

Public Abstract

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Title:Collaboration and Separation: How News Companies Find Innovation

This research examines how effectively journalists and business department workers at news organizations collaborate to improve their companies' financial standing.

This examination comes at a critical time in the news industry. It continues to experience numerous financial challenges across print, online and broadcast platforms, including declining advertising revenue and flattening and audience levels. The subsequent job cuts are annual events at an increasing number of news organizations and the level of informing the public – the most fundamental responsibility of journalism in a democracy – has greatly diminished in recent years. The research also comes after widespread acknowledgement that journalists and colleagues in companies' business departments need to more closely work with each other to develop strategies to maintain and build audiences.

The study involves an analysis of interviews with individuals working in the editorial and various business (e.g., advertising, marketing) departments at various news organizations. People interviewed worked at a variety of news media: print, broadcast and digital-only.

The findings show uneven success with internal collaboration at news organizations, with the greatest challenges for collaboration existing in older and print-focused news organizations. A reliance on increasingly antiquated business models and company structures are sabotaging efforts for effective collaboration. The interviews revealed few rewards for experimenting and collaborating.

The implications of this research are far reaching. The news industry collectively may be poorly equipped to confront and solve future revenue declines. Additionally, the examinations suggests new research on the journalism education industry's role in the failure of widespread effective collaboration in the news industry.