

Chapter 2

Online Journalism Structures



Chapter Overview

- ▶ Introduces basic issues involved in the production of online journalism
- ▶ Discusses the concepts of convergence and modular content as they relate to online journalism
- ▶ Discusses new forms of online journalism that are supplementing traditional forms
- ▶ Illustrates the wide range of online journalism organizations by looking at case studies of large, medium and small legacy Web operations



Where Do Online Journalists Work?

- ▶ Legacy news organizations
- ▶ Independent news sites



Independent News Sites

- ▶ Tech crash of early 2000s closed some sites.
- ▶ A new second wave of independent sites:
 - Journalists who have been squeezed out of legacy news organizations (or who left on their own)
 - New college graduates
 - Concerned citizens
 - Public interest organizations



What's Your Viewpoint?

- ▶ Consider blogger Marcy Wheeler, as discussed in the text:

She differentiates herself from traditional journalists, who usually must have a fully formed news story when they write. Wheeler, on the other hand, often posts pieces of data as she finds them that may or may not play into a larger significance. In other words, when she finds something that may be significant, she doesn't have to wait to wrap it within a traditional news story.

- ▶ Would you consider her a journalist? Why or why not?



Elements of Producing Online Journalism

- ▶ 24/7 news cycle—
 - People can access news from the Internet at any time, from anywhere.
- ▶ Convergence
- ▶ Modular content



Convergence

- ▶ Combining of media:
 - For example, fusion of video, text and sound
- ▶ Merging of media organizations:
 - For example, a newspaper and a television station combine their news-gathering resources



Modular Content

- ▶ News organizations no longer work toward just one product per day (one newspaper or broadcast).
- ▶ Content needs to be constantly changed and updated.
- ▶ Content takes a modular form
- ▶ Content management system (CMS) software used



Alternate Journalistic Forms

- ▶ News aggregators
- ▶ Hyperlocal sites
- ▶ Blogs
- ▶ Content for other devices



Example of a Hyperlocal Site

New West FRONT PAGE

FRONT PAGE | ABOUT US | NEW WEST STUDIO | CONTACT US | ADVERTISE | NEWSLETTERS | FEEDS | LOGIN

NEW WEST TOPICS

- Travel & Outdoors
- Politics
- Energy
- Food & Agriculture
- Development
- Books
- Skating
- New West Blog
- Community Blogs
- Images & Video
- Conferences

NEW WEST LOCAL

- Missoula
- Bozeman
- Boise

MEDIA PARTNERS

- Flathead Beacon
- Kronenfeld Seattle
- Howl's Bay Online
- Headline Arts West
- High Country Times
- KUNC Radio 91.3
- Daily Tender
- WyoFile

NEW WEST WIRE

New Book Asks: Where Have All the Ski Bears Gone?
"In Search of Powder: A Story of America's Disappearing Ski Bear" is an elegy to... | Posted in [SNOWBLOG](#)

The Milltown Union Bar Revisited
A few short months after arriving in Montana, I made a point of stopping at... | Posted in [BOOKS](#)

Salazar's 'Wild Lands' Decision A Cause For Optimism in the West
"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings." So spoke John Muir, one of the... | Posted in [OUTDOORS](#)

Rocker Technology: Changing How the Rest of Us Ski
Up until recently, most skis were made basically the same — when placed base down... | Posted in [SNOWBLOG](#)

[more from the New West Wire]

EDITOR'S PICK

A Moment of Opportunity for Public Land Counties

By Mark Haggerty
New decisions about the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act will fund local roads and education, but could also affect employment and public land management, according to an economist specializing in land management.

[read more]

NEW WEST FEATURES

<p>Ag Roundup: New GOP House May Strip Food Safety Law — Can GE and Non-GE Alfalfa</p>	<p>What Good Are Wolves? By Norman A. Bishop</p>	<p>How Thrice-Told Tales Helped A Boise Theater Group Prosper By Steve Bank</p>	<p>An Interview with Cortright McLeod By Jenny Shank</p>
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Check All 3 Scores and Reports

Twitter.com/NewWest

- Colorado wildlife officials may ban den-hunting after a hunter killed a 700-pound black bear in a cave. Is the... [http://fb.me/2gM0Pq7](#)
- Here's some shiver-inducing footage of a "traditional" New Year's adventure through some frigid Utah canyons. Does... [http://fb.me/C1pVw7d](#)
- The debut installment of our new agriculture round-up looks at the uproar surrounding the Food Safety Modernization... [http://fb.me/0Zkmi5n](#)
- Norman Bishop spent years working to educate people about wolf reintroduction at Yellowstone National Park. Here's... [http://fb.me/8Bub0to0](#)
- The Idaho Shakespeare Festival uses an innovative business model that keeps actors employed year-round and brings... [http://fb.me/v2dQA2dF](#)

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COMMENTS

- What Good Are Wolves? (256 Comments)**
Ron said: "28,000 polar bears does not seem to be odd when you compare their numbers against the human population which is nearing 7 billion."
- Sarah Palin's Advice to Gun Down Bears is Both Reckless and Wrong (76 Comments)**

Blogs' Contribution to the Journalistic Discourse

1. Commentary
2. Filtering and editing
3. Fact checking
4. Grassroots reporting
5. Annotative reporting
6. Open source reporting and peer review



Case Study—

The Washington Post

- ▶ No longer a separate online entity:
 - Both “print” and “online” personnel work together in the same newsroom.
 - A single executive editor oversees print and online operations
 - A universal news desk has workstations for home page editors, mobile editors, print editors, photo editors, etc.
- ▶ Stories become available—from the day’s print paper, wire services or reporters—and are then available to various content editors to disseminate.



Challenges at the *Washington Post*

- ▶ “A huge cultural, mental and emotional change.”
- ▶ Some reluctance to embrace video and other multimedia forms.
- ▶ No longer a print-centric organization.



Case Study—

The Dispatch Printing Company

- ▶ Based in Columbus, Ohio
- ▶ Owns many weekly newspapers, a monthly magazine, several TV stations and affiliates, and radio stations.
- ▶ The Web is the focal point for convergence of all the company's holdings.
- ▶ Bridge specialists work with traditional reporters on new-media projects.



Case Study— 13abc.com and WTVG-TV

- ▶ ABC television affiliate in Toledo, Ohio
- ▶ Only a handful of staffers
 - Separate from the reporters and editors who produce the station's broadcast content
- ▶ Starting point for nearly all the news content is the TV station's daily newscasts (shovelware).
- ▶ Use social media:
 - Regular updates to stories
 - Breaking news



What Is Your Viewpoint?

- ▶ Consider these quotes from an editor at the *Columbus Dispatch*:
 - “The newspaper structure was built to give birth once a day, while online we give birth like rabbits.”
 - “It’s like going down the highway and being under the hood tweaking the engine as you’re driving. It’s exciting, but it’s exhausting . . . and it’s never done.”
- ▶ How do you react to this? Does this sound like an exciting challenge, or a daunting one?

