



## **Downturn and Reinvention of Journalism**

### **The Economics and the Future of Quality Journalism and Media Accountability**

Call for Papers for a workshop organized by the European Journalism Observatory, in collaboration with the Daimler and Benz Stiftung

Berlin, 18-20 September 2013

Daimler and Benz Stiftung, Haus Huth, Alte Potsdamer Str. 5 10785 Berlin

Quality journalism of opinion-leading print media, in particular of newspapers, is endangered. The causes for this disruption are manifold. First of all technological changes and, in particular, the Internet with its search engines and social media have significantly changed the values and practices of journalism by uncoupling it from its gatekeeping notion. At the same time journalism is faced with growing economic issues because the once established business models, which are first and foremost grounded on advertising, are no longer viable. Actors like advertisers who have contributed so far directly or indirectly to the financing of newsrooms are changing their behavior and shift their attention to other (social) media, which allow far more targeted ad-campaigns. Furthermore, journalistic infrastructures are collapsing: news organizations are downsizing their newsrooms, there are fewer correspondents, local and regional newspapers are regularly shut down.

Journalism is not just disrupted, it is at a turning point: Media managers are experimenting with new business models, journalists are engaging in new, entrepreneurial forms of online journalism and researchers are analyzing all these changes. So far, however, too little effort has been put in systematic comparative research across cultural and language barriers. Moreover, journalism researchers and economists still speak different “languages”: while numerous economic and econometric analyses of media markets exist, only few scholars have systematically applied *economic theories* to explain the changes we are currently witnessing in newsrooms and news media at large. The same applies to the analysis of editorial contents: whilst journalism studies usually apply well-known theoretical frameworks native to communications research, economic principles have been relegated to a niche existence.

The workshop intends to address research about the impact of new business models, new distribution channels, the effects of media convergence on quality journalism, media accountability and journalistic credibility and wants to bundle creativity and resources in order to foster a more comparative, systematic and interdisciplinary approach bringing together economists and journalism researchers. Thus we would like to encourage submissions from different (journalistic, economic, cultural) backgrounds which take into account what might be learnt from behavioral economics to understand better decision making processes in traditional newsrooms as well as in journalism startups which are developing concepts of “entrepreneurial journalism”. New proposals should therefore bridge the gap between communications research and economics. We particularly encourage young and talented researchers to submit innovative papers.

Here is the list of topics:

### **Behavioral Economics and the Economics of Journalism**

- Herd behavior of journalists in news markets and its external effects on journalism, the economy and the society
- The behavioral economics of journalism: Which well-known and predictable irrational behaviors affect media users, journalists and media managers in their decision-making?
- Iterative games between journalists and their sources – and their effects on agenda-setting
- How can economic models/theories (like the principal-agent theory, the markets for lemons concept, the tragedy of the commons, etc.) be further applied to journalism research?

### **Journalistic Quality and Quality Journalism**

- How can journalistic quality be “measured”? And how can quality journalism be defined and possibly operationalized?
- How are journalists dealing with errors in different journalism cultures, what kind of correction policies exist and work?
- Long term content analyses, in particular related to the development of foreign correspondence, business journalism, science journalism and media journalism

### **Media Economics and Newsroom Management**

- Successful strategies for paid online content: Which business models work in which market segments and why?
- New challenges to media management: Managing newsrooms in times of converging and shrinking media. How are „convergent“ newsrooms operating? What can be learnt from the experiences of early adopters?
- Co-opetition practices and co-creation of value in news organizations
- Synergies and quality improvement by outsourcing: Which models work, and why?
- What are the potentials and pitfalls of entrepreneurial journalism?
- Networked news gathering and dissemination
- Reputation management: How can incentives for more accountability and transparency in newsrooms be created?

## **Media Policies and Politics, Cooperation with Media Users and Publics**

- What can media policy do to create incentives for quality in journalism without endangering press freedom?
- How can media users be encouraged to get involved in holding the media accountable? How can models of interactive journalism/crowdsourcing be developed further?
- How does PR affect the credibility of journalism? Can its effects be measured and possibly be neutralized?

### **Guidelines for Contributions:**

For this workshop papers in form of extended abstracts will be considered. Authors should provide a 500-words abstract for a single paper proposal. All contributions should be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format, or PDF format to:

[stephan.russ-mohl@usi.ch](mailto:stephan.russ-mohl@usi.ch)

Submitted abstracts preferably conform to APA 6th reference style. The conference language is English.

### **Important dates:**

Submission deadline for abstracts: 15th of June 2013

Notification of acceptance: 15th of July 2013

### **Conference Co-Chairs:**

Susanne Fengler, Erich Brost Institut für internationalen Journalismus, TU Dortmund

Robert Picard, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford

Stephan Russ-Mohl, Università della Svizzera italiana, Lugano