

# Journalism in Transition: The Impact of Digital Broadcasting

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## Abstract

Digital broadcasting has revolutionized the field of journalism, transforming the way news is gathered, reported, and consumed. This article explores the impact of digital broadcasting on journalism, highlighting the opportunities and challenges it presents. It examines how digital technologies have enabled journalists to reach a wider audience and deliver news in innovative ways. The article also discusses the role of social media, citizen journalism, and mobile technology in shaping the future of journalism. Additionally, it addresses the ethical considerations and the need for journalists to adapt to the evolving digital landscape.

**Key words:** digital platforms, journalism, media audiences, integration

## Introduction

Digital broadcasting has ushered in a new era for journalism, offering unprecedented opportunities for news dissemination and audience engagement. This article examines the transformative impact of digital technologies on journalism and the challenges faced by journalists in this evolving landscape. Digital broadcasting has expanded the reach of journalism, allowing news organizations to reach a global audience instantaneously. It has also democratized the news-making process, enabling citizen journalists to contribute to the news cycle. Additionally, digital platforms offer new storytelling tools, such as multimedia and interactive graphics, enhancing the quality and depth of news coverage.

Journalism, by origin, is the production of ‘factual accounts, and explanations of current or recent events’; it can be traced back many centuries, to a time before it became an industry and

profession. Originally, journalism existed in the form of ‘pamphlets and broadsides (large sheets printed on only one side)’, ‘content of private letters, public announcements and also word of mouth reports’ (McQail 2013, pp. 2-3; Marshall 2011, p. 4). Those who produced this content would not have identified as journalists. Rather, they would have aimed to: ‘make money, argue politics, provide a community service, and promote their faith’ (Marshall 2011, p. 4)

The significance of news and its diverse interpretations have led to scholarly debates about journalism and news, each attracting its own communities of interpretation. This report focuses on those who analyze the news media from a technological perspective. While the impacts of technology, including algorithms, will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, we can pose a preliminary and overarching question here.

Information and communication technologies are rapidly changing the practise of journalism, just as they are changing how services are delivered in other industries (such as the political, health, and educational sectors, among others). The internet is the historical medium with the quickest growth. The fundamental technology of the internet – the digitalization and integration of telephone and computer technologies – has significantly changed how news and information are produced and disseminated (Talabi, 2011). Globalisation, which is currently a trendy term, has revolutionised the world and brought with it competition. People's life has changed, either for the better or for the worse, depending on which side of the divide they are on. According to Talabi (2011), journalists around the world have embraced the internet quickly.

Technological determinism is the idea that technology has the ability to drive human interaction and create social change. This concept focuses on the effects and/or impacts those digital technologies have on users (journalists), organizations and society (Hauer, 2017; Talabi, 2017; Macaulay et al., 2021).

According to Baran (2013), media audiences have unquestionably reached a very high point in a tremendously significant stage of development in the history of communication as a result of journalists' use of digital technologies in journalistic practise. Many journalists now operate in different ways in media organisations as a result of it. World wide, digital technology has significantly altered the journalism industry. According to Daily Trust (2012), the Web's journey has changed everything and it appears that social media has finally become crucial for journalists. The modern world is undeniably information-driven, with a culture increasingly dependent on information. Information plays a crucial role in driving progress and managing the reputation of nations, among other things. The development of digital technology has had a profound impact on various professional practices, including journalism. The rise of social media on the internet, in particular, has significantly altered the landscape of global journalism practice. It's evident that information is a driving force for progress and plays a key role in managing the reputation of nations and other entities. The development of digital technology has significantly impacted various professional practices, including journalism. One notable example is the influence of social media on the practice of journalism worldwide.

Digitalised broadcasting is an improved and technologically advanced means of transmitting broadcast signals to a dispersed audience. It is also the use of digits in disseminating and receiving information. However, Orlu-Orlu (2017) opined that digital means the application of digits or numbers in the representation of information. In this regard, digital broadcasting is a means of ensuring capacity in broadcast transmission networks by improving spectrum efficiency (Plum, 2014) The digitalisation of broadcast takes care of visual distortion that is often associated with analogue

transmission. Low-cost maintenance, reduction in energy usage and support from vendors and among others are the benefits derivable from the digitalisation of broadcast operations (Aginam, 2017) This is in line with the view of Dokepsi (2008) who articulated that digitalisation has cut down the cost of media operations. He noted that a task that is supposed to be done by twelve is now handled by one individual with little or no stress. According to Olalere, Oyeyinka, Lateef, Olakunle, Kenneth, Rauf, Omolay Omolayo and Nwolikpe (2013), digitalisation provides more internet expansion. This assertion agrees with ITU's press statement which detailed that the digitalisation of television will allow more room for spectrum expansion for the nation's broadband and internet penetration. Technically, digital television transmission (DTT) provides better signal quality which increases the rejection of noise and frequency interference during transmission (Plum, 2014). This corresponds with the assertion of Ihechu and Uche (2012) who clearly stated that digital broadcasting provides clearer and quality signals and spectrum.

Since technology opened a world of possibilities for broadcasting a huge spectrum is available for radio and television broadcasting in the country. It also avails broadcast stations with opportunities for interactive broadcasting as television set now does more than only receive signals. Also, digital broadcasting equipment allows simultaneous transmission of a minimum of four programmes and four channels from the same station that used to transmit only one programme or channels in the analogue transmission (Idachaba, 2013). The lukewarm attitude of most journalists to upgrade their skills through training whenever the opportunity comes has remained a hindrance to reaping the drivable benefits from digitalisation in the ever-dynamic broadcast media industry (Nwanne, 2014).

Social media platforms have become integral to the news ecosystem, allowing journalists to engage with audiences directly and disseminate news rapidly. Citizen journalism, enabled by digital technologies, has also played a significant role in providing alternative perspectives and uncovering underreported stories. As journalism transitions to digital broadcasting, ethical considerations become more complex. Journalists must navigate issues such as privacy, accuracy, and bias in the digital age, ensuring that their reporting upholds the highest standards of journalism. Digital broadcasting has revolutionized journalism, offering unprecedented opportunities for news dissemination and audience engagement. While it presents challenges, such as the need for instant updates and the rise of fake news, digital broadcasting also offers new avenues for storytelling and audience interaction. Journalists must adapt to this evolving landscape, embracing digital technologies while upholding the core principles of journalism.

For traditional media companies transitioning into the digital age, merging with the digital media industry is often crucial for successful adaptation. Despite the challenges, traditional media can leverage their strengths to thrive in the digital era. The emergence of advanced digital media technologies has significantly impacted the communication industry, offering new opportunities for media organizations.

Digital media technologies have transformed the way media workers operate, allowing them to access new content and news sources through advanced search engines. Traditional media can still play a crucial role in verifying the accuracy of acquired sources and created content. Readers now have the freedom to share their opinions and engage in discussions about online content using various devices. This interactive aspect provides opportunities for readers to comment on the latest events in real time.

The use of digital media platforms enables rapid and effective sharing of information. Through these platforms, media professionals can gain insights into readers' preferences, helping them create

content that resonates with their audience. Overall, the integration of digital media technologies has revolutionized the media landscape, offering new avenues for growth and innovation for traditional media companies.

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