

## **Abstract**

As someone who is interested in pursuing a career in journalism, I am interested in how digital news media and participatory journalism challenge traditional journalism and mainstream news networks. In doing my research, I referred to academic literature on the subject and conducted my own case study in form of a survey.

Chapter 1 provides a historical overview of the three major forms of mass media through which news organizations traditionally disseminated information to audiences. Newspapers, radio and television each held the position as the dominant source of news during various moments in history. As technological advances were made, we see a period of transition from traditional media to digital media as a result of the breakthrough of the computer and subsequently the World Wide Web. Web 2.0, which refers to websites that enable the creation of user-generated content and encourage collaboration among users, gave rise to social media platforms such as Facebook that are widely used today.

Chapter 2 explores the participatory culture of Web 2.0 which empowers users to create their own content as well as form virtual communities that connect people with a common factor together across the globe. The environment of Web 2.0 was an optimal breeding ground for the emergence of a new, alternative form of journalism called *citizen* or *participatory journalism* in which ordinary citizens play an active role in the news making process. The result is a transformation in the relationship between the news and audiences. The field of journalism is faced with the challenge of staying relevant in an age when the role of “gatekeeper” is no longer reserved exclusively for the press. This section also explores how newsrooms can potentially collaborate with citizens to produce quality reporting that is more relevant to audiences. The fate

of journalism and in particular print media remains a constant worry within the news industry as they employ strategies to adapt to the media landscape of today.

Chapter 3 summarizes the results of a questionnaire intended to gain insight as to how audiences consume news, as well as their perceptions of journalism and participation in the production of news. Responses were further analyzed to see whether there were tendencies among different age groups. The results suggest that while there may be slight differences between older and younger respondents, their attitudes, habits and level of participation were generally aligned with each other.

**Key words:** journalism, Web 2.0, mass media, social media, participatory journalism, user-generated content