

Journalists prefer Twitter: Spanish study

September 26 2011



Journalists prefer Twitter, according to a UC3M study. Credit: Labapart

Research carried out by professors at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M) analyzing how Spanish journalists use the main social networks shows that Twitter is the most widely used, particularly to disseminate information.

The study, titled "Join the Conversation: how Spanish [journalists](#) are using Twitter" was carried out by professors from the LABàPART group (The Medium is the Lab), a permanent communication and social media laboratory at UC3M set up to analyze the state of on-line participation by the Spanish news media, and the newest collaborative strategies being developed on the Internet. This team is part of a group in the Department of Journalism and Audiovisual Communication at the

UC3M doing research on Journalism and Social Analysis: Evolution, Effects and Tendencies (PASEET). The project was presented at the most recent conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), which was held last July in Istanbul (Turkey).

The objective of this research is to see what kind of professional use Spanish journalists make of the different social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube...), analyze what they use them for, what their perception of them is, and what their expectations are: "The first step was to analyze the participative scene, relating it to journalism. We were particularly interested in analyzing the perception journalists have of Twitter with respect to other social networks or other platforms, such as blogs", explained the director of LABàPART, Pilar Carrera, of the Department of Journalism and Audiovisual Communication at the UC3M.

The research is based on an in-depth poll of fifty Spanish journalists with active Twitter profiles: their median age is 38, and they have been working in the profession for 15 years on average. The results show, for example, that these journalists assiduously use this tool to publish and distribute information (95%), identify tendencies (86%), look for information (82%), 'viralize' information about their particular media (82%), or build audience loyalty (78%). However, only 25% of those polled said they use [Twitter](#) to carry out investigative reporting.

The way in which journalists currently use the social networks does not necessarily involve taking advantage of the specificity and logic of those networks to create new content, according to the authors of the study. "For the most part, the journalists use these networks as 'viralization' mechanisms, as systems to disseminate content that has mostly been generated outside of the logic of the social media', according to the traditional forms of journalistic production", comments Professor Pilar

Carrera.

The study also analyzes whether or not the [media](#) has guidelines or agreed upon norms regarding the use of the social networks. Currently, only about one in ten journalists (13%) says that their medium has such guidelines. Fifty-four percent recognize that they lack guidelines of this kind, and the remaining 33% confirm that, although they do not have them, their medium is working on them.

Provided by Carlos III University of Madrid

Citation: Journalists prefer Twitter: Spanish study (2011, September 26) retrieved 29 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-09-journalists-twitter-spanish.html>

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