

# ***Role Orientation, Development and Transformation of News Editors in the New Media Era***

**MingQian Yang<sup>1,a,\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW, 2006, Australia*  
*a. 2534224914@qq.com*

*\*corresponding author*

**Abstract:** With the rapid development of modern economy and society and the arrival of the information age, the new media have profoundly influenced the daily lives of people. News editors, as disseminators and advocates of news information, play an important role in the dissemination of news information. In the new media era, the news dissemination of new media relies on the degree of strengthening but also puts forward new development requirements for the development of news editors. This paper is based on the role of news editing and development transformation to analyse and solve the key problems in the current stage of news dissemination. In the new media era for the news editor, the new requirements listed in the new media era for the news editor include role positioning analysis and development transformation measures. The changing role of news editors in the new media era and their need to adapt to digital platforms and audience participation, utilise audience data, and develop multimedia narrative techniques Subvert the traditional communication mode of paper media, gradually adapt to and turn to the development of multimedia news reporting channels, and transform the skills and strategies of journalists to adapt to the progress of this era.

**Keywords:** New Media, News Editor, Role Orientation, Development Transformation

## **1. Introduction**

The news media landscape has undergone seismic shifts in recent years with the rapid advancement of digital technologies and the internet. Where once print newspapers and broadcast television ruled supreme, today's news cycle is 24/7, multi-platform, and increasingly social. These changes have dramatically impacted the traditional role of news editors, requiring new skills, responsibilities, and ways of thinking to meet the demands of the digital age. The role of news editors has undergone significant changes in recent decades as a result of the digital transformation of media. However, the rise of online news has disrupted traditional business models and introduced new challenges that have fundamentally altered the editor's role. Therefore, the transformation of news editors is crucial to adapting to the new media era. How to integrate the interview and news resources of ordinary paper journalists into the all-media operation needs a change of concept.

In the era of new media, citizens who previously had no say in the creation and distribution of news can now do so. As a result, there is a chance that news presentation mode will change because the audience is coming in to the news. Audiences are today viewed as collaborators in the creation and transmission of news, in contrast to the past, when journalists were inherently and practically

distinct from readers, watchers, and listeners [1]. With the development of the new media era, the rise of the Internet and blogs has triggered a shift in the field of journalism [2].

Field theory has given rise to many of the questions studied in this paper, challenging the original working concept of journalism and transforming the old idea that journalists can determine the minds and ways of the public. In other words, the rise of the Internet has increased audience interaction and removed the distinction between news creators and news consumers. The move certainly challenges journalists' ability to shape the public agenda and shape reality [2]. Therefore, this essay will examine how the rise of new media has transformed the orientation, development, and day-to-day responsibilities of news editors based on existing literature and data, exploring the impacts of the 24/7 news cycle, social media, and online optimization on editors' work. Changing roles, skills, training needs, and ethical challenges will be analyzed. As online culture continues to evolve and analytical forums expand, we may see an increase in attention to professional norms in the news media. The findings of this paper will benefit the relationship between old and new media as it continues to explicitly allow for a shift in power relations and the development of the Internet to optimize its impact on journalism.

## 2. Traditional Role of News Editors

For most of the 20th century, print and broadcast media dominated as news sources, with professional journalists working in centralized newsrooms. Editors played a key role in overseeing reporters, selecting stories, checking facts, and upholding standards. The advent of cable news and the 24-hour news cycle began to accelerate the pace of the news cycle in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the rise of the internet and social media in the 2000s has utterly disrupted traditional news media. Online outlets now compete relentlessly for clicks and shares, while audiences have fragmented across platforms. For editors, these changes have created both opportunities and challenges.

Historically, newspaper and broadcast editors played an essential role in the newsroom. As gatekeepers, they decided which stories would be covered and how prominently they would be played. As described by media scholar Pamela Shoemaker, this gatekeeping role meant determining what information reached the public and in what form [3]. Editors assigned reporters to stories, oversaw the newsroom, edited articles, and ensured standards were followed in terms of accuracy, balance, and ethics. Editors checked articles for accuracy, balance, and objectivity, correcting errors and questioning any biases [4]. Editors reviewed drafts to improve focus, flow, structure, and clarity. They verified facts, watched for bias or libel, edited for Associated Press style, and ensured balance. Photos and graphics were also vetted. Editors collaborated with reporters on revisions until satisfied. They managed tight deadlines and oversaw the finished product. They wrote attention-grabbing headlines and designed layouts to showcase the most important stories.

At newspapers, the managing editor oversaw the entire news operation, while assignment editors matched reporters to stories. Broadcast editors reviewed scripts and assembled clips into polished packages. These traditional editors upheld rigorous standards for sourcing and verification, such as requiring two independent sources to confirm any facts [5]. Copy editors were meticulous about fact-checking, grammar and style. Department editors oversaw subject matter beats like politics, business and sports. News editors managed day-to-day operations on their shift. Photo editors chose iconic news images. Editors ensured that reporters adhered to editorial policies, standards and ethics. They instilled a culture of accuracy and integrity. Above all, editors upheld journalistic ethics. They pushed reporters to dig deeper, minimize harm, and exercise sound news judgment. Guarding against errors, bias, and sensationalism was paramount. Editors embodied the values of accuracy, truth, and public service despite external pressures. This steadfast ethical orientation was instilled through formal journalism education and on-the-job socialization [6].

### 3. Challenges Posed by New Media

The rise of digital media has profoundly upended traditional newsroom roles. Editors do not have the cycle of print, and viewers need to be constantly informed on the Web. The advent of digital formats and distribution channels has dramatically disrupted editing roles and workflows. No longer bound to print deadlines, the news cycle is now continuous — demanding constant updates and real-time responsiveness [7]. Stories are published instantly online and updated continuously. This pressures editors to make decisions rapidly. To feed the insatiable 24/7 online news cycle, editors must constantly update stories under intense deadline pressure [8].

With consumers getting news for free online, the traditional business model collapsed. Newsrooms have faced heavy staffing and budget cuts. Top editorial jobs have been eliminated. With advertising revenue declining, newsrooms have seen deep staff cuts, leaving fewer editors handling wider responsibilities [9]. The remaining editors must do more with less resources. Citizen journalists and social media have also challenged the gatekeeping role of editors. Editors must incorporate social media and reader analytics into coverage decisions, chasing clicks and pageviews to attract scarce ad dollars [10]. Citizen journalists and bloggers undermine the editor's gatekeeper status, as anyone can now publicly report, analyze, and comment on current events [11]. Editors feel pressure to keep up with real-time reporting on platforms like Twitter, where misinformation can spread rapidly [12]. With the 24/7 news environment, the unforgiving pace takes a toll on editors. There is constant pressure to publish stories before competitors, even with fewer staff and resources. This "hamster wheel" leaves little time for deliberation or thoughtful editing [13]. Editors must balance speed with accuracy amid constant distraction. They monitor Twitter, reader analytics, and breaking news while editing. Remaining focused is a challenge.

### 4. Changes in Newsroom Leadership Styles

The digital era has necessitated big changes in newsroom leadership styles. In place of the hierarchical, top-down management of old, leadership today is more collaborative, flat, cross-functional and data-driven. In the past, powerful executive editors could dictate the news agenda with minimal input from staff. Today, with flatter organizations and fewer levels, editors rely more on teamwork. The pace and complexity of digital news demands a more flexible leadership style in modern newsrooms. Strict top-down management gives way to a flatter organizational structure with more collaborative decision-making [14]. Editors increasingly act as moderators, fostering discussion of story ideas across the newsroom and with the public on social platforms. Data and metrics guide coverage with a more audience-focused approach. Authority is distributed across the newsroom rather than centralized. Editors work closely with reporters, visual journalists, and developers to create compelling digital storytelling. They solicit creative ideas from staff. Leadership emphasises flexibility, openness, and transparency rather than command and control.

Newsrooms use tools like Slack to facilitate team communication through text messages, file and media sharing, private chats, or voice and video calls within communities called workspaces. Slack allows communities, groups, or teams to join workspaces via a specific URL or an invitation sent by a team administrator or owner to get work done faster and more clearly. Leadership is less about hierarchy and more about facilitating collaboration to drive engagement and subscriptions. Some editors have adopted an audience-first approach over an internal focus. They advocate putting community needs before traditional journalistic rituals. Editors aim to build loyalty among local audiences by addressing their concerns. While executive-level editors still provide direction, middle managers empower teams to execute using their expertise. They encourage experimentation and risk-taking to foster innovation. Instead of commanding from on high, today's editors cultivate diversity and experimentation. They solicit input from far-flung bloggers, freelancers, and readers,

curating a "networked journalism" model [15]. Successful editors adapt by adopting a digitally savvy, enterprising, and open leadership style.

## 5. On Journalistic Values and Ethics

While adapting to digital, editors must ensure core journalistic values survive intact. Some observers worry the Internet's disruption of the news media comes at the expense of core journalistic values. Some industry practices have threatened standards. To drive traffic, questionable headlines and sensationalised content have become common. In their drive for clicks and traffic, editors may privilege sensationalism over public-interest news [16]. This aggressive use of news content for profit undermines the original meaning of news and breaks the accuracy and integrity of real events. The rush to publish first has resulted in errors, corrections, and digital misinformation. Reliance on social media has spread fake news and propaganda. Reliance on social media allows misinformation to flourish, as fabricated stories generate high engagement [17].

Maintaining high ethical standards online is also a major concern. Fabricated stories, activist conspiracy sites, and hyper-partisan blogs abound. Editors must safeguard their outlets' credibility against "fake news" accusations and fact check rigorously [18]. However, traditional verification methods don't always translate seamlessly to digital media. New approaches like collaborative verification and crowdsourcing have pitfalls too. Upholding standards on social media is challenging given limited control. Meanwhile, platforms like Facebook and Google gobble up advertising revenue, limiting outlets' resources for quality reporting [19]. While new tools provide information on audience interests, editors must ensure business pressures do not dictate coverage [20]. Balancing speed, transparency, and accountability with independence, accuracy, and integrity remains an ethical challenge.

However, with commitment to truth and community service, conscientious editors can uphold standards while innovating digitally [21]. However, many editors are working hard to uphold standards. They vet sources before publication, issue corrections prominently and quickly, and moderate comments with civility. Editors emphasise accuracy over speed. They diversify story selection beyond just clicks and shares. Some have formed Trust and Safety teams to protect journalistic integrity. Others have established reader advisory boards and ombudsmen to strengthen ties with the community. Training in ethics and values has increased. Editors realise that quality original reporting is vital to earning audience trust and loyalty in the long run. Investigative units have been set up by many digital native publications to counter misinformation through rigorous fact-checking. Editors are also preserving the separation between advertising and editorial to maintain independence. Overall, conscientious editors strive to balance adaptation with time-tested values of truth, accuracy, and fairness — the foundations of quality journalism.

## 6. Conclusion

In summary, the transformation of news editors' roles reflects the larger changes impacting journalism amid the rise of digital media. Where once they served as gatekeepers overseeing print and broadcast outlets, editors must now adapt to curating content across platforms, leveraging audience data, and developing multimedia storytelling techniques. The digital revolution has profoundly disrupted traditional news media, posing new challenges for editors balancing timeless values with changing realities. While this provides new creative opportunities, it also comes with ethical challenges around standards and misinformation. Training and development focused on digital strategies is crucial for modern editors. As their gatekeeping role erodes, editors must adapt by adopting more collaborative yet data-driven leadership approaches. Despite economic pressures threatening journalistic standards, editors focused on serving citizens over profits can guide

newsrooms to rebuild community trust. The rise of misinformation means conscientious verification and transparency are more vital than ever. Editing for the modern age requires openness to new voices and ideas as well as upholding the core principles of accuracy, independence, and integrity. By honouring the legacies of quality journalism while innovating boldly, today's editors can ensure their indispensable function endures whatever disruption tomorrow brings. By balancing emerging tools with timeless principles, editors can play a key part in shaping the future of quality journalism. Though specific tools and business models may evolve, editing guided by truth and public service remains essential to democracy. There are still some shortcomings in this research so far, and the future research direction will pay more attention to providing additional data and analysis to support the conclusion so as to provide more in-depth research in this related field. The breadth and depth of the literature used in future articles will also be improved, with more references to some groundbreaking works and the latest academic research articles.

### Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like to thank my parents, who gave me indispensable support and encouragement during my student years and encouraged me to explore deeper academic levels. In addition, I would like to thank the professors in my university, who taught me the professional knowledge related to media and provided a lot of theoretical support for my thesis. Finally, I would like to thank my two best friends who acted as my emotional support, constantly digesting and adjusting my negative emotions during the writing process of my thesis. I couldn't have finished my paper without everyone's support. Thank you very much for your support and help.

### References

- [1] Vos, T. P., Eichholz, M., & Karaliouva, T. (2018). *Audiences and journalistic capital*. *Journalism Studies*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1477551>
- [2] Laor, T., & Galily, Y. (2020). *Offline VS online: Attitude and behavior of journalists in social media era*. *Technology in Society*, 61, 101239. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2020.101239>
- [3] Shoemaker, P. J. (2017). *News values: Reciprocal effects on journalists and journalism*. *The International Encyclopedia of Media Effects*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118783764.wbieme0053>
- [4] Jones, A. S. (2010). *Losing the news*. Oxford University Press.
- [5] Smith, R. F. (2005). *Groping for ethics in journalism*. Iowa State University Press.
- [6] Brennen, B., Simon, F. M., Howard, P. N., & Nielsen, R. K. (2020). *Beyond 'fake news': A typology of media trust and distrust*. *Communication Research and Practice*, 6(2), 152-168. <https://doi.org/10.1080/22041451.2020.1765404>
- [7] Tandoc, E. C., & Jenkins, J. (2017). *The buzzfeedication of journalism? How traditional news organizations are talking about a new entrant to the journalistic field will surprise you!* *Journalism*, 18(4), 482-500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884915620269>
- [8] Johnson, S. (2019). *Breaking news consumer's handbook: System failure*. *Columbia Journalism Review*. [https://www.cjr.org/special\\_report/breaking-news-consumers-handbook-system-failure.php](https://www.cjr.org/special_report/breaking-news-consumers-handbook-system-failure.php)
- [9] Barthel, M. (2019). *Newspapers fact sheet*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.journalism.org/fact-sheet/newspapers/>
- [10] Anderson, C.W. (2018). *Apostles of certainty*. Oxford University Press.
- [11] Lasica, J. D. (2005). *Darknet: Hollywood's war against the digital generation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [12] Silverman, C. (2016). *This analysis shows how viral fake election news stories outperformed real news on Facebook*. BuzzFeed News. <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/craigsilverman/viral-fake-election-news-outperformed-real-news-on-facebook>
- [13] Christin, A. (2018). *Metrics at work in journalism: Objectivity and accountability in the news*. Princeton University Press.
- [14] Usher, N. (2014). *Making news at The New York Times*. University of Michigan Press.
- [15] Beckett, C., & Mansell, R. (2008). *Crossing boundaries: New media and networked journalism*. *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 1(1), 92-104.

- [16] Meyer, P. (2009). *The vanishing newspaper: Saving journalism in the information age*. University of Missouri Press.
- [17] Allcott, H., & Gentzkow, M. (2017). Social media and fake news in the 2016 election. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(2), 211-36.
- [18] Funke, D., & Flamini, D. (2017). *A guide to anti-misinformation actions around the world*. Poynter. <https://www.poynter.org/ifcn/anti-misinformation-actions/>
- [19] Bell, E. (2017). Facebook is eating the world. *Columbia Journalism Review*. [https://www.cjr.org/analysis/facebook\\_media\\_news\\_platforms.php](https://www.cjr.org/analysis/facebook_media_news_platforms.php)
- [20] Christians, C.G., Glasser, T. L., McQuail, D., Nordenstreng, K., & White, R. A. (2009). *Normative theories of the media: Journalism in democratic societies*. University of Illinois Press.
- [21] Jones, J., & Westlund, O. (2021). The imperative of ethics for digital news in public service media. *Journal of Media Ethics*, 36(2), 89-103.