"PLAYING" WITH YOUR NEWS: A FOCUS GROUP STUDY ON "NEWS YOUR OWN ADVENTURE"

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how news consumers interact with self-directed news content on a tablet device. I sought to discover how visual design, interactivity and control impact the way people watch news. I conducted a focus group study of 35 student participants — one group of seven, two groups of five, and three groups of six — from the Missouri School of Journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Participants were given an opportunity to explore stories within “News Your Own Adventure,” a Beta version of an iPad app from Newsy. I found the ability to control and self-direct their viewing of a news product was highly valued in the news consumption experience and led to more engagement. This research is a first look at how consumers like to engage and interact with self-directed content. Future producers and researchers could benefit from this by applying these findings to future app development.