

HANDOUT

How do journalists behave in social media?

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- Project "Online presence and credibility of journalists in social media", 2012–2013 done in the COMET Research centre
- Newsrooms encourage journalists to use social media as **a way of enabling interaction** with the audience and as **a potential source for stories** and background information
- Social media can also be used for **self-promotion** and strengthening both one's own image as well as the media brand

Questions:

- 1) How do journalists use social media?
- 2) How can a journalist **develop a credible online presence as part of his/her professional activities, both as a personality and a representative of the media institution?**

Finnish journalists are divided: some are enthusiastic social media users, some are very skeptical. Since 2012 Twitter has become the most important tool for journalists. Self-branding and promotion, blogging, Twitter, Facebook...

Openness and transparency important values in the social media – journalists should be open about what and how they do their work, also towards the audience. Searching for sources outside the 'usual suspects'.

In a networked world greater amounts of official and unofficial information is circulating online, journalists are gatekeepers and verifiers of this information. The audience is increasingly skeptical, but willing to co-operate with the journalists.

In such a transitional situation it would be useful for journalism professionals to build a **genuinely interactive connection** to netizens. A service orientation has been put forward as a solution for better journalism, to truly participate in communities, not only follow other journalists in Twitter.

- **key concepts:** participation, interaction, online presence

References

Elina Noppari, Ari Heinonen, Eliisa Vainikka (2014) "Critical but co-operative – Netizens evaluating journalists in social media", Observatorio 8(4), URL: <http://obs.obercom.pt/index.php/obs/article/view/782>

About the Speaker

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