

UK journalists use social media despite fears of impact on quality

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According to a major new survey by Canterbury Christ Church University and Cision, the leading provider of PR software and services, 90% of journalists regularly use social media, but most of those surveyed were worried about its accuracy and reliability, with more than half of respondents agreeing that social media encourages softer, more opinion-oriented news.

Dr. Agnes Gulyas, Principal Lecturer, Department of Media at Canterbury Christ Church University, said: “The survey suggests that [social media](#) is having a dramatic impact on the industry where journalists now have access to a range of sources to help them research, verify, monitor and most of all publish their work. What is interesting is that social media sites are being used to supplement existing contacts and PR professionals, but is not supplanting them. It's likely that whilst concerns over accuracy and reliability remain, social media will be part of the journalists' tool kit rather than their only tool.”

Falk Rehkopf, Director, Special Projects with Cision, commented: “In 2010, [through our first Social Journalism Study](#), we already uncovered that Twitter is the de facto social network for UK journalists. I am very pleased that our follow-up in 2011, the most comprehensive social media study of its kind, allowed us to drill down further and gain greater insight.

“The valid data clearly demonstrates enormous differences in uptake, views and usage of social media among journalists, influenced by what

type of media the journalists works for, the size of the organisation as well as the journalist's seniority. I was surprised to learn how important social media sites are to radio journalists in comparison to newspaper journalists who are least engaged.”

Other key findings:

- 90% of UK journalists use social media tools more now compared to three years ago – there is also an increase in the use of search engines (53%)
- A variety of social media tools are used but most popular are microblogs (70%) information depositories such as Wikipedia (68%) and social networks such as Facebook (67%)
- 89% of the surveyed journalists most commonly use social media for publishing and distributing their work
- PR professionals still use traditional traditional forms of communications to contact journalists such as email/fax (97%), press releases (86%) and face-to-face contact (48%)
- Radio and online journalists fully embrace social media with 61% actively blogging, whereas newspaper and magazine journalists are active to a lesser degree (51%)
- The vast majority (85%) of UK [journalists](#) used some type of mobile devices in their work, with smartphones being the most popular tool (76%)

Kristine Pole, Senior Lecturer in Marketing at Canterbury Christ Church University, added: “Professional practices and values are changing because of social media, which will have consequences on the social, political and economic roles of media in society.

“The speed and extent of the changes are truly remarkable, and one struggles to find many other technological developments which have had similar effect on the profession within such a short period of time. The

survey reveals that a great advantage of social media, and a reason for its popularity, is its flexibility and diversity of its potential use.”

More information: uk.cision.com/en-gb/Resources/...al-journalism-study/

Provided by Canterbury Christ Church University

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