

WRITING AND REPORTING

NEWS

A Coaching Method

CAROLE
RICH

Eighth Edition



Writing and Reporting News

A COACHING METHOD

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EIGHTH EDITION

Writing and Reporting News

A COACHING METHOD

CAROLE RICH



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Brief Contents



PART ONE Understanding News

- 1 Changing Concepts of News 1
- 2 The Basic News Story 20
- 3 Social Media 44



PART TWO Collecting Information

- 4 Sources and Online Research 57
- 5 Interviewing Techniques 75
- 6 Mobile and Multimedia Skills 97



PART THREE Constructing Stories

- 7 Leads and Nut Graphs 110
- 8 Story Organization 139
- 9 Story Forms 160
- 10 Storytelling and Feature Techniques 178
- 11 Broadcast News Writing 200
- 12 Online Journalism 227
- 13 Public Relations Writing 246



PART FOUR Understanding Media Issues

- 14 Media Law 267
- 15 Media Ethics 287
- 16 Multicultural Sensitivity 304



PART FIVE Applying the Techniques

- 17 Profiles and Obituaries 322
- 18 Speeches, News Conferences and Meetings 343
- 19 Government and Statistical Stories 358
- 20 Crime and Punishment 378
- 21 Disasters, Weather and Tragedies 406
- 22 Media Jobs and Internships 428
- Appendix: Grammar and Usage 448
- Glossary 463
- Index 471

Contents

Preface xi
Acknowledgments xiv
About the Author xv

PART ONE Understanding News

- 1 Changing Concepts of News 1**
 - Media Convergence 3
 - Changing Delivery of News 3
 - SOCIAL MEDIA 4**
 - Citizen Journalism 5
 - Economic Changes in Media 6
 - Changes in Online News 7
 - Changing Values 8
 - Objectivity 8
 - ETHICS 9**
 - Qualities of News 9
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH 15**
 - The Importance of Visuals 16
 - The Coaching Method 18
 - Exercises 19
 - Featured Online Activities 19
- 2 The Basic News Story 20**
 - Finding the Focus 21
 - Basic Questions 22
 - Elements of the Basic News Story 23
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH 30**
 - SOCIAL MEDIA 33**
 - Example of Basic News Story 34
 - ETHICS 35**
 - Quotes and Attribution 35
 - Exercises 41
 - Featured Online Activities 43

- 3 Social Media 44**
 - Defining Social Media 45
 - Reporting with Social Media 46
 - Facebook 47
 - Twitter 47
 - Verifying Social Media 49
 - Curation 49
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH 50**
 - Blogs 50
 - Podcasts 53
 - ETHICS 54**
 - SOCIAL MEDIA 55**
 - Exercises 56
 - Featured Online Activities 56

PART TWO Collecting Information

- 4 Sources and Online Research 57**
 - Human Sources 59
 - Data Sources 60
 - SOCIAL MEDIA 62**
 - Anonymous Sources 62
 - ETHICS 64**
 - Multicultural Sources 66
 - Written Sources 67
 - Online Sources 68
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH 69**
 - Public Records 70
 - The Freedom of Information Act 72
 - Exercises 73
 - Featured Online Activities 74
- 5 Interviewing Techniques 75**
 - Observation 77
 - Gathering Details 80

Sensitivity	80
Pros and Cons of Digital Recorders/ Videotape	81
Listening Tips	82
Note-Taking Tips	83
SOCIAL MEDIA	85
Interviewing Tips	85
MULTIMEDIA COACH	92
Email Interviews	92
ETHICS	93
Telephone Interviewing	94
Common Interviewing Problems	95
Exercises	95
Featured Online Activities	96

6 Mobile and Multimedia Skills 97

Multi-Platform Consumers	99
Mobile Reporting	99
ETHICS	100
Writing for Mobile Media	101
Multimedia and Convergence	102
Multimedia Innovation	102
SOCIAL MEDIA	103
Multimedia Planning	104
Writing for Multimedia	104
MULTIMEDIA COACH	105
Exercises	108
Featured Online Activities	109

PART THREE Constructing Stories

7 Leads and Nut Graphs 110

Types of Leads	111
Hard-News Leads	112
SOCIAL MEDIA	119
Soft Leads	123
MULTIMEDIA COACH	124
ETHICS	124
Reminders: Tips for Finding Your Lead	135

Exercises	136
Featured Online Activities	138

8 Story Organization 139

Stages of the Writing Process	140
SOCIAL MEDIA	143
ETHICS	143
Organizational Techniques	143
MULTIMEDIA COACH	149
Making Middles Move	149
Endings	154
Exercises	159
Featured Online Activities	159

9 Story Forms 160

Story Structures	162
Inverted Pyramid	162
<i>The Wall Street Journal</i> Formula	163
MULTIMEDIA COACH	167
Hourglass Structure	167
SOCIAL MEDIA	169
List Technique	169
Question/Answer Format	170
ETHICS	171
Sections Technique	172
Exercises	175
Featured Online Activities	177

10 Storytelling and Feature Techniques 178

Narrative Writing	180
Reading to Write	182
Reporting Tools	182
Writing Tools	183
MULTIMEDIA COACH	191
SOCIAL MEDIA	193
Storytelling Structure	193
ETHICS	195
Serial Narratives	197
Exercises	198
Featured Online Activities	199

11 Broadcast News Writing 200

Producing a Newscast	201
MULTIMEDIA COACH	206

Writing Tips 206
 Broadcast Writing Style 207
 Teasers and Lead-Ins 210
ETHICS 211
SOCIAL MEDIA 214
 Writing for Radio 214
 Broadcast Style 216
 Story Structure 217
 Revising Stories 223
 Glossary 223
 Exercises 225
 Featured Online Activities 226

12 Online Journalism 227

Digital First Media 229
 Qualities of Online News 230
 Online Readers 231
ETHICS 232
 Story Planning 233
 Reporting for the Web 234
 Anatomy of a News Story
 on the Web 235
 Writing Techniques 236
MULTIMEDIA COACH 237
SOCIAL MEDIA 238
 Headlines, Summary Blurbs
 and Briefs 239
 Story Structure 241
 Personal Storytelling 243
 Revise 244
 Exercises 244
 Featured Online Activities 245

13 Public Relations Writing 246

Changes in Public Relations 248
MULTIMEDIA COACH 249
 Writing Skills for Press Releases 250
ETHICS 251
 Email Press Releases 251
SOCIAL MEDIA 252
 Structure of Press Releases 253
 Video Press Releases 258
 Public Service Announcements 261
 Multicultural Awareness 262
 Media Kits 263
 Job Skills — Advice from the Pros 264

Exercises 265
 Featured Online Activities 266

PART FOUR Understanding Media Issues

14 Media Law 267

Libel 269
 The Importance of Accuracy 274
ETHICS 278
 Invasion of Privacy 278
 Online Legal Issues 280
SOCIAL MEDIA 282
 Copyright 283
MULTIMEDIA COACH 284
 Exercises 285
 Featured Online Activities 286

15 Media Ethics 287

SOCIAL MEDIA 290
 Conflicts of Interest 291
 Deception 293
 Plagiarism 293
 Privacy Issues 294
MULTIMEDIA COACH 301
 Ethical Reasoning 301
ETHICS 302
 Codes of Ethics 303
 Exercises 303
 Featured Online Activities 303

16 Multicultural Sensitivity 304

The Language of Multiculturalism 306
ETHICS 310
 Minorities in the News 311
SOCIAL MEDIA 312
 Gender Differences 313
MULTIMEDIA COACH 314
 Guidelines for Writing About Special
 Groups 314
 Exercises 320
 Featured Online Activities 321

PART FIVE Applying the Techniques

17 Profiles and Obituaries 322

- Turning Points 325
- The Goal Method 325
 - PROFILE PLANNING TIPS** 326
- Basic Elements of Profiles 327
- Micro Profile 329
- Snapshot Profiles 330
- Organizing the Profile 331
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH** 332
 - ETHICS** 334
- Obituaries 334
 - SOCIAL MEDIA** 335
 - Exercises 341
 - Featured Online Activities 342

18 Speeches, News Conferences and Meetings 343

- ETHICS** 346
- Stories About Meetings 346
 - SOCIAL MEDIA** 351
- Stories About Speeches 351
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH** 354
- Stories About News Conferences 354
 - Exercises 357
 - Featured Online Activities 357

19 Government and Statistical Stories 358

- MULTIMEDIA COACH** 360
- Reporting Tips 361
- Visuals 362
 - ETHICS** 363
- Writing Tips 364
 - SOCIAL MEDIA** 369
- Statistical Stories 369
- Budget Stories 371
 - Exercises 377
 - Featured Online Activities 377

20 Crime and Punishment 378

- Crime Stories 380
 - SOCIAL MEDIA** 386
 - ETHICS** 391
- Court Stories 394
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH** 395
- Federal Courts and State Courts 395
 - Exercises 403
 - Featured Online Activities 405

21 Disasters, Weather and Tragedies 406

- Changing Challenges of Covering Tragedy 409
 - SOCIAL MEDIA** 412
 - ETHICS** 413
- Reporting Techniques 414
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH** 418
- Airplane Crashes 421
- Natural Disasters 422
- Weather Stories 425
 - Exercises 427
 - Featured Online Activities 427

22 Media Jobs and Internships 428

- Finding Jobs and Internships 430
- Applying for a Job or Internship 432
 - SOCIAL MEDIA** 434
- Writing Cover Letters 435
 - ETHICS** 439
- Online Application Examples 439
- Résumés 440
 - MULTIMEDIA COACH** 442
- Online Portfolios 444
- Interviews 444
 - Exercises 447
 - Featured Online Activities 447

Appendix: Grammar and Usage 448

Glossary 463

Index 471

Preface

It's an exciting time to be studying journalism. "In my view the future of journalism can and will be better than its past," according to Richard Gingras, senior director of news and social products at Google. "I believe we are at the beginnings of a renaissance in the exploration and re-invention of how news is gathered, expressed, and engaged with. The media landscape is in the process of being completely transformed, tossed upside down; reinvented and restructured in ways we know, and in ways we do not *yet* know."

Although the development and delivery of news will continue to change, some journalism skills remain essential. This book teaches the basic skills of journalism as well as the skills for producing social and mobile media for digital delivery.

As in previous editions, the coaching concepts of this book are designed to help students acquire the writing and reporting skills they will need no matter which media field they choose to enter. The book also includes breakout boxes of social media, ethics and multimedia in every chapter. The chapters are written in a storytelling style to make learning a pleasant reading experience.

NEW MATERIAL IN THIS EDITION

This eighth edition of *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method* has been revised to include more social media, multimedia and mobile media skills in every chapter. All chapters have been updated, more photos have been added and the following new sections have been added:

Chapter 1: Changing Concepts of News offers a new section on objectivity vs. neutrality.

Chapter 2: The Basic News Story contains a new section on objectivity and a new example of the basic news story.

Chapter 3: Social Media (was Chapter 4 in 7th edition) now includes new sections on verifying social media, curation, and a social media glossary.

Chapter 4: Sources and Online Research (was Chapter 5 in 7th edition) includes a new section on data sources.

Chapter 5: Interviewing Techniques (was Chapter 6 in 7th edition.) includes new information about the controversy in colleges over email interviews.

Chapter 6: Mobile and Multimedia Skills (was Chapter 3 in 7th edition.) is a major rewrite with expanded information on mobile media, new sections about multiplatform consumers, and multimedia innovation.

Chapter 9: Story Forms features a new lead focusing on the *Denver Post* Pulitzer Prize about the Aurora, Colorado, movie theater shooting and includes a new example for the question/answer story form.

Chapter 11: Broadcast News Writing features a new section on VOs and VOSOTs (voice-overs).

Chapter 12: Online Journalism offers another major rewrite with new examples from prize-winning college websites and a new section on digital first media.

Chapter 15: Media Ethics includes a new section on conflicts of interest.

Chapter 16: Multicultural Sensitivity features an expanded section on the Language of Multiculturalism with a new section on gender-neutral language.

Chapter 17: Profiles and Obituaries includes a new section on micro profiles (also called Twitter profiles).

Chapter 18: Speeches, News Conferences and Meetings includes a new lead and new examples.

Chapter 21: Disasters, Weather and Tragedies features new sections on the Boston Marathon bombing, Deadline Dangers, the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy and the role of social media in these tragedies.

Chapter 22: Media Jobs and Internships includes updated information using Twitter and social media and a new section on online portfolios.

For the first time a **Glossary** offers an alphabetical list of key journalism terms in the book. Also the inside back cover offers a quick **Glossary-at-a-Glance**, which features selected key journalism terms and social media terms.

HOW THE BOOK IS ORGANIZED

Although this textbook is arranged sequentially to take students through the steps from conceiving ideas to constructing stories, each chapter is self-contained so the chapters may be used in any order. While some material has moved to other chapters, the basic structure of the book has been retained:

Part 1: Understanding News: Part One contains chapters that explain changes in the media, the basics of a news story and the impact of social media on how we read and write news. This part will give students a greater understanding of the course they are about to take.

Part 2: Collecting Information: The three chapters in Part Two outline ways to collect the necessary information to write a story. Information includes types of sources available, online research, interviewing techniques and mobile and multimedia skills.

Part 3: Constructing Stories: Part Three covers tools to create stories in a variety of media. From writing leads to organizing stories, this section features techniques to help students whether they plan to pursue careers in print, broadcast, online media or in public relations.

Part 4: Understanding Media Issues: The chapters in Part Four discuss legal and ethical issues critical to understanding media today. The chapter on multicultural sensitivity covers topics that are more relevant and important now than ever before.

Part 5: Applying the Techniques: The chapters in Part Five apply techniques taught in the rest of the book to specific types of stories, from speeches to crimes and

disasters. This section also features a chapter that teaches students how to apply for jobs by crafting cover letters and resumes in print and online formats.

ALSO AVAILABLE DIGITALLY

MindTap for Journalism, offering the ultimate personal learning experience, is now available with *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method*, Eighth Edition. Fully integrated into one seamless experience, MindTap combines readings, multimedia, activities, and assessments into a singular learning path—guiding students through the course, maximizing study time and helping them master course concepts. Instructors can personalize the learning path by customizing Cengage Learning resources and adding their own content via apps that integrate into the MindTap framework with any learning management system. Also included within MindTap for this edition:

Learning Objectives help students understand what they will learn in each chapter.

Getting Started Activities engage students at the start of each part, motivating them to learn and collaborate via forums, voting and polling questions, and more.

Workbook Activities reworked from the workbook that has always been offered, are integrated into chapter readings to help students practice as they learn.

Chapter Quizzes help to gauge student understanding of the concepts in the chapter.

NewsScene Assignments based on realistic news events. Assignments offer extensive source material, including videotaped interviews, telephone messages, official documents and database information, which helps students sharpen their writing skills for print, broadcast and online media.

To learn more, ask your Cengage Learning sales representative to demo MindTap for you—or visit www.cengage.com/mindtap.

SUPPLEMENTS

The **Instructor's Companion Website** is an all-in-one resource for class preparation and presentation for instructors. Accessible through Cengage.com/login with your faculty account, you will find the latest revision of the Instructor's Manual (description below), as well as a list of helpful weblinks that can be used to broaden students' learning experiences.

The **Instructor's Resource Manual** contains chapter-specific goals, teaching suggestions and answers to the textbook and workbook exercises. It has been revamped to include not only the News Scene IM, but also to also help instructors teach through the MindTap. The Resource Manual also includes examples of original stories. Because the Instructor's Resource Manual is an electronic document, the file is available for download at the Instructor's Companion Website, at login.cengage.com.

The **Student Workbook**, which will be available as a print-on-demand request for this edition, features several exercises in each chapter to reinforce the concepts taught in *Writing and Reporting News*, Eighth Edition. These include quizzes, exercises designed to give students more opportunities to improve their reporting and writing skills, and exercises designed to encourage critical thinking by asking students to critique news stories and analyze websites. This edition of the workbook also includes practice in using social media skills. Please contact your local sales representative to request the workbook for your students.

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About the Author



Carole Rich has spent 25 years teaching journalism at four universities and coaching professional writers throughout the U.S. She has taught at the University of Alaska Anchorage and has served as chair of the journalism department at Hofstra University in Long Island, N.Y. She began her teaching career at the University of Arizona in 1985 and then taught journalism at the University of Kansas from 1987 to 1998 when she was hired as the distinguished Atwood professor in Alaska. Prior to becoming a professor, she worked for 16 years in the newspaper industry. She was a reporter for the former *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, city editor of the *Sun-Sentinel* in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and deputy metropolitan editor of the *Hartford (Connecticut) Courant*.

Rich has been a visiting writing coach at newspapers throughout the U.S. and has conducted many writing seminars at journalism organizations, including a seminar for professional journalists in Spain. She is also the author of *Creating Online Media: A Guide to Research, Writing and Design on the Internet*, published by McGraw-Hill.

IT'S SHORTLY AFTER 1 A.M., AND THE POLICE OFFICER'S PATROL IS

uneventful, except for the man carrying a 5-inch-long rat on his shoulder. No crime; it was just a man who bought a rat at a pet store. At 5:42 a.m. a young mother wakes to the cries of her hungry 10-month-old daughter. At noon a homeless woman with a canister of pepper spray in her bra waits for lunch at the local soup kitchen, and as midnight approaches, three fraternity members celebrate the last day of classes by climbing on the merry-go-round at a shopping mall.

These are just a few of the stories and photographs that chronicle one day in the life of residents in Lawrence, Kansas. The project could be done in any community. When the *Lawrence (Kansas) Journal-World* tackled the subject, it created a “multi-media time capsule” by producing the story in the newspaper, on television and on its website with text, photos, audio and video.

That’s not unusual these days. Almost every news organization has done a 24-hour story, but what made this different was the participation from the community. In addition to reporting by reporters and photographers of the newspaper and its partner TV station, residents participated by sending in stories about their day in various forms: podcasts, blogs, video, photos and text messages via email.

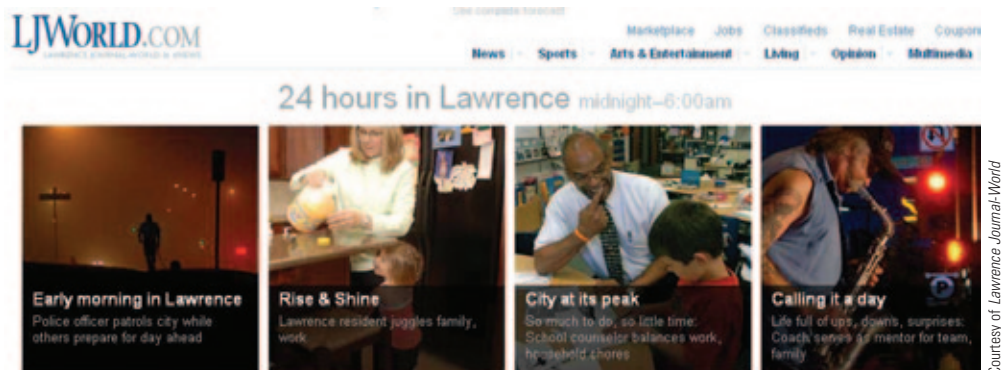
This project was one of several innovative methods the *Lawrence Journal-World* has produced to interact with its readers and viewers in multimedia forms. And it is an example of how the nature of news is changing.

Readers are participating much more in producing and reacting to news through social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and others. Mobile media and tablet computers are also affecting how news is delivered.

“Americans are now fully into the digital era,” according to a study by the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism. More than three-quarters of U.S. adults own a laptop or desktop computer, and 56 percent own



Courtesy of Lawrence Journal-World



Courtesy of Lawrence Journal-World

smartphones, according to the study. “News is a significant part of how people use these devices. . . . A mounting body of evidence finds that the spread of mobile technology is adding to news consumption.”

Readers and viewers don’t just receive news; they help collect and create it. They get the news when, how and where they want it on computers, mobile phones, tablet devices or social media networks. They contribute to traditional media outlets with news tips, story ideas and eyewitness reports in text, video and photos via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and other social media sites.

Definitions of news are also evolving, and economic factors such as mergers of media companies have changed the landscape of the news industry.

Declining newspaper circulation, increased competition from cable television news stations and access to millions of sites on the Internet are forcing news organizations to expand ways to interest readers and viewers. The days of writing for a single medium have ended at most news, public relations and advertising organizations.

MEDIA CONVERGENCE

Many of the skills you need to become a journalist are still grounded in basic reporting and writing principles, but in today’s market you need to know how to present information for print, broadcast and online media. This mixture of media is called “convergence,” “multimedia,” “integrated media” and other terms.

In some types of convergence, a print news organization partners with a broadcast station to collaborate on a story. In other newsrooms the print and broadcast facilities are in the same building where journalists coordinate news coverage. Convergence can also be considered the merger of print, audio, video and interactive elements in an online form.

The *Lawrence Journal-World* was one of the first news organizations in the U.S. to converge its print, broadcast and online operations, which are housed in a 1906 brick building that belies the modern newsroom inside. In 2001, owner and publisher Dolph C. Simons converted a vacant post office on the National Register of Historic Places into a newsroom featuring a circular multimedia desk where editors coordinate information from print, broadcast and online media reporters. “We want to stay abreast of new developments and be able to deliver news and advertising, as well as other information, however a reader or advertiser might desire,” Simons said.

These days many newsrooms at universities and news organizations all over the world have been reorganized to foster convergence of multimedia on a variety of platforms.

CHANGING DELIVERY OF NEWS

The increasing popularity of smartphones and tablet computers like the iPad is creating new venues for news companies to deliver their products. Mobile news delivery is the fastest growing trend for the media industry.

USA Today has completely restructured its newsroom to take advantage of distributing news on mobile and tablet platforms. The company disbanded its universal desk and reorganized the newsroom around 15 content areas such as travel, personal finance, technology and subjects that are geared to the audience and technology of mobile and tablet media.

These changes in technology have spawned an alphabet soup of terms related to forms of delivering news. Here are some common terms:

- **Blogs:** The term blog is short for “Web log” because blogs are posted on the Web. A blog can be a personal journal or brief commentary about any topic and can include audio or video.
- **Podcast:** This is digital media information in audio or video form distributed over the Internet for use on a portable media player such as an iPod, an instrument developed by Apple Inc., or an MP3 player. Pod is an abbreviation for “portable on demand.” You don’t need an iPod to hear or view a podcast; you can receive it on your computer with the use of software.

SOCIAL MEDIA



SOCIAL NETWORKING has transformed the media, according to Clay Shirky, a New York University professor who is considered

an expert in this field. “We are living in the middle of the largest increase in expressive capability in the history of the human race,” he wrote in his book *Here Comes Everybody*. “More people can communicate more things to more people than has ever been possible in the past, and the size and speed of this increase, from under one million participants to over one billion in a generation, makes the change unprecedented, even considered against the background of previous revolutions in communications tools.”

Here are a few of the ways social media sites are changing journalism:

- **New job positions:** News organizations are hiring social media editors. They interact with their communities on sites such as Twitter and Facebook, train journalists in their newsrooms to use social media, and
- maintain and contribute blogs or tweets to company sites.
- **Reporting:** Journalists are using social media to gain tips and sources and to communicate with readers and viewers, especially during a breaking news event. Many government and community organizations and corporate communications agencies also post information on social media sites that reporters can follow to gain information.
- **Participation by readers and viewers:** News organizations are soliciting information from subscribers to their websites and social media sites for breaking news, eyewitness reports and feedback about stories and issues. And social media users share information about the news with each other, creating new types of communities. “The public is clearly part of the news process now. Participation comes more through sharing than through contributing news themselves,” according to a report by the Pew Internet and American Life Project.

- **RSS:** These letters stand for “Really Simple Syndication,” which is probably simpler to use than to define. If you want to receive certain blogs or podcasts regularly, you can subscribe to a site using a Web feed reader called an “aggregator” that will compile them and deliver them to you. You insert a link to the site into the aggregator software. Search engines such as Google or Yahoo! offer to deliver automatic updates of news via RSS feeds. These feeds, delivered to your account, contain headlines, summaries and links to the articles.
- **Aggregator:** This is software that compiles or collects certain websites that you want delivered to you regularly and pushes them to you via email or automatically downloads them for you into a portable media player. The aggregator is also known as a feed reader because it “reads” the sites it will “feed” to you. It checks them for new material and downloads updates to your account for easy access on your computer or portable media device.
- **Social media:** News organizations are using social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr and others to connect with readers and viewers. Social media is electronic communication where users share information, ideas, messages, audio and video content on websites designed to create online communities.

CITIZEN JOURNALISM

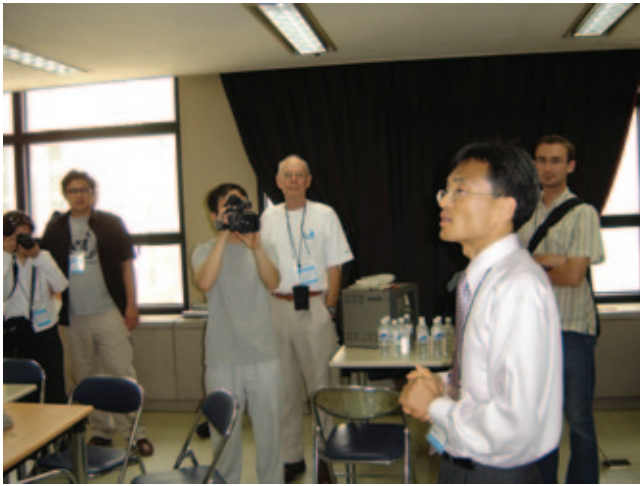
The concept of involving readers and viewers in reporting and disseminating news is called “citizen journalism,” “participatory journalism” or “user-generated-content.” The movement is an attempt by media organizations to increase their interaction with their audience. The contributors are often called “citizen journalists” because they are not staff members of the news organization, even though they may write blogs on a regular basis for the media website. Social media contributors sometimes perform the same functions.

Many of the citizen journalism sites are considered hyperlocal, providing local news and information for a neighborhood or small community within a larger area such as *The Oakland Local* (oaklandlocal.com). *The Twin Cities Daily Planet* (www.tcdailyplanet.net) is a successful hyperlocal site covering neighborhoods in the Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, area. The site has 100 media partners and bloggers.

A pioneer in the user-generated-content movement is a South Korean website called OhmyNews International. Oh Yeon-ho, creator of the site, said his motto is “Every citizen is a reporter all over the world.” Since its inception in 2000 with 727 citizen reporters, the organization has grown to more than 62,000 contributors, with 70 full-time editors and reporters. The focus of the organization has changed to report more about citizen journalism than world news.



Courtesy of OhmyNews International



Erik Moller/Creative Commons

This is how the company describes itself and its focus on citizen journalism: “We are a small team based at *OhmyNews* in Seoul, South Korea. We are international journalists. We know technology, and we are curious about the global progress of citizen journalism. And we adore coffee always. Grassroots journalism, citizen media, [and] crowdsourcing are all related terms that tackle the same question: How are regular people making and changing the news?”

ECONOMIC CHANGES IN MEDIA

OhmyNews founder Oh Yeon Ho in the newsroom in Seoul, Korea.

The changing face of the media isn’t just in the content and delivery of news; it is in the ownership of the largest media organizations. Economic forces created significant changes in major media companies at the start of the 21st century. Newspaper circulation was declining, and the large media companies listed on the stock exchange were under pressure because of sagging stock profits for their shareholders. Print and broadcast news organizations cut staffs and resources. Two of the largest media organizations, Knight Ridder Inc. and the Tribune Company, sold their newspapers and TV stations.

Journalists who got into the business years ago with the idealistic notion that the primary concern of media companies was content became disillusioned by the emphasis on economics, and many quit or retired. The times were changing and the news business was just that — a business that was supposed to make a profit. But journalists didn’t disappear; many of them formed new online ventures and found news-related jobs in other publications, businesses, public relations organizations and government agencies. Good journalism skills have broad application.

Partnerships

News organizations that were once fiercely competitive formed partnerships to share news stories in print and video as a way to cut costs. In South Florida, *The Miami Herald*, the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* and the *Palm Beach Post* began sharing stories, and similar arrangements were created among newspapers in Maine, Ohio and Texas. The nature of competition has changed.

Partnerships with university journalism departments are another way news organizations are expanding their coverage without expanding their staffs. *The New York Times* has a partnership with City University of New York in which journalism students write blogs to cover communities in Brooklyn and New Jersey; and with New York University journalism students to cover other communities within the metro area.

AOL has created a partnership with several universities called “PatchU,” which offers internships and coursework as well as freelance opportunities at Patch publications, which are online sites that provide news and information in hundreds of communities. Students can write stories and cover local events in multimedia form and integrate social media for the Patch sites.

Pay Walls

Would you be willing to pay for online news that you currently can get free? That’s a dilemma facing news organizations that are seeking ways to pay rising costs for their online publications. With advertising revenues declining and competition rising from other websites, news organizations have discussed charging for access to some or all of their online content. Several news sites have created pay walls, which wall off, or block access to, certain content. The cost of applications for digital delivery to smartphones and tablets will also affect the future of charges for online information.

CHANGES IN ONLINE NEWS

The Web has changed the nature of news in other ways:

Continual Deadlines When a news story breaks, reporters at many newspaper and broadcast organizations are expected to file the story immediately for the Web and update major stories online throughout the day. Twitter has changed the nature of breaking news as well. Reporters may tweet updates continually during a major incident or any breaking news story.

Interactive Content One of the main distinctions of online news is the ability to interact with readers. Web news stories often feature interactive content such as polls, chats and questions at the end of stories to prompt readers to express their views, as well as requests to comment on a news organization’s social media site. More than ever, writers need to consider how their audience will be affected by the story, regardless of the medium.

Related Links Online news is accompanied by links to related information, so a news story may no longer be a single entity. Traditional print and broadcast news stories also refer readers and viewers to related online information. Social media sites such as Twitter also feature links to blogs, photos, videos and other media content.

Nonlinear Structure Print and broadcast news stories are written in linear order — to be read or heard from beginning to end as if in a straight line. Because the Web features links and multimedia features, it creates a nonlinear environment, meaning readers may access content in any order they choose. Although many online news stories are still linear, original Web content is organized in more related pieces. Instead of one story containing all the information, nonlinear news might be split into separate parts for background, profiles, timelines, databases and multimedia.