

Credibility of Traditional vs. Online News Media: A Historical Change in Journalists' Perceptions?

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SUMMARY

Current research is mixed with regard to the question of how the credibility of information published on news websites compares with the credibility of information offered by the traditional news media, although evidence is scarce at this point. The main goal of this paper is to verify whether the rise and expansion of news websites brought about a change in journalists' perceptions of media credibility. The authors present results of a survey of a random sample of 106 journalists in Slovenia, asking them to evaluate the credibility of different types of media, to explain their reasons for rating particular media as more credible, and to describe their criteria for evaluating credibility. The key finding of this survey is that the majority of journalists still believe that the traditional media are the most credible; they hold a conservative standpoint in the matter of journalistic credibility and its criteria. The negative judgment of news websites may be partially a result of a will to defend the established authority of one's own profession. It may also be attributed to the weakly developed online media scene in Slovenia, where the online media mostly

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operate as extensions of the traditional media. Additionally, it may be partially a result of journalists' negative evaluation and discontent with their own work. Still, some journalists found online companies' websites to be valuable, as they offer prompt information which is constantly verified by the community of online media users.

Key words: credibility, history, Internet, new media, news websites, online journalism

Introduction

Journalism and the news media are built on credibility. With the appearance of online news websites, journalism in the traditional news media gained a competitor in the news offer. How did mainstream journalists in the traditional news media react to the new key player on the media scene? They have a generally negative attitude toward the Internet. They are concerned with source credibility, information reliability, and the difficulties in verifying facts in the online world (Garrison, 2000; Weise, 1997; Chan et al., 2006). Such reactions can be seen as constituting a process of "news repair" that reaffirms the institutional authority of traditional news media, and the legitimacy of the traditional model of journalism (Bennett et al., 1985; McCoy, 2001). Moreover, the responses of traditional media's journalists to online journalism will shape the further development of journalism in the new media environment.

Credibility research has been a major facet of mass communication and journalism scholarship since the field's earliest days. Whereas the seminal work on credibility concentrated on dimensions of source credibility (e.g., Hovland & Weiss, 1951), more contemporary literature highlighted variations in the perceived credibility attributed to different media channels (e.g., Rimmer & Weaver, 1987). Despite this expanded scope of research, the realm of online news has only recently been explored in media credibility analyses (e.g., Bucy, 2003; Chan et al., 2006; Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Jordan, 2007; Kioussis, 2001). A recent study of online journalism concluded that "the more people use the Web, the less they trust it. The most trusted sites of all increasingly are those from the old-legacy media" (*The State of the News Media*, 2006). The report goes on to state that the boost to "old-legacy media" sites is balanced by an increasing scepticism toward alternative online news fora, noting that "[e]ven people who enjoy blogs, for instance, are suspicious of them. They go for the energy, argument and authenticity they find there, not hard information" (ibid.). Although helpful, such inquiries are restricted because they have normally been based on samples of

Internet users or nonrandomly selected journalists or populations. Accordingly, the purpose of this project is to fill this gap in scholarship by ascertaining journalists' views on the credibility of online news in comparison to television and print news, through a probability sample of journalists. The present study is aimed at tackling this issue empirically by examining how randomly selected journalists (those working in traditional media organizations as well as online journalists working within media which offer information only on the Internet) react to the credibility of online and traditional news media. The key goal of this paper is to verify whether a historical change in journalists' perceptions of credibility occurred with the rise and expansion of news websites.

In the first chapter of this paper, a short review of the Slovenian online news media scene is presented, followed by a theoretical background with research questions and hypothesis in the second chapter. Next, the research method is specified, and the results of the research are presented in the fourth chapter. Finally, we discuss our conclusions within a broader journalistic, media and social context.

Use of the Internet in Slovenia and the online news media scene

In Slovenia, almost 1.1 million people were using the Internet in the first quarter of 2009, which represents almost 64% of all people aged from 10 to 74 years old, 56% of whom were using a broadband connection. The largest share of regular users of the Internet (98%) was in the age group between 10 and 15 years old. The majority (54%) was using the Internet for e-mail communication; 48% were using it to search for information about goods and services; 35% to participate in Internet fora; 15% to make phone or video calls; and 13% to send messages to Internet chat rooms. 22% of users made or edited their own profile on social network sites. (RIS, 2009)

According to Vobič (2009), the transition of print and broadcast media companies to the Internet began in the second half of the 1990s, when a "we-have-to-be-online" mentality prevailed in the Slovenian media ecosystem. Media companies implemented a "shovelware" concept, publishing only selected content of in-house print or broadcast news teams. In the early 2000s, media companies started to establish online departments of 10 to 15 newswriters, producing "original" news content, mainly by repackaging in-house print or broadcast news and content of other media and news agencies. In the late 2000s, online teams at traditional media organisations still mainly reproduce news content from in-house print or broadcast sources or other media and press agencies; however, characteristics of online communication, such as hypertextuality, interactivity and multimediality, are being more actively implemented into the online news production process, resulting

in the establishment of special multimedia news teams and online news formats. Furthermore, *Žurnal media*, *Delo* and *Dnevnik* started the newsroom integration process in 2008, trying to bring online news teams into the “centre” of news production, and build common information engines across departments and media platforms. In short, the offer of news websites in Slovenia mostly consists of websites which are mere extensions of the traditional print organisations (e.g., *Dnevnik.si*, *Vecer.com*, *Finance.si*, *Delo.si*, *Primorske.si*), television programmes (e.g., *24ur.com*, *Rtvslo.si*), or radio programmes (e.g., *Radio1.si*), while there are only a few news websites which offer information about public issues exclusively on the Internet (e.g., *Vest.si*, *Razgledi.net*, *Siol.net*). It is interesting, however, that the tabloid *Slovenske novice*, which is the most read Slovenian daily newspaper (Valicon, 2009), does not have its own website.

According to research conducted by the Slovenian Advertising Chamber (MOSS, 2009), *24ur.com* (the website of POP TV) is the most visited Slovenian website (with a 53% reach); in September 2009, it was visited by 607.685 people. Second place is held by the search engine *Najdi.si* (with a 48,7% reach). The website *Siol.net* (483.835 visitors) is in third place, followed by the public broadcaster website *Rtvslo.si* (426.680 visitors) and the Internet classified website *Bolha.com* (381.912 visitors).

In recent years, two issues emerged in the Slovenian digital media arena: first, the weak social status of online journalists, and second, the search for a new economic model. Inside the Slovenian journalistic community, journalists are polarised into “defenders” and “critics” of online journalism, whereas online journalists are often not regarded as “real” journalists since they primarily repackage content. (Vobič, 2009)

Literature review

Credibility

Credibility of the news media or sources is important to audience members (Kaufman et al., 1999). Two types of media credibility have traditionally been studied. Source credibility considers the trustworthiness of the individual who constructs the message (Hovland & Weiss, 1951) while news medium credibility evaluates the overall credibility of a larger entity, such as a local television news station, newspaper (Graziano & McGrath, 1986), or, of course, an online news company.

Online credibility

Much of the Internet credibility research has compared online newspapers to more traditional news formats. The studies have produced mixed results with some research indicating that online news media are more credible than more traditional news media (television and radio stations, newspapers), while other research has suggested that online media are less credible. Johnson and Kaye (1998) examined how individuals who used the Internet for political information and to purchase candidate paraphernalia, judged the credibility of several news media, including the Internet. They found that online newspapers and news magazines were judged as highly credible; more credible than traditional media. Credibility was more associated with reliance on the Web than with how much an individual was using the medium. Johnson and Kaye (1998) also discovered that online newspapers and news magazines were regarded as highly credible. According to Flanagin and Metzger (2000), the Internet was deemed to be as credible as most other media, with the exception of newspapers. Kiouisis (2001) found that people were sceptical of online news sources. His survey showed that newspapers were found the most credible medium. International studies have also confirmed that the traditional news media were regarded as more credible than the online news media. According to Yi Park (2005), Koreans considered traditional news media to be more credible than the online news formats. Schweiger's (2000) study found that German media consumers rated newspapers as being more credible than television or online news. At the time that the study was conducted, the Web was relatively new to consumers and the majority of participants were non-Internet users. While newspapers were generally considered to be the most credible medium, the lines between television and online news media were blurred. Television was considered as more serious, well-researched, critical, proficient and professional, whereas the Web was rated as more thorough and impartial.

Research has shown that age affects how audiences rate credibility. Bucy (2003) discovered that college students found television news and online news more credible than older media consumers. Older participants, however, found online news to be more credible than television news, whereas college students found television news to be more credible.

Some research has also examined Internet credibility without considering other media. Greer (2003) compared the credibility of a highly credible and recognizable online news source *Nytimes.com* (the online version of *The New York Times*) to a personal Web page. Participants saw either a highly credible source or a less credible source, and then rated the credibility of a news story on the page. The highly credible source was evaluated as the most credible, but the difference was

not statistically significant. Lowrey (2004) found that online news credibility was not affected by story design. One group of participants rated the credibility of a news story written in a traditional, linear style. The other participants read a news story that was in a non-linear online format, which allowed participants to jump from one part of the story to another via hyperlinks.

Tension between traditional media journalism and online journalism

The tension between traditional media journalism and online journalism is more of a conceptual than a technological issue as traditional media journalism exhibits not an aversion to new technology but rather an attempt at a controlled incorporation of it. "What is at stake is how, not if, these new technological practices will be incorporated into journalistic practices" (Bratich, 2004: 110). The problem of controlling news quality online stems from the inherent qualities of the Internet itself, where "the invitation to 'be the media', and thus to challenge traditional media's definitions of what counted as 'news' as well as who qualified as a 'journalist', [is] very much consistent with the animating ethos of the Internet" (Allan, 2002). Such statements reveal the resistance of the traditional news media to the idea that "the content of the Web is news, though not necessarily journalism" (Jones, 2000). As the traditional news media have no real means of prohibiting online news sites from disseminating their material, their strategy has been to dissuade online news seekers from trusting the material found on those sites. By analysing the discourse surrounding online reporting, Jordan (2007) observed how the traditional news media used accusations of unprofessionalism and irresponsibility in their discussions of online news sites to discredit those sites. Even at the dawn of the twenty-first century, many professional journalists in the traditional media remained sceptical of the Web's value as a news resource. News professionals lamented the quality of ideas found online and harshly criticised the lack of gate-keeping in online publishing. For example, Jordan (2007) found that broadcast journalists took pains to emphasise the care and concern of their own reporting methods even as they continued to promise increasing amounts of available information and urged their television viewers to go to their news Websites. The message being broadcast was that the mainstream press could be trusted to push all this information through to news seekers without compromising their own journalistic integrity and credibility. As proof, they even reported on reporters who were suspended for revealing too much information. Jordan also found that the division between mainstream and online news coverage was established in the mainstream press accounts which implied that theirs was the only legitimate way to cover social events. The tone taken in the press reports was paternalistic. They did not deny

that online news seekers had many alternatives for acquiring information, but they wanted to ensure that news seekers were always questioning those sites' journalistic credentials. To clarify this distinction, the mainstream press continually reported on the activities of online news Websites and pronounced judgement on their journalistic merit, which provided an interpretive template for news seekers to use when assessing online news.

It is obvious that the traditional news media will never be able to control what individual users are able to say online; nor do they need to exert that level of control. Therefore, "rather than closing down the Internet's information proliferation, it is sufficient for their purposes that news audiences maintain a pervasive scepticism regarding online information that is not issued under the banner of a mainstream news Website" (Jordan, 2007: 283). This tactic is still in evidence today when traditional news articles speak of alternative news media as "standing somewhere between opinion journalism and straight reporting", a statement which does not deny the importance of alternative news media, but which clearly distinguishes them from "straight reporting" (ibid.) Moreover, it is interesting to note that what counts as "straight reporting" is not explicitly defined; instead, the implication is that straight reporting is different and more valuable than whatever the alternative news sites provide (ibid.). Criticism of online news sites was frequently articulated as an issue of journalistic "professionalism", a discourse used by the traditional news media to discipline reporters, editors and news consumers (ibid.).

Research questions and hypothesis

As discussed previously, current research is mixed with regard to the question of how the credibility of Internet information compares with the traditional media, although evidence is scarce at this point. Because of these inconclusive findings, however, more empirical work is needed to understand the dynamics of news credibility attitudes across media channels. Accordingly, the following research question is provided:

RQ1: Which type of news media will respondents rate as most credible?

Our review of literature has shown that journalists are likely to hold relatively negative views toward online media due to the need to protect the authority of their own profession. In the surveys, journalists were asked to rate the credibility of "news websites operated by traditional media organisations" and "news websites operated by online media companies respectively". The hypothesis of the present study is:

H1: Journalists working for the traditional media rate online news sites of established traditional media organisations as being more credible than news sites of online companies.

Since most of the research does not deal with the reasons for rating media as credible, we set the following research question:

RQ2: Why do journalists rate particular media as being more credible?

Since the majority of studies neglect the definition of credibility, i.e., the criteria of credibility as perceived by the respondents themselves, and because we wanted to verify whether the respondents use the established professional criteria, such as being fair, accurate, believable, informative and in-depth (Bucy, 2003), or if they have formed new criteria, we posed the third research question:

RQ3: What are journalists' criteria for evaluating media credibility?

Method

The analysed data came from a survey of a random sample of 130 journalists in Slovenia, conducted in the autumn of 2009. The target population was all Slovenian journalists. The respondents returned the completed questionnaires to us a few days later. 106 completed questionnaires were received, yielding a response rate of 82 percent.

Measures

When measured as a single perceptual dimension, media credibility is operationally defined as believability (Bucy, 2003). Despite debates in the literature on the dimensionality of media credibility, this study utilises a single indicator as an overall measure of the believability of the media. For our purposes, we prefer the overall measure of believability to multi-indicator measures that have no clear conceptual explication of the structure of dimensionality. In the survey, respondents were asked to express their agreement with each of these three statements on a three-point scale (where 1 = disagree, 2 = do not agree or disagree, and 3 = agree): (1) "traditional media have high levels of credibility"; (2) "news websites of traditional media outlets have high levels of credibility"; and (3) "news websites of online companies have high levels of credibility".

Our aim was to research journalists' evaluations of the credibility of the same type of media, i.e., the so-called quality media (see Sparks, 2007). Therefore, we excluded tabloids and limited our research to what is generally known as the "serious media" among Slovenian journalists and the wider public. This term will be used in this article when referring to the media which cover public affairs and other relevant topics serving the public interest in a democratic society.

To identify the reasons for rating a medium's credibility, two open, i.e., non-structured questions were posed to respondents: why do they rate particular media as more credible, and how do they define credibility. We asked these questions with the intention to get the respondents' own criteria of credibility, instead of serving them the criteria known from the literature, which have so far been verified mainly in the traditional media, i.e., the criteria of journalists being believable, fair, accurate, informative and in-depth (Bucy, 2003).

Studies of media credibility have consistently found an association between age, education and use of the Internet with credibility assessment. In general, older, more educated audiences and those who use the Internet less, tend to be the most critical of online media, while younger, less educated and more heavy users of the Internet are more likely to be accepting of online news coverage and to evaluate the online media as credible (Bucy, 2003).

Results

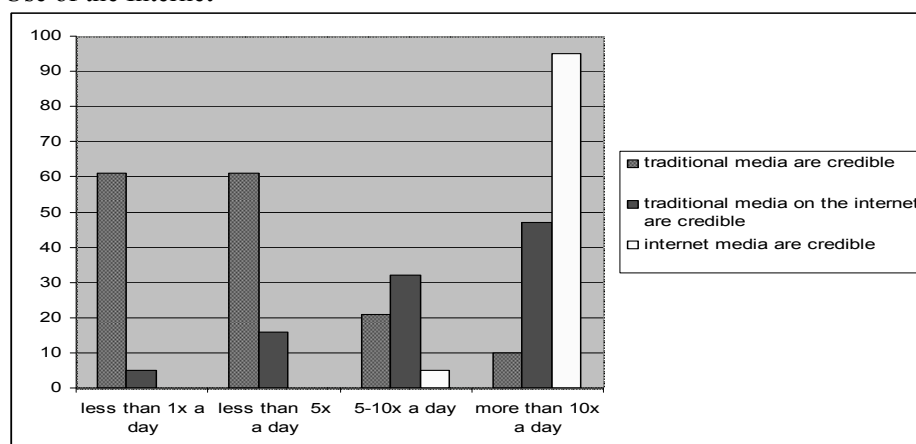
First, we will present journalists' ratings of the credibility of particular groups of media (see Table 1). The majority of our respondents (almost 70%) agreed that the traditional news media have a high degree of credibility. Approximately 18% of respondents attributed high credibility to news websites of the traditional serious media, while almost half could not decide whether or not these websites are credible. Only 18% of respondents believed that the news websites of the news media publishing only on the Internet are highly credible, while 64% of respondents disagreed.

According to data results, *gender*, *education* and *age* do not have a statistically significant impact, which means that the journalists' evaluations of news media's credibility do not differ significantly based on gender, education and age. Those who evaluate particular media as more credible are not homogenous regarding their gender, education and age structure; but, the evaluation of credibility is in correlation with the daily use of the Internet (see Chart 1) and with working within a medium of a particular group (traditional, traditional on the Internet, Internet) (see Chart 2); correlations between these variables are statistically significant, as demonstrated in both charts.

Table 1: Journalists' Evaluations of Media Credibility

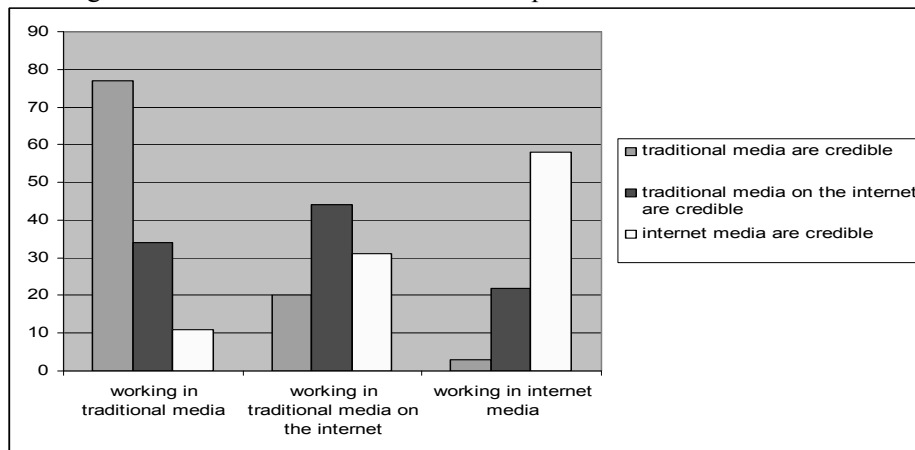
	I disagree	I do not agree or disagree	I agree	Sum
The traditional serious news media have high levels of credibility.	26 24,5%	8 7,5%	72 67,9%	106 100%
The news websites of the traditional serious news media have high levels of credibility.	41 38,6%	46 43,4%	19 17,9%	106 100%
The news websites of online companies which publish information about public affairs topics have high levels of credibility.	68 64,0%	19 18,0%	19 18,0%	106 100%

Chart 1: Journalists' Evaluations of News Media Credibility According to Daily Use of the Internet



According to the results, the Internet media are evaluated as more credible by those respondents who use the Internet more often throughout the course of a day and by those who work in the online news media. However, the respondents who have fewer daily experiences with the Internet and who work in the traditional news media, evaluated the traditional news media as being more credible. In this way, our hypothesis was confirmed: journalists working for the traditional news media rate online news sites of established traditional media organisations as being more credible than news sites of online news companies.

Chart 2: Journalists' Evaluations of News Media Credibility According to Working within a Medium of a Particular Group



So far, we have presented results concerning journalists' evaluations of the credibility of news media in general. In the following chapter, we will address journalists' reasons for evaluating particular news media (traditional, traditional on the Internet, online) as more credible, as well as journalists' criteria for evaluating credibility.

Journalists' Reasons for Rating Particular Media as More Credible

The majority of the respondents wrote that they rated the traditional news media as more credible because of their longer tradition during which they had earned a *reputation* of credibility and quality. Some of them referred to the traditional news media's "good name" which they had achieved during years of practising journalism. Most of them attributed such a reputation to personal "positive experiences" which they had as audience members or as journalists in their everyday practice and relations with the traditional news media, while they had negative, few, or no experiences with the online news media.

Several respondents attributed the media's reputation to *personalities* who work in particular media, stating that credibility is linked to "good", "experienced", "acknowledged", "distinguished" reporters and editors. They chose the traditional news media because they employ reporters and editors whom they trust.

The third key reason for rating the traditional news media as more credible is their quality *news supply*. Most respondents said that the traditional news media are more credible because they offer more "serious", "public affairs" topics, while the

online news media offer more sensational news. They defined topics such as politics, economy, social affairs, and ecology as “public affairs” and listed entertainment, and especially lifestyle and sexual advice as sensational news. According to respondents, the traditional news media are more trustworthy because they offer more “exhaustive”, “in-depth” and “accurate” information, while the online news media offer “surface”, “quick” and “unverified” information. Some respondents also stated that they do not trust the online news media (both “pure” online media as well as those which are only extensions of traditional media) because their journalists merely “package PR information”, “shape PR information in the form of journalistic items”, “translate information published in the foreign media” and “transmit news from the STA (Slovenian Press Agency)”. Thus, the work of journalists from the online news media is less highly rated than the work of those from the traditional news media; the main argument is that journalists from the traditional news media have a more professional journalistic approach to news production. Some respondents even wrote that they value journalism in the traditional news media more because their journalists more clearly separate facts from opinions. They also criticised journalistic writing in the online news media, arguing that online journalists construct sentences which are too short, use superficial language and make numerous spelling and grammar mistakes.

The fourth reason for rating the traditional news media as more credible was journalists’ *education* and *experiences*. According to respondents, journalists working in the traditional news media are more educated and experienced than online journalists. For example, one respondent wrote that “journalism in the traditional media is more credible because journalists are more educated and have more working experiences than journalists in the Internet media”.

A dozen of respondents revealed that they do not like *commentaries* on their online news items, as they are usually reduced to political or ideological hate speech, e.g., “in the commentaries published under news items, the same ideological division between the communists and the clerics always appears, regardless of whether you write about the parliament or the price of tomatoes”, and/or inappropriate offences, e.g., “they insult us although we are not to be blamed for what bothers them; people are frustrated and do not dare to protest where they should”, and “commenting on the news items is similar to writing on a toilet’s wall”.

The respondents who favoured the online news media mostly referred to their *promptness* at information gathering, which is very important in the contemporary fast-changing world. Some of them argued that online news media are credible because Internet users are given an opportunity to comment on published information. Thus, the *community of recipients* constantly verifies the credibility of a particular news item, the journalist who has written it, and the medium itself. The re-

ipients who are active regularly verify credibility in this way; therefore, according to some respondents, the online news media are much more credible and of a higher quality than the traditional news media which hide behind their inaccessibility.

Journalists' Key Criteria of Media Credibility

The majority of respondents argued that the main criteria of credibility are *tradition* and *media reputation* in general. As we have already pointed out, reputation was attributed to particular *reporters* and *editors*. The respondents make a decision about a particular news medium's credibility having particular reporters and editors in mind. For them, the matter of who has written a particular news item is crucial.

The respondents emphasised *journalistic work*. Most of them stated that the key criterion of credibility is *source selection*, e.g., inclusion of "sources who are involved in a certain event" and "those who have something important to say about the event". This is connected to the criterion of *impartiality*. The respondents said that in a news item it is important for them to see that "all", i.e., "different sides" of a story have been included. They also indicated that in news items they search for "signs which show that journalists have verified information". According to respondents, a credible journalist writes an item in a way that makes it clear whether certain information is confirmed or opposed by news sources.

One of the key criteria indicated by many respondents is publishing "in-depth information", which they understood as *information about the structural relations in a society*, i.e., information which uncovers relations of power in a society and do not offer only data without the context. According to respondents, the media too often offer pieces of information which are not linked to one another, or which are published only to fill the space.

Another criterion mentioned by respondents is *criticising information*. They believed that journalists should be engaged, i.e., "they should clearly stand for a discriminated group", and should fight against discrimination; in this way, journalists can demonstrate their credibility. According to respondents, the so-called "quasi-objectivity" is merely enabling certain people to maintain power and authority.

Discussion and conclusion

The analysis adds to our understanding of how journalists evaluate the credibility of news websites and how such evaluations may be contextualised. What we have demonstrated here is the value of examining journalists' evaluation of news media

credibility as situated in, and indicative of, their normative beliefs. This should be a theoretically valuable line of inquiry for research on journalism in the new media world.

Our key finding is that no significant historical change in journalists' perception of credibility occurred, i.e., the majority of journalists still believe that the traditional news media are the most credible. The majority of respondents hold a conservative standpoint in the matter of journalistic credibility and its criteria, as they put forward the traditional criteria of quality journalistic work to rate journalistic credibility, i.e., criteria which were already generally accepted in the journalistic profession before the development of online news media and journalism (for more, see Bucy, 2003).

We found that Slovenian journalists prevalingly rate online news media as significantly less credible than traditional news media. This finding points to an apparent similarity between journalists in Slovenia and their counterparts in other European societies. Practitioners tend to value the established model of journalism more highly than the newly-developed, online journalism. This conclusion could represent an informed "professional" judgement – journalists understand what constitutes quality journalism and recognise that the procedure of practising "traditional media journalism" has built-in mechanisms for quality control.

The negative judgment of online news sites may be partially a result of a will to defend the established authority of one's own profession and reaffirm blurring institutional boundaries. It may be part of a "process of news repair" (Bennett et al., 1985; Reese, 1990), through which journalists attempt to reconfirm the legitimacy and validity of their own model of journalism.

The conservative viewpoint of Slovenian journalists can be attributed to the weakly developed online news media scene in Slovenia, where the online media mostly operate as extensions of the traditional media. In recent times, the online media have functioned as attention-catchers among people of the younger generation who are not faithful and regular users of the traditional media. In times of economic recession, these media have been, above all, a means to reduce distribution expenses and a bait to attract advertisers. However, there are only a few media in Slovenia which publish only on the Internet and have no "history" of traditional media. Their financial situation is precarious; they fight to survive on the media market, and can, therefore, scarcely afford to employ educated and quality reporters, which is generally reflected in the quality of their journalistic offer.

The negative judgment of online news sites may be partially a result of journalists' negative evaluation of, and discontent with, their own work. Namely, the analysis revealed that particularly those journalists who work for the news websites of the traditional media negatively evaluate their own work, often naming it a "copy-

paste” production practice. Respondents described this practice as translating mostly sensational news from the foreign media and shaping PR messages in the form of news items. Most of the respondents perceived online news as “infotainment”.

However, these arguments are not to suggest that journalists in Slovenia do not find online companies’ websites valuable. In fact, respondents recognised the value of the Internet in opening up a wider space for journalism. They particularly valued online news as a source of prompt information which is important for making decisions in the contemporary world.

Some respondents also pointed out the importance of credibility, which is assured by being constantly verified by the online community of media users. It may be expected that once the number and influence of journalistic resources on the Internet increase, the broader sense of “community” will prevail over the more narrow sense of “professionalism” in journalism. We may even speculate that a new “community” model, which would better serve the public’s news interests rather than follow exclusive and arbitrary standards, might mitigate some of the misinformation circulating online and thus be of better service to the people rather than the elite.

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Vjerodostojnost vijesti u tradicionalnim naspram internetskim medijima: povijesna promjena u novinarskoj perspektivi?

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SAŽETAK

Ovo istraživanje uzima u obzir pitanje odnosa *vjerodostojnosti* informacija objavljenih na novinskim web stranicama i vjerodostojnosti informacija u tradicionalnim medijima, iako je dokaza u ovom trenutku malo. Glavni cilj je rada potvrditi je li širenje i porast broja novinskih web stranica donijelo promjenu u novinarskoj percepciji vjerodostojnosti medija. Autorice predstavljaju rezultate ankete provedene na slučajnom uzorku od 106 novinara u Sloveniji, kojom se tražilo da ocijene vjerodostojnost različitih tipova medija, objasne razloge za ocjenjivanje određenog medija kao vjerodostojnijeg te opišu svoje kriterije za ocjenjivanje vjerodostojnosti. Ključno saznanje ove ankete jest da većina novinara i dalje vjeruje kako su tradicionalni mediji najvjerodostojniji čime zadržavaju konzervativno stajalište u

pitanju novinarske vjerodostojnosti i njenog mjerila. Negativna prosudba novinskih web stranica može djelomice biti rezultat želje da se obrani i utvrdi autoritet vlastite profesije. Može se također pripisati slabo razvijenoj *online* medijskoj sceni u Sloveniji, gdje *online* mediji pretežito djeluju kao produžetak tradicionalnih medija. Uz to, može djelomice biti i rezultat negativne procijene i nezadovoljstva novinara vlastitim poslom. No, unatoč tim rezultatima, neki novinari smatraju novinske web stranice dragocjenima jer nude brze informacije koje su neprekidno provjeravane od strane zajednice medijskih korisnika.

Ključne riječi: vjerodostojnost, povijest, internet, novi mediji, novinske web stranice, internetsko novinarstvo