

Understanding Online Journalism



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What is journalism?

- One hand: all kinds of news-making
- Other hand: informing the public on issues of public concern via public media

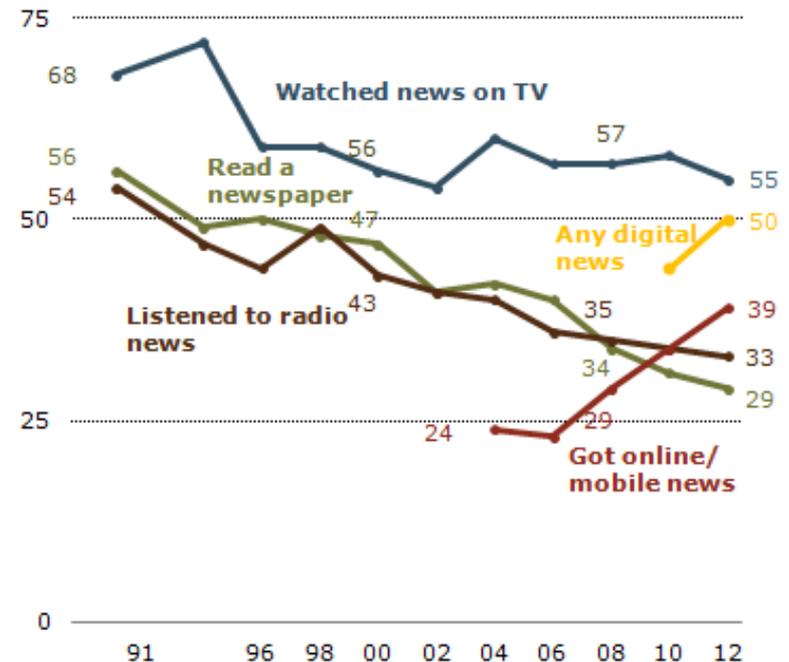
- It's the practice, not the media



Where & how we get news

- Less paper, still lot of TV
- Strongly online

Where People Got News Yesterday

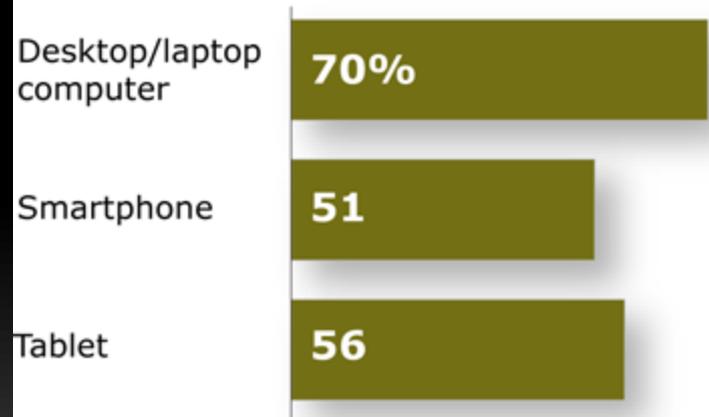


PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 News Consumption Survey.
Q9, Q11, Q13, Q17, Q20 Q21, Q70, Q75, Q82, Q87.

- Increasingly mobile

News consumption on digital devices

Percent of device owners who get news from...

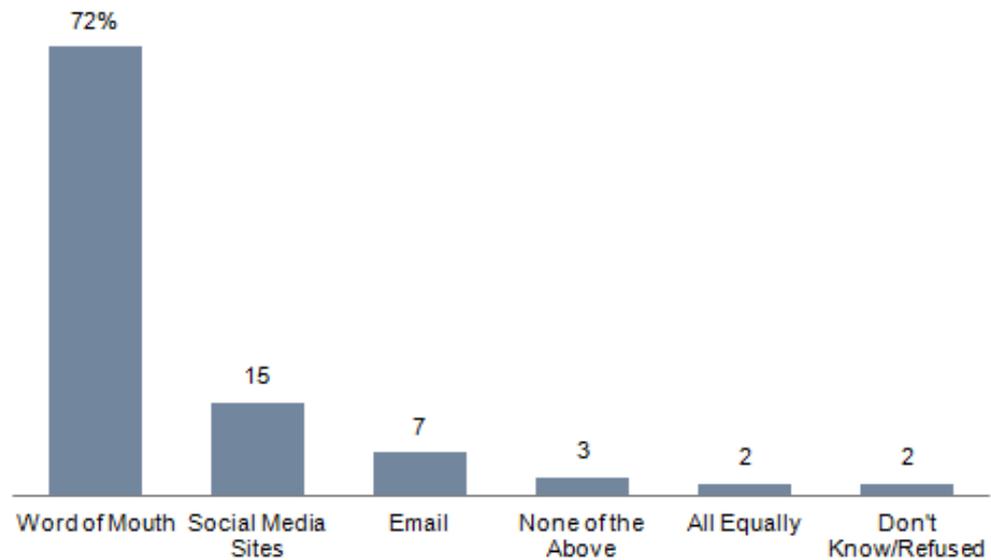


N's: Desktop/laptop=2,342; smartphone=1,180; tablet=511

- Social as ever, and then some more

Word of Mouth Is the Most Common Way People Get News From Friends and Family

Percentage of U.S. Adults



N=2009

Question: Many people get some of their news of the day from friends and family. When family or friends share a news story with you, what is the most common way they share it?

Note: Numbers are rounded and may not add up to 100.

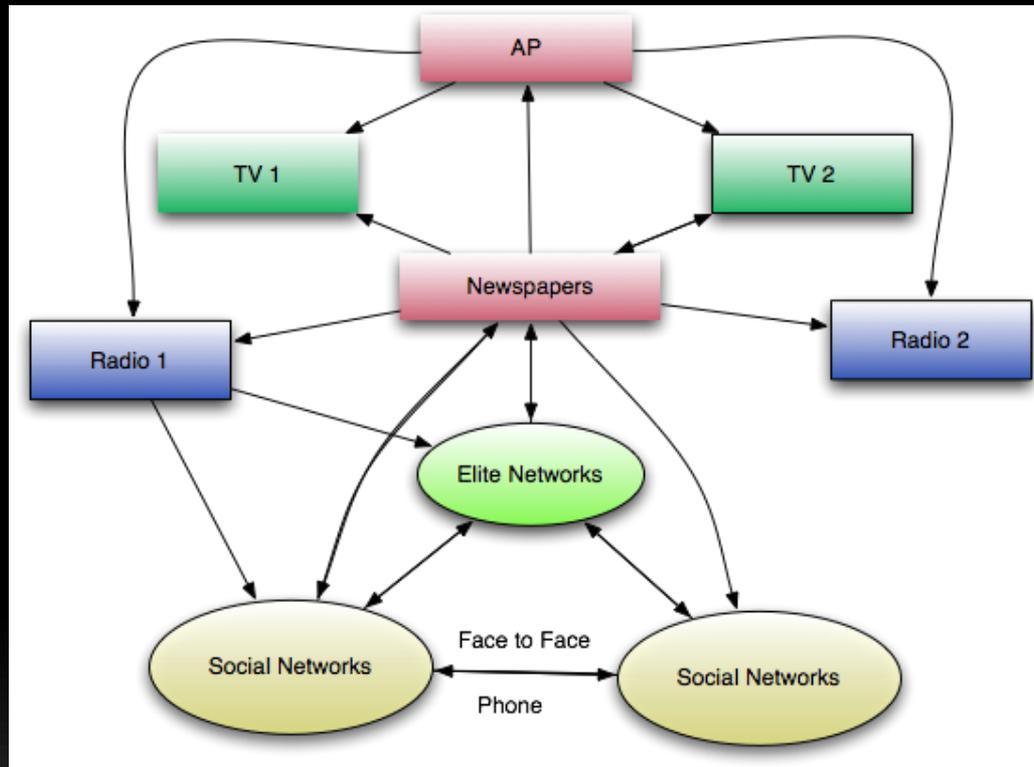
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

2013 STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

... simultaneously.

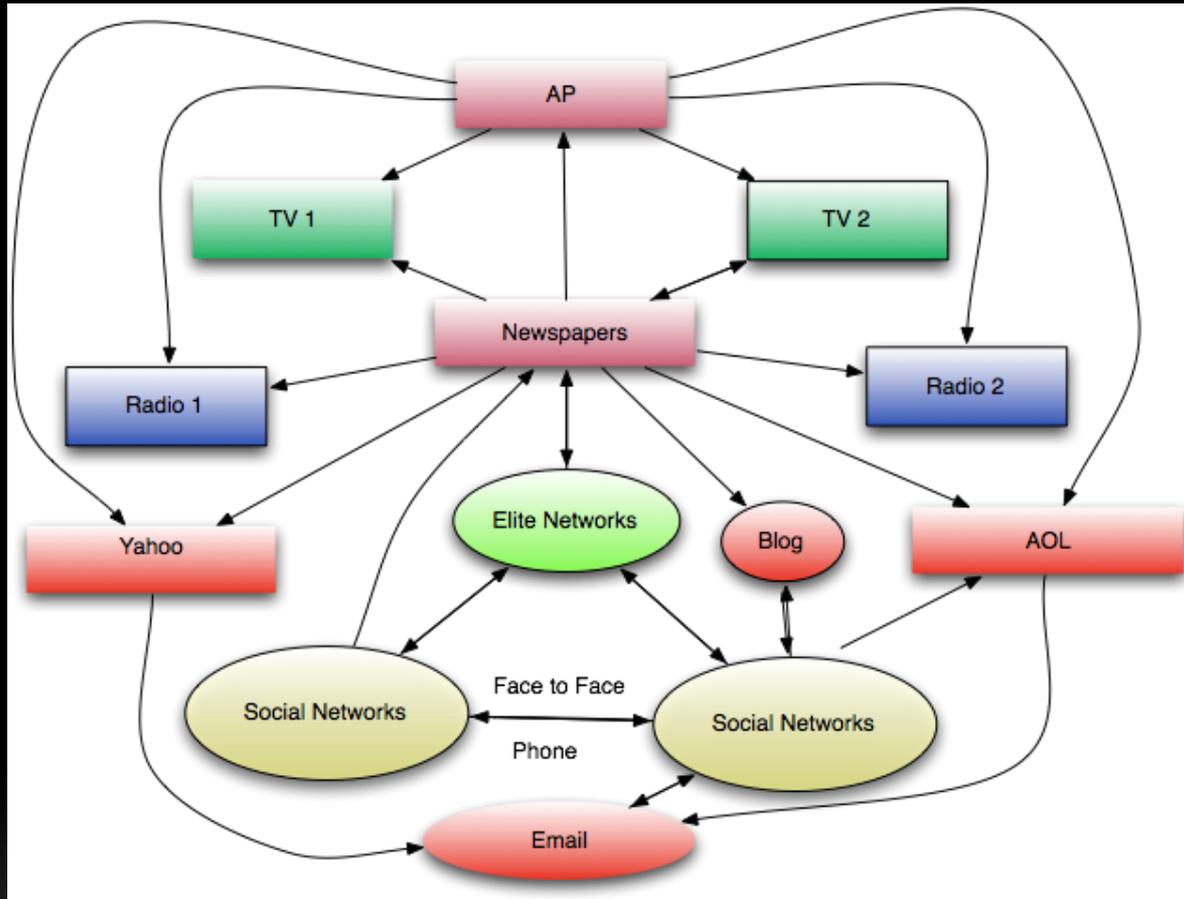


The changing(changed) news ecology



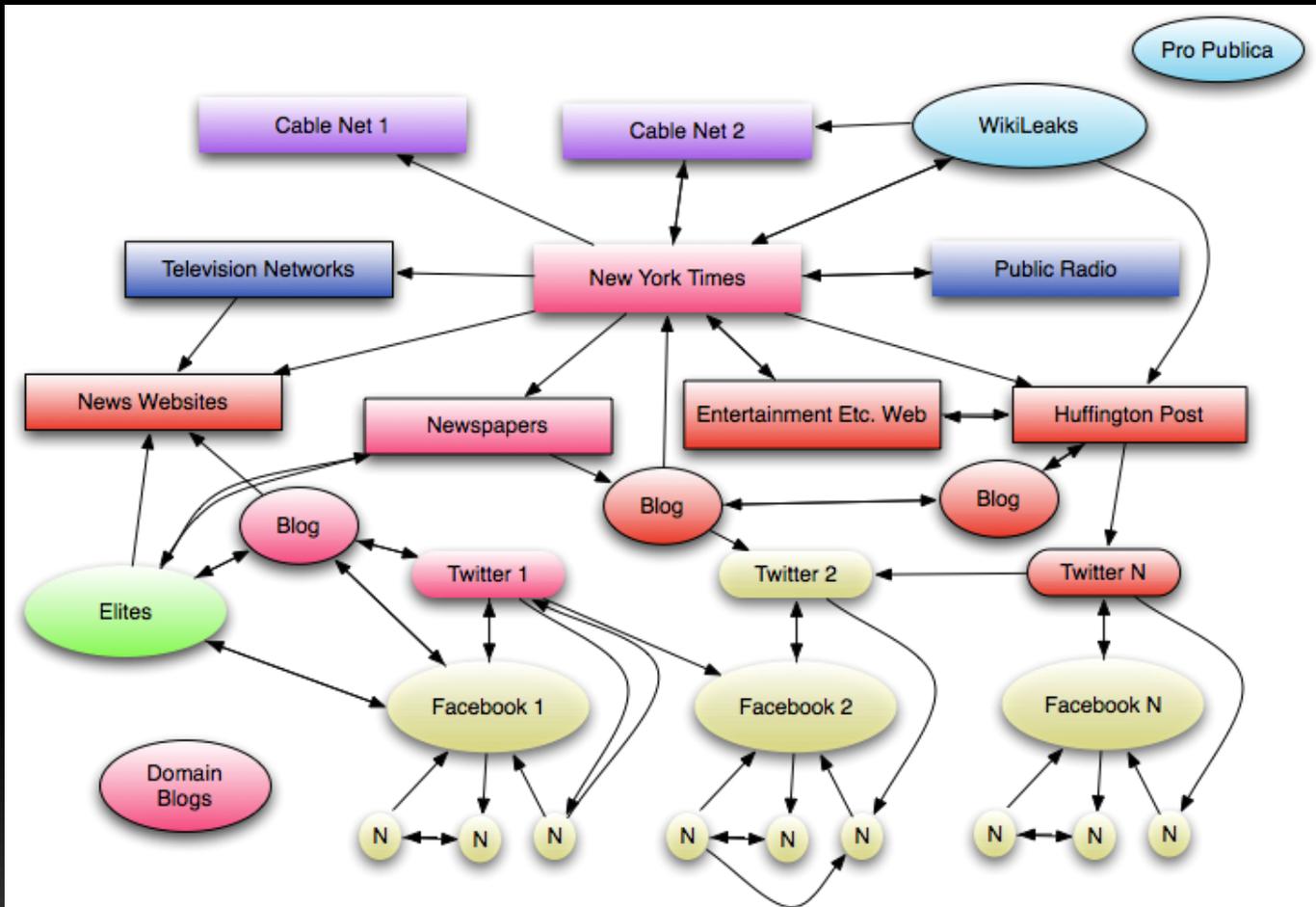
Modern Era 1950-1995





Transitional Era 1990-2000

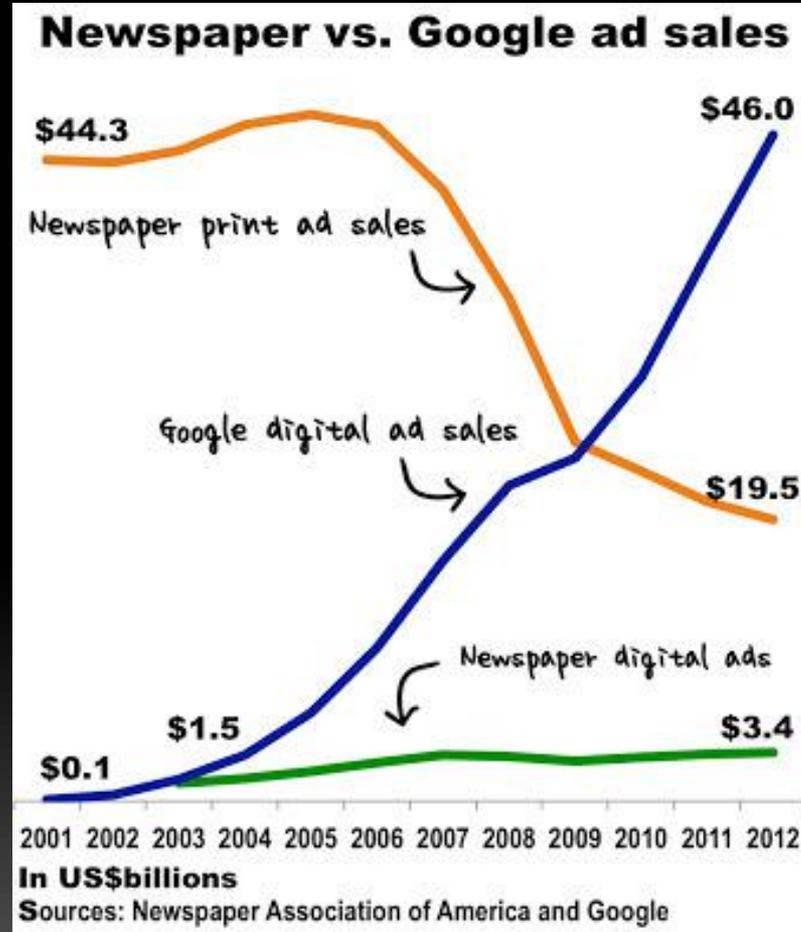




Today National



No way back



- “Traditional” news
 - News cycle
 - News as product
 - Form-bound storytelling
 - Researching facts
 - Mid-to-large scale of target community

... however, online news introduced new rules.



Constant stream

- Updated 24/7, near-realtime

The screenshot shows the MADISON.COM website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Sites, News, Sports, Entertainment, Events, Weather, Communities, Get It, and Car. Below the navigation bar, there is a "Trending" section with links to "Database: State employee raises", "Baseball team logo quiz", "Interactive timeline: Margaret Thatcher", and "T".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features "Editor's picks" with two articles:

- City cancels Mifflin Street Block Party**: A photo of a street scene is shown. The text reads: "Police have put the kibosh on the Mifflin Street Block Party, but it's not likely to go quietly." It was posted 1 hour ago and has 16 comments.
- Badgers football: Gun-toting kicker misses uprights**: A photo of a man in a suit is shown.

The right column features "News Now" with a "More" link and a list of recent news items:

- Day 2: Wisconsin Film Fest gets in full swing Friday night (52 minutes ago)
- Sure sign of spring: Merrimac ferry is running (1 hour ago)
- Rain's reign not ending anytime soon (2 hours ago)
- Largest heroin bust ever reported in Berlin in Green Lake County (2 hours ago)
- Police probe use of fake \$100 bills on Far West Side (3 hours ago)

At the top right of the page, there is a weather widget showing 38° Rain, Weekly Forecast, and a "HO-CHUNK" logo.

News as process

- Live, by default
- Constantly updating

Case: Isthmus on 2011 protest

<http://storify.com/isthmusmdp/pesteing-the-wisconsin-state-assembly-extraordi>



Show, tell, interact

- Telling stories with every means available
 - Show-and-tell
 - Gamification
 - Re-bundling

Case: Unfit for Work (NPR)

<http://apps.npr.org/unfit-for-work/>

Case: Cutthroat Capitalism (WIRED)

http://www.wired.com/special_multimedia/2009/cutthroatCapitalismTheGame

Case: Times Topics: Obama (NY Times)

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/o/barack_obama/index.html?ref=topics



Data journalism

- Datasets as news sources
- Not a new practice, but significantly enhanced
- Boosting investigative journalism

Case: Political fundraising sources (Wiscwatch)

<http://www.wisconsinwatch.org/viz/graphics-mapping-scott-walkers-support/>



Hyperlocal to 'Glocal'

- Connecting neighborhood-level media to the rest of the world, and vice versa
- Bridging and bonding communities

Case: Madison Commons

<http://madisoncommons.org>



Tapping “social networks”

- Social Networks can enhance/ruin all stages of the news process
 - Gathering information
 - Writing / editing
 - Distributing
 - Feedback



Gathering information

- “Tell us more about it”

Case: The Stream (AJZ)

<http://stream.aljazeera.com/story/south-korea-strike-update>

- One-man news bureau

Case: Twitter @acarvin (NPR)

<https://twitter.com/acarvin>



Writing / Editing

- “Tweet first, confirm later”
- Controversy in journalism ethics

Case: celebrity deaths, tech gadget leaks, etc

<http://www.techradar.com/us/news/world-of-tech/internet/10-news-stories-that-broke-on-twitter-first-719532>



Distributing

- The power of “viral” news
- Downsides: less control
 - Lose sources, become rumors
 - Can corrections and retractions be just as viral?
 - “Too touching to be true”

Case1: Boston marathon terror ‘suspect’

Case2: Te’o catfishing



Feedback

- Comment moderation: more important, more difficult than it looks
 - Comments affect perception of the article (Scheufele & Brossard, 2013)

Case: Huffington Post



Online journalism is simply journalism, here and now.



Positions to Fill

- Online journalism is looking for
 - Data analyzers / presenters
 - News community managers
 - Investigative reporters

“News organizations as platforms for talent”

