

WHY PEOPLE PRODUCE CITIZEN-JOURNALISM: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

“Citizen journalism” is the term used to describe journalism-like mass media content produced and published by non-professional journalists, i.e. everyday people who produce and publish written, photographic or videographic content for free. Blogs can also fall under this rubric. This study answers the research question “Why do people produce citizen journalism?” To this end, four citizen journalists, affiliated with the citizen journalism publication Mymissourian.com, were interviewed to discover their motivations for producing citizen journalism. These interviews were analyzed using a theoretical framework developed from a synthesis of Weberian social action theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory. Interview questions sought to discover how the individuals felt before, during and after generation and publication of their citizen journalism content, the community's response to the citizen journalism that was produced, and the citizen journalist's relationship to the professional media of the community. Motivations for producing citizen journalism were categorized as gratifying either goal-directed or experiential needs related to sharing online.