

# Social journalists and social news media logic when social media is adopted in journalism

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Ulrika Hedman has followed Swedish journalists' adoption of social media and social network sites (SNS) from 2011. Based on

representative surveys and massive data on journalists' use of Twitter, she has analyzed how journalists use social media and changes in use over time, and how journalists perceive professional practices and norms in relation to social media.

In public [media](#) debate as well as among journalists themselves, there is a concern that the [use of social media](#) could change journalism and the professional roles of journalists fundamentally. With social media, many journalistic practices have changed for sure, and new ones have been implemented. Social media are used for general monitoring, research, distribution of content, and for various forms of audience dialogue. Social media are also used for networking and for branding, activities increasingly important on an ever more competitive media market. Ulrika Hedman explains:

"The competition for audiences and for journalism jobs is hard, so it is really important for journalists to constantly show who they are and what they produce."

"For most journalists today, social media and SNS are valued tools. However, the social media hype we saw some years ago seems to have faded."

In her material, Ulrika Hedman identifies some distinct differences between the small group of journalists that are active in social media 24/7, and those that have a more pragmatic view on their activities. The most active ones mix private and professional, they are more into networking, and more engaged in dialogue. They are also more active in building their personal brands. However, when it comes to journalists' traditional norms and values, like objectivity and neutrality, she can trace no effect from the adoption of social media.

In her work, Hedman has been able to follow how a new and more social

set of journalistic roles (how journalists "behave as journalists") has evolved. In social media, the audiences can now find journalists that are skeptical shunners, activists, pragmatics, lurkers, networkers, [news](#) hubs, coordinators, ambassadors, celebrified marketers, professional marketers, entrepreneurs, and journalists in incognito mode. These roles are influenced by the classical news media [logic](#) or the new social media logic, and are more professional or more private in its content. Ulrika Hedman:

"Many journalists have incorporated networking, interactivity, and dialogue in their traditional journalistic role, and hence the traditional journalistic role has become more social."

These more social [journalists](#) can be regarded as part of an evolving social news media logic, that differs from the traditional news media logic in key aspects. In the social news media logic, traditional journalistic practices and values are still of core value, but are combined with sharing logic, viral distribution, and interactivity.

"Today, we consume journalism in single pieces, not in packages such as a newspaper or a news show on television. And therefore, it is important that every piece of content is optimized for [social media](#) in such a way that the audiences not only read or watch but also engage with the material—that they comment, share, and like. If a journalist wants to stay in journalism, she needs to be able to make her content the one that people share and engage with. She has to be social."

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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