MOBILE AND TABLET MEDIA PLATFORMS: EFFECTS ON EDITORS AT PRINT PUBLICATIONS

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by

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DEDICATIONS

To CJ, for doing everything in his power to make life easier for me through the long months of project conception, data collection and thesis writing and for always answering his phone in the middle of the night. To my parents, whose support of me throughout my education made it all possible.
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Mobile and Tablet Media Platforms: Effects on Editors at Print Publications

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Dr. Clyde Bentley, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how the publication of newspaper and magazine content across multiple platforms (print, web, mobile and/or tablet) is impacting editors in terms of time spent on traditional editing tasks, workload, job satisfaction, and whether editors feel this is impacting content quality. Using the framework of labor process theory, this issue is explored through preliminary written interviews followed by semi-structured interviews with various newspaper and magazine editors. This research, a partial replication of Russial’s (1989) dissertation on the effects of pagination on editors, found that the publication of content across multiple platforms is not causing editors to de-skill. Instead of abandoning traditional editing work for automated activities, editors are carrying a heavier editorial load than before, which causes makes editors unable to concentrate on any one task at a time. Regardless of the extra editorial burden, editors, for the most part, remain satisfied with their job and feel that the expansion of content to new digital platforms will ultimately be a boost to the quality of published content.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Since Russial completed his (1989) research on the effect of pagination on editors more than 20 years ago, technology has continued its march onward. It is therefore important to update his study so that researchers understand if, and how, technology has continued to have a degrading effect on editors’ work. Russial found that individual editors in his study experienced re-skilling, deprofessionalization and a mix of both positive and negative impacts in their work – Russial terms this “technological job enlargement” (2000, p. 70). As an example of changes that have simultaneously negative and positive impacts on editors, Russial (through personal correspondence) mentioned that editors today are bemoaning the fact that they have to be available at all times to “feed the beast” that is 24/7 news but that this situation also leads to an increase in reader engagement with the content, which is a positive change.

New trends in media invariably lead to researchers asking questions about the effects and motivations behind the trends. Quinn (2004), for example, asks whether the impetus behind new media trends like multi-platform publishing is due to financial or quality journalism motivations. Quinn, paraphrasing Ari Valjakka, editor-in-chief of Turun Sanomat, a Finnish newspaper, says there is a “danger of trivialization of quality journalism when the same journalist ‘shovels’ the same story from one medium to another without producing content appropriate for the medium” (p. 120).
**Research questions**

This two-phase, qualitative study seeks to explore how editors’ time spent on traditional editing tasks, workload, job satisfaction, and the quality of the content they produce is changing now that newspapers and magazines publish material across multiple platforms. This issue will be explored through the following research questions:

RQ1: As journalism publications must meet more and more demands to continue attracting readers and advertisers across multiple media, how are editors’ roles shifting to meet those demands?

RQ2: Are editors spending less time on traditional editing tasks in the rush and stress of publishing across multiple media?

RQ3: How is publication across multiple media effecting editors’ job satisfaction and workload?

RQ4: Are editors spending any time and energy repurposing content for each platform or are they simply shoveling material into all platforms at once?

RQ5: How do editors feel that publication across multiple media is affecting the quality of the content they produce?

This study focuses on editors and not writers, designers or publishers because of the impact editors have on a publication’s content. Editors are valuable members of newsrooms who have direct bearing on stories through macro editing and/or copyediting, headline writing, and through decision-making in terms of what stories get published at what times and so they are traditionally responsible for upholding the journalistic integrity and quality of content. Russial (1989) further defines editors as those “responsible for ensuring that stories are accurate, fair, clear, readable, comprehensive
and well-presented” (p.10). This study included editors with a variety of backgrounds and job titles at newspapers and magazines.

New technology is often heralded as a step forward for civilization, but technology can also have hugely negative implications for workers. For example, mobile and tablet technologies make it possible for more readers to be exposed to content than through print and online alone. The same mobile technology, however, might also be blurring the line between work time and relaxation time for editors who can access their publications’ content and database at any time and can also easily be reached at all hours by staff members. It is important to recognize how new digital technology impacts editors’ work to ensure that editors continue to perform traditional editing tasks and act as guardians of journalism ideals for their publications.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of new technology and its effect on established media has been part of the academic journalism conversation for decades – radio was the new medium in the 1920s, television was the new medium in the 1950s, and so on (Scolari, 2009). New media is therefore a relative concept; in the not-so-distant future, Twitter and Facebook as well as mobile and tablet apps will be considered “old media.” For the purpose of this research new media will be defined as information and communication technology devices that “enable and extend our abilities to communicate” and “the social arrangements or organizations that forms around the devices and practices” (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2006).

New media often integrate audio, telecommunications, print and other ways of communicating (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2006). For the purpose of this study, new media is further categorized as mobile and tablet technologies because those are the newest technologies that provide distribution possibilities for journalism publications.

Organizational Change Theory

The nature and process of change, especially in terms of organizations, has been widely studied; because new technologies are changing the journalism industry, it is important to look at change theories to understand the widespread impact of digital platforms at journalism organizations.
Theories on change help researchers both observe and analyze change and usually outline several steps describing how change occurs (Kritsonis, 2004-2005). Among many academic definitions of the concept, change includes altering skill sets and knowledge (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Weick and Quinn’s (1999) change theory is a reconceptualized version of Lewin’s (1951) change theory and can be used to describe and analyze how changes take place in firms because of new technology. While Lewin’s change theory views change as episodic, Weick and Quinn (1999) morph the theory into a model for continuous change.

Episodic organizational change occurs in three steps of unfreeze, transition and refreeze, according to Lewin’s three-step change theory. This usually happens when big events such as technology or personnel change occur (Weick & Quinn, 1999). In contrast to episodic change, continuous change also occurs in three steps: Freeze, rebalance and refreeze (Weick & Quinn, 1999). With the rate of technology today, it is likely that journalism organizations, although possibly operating under episodic change in the past, now have to deal with a more continuous organizational change model, which is “used to group together organizational changes that tend to be ongoing, evolving and cumulative” (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Furthermore, Lewin’s change model is best applied to situations where change must be created while a continuous model deals with “redirecting what is already under way” (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Because editors now have to figure out how to best present or tweak their content and mission statement for each device, “redirecting what is already under way” is a good description of how the organizations presently deal with change. Further support for the
application of a continuous change model towards journalism institutions is Wheatley’s (1992) description of an organization in the throes of continuous change that includes evolving job descriptions and strategies. Editors once again have to take on more tasks with every new format available for content distribution and each format, in turn, must be accompanied by strategies for the best use of the technology.

Change theories by Lewin and Weick and Quinn broadly apply the concept of change to organizations as a whole. However, within these change theories are opportunities and justifications for studying individuals within the organizations. Weick and Quinn reference an earlier (1995) book they wrote that discusses the importance of looking to change agents (i.e., individuals in an organization) to understand the change as a whole (1999). Change agents are able to explain the current change, where the change is taking them, and how the change is impacting the organization (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Isabella (1999) provides one example of looking to change agents to understand organizations; she relied on the theoretical framework of Lewin’s change theory to study how managers understand and interpret events related to changes within their organizations. Keeping in mind the concepts of continuous and episodic change, as well as the different applications of change theories to various studies, allows for better analysis of how changes in the journalism industry in regards to digital platforms impact organizations and not just the individual editors interviewed.
Technology and changes in journalism

Media researchers indicate that new technology impacts the way journalists work and the content they produce. The State of the News Media (2011), for example, outlines the extra complications the Chicago Tribune must go through to publish content across multiple platforms: the Tribune “creates one app through Apple’s software that appears only on Apple products, then a second through Google’s software for the Android system, and so on for each new phone or tablet maker.” Each of these extra steps takes organizational time and energy away from newspaper and magazine staff members – time that could be spent instead on traditional writing, editing, and publishing tasks.

Past research suggests that technology has always been a two-sided coin for journalists. For example, the introduction of visual display terminals to newsrooms in the 1970s was met by initial excitement followed by editors’ realization that the increased control over the editorial product came with “added responsibilities for proofreading, composition coding and typesetting” (Russial, 1989, p. 20). The old adage “with great power comes great responsibility” can be aptly applied in describing journalists’ relationship with technology.

New technology, particularly digital technology, impacts ways communication and media is produced and leads to an “appearance of new professional routines and practices” (Scolari, 2009, p. 956). Many researchers, discussed later in this paper, point out negative effects of digital platforms on journalists and their work that include increased time pressure, less attention spent on content quality, and blurring boundaries between work and home life.
Beyond additional duties and complications, the publication of mobile and tablet versions of newspapers and magazines brings up concerns about “shovelware” and a general lack of concern for the strengths and weaknesses of devices as well as the ways readers interact with and access content on each device. Shovelware is defined as “reproductions of content that appeared in a news organization’s primary distribution channels” (Scott, 2005, p. 110). Scott (2005) also linked shovelware to negative trends in the journalism industry that have been going on since 1996 when journalism organizations started publishing content online. When journalists fail to tailor stories for each new medium, even if this means merely rewriting or tweaking a headline, it suggests a disregard for quality journalism.

There is also concern over new technology’s impact on journalists’ skills. For example, Ursell (2001), citing Sparkes (1991), says that multi-tasking – the constant addition of skills to journalists’ toolkit with each new technology – might jeopardize fundamental journalism ideals, “which need to be applied if journalists are to produce well-substantiated, accurate, and pertinent news” (p. 176). Other researchers argue that the increase in skill requirements for journalists working with multimedia is to blame for the trend in a less serious treatment of news stories (Cottle, 1999). This debate over skill is closely related to labor process theory and will be discussed in later sections.

Another concern among researchers concerning journalism and new technology is the ever-increasing speed of the industry. More speed equals less time spent on just about everything, especially with the current expectation for news 24/7. For example, the 2005 State of the News Media report found that the time journalists have available for research
has decreased during the last ten years (Pew Research Center, 2005). And time is an important ingredient to quality journalism – Russial (1989) says that “if editors have enough time, editing will be tighter, writing clearer, facts, grammar and spelling checked more thoroughly, headlines more accurate and inviting, related stories packaged better” (p. 252). An example of a publication respecting journalists’ need for creative space is the online magazine Slate, which firmly believes that creativity needs space and time to breathe and so gives each staff member a month off during the year to work on a longer project of their choosing.

Quinn (2004) also sounds a warning bell about the sped-up pace of journalism as every news worker is expected to take on an increasingly heavy burden of duties: “reporters could become too busy to verify the information they find” and “journalists could get so busy providing content for multiple platforms that they simply do not have the time to reflect or analyze” (p. 121). Other researchers echo this concern. Ursell (2001), for example, concluded that increases in pace and work demands at the BBC caused a downgrade in accuracy, factualness, and completeness – a focus group participant in this study said that there is “no time to think, no time to check.”

Furthermore, participants in Ursell’s study agreed that “more numerous and shorter deadlines meant less time to check sources and to counter the efforts of the politicians’ press officers” (p. 193). In other words, researchers suggest that although journalism organizations now provide more content across more hours of the day, it is possible that publications are in reality offering a downgraded service to readers.
Once again, the increased speed of the industry with the introduction of new technology seems to be an old problem. In the early days of United States history, publishers seeking information had to depend on slow transportation methods such as horse, foot, and rail until the telegraph was invented in the mid-1800s (Koelbowicz, 1987). The mail was also an important information-gathering tool for American journalists for many decades and even with the invention of the telegraph news could still take days to travel from one American city to another (Kielbowicz, 1987). Even though the telegraph sped up the distribution of news, it did have negative effects on journalists’ work: “Stories had to be summarized – even skeletonized and sent in code – to save on the expense of transmission” (Kielbowicz, 1987, p. 33).

Fast forward more than a century and Russial, in his (1989) dissertation, admitted to feeling uneasy about the introduction of pagination to newsrooms and wondered whether this was really the best use of editors’ time. Russial (1989) cites a 1986 American Society of Newsroom Editors survey that says “Copy editors are being asked to take on more and more jobs … without giving them time to do the main job we were hired for – editing” (p. 21). Russial’s research findings on the introduction of pagination to the newsroom indicated that “the shift of tasks from the composing room into the editorial department has created an added burden for editors,” and has “left them less time to perform their traditional tasks of copyediting and headline writing” (p. 113).

More than 20 years have passed since Russial’s (1989) study and there have been no indications that the ever-increasing speed of journalists’ work because of additional duties has slackened. For example, Lowrey and Becker (2001) found that technology
shortchanges “time spent performing occupation tasks of a more conceptual nature” (p. 768). If editors are continuously given more duties, especially with the modern breakneck pace of technology, then it would be expected that time is always a precious commodity and that some responsibilities, especially time-intensive ones, get shortchanged.

The blurring separation between work and life is another negative dimension to the increased speed of the newsroom. Stepp (2009) interviewed a St. Louis Post-Dispatch news editor who said that about 50 staff members have the ability to post content directly to the Post’s website. This is often done away from the office and without a fine-toothed read from a copyeditor – a “growing, troubling trend in these days of never-ending news cycles and ever-dwindling editing corps” (p. 42). This instant access to publications’ Web portals along with the time crunch reporters and editors experience is all the more troubling for the drastic newsroom cuts made in the past few years. As of 2009, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch had cut almost half of their copy editors with the result that “fewer editors scrutinize copy, and they often spend less time per item than they would have just a few years ago” (Stepp, 2009, p. 42).

Researchers’ concerns for the future of journalism overlay a general concern for new technology’s impact on the quality of content produced by journalism organizations. Ursell (2001) studied the effect that organizational change, technological developments, and the subsequent change in journalists’ skills has on content quality and uses the term “dumbed down” (borrowed from Franklin and Murphy, 1998) to describe the overall trend in the British press and broadcasting media. Many researchers have examined the
downward trend in media quality, but Ursell (2001) cites Bourdieu (1998) in pinpointing the cause to “intensified media competition” and “niche marketing” of news (p. 176). Although this study does not delve into a deeper look at the competition and marketing of publications, this is an interesting observation to keep in mind.

The downgraded (or “dumbed down”) quality of news is partly because of an increased focus on production processes, say some researchers. Lowery and Becker (2001), who studied the importance of production technology skills to new graduates looking for a job in mass media, discuss how new technologies and processes are changing the balance of work at journalism organizations: “Securing the means of production necessarily takes priority over ensuring quality of content: the newspaper must come out, the show must go on, and the site must stay up” (p. 767). It is a telling sign that Lowrey and Becker (2001) found that technical skills and production knowledge are “prioritized over skills and knowledge involved with crafting content” (p. 767) in the mass media job market.

Journalists fought hard for professionalization in the early 1900s by starting journalism programs at universities and pushing for union rights, (Banning, 1998) but Lowrey and Becker’s (2001) research corroborates with Russial’s (1989) finding that new technology causes a “deprofessionalization” of journalists. If journalists are valued more for their ability to get content from platform to platform and less for their actual storytelling and editing skills, then it seems as if journalists’ work has possibly become more automated and less concerned with high-skilled duties and ideals such as fact checking, truth telling, and accuracy.
If new technology and media platforms impact journalists and their work so negatively, as various researchers assert, then why do news organizations push so hard towards providing content across the new media? With mobile and tablet technology heralded as the savior of journalism, researchers worry that media managers have learned to focus their decision-making solely on economics rather than the production of quality journalism. Once again, this concern has a whiff of history about it – the transformation of newspapers from partisan publications to the penny press in the 1800s is an historical example of economic concerns creating shifts in the journalism industry. Advertisers supported the penny press because it allowed them to expand their advertisements’ exposure because of the press’ increased attention on “sensational topics such as crime and scandal” (Fengler & Ruß-Mohl, 2009, p. 679).

The tug-of-war between business and journalism has been a debated topic ever since the days of the penny press. Fengler and Ruß-Mohl (2008) summarize the existing literature on this issue: “Most authors remain highly critical of the profit orientation of media managers, and tend to describe journalists as victims of changing newsroom conditions and increasing media competition” (p. 668). Various researchers have coined terms like “MBAs in the newsroom” to describe the problem (Fengler & Ruß-Mohl, 2008). Fengler and Ruß-Mohl (2008) take it one step further and conclude that journalists largely employ a market-based approach to their work – they try to “maximize attention for their work” and “minimize costs of investigation and research” (2008, p. 673).
Quinn (2004) specifically asks whether the impetus behind new media trends is motivation for better business or for better journalism. He lists some of the general motivations behind what he calls “multiple-platform publishing”: “the media’s desire to reach as wide an audience as possible, consumers who want access to news in a variety of forms and times (news 24/7) and editorial managers’ drive to cut costs” (p. 109).

Another researcher who sounded a warning about the motivations behind the addition of new technology to the newsroom is Ursell’s (2001) study of the BBC and ITN (Independent Television Network). Part of the researcher’s conclusion is that the introduction of new technology at ITN has “been directed at the creation of novel news products and the changed work organization and practices appropriate to the pursuit of news clients and outlets” (p. 193). This suggests that innovation at these organizations was motivated by the desire to reach more people and therefore gain more revenue – not to provide a richer service to people. However, as long as the quality of content does not overwhelmingly suffer from the desire to reach a broader audience, this could also be a positive change for publications.

High profit margins – higher profit margins than in many industries – are a big part of the problem and are the consequence of “shackling the quality of news organizations to the fortunes of the equity market, almost inevitably sacrificing long-term credibility for short-term returns” (p. 90). This obsession with profits results in a decline in investigative reporting, foreign press staff, and the diversity of reporting staff (Scott, 2005), all of which are extremely costly endeavors but all, many argue, an essential part of journalism in service of the democracy. All of this business versus journalism research
is not to say that the health of journalism organizations as businesses is not important. The research is merely pointing out that the nature of journalism and the service it provides readers requires a careful balance of business and journalism concerns.

**Labor process theory**

Labor process theory provides the theoretical framework to determine how publication across multiple platforms impacts editors in terms of time spent on traditional editing tasks, workload, job satisfaction, and any subsequent effect on the quality of content produced. Russial addressed labor process theory in his (1989) dissertation; other researchers have also used the theory as a framework for studying how technology impacts journalists’ work.

Labor process theory has traditionally focused on ways workers’ skills are transformed by capitalism (Jaros, 2006). It traces the development of technology and its use to squeeze surplus value out of workers and increase the control of the managing class (Liu, 2006). The historical development of capitalism involves the “progressive alienation of the process of production from the work” and the emergence of a management class (Braverman, 1974, p. 39-40).

The first great milestone in the history of capitalism was the industrial revolution, which required huge labor forces and marked the birth of the managing class (Braverman, 1974; Gartman, 1999). A division of labor causes workers to lose knowledge and skill of their crafts and not only places control in the hands of the machines at which workers toil but also increases managerial control over workers (Braverman, 1974; Gartman, 1999).

The pervasive use of machinery in the workplace completes the cycle of worker
exploitation – machinery places control out of the hands of the worker and into the hands of the manager and the worker cannot abandon the machinery because he/she has lost all knowledge of the craftsmanship that comes with both conceiving of and executing labor (Braverman, 1974). According to labor process theory, machines are utilized because of their ability to increase revenue and because the development of factories enabled the employment of low-paid women and child workers (Liu, 2006).

Braverman’s (1974) *Labor and Management Capital* reconceptualizes labor process theory from its Marxian roots to serve analyses of the dynamics within capitalist work organizations. The four main points of Braverman’s labor process theory are the separation of conception and execution of labor, the increasing differentiation of the work process, greater productivity as a result of technology and the deskilling of work (Braverman, 1974; Ornebring, 2010).

Braverman (1974) broadly describes how capitalism and new technology transform the workplace and the ensuing conflict between managers and workers that results from the capitalist system. Braverman’s conceptualization of labor process theory also includes the hypothesis that workers are deskilled because capitalism has separated the conception of work from its execution, which allows management to control the production of goods and services (Braverman, 1974; Rowlinson & Hassard, 2000; Jaros, 2006). The separation of work conception and execution happens when “The driving force of labor remains human consciousness, but the unity between the two may be broken in the individual and reasserted in the group, the workshop, the community, the society as a whole” (Braverman, 1974, p. 35).
This separation between work conception and work execution leads to de-skilled workers – workers no longer have knowledge or skills related with their craft but instead are involved in increasingly more automated, mindless activities (Braverman, 1974). According to Jaros (2006), work is considered de-skilled because “the craftworker must have both the mental skills needed to conceive the work processes and the physical skills to execute the tasks,” whereas capitalism requires only “base physical skills associated with execution” (p. 6).

Critiques of Braverman’s work include the accusation that he has over-simplified capital control and technology’s effect on workers’ skill levels (Jaros, 2006). These critiques are part of a decades-long debate between up-skilling and de-skilling hypotheses (Sawchuk, 2006). Jaros (2006) for example, points to Zimbalist’s (1979) work that says skills are “cyclical” and that “the same processes that tend to produce de-skilling in some areas or sectors produce up-skilling in others” (p. 7). Other researchers have shown that the introduction of new technologies to white-collar organizations often results in increased job opportunities for workers with advanced skills (Liu, 2006). Researchers in the fields of sociology and economics have argued that “advanced technology will benefit workers by eliminating unskilled, tedious jobs and providing in their place jobs that offer greater variation and greater opportunity for meaningful work and upward mobility” (Russial, 1989, p. 48).

The relationship between skill and computer technology, in particular, has resulted in an on-going debate among researchers. Has white-collar work, defined by Russial (1989) as “professional, managerial and higher-level technical” improved or not
in terms of “efficiency, quality of work life, job satisfaction, professional autonomy, social class identification and political practice?” (p. 7). Grugulis (2003) suggests that computer use, while “associated with rising skill levels,” results in de-skilled work (p. 4). Scolari (2009), on the other hand, argues that the “digital work force” is being re-skilled and that workers no longer learn one skill and stick with it for the duration of their careers. Instead, workers are constantly learning and evolving their skill set (p. 957). Scolari further states that to stay afloat in today’s “high-tech production environment,” media workers should be multi-skilled – the “same professional should be able to produce information for different media” (p. 957). This observation is supported by changes in journalism education, which require students to learn an increasing number of digital and multimedia skills.

Yet another example of the up-skilling and de-skilling debate is the post-industrial thesis that, in direct opposition to Braverman’ work, argues that new technology in the workplace requires “greater use of information, knowledge, greater discretion, smarter workers and symbolic analysts” (Sawchuk, 2006, p. 595). This debate about technology’s effect on skill has led to an agreement among researchers about the definition of skill, which Sawchuk (2006) summarizes as “internalized capacities resident in the individual worker” and includes “job design, divisions of labour, technology and control,” which is ultimately socially constructed (p.598).

Sawchuk’s (2006) research on the use-value thesis of labor process theory adds another dimension to the skills debate. The use-value thesis does not see the need to theorize whether technology causes up-skilling or de-skilling but rather “sets the stage for
a broader systemic understanding of the contradictory processes … that occur simultaneously in all workplaces under capitalism” (p. 593). Sawchuk’s conception of labor process theory thus allows for de-skilling, re-skilling, and up-skilling to happen simultaneously in a workplace.

This study follows Russial’s (1989) lead in applying labor process theory to study how the publication across multiple platforms impacts editors. In regards to labor process theory, Russial said pagination “degrades editorial labor insofar as editors, whose jobs are largely professional, are required to take on more composition tasks” and that “pagination represents a ‘reskilling’ at the same time it represents deprofessionalization – a situation that does not seem to be adequately addressed by human relations approaches by Braverman” (p. 260). Hence, labor process theory will be applied loosely, as per Russial’s example, in order to provide a descriptive theoretical framework and will allow an analysis of ways technology is changing editorial work processes and its effect on traditional editorial tasks.

Labor process theory and journalism

Labor process theory is appropriate for this study because the development of journalism is intimately entwined with the invention of new technologies (Pavlik, 2001). Dickinson (2007) challenges researchers to study journalists as “members of a distinctive occupational category” (p. 195) because it is important to understand how journalists accomplish their work within the context of a technologically evolving environment. Weiss and Joyce (2009) have also stressed the impact technology can have on the newsroom as well as the content that is produced by journalists.
Hardt (1990), who argues for the necessity of studying journalism history in the context of technology’s effect on the news, describes the relationship between journalism and technology: “Newsrooms, like factory floors, have been a laboratory for technological innovation and a battleground of economic and social interests for over 100 years” (p. 355). Hardt goes on to describe the clash between traditional journalism ideals and technology and the subsequent effect on workers as causing a “(re)definition of occupational roles and structures of authority in the newsroom” (1990, p. 347).

Journalism and technology have been studied from a labor process standpoint by researchers in the past. For example, researchers have argued that the history of journalism is a history of the transformation of a craft practiced by printers and editors into a business run by larger organizations with a division of labor between printers and journalists. Hardt (1990), for example, places the history of journalism within a labor process standpoint:

“Journalists as skilled laborers were subjected to a succession of technological advances under conditions of producing and trading stories as commodities; these conditions further defined the place of journalists within the media system and therefore reduced opportunities for independent judgments, expression of ideas, and editorial creativity, while increasing managerial control” (p. 349-350).

Örnebring (2010) applied Braverman’s labor process theory to the technological development of journalism and argues that studying journalism as labor “presents a way to address both the integration of technology in the everyday working practice of journalists, and the history of the inner-relations between journalism and technology” (p. 20).
Journalism was considered a craft in its early days, with the work of collecting, writing, and distributing news often done by a single person. When newspapers began to publish on a regular schedule, i.e., daily, weekly or monthly, a division of work was necessary, which led to the creation of news management when the press was industrialized in the late 1800s (Örnebring, 2010).

Before computer technology was invented, the most important skill of writers and editors was the ability to write and gather material. As new technologies entered the workplace, journalists were expected to have more technical computer skills (Örnebring, 2010). Örnebring further argues that technological changes in the newsroom are related to management control: “Technology then becomes a tool that allows managers to implement organizational changes aimed at making journalistic labour more cost-effective and more easily controlled” (p. 65).

Other researchers besides Örnebring have applied labor process theory to study the introduction of new technologies to the newsroom. For example, Liu (2006) relied on the works of Marx and Braverman to determine how information and communication technologies have negatively impacted labor processes and working conditions of Taiwanese reporters. Liu (2006) concluded that deadline pressure causes newsrooms to be transformed into an “assembly line for the sake of efficiency, with news writers turning into information gatherers” (p. 699). In addition, Russial (1989) studied the effect of pagination on editors in terms of workload, job satisfaction, and time spent on traditional editing tasks. Another study by Russial (2000) analyzed how digital imaging changed photojournalists’ work processes and, while this research does not mention labor
process theory directly, it does discuss the up-skill/de-skill debate as well as the separation of work conception and work execution.

While labor process theory is a legitimate theoretical lens through which to study this research question, the theory will not allow an exploration of the economic implications for introducing new technologies to journalism organizations or expanding content to new digital platforms. Labor process theory will also not provide the theoretical framework for exploring all the ways content produced by journalists is changing with the addition of new technologies to the newsroom. Both issues can be addressed, however, in the form of recommendations for future research in later sections of this paper.
CHAPTER 3: METHOD

This research employed a two-step qualitative process. Qualitative research is defined as “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). In particular, this study will be a modified case study, which is the “preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over other events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (Yin, 2003, p. 1). All of these conditions apply to this study.

A brief preliminary written interview was followed by semi-structured interviews with six newspaper editors and five magazine editors. The written interviews were used to frame further discussion in the semi-structured interviews. Both written interview and semi-structured interview questions were based off of Russial’s (1989) research instruments.

The advantage of relying upon qualitative research is that it allows the researcher to “build their patterns, categories, from the bottom-up” and it also allows for an emergent design, which means that “the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed and that all phases of the process may change or shift after the researchers enter the field and begin to collect data” (Creswell, 1998, p. 39).

Because mobile and tablet technologies are so new and because this was at heart an exploratory study, a research method that allowed the researcher to build patterns and
shift methods as the research evolved throughout the interview process was ideal. As another defense of the use of case study research in this study, Yin (2003) says that the “case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries” (Yin, 2003, p. 2).

Past researchers’ use of similar methodology to examine questions about labor process theory and journalism further defends the choice to employ interview methodology in this study. Russial (1989) used interviews with various news workers for his dissertation on the impact of pagination on news workers. Liu (2006) also used interviews with a sample of Taiwanese journalists to determine the de-skilling effects of information and communication technologies on their day-to-day work.

Samples for this study consisted of six editors at five newspapers and five editors at five magazines. The newspapers were all dailies at medium-to-large cities in various parts of the U.S. The magazines were all nationally distributed consumer publications. Anonymity of participants’ names and the publication they worked for was necessary in this research because participants discussed sensitive topics involving their job and workplace. Publications in this study were targeted because of their use of mobile and tablet technology to bring content to readers. In addition, some of the publications also had a relationship with the University of Missouri-Columbia’s Reynolds Journalism Institute.
The initial target sample included managing editors at magazines and copy editors at newspapers but, in reality, the sample ended up being a more diverse group. Initial contacts were made at publications through a contact at the University of Missouri-Columbia or by simply picking a name off the publication’s directory. Most initial contacts directed the researcher to a more appropriate person to participate in the study.

Participants included a copy editor, two content editors, an assistant managing editor, and two copy desk chiefs at major daily newspapers as well as two copy chiefs, an assistant managing editor, an editor-in-chief, and a deputy managing editor at consumer magazines. The editors represent a range of backgrounds, age groups and experience levels with new digital platforms. They are front-and-center of all the changes taking place in the journalism industry and even though they do not represent identical cases – they do not have the same job titles and they do not deal with new platforms in the same way – the variety of voices and opinions coming from this group of editors is valuable because it provides a fleshed-out, comprehensive view of how new platforms are changing editorial work overall. (See the chart at the end of this section for a more comprehensive picture of the editors.)

This diversity in the background of participants is permitted, and even encouraged, in case study research. Creswell (2005) says of his own case study research that he prefers “to select cases that show different perspectives on the same problem, or event I want to portray” – this is called purposeful sampling (p. 75). Furthermore, Creswell points out that qualitative research is supposed to be an emerging design, which means that “the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and that all phases
of the process may change or shift after the researchers enter the field and begin to collect data” (2005, p. 39).

Russial’s (1989) dissertation on pagination used a similarly diverse group of participants to “explore a potentially wider range of responses to pagination technology” rather than studying one in-depth case because “different newspapers tend to structure their editorial operations somewhat differently, because there is a great deal of organizational experimentation with pagination systems” (p. 93).

The choice to include both newspapers and magazines in this study stems from the fact that publication on mobile and/or tablets is a relatively new phenomenon and so inclusion of both types of publications will give a broader look at the influence of the technology on editors. Furthermore, while all of the publications listed above provide content on mobile and tablet, they are not doing so equally. The newspapers provide content on both platforms, but might not have actual separate applications for mobile phones and the iPad. The magazines, in comparison, often have separate applications for both platforms and appear to be offering content that is uniquely tailored to each platform. A random sample of editors is not appropriate or feasible because, once again, publication of content on mobile and tablet technologies is such a new phenomenon in the journalism industry.

When Russial completed his (1989) research on pagination, the situation was similar in that the technology was relatively new, had not yet spread to all publications, and the way publications used pagination was not standardized in the industry. In defense of his non-generalizable research methods, Russial said “I felt it would be more
illuminating to look at a number of papers less intensively, in order to explore a potentially wider range of responses to pagination technology” (p. 93).

Editors received an initial email (see Appendix I) explaining the research topic and procedures. After agreeing to participate in the study, newspaper and magazine editors received the preliminary written interview via an emailed link to SurveyMonkey.com. Upon completion of the written interview, participants completed semi-structured interviews that took place over the telephone at a date and time of each participant’s choosing.

After collecting and analyzing data from the preliminary written interview, semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions (see Appendix II) were conducted with the same editors that filled out the written interviews. The original research design called for Skype interviews but frequent interruptions in conversation due to low bandwidth and other technological shortcomings rendered that choice impractical and so all but one of the interviews was conducted over the phone. Although case study research is usually carried out face-to-face, telephone interviews are also acceptable. Yin (2003, p. 11) says, “You could even do a valid and high-quality case study without leaving the library and the telephone or Internet, depending on the topic being studied.”

Interviews lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes and were recorded using an Olympus digital recorder. The interviews were semi-standardized; although the interviews followed a standardized protocol (see Appendix III) that included a list of primary and secondary questions, the research allowed for follow-up questions or clarifying questions to be asked. Variation between the interviews was allowed in order
to obtain the best information – lines of questioning related to the research questions but not specifically listed in the protocol were sometimes used. The fluid nature of case study data collection is expected: Yin (2003) cites Rubin and Rubin (1995) when he points out that “the interviews will appear to be guided conversations rather than structured queries. In other words, although you will be pursuing a consistent line of inquiry, your actual stream of questions in a case study interview is likely to be fluid rather than rigid” (p. 89).

Each interview was transcribed and coded for emergent themes using cross-case analysis. Cross-case analysis is a form of analysis used when multiple cases are studied in a collective case study and “involves examining themes across cases to discern themes that are common to all cases” (Creswell, 2005). The analysis was largely a holistic process, where “the researcher examines the entire case and presents descriptions, themes, and interpretations or assertions related to the whole case” (Yin, 2003; Creswell, 2005).

After thoroughly reading the interview data multiple times to maximize general understanding and making short memos and observations in the margins of the transcripts, an initial, big-picture description of the facts of the cases was written. Focus was next turned to extracting “a few key issues (or analysis of themes), not for generalizing beyond the case but for understanding the case” (Creswell, 2005, p. 75). Common themes that were found across cases were identified and collapsed into a workable list of themes and subthemes. After classifying themes and patterns, the remainder of the analysis went in a circular loop as codes of the themes were reorganized.
and clarified upon further examination of the data. Creswell (2005) describes this step of the analysis: “researchers develop codes or categories and sort text or visual images into categories” (p. 152). Creswell calls this “winnowing” the data – “not all information is used in a qualitative study” and “researchers develop a short list of tentative codes (e.g., 12 or so) that match text segments, regardless of the length of the database” (p. 152).

This winnowing process continued until the data was reduced into a clear, workable batch that made it possible to make naturalistic generalizations about the data. Creswell (2005) defines naturalistic generalization as occurring when “in the interpretation of a case, an investigator undertakes a case study to make the case understandable” (p. 163).

The overall pattern of data analysis fits Creswell’s description of the data analysis spiral: beginning with management and organization of the data, researchers are to read the data several times to get a sense of the overall picture. Creswell suggests “writing memos in the margins of field notes or transcripts” which “helps in this initial process of exploring the database” (2005, p. 150). The next step in the data analysis process is to determine major themes and subthemes present in the database and to classify the data by identifying around six general themes, which can be viewed as a “‘family’ of themes with children, or subthemes, and even grandchildren, sub-subthemes represented by segments of data” (p. 153). Lastly, the researcher is to present the data in “text, tabular, or figure form” (p. 154).
TABLE I: Editors’ positions, backgrounds and experiences with digital platforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publication Type</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years in Journalism</th>
<th>Experience with new tablets</th>
<th>Work related to new tablets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copy chief</td>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Writes digital content and proofreads online pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant editor</td>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6 months to a year</td>
<td>Edits digital content and curates content for various platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy desk chief</td>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>One to two years</td>
<td>Copyedits digital content and sometimes produces digital copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor in chief</td>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>One to two years</td>
<td>Works with numerous digital and tablet extensions of his/her publication; meets with editor who oversees the applications and regularly checks on digital content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy managing editor</td>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Is lead editor for the magazine’s tablet edition; edits stories; consults with designers on digital layouts; supervises copyediting and participates in simulator and on-device reviews of digital applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy editor</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6 months to a year</td>
<td>Writes posts for the paper’s social media accounts; publishes each story he/she edits on the paper’s website; copyedits digital content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National content editor</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Conducts research on mobile and tablet applications and manages others who work directly with digital content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content editor</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Copyedits digital content and curates content for various platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant managing editor</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Copyedits digital content and curates content for various platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy desk chief</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>One to two years</td>
<td>Copyedits digital content and curates content for various platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy desk chief</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Tags stories with keywords to push them to the mobile site; writes headlines for digital content; uses CMS to format stories for online and mobile sites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The follow-up interview data was categorized based on major themes that emerged upon initial analysis. The themes were: additional work, the effect of additional work, the maintenance of content quality, treatment of platform content, editors’ job satisfaction, and organizational management of industry changes. These categories as well as any subthemes that emerged upon additional analysis and the data contained within each produced a snapshot of how the publication of newspaper and magazine content across multiple platforms is impacting editorial workload, job satisfaction, time spent on traditional editing tasks, and the content quality of their publications. The question of how social media plays into all of this was not built into the original research design but editors brought it up on their own during the follow-up interviews, so it will be briefly covered in the findings and addressed in later sections in the form of suggestions for future research.
TABLE II: Research question and corresponding major analysis theme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Corresponding major themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are editors’ roles shifting?</td>
<td>• Additional work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The effect of additional work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the impact on time spent on traditional editing tasks?</td>
<td>• The effect of additional work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The maintenance of content quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is it impacting editors’ job satisfaction and workload?</td>
<td>• Additional work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Editors’ job satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are editors repurposing content for digital platforms?</td>
<td>• Treatment of platform content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do editors think digital platforms are impacting their publication’s content</td>
<td>• Maintenance of content quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality?</td>
<td>• Treatment of platform content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Organizational management of industry changes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional work**

For coding purposes, additional work was defined as any instance in which a participant discussed extra work, duties, or responsibilities in their roles as editors. This includes any work directly related to mobile or tablet platforms. This coded category also included any mention of decreased time spent on traditional editing tasks because of new duties or responsibilities.

The majority of participants indicated that they are taking on additional tasks and duties in the wake of multiple-platform publishing. On the written interview, editors were asked how the publication of content across multiple platforms impacts their job difficulty. Where one was “much easier” and five was “much more difficult,” all participants rated a three or higher (out of five), and seven rated a four or five.
TABLE III: How has the publication of content across multiple platforms affected your job’s difficulty level?

Data from the written interviews was echoed by editors’ responses in the follow-up interviews. For example, one copy desk chief at a large daily newspaper said:

“I would say I’m putting in more hours than ever. And the copyeditors I supervise work harder, they have the difficult job of being on the front line.”

Other editors agreed that their jobs are now more difficult – a newspaper features editor at a daily paper said that more and more duties have been added to his job over the years:

“Since about 2006, 2007, just little duties have been added here and there because they know that online readership is high.”

A heavier workload because of new publishing platforms is not exclusive to newspaper editors – magazine editors also indicated that they now have more on their plates because of the publication of content on multiple platforms. For example, a copy
desk chief at a consumer magazine said that new digital platforms add to the work of staff members who “already had their hands full with the print magazine.”

Social media is a source of additional work for editors, too. Copyeditors have to do extra work because of Facebook and Twitter because they are the ones responsible for posting the stories they edit on social media outlets and crafting unique story descriptions for both social media platforms. For example, a copyeditor at a daily paper said:

“I have to go into TweetSuite and make sure my Twitter partner for the day hasn’t already posted it. Then I have to formulate it and put it into TweetSuite and if I think it should go on Facebook I write display type for Facebook and link and post it and that’s time I’m not editing.”

It is interesting to note that extra work does not rest solely on the shoulders of editors – participants indicated that the piling on of work, whether in the planning, editorial, or design stage, is quickly becoming the norm across whole organizations. A deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine described how the extra work extends beyond her own duties and impacts the entire organization; she cited the new organizational load as more of an “expansion rather than a change”:

“As each department plans content, they’ve had to expand their organizing so the iPad content is included in their plans; when it gets to the design stage our creative director has to include digital in his assignments to designers.”

Although the majority of participants had something to say about the amount of time additional duties have been taking up during their day-to-day work, the issue is best summarized by a copy desk chief at a major daily newspaper. He said:

“Whereas three of four years ago my job was a hundred percent newspaper editing, it’s probably half that now and
the rest is making sure everything looks right for online and some of it is processing pictures and things like that.”

It is important to note that while not every participant included in this study works directly with the various digital platforms of their publications, virtually every single one indicated through the written interviews of the follow-up interviews that the emergence of multiple digital platforms is an added burden to their workday.

Participants, like the one cited above, indicated that many additional duties are an expansion of editorial work rather than a change away from editing. This “expansion” includes writing platform-appropriate headlines, planning content for digital platforms, and tweaking print content for digital platforms. This is supported with data from the written interview. Editors were asked to rate how often they do various editing tasks – the following chart shows that editors still regularly tend to traditional editing duties.

**TABLE IV: Frequency of performing editing tasks**

![Chart showing frequency of performing editing tasks](chart.png)
As additional evidence that editors are not abandoning their traditional editing tasks for more automated, de-skilled work is how participants rated various aspects of their current jobs:

Table V: To what degree do you find your job creative?

Table VI: To what degree do you find your job varied in scope?
Table VII: To what degree do you find your job challenging?

Table VIII: To what degree do you find your job complex?
Table IX: To what degree do you find your job analytical?

Table X: To what degree do you find your job mechanical?
One editor at a major city's daily newspaper said that the publication of content across multiple platforms makes her concerned about being “the only pair of eyes on a story,” in comparison to a few years ago where content went through a highly structured copyediting process. She says:

“I may be the person who assigns the story, rewrites the story, copyedits it and puts the headline on it.”

While this is yet another example of editors’ additional work, it is apparent that this work is not necessarily automated and that editors are not necessarily abandoning their traditional tasks – as this editor indicates, they are merely having to fit a whole lot more traditional editing tasks into their daily schedule.

With so many content platforms needed attending to, one traditional editing task participants still spend time doing is headline writing. A copyeditor at a major daily newspaper outlines all the different headlines she writes for each story:
“Instead of writing one headline for print specs, I have to write a headline for print specs, a headline to display on the website and a separate search engine optimized headline.”

Editorial planning is another skill that editors continue using. This is particularly true for magazine editors – planning content months in advance takes insight into audiences’ desires and foresight into future trends. The abundance of digital platforms also expands this editorial role, as indicated by a comment from a deputy managing editor of a consumer magazine who said that digital platforms put “more work on everybody’s plate”:

“The deputy editors as they’re planning now instead of just planning the content, they’re having to take some time with each story and think about how they want to present the story digitally and if they need to include additional features.”

Not all new editorial responsibilities, however, are connected to traditional editing tasks. While a large majority of extra work discussed in the interviews was an expansion, rather than an abandonment, of traditional editing tasks, it is still important to point out some of the less traditional work editors are doing in order to understand the full scope of digital platforms’ impact on editors’ work.

One non-traditional task editors are sometimes now responsible for is reformatting photos, as pointed out by a copy desk chief at a daily paper. Not only can reformatting photos take up a significant amount of time, but it is also not the only example provided by editors of ways new platforms detract from time spent on traditional editing. One participant, a copy desk chief at a daily newspaper, said that he now spends his time “formatting photos for online” and other digital platforms, which in the past
would never be done by a copyeditor. As another example of non-traditional editing work, a features copy desk chief at a daily newspaper said he spends time “mainly just keywording and making sure the pictures are hooked up right.”

A copyeditor at a daily newspaper also gave some examples of additional work not associated with traditional editing tasks:

“There is less time to edit because more time is taken up with reformatting things … I don’t fill out one form with a bunch of fields. I have to go into the publication platform for each of these editions.”

Another participant, a features editor at a daily paper, gave perhaps the most extreme example of editors abandoning their traditional editing tasks in lieu for less skilled work. She said she now does a lot of “clicking:”

“Instead of worrying about the content of the story, now we are very heavily involved in directing stories. Half my job now is just clicking and directing rather than actual working with reporters.”

This may be an extreme example of time spent on non-traditional editing tasks but, once again, it is important to take note of in grasping the spectrum of ways digital publishing platforms are impacting editorial work at newspapers and consumer magazines. Overall, while both newspaper and magazine editors are taking on additional work in their jobs, the burden of additional work appears to be falling more heavily on newspaper editors than on magazine editors, perhaps because of the difference in staffing situations at the two organizations.
**Effects of additional work**

The extra work placed on editors’ shoulders because of the existence of multiple digital platforms impacts their day-to-day work, as is apparent from the evidence presented in the previous section. Three of the most obvious issues arising from additional daily work are mental juggling, issues with time, and staffing shortages.

**Mental juggling**

For coding purposes, mental juggling was defined as any mention by participants of the impact of multiple platform publishing on editors’ mental focus. Although editors seem to be taking on ever-expanding editorial work instead of abandoning it for more automated duties, one major downfall of this is the constant mental juggling that is necessary to keep everything straight. A majority of the editors interviewed mentioned the distracting nature of working with multiple platforms. For example, a copyeditor at a large daily newspaper said:

"On a day when I’m busy and I have to post something every 45 minutes or so, there’s not time for me to do my normal copyediting work and also digest all the stories I’m tweeting about. The hard part comes in when there’s so many things to juggle."

Other participants in the study echoed this concern, as well. An assistant editor at a consumer magazine said the presence of multiple platforms makes her think “constantly on multiple levels” about how content translates to each platform; this “detracts some concentration away from editing.”

The difficulty of mental juggling becomes even more apparent from the lengthy description of the overlapping editing schedule a deputy managing editing at a consumer
magazine routinely deals with. Her work is constantly situated among multiple print and
digital versions of the magazine, each at different stages of completion. She says,

“*You kind of have to switch your mindset back and forth between not only which issue you’re working on but which medium you’re working with because there’s such a difference. We’re doing a horizontal on the iPad and our magazine, of course, is vertical and you just kind of have to get into the mindset as you’re approaching each work center.*”

Nearly every participant in this study spoke about the lack of focus they are
afforded by their current publication schedule. While many additional duties related to
multiple-platform publishing fall in line with traditional editing tasks, the issue with
editors’ lack of focus leads one to wonder whether those tasks – traditional editing or not
– can be done well if editors are constantly having to multitask their mental focus.

**Time issues**

For coding purposes, time issues were defined as any instance where a participant
mentioned a shortage of time or problems with deadlines. If editors are being handed
additional duties, it certainly follows that time, or lack thereof, would become a problem.
The written interview shows that time, while not a huge problem across the board for
editors, is an issue for the majority of them, as evidenced by the following chart:
Table XII: To what degree are time issues/deadlines a problem in your job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Newspaper Editors</th>
<th>Magazine Editors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
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</table>

Analysis of the interview data shows a generally negative attitude towards the pace of work that is becoming more commonplace as digital platforms become a normalized part of newspaper and magazine organizations.

Take, for example, a comparison by a features copy desk chief at a major daily newspaper of the deadline schedule for a strictly print publication versus a publication with multiple digital platforms. The deadline pressure for digital platforms is constant, whereas before with a print-only publication, it was “cyclical, always the same.”

And another participant, a deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine echoed similar concerns:

“The biggest challenges have been just production time, trying to get out a print issue and a digital issue with a limited amount of time.”
Besides being a side effect of editors’ increased workload, timing and scheduling issues come with a unique set of problems according to participants in this study. A content editor at a daily newspaper said,

“You don’t have time to consider things. Anytime you do something that’s less considered than other times, you’re going to introduce errors more.”

Of course, according to Walter Williams’ Journalist’s Creed, which was written shortly after Williams founded the University of Missouri-Columbia’s Journalism School, accuracy is one of the foundations of good journalism; the degradation of publications’ standards of accuracy is a problem that extends beyond the limits of this study, but it is important to note in order to understand the full spectrum of how the presence of multiple digital platforms is impacting editorial work at newspapers and magazines.

Staffing

Staffing is the biggest problem plaguing the newspaper and magazine industry, judging by what emerged from the analysis of the interview data. For coding purposes, staffing issues were identified as specific instances in which participants attributed any negative aspects of their work or the current industry as a whole to staffing problems.

The written interview data shows that staffing is a problem in the newspaper and magazine industries, but is more of an issue at newspapers:
Table XIII: To what degree is insufficient staffing a problem in your work?

In the follow-up interviews, editors indicated that extra staff would alleviate them of many of the negative effects stemming from multiple platform publishing – according to one copy chief at a consumer magazine, most problems with editorial workload start with a lack of staffing:

“People aren’t really hiring very many people to take care of online and social media and mobile. It’s kind of just putting extra workload on people’s plates.”

A copy desk chief at a consumer magazine said that she wishes the iPad publication almost had its own staff because “even though it’s obviously integrated with our print issue, it does require a lot of hours of work.”

Virtually every newspaper editor interviewed indicated in the follow-up interviews that staffing is an issue at their publication, which makes the additional work from digital platforms an even heavier burden. When asked how multiple-platform
publishing makes her job more difficult, one content editor at a major daily paper referenced the shrinking copyeditor staff, which means that

“It has now come on to the content editors to write headlines and to write captions and to put stories online.”

The majority of editors in this study pointed to staffing issues as the main ailment for the newspaper and magazine industries – an ailment that, if fixed, would alleviate many other problems.

**Maintenance of content quality – Positive**

Based on the emergent themes from the interview data, positive indications of the maintenance of content quality after expanding content to multiple digital platforms include an expanded audience, editors’ willingness to take on extra work, enhanced storytelling, and indications that publications learned their lessons from their initial treatment of the web as a platform.

While no separate measures of content quality have been taken in this study, most participants think that expanding content to multiple platforms is strengthening or at least supplementing the quality of their original print product.

**Expanded readership**

For coding purposes, expanded readership was defined as any instance where participants discuss catering to existing readers or attracting more readers to their content with extra digital platforms.

When asked what advantage the publication of content across multiple platforms brings to their publication, many participants said that it brings their content to new readers or pursues old readers as they flock to the ever-more-popular iPads and mobile
smart phones. One participant, a features copy desk chief at a major daily newspaper, said that the fluctuation in readers’ Internet usage throughout the day made the publication of mobile content necessary for survival:

“The computer usage drops off a cliff after six and on the weekends and the mobile and tablet seem to be a good compliment to that – that’s where people are going at this time and so we’ve paid more attention to what’s going on during the day and on weekends.”

Another participant, a copy editor at a major daily paper, noted that tablets and mobile smart phones are the way to go if you don’t want “your entire subscriber base to die.” She further stressed the point that it’s not the physical paper that’s important but rather the “reading and disseminating of information” that makes the newspaper a valuable service to readers.

When asked about the advantage of providing content on multiple digital devices, an assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper said it is mainly in pursuit of new readers who have “already migrated to other platforms.” He continues:

“Everyone carries a cell phone or smart phone. Tablets might not be a panacea for what ails our industry but seem like a popular device category for millions of people. We want to make sure our content is available there and we need to deliver our content where readers are at.”

The majority of participants believe that providing content across multiple platforms provides a benefit in terms of maintaining and gaining readers and is a necessity to survive as a trusted source of information in the coming decades – a do or die situation.
Enhanced storytelling

Enhanced storytelling was coded as any instance where participants mention new ways to tell stories through digital platforms. New digital platforms, especially tablets such as the iPad, allow for fresh, innovative ways of storytelling. Most participants in the study indicated that they recognize opportunities that digital platforms provide for enhanced ways of presenting content to readers.

Magazine editors, especially, recognize the aesthetic appeal of the iPad, which lends itself well to the striking visuals and design of consumer publications. A deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine said,

“We put a lot into our photography and the images are stunning on the iPad, very luminous and bright, colorful. It really plays into what our readers are looking for as far as ‘me’ time, you know, to just be able to sit back with the tablet and enjoy the experience. We really want to make the digital issue an experience for readers, something they can enjoy and not just something to swipe through.”

This shows that not only are magazine editors conscious of the aesthetic opportunities offered by the iPad and other tablets, but they are also considering the readers’ experience, which is an indication that magazines are strategizing in order to maintain content quality.

Besides their aesthetic appeal, new digital platforms also provide an innovative approach to space issues that print publications have had to deal with in the past. A copy desk chief at a consumer magazine talked about the possibility of providing a better service to readers through the unlimited space available on tablet publications:

“In the print magazine you’re limited to space, so usually we can’t run as many photos or illustrations showing
something because there are only so many pages in the magazine but with the iPad you can have as many pages or images that you want.”

An editor-in-chief at a consumer magazine also indicated that the iPad edition of the magazine was fostering a positive change in the relationship between the publication and its readers with the addition of digital content:

“There’s a relevance and a connectivity with anything digital in terms of having ties to your readers and your subscribers and your fans that can’t be done through the printed page.”

An assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper echoed this feeling about the relationship between readers and the digital versions of newspapers and magazines – “It gets us to think about new ways to tell stories in new areas … new pathways for us to communicate with readers and deliver news and feature-like content.”

Lessons learned from the Web

One positive indication of the maintenance of content quality that emerged from the data analysis is that publications have gotten smarter in their approach to digital platforms since the early days of the Internet – whereas many publications were previously accused of shoveling content from print to the Web, newspaper and magazine organizations have now learned to appreciate new digital platforms as a unique content delivery method.

For coding purposes, this category was defined as any instance where participants spoke of changing their digital platform strategy in the time since the Web was introduced. For example, an assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper said,
“Five years ago it probably was more of just ‘let’s shovel everything from the paper onto the Web, paper first, Web second, and hope for the best.’ We’ve learned so much, you know, and industry-wide knowledge has skyrocketed.”

This participant also directly addressed his publication’s attitude towards the Web. He said that the Web was first regarded as a “threat” and a “competitor” but that as his publication evolved, the organization realized it couldn’t “just be the paper rendered in pixels.”

Although researchers’ concerns about publications shoveling content onto various platforms is directed more at newspapers than magazines (as was discussed in the literature review), one editor-in-chief at a consumer magazine spoke of initial struggles with the Web at his publication as well:

“It’s not so easy to just say, ‘we’ll write it and we’ll put it up on these different platforms’. We started doing that and we recognized that it wouldn’t work that way so we had to put more energy and effort into customizing the content for each platform.”

The majority of editors who participated in this study indicated that they are not approaching mobile and tablet platforms with the same attitude, viewpoint, or concerns they initially brought to the Web. While it makes sense that a whole different set of problems will crop up with mobile and tablet digital platforms, at least there has been an improvement in digital platform strategy in the 20-plus years the Internet has been in existence.
Maintenance of content quality – Negative

Negative indications of content quality because of changes brought about by digital platforms include changing standards for digital platforms and negative effects on editorial work.

Changing standards for digital platforms

For coding purposes, changing standards for digital platforms was defined as any instance where participants mention a lax attitude toward editing digital content or a shift in the way “news” is defined because of digital platforms.

Although editors view new digital platforms as a tool for expansive storytelling and a new way to bring content to readers, portions of the interview data suggest that the care and attention paid to the print product is not being paid to digital content. A features copy desk chief at a major daily newspaper said there is “less deliberation” about what content is posted to digital platforms and that reporters are writing stories for digital platforms that only a few years ago they might have merely put “in their notebook and saved for another day.”

Another participant, a features content editor at a major daily newspaper, spoke of the possibility that readers just don’t care – they don’t hold digital newspaper and magazine content to the same high standard they hold traditional print content. He said,

“There’s less time for editing and spelling. I think that it’s just not as big a deal on the Internet or on mobile whereas it used to be a big deal in newspapers.”

The changing standards for digital platforms apply to the production process as well as the editing process. According to a copy desk chief at a major daily newspaper, the
workflow is much more less streamlined now that multiple digital platforms are involved in the production process. Whereas before the workflow was linear, moving from “writers to editors to designers to proofreaders,” you now have

“reporters posting online before stuff is edited and you have editors posting before it’s copyedited and you have copyeditors reposting after changes are made. Proofreading is now an afterthought and it’s not a part of the linear work flow.”

Based on this editor’s experience, the tried and true process of polishing content through a pattern of reporters, editors, and copyeditors seems to be less of a priority as content has spread to multiple digital platforms.

Another indication that digital platforms are negatively impacting content quality is that, according to one copyeditor at a daily newspaper, the editors posting things on Facebook and Twitter and writing the descriptions for the two social media platforms might not have even read the stories.

The copyeditor explained that when copyeditors lack the time to fully read and understand the stories being posted on Facebook and Twitter, “inaccuracies would get put in there” due to content being rephrased for the short word limit on Twitter or for the purpose of a snappy Facebook description.

Negative effects on editorial work

For coding purposes, negative effects on editorial work because of multiple-platform publishing was defined as any instance where participants discuss specific ways editing has slipped or suffered with the onslaught of digital platforms. An assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper noticed small errors in the form of
“occasional missing words,” homonyms, misspellings and “stray punctuation” creeping into the pages of his publication. Other participants spoke of the diminished quality of copyediting because editors are “too swamped” to fully focus on editing and the overall diminished quality of the publication because of shortages of time and extra eyeballs to read content before it is published on various platforms. One copy desk chief at a daily paper, in particular, cites the difference in time spent on headline writing as indicative of the diminished quality of his publication:

“When I was at the Wall Street Journal years ago, we’d spend sometimes two to three hours crafting a perfect page one headline that we knew would cover every aspect of the story and be eye-catching. Now I’m lucky if we can spend 10 minutes on a good print headline. It really is all about speed and all about volume and we’re fewer people to do more work.”

Once again, the point is stressed that although editors might not be abandoning editing work to complete automated tasks related to digital platforms, editors’ workdays are often too full for them to satisfactorily complete their traditional editing duties.

**Treatment of platform content**

For coding purposes, a unique treatment of digital platform content was defined as any instance where participants mention tweaking content for various platforms or mention an awareness of the strengths and differences of the various platforms.

Most participants in this study indicated that their publications are well aware, on an organizational level, of the differences between the platforms and they respect those differences by treating them as unique vehicles for content delivery. A content editor at a major daily paper said
“Those platforms have to be respected. You have to write a little bit differently, you have to edit a little bit differently. So what we did with the mobile is we did some training on getting people to write a little bit differently, so we’re filing a little bit differently, too, especially for breaking news.”

While most participants did not talk about such concrete steps as teaching reporters a different way of writing, most indicated that at the very least their publications regularly tweak content to make it more suitable for various platforms. An assistant managing editor at a consumer magazine said her publication takes both new and previously published content and adapts it, which can include

“reformatting the artwork or reformatting the headlines to be more appealing on a digital platform, making the content more bitsy so it’s more easily accessible on the digital platform.”

This previous quote is in line with what other magazine editors said about their treatment of the different digital platforms. Another participant, a deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine, for example, talked about the formatting issues that come with working on multiple platforms:

“If we have a spread magazine, obviously it’s only a one-page opener on the tablet or we have a very vertical image in the magazine that has to go horizontal in tablet, perhaps a different image from farther in the layout or moved to the front and so a lot of times small changes need to be made.”

Newspaper participants, although presently more concerned with mobile than tablet platforms, also indicated that their publication has a policy to regularly tweak content for digital platforms. One participant, an assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper, said he regularly looks for the advantages individual platforms have over other platforms, how to take advantage of these differences and “even when the
differences aren’t only seen as advantageous” he looks at how to “tailor material to those platforms.” This particular editor also said that his publication realizes the on-the-go readability and convenience of blogs and other short story forms and so they recently started publishing around 30 regular blogs. “That’s a good broad example of how we’ve adapted what our resources can do to deliver content into a different platform,” he said.

One magazine studied in this research was an outlier in terms of tailoring content for platform; the editor from that magazine said this about the tablet edition of her publication:

“It’s kind of been something that we sort of put together, I don’t want to say ‘haphazardly’ but it’s like sort of a second thought after we get each issue finished.”

It would be interesting if a survey of a wide selection of both newspapers and magazines could give better insight into how common or rare this “haphazard” attitude toward digital platforms is overall in the industry, but that is far beyond the scope of this study.

Editors’ job satisfaction

For coding purposes, positive job satisfaction was defined as any instance where participants say they are satisfied with their job, are enthused by the challenges inherent in the current industry or are appreciative of the exploratory nature of the emerging digital platforms. Negative job satisfaction level was defined as any instance where participants mention being dissatisfied with their jobs and/or the general environment of the current industry.
Regardless of the challenges inherent in the newspaper and magazine industry today, most participants indicated through both the written and follow-up interviews that they are, overall, satisfied with their work.

TABLE XIV: How satisfied are you with your current job?

In the follow-up interviews, editors said that even though they are working harder than ever before, they are enthusiastic to be part of this new phase in the industry and find it exhilarating. An assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper said

“There’s no question it’s harder but I’ll also say that our department has been very gung ho about taking it on because we feel there’s no choice. And even if there were a choice to opt out we wouldn’t because it’s fun.”

Most of the quotes from editors about liking their jobs come with at least some acknowledgment of the challenges they face on a daily basis. For example, a deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine said
“It’s a new frontier and it’s fun. Sometimes it is a challenge but I think it’s fun to be on the cutting edge of this and kind of wonder where it’s going to go.”

Although editors expressed a mixture of enthusiasm and resignation when asked about their job satisfaction, the written interview data shows that editors, if given the chance, would either choose the same profession or are not sure – none said that they would not choose the same profession.

TABLE XV: With the chance to start over, would you pursue the same work?

An editor-in-chief at a consumer publication said that, while more difficult, he finds his job “more interesting,” and “in general, you sign up for jobs like this because you want to be challenged.”

Another editor said that it isn’t the format of the paper so much as the opportunity to “present it in a way that people can understand and find accessible” that keeps her satisfied. And yet another participant, an assistant managing editor at a major daily
newspaper, said he prefers this era of the industry to even the more financially solid years

two decades ago:

“It was a different era, different resources. You were
publishing on one platform but this is better. This is more
fun, it’s more engaging; those are all good incentives for
coming in the office every day and working hard.”

Although no editor said outright that they are dissatisfied with their job, a few
pointed out areas where their jobs could be improved. For example, a copyeditor at a
major daily newspaper indicated that her hours and the fast pace of her daily work were
causing more dissatisfaction than the fact that content is being published across multiple
platforms. This same editor said that even though her work is mostly satisfying it is also
frustrating because

“I don’t know whether I’m actually helping my publication
in terms of whether we’re doing this the right way. I’d like
to see more numbers and feedback.”

All of this suggests that editors are taking the changes in their jobs in stride and
remain passionate about their work as editors and journalists – even to the cost to their
time and stress levels, editors enjoy being part of this new era in the industry.

Many of these quotes show an intriguing mixture of satisfaction and awareness of
the futility of the situation – the editors know the necessity of providing content on
multiple platforms for their publications to survive financially and that if they want to
work in the newspaper or magazine industry they are just going to have to deal with the
bad that comes with the good. Although the majority of editors expressed satisfaction
with their jobs, the transcripts hint at a similar undercurrent of desperation and
resignation at the situation in the industry – editors cannot do much to change the
situation so they might as well put on a cheery front and not complain about a situation they cannot control.

Another point to consider is that the editors in this study chose to participate, so it stands to reason that those editors more enthusiastic about their work and new digital platforms are the ones that spent time filling out the written interview and sitting through the follow-up interview.

**Organizational management of industry changes**

For coding purposes, organizational management of industry changes was defined as any instance where participants mention the financial state of the industry, management’s handling of the new platforms or big-picture, interlocking problems within the industry (i.e., staffing, time issues, platforms, and economics). Any mention of staffing in this category is connected either to management or money issues. The sub-category in this theme is the presence of an organizationally integrated production process.

Financial concerns overshadow the issue of editors’ workloads and whether digital platforms will maintain a high level of content quality. All complications with the presence of multiple digital platforms seem to stem from tight budgets while, simultaneously, the digital platforms are used in pursuit of increased revenue and continued relevance. One copy desk chief at a major daily newspaper said

“It’s not the presence of various platforms that’s affecting quality. It’s the understaffing and the additional workload that is doing it. We need the multiple platforms, that’s our future, but because companies don’t have the money anymore to pay the staff to do the production work, the backend work, the editing and all of that, the quality has
gone down considerably, and it’s more to do with the economics and all of that than the actual presence of the different platforms.”

Without surplus budget to spare, newspaper and magazines are treading cautiously on an organizational level with new digital platforms; this contributes to the “Wild West” feel of the industry for editors today, according to a copyeditor at a daily paper. For example, a copy desk chief at a major daily paper said

“The whole management’s idea has been that this is kind of a one-year experiment to see how big of an impact it does have on which departments and along with reader feedback just kind of explore the medium.”

Management’s attitude towards new platforms impacts editors’ day-to-day jobs, as well.

An assistant managing editor at a major daily newspaper, for example, said

“We fail now and again but for every setback we move forward a couple of steps. I think when you’re starting with something small and new, if you have smart people attached to i, and the proper resources, the backing of management, which we all have here, very much, you can succeed and the success is not so short-term”

This editor went on to say that it’s a “classic management trap” to save your best minds for the old product, i.e. print. In the early days of the Internet, for example the “people devoted to the Web were people who might not have been doing well on the paper.”

Instead, management now needs to be proactive about putting their “best, smartest, most dedicated people to what’s new.”

Maybe publications have learned their lesson with the Web, as the participants said, and so management is doing a better job of putting their more talented staff members on mobile and tablet teams. This would explain why editors voiced more
positive than negative opinions about their jobs, the industry and their satisfaction levels often right after talking at length about the long hours, high stress and shortage in staffing.

**Integrated production process**

For the sake of coding, integrated production process was defined as any instance where participants discussed the workflow related to digital content and whether the editorial operations work together or are divided between platforms. The majority of editors who work in a more integrated work environment are more satisfied in their jobs than editors working in a non-integrated environment. A content editor at a major daily paper said

“I think we’ve been pretty smart about trying to move it to the front end so that it’s all part of a seamless work flow rather than repurposing where you start losing some efficiencies.”

An editor-in-chief at a consumer magazine also discussed why his publication decided to integrate print and digital production processes to the point where “the people who run our digital platforms are also involved with certain pages of the print product” as well:

“We decided to integrate digital and print even before mobile and print because we recognized that there has to be very specific reasons why you have a physical print product and there has to be very specific reasons evidenced in the content why you have a digital product. There has to be an obvious connection to readers and users and subscribers as to what those evidences are and what those advantages are in each case and how they relate to each other.”

Editors who work in an organization that keeps the print and digital production processes separate are not as satisfied with their jobs. A copy chief at a consumer magazine said
“Sometime in the future I would hope that the digital and print sides of the magazine would become more integrated. Our editorial department is pretty disconnected from the digital versions. There are people who work on the Web side who I haven’t met after working here for four months and that’s sort of been my experience with other magazines, too.”
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The analysis of data for emergent themes resulted in answers to each of the five research questions posed at the beginning of this paper. The answers are a compelling mix of positive and negative findings – a mixed bag of experiences from a variety of editors coming from different publications that handle new digital platforms differently. This is similar to the varied findings of Russial’s (1989) dissertation – he called his findings a “snapshot of a moving target” (p. 72).

That this snapshot of the current industry is a mixed bag of experiences fits right in with Sawchuk’s use-value thesis of labor process that was discussed in the literature review chapter of this paper. The thesis “sets the stage for a broader systemic understanding of the contradictory processes … that occur simultaneously in all workplaces under capitalism” (p. 593).

The first research question asked how editors’ roles are shifting to meet the demands of journalism publications that must constantly strive to attract readers and advertisers across multiple media. By the evidence presented in the findings of additional daily duties, some associated with traditional editing and others not so much, it is apparent that editors are wearing more hats now than ever before, often taking on duties and responsibilities they wouldn’t have in the past.
Whether or not additional work are related to traditional editing tasks, this accumulation of duties negatively impacts editors’ capacity to focus on content and the time they spend editing each story. Editors have to constantly think about what platform they are editing for and are constantly juggling different deadlines for the different platforms. An editor-in-chief at a consumer magazine described the issue this way:

“Everybody is thinking more and more about everything so in terms of processes and workload, it’s made it more complex and more elegant and interconnected but it’s also required triple focus and double the work and quadruple the cooperation and communication.”

Staffing has been a problem in the industry for quite some time; newspapers and magazines tightened their belts to get through the 2008 recession, which is why staffing appears as a component in almost every answer to the five research questions. Editors acutely feel the lack of staffing in their day-to-day jobs even more so because of the extra pressures of new digital platforms. A features copy desk chief at a daily newspaper said

“It is a stretch of resources. It’s kind of like we can’t devote as much as we want to mobile and we can’t devote as much as we want to the website.”

More than two decades ago, Russial (1989) noted the issue of integrating new technology in the newsroom without hiring the extra staff to manage it. He said that “As workload increases, the time editors have at their disposal to do individual tasks diminishes. Unless, of course, staffing is increased sufficiently to meet the new needs” (p. 251).

Overall, as evidenced by analysis of the qualitative data, editors’ duties seem to be expanding rather than shifting to non-traditional tasks – a deputy managing editor
actually said, “It’s more of an expansion rather than a change.” Editors are spending some time on nontraditional editing tasks, such as reformatting photos and uploading stories to the various platforms, but for the most part additional work is related to editing and includes writing different headlines for the various platforms, visualizing stories differently for tablet, and planning content specifically for mobile and tablet applications.

Many of the researchers cited in the literature review discussed the dangers of placing too heavy a burden on editors’ shoulder. For example Quinn (2004) said that the sped-up pace of journalism would cause reporters and editors, too busy to truly reflect on their tasks, to forego important editorial work like copyediting and fact checking. This observation may be accurate: On the written interview, one editor, when asked to describe what task he regularly needs more time for, responded with “thinking” and another editor said “thinking critically about a story’s content and structure.”

The second research question asked whether editors are spending less time on traditional editing tasks in the rush and stress of publishing across multiple platforms. The answer to this question is yes … and no. The additional steps needed to move content from platform to platform and the work needed to tweak headlines, tweak magazine content for the iPad’s dual vertical and horizontal layout, etc. are eating up time, that’s for sure. Everyone seems to be doing more work across the board and many editors complained about the mental multitasking that is a constant necessity because of the multiple digital platforms.

Editors’ lack of focus is another area where past researchers have raised concerns. As was cited in the literature review chapter of this paper, Sparkes (1991) says that
multitasking might jeopardize traditional editing skills and ideals, which are necessary ingredients of quality journalism.

Even though editors have more work to do, they do not seem to be relegating a large portion of their day to automated, brainless tasks, which is a main concern of labor process theory in regards to the effect of new technology in the workplace, but are rather actually doing much more editing. Although a lot of the extra work put on editors’ shoulders does make use of their traditional editing skills, not all of it does. A copy editor at a daily newspaper said there is less time to edit because some of her time is now relegated to general reformatting. She further pointed out that when uploading digital content to different platforms she doesn’t “fill out one form with a bunch of fields” but rather has to “go into the publication platform for each of these platforms.”

An inability to wholly concentrate on any single task because of increased work and shortages in staffing is what truly detracts from editing when multiple digital platforms are involved and not the migration of editors’ time to less intellectual, conceptual roles in the editing process. In 1989, Russial pointed out that if editors have the luxury of time “editing will be tighter, writing clearer, facts, grammar and spelling checked more thoroughly, headlines more accurate and inviting, related stories packaged better” (p. 252). So the issue here, once again, is not that editors’ craft is being taken away from them but rather that they simply don’t have the time they need to do their jobs as well as they would like.

The third research question asked how the publication of newspaper and magazine content across multiple media impacts editors’ job satisfaction and workload.
As was discussed in the answer to the last research question, there is more work for everyone in newspaper and magazine organizations – in the written interview, for example, every single participant said that the publication of content across multiple platforms makes their job slightly more difficult to extremely more difficult. However, most participants also indicated, both through their written interview responses and the follow-up conversations that, while challenging, the industry changes are also exciting. Participants are invigorated by the opportunity to contribute to a form of content distribution that might outlast the newspaper or magazine’s traditional print format.

This enthusiasm, however, must be considered in the light that these editors are aware of the do-or-die nature of the current industry in regards to mobile and tablet platforms. Because editors know that it is both absolutely necessary that their publications provide content across multiple platforms and that their organizations do not have the cash to hire additional staff members to shoulder the burden of extra work, there is a possibility that they are choosing to remain positive about the situation they cannot change.

One participant, a copyeditor at a daily newspaper, said that the current industry is both exciting and challenging because it has a new frontier feel to it – almost like being in the “Wild West.” Another participant, a copy desk chief at a daily newspaper, spoke of the mixture of enthusiasm and defeat he feels towards his job:

“We’re pushed to the limit, and I’ve always gotten great satisfaction out of being pushed to the limit. You know you want to be tested and you want to be pushed and there’s nothing a newsperson likes more than breaking news that gets the adrenaline flowing and all that. So that keeps me satisfied when that happens from time to time. The
satisfaction wears thin when something big happens and we don’t have the resources to cover it and to deal with it in a way that we should.”

Similar to every other answer in this section, it’s a mixture of yes and no, of good and bad.

The fourth research question asked whether editors are spending any time and energy repurposing content for each publication instead of simply shoveling material into all platforms at once. Participants in this study indicated that they mostly do minor repurposing of content for different platforms but also occasionally do anything and everything from writing SEO headlines and including more photos for the Web, making content more “bitsy” for mobile, redesigning content to work with the dual horizontal and vertical layout of the iPad, to completely rethinking the way readers use and interact with each platform. Newspapers and magazines are respecting the different platforms and even though they don’t usually completely transform content for different platforms, they are putting at least some thought into their digital platform strategy.

For example, an editor-in-chief at a consumer magazine said that about 75 percent of the magazine’s mobile and tablet content is repurposed and “enhanced content from our print and digital applications” and about a quarter of the mobile and tablet content is new and created just for tablet and mobile. Another participant, a copy desk chief at a daily newspaper, said that almost 100 percent of the paper’s content at least gets tweaked for digital platforms:

“We spend a considerable amount of time just making minor changes but I’d say nearly every story that gets used in multiple places has to be touched for each.”
In the case of this research question, there did seem to be a divide between what newspapers and magazines are doing with their digital content. Newspapers seem to be more involved with vetting content for online and mobile and are, for the most part, just getting started with the tablet. Newspaper editors, in tweaking content, are concerned with accurately portraying information no matter what the platform – they want readers to get a firm grasp on the contents of the story whether they are reading a headline in the paper or on a mobile phone. Magazines, in comparison, while still concerned with accuracy, seem to be more involved with the tablet. They want the tablet to be a new, satisfying reading experience that takes advantage of all the functionality and aesthetic capability of the device.

The final research question asked how editors feel that publication across multiple platforms is impacting the quality of the content they produce. Most participants indicated that they thought their content was either better or the same after adding mobile and tablet content to their publications. This is an interesting opinion considering all the extra work and pressures from staffing shortages and the time crunch that editors experience. According to editors who participated in this study, one of the reasons why their content is improved with the expansion of publication to new digital platforms is because multiple platforms allow more readers to access more material and allow for new, innovative ways of storytelling.

Regardless of the pressures on newspaper and magazine staff members, editors indicated that everyone is pulling the extra weight needed to avoid letting the quality slip. For example, a deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine said she thinks her
publication’s quality is “still very high” but only because of the “sheer determination” of staff members:

“We don’t want to lose that quality in adding a digital issue and we have hired contemporary employees who are helping especially with design and also copyediting to ensure that we don’t lose quality because that’s something that is a huge concern for us.”

As another example, a national content editor at a daily newspaper said that content quality is what will “make or break the paper.” He said

“If we maintain the quality standards, no matter how we present it on a platform, that’s going to be the ticket. And we feel that we have more room to show off the quality of our content on tablet than on mobile.”

Regardless of editors’ opinion that content is not suffering much, some indication of a decrease in content quality did show up in the interview transcripts. For one, the standards of digital platforms seem to be less exacting than the standards for print products. One editor, a copy desk chief at a daily newspaper, went so far as to say that the “manager of our paper doesn’t believe it’s as important to edit what’s online as it is to edit what’s in the paper.” Another editor said that readers don’t seem to care as much about spelling, punctuation, and grammar when they are reading content online or on their mobile phones.

It is interesting to note that these changing editorial standards don’t really apply to tablet content. Magazines, in particular, are taking great care with their iPad content and want it to not only be aesthetically beautiful but also to be an enjoyable, rewarding experience for their readers.
It is clear that a separate study tracking the changes in content quality with the addition of new platforms is necessary to determine whether the editors are correct in thinking that the platforms do not negatively impact content.

**Organizational change theory**

Theories of episodic and continuous change were outlined in the literature review chapter of this paper. Based on the analysis of the data, both newspapers and magazines operate under continuous change, which operates in an unfreeze-rebalance-refreeze pattern (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Both publication types are experimenting with the different digital platforms and are constantly trying to think ahead to the next strategic step. As content delivery platforms and the technology associated with them are developed at a more rapid pace, newspapers and magazines have to continually tweak and reposition their publication – long gone are the days when a new platform would come out every few decades. To highlight the continuously changing atmosphere of newspapers and magazines, an editor-in-chief at a consumer magazine said his publication has “figured out a lot of it,” but the magazine has to keep figuring things out, which is a process that is never truly complete. He uses the early automobile as an example:

“If in the early days of the automobile you figured out how to make sure that there was always somebody in front of the car to turn the crank and you thought, ‘Well that’s all you need to know about starting a car,’ you would kind have been fooled since pretty soon people would put keys in the drive shaft and turn it that way. So we don’t assume that how everything works today is how it’s going to work tomorrow or a year from now.”
Weick and Quinn’s (1999) theoretical definition of “change” includes the alteration of workers’ skills set and knowledge. Although editors are still spending a lot of their time applying their traditional editing skills to new digital platforms, they are also learning new skills such as writing appropriate headlines for mobile, designing content for the iPad, and planning content that maximizes the functionality of each platform. This research outcome – that editors are working under an environment of continuous change – agrees with Scolari’s (2009) study that finds that the workforce is constantly being re-skilled and it is rare for a worker to learn one skill and utilize that skill for the duration of their career.

Part of the introduction and literature review of this paper discussed the forces motivating newspapers and magazines to provide content across multiple platforms – past researchers have stated concerns that media managers force all this work on the staff purely in pursuit of higher profits. For example, Fengler and Ruß-Mohl (2008) discuss the trend of “MBAs in the newsroom” and many media manager’s market-based approach as a negative development in the industry. While an in-depth look at the motivations behind the publication of digital content is beyond the bounds of this study, it is interesting to note that not a single editor blamed management in a negative way for all the extra work. In fact, as previously mentioned, most editors had a “do or die” attitude about tablet and mobile content – if publications want to survive, they must offer content on digital platforms. In other words, any organizational changes for the sake of digital platforms are completed more for a desire to survive as a source of information than for
higher profits alone, although the two issues – survival and economics – are truly intertwined.

**Labor process theory**

As discussed in the literature review section of this paper, the main points of Braverman’s labor process theory in regards to the introduction of technology in the workplace are the separation and execution of the work process, greater productivity as a result of technology, and the deskilling of work (Braverman, 1974; Örnebring, 2010).

Although editors are most certainly dealing with an increase in work and responsibilities – a change brought about by the introduction of mobile and tablet technology into the production processes of newsroom and magazine operations – most editors are at least somewhat excited by the industry’s changing environment. The conception and execution of labor does not appear to be any more separated than it has been in newsroom and magazine offices since the invention of the typewriter.

Editors still spend the majority of their time on traditional editing tasks; the problem is not that they have abandoned editing but rather that they have too much editing to do. Further supporting this point are the charts in the previous chapter that show how creative, varied in scope, challenging, complex, analytical, mechanical, and routine editors rate their jobs. This suggests that although editors are taking on more work than ever before in dealing with the new digital platforms, they are not routinely completing more automated tasks. The new platforms instead make editors unable to focus on one single task at a time because they are in a constant whirlwind of activity that includes both traditional editing tasks and more automated tasks, such as reformatting.
photos, posting stories on various platforms and moving content from different platforms’ content management systems.

Another layer of labor process theory is management’s control over workers. While this aspect of the theory was not a major part of the study, indications of tension between editors and managers exist in the data from one publication, where the editor said, “The management doesn’t believe it’s as important to edit for online as for print.”

Control, however, doesn’t have to come from management – there are other ways editors feel a lack of control in their work. For one, some editors feel a lack of control when it comes to viewing their work before publication because of the shortages of iPads or smart phones in newsrooms. As an example, an assistant managing editor at a daily paper said that the staff does not have the most up-to-date technology like iPads or smart phones because the paper cannot afford it and because technology simply moves too quickly.

Apple’s design and distribution mandates for the iPad also make editors feel a lack of control. For example, a deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine said

“There are also some issues with the Apple store. Like we wanted to have a lower price point and some other options and, at least initially, we haven’t been able to do that. And so a lot of readers aren’t super happy with the idea of ‘well, I’m already subscribing and now I have to pay another $4.99 to get the digital editions.’ And I think we’re going to see a change on that in the near future, that Apple’s going to be open to where subscribers can get a discounted rate for an iPad subscription.”

Overall, the publication of content on mobile and tablet platforms fits only one of the four main points of labor process theory. Editors are more productive – not because
technology makes the process smoother but because they have to be more productive to publish material on so many platforms. The conception and execution of work still largely rests with editors who are learning to apply their traditional editing skills to new platforms – like Russial (1989) found, editors are re-skilling rather than deskilling.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Through 11 written interviews followed by 11 in-depth semi-structured interviews and a qualitative analysis of the resulting transcripts, this study answered the following research questions:

RQ1: As journalism publications must meet more and more demands to continue attracting readers and advertisers across multiple media, how are editors’ roles shifting to meet those demands?

RQ2: Are editors spending less time on traditional editing tasks in the rush and stress of publishing across multiple media?

RQ3: How is publication across multiple media effecting editors’ job satisfaction and workload?

RQ4: Are editors spending any time and energy repurposing content for each platform or are they simply shoveling material into all platforms at once?

RQ5: How do editors feel that publication across multiple media is affecting the quality of the content they produce?

Based on analysis of the qualitative data, the answers to these questions are complex. Newspapers and magazines are expanding ways readers can access content, both in an effort to gain and hold more readers and also in order to stay relevant in today’s high-tech world. Extra platforms mean extra work – often this extra work is an expansion of editorial duties, but editors are spending some of their time on tasks they would not have
done before, such as reformatting photos for various platforms.

Although staffing seems to be a bigger issue in the newspaper industry, magazine managers are not yet willing to hire extra staff to manage the iPad or tablet content before they know how readers want to experience magazines on the iPad, how profitable the iPad content will be and where the iPad will lead the industry in the future.

Publications’ unwillingness to hire extra staff before they know more about the new platforms can be explained using Weick and Quinn’s (1999) continuous change model that says that change occurs in three steps of freeze, rebalance and refreeze. As discussed in the literature review, a continuous change model is “used to group together organizational changes that tend to be ongoing, evolving and cumulative” (Weick & Quinn, 1999). It can be argued that the industry has been unfrozen by the debut of mobile and tablet platforms but has not yet found its balance in the new digital landscape.

The lack of extra cash on the part of newspapers and the exploratory approach magazines are taking with the iPad means that all this work, once again, lands on editors’ shoulders. The staffing shortages contribute to editors’ lack of mental focus and overall time to complete tasks. Even though their jobs are harder than ever and they are expected to do more than ever before, editors, for the most part, remain satisfied on the surface, at least, about their jobs and the instrumental role they might play in delivering the newspaper and magazine industries into the next era of information distribution.

Some concern was expressed about small dips in content quality but editors feel that through their staff’s dedication and hard work, the quality level of the content will be maintained in the future. Furthermore, participants argued that multiple-platform
publishing expands their readership and allows for enhanced ways of storytelling. I
believe, however, that a separate study of how platforms have impacted content quality is
imperative to measure the truth in editors’ statements about maintaining quality.

This study was designed as a replication of Russial’s 1989 dissertation research
on pagination’s effect on the newsroom, so it is appropriate to compare the two:

**TABLE XVI: Comparison between Russial (1989) and Rapp (2011)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology studied:</th>
<th>Russial 1989</th>
<th>Rapp 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pagination</td>
<td>Mobile and tablet applications</td>
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<tr>
<th>Technology impacted:</th>
<th>Russial 1989</th>
<th>Rapp 2011</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newsroom organization and management</td>
<td>Editors’ duties and responsibilities as well as their daily workload</td>
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<tr>
<th>Concerned with:</th>
<th>Russial 1989</th>
<th>Rapp 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether pagination is decreasing the time editors have for traditional editing tasks, is impacting editors’ workloads, slowing editors down and restricting creativity; pagination’s impact on editorial quality and working conditions; the subsequent impact on content quality</td>
<td>How editors roles are shifting; whether mobile and tablet applications are decreasing the time editors have for traditional editing tasks, are impacting job satisfaction and workload, and how editors feel the changes are impacting content quality; whether editors spend time repurposing material for separate platforms</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Theory used:</th>
<th>Russial 1989</th>
<th>Rapp 2011</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Conclusions:</th>
<th>Russial 1989</th>
<th>Rapp 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Pagination degrades editorial labor insofar as editors, whose jobs were largely professional, are required to take on more composition tasks, most notable electronic paste-up. It doesn’t deskill in the sense of expropriating one’s skills, but it may “deprofessionalize” editors to the extent that they must forgo editing – the exercise of some of their more highly developed professional skills – to do electronic paste-up. In this sense, pagination represents a “reskilling” at the same time it represents deprofessionalization” (p. 260).</td>
<td>Editors are not being deprofessionalized by mobile and tablet technology because they are causing an expansion of editors’ traditional editing tasks – technological job enlargement (Russial, 1989) – rather than a major shift to automated work. Editors are re-skilling because they are learning ways to adapt traditional editing skills to new platforms. Although editors spend some time on mundane tasks like reformatting photos, most issues with editors’ job satisfaction and workload are caused by having too much editing to do rather than a full-scale abandonment of traditional editing tasks.</td>
<td></td>
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Limitations

This study did contain some flaws. Because the publication of newspaper and magazine content on mobile and tablet platforms is a relatively new trend in the print journalism industry, neither newspapers nor magazines have a standardized way of handling content, which means that editors from different publications are oftentimes coming from completely different viewpoints about the issues at hand. Furthermore, a lack of industry standard for digital content made it unclear what editorial position at newspapers or magazines would provide the best insight into the questions asked.

Another limitation is my age and experience level. As a scholar who went straight from undergraduate to graduate school I am lacking in any serious professional editing experience, which would have led me to ask better questions and to have a completely different point-of-view of the research questions and of the current industry conditions facing editors than a researcher with more experience in the field. This study, however, gives me valuable authority on the current industry as I launch my career.

And finally, the lack of face-to-face interviews means that I was unable to pick up on visual clues editors might have been sending about their opinions on the current industry and their level of job satisfaction. Although it could be considered a limitation that 8 of the 11 interviews were with editors working on the coasts, it is important to note that the data from coastal editors was comparable to the data from editors working in the Midwest.

For all its flaws, this study provides a valuable snapshot of the industry at the present time and hints at issues and topics needing further exploration. Future research
could include a quantitative-based comparative study of publication quality before and after the implementation of tablet and mobile content delivery systems. As a supplement to this study, researchers also need to understand how social media is changing editorial work. It would also be interesting to do an in-depth case study of a single publication and explore how the changes in the industry impact staff members at all levels of the organization.

By contributing an understanding of how the added responsibility of publishing content on additional platforms has transformed and continues to transform editors’ day-to-day work and impacts the time editors spend on traditional editing duties, researchers now have a valuable starting place to not only understand how print journalism is evolving but also to hypothesize about any new media effect problems that need examining. Because journalism is a vital part of a functioning democracy, it is imperative that researchers and practitioners understand the ways new technology aids or impairs journalists in their pursuit of traditional editing tasks.

This study is also a valuable addition to the canon of labor process theory research. New technology is often heralded as a step forward for civilization but technology can also have hugely negative implications for workers. For example, mobile and tablet technologies make it possible for more readers to access content than through print and the Web alone but the same mobile technology can also blur the line between work and relaxation time for editors who can access their publications’ content and database at any time.
In 1989, Russial found that the introduction of pagination, then a new technology, into the newsroom caused journalists to “deprofessionalize” and re-skill because of less time spent on editing tasks. This study shows that, while editors are not becoming any less professional in their work with mobile and tablet content, they are continually re-skilling – learning new skills and learning how to make use of their old skills – in order to best present content on digital platforms and capture the imagination of the modern reader.

The editors included in this study still use their traditional editing skills although they are now fitting much more editing into one day than ever before and are not abandoning these skills in lieu of more mechanized, brainless tasks. This is why editors’ job situation in regards to digital platforms fits with Russial’s (1989) conception of “technological job enlargement,” where editors experience both positive and negative impacts of new technology in their work. Although the outcome of this study is slightly different from what Russial (1989) found more than two decades ago, it is important to recognize these findings in order to ensure that editors, the gatekeepers of quality and integrity for their publications, continue to be valuable members of their publications and continue to have working conditions that allow them to do their jobs well.
Appendix I: Introductory letter

Dear ________,

My name is Stephanie Rapp and I am a journalism graduate student at the University of Missouri-Columbia and am currently in the process of setting up my thesis. My research involves how the publication of newspaper and magazine content across multiple platforms (print, web, mobile and/or tablet) is affecting editors in terms of workload, job satisfaction, time spent on traditional editing tasks and what effect, if any, all of this is having on the quality of content produced. This study is essentially a replication of research completed by John Russial in 1989 on the effect of pagination on newsroom workers.

I am contacting you because I am interested in including you as a subject in this study. This would include filling out a short written interview (less than ten minutes) and then setting up a follow-up interview lasting about 30 minutes. This would not be taking place until late May or June and could be scheduled at whatever time is most convenient for you. In the thesis, your identity will be confidential and you will be referred to only by your job title and the size and type of publication you work for.

Please let me know whether this is something you would be willing to do. If not, or if you do not think you are the proper person at _________ (FILL-IN PUBLICATION) to participate in this research, it would be greatly appreciated if you could recommend someone else to contact.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have about the project.

Thank you for your time,

Stephanie Rapp
314-606-8345
Appendix II: Written interview instrument

1. Background
   a. Age
   b. Sex
   c. Years of newspaper/magazine experience
   d. Current newsroom job/desk
   e. Previous related newspaper/magazine jobs: (write in)

2. How much experience do you, personally, have with publishing content on mobile or tablet applications?
   a. None
   b. Less than 6 months
   c. 6 months to a year
   d. one to two years
   e. more than two years

3. How often do you perform the following tasks?
   a. Assign stories to reporters/writers
      i. Never
      ii. Sometimes
      iii. Regularly
   b. Discuss stories with reporters/writers
      i. Never
      ii. Sometimes
      iii. Regularly
   c. Discuss stories with other editors
      i. Never
      ii. Sometimes
      iii. Regularly
   d. Read stories
      i. Never
      ii. Sometimes
      iii. Regularly
   e. Copyedit stories
      i. Never
      ii. Sometimes
      iii. Regularly
   f. Write headlines
      i. Never
      ii. Sometimes
      iii. Regularly
   g. Write captions
      i. Never
ii. Sometimes
iii. Regularly

h. Consider platform when writing headlines
   i. Never
   ii. Sometimes
   iii. Regularly

i. Proofread stories
   i. Never
   ii. Sometimes
   iii. Regularly

j. Other ______________

4. How much time do you spend daily on issues related to publishing content on mobile and/or tablet applications?
   a. None
   b. 1 hour or less
   c. 1-2 hours
   d. 2-4 hours
   e. 4-8 hours

5. On the whole, how has the publication of content across multiple platforms affected your job’s difficulty level?
   a. 1 (much easier)
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4
   e. 5 (much more difficult)
   f. N/A

6. In general, do you feel you have enough time to do your job well? Please circle the number
   a. 1 (never)
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4
   e. 5 (always)

7. Which specific tasks do you feel you need more time to do well? __________ (write-in answers)

8. Based on the following scale, to what degree do you find your job
   a. Creative
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
b. Varied in scope
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

c. Challenging
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

d. Complex
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

e. Analytical
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

f. Difficult
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

g. Mechanical
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

h. Routine
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
v. 5 (very much)
i. Boring
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)
j. People-oriented
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)
k. Production-oriented
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

9. How important are the following considerations to you?
   a. Pay
      i. 1 (not too important)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
      iv. 4
      v. 5 (very important)
   b. Other benefits
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
      iv. 4
      v. 5 (very much)
   c. Job security
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
      iv. 4
      v. 5 (very much)
   d. Chance for advancement
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
      iv. 4
v. 5 (very much)
e. Degree of autonomy
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)
f. Variety in tasks
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)
g. Opportunity to be creative
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)
h. Working conditions
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very much)

10. To what degree are the following problems in your job?
   a. Lack of time and deadline pressures
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
      iv. 4
      v. 5 (very)
   b. Computer problems
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
      iv. 4
      v. 5 (very)
   c. Stress
      i. 1 (not at all)
      ii. 2
      iii. 3
d. Incomplete or poorly edited copy
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very)

e. Insufficient staffing
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very)

f. Missed deadlines by others
   i. 1 (not at all)
   ii. 2
   iii. 3
   iv. 4
   v. 5 (very)

11. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your current job? Please circle the number.
   a. 1 (not at all)
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4
   e. 5 (very)

12. If you had the chance to start over, would you pursue the same type of work?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know
Appendix III: Semi-structured interview questions

Semi-structured interview questions

1. What has been your experience with publishing content on mobile and/or tablet?
2. What processes do you go through to publish content on mobile and/or tablet?
3. What do you feel are the advantages in publishing across multiple platforms?
4. What do you feel are the disadvantages in publishing across multiple platforms?
5. Does publication across multiple platforms cause any extra deadline stress or pressure? If so, how?
6. Overall, how do you feel that publication across multiple platforms is impacting your publication’s content quality?
7. Do you spend any time repurposing stories for specific devices, i.e., for online, mobile and tablet, or do you just copy the same text, headline, etc. to each platform?
8. Has publication across multiple platforms increased or decreased the time you have for other tasks?
   a. Are you spending more or less time on any particular task?
9. Has editorial workload increased or decreased as a result of publication across multiple platforms? How, and where?
10. Compared to a few years ago, how has your job changed in terms of workload and the time you spend on traditional editing tasks?
11. Have there been changes in the way work is organized?
12. How satisfied are you with your job now that your publication is offering content on mobile and/or tablet devices?
   a. What has been the impact on your job load?

Secondary

1. Has publication across multiple formats affected your job in official terms, e.g., a new job title? A new job description? Other?
2. About what percentage of your workday do you spend on issues dealing with your mobile/tablet application?
3. What do you like about your job? What do you dislike about it?
4. Do you feel that you have control over your job? Why or why not?
5. In general, how satisfied are you with the system in place for publishing across multiple platforms?
Appendix IV: Interview data (Features copy desk chief at a newspaper)

**What has been your experience with publishing content on mobile and/or tablet?**

On the written interview you said you tag stories with keywords, write different headlines and use CMS. Can you go into more detail?

Mainly we’ve been ramping it up a little bit in the past few months. We don’t get to see what it looks like on a tablet and we can see what it looks like on mobile … what we do is we take a look at what it looks like and maybe add a photo to it. The goal of the newsroom is to get something up at least once an hour, and that means every day, even Sundays, even on nights, up until about midnight. So when it comes to me it is mainly just keywording and making sure the pictures are hooked up right and, you know, someone will get on their phone and we see how it looks for mobile. There’s about four tablets in the newsroom and you can get one to look at for awhile, you can borrow it from whoever’s got it but you can’t have it all the time. But for the most part, we’re really just doing the front-end production of it and the people who do the programming and the managers all take care of what it ends up ….

**And then, what do you feel are the advantages of publishing on mobile and tablet for your paper?**

Well we’ve heard there are certain times of the day where people are on their computers all the time, especially in the evening. And then there are certain times during the day where the computer usage goes down, and people get on the mobile and tablet and that tends to be later in the afternoon. For the most part, for our paper, the computer usage takes a big, it just drops off a cliff after six usually and on the weekends and the mobile and tablet seem to be a good compliment to that, that’s where people are going at that time and so we’ve paid more attention to what’s going on during the day on the weekends.

**Okay, that’s really interesting. What do you feel, on the flipside, are the disadvantages to publishing on all these different platforms instead of just on the print paper or online?**

Well I’d say we’re kind of strained for resources as are most as are most papers are, you know, with having to put out a paper, whereas the newer places don’t have to worry about that. So, it is a stretch of resources. It’s kind of like we can’t devote as much as we want to mobile, we can’t devote as much as we want to the website. We’re a little bit straddled with what the old stuff to do is. So I think the other disadvantage is that we don’t always have the technology to see exactly what it looks like. Most people have a phone, but when it comes to iPad or whatever tablet we’re talking about, you don’t get a chance to take a good look at it – you’re second guessing about what it looks like.

**So then do you feel like you have less control then over what you’re putting out there on those platforms then since you can’t even really look at it?**

Well, I think it’s more of a leap of faith. Someone is deciding what it looks like for us and we’re just told, you know, here is what the keywords are, are the pictures the
right size and it is nice to have that validation, you know on the computer or on the newspaper, exactly what something looks like. So you’re jumping out there, it can be a disadvantage if you really want to see what it looks like. Or if you want to tweak it or if there’s a mistake. You don’t really get that feedback right away.

That makes sense. And then, on the written interview you said that publication of content across multiple platforms makes you job slightly more difficult. I’m just wondering how, like, exactly, it’s making it more difficult. Like, for example, does it cause any extra deadline stress or pressure, or anything like that?

It can. I guess the deadline pressure for mobile and stuff is often constant whereas you can predict the deadline pressure for the newspaper. It’s pretty cyclical, it’s always the same thing. So I’d say if all things are equal no one’s on vacation, which is about half the time, maybe, you don’t feel a lot of pressure, it’s not too bad but it is a little difficult for some people to get into that habit of doing two things at once and multitasking – working on reading stories for the paper, then all of a sudden having to switch to a story we’ve got to get up online, here’s a picture we’ve got to get online. I guess that’s probably where the adjustment and makes the job slightly harder is. You’ve got to get used to doing two or three things at once.

And I know I came across research that said a lot of journalists are struggling with the fact that they’re having to put stuff on there on, like, a 24-hour news cycle now. Is that also what you’ve found?

It is, it is. We don’t do quite 24 hours at the paper but I’d say about midnight to five there is no one there. That’s about the only time there is no one there. But people can get on from home if there is a big, a big, event, or if they have to, but I’d say that it is a struggle. I’m a manager and I do the scheduling for copyeditors and I have to find someone to handle that stuff on Sunday afternoons, for instance, Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. As typically we would not have any copyeditors working – they would only be working Sunday nights when we’re just putting out a paper. So that’s where it can be tough. I have to give that shift to someone and it takes away from where it could help, really, during the week or where it could help on weeknight or something like that where we need more people.

Okay. And then overall how do you feel that publication over multiple platforms is impacting your publication’s content quality? I mean, is it having a positive impact, a negative impact, or no impact at all and how so?

Well, if you look at it from the quality of copyediting, I’ll say that first, it’s not good. The standards are different for the Internet and it’ll creep into the actual standards for the newspaper once in awhile because you’re just too swamped to really put your mind on editing stuff for the paper. From the quality of the content, I think it actually adds a little bit to the breadth of coverage than just paper’s do. I think they wouldn’t cover things or they wouldn’t be, they wouldn’t get things up fast, if it weren’t for mobile or whatever platform you’re talking about. There’d be a little bit more deliberation on what’s, there still is deliberation about what’s goes in the paper and there’s less
deliberation about what goes online. So, I think reporters are willing to cover more, they’re willing to get things up fast where you might not have considered it news a few years ago. They might have just put it in their notebook and saved it for another day. So, and then there’s also stuff we would have never done in the paper, you know, just as an example off the top of my head, we do little quizzes, which the graphics department puts out which are very popular. There’s photo galleries which are very popular to online people but there’s no space for it in the paper. So I think it does give us a little more breadth, even though when it comes to actual editing, the editing is much more lax when it comes to online stuff.

Right. Is that because of a lack in staffing for that with you all having to do more work because of these platforms you’re publishing on?

It is probably like this at a lot of papers. There’s a process for editing a story in a paper where it goes through assigning editor, a copyeditor and the slot editor and it’s in the paper. For online it’s, I would say it’s more out of what people do as the way things should be online is that it just has to go up first and then if you get time to edit it, you can edit it. So I would say that the newsroom, while there is not a lot of staff and you couldn’t set up staff to handle everything that’s online, I would say that the manager of the paper doesn’t believe it’s as important to edit what’s online as it is to edit what’s in the paper.

Okay, and then do you or other editors at the paper, do you spend time repurposing stories for specific devices. For example, do you change headlines for online, mobile or tablet or do you just copy the same text and everything to each platform?

The text is usually the same and there are changes in headlines. Usually what’s in the paper, it depends, if it’s just straight news usually the headline’s going to be fine online. I work in the features section mainly and most of the stuff that’s in features, the headlines in the paper, are just not going to read right online. I don’t know a lot about SEO, we aren’t taught a lot about it but we know enough to say that, you know, you wouldn’t click on this story with this headline the way it is in the paper. You’ve got to change it for mobile and for online. Mainly one of my main jobs is for online making sure that things read online. The tablet is a little bit newer and there’s really only a few people in the newsroom that mess around with that right now.

Okay, that’s interesting. Has publication across multiple platforms increased or decreased the time you have for other tasks overall? Like, when I say other tasks I mean more traditional editing tasks like copyediting and everything like that.

It’s decreased it. It really hasn’t totally, totally pushed it off to the side. I’d say whereas three or four years ago my job was a hundred percent newspaper editing, it’s probably half that now. And the rest is making sure everything looks right for online and there’s, some of it’s processing pictures and things like that, so that’s definitely taken away from what are considered traditional editing duties now. Some things that go online and they do cross-publish where they’ll take from a blog online and boil it down and put it in the paper. And in that case, it’s not for me personally, but for the news side of operations that would probably help. That would probably save them some time. Once
they decide this is what we’re going to put in the paper, all they’re doing is pulling it off a blog and boiling it down and sticking it in the paper.

Is there any particular editing task that you think is being shortchanged due to all of this?

I just think, you know I think headline writing still has to be as strong, has to be a strong point of this. So I think headline writing is fine. I think general editing for grammar and spelling – there’s less time for it. Personally I just feel it’s harder to concentrate on a story than it used to be. You know, you’re reading a story but then you’re thinking should I be checking something online or, you know, what is this story going to look like online, what pictures am I going to use. I would say spelling and grammar, and I think that’s reflected about what people say about what goes online and readers or commenters on stories they often like to point out the mistakes online and so I think it’s reflected in the way they look online. There’s less time for editing and spelling. Like I said I think that it’s just not as big a deal on the internet or on mobile for people who read the Internet or read on mobile, for most people it’s just not that big a deal. Whereas it used to be a big deal in newspaper, it’s not a big deal online.

And has editorial workload increased or decreased as the result of publication across multiple platforms. I know you said your job is more half doing the traditional editing stuff but I’m just wondering if you can elaborate on that a bit.

It feels like it’s increased. I guess what I would say is that in the old days, you know, which means five years ago, we would be editing for the paper and half your shift would be at normal speed and then the last two hours would be breakneck speed where you review and read over the proofs. I think now the work is more spread out over your whole shift. It’s more like eight hours of constant speed with little bursts every now and then. You’re not just reading for the paper you’re always thinking about what’s online or in certain cases you’re assigned to check this page or check these comments or whatever. So it’s spread out over the eight hours. It feels like it’s more, it probably is more work than it used to be. But it might be the same amount and just before you had a little mental break there once in awhile, this way it feels like you’re under constant pressure and there’s a lot more. We’ll say one thing about online, there is a lot more a lot more emphasis placed on individual interest. When it was just the newspaper you were assigned a story, you read it, you move on to the next one. Online you can get as involved as you want, you can get your hands into as many things as you want, probably because the depth of the content is much broader, if you wanted to edit things you can jump into all sorts of pages and find things to edit. So, if your level of interest is high for online its gonna, you’re going to feel like it’s more work.

Right. Okay. And have there been changes in the way work is organized at your paper due to publication on tablets and mobile?

Yeah, there’s been a gradual I guess accumulation of duties. Like I work during the day and what happens is it used to be only features copyediting during the day, there was nothing else to do. Over the years since about 2006, 2007, just little duties have been
added here and there because they know that online readership is high during the day, it’s not high at night so they don’t need a whole lot of extra help at night. Yet work was restructured to add little jobs here and there. For instance they start putting out a business newsletter and the features copyeditors do it because the features copyeditors were there during the day and in the morning. They didn’t have any business copyeditors there during the day. And when it comes to online, you know some other jobs, there’s other newsletters, there’s monitoring of comments that are spread around a little bit. People are assigned to do that. So yeah, what is a normal, nine to five during the day just read features copyediting job, over the years has gradually accumulated online duties. The newsroom has sort of struggled about big picture ideas about structure, they want everyone to be involved online but it’s hard to get big organizations to move from all newspaper to straight news online newspaper. Certain people have moved to that but the big structure newsroom has not dramatically changed other than the fact that, separate from online, it’s gotten a lot smaller. I would say people are more nimble and the newsroom structure is more nimble but it’s a lot smaller. But when it comes to big picture newsroom structure there’s not a big wholesale changes because of online and mobile.

**Okay, and how satisfied to you feel with you job with all these changes taking place. How has it made you more or less satisfied and how so?**

For me it’s a little more satisfying. You do feel some days your brain’s kind of scrambled but it’s clear that you have to have some sort of skills online if you want to survive in a newspaper. The newspaper may survive but I don’t, we don’t know, but it’s not going to be that much longer, I don’t think, just as a newspaper. So you have to have something for the future and there are a lot of people who are more interested about what’s online than on what’s in a newspaper anymore. Even people that worked in a newspaper 20 years or so, just by habit of having computers themselves at home they get a lot of their news from the *New York Times* or, I look at ESPN.com a lot, so I think they feel a little bit more satisfied in that they’ve gotten opportunities using those skills whereas in an older, more hierarchical structure of a newspaper, they would have just stuck you in the same job for a long time, and you’d be there, you know. It might not be that great but you’d be doing okay making money, but you wouldn’t have a lot of chance to branch out and when it comes to online because there is a lot of a lot of emphasis put on individual, you know, individual interests, individual achievement, I would say at least for most people, it’s made their jobs a little more interesting by giving them some involvement in subject matter, or, you know, pages that they wouldn’t have had a chance to be involved in before.

**Right. This is my last question. Has publication across multiple formats affected your job in official terms at all like a new job title or a new job description?**

Well no my job title hasn’t really changed except for moving from a nighttime position to a daytime position. So titles aren’t really that big a deal until you get to the very top. So I’d say for titles they haven’t really changed. Now when it comes to descriptions, we’ve done, or I did, write new job descriptions. It was probably a year ago, it was soon after the union agreed to a new contract and people wanted the management
above me wanted a description of what individual job titles were. So I came up with some descriptions of … it was changed from just being newspaper copyeditors to producing copy for online and being occasional fill-in newsletter news editor for online, formatting photos for online, which a copyeditor would never format photos for a paper. So I would say it’s made the newspaper rethink the job description of a copyeditor and the job description of a news page designer and I don’t know about reporters specifically but, for titles, no, I think for job descriptions, yeah, those have changed.
Appendix V: Interview data (Content editor at a newspaper)

You said on the written interview that the publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job much more difficult. I was just wondering if you could possibly elaborate on that.

Let’s see. In a couple of ways. For one with the system that we have now we’ve only had it for a few months. It seems like there’s just a lot of lot of clicking to do rather than doing what we used to do as content editors, you know, worry about the content of the story. Now we are very heavily involved in directing stories to the right space on the Internet. It’s just continuous. I feel like it seems to me that half my job now is just clicking and directing rather than actual working with reporters.

Okay. That’s really interesting. Are there any other ways it makes your job more difficult?

This has been going on for years – you’ve probably heard it from other people that there is a rush and a need from the multimedia people, you know, to be first, to be online to be online. You know we’re so used to, you know, wanting to make sure that it is accurate and make sure that it’s good, so that’s a real tug of war.

Okay. And now that your paper publishes content on more than just the print and Internet platforms, how is that changing editorial work overall at your paper? I know you said that you spend more time clicking buttons but can you elaborate on that a little more or are there any other ways it has changed editorial work?

Let’s see here. I’m not sure if this answers your question but as an example we have done away with a lot of copy editors so it has now come on to the content editors to write headlines and to write captions and to put stories online. So that is part of it. That’s a negative side to it of course and you know, fewer people to eyeball it. On the bright side it’s exciting and interesting to, you know, put a story online and get some thousands of clicks and know that it is being picked up immediately. The other thing that is a mixed bag has to do with public comments on stories. And you know, it’s interesting to put a story out there and see how quickly conversation about that story digresses. So people are pointing fingers at others or turning it into a political debate or a debate about race or whatever rather than actually commenting on the story itself.

Yeah, I’ve actually heard that from a few other people I’ve interviewed so that’s really interesting. How has your day-to-day work personally changed with advances in technology at the workplace?

It’s made the day much longer. You know there are plusses and minuses. Okay, well, take the blackberry for example. With that now, you know, reachable 24 hour thing anybody can call the cell phones and anybody can email. And while it’s good as an editor – I love to be able to get a hold of my reporters, when I started out as a reporter we had to find pay phones to call into the office. On the other hand it means you can (emphasis) work 24 hours a day and that, you know, one day can easily begin at eight-thirty and not end until, you know, ten-thirty, eleven o’ clock at night.
Okay. And compared to a few years ago how has your job changed in terms of how much time you spend on traditional editing tasks like copyediting, headline writing, and stuff like that?

Okay I mentioned already that with our technology now we’re way more involved with putting our content online right away. So that’s a big part of it whereas even just six months ago I might have been required to come up with stories, you know, produce stories quickly but now I’ve actually got to put it online. And again because of the way journalism is changing, there is a lack of copyeditors. It may not be my headline but I’m still required to write a headline and captions and all that stuff.

Okay. And what do you feel are the advantages for newspapers providing content online and on mobile and the iPad in addition to just print.

The advantages are we can put a story online and somebody can see it and email the reporter with an additional tip or saying that’s not quite right, you know, it’s this way. So by the time a story appears in print the next day it sticks to our (unintelligible) so that’s definitely an advantage.

Okay and then on the flip side what are some disadvantages to providing content across multiple platforms?

The need for speed, the rush. Again, that’s always a constant struggle. And in some ways the need for making a print story different than the online or mobile story. We may be writing the same story in two different ways.

And that’s actually related to my next question. Do you or others at your paper spend much time repurposing stories for specific platforms – for online and for mobile and tablet? Or do you just copy the same headline and everything?

No they’re different. There are definitely different headlines. For example, a headline for print could be what we call an art head --- you know, two or three words and the typography is kind of special. But that won’t work online or on mobile, of course. The other thing is we have labels and things like that in print whereas you don’t for online. I would say probably 70 percent of the time the headline for online or mobile is different than the headline for print. I’m trying to think of a good example from recently. Well we did a story about charter schools and how they’re just exploding. And that was the word. The print headline referred to the explosion of charter schools. I used that for the online headline and it was changed because as you know with search engines, it was giving off the impression that charter schools were physically exploding, that they were going up in bombs and fire and things like that (mutual laugh).

How do you feel overall that the publication on all these separate platforms is impacting your paper’s content quality?

Yeah, that’s a really tough one because, honestly, I feel that people here are so professional and so talented that as we grow and learn new things we gather those skills and we’re able to keep the quality up.
And are there any downsides with the lack of copyeditors that you mentioned before or is everyone just worn thin because they’re picking up the slack?

I think people are a little bit more worn now. For me, as an example, I’m always concerned about being the only pair of eyes on a story. And before you had a copyeditor who went through and, now sometimes that may not be the case with me being the only eyes. I may be the person who assigns the story, rewrites the story, copyedits it and puts the headline on it.

And then have there been any changes in the way work is organized at your paper with all these separate platforms for providing content?

We have restructured differently in the last year but I can’t really say that it has anything to do with the platforms. It’s just more because of fewer people. They came up with a different system for dividing the workload. But then I can’t really associate that with producing online and producing for tablets.

And then how satisfied are you with your job now that your paper is offering content on mobile and tablet devices?

You know I guess I’ve always been satisfied with my job. I’m certainly just as satisfied if not even more satisfied. I mean there certainly is a thrill to putting something out there that again is picked up by the Huffington Post or whatever.
Appendix VI: Interview data (National content editor at a newspaper)

What has been your experience with publishing content on mobile and/or tablets? I know on the written interview you said you did some early research. What exactly did that entail?

So you know right now we’ve got a pretty good mobile app that needs some developing. And so what we did with the mobile is we did some training on getting people to write, how to write for mobile, write a little bit differently, so we’re filing a little bit differently especially for breaking news. And on the tablet, we’re developing a couple of things on the text side, right, so we have an iPad app under development and then some other tablet approaches under development. But for that, we haven’t done anything yet. Except kind of set the stage for it, to segregate the material. So some material that’s on the online side, for example, may take a different place or maybe be fed differently for a tablet than it is now for online. But for kind of newsgathering and news editing, we haven’t changed anything to accommodate the tablet yet.

And then what do you feel are the advantages in publishing on mobile and tablets in addition to print and online?

Yeah. So, mostly you’re reaching an audience that you could never hope to reach, so you’re expanding an audience and that’s always a good thing. If you go back before we started publishing online, you know we had a very strong audience, a very local audience, kind of a Midwest paper with a strong brand and strong audience in the region. But the kind of impact that you can have is still pretty limited. We would write stories that would catch the eye of people Washington and have an effect there but, outside of that, there is a little bit more of an impact now. You can write something, you can have an impact immediately across the country. Even across the world, of course. So that’s nice, that’s rewarding to have that impact outside your own community. Then that’s the biggest opportunity for us. The biggest advantage, I think, you know there are obviously some disadvantages too, but that’s the biggest advantage.

Okay, and what are some of the disadvantages?

Well one of course is that, you know, people steal your stuff. So it’s a lot easier for people to steal stuff now. That happens a lot and it’s killing us. And the other disadvantage is you know, there’s a lot of competition. The cost of entry is so much lower so competitors can come in at a very low cost and if they’re combining a very low cost of entry with the ability to take stuff from us or take stuff from the Los Angeles Times or the New York Times then quickly they can create a product that whether or not it’s done the right way, to the consumer it’s a decent product that competes pretty quickly at a high level. So competition. Obviously, we like competition, we just don’t like competition that, you know, kind of piggybacks on everything that we do. And the fact that you’re no longer the only game in town or, you know, one of the only really strong games in town.
Okay. And then, what kind of day-to-day processes do you do when it comes to mobile and/or tablet?

Yeah, so that’s been another disadvantage. It’s a lot more work, right? People think that oh it’s just a different platform. It’s a different platform, sure, but those platforms have to be respected. So there are differences. You have to write a little bit differently, you have to edit a little bit differently and you have to be faster, right? You have to be faster not only to get in with the audience, but you have to be faster and quicker to the punch. There’s a different media experience, there’s no question about that, on mobile or online compared to print and you have to respect that. And all that takes energy. All that takes thought, all that takes work, right? And it takes time.

In the written interview, you said that publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job more difficult. I’m just wondering if there are any other ways it does that?

I think the speed of it makes it – you want to get out there, right? And you don’t have time to consider things so there’s always more of a, I don’t want to say risk but anytime you do something that’s less considered than other times, you’re going to introduce errors more, so, there’s a greater risk of error, there’s a greater risk of things happening that you didn’t foresee. And in some ways some of the content that the news media puts out now gets adulterated by third parties. So you can write an article that’s perfectly fair but if the comments are all personalized and taking aim at the parties, that party, the person that’s profiled can suffer. Right? In a way that wouldn’t have happened with print. So I think that the people we write about are, in this new world where everybody takes shots at them and are exposed and that makes it more difficult. We always when we wrote stories for print, you always said, okay, well, how is this going to sound, right? How is this person going to be portrayed, what’s going to be the reader reaction, etc. But, now, I mean sometimes its like you don’t even see it coming and the really negative and hostile reactions to things and you kind of have to think of the worst that could happen and work backwards from there in a way that it’s just so much more immediate and so much more stressful than print.

Okay. And overall, how do you feel that the publication on mobile and tablet platforms is impacting your paper’s content quality?

I believe that the quality of our content is what’s going to make or break the paper. And so, I think if we provide quality content and maintain the quality standards, no matter how we present it on a platform, that’s going to be the ticket. So I think on tablet, in particular, the quality shows. And we feel that we have more room to show off the quality of our content on tablet than on mobile. But at the same time the kind of breaking news content that we’re doing already we believe is better than anybody in the market. So that’s a real winner for us on mobile. So I don’t see any negative effect on our quality. I see a positive one, which just forces us to be better, much better.
Okay. And then, once again you somewhat addressed this earlier but how much
time do you spend repurposing stories for specific devices in terms of like changing
the text or headlines or reformatting the look of it or anything like that?

So my group does a lot of that, frankly. So we’ll look for good headlines for SEO
purposes, different headlines from those that are going to appear in print. We look for
ways to highlight certain information, maybe photo galleries that we didn’t have space
for or even an appetite for, in the printed product. So I would say that some of my people
they spend about half of their job doing that.

Okay and, overall, has the publication on mobile and tablet increased or decreased
the time you have for other more traditional editing tasks?

Definitely decreased. There’s only so much time in a day. And I think the whole
trend of multiple platforms is putting more and more finishing touches into the hands of
the content creators or the media editors and has raised the work and because of that has
shrunk, somewhat, the amount of time that people can spend on newsgathering and news
editing. And by that I mean, you know, whether its geo-coding or SEO tagging or
alternate headlines for the web, some of which reporters do, right? Some of which
reporters are asked to do. Or their source editors who write and direct what those
reporters are asked to do it. All of those things or even just, you know, coding for print,
right? So I mean, newspaper editors and reporters code things now much more than they
used to say, 10 or 15 years ago because of pagination, right? So all those things take
away time from newsgathering and news editing. But it’s just a part of life and I think
people adjusted to it but it did have an impact.

Okay and then are you specifically spending more or less time on any particular
task? That you would have spent more time on before?

Specifically I don’t. I actually spend time going around and since I don’t do a lot
of stuff myself since I kind of supervise producers. But I spend time going in and
changing things or asking for things to be changed if they look good in print but they
won’t work that great online yet. So I don’t spend a lot of my time doing that but I do
spend more of it than I used to. Which is kind of more nitty-gritty than big picture.

And compared to a few years ago, how has your job changed in terms of workload,
overall?

It’s hard to separate what the changes in the industry are, but I think the workload
has changed because of the platforms and everything. Part of it is everybody in news
media is doing more product forms and everything. Part of it is just everybody in news
media is doing more with less. And I think it’s just financial pressures and the structural
changes have in some cases – my workload is probably, I don’t know, it was pretty big
two years ago – it’s grown, you know it seems to grow pretty healthily every year.

And, do you feel that the publication across multiple platforms … I know I’ve heard
this from other interviews, that it takes away a lot of time spent on copyediting and
just taking a lot of care with the content to make sure that its all accurate and grammatically correct and all that.

We work harder, try to work smarter, try to change work flow so that it’s part of a seamless process. So the more you try to initially create it that way, the less time you spend repurposing and then you do have time to do the editing and the fact checking and the other stuff. But there are only a certain number of hours in the day, right? And if that time, or any time, is diverted from that to do something else it’s going to come at some cost. But I think we’ve been pretty smart about trying to move it to the front end so that its all part of a seamless work flow rather then repurposing where you start losing some efficiencies

And then, can you just go over how publication on mobile and tablet has sort of caused your paper to kind of reorganize any work structures or anything like that?

Yeah sure. So we train reporters, because they know the material the best. So we train reporters to do some of the geo-coding or SEO headline words, right? They know the material best. So it’s much faster, much more efficient for them to put those things in than for someone later to go in and read the story and then decide what the keywords should be. That’s one thing we do. Another thing we did was we went to a multiple platform CMS – content management system – called _____, which allows a lot of work to be done on a file before it’s sent off to its various platforms, right? So what that does is, whereas before we were kind of editing in parallel, once it was split off to online or print it would all be edited by two different people for two different products. Now the editing is one, by one person, for all platforms until the very last minute when it has to be split off into the different platforms. So those are two significant changes we’ve made but there’ve been others as well.

Okay. And overall how satisfied are you with your job now that your paper is offering content on all these different platforms?

Hmmm, I like my job. I think the ____ has a positive view of the future and good plans. And part of that is these different strategies for different platforms. So it’s not the same job I used to have but nobody’s job is the same.

Okay and then this is my last question actually. In general, how satisfied are you with the system in place at your paper for publishing content across multiple platforms. I know you said that the content management system works pretty well.

Yeah in terms of the content management system I think that we’re looking forward to our mobile apps and moving forward on our mobile apps and iPad apps and so I think I’m satisfied with the tablet strategy – and we’re all eager for it to be put into practice.
Appendix VII – Interview data (Copy editor at a daily newspaper)

What do you feel are the advantages for your publication in publishing content on mobile and tablet in addition to print and online?

All right when I talk to people, when I meet people, like my own age, mid-20s, and introduce myself and where I work for comes up, well about half the time people look at me just sort of unfortunate, like I didn’t ask you, but they look at me and they go “oh, I don’t read the newspaper,” like, okay, if you’re a kindergarten teacher I don’t go to kindergarten but thanks. So the reaction of people my age, you know, like I don’t subscribe to the newspaper, I don’t read, is a little disconcerting for any kind of publication, so in order to stay relevant … also these same people have iPads and other sort of mobile devices so if newspapers want to continue to live, the paper part’s not the important part, it’s the reporting and disseminating of information, so those are the platforms that people up-and-coming are using and spending money on so I think the advantages are if you want to be a credible source that people will read and not have your entire subscriber base die that seems like the way to go.

Right. And on the written interview you said that the publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job more difficult. I was just wondering if you could describe to me how it does that.

Well, in all honesty the thing that makes my job more difficult is more work and less staffing so if we had more staffing my job wouldn’t be more difficult because we’d have more people to spread the work across. Publication across multiple platforms makes my job more difficult because it’s more work. Instead of writing one headline for print specs I have to write a headline for print specs, a headline to display on the Website and a separate search engine optimized headline that is specifically different from the original, from the Web headline because even if the Web headline has good SEO terms, apparently Google does, like adding redundancy in there or something. If the SEO headline is identical to the Web headline that hurts search engine optimization. I don’t know. And then also deck’s the same way, so doing that takes time. I also help man the Twitter and Facebook accounts for my publication and that takes time. It takes time to stop and think about another way to phrase the same news for a different audience. Also just the (undistinguishable) with having so many platforms to work with, it gets distracting. If there were more people working with me and I had fewer things to juggle, it wouldn’t be so hard. In fact, it would probably be easy. It’s easy, for example, to post a twitter and a Facebook posting and whatnot about a story I personally edited or at least read the whole way through but on a day when I’m busy and I have to post something every 45 minutes or so, there’s not time for me to do my normal copyediting work and also digest all the stories I’m tweeting about so the hard part comes in where there’s many things to juggle and not enough time to do it all.

Right. Okay and you kind of touched on this in your last answer, but I’m wondering if you have anything more to say about it, how has the publication of newspaper content on mobile devices impacted editorial work at your paper?
Well it changes the day-to-day and there are more things to focus on and not more people to focus on them.

(Laughs) okay so it sounds like it’s just what we discussed in the last question? Yeah.

Okay and has the publication of content on mobile and tablet devices impacted the time you as a copyeditor are spending on traditional editing tasks?

Yes. In that there is less time to edit and because more time is taken up with reformatting things and, you know, the more display type you have to write. And I’m also responsible for taking the time to … you know I don’t fill out one form with a bunch of fields, I have to go into the publication platform for each of these multi-platform. Yeah, so to publish on the website I have to go into our website publication tool and make sure the package is assembled and all the related items are related, you know, the photo and other relevant stories and so on, make sure it’s on the correct spot on the page and publish it and for Twitter we use TweetSuite so I have to go into TweetSuite and make sure my Twitter partner for the day hasn’t already posted it and make sure the Web person hasn’t already posted it, and so on.

Right. And overall, how do you feel that, uh, publication on mobile is impacting your paper’s content quality? If it is at all.

You see I can’t tell what is because of multi-platform and what’s because of the economy and what’s because of general … yeah I’d say. Okay I joined the paper three years ago so that was three months before the stock market tanked. And it was a little bit before we had a huge presence on Twitter and Facebook and definitely before tablets even really existed. So all these things happened at the same time and we lost lots of people since then so, that said, I know that we do things, I know that there are some things we publish about because we know they’re going to get a lot of Web clicks and that said, I don’t think we do things specifically for Twitter or Facebook or tablet, I mean, that’s the Internet. It seems, I mean, (sigh) pandering seems like a strong word but I think we do more celebrity news than we otherwise would. There are a couple of blogs that have the mandate to post often and what we get from those blogs, which have become very popular in terms of views, they tend to be low-quality in terms of original reporting, there’s a lot of linking to outside sources and you can’t blame the reporters because they’re under a mandate to write so many blog posts a day. I mean, how much in-depth anything can you do in like an hour? So I don’t know. I’d say that’s directly related to the platform rather than to an economic situation. It’s kind of related to an economic situation but if the Internet exists the way it does we’ve had limited resources and we’d be trying to get revenue in a different way. Maybe still with celebrity news, I don’t know, but probably not with having blogs that chiefly link to other publications.

Okay and how satisfied are you with your job now that your paper is offering content on mobile phones and Internet and all these different devices?
It’s hard to say what the relationship is in that way. I’ve always been pretty satisfied with my job. My chief dissatisfactions have more to do with my hours and pace of work with the platforms we’re publishing on. I personally enjoy working with, I mean I like editing but I also see my job kind of as, like my overall career goal is to be a person who takes information and presents it in a way that people can understand and find accessible and so the freedom to take the same story and rephrase it or introduce it in several different ways I find actually very interesting to me. I’d say that that makes me pretty satisfied. That said, doing that, you know having the pressure to do four of those things at the same time and sometimes I haven’t even read the story is less satisfying. That’s mainly just a staffing issue rather than specifically a problem with platforms.

Yeah I actually heard that from a lot of people that there’s a staffing issue and a lot of people are actually saying that the changes are challenging but that it’s exciting. So I think that’s a positive thing to hear.

Well I think it depends on who you talk to. I mean I love my boss. That said he referred you to a couple of people who, well okay, I do Twitter and Facebook. Twitter and Facebook participation for copyeditors is voluntary at my publication. So there are people who have tried it and then opted to get off of that team because they were not enjoying it. There are people who, fewer now, but there are people who outright sort of mock the idea of social media who are not involved in it. These are not the people you are talking to right now. So there’s that. There was a period about a year and a half ago where everyone who was involved in Twitter at my paper because of promotion or maybe company or just other job responsibilities, all of them in a very short time were no longer on teams posting to twitter and so all of a sudden it was me and two other people and we stepped up and we took care of it for like a month just the three of us. It was overwhelming but I loved it because it’s fun to be in charge of something and the Wild Westness of it was exciting. But I’m the person you’re talking to, like I chose to do that and I continue to choose to do that. So we have a couple dozen people and the workload is much more manageable on that front. I would like to see more, I mean, the thing that makes this kind of frustrating to me is that I that I don’t know whether I’m actually helping my publication in terms of whether we’re doing this the right way. I’d like to see more numbers and feedback and I mean sometimes I’ll post a link to something just for the sake of having something on twitter that’s newer but I don’t think it’s necessarily a very good article. Is that helpful or not? Nobody I know can tell me. So the thing that would make me more satisfied is, you know, it’s nice that it’s the Wild West but it also might be nice to have some more organized standards and feedback.

That makes sense. This is actually my last question. In general how satisfied are you with the processes and protocol in place for getting stories on all these different platforms?

I don’t know, like, six of ten. I like very much that by and large we have copyeditors doing it rather than just really anybody who’s attentive to detail and has been trained with sort of journalism ideals because in some places and before copyeditors were involved specifically in Facebook, sometimes in Twitter, inaccuracies would get put in
there for the purpose of, I mean things would be rephrased and it would be understandable why somebody phrased them that way but there would not be, it’s because it was a person running it with less sensitivity for accuracy, which I personally think is the most important thing that you can have in a reputation for accuracy in journalism. Because if you get people to click on things and they’re disappointed then, you know, your reputation for accuracy goes down and then like what do you have even? Nothing is what you have. Or a reputation for being just another voice in the, there is no shortage of voices on twitter, so maintaining credibility is very important. So I’m glad that we are trying to do that. That said maybe it’s just me personally, but I would enjoy having a presence on social media that is more honestly social. Sometimes I feel like Twitter and Facebook, etc., they’re interactive media, you know, you post something and people respond and then there can be a conversation. Or somebody posts something and then you respond and there can be a conversation. And because of time as well as because of a sort of overall question of whether it’s worth it. I mean I don’t know whether it would pay off to have a more interactive presence. We use social media more like a megaphone and we just say something and then the Internet, you know, the masses can think of it what they will just like with our website and the newspaper. That doesn’t necessarily seem appropriate to me. That said, if I post something on Facebook and people don’t understand and suddenly the conversation veers into, you know, they don’t read the story and suddenly they’re missing the whole point of the story. Occasionally I’ll try to step in and correct it but I don’t really have time for that and where do you draw the line? Can you fact check every single thing somebody says on the Internet? That’s impossible. So when you post as the publication rather than as a person, you’re always carrying so much weight and it’s hard to walk that line being having the icon and the name of your entire publication and also just being a person who does not know the answer to everything that your publication as a whole would know the answer to. So in terms of satisfaction with our social media presence, I think we’re doing the best we can right now and as a person who’s involved in doing it, I know that I’m doing the best I can and I know that my colleagues are doing the best they can. As a consumer of social media or a participant in social media in my personal life, I think we’re not meeting the ideal, I don’t believe.
Appendix VIII – Interview data (Assistant managing editor at a daily paper)

This is much better. I was going to call you but I realized that your number, it says unavailable so I couldn’t call you back.

Hmm. I wonder why that is. That’s kind of odd. Well, maybe the thesis ought to be changed to the rigors of technology and how they’re feeding advances of media or something. Well, what can I say? We have an old company with old machines. But we have a lot of younger, newer people here to make up for it. So I do apologize for that. I’m making it harder than it has to be for you.

No, no. I’m just glad I got into contact with you again.

I was starting to say my answers to your questions would be much different in maybe three to five months, we’ll be much farther along with our tablet efforts. We’ve had a mobile app for a long time. My group, the copy desk, doesn’t have a direct role in sort of developing those tools. We edit everything that’s got our paper’s name on it whether it’s a blog post or an article, those things, end up being channeled into new platforms, so we don’t feel any special pressure or difference yet with the mobile efforts or with the tablet new app and some things I can’t tell you about yet but which will be prepared later. We think that’s like our third platform, our third big one after the newspaper and the free web. And our next big goal on the copydesk would be right at the center of that so we’ll know more at that point how those things will affect our work flow. Everything we do is digital first and print second, that’s our approach on the copy desk.

What do you feel are the advantages for your paper in publishing content on mobile and tablet, in addition to print and online?

I think it’s two-fold. It’s mainly an attempt to find new users who have already migrated to other platforms but I think it’s also a chance to maintain people who might be moving from print to new platforms. Everyone carries a cell phone or smart phones and tablets might not be a panacea for what ails our industry but seem like a popular device category for millions of people. Well, we want to make sure our content is available there, so it’s the people using those devices who have never picked up the paper, there are people who might like getting the paper on those devices, we need to deliver our content where readers are at. I think it’s just pretty basic.

And then, on the flip side, what do you think are the disadvantages?

I can think of nothing I call a disadvantage. Certainly there are challenges in trying to make sure that something is custom-made. I hear there’s a work by human beings for a newspaper, in a newspaper-infused, a newspaper focused environment, will work in a different platform. It took us a long time to figure out how to publish intelligently to the Web. Early on, you know, some years ago, people here tended not to even think of the website, never to even open up our website here at work. It was a separate operation, it was down the street from us in a different building, then it was in the same building but on a different floor and only about three years ago was it integrated.
into traditional print-focused newsrooms. So it was one newsroom publishing on the website and the newspaper, so the challenge has always been how to get people making sure material’s available for every platform we’re publishing on and you can now add mobile and then the tablet’s next but also looking for how those new platforms have certain advantages over the old one, print, and how we might, therefore take advantage of those differences. And even when the differences aren’t only seen as advantageous but how to tailor material to those platforms, so about four years ago, we had I think three or four blogs. We realized that blogs, you know, shorter story forms, would be a good way to tell our stories on handheld devices or on the Web so now we have close to 30 blogs. That’s probably not unusual, so that’s a good broad example of how we’ve adapted what our resources can do, deliver content into a different platforms. Blogs may not work in their current form perfectly on a tablet but we think that they have to be very visual, so if you look at our site, you might see some of these thirty blogs. Many of them may use photos and while many of them may not use photos but we think photography is a big part of the tablet experience. So I don’t see disadvantages more just challenges of reconfiguring continuously what the audience might be looking for in a new platform and making sure, well, for example, with the tablet, making sure it’s visual, we want to make sure it has lots of links to previous material and so forth. And I think as we try to adapt, steadily and recalibrate to those platforms, we find there’s some advantages to that. So I think I think it’s all very positive. Part of my stump speech for the copy desk is that we do try to be, in our department, which is 1/8 of the staff, so about 65 people, it’s approximately 1/8 of the current staff of our paper, like everything it’s about half of its former peak size but we still have a large copy desk – oh it looks like my computer’s coming back here – so, I’ve been running it for two years, as an assistant managing editor. My approach is that we are Web first in our thinking and print second. So we publish almost all of our stories to the Web first whether it’s the final version or an early breaking news version and we polish and finish for the paper. We start at six in the morning now, our first shift starts at six in the morning. As of a couple of years ago we used to start at 10 or 11 in the morning. So we operate from six a.m. to midnight, five days a week, from seven to midnight on the weekends. It’s all about trying to think digitally first, knowing that the audience is there from the time we wake up and the paper audience is the one that wakes up the next morning. So that’s just recalibrating our little piece at the copy desk to that reality, as reporters and editors and photographers and other workers also learn to use the Web and we hope these other two, new portable tools to their advantage.

Okay. That’s similar to what I’m hearing from other people so it seems to be, you know, what’s going on industry-wide. On the written interview you said the publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job more difficult. I was just wondering if you could describe how it does that.

I think because it’s just that the resources are not growing but the demands are growing. So you have the vectors pointing at a different direction. We have about half the staff we had at our peak three or four years ago and yet I think it’s fair to say our work has probably doubled and that we have 30-some blogs and we copyedit all of those. We
go over it once very lightly, it’s very quick copyediting, there’s very little fact checking, we’re reading for, you know, just clean type and we’re checking links, we’re making sure the headlines are publishable. That’s copyediting and not every publication, not every mainstream newspaper publication with a website thinks of the blogs as something to be edited. We do. Our name’s on it, it’s our brand, we want to make sure it’s our best work. So, that’s an added responsibility. When we really started taking the Web seriously in about 2007, we had just three or four blogs and it seemed impossible. Wow, how can we add these three or four blogs to our workflow? How can we write SEO type for every story, not just the print type. Before we even knew what SEO stood for and what it was about, so we started small and we worked up gradually in our duties, so I don’t think I’d ever say that our jobs are less difficult, I mean it’s adding more things that makes it more difficult and so my job as manager running the whole group for two years, we put away our smaller Web-focused morning copy desk, which is my previous job, and the difficulties are getting matching resources to demand and knowing that resources are shrinking, demand is rising. So it’s difficult but I think it’s necessary and it’s really fun because it is exciting to help build something that might outlast the traditional print newspaper, which might disappear in your lifetime, you’re starting your career. I hope it’ll be around for the rest of my career, I’m in my mid-fifties. I think it’s difficult, no question, and we feel the strain but I don’t think we have a choice except to move forward and digital is where everything is at. I’ll just say that you may want to, when we’re done, want to get with an actual working copyeditor to hear how he or she might see it. I’m the manager, I don’t get to edit for a living any more. I manage people who do that. But there’s no question it’s harder but I’ll also say that our department has been very gung ho about taking it on because we feel there’s no choice. And even if there were a choice to opt out we wouldn’t because it’s exciting and fun and if you talk to other copy desk folks in your study, you might hear a lot of anxiety and I share that to some extent. You know, newspaper companies are puddling their copy desks in regional hubs so they can publish many papers from one spot with fewer people, that sort of thing. I think that the challenge for copy desks, as a subset of the group you’re talking to, is to remain relevant. And so the way we’ve tried to grab on to relevance here is to say, all right, we have a website, we will be the Web team’s best friends and we’ll do as much as we can to support them and make it a better website. All right, here’s the tablet project that’s coming. Does it have the essence of maybe something bigger coming later? We want to be part of that because if we’re going to ask people to buy an app, or to pay some sort of fee to get our content, we want to make sure it’s edited, curated, properly, presented to them, it’s worth their money. So you need a copy desk for that. So the key word from our point-of-view is we’re trying to be relevant in a changing world and that’s difficult but really to me there’s no other options, no other way to go.

Okay, well my next question is kind of related to what you’ve been talking about. How has the publication of newspaper content on mobile and tablet devices impacted editorial work at your paper and the time editors have for traditional editing tasks?
It is just really putting more emphasis on more digital content such as blogs, which not only work well on the Web but can work in short form on a on a handheld device. With the visuals and so forth it could work well on the tablet as well so it gets us to think about new ways to tell stories in new areas, so from three blogs to 30, that’s 27, 28, 29, whatever new pathways for us to communicate with readers and deliver news and featurey things. But as it effects the overall editing it also has possibly sometimes negative effects in that you have a shrinking or now stable staff doing all this extra work. You know, there are only so many hours in a day and there’s a fatigue factor, there’s a stress factor, and all that stuff. You can probably find maybe more typos in the newspaper than there used to be. Maybe that’s mostly because there are fewer editors but I think it’s also just that in publishing across many platforms editors can be distracted. Certain hours of the day we have to focus everything we have to finishing the paper in the last hour or two on the print side but the rest of the day we’re both preparing for the newspaper, we’re preparing the paper for publication and we’re publishing to the website, so you’re asking people to be working with fewer breaks and with dual if not triple sort of focus on delivering material to somewhat different audiences. And so that’s something we’ve been doing energetically for several years but we still haven’t mastered it and I think you might see therefore a legitimate and certainly understandable and obvious to some readers a degradation of quality. I think it’s slight, you don’t see like poorer records or double in number or anything like that. I think just small things that would probably rarely occur in our paper, the occasional missing word, a homonym, you know where we have the wrong version of a word that sounds like another word. Some small misspellings, stray punctuation, things like that that, newspapers have always had, you know newspapers always had errors, it’s just the nature of the format of the product. I would say those little things seem to crop up more often and readers have noticed that. The question is what do we do. Well, I don’t think we can give up our digital aspirations; we still need to deliver resources there. I think we need to try to do both better and that’s just that’s the hard part. I think as people get more comfortable multitasking, thinking of the multiple platforms at once, they’ll just naturally get a little bit better about doing their best work on all of them but it’s a challenge and that’s really my personal challenge in my job is getting people to be able to master all of that at once and I think you’ll find generally more typos in newspapers these days than maybe was the case a few years ago. But there’s always been issues. But when you see a typo in the New York Times it’s very unnerving, you know, it’s supposed to be the best newspaper around. If you see a typo in the Wall Street Journal, it’s unnerving and yet one does.

Right. About what percentage of content would you say your paper repurposes for specific devices? This could be like rewriting headlines for online and mobile and choosing different photos for mobile and tablet or anything like that.

Sure. In terms of a percentage, it’s certainly more than 50 – it would vary by category. I tend to filibuster so I’ll give you another long answer with apologies. But for articles, 100 percent of it has something different for the web and other digital platforms, more like 95 percent of it. Every article that goes in the newspaper goes on the Web and nearly all of those has a separately written headline that’s different from the print
headline. Sometimes they’re word for word or almost word for word with what the print headline has. That’s what the key words that might matter to someone typing in a search query in Google, you know, “Mayor approves budget” or something like that. That would be a very boring print head but some print heads, especially on newsier stories, work fine online but even most of those, the vast majority, almost all of them are tweaked somewhat to improve the searchability and also what we think is what the readers are looking for, which is more information, more facts, more specific information, which is why the narrow confines of a print column might say you’d have to refer to ______ as “state” to fit it in the headline but online its just going to say ______, because people want specificity; they’re reading us around the world, around the country, and typing in “________” presumably if they’re looking for like budget information and so we want that SEO visibility so nearly every article, if it’s not 100 percent, it’s in the 90s, has added material for the Web in the form of SEO friendly headline, sub headline, there are invisible tags that are not seen by the reader, which have some SEO abilities which are similar to the visible title tag at the top of the page, which the copy desk writes also, is meant to be SEO friendly. So on articles they go to the Web almost all of them, with added material designed to improve their searchability and, you know, a clever headline that works in the paper with a photo on the story right there, and the layout, where it’s all just clear what the story’s about, that doesn’t always work on the Web, that’s a pretty well accepted truism and so even if you’re not trying to boost search, per say, you’re trying to make sure the article’s clear, its meaning, its subject is clear to the online reader and so you rewrite that. Obviously people read our headlines online as tweets or they might read it on the home page or elsewhere on the website so they have to be clearer, more specific. So copyeditors should edit every story virtually that runs on the paper. With photos we acquire them from our own staff and from outside sources, many more photographs than we could possibly show in the paper. The goal is every article online would have a photo. Some just lack the right photo. You can’t illustrate the photo of the car crash that took place, you know, two blocks away from city hall on Sunday. But for most articles, outside of specific instances like that we try to have photos, so there’s many more photos on our website than in the paper. It’s a space issue. It’s also the idea that the Web is for visuals and so we want to make sure there are photos there. Photos not only enhance the article at that level but help function as a thumbnail to get people to click an article when they’re looking at a collection of stories. We think for the tablet, photos are essential, that sort of thing, so. So articles and photos clearly some of it’s visible, in terms of the photographic area, and the stories, you’ll see some of that as headlines but there may be some hidden stuff in the coding, in the infrastructure where our copy editor or Web producer has taken the print text and rewritten it, repurposed it in a way we think will help the online reader experience or will help its searchability. That’s pretty basic. We’re not doing anything that revolutionary here, that’s for sure.

I know some research that I read was concerned that a lot of newspapers were just dumping content into all of these different platforms without tweaking it but I haven’t really talked to anyone that’s doing that. So that’s kind of a good sign.
Yeah I think for many, not many, but some people in the industry still, they still think of it as newspaper first, Web second and in pushing my department in the opposite way I might be in the minority in terms of how we manage this but the Web is the place to break news. It is live and it’s what people are looking for with now in capital letters. The paper is the next day’s recap of what happened with some context and so forth, but I think for many users here who grew up with newspapers as I did, as perhaps your parents did and older generations did, they still, a lot of them think of the dot com as the digital version of the newspaper and in some ways, it is, but it has to be more than that. And I think when newspapers first realized the Web was possibly first a threat, a competitor, now is a successful tool as we evolved in our thinking. We can’t just be the paper rendered in pixels. Our readers expect more than that, they expect this article might have been in the paper, it probably was, but you want hyperlinks to related material, you want links to your previous stories, you want the photos that didn’t fit in the paper, you know, you want all of that. You want, links to content outside of your site. People just come to expect that, you want a place where they can comment. Those are just very basic building blocks of a full user experience online. So five years ago, it probably was more of just the let’s shovel everything from the paper onto the Web, paper first, Web second, and hope for the best. We’ve learned so much, you know, industry-wide knowledge has skyrocketed. People like yourself, you know, the next generation, you’re studying and attempting and learning things that will help us evolve the idea that any publication can survive by merely turning its print product into digital alone I think is missing out. It’s certainly shortsighted and well it’s not much of a policy, is it? It’s just hardly trying. I don’t think it concerns the reader. Even our most august print publication, if you look at the New Yorker and their beautiful website, I think that there’s a subscription required for that. I subscribe, but their articles online have lots of extra things, that, you know, you might think those traditional publications, magazines, doing all kinds of great stuff, adding more visuals, linking to their archives, having Web-only things, including blogs, those are all things that even those traditional publications have learned are important for the audience. I’d be flabbergasted if anyone’s ever said well, oh no this is just our newspaper, you know, the digital, we don’t need, would be unfortunate to hear. You wouldn’t be talking to them in five years, in a follow-up study, they wouldn’t be around.

And have there been changes in the way work is organized at your paper with the publication of content on mobile and tablet?

Yeah, I mean generally like I said the changes are mostly about online in general, mobile is just something we’re still developing and material that is made for the paper, the Web first, and then is repurposed for mobile but that’s just typical for our workflow. I don’t think there’s really a lot of mobile-only material. I think in terms of just my own department we work from about 10 to midnight, 10 a.m. to midnight, the features team come around 10, the news team around two or three. We do have people on as early as six in the morning now, our Web team is now on a 24/7 schedule, we used to have some gaps in it until a few years ago but they still put everything on our website. It’s as few as one person and as many as, you know, a dozen at a time. But it’s just around the clock and there’s hand-offs from shift to shift. They’re working in close contact, they work in
concert with the copy desk and so that’s forced us to change operations so we have more people on duty on more hours during the day. I’d say our weekend staffing is somewhat different because although traffic may be somewhat less online when people are at home and not at their offices or using their computers, there’s still an audience for what’s happening now, no matter what the day is, so the Web team and the copy desk have adapted accordingly. So those are mainly staffing-based but it’s all what the idea is delivering content where the audience is, which is everyday.

Okay. And how satisfied are you with your job now that your paper’s content is being published on all these different places? And how has it impacted your job load?

Well I’ve always kind of worked like a demon. I work hard. I’ve been at this paper about 21 years as of next week will be 21 years. I’ve worked 15 or 16 of those years as a copyeditor, five years as an assigning editor, up to like deputy section editor and now I’m the masthead editor, so these have all been hard jobs but I would say I’m putting in more hours than ever, I’m working pretty hard. And the copyeditors that I supervise work harder, they have the difficult job of being on the front line and there’s a survival mechanism at play here, of course. We want to make sure that we are relevant and persist and survive. The audience wants it digitally so that’s a nice incentive to work hard, but I’m not complaining. I’m 64 years old, I got a late start in this business but I’m older than some of the people you’re probably talking to, older than yourself and your colleagues doing your study but I think it’s highly satisfying, I think it’s the most fun I’ve ever had and the last two jobs I’ve done, the job I did before this job was very much Web-focused. I was asked to set up a copy desk serving our website and only our website. It was an adjunct; it was an offshoot of the main copy department. I was told “set up a desk, you’ll edit content for ________, how many people do you need, how do you want to do it?” So I said I need five people, plus me, and we put out a call to arms and like the five best people in the department raised their hand and said “I want to be part of this,” and so, part of it, too, is making sure that your best people want to be, want to have an incentive to be part of what’s new and not like “oh, I’ll put someone there who’s less essential to the old, bigger thing.” That’s that I think is a classic management trap, where early people devoted to the Web were people who might not have been doing well on the paper. I think you need to devote your best, smartest, most dedicated, energetic people to what’s new. Otherwise what’s new is going to be like the digital version of what’s old and may not work. So that’s not quite an answer to your question. I would say, personally, I’m hugely satisfied, I’m having a lot of fun, the Web desk that I ran for two years was like the most fun I ever had and when I was asked by the editor to step up and run the department I said I’ll be happy to do it but I’m completely infused with this Web mentality. We’re going to run a Web-first department and don’t make me ever go back to a full-time newspaper job. That to me is like the wrong direction. I may be unusual among the folks you speak to but I hope not. I hope people find that it’s really satisfying to be part of something new and to try things. We fail now and again but for every setback we move forward a couple steps and I think when you’re starting with something small and new you can, if you have smart people attached to it and the proper
resources, the backing of management, which we all have here, very much so, you can succeed and the success is not a short-term. The newspaper is going to be 130 years old in December and so that’s a long-term development cycle. We’ve had our ups and downs. Our Web domain has probably been out there for 20-plus years but no one knew about it for awhile and we didn’t apply it really vigorously until maybe four or five years ago. So when the iPad came out no one really talked about the tablet very much did they, and that’s only, you know, in the last couple years and so forth. We’ve had mobile phones and smart phones for awhile but the capabilities now are astounding and I think are a great opportunity for journalists, so I think people of your generation are coming in at a wonderful time and I hope lots of satisfying and even fun jobs because you’re inventing stuff with your more established, older peers you’ll be joining and what’s not to like? I think I must have checked “extremely satisfying” on your chart. If there was one category even two spaces to the right, I would have checked that, too. I mean, that’s how much fun it is.

Most of the people I’ve been talking to are saying that there are challenges but that they’re greatly enjoying it. So they seem to agree with what you’re saying, which is a good thing, I think.

I think when people see what the challenges are, there’s also hope. And there’s not been a lot of hope over these past few years as we’ve taken our hits economically and, you know, not every publication is going to survive, let’s face it. Not every journalist is going to survive. But in the overarching picture I think there’s hope. There’s no miracle cure there in the tablet or in Web revenue and stuff like that. That’s not going to happen but I think enough people have read the writing on the wall, a lot of smart comment out there, just a lot of good information. So I think satisfaction goes hand-in-hand with hope and some promise and not just inexorable, you know, arrow pointing downward towards zero, which still they have that but I don’t think it’s going to happen. They have it for some publications but I think the overall prospects for the industry are quite good, in some markets, with certain publications with enough energy and enough risk-taking I think it’ll be mostly good. So that’s satisfying just by itself.

And this is actually my last question. In general how satisfied are you with the system in place for publishing content across multiple platforms?

I don’t know what I answered on your written interview, it probably was not a ten on your scale, a ten. Just for instance today I couldn’t get my computer to boot up. Do I think bad thoughts about Dell Corporation or Microsoft but that’s what we have so I would say that the tools we use are rarely sufficient for the task. If the task keeps growing, the challenges keep growing, the goals keep getting bigger as the audience evolves and so your tools can’t change that fast. It’s like an automaker saying I’m going to do this car; I’ve invented this car. It takes three and a half years, no matter what, for that car to hit market. So we have computers that are not always state-of-the-art. We have the content management system that we didn’t invent but are using, you know so it’s an off-the-shelf product and so it was built generically for websites but they’re not fitting the unique needs that we have. Every website’s different, so we’re unique. Our needs are
mostly met by our content management system but not fully. You know, a lot of blogs like Wordpress, typepad, the system that we use here are beautiful for the lone blogger writing his or her wonderful thoughts from an office, or wearing bunny slippers and commenting on the world, whatever, but when you have hundreds of users using that same, that fairly cheap software, it’s not ideal. It’s not customized for us, really. You can buy some extra templates probably but it’s an off-the-shelf product built for a much smaller user base than we have here. So it’s not always reliable, it can crash, it’s not necessarily secure, so there are challenges there. That would probably be my lowest ranking of any question you ask because the tools aren’t good enough here, you know, a ______-company owned newspaper but it may be that they couldn’t be because the tools can’t keep up necessarily when you scale up to 600 some users, you know, you can’t buy 600 iPads, we can’t even issue 600 cell phones, probably, smart phones. But the people who really need those advanced tools do have them. Our design staff has state-of-the-art Apple computers for designers. I’m a word person. I have a not-quite-state-of-the-art Dell computer that today is deciding not to work and my phone is probably older than you are. And yet we make it work so I think human ingenuity will overcome a lot of the tool issues. There may be a lab in Missouri or in NYU or someplace like that where everything is up-to-date completely and is beautifully configured towards publishing digitally but your user base is not 6000 professional journalists, it’s somewhat smaller probably, something like that. So I would say the short answer is not satisfied. The longer answer is I don’t know that I could be working at this scale because of the costs and the evolving nature of what we need, we just have to be ingenious about using some older tools to make things work. The ______ technology is trying to create its own tools here and there and has mixed success on that. I was just talking to someone the other day at work and I’ll stop filibustering here with this but we’re using some off-the-shelf news editing software. It’s optimized to share material among many publications, we’re part of a many-newspaper company, so, it makes it easier to share stuff with our colleagues in Chicago or Orlando or so forth but for publishing one paper at a time it’s not optimized. It tends to freeze up a lot, it involves lots of extra steps. So this was a product that was sold to us by an outside vendor, it’s called ______, lots of people use it and it’s a variation of CCI, which you may have heard of that, a lot of people use it. That’s what it is. Thirty years ago when the Times first got computers, it built its own computer system working with an outside vendor. It was called ______, which later was used by other newspapers but it started here. Guess what? It worked perfectly for this newspaper. It had little quirks that were based on actual people who worked in this newsroom. There was a user who had not full use of both of his hands so one of the keys was you would hit it and it would just stay enabled, like a function key. You would hold it and just, you would hit it, tap it once and it would stay enabled then he could type functions and type keys after that, because of his particular usage needs. Well that would be unheard of in an off-the-shelf product. And it works great for, you know, 10 plus users. Then PCs came along and we had a Microsoft-based, PC-based version of that, which was almost as good and then we started having to go to the outside system because of the nature of having to create a system from scratch and we couldn’t do it, we had to buy a product. And so when we can create our own thing it was perfect. We would love somewhat better tools but you
have to make up for that and work around things. You hear phrases all the time, “that’s a non-problem” meaning we’re not going to get to it for awhile. Or we have a work-around for that. You know, those terms were never uttered 20 years ago. It was a different era, different resources, publishing on one platform and pretty well, but this is better. I mean, this is more fun; it’s more engaging. It’s important and those are all good incentives for coming in the office everyday and working hard. Yeah, it’s a lot of fun. I hope you get to find something fun.
Appendix IX – Interview data (Copy desk chief at a newspaper)

My first question is what has been your experience with publishing content on mobile and tablet as a copy desk chief at your paper? I know on the written interview you said that you copy edit content but I was wondering if there’s anything else you do that’s related to getting these stories out on different platforms.

At the moment, no. I’ve been trained in it, I know how to do it but the way our work flow is I don’t do it often. We do craft headlines for various platforms, different headlines for different stories, but the actual posting stuff is handled by web producers for the most part.

Okay. And then I guess my next question is actually kind of related. What processes do other editors or web producers at your paper go through to actually get this content on the different platforms? Are there any extra steps involved?

Yeah, there are. We design for multiple media functionality and do various other things. There are extra steps involved. And they tried to automate it as much as possible but it still has to be individually massaged for the various platforms.

Right. And then, what do you feel are the advantages for your paper in providing content on mobile and tablet in addition to print and online?

The advantages? Well, we’re building audience for (break in Skype connection) credibility and the better the website (break in Skype connection). That’s about it the advantage is positioning ourselves for the future and who knows what that future is going to be.

Right. And then on the flip side, what do you feel are the disadvantages?

Disadvantages … Well, the main disadvantage is just the loss of print readership but there’s things we can do with that.

Okay and how has publication across multiple platforms impacted editorial work at your paper?

It has definitely added more work because you are editing with specific platforms in mind – a web headline is not always best for print and vice versa.

Ongoing problems with Skype connection….

Okay, and how has the publication of content on multiple platforms impacted your day-to-day work?

Oh it’s definitely more to keep track of. It’s an organizational thing, managing the copy editors as they do different versions of the stories for different platforms. It has (pause) changed priorities. The more live stuff gets precedence; we publish everything online before it appears in print so deadlines are not the same. You’re always on deadline; it’s essentially the same as running a wire service these days. You get the story up online as fast as you can and then you worry about print so you have a deadline every
minute, you have the print deadlines looming always. It’s definitely more stressful. It’s more tense and you are torn in several different directions having to mentally remember where you are when you’re editing for what the end purpose of the copy and headlines and stuff with that is and it takes a lot more awareness of where you are and what you’re doing.

Right. And on the written interview you also said that the publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job much more difficult. I was just wondering if you could outline some of the ways it does that.

It requires you to be focused on different aspects of the story what would be best for online what would be best for print and various versions of that. It requires more attention to deadline, more attention to detail, continual updating of stories for online whereas with print you might have three additions so you update the story twice. But with the online you could be updating it every whatever, whenever a single development happens, you update it. That makes it more difficult and it actually increases the workload considerably. And for a manager it’s more difficult because a manager’s got to keep track of all the people working for him and what they’re doing and what their progress is minute-to-minute rather than just checking things off prior to print deadlines.

Okay. And has all this extra work impacted the time you have for more traditional editing tasks like copyediting, writing headlines, things like that?

Absolutely. It has, it has diminished quality because we don’t have the time to focus and to craft perfect headlines for print. When I was at the Wall Street Journal years ago we’d spend sometimes two to three hours um crafting a perfect page one headline we knew would cover every aspect of the story and be eye-catching and all of that. Now I’m lucky if we can spend 10 minutes on a good print headline. It really is all about speed and all about volume and we’re fewer people to do more work.

And I know you mentioned that you spend time rewriting headlines for different platforms. About what percentage would you say you tweak copy if it’s going to be on mobile or online or tablet versus print?

In some aspect it’s 100% because print of course you have space restrictions on your headline and online, given the template that our website uses you also have space restrictions and you want to make sure that the headline breaks in a reasonable spot and we do the same with mobile. So we spend a considerable amount of time just making minor changes but I’d say nearly every story that gets used in multiple places has to be touched for each.

Okay. And overall how do you feel that the publication of content on mobile and tablet platforms is impacting your paper’s content quality?

It’s not the presence of various platforms that’s affecting quality it’s the understaffing and the additional workload that is doing it. We need the multiple platforms, that’s our future but because companies don’t have the money anymore to pay the staff to do the production work, the backend work, the editing and all of that, the
quality has gone down considerably and it’s more to do with the economics and all of that than the actual presence of the different platforms.

Right. And I’ve actually been hearing that from a lot of people I’ve talked to so that seems to be the general problem overall.

It’s an industry-wide problem and its never going to go away. The money to pay people is never coming back in the way that it used to be there.

Right. And how has the publication of content on multiple platforms, how has that changed the way work is organized at your paper?

Oh that’s changed the way work is organized quite a bit. I mean it used to be the workflow went, you know, from writers to editors to designers and proofreaders and everything was a very linear workflow. Stories that needed updating would loop back to whatever point the updating needed to be done. Then with the multiple platforms you have reporters posting online before stuff is edited and you have editors posting before it’s copyedited and you have copyeditors reposting after changes are made. And proofreading is now an afterthought; it’s not part of the linear workflow so much anymore. We pretty much leave that as an embellishment or as a frill, it’s not required to do anymore before something is published.

Okay. And how satisfied are you with your job now that content is being published in all these different places?

I’m not dissatisfied. I’d be a lot happier if there was more time and more manpower to focus on the quality. I understand all the economic and social pressures that are pushing us different directions but I’m still satisfied that we’re doing the best we can under circumstances. We’re pushed to the limit and I’ve always gotten great satisfaction out of being pushed to the limit. It’s one of those things that you know you want to be tested and you want to be pushed and there’s nothing a newsperson liked more than breaking news that gets the adrenaline flowing and all that. So that keeps me satisfied when that happens from time to time. But the satisfaction wears thin when something big happens and we don’t have the resources to cover it and to deal with it in a way that we should. Overall I’m about as satisfied as I can be under the circumstances.

Right. I know I’ve been hearing that from a lot of people that they find changes pretty challenging but that it’s also kind of exciting at the same time.

It is, but along the same lines, there isn’t the education and the training that there should be to allow people to do their jobs more easily. There’s an awful lot of on-the-job education that could be handled, you know, with two days of training instruction. The person could be made a lot more facile in the way they do things but there’s no time or money for that.

Okay. And that’s actually related to my next question. In general how satisfied are you with the system your paper has in place for publishing across multiple platforms?
We just switched our content management system and we use ______, which feeds into the content management system for online stuff. It’s not all that easy to use and again there really hasn’t been official training for people before they’re turned in to it. I think with the right training and the right development by the programmers it can be a very useful and kind of satisfying system but it does take training.

Okay. And this is actually my last question. Has the publication of content across multiple platforms affected your job in official terms, like has it caused you to have a new job title or to have a new job description or tasks added on to your job description of anything like that?

I don’t think, again, the publication across multiple platforms has caused that. It’s more the economy and the change in the media structure and the social media and the way people get their information in news has caused the change. My job title didn’t change but the number of people I supervise has changed dramatically down from about 25 to five or four now. That’s 25 to 4 in the space of three years. And responsibilities, I now have some online responsibilities, which up until three years ago our website was a completely separate operation. They took our news feeds and then the web producers did their magic. So that has changed responsibilities. And then as I said my supervisory responsibilities have changed dramatically. I don’t want to blame that on the Web or on mobile. I blame that on the economy and the change in the atmosphere not specific platforms, so budgets of course, I mean that’s changed, but again it’s not really the process of publishing across multiple platforms that’s causing all the changes but I don’t know what the cause/effect relationship is there, so it’s hard to tell.
Appendix X – Interview data (Deputy managing editor at a consumer magazine)

What has been your overall experience with publishing content in mobile and/or tablet. I know on the written interview you said you were lead editor for tablet editions for all stories but I was just wondering if you could go a little bit more into detail about that.

I am lead digital editor for tablet. I oversee all of the editorial. What we have been doing is we’re just taking the print magazine content then deciding what can kind of translate directly and what we either want to modify somewhat for the tablet or what we want to add content for the digital issue and that’s kind of a group planning process just like the print issue is, you know with each department step of the editor weighing in on that. And then once the plan is set, it’s kind of all handed off to me to oversee it and digital designers put stories into layout form. And then I’m the one who does the first review of all the stories in the digital layouts. And in addition to just, you know, sometimes massaging copy to make it work I’m also kind of charged with overseeing if the actual content is working in the digital format and if we need to consider any design changes or editorial changes that might improve how it would be coming across to our readers.

Okay…. And what do you feel are the advantages for your magazine in terms of publishing content on mobile and/or content?

I think it’s really a nice thing for us because we put a lot into our photography and the images are stunning on the iPad, they’re very luminous and bright, colorful. It really plays into what our readers are looking for as far as me time, you know to just be able to sit back with the tablet and enjoy the experience. We really want to make the digital issue an experience for readers, something they can enjoy and not just something to just swipe through quick (laughs).

And then on the flip side what do you think are the disadvantages in publishing across multiple platforms?

Really the biggest challenges have been just production time, you know trying to get out a print issue and a digital issue with a limited amount of time. And then there are also some issues with the Apple store. Like we wanted to have a lower price point and some other options and, at least initially, we haven’t been able to do that. And so a lot of readers aren’t super happy with the idea of well I’m already subscribing and now I have to pay another $4.99 to get the digital editions. And I think we’re going to see a change on that in the near future that, you know, Apple’s going to be open to where subscribers can get a discounted rate for an iPad subscription and things like that, so I think that’s going to help that problem go away. And I know that’s not really related to the production of the issue but on the other hand it kind of is because it effects our whole plan and what we want to do going forward.

Okay, and overall how has the publication on mobile and tablets changed or impacted editorial work at your magazine?
It’s definitely put a lot more work on everyone’s plate, really. The deputy editors as they’re planning now instead of just planning the print content they’re having to take some more time with each story and think about how they want to present the story digitally and if they need to include additional features – are there photos we’re going to use in digital that maybe we’re not using in print, when things need to be assigned out to writers early on in the process, if we’re doing video or audio or if we’re doing plans for the digital issue then all that has to be thought out ahead of time and assigned to writers or artists or whoever and so its just been a lot more planning and then when it actually gets to the production stage then the deputies usually like to at least see how it’s coming together. You know they might not put as much time into it as they would a print story since I’m reviewing it for them because a lot of the issues have already been worked out but still it does take some of their time from, well it adds to their time.

How has it impacted your day-to-day work, personally?

The thing is, my position has only been in existence about just a little over a year. And so we were kind of lucky that the timing of things because you know I can’t really say if my boss has really envisioned how much work I’ve been doing with digital but when I was hired to be kind of the writing quality person this magazine, you know, there was an understanding that this job would kind of flow with what the needs were and so we were luckier than a lot of magazines I think just because my position had been created and I was able to absorb that workflow because it turned into, I would say at least 20 percent of my job and it might be more than that, really it might be closer to 25.

And then on the written interview you also said that publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job more difficult. I know we’ve already addressed part of this but I was just wondering if there are any other ways it is making your job more difficult. Like, for example, does it cause any extra deadline stress or anything like that?

You know, I think the hardest thing is the layered deadlines. Before you kind of had a stair step deadline. And now, well, I’ll just give you an example from what’s going on right now. We just finished the July digital issue and as far as creating functionality of the pages and all of that and so now what they do is after we editorially get done with it then it goes to the people who create the functionality and then it comes back to us for a simulator review, which we did last Friday, then it comes back to us again with a push to the iPad and just to a small group of people who then go through and make sure everything is the way we want it to be and make sure that all the functionality is there, you know, all the hot spots are working, the web links are in the right place, everything is doing what it’s supposed to do and it is presented the way we wanted it, want it to be when it goes to the Apple store and so now it’s like today I’ll be reviewing July digital on the iPad push and at the same time we’re trying to get the last August print files sent out to the imaging center and then at the same time there’s September print first copies coming to me for first review and edits so there’s like this, like this three issue layer. You know you have to kind of switch your mindset back and forth between not only which issue you’re working on but which medium you’re working in because there’s such a
difference. You know we’re doing a horizontal on the iPad and our magazine of course is vertical and you just kind of have to get into the mindset as you’re approaching each work center (laughs).

How much would you say you repurpose stories for the tablet. I know you said you massage copy sometimes or you use different pictures or something but what percentage of the actual copy do you make changes to?

Probably half, actually. There’s a lot of times just because of the different formats that maybe, you know if we have a spread magazine, obviously it’s only a one-page opener on the tablet or we have a very vertical image in the magazine it has to go horizontal in tablet, perhaps a different image from further in the layout or moved to the front and so a lot of times small changes need to be made – open the story differently or rewrite a caption or just things like that and sometimes if a story is wrong, we’ll have to figure out ways, we’ll have to decide if we want it to go on consecutive pages or if we want to use, you know, pop-up, you know, tabs to get through the story in a different way than we might have done in print. And then we are adding a lot of video and audio that we have to write little copy blocks for or introduce and we’re doing a lot of additional content as far as planning plans, things like that, it’s copy that was not in the magazine and so it has to be read for the first time for digital and to make sure that it’s working with the rest of the story.

I know there’s been criticisms that some publications have just dumped content on tablet and mobile but it sounds like you guys don’t do that at all.

No, we don’t do that at all although we really do understand why they’re doing that. It’s all a time and will power issue and some of the _____ publications are doing that, you know it’s just basically what you see in print is what you’ll see in digital and it does give readers the option, okay do I want to just have a digital subscription rather than a print subscription and you know, there are readers out there who are really wanting that, they don’t either its more convenient for them or they really don’t want to see, you know, environmentally they think that they’d rather not be getting that many pages of paper. So there is a push that some people really want that and, and that’s all they want – they’re not looking for the bells and whistles, they’re just wanting the magazine in a different format. So there’s good reason why some magazines are going that way and I don’t think it wouldn’t be totally out of the question that that might not happen for us down the road and perhaps that we’d go to maybe some special issue or, you know, special offering, and maybe just have the regular, you know, January, February, March issues coming out without the bells and whistles and then but then readers could also get special iPad only issues.

Overall how do you feel publication on these different platforms is impacting your magazine’s content quality, especially with all the time displacement and all the extra tasks that everyone has to do?

I think our quality’s still very high and just because of sheer determination (laughs) that you know, we don’t want to lose quality in adding a digital issue and we
have higher contemporary employees who are helping especially with design and also
copyediting to try to ensure that we don’t lose quality because that’s something that is a
huge concern for us.

So overall do you feel that publication across multiple platforms has increased or
decreased the time you and others in editorial roles have for more traditional
editing tasks?

You know, I think right now people are just putting in the extra hours. I think we
are kind of in – the whole, the whole management idea has been that this is kind of a one
year experiment to see how big of an impact it does have on which departments and to
get reader feedback and just kind of explore the medium and then once we get a better
feel for how everything is then I think the plan is that we’re going to make some longer-
term decisions on staffing and if we want to continue to present the digital magazine the
way we currently are or if we want to make changes – do less, do more (laughs) do the
same and if we want to have permanent staff to handle that. And also advertising, you
know, I mean that’s another factor how much advertising is going into the issue and what
that can lend to supplying or hiring more staff so, you know, really right now it is very
much a kind of an experiment in progress.

My next question actually has to do with how publication across multiple platforms
has changed the way work is organized. I know you just said that it is more at the
experiment stage right now but I was wondering if you could just maybe
hypothesize on how you think it might change the way work is organized at your
organization.

You know, I don’t think there’s been a huge change in how things are organized. I
think it’s just added to the organizational load. I think as each department plans content
they’ve just had to expand their organizing so the iPad content is included in their plans
and then, you know when it gets to design stage our creative director has to include
digital in his assignments to designers and it’s just more kind of an expansion rather than
a change.

Can you see employees at your magazine that deal with these separate platforms
eventually having less traditional editing tasks to do and be involved in the more
automated tasks, like getting content on to these devices or does your organization
have employees that deal with more coding and stuff like that?

We’ve actually given all of the like creating hot spots and that sort of thing, we’ve
transferred that over to our content center and so they eventually hired some more people
there who are doing that kind of work so it’s not, you know, our designers aren’t
spending time creating web links and hot spots and putting in audio and video.

So you think that editing tasks will stay with editors and not be neglected as
everyone takes on more digital work?

Oh yes, I think so.
Okay, (laughs) well, and how satisfied are you with your job overall now that you have to deal with the tablet content?

You know, I really enjoy it. It’s a new frontier and it’s fun. You know, sometimes it is a challenge but I think it’s fun to be on the cutting edge of this and kind of wonder where it’s going to go. So it’s fun to create a new magazine and see what happens.
Appendix XI: Interview data (Copy desk chief at a consumer magazine)

First of all, what processes do you or others at your magazine go through to publish content on mobile and/or tablet applications?

Basically, the way it’s been done here, you know, things are always changing, is after the print issue is shipped, we come to approve the layouts for the iPad because we produce an iPad version every month. And so basically the layouts are then designed for the iPad and the text is flowed in and once production and the art department is fine with all the layouts are approved for the iPad version, usually somebody in copy will do the key lay on the issue for the iPad, which basically involves reading it and checking to make sure all the interactives work properly and we have like a horizontal and vertical layout, so we have to read both horizontal and vertical for each story. So that can be kind of time consuming.

And I know on the written interview you said that mostly do copyediting with tablets. I was just wondering if you could kind of tell me more about what you do in relation to publishing content on these different devices.

Well basically we’re just reading it like we would the print magazine. So we read it letter for letter to make sure that everything is correct. Also it changes a little bit on the iPad version because in the magazine, obviously, we have directional or, you know, to jump lines, and in the iPad we don’t because there’s no folio, obviously, on the iPad version. So we usually have to make sure all the directionals are moved or any kind of like internal page references. Sometimes there’ll be like, you know, “see sidebar p. 222” or whatever, so we’ve got to make sure that those don’t appear in the iPad version. So it’s a little bit of looking at it differently because the layouts aren’t the same as the print magazine, you know. Sometimes they go with less photos, sometimes they turn them into these slideshows and it’s just kind of rethinking how the text works with the iPad.

What do you think are the advantages for your magazine in publishing content on all these different platforms?

Well I think the advantages are it’s like you can provide more of a service to readers like if you’re talking about, for example, doing a certain hairstyle or wearing a certain outfit or using like one item of clothing in different ways, you actually have slideshows that basically show every single photo and each step in the process. So if you’re trying to do a certain hairstyle you can have like five photos that illustrate all of the steps to get to that hairstyle or if there’s a certain outfit that you can wear like six different ways or something. Whereas in the print magazine, you’re limited to space, so usually we can’t run as many photos or illustrations showing something because there are only so many pages in the magazine but with the iPad you can have as many pages or images that you want.

Okay, and on the flipside, do you think there are any disadvantages to your magazine publishing across multiple platforms?
Disadvantages? I don’t think there’s any actual disadvantage although, you know, it comes down to personal preference too because some people still like to, you know, have an actual magazine in their hands or obviously it’s nice to be able to go into a doctor’s office or a bookstore or nail salon, whatever, and be able to pick up an actual magazine. I think that you can pretty much tell the same story or maybe even tell it better on a tablet because you have more space to work with.

On the written interview you said that the publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job more difficult. I was just wondering if you could kind of expand on that and tell me how it does that.

It makes it more difficult just due to sheer manpower. I think this is all a relatively new development in the publishing industry and I don’t think that, management basically doesn’t really want to hire additional people to work on it and then we have some freelancers who also help us put it together but it just creates more responsibilities for the people who already had their hands full with the print magazine. It’s just maybe, you know, they haven’t come around to the whole idea of having a staff that’s just dedicated to the iPad. It’s like everybody has to kind of increase their responsibilities in order to get it done. So that’s how it makes my job more difficult. I have to schedule additional people to work on it or take people away from the print magazine who would normally just be working on the print magazine to focus on the iPad. So it’s just more work for the staffers that are here, basically.

And has the publication of content across multiple platforms impacted editorial work at your magazine, besides just increasing the workload?

Yeah. I mean I think the thing is, too, is that I feel like maybe the technology that we use here, it’s not integrated seamlessly with the iPad. For example, we can’t make any of our own edits ourselves, we usually have to go to a production person to have them do it before it can then be uploaded to the iPad. So I think it’s because the versions are always changing as well it kind of takes more work to get to the final version on the iPad because the technology is different from what we use for copy and design for the print. So we could just obviously make our own changes in copy when we’re editing something but with the iPad we can’t just go in and copyedit and edit the iPad. We have to note our changes and then go over to somebody else and sit there to make sure they’re being input correctly. So that adds like a whole other layer to the process.

Okay. And how have these changes impacted your job?

I mean I think now it’s just we have to think of the magazine not only as a print issue but we also have to think about it in terms of all of the various platforms that we’re on, you know, besides like print and the web we also have a tablet version. So I think it’s basically just thinking of it all as one instead of we just work on the print magazine or we just work on the Web side, you know, now the staff is more integrated and we have to be thinking about how the stories are presented and various formats.
Okay. And with the publication of content across multiple platforms, has that impacted the time you have for traditional editing tasks? I know you said you do a lot of copyediting but I was just wondering if you spend less time on those things now that iPad and mobile publication are in the picture.

No. I still think that most of our time is devoted to the print issue but because basically our tablet version is pretty much, you know, an exact replica of the print magazine, so most of our work is on the print issue and then after we close the issue then the work on the iPad really kicks off, at least for us. And we spend probably about a week to a week and a half on it in between issues.

And then, overall, how do you feel that publication across multiple platforms is impacting your magazine’s content quality, whether it’s making it better, worse, or if it’s the same?

I would say it’s probably the same because we put out a really high quality product every month and I think the iPad reflects that as well because time goes on and we can, you know, I think everybody gets more up to speed with doing the tablet then I think it’ll become even better especially as certain processes are smoothed out and things will improve over time as people become more experienced.

Right. And you kind of touched on this before but how much content do editors at your magazine repurpose for the iPad?

Oh, well, I mean pretty much everything. Like I said, it’s pretty much just a replica of the monthly issue so the tablet version of our magazine is pretty much what you get. It’s like the same stories as in the print issue it’s just maybe presented just a little bit differently just because there’s, you know, a different functionality and things you can do with it, you know, on the iPad versus just having paper. But it’s pretty much the monthly issue in tablet form.

And since your magazine has been published on the iPad and on mobile applications, have there been any changes in the way work is organized at the publication?

Let’s see. Well, a little bit. I mean, there’s been some slight restructuring but I think we’ve had to hire some additional freelancers to work on it, but I feel like the people, the staffers themselves, you know, we’ve had to basically carve out time to work on that and it takes away time from the print issue. We’ve been managing it okay I just think ideally it would be nice to have, you know, a dedicated iPad staff but for now I think it’s working out okay.

Okay. And how satisfied are you with your job now that these changes have taken place?

I’m fairly satisfied but, like I said, it’s just another, an added responsibility, which can be difficult, especially if you feel like you’ve been handling a lot of responsibilities already so I think it would be easier if we actually had more people who could help because I feel like the iPad is its own magazine almost, even though it’s obviously
integrated with our print issue but it does require a lot of hours of work. I would say that I’m fairly satisfied but probably it was, obviously my job was easier before we introduced it.

**So it’s had a pretty major impact on your job load, then?**

Yeah, I would say maybe not extremely major but, you know, probably more than average, impact. Probably 50 percent more responsibilities.

**Well, that’s a pretty big number.**

Yeah.

**And then this is actually my last question. In general, how satisfied are you with the system your magazine has in place for publishing content across multiple platforms?**

Well I think right now I’m not very satisfied but there are some changes that are in the works so I’m hopeful that, you know, things will change in the future and things can become more streamlined between the platforms and hopefully that will mean better work lives for all of us. Because right now we’re putting in a lot of hours so I’m hoping that as our system becomes more refined and things become more streamlined that, you know, hopefully the hours become reduced.
Appendix XII – Interview data (Assistant editor at a consumer magazine)

I know you said on the written interview that you don’t deal with mobile or tablet content but I was just wondering if it was possible for you to tell me a little bit about the process that others at your magazine go through to create content for the iPad or for mobile apps.

Well as an intern I worked a little on that. Basically it’s just taking content from books or magazine articles and adapting it to suit another platform whether that means, you know, reformatting the artwork or reformatting the headlines to be more appealing on a digital platform, making the content more bitsy so it’s more easily accessible, again, on the digital platform. A lot of times it just involves putting stuff in spreadsheets and organizing them. I don’t know a ton about the backend of it but I think there’s obviously, you know, editing something that’s been written for long-form doesn’t translate well to a digital platform, so, you know, it’s making things more listy or bitsy.

Right. So your magazine usually reformats content for digital platforms, then, they don’t just dump it as is onto mobile or tablet apps?

Yeah, I mean, we try to, you know, take things and certain articles are written, you know, a lot of our articles’ formats will be five different points with service in each. So that translates pretty well to digital formats. But sometimes it means making slideshows or dividing articles up or we’ve (indistinguishable) put our long-form writing up on the web or whatnot, but what we’ve found is that it translates better when it’s in a slideshow form or something like that.

And what do you think are the advantages for your magazine in providing content to readers on these different platforms?

Everybody’s different. Some people still prefer to have the tangible magazine to hold in their hand but there are other people who want the convenience factor of being able to pull out their e-reader or cell phone and read a story. So there’s that instant gratification factor of being able to sit on the subway and immediately read something. So I think it’s the immediacy, the convenience. Just the quick stream of content. You’re not bound to reading just the article that’s in the magazine and there’s links then to other articles that may interest you so it’s this kind of click and then click and then click process of constantly finding new information that is in the vein of what you’re interested in.

Okay. And then on the flip side do you think there are any disadvantages for your magazine in providing content on mobile and tablet platforms?

Well again, I think people will lose their appreciation for more long-form stuff. When it’s online they don’t want to sit down and read, you know, a 3,000 word story, they want little bitsy things. And I think sometimes there’s also a problem online with people just dumping content, that there’s less discretion of what to put online so you don’t have this solid reporting sometimes. You don’t have as serious a conceit behind a story, as much contemplation of your topic. People just find something and, you know,
throw it up on the Web for the sake of clicks and I think it’s important to preserve your brand and your brand’s integrity when you’re creating content for digital platforms like mobile and tablet.

**And on the written interview you said that publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job slightly more difficult. I was just wondering if you could describe to me how it does that.**

You just have to always be aware of how it’ll translate to the different digital platforms. And, I mean, it’s not a huge consideration but it’s definitely something you want to just make sure that you keep uniformity with the brand image you put on all these different platforms. So it’s not a huge concern for me, really, but it does kind of make me think on multiple levels constantly, which kind of redirects my focus away from some of the editing tasks.

**Okay. And how has the publication of magazine content on mobile and tablet devices impacted editorial work at your magazine?**

I don’t really think that it has besides what I mentioned in the last question. I mean, there are two separate things so they’ve got that department has one thing going and we’ve got another thing going. I don’t feel like detracts or impacts the other, really.

**Okay. So what you’re telling me is that at your magazine, people who work on the print product are separate from people who work on the digital products, then?**

Yeah, I mean there is some integration, to some degree, Like I work online and I work with the magazine but I think for the most part, people specialize.

**Okay. And I actually don’t even know if you have an answer for this based on how you answered the last question but since your magazine has been offering content on mobile and tablet platforms has that impacted at all the time you have for traditional editing tasks?**

I mean, it does, like I said before, make me think constantly on multiple levels. I have to think about how each story I work on will translate to different platforms, which detracts some concentration away from editing and, like I said before, contemplation of the subject matter.

**Okay. And then do you think that because your magazine is offering content on these different platforms, do you think it's having an impact on the quality of content?**

No, I think we always, in the magazine, it’s like the mothership, and there is always loyalty to the magazine, so one will never compromise the other. We’ll just be more willing to put in more work or we’ll add people to staff who can specialize.

**So you just mentioned that you add staff members when you need them. Have there been any other changes in the way work is organized at your magazine since expanding content to digital and tablet platforms?**
Not really. You know, there’s always been online people, there’s always been editorial people, they do aim for more integration between the two so as to keep us all aware of what’s going on or as involved as much as possible in both sides of the story.

Okay, and this is my last question, actually. Has your workload changed at all since, content has been offered on more platforms?

Well I’ve always worked on both the print and digital side, so, you know, it hasn’t changed for me. I mean, I spend a lot of time doing, like, social media or things like that, but that’s always been kind of a part of it for me so there’s not been a huge change. I think people that have been in the industry longer are the ones who are really seeing more of the changes just because they were there before all these other things started happening.
Appendix XIII – Interview data (Copy chief at a consumer magazine)

First of all, can you describe to me a little bit about what your magazine is doing with mobile and tablet content?

I know we’re getting ready to do a lot more. I know our managing editor right now is getting ready to transition to kind of work on that exclusively. It’s definitely becoming a much bigger push, we’ve been doing a version for Kindle for quite awhile but it’s kind of just been something that we sort of put together, I don’t want to say “haphazardly” but, you know, it’s like sort of second thought after we get each issue finished.

Okay, and what processes do people in editorial roles at your magazine go through to get content ready for mobile and tablet applications?

The majority of the staff doesn’t really have much to do with it. Our managing editor has done a lot of it and the copyeditors and I help her with the, uh I don’t know what the correct terminology is, but like uploading the pages or the text or, it’s just kind of the two of them who have been converting everything from the regular print issue into that format.

Okay. And overall, what do you think are the advantages for your magazine in putting content on all these different platforms instead of just publishing a print edition?

It just seems like a print edition isn’t enough anymore. People say so much on facebook and blogs and twitter that if you’re not getting your content out there on every platform available then they’ll see the same kind of information coming from a competitor who’s taking advantage of that. So yeah I guess that’s it.

Okay, and then on the flipside, do you think there are any disadvantages to providing content on multiple platforms?

Well I think the most obvious disadvantage that I’ve witnessed is just that it stretches the staff’s really thin and people aren’t really hiring very many more people to take care of online and social media and mobile, for example. It’s kind of just like putting extra workload on people’s plates. And that’s been my experience at a few different magazines, which I think is probably pretty typical.

And then on the written interview you said that publication of content across multiple platforms makes your job more difficult and obviously you just touched on this a little bit already but I was wondering if you could tell me a little bit about how it does make your job more difficult?

Well I haven’t had that much to do with online and with the tablet version here but when I was at ______ I did more with that, I would proofread stuff for the website and it just seemed at ______ they, the staff in general, had more of a hands-on approach in the website. Like we would do more brainstorming for what was going on in the website and how we could connect it with the magazine and I honestly haven’t felt that
much here but it does take time away from other things we would otherwise be doing for the print issue.

**Okay and how has the publication of magazine content across multiple platforms, how has that impacted editorial work at your magazine?**

I think at ______ our editorial department is pretty disconnected from the digital versions. There are people who work on the website who I haven’t met after working here for four months – that’s sort of been my experience at other magazines too – at ______ they were like really pushing for more of a collaboration between online and editorial and making sure everyone is contributing ideas to both and they are working together, but even there it was like there was a separate digital department at Hearst, which really was, they were like the go-to for, they were the supervisors for our online team so even there it was a pretty separate. So the different teams are more separate than what you would expect at this point.

**And has the publication of content on multiple platforms impacted the time you have for traditional editing tasks? Like do you now have less time than you would have a few years ago for like writing headlines, planning content and copyediting and things like that?**

I don’t think so really like on the print version. When I was at ______ and I was doing a lot more for the Web there, there was obviously a much faster turnaround and I think a lot of stuff, even there where I was copyediting a lot of stuff, a lot of stuff goes online without necessarily being proofread or anything like that. There’s definitely a lot more room for error.

**So do you think the standards are different for print and for the digital platforms, like for online and for mobile and tablet?**

That’s definitely been my perception. And maybe I’m just more harsh about that because when I hear about people laying off like all of the online editors, or online copyeditors, the company, they’re having like two online editors, or, excuse me, copyeditors for several different websites I just think it’s ridiculous.

**And do you think that now that your magazine is offering it’s content on all these different platforms, do you think that’s having an impact on the publication’s content quality?**

I haven’t noticed it yet. I feel like at this point everyone’s kind of willing to put in the extra hours or the extra effort to do the additional tasks that are necessary for online or tablet but I think in the long run you’re going to have to hire more people who are specifically in charge of the tablet. Or else, you know, people will just get stretched too thin and that would lead to probably lower quality.

**And for the content that your magazine puts on digital platforms, does that content get repurposed for specific platforms or is it pretty much a verbatim copy of what appears in the print edition?**
The tablet is just exactly taken from the print issue and for online we do add additional photos or slideshows but it is mostly the same as what appears in print.

Okay, and have there been any recent changes in the way work is organized at your magazine?
In the past year we’ve had a huge turnover in staff and so there have probably been a lot of changes that I’m not even aware of. But it’s hard to say if those changes are due to the multiple platforms or to the economy or something else.

Okay. And how satisfied would you say you are with your job now that magazine content is being offered on multiple platforms instead of just through a print product?
I’m totally happy with my job. I haven’t had to do that much extra work in regards to the tablet. I don’t know, any extra work I’ve been asked to do has been kind of fun. If I were asked to do a lot of extra work, though, like it was just expected of me and it wasn’t kind of like attached to higher compensation or a title change or something like that, it would probably be angering.

Okay and this is actually my last question. In general how satisfied are you with the system that’s in place for publishing content across multiple platforms?
I definitely think it should be more integrated. I think it’s really kind of frustrating to feel like you don’t have a great idea about what’s going on with the online team or with the tablet, like some of these questions you’ve asked me I couldn’t even answer all that well because I am not as included in the digital content process as I think I should be. I feel like if you’re going to have a brand that spans across all those things you should at least have somewhat of a hand in all of them or at least be aware of what’s going on and I don’t think we’re totally at that point.

Okay, but do you think it will change in the future if the tablet becomes an integral part of the magazine industry's strategy?
I think it will become more integrated eventually, but I haven’t seen too much worry about that yet so I’m not sure how long it will be but, yes, sometime in the future I would hope the digital and print sides of magazines would become more integrated.
Appendix XIV – Interview data (Magazine editor-in-chief)

What has been your experience with publishing content on mobile and/or tablet? I know on the written interview that you said you spend a lot of time meeting with editors and checking the digital content but I was just wondering if you could go into a bit more detail.

I can. Now first of all I don’t think it matters for purposes of this but as of two weeks ago I am no longer the editor-in-chief but I was when we essentially transitioned and I handed it over to somebody else, he’s very busy and there’s no way he’s going to be able to answer these for you so because it’s anonymous it doesn’t matter, right?

Right.

All right, so you want to know what we do on digital and mobile?

Yes. And your overall perception of the process.

You know, we’ve been sort of attacking the mobile space for about 18, for about 18 months to two years and we’ve considered it a success in terms of we’ve had a lot of downloads and people paying attention to what we do online but it’s in the early stages and I think what we’re finding is that increasingly the process is, you know … energy, time consuming. Energy and time consuming because in order to create content and to repurpose content from the other things that we do for our mobile and tablet applications requires manpower. And it’s manpower that, at the moment, is in excess of the normal ratios we have for manpower versus content versus readers. What I mean is we have 60 people on staff and together they are producing content that reaches 15 million readers, we probably have five people working very hard on mobile and digital content, mobile and tablet content, that reaches 200,000 readers and if you think about that, you know, it’s twelve times as many people that reaches like 150 times as many people in print, so it’s still a highly inefficient method of content delivery for us but obviously it has promise and what we’re finding is basically, I would say, that now about 75 to 80 percent of our mobile/tablet content is repurposed and enhanced content from our print and digital applications meaning from our magazine and from our daily website. And 25 percent is increasingly, you know, new and original stuff that we’re creating for the tablet and for our mobile application. That’s pretty good and we expect there to be more of that moving forward and what’s especially helpful or interesting or promising is that increasingly there are things we are doing on our mobile application or on our tablet application that, you know, we’re saying “hey, that was pretty good” and even on the printed page, too.

What do you feel are the advantages for your magazine in publishing content on mobile and tablet?

Far and away I think one of the biggest advantages is that you are able to say that you are publishing on mobile and tablet. I mean that specifically you can’t claim to be a magazine in the second decade of the 21st century and not recognize that you at least need to be exploring that area. So being in the game is just important even though we don’t
know where the game will lead. Secondarily, as I said, the second biggest advantage is people who are doing our tablet application are smart and they’ve already created things that have come back into our printed product so it’s just another way to think about content and storytelling and narrative in an incubation form that’s just helpful because it keeps you thinking about change and variety. And finally there’s a relevance and a connectivity with anything digital in terms of having ties to your readers and your subscribers and your fans that can’t be done through the printed page. As far as I know, you can’t talk to people through the printed page directly. Question number 3!

Okay. And then on the flip side what do you feel are the disadvantages for your magazine?

The disadvantages are that it’s labor intensive. Right now there’s not a lot of data and feedback about what the user experience is like so you’re operating a little bit in a dark room and it costs money. But so those are unavoidable whenever you’re experimenting in a new area and undoubtedly we are walking down blind alleys sometimes and we are walking into dead ends but for the most part it’s a rewarding experience despite the difficulties.

Yeah I know a lot of people I’ve been talking to are saying the same things that it’s just the manpower is just, is just not quite there yet.

It’s not that people aren’t devoting manpower to it, it’s that the manpower they’re devoting to it is a lot, actually, given the numbers on the other end in terms of user experience.

Overall how do you feel that publication on mobile and tablet is impacting your magazine’s content quality, whether for better, for worse or not at all?

I think it’s better. It’s just making us be more creative, making us expand our ideas of where content can live and where it can come from and how it can develop. Far and away it’s making it better. A lot of the people we hired to work on this are very good and are very creative and they’re helping to make the main product good, too, because they’re in the same office.

Right, right. It’s good that you guys have that feedback loop between the two aspects of your publication. I don’t actually hear that from many people, so.

Well early on in our processes we decided to integrate digital and print even before mobile and print because we recognized that there has to be very specific reasons why you have a physical print product and there has to be very specific reasons evidenced in the content why you have a digital product and there has to be an obvious connection to readers and users and subscribers as to what those evidences and what those advantages are in each case and how they relate to each other. And because we recognized that, you know we have everybody working on the same stuff and doing the same stuff, so the people who run our digital platforms are also involved with certain pages of the print product, too.
That makes sense.

I don’t mean, by the way, that we have it all figured out. We’re just trying it, we’re talking a lot out loud about what makes the most sense and a lot of this we understood from our junior staffers. That they would all be able to do a better job if they were all kind of doing the same job with each other.

Right. And has the publication of content across multiple platforms impacted editorial work at your magazine?

I think it’s made it more matrix-like. And you know what I mean by matrix-like, meaning everybody is thinking more and more about everything so in terms of processes and in terms of processes and workload it’s made it more complex and more elegant and more interconnected but it’s also required triple-focus and double the work and quadruple the cooperation and communication and I made up all of those exponents meaning I don’t know if it’s triple the other and quadruple this one and double that one, but you know what I’m saying.

Do editors at your magazine spend much time repurposing print stories for mobile or tablet or is it more that you guys use the same text and headline for each platform?

It depends, there’s no formula. It all depends on the story. In terms of the long-term narrative, yeah we feel like people are able to read long-form narratives on mobile platforms at this point. Oftentimes we will take the, you know, so much of what we do is graphic and visual and so in that case we very much see the opportunity or we look for the opportunity to sort of enhance or expand the content in the magazine online. We certainly will, you know, include more photographs and include more interactivity of various kinds with the graphics, so, yes. So it’s not so easy as to just say we’ll write it and we’ll put it up on these different platforms. We started doing that, and it didn’t work out very well. We found that it wasn’t a satisfying experience for our online users. And we were slow and we recognized that it wouldn’t work that way so we had to put more energy and effort into customizing the content for each platform.

Okay. And you kind of mentioned this before when you said that you, at your magazine, that print and digital were integrated but have there been any changes in the way work is organized because of the different platforms?

Yes. Everyday and ongoingly. And ongoingly is not really a word but I think you and I should make it a word.

I understand what you mean. So your magazine is in the process of figuring things out then, right?

Yeah, we think we’ve figured out a lot of it already but we don’t want to settle and assume that, you know, if in the early days of the automobile you figured out how to make sure that there was always somebody in front of the car to turn the crank and you thought, well that’s all you need to know about starting a car, you would kind of, you know, have been fooled since pretty soon people would put keys in the drive shaft and
turn it on that way. So we don’t assume that how everything works today is how it’s
going to work tomorrow or a year from now.

And I know you aren’t in the same job with the magazine, but how satisfied were
you with your job once the magazine started offering content on mobile and tablet?

Oh yeah, and you should consider mine as kind of a present tense thing because
I’ve been doing this for 18 months and the new guys been doing this job for ten days. But
on a scale of one to ten, I’d say a seven. Because, you know, it’s still early and you can
sort of assume that to be more than a seven at this stage of the game would be a little
naïve.

Okay. And how did it impact your job difficulty? I know you said on the written
interview that you rated it like a three out of five for making your job more difficult.

It made it more difficult but also more interesting and, in general, you sign up for
jobs like this because you want to be challenged and that made it more challenging, so
that was a good thing.

That’s actually what I’ve been hearing from pretty much everyone so that’s kind of
a positive thing, I think.

Yeah, well if you think about it the people that you’re talking to are people who
get to where they are by being, for the most part, the upside of challenges. So that’s also
not surprising if you stop and think about it for a second. I think it’s sort of like saying if
you, you know, if you were doing a research project about explorers it wouldn’t be
surprising to find out that they like, they really enjoy seeing new things and new places
they’ve never been to before. They’re explorers, that’s what they live for!

Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And, this is actually my last question. In general
how satisfied are you with the system in place at your magazine for publishing
content across multiple platforms?

I would say moderately satisfied. Again, I feel like we are, you know, we have a
process in line that’s fairly, that works that’s fairly efficient but I would be shocked if, in
two years, we didn’t have a better process and a better system that is more efficient.
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