

European Digital Journalism Study

How the *Digital Age* has affected
journalism – and the impact for PR



ORIELLA
PR • NETWORK

European Digital Journalism Survey 2008

Journalism is evolving...

With the advent of the internet and widely-available broadband, journalism has experienced one of the biggest transformations in the way content is produced since the invention of electronic newspaper production. The results from this survey provide evidence and explore the change. In April and May 2008, 347 journalists were polled from broadcast, national, regional and trade media across Benelux, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK, to see just how far the role and daily routine of a European journalist has changed.

"My editor no longer expects stand-alone copy – the more interactive the better..."

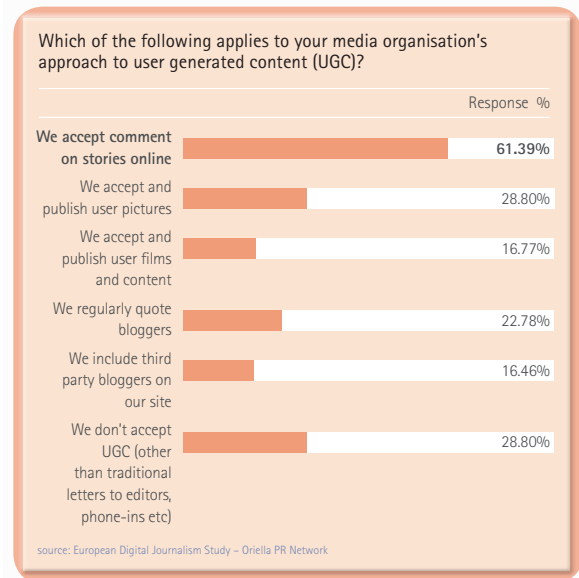
Journalists are no longer responsible for simply writing stories each day in time for deadline. They now need to have a much broader range of multimedia and interactive skills in their portfolio. Video is having a significant impact on today's journalist - 41% of those polled confirmed they are now expected to produce video content or present to camera, despite only 3% being employed by traditional broadcasters.

Multi-channel reporting formats are being widely adopted throughout European media. 44% of outlets offer journalist-authored blogs, almost a fifth (18%) now produce audio podcasts and almost one in four (24%) offer video podcasts. The research demonstrates that journalists are now expected to be multi-disciplined when it comes to providing content to their audiences.

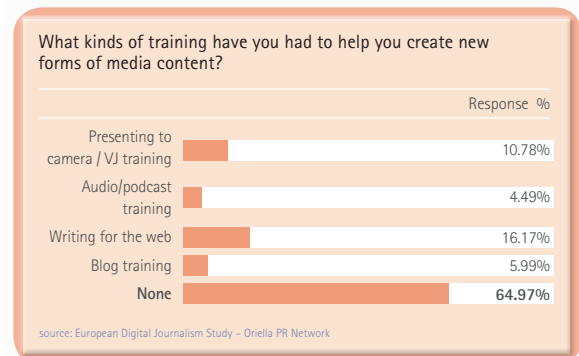


Journalists are no longer the sole providers of content for their respective publications. User-generated content (UGC) is now welcomed by over 70% of publications across Europe. Over 60% take comments on stories online with 29% also accepting and publishing readers' pictures. One in six publications also make use of readers' films on their websites.

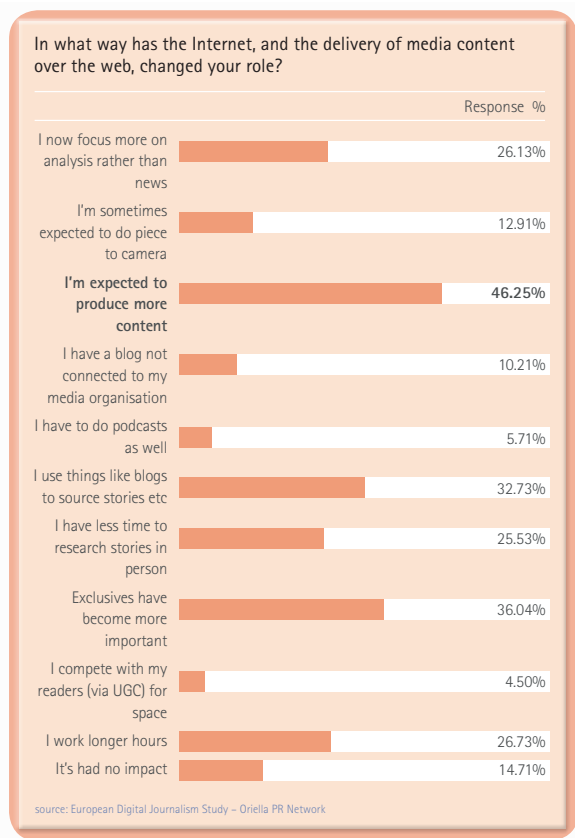
The influence of the blogosphere is being felt within European journalism. Almost a quarter of journalists now regularly quote bloggers in their articles while a third said they use blogs alone to source stories - a practice that was more or less unheard of only three years ago.



Despite the demand for journalists to be competent across multiple digital platforms, the survey reveals they are expected to learn these skills themselves. Almost two-thirds (65%) confirmed they are self-taught pod and videocasters with only one in ten receiving any form of professional video training.

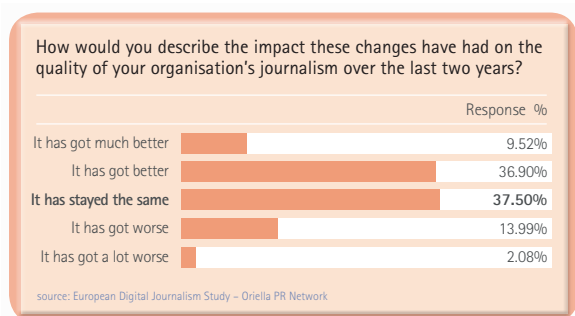


The 'Digital Age' has affected the daily routine of the journalist and the survey highlights the increased responsibility journalists must now take on. Many say they are expected to produce more content. 46% feel this is the case, with over half of journalists in Benelux, Germany, Spain and the UK working to increased story demands. Interestingly, a quarter revealed they now have to work longer hours as a result, and the same number also confirmed they now have less time to research stories in person.

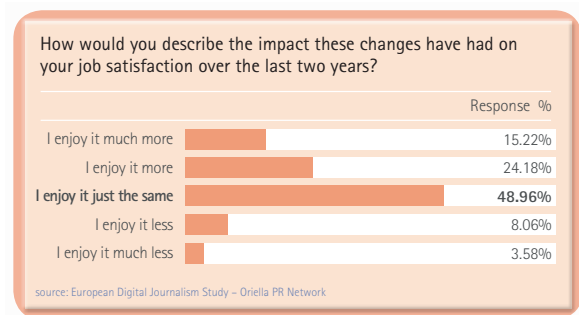


An unexpected twist

The survey results reveal a counter-intuitive insight. Journalists are now expected to produce more, have less time to research stories and are expected to learn and incorporate new media techniques, such as podcasts and pieces to camera into their everyday routine. However, despite the increased demands this change is felt to have had a positive impact on the quality of their work. 46% feel the 'Digital Age' has improved the quality of their organisations' journalism over the past two years with only 16% saying quality has decreased as a result.



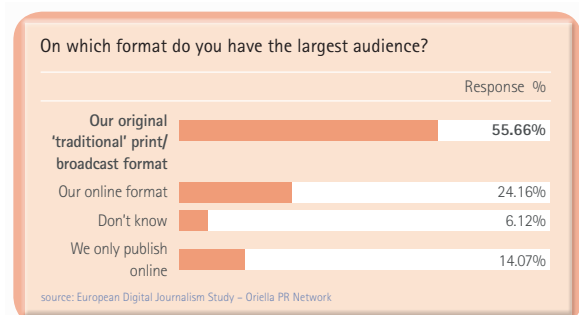
In many industries, it is likely that being asked to produce more and work longer hours would have a negative impact on job satisfaction. This does not appear to be the case with the journalists polled. 89% of respondents confirmed they were just as happy or happier with their job, in its evolved role.



"Digital media has revolutionised the way I produce my work. I enjoy the incorporating the likes of video and podcasting into my daily routine."

Which format draws the largest audience?

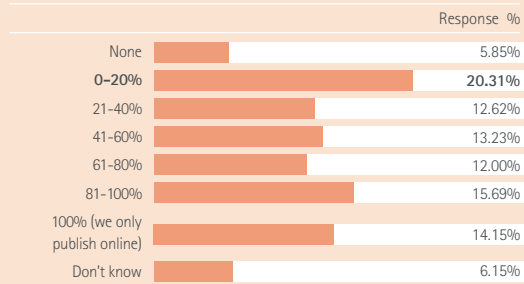
Despite the ubiquity of the internet, the majority of European journalists still believe their traditional format (print or broadcast) brings the largest audience – 55.66%. However, the rise of online media cannot be ignored. Almost a quarter of all respondents say their online format currently accounts for their largest audience and this trend is expected to continue. In France, it's already the case that online readership numbers are larger than traditional formats.



Online content – new or reproduced

Publishers no longer use the web to simply archive print or broadcast material. These 'Publishing Dinosaurs' are nearing extinction with only 5.8% using their online outlets purely as an archive, rather than a medium for new material. More pertinently, the study has uncovered a '40/40 Factor' in action – 41% of respondents now produce more than 40% of their output online in the first instance. The '40/40 Factor' is even more interesting when one considers it was only in October 2005 that the Daily Telegraph became the first UK newspaper to publish online, before the print edition.

Approximately how much of your online content is new (ie not repetition of existing offline content)?



source: European Digital Journalism Study – Oriella PR Network

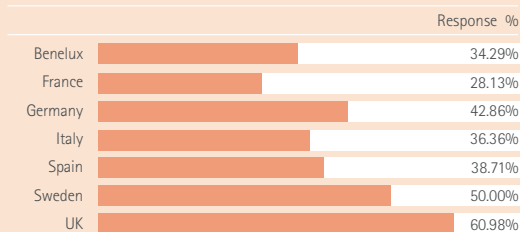
Has your PR evolved?

News releases sent by email remain a staple diet for journalists when it comes to receiving content from PR officers – over 90% find it useful to receive them. However, the survey revealed the increasing demand for new forms of communication between PR officers and journalists. A fifth of journalists now appreciate receiving content in the relatively new format of the social media news release (SMNR). Almost half (45%) appreciate links to microsites which accompany the story and video content from PR is also working its way into the mainstream, with almost 30% now accepting this format.

Country comparison

The growth of video

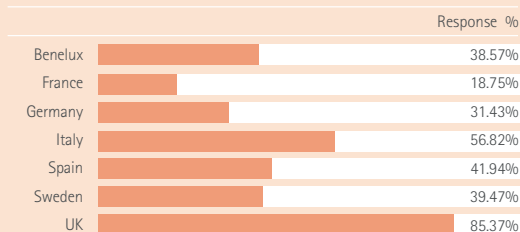
Are online TV / video clips part of your online offering?



source: European Digital Journalism Study – Oriella PR Network

The presence of journalist blogs

Are journalist-authored blogs part of your online offering?



source: European Digital Journalism Study – Oriella PR Network

What does this mean for the PR industry?

The results of this study highlight that journalists across Europe are now expected to be "inherently digital" – that is to say they are expected to produce stories across multiple digital channels as part of their everyday routine, without any formal training. PR officers (PROs) need to accept that the role of the journalist has transformed drastically over the last five years and, as a result, need to work differently with today's media.

"I find that I am expected to do more for our website, but I enjoy the variety."

As recently as 2001, PR companies still had "Lick and Stick" sessions to send press releases out via post, rather than emailing – something that seems unthinkable now. However, even the humble emailed press release is becoming obsolete in some situations, as journalists now look to source their content from a range of different areas. Imagery, audio content and video are all now commonplace in journalism, across all types of media and the PR industry has to align its development of collateral accordingly.

It should be noted, that not every story is going to warrant such media generation, but it should now be second nature for PROs to consider how to build a story, beyond a standard release. The fact that a large number of journalists admit they have less time to source stories indicates that if they can receive a story with all the digital media components already in place, they will be more inclined to run the story. This would partly explain the growing influence of the social media news release (SMNR), which combines the traditional press release with interactive content. Despite only being in existence for two years, the SMNR is becoming a more and more widely accepted form of content that journalists wish to receive from PROs.

"Story production and delivery is increasing important. I'm now a proficient videographer and sound man, as well as a journalist."

Lastly, it's interesting to consider journalists' research process. The blogosphere continues feature in the news process and according to Technorati, 175,000 new blogs are created daily. Naturally, journalists are unable to search extensively for informed comment, but the PR industry can be sure that they will have preferred bloggers and forums. PR officers would be well advised to understand the influencers their target media is monitoring and hold in high regard. It is also important for PROs to understand the relationship and interaction between

bloggers and brands -- if the bloggers, which journalists deem to be influential, feel a certain story or company is worth writing about, it will have an influence on the journalist as well.

The PR industry has taken some steps to increase its digital output in the past few years, but, so far only on a small scale. PROs need to understand that journalists are hungry for interactive content and, the more they receive stories in formats they appreciate, the stronger relationships will be between the two groups.



About the Oriella PR Network



The Oriella PR Network is an alliance of 15 communications agencies in 20 countries around the world. Our partnership of independent agencies was built upon a set of global best practices and close working relationships not offered by others of its kind. The network was founded by Brands2Life and Horn Group with the support of agencies around the world with whom they have worked successfully on client projects - in some cases for many years. Oriella partners exist in major and secondary markets throughout The Americas, Europe, Middle-East and Africa and Asia/Pacific.

The *European Digital Journalism Study* was compiled in April and May 2008, using an online survey of 347 journalists from broadcast, national, regional and trade media across Benelux, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

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