

Public Abstract

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Title:EXPLORING THE PROFESSIONAL VALUE SYSTEMS OF CONVERGED JOURNALISTS: WHAT ARE THEIR VALUES, AND DOES THE MEDIUM MATTER

Scholars have suggested that journalists working in print and online media may emphasize their professional values differently. But what about those inhabiting both worlds? This study investigates the professional value systems of 184 converged journalists—those working on both print and online platforms—to examine whether they emphasize the same values across different media. Respondents completed an online survey based on a portion of the American Journalist Survey; the journalists ranked the importance of 15 values in both their print and online work, and were asked which values they favored when presented with sets of two. The results reveal that the sample counts all 15 values among its professional value system in both platforms. When working in print, the sample most emphasized accuracy, followed by speed and providing analysis of complex problems; online, the sample most emphasized speed, followed by accuracy and letting people express views. When asked to choose between two values, respondents favored accuracy, thoroughness and balance, with accuracy receiving the most emphasis. Although the sample generally emphasized values proportionately between the two platforms, they stressed values more strongly in print than online. The findings indicate that technology has indeed forced change in the values journalists emphasize, but also suggest that social learning is alive in converged newsrooms, and that more traditional professional values have traveled fluidly to new media. The results lay a foundation for understanding how converged journalists make ethical decisions, and establish convergence journalism as a distinct segment of journalism worthy of further study.