

**Competence of information technology awareness of convergent editorial journalists
(in the case of Uzbekistan editorials)**

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Abstract: *as a result of digitalization, the format of journalistic activity has also changed radically. This requires journalists to be competent in information technology awareness. The article examines the extent to which employees of convergent editorial offices in Uzbekistan know and can use information technologies in creating content based on the results of a survey.*

Key words: *convergent editorial, information technology, media content, convergent content, convergent journalist, competence.*

Introduction

Modern information technologies have created the basis for the quick and efficient establishment of journalists' activities, and have provided new methods of information transmission. It cannot be denied that journalism began to emerge as a profession with the creation of Guttenberg's loom. But the other side of the coin is not absent. Now media representatives have been entrusted with the responsibility of quickly and effectively adapting to the digital process while maintaining balance in the creative environment. That is, the creative activity of a modern journalist has fallen under the influence of the "digital revolution". Media researchers are already have repeatedly paid attention to the origin of the concept of "convergence", associating it with the processes of convergence, rapprochement, mutual similarities observed in biology, ethnography, linguistics, philosophy, sociology and other natural and humanitarian sciences. The technological level of convergence is associated primarily with the digitalization of media content - with its transfer to digital form, easily transportable through modern channels of electronic communication. Convergence in this case is represented as process that brings together digitized content (verbal, auditory, visual) in web-based media integration

According to Russian scientist Oleg Kopylov, the digital age has destroyed the role of media representatives in society, making this profession open not to a few people, but to hundreds of thousands of people who reach a large audience with specially prepared information. As a result, representatives of the media sector have moved from the center of the increasing flow of information to the edge of consumer communication interests. The current situation threatens to make the professional journalist lose his individuality and marginalize his status as a media subject¹.

Methods

The concept of universalization in journalism was considered a relevant issue before. David Randall once defined the term "universal journalist" as follows: "...universal journalists are not narrow specialists, they must be ready to report under any circumstances, know how to prepare any material, inform and entertain. They must be able to understand the intricacies of editing, layout, design, and editorial management, to perceive new technologies, and to create and sell new newspapers."².

¹ Копылов О. Особенности творческой деятельности журналиста в условиях медиаконвергенции. Диссертация на соискание учёной степени кандидата филологических наук. Барнаул – 2012. – С.3.

² Рэндалл, Д. Универсальный журналист. – М.: Международный центр журналистики, 1996. – С.345.

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It can be seen that the buds of convergent journalistic activity were also in that period. But for today's modern media workers, the term universalization is a bit outdated. Universality is a complex phenomenon. The reason is that it is a difficult process to be able to write at a professional level in various topics and areas. It can be said that modern information technologies have led to the "prosperity" of these buds. The reason is that the process of convergence, which has arisen as a result of the development of information technologies and the Internet, requires the reconstruction of the traditional journalistic activity in a mixed format with an integral relationship between the student and the technical expert. That is, it is somewhat inappropriate to apply the definition of "universal journalist" to a journalist working in a convergent editorial office. It is appropriate to give them the definition of convergent competent journalist.

When conducting the analysis in more depth, it is appropriate to consider the connection with media representatives and information technologies in the following two directions:

- 1) use of information technologies in content preparation;
- 2) use of information technologies in content distribution.

Discussion

In order to gain a certain understanding of how journalists are aware of information technologies in obtaining and processing information and how they can use it during their work, a survey was conducted among several editorial journalists who are adapting to the convergence process in Uzbekistan. A total of 125 journalists from republican and regional publications took part in it. Most of the respondents, 33.6% were 23-35 years old, 26.9% were 35-45 years old, 24% were 45-55 years old, and the remaining 12.8% were over 55 years old.

The first question of the survey focused on determining the journalists' understanding of the process of media convergence. 74.4% of respondents marked the line "multi-platform integration". This shows that most journalists have an adequate understanding of this process. However, the fact that 16.8% did not have a clear answer in this regard indicates that some journalists should be given knowledge in this regard. The reason is that 7.2% of the respondents who answered this question marked the line where the process of media convergence is generally incorrectly defined. Also, among the answers, "Media convergence is opening new horizons for the media" and "Acquiring any skills related to the press" were also noted.

The next question of the questionnaire was about the ability to use computer technologies. More than half of the respondents said that this does not cause a problem. 17.6% stated that the editorial site does not work well and cannot post independent content on it, while 24.8% noted that the site is active and learning to post material on it. 0.8% stated that they do not have a site at all. In today's Internet and information age, it is not promising for any editorial office to not start a website. (2-пачм)

"Is the website of the publication you work for active?" Can you post an independent article on it yourself?"

(Responses in % calculation)

| № | Choice of answers | General (in %) |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Yes, of course. This is not a problem | 52,8 |
| 2. | It works, but we're just learning how to post to it | 24,8 |
| 3. | It doesn't work well, we don't post the material ourselves | 17,6 |
| 4. | Works well. But posting content on your own is difficult | 0,8 |
| 5. | It doesn't work | 0,8 |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 6. | It works, but the material is placed on it by special personnel | 0,8 |
| 7. | We don't have a website | 0,8 |
| 8. | Doesn't work at all | 0,8 |
| 9. | It works fine, but we can't install it ourselves | 0,8 |

Figure 2 - about the activity of the editorial site.

The next skill is information acquisition. When asked if you can shoot with a professional camera, most journalists, 52%, said that they do it with their mobile phone. 25.6% said that they have this skill and use it during their career. The most interesting thing is that 20.8% of the respondents said that this skill is not necessary for a reporter and they have no desire to learn it. The rest wrote that they want to have this skill and will learn it whenever possible. (Figure 3)

Can you shoot using a professional camera?

(Responses in % calculation)

| № | Choice of answers Total (in %) | Total (in %) |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | I take pictures with my mobile phone and post them on platforms | 52 |
| 2. | No, I have no need or desire for it. | 20,8 |
| 3. | Yes, I do this a lot in my career | 25, 6 |
| 4. | Not yet | 0,8 |
| 5. | No, I can't | 0,8 |
| 6. | I would like to learn if possible | 0,8 |

Figure 3 — Professional camera skills.

Another skill that is becoming increasingly important in the production of converged material is the ability to edit video content. Until recently, this skill was considered to be unique only to the television industry, especially to a narrow circle of specialists in it. But today, the era itself has shown that the use of these tools is also necessary for the representatives of the press direction. As a result of the development of techniques and technologies, acquiring this skill has not become a complicated process. That is, not only information distributors, but also its consumers can take a photo with their mobile phone, manually edit it and post it on social network pages.

But the concept of professionalism is high in the type of journalistic activity. Unlike the audience, reporters have to handle the process from filming to editing in a professional manner. "Can you edit the video you recorded yourself?" only 36% of journalists gave the answer "Yes, I tried and learned". 44% of the respondents, i.e. almost half, said that they do not have enough time and energy to master this skill after writing articles. The most interesting thing is that among the editorial journalists who are adapting to the process of convergence, there are those who think that "this skill is not needed". The fact that 15.2% of the respondents chose the option "I don't think it is necessary for us to know this" proves our point. Among the answers, there are also answers such as "I have an employee who deals with this" (1.1%), "At the moment we have more time for other organizational work than writing articles (subscription)" (1.1%). This is where the problem of convergent editorials becomes apparent. That is, the issue of time and the wrong distribution of work. In addition, the outlook of journalists is not up to date. If almost half of the respondents say that they cannot learn professional editing because they do not have time to learn it, the work load is high for the employees of convergent editorial offices, while 15 percent of journalists say that they do not need to learn it, this is a backward worldview. (Figure 4)

**"Can you edit the video you recorded yourself?"
(Responses in % calculation)**

| № | Choice of answers Total (in %) | Total (in %) |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | No, I can't learn more than writing articles | 44 |
| 2. | Yes, I learned by trying | 36 |
| 3. | I don't think you need to know that | 15,2 |
| 4. | I have an employee who works for me | 1,1 |
| 5. | At the moment, we have more time for other organizational tasks than writing articles (subscription) | 1,1 |

Figure 4 — assembly skills.

A number of computer programs and platforms are now available for creating journalistic material. When the respondents were asked about this issue in the next question, 56% of journalists specified more than 3 programs. 36.8% noted that they only use Microsoft Word. However, information technologies such as Crowdsourcing and Cloud are widely used in modern journalism. In today's rapidly developing Internet and computer technologies, it is very simple to create content using only Word. Unfortunately, only 4.8% of 100 respondents indicated that they can work in about 10 programs. 1.6% said that they could not give a clear answer, and 0.8% said that they do not use computer programs at all. (Figure 5)

**How many computer programs do you use to prepare converged material for print and online publication?
(Responses in % calculation)**

| № | Choice of answers | total |
|-----------|--------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | More than 3 | 56 |
| 2. | Microsoft WORD only | 36,8 |
| 3. | About 10 | 4,8 |
| 4. | I didn't know | 1,6 |
| 5. | I don't use it at all | 0,8 |

Figure 5 - about the use of computer programs.

The use of multimedia tools is of great importance in preparing a journalistic work based on the audience's demand. Now, the ability to use these tools for a representative of the print media has become one of the urgent issues of modern journalism.

But the results of the polls are not satisfactory. "Can you make an infographic or timeline yourself?" 52.8% of journalists answered "I know what it is, but I can't prepare it myself." This means that most media representatives have an understanding of infographics, but lack the knowledge and experience to prepare them. Only 29.6% of the respondents noted that they are ready, and 17.6% asked "What are they?" marked the answer.

It is important to use modern technologies in the distribution of received and processed information. Such tools are very necessary, especially in the media market, where the abundance of information flows requires journalists to draw attention to their content. In the framework of the survey, information was collected about whether the respondents know what SEO optimization is and how they use it in their work. According to him, only 21.6% of journalists could tell what SEO is and how it is used on their site. The remaining 36% stated that they do not know what it is or how to use it, while more than 42.4% admitted that they often have ringing in their ears, but do not

know how to use it. These answers also prove that the media literacy of the convergent editorial staff is low.

**Do you know what SEO optimization is? How do you use it in your work?
(Responses in % calculation)**

| № | Choice of answers | total |
|----------|---------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | I don't know, but it often rings in my ears | 42,4 |
| 2. | I don't know what it is or how to use it | 3,66 |
| 3. | I know we use it on our site | 24 |

Figure 7 — The skill of using SEO optimization.

Conclusion

The analysis of this survey showed that most of the journalists in the republican and local convergent editorial offices do not have a satisfactory level of modern professional skills, knowledge of techniques and technologies. Journalists have an understanding of media convergence, but lack the skills to use platforms and technologies to create appropriate content in this context. Although the employee working in the convergent editorial office is at the initial level, it is necessary to acquire these skills and abilities, and today's era itself shows that it is necessary.

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