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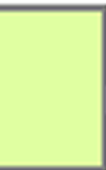(aggregation, portal, explai

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Paul Bradshaw

Model for a 21st Century Newsroom - Redux

How digitisation has changed news organisations in a multiplatform world

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1. Introduction

In 2007 I published 'A Model for the 21st Century Newsroom', a series of models exploring how journalism might be organised to best play to the strengths of the world that we were now operating in. The physical limitations of traditional newsgathering, production and distribution were now being overcome by digital equivalents. The production line model that had dictated news production for a century was meeting a networked mode of operation where anyone could take on editorial and distribution roles.

Computational power and virtual networks allowed journalists to ask questions and access contacts that might have previously been impractical to answer or reach. We were no longer limited in the medium that we could choose to tell our story, or the time and space that we had to tell it. New forms of media were yet to settle down into standard formats; old ones were being reinvented.

There were, it seemed, countless opportunities to do journalism in a different way - but very little time, or resources, to find out which ones were most effective. There was a danger that instead of using these opportunities to tackle journalism's problems, established news organisations would instead tack them onto existing production processes - and be overtaken by online-only start-ups in the process.

The 21st Century Newsroom, and its accompanying diagram the News Diamond, was adopted and adapted by a

number of news organisations in the UK and around the world. Meanwhile, technology, user behaviour, newsroom culture and the commercial context continued to change.

This report, then, attempts to revisit the Model for the 21st Century Newsroom in the light of those developments and the growing experiences of those organisations and individuals dealing with them. What emerges is a picture both of increasing formalisation of production processes and the emergence of entirely new fields of operation. Breaking news, for example, is now dealt with online with particular confidence, while news apps and the increasing role of data present new challenges for information management and presentation. Cultural and technical barriers to collaboration are slowly breaking down and the desire to explore collaborative projects increasing. In a nutshell, the battle of the last five years has been to organise people - both within and outside of the organisation - and the focus has been on speed. The next challenge for the industry will be organising information itself - with a focus on depth.

The new version of the News Diamond, then, is both simplified and made more sophisticated as a result. Whereas the original was exploratory this new version reflects wider existing practice. Whereas the original focused on process, this overlays research on participation and distribution.

Based on a combination of interviews with journalists, editors, developers and executives and a review of current literature, this report attempts to summarise the way that multiplatform journalism is organised and managed across

a wide range of news organisations - national and local, print and broadcast, magazines and online - both in the UK and internationally. It explores how news increasingly operates in 'real time' and in response to the audience as much as it seeks to generate a response from them. It explores the rise of the liveblog format as a way of doing this while retaining institutional control - being 'of the network' while not always 'in the network'; the ways that news organisations are dealing with the challenges of providing context, including the rise of 'explainers' and tag-driven internal aggregation - and how new types of information are leading to new types of news apps that allow users to control and customise their experience of the story.

The report is divided into three sections: 'The Context: Devices, Rhythms, Content' is an overview of how people consume news and information online - and how that continues to change.

'21st Century Newsroom Redux' outlines how a news story increasingly moves through a series of stages from initial 'Call To Action/Response To Action' through to 'Comment and Connect' and 'Control and Customise'.

And a final 'Recommendations' section outlines a series of practical implications for journalists and editors.