

Changing media. Online newspapers

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Keywords: *mass media, online newspapers, consumer behavior*

Abstract: *This article's purpose is not to provide predictions on the evolution of online newspapers but rather to explore the ways in which the newspapers' online platforms are perceived and used. The approach, from a methodological point of view, is a qualitative one and wishes to identify the criteria for selection and use of newspapers' online media. The change in paradigm in the production and distribution of information through the media has consequences both in the journalist's practice and in the media consumer.*

The media industry, referring to the print press, is still looking for the best way to incorporate the online presence in the traditional versions of the newspapers. As far as their primary purpose, the online versions are not different from the printed ones, they both look for the information, they evaluate and they organize it. Globalizing the information makes unlimited resources available. Therefore, unlike the traditional press, whose purpose is to give information, to entertain or to offer educational programs, the press of the future, the online press, is based on filtration, on the selection process.

The three assumptions of the article are:

1. The online press produces changes in the behavior of the media consumer
2. The perception of a printed newspaper by a press consumer has a much more powerful effect than an online newspaper would have. We mainly refer to the contributions that multimedia bring in current journalistic landscape.
3. The content and the interactivity are the key elements of the online newspaper which have the greatest impact in choosing an online newspaper.

The major difference consists in the way that news gets to the readers. While the traditional press uses paper, ink, printing houses and people for distribution and sale, the online press transmits the information a lot easier, through the internet. The latter borrows all the deontological norms and genres of the press from the classic press and it offers it in return an example of being popular, independent and flexible. The online journalism trains its community, asking for feedback from the readers and at the same time asking them to give subjects for future articles. Traditional journalism has as a main purpose to insure the access of the public to general interest information. But we must admit that the written press has always had some drawbacks, some boundaries: an old system of offering, storing and the recovering information. We are talking about those barriers that new technologies try to overcome. Defenders of classical versions of printed media claim that by moving away from the traditional mass media and from the meanings of communication, we are heading towards death (Koch 1996). Tom Koch, though, sees things from a totally different perspective, considering that these new media technologies are truly useful. He goes on further, saying that people have never stopped reading; it's just that they have changed some habits. Clearly they have not stopped learning, searching, just that they found other ways of accomplishing this easier, more accessible, with complete and better presented information. Even if some changes occur in the people's habits, it does not mean the death of democracy, the end of science, as Tom Koch considers, these changes can mean a real reinforce of democratization process. Along the same line, the same aforementioned author affirms that new technologies offer a much more flexible and complete information source (Koch 1996).

The tendency now is to put focus on the content and not on the form. The journalistic activity is no longer focused on the body, on the newspaper, the news is no longer published once every 24 hours, but they get to the readers through the newspaper and also through the internet, mobile phone networks, TV or radio. The sites are not perceived as simple copies of the printed form, but as instruments of permanent actualization of the information. This tendency to produce news, information, facts, data and comments is taking vast proportions. A first example is the Los Angeles Times newspaper, which changed the rolls and professionals habits from inside: the print journalists learn about online, and the online journalists learn about print.

The use of these new communication systems is characterized by the speed (regarding collection, diffusion and consume of information) with which the news

get to the reader, by the low price for distributing the information, by the possibility of constantly bringing the news up-to-date, and of course, by the opportunity of making direct contact and interaction with the readers, who now play an important role in determining the journalistic offer (Guerrea 2008). As for the criteria of evaluation and determination of the online press quality, they are mainly the same, both in the print media and the online newspaper (Jurnalism Online n.d.). The content must be relevant, interesting and useful. Moreover, the internet offers a series of instruments by which we can add value to the information: links that send the reader straight to the source, combining the texts with multi media elements (image, sound), the non-linear structure of the content, so that the ones interested can get straight to the paragraph they want to. What is obviously noticeable is the fact that through the online press journalists can communicate to the readers in different ways, the most important feature of the online journalism being the interactivity. The journalist has the possibility to transform the reader into an integral part of the media experience (Danciu 2005). Therefore, the blogs, the comments and other methods eliminate that “barrier” between the journalist and the reader, creating a much less formal, but much more interactive space.

The practice from the online journalism says that the article in an online newspaper must not be very long. The readers are looking for concise and clear information. The active voice is preferred to the passive voice, the latter being used when the subject is not very well known. Also, the verbs which suggest action, movement are preferred. Another important aspect is mentioning the source that the information was selected from. The reader is very interested in finding out the source from where the journalist collected the information. Jason Spencer, in his article *Found in (My)Space: Social Networking Sites like MySpace and Facebook Are Valuable Sources of Information for Journalists*, underlined the importance of these news sources in the journalistic work. Journalists are finding that checking out MySpace, Facebook and other social networking sites can pay big dividends. Such sites allow people to post their likes, dislikes and heroes, their favorite books, movies and music, and journal - like blog entries about their lives (Jason Spencer 2007). Users agree to acquire and be acquired as friends, instantly connecting to one another’s networks. MySpace, which had more than 114 million unique visitors worldwide in June, has traditionally been the site of choice for high school students. Facebook (52 million unique visitors), which began at Harvard, has been the favorite of college students, although usage patterns may be changing. The sites may change, but social networking is here to stay- and so is its place in a reporter’s toolbox. The article presents also a quick checklist for journalists using networking sites in their reporting, straight from the experts is: a journalist never has to use MySpace or Facebook data without double-checking its authenticity. E-mail MySpace or Facebook “friends” to verify information or arrange interviews. Always identify yourself up front as a reporter. The information people post on a social networking page is self-selected. It could be biased, exaggerated or just

plain wrong. To verify a site's legitimacy, the journalist could check to see when the user joined, looks for posts on his or her page from friends and goes to those friends' pages and looks for posts from your subject. In other words, look for activity. Check for blog entries, pictures and videos (Jason Spencer 2007).

On the one hand, some say that the appearance of new technologies will eventually lead to a paradigm change in technological plane, but there are also some who claim that we are simply witness to the opening of a new level of access, through which information and opinions become more accessible, they circulate very easily. Barb Palser, director of digital media for McGraw-Hill Broadcasting Co. considers that nowadays the pressure is on sales departments to reel in the advertisers that were supposed to follow that audience. Revenue growth at news sites is robust, but still makes up a small share of total revenue--3 percent to 8 percent for newspapers and 1.5 percent to 3.5 percent for television stations, according to the media research and consulting firm Borrell Associates (Barb Palser 2008). On the content side, traditional newsrooms have reached an acceptable level of competence - sometimes even expertise - when it comes to publishing online news and attracting Web viewers. Defying predictions of obsolescence in a world of citizen media and pure-play Internet operations, old-media brands still rule the roost. In overall numbers, the online news audience has more than compensated for declines in traditional media use (Barb Palser 2008). We can now talk about another drawback of these communication mediums, the fact that the standards are loosened, the quantity of information and of sources increases, being much more difficult to separate the credible sources from the less credible ones, or the objective ones from the personal ones. But whether in print, on air or online, people will continue to seek news, and advertisers will want to be connected with it. But new options have changed the game; things won't go back to the way they were, underlined the specialist.

We are surely starting to ask ourselves if this "new journalism" will manage to include the traditional one. An example is the New York Times newspaper, which is one of the most traditional newspapers in the world. At the present, the newspaper still keeps the typeface it used a hundred years ago. On the other hand, the New York Times has one of the most interactive news sites in the world, and the editorial staffs of the printed and online version were recently integrated. On the site, there are dozens of blogs and different ways through which users are invited to produce content. This is a proof of the fact that the new communication way is an instrument which adds value to journalism. The theorists of media space identify new forms of public opinion manifestation; we are talking about civic journalism. Regarding these new forms, civic journalists and Internet journalists have a lot in common - both groups place a high value on interaction. Civic journalists, also known as public journalists, interact with readers and other citizens through focus groups, resource panels, town meetings and community conversations, whereas online journalists interact with citizens through e-mail messages, list-serve postings, interactive web pages and hypertext links. Both

believe including average citizens in public discussions is good for democracy (John L. Morris 2003). The books on civic journalism published in the past three years make clear that this movement has drawn attention to the actions or interactive processes of journalism over the static products of journalism. Glasser even cautions civic journalists about adopting a “strictly procedural role” in *The Idea of Public Journalism*, and Corrigan catalogs numerous civic journalism processes in *The Public Journalism Movement in America*, such as teamworking, alternative framing, exchanging civic capital, acting as civic catalysts, civic mapping, collaborating, conducting community conversations, connecting with the community, deliberating, engaging the public, participating, conducting focus groups, mobilizing, public living, public listening, telling stories and working through problems (John L. Morris 2003).

Two of the first influent theoreticians of the information media have been the Canadian authors Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan. According to them, the media influences society more from a communication modality viewpoint and less from the content of the communication. McLuhan considers that “the medium represents the message”, and therefore the nature of the media in a society influence its structure at a greater level than the content or the messages that the media transmit (Danciu 2005). The internet influences the behavior and the attitudes of the people because of the fact that, by its nature, it is very different from any other media. The electronic media, McLuhan said, create a “global village” with the help of which people from the entire world see and get the information from the same sources.

Jean Baudrillard, strongly influenced by McLuhan, considers that the new media, mainly the television and the internet, practically change the reality we live in. The French theoretician sustains that the impact of the modern mass media is very different and a lot more profound than that of any other technology. Baudrillard says that in an era in which mass media is everywhere, a new reality is being created, a hyper-reality, made of the people’s manner of life and of the images of the information media.

John Thompson is the one who analyzed the relation between media and the development of the industrial societies. He maintains that, from the primary forms of printing to the new ways of communication, the media information has played an essential role in the development of the modern institutions. Thompson’s theory depends on a distinction between the three types of interaction: the face-to-face interaction, the media interaction which implies the use of the mediated technology (newspaper, electric connections etc) and quasi-mediated interaction which refers to the type of social relationships created by the mass-media (Giddens 1997).

The Chicago School saw the press as an instrument for offering information and education to the audience. Walter Lippmann, on the contrary, considered that the press contributes to the perpetuation of a sickness of the public opinion. He sustains that man does not have the capacity to know and judge the “unpredicted facts”. John Dewey on the other hand, considers that the problem is not the incompetence of the public opinion, but rather the absence of adequate ways for communication and public

debate. The physical ways of collecting the information have passed a lot beyond the intellectual phase of research and organization of the results (J. Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, p. 180).

Lippmann's view of the press is part of his wider conception about the way in which an opinion is formed, about the role of the stereotypes, the codes and even of the prejudices. We can say that the analysis made by the American author oscillates between two poles: 1. The truth about the complex problems that we know directly is not self obvious. 2. The news and the truth are not one and the same thing (Lippman 2003). He makes the conception according to which the truth would be relevant, inspired, offered and not built, discovered, gained as result of a long time effort unlikely. This belief attributes the role of "revealing the truth" to the press, the purpose of "main contact medium with the environment we do not know directly".

The attitudes and the behavior of the media consumers

Thorstein Veblen, in his works from the end of XIX century and the beginning of XX century, among which we mention *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, underlined the fundamental idea by which we can understand consumerism more than a century ago. He identified two types of behavior: social consumerism, which is influenced by other people and cultural consumerism, considered to be information offered by others (Nelson 2007). From this perspective we can point out some factors that can influence the behavior of a consumer. A first category of factors are the environmental ones, such as the culture and the subculture, which are formed starting from norms, beliefs, habits and are passed on, changing with time, from generation to generation. The socio-economical classes are part of this category of factors, these being defined as an aggregate of persons which have a close position within the society and who have common characteristics regarding their behavior and their attitudes. A last subcategory is made of the social groups, represented by the family, the reference persons and the opinion leaders. These groups are characterized by the common aspects of their members and by respecting a set of common norms. The family is the closest social group to an individual and the main influential element on the individual. The person of reference serves as a guide mark in determining the beliefs and the attitudes. The individual does not need to belong to the group in order to be taken as a reference element. The opinion leader can come from the family or from any other group. The quality of leader is based on competence, charisma and on his/her image. The second category of factors is the individual ones, such as the motivations and the blockings, the needs, the personality, the values and the attitudes. The attitudes are formed starting from factors connected to culture, family, image of oneself, personal experience, beliefs and feelings and allow the individual to make a certain choice. The socializing and socio-cultural integration process of the individuals can be understood mainly in terms of assimilation, interiorization of the values and generally human or specific to a culture or to a group. Since an individual can belong and refer to more groups

at the same time, the definition of the socio-cultural context is more directional than homogenous. In the contemporary world, the increase of the intra-cultural diversity and the decrease of the inter-cultural diversity is widely spread. More and more values, norms, attitudes and lifestyles are now becoming universal (Ilut 2004).

The American psychologist Harold J. Leavitt points out that there are three essential elements that define human behavior: *the stimulus* is the one which represents the cause; *the need*, which can be seen as a wish; *the objective*, seen as purpose. Thanks to the techno-scientific progress the needs multiply to an exponential proportion, this process leads to the birth of other needs. Therefore, the satisfied need leads to the birth of another one, while the individual's behavior changes at the same time.

Regarding selective attention, this is an important concept in communication, both because of its role in the limited effects paradigm and its intuitive power in describing how the media are used. Selective attention is, broadly speaking, the preference for information that is consistent with previously held beliefs together with the avoidance of information counter to those beliefs. The selective attention hypothesis is widely accepted, at least tacitly, in the face of inconclusive evidence. Some researches made in this field have looked at new media technology, such as online newspapers, which may be more conducive to selective attention. Online media permit greater control by the reader to progress beyond a headline of an article; the reader must consciously choose to view an article, and then click to it on the Web site. This degree of intention is unusual among the media, and it even challenges notions of what defines a mass medium (Joseph Graf, Sean Aday 2008).

The attitude can be considered *a motivational force*, generating a specific action. In this way, it appears as a cause of the behavior, multiplying in out behavior acts. The attitude functions as an intermediate variable, when we want to describe an attitude we are interested in the content and in its intensity, the level of decision and its direction (in a positive or in a negative sense). Therefore there are three important elements that must be taken into account: the informational elements, come from what one has experienced, from the experience connected to the object, they come from advertising or as a result of the documentation; the emotional elements come from sympathies, antipathies or reputation; the elements connected to intention are the ones which send to data connected to education, to the life frame. Changes in attitude or values occur, on one side, at the moment when the process of mass-communication is mediated by the opinion leaders or by the famous and respected persons within a community, or when certain situations determine a certain attitude orientation (Mosco 2008).

The media, as a vehicle and generator of opinions, structures the people's perceptions and opinions, to such an extent that it manages to establish a great consent in some dominant viewpoints. This happens even more since the evaluation of the opinion climate is realized with the help of two sources: direct observation, within the relational system and indirect observation, through the media. (Petcu 2002, p.82) Sociologists have determined four variables that determine the change in attitude:

the credibility of the source, the sensibility of the receiver to the source (there can be social factors, different arguments), the rhetoric of the message (there are different types of argumentation) and the situational factors.

The first research method used is the analysis of documents. The selection of newspapers which have entered in the analysis was made based on statistical data provided by those who are measuring the online audience. Based on this data we've selected the sites of five Romanian newspapers. The choice was made based on the number of visitors and users of those online pages. These are: *Evenimentul zilei*, *Cotidianul*, *Jurnalul Național*, *Gazeta Sporturilor* și *Libertatea*.

The main components of the analysis are the graphic elements of the page net, structure, content and interactivity. *Graphics* related to the colors used, background, visual elements, typeface. It may be accessible, with a consistent look, or on the contrary, difficult for those who access the newspaper. It is also advisable to have a balance between text and image. The *content* focuses on the diversity of information, it is preferable for the newspaper to treat as varied topics as possible. *Structure* helps the reader to find the needed information. For this reason it must be "light", easy to go through. *Interactivity* gives the readers different ways of feedback using comments, forums and blogs. At the same time readers are allowed to write their own news. *Accessibility* refers to how easy it is to navigate the site, if it is legible, and the information is organized by domains. Page loading should be quick, and there should be options to select the language.

We graded on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the worst grade that can be granted to a newspapers, and 5 is the highest. In the end we obtained a score for each newspaper in all five sections analyzed, resulting in a ranking of the five newspapers. The analysis was performed by experts, people knowledgeable in this field, resulting in a classification to be taken into account. Following these classifications we will be able to establish relationships with the concepts from the hypotheses, and thus draw some conclusions. The limits of this evaluation are given by the evaluator's subjectivity, by the way in which he perceives the online product. This methodological exercise extended to a large number of consumers of online media may reveal how the consumer's perception works. On the other hand it may reveal the degree of marketing instruments' adaptation or editorial policy for online versions of newspapers.

After the two evaluations, the following can be observed: *Cotidianul* and *Gazeta Sporturilor* are on the first and, respectively, second places. On the next position are *Jurnalul Național*, *Evenimentul Zilei* and *Libertatea*.

Cotidianul

The philosophy of the site falls within the new trend, which prefers the online edition should be regarded as a publication in its own right, separate from the printed edition, but still taking content over from the print. In terms of graphics, the site is elegant; the design is airy and pleasant browsing. The menu is horizontal, sections

are differentiated chromatically: green for sports, purple for entertainment, orange for society. Also, the news is accompanied both by photos and by videos. The content is rich in information, updating is done in continuous flow. There are editorials, the latest news and the most read articles section. The site is accessible to readers; each area is divided into subcategories. In terms of interactivity, there are some problems, it being almost nonexistent. Thus, cotidianul.ro is the newspaper that moving ahead rapidly, being a balanced site focused on its target to which it provides the needed information.

Gazeta Sporturilor

The gsp.ro site, the most visited sports site in Romania according to trafic.ro, was relaunched with a new design and a new structure. Experts claim that this revival came in the context of the main competitor, prosport.ro, also relaunching its website. The new design of the site is focused primarily on the information provided to readers. The site's structure, on three columns (last minute news, special topics with videos, tools column: ratings, polls, etc.), offers readers the opportunity to access information more easily and quickly.

The design is simple, the only graphics on the page being those from the header.

The site is constantly updated, with a large amount of information. It is the site with good news coverage of other sports beside football. But a downside of the content and the articles are no more than 2-3 paragraphs long, which makes us say that the site impresses by the quantity and not necessarily the quality of articles. From the perspective of accessibility, we point out that navigating the site is easy and intuitive. Another strength is the fact that in the search results, the keyword is highlighted, and the items are sorted in descending order by date. There is an advanced search option, with the opportunity to choose up to three sections in which to search. Regarding interactivity we believe the site is on the right track, being quite well represented by interactivity specific elements. In conclusion, gsp.ro is a site that is on the right track, this relaunch being auspicious.

Jurnalul National

The appearance of this newspaper is a good one overall, a well organized site, easy to follow by readers. The home page is organized in a blog style, the main items placed under one another, marking the first article with a headline and a picture slightly larger than the following. This is a solution that promotes legibility. The photo section of the newspaper is a very professional one, Jurnalul National being considered the best national newspaper in this section.

EVZ

The relaunched site evz.ro failed to ensure the much expected growth, but instead the number of readers has decreased in recent months. The data from trafic.ro show that new information portal, the analyses, the statistics and multimedia content format

approached at the end of January have failed to maintain the same interest among internet surfers. The new evz.ro site does not satisfy readers at all, the problem being not necessarily the design, but the content. The information seems discarded; the article page does not seem at all elaborated. If before the launch local news were delimited, now they are all in one place, and the reader is inconvenienced to sit and look for news. In addition there should be a more advanced search engine. Regarding icons on the site we can say that they are practically inconsistent, disconnected from the site, and excessively large, as is the case of the weather section.

What emerges from this is the fact that before launching the site evz.ro was appreciated by readers, being among the favorite online newspapers. But this relaunch has not brought advantages but rather disadvantages.

Libertatea

The libertatea.ro website is certainly address to a target audience. We can consider this one of the few positive aspects of site, the fact that there is a target audience. Regarding the graphics, the site is crowded, too flamboyant, which makes navigation and timely information of readers difficult. The content, the information presented in the articles is not of high quality; emphasis is placed mainly on the sensational and social news. Elements of interactivity exist on the site, but not in large numbers.

The second research method used is the guided interview, semi structured. Eight consumers of media were interviewed and four specialists from the media. The interviews took place in May 2008 in Cluj-Napoca. Each interview was recorded, and then transcribed for data interpretation. For each category of respondents there was an interview guide. It should be noted that throughout the interview, some questions have been added. This was due to the fact that the answers provided by participants revealed some interesting data that deserves to be debated.

Data obtained in the interview in their raw form are usually much more erratic than not. Thus, the first step to be done is the compilation and summarization of the data obtained. In the first place we will extend the first hypothesis, the relevant questions, those that are related to concepts used in it, being selected afterwards. We will summarize the responses into two tables, one for consumers and one for media professionals in the field, completing the answers relevant to key concepts. Once these have been completed we try to do the necessary correlations to establish conclusions.

Working hypothesis: The emergence of online media produces changes in the consumer's behavior.

Discussion topics:

1. Do you feel that this way of reading the newspaper in electronic format has changed the reader's behavior?
2. Do you consider that this new technology, reading newspapers in electronic format, has produced changes in the behavior of press consumers?
3. Who you think the online media addresses primarily?

The first two questions are answered in much the same way. Half of the media consumers have responded that the emergence of online media changes media consumers' behavior. Responses were both affirmative as influencing behavior "people probably involve themselves more, having the opportunity to respond or to comment, so I think readers are more involved and feel directly involved in the news"; "the biggest change is related to feedback, a more informal relationship between journalist and reader is formed this way". There were also answers such as: "I do not think much has changed", "it has not changed significantly". From these answers we have to point out that the respondents have said that not much has changed, meaning something has changed. There was also one consumer who has stressed that the emergence of online media has not changed its behavior, but has adapted in the light of our life style.

Specialists in media have claimed that the emergence of online media has changed consumer behavior. "Yes, certainly this has happened. It is more convenient to read online than to read the print. I can access information more quickly because I go straight to the sections I am interested in, reading diagonally. So certainly there have been changes. Before, the printed newspaper had an almost ritual dimension." Another respondent mentioned Jakob Nielsen, "according to J.N., lately users have become more selfish, very demanding and want to find the information they are interested in very quickly. In general they say that users learn to use various sources on the Internet, to find what they are interested in. "

The third question has revealed very similar answers. Most respondents, both consumers and media professionals said that online media is addressed first of all towards Internet users, young people, aged up to 55 years, business people, mobile people. We must point out that there are of course and older people who read the press on the Internet, but not in large numbers. There were two respondents who claimed that the online media, does not have a target audience, especially in Romania. "I don't see any segmentation, a specific target audience for online another for print. The idea is simply that the online will replace the print."

Working hypothesis: The perception of a press consumer has a stronger effect on a printed newspaper than on an online one.

Discussion topics:

1. Do you read both printed and online newspapers?
2. Can you identify the reason that determines some press consumers not to give up printed newspapers?
3. Do you consider a press consumer's perception has a stronger effect on a printed newspaper than on an online one?

The concepts presented in this hypothesis have been well highlighted by these three key questions. The first question on how newspapers are read was asked, as observed, only to consumers of media. The eight participants responded according to their own information habits. We can see clearly the trend of respondents to read

the electronic media. It should be noted that the eight respondents are young, aged between 23 and 30. Maybe that is why online media is the predominant means of information. But there are three people who say they read the press both printed and online. In terms of consumer perception on a printed newspaper, the eight media consumers had different opinions. Four of them have replied that it may be stronger on a printed newspaper. Two participants have argued that it is not stronger, while the last two have said that it is a personal issue for each person.

On the other hand, the responses of the four experts were much more similar, arguing that this depends on the consumer segments. "It differs depending on the segments of consumers. Because the young consumers raised in the electronic environment and bathed in electronic interaction, stop noticing these things. For them, the newspaper is printed for wiping windows or as art, it is no longer a means of information. "

"I do not know what to say. It depends from person to person. For some, it's difficult to focus too much on the Internet. Your eyes hurt, it's a bit tedious. On the Internet, you are used to go from one link to another, to navigate a bit disorganized, the one who reads printed newspapers might be a bit more attentive and better informed. At least someone who buys it in print is more likely to read more from it; the one reading on the internet is looking only for information that interests him."

We can thus make a correlation between the answers given by the eight media consumers and experts who responded. Note that four of the consumers said that there is a greater perception on a printed newspaper than online. Thus, although most participants said they were informing themselves from electronic media, they have the concept and maybe even the conviction that the printed press has a far greater impact.

In what the third question is concerned, the four experts have said that the reasons why the reader does not renounce print media are habit, lack of access to technology and technological illiteracy and maybe the ritual dimension. "Habituation, lack of access to technology, technological illiteracy (or difficulties encountered in using technology)."

Working hypothesis: The content and interactivity of the site are the elements that have the greatest impact in the consumers' choice of online newspaper.

Discussion topics:

1. What do you believe are the most important qualities of a news site, online newspaper?
2. What online newspaper in Romania do you believe offers consumers the most appropriate ways to give feedback?
3. Are you one of those consumers who participate in debates, comment various articles?
4. How important is the presence of blogs in online newspapers for you?

The third hypothesis, namely the concepts within it have found correspondents in the key questions chosen for the last theme. Thus, we can see which the responses given by the eight media consumers related to elements that convince them to remain loyal to an online newspaper or at least not close the page were. Following these responses we can say that accessibility, graphics and content are the three elements that matter to consumers. Regarding interactivity, things are as follows: interactivity is not the primordial element when they enter to read an online newspaper. Maybe this is why those who mentioned a newspaper with appropriate elements of feedback were few. Most respondents said that big newspapers usually offer great possibilities for feedback, which is perfectly true, but could not name a specific newspaper. As for the importance of blogs, or links that point to a specific blog, respondents had similar views. The blog is not yet a necessary element for accessing an online newspaper for them. The importance is low; it may probably create a closer connection between the journalist and reader. „Very low. The selection of blogs I read is made on recommendations. The fact that someone writes a blog does not legitimize him in my opinion as a value blogger.” “I’m not interested in blogs.” “The importance of the presence of blogs on an online newspaper is very low.”

The responses of the four specialists were slightly different in this topic. First off, beside the content, graphics and accessibility interaction is added as an important element in the selection of online newspapers. They consider that the communication between journalist and reader is important to a large extent. They could also name some newspapers that are interested in this connection with the reader and have these elements of interactivity present. Regarding blogs, things are about the same, the experts considering that blogs do not have great importance when the reader chooses a newspaper.

Opinions were divided among media consumers. The four experts also said that this depends on the consumer segments. Thus for the young people, perception is more powerful on a printed newspaper than on an online one. The traditional consumer will always have a satisfaction when reading a printed newspaper. It should be noted that habit with a certain medium of information, in some cases the lack of access to technology plays an important role. There is a restraint among consumers to change the instrument of information.

Conclusions

The questions and hypotheses advanced at the beginning of this article are problematic. On the basis of the gathered and analysed data a generalization would be improper, but it is rather more appropriate to put forth a series of considerations with orientative value on the proposed hypotheses. The studies that will follow in this field of analysis will strengthen or change our perceptions on the online written press phenomenon.

The need of people to be informed is a trait that does not change greatly over time, it is a constant need. But the means of information are in continuous evolution and

new means include possibilities for interaction, for feedback. Therefore, we believe that everyone must learn to develop integration strategies of technological innovation in the everyday life (the editor and journalist but also the media consumer) keep with changing technology, adaptation being a sine qua non of survival in the “information era.”

Following the research, we have shown that people have changed how they use the press, from print to online the ways of access are changing. The research has revealed that for the consumers it is much more convenient to read newspapers online. In addition to the main advantage, which is the price, speed and easy access to news are two other important characteristics. The fact that they can read several newspapers, even cursorily, diagonally, gives them a big advantage. The people who access the Internet more are also the people who read the online press. We can say, after the research, that young people, businessmen, dynamic, active people in general are those who access the press continuously.

Content is an element of impact for consumers in choosing an online newspaper, but the interactivity is not a criterion of selection for all. Most interviewed readers are passive, do not participate in debates on the forums, do not write comments to articles, and prefer instead to read. Blogs also do not have a high importance to them. Instead, the specialists who have answered the questions consider that ways of feedback play an important role in choosing the online newspaper.

Online media provides an interesting way of getting information, there being various ways to access and read these papers. But there should be control and a selection of existing information on the Internet should be made.

The paper shows a limited research. Determinate samples are reduced for us to be able to draw some comprehensive conclusions on the population represented in the samples. Therefore, we say that the study presents some limitations in what the conclusions are concerned, because its goal was not to extrapolate the results to wider populations.

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