

Public Abstract

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Today, journalists need to engage in the most advanced technological methods of reaching their audience more efficiently as media professionals now battle a fast spread of unverified news. Journalists need to be quicker, but also retain the high level of accuracy that distinguishes the media from other sources of information. A very good example of the importance of the media needing to be faster and more accurate than ever, especially in the online environment, is the bombardment with false news on Facebook and Google during the 2016 U.S. elections.

The purpose of my thesis is to explore what influences the adoption or resistance to new technology in newsrooms and how new technologies change the journalistic processes. I looked at how non-management news producers dealt with technology throughout time, referring to the previous adoption of now embraced technologies. I also inquired about technologies that they are currently experimenting with, and attempted to predict the probability of them using other new technologies that they might not be familiar with.

The research method that I used is qualitative semi-structured interviews with 11 news producers from newspapers across the United States, who talked about their perception on how their newsrooms deal with technology-related decisions.

My results showed that non-management news producers believe newspaper newsrooms adopt technology based on preferences and industry practices. The media seems keen on experimenting with new types of technologies, but there are several aspects that they fail to consider. This makes the implementation of these technologies either hard to understand by users or very hard to carry out per se. News producers complained they are overburdened with tasks because of new technology that newsrooms are forcing onto them just because their peers in the industry are using it, while they admitted they would be interested in trying anything that might get them closer to their readers. If the technology serves them or not, they thought this is mostly related to leadership in the company.

These results are to be considered by those who build technology for the media and those in charge of incorporating it in the work of news producers. Future research could take into consideration both including more diverse subject categories, as well as the academic environment in which journalism is still taught.