

Call for papers

*Professional sociability of journalists on
social networking sites*

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Since research has been looking into the professional practices of journalists, the use of digital networking tools has been paramount in their analysis. Whether it be the Minitel (Jouët, 1987) or the web at its beginnings (Pelissier et Romain, 1998, Deuze, 1999, Boczkowski, 2001, Damian et al., 2002, Gonçalves, 2003), these techniques have always had an important role in the news collection process, in the media relation with the general public and the sources, as well as in the journalists' socialisation and inter professional relationships.

Nowadays it's social networking sites (SNS) such as Twitter and Facebook that catch the attention of observers. Indeed, these social media play an important part in disseminating news (Yang et Leskovec 2011, Messner et al., 2011, Rieder et Smyrniaios, 2012). Several studies in Europe (Mercier, 2012, Jeanne-Perrier, 2012, Cision, 2012, The European Commission, 2012) and elsewhere (Armstrong et Gao, 2010, Bruns, 2012, Recuero, 2009) show strong use of SNS also in the process of producing news. **At the same time these tools seem to be central in the process of professional sociability of journalists. As part of their everyday life, SNS help journalists increase personal visibility, create and enrich networks of contacts, maintain relations with sources and readers, establish professional specialities or deal with hierarchical injunctions.**

The global evolution of contemporary journalism in Europe and in North America frames the intensified use of SNS. The increasing number of free-lance journalists over the past few years multiplies the number of reporters who directly depend on their professional reputation to find work (Pilmis, 2010). Services such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn are good ways of maintaining contacts as well as showing professional skills to potential employers and peers. The same trend can be observed on populations of independent workers, such as consultants and experts in communication, often former journalists themselves, as well as computer specialists gravitating around media (Christopherson, 2004). These professionals' success directly depends on the visibility of their work and person on the internet. Having assimilated this need, the group uses the SNS strategically. This imperative of visibility (Aubert & Haroche, 2011) whose goal is to build reputation as well as a "personal" audience, raises important ethical questions (Domenget, 2012), that can be considered as particularly important in the case of journalists.

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SNS are also used to reinforce accountability of journalists (Datchary, 2010). Readers and viewers interact with journalists in various ways (criticism, encouragement, Q & A). This takes place in institutionalized spaces like official media pages and profiles, but also through the personal accounts of individual journalists on Facebook and Twitter.

This tendency of journalists of mixing professional activity and personal points of view on SNS regularly generates tensions. On the one hand media organizations managing teams worry about their company's image and, on the other hand, journalists defend their freedom of speech online. The managerial injunctions aim to subordinate the use of SNS in promoting media organisations, but the journalists resist and try to negotiate individual spaces of freedom. Thus, Twitter and Facebook become new fields in which this historical struggle for journalistic autonomy deploys itself (Lemieux, 2010).

In this context contributions may explore the following axes:

- **Professional discourses:** how do “social network” brands claim to guide the journalists’ professional practices? What journalists describe their use of SNS in terms of cooperation with pairs, sources and the public? What are the recommendations, appreciations, or injunctions of authorities, experts and media managers related to use of SNS by journalists? What do the charts of “good practices” established in each specific media, say about collective professional references in terms of auto-regulation by ethical and moral discourses?
- **Uses:** How do journalists integrate SNS in their everyday practices? To what extent are these tools important in news and sources gathering? To what extent do they constitute devices for professional socialising and the raising of awareness in belonging to a group (for example, that of web journalists)?
- **Players:** Who contributes to the disseminating of a journalistic practice on the social networks, and where? Consultants, teaching organisms, media are also spaces in which the imaginary and use prescriptions form, and can be submitted to analysis and questioning. Who are the actors that contribute to the circulation of these imaginaries, with what trajectories and professional objectives? How do the journalists use the socio-digital networks as collaboration tools that go beyond the borders of the traditional newsroom?

Any other proposition, in relation to these three axes, that describes the evolution of Social Networking Sites and their uses in relation to journalistic practices will be examined.

Articles may be offered in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.

Please **indicate your interest in this special issue** by sending a two-page summary of your article proposal to the guest editors **before the 15th November 2013, to:**

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Submission of articles (30.000 to 50.000 signs, including references and footnotes) **before 15th March 2014** : <http://surlejournalisme.com/rev/index.php/slj/author/submit/1>

The articles will be subject to ‘double-blind’ assessments; they should include theoretical references, research methods and a corpus reference.

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The review is a **rendezvous** between diverse research curiosities and ways of looking at journalism in an arena of high scientific vitality.

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