfers can be performed on the World Wide Web without the need for special software. In this case, the Web browser will suffice. Whenever you download software from a Web site to your local machine, you are using FTP. You can also retrieve FTP files via search engines such as FtpFind, located at http://www.ftpfind.com/. This option is easiest because you do not need to know FTP program commands.

**1.4.5 TELNET**

Telnet is a program that allows you to log into computers on the Internet and use online databases, library catalogs, chat services, and more. There are no graphics in Telnet sessions, just text. To Telnet to a computer, you must know its address. This can consist of words (locis.loc.gov) or numbers (140.147.254.3). Some services require you to connect to a specific port on the remote computer. In this case, type the port number after the Internet address. Example: telnet nri.reston.va.us 185.

Telnet is available on the World Wide Web. Probably the most common Web-based resources available through Telnet have been library catalogs, though most catalogs have since migrated to the Web. A link to a Telnet resource may look like any other link, but it will launch a Telnet session to make the connection. A Telnet program must be installed on your local computer and configured to your Web browser in order to work. With the increasing popularity of the Web, Telnet has become less frequently used as a means of access to information on the Internet.

**1.4.6 E-MAIL DISCUSSION GROUPS**

One of the benefits of the Internet is the opportunity it offers to people worldwide to communicate via e-mail. The Internet is home to a large community of individuals who carry out active discussions organized around topic-oriented forums distributed by e-mail. These are administered by software programs. Probably the most common program is the listserv.

A great variety of topics are covered by listservs, many of them academic in nature. When you subscribe to a listserv, messages from other subscribers are automatically sent to your electronic mailbox. You subscribe to a listserv by sending an e-mail message to a computer program called a listserver. Listservers are located on computer networks throughout the world. This program handles subscription information and distributes messages to and from subscribers. You must have a e-mail account to participate in a listserv discussion group. Visit Tile.net at http://tile.net/ to see an example of a site that offers a searchable collection of e-mail discussion groups.

Majordomo and Listproc are two other programs that administer e-mail discussion groups. The commands for subscribing to and managing your list memberships are similar to those of listserv.

**1.4.7 USENET NEWS**

Usenet News is a global electronic bulletin board system in which millions of computer users exchange information on a vast range of topics. The major difference between Usenet News and e-mail discussion groups is the fact that Usenet messages are stored on central computers, and users must connect to these computers to read or download the messages posted to these groups. This is distinct from e-mail distribution, in which messages arrive in the electronic mailboxes of each list member.

Usenet itself is a set of machines that exchanges messages, or articles, from Usenet discussion forums, called newsgroups. Usenet administrators control their own sites, and decide which (if any) newsgroups to sponsor and which remote newsgroups to allow into the system.

There are thousands of Usenet newsgroups in existence. While many are academic in nature, numerous newsgroups are organized around recreational topics. Much serious computer-related work takes place in Usenet discussions. A small number of e-mail discussion groups also exist as Usenet newsgroups.

The Usenet newsfeed can be read by a variety of newsreader software programs. For example, the Netscape suite comes with a newsreader program called Messenger. Newsreaders are also available as standalone products.

Usenet is not as popular nowadays as it once was. Blogs and RSS feeds are newer modes of communication that have caught the interest of Internet users. These technologies are covered in Understanding the World Wide Web.

**1.4.8 FAQ, RFC, FYI**

FAQ stands for Frequently Asked Questions. These are periodic postings to Usenet newsgroups that contain a wealth of information related to the topic of the newsgroup. Many FAQs are quite extensive. FAQs are available by subscribing to individual Usenet newsgroups. A Web-based collection of FAQ resources has been collected by The Internet FAQ Consortium and is available at <http://www.faqs.org/>.

**RFC** stands for Request for Comments. These are documents created by and distributed to the Internet community to help define the nuts and bolts of the Internet. They contain both technical specifications and general information.

**FYI** stands for Your Information. These notes are a subset of RFCs and contain information of interest to new Internet users.

**1.5 Characteristics of online journalism Vs. traditional journalism**

**1. Immediacy:** It used to be said that radio was the most immediate medium. Yetmost radio stations only offer you news on the hour or half hour.They put it in boxes. Sometimes it does escape. ‘We now interruptthis programme to bring you a newsflash’ may be the stuff of Bmovie fiction but it does happen. However, it is a rarity on stationsother than those with a rolling news format. The word ‘interrupt’says it all – ‘We can only give you one thing at a time so we haveto stop one thing (e.g. interview with pop star) to give you another(e.g. newsflash).’

On the Web, there is the potential to update your news, showbizand any other pages simultaneously and repeatedly, minute byminute, to give both the latest news and low-down on the pop star.A single news site can post dozens of different updates on storiesevery few minutes. Immediacy supercharged by such flexibility isa potent tool, particularly for breaking news. However, note, again,the word ‘potential’.

**Online = real time** Online journalism can be published in real time, updating breaking news and events as they happen. Nothing new here -- we've had this ability with telegraph, teletype, radio, and TV.

**Online = shifted time** Online journalism also takes advantage of shifted time. Online publications can publish and archive articles for viewing now or later, just as print, film, or broadcast publications can. WWW articles can be infinitely easier to access, of course.

**Online = multimedia** Online journalism can include multimedia elements: text and graphics (Newspapers and books), plus sound, music, motion video, and animation (Broadcast radio, TV, film), 3D, etc.

**Online = interactive** Online journalism is interactive. Hyperlinks represent the primary mechanism for this interactivity on the Web, linking the various elements of a lengthy, complex work, introducing multiple points of view, and adding depth and detail. A work of online journalism can consist of a hyperlinked set of web pages; these pages can themselves include hyperlinks to other web sites. Traditional journalism guides the reader through a linear narrative.

The online journalist lets readers become participants, as they click their way through a hyperlinked set of pages. Narrative momentum and a strong editorial voice pull a reader through a linear narrative. With interactivity, the online journalist can pre- determine, to a certain extent, the reader/participant's progress through the material, but manifold navigation pathways, branching options, and hyperlinks encourage the reader/participant to continue to explore various narrative threads assembled by the reporter/writer/editor. A web of interlinked pages is also an ideal mechanism to give reader/participants access to a library of source documents and background information that form the foundation of an extensive journalistic investigation. Readers/participants can respond instantly to material presented by the online journalist; this response can take several forms. Email to the reporter or editor resembles the traditional letter to editor of print publications, but email letters can be published much sooner online than in print.

Online journalists can also take advantage of threaded discussions that let readers respond immediately to an article, and to the comments of other readers, in a bulletin boardstyle discussion that can be accessed at any time. Readers can become participants in the ongoing cocreation of an editorial environment that evolves from the online journalist's original reporting and the initial article. Blogs (short for "Web log", a Web-based journal) make this easy.

Much of the journalism published on the Web and elsewhere online amounts to nothing more than traditional magazine or newspaper articles and graphics, perhaps with some added links to related web sites. By providing an instant, ubiquitous, cheap distribution medium, the Internet adds tremendous value to such articles. Journalists are still experimenting and discovering how best to take advantage of interactivity and hyper linking to create distinctive works that take advantage of the benefits of the online medium

**Unlimited Space:**Unlike traditional media, online media do not have space/time restraints**.**

**Global Distribution:**global reach is basic feature of online media.

**Convergence*/Multiple pagination***

A web site can have hundred of separate pages, linked to eachother but also capable of being read and understood in isolation.This increases the amount and range of both the news coverageand the potential audience.

Web sites can offer, with varying degrees of user-friendliness,text, audio, graphics, animated graphics, still pictures and movingpictures. TV is king but video so far has been the Cinderella ofweb publishing – or perhaps ugly sister would be a betterdescription. Tiny, fuzzy, jumping pictures of what you can seeanyway on television (e.g. television news reports) have belied theweb’s cutting-edge reputation.

The problem is that video contains an awful lot of ‘bits’ ofinformation and they cannot all travel down the pipe (usually atelephone wire) to the PC quickly enough. The situation isimproving. This digital information can be compressed to reducethe amount of space it uses and the size of the pipe (bandwidth)will also increase. Even within current restrictions, the sites of theBBC and CNN (which want to exploit their existing video newsresources) are showing what can be done.

Multimedia can provide multiple textures to journalism. Forexample, you can hear the eye-witness account while reading thejournalist’s report. Although the application is still rudimentaryon many sites, the potential is there and it will be realized,particularly when television and the Web converge.

**Linkage:** The traditional role of the journalist is further challenged by theonline capacity to link readers to other sites. A newspaper couldrun a story about, for example, lack of funding for school repairs in its area. It might contain a news piece and several related features or fact files. The online version of the paper could offer all of that, but also link the reader to the web sites for the local education authority, the relevant government department, the schools’ inspectorate, local pressure groups, teachers’ unions, the headteachers’ association, political parties, etc.

**Characteristics of the Internet**

1. Anonymity
2. Interactivity
3. Beyond geography
4. Online community
5. Lower cost to participate in the public sphere
6. Lower threshold for self-expression of political opinions

Potential of the Internet

1. Active, participatory citizenship
2. Not only consumption but production
3. Undermines the centralized control of information
4. Reflects the range of views and ideas
5. Improve the level of civic engagement among younger generation

**1.5.2Weaknesses of Online Journalism**

**1. Mushroom:**news sites, journalists and news/opinion.

**2. Lack of Credibility:**The benefit of immediacy can give rise to some serious ethical issues. The desire to publish new information and the ease of which it can be altered may cause information to be made accessible before it is verified. This undermines the journalistic principle of accuracy and can lead to misinformation. Another potential problem is the dilemma of breaking a news story immediately on the Internet and therefore alerting rival news outlets, or waiting to break the news in another medium and have an exclusive story.

**3. Information Overload:**The immense size of cyberspace and the extent of information available may intimidate audiences and cause information overload. Furthermore, it may be difficult for audiences to distinguish between credible news websites and other non-official news websites. This can lead to confusion and misinformation.

**4. Ethical Question:**privacy, accuracy vs. speed, copyright and advertising

**5. Digital Divide:**the gap between have and have not’s.

**1.6 Trends in Web Journalism**

**1.The relationship between social media and photography grow**

“The cliche that a picture is worth 1,000 words rings especially true on social media sites.”Using social media to bring traffic to your website — whether it’s a newspaper, blog or small business — isn’t new. In 2012, social media experts preached a photo-centric strategy on Facebook. The rise of Instagram, Tumblr and Pinterest in recent years further strengthened the relationship between social media and photography. As social media positions at online publications continue to increase, they’ll drag photographers along for the ride. You can’t have a good social media presence without a strong backing in photography, something major newspapers are discovering.

**2. Reporters will be pushed to expand their skill sets into mobile video creation**

In 2013, more publications will train their reporters in on-the-go mobile video and audio, expecting reporters to cover the story but also send live updates for the website.

**3. Audience will continue to expect verification from news organizations**

If news organizations didn’t realize after [PolitiFact](http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/) that audience actually wanted them to verify statements made by political pundits instead of just reporting them. For example the blog was busy during Hurricane Sandy finding the source of weather photos. Side note: all journalists should prepare themselves for fake weather photos by watching the movie *The Day After Tomorrow*, which seems to be the source of many.

**4. Television companies and news companies with a share in the television market will cater more to dual screening**

Most of the live viewers of a special program followed the coverage on more than one screen. Many watched the debate on television and followed the conversation on their social media feeds at the same time. Television has become an incredibly social experience.

**5. An increase in crowd sourcing and citizen journalism will involve the audience in the creation of stories**

**6. Audience will have greater access to the editors and reporters about how and why they make decisions that affect news coverage**

Editors and reporters at major news organizations have gone to Reddit this year to engage in open dialogue with the audience. Even President Barack Obama has appeared in an AMA chat on Reddit.

**Chapter Two: News Media Technologies & Online Journalism**

**Chapter Contents**

* 1. What is New Media?
     1. Impact of New media on journalism
     2. Globalization and new media
     3. Citizen journalism
  2. Forms of the new Media
  3. Blogs
     1. Introduction to blogs
     2. Types of blogs
     3. Uses of blogs
  4. **What is New Media?**

New media is a term meant to encompass the emergence of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies in the later part of the 20th century. Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, often having characteristics of being manipulatable, networkable, dense, compressible, interactive and impartial. Some examples may be the Internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMS, and DVDs. New media is not television programs, feature films, magazines, books, or paper-based publications.

Although there are several ways that New Media may be described, *The New Media Reader* by Wardrip-Fruin and Montfort defines New Media by using eight simple and concise propositions:

1. **New Media versus Cyber culture**- Cyber culture is the study of various social phenomena that are associated with the internet and network communications, whereas New Media is concerned more with cultural objects and paradigms.

2. **New Media as Computer Technology used as a Distribution Platform**- New Media are the cultural objects which use digital computer technology for distribution and exhibition. e.g. (at least for now) Internet, Web sites, computer multimedia, DVD's etc. The problem with this is that the definition must be revised every few years. The term "new media" will not be "new" anymore due to most forms of culture will be distributed through computers.

3. **New Media as Digital Data Controlled by Software**- The language of New Media is based on the assumption that, in fact, all cultural objects that rely on digital representation and computer-based delivery do share a number of common qualities. New media is reduced to digital data that can be manipulated by software as any other data. Now media operations can create several version of the same object.

4. **New Media as the Mix Between Existing Cultural Conventions and the Conventions of Software**- "New Media today can be understood as the mix between older cultural conventions for data representation, access, and manipulation and newer conventions of data representation, access, and manipulation." e.g. In film, software is used in some areas of production, in others are created using computer animation.

5. **New Media as the Aesthetics that Accompanies the Early Stage of Every New Modern Media and Communication Technology**- "While ideological tropes indeed seem to be reappearing rather regularly, many aesthetic strategies may reappear two or three times...In order for this approach to be truly useful it would be insufficient to simple name the strategies and tropes and to record the moments of their appearance; instead, we would have to develop a much more comprehensive analysis which would correlate the history of technology with social, political, and economical histories or the modern period."

6. **New Media as Faster Execution of Algorithms Previously Executed Manually or through Other Technologies**- Computers are a huge speed-up of what were previously manual techniques. E.g. calculators. "Dramatically speeding up the execution makes possible previously non-existent representational technique." This also makes possible of many new forms of media art such as interactive multimedia and computer games. "On one level, a modern digital computer is just a faster calculator, we should not ignore it's other identity: that of a cybernetic control device."

7. **New Media as Metamedia**- Manovich declares that the 1920's are more relevant to New Media than any other time period. Meta-media coincides with postmodernism in that they both rework old work rather than create new work. New media Advant-Garde "is about new ways of accessing and manipulating information." (e.g. hypermedia, databases, search engines, etc.) **Meta-media is an example of how quantity can change into quality** as in new media technology and manipulation techniques can "recode modernist aesthetics into a very different postmodern aesthetics."

8. **New Media as Parallel Articulation of Similar Ideas in Post-WWII Art and Modern Computing**- Post WWII Art or "combinatorics" involves creating images by systematically changing a single parameter. This leads to the creation or remarkably similar images and spatial structures. "This illustrates that algorithms, this essential part of new media, do not depend on technology, but can be executed by humans."

* + 1. **Impact of New Media on Journalism**

Ask any journalist today how the Internet has changed journalism, and the most likely reply willbe, “how hasn’t it?” The Internet has changed journalism in every conceivable way. It haschanged the journalists, the audience, the advertisers … - “the whole ecosystem”.

The Internet has become a **time-saving research resource** for journalists and editors, especially forreporters looking for background. The Internet **has opened up new ways of storytelling** through differenttechnical components. Web journalists offer a variety of media to tell their stories, such as audio, video,and digital photography. They create an opportunity for niche audiences, allowing people to have moreoptions as to what to view and read.

**Online media reaches a wider audience**. People all over the world could be reading stories in the*New York Times* and sharing what they read with friends. The *Huffington Post* has already emerged as aleader in this respect, as it takes pride in the fact that it is an online newspaper with diversified ideas readworldwide. On social networking sites such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* people are finding and reading thenews quickly as it is right at their fingertips. Readers can also subscribe to breaking news and get it ontheir mobile phones via SMS texts.

More and more people of today turn to the Internet. They can actively engage and participate inthe news as online media provides the opportunity to share, discuss, and debate a certain news eventtaking place. Most big news sites now have a way for readers to post their comments.

Because of the popularity of the Internet, most people can add their own forms of journalism tothe information network. Individuals who are not professional journalists who present news through theirblogs or websites are often referred to as **citizen journalists**. One does not need a degree to be a citizenjournalist. Citizen journalists are able to publish information that may not be reported otherwise, and thepublic has a greater opportunity to be informed. Citizen journalism is everywhere today.

Online journalists have the same influence on their audiences that conventional journalists have -by choosing which stories to report; which facts, quotes, and other story elements to include and which toexclude; by choosing to tell the story from a particular **point of view**. A crime story told from the point ofview of the victim will elicit a different reaction from the same story told from the point of view of thecriminal.

The Web’s interactivity and hyper linking gives the journalist more opportunities toexamine multiple points of view in a particular piece than traditional, analogue media. The lack of seriousspace limitations permits online journalists to develop a **story more fully and to publish source documents and background material**.

**The high number of Internet users is attracting a lot of advertisers away from newspapers.** Manynewspapers have to close down as loss in advertising revenue further damages print media abilities tocontinue publishing. Internet advertising is cheaper and, no doubt, is much more promising than classifiedads in print media.Although the Internet may have succeeded in revolutionizing the way news is gathered and present,many people are critical of online journalists, bloggers and twitters. As online journalism is not regulatedproperly, the accuracy and credibility of its stories is often questioned.

As we shall see, the arrival of online journalism has challenged the primacy of news, the relationship between reporter and reader and the current skills package of the journalist. News and features have given way to ‘useful content’. Journalists are told they have become ‘information architects’, but do not know what that means. But journalism in the online world is a broad church, encompassing a wide spectrum – from news to information, from investigative journalism to re-purposing content, from multimedia interactions to bullet point lists, from intricate sites to the simple e-zine. It can accommodate all of this because, running through it, like a golden thread, is the core journalism – the identification, collection, selection and presentation of information.

* + 1. **Globalization and New Media**

The rise of new media has increased communication between people all over the world and the Internet. It has allowed people to express themselves through blogs, websites, pictures, and other user-generated media.

Flew (2002) stated that as a result of the evolution of new media technologies, globalization occurs. Globalization is generally stated as "more than expansion of activities beyond the boundaries of particular nation states". Globalization shortens the distance between people all over the world by the electronic communication (Carely 1992 in Flew 2002) and Cairncross (1998) expresses this great development as the "death of distance". New media "radically break the connection between physical place and social place, making physical location much less significant for our social relationships" (Croteau and Hoynes 2003: 311).

However, the changes in the new media environment create a series of tensions in the concept of “public sphere”. According to Ingrid Volkmer, “public sphere” is defined as aprocess through which public communication becomes restructured and partly disembodied from national political and cultural institutions. This trend of the globalized public sphere is not only as a geographical expansion form a nation to worldwide, but also changes the relationship between the public, the media and state (Volkmer, 1999:123).

**"Virtual communities"** are being established online and transcend geographical boundaries, eliminating social restrictions. Howard Rheingold (2000) describes these globalised societies as self-defined networks, which resemble what we do in real life. "People in virtual communities use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk" (Rheingold cited in Slevin 2000: 91). For Sherry Turkle "making the computer into a second self, finding a soul in the machine, can substitute for human relationships" (Holmes 2005: 184). New media has the ability to connect like-minded others worldwide.

While this perspective suggests that the technology drives – and therefore is a determining factor – in the process of globalization, arguments involving technological determinism are generally frowned upon by mainstream media studies. Instead academics focus on the multiplicity of processes by which technology is funded, researched and produced, forming a feedback loop when the technologies are used and often transformed by their users, which then feeds into the process of guiding their future development.

New Media changes continuously due to the fact that it is constantly modified and redefined by the interaction between the creative use of the masses, emerging technology, cultural changes, etc.

* + 1. **Citizen Journalism**

Citizen journalism (also known as "public", "participatory", "democratic" or "street journalism" is the concept of members of the public "playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information," according to the seminal 2003 report *We Media: How Audiences are Shaping the Future of News and Information*. Authors Bowman and Willis say: "The intent of this participation is to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires."

Journalism should not be confused with community journalism or civic journalism, which are practiced by professional journalists, or collaborative journalism, which is practiced by professional and non-professional journalists working together. Citizen journalism is a specific form of citizen media as well as user generated content.

The idea behind citizen journalism is that people without professional journalism training can use the tools of modern technology and the global distribution of the Internet to create, augment or fact-check media on their own or in collaboration with others. For example, you might write about a city council meeting on your blog or in an online forum. Or you could fact-check a newspaper article from the mainstream media and point out factual errors or bias on your blog. Or you might snap a digital photo of a newsworthy event happening in your town and post it online. Or you might videotape a similar event and post it on a site such as YouTube. In *What is Participatory Journalism?* J. D. Lasica classifies media for citizen journalism into the following types:

1. Audience participation (such as user comments attached to news stories, personal blogs, photos or video footage captured from personal mobile cameras, or local news written by residents of a community)

2. Independent news and information Websites (Consumer Reports, the Drudge Report)

3. Full-fledged participatory news sites (NowPublic, OhmyNews, DigitalJournal.com, GroundReport)

4. Collaborative and contributory media sites (Slashdot, Kuro5hin, Newsvine)

5. Other kinds of "thin media." (mailing lists, email newsletters)

6. Personal broadcasting sites (video broadcast sites such as KenRadio).

New media theorist Terry Flew states that there are 3 elements "critical to the rise of citizen journalism and citizen media":

1. open publishing,
2. collaborative editing and
3. Distributed content.

From this perspective, Wikipedia itself is the largest and most successful citizen journalism project, with news often breaking through Wikipedia editors, and stories being maintained as new facts emerge.

* 1. **Forms of Online Journalism**

**Introduction**

All forms of online journalism emphasize different aspects of the news and establish a differentrelationship with the public sphere, the informal aspects of the political process, and withformal political institutions.The main argument pursued here is that online journalism is becoming increasinglycomplex and varied in its forms, requiring a more in-depth and nuanced approach toassessing its role. The following are the seven forms of online journalism; their specific instantiations:

1. **Participatory or Civic Journalism**

This is the most celebrated new form of journalism, one which is thought to radicallychange journalism. In Dan Gillmor’s (2004) well-known words, if journalism waspreviously a lecture it is now a conversation or seminar. ***The originality of this form of journalism is that it allows the active participation of readers. This is formally evidenced in providing the means by which citizens can post their own news articles, photos, opinions, and so on.***

First, In this kind of journalism, readers are or can potentiallybecome journalists themselves.

Secondly, the news is organized on the basis ofimportance to those running the site rather than coinforming to standardized news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1965).

Thirdly, precisely because of the reliance of thisjournalistic form on readers rather than journalists, its stance vis-à-vis the politicalprocess is not the “objective” or at least detached one found in other, more mainstreamforms of professional journalism.

These three elements, namely the involvedand overtly partisan stance toward the political process, the ranking of news on thebasis of their significance to the readers and/or site objectives and aims, and thedirect participation of readers in the journalistic process, constitute this, a distinctform of journalism.

As journalism, this is not only alternative in the sense that it publishes different kindsof news, but in the more radical sense that it serves a different purpose. More broadly, itreconfigures the politics–journalism relationship: no longer is journalism a mediator forpublic opinion, or a watchdog of the political process, but it is more a kind of politicalactivism (c.f. Will, 2006 in Atton and Hamilton, 2008), a reclaiming of radical politicaljournalism as seen in the early radical press. The focus is on mobilizing, organizing, anddisseminating useful information, while readers are seen as an integral part of the process.

1. **J-blogging**

Journalistic blogging emulates the form taken by civic or participatory journalism, inthat it makes use of readers’ contributions and comments while also its inclusion andarrangement of news items is according to the blog’s priorities and interests. On theother hand it differs from participatory or civic journalism in two respects: ***firstly***, bloggingas such is not journalism in that it does not usually produce news but repeats andcomments on it – that occasionally some news stories are broken by blogs is the exceptionthat proves the rule. ***Secondly,*** j-blogging, which may produce news and hencequalify as journalism, differs from civic journalism in that it is typically produced byjournalists or people who understand themselves as media workers. For instance, themost well-known and highest ranking j-blog. In short, thisform of journalism is similar to participatory journalism, but differs in that the contributorsare not citizens, but journalists.

This is liberal journalism at its best, retaining autonomy (and credibility) throughprotecting itself from the market and writing critical but substantiated articles ontopics that have an impact on people’s lives. It is not concerned with “objectivity” asmuch as with bringing about social justice, but through the traditional journalistic route of helping form and mobilize public opinion. The political role of this kind ofjournalism is close to the liberal and early Habermasian normative ideals of legitimatingof political decisions through public opinion.

However, to the extent that itdoes not provide a forum or enable more active participation from its readers,it repeats and re-enacts a division between politics–journalism–citizenry. It cannotbe considered participatory, or deliberative, or, finally, radical but it constitutes neverthelessa new form of journalism that relies on resurrecting the classic journalisticstandards of accuracy, analysis, and informed commentary that hark back to the earlydays of the (bourgeois) public sphere.

1. **Video Journalism**

Video journalism is a new form of journalism that uses and combines the principles ofbroadcast journalism with those of the participatory forms discussed above. It is producedby both professional journalists as well by citizens themselves. The news is primarilyencoded through a visual language, and it is not text-based. As such the priority is onreportage rather than opinion, although the visuals can be used as a commentary oncurrent affairs. The readers are addressed as audiences, that is, primarily as spectators,engaged through their senses rather than through their intellect.

In general, there is an emphasis on creativity and imagination. This form of journalismis based on the use of visual material to make points on topics of concern. It contains awide range of topics, mostly found under the citizen journalism category, which aresubmitted by a very wide range of sources from across the world. Other elements include educational/trainingvideos for journalists, and artistic social film-making. It is clear that this kind ofjournalism seeks to relate the world through visual means. In terms of its production, itis neither professional in the strict sense of the term nor amateur or volunteer based – infact it combines both professional and citizen journalism, but perhaps it is better understoodas creative journalism.

Given its links to, but also detachment from, journalistic norms, this form ofjournalism may be seen as functioning in ways similar to that of art. Adorno (1997) sawart as operating both from within and outside of society, in order to comment, criticize,and help apprehend the world in radical new ways. Just as art, for Adorno, operatesthrough a dialectic between content and form, so this kind of visual, creative journalismoperates by imposing a new form (the visual one) on journalistic contents.

1. **News aggregators, exemplified by Google News**

This form of journalism refers to the aggregation of news from different news outlets,which are ordered and offered in a meta-site such as Google or Yahoo. The productionprocess differs in that in fact the site reproduces rather than produces the news. Thecontents are those of standard, mainstream journalism, but are offered in a specific customizablemanner to audiences/readers.

In examining this form more closely, the focus is on Google News. The main categoriesare difficult to discern as the site allows for customization. It mostly includes topstories, ranked on the basis of popularity (i.e. found in a lot of other news media) andrecency (when they were published, the more recent goes on top). Users can customizethe site on the basis of specialized news, for example, entertainment, sport, politics, andso on, and/or in terms of location, for example, news occurring in Greece or the USA,in terms of the main news outlets they are interested in, for example, CNN, Fox News,BBC News, and so on. It should be clearly noted that none of the news items are produced by Google – they are collected by a host of media and aggregated by Google.

However, Google News understands itself as providing a service to news readers thatallows for a more personalized take on the news, based on a theme or topic. It views itselfas objective in the sense that it provides several journalistic sources on a topic or newsstory, while it also makes use of a computer-based sorting system that disregards politicalideology. Audiences are clearly seen here ascustomers, as individuals in the (liberal) sense of having certain individual preferencesand choices. This is clearly a customer-based take on journalism as service provision, adepoliticized understanding that pretends to service the customers even as they stripthem of any potential contribution.

1. **Mainstream Online Journalism**

This refers to the traditional form of journalism that for the most part has merely shiftedits platform from print to online. It is produced by professional publishers, editors, andjournalists, who are getting paid for their work. The news is produced by either in-housereporters or bought from news agencies, and ordered on the basis of the well-knownnews values. Readers are primarily positioned in a passive manner, reading the news.

However, the online version of mainstream journalism has introduced a few changes inthis form as well. These are found in the news contents and readers: news contents areconsiderably expanded while readers are allowed to comment on news stories. Finally, this form of journalismreproduces the offline model, and while integrating some new media features, it doesnot really significantly alter offline journalism – from this point of view, this kind of journalism may not be considered a new form as such, but rather the successful migration of journalism to the Internet.

1. **Open or crowd sourced journalism, exemplified by Wikileaks;**

The term crowd sourcing was coined by Jeff Howe, in an article in *Wired*magazinein 2006. Howe understands crowd sourcing as the application of open source principlesto fields beyond software injournalism; this idea has also refer to the production of contents by users. But crowd sourcing goesbeyond this: **it issues an open call to all who may know something about a given issue or event, and asks them to share it.** On this basis, the production of journalism isradically altered, because it is no longer undertaken by one or even a team of trainedor citizen journalists – rather, production of journalism is distributed across severallocations and people, each making a distinct contribution to the emerging newsstory, even if in the end it is compiled and presented by a single person. The newsstories emerging from this kind of production tend to include a lot of data, and tobe investigative. Readers are typically placed in the position of both users/readers aswell as contributors and co-authors of news stories.

Wikileaks has a very simple interface, including few if any categories, which includerequests to ***donate, as well as to submit material***. It further includes an archive from2002 to 2010, and a series of editorials, comprising mostly the views and opinions of itscelebrity founder ***Julian Assange.*** The main part of the site includes links to, and briefsummaries of, the files and information leaked through Wikileaks. These notoriouslyinclude the Guantanamo Bay files, some 800 classified prisoner dossiers, the 250 000cables from US Embassies, and the Iraq and Afghanistan War files. These files can beaccessed and downloaded from the Wikileaks site, as well as from mirror sites andthrough torrent, the P2P file-sharing protocol. These files are in their “raw” and unprocessedform, just thousands and thousands of pages of information that need to be siftedthrough and highlighted in order to be made clearer. At the same time, Wikileaks has itsown journalists, who provide summary versions and highlights of the main informationcontained in the files.

The number and complexity of the leaked files implies that readers of Wikileaks maynot be everyday citizens, who have hardly the time and inclination to sift through andunderstand these documents, but rather professional journalists, and other interestedparties (e.g. diplomats, political activists, human rights specialists, and so on). Thesemore specialized readers then read and compile this information into a news story.

Thenews stories that have emerged through Wikipedia then reflect the specialism and interestof their authors: thus, professional journalists who have accessed the files have offeredjournalistic accounts, focusing on the personalized, sensational, elite, and so on, aspectsof the files; human rights and other activists have looked for and examined any humanrights violations, any legal liabilities; diplomats have sought the implications for foreignpolicy, security issues and the like. Readers are then primarily experts who use the leakedarchives as their primary source. At the same time, however, Wikileaks has issued opencalls for contributors, who may have access to information that the public may have aninterest in. Such whistleblowers may contact Wikileaks and offer information in ways that will not compromise them.

Two kinds of readers are therefore primarily addressedby Wikileaks: experts, who are able to compile and interpret the raw information leaked,and whistleblowers, who have access to important and secret information.

Wikileaks depends entirely on donations, and has been at the center of a controversialdecision by Visa and Mastercard to block donations to Wikileaks. The legal problems,celebrity style of its leader, and the notoriety it has achieved, often combine to obscurethe origins of Wikileaks in the hacking and cyberlibertarian culture. This culture, described by Castells (2001) as one of the four cultures of the Internet, is characterizedby an ethos of freedom but also creativity and innovation.

This kind of hacking culture is positioned in-between university (“techno-elitist culture”for Castells), and entrepreneurial cultures, borrowing elements from both. If wecombine this culture and its ethic of freedom, innovation, and creativity, but also peersupport, with journalism, the new journalistic form that emerges radicalizes journalism inits production, which is now distributed across many sources; in its contents which arenow (re)written by experts, journalists, and bloggers; and in its readers/audiences, whoare not only everyday citizens but also peers (experts and journalists).

Open source journalism can therefore be understood as a kind of continuousinvestigative journalism in the tradition of the journalism of Watergate, and its protagonists,the “Deep Throat” (the government whistleblower), Bob Woodward, and CarlBernstein (the *Washington Post* journalists).

1. **Social Media Journalism, exemplified by Twitter, facebook**

Social Media journalism refers to the ways in which social media arecombined with journalism and produce a new kind of social media journalism. Interms of production, this form of journalism is collectively produced by both professionaland amateur journalists, in a distributed manner similar to open source journalism.Its contents are primarily characterized by a personalized take on events andare ranked in terms of personal interest rather than their news value. Readers are notonly active producers in this form of journalism, but they are also understood as“friends” or “followers,” that is, as forming networks clustering around specificissues or keywords and/or persons.

Twitter is an example of social media. Twitter, whichis understood as a micro-blogging site or platform for user-generated content, allowsusers to post short messages of a maximum 140 characters. Its contents are entirely producedby users, who see a rolling line of new tweets as they come in. A significant aspect of Twitter is that tweets by users can be ordered on the basisof their contents, as users can provide hashtags, that is, keywords preceded by a hashtag. A vast proportion of Twitter activity is personal and cannot really qualify asjournalism. However, journalists or interested citizens can, and do, use Twitter in a journalisticmanner, posting short messages about events as they unfold, or also summariesof news where one can read more.

* 1. **Blogs** 
     1. **Introduction to Blogs**

A blog (a contraction of the term "web log") is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (Art blog), photographs (photoblog), videos (Video blogging), music (MP3 blog), and audio (podcasting). Microblogging is another type of blogging, featuring very short posts. As of December 2007, blog search engine Technorati was tracking more than 112,000,000 blogs.

**2.3.2 Definitions of Blog**:

* **Blog is an online Journal**. It is a frequently updated journal or diary usually, often hosted by a third party.
* Short for "Web log," a specialized site that allows an individual or group of individuals to share a running log of events and personal insights with online audiences. Blogs with political or current-events themes have grown in popularity and allows for instant mass-audience commentary.
* **Web LOG is a journal kept on the Internet**. This journal is often updated daily and contains all information that the person maintaining the BLOG (the blogger) wishes to share with the world. 4- A blog is information that is instantly published to a Web site. Blog scripting allows someone to automatically post information to a Web site. The information first goes to a blogger Web site. Then the information is automatically inserted into a template tailored for your Web site.
* **A BLOG is a publication of personal thoughts, experiences, and web links.** It is updated frequently and is usually a mixture of what is happening in a person's life and what is happening on the web or in the media.
* **Blog is a frequent, chronological publication of personal thoughts and Web links.** It offers readers the opportunity to reply to opinions and link to their own blogs.
* **It is a web-based publication consisting of periodic contributions, often in reverse chronological order**.
* Blog is a journal on the web, which may be public or private, individual or collaborative.
* BLOG is our Web pages that work as a journal that our normally updated daily. Blogging sites can provide excellent information on many topics, although content can be subjective.
* Blog is an online diary written on a computer and posted on the World Wide Web.
* A blog is an online journal or diary of an individual’s opinions and latest news that is updated regularly, in chronological order. Many blogs allow visitors to make comments, or “postings” in response to the blogger, or ask questions.
* A blog is basically a journal or personal diary that is available on the web. Blogs are typically updated daily using content management software that allows people with little or no technical background to update and maintain them.
* It is an online diary where people can post messages and others may view and respond to the posts.
* This is a term coming from the combination of the terms web log – it is a web page that serves as publicly accessible journal for the author. It can be formal or informal, is usually updated daily and reflects the personality of the author.
* Blog is a web journal which is otherwise called as a "weblog". Entries are made on a regular or daily basis in a blog like an online diary. Some blogs have definite authors who disclose their names and some with anonymous authors who use a nickname.
* Blogs have been identified as an increasingly popular source of online publication, especially regarding political information, opinion publication and alternative news coverage.
* Weblog is a website with a series of postings. Blogs are easily written and published via a web form using free or low cost software. Many libraries use a blog format as their website.
* A weblog is a hierarchy of text, images, media objects and data, arranged chronologically, that can be viewed in an HTML browser.
* A blog is a user-generated website where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order.

**2.3.3 Components of Blogs:**

1. ***Subject or Header***: Subject or header is the blog's title.
2. ***Content or Body***: The text is typed or pasted into the body.
3. ***Comments***: The comment feature allows others to take part in a discussion regarding the contents of your blog. When visitors add their own two cents regarding the subject matter, a lively discussion can proceed. Many bloggers and blog readers appreciate the sense of community blogs offer thanks to comments.
4. ***Time and Date Stamp***: Because blogs are arranged in chronological order, it's important for visitors to note the time and date of each post.
5. ***Community***: The blog builds community around a common vision. Bloggers will often link to other blogs and websites as a way of illustrating a point or citing a source. This not only adds an air of credibility to the blog, but it also allows readers to visit blogs they might not have otherwise heard about. The blogger on the other end of the link is sure to appreciate the resulting boom in traffic. In fact a community made up of like-minded bloggers and commenters usually form as a result of the links. These bloggers will cite each other's blogs in their own and even discuss and analyze each other's topics.
6. ***Blogroll***: A list of links to other blogs, often called a blogroll.
7. ***RSS feeds***: that permits automatic notification of blog subscribers when new entries are posted.
8. ***An archive feature for older articles***. Blogs also focus on a particular topic such as a corporate vision, politics, religion, sports, or health.

**2.3.4 Types of Blogs**

There are many different types of blogs, differing not only in the type of content, but also in the way that content is delivered or written.

**Personal blogs :**The personal blog, an ongoing diary or commentary by an individual, is the traditional, most common blog. Personal bloggers usually take pride in their blog posts, even if their blog is never read. Blogs often become more than a way to just communicate; they become a way to reflect on life or works of art. Blogging can have a sentimental quality. Few personal blogs rise to fame and the mainstream, but some personal blogs quickly garner an extensive following. A type of personal blog is referred to as "microblogging," which is extremely detailed blogging as it seeks to capture a moment in time. Sites, such as Twitter, allow bloggers to share thoughts and feelings instantaneously with friends and family and is much faster than e-mailing or writing.

**Corporate and Organizational Blogs :**A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business purposes. Blogs, either used internally to enhance the communication and culture in a corporation or externally for marketing, branding or public relations purposes are called corporate blogs. Similar blogs for clubs and societies are called club blogs, group blogs, or by similar names; typical use is to inform members and other interested parties of club and member activities.

**By genre**

Some blogs focus on a particular subject, such as political blogs, travel blogs also known as **travelogs**, house blogs, fashion blogs, project blogs, education blogs, niche blogs, classical music blogs, quizzing blogs and legal blogs (often referred to as a blawgs) or dreamlogs. Two common types of genre blogs are art blogs and music blogs. A blog featuring discussions especially about home and family is not uncommonly called a mom blog. While not a legitimate type of blog, one used for the sole purpose of spamming is known as a **Splog**.

**By media type**

A blog comprising videos is called a ***vlog***, one comprising links is called a ***linklog***, a site containing a portfolio of sketches is called a ***sketchblog*** or one comprising photos is called a ***photoblog***. Blogs with shorter posts and mixed media types are called ***tumblelogs***. Blogs that are written on typewriters and then scanned are called ***typecast or typecast blogs***.

**By device**

Blogs can also be defined by which type of device is used to compose it. A blog written by a mobile device like a mobile phone or PDA could be called a ***moblog***. One early blog was Wearable Wireless Webcam, an online shared diary of a person's personal life combining text, video, and pictures transmitted live from a wearable computer and EyeTap device to a web site. This practice of semi-automated bloggingwith live video together with text was referred to as ***sousveillance***. Such journals have been used as evidence in legal matters.

**Legal status of publishers**: A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business purposes. Blogs either used internally to enhance the communication and culture in a corporation or externally for marketing, branding or PR purposes are called corporate blogs.

**Blog search engines**: Several blog search engines are used to search blog contents (also known as the blogosphere), such as blogdigger, Feedster, and Technorati. Technorati provides current information on both popular searches and tags used to categorize blog postings.

**Blogging Communities and Directories**: Several online communities exist that connect people to blogs and bloggers to other bloggers, including BlogCatalog and MyBlogLog. A collection of local blogs is sometimes referred to as a Bloghood.

**Advantages and disadvantages of blogs**

Before you join the blogosphere, consider both the advantages and the caveats. ***The major advantage*** of blogs is that they are interactive and require no knowledge of coding by the content creators. ***The major disadvantage*** is that maintaining a successful blog requires skillful research, professional writing skills and a huge commitment of time and effort. There simply is no such thing as a perfect marketing tool, or an effortless way to build traffic to any site, including blogs. There are more advantages than disadvantages to blogging, but the disadvantages will definitely cause your blog's failure and could even put you in the midst of controversy or see you mocked by other bloggers.

**Advantages of blogs**:

1. The consumer and citizen are potentially better informed and this can only be good for the long-term health of our societies and economies.
2. ***Blogs are an excellent way to share knowledge with others on both a personal and business level.***
3. ***Blogging permits team communication*** in a group that is scattered geographically, with many advantages over traditional email.
4. ***Blogs have potential to help the organization develop stronger relationships and brand loyalty with its customers,*** as they interact with the ‘human face’ of the organization through blogs.
5. Blogs, in an intranet environment, can be a***n excellent way of sharing knowledge within the organization.***
6. ***Blogs can be used to provide feedback, ideas, and concepts***. They can be a positive way of getting feedback, and keeping your finger on the pulse, as readers react to certain pieces, suggest story ideas, etc.
7. ***Blogs can build the profile of the writer***, showcasing the organization as having talent and expertise.
8. ***Blog software is often free and easy to use***. A non-technical person can use a blog. Blog pages can be created quickly and updated easily by a non-technical person.
9. ***Journalists troll blogs for source material*** because bloggers often break stories before traditional media. Posts in your blog can lead to coverage in mainstream, traditional media. Key people in the media search the blogs for information. We often get news from blogs well before the same information is seen in CNN. FOX, traditional networks, or other news services.
10. ***Blogs are a perfect way to organize large amounts of information*** because posts are automatically archived and searchable.
11. ***Blogs generate traffic***. Search engines love blogs, so a good blog will drive traffic to you and your web site. Blog page listings are updated frequently in the search engines because they are strong on content and changed often. As a result, blogs can drive high-quality listings for a web site.
12. ***Blogging is a very inexpensive form of advertising*** and there is a high click through rate for advertising on the better blogs. Its good advertising and marketing. Click-through rates on blog ads can reach 5%, and blog advertising is particularly good for niche marketing. Banner ads are nowhere near that. Some bloggers are getting 6-figure incomes from their support advertising in their blogs.
13. ***Blogs establish you as an authority*** on the subject of your blog, increasing your credibility.
14. Several blogs reach over 100,000 unique visitors a day. In other words, ***if you do it right you have a very large audience.***

**Disadvantages of blogs**

1. **Like practically everything else on the Web, blogs are easy to start and hard to maintain.** Writing coherently is one of the most difficult and time-consuming tasks for a human being to undertake. So, far from blogs being a cheap strategy, they are a very expensive one, in that they eat up time. As a result, many blogs are not updated, thus damaging rather than enhancing the reputation of the organization.
2. Most people don’t have very much to say that’s interesting, and are unable to write down their ideas in a compelling and clear manner. People who have most time to write have least to say, and the people who have most to say don’t have enough time to write it.
3. **It is easy for a non-technical person to maintain a blog.** This is both a plus and a minus. The fact that updating is easy makes it possible for a non-technical person to update the blog. At the same time, this means you can find a large number of blogs out there that add nothing to the blogosphere but garbage and mis-information.
4. **Blogs are time intensive.** You need to do research to find and verify information. You have to keep up with many other blogs. You have to keep your blog updated, or you lose your readers. It also takes time and effort to build your audience. Once the audience is built, however, it is a loyal audience. Of the over 11 million blogs out there, only about 4 million are active. People quit keeping the blogs up for a variety of reasons. Most of these relate to the difficulty and time required to author quality content and the research required to keep it accurate.

**Chapter Three: Searching the Internet &Web Design**

**Chapter Contents**

3.1 Searching the Internet: Search Techniques

3.2 Web site Design

**3.1Searching the Internet: Search Techniques**

A variety of search tools to help you gain skills in conducting research on the Internet. This sub topic covers three basic types of tools:

1. Subject Directories
2. Search engines
3. Deep Web

**Why we need to study directories, engines and the deep Web?**

* Many people use search engines without considering the usefulness of subject directories for their topics.
* The difference between these types of tools is often poorly understood
* Yahoo has such a popular directory that more selective and higher quality directories are often overlooked.
* The deep Web is growing at a phenomenal rate, so its content is becoming increasingly important to researchers.
* All of these tools can complement each other in the research process.
* The lines are blurring between sites that offer either one resource or the other; for example, it is common to find directories and specialized searches (i.e., deep Web) at many search engine sites.

**When should I use a subject directory?**

* When you have a broad topic or idea to research
* When you want to see a list of sites on your topic often recommended and annotated by experts
* When you want to look around in a controlled environment
* When you want to retrieve a list of sites relevant to your topic, rather than numerous individual pages contained within these sites
* When you want to search for the site title, annotation and (if available) assigned keywords to retrieve relevant material rather than the full text of a document
* When you want to avoid viewing low-content documents that often turn up on search engines

**When should I use a search engine?**

* When you have a narrow or obscure topic or idea to research
* When you are looking for a specific site
* When you want to search the full text of millions of pages
* When you want to retrieve a large number of documents on your topic
* When you want to search for particular types of documents, file types, source locations, languages, date last modified, etc.
* When you want to take advantage of newer retrieval technologies such as concept clustering, ranking by popularity, link ranking, and so on

**When should I use the deep Web?**

* When you want dynamically changing content such as the latest news, job postings, available airline flights, etc.
* When you want to find information that is normally stored in a database, such as a phone book listing, listings of lawyers, doctors, plants etc., searchable collections of laws, geographical and company data, and so on.

**Search Engines**

**Definition:** A search engine is asearchable database of Internet files collected by a computer program (called a wanderer, crawler, robot, worm, and spider). Indexing is created from the collected files, e.g., title, full text, size, URL, etc. There is no selection criteria for the collection of files, though evaluation can be applied to ranking schemes that return the results of a query.

A search engine might well be called a **search engine service** or a **search service.** As such, it consists of three components:

* 1. **Spider:** Program that traverses the Web from link to link, identifying and reading pages
  2. **Index:** Database containing a copy of each Web page gathered by the spider
  3. **Search and retrieval mechanism:** Technology that enables users to query the index and that returns results in a schematic order

There are two major types of search engines:

* 1. **Individual:** An individual engine uses a spider to collect its own searchable index.
  2. **Meta:** A meta engine searches multiple individual engines simultaneously. It does not have its own index, but uses the indexes collected by the spiders of other search engines.

**Meta search engines** simultaneously search multiple search engines. They are also sometimes referred to as **parallel search engines, multithreaded search engines, or mega search engines**.

Most meta engines return a single list of results from multiple sources, usually with the duplicate files removed. These engines retrieve a certain maximum number of files allowed by the individual engines it has searched, cut off after a certain point as the search is processed. The cut-off may be determined by the number of documents retrieved, or by the amount of time the meta engine spends at the other sites. Some of these services give the user a certain degree of control over these factors.

All of this has two implications:

* + These engines return only a limited number of the documents available to be retrieved from the individual engines they have searched.
  + Results retrieved by these engines can be highly relevant, since they are usually grabbing the first items from the relevancy-ranked list of hits returned by the individual search engines.

**Meta Searching: Pros and Cons**

**Pros**

* + useful when you want to retrieve a relatively small number of relevant results
  + an excellent choice for obscure topics
  + a good option when you are not having luck finding what you want when you search
  + appropriate when you want to get an overall picture of what is available on the Web on your topic

**Cons:**

* + use is limited primarily to simple queries
  + little or no field searching is available
  + these engines return a limited number of results that do not represent the totality of results from any source engine

The better meta search engines remove duplicate files and give you some information along with the document title.

**Special Features:**

* + Simultaneously searches several major search engines and subject directories
  + Returns the top 10 results, easily viewable with a star rating: 1 star per top 10 hit
  + Each result shows the source of the hit and the ranking, e.g., *Altavista (4)* means that the hit ranked fourth on AltaVista
  + "Highlighted result" shows the page with your search terms highlighted for a contextual view
  + Duplicate hits are removed from the list of located sites

**Drawbacks:**

* + While top 10 results can be relevant, other results may also be useful to you

**Other Recommended Meta Search Engines**

**Don Busca:** http://www.donbusca.com/ Searches the Web, blogs, news and software and offers a variety of options with each result including concept clusters, a visual thumbnail of the site, a cached version, a link to the site archive in the Wayback Machine, site info from a variety of sources and various bookmark management options.

**Fazzle:** http://www.fazzle.com/ Searches several search services on the Web; also offers specialty searches of downloads, images, videos and other topics from the deep Web.

**Yooci:** http://www.yooci.com/ Retrieves no more than 250 results for any search. You can see a list of more meta engines by visiting Internet Search Engines.

**General Search Strategies**

1. **Search engines tend to have a default Boolean logic.** This means that the space between multiple search terms defaults to either OR logic or AND logic. *This has become a de facto standard.* It is imperative that you know which logical operator is the default. Nowadays, the default logic tends to be AND, but you should always check the site's Help file to make sure.
2. **Search for phrases within quotations,** e.g., "dealth penalty".
3. **If the option is available, use proximity operators:** if these are available rather than specifying an AND relationship between your keywords**.** This will make sure that your search terms are located near each other in the full text document. The closer your terms are placed, the more possibly relevant the document will be. Google does proximity searching by default.
4. **Field searching: is important way of limiting search results in large search engines that contain millions of full-text files.**
5. **To enhance subject searches, try the URL field to narrow your results.** The URL field offers a good way to search for certain subject terms. This is because of the make-up of the URL.

**Anatomy of a URL**

The following URL is on the CNN home page. It is typical of addresses hosted in domains in the United States. ***http://www.cnn.com/feedback/comments.html***

Structure of this URL:

1. Protocol: **http**
2. Host computer name: **www**
3. Second-level domain name: **cnn**
4. Top-level domain name: **com**
5. Directory name: **feedback**
6. File name: **comments.html**

The *directory name* and *file name* often contain subject terms. These can be searched with the URL field.

1. **To find a home page when you know the *location or sponsor* of the information, use the Site field.** In this case, you search on the top-level and second-level domain names together, and then use AND logic to add subject terms to your search.
2. **Beware of searching on three-letter top-level domains to narrow your search. Do NOT try to search for the URL *edu*or *com.*** There are too many pages in these domains for the search engine to handle. On the other hand, searching for the URL *gov*may be more successful because there are far fewer of these pages. Still, all searches on top-level domains should be used with caution.

Keep in mind that there are a few search services that specialize in retrieving Web pages from individual top-level domains. For example:

* + SearchEdu.com limits results to the *edu, gov*and *mil* domains
  + Google Search: Unclesam limits results to the *gov*and *mil* domains

Use these specialty engines when you wish to limit your results to these domains, as your results are more likely to be accurate and comprehensive.

1. **Limiting a search by a two-letter country code, also a top-level domain, might be a viable option.** Take a look at Internet country codes.

**Best Bet Search Syntax**

* + Place the plus sign ( + ) in front of all words you wish to retrieve

**+hibernation +bears**

* + Place a phrase within quotations: ex. **"freedom of the press"**
* Putting it all together: ex. **+"drug policy" +"United States"**

**How to Choose a Search Engine or Directory?**

* Fields & FileTypes
* Search Logic
* Search Options
* Search Results
* Specialty Searches

**3.2 Web site Design**

**Web design** encompasses many different skills and disciplines in the production and maintenance of websites. The different areas of web design include

* web graphic design;
* [interface design](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interface_design);
* authoring, including standardized code and proprietary software;
* [user experience design](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_experience_design); and
* [Search engine optimization](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization).

Often many individuals will work in teams covering different aspects of the design process, although some designers will cover them all. The term web design is normally used to describe the design process relating to the front-end (client side) design of a website including writing mark up. Web design partially overlaps [web engineering](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_engineering) in the broader scope of [web development](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_development). Web designers are expected to have an awareness of [usability](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usability) and if their role involves creating mark up then they are also expected to be up to date with [web accessibility](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_accessibility) guidelines.

**Internet tools**

Because you will be dealing with the Internet, you need to have some tools specifically for viewing and moving files over the network:

**A variety of browsers.**Because browsers render pages differently, you’ll want to test your pages on as many browsers as possible, both on the desktop and on mobile devices. The following lists the desktop browsers most commonly used on Windows and Macintosh operating systems: Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Opera and Safari,

**Web-Related Technologies:**

* Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)
* Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)
* JavaScript and DOM scripting
* Server-side programming and database management

**Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)**

HTML (HyperText Markup Language) is the language used to create web page documents. There are a few versions of HTML in use today: HTML 4.01 is the most firmly established and the newer, more robust HTML5 is gaining steam and browser support. Both versions have a stricter implementation called XHTML (eXtensible HTML), which is essentially the same language with much stricter syntax rules.

HTML is not a programming language; it is a markup language, which means it is a system for identifying and describing the various components of a document such as headings, paragraphs, and lists. The markup indicates the document’s underlying structure (you can think of it as a detailed, machine-readable outline). You don’t need programming skills—only patience and common sense—to write HTML.

The best way to learn HTML is to write out some pages by hand, as we will be doing in the exercises in this book. If you end up working in web production, you’ll live and breathe HTML. But even hobbyists will benefit from knowing what is going on under the hood. The good news is that it’s simple to learn the basics.

**Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)**

While HTML is used to describe the content in a web page, it is Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) that describe how that content should *look*. In the web design biz, the way the page looks is known as its presentation. That means fonts, colors, background images, line spacing, page layout, and so on… all controlled with CSS. With the newest version (CSS3), you can even add special effects and basic animation to your page.

CSS also provides methods for controlling how documents will be presented in contexts other than the traditional desktop browser, such as in print and or on devices with small screen widths. It also has rules for specifying the nonvisual presentation of documents, such as how they will sound when read by a screen reader (although those are not well supported).

**JavaScript/DOM scripting**

JavaScript is a scripting language that is used to add interactivity and behaviors to web pages, including these (just to name a few):

• Checking form entries for valid entries

• Swapping out styles for an element or an entire site

• Making the browser remember information about the user for the next time she visits

• Building interface widgets, such as expanding menus JavaScript is used to manipulate the elements on the web page, the styles applied to them, or even the browser itself. There are other web scripting languages, but JavaScript (also called ECMAScript) is the standard and most ubiquitous.

**Server-side programming**

Some simple websites are collections of static HTML documents and image files, but most commercial sites have more advanced functionality such as forms handling, dynamically generated pages, shopping carts, content management systems, databases, and so on. These functions are handled by web applications running on the server. There are a number of programming languages and frameworks (listed in parentheses) that are used to create web applications, including:

* + PHP (CakePHP, CodeIngniter, Drupal)
  + Python (Django, TurboGears)
  + Ruby (Ruby on Rails, Sinatra)
  + JavaScript (Node.js, Rhino, SpiderMonkey)
  + Java (Grails, Google Web Toolkit, JavaServer Faces)
  + ASP.Net (DotNetNuke, ASP.Net MVC)

Developing web applications is programmer territory and is not expected of all web designers. However, that doesn’t mean you can’t offer such functionality to your clients. It is possible to get shopping carts, content management systems, mailing lists, and blogs as prepackaged solutions, without the need to program them from scratch.

**Equipment**

For a comfortable web development environment, the following equipments are recommended:

* A solid, up-to-date computer.
* Extra memory.
* A large monitor.
* A scanner and/or digital camera.
* A second computer.
* Mobile devices.

**Web Site**

A **website**, also written as **web site**, or simply **site**, is a set of related [web pages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_page) typically served from a single [web domain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fully_qualified_domain_name). A website is hosted on at least one [web server](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_server), accessible via a network such as the [Internet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet) or a private [local area network](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_area_network) through an Internet address known as a [uniform resource locator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniform_resource_locator) (URL). All publicly accessible websites collectively constitute the [World Wide Web](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Wide_Web).

A webpage is a [document](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Document), typically written in [plain text](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plain_text) interspersed with formatting instructions of Hypertext Markup Language ([HTML](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML), [XHTML](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/XHTML)). A webpage may incorporate elements from other websites with suitable [markup anchors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML_anchor).Will electronic newspapers replace dead-tree newspapers someday? Probably. They will be cheaper to produce, more enjoyable to read, more timely, more comprehensive. Creating pages for the World Wide Web requires the same understanding of type and images that you need when creating pages for print. But it’s a different environment, one where readers have more control than ever before. Instead of designing pages that sort the news in a pre-arranged progression, you create an interface where users interact at random.

**Transforming Print Pages in Web Pages**

**Online news sites don't need to be cool; they need to be:**

* **Informative:**That means useful news, not whiz-bang gimmickry.
* **Easyto navigate:**That means a clean, uncluttered, user-friendly interface.
* **Fast-moving:**That means its responsive - quick clicks from link to link.
* **Current:** That means you guarantee freshness every day. Every minute, even.

**Web Pages in comparing with Newspaper Pages**

* For instance, in newspaper page a photo, a cutline, a headline, some text, and a box that refers to related stories need to be fairly simple. And the text can be folded into three legs so it fits. On the Web, same elements need to have different configuration. ***Instead of three legs, we use one wide, deep column of text.***
* In a newspaper, space is finite, and you spend your time making the puzzle fit. On the Web, the page size is smaller, but space is infinite, and stories can run on forever. In fact, you can generally divide most online newspaper pages into two categories: ***stories*** and ***home pages***– special directories that function as section fronts to guide users through your Web site.
* Just as the front page is the doorway to the printed newspaper, the home page is the gateway to the online newspaper. And because the home page links users to every inside page, it *must* be comprehensive, yet easy to navigate.

**Elements of Homepage**

1. **The flag**: For online editions, newspapers often devise a new name and spiffed-up logo, while maintaining some connection to the print version.
2. **Time/date**: If you update your site more than once a day, you should include the time of this edition, as well.
3. **Index (or navigation bar)**: It's easy to get lost in cyberspace. That's why a complete, clickable index is vital on the home page – AND on every other page in the site, as well.
4. **Navigation buttons**: These quickly link users to non-news services; the index down the left side guides us to actual news.
5. **Lead story**: It's usually just a summary, but you can click the headline to link to the full text - or photos and Classified ad.avideo clip.
6. **Page depth**: This page is designed to fit on one screen, so readers won't have to scroll. Ideally, you'll try to avoid never-ending vertically scrolling home pages - which requires smart planning and tight editing – but usually, the bigger the site, the deeper the home page.
7. **Footer**: Every page on every Web site should include copyright information. But this is also a good spot to solicit e-mail feedback from users or provide links to other sections of the site.
8. **Links**: Click on the headlines link and will be transferred to the story page, where you can read the text in full. For most home pages, virtually everything is a clickable link to another page.
9. **Interactive extras**: Online newspapers provide features that ordinary newspapers, can't: instant polls. Podcasts. Photo galleries. Animated graphics.
10. **Ads/promotions**: These are often dummied horizontally at the top of the page or (better) aligned neatly in this right-hand rail.
11. **Search engine**: This helps user shunt for specific topics or names in the news.

Most home pages present a sprawling mix of material: headlines, text, car ads,photos, promos, restaurant ads, blogs, videos - and furniture ads.Virtuallyeverything on your Web site wants a spot on your home page.

For online news sites,home pages are directories. You'llrarely see full-length stories there; instead you'll browse a collage of links, withshort blurbs and small photos laid out like a postage-stamp collection.Most newspaper home pages consist of:

* **News Content**. The lead story gets bigger play and bigger art; secondary stories and briefs are usually grouped by topic (Sports, Business, etc.). Headlines provide clickable links; small photos link to bigger photos, slideshows or videos. Web extras. These are often an assortment of standalone news features such as blogs, polls, podcasts and photo galleries generated by the newsroom.
* **NavigationBar**. This may be the most crucial element on the page, so it's got to be easy to find, easy to use, and displayed in the same identical place (along the top? Down the side?) on every page of the site.
* **Service Menu**. This is where you promote all the non-news features your site provides: classified ads, subscription information, newsroom contacts, reprints, contests, etc.
* **Ads**. Decisions about advertisements - how big, how intrusive, how many - will shape your home-page architecture. In a perfect world, ads would be organized to provide impact without dominating the news content.

Jugglingall these different elements isn't easy,which is why many home pagesbecome chaotic jumbles. Smart Web designers group and grid related elements,developing a dependable architecture that organizes material consistently fromday to day. Designing a home page is like decorating your home; the furniturestays in the same place while the guests come and go.

Just as you need to develop a consistent architecture for home pages,you needto establish a standard format for story pages,too. Most stories may be short andsimple - no photos, graphics or multimedia extras - but they all incorporateelements that need to be uniformly sized and positioned. For example:

* **Headers/navigation bars**. To avoid confusing users, these *must* be firmly nailed down and remain in exactlythe same spot on every page of your site.
* **Headlines**. Most sites use one headline font and size for all standard stories, another for shorter sidebars. A 24-to-30-point banner headline is typical for most stories;many sites add decks to their bigger stories, too.
* **Text**. One wide leg of easily readable type (usually 12 point) is standard for most stories. Double-spacing between paragraphs is typical, too. Photos, sidebars and links are frequently indented into the text - along with ads, as well.
* **Bylines**. These often provide links to biographical data about reporters or allow users to send e-mail feedback.
* **Time/date**. This shows when the page was posted or last updated.
* **Photo links**. To speed each page's download time, images usually run small, then link to larger photos, slideshows or video clips.
* **Text links**. These connect users to related stories, columns, blogs, graphics, etc. Like sidebars in print publications, these usually use a smaller sans-serif font to distinguish them from body type.
* **Comments**. Readers want to react to stories or voice their opinions, so a tell us what you thinklink will connect them to a message board – thoughmany sites post reader comments immediately following the end of the story.
* **Ads**. Yes, they have to go *somewhere.* But how big and intrusive must they be?

There's another important reason for developing standard treatments for all these story elements: to save time. Few Web designers can afford to reinvent the wheel every time they post a new story, so each site adopts a consistent story-page format that usually resembles one of these options:

**Adding Online Extras**

Web developers use a sarcastic term, ***shovel ware****,* to describe headlines and text lifted from a print publication and dumped onto a Web site without adding anything extra. Shovel ware is easy, but it's lazy. If you just shovel your print material online, users will realize that either you don't care - or you *just don't get it.*The Web offers vast storytelling potential, but you'll never tap it if you're too dependent on just headline-text-photos-and-cutline’s. So put down that shovel. Here are three types of online tools every smart news site should incorporate.

**1. Link**

If you've done your job and presented good information, users willwant more. Online, it's easyto giveit to them. Youcan link to other material by highlighting words or phrases in the text, but that can get distracting if it's overdone. Usually,it's best to gather links into lists that run alongside stories. Byclickingon these links, users can connect to:

* **Related material** that's posted elsewhereon the site. This will include stories, graphics, photos, videos, reader comments or polls.
* **Previously run material** on this topic (or related topics) from your newsroom's archives.
* **Editorials or columns** that offer analysis or commentary on topics discussed in the story.
* **Additional information** that was left out of the story: statistics, quotes, even full-length transcripts or audio of interviews.
* **Organizations or individuals**whom users may want to contact.
* **Other Websites** that offer additional viewpoints or data.

**2. Multimedia Option**

* **Slideshows** (or *photo galleries)* present a series of photos and captions that tell a story, illustrate a topic or document an event. With a little extra effort and the right software, you can add audio narration, interviews, music and sound effects; photos can be timed to advance automatically, too.
* **Video**. Some news sites repackage clips from TV newscasts. That's a good start, but you can also expand your online coverage with video interviews, documentary-style packages, even digital footage submitted by users.
* **Audio**. News sites often provide audio files of speeches, interviews or musical excerpts to supplement the text of a story.
* **Animated graphics**. These are like the charts, maps and diagrams you see in print, except they're animated to simulate motion. They'll illustrate the path of the hurricane or show, step by step, how a new gizmo works. Some add sound; some are "clickable;' giving users more choices and control.
* **Podcasts**. These are audio versions of stories for users who'd rather listen than read - downloadable for playback at a later time. Like radio news stories, podcasts are most effective when they incorporate sound bites, music and other audio extras.

**3. Interactive Options**

For centuries, newspapers were a one-way monologue. But online news sites are now giving readers a voice,too, providing dialogue through:

* **User comments**. Stories and columns often add a "comment" section that allows everyone to voice opinions, correct errors or supply further details. Many online news sites feature reporters' or editors' Web logs (or *blogs)* where journalists discuss controversial stories, defend their decisions, publish newsroom memos and add a human face to their news coverage.
* **User-generated content**. Many news sites post users' blogs, photos and videos, both for standalone features *and* breaking news. Some encourage local experts to report on their areas of expertise; others ask readers to send in story ideas, anecdotes and interview questions - or ask them to participate in:
* **Online polls, contests- and quizzes**. With the right software, you can conduct reader surveys on any topic (though results may not be statistically accurate). You can integrate tests and quizzes into stories, too, with forms that check your fitness level, test your Grammy IQ or calculate: *What Will This New Tax Plan Cost YOU?*
* **Live chats**. These are interviews - of newsmakers, experts, even newsroom staffers- asking questions submitted by readers and moderated by a reporter or editor.

**Web Design Guidelines**

**1. Dealing with Different download times**

In the future, we'll all have lightning-fast Web connections that instantly display lavish, complex pages loaded with audio and video. But unfortunately, this is now. And nowadays, we all download pages at different speeds. Some of us are fast. Some of us are painfully slow. Thus, every Web designer needs to appreciate that the more complex a page is, the more slowly it downloads. The more slowly it downloads, the more frustrated users become, vowing neverto return to your site again. Therefore:

* **Keep things simple**. When in doubt, minimize. News sites really don't need type that sparkles or images that blink, unless they're warning that your site is about to explode. Use special effects for good reason - animated infographics, for example - not for frills. Don't waste bandwidth. Make every Kcount.
* **Keep images small**. Set a limit on routine image file sizes (20K?). To display full-size photos, use clickable thumbnails that link to larger images.
* **Monitor your users**. Suppose virtually all of your users have new computers and broadband. Would that make it OK to load your site with huge graphics? Run browser-detection software to analyze who your users really are, then decide.

**2. Coping with Different Platforms**

No matter what you do - whether you use animated graphics or the simplest HTML coding - your site looks different to everyvisitor. Pagesthat look fine on my big monitor may not quite fit on your little laptop. I may use the latest version of Firefoxon a new Mac; you may use an Explorer LIon an old Pc. And even two identicallysized monitors might display everything at different resolutions.

In addition, HTML won't let you choose *exact* point sizes for text; you can onlychoose one of seven *relative* sizes. You can't select exact fonts, either (since users may not own the font you're using); you can only *suggest* fonts for users who have them installed. And to complicate things even more, all users set up different defaults in their browsers. (My text may default to Times, yours to Helvetica.) So what can you do? Wait for Web software to evolve. And until then:

* **Test carefully**. View all your pages on all platforms and all browsers. Stay aware of the inevitable flux, so you can build a little flex into your layouts.
* **Remember your text-only users**, those viewing your site on browsers with the graphics turned off (or the visually impaired, whose browsers read the page aloud). Will your pages be navigable to them? At the very least, provide ALT tags for every image, so if the images don't appear, short descriptions of them do.

**3. Organizing Pages**

* **Avoid Clutter**. Don't get sloppy or lazy. Don't settle into a dull, inflexible format. Keep pages fresh. For every edition, design your top stories with dramatic headlines and visuals, just as you would in your newspaper.
* **Make easy navigation a priority**. Clutter is bad enough; it's even worse to scroll down, down, down with no clue what comes next. The busier the page, the more you must label and group everything - like a restaurant menu. Use colors, headers and navigation bars *consistently.* Help readers search, click and exit *effortlessly.*
* **Watch your page width**. Web dimensions are measured in pixels, with 10 pixels to a pica. Currently, the most common size for Web pages is 800 by 600 pixels. At that size, they'll easily fit on most anyone's monitor. Some sites are built even wider, but be careful not to make your pages too wide; *you* may have a jumbo monitor, but if your readers don't, they'll quickly tire of scrolling sideways. We said that the standard monitor depth is 600 pixels. And in a perfect world, Web pages would all hold to that depth. But since that's seldom possible:
* **Let 'em scroll**. Some Web experts urge you to fit all your data on one screen, especially on your home page. Force readers to scroll, they warn, and they'll quit in frustration. Good theory; impractical in reality. Besides, it's not *scrolling* that, readers dislike, it's being *bored.* Successful design has always been about fitting the maximum data into the smallest space, so keep pages (especiallyhome ADS pages) to one or two screens, if you can. Otherwise:
* **Think vertical**. Like classic newspaper pages of the Web pages flow vertically as you scrolldownscreen.
* **Include fixed page elements**. Don't ever let readers get lost or confused. When designing pages and creating page templates, keep navigation bars close by at all times. Remember, too, that users often print out pages or save them to disk. To ensure your ownership remains attached, make sure every page contains your publication's name, the date and all relevant contact/copyright information.

**4. Using Effective PageGrids**

Whether you're designing a simple story or a complicated home page,you need to divide the page into modules and assign every module a specific job: the index module. The lead story module. The news briefs module.The cheesy promotional gimmick module.

You can organize your modules with rules, with labels, with background screens and colors - whatever it takes to unify the elements without creating clutter. Other advice:

* **Avoid random or redundant modules**. Prioritize and sort *everything,* especially on crowded, busy home pages. Make every element's function and identity clear.(Some sites have both "Top Stories"and "LatestNews"- what's the difference?)
* **Align those ads**. Is that Moe's Hardware ad.drowning out your flag? Does yourhome page look a race car covered with sponsors' decals? Get those noisy adsunder control. Stackthem neatly,just as you would on a printed page.
* **Avoid overcrowding**. Design white space into the layout, a little extra air betweenmodules. Make all your gutters at least a pica wide to let the page breathe.

**5. Adding Color**

* **Use color consistently and strategically**. Develop a color palette that's part of your overall navigational system, one that helps to organize page elements and direct traffic without adding unnecessary noise.
* **Beware of dark, textured or colorized backgrounds**. Unless you've got a terrific reason, stick to black type on a white background. Too much color adds clutter - worse, it reduces readability and makes linking problematic. Yes, you can use tinted or white type in small chunks. But reserve that treatment for signage and dramatic display elements - not for long paragraphs of text.

**6. Sizingand Saving Graphics**

On the Web,the word *graphics* refers to a variety of elements: photos, displaytype, flags,illustrations, icons, navigation buttons and bars. Almost anything onyour site that's more complex than HTML text and headlines - including anytype you want to craft precisely- will need to be imported as a graphic.As we've learned, too many imported graphics will slow your download timeand constipate your page flow.But too *few* images can result in pages that arewordy,messyor dull. Either way,you lose.So what can you do?

* **Compress all your images by converting them into either GIF or JPEG files**. They're the two most common Web image formats. What's the difference? *GIF* images work best, as a rule, for line art; for images with just a few colors or with large areas of solid color; for display type; for black-and-white images; for images smaller than, say, a postage stamp. *JPEG* generally works best for photos and complex illustrations.
* **Use fewer and smaller images**. Yes, as you know, big photos are a band width clogger. So until Web pipelines speed up, use thumbnails (tiny postage-stamp images) to *link* to your full-sized photos.

**7. UsingType Effectively**

* **Keep your text width comfortable**: Because stories will scroll down –downdown,stacking them in narrow legs (like newspapers do) won't work. It's better to use one wide column. But don't make it *too* wide. Browsers vary in their text display sizes, but the ideal column width will range from 15-30 picas, or 150-300 pixels.
* **Avoid excessive text on home pages**.In fact, you should generally avoid runningmore than a paragraph of text there. Think of the home page as a menu or super index;think of its main elements as promos. Your goal is to click users ahead.
* **Avoid underlining text**. Underlining must be reserved exclusivelyfor links.orreaders will get confused. For that matter, Web visitors have been trained to thinkthat any differently colored or differently styled type is a clickable link. So don'tcolorize ordinary type; colorize only links.
* **Be creative when installing links**. Remember, you can link with headlines,words, icons or images.Experiment to expand your hyperlink repertoire:
* **Use different fonts for different jobs**,just as you would for the printed paper.Mix bolds and italics when crafting headlines, decks and bylines. Use displaytype, saved as small GIF files,to create appealing headers and special headlines.

**Types of Web Site**

**Static website**

A static website is one that has web pages stored on the server in the format that is sent to a client web browser. It is primarily coded in [Hypertext Markup Language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypertext_Markup_Language) (HTML); [Cascading Style Sheets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascading_Style_Sheets) (CSS) are used to control appearance beyond basic HTML. Images are commonly used to effect the desired appearance and as part of the main content. Audio or video might also be considered "static" content if it plays automatically or is generally non-interactive.

This type of website usually displays the same information to all visitors. Similar to handing out a printed brochure to customers or clients, a static website will generally provide consistent, standard information for an extended period of time. Although the website owner may make updates periodically, it is a manual process to edit the text, photos and other content and may require basic website design skills and software. Simple forms or marketing examples of websites, such as *classic website*, a *five-page website* or a *brochure website* are often static websites, because they present pre-defined, static information to the user. This may include information about a company and its products and services through text, photos, animations, audio/video, and navigation menus.

Static web sites can be edited using four broad categories of software:

[Text editors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_editor), [WYSIWYG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WYSIWYG) offline editors, WYSIWYG online editors and [Template-based editors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_template_system).

Static websites may still use [server side includes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Server_side_include) (SSI) as an editing convenience, such as sharing a common menu bar across many pages. As the site's behavior*to the reader* is still static, this is not considered a dynamic site.

**Dynamic website**

A dynamic website is one that changes or customizes itself frequently and automatically.

Server-side dynamic pages are generated "on the fly" by computer code that produces the HTML (CSS are responsible for appearance and thus, are static files). There are a wide range of software systems, such as [CGI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Gateway_Interface), [Java Servlets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Java_Servlets) and [Java Server Pages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Java_Server_Pages) (JSP), [Active Server Pages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active_Server_Pages) and [ColdFusion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ColdFusion) (CFML) that are available to generate [dynamic web systems and dynamic sites](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Programming_languages_used_in_most_popular_websites). Various [web application frameworks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_application_framework) and [web template systems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_template_system) are available for general-use [programming languages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Programming_language) like [PHP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PHP), [Perl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perl), [Python](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Python_%28programming_language%29), and [Ruby](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruby_%28programming_language%29), to make it faster and easier to create complex dynamic web sites.

A site can display the current state of a dialogue between users, monitor a changing situation, or provide information in some way personalized to the requirements of the individual user. For example, when the front page of a news site is requested, the code running on the web server might combine stored HTML fragments with news stores retrieved from a [database](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Database) or another web site via [RSS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS) to produce a page that includes the latest information. Dynamic sites can be interactive by using [HTML forms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML_forms), storing and reading back [browser cookies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Browser_cookies), or by creating a series of pages that reflect the previous history of clicks. Another example of dynamic content is when a retail website with a database of media products allows a user to input a search request, e.g. for the keyword [Beatles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatles). In response, the content of the web page will spontaneously change the way it looked before, and will then display a list of Beatles products like CDs, DVDs and books.

[Dynamic HTML](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynamic_HTML) uses [JavaScript](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JavaScript) code to instruct the web browser how to interactively modify the page contents.

One way to simulate a certain type of dynamic web site while avoiding the performance loss of initiating the dynamic engine on a per-user or per-connection basis, is to periodically automatically regenerate a large series of static pages.

**Types of Websites**

There are many varieties of websites, each specializing in a particular type of content or use, and they may be arbitrarily classified in any number of ways. A few such classifications might include:

1. **Affiliate**: A site, typically few in pages, whose purpose is to sell a third party's product. The seller receives a commission for facilitating the sale.
2. [**Affiliate Agency**](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Affiliate_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1): Enabled [portal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_portal) that renders not only its custom [CMS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Content_management_system) but also syndicated content from other content providers for an agreed fee. There are usually three relationship tiers.
3. [**Archive Site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archive_site): Used to preserve valuable electronic content threatened with extinction. Two examples are: [Internet Archive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_Archive), which since 1996 has preserved billions of old (and new) web pages; and [Google Groups](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Groups), which in early 2005 was archiving over 845,000,000 messages posted to [Usenet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usenet) news/discussion groups.
4. [**Attack site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malware): A site created specifically to attack visitors' computers on their first visit to a website by downloading a file (usually a [trojan horse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trojan_horse_%28computing%29)). These websites rely on unsuspecting users with poor anti-virus protection in their computers.
5. [**Blog**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog) **(web log):** Sites generally used to post online diaries which may include discussion forums (e.g., [Blogger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blogger.com), [Xanga](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xanga)). Many bloggers use blogs like an editorial section of a newspaper to express their ideas on anything ranging from politics to religion to video games to parenting, along with anything in between. Some bloggers are professional bloggers and they are paid to blog about a certain subject, and they are usually found on news sites.
6. **Brand-building site:** A site with the purpose of creating an experience of a brand online. These sites usually do not sell anything, but focus on building the brand. Brand building sites are most common for low-value, high-volume [fast moving consumer goods](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_moving_consumer_goods) (FMCG).
7. [**Celebrity website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celebrity): A website the information in which revolves around a [celebrity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celebrity). These sites can be official (endorsed by the celebrity) or fan-made (run by a fan or fans of the celebrity without implicit endorsement).
8. [**Crowdfunding**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowdfunding) **website:** Platform to fund projects by the pre-purchase of products.
9. [**Click-to-donate site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Click-to-donate_site): A website that allows the visitor to donate to charity simply by clicking on a button or answering a question correctly. An advertiser usually donates to the charity for each correct answer generated.
10. [**Community Site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_site): A site where persons with similar interests communicate with each other, usually by [chat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_chat) or message boards.
11. [**Content**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Content_%28media%29) **Site:** A site the business of which is the creation and distribution of original content.
12. [**Classified ads**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classified_ads) **site:** A site publishing classified advertisements.
13. [**Corporate website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporate_website)**:** Used to provide background information about a business, organization, or service.
14. [**Dating Website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dating_website): A site where users can find other single people looking for long range relationships, dating, or just friends. Many of them are pay per services, but there are many free or partially free dating sites. Most dating sites today have the functionality of social networking websites.
15. [**Electronic commerce**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_commerce) **(e-commerce) site:** A site offering goods and services for [online sale](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_shopping) and enabling online transactions for such sales.
16. [**Forum website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_forum): A site where people discuss various topics.
17. [**Gallery website**](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/gallery): A website designed specifically for use as a Gallery; these may be an art gallery or photo gallery and of commercial or non-commercial nature.
18. [**Government site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government): A website made by the local, state, department or national government of a country. Usually these sites also operate websites that are intended to inform tourists or support tourism.
19. [**Gripe site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gripe_site): A site devoted to the criticism of a person, place, corporation, government, or institution.
20. [**Gaming website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_game): A site that lets users play. online games
21. [**Gambling website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_gambling): Some enable people to gamble online.
22. [**Humor site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humor_site): Satirizes, parodies or otherwise exists solely to amuse.
23. **Information site:** Most websites fit in this category to some extent. They do not necessarily have commercial purposes.
24. **Media-sharing site:** A site that enables users to upload and view media such as [pictures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image_hosting_service), [music](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Music_hosting_service&action=edit&redlink=1), and [videos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_hosting_service).
25. **Mirror site:** A website that is the replication of another website. This type of website is used as a response to spikes in user visitors. Mirror sites are most commonly used to provide multiple sources of the same information, and are of particular value as a way of providing reliable access to large downloads.
26. [**Microblog site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microblog): A short and simple form of blogging. Microblogs are limited to certain amounts of characters and works similar to a status update on [Facebook](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook).
27. [**News site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/News_site): Similar to an information site, but dedicated to dispensing news, politics, and commentary.
28. [**Personal website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_website): Websites about an individual or a small group (such as a family) that contains information or any content that the individual wishes to include. Such a personal website is different from a *Celebrity website*, which can be very expensive and run by a publicist or agency.
29. [**Phishing site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phishing): a website created to fraudulently acquire [sensitive information](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_sensitivity), such as passwords and [credit card](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Credit_card) details, by masquerading as a trustworthy person or business (such as [Social Security Administration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_Security_Administration), [PayPal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PayPal)) in an [electronic communication](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunication) (see [Phishing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phishing)).
30. [**p2p**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peer-to-peer_file_sharing)**/**[**Torrents website**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torrent_file): Websites that index torrent files. This type of website is different from a [Bit torrent client](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BitTorrent_%28protocol%29) which is usually a stand-alone software.
31. **Political site:** A site on which people may voice political views, show political humor, campaigning for elections, or show information about a certain political party or ideology.
32. [**Porn site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_pornography): A site that shows sexually explicit content for enjoyment and relaxation. They can be similar to a personal website when it's a website of a porn actor/actress or a media sharing website where user can upload from their own sexually explicit material to movies made by adult studios.
33. [**Question and Answer (Q&A) site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Question_and_Answer_Websites): Answer site is a site where people can ask questions & get answers.
34. [**Religious site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_and_the_Internet): A site in which people may advertise a place of worship, or provide inspiration or seek to encourage the faith of a follower of that religion.
35. [**Review site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Review_site): A site on which people can post reviews for products or services.
36. [**School site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_website): a site on which teachers, students, or administrators can post information about current events at or involving their school. U.S. elementary-high school websites generally use k12 in the URL.
37. [**Scraper site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scraper_site): a site which largely duplicates without permission the content of another site, without actually pretending to be that site, in order to capture some of that site's traffic (especially from search engines) and profit from advertising revenue or in other ways.
38. [**Search engine**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_search_engine) **site:** A website that indexes material on the Internet or an [intranet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intranet) (and lately on traditional media such as books and newspapers) and provides links to information as a response to a query. Eg. [Google Search](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Search), [Bing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bing), [GoodSearch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GoodSearch), [DuckDuckGo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DuckDuckGo)
39. [**Shock site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shock_site): Includes [images](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image) or other material that is intended to be offensive to most viewers.
40. [**Showcase site**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Showcase_website): [Web portals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_portal) used by individuals and organisations to showcase things of interest or value.
41. [**Social bookmarking**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_bookmarking) **site:** A site where users share other content from the Internet and rate and comment on the content.
42. [**Social networking**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_networking_service) **site:** A site where users could communicate with one another and share media, such as pictures, videos, music, blogs, etc. with other users. These may include games and [web applications](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_application). Eg.[Facebook](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook), [Orkut](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orkut), [Google+](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google%2B)
43. [**Warez**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warez): A site designed to host or link to materials such as music, movies and software for the user to download.
44. [**Webmail**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Webmail): A site that provides a webmail service. Eg.[Hotmail](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hotmail), [Gmail](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gmail), [Yahoo!](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahoo%21)
45. [**Web portal**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_portal): A site that provides a starting point or a gateway to other resources on the Internet or an intranet. Eg.[msn.com](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Msn.com), [msnbc.com](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Msnbc.com), [yahoo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahoo)
46. [**Wiki**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki) **site:** A site in which users collaboratively edit its content. Eg. Wikipedia,

**Advantages of static websites**

* Quick to develop
* Cheap to develop
* Cheap to host

**Disadvantages of static websites**

* Requires web development expertise to update site
* Site not as useful for the user
* Content can get stagnant

**Advantages of dynamic websites**

* Much more functional website
* Much easier to update
* New content brings people back to the site and helps in the search engines
* Can work as a system to allow staff or users to collaborate

**Disadvantages of dynamic websites**

* Slower / more expensive to develop
* Hosting costs a little more

**Chapter Four:New Media Theories**

**Chapter Contents**

* + Theory of Media Convergence.
  + Normative Theory
  + Media Theory
  + Agenda setting Theory
  + Selective exposure Theory
  + Limited Effect Theory

**Introduction**

Writing for media has always had direct ties to mass communications theory, ***whether it was for audience and writers***, or ***for the medium itself being used as the delivery method.*** While new media theory is ***still being developed by scholars within the academic community***, there are logical ties that can be made to previous mass communication theory. ***This is, of course, consistent with the logic of academia, which notes that almost all theory is built on, and an extension of, previous or ‘‘existing’’ theory.***As new media developed as an interactive platform, users were able to, as never before, access the media at their own leisure, or even with their own urgency.

The ‘‘demassification’’ of the media has made it so that the mass media is much more a micro media experience, with each user deciding ***what kind***, ***what time***, and ***what format*** he/she wants the news.The interaction is also ***asynchronous now***; this means it can be whenever the user wants. Information is placed online, or received in email, and can be accessed or ignored at the user’s discretion.***Mass media theory from the past is still applicable today***, just differently from the fragmentation of audience, the wide variety of media outlets, and the fact that the time the public uses media is in the users’ hands, not the media.

**What is Media Convergence?**

Despite it is difficult to define the concept of media convergence Eugenia Siapera and Andreas Veglis, (2012) defines it as follows:*convergence in journalism is a multidimensional process that, facilitated by the* ***widespread implementation of digital communication technologies****,* ***affects the technological****,* ***business****,* ***professional****, and* ***editorial aspects of the media****,* ***fostering the integration of tools****,* ***spaces****,* ***working methods****, and* ***languages that were previously separate****, in such a way that journalists can write contents to be distributed via* ***multiple platforms****, using the language that is appropriate in each medium .*

**Types of Convergence in the Media**

How does this definition work out in practice? It is necessary discuss the forms of convergence that can be observed in the media today, in the light of the definition set out above.

**1. Technological convergence: Multiple Platforms**

From its very beginnings, the history of journalism has been linked to technological innovations. ***Technological convergence means that almost any digital device with a screen*** – ***smart phones***, ***electronic diaries***, ***tablets***, ***online video-game consoles*** – serves to reproduce almost any kind of material. These new technological ***possibilities are automatically converted into a demand for services*** that the media is obliged to meet. To respond to this challenge, the production processes and internal organization of these news corporations have to be adapted.

So the development of production methods is being stimulated, following through on the process of digitalization of print and audiovisual media that has been underway since the 1980s. New content management systems (CMS) are thus being devised, which take the industry from production in a single medium to a ***situation in which polyvalent multimedia systems are the norm, making it possible to create and publish material in different formats.*** At the same time, the working environments are changing: editorial teams that were previously separate are being merged together, and are no longer organized according to the medium in which their work is to be published, but rather in accordance with the type of contents they are supposed to produce. In short, the move from “analog journalism” to “digital journalism” sparks a mutation in all the print, radio, television, and online media, and in their various production processes. This change not only affects each of the media separately, but also leads to the creation of new editorial and commercial links between them. This phenomenon may be termed “***cross-media ” or “multiplatform” journalism.***

**2. Business convergence: Concentration**

The process of technological convergence has triggered various secondary effects in the heart of news organizations. These businesses have to reconfigure their production structures and processes to respond to the challenges of a communications market governed by a new set of rules. ***Their response is materialized through two development strategies***: one which is ***centrifugal***, the other ***centripetal***.

***1. The centrifugal strategy*** consists of media diversification. Since the early 1990s, many news corporations have undergone simultaneous processes of horizontal and vertical development.

On the horizontal plane, growth has consisted of multiplying their presence in different media and on different platforms, either by launching new projects, or by acquiring pre-existing publications. In other words, businesses that formerly owned only one newspaper or television channel have turned into multiplatform operations with interests in print journalism, audiovisual media, and the Internet, thanks to their investment policy.

At the same time, vertical development has taken place in the form of the purchase of companies and businesses that are present throughout the value chain of entertainment and news products. Today it is far from unusual for news businesses to have shares in news agencies, audiovisual production, and distribution companies, digital service providers, media firms, media agencies, publishers, and so on, in addition to carrying out their traditional functions.

***2. Centripetal strategies*** in news businesses can be defined by using a term that is common in the business sector: concentration. In this case, the novelty is that processes of convergence result not only in the merger of news companies on a business level, but also in the concentration of production processes. In fact, convergence on the business level leads to new forms of logistical organization designed to increase productivity. The media reorganize their editorial teams in order to foment more flexible and diverse means of news production that can respond to the requirements of the new digital platforms. Within this framework of logistical reorganization, one of the measures that has been most widely adopted has been the integration of editorial staff.

**3. Professional convergence: Polyvalence**

Convergence also modifies the profile of those who exercise the profession of journalist. This mutation is, to a certain extent, a logical consequence of the development of technologies and working environments. Journalists are immersed in a process of adaptation to a changing technological and logistical habitat, which requires new professional skills and updated means of organization.

These changes have one common denominator: increasing polyvalence. Journalists who are used to carrying out a single task – writing, photography, design, research – for a single publication are becoming a relic of the past. Current news businesses are looking for journalists who are capable of taking on different types of work within the editorial department, and who are versatile enough to work in different media either at different times or at the same time.

This growing trend toward polyvalence is often used to illustrate the degradation from which the profession of journalist has suffered in recent years. Many journalists maintain that they are compelled to produce more and more news, more quickly, in the course of longer working days, in exchange for lower salaries or other forms of payment. Many companies have opted to employ “multitasking journalists.” Whatever the truth of this, polyvalence is a double-edged sword, because there is a risk that managers will turn this trend into an “excuse” to cut costs, “do more with less,” and ultimately reduce the quality of the end product.

Whether this is due to the momentum of technology, or the need for companies to increase productivity, it is a fact that journalists are increasingly involved in a process of polyvalence. This has three possible variants: (i) functional polyvalence, (ii) thematic polyvalence, and (iii) media polyvalence.

*Functional polyvalence could be regarded as a synonym of “multitasking” itself. It* refers to the multiplication of practical tasks carried out by journalists inside and outside the editorial department. In the not-so-distant past, these were separate disciplines. For example, in the area of television, only 20 years ago, conventional news was generally covered by no fewer than four people: a driver, a camera operator, a sound technician, and, of course, a news writer. Today, it is usual to cover the same type of news with just a cameraman and a journalist. In fact, on many occasions all the different tasks are starting to be done by just one person: the news writer. In the newsroom a similar phenomenon can be found, not only in print media but also in television and radio and, of course, in the online media. In the latter, many journalists already combine the tasks of writing, researching, designing, and editing news in any format, be it text, photographs, sound, or video.

The second variant is *thematic polyvalence . This is the opposite of specialized journalism,* and means that the journalist has to write about any topic, depending on the needs of the day. This kind of polyvalence, like the functional variant, has been common practice in small companies for a long time, particularly on local television and radio stations, and in the case of correspondents. Where the editorial team is very small, the journalist has no choice but to cover a broad range of topics and develop all-round reporting skills. The third and final variant is that of *polyvalence of media . It designates a form of multiple* employment that consists of working as a journalist for several media at the same time.

It is understood that these belong to the same company. When a journalist performs the same kind of activities for different businesses, his or her role would be the modern version of the classic *freelancer.* Within the framework of the ongoing editorial integration processes, firms usually want their journalists to be able to adapt to the different media. The most widespread formula is that of implanting multiplatform polyvalence in all the media belonging to the same brand name. In such cases, journalists who used to publish in one format now work on all the different platforms operated by their employer.

In the professional (and business) dimension of convergence, another key term is often heard: *compensation . Gracie Lawson-Borders defines this as:* A growing concern for journalists, particularly in print, as the organization’s demands for more skills and knowledge increase. Media managers must consider how to recognize and reward the additional skills and expertise required of their staff as they evolve. In a digital environment with multimedia delivery of content, journalists and other workers may specialize in one medium, not having an understanding of the multimedia environment is at a premium. Although some media organizations include multimedia initiatives in performance reviews, most managers have not taken any steps to reward the skills monetarity (Lawson-Borders, 2003 : 16)

Above all, convergence is a duty for companies and a challenge for managers, while it also means – or may be seen to mean – an extra workload for a workforce that was notalways particularly well paid in the past. Salaverría and GarcíaAvilés highlight this point: “Convergence of editorial teams is prone to a number of risks. There is a need to provide journalists with updated training in writing, editing, presenting, recording and publishing skills for multimedia production, as well as a need to recompense them for their work, which has increased as they are increasingly required to provide contents for several different platforms” (Salaverría and GarcíaAvilés, 2008 : 44).

Other authors, like Huang, are equally conscious of the problems or tensions that could arise alongside the different opportunities afforded by convergence, amid the different professional cultures involved:

Both editors and news professionals do care about quality, but they are not prevalently concerned about the quality of work currently re-purposed for multiple media platforms.Therefore, there is no reason to be concerned that future journalists who are being trained on multiple media platforms and better prepared for convergence will be jacks of all trades but masters of none or will produce worse reporting.Huang *et al ., 2004 : 94*

Resistance to accepting every kind of convergence within the editorial team comes, on the one hand, from general opposition to changes in working patterns, which certainly exists on the part of journalists and their representative bodies; and on the other hand, from a certain awareness among journalists – present also in other sectors connected to intellectual production, such as photographers and artists – that they are missing out on an opportunity to get a better financial deal for their work, while companies have been diversifying the places where their work is published, or the other companies to which

they are prepared to release it, either within the media group or outside it. “Some print reporters find it intimidating and call it cheap labor, since they are not paid extra for the additional duties. But some are going with the flow,” stated Leisner, an Associated Press writer in 2000 (Leisner, 2000 ). For some time now, the International Federation of

Journalists has been expressing some concern in this respect:Journalists need to work in reasonable conditions which include the presence of fair rules concerning the use of their work. This means that they should still receive payments for what is their intellectual property, and all the more so when the use of new technologies facilitate the repeated exploitation and manipulation of their work in different media.FAPE, 2011

In Europe, trade unions, associations, and professional bodies representing journalists have made appeals in defense of journalists’ rights over their own intellectual property. In May 2009, the International Federation of Journalists made public the VarnaDeclaration:

Journalism needs to be reliable and credible and that requires investment in jobs and the work that journalists do and the elimination of precarious social and working conditions.

The right of all journalists – permanent staff or freelance – to work in decent conditions, with their authors’ rights and professional status underpinned by protective regulation is a guarantor of quality journalism.European Federation of Journalists ( 2009 )Along similar lines, it states that “multimedia convergence requires new models of governance;

press council and broadcast media councils and different forms of self-regulation, co-regulation and legally-binding rules. Existing structures are increasingly made obsolete by the realities of the Internet.”

**4. Convergence of contents: Multimedia**

All the modes of convergence described up to this point ultimately affect the area of contents. News corporations are organizations oriented toward the ongoing production of a news product. It is thus inevitable that a change in the technological and logistic elements and in the professional profiles involved will ultimately have consequences on the level of contents. The outcome can be summarized in just one word: *multimedia .*

The contents of a network combine different communicative codes, principally text, image – which may be static or moving – and sound. These elements are later organized at the editor’s discretion in digital documents, giving rise to multimedia products. The multimodal nature of the cybermedia pushes increasingly toward convergence.News companies feel the need to feed their digital publications with contents presented in text format as well as in audiovisual formats, and to update these constantly. This creates an enormous demand for raw material, which news companies try to meet, partly through coordinating their activities across the different platforms. In the large communications corporations that own printed publications, audiovisual channels, and digital sites, it is usual for the digital editions to include contents from several of these media at the same time, which gives a heightened effect of confluence as far as the contents are concerned.

Another effect of convergence in contents can be observed in the trend toward coordinated news coverage in different media. In the case of important news events of an organized nature, such as elections, certain parliamentary sessions, major sports events, important cultural occasions, and so on, it is starting to be common for news companies to coordinate the news coverage provided by their respective print, audiovisual, and digital media beforehand. It is no longer a question of planning the coverage in each medium or publication separately, but rather of projecting the potential collaboration of each medium. In this way, news companies aspire to creating a *group effect , something* resembling a virtuous circle that favors all the different branches of the company. On the other hand, the trend toward integration of editorial teams boosts the dynamics of increasing hybridization of contents and formats offered to the public via different platforms.In any of its forms, convergence is a key factor of today’s media industry. However, we are in front of a complex phenomenon, to some extent erratic, which creates much dissent and doesn’t lead toward a single and universal model.

This lack of consensus is perceived not only through the observation of professional practices in the newsrooms, but also in the theoretical approaches to the concept that have been made so far. The confusion, then, is evident. There are different definitions of convergence depending on the disciplines, but even within a single discipline, such as journalism, there is also great diversity of interpretations. The definition of media convergence posed in this chapter aims to facilitate the comprehension of the concept, helping to its appropriate use both by professionals and academics in an environment of constant transformation. Therefore, it should be understood only as a step in the study of convergence in journalism, not as a finishing line.

**Chapter Five: Online Writing**

**Chapter Contents**

**Introduction**

**Online** journalism has certain attributes of print journalism and of broadcast journalism, and other attributes that are unique to the Web. Frequently Web sites offer news articles to be read, just as they would be in a newspaper. At other times, the audience may select a video clip, so the Web site resembles a TV broadcast. An online story that takes full advantage of the new medium allows the reader to become a participant, choosing his or her own path through the information presented.

“Online journalists must think on multiple levels at once: words, ideas, story structure, design, interactive, audio, video, photos, news judgment,” says Jonathan Dube, publisher of CyberJournalist.net, a Web site that focuses on how the Internet and other technologies are changing the media. “TV is about showing the news. Print is more about telling and explaining. Online is about showing, telling, demonstrating, and interacting.” To make that possible, online journalists present information in layers, using a variety of story forms.

**5.1 Online Story Forms**

**The** most basic online-story form has been described as “print plus.” It’s a text story that includes additional elements like photographs, audio, and video, or hyperlinks to more information. By embedding links, the journalist can take the reader to additional information on separate Web pages, some of which may be provided by sources outside the news organization, with more background or history.

A more innovative approach uses “clickable interactive” or multimedia graphics specifically designed to illustrate a story. The graphic elements are laid out in linear fashion, but the reader can explore them independently in any order. The same is true of most online “slide-shows,” which combine text and audio with still photographs in a multi-media experience for the user.

**5.2 Online News Gathering**

**Four elements of online news ‘gathering’**

Using the bottom-up approach, we can identify the main elementsof research and reporting and consider how the use of online cansupport them.These categories are not watertight.

* **Finding information** – a broad heading, which could include documents, data, photographs, audio, video (these tend to be the more static artefacts);
* **Finding people** – not just named individuals, but also tapping into debate, current thinking, trends and fashions (this is a more fluid grouping); Some of the techniques used to find people, such as mailing lists, will also give you information.
* **Checking information** – using online reference resources; and
* **Analyzing information** – in particular, data.The useof spreadsheets by reporters to analyze information.

**Finding Information – the World Wide Web**

You need information at every stage of the news identification andcollection process. Not just specific information to develop yourstory, but contextual stuff that will bolster your knowledge ofunderpinning structures and current affairs.

Much of the information available online is posted on the WorldWide Web. Recent studies put the number of documents on theWeb at over one billion, and this is estimated to grow to over 13billion pages by 2004.

This is where the trouble starts. Such quantities rattle thesenses. You literally do not know where to begin and there isfurther discouragement. The Web is not like a library and it doesnot have a single comprehensive catalogue or an ordered systemof storage.At an earlystage, learn to think as clearly as possible about what you arelooking for *before* you go online.

**5.3 Core Writing Skills**

Online writing, says Jonathan Dube, is a cross between print and broadcast writing. He maintains that the short, simple style favored by broadcasters makes online writing easier to follow. But he says too many Web sites ignore the basic rules of good writing. A conversational tone is good, says Dube, but grammar and spelling still matter. Television news manager Scott Atkinson says his best advice is to write for the Internet as you would write an e-mail to a friend. “that doesn’t mean you can misspell words, ignore story structure, or leave out context,” he says. “What it does mean is you should write in the most intimate style you can muster.”

Because Web-based news sites tend to offer readers many choices, writers should avoid delayed or anecdotal leads that don’t quickly indicate what a story is about. The lead should give the reader a good reason to continue reading; otherwise, he or she probably will click on another story. Stories online generally are shorter than newspaper stories. A good guideline is to limit an online story to about 800 words and to keep it all on one page. Studies have found that readers are willing to scroll through text on line; there is no need to force them to click to additional pages for more of the same story. But to make the text easier to absorb, Dube suggests that online writers break the text into more blocks and use more subheads and bullet points to separate ideas than they would in print.It is no accident that the two best sources on core writing skillsfor online journalists are both long-established primers fornewspaper journalists.

Jakob Nielsen (2000) cites research that indicates reading fromcomputer screens is about 25% slower than reading from paper.He recommends you should write 50% less text to accommodatethis disadvantage and the discomfort caused by reading fromscreens (although screen resolution will improve in the next fewyears).

**Words and sentences**

The first step to effective writing is widespread, critical reading. Readershould have a keen eye, quick wit and asharp intellect, married to a clear understanding and respect forthe power of simple language.As journalists, sentences and words are the basic units of ourcurrency and we must not devalue them. As Evans (2000) put it,‘Nothing so distinguishes good writing as vivid economy’. Thefollowing are guiding principles on the use of sentences and wordswhen writing. They are not unbreakable rules, but you must havea good reason for not enforcing them. Most importantly, you musthave thought carefully about those reasons and therefore alsoabout your writing.

1. ***Sentences***
   * You should always try to write directly. S+V+O.
   * Keep your sentences short and to the point.
   * A mix of sentence lengths can improve the rhythm of your writing.
   * Try to write actively, about things happening to people rather than not happening.
   * Use punctuation correctly.
2. ***Words***

As Keith Waterhouse (1989) remarks ‘Every word that gets intoprint should have something to say’. So:

* don’t use more words than you need;
* avoid long words if shorter alternatives are available;
* avoid words with complex meanings if simpler alternatives are available;
* use words with a concrete, rather than an abstract, meaning whenever possible;
* be specific rather than use generalities;
* give words their correct meaning.
* The frequent use of adjectives or adverbs to ‘pump a story up’ often has the opposite effect.
* Expressing the facts of the story clearly and vigourously should provide all the necessary impact.
* Avoid an excessive use of clich´es.
* You should filter out all jargon and ‘officialese’.
* Finally, use quotes appropriately.

**5.4 Story Structure**

Two things fill a journalist’s mind when they are writing – ideasand language. Language, as we’ve seen, is critically important andshapes the structure of the sentence and the paragraph. But ideasshape the structure of the story. And story structure is fundamentalto your readers’ understanding of your message.

David Randall (1999) says,‘the most important part of writing is what happens insideyour head between finishing your research and putting thefirst word down. You have got to think about your material anddecide what it is about and what you want to do with it.

In traditional news writing, the structure of the story, inparticular the introduction or lead, can be heavily influenced bythe imperative of delivering maximum news value to your readersquickly.However, issue or information driven stories are a differentmatter. Here the journalist is expected to explain and interpret andmuch of this comes from the careful structuring of the introductionand the rest of the story.

So, as journalists we write with ideas on how to convey ourmessage, be it factual information or human emotion. But we doalso write with words. You can structure your story with absoluteclarity but then cloud your readers’ understanding with dismallanguage.You need both clear structure and the right words; and whenideas and language come together effectively, the journalist findstheir ‘voice’, their distinctive view and its expression.

Story construction is the preoccupation of most writers. But injournalism it has a particular importance. Reporters have to jugglethree essentials when writing their stories:

* identifying the elements of the story that will be of greatest interest to their readers;
* structuring the story in a way that will deliver these elements as effectively as possible;
* Presenting them in a way that will make maximum use of the medium they are working within and engage the maximum number of readers for the maximum length of time.

**Inverted Pyramid**

Anyone familiar with journalism textbooks will know all aboutpyramid structure, used for news stories in newspapers andbroadcasting. Quite simply the essence of a story should beplaced at the top of the pyramid, with further development andamplification of the main points below, before finally tapering outto a base of background material.Please do not write introductions that are fifteen timesbigger than the background material at the end of the story.

The pyramid shape offers two benefits.

* First, the reader can get the essence of the story by reading just the introduction.
* Second, newspaper sub-editors, pressed for space and time, can cut pyramid shaped stories from the bottom up and not destroy their sense.

**Headlines**

Harold Evans (2000) is in no doubt about the importance ofheadline writing: ‘Writing good headlines is 50% of text editors’skills. Headlines are used with littleapparent thought for either their purpose or appearance. This is aparticularly perverse practice within the online medium, given thereading habits of users highlighted by the Poynter Institute EyeAs Evans (2000) explains, theheadline serves two main purposes:

* First, to attract as many readers as possible into the text of the story.
* Second, for those who do not read further, headlines can still have an effect, ‘for many who do not read the story none the less retain an impression from *scanning* the headline.’

The headline carries an additional responsibility within onlinejournalism. It provides important guidance and context for thosereaders who access individual sections of stories on their own,separated from the rest of the coverage (for example if linked toa section direct from another site or a search engine). The BBCare aware of this:

Leslie Sellers (1968) offers a number of basic rules that everyheadline writer would do well to remember:

* use the active voice and the present tense whenever possible
* avoid punctuation
* avoid the anonymous
* avoid cramming in too much information;
* In the case of a double-line heading, try to make the first line make sense on its own because it represents a complete thought on its own.

The final point to be made about writing headlines is aimed atthose people who write headlines for others. No matter howpressurized you are, it’s vitally important that you both read andunderstand the whole story submitted to you. You must readeverything because the main news point might not be in the firstparagraph. And you must understand both the story and itsimportance to your readership. You cannot make judgmentsabout the content of a headline if you do not understand thebackground to the story.

**Captions, Summaries and Links**

The most common fault with captions is to make them toodescriptive. Just as a television journalist is taught to let pictures telltheir own story and be sparing with the voice-over, so a captionwriter must not waste their limited space (usually one line) simplydescribing what the reader can see in the picture anyway. As Sellers(1968) points out ‘Writing an accompaniment for a picture is anentirely different art, in which the picture is the intro, the attentioncatcher,and the rest can fall more gently into place’.

Summaries are also used extensively on online news sites,outlining the story and hopefully inviting the reader to clickthrough to the detailed coverage. Again these need to be writtencarefully. They should not necessarily be the first two paragraphsof the story and they certainly should not repeat what is in theheadline as this will accompany them on the page. The BBC limittheir summaries to one sentence in the present tense.

There is one area where online provides a new challenge for thejournalist as text editor and that is in the labelling of links. Howoften have you seen a site inviting you to link to other pages orsites without giving you any clear idea of what to expect or whyyou should go there? Internal links (linking you to other pageswithin your own site) are often the most challenging. The externallink can be summarized by using the name of the organization thatyou are linking to. But internal links might take you to pagescontaining quite complex content, such as ‘Related Stories’. Youmust think carefully how to summarize these in a way that makessense to your user. A good check on this is to periodically showyour links to someone unfamiliar with the previous coverage andsee if they can understand them.

So, structure and writing, ideas and language – essentialdeterminants of how you select and present your information.It’s not hard to see how the simplicity of classic news writingwill benefit online journalism.

**5.5 Online storyConstruction: Non-linear storytelling**

Newspaper and broadcast stories arebuilt on a linear model. However, much has been written about thenon-linear nature of online. Users have the power to go wherethey please, gathering content. They can link from informationchunk to audio file, to database, to graphic, to text summary, tovideo, to archive, and then disappear through an external link toanother site.

As Gentry herself puts it:The fundamental theory behind non-linear storytelling forthe web is that you need to look at the medium you’reworking in and ask ‘What are the strengths of this mediumand how can I use those strengths to help me tell mystory?’. So you work with the medium instead of against the medium.

**Guidelines, of online content,**

**Follow the guidelines of good journalism.** Thetraditional methods of careful and unbiased reporting, usingcompelling writing, photography, audio and video, will translatewell into the new media.

**‘Leverage the strengths of the medium’.** This phrasehas rung in my ears since I first heard Leah Gentry talk aboutit at a conference in 1997. She defines the strengths as linking,immediacy, interactivity, multimedia and depth. These, especiallywhen combined, are what make online journalismdistinctive.

**Deconstruct, reconstruct and storyboard**.Divide your story into component pieces, look for similarities ortrends in those pieces, group your pieces into logical categories,reconstruct your story, using storyboards, to group thepieces under those categories and build cross-links. Each storywill have one section which is the ‘linear kernel’ – the essenceof the story – plus other sections which will provide additionalinformation, background and explanations.

**Do not use technology out of context.** Anything thatdoes not further a story is visual noise.

Separating the story into chunks also increases the number ofentry points for the distinctive elements of online. When LeahGentry urged us all to ‘leverage the strengths of the medium’,she wanted us to work with and not against the online medium.

**How to separate a story into chunks**

Linearity is central to how we build each chunk, but how do wedecide what each chunk should be? Should there be any criteriafor how we segment our stories?

Segmentation can be influenced by:

* the characteristics of the story;
* the needs and interests of the user; and
* the delivery platform being used.

The ‘characteristics of the story’ refers to the way the story itselfcan influence how you segment it in the following three ways.

* The scale and duration of coverage – is this a major breaking story which could require many separate pages and constant updates?
* The breadth and depth of coverage – is this a complex story with many different facets and, thus, many different potential readerships?
* The range of coverage – does this story lend itself to multimedia, interactive features, etc.?

The storyshould drive the segmentation process, rather than dogma, habitor automated systems.

**Writing for online**

Jakob Nielsen (1999) offers three rules for writing on the Web:

* Be succinct – use no more than 50% of the text you would have written for the same story in print;
* Write for scannability – use short paragraphs, subheadings and bulleted lists instead of long blocks of text; and
* Use hypertext to split up long blocks of information into multiple pages.

Nielsen is also an advocate of plain language and pyramidstructures.

**5.6 Ethical Considerations**

The speed and anonymity provided by the internet can play fast and loose with journalistic ethics. The internet has created a fourth kind of journalism next to radio, television, and print journalism.

An important question to ask when linking to ***external sites***is ‘What am sending my user to?’ There can be a conflict ofinterest here for the online journalist. Any attempt to deny useraccess to information, including links, appears to fly in the face ofthe medium itself.

However, there are occasions when the nature of the story youare covering should at least make you reflect on any links youprovide. For example, if you were writing a story about thediscovery of a paedophile ring, would you link to its site as aprimary source? If so, does that in some way implant some sort ofrelationship, however tenuous between your site and the ring’s?

Libertarians will argue that it is pointless to deny your users thelink because they are only two clicks away from the site anyway –one click to a search engine and the second to the site. All you willdo, they believe, is drive readers away from your site and so anypossible counter arguments you have presented in your responsiblecoverage.

Others believe that if people wish to seek out such material, itis not the business of a news organization to facilitate the processor to provide a platform for such groups. What would be theposition of the news organization if it later emerged thatpaedophiles had used the link on your site to make contact withlike-minded people and this had led to the abuse of children?

There is also the possibility that material on certain sites breakslaws regarding obscenity or the incitment of racial hatred. A linkto these could be seen as aiding and abetting such violations.Political unrest and conflict can also raise issues about linking toexternal sites. A country can be isolated politically and its policiesreceive wide criticism, but news organizations may still link to itsofficial news sites to let readers judge for themselves. They mayseek ‘balance’ in the links they offer just as they will in theirstorytelling. Thus, they will link to both sides in any conflict.

News organizations usually accept that they have responsibilitiesto the societies within which they operate. However, this cancause real tensions within the online medium. Any potentialconflicts of interest are usually dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Online news gathering and publishing is a continuous process,with different people frequently working on the same story. Largeorganizations need policies on linking and other matters to ensureeditorial continuity.