

The liability of newness: Journalism, innovation and the issue of core competencies

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Abstract: Utilizing the theory for disruptive innovation, this study endeavors to better understand how working self-identified digital journalists conceptualize innovation and perceive the impact of technological innovation on practice. Through in-depth interviews with 25 digital journalists, this study finds that journalists often perceive innovation as market driven and fight against its incorporation, in part because their newsrooms don't engage with the technology enough to train them to use it. The authors argue that journalism as a field is not well suited to innovation and any implementation must be thoughtfully carried out. Finally, this study concludes by theorizing about how these findings connect to both industry and digital journalism studies research.

KEYWORDS:

DIGITAL JOURNALISM
DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION
QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS
MEDIA SOCIOLOGY
NEWS GAMING
ENGAGEMENT
AUGMENTED REALITY
VIRTUAL REALITY

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TO CITE: Patrick Ferrucci & Gregory Perreault (2021) The Liability of Newness: Journalism, Innovation and the Issue of Core Competencies, *Journalism Studies*, 22:11, 1436-1449, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2021.1916777

Published in the special issue "Reconsidering Innovation."
Ed. Jacob Nelson & Diana Bossio

In 2011, *The New York Times* released the ground-breaking multimedia feature “Snow Fall.” Journalists at the time saw it as reflecting “the future” of digital journalism (Greenfield, 2012): The six-part story included simulations, aerial video, and interactive graphics in an easily readable format. It was a journalism sensation that went on to win a 2013 Pulitzer Prize and a Peabody award. Journalists adopted the feature as a verb--considering projects they could “snowfall” (Dowling & Vogan, 2014, p. 209). While the *New York Times* never revealed the cost of production of “Snow Fall,” conservative estimates put it at \$250,000 (Malik, 2013). A cost of \$250,000 is out of reach for many newsrooms.

The discussion of “Snow Fall” reveals an underlying elitism in the conception of digital journalism. If “Snow Fall” exemplifies digital journalism, in the way many academics and journalists often argue it does, then when we study digital journalism, are we only examining the most financially rich newsrooms? In the current reality, the majority of newsrooms do not employ enough journalists to cover their communities, much less spend considerable time and financial resources to produce something such as “Snow Fall” (McChesney, 2016). The present study, through long-form interviews with 25 self-identifying digital journalists, seeks to understand how digital journalists – most of them from smaller U.S., locally-oriented publications – see innovation operating in their newsrooms. We will argue that digital journalists found innovation to largely come at the expense of the current workforce, a workforce without the core competencies required to utilize innovation in the way necessary to attain idealized outcomes. Further, we postulate that research in digital journalism, while understandably interested in the most innovative

activities, too often focuses on only the most resource-rich newsrooms and ignores the vast majority of newsrooms that find integrating such innovation immensely difficult.

Journalism and the Market

As the last decades of the nineteenth century took shape, newspaper publishers began to understand the almost unparalleled profit potential of newspapers, a potential that led to the professionalization of journalism and its definitive emergence as both a service and a business (i.e., McChesney, 1999; Schudson, 1978). This seemingly incongruous dual goal presents a problem for journalism as the need to secure advertising revenue, scholars have argued, violates the normative goals of journalism and therefore makes it fundamentally impossible for the industry to truly serve citizens first (Habermas, 1989). This argument essentially boils down to the idea that a news organization cannot accomplish normative goals if it all cares about its audience size. Beam (1998) though, argued against this, contending that even an organization with no commercial aspirations must be somewhat focused on amassing eyeballs since, without those, they could not survive. In effect, Beam (1998) maintained, all news organizations are market oriented in some way

Scholars have defined market-driven or market orientation as how closely an organization follows market philosophies or, in other words, how customer-focused it behaves (Beam, 2001; Ferrucci, 2015; Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). For news, this is often conceptualized as whether news organizations provide the information central to democratic functioning versus content perceived as more desired such as sports (Beam, 2003). Prior research illustrates how this push toward a strongly market-oriented approach

can impact content (e.g., Beam, 2003; Ferrucci, 2019), how journalists view their jobs (i.e., Beam, 2001; Perreault & Vos, 2018, 2020; Tandoc Jr & Vos, 2016), how much influence institutions can have on journalism (i.e., Ferrucci & Nelson, 2019; Pompilio, 2009), and how newsrooms are structured (i.e., Beam, 2001). However, the main manner in which the need for profit and the drive to be market oriented manifests itself in newsrooms is through the adoption of technology (Cohen, 2002).

Near the turn of the century, as its share of audience across platforms began to increasingly shrink, the journalism industry responded by labeling technological innovation a potential cure (Klinenberg, 2005). Much of this innovation occurred in newsrooms becoming smaller and smaller due to layoffs (Bird, 2009). As the 21st century progressed, even the richest American newsrooms such as *The New York Times* faced steep budget cuts, but these massive layoffs, furloughs and overall drastic economic cuts most significantly hurt the vast majority of medium-sized and small newsrooms across the country (Abernathy, 2018). While some might accurately argue that innovation became necessary due to this economic disruption and the drastic recent shifts in how audiences consume information (Atuahene-Gima, 1996; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007), research shows that how and why news organizations adopt and embrace innovation is intrinsically linked to the strength of ownership's market orientation (Cohen, 2002; Ferrucci, 2020). It is through this prism that one can understand how innovation and journalism comingled throughout the evolution of digital journalism.

Digital Journalism

Through the lens of digital journalism studies, digital journalism is not solely “journalism that is transformed by being digital; it is digitization as it is embodied in journalism” (Duffy & Ang, 2019, p. 378). However, this definition ignores the realities of the journalism industry, a field where most of this “digitization” occurs at legacy media, and even digitally native organizations primarily enact professional cultures that fit snugly within the field at large (Ferrucci & Vos, 2017). Therefore, a more practical definition of digital journalism is that it “embodies a set of expectations, practices, capabilities and limitations to those associated with pre-digital and non-digital forms, reflecting a difference of degree rather than kind” (Zelizer, 2019, p. 349). This is important because treating digital journalism as some unique field existing in a different orbit than other forms of journalism give it imaginary qualities unsupported by empirical evidence (Cheruiyot, Baack, & Ferrer-Conill, 2019). In fact, most self-labeled digital journalists work at what would be considered legacy media (Ferrucci & Vos, 2017).

This conceptualization of digital journalism as a practice (i.e., Zelizer, 2019) can occur at a variety of different types of news organizations is not necessarily the norm in journalism studies research. As previously noted, Duffy and Ang (2019) argued for a conceptualization independent from traditional journalism. This popular contention, though, leads to many quasi-utopian claims about technological innovation in the field of journalism. For example, some scholarship dismisses journalists with a negative opinion concerning innovation as out of touch, or lacking “the self-reflexivity to consider their work and ideals in light of a new media world” (i.e., Usher, 2010, p. 924). But how much does this “new media world” actually affect the practice of journalism beyond some new

tools? Siegelbaum and Thomas (2016) maintained that the desire for innovation in both journalism practice (and scholarship) could actually be contributing to a normative failure in the industry. In other words, they contended, the industry's increasing focus on innovation could actually harm journalism quality. Therefore, while the field of journalism seemingly operates with the assumption that journalism is "hurting and new technology...[could] provide the answers" (Vos & Perreault, 2020, p. 483), it is not a given that an industry can easily adapt to innovation

Theory of Disruptive Innovation

When an industry such as journalism innovates, innovation often occurs out of necessity, out of trying to react to consumer choices, but many organizations steeped in historical practices find it exceptionally difficult to adapt (Anderson & Tushman, 1991; Barrett, Davidson, Prabhu, & Vargo, 2015). To account for how and why industries adapt to disruptive technologies, Christensen (2003) conceptualized the theory of disruptive innovation, which contends that market forces often dictate innovation adoption, but that stable fields tend to struggle with this most prominently.

Industry leaders are most likely to struggle with innovation because they are often not nimble enough to adapt (Christensen, 2013). Earlier scholars dubbed this problem the liability of newness, which principally contends that faced with disruptive technology, even old organizations have to essentially become new organizations (Stinchcombe, 1965). Specifically, stable industries hire and train employees for specific tasks and new technologies threaten to make many of those skills obsolete. Habitually, when a stable industry is faced with disruptive technologies that threaten a market model, they view

these innovations as threats and not opportunities, and subsequently expend resources in an attempt to fend off the innovation (Anderson & Tushman, 1991; Christensen, Raynor, & McDonald, 2015). When digital technologies such as computers, editing software and early mobile devices first began affecting journalism in the late 1980s and early 1990s, this is exactly how the industry reacted (Mari, 2019).

For an organization to adapt and flourish after a disruptive innovation, it must be able to recognize the innovation's effects, comprehend the organization's own core competencies and then move forward by adapting the organization's makeup (Barrett et al., 2015). For journalism, in some cases, innovative technology, over time, led to some innovative practices such as data journalism (Gynnild, 2014), or mobile delivery (Walck, Cruikshank, & Kalyango, 2015), or the use of open-source technology (Lewis & Usher, 2013). However, the journalism industry adapted to these innovations slowly and over a long period, but also, more saliently, this predominantly occurred in large organizations with the significant capital to hire technologically adept employees (Spyridou, Matsiola, Veglis, Kalliris, & Dimoulas, 2013). Therefore, this study asks the following research questions:

RQ1: How do digital journalists conceptualize technological innovation?

RQ2: How do digital journalists believe technological innovation affects their work?

Method

To address these research questions, the research team reached out to 162 journalists from across the United States. Initial proposed participants were identified

through a purposeful sampling method (Koerber & McMichael, 2008) as journalists whose qualifications included digital publication focus, and working full-time for a news organization (as opposed to freelance), as a way in which ensure that journalists could address questions about their newsroom culture. Furthermore, researchers aimed to include journalists from a variety of mediums and with a range of audiences (e.g., local and national, niche and general). In recruitment, journalists were asked whether they self-identified as digital journalists, without a definition offered to them. This was done in order to honor the spirit of tension incumbent between the “digital” and the “journalism” (Eldridge et al., 2019). This flexibility in qualifications allowed digital journalism to be defined from the perspective of digital journalists’ own experience. As a result, participants included journalists who primarily worked for traditional outlets such as the Associated Press, ABC News-Washington, *The High Point Enterprise*, CNN, and *The News and Observer* (Raleigh). All journalists were recruited via email and then interviewed via phone after Institutional Review Board approval. After meeting qualifications, researchers interviewed a total of 25 journalists. Interviews were conducted from September to November 2018. The semi-structured interviews followed the open-ended interview format reflected in other studies in which journalists reflect on their news coverage and impact of digital technology (e.g., Perreault, Stanfield & Luttman, 2019). Interviews lasted between 30 minutes to an hour in length. All of the participants were located in the United States (see Table 1).

Questions were divided into five areas: (1) questions about digital journalists’ professional background and current occupation, (2) experience and training with digital

journalism tools, (3) reporting emphases, (4) influences on journalist's news work, and (5) questions about journalists' definition of digital journalism and perspectives on augmented reality, virtual reality, and news gaming innovations. Questions were posed such as, "what does the term 'digital journalism' mean to you?," and "Do you feel digital journalism is integral to your news organization's overall coverage?" For augmented reality, virtual reality and news gaming, specific questions were asked about respondents' experience with the innovations, perception of the value of the innovation, and perceived audience for the innovation.

Interviews were conducted until the researchers felt they reached saturation of responses. Then researchers transcribed the interviews for textual analysis. The authors analyzed the data using a constant comparative approach to arrive at themes that addressed the research questions (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). During this process, aspects of the responses considered were any allusion to the journalistic innovation, journalistic newswork, and journalistic definition making. After each response was coded, the research team met via video call to compare the themes and thoughts emerging to establish resonance and find associations, unities, and differences among them. All participants were granted anonymity. Given that this study explores digital journalism as a field, individual participants are not assigned particular letters or numbers, but their exact words are quoted.

Findings

Conceptualizing Innovation

This study's first research question asked how self-identified digital journalists conceptualized innovation. The journalists interviewed primarily conceptualized it two disparate ways, as something aimed at enticing younger readers or as a quasi-gimmick meant to attract a non-news-consuming audience.

Enticing a younger audience. A large majority of those interviewed viewed recent innovation of all kinds as something primarily desired and implemented by management for the sole purpose of attracting younger readers or viewers. For example, one said that current innovations in journalism are "very limited to younger people, probably ages 20-35 or so." This sentiment was repeated in various different forms by subjects. Ostensibly, they believe that many "younger millennials" need more than just a news story to get them engaged with journalistic content. If a story is disseminated in a traditional manner – as text- or video-based – most younger people will not bother to consume it. Participants contend that "young people (need) to be entertained to get informed." While some of this sentiment could potentially be explained by the average age of participants, it is particularly noteworthy that even younger subjects believed this. They argued implicitly that entertaining audiences is a fundamental function of journalism today, at least if they want to succeed economically. One participant noted that "everyone likes to be entertained, and the more you entertain people with the news, the more they'll read it." While this subject first articulated the benefit of innovation as something for "everyone," they quickly expounded on this by continuing, "but it's probably usually mostly targeted at a younger audience, to get them hooked in."

At the heart of this majority opinion is the idea that most younger people – often articulated as college-aged to mid 20s – do not consume news, but are enamored with technology. If journalism could harness technological innovation in a way that could make news delivery more entertaining, it would increase audience size by enticing younger people. For participants, innovation is for “people that aren’t actively looking for news” or “your average person who only gets their news from Facebook.”

Gimmick. While the last theme implicitly revolves around attracting audiences, when discussing younger people the participants did not necessarily conceptualize innovation as a gimmick, but rather just a different method, one that would attract a different audience. Other participants, though, subtly expounded on this by arguing that innovation was only a gimmick, a gimmick that has no news value whatsoever. One subject, speaking of virtual reality said that type of innovation – one that requires expensive equipment – is only for “wealthy people” who are also “civically engaged” and essentially seeking something different. In a very similar manner, a subject said innovation was only for “city folk who are tech-savvy.” Others were less dismissive, saying that many of today’s innovations such as virtual or augmented reality and gamification tools are “a little niche.” Implicit in that comment is the idea, though, that these remain niche because most news consumers and newsrooms cannot afford the technology and because it does not actually benefit the news-consuming experience. The main thrust of this theme concerns newsrooms adopting new tools simply as a public-relations ploy aimed at generating some excitement in the audience; an audience, participants argue, that is either already consuming news or beyond recruitment. For these participants, innovation is “the

new magnet for people who aren't really reading us," and more than likely will not anyway. These participants also believed that it was not the audience actually desiring innovation, but rather just an idea by journalism elites who think it might save the profession. For example, one participant said, "I think it's just something industry people geek out over," but not something working journalists or actual communities care about. The overall sentiment was that people who want news already get it and technological innovation will not increase that pool of people.

Impact on Practice

The study's second research question posited the question of how digital journalists conceptualize the impact of technological innovation on practice. The self-identified digital journalists in this sample argued that (1) mastery of old technologies did not imply mastery of new technologies, (2) that new technologies did not necessarily have an impact on practice and (3) that newsrooms often engaged with innovation too late.

Mastery of old. Study participants differentiated the technological affordances that had made them successful pre-digital from the technologies of digital journalism. For example, one participant noted that "the older models of print newspaper gave the writer the opportunity to dive into a story to dive deeper and they got higher pay" whereas digital journalism afforded them "creativity, flexibility and a faster pace." Others noted that while they felt a responsibility to "get stories up on the web," their primary focus was still television or print newspapers. Journalists argued that innovation placed more responsibility on their shoulders given that "we are responsible for photos and videos...as reporters we have to do a lot of production stuff that in the old days we did not."

In short, the range of skills required for mastery in journalism were wider as a result of digital innovation, but journalists still needed to accomplish other goals using older tools. Furthermore, journalists felt that innovation required them to have a finger on the pulse of their audience interests. In pitching stories, journalists noted that they “pay attention to what is trending on Twitter and Facebook, and look for new angles that might interest my audience.” One journalist noted that they “use a program called Harken where readers can ask questions and suggest what type of stories they want covered.” Another noted that they used the Chartbeat online database in order to “analyze whether what we’re doing is successful.” Essentially, for this theme, journalists acknowledged trouble adapting to new tools, but stressed that this “innovation” did not relieve them of utilizing old skills. In effect, innovation did not make their jobs easier, but rather added more responsibilities to an already growing list of obligations in an age of shrinking newsrooms.

Little impact. Journalists often also articulated their work with innovation as having little practical impact on their practice. Digital innovation required an extra step or perhaps a slightly expanded practice, but little that was new. For example, one participant argued that they “upload full newscasts online and then upload the individual stories on Facebook and YouTube.” In short, the reporting and gathering practice was unchanged by digital innovation--they just created additional means of distribution. The “interview process is the same as before,” another participant noted, in that “interviews are still done by phone or in person.” That said, the participant noted that the internet made research more efficient. Another participant noted:

For whatever reason, our company doesn’t make visual presentation a priority. We don’t have a graphics specialist in the newsroom, and

reporters lack the time needed to learn new skills or even consider new ways of presenting information. So our website is devoid of the type of interactive maps, charts and graphics that readers enjoy on major news websites like *Axios*, *the New York Times*, *Politico*, the *Washington Post* and *Vox*.

In many newsrooms, journalists still “report and write the way we used to,” but with added obligations. The differences are reflected in the deadline in that “in the old days, we had a nightly deadline and they would go in the next day’s paper. Now, when the story is done, it goes in a publishing system to go online.” Journalists noted that because they had been trained to be a print journalist or a television journalist, they hence engaged innovation with the “bare minimum to stay afloat.” So while innovation added more steps to news production processes, it did not fundamentally change how journalists did their jobs.

Too late. Journalists in this sample largely felt that their engagement with innovation was subpar in that “our survival depends on our ability to stay ahead of (technology).” However, participants noted, by the time their newsrooms innovate, it’s often well after something could be correctly labeled innovative. Journalists in many cases lamented their newsrooms commitment to innovation noting that given the lack of systematic commitment to innovation it was “hard to do super jazzy multimedia things.” And while journalists did sometimes wish their newsroom provided them with current tools and training, they simultaneously understood that it would require substantial work for their newsroom and individual commitment. Hence, they also expressed a degree of relief that their newsroom wasn’t more thoroughly invested in new forms of reporting.

All of this together indicates the degree to which self-identifying digital journalists conceptualized the impact of innovation as a bit haphazard--a substantial impact if engaged with thoroughly, but most respondents reported very little impact on their practice. The lack of impact, journalists admitted, was in part a result of their newsrooms lack of commitment to innovation, despite rhetoric to the contrary.

Discussion

For an organization to succeed in the face of a disruptive innovation, it must react nimbly and with an openness to change (Christensen, 2003). Typically, when a disruptive technology enters an industry, certain types of organizations – newer ones or businesses with a more flexible organizational culture – can adapt more seamlessly (Christensen, 2013). In journalism, however, technological innovations that, for example, changed how news is disseminated to audiences and how journalists gather information, have completely upended the industry and left it struggling to adapt (Singer, 2011). This should not be a surprise, though, as the journalism industry is known for its fossilized professional ideology, one that rejects changes to normative practices across the field, which, for decades, made it almost impossible for individual organizations to alter professional culture through innovation (Deuze, 2005; Lewis & Usher, 2013; Singer, 2003). In short, the journalism industry of the late 20th century featured one of the least nimble professional cultures and, therefore, instead of embracing technological innovation, unsurprisingly fought against it vigorously (Ferrucci, 2018; Singer, 2011). This professional culture should not have come as a surprise to anyone attempting to innovate in the field; the overall failure for the field journalism to innovate should have been easily predictable.

One can see the effects of this deleterious struggle with innovation in the results of this study. The sample utilized for this work's interviews come from across the field of journalism, not simply far from resource-rich newsrooms such as *The New York Times*. Without the benefit of a large staff and the capital to develop new skill sets, the journalists interviewed fundamentally believed that innovation was simply a market-driven decision, something that did little to assist in accomplishing the normative goals of journalism. They believed that non-journalists foisted various forms of innovation on them without any idea of how these would translate into superior news production tools; these new tools simply served as promotional opportunities to seek out new audiences. This study's first research question asked how self-identified digital journalists conceptualized innovation. The journalists interviewed primarily conceptualized it two disparate ways, but, at the heart of both of those conceptualizations sits the idea that innovation is a market-driven addition to the field of journalism.

Participants argued that innovation occurred primarily as a means of attracting a younger audience. Thus, the implicit idea here is that the field of journalism can attain more economic capital by increasing audience size. Participants see younger generations as people who are not civically minded and do not necessarily care about news. But, participants believe, if you combine news with innovations such as gamification then younger people might just consume because it is then "entertainment." The participants never discussed this potential audience as one that could benefit from more news consumption, but rather as just a potential audience.

This market-driven belief is even more prevalent when participants discussed innovation as a gimmick. This belief emerged across the board in terms of various innovations: Participants believed they were asked to incorporate these tools only to increase economic capital. The participants did not believe these advancements actually increased audience engagement or created a more informed citizenry, they just made certain types of audience members more excited. To participants, when their organizations or the field of journalism incorporated innovations such as, for example, an engagement platform, this decision came from a non-journalist not quite understanding how journalists do their jobs.

Anderson and Tushman (1991) contended that without a significant investment in employee development, an organization or industry cannot just simply adapt to new technologies or innovative tools because a mastery over previous skills does not translate into a mastery over new ones. Essentially, as evidenced by the dismissive attitude toward various new technologies found in this study, most new innovations in journalism do not fit into practitioners' core competencies. Journalists felt as though their newsrooms paid lip-service to innovation, engaging it enough to disrupt their news production processes but not enough to make meaningful change to the news content. Instead digital journalism is simply "instant journalism" as one participant said. Some scholars have argued that any innovation in journalism should be accompanied by "a process of resocialization focused on addressing journalists' attitudes toward these interventions" (Tandoc Jr. & Ferrucci, 2016, p. 155); the findings here suggest this does not happen often.

Christensen, Raynor, and McDonald (2015) argued that one of the main reasons organizations fail in the wake of disruptive innovation concerns how most of these types of modernizations typically fall outside of the skillset of practitioners. Even more salient, when innovation does fall outside of core competencies, employees actively work against their utilization (Christensen, 2013); this also occurs in journalism (Appelgren & Nygren, 2014). In the case of journalism, oftentimes, especially in the last 20 years, innovation comes at the expense of journalists who have steeped themselves in the professional culture of the industry, whose very identity is primarily composed of performing certain normative routines that they know innovation could completely upend (Ferrucci, Taylor, & Alaimo, 2020; Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016).

Therein lies the main problem with an argument for disruptive innovation in journalism: It would seemingly come at the expense of the current workforce, a workforce without the core competencies required or the desire to utilize innovation in the way necessary to attain idealized outcomes. A workforce that knows there is no proof these innovations actually make journalistic quality increase (Nelson, 2018). Therefore, for journalism to truly embrace disruptive technologies, it would need a new workforce, which would come at the expense of the historical knowledge and long-earned professional culture that is fundamental to the industry today. This combination of factors is what makes any form of innovation difficult in journalism: First, historically, the industry features an inordinately strong professional cultures that will resist basically any change, regardless of merit (Spyridou et. al, 2013). Second, the majority of the current workforce is not trained in new tools and most newsrooms lack the resources to properly fund the kind

of professional development and buy in Tandoc Jr. and Ferrucci (2016) argue is necessary for innovation to flourish. And, third, due to this strong professional culture and a guiding ethos toward normative goals, many journalists rightly push back against some forms of innovation due to their belief that these technologies do not actually make their journalism better (Siegelbaum & Thomas, 2016).

The findings of this study also offer some insight into the intersection of innovation and journalism studies research. This type of work that intelligently discusses and theorizes about various innovations for the field typically does so without an acknowledgment that these innovations often only happen in the most resource-rich of newsrooms, ones that characteristically make up a tiny fraction of the field. In many of the small cities and local news organizations represented by the participants of this study, there is no money for development, no money for training, and no time to try something new. As indicated in the introduction of this study, digital journalism studies should not only reflect on the newsrooms able to produce works such as “Snow Fall,” but should equally engage with how can smaller news organizations overcome significant barriers to innovate in a way that aligns normatively, and engenders actually buy in from journalists.

Of course, no study comes without limitations. This work features several. First, our sample features participants from larger news organizations, but is primarily made up of journalists from smaller organizations. If our sample featured more representation from resource-rich outlets such as *The New York Times*, opinions on innovation and experience with it might have reflected a more positive outlook. Second, interviewing as a methodology provides only participants’ perceptions. Third, by only sampling journalists

working full time, it potentially misses a large swath of freelancers and entrepreneurs who could have very different conceptions of innovation. Fourth, and finally, by studying the term “innovation” in a very general manner like we did, these findings lack some specificity and do not delineate between different types of technologies. While this is a limitation, we also believe this is what makes this study different from works that only examine one particular innovation (i.e., web analytics); this decision also helps unearth a more general perception of innovation across the industry.

In conclusion, the theory of disruptive innovation provides a distinct window into how journalism as a field treats innovation (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015). An industry benefits from and thrives through innovation when its “current capabilities can be used or extended” and when it is possible to reconsider “the existing identity” of a field (King & Baatartogtokh, 2015, p. 87). This is not often possible in journalism. Therefore, it remains important to remember that while journalism exists right now during a moment when “when the latest technology invention is too readily seen as the salvation for journalism’s troubled model” (Lewis & Usher, 2013, p. 615), even if a technology could be a salvation of sorts, it does not mean the industry is prepared to properly incorporate or master the innovation.

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Table 1-Participants

Current news organization	Years of Experience
<i>Charlotte News and Observer</i>	10
CNN	1
<i>The News & Advance (Lynchburg, Virginia)</i>	20
Associated Press	29
WUNC (National Public Radio)	1
McClatchy Newspapers	37
<i>Asheville Citizen-Times</i>	6
iHeartMedia	2
<i>Appalachian News</i>	2
<i>Greensboro News & Record</i>	8
RT America	5
WWAY3 (ABC News)	1
<i>Clinton Chronicle</i>	11
<i>AFAR Travel Magazine</i>	6
<i>Trenton Times (New Jersey)</i>	33
<i>Stars & Stripes</i>	42
ABC News (New York)	3
<i>Durham Herald-Sun</i>	2
<i>Spartanburg Herald-Journal</i>	4
ABC News (Washington)	5
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>	20
Fox 46 News	1
<i>Charlotte News and Observer</i>	8
<i>Durham Herald-Sun</i>	37
Triangle Today	5

