



*Extended Abstract*

## **Quantification of audiences as a decision-making factor in Slovene web journalism**

**Sašo Slaček Brlek <sup>1,\*</sup> and Jernej Amon Prodnik <sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Social Communications Research Centre, University of Ljubljana / Address (M\_address)

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague and Social Communications Research Centre, University of Ljubljana / Address (M\_address)

E-Mails: saso.brlek-slacak@fdv.uni-lj.si; jernej.amon-prodnik@fdv.uni-lj.si

\* Author to whom correspondence should be addressed; Tel.: +386-1-5805-353

*Accepted:*

---

Business models of news media organisations are currently undergoing profound transformations as the ability of traditional news media to effectively monetise their audiences is eroding (Napoli 2011). Since the beginning of the global economic crisis the news industry is facing not only problems of trust in journalism, but also of increasing financial difficulties resulting from declining numbers of readers, listeners and viewers, lower advertising revenues and failed technological innovations in the sphere of journalistic production (e. g. Jones and Salter 2012; Grueskin et al 2012). While online news production has often been studied from the perspective of audience participation in the creation and distribution of news or the impact of digital technology on newsgathering routines, it has less frequently been examined how business models of news organisations are being transformed in the digital age. Different authors (e.g. Napoli 2011; Fuchs 2011; Turow 2012; Allmer 2012) emphasize that digital technologies enable increased surveillance of internet users; it remains to be answered to what degree media industries (beyond biggest Internet corporations) in fact utilize these possibilities in their daily business and in what ways “economic surveillance” influences their decisions. It is therefore of key importance to study the changes in these industries that occurred in the recent years because of technological developments and the economic squeeze. In short, these transformations must be analysed from a critical political-economic perspective as well.

While Slovenia has been especially hit by the global capitalist crisis (e.g. Vobič et al 2014) and Slovenian media industries have undergone transformations similar to other capitalist countries, Slovene media have also been under pressure from holders of social power during the last 20 years in the form

of unstable ownerships, unstable management and frequent changes of editors, making it hard to balance journalistic and business goals. (Vobič 2012) The transition to online has in part because of this troubled history been quite problematic. In Slovenia detailed analysis of business models of digital media are available only for online editions of newspapers (e. g. Vobič 2013) and they find they are adapting to deteriorating financial circumstances mainly by reducing production costs, especially the costs of labour.

Using the methods of content analysis, document analysis and in-depth interviews with journalists, editors, and advertisers, the authors analyse the three most visited Slovene news sites (24ur.com, Planet Siol and MMC RTV SLO) to examine: a) how these organisations are adapting to changing circumstances (particularly decreasing advertising revenues); b) how relationships between media organisations and advertisers are being transformed; and c) how is the availability of online audience metrics impacting the work process in newsrooms, relationships between different parts of news organisations (particularly the editorial and marketing of advertising space) and relationships between news organisations and advertisers.

## References and Notes

1. Napoli, Phillip M. *Audience Evolution: New Technologies and the Transformation of Media Audiences*. Columbia University Press: New York, USA, 2011.
2. Jones, Janet and Lee Salter. *Digital Journalism*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, USA, 2012
3. Grueskin, Bill, Ava Seave and Lucas Graves. *The Story So Far: What We Know About the Business of Digital Journalism*. Columbia Journalism School, Tow Center for Digital Journalism: New York, USA, 2012. Available at: [http://www.cjrarchive.org/img/posts/report/The\\_Story\\_So\\_Far.pdf](http://www.cjrarchive.org/img/posts/report/The_Story_So_Far.pdf)
4. Fuchs, Christian. *Foundations of Critical Media and Information Studies*. Routledge: New York, London, UK, USA, 2011.
5. Turow, Joseph. *The Daily You: How the New Advertising Industry is Defining Your Identity and Your Worth*. Yale University Press: New Haven, London, USA, UK, 2012.
6. Allmer, Thomas. *Towards a Critical Theory of Surveillance in Informational Capitalism*. Peter Lang: Frankfurt, Berlin, New York, Oxford, Germany, 2012.
7. Vobič, Igor. Piano: Malo muzike, malo denarja. *Medijska Preža/MediaWatch*, december 2012. Available at: <http://mediawatch.mirovni-institut.si/bilten/seznam/43/splet/#1>
8. Vobič, Igor. *Journalism and the Web: Continuities and Transformations at Slovenian Newspapers*. FDV (Faculty of Social Sciences), Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2013.
9. Vobič, Igor, Sašo Slaček Brlek, Boris Mance and Jernej Amon Prodnik. Chaning Faces of Slovenia: Political, Socio-Economic and News Media Aspects of the Crisis. *Javnost-The Public* 2014, 4, 77-98.