



HAAGA-HELIA
ammattikorkeakoulu

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SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE NEWS

Social media interaction
patterns on news sites



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Contents



1	Background	4
1.1	Research questions, method and data	6
1.2	Background theory	7
2	Data analysis	9
3	Results	15
3.1	Belgium	15
3.2	Brazil	18
3.3	China	20
3.4	Estonia	23
3.5	Finland	35
3.6	Germany	84
3.7	Great Britain	100
3.8	Hungary	106
3.9	Kazakhstan	110
3.10	Latvia	113
3.11	Russia	122
3.12	Venezuela	166
4	Conclusions	170
	References	176

1

Background



■ During the past decades the media landscape has changed at an accelerating pace. One of the greatest influences has been the invention of the Internet, and more recently social media. The news media have been using more and more interactive elements and social media in their news services.

Fifteen years ago, at the beginning of the millennium, it was already known that online media can offer interactivity, multimedia stories, news feeds and large online audiences (Chyi & Sylvie 2000), but no one was able to foresee the impact of social media nor the rise of mobility. According to Mitchell & Rosenthal (2012), mobility and social media are fundamentally challenging the future of American news. In 2011 online audiences grew while print circulations simultaneously declined dramatically. The trend is the same in Europe. Print news is not popular and young people are unwilling to pay for news online (Thurman & Myllylahi 2009). Many journalists have lost their jobs. Such downsizing has been more frequent in the Baltic region in contrast to UK, Belgium and the Netherlands, for example, where news organizations have generally maintained employment levels.

The diffusion of broadband and the proliferation of content websites and applications have fuelled the expansion of the time consumers devote to the web from some 20 minutes a day in 2000 to nearly 90 minutes in 2009. So, young people spend a lot of time on the Internet. Mobile audiences, too, have increased dramatically. According to Michell, Rosenthal, Houston, Santhanam & Cristian (2012), mobile audiences have a big impact on the news industry. At the same time Chan-Olmsted, Rim & Zerba have noticed that even though young people own smart phones they are not willing to pay for online content.

We need to find ways to get young people interested in reading the news. In a democratic Europe citizens must have access to reliable, accurate and meaningful contexts – this is the central purpose of journalism.

A news organization's credibility is the basis for trust building. According to the Tartu Declaration, the principles of journalism are: feeling responsible for the freedom of expression, respecting the integrity of individuals, being critical of sources, being independent of vested interests, and using customary ethical standards.

Even though the Internet is a very common source for the news, the journalism media market is mostly national due to native languages. Although the principles of journalism have remained the same, journalists and journalism students face new challenges – they need to know what social media and new distribution channels mean to journalism and how to use them to produce and disseminate the news and stories in an innovative way.

Social media can be described as a concept or model that includes participation, networking and information sharing, user generated content, as well as innovating and spending time together. (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silvestre 2011; Aunesluoma, Majava & Wilenius 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Kim, Jeong & Lee 2010; Boyd & Ellison 2008; Castells 2007; Lietsala & Sirkkunen 2008.) In journalism, reader participation has been described as we media, distributed journalism, participatory media, open source journalism and participatory journalism (Deuze 2006; Gillmor 2006; Rosen 2005; 2004; Bowman & Willis 2003; Pavlik 2001). It can also mean crowdsourcing, co-creation and crowdfunding (Aitamurto 2012; 2011). The influence of active readers is transforming journalism from gatekeeping to gatewatching (Burns 2008). Domingo et al. (2008) claimed that the emergence of participatory journalism is influenced by external factors such as technology, economy and the larger cultural and societal framework. Social media and readers' participation are vital parts of the journalism and media landscape.

The development described above has brought many interesting changes to the ways social media is consumed and used. One way to study these changes is to approach them by looking at the patterns they create. Rossing, De Vries & Vollenbroek (2012) write about this as a fairly new concept in the field of social media. A social media pattern is a description of a social media usage process in which processes are characterized by the dimensions of context, goal, interaction and interface.

1.1 Research questions, method and data

As one can expect, young people are at the forefront of media consumption as early adopters. We need to know and understand how young people – the future consumers of media – are consuming social media and social news, and how this might change the media landscape even further. Given the significance of news media for our society, we also want to investigate the cultural and ethical implications to understand whether we might identify some global trends.

The purpose of this study was to describe the chain from news media to young people in a variety of countries and to forecast how social media is impacting media usage.

The research questions were:

1. What are the social media patterns used by news media and what purpose do they serve?
2. How do young people value these patterns?
3. What kind of cultural and ethical differences can be distinguished?

The primary question was: what implications might the consumption patterns have for the future of news media?

The research data consisted of three different types of qualitative data: (1) explorative research questionnaires filled by international students, (2) interviews and (3) observation. Interviews were done in Finland and the informants were Finnish media representatives: journalists, editors-in-chief and newsroom managers.

The research had three different stages: in the first stage the collected data were used to answer research question number one and two: What are the social media patterns used by news media and what purpose do they serve and how do young people value these patterns?

Similar data was collected in the Netherlands, at the NHL University of Applied Sciences. In the second stage we will compare our research results in research report number two. After comparison of the data collected in both countries we will try to find answers to research question number three together with the Dutch researchers: What kind of cultural and ethical differences can be distinguished?

The research method that was used to collect the required data was the theory of patterns and pattern languages (Alexander 1979; Schuler 2008).

This pattern approach enabled us to describe social media usage in traditional media. We used this approach to identify and describe social media interaction patterns within an online context. In line with this technique used a number of recurring social media functionalities. In combination with a template these functionalities were used as the basis for the identification of social media news interaction patterns. By using these tools, we were able to take the first steps towards the development of a social media pattern language.

The social media patterns used in this study were: (1) connect, (2) share, (3) post, (4) comment, (5) discuss, (6) create and (7) vote.

Data was analyzed by means of Grounded Theory. According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), the goal of the theory is to generate theory or explanation that accounts for a pattern of behaviour that is both relevant and problematic to those being studied.

Each student chose one online news source from his or her home country.

In their findings they included 'screenshots' of their various sources. This was followed by a description of the objectives of the news organization and its target audience.

Other relevant information about these so-called patterns was given by the students in the discussion. The findings as a whole were analyzed by means of the so-called family format. One of the most important findings was that there is a great variety in online news sources and this diversity can be perceived in content, appearance, methodology, target audience etc. The way of interaction between online sources and their audience differs greatly between countries and between news sources.

1.2 Background theory

Deuze (2003) highlights the differences between open and closed journalism by means of a diagram, which includes the instrumental and orientating dimensions of Bardoel (1996). The diagram (Figure 1) also includes elements relating to public participation: monitorial journalism, i.e. the extent to which content produced by the public is moderated and dialogical journalism, i.e. the extent to which professional journalists enter into a discussion with the public.

Journalistic culture is either closed from the orientating or monitorial point of view, or open from the instrumental or dialogical point of view. In closed journalistic culture, content is typically not added to the content

produced by editorial staff, and the content has the primary purpose of providing background information and orientation. If the public is given the opportunity to contribute, this content is also monitored and moderated.

Conversely, in open journalistic culture the public is allowed to participate instrumentally, i.e. online technologies are utilized for the distribution of content even if professional journalists have produced this content. Open journalistic culture is dialogical when citizens are given the opportunity to produce user-generated content to supplement the content produced by professional journalists. (Deuze 2003.)



Figure 1. Characteristics of open and closed journalistic culture by Deuze (2003).

In this study, Deuze’s diagram was used to analyze the journalistic culture of news sites: how open or closed is it from the viewpoint of the social media patterns? Figure 2 shows the relation between the explored social media patterns, collected data and background theory.

2

Data analysis



■ The research data of this study was qualitative. Firstly, 33 students in the course Introduction to Information Retrieval (autumn 2012) and 53 students in the course Online Communication (Spring 2013) explored 60 news sites in 12 countries: Belgium, Brazil, China, Estonia, Finland, UK, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia and Venezuela. For data collection the students used a structured form for this purpose.

The explored news sites can be categorised as follows:

- 10 National dailies
- 6 Regional dailies
- 3 Local dailies
- 4 Local weeklies (Published once or twice a week)
- 3 Business dailies
- 3 News agencies
- 8 Online news sites (no printed newspaper or magazine)
- 6 Magazines
- 1 Business portal
- 3 Tabloids
- 2 Free newspapers
- 11 Radio and TV broadcasters

Belgium/1 Radio-télévision Belge de la Coummunauté (RTBF), Radio and television broadcaster	Germany/6 Bild, Tabloid Die Welt, National daily Der Spiegel, Online magazine Freie Presse, Local daily Tagblatt, Local daily Weser Kurier, Local weekly
Brazil/1 Revista veja, Magazine	Hungary/2 Magyar Nemzet, National daily Origo, Online news site
China/1 Sohu, National daily	Kazakhstan/1 Ivest, Business portal
Estonia/4 EER Uutised, Radio and television broadcaster EEsti Uutised, Online news site Delfi, Online news site Postmees, National daily	Latvia/4 Delfi, Online news site IR, Magazine KasJauns, Magazine TVNET, Radio and TV broadcaster
Finland/19 Akaan Seutu, Local weekly City, Free newspaper Helsingin Sanomat, National daily Huvudstadsbladet, National daily Iltalehti, Tabloid Ilta Sanomat, Tabloid Kaleva, Regional daily Metro, Free newspaper MTV3, Radio and TV broadcaster Nelonen, Radio and TV broadcaster Pohjalainen, Regional daily Rannikkoseutu, Local weekly Savon Sanomat, Regional daily Sotkamo-Lehti, Local weekly Talous Sanomat, Business daily Talouselämä, Business daily Turun Sanomat, Regional daily Valkeakosken Sanomat, Local daily Yle, Radio and TV broadcaster	Russia/18 Bolshoy Gorod, Magazine Delovoy Petersburg, Business daily Echo of Moscow, Radio broadcaster Fontanka.ru, Regional daily Gazeta, National daily Interfax, News agency ITAR TASS, News agency Kompravda, Online site Lenta, Online news site Pervyy kanal, TV broadcaster RAMBLER, Online news site RBC, Radio and TV broadcaster Ria, National daily Ria Novosti, News agency Rossiiskaya Gazeta, National daily Russian Reporter, Magazine Vesti, Radio and TV broadcaster Yandex, Search engine and news site
Great Britain/1 BBC, Radio and TV broadcaster	Venezuela/2 Elsoldemargarita, Regional daily El Universal, National daily

Table 1. The names of the news sites studied by students by country and the nature of the news site.

Figure 2 shows on a map the number of the explored news sites in Belgium, Brazil, China, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Latvia, Russia and Venezuela. As seen the most studied news sites were from Finland (19) and Russia (18).



Figure 2. The news sites studied as located on a map.

Secondly, students Riikka Nyman, Tarja Harman and Maaret Väkinen in the course Changing Media Landscape and Content Creation interviewed in autumn 2012 five journalists and five managers: one editor-in-chief and four news desk managers in the local print newspapers *Helsingin Uutiset*, *Keski-Uusimaa* and *Vartti*. Thirdly, student Erika Åkerman in the same course but in spring 2013 collected information about 124 local newspapers on Facebook and interviewed 56 journalists by email receiving 16 answers.

Each questionnaire form was read line by line and patterns in families were categorized. All material was organized by social media pattern family: (1) share and post, (2) connect, (3) comment and discuss, (4) create and (5) vote, rate and recommend. The results are presented by country in alphabetical order and by family in the numbered order provided above. The social media patterns were analyzed using Deuze's diagram of showing open and closed journalistic culture. After that all interviews were analyzed and all results were merged.

Patterns in the category (1) share and post are about sharing content with friends or followers on social media, or receiving shared content. Content can be shared directly, without adding anything, or a comment can be added. Share means that one can use a different social media plat-

form to share the news, for example Facebook, Google+, Twitter and others. The post pattern means that there is the possibility to subscribe to a RSS feed, newsletter, or email or somehow interact with other readers. The post pattern is instrumental because it only offers a single way to subscribe news and doesn't allow deeper interaction with the reader and the journalist.

Every news site shares news in a variety ways. The most common ways are via Facebook, Google+, Twitter, YouTube and occasionally Pinterest and Google+. Five countries have their own social media-sharing platform, for example Orkut (Google) in Brazil. In China big social media platforms are Renren, Sina Weibo and Tencent Weibo. In Latvia a big one is Draugiem, and in Russia they are V Kontakte, Moy Mir and Odnoklassniki. Baltic countries also have a very popular web portal called Delphi, which shares news in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Almost every news site offers the possibility for RSS feed or a newsletter, but it seems that the share pattern has displaced this.

(2) The connect pattern describes how one engages in, and makes explicit, a relationship with another user on social media. The connect pattern means that readers can create a group or a club on a news site, for example. No indication of this pattern was found on the news sites under investigation.

(3) Comment and discuss. Patterns in this category are about leaving a message in response to a particular piece of content. Commenting differs from content creation in the way that creating content delivers new, shareable content. Commenting makes this content richer, but the comment is never shareable on its own without sharing the original content. Comment can be added after an article, picture blog post or discussion.

Figure 3 shows how the data was analysed using Deuze's idea of open and closed journalistic culture and how the social media patterns are embedded in the analysis.

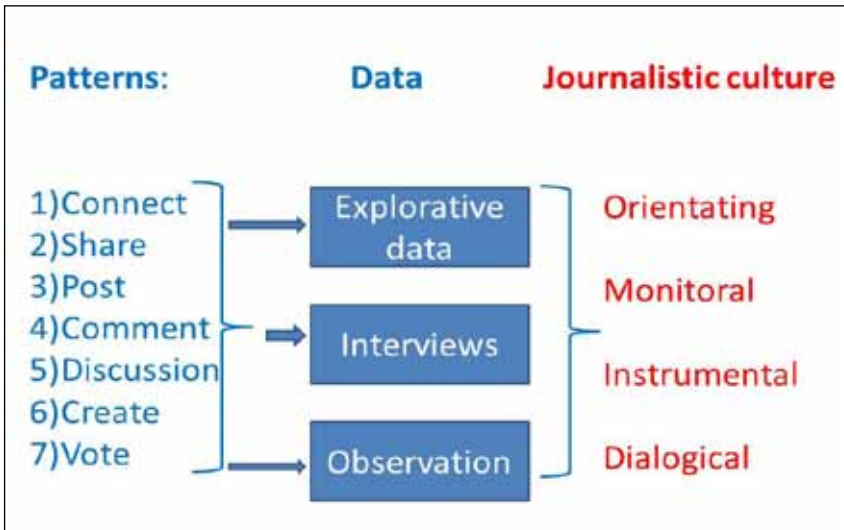


Figure 3. Social media patterns, research data collection and background theory.

Discussion patterns in this category deal with conversations going on in the comment section. Just as is the case with the pattern commenting, a reaction is posted. The difference between the commenting and discussion is that response is given to previous response and not to the original content. In this data it was sometimes difficult to distinguish if the students were exploring the comment or discussion.

In the viewpoint of Deuze’s theory of open and closed journalism culture comment and discussion patterns are more public orientated that share and post because commenting and discussion patterns allow reader to add content to the news site. It also enhances journalist to follow how readers are reacting, if they liked or not liked the article.

Most of the news sites use social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Yahoo, Pinterest, Twitter and Google+ to maintain the discussion or commenting. It is easy way because reader must log into his or hers account when leaving the comment. So people are leaving comments or participating to the discussion with their own names.

(4) Create: Patterns in this category are about placing new sharable content, such as text, photos or videos. The emphasis here is on the initiative. This pattern allows reader to create its own content like logos, photos suggest topics and to write stories together with the journalists or report from the crime scene. Create can also mean that readers are the sources of the news or they help journalist to go through masses of information. This

kind of information can be used for example when creating data journalism.

This type of interaction stresses open journalistic culture because there is dialogue between the journalist and the reader and readers can be part of the journalistic working process.

Most of the creation patterns were described video, photo or digital badge creation. But for instance some news sites are using readers as informant and enhance them to give information about the topic, or even be as a co-writer of the story.

(5) Vote, rate, recommend, like: Patterns in this category provide the possibility for rate content, products and profiles, vote best stories or comments or recommend stories, pictures or videos. It also includes the possibility to click the “Like” button, which every news site uses.

The results are presented below in an alphabetical order by country and by news site. Each presentation starts with an introduction of the site followed by the social media pattern findings and students’ discussion of the patterns.

3

Results



■ This chapter presents the study findings alphabetically by country. At the beginning of each subchapter there is a short summary of the media landscape and the results for every country. The objectives of the news sites and the discussion of the patterns found on those news sites are the interpretation of the students.

According to the research data, the pattern share was the most popular and it was present in all the news sites studied. The popularity of this pattern can be explained as it is the easiest way to carry out this kind of social media interaction given that, for example, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube and other social media platforms have made sharing easy.

3.1 Belgium

Belgium has approximately 10 million inhabitants. In Belgium there are three official languages: Dutch, French and German. According to Raetnadjerm De Bens, Paulussen, Deprez & Tenret (2010) there are only five independent media companies: Corelo Media, De Persgroep, Concentra, Rossel and IPM. The biggest or the most popular newspaper is *De Standaard*, and after that comes *Het Nieuwblad*, *De Gentenaar* and *Het Volk*. The most popular website is HKN.be.

Belgium's public broadcasting company was founded in 1930 and the first Belgian television broadcasts were aired in 1953. In the beginning of the 60s Flanders got the *Belgische Radio and Tlevisie (BRD)* and Wallonia radio television *Belge Francophone (RTBF)*.

Only one Belgian news site was explored: *Radio-Télévision Belge de la Communauté Française*, which is a public television and radio broadcaster founded in 1977. Since 1997 it has been an autonomous public enterprise. It has a website: <http://www.rtbf.be>. The language is French. The site has a mobile version and lots of video and audio material.

1. Share and post: RTBF is using Twitter, Facebook and Google+. BTBT has a Facebook site with 5900 people who like the site. One can order a newsletter via email.
2. Connect: This pattern was not identified on the news site.
3. Comment and discuss: Readers can comment on some of the articles and recommend and tweet. On Facebook it is possible to comment and have a discussion of the content. The site has a section showing the most commented and most read news.
4. The create pattern was not identified.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: Via Facebook it is possible to recommend an article and on the Facebook site one can like articles.



Figure 4. RTBF screenshot.

By having a platform where they can express themselves freely and share news, the readers can visit the news site on a more regular basis.

The news site uses the social media elements in order to remain up-to-date with the trends in society and to increase the number of people using the media.

“I think for the news organisations the objectives are first to keep their regular readers by offering them new tools and also to attract new readers who can be seduced by the freedom they have to express themselves.”



Figure 5. RTBF on Facebook.

“I think that with the development of new media it is understandable that the news organisations are using social media. It seems that the news organisations are trying to reach a wide range of audiences and they have found social media to be a new tool to do that. I am not really the right person to give an opinion on the patterns because I am one of the few people resisting the use of social media. When I want to share news face-to-face. At least people around me are using social media and you can be (maybe it is a strong word) addicted and feel that you have to use it. But sometimes I read the comments after the stories. Some comments are interesting and sarcastic and some very stupid and have nothing to do with the topic.”

Links to *RTBF* pages on social media sites are provided below:

- <http://www.facebook.com/RTBF>
- <http://www.facebook.com/rtbfinfo>
- <http://www.facebook.com/RTBFTV>
- <http://www.facebook.com/RTBFSport>
- <https://twitter.com/RTBFinfo>
- <https://twitter.com/RTBF>
- <http://www.plusg.info/index.php?type=education&query=RTBF>

3.2 Brazil

Brazil has more than 200 million inhabitants. A little more than half of the population are descendants of Europeans, and there are also people of African and Indian descent. According to UIS (2013) there is a wide range of newspapers in Brazil: 672 print dailies and 2,784 print non-daily newspaper titles. There are also almost 4,000 different community television and radio channels.

In Brazil only one news site was explored: *Revista Veja*, which is a traditional Brazilian newspaper. It has an online news site at <http://veja.abril.com.br>. The newspaper was founded in 1968 and the language is Portuguese. The newspaper publishes political and economic articles as well as articles about culture, behaviour, entertainment, technology, ecology and religion. The students of this study described the paper as conservative and one of the biggest weekly magazines.

Revista Veja has a tablet and android version.

1. Share and post: *Revista Veja* is on Google+, Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, Anuncie, Tempo (Weather service), Cotacoes (Stock market), Iba (PC, Mobile and tablet versions) and Foursquare. One can subscribe to an RSS feed and newsletter.



Figure 7. Share and post choices offered by *Revista Veja*.

Students informed that *Revista Veja* uses a lot of integrated social media/patterns to divulge its contents and reach a larger audience. For instance, *Veja* has its own Facebook fan page and Facebook

news page. It also uses services such as Twitter, Google+ and newsletters through which it publishes some of its information. *Veja* interacts with subscribers by sending news and information about the online magazine and other matters. *Veja* also has a blog with some columnists. The bloggers include Reinaldo Azevedo and Augusto Nunes.

2. The connect pattern was not identified.
3. Comment and discuss: *Revista Veja* allows people to post comments on most of the topics it releases. However, there are certain terms of use with which the public must comply. For instance, *Veja* states that “we approve comments in which people can express their opinions, but comments which contain swearing, personal insults will not be published. If there are some language misspellings, that does not impede comments from being published.” Therefore the public cannot post anything without first being evaluated. *Veja* does not post readers’ pictures.
4. Create: It seems that *Revista Veja* does not allow the public to suggest topics or publish reader’s pictures.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: *Revista Veja* has a profile and a site on Orkut created in September 2010. The site has 4,602 members. On Google plus there are more than 1.3 million followers and on Facebook 1.8 million likes. On these sites you can vote, rate, recommend and like.

Revista Veja uses social media and other integrated services because there is a growing number of users in this social media, etc. In Brazil, more and more people are spending time using some of these social tools. Therefore, many companies have started to take advantage of this trend.



Figure 8. Revista Veba on Orkut.



Figure 9. Revista Veba on Iba.

3.3 China

The current population of People's Republic of China is estimated at 1.3 billion (world population statistics 2013). The amount of the newspapers is approximately 2,200 titles.

Chinese students explored only one news site: *Sohu*. It is one of the biggest media portals in Mainland China. It publishes news in Chinese and English. It is a national, independent media owned by Sohu company. It has a print daily and an online edition with a blog. The *Sohu* website is

one of the earliest portal websites in China. According to Chinese students, the website's primary objective is to be fast, comprehensive, objective and true. <http://news.sohu.com/20130328/n370825327.shtml>

1. Share and post: Readers can share articles to the several Chinese big social media platforms like Renren, Sina Weibo and Tencent Weibo.
2. Connect:
3. Readers can comment and discuss the news. Moderation is done by the website's administrative group. Comments are checked immediately after posting.
4. Create: Readers can establish their own blog under the website. The readers' photos or videos will be published annually as feedback.
5. Vote, rate, recommend, like:

There are sections on the website that suggest topics for the readers to read.



Figure 10. Screenshot of Sohu portal.

News on the website changes fast (see the first picture of the screenshot above) and the news site always tries to get firsthand news. Also, the website offers free discussion for readers (see the left circle of the first picture). Of course, discussion is monitored but unlike some other websites it gives the readers quite a lot freedom to say what they are thinking about the

articles. Readers can share articles on their own blog with their own comments easily (see the right circle of the first picture). The ‘discussion between celebrities’ is published really quickly, as shown on the right of the page (see the second picture).

For the readers, it is very important to share the news. They get the chance to spread the news they are interested in and are willing comment. It is also essential for them to share comments with people in the same group.

Objectives for the news organization	Objectives for the readers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updating fast, quick respond ▪ Integration in many aspects ▪ Increase traffic to the website ▪ Combine with Chinese version of Twitter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get the fastest news about China ▪ Free discussion ▪ Ability to respond quickly ▪ Do many tasks on one website

Table 2. Social media objectives for Sohu and its readership.

“I personally like to share news on my blog. I have found it to be an interesting and positive to share what you’re reading with your friends and relatives, also sharing what’s new can help people to get the news faster than if reading on their own. Comments are also important for the media. You need to know what the readers’ opinion are of specific news and monitor the website main target group, including people’s concerns about society and where they put their focus on.”

“I actually don’t believe everything the website publishes. The information can be always be distorted by information flows, not to mention that some people make false news to reach their own goals. But checking different websites can help you to distinguish the true from the false and the reliability of the news. Checking comments is also a way to find out what others think about any particular news item.”



Figure 11. Screenshot of Sohu portal.

3.4 Estonia

Estonia is a Baltic country with 1.36 million inhabitants. After becoming an independent democracy it became a member of the EU in 2004. There are five daily newspapers, four in Estonian and one in Russian, eight weeklies and 23 independent regional papers and a plethora of magazines. The estimated number of newspaper titles is 155. There are also nine national TV channels and more than 20 radio stations. Newspapers are published in Russian and Estonian. The biggest newspapers are *Postmees* and *Õhtuleht* with a circulation of 60,000 copies. ERR is the public service broadcaster called Eesti Rahvusringhääling. The biggest web portal is Delfi.ee. (Loit 2010.)

Studied in Estonia were four news sites: the national daily *Postmees*, the Radio and TV broadcaster *ERR* *Uutised* as well as the online news sites *Delfi* and *Eesti Uutised*. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube were mentioned the most.

Delfi

- <http://www.delfi.ee/>
- <http://www.rus.delfi.ee/>

Delfi is a large Internet news portal in Estonia (delfi.ee), Latvia (delfi.lv), Lithuania (delfi.lt) and Ukraine (delfi.ua). It is ranked as one of the most popular websites among Estonian and Lithuanian users. In March 2012 the company also launched a Polish site (pl.delfi.lt) and later that year an English version (en.delfi.lt)

Delfi was originally established in 1999 by the Estonian company MicroLink. The Norwegian firm Findexa bought it in 2003. In 2007 the company returned to Estonian ownership and now belongs to the Estonian company Ekspress Grupp.

-
- Country: Estonia
 - Languages: Estonian, Russian
 - Baltic and Ukrainian newspaper
 - Online edition only
 - Largest in Estonia
 - Independent media
 - Current owner: Interinfo (Findexa) Norway
-

Table 3. *Delfi* key facts.

The news portal generally presents works of independent journalism done by professional journalists, as well as general site users. The news can consist of any local or global events.

1. Share and post: Readers can share and follow news on Facebook, Twitter and via RSS feed. *Delfi* also encourages people to keep track of them through Facebook, Twitter and RSS feed. The relevant buttons are located at the very bottom of the main page.
2. Connect: *Delfi* has a space for readers' advertisements to buy and sell things. There are also advertisements from different companies.
3. Comment and discuss: There is the possibility to comment on the news. Comments are published immediately and there are moderators who are checking comments and correct them if they contain swear words or other non-normative lexicon.

4. Create: Users are also allowed to create their own articles if they wish to do so. These are published as stories or videos, photos. You just send an article and the site decides if it is acceptable for publication. There are no special requirements and the topic choice is free.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: All these possibilities are found on Facebook.

The objectives of the above patterns are to ensure maximum user engagement and to generate additional content and discussion through user activity. Most of the popular articles also get posted on Facebook for viewing by anybody who has liked *Delfi's* FB page.

Because visitors of *Delfi* can anonymously comment on every news story, the site generates debate about the freedom of speech in the Baltic States. Some members of the Estonian and Lithuanian Parliaments have proposed laws making *Delfi* and other news portals responsible for the contents of anonymous comments. In September 2006, attorneys of Artūras Zuokas, the mayor for Vilnius, asked public prosecutors to seize *Delfi* servers and reveal the IP addresses of all anonymous commentators that have written comments about him in several *Delfi* publications.

The *Delfi* portal has categories like sport, culture and other media. There also is a dating portal where people can meet and find a dating companion.

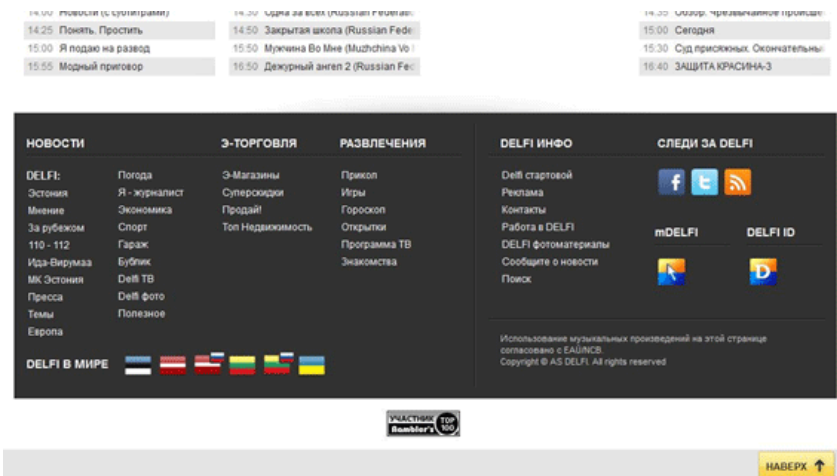


Figure 12. Screenshot of Delfi categories and links.

The ability to leave anonymous comments on any news article has come under debate because the discussions tend to get quite heated. Discussions often end being riddled with insults and poorly worded and thought-out opinions. However, this is what also gives *Delfi* so much site traffic and constant user activity.

It is clear though its Facebook site activity and constant user activity *Delfi* strives to engage the users as much as possible to encourage free discussion of any topic, as well as generate site content and increase site traffic.



Figure 13. Screenshot of Delfi. URL: <http://www.delfi.ee/news/paevauudised/eesti/skandaal-sakus-kodukassid-jaid-kadunuks-sest-vald-tellis-kaebuse-peale-loomapuudja.d?id=65939136>

The patterns are used to spread the news:

- Readers can share news thought to be relevant or interesting
- The organization benefits in the form of publicity
- Comments can be anonymous
- The patterns give the option to complain about comments
- Organization can control behaviour
- Offensive comments can be removed
- Readers can leave comments, and like or dislike them
- Creating publicity for the article
- Readers can join discussions to share information
- Popularity of the comments/articles can be estimated
- Comments can also be replied to

“Cultural characteristics are exemplified in the gap that exists between news in Estonian and Russian. One newspaper has different topics to discuss for national groups. The Estonian audience has more news relating to events and social problems in the topics, while the Russian audience has big discussions about political and social aspects. Russian news portals provide more negative information about the country’s situation and if you would analyze the comments just about all news items include the comment in the context ‘We should move abroad to work/study/live’. It creates a feeling that the media is trying to brainwash people to move away from the country. Estonian news portals do not have that much negative news and there are more discussions about world news.”

ERR Uutised

ERR Uudised (<http://uudised.err.ee>) is among the least politically influenced sources of national news in Estonia.

This media was established in 2007 (radio since 1926) and is the oldest Estonian TV channel and radio news provider. It provides news in Estonian, Russian and English, is big on national level and provides free access. It is available online, but there is no print version. It is a government owned media and one of the most objective ones available. Readers can share news on Twitter and Facebook and by e-mail links. *ERR Uudised* has it’s own Facebook page and Twitter account, people can leave comments and read the comments of others. There is no possibility to rate the news or comments, but you can write to the publisher through links.

1. Share and post: Facebook, Twitter, email and RSS
2. Connect: not found
3. Comment and discuss: yes
4. Create: not found
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: recommend on Facebook, no rate or vote



Figure 14. Screenshot of EER Uutised.



Figure 15. Screenshot of EER Uutised.

Breaking news is listed first. There is a column for the latest videos, TV news and web news. When an article is opened, links to social media channels are available. They serve as a channel to spread the news and broadcast the media through readers. There is a social media strategy, but it isn't presented on the webpage. Since the organization is government owned, most of the things are regulated by different acts.

“The simplistic design helps to keep information well-sorted and easy to identify for the reader. For today’s readers/listeners it is important to be able to share news/ideas. This site is comparable to some other sites not expressing the views of political parties, and therefore I find it trustworthy.”

Eesti Info

Eesti Info <http://eesti.info/uudised/>

This site is a news aggregator like Ampparit.com in Finland. All the news is from different publications in chronological order. The site does not create the news it just collects the news from other sources.

The site is only in Estonian, big on national level and provides free access. It seems that the site was created for the convenience of having all web-published news in one place. It has articles from all kinds of newspapers and news sites with no filtering. A lot of news is from news sites owned by the right wing.

The site has links to the most popular search engines in Estonia: Neti, Google, Bing, Yahoo etc. You can comment and chat about the news or anything else at the same time. News can be shared on Facebook or Twitter, but not on any other social media sites. People can share pictures and videos on the site.

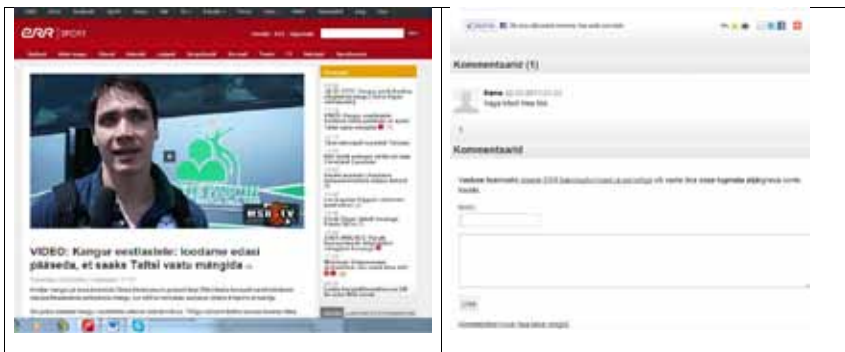


Figure 16. Screenshot of Eesti Info.

News site uses the sharing and commenting patterns. Everything is accessible by clicking. You can spread the news and ideas by commenting, allowing the site to also promote itself. A social media strategy is not very clearly imprinted on this site.

“It is good that there is the possibility to share the news, though I usually don’t. I don’t share my pictures on the news sites. I use news sites only for keeping myself up-to-date with current affairs.”



Figure 17. Screenshot of Eesti Info.

Postimees (Estonian daily newspaper)

- Country: Estonia
- Language: Estonian, Russian
- National newspaper
- Online and print edition
- Size: second largest in Estonia
- Independent media
- Established : 1st January 1857, Pärnu
- Nowadays owner : Schibsted company, Norway

Readers can share and follow news on Facebook, Twitter, RSS and YouTube.

There is the possibility to comment on the news. Comments are published immediately and news site uses moderators who correct the text if the language is not appropriate or normative lexicon. It is possible to comment a comment.

The news site also publishes reader news as stories or photos. You just send them to the newspaper and they decide if it is acceptable for publication.

The web version has links to small news portals from other news that are no longer published on paper and belong to *Postimees*. News is organized in categories: regional news, national news and world news.



Figure 18. Screenshot of Postimees. URL: <http://www.tartupostimees.ee/1209782/galerii-voru-linn-muutus-lahinguvaljaks>

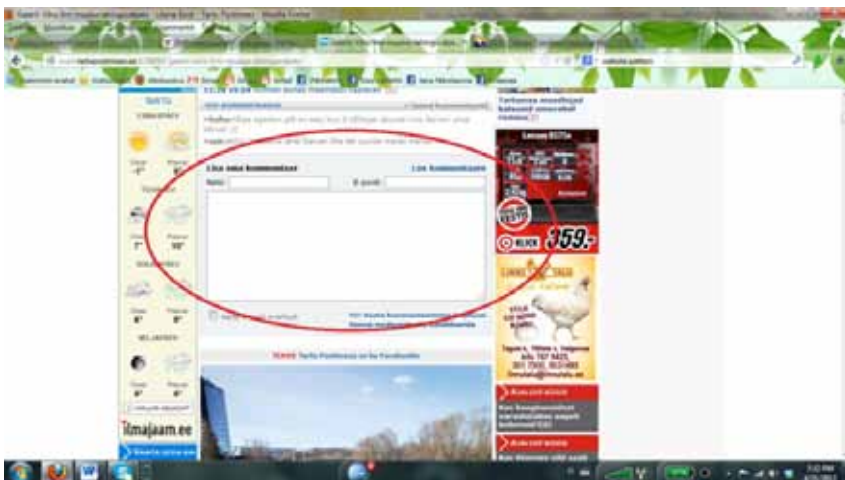


Figure 19. Social media opportunities provided by Postimees.



Figure 20. Screenshot of Postimees.

1. Share and post: Readers can share and follow news on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and RSS.
2. Connect: Not found
3. Comment and discuss: There is the possibility to comment on the news and on the comments. Comments are published immediately and they are post-moderated.
4. Create: Readers can write their own stories and they are published on the site. The site also publishes reader news as stories, photos or videos, but the site decides what to publish. News from readers doesn't have special requirements and the topics are free.

The patterns are used to spread the news:

- Readers can share news thought to be relevant or interesting
- The organization benefits in the form of publicity
- Readers can leave comments, and like or dislike them

Create publicity for articles

- Readers can join discussions to share information
- Popularity of comments/articles can be estimated
- Comments can also be replied to

This Estonian student did not like sharing the news. The student also claimed not to trust the news because they can be “coloured” by the party

leaders of the Estonian parliament. There seem to be a bit of tension between the Russian news and Estonian news.

“I don’t like to share news. Mostly because I don’t trust that the media is absolutely independent and neutral. Every news organization has its own idea and special purpose and I don’t like to be used as a channel to spread it. The news makes us think like the author wants us to think and again it is just control for some special purpose. It is used very often in a political way, especially before elections or when there are some big happenings in the country. The only exception I make is for news of cultural events. For example: Last year when Helsinki was World Design Capital I followed and shared news about some cultural activities in the city.”

“The commenting option is nice for people to spread their own thoughts, but very often they are just an arena for fights and arguments. Comments are useful if you want to see what is the IQ of readers who are reading articles or news.”

“I also never share my pictures on news sites. I keep my privacy and I would really not like to be a public person and let some other people discuss my private life. Nowadays the most tempting media element is Facebook and YouTube. Most of the people are using them to share news and to get news.”

“I don’t trust much of the news given on the chosen news site from Estonia. Mostly it is because the news, which is in two languages (Russian and Estonian), is different and has different purposes for each audience. After comparing them it is easy to see that two social groups are discussing different topics and that is why there is a big gap between these two ethnic groups in the country. Media channels are separating people, especially in the political arena. Most of the news is negative in the Russian language portal, which creates pessimistic feelings for the audience. It is not a secret that *Delfi* and *Postimees* are used for publishing political parties’ articles to manipulate people’s minds.”

“Cultural characteristics are about the gap in media between news in Estonian and Russian. One newspaper has different topics to discuss for different national groups. The Estonian audience is provided more news about events and social problems in topics, while the Russian audience has big discussions about political and social issues. Especially Russian news portals are more negative about the country’s situation and if you would analyze the comments all have the context ‘We should move abroad to work/study/live’. It creates a feeling that the media tries to brainwash peo-

ple to move away from the country. Estonian news portals do not contain that much negative news and there are more discussions about world events.”

3.5 Finland

Finland is a Scandinavian country with 5.4 million inhabitants (VRK 2013). The spoken languages are Finnish and Swedish. There are about 200 newspapers a quarter of which are published at least four times per week. The first Finnish newspaper *Tidningar Utgifne Af et Sällskap i Åbo* was published in 1771 in Swedish. (Sanomalehtien liitto 2014). The first Finnish magazine was also published in the Swedish language: *Om konsten att rättä behaga* in Turku in 1782. Nowadays there are approximately 4,594 magazine titles and 95 % of magazines are delivered home or to the workplace. (Aikakausmedia 2013.)

Finnish students explored 19 different news sites: *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Huvdstadsbladet* are national dailies, *Kaleva*, *Pohjalainen*, *Savon Sanomat*, *Turun Sanomat* are regional dailies, *Valkeakosken Sanomat* is a local daily, *Akaan Seutu*, *Rannikkoseutu*, *Sotkamo-Lehti* are local weeklies, *Talous Sanomat* is a business daily, *Talouselämä* a business weekly, *Iltalehti* and *Iltta-Sanomat* are tabloids, *City* and *Metro* are freely circulated newspapers, *MTV3* and *Nelonen* are commercial TV and radio broadcasters, *Yle* is the public TV and radio broadcaster.

1. Share and post: Readers can share and follow news in Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Digg, Youtube and RSS and email.
2. Connect: dating page in City-lehti websites
3. Comment and discuss: There is a possibility to comment news and comments but registration is demanded. Comments are either published immediately or there are postmoderated.
4. Create: Readers can write their own stories and they are published on the site for example Yle. Site also publishes reader's news as stories or videos, photos but the site decides what to publish. News from readers doesn't have special requirements and are free for topics.
5. Rate and vote: merely in Facebook

The most used social media pattern on Finnish news sites is share: one can share news on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+ and Digg

as well as on blogging sites like blogger. Most news sites offer the possibility to subscribe RSS feeds and newsletters. Students mentioned that there is a forum for discussions on every news site and one can comment on the news, albeit only if registered. Readers can also send photos rate articles and suggest topics. Almost all news sites have a mobile version and *Helsingin Sanomat*, *Huvudstadsbladet*, *Iltalehti*, *Ilta-Sanomat*, *Talouselämä* and *Talous Sanomat* also offer a special version for iPads.

The students found that newspapers use social media to get more readers, visitors and customers, to introduce conversational topics and interact with other readers. Newspapers can get new ideas, spread the news in an easy way and sometimes they correct mistakes in articles noticed by readers.

Akaan Seutu

Akaan Seutu newspaper's website. <http://akaanseutu.fi/>

“I chose this media because it's a small local news media from my home town with long traditions, serving the needs of locals and summer visitors who are living/have lived in the area.”

Akaan Seutu covers news in Pirkanmaa province and was founded in 1916. The print version is published twice a week: Tuesdays and Fridays. The circulation is 5,927 (2011) and has an estimated readership of 19,000 (2008).

Akaan Seutu publishes an online edition to be read for free by print subscribers and for a fee by others. Some extra articles and materials are provided on the website. All articles deal with local topics concerning things such as happenings or matters of relevance to people in the area. For many local businesses the daily offers a traditional way to advertise and communicate with the locals. At first the online version was developed to support the print version, but now it is adding clear value to the service.

“In my opinion *Akaan Seutu* and its web version are a rather conservative media. This is partly because the team writing the magazine most likely consists of people born and bred in the area. The conversation is rather restricted and on a general level, and there is not too much debate or controversy. “

Akaan Seutu is owned by a family enterprise Akaan Seutu Lehti Oy, and is a part of Pirkanmaan Lehtitalo Konserni.

The daily was established in 1916 (*Toijalan Sanomat*), and the first on-line edition is from 8/2010.

All online articles can be shared on Facebook and Twitter by pressing a button at the end of the article. The first article on the site has been recommended 61 times on Facebook. *Akaan Seutu's* Facebook profile has 392 likes, and 72 persons have mentioned it. Also at the bottom of the page there is a box promoting the Facebook profile encouraging visitors to click the like button. Articles can be shared on Twitter, but no official profile exists.

Under the "Column" tag on the website can be found a series of articles, where apparently anyone can write an article. All of these are published by *Akaan Seutu* with the writers name or nickname at the end of the article, so some kind of moderation before publishing must be in use. Many of the articles are written by members of the city council for example, but some also by "regular citizens".

Following the "Columns" tab to "Blogs" tag takes visitor to a site where readers can start/share their own blog. No blogs have been set up yet.

All leading articles of the magazine are published under their own tab, which are almost always written by the editor.

Under tag "our readers write" can be found very different articles from readers. Topics vary from the eternal problem of dog droppings on the side of the streets to invitations of class meetings. Readers of the magazine can clearly be identified as a tight community.

It is possible to comment all the articles with a name or a nickname, but an email is required (not shown on the website). About the moderation practices I am not sure. No rating application is available.

As a conclusion readers have many opportunities to comment and discuss articles and create content, although by glancing the newest articles commenting isn't very common. Videos or SMS messages are not available.



Figure 21. Screenshots of Akaanseutu.
 URL: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Akaan-Seutu/177610972309508>

For news organizations, the objectives of using social media applications are to meet customer needs more precisely by giving them the chance to show what kind of contents they like or dislike. It’s a way to diversify the content and make sharing information more interactive rather than just one-way communication. There is the possibility of straight and relevant feedback and an increase in customer involvement.

For readers, in addition to all the things mentioned above, social media makes it easier to identify relevant information and topics of one’s own interest. Contacting, networking and interacting with people with similar interests is just clicks away. Visitors of news websites are turning from receivers to providers of content.

“I doubt that any strategy is executed or adhered to in *Akaan Seutu’s* social media presence since it is a relatively small organization.”

“Commenting and sharing are great applications in the social media that I use more or less frequently. The development of these applications has exploded the amount of information available and eased access to it. For me open mindedness and interest in things

happening all around the world are very relevant and social media applications are making browsing more effective and fun. “

“I think the commenting opportunity is a great development since it is encouraging readers to think critically and to see that many topics have to be considered from several points of view. It is a good way for supporters and dissenters to make their voices heard and often creates interesting polarisations. Unfortunately the possibility of anonymous commenting has also led to concern about hate messages, internet bullying, racism and discrimination.”

City

■ www.city.fi

City used to be a print media that appeared once every two weeks but now exists only online, with constant updates. It is a medium size media. The target audience is young adults mainly living in the metropolitan area. It is quite liberal and sometimes has strong opinions or “shocking” stories.

City is Published by CTRL Service Oy

City is present only in Facebook and, of course, you can like it there.

They have blogs, a date site and a restaurant guide. They also publish news of all kinds of happenings around Finland, mostly involving music.

Concerning the blogs readers can sign in as users and create blogs on the site so there is a mix of blogs and Q&A type of writings. The paper itself has a sex blogger, a blog called Relationship Clinic and a number of opinion blogs. Everything can be commented.

You have to be signed in to write a comment and you can do it anonymously or with your user name and I think that the post will appear immediately.

The users can create a profile with pictures and everything and be active in commenting if they wish. You can also create communities, start a blog, or conversation, confess something, ask or answer something, have your photo reviewed by others and so on.

There is free dictionary found on the page.

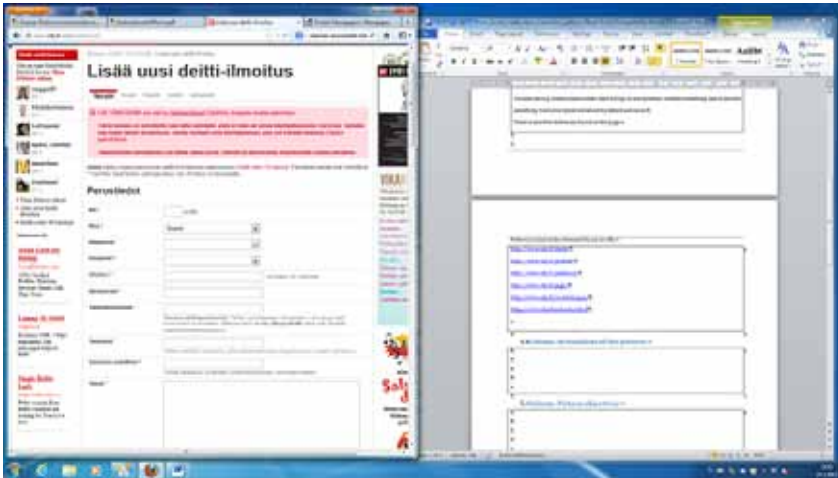


Figure 22. Dating on City.

City uses social media because its target audience uses social media and Facebook offers the best possibilities for advertising etc.

City is active on Facebook where it has its own page, which people and readers can like. By liking the page readers get current information on events and other topics that are discussed or written about on the web. The paper has several online blogs what readers can comment or share in their social media platforms. Since this is an online publication, there are many pages where readers can start their own discussion or topic of their interest and others can read it and comment.



Figure 23. Screenshots of City.

“As a reader of City, I think it uses social media very well and it keeps the readers interested in the changing topics, but at the same time it has many articles that have been the same for years and readers always wait for the next. Having readers as part of the page and building it larger is very clever. “

“I couldn’t find any information on the social media strategy, but I read that they launched Finland’s most sold lifestyle app for Ipad called City Tablet Book. “

“I do share news and I think it’s an important to have this element on a news site. I also share comics and amusing pictures sometimes. I don’t find it important to send my own photos to sites, except on Facebook and other sites like that.”

“*City* isn’t my favourite just because it’s quite messy in a way and has usually more leisure time news and not really big news about what’s going on in the world. “

“Mostly I read my news online, but I rarely share what I read. In my opinion the most important thing from the reader’s perspective is that the news are important and easy to access from any portable device. I think it is great that papers offer their readers the chance to comment and influence the content. I think that these days people see that it is important that if you use some kind of online newspaper that there is a chance for you to share. This is a big thing that I have noticed lately on my own page. Friends sharing news they have read and on Facebook I can comment and we can then discuss privately with friends behind ‘public’ viewing. “

Helsingin Sanomat

Helsingin Sanomat, also known as a HS or Hesari, is a Finnish newspaper owned by Sanoma Oyj and it was established in 1889 by Eero Erkko, Juhani Aho and Arvid Järnefelt. The newspaper is by distribution the most read in Finland. It is an independent media. *Helsingin Sanomat* also offers news in English, however the site layout is a lot different and the translation process takes a while so they only display the major news that have been happening recently. *Helsingin Sanomat* is considered to be a reliable

and up-to-date media so its written style is proper and official, almost conservative yet understandable. The columns, sports and leisure issues are remarkably different in their written style, more casual and free.

Helsingin Sanomat has eight different news categories: Breaking news (the last 24 hours), news from Finland, politics, and city of Helsinki, foreign countries, economics, sports and culture. Besides this the newspaper writes about food and publishes letters to the editor. Once a month the newspaper publishes a supplement called *Kuukausiliite* and also weekly a TV guide and entertainment supplement.

Helsingin Sanomat is read all over Finland. It is the biggest newspaper in Finland. The newspaper and web version is published and updated every day. You can read the online version with your iPad.

Social media is the best way to reach people these days. For *Helsingin Sanomat* this means getting new readers is even easier than a decade ago. Almost everyone has access to Internet these days and sharing and finding information is getting easier every day. Social media makes it easier to follow the news and get new information. *Helsingin Sanomat* is a place where you can find reliable information.

Helsingin Sanomat shares news on Facebook, Twitter and Google+ and one can send articles via email. The Google+ site is not very widely used – the same videos are on YouTube.

Normally there are lots of comments after each article and if the story is popular the news site offers a special discussion board for readers' interaction. *Helsingin Sanomat* also has a profile on YouTube but it is not very visible on the news site. One must go to YouTube and search *Helsingin Sanomat*. The videos are mostly background information about written stories and commercials.

“When people share news it gives new perspectives and sometimes I think you understand your thoughts better when you say them out loud and discuss with other people. Also you can start to see things in a different light when someone you know shares something that is important to her/him. It might give more weight to the matter. Also sharing news that are important and what you feel needs to be shared is maybe part of the freedom of speech. You can comment and share.”

Students described the site as reliable and trustworthy, and they like reading new on the website.

“For this assignment I chose Helsingin Sanomat <http://www.hs.fi> because it is the most reliable newspaper and I read it every day. I chose this media because I like reading it.”

“I chose *Helsingin Sanomat* as it is one of the most appreciated printed newspaper in Finland and it has the most readers in the country. Also it’s my favourite newspaper. I find it a reliable source of information.”

“I trust the news on this site because I believe readers correct all the mistakes and express their viewpoints instead of just believing what the site says. I believe that all the stories in the world worth noticing are put there, so by following the site I’m not missing out on anything important. I think *Helsingin Sanomat* is a very “Finnish” newspaper, although I don’t follow too many foreign newspapers. It’s clear and the layout is black & white so the reader doesn’t get distracted from the newspiece itself. “

“Helsingin Sanomat in its online version is about news, food, travelling, weather, television programs and so on. But mainly people read it because of the news.”

All the news on the *Helsingin Sanomat* website can be shared on Facebook, Twitter and Google+. They can also be sent to a friend’s email or a reader can comment on them or write on the website’s own discussion forum. However, before writing a comment the reader has to sign in either by registering to the website or signing in through his or her Facebook profile. The website does not publish comments immediately and comments are first read by moderators to maintain the quality of conversation.



Figure 24. Screenshot of Helsingin Sanomat.

“The main objective of sharing news in social media is to get more readers for the website and newspaper and also, of course, to inform people about what is happening in the world. One of the main objectives could also be to stimulate conversation and eventually maybe even form groups of people to fight for a cause. Through its active and up-to-date Facebook account, *Helsingin Sanomat* is able to attract different kinds of readers and encourage them to be interested and interact with issues concerning the country, region and globally.”

“I rarely share news on my own social media pages but I do however read them if someone posts something interesting and worth reading. Commenting and rating the news is important because you are able to read other people’s opinions and points-of-view.”

“Articles can be commented, but in order to do that users have to register and create a user ID. All the comments are checked before publication. Users can flag comments as inappropriate and rate comments they agree with and to indicate if a comment was well justified.”

“Users (<http://www.hs.fi/yhteystiedot/>) can contact the editorial staff in order to suggest a news topic or send photos etc. I’ve seen *HS* using reader’s photos on their website in the articles. *HS* has several blogs written by the editors and freelancers (<http://blogit.hs.fi/>).

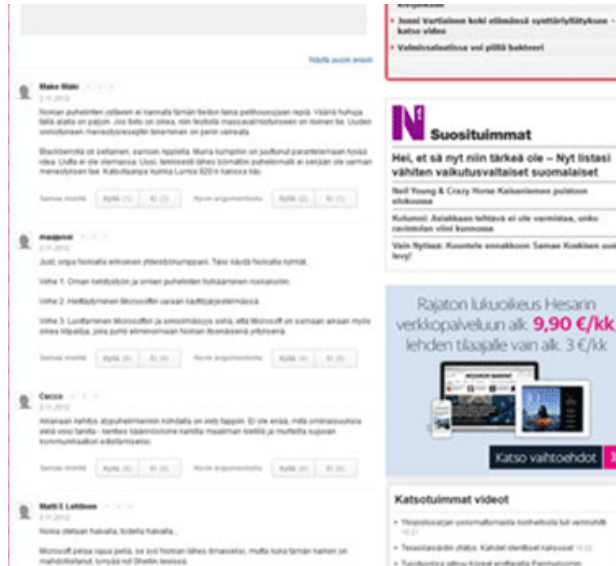


Figure 25. Screenshot of City.

“I think *Helsingin Sanomat* uses social media to be more visible and to target young readers who wouldn’t necessarily go to the online version. The online version also gets valuable information on users’ profiles that they can then use to plan advertisements on printed paper as well as on social media. People that click the news on social media might also click to the actual website, providing an opportunity to get advertisement revenue.”

“I think it’s important for traditional media to be shown and seen in social media. The printed media is losing revenues more and more as people are moving towards electronic environments. Traditional media has to change their business plan and adjust to the changes.”

“I think it is important to be able to comment on articles and have a dialogue with the editing staff; the newspaper can get new ideas and provide topics that the customers find interesting.”

“I like newspapers in social media. It’s easy to be up-to-date on what’s happening in the world.”

- Increase the amount of readers (people’s friends and followers)
- To have discussion about the news (the company could even make news about the discussion)
- The reader can express his viewpoints and raise discussion on topics important to him/her

“I think sharing news is very important because I simply can’t follow all the news sites. It’s useful that people share news on social media platforms. I usually don’t share any news, since I’m very hesitant of cramming people’s newsfeeds on Facebook. And I really don’t believe that any of my Twitter followers would be interested in visiting the sites. Comments on news articles are very important. If the journalist writes something inaccurately the people will let him/her know. Unfortunately comments are usually full of reader frustrations and not worth reading. I don’t share any of my own pictures usually, but I appreciate the people who do.”

The social media pattern found on the website proves that it is up-to-date with current “trends”, how readers act in social media and what kind of news and writings they are interested in. Through sharing in social media the news can reach people who normally do not particularly read news on their own. This way they might get interested and therefore the website/newspaper gets even more readers. *Helsingin Sanomat* has started quoting some of their readers’ comments on current events on their print version, which makes the reader more involved with the paper. *Helsingin Sanomat* also responds actively to the comments left on the newspaper’s social media webpages.

“I rarely share any piece of news on social media but I usually do read the news my friends share online. To me it is important that readers can share these links as it makes people more aware of recent events and happenings. It is also an interesting way to see what kind of news attract most of the readers or for instance different age groups.”

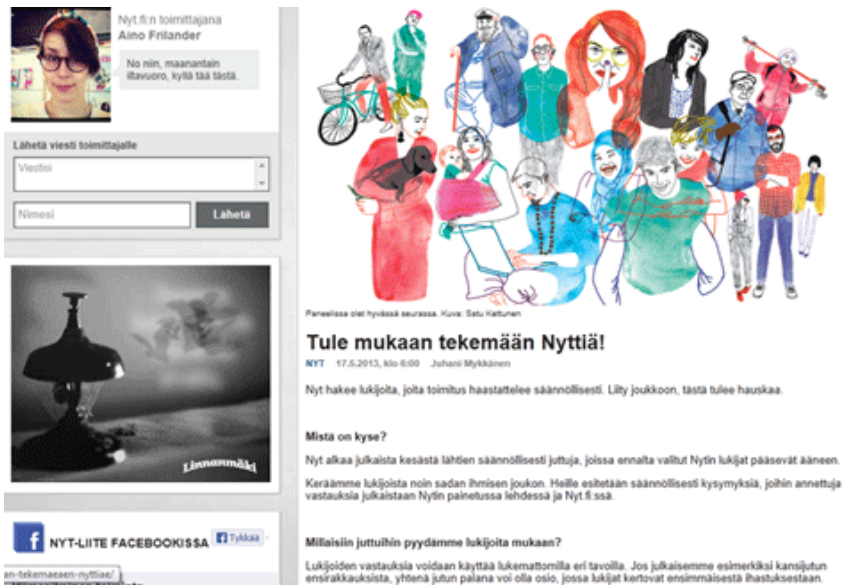


Figure 26. Screenshot of Helsingin Sanomat.

Helsingin Sanomat has a reader's panel in its *Nyt* supplement.

“They have various target groups, which can be seen in the number of the blogs; I don't think that any other newspaper has eleven bloggers.”

The reader benefits by getting articles about the things they are interested in – assuming there is enough people wanting the same thing.

“I share news every now and then on Twitter or Facebook. I only upload photos to Twitter and Facebook, where my accounts are protected. And these days I haven't upload anything new for a long time. My opinion is that people like to upload pictures and writings to get attention. When your friends and acquaintances answer and give their reaction it can bring a certain kind of satisfaction, a feeling that you are important or feeling that people care when they answer to you.”

“When I read news I always keep the source in mind. For example, I trust what I read on *Helsingin Sanomat* more than what I read on *Iltasanomat* or *7päivää*. Also I try to look for the sources behind the news.

“I can’t think of any cultural features in Helsingin Sanomat, though I am sure there are some. Maybe one thing that bothers me in Finnish newspapers is that even the smallest things break the news barrier (I’m talking about smaller papers like METRO). I think it’s because Finland is quite small and there isn’t that much to write about. It might also be that people are more interested in entertainment and beauty pageants rather than what is really happening around us. If I compare Finnish newspapers to some English ones that I have read, I think there are less sad stories in the Finnish ones. As Finland has less citizens it is quieter here compared to bigger countries.”

Helsingin Uutiset

Helsingin Uutiset URL: <http://www.helsinginuutiset.fi/>

Helsingin Uutiset is a small regional newspaper focusing on Helsinki. It was established in 2003 and the publisher is Suomen lehtiyhtymä Oy. It is an independent newspaper.

They have their own site on Facebook, and readers can recommend *Helsingin Uutiset* articles on Facebook. You can share articles on Facebook, Twitter, and on 339 other social media sites. They have many bloggers. The blogger can be any active citizen.

You can comment on articles and they publish them immediately, but they give instructions what shouldn’t be written. For each article you can start a discussion.

You can write your own story and send photos. These are first checked and if they find the story or photo interesting they will publish it on their site and possibly also in the newspaper.



Figure 27. Screenshots of Helsingin Uutiset.

Because 73% of their readers are age of 45 or older, they probably reach their readers best through printed media. Their circulation is around 230 000, but they have only 1,200 likes on Facebook and 169 people have commented the site so it's not nearly as popular as the printed version. Because they are not even on Twitter, they probably joined Facebook only because it is the most popular social media and because the majority of newspapers or companies are on Facebook. I don't think they have any social media strategy except for Facebook.

“I think it is very important that we can share news. That's how I often find interesting articles and new websites to follow. When I share news on Facebook it also reflects my opinions and interests and my friends interests. I usually share 2–6 news articles a month. Comments are important because they can give a fresh perspective on the news and rating comments can be used to show support for the commenter, and maybe boost him/her to be more bold in sharing his/her opinions and thoughts.”

“I trust the news of websites that I know as a reliable news sites such as *Helsingin Sanomat*. Some news of some sites can easily be noticed as a media tricks. The look of the site usually gives some indication of how reliable the site can be. Also if the news shows that it has been quoted from a reliable site, I can trust the news. I would never share my photos on a news site. “

The cultural characteristics of the *Helsingin Uutiset* site could be that they show all the local news, there's pictures of Finnish nature and they have a local politician as a blogger, Mr. Eero Heinäluoma, one of Finland's leading figures in the Social Democratic party.

Huvudstadsbladet

Huvudstadsbladet is a traditional daily newspaper with a daily circulation of 46,395 copies. It has a website at <http://hbl.fi>. The language is Swedish. It has diverse versions for tablets and mobile. One can share news on Facebook, Google+ and Twitter. *Huvudstadsbladet* has a YouTube profile, but like *Helsingin Sanomat* it is not very visible on the news site. One must search for the profile on YouTube.



Figure 28. Screenshots of Huvudstadsbladet.

“They have their website and HBL apps to attract readers who are not that fond of reading the paper version of the newspaper.”

“The use of social media is almost obligatory for newspapers today because: a) Young people are very keen about different kinds of social media, and by having an account on Facebook or Twitter the newspaper can ensure that it's possible to reach this demanding reader group; and b) Today's people want to have as much information as possible in one ensemble.”

“Sharing news on Facebook or Twitter is a great way to get people express their opinions and stir up a conversation. I share news every now and then because if I share a piece of news it’s usually because I want to share my own agenda. I personally use Twitter on part of the news because Facebook has too much irrelevant information, which makes it hard to find the news you want. In social media the most tempting element are the games.”

“In general, I trust the news I find on *Hufvudstadsbladet* or its website, although my personal opinions affect my opinion of the news I read. *HBL* is very typical Swedish-Finnish newspaper, with its liberal and independent agenda.”



Figure 29. Screenshots of Huvudstadsbladet.

“*Huvudstadsbladet* has a clear layout. Its easy, relaxing pictures entice people to read the articles. The white background could be decorated somehow.”

Iltalehti

Iltalehti is a daily tabloid and the third largest newspaper in Finland. It was founded in 1980. It covers all kinds of news such as the economy, entertainment, foreign news and domestic news. I think *Iltalehti* is both conservative and liberal depending on the news. When talking about the economy, it is more conservative and when talking about celebrities perhaps more liberal.

You can find *Iltalehti* on Facebook. You can share news on Facebook, Twitter or send a news item by e-mail to a friend. The news site has a profile on Google +, but the page is not very active. One can subscribe to a newsletter or RSS feed. Many mobile versions are available: iPad, iPhone and Android. The news site shows lot of videos and uploads some videos on YouTube. *Iltalehti* has many bloggers on their blogger site.

URL:www.iltalehti.fi

Iltalehti allows readers to comment on articles and it has a special discussion forum.

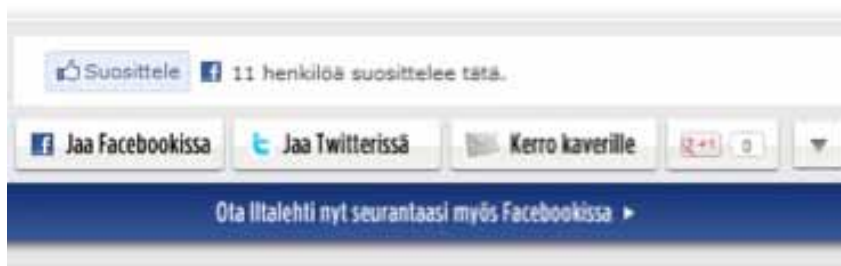


Figure 30. Screenshot of social media buttons on Iltalehti.

“News can be posted forward and published somewhere else. This is good for marketing because more people will open links they wouldn’t have otherwise found and the sites will become more popular and start receiving more daily or at least weekly visitors. I definitely think *Iltalehti* uses this social media strategy. I’m on Facebook and constantly get announcements that somebody has posted something from *Iltalehti* on Facebook and they can be seen on my front page and sometimes I get interested and then they have one reader more.”



Figure 31. Screenshot of Iltalehti.

“I think it is a marvelous idea [to share news]! It’s not only good for these sites but also for people because they are constantly getting more information like warnings etc., which can sometimes be very useful. If I share news I do it very rarely because I’m quite a quiet user of Facebook and Twitter. Commenting and sharing is fine and it can lead to useful arguments and help to see other people’s views. Sometimes though, when people are bored and with the courage of being anonymous, they might say inappropriate and inconsiderate things that only cause extra harm... I don’t really trust news unless they appear on many sites. If a news item is only on one site I might think twice whether to believe or not to believe. They also like to make stories bigger than they are and emphasise more interesting but maybe irrelevant points. People should always have a critical mindset when reading the news. I don’t think I noticed any special cultural features in Finland. The sites seemed international and would do well abroad as well. Except that the emphasis is on Finnish and European news.”



Figure 32. Screenshot of Ilta-lehti.

“The news sites use social media to advertise their sites and get more customers. Reader benefits are that they get more information from one site and when you share information on some kind of social media, it’s easier to talk about the thing with your friends etc. And then you can choose what you want to share, so that everybody won’t know what you are reading.”

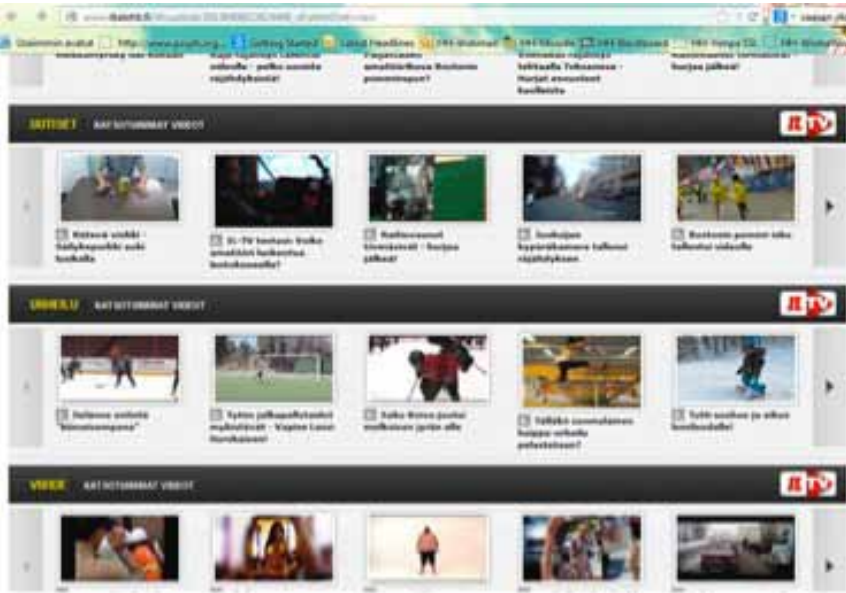


Figure 33. Screenshot of Ilta-lehti.

Ilta-Sanomat

Ilta-Sanomat is a big national tabloid with online TV, offering versions for iPad, iPhone and Android. Most of the news is in Finnish and you can subscribe to a newsletter and RSS feed. Readers can share the news on Facebook and Twitter. The news site has a Google + account, but no news is posted at the moment. *Ilta-Sanomat* also has its own page on Facebook and Twitter and Foursquare accounts. You can comment and rate the news. They publish reader photos and videos and readers can inform them about interesting news. After each article is a comment field. Registration is required when leaving a comment. There is a special discussion forum for readers and many blogs.

Readers can share news on Twitter, Facebook, Google+ and other social media platforms. They have blogs. The bloggers are mostly politicians, experts and celebrities. It is possible to comment news, rate news, rate comments, and discuss the news. There is a discussion forum, but I'm not sure how the discussions are moderated. You can suggest a topic and they publish reader's pictures and videos.



Figure 34. Screenshot of Ilta-Sanomat.

“It is good to make it easier for people to read and share the news. It’s also good people can comment on the news and discuss. I think they may have a social media strategy because they also have this IS TV programme there.”

“They want to get more readers and it’s easier to spread the news with social media elements. For example, if someone shares the news on Facebook, the news will reach more people in less time. People are nowadays increasingly using the Internet and Facebook is an ideal way to reach people.”



Figure 35. Social media buttons on *Iltta-Sanommat*.

It was important to realise that sharing the news divided students opinions. Some students said this is very important and that they share the news with their friends. They also appreciated the possibility to discuss about news topics. According to the students, sharing means that they stay up-to-date and know what topics are being discussed.

“Sharing the news is very important to me. I want to know what’s going on in the world and what’s up with my friends. I use Facebook a lot for sharing the news, thoughts and photos. People noticing and commenting the news is very important, for example to start a conversation and share information. I don’t share that many pictures on the news site, but when I do, the pictures tell other people something about me. I think the most tempting social media element is Facebook. All of my friends are using Facebook and I can get updates from them everyday. Most of the news and posted articles are trustworthy and I enjoy reading them, but some stories I just ignore completely. I read *Iltasanomat* daily and through Facebook I can immediately see the most important news that the newspaper has posted there. The news are from different sources and sometimes you need to verify and do some research to determine if the news is up-to-date and reliable.”

“I think it is really nice that we are able to share the news if there is something important going on or something funny you want to share with your friends. I do share the news maybe a couple of times a month. I think commenting is also really good so that you can tell if they have done some serious mistakes or just to give good feedback to the writers. I don’t share my own photos on news sites. The most

tempting social media element for me is definitely Facebook. It depends on the topic whether I trust this source because they write really stupid articles sometimes.”

Some students did not think that sharing the news has any importance for them. The same goes for the possibility to comment or rate.

“I don’t think it’s so important to share all the news, but of course it’s good if the news involves some huge event. Personally I never share news. I don’t share my own pics either. I trust the news on *Iltasanomat* but sometimes they exaggerate or something like that. I don’t think there are any cultural elements on the website that are unique to Finland.”

“I don’t personally share any news on Facebook or elsewhere public. If I read an interesting article, I might send a personal link to a friend or speak about it face-to-face and not online. I don’t think commenting and rating is important. I have such a busy life so I don’t even have time for such things online. The news on *Iltasanomat* is usually quite right, but they focus on articles that sell.”

The organization has an account on Facebook to reach more readers. Readers can post articles and “like” articles, thereby providing more publicity for the tabloid. I did not find information of their social media strategy, but the social media they are using indicates that they have a strategy. It looks like they want to keep the tabloid up-to-date.

“Sharing news on Facebook is mostly for fun. People share funny stories, sports news and other not-so-important news. For me it does not make a difference, I don’t really care for sharing news on Facebook and I don’t trust this news source as much the state broadcasting company YLE, for example. For the news site it is important to be able to share news.”

Kaleva

Kaleva is a large regional weekly newspaper focusing on the city of Oulu and nearby regions (Northern Ostrobothnia & Kainuu). The newspa-

per has a traditional print version as well as an online edition. It has been published since 1899.

Kaleva has a profile on Facebook, Twitter and Google+. News can be sent via email and stories can be commented and recommend (you can also comment on comments etc.).



Figure 36. Screenshot of Kaleva.

Kaleva aims to increase its readership (people's friends and followers) and to foster discussion about the news (the company could even make news about the discussion). Readers can express their viewpoints and raise discussions on topics important to them.

“*Kaleva* was the newspaper I used to read daily for years and I guess I’m too familiar with it and its online website, so that my estimates aren’t very objective. I trust Kaleva very much, and it’s nice that it writes about the regional issues (when reading for example HS it kind of makes me feel that Helsinki is the only city in the universe). “

Metro

- URL: <http://metro.fi/> METRO LEHTI

Metro is a medium-sized newspaper focusing on the Helsinki region. It is owned by Sanoma News Oy. The original Metro was founded in Sweden 1995, with the Finnish version coming out in 1999.

It has a print version and a website. The news covers weekly news items from Helsinki and also international news and weather. It also informs readers about events etc.

Readers can share their photos by sending them to *Metro*. The website includes links to other news websites such as the tabloids *Iltasanomat* and *Iltalehti*.

The objective is to keep people interested and give them a chance to express their opinions. Also, the news organisation might get a great story they wouldn't have come up by themselves. Social media elements are used to get more visibility all over the Internet. The reader benefits when finding interesting articles after a friend has shared them via, for example, Facebook. Based on the site, I don't think this media has a social media strategy. They probably don't see the full benefits of social media.

“I chose this media because it is a regional newspaper and also free. It's an international newspaper that is published locally.”

“I chose this site because I like the traditional media version of it, and I thought it might be interesting to see how the website looks.”

“Apparently there are no surprising social media patterns. People can comment the news and make their own news. They also publish reader pictures and have a “question of the day” section in the middle of the front page.”

Patterns/social media elements found on URL: Facebook. No other social media patterns were found. There are some columns written by private persons.



Figure 37. Screenshot of Metro.

The site uses social media patterns to increase the number of the readers. They want to stay connected with readers via social media, and also want people to share the news of that specific website.

“I’m sure they have a social media strategy. I think the social media patterns should be more visible on the site.”

“I find it really important that I can share the news. This makes news agencies more competitive and helps them to stay connected with the moment. The sharing of news in social media also shows what kinds of news interest people the most.”

“I think *Metro* has some good patterns, but they should be improved. I think it is quite important to have the opportunity to share news, rate comments and let the readers express themselves by commenting, adding pictures and so forth. I do share news via Facebook myself, but not very often. I have never shared my own photos on any news site. I think that sharing the news might be tempting, but on the other hand the comments important too: I really like to read the comments of others, and they often introduce new points of view or information

about the original post. Actually I had never before visited the site, but I do like to read the paper version and I have found it quite trustworthy.”

“I don’t know if this is a cultural feature or not, but I think in Finland people normally don’t value aesthetics as much as they should, and this applies to the *Metro* site too: it is way too full of everything, messy and confusing. I really don’t understand why there are only three tabs on the top of the main page. At least they should add one for the columns and maybe one for readers’ pictures too. Definitely they should take stuff from the front page and put it somewhere else because the front page is the most important part of the site: it is the reader’s first impression, and it should be professional and uncluttered.”

MTV3

MTV3 is a big nationwide commercial TV channel in Finland. It was founded in 1957. The company has an online news site on URL: <http://www.mtv3.fi>. *MTV3* allows the sharing of news on Facebook, Twitter and via email, and also allows recommendations via a Facebook application. The company has been active also on Google+, but no new posts exist after may 2012. The news site offers a commenting option after each article, but only for those who have registered.

The site has a version for iPad, iPhone, Symbian, Windows Phone 7 and Windows 8. The news site shares videos on YouTube and the *MTV3* website.

“The news spreads around when readers comment, like or post the news on Twitter or send to friends by email. Readers can express their opinions by commenting and show that they are interested in articles, TV programmes, video clips, blogs etc. Some info about a *MTV3* social strategy are visible, e.g. in the screenshot below.”



Figure 38. Screenshot of MTV3.

<http://www.mtv3.fi/viihde/uutiset/muut.shtml/1648315/estellen-lahjasta-syntynyt-alyton-riita-paatokseen> (in the end of the news is a comment section and on the side the Facebook section)

“I think it’s important that everyone can voice their opinions on the site. Of course, it’s important that the comments are examined so that nothing inappropriate or hurtful is published. I myself don’t really share news except maybe privately with my friends. I think it’s quite important to be able to comment and rate comments. I don’t share my own pictures on any news sites, I only post my own pictures on Facebook. I trust some of the news, although many article are more about entertainment than information. Luckily it is easy for readers to spot fact from fiction or funny articles.”

Nelonen

Nelonen is a national medium-sized commercial TV and radio broadcaster owned by Sanoma Ltd. After each article one can comment or rate news by via Facebook, Yahoo, AOL or Hotmail. There is also a Facebook icon on the site. The news site has also a Twitter account, but the site has no Twitter icon. The site contains plenty of content from *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Iltasanomat* and therefore there are lots of links to these news sites. They do not have any bloggers. Anonymous comments are not allowed.

“Of course if somebody shares their news on Facebook etc. they get more visibility. *Nelonen* follows pretty much the same strategies as other TV channels. They have some online programs that you can watch. I think that instead of the number of comments or sharings it’s more important to know how many people have opened the page/link, what topics are interesting to readers and so on. Most news items can get more attention simply with attractive headlines or photos.”



Figure 39. Screenshot of Nelonen.

“I chose this site because I use it a lot in my everyday life and the site is easy to use.”

Readers cannot write their own news or send videos or photos, but they can send news tips. The site has plenty of interactive elements: videos and short news clips. There are also links to the websites of *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Iltasanomat*.

“I think that nowadays it’s important to co-operate with different kind of social medias. People use them a lot and you can find a lot of information in them. News sites as well as other sites can easily use these social media sites to contact more readers. In social media people often share interesting news.

I think that Nelonen-Uutiset have a social media strategy but I could not find any information about it, perhaps it is a business secret.”

“In my point of view it is very important to be able to share news. Because you can share important and interesting news on your social media site and discuss about it with friends. I sometimes share news that I find funny or shocking. I share news approximately 1 to 3 times a week. “

“Commenting on news is important if the comments actually are about the news and if they are appropriate. I have not yet shared any photos or videos in a news site. For me most tempting social media element is Facebook, because I use it a lot in a daily basis. I trust Nelonen-Uutiset a lot because it is part of a well known organization. “

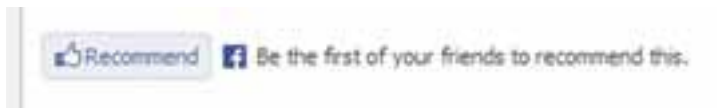
Pohjalainen

Pohjalainen is a regional newspaper for the Pohjanmaa region (around the Finnish speaking municipalities around the city of Vaasa). In 2012, there the newspaper had about 69,000 readers (Kansallinen Mediatutkimus). The language of the newspaper is Finnish.

Pohjalainen is a traditional newspaper that also has online news. Pohjalainen is owned by Ilkka-Yhtymä Oyj, which also owns Ilkka, the regional newspaper for southern Pohjanmaa, and several local newspapers. *Pohjalainen* was founded 1903 and was called *Vaasa* until 1984. *Pohjalainen* is an independent newspaper but it used to be in the favour of National Coalition Party.

Features of the newspaper are illustrated below.

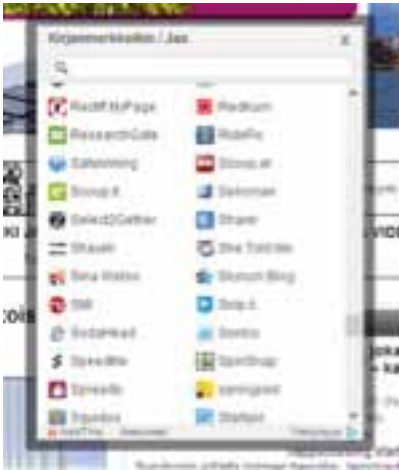
1. Facebook recommend



2. Send link button featuring links to Facebook, Delicious, Digg, Twitter, email and Google's AddThis



3. Google's AddThis service



4. Facebook page



5. Blogs



6. Commenting after registration (free, email address needed)



Below are links to the newspaper's web content:

- <http://www.pohjalainen.fi/uutiset/maakunta/vaasan-yliopiston-avoin-yliopisto-suomen-toiseksi-suurin-kauppatieteissa-1.1381746>
- <https://www.facebook.com/Pohjalainen.fi>
- <http://www.pohjalainen.fi/blogit>

Pohjalainen seems to want to offer as possibilities for social media sharing as much as possible. That makes it possible to gain new readers for the articles and gain visibility for the brand.

Pohjalainen is active on Facebook and gives readers the possibility to like and comment their page. They have a photo gallery called "Reader's pick" (*Lukijan löytö*) where readers can post their photos. Photos can be sent by SMS (0.70 euro) or by email (free).

Pohjalainen has two blogs. *Taiteilijanelämää*, meaning the artist's life, is written by Panu Sivonen and Pirkko Aitolehto. The second blog is called *Samalla pallolla*, loosely translated as "on the same wave length". It is written by Antti Asu, Aila Asu, Minna Bunnet, Mervi Hakomäki and Timmy Trümpler. They are all originally from *Pohjanmaa* but now live in different countries.

The first link below the articles is the Facebook recommend button. Facebook is likely to be the most common social media site to share news so the link is easily accessible. There is also a Send button on the right, which also includes an AddThis link. It leads to more than 300 integrated social media pages (read more).

Pohjalainen probably tries to connect with more readers mostly through their Facebook page.

The blogs give people from Pohjanmaa the possibility to write about their experiences and opinions on the online newspaper's site. It offers the possibility to connect with people from the same area.

Rannikkoseutu

Rannikkoseutu is a small local newspaper that reports about news and events in the Naantali-Raisio-Masku area in Varsinais-Suomi province in coastal southwestern Finland. If you live in one these cities, you can order *Rannikkoseutu* to your home but you can also access news on their website. *Rannikkoseutu* is an independent media and is owned by publishing group Alma Media.

Rannikkoseutu uses sharing patterns on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and via email. It offers bookmarking with Google. The newspaper allows readers to like, comment and recommend without registration, but the site recommends readers to sign up. On the news site there is no information about mobile versions or if the site has a YouTube profile.

“I chose *Rannikkoseutu* because I read it in my hometown, Santali.”



Figure 40. Screenshot of Rannikkoseutu.

Readers can comment on the news on the website or recommend articles on Facebook, Twitter, Google and LinkedIn. They can also give news tips to the journalists. On the website you can access an editorial blog (*Pääkirjoitus*) on local issues, written by Raija Leppänen.



Figure 41. Social media opportunities provided by Rannikkoseutu.

“Giving readers the possibility to share and recommend news on Facebook and Twitter potentially brings more visitors to the original website and therefore make the paper more known. Once people find the website they might become regular visitors and even order the printed version to their homes. As a student who now lives away from my hometown, it is very convenient to share and get information about hometown news when they are posted on Facebook.”

“I don’t visit the *Rannikkoseutu* website very often. Usually if I do, a friend has hinted that I might be interested. I haven’t commented any news on the website, but I like to read other people’s comments so it is good to have the possibility to leave comments. I would think that it is also good for the writers of the articles to have feedback and comments.”

“I do trust the information in the newspaper, both in the printed version and on the website.”

Savon Sanomat

Savon Sanomat is a regional newspaper of Savo province. It is owned by Keskiuomalainen Oyj. Examples of social media patterns available on their site are provided below:

- Facebook and Twitter links (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/>)
- Tweets from editors (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/>)
- Blog *Kappale kauneinta* by Soili Väisänen (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/lukijoilta/blogit/kappale-kauneinta/>)
- Blog *Saaristo kaupungissa* by Outi Poikonen (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/lukijoilta/blogit/saaristo-kaupungissa/>)

- Discussion forum (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/lukijoilta/keskustelupalsta/forums/list.htm>)
- Readers' photos (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/lukijoilta/lukijan-kuvat/>)
- Readers' news hints and photos (<http://www.savonsanomat.fi/>)



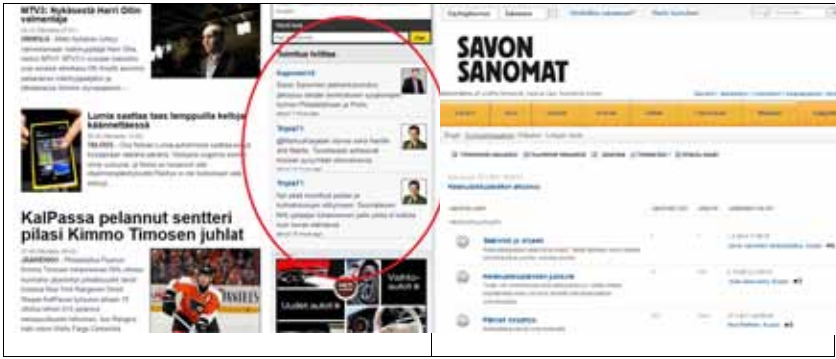


Figure 42. Screenshots of Savon Sanomat.

The objectives of the news organization can be characterised as providing quick and updated news, communicating with readers, as well as providing versatile content such as news, blogs, entertainment, social media and discussion forums.

Reader objectives include sharing opinions and giving feedback, suggesting news stories, communicating with other readers as well as easy access to up-to-date news.

Links to social media (Facebook and Twitter) are placed on the right side of the front page where the icons are easily spotted (Screenshot 1.). All news can be shared on readers' Facebook or Twitter profiles by clicking a button below each article. This makes the website interactive and allows readers' to comment on and share the news with their friends.

Tweets from the editors section is a useful feature and a good way to highlight important and interesting news and create discussion among readers.

“It is important that readers are given the chance to give feedback and openly discuss on current topics in the discussion forum. Readers can also suggest story ideas and send their photos and therefore influence the content of the website according to their own interest.”

Sotkamo-Lehti

Sotkamo-Lehti is a small local newspaper written in the Finnish language. The distribution is about 5,600 and it has over 15,000 readers. It is published twice a week. The paper is owned by publishing group Alma Me-

dia. It has a printed version and a news site on URL: <http://www.sotkamolehti.fi>

The site makes use of sharing tools Google, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and has a comment forum. Also you can send the news by e-mail to your friends. *Sotkamo-Lehti* has its own site at least on Facebook and they share news and other useful information on their pages on Facebook. They have a blog written by one of the journalists. I think that the blog is hilarious because the journalist writes with a sense of humour and discusses a lot. Part of the blog text is always published in the printed paper.

It is possible to comment and rate the news on the website. You can leave and write comments anonymously.

“I am not sure if it is good that you can write anonymously because it is a local newspaper and there is lot of critical commentary. Like recently when the municipal elections were on, there was lot of writing and comments about the candidates. The mayor of Sotkamo said: “Social media today is making a travesty of democracy.” He meant that it is good that people can talk and discuss about their own opinions but that we should remember good habits.”

“It is also possible to suggest topics or invite the paper to do a story about yourself if you have done something interesting.”

“In my opinion they really have to invest news from nothing sometimes because the content of the paper is kind of boring, in a way.”



Figure 43. Screenshot of Sotkamo-Lehti.

Talouselämä

Talouselämä is Finland's largest financial and economic weekly paper (<http://www.talouselama.fi/>). Both the paper version and the website are in Finnish. *Talouselämä* is owned by Talentum and the print version has been published since 1938. The circulation of the journal is currently 80,800 copies.

Talouselämä has pages on Facebook (3,944 likes), Twitter (13,756 followers) and Google+. On Twitter you can follow the editorial of the magazine (@talouselama), the news (@teutiset) and company purchases (@yrityskaupat). Readers can also subscribe to an email newsletter or RSS feeds. The paper has its own live blog, which is currently following the Euro crisis. You can also read other blogs from their two partners, Tieto and Accenture.

You can comment on the news and reply to other comments. Messages are checked before publishing and you need to use your real name, not a username. There is a forum called Tebatti where visiting expert writers write about current topics. Readers can give feedback with a separate form.

“On the website I do not see any other interactive elements besides the comments and the feedback form. The same goes for Facebook.”
The patterns/social media elements found are shown below.

1. Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/talouselama?fref=ts>



Figure 44. Screenshot of Talouselämä.

“I follow only a few Finnish news sites, mainly *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Talouselämä*, sometimes *Yle*. I follow *Talouselämä* rather often, as I get their headlines on my iGoogle page. That is why I chose it also for this study.”

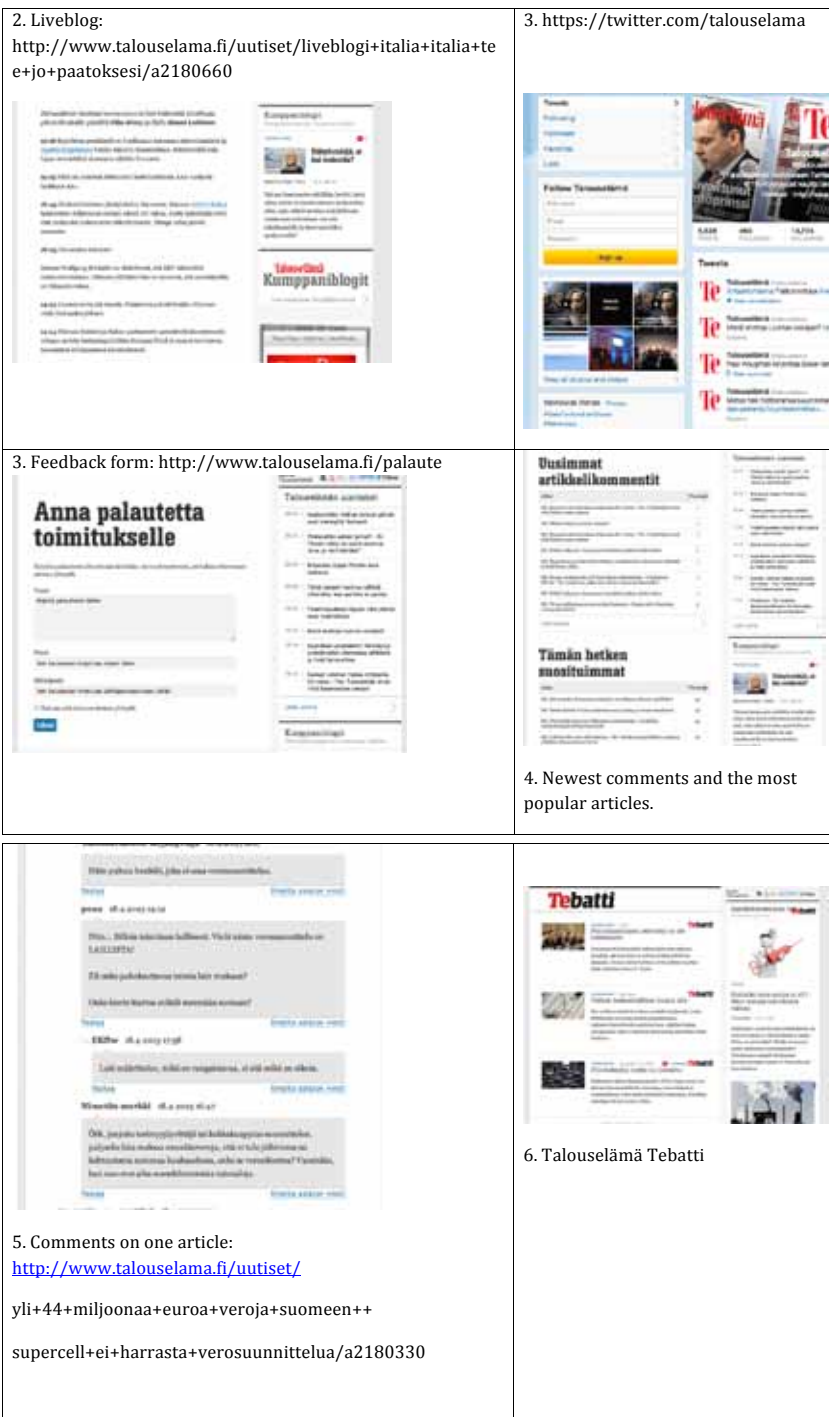


Figure 45. Screenshots of Talouselämä.

Through these patterns *Talouselämä* is spreading the news and strengthening their brand as the leading business newspaper in Finland. They get more clicks for their news on the website and the news site is able to create conversation among readers because the threshold to participate is lower. In social media people like to share and participate and they feel it is easier than on the news site's own website.

The objective of Facebook is to bring visibility. Twitter is for news followers but also for readers who really have something to say. So the profile of these two main patterns is different.

Google+ shows the organization wants to be ahead of its time, as it is not yet a main stream social media.

“I think *Talouselämä* does have a social media strategy because they are involved in many different social media networks and very active in each. There is no information about their strategy on the website.”

“If there is news that relates to my interests (ecology, clothes production, recycling, travelling, animal welfare) I like to share it on Facebook. I do not have an account on Twitter or Google+ and do not subscribe to any RSS feeds. I prefer to choose when to read the news, rather than receiving news all the time. “

“I think it is important that you can comment on the news, but unfortunately the comments I read far were are from people who want to sound overly intelligent and want to compete with the journalist. Of course this also encourages journalists to write quality news as they know people will comment. Also I see comments as a reward for the journalist; s/he wrote something that stirred thoughts in people, so it was interesting. This way the reward is more direct than just a rise in subscriptions.”

“I think Facebook is the most tempting social media element because you can reach so many people, e.g. when sharing an article.”

“I trust this news site, they have a very professional profile and they also publish many studies related to Finnish business and economics. They have a page on the website devoted solely to news about Nokia, which I would mention as a national/cultural characteristic.”

Taloussanomat

- Taloussanomat.fi

Taloussanomat is a liberal and independent online business news site and also the biggest in Finland. The site was established in 2008 (print1997–2007). It is owned by the Sanoma News group.

The site makes use of Facebook. There are partnership blogs, for example the one by Finland's marketing association. The bloggers are Lauri Sipilä and Jarkko Kurvinen. It is possible to share the blogs on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn.

- Information about the site is provided by the links below.
- <http://mediatiedot.taloussanomat.fi/index.php/ajankohtaista/21-uuttadynaaminentapetti>
- <http://mediatiedot.taloussanomat.fi/index.php/tuotteet/mobiili>
- <http://www.taloussanomat.fi/lomake/virhe/>
- <http://www.taloussanomat.fi/lomake/palaute/>
- <http://www.taloussanomat.fi/lomake/uutisvinkki/>
- http://www.taloussanomat.fi/kumppaniblogit/2013/05/20/markkinointituuli-puhaltaa/20136900/322?ref=ts_promo

Comments on news is allowed but this should be done in a formal and polite tone of voice. There is a certain etiquette any discussion. The editors have the right to remove any impolite or provocative opinions.

You can share news, videos and appointment news as well as give feedback and inform about technical flaws on the site. Advertising is possible on mobile versions or using so-called dynamic flashbacks.



Figure 46. Screenshot of Taloussanomat.

1 Dynamic flashback

6 Partner blog

<p>2 Mobile version</p>	<p>3 Mistakes</p>
<p>4 News tips</p>	<p>5 Partner Blog</p>

Figure 47. Screenshots of Taloussanomat.

“I chose this site because it is interesting, reliable and popular. It also offers many opportunities for research. The site was the most important source of information for my economics assignment, for example.”

“In my opinion, the news media use these patterns because they want to communicate with people and use interactive solutions to get more readers. Active visibility brings active endorsement. Also readers benefit so that they can be a part of spreading the news. They also get valuable and up-to-date information about important economic news and happenings.”

“I find the actual news more important than sharing. It is quite common to share news on Facebook or Twitter, but I am not so interested. The flow of news is, in any case, overbearing, so maybe we are going to drown in all the shared news. Facebook could be used more for entertaining and having fun.”

Turun Sanomat

Turun Sanomat is an independent newspaper published in Varsinais-Suomi province and owned by TS-yhtymä Oy. It is a big newspaper with lots of local news as well as national and international news. The newspaper was founded in 1904 and has a circulation about 99,000. It is the third biggest daily in Finland. The online version can be found on URL www.ts.fi.

The newspaper doesn't have its own news agency, radio or TV station. It has been politically independent and non-aligned since 1961.

Turun Sanomat allows readers to recommend and share news on Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Digg, and via email. One can share news also on blogs like Stumbleupon, WordPress, Lifestream and Blogger. Discussion can be raised on Messenger, though Microsoft has announced that the service is no longer in use after June 2013. The news site has a Twitter profile.

People can share the news on Facebook and Twitter, and also send to a friend and other social media portals. They have lots of different social media accounts so that they can promote their paper. They have different people keeping different blogs. It is possible to comment news and rate the news. The discussion is moderated after the posting of comments if the

comments are not “good”. It is also possible to publish your own column and send SMS messages.

There are several blogs on ts.fi, for example *Formulablogi* and *Rillit huurussa*. Readers can recommend news on Facebook.



Figure 48. Social media buttons on Turun Sanomat.

“Sharing news on Facebook is making it easier for people to find news that interest them and also to hint to friends and families about current events.”

Sometimes it is difficult to find the sharing pattern on the site. Students commented that it is strange that the newspaper only has a Facebook profile and that readers need to press the “more” button to get more options to share the news.

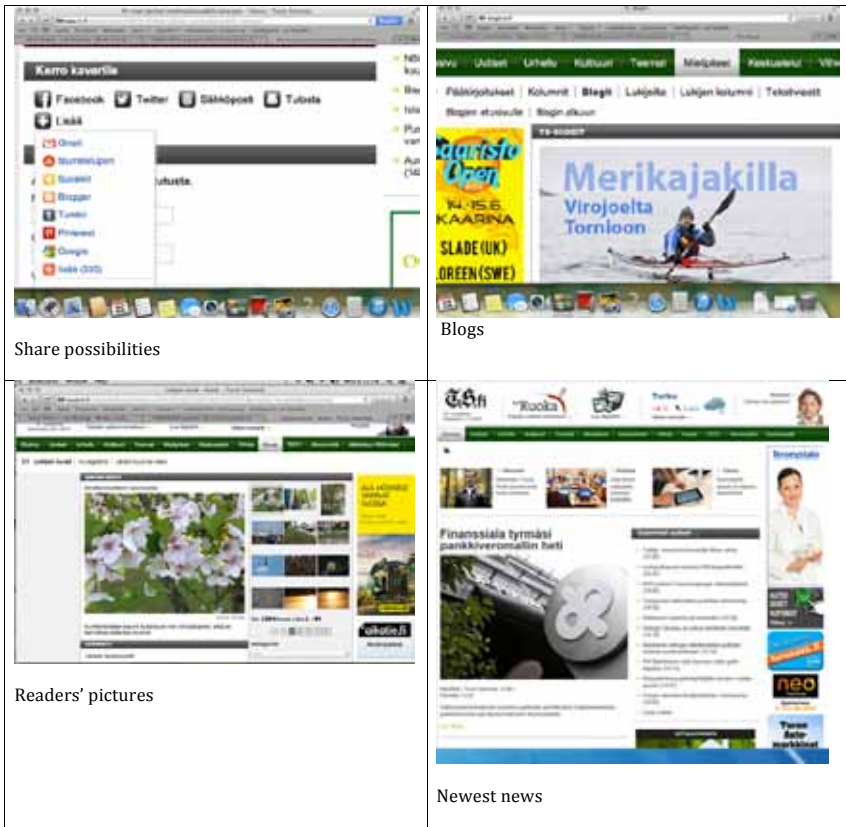


Figure 49. Social media buttons on Turun Sanomat.

“I was surprised that Turun Sanomat has only a Facebook profile because I thought it would also have Twitter at a minimum. However, it is great that you can share their news and comment right on the website.”

Readers can comment or discuss after each article anonymously, which is very rare. There are some guidelines on how to write and information is provided that all comments are read before publishing.

“They have a specific space for readers comments and conversations about current issues. I haven’t actually posted there but I have had a lot of fun reading them! Although I don’t trust all, or most, things in the conversation area, I do trust the articles of *Turun Sanomat*.”

They use these patters so that they get more people to read their paper, with those things they get people interested and it's easy to access. People benefit from it, for example if you see something interesting you can share it with your friends and they can easily read it too.

“I think that their strategy is to promote the online version to the younger generation, but still the older generation will want to order the printed version, because all of the people do not manage so well with the computer.”

“Sharing news is very important, if you want to be “on the radar” so to speak. I share some interesting articles or funny ones that I think have a good point. Usually I share those that I think matter to me. Commenting might be a good thing, but then again there are people who just want to annoy other people with their comments. I think rating is not a good thing because it only shows the readers opinion about it. And everybody has the right to have his or her own opinion. I don't share my own pictures. To me tempting might be blogs because people write there sometimes about their own experiences. Some things that might be a Finnish thing in the newspaper is a column in local dialect.”

“I chose the media because it has a good culture section (comics). I really don't read it that much.”

Valkeakosken Sanomat

Valkeakosken Sanomat is a Finnish weekly regional newspaper with print and online editions.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Valkeakosken-Sanomat/110174312339699>
- Blogs: <http://www.valkeakoskensanomat.fi/Blogit>

The social media on the newspaper's website are Facebook and blogs. The frontpage offers access to the Facebook page and you can also find it easily though Internet and Facebook search.

The blogs are in two places. On the front page there seems to be five bloggers: Iiria Lehtinen, Jaana Laakso, Jorma Ahola, Kati Vaittinen and Merja Nurmi.

You can comment, recommend and share the news.

Readers can suggest a topic but the information must be sent by email or telephoned to the newsroom. Information about how to suggest a topic is available in the printed version.



Figure 50. Screenshot of Valkeakosken Sanomat.

Sharing social media patterns are useful for people who use social media a lot and they can find everything in the same place. *Valkeakosken Sanomat* seems to use only Facebook and it is of interest mainly to people who are living in Valkeakoski. The news site has gathered links on their website to other websites that Finnish people visit a lot. The news flow is not as

substantial and frequent as in big newspapers so maybe that's why there is space for other things.

“The bloggers are not very known but it's a nice addition to the website and I think people living in Valkeakoski area are interested in their texts.”

“For me sharing and commenting news is not important and I don't use these functions, but I understand why it is important for some people. I don't really understand rating the news, but with your comments you can change the conversation and bring up new perspectives. I don't feel the need to share my own pictures on the news sites. “

“I think it is good that also newspapers have their own Facebook pages where people can easily contact them, comment on things and read news headlines while checking personal stuff. The newspaper doesn't focus on “gossip” as much as some newspapers, so I find the articles reliable.”

YLE Finnish Broadcasting Company

Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) is a big national public TV and radio broadcaster which sends programmes in both Finnish and Swedish languages.

YLE allows readers to share on Facebook, Twitter and Google+. Readers can recommend news topics. Some articles have the possibility to comment news and readers can answer other readers' comments anonymously. There is also a special section called “suora linja”, which allows readers to discuss about given topic. On the news site there is no information about mobile versions. The company has a Facebook site but only some journalist of the company can be found on Google+.

They do have bloggers, for example, Tuija Aalto, who is chief strategist in *YLE*'s strategy office. There are basically discussion forums, you can post comments under the article and it is posted immediately.

An example of the discussion forum is found at: http://yle.fi/uutiset/suora_linja/. In the example, readers are invited to discuss whether they believe in the power of nature.



“It is important that you can share news. That is one of our way of getting news: from each other. I share news that I find interesting by telling others about it. I’m not on Facebook so I don’t really share news on the net. But the most tempting social media element is that you are able to voice your own opinions and it is made easy to socialize with people who live in different parts of the world. I trust most of it but I still read critically. A cultural feature in our country is that we do write quite honestly in newspapers.”

3.6 Germany

Germany has about 82 million inhabitants and the spoken language is German. The first newspapers were established already 400 years ago. According to Thomas (2010), the German press is characterized by a large number of titles. There are 1,512 different newspapers. Most of the subscriptions are local and there are only a few national newspapers: *Bild*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Welt*, *Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Tageszeitung*. There is also a very wide selection of magazines, with over 900 general and 1200 specialized periodicals. German social media sites include *StudiVz*, *MeinVz* and *WerKenntWen*, which are akin to Facebook. *Xing* is similar to LinkedIn.

German students studied six news sites: *Bild*, a tabloid, *Die Welt*, a nationwide daily, *Der Spiegel*, a nationwide weekly, *Freie Presse*, a local daily, *Tagblatt*, a local daily and *Weser Kurier*, a local weekly.

1. Share: This pattern was found on all news sites. The most used social media platforms were Facebook, Twitter and Google +. Also Tumblr, Deli.cio.us, Pinterest, Digg and Reddit were mentioned as sharing platforms. The news sites have RSS feeds and news can be received via e-mail as a newsletter. All sites had a mobile application.
2. Connect: not found

3. Commenting and discussion: Stories can be commented and almost all sites have a reader's discussion forum.
4. Create: Readers can send their own stories or pictures to the sites and they might get paid if the topic is interesting enough.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: All news sites used these patterns.

The students had contrary opinions about the value of sharing news: Some thought it is very important while others stressed that it is not important to share news online. The students seem to trust the news German news sites produce.

Bild

Bild is a popular German tabloid and an equivalent to Finnish papers *Il-talehti* or *Iltasanomat*. The URL is www.bild.de. *Bild* claims to be the biggest daily in Europe with 12 million daily readers. The first tabloid came out in 1952 and *Bild* online was founded in 1996. The tabloid has applications for iPhone, iPad and Android.

The site always has a big header, which changes several times a day with the newest headline. Under it is a box with other breaking news about lifestyle, sports, politics, music, VIPs, etc. Next to that is another box where some gossip about VIPs can be found. These boxes are updated and changed several times a day. The next section is the news ticker where short news are marked by the time. Then there are advertisements.

Next are the "Top News" followed by regional news, which change from place to place depending on your access location. The next section contains politics, followed by the gossip section and after that are some videos on any topic.

The next section is sports, then business news, pictures of the day, the top clicked stories of the day, the "Guides" section, travel, followed by the digital section, which includes everything from phones to computers, games and apps.

Further along you can find cars and erotics ending with stories from readers and where the newspaper helped. All sections contain plenty of big and catching photos.

The format is always the same. Nothing changes except when there is a big story, e.g. the bombing in Boston, the site gets an even bigger header and is updated constantly.

All stories can be commented. You need to be signed in for that. There are also buttons to follow the *Bild* on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google+ as well as to get information via email. Pictures can be submitted and might earn compensation if the picture is printed with the story. It's not always found on the page.

- The Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bild>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BILD>
- Google +: <https://plus.google.com/+bildde/posts>

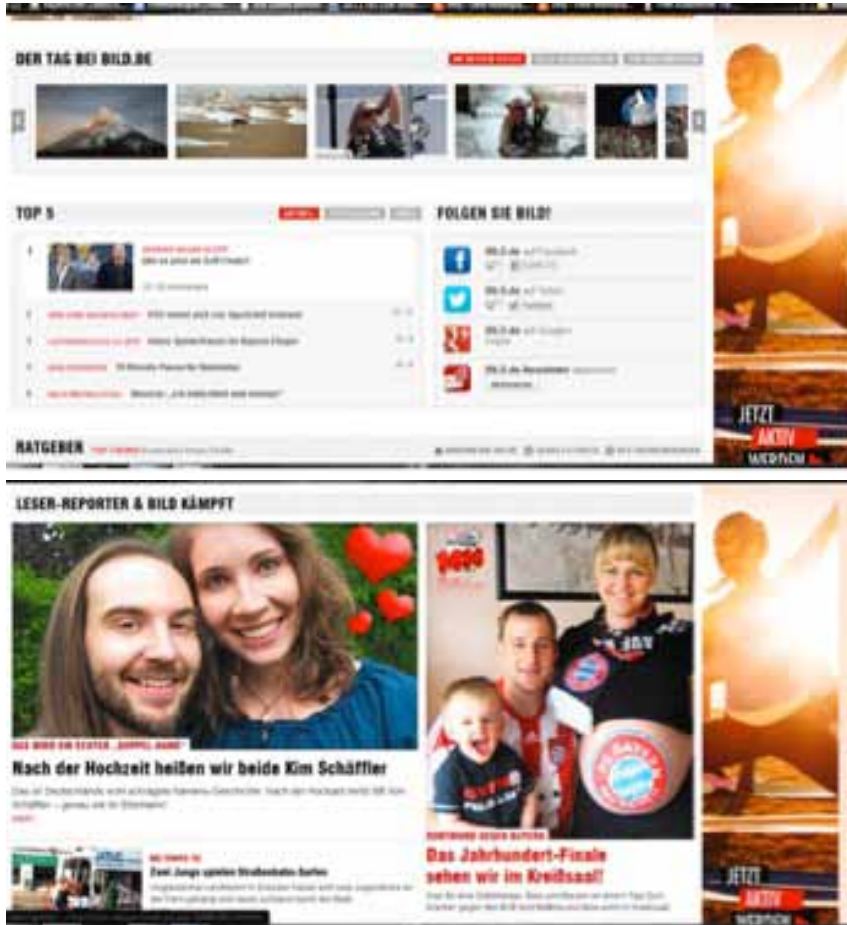


Figure 51. Reader stories and the newspaper helping readers.

The social media elements are not directly visible on the website. They show up when the link to an article is clicked. The “like” boxes are under photos, right above the text and under photo captions.



Figure 52. Screenshot of Bild.

The screenshot above shows that it is easy for the reader to “like” or interact with the article. Also, after signing in, it’s possible to leave a comment and interact with other readers.

For the newspaper, in this case the site, it makes it much more easy to identify what readers are interested in and what they are sharing on their social media accounts after connecting with *Bild* via Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest or Google+. Upon subscription readers can choose to see all the news right away without even opening the site. It’s easier to preselect.

“I hardly ever share news via Facebook or Twitter. I don’t use Google + so it’s not important.”

“I don’t share news from this side too much because they are written like the headlines from tabloids like *Iltasanomat* etc. There is a huge diversity of opinions on the site but people are still reading it. As they always say “Nobody buys it, but everybody knows it.”

“In general sharing news is a great thing, but I myself don’t want to be bothered with news in my newsfeed. I might have already read the story or I am not interested in it.”

“Also some news might be offensive to some people and I don’t want to start a huge discussion about why I shared what. And, as with all news from pages like that, there is always a bit of a doubt about what they write and how they write. “

“I am also not a fan of the comments because these often start spiralling discussions and hardly stay focused on the topic and often end in personal attacks. I would also never share pictures there, just because I am not in Germany. Beside that it’s not my thing.”

Bild offers a simple way to use social media to share news.

Social media makes the paper and the site more interesting for the younger generation and also the content can be shared easier. In this case it is the headlines and teasers that bring new readers to the page and the hit counter up.

Der Spiegel

Der Spiegel is a national magazine and it also has an international English version.

It is an independent media and the magazine was established in 1947. The online version was launched in 1994. The owner is Spiegel Online GmbH.

Der Spiegel has a profile on Twitter, Facebook and Google+. Readers can also share news articles on Xing, LinkedIn, Tumblr, StudiVz/MeinVz, Deli.cio.us, and Digg & Reddit. The user has the option to subscribe to news via RSS feed and to create a user profile, and to comment on articles and rate them.

Readers can also print, mark and send articles via mail or give feedback to the editorial staff. They have no blogs, but a forum with 18 different topics. There is always a short comment or story given by the news site and the readers can contribute by commenting or writing a story about the given topic.

Patterns/social media elements can be found via the links below:

- <https://www.facebook.com/spiegelonline?fref=ts>
- <https://twitter.com/SPIEGELONLINE>
- <https://plus.google.com/+SPIEGELONLINE/posts>

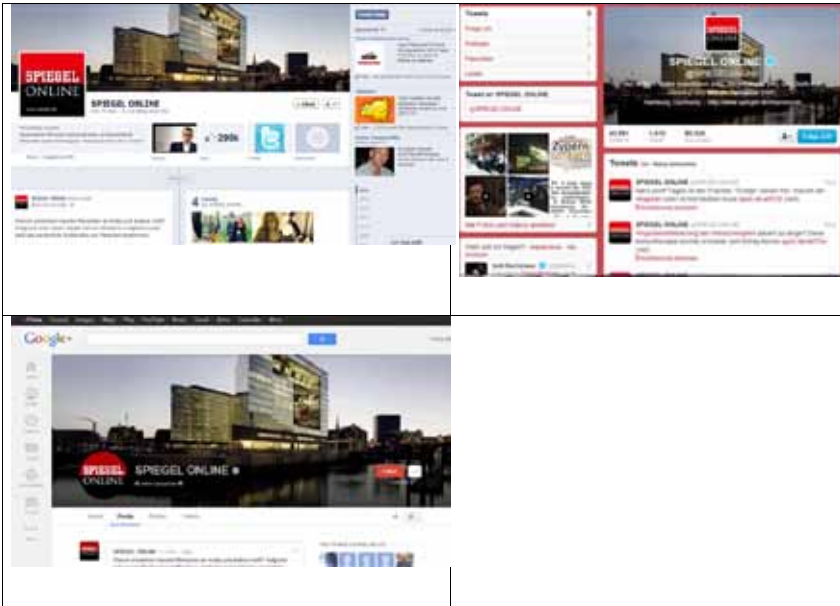


Figure 53. Screenshots of Der Spiegel.

The news site uses social media as it is the easiest way to reach readers. You can share news or stories with friends by just clicking a button. Also magazine-to-reader and reader-to-reader communication is very easy and simple. On Facebook, for instance, you can discuss articles and on Twitter you can retweet or reply etc.

“For me it’s fairly important to be able to share news from that site. It’s a site I visit daily and where I find all important information. If I want to read a subject deeper, I may use other newspapers also. Generally, I share quite a lot, but mostly things that people might hear in current news.”

“I think commenting and rating is fairly important as this gives feedback to the author and also to the other readers.”

“I don’t share pictures or articles on news sites.”

Die Welt

Die Welt is a big, conservative daily traditional printed newspaper available in about 130 countries. It belongs to the Axel Springer AG group. It was founded in Hamburg in 1946.

It is possible to recommend articles via email, on Facebook, Twitter and Google+ (Screenshot 1). *Die Welt* has sites on Facebook, Twitter and Google+ (Screenshot 2). There are 5 different bloggers. (Screenshot 3).

It is possible to comment on articles, but you have to log in via Twitter, Facebook, Google+ or you can register on the page itself with your name and email. Comments are shown right after the articles and it is possible to comment other comments (Screenshot 4). The comment is moderated before it is published. You can rate comments.

Die Welt offers apps for iPhone, iPad and android tablets as well as an eBook version. Furthermore they offer RSS feeds and a newsletter (Screenshot 5).

The URLs to the screenshots are provided below.

- Screenshot 1,2 & 4: <http://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article114953668/Aldi-oder-Lidl-Wer-ist-billiger-fairer-besser.html>
- Screenshot 3: <http://www.welt.de/debatte/weblogs/>
- Screenshot 5: <http://www.welt.de/services/article7894222/Kontakt.html>



Figure 54. Screenshots of Die Welt.

“I chose this newspaper because it is big and well known. I always read it at airports.”

By sharing content the reader is able to share interesting information with friends and family. It gives the possibility to share information and knowledge. It also shows what people care about or are interested in. The newspaper benefits in getting more users due to the recommendations.

Through social media readers can get news not only via the website but also other mediums that are easier to follow. This attracts readers to the newspaper as well.

Blogs give the opportunity to follow recent news as well. At *Die Welt* they express opinions and are separate from the more objective articles. This gives the newspaper an inner life.

Comments allow readers to discuss topics. The website gets more interaction. The newspaper and readers maybe get interesting information as well.

Apps help to access the website through different mobile devices. That makes it easier to use and increases the amount of readers and RSS feeds help to follow the site.

Social Media allows the newspaper to reach more people especially a younger reader base.

“I personally like to share information/articles. I mainly use Facebook for this as I use it most and have most of my friends there. I don't share articles often, maybe 5 times a year. I would not share via email, Twitter or Google+ as I am not using these platforms (except email). I am not following any newspaper via Facebook but do follow informative sites like Foodwatch. I usually don't look for blogs. I don't comment articles but I sometimes read the comments of others. I do not use apps even though I have a smartphone. I have never subscribed to RSS feeds.”

“The only functions I use are sharing and commenting/reading comments. Nevertheless they are not that important for me and I could live without them.”

“I never share personal content on news sites. For me this social media element is merely about following a trend.”

“I trust the newspaper as I have the feeling it is a quality newspaper.”
Freie Presse

Freie Presse is a daily newspaper in the region of Chemnitz, Germany. It's the most selling newspaper in Saxony province. It's a traditional news print media. The newspaper is conservative and the publisher is Medien Union GmbH Ludwigshafen. It has been published since 1963.

The newspaper's website makes use of Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and you can subscribe to news via RSS feed. You also have the possibility to email news or bookmark them. You can comment on the news, but will need to register first. You can participate in photo contests and the newspaper publishes mail and comments by the readers. Also blogs might be published. The newspaper has sites on Facebook, Twitter and Google +. They use blogs and the authors are different persons who work for the paper or also readers. They have polls etc.

- <https://www.facebook.com/freiepresse>
- http://twitter.com/freie_presse
- <https://plus.google.com/+freiepresse?prsrc=3#+freiepresse/posts?prsrc=3>

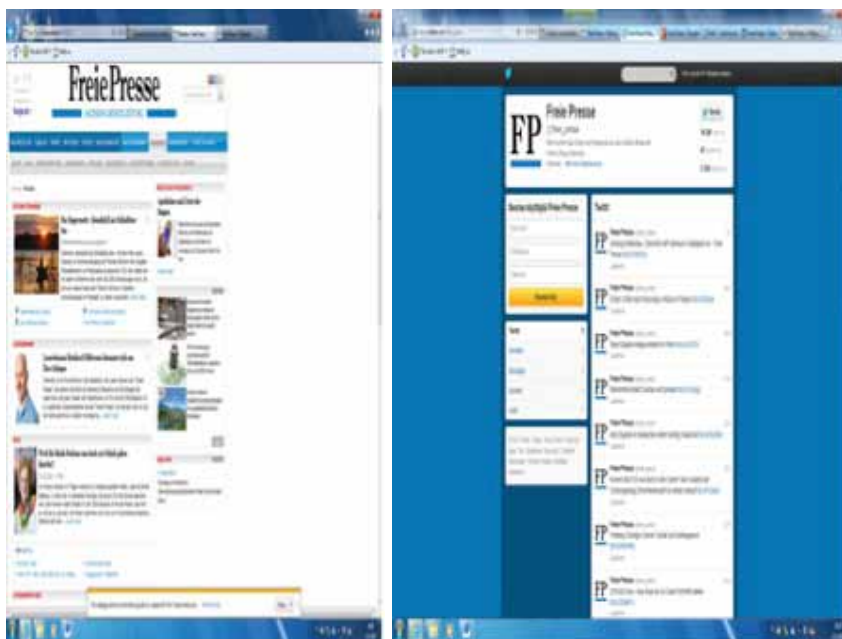


Figure 55. Screenshot of Frei Presse.

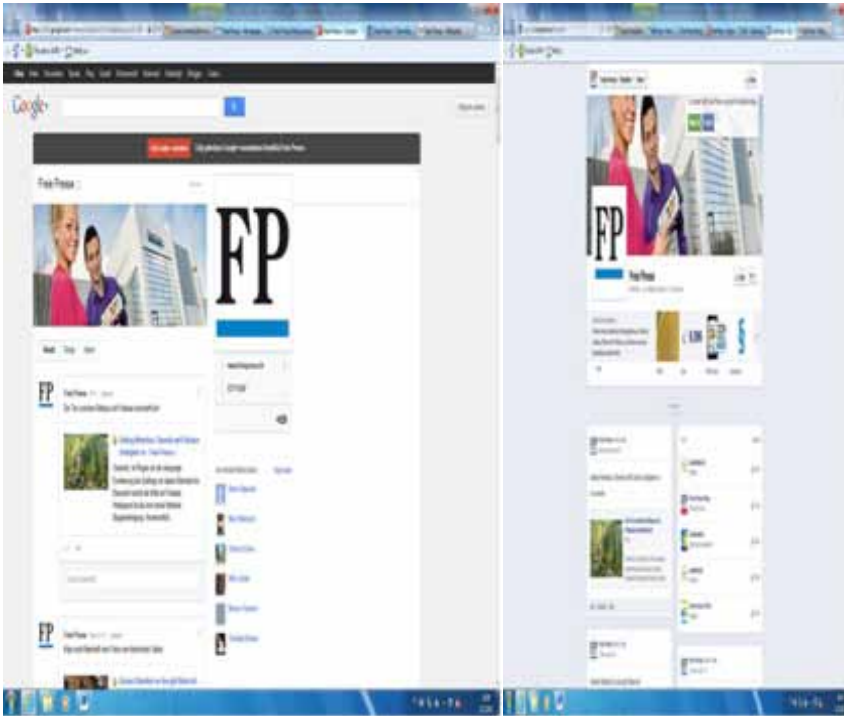


Figure 56. Screenshot of Freie Presse.

“Most of the people nowadays use social media, so it is the easiest way to be in contact with the reader and spread the news. People can like their page and might get to news faster, same with twitter. You know much faster what happened as they will just need to tweet a link.”

“As the people can share the news, more people will see it and the paper gets more attention and more people are aware that there is this newspaper.”

“I believe the strategy is to reach as many people as possible and to interact with them in the easiest way, to give them a chance to discuss and participate.”

“For me it’s somewhat important to share news, but personally I watch news via online TV, both from German Channels like Pro7/RTL (night news at 12am/1am Finnish time) or from N24/N TV or CNN as an English source. Otherwise I read news magazines like Focus or Stern, where you can read news and other articles about politics,

economy and lifestyle. If there is something interesting I also share it on Facebook or Twitter. Personally I think liking or rating comments is somewhat important as it shows if you agree or disagree with someone or something, usually I don't comment. For me the most tempting and also most important social media is Facebook. “

“I know I can rely on the site, but usually I only read it when I am at my parents' place or I learn from my old friends that something has happened in the region I come from. “

Tagblatt

Tagblatt is a traditional regional newspaper in southern Germany. It is medium sized. It is owned by the publisher Suedwest Presse and the manager is Alexander Frate. The newspaper is a liberal media. *Tagblatt* was established in 1945, so it is quite an old newspaper. *Tagblatt* offers a lot of culture news, such as theatre and cinema, which is typical for the region, as it is very culturally oriented.

Social media patterns found on the site were share, post, comment, discuss, rate, recommend and create.

Readers can recommend articles on Facebook, Twitter and Google+ by pressing a button underneath each article and it is also possible to write an opinion about articles (as a reader's letter) as an email, but the letters are moderated, meaning that they get checked first before they get published. There is only the possibility to comment on news articles that are tagged with “open discussion” on the website, all the other articles cannot be commented on. Also, there is no possibility to rate comments.

The website has a readers' portal, where readers can send emails to the newspaper, read letters by other readers and participate in a discussion forum. Readers have to register first before they can write into the forum, but reading is possible even without registration. Discussions in the discussion forum are moderated, but moderators only intervene if someone gets offended or the law gets broken. Otherwise, readers can discuss freely about anything they want to.

As a special feature, teenagers and young adults can contribute by writing articles for the newspaper's “youth editorial team”. The articles get checked before they get published, though.

There is a section for pictures and videos, but only the editors of the newspaper can post them.

Links to the newspaper's website and social media accounts are provided below.

- Facebook pages: <https://www.facebook.com/schwaebischestagblatt>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Tagblatt>
- Google+: <https://plus.google.com/101354975146790595850#101354975146790595850/posts>
- Readers' portal: <http://www.tagblatt.de/Home/leserportal.html>
- Discussion forum: <http://www.tagblatt.de/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=2>
- Youth editorial team: http://www.tagblatt.de/Home/nachrichten/jugend_costart,1.html





Figure 57. Screenshots of Tagblatt.

Newspapers use these patterns in order to be up-to-date. Especially social media websites are more and more trendy nowadays and a lot of people actually use these sites. For traditional newspapers, there's the danger of seeming "old fashioned" or even "outdated" if they don't go with the trend and start using social media as well. Moreover, it's a good possibility for them to get new readers like young people.

For the reader access is made easier because nowadays almost everyone has a smartphone or laptop and therefore people can easily access newspapers online without having to go to the shop to buy the printed version. For the reader it also offers the possibility to discuss their opinions with other readers and share points of view.

The newspaper doesn't seem to have an explicit strategy for social networks though.

"In my opinion, it is very important to share news, especially when you get other opinions and points of view that you haven't considered

before. The news becomes more “lively” if you have to possibility to directly discuss with others.”

“I do share news that is interesting or important to me, mostly on Facebook or via email. I do it randomly, though, whenever I see something interesting or a news item that I think might be of interest to one of my friends. There is no specific pattern about how often I share news.”

“I also think commenting on articles and rating comments is important because that is the only way a discussion can actually begin. Also, if a newspaper doesn’t give the possibility to comment on their articles online, it gives me the feeling of censorship, as if the readers don’t have the right to tell their opinions, or the newspaper simply doesn’t want them to. It gives a better impression of a newspaper if they let readers actively participate in discussions and let them freely tell their opinions.”

“I don’t share my pictures on news sites – firstly, there isn’t the possibility to do so, but also if there was, I wouldn’t do it, simply because I wouldn’t want everyone to see my photos. I like to keep my privacy. But if people want to share their photos, I think that it is good that they can do so.”

“The most tempting social media element is Facebook, in my opinion. It is easy to share news there and easy to comment.”

“I very much trust the news given on the *Tagblatt* website because I know they are a trustworthy newspaper. Still, I think they could improve their appearance and possibilities for readers to participate.”

Weser Kurier

Weser Kurier is a regional weekly newspaper. The publisher is Bremer Tageszeitung AG. The newspaper focuses on news from Bremen and Verden, and also has a Sunday edition entitled “Kurier am Sonntag”. They established the newspaper 1945 and established a website called www.nordwest.net in 1997. It is a social liberal medium.

Readers can share news on Facebook, Twitter Google+ and Pinterest. *Weser Kurier* has its own site on Facebook, Foursquare, Google+, Twitter etc. It is possible to comment/rate news/comments but you need to have an account on their website and you need to log in. When you are logged in, you are able to read comments and write your own comments.

Weser Kurier also publishes stories/pictures etc. from readers, if they are important or interesting enough. I could not find interactive elements such as chat, a forum or similar.



Figure 58. Screenshots of Weser Kurier.

“I choose the *Weser Kurier* because it is a popular newspaper in my hometown Bremen.”

“Today more and more people use the Internet to gather information and to be up-to-date. Especially the younger generation can be reached via social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. That’s also one way to reach more readers, more people are reading the news

online and the chance that they register on the website or order the newspaper as home delivery are growing. Social media platforms are also a good way for the media to gather feedback, suggestions and news for their own newspaper. Nowadays the approach to the news is simplified by laptops, smartphones and other new techniques.”

“For me its not so important to share news online. I share news in conversation face-to-face, but rarely publish something on Facebook. In case I publish it is usually something about animals in need of rescue or a crime that happened in my hometown. In my opinion it depends on the topic whether comments might have an effect or not. When I share news about animals in need I am hoping that more and more people become aware of the fact that we should also take care of other things than ourselves and try our best to help them. Since an article about me has been published on a newspaper once, I don't really trust the news a newspaper or news magazine publishes. Of course each media tries to reach many customers and therefore it tries to make the stories as interesting as possible.”

“From my point of view the most tempting social media element is Facebook. I do not use any other social media element than that.”

3.7 Great Britain

According to the mediaUK website (2014), the United Kingdom has 1,593 newspapers, 1,976 magazines (8,800 – 10,000 titles; Bromley 2009), 829 radio stations and 516 TV channels. These media are owned by 300 different media companies. According to Bromley (2009), the traditional press is divided into three sectors: quality, middle market and tabloids.

In the research group were two British students. They both choose BBC because in their opinion it is the main source of news and trustworthy. In the students' opinion, it is important to share news and they told that they share news if they found something important and interesting on the news site. Students stressed that characteristic for the BBC is freedom of the speech.

BBC is a radio and TV broadcaster. It also has a news agency and on-line service. The social media patterns found on the BBC site:

1. Share and post is possible on Facebook, Twitter, Delicious, Digg, Reddit and Stumble Upon and email and RSS feed is available. The site displays the most popular shared, read and audio/video stories.
2. Connect: not found
3. Commenting and discuss: Commenting is possible but they are moderated before publishing. The commentator must be a registered user.
4. Create: Readers can send their own stories, pictures and videos and SMS. The site decides what to publish.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: on social media sites like Facebook

BBC

The BBC is a large British public broadcasting service founded in 1922 by John Reith and George Villiers, dealing with everything from TV, radio, world news to local news. BBC online was launched in 1997.

The BBC is supposed to be non-political and neutral. The BBC is a semi-autonomous public service broadcaster that operates under a Royal Charter. The BBC has accounts in Google+, Twitter, Facebook, Spotlight and Skoovy.com (weather). The site features blogs (journalists and readers can make comments) and a 'have your say' section where you can send in your comments via SMS, Twitter, Facebook, SKYPE, E-mail or phone.

BBC online can be found on URL <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

Social media patterns found on the BBC site include the possibility to comment on news, rate news and rate comments. You can also discuss the news and how discussions are moderated. They moderate your discussions and comments before they publish them.

You can suggest topics and write your own stories on 'have your say', where they publish reader pictures, video and SMS, Interactive TV and music.

They check discussions and comments before publishing them against prejudice, racism etc.

You can suggest a topic or write your own story. They publish readers, pictures, videos and SMS, there is also the possibility to discuss on Skype.

Examples of social media elements are provided below.

Comment and share: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-20176851>

Contact form: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-20177276>

Reporter blog: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/>

Twitter: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/search/twitter>

Facebook: www.bbc.co.uk/search/facebook

“I chose this website because this is my main source of news from my country, England and my main source of news whilst living in Finland. “

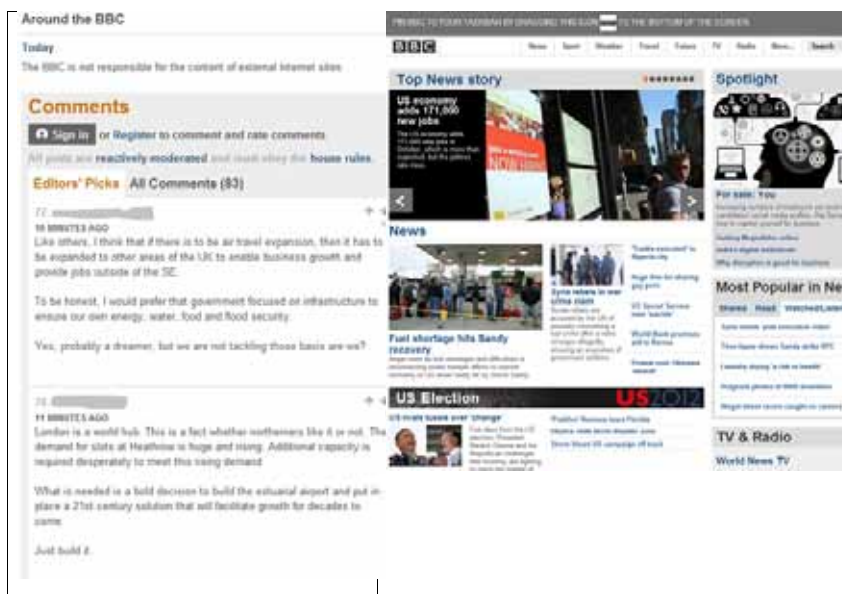


Figure 59. Screenshot of BBC.

The BBC news website has international news, sports, entertainment, travel, weather, TV, radio, BBC in your language, children, health, learning, science, music, history, nature, food and local UK news.

There are many options of sharing from the BBC news website. Simply by clicking the “share” icon on any of its news articles, you will get the option to share to the pages: Delicious, Digg, Facebook, Reddit, Stumble Upon and Twitter. In addition, there are quick options to either e-mail or print their news stories. There are a lot of people who write blogs for the BBC and these can be found in the sections of the website, for example Andrew Benson is a blogger/writer for Formula 1 coverage. The public, on the other hand, cannot contribute articles or stories to the website.

With most of their stories, there is a form at the bottom of the page where you can contact the BBC with your opinions or experiences of a

particular story, but these comments are in fact not public. With other stories, however, there is a discussion section, again at the bottom, where comments can be posted and replied to by registered users. Moderation of these comments are reactive and the comments must be approved before being shown on the website. Since it is a large public organization, this isn't surprising as overly offense comments will likely cause controversy. Comments can be deleted for containing offensive, racist or sexist remarks as well as for advertising. Apart from the comments and sharing, there is not much interactivity on the news website as it is specifically for reporting the news.



Figure 60. Screenshot of BBC.

News sites such as the BBC are using these social media elements in order to evolve the way that news is broadcast. Traditionally it is very non-interactive, you either hear the news from the radio or you watch someone on TV, it is very rare that they would have someone phone from home live on air. With the new social media outlets, for the first time they are

able to get the feedback and suggestions of readers pretty much immediately, rather than them having to wait in a queue on the phone or having to send a letter by post. The reader obviously benefits greatly from such interactions as they can voice their opinions on stories and even talk to the news reporters themselves in some cases. It is also beneficial to be able to share the stories on Facebook or Twitter because one can involve friends in the stories as well.

“I don’t think the BBC has a particular social media strategy that they are going with. I think it’s fairly standard to have the capability to link to social media sites and if a company doesn’t, it will be seen as very old fashioned. As a public company, it is an obligation for the BBC to keep up with public activity and as such they are active on all the main social media sites in Britain and all over the world.”

“As noted in the previous section, I think it is important that these social media tools are available to the public when dealing with news sites. Involving friends in news encourages social interaction and it can also help raise awareness of issues and news stories if it’s necessary or urgent, for example flood warnings or traffic accidents. Commenting and rating is also important for the site in question because it interacts with the viewers and readers and lets people know that they are up to date with the technology. I tend not to share news on my social media sites, but it is tempting to do so because it’s so easy and another tempting element is to comment on the stories because you are sharing your opinions and possibly having an interesting debate on the topic. Since the BBC covers global news around the world, there isn’t anything in particular which is culturally characteristic to the website, for example there is no British-only social media site to share the stories to.”

Social media provide readers with the fastest way to receive and comment. The benefit for the reader is that they are always on top of the news and continuously updated.

“I do think it is important to share, receive and send news so that the information is objective and that you can see and hear the news from many different points of view. I don’t share news very often but I have

made comments on subjects that I feel very strongly about, e.g. the riots in England. I think that it is interesting to read other people's comments, though I might not necessarily agree with them. Rating comments is purely a personal thing, how you rate the comment depends on how you feel about the subject. I have never shared my own pictures on the BBC news site. The most tempting social media element is probably Facebook. I generally always trust the BBC and it has always been my main news source, whilst travelling or living abroad. But recently there has been a major scandal about the BBC regarding the cover-up of systematic child abuse by former and present BBC workers. This has created an atmosphere of suspicion and lack of trust.

“The BBC tries to be fair, objective, open-minded and multi-cultural.”

The objective for using social media elements is to get the news out as quickly as possible to readers and listeners – the news is updated immediately. The aim is to build a relationship between the reader and the news organization. Social media elements are good for feedback from the reader, comments and discussions, as well as the exchange of information, pictures and videos. Readers benefit in being able to follow breaking news 24/7 from all over the world, join discussions and make comments.

The BBC's social media strategy can be found on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/page/guidance-blogs-bbc-full>

“I think it is important that people share news so that things can be seen from another perspective whether it be cultural, political or general observation.”

“If I share news it is generally through Facebook with friends. Sometimes I make comments on news websites if I feel strongly about something. Commenting and rating is important because it is interesting to see how people react to different news and to see their comments and discussions. I enjoy reading comments and discussions, for example on BBC's 'have your say', which covers a wide range of topics and has an audience from all around the world. I haven't as yet shared pictures on a news site. The most tempting social media at present for me is Facebook and YouTube. I genuinely would like

to trust the news given on the BBC as it has a worldwide reputation of excellence, the best reporters, as well as an old tradition of being reliable. I always go first to the BBC sites for my daily news update. Some cultural features of the BBC, which are characteristic of my country are tradition, multiculturalism and freedom of speech.”

3.8 Hungary

Hungary is located in the centre of Europe. Its population is about 10 million. Hungary has 10 national and 24 local dailies, which all are privately owned. The most popular newspaper is *Metropol* owned by Swedish Modern Times Group. The second largest national daily is *Magyar Nemzet*. Finnish Media Company Sanoma publishes three magazines: *Nők Lapja*, *Figyelő* and the weekly TV guide SZRTV. Currently there are three national public service stations (MR1-Kossuth, MR2-Petőfi, MR3-Bartók), and two major national radio stations, Neo FM and Class FM. There are three terrestrial television channels: MTV, the public service channel TV2, and RTL Klub. (Dániel 2010)

A Hungarian student studied two news sites: *Magyar Nemzet*, a national daily, and *Origo*, an online news site. The student does not share the news because it might concern someone. The student usually trusts the news on these news sites.

Social media patterns found on these news sites:

1. Share and post: Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Google+, email, RSS feed. The sites have a mobile application for iPhone and Android.
2. Connect: not found
3. Comment and discuss: Commenting is allowed as a registered user. Comments can be postmoderated.
4. Create: Readers can send their own stories, pictures and videos.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: on social media sites like Facebook and rating stories also on the news site (one can give stars from one to five)

Magyar Nemzet

- <http://mno.hu>

Magyar Nemezet is the second biggest newspaper in Hungary. It writes about politics, sports, everyday life, technology etc. The news is from all over the world and also national. The news sites allow sharing news on Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and via email. There is a link to iPhone and Android applications, and the possibility to subscribe to RSS feed. There are also many bloggers, for example Aster Karczag, who writes about art, fashion and design.

- <http://www.facebook.com/mno.hu>
- https://twitter.com/mno_hu



Figure 61. Screenshot of Magyar Nemzet.

If a website has the option for sharing their information on the biggest social media sites, it fosters other people reading it as well. The readers might get interested in the site itself and become regular readers. Information might reach the reader that concerns him/her and what normally wouldn't have reached him/her.

“I never share news, only if it actually concerns someone, then I send it in a private email, not on a public site. If someone else shares an article, I don't open it unless I find the title interesting. I don't pay attention to the ratings nor the comments. For me it is not important, as I said before, I read something if I'm interested in it, it is that simple.”

Origo

- <http://www.origo.hu/index.html>

Origo is a medium-sized Hungarian site. It writes about politics, news, science, economics, health, media, culture and domestic and foreign news. It is solely online. The news site is quite popular, writing about wide range of topics.

They write about Hungarian news also, they also have cultural news, including a lot of Hungarian cultural stories, news and information. The site also cooperates with many big Hungarian companies.

“I usually do trust their information.”

Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Google+ are all used on the site, giving the possibility to share or comment. Also it has its own pages on these sites. They have many bloggers writing about different topics, such as travelling, health etc. There is the possibility to comment (after a registration), which is public right away, but they delete comments if they are provocative or offensive. Readers may write articles or send photos.

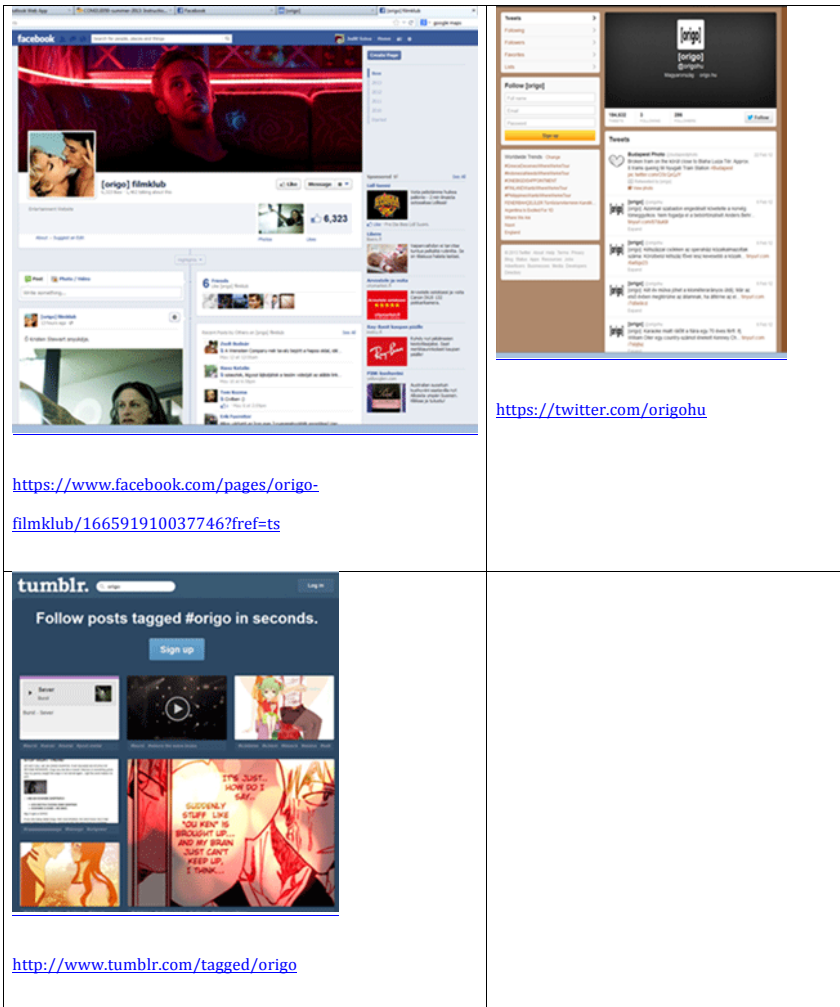


Figure 62. Screenshots of Origo.

From the social media patterns the reader can get up to date news and pictures right away, getting the sites opinion about the articles and news, not just the news itself. Also more people have access to it, the patterns help expand readership of the site.

On the website there is no information about their strategy, only names and contacts are given.

“I use many social media sites to check news, but I rarely share news myself, only if it is really important. If I do share, then usually on Facebook. I have Twitter account but don’t use it that often. Commenting is important on the sites of news articles. It gives a good

idea of people's reactions, and how to improve or correct one's style of writing, what are people interested in."

"I usually don't share my own pictures. The most tempting social media element is Facebook. As I live in a different country, it is easy to contact anyone at home, and people are able to follow me as well.

3.9 Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan is a former part of the Soviet Union with a population of 16.6 million. The country has two official languages: Kazak and Turkish, but Russian is spoken widely because of the country's history.

Only one student studied news site in Kazakhstan and it was *Ivest.kz*. It can be described as a business portal and the language is Russian. On the website were found social media patterns:

1. Share and post: on Facebook, Twitter, Google, Vkontakte, MailRu, Odnoklassniki, YaRu. The site has a mobile application for iPhone and Android.
2. Connect: not found
3. Comment and discuss: Commenting is allowed as a registered user. Comments can be postmoderated.
4. Create: not reported
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: on social media sites like Facebook and Vkontakte

Ivest.kz Business Portal: Country: Kazakhstan, Petropavlovsk Language: Russian

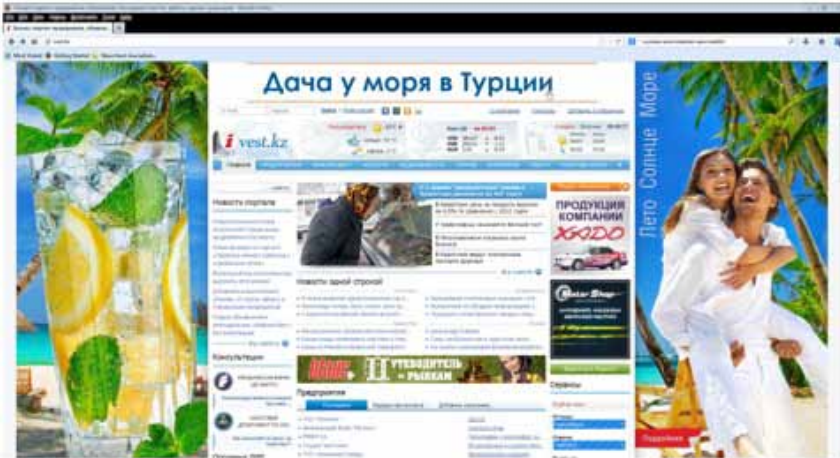


Figure 63. Screenshot of Ivest.

Ivest.kz can be regarded as a small size site as it is mainly regional and is oriented towards the northern Kazakhstan population. It is also available in printed version as a newspaper.

The web site uses such social media patterns as Facebook, Vkontakte, MailRu, Twitter, Odnoklassniki, and YaRu. There is a possibility to share the news by using social media channels as well as to leave comments.



Figure 64. Screenshot of Ivest.

The objectives for news organisations can be characterised as follows: to inform people quickly, to attract new visitors, and to interact with the reader. For the readers, objectives include being informed about latest news quickly, sharing information and commenting on topics that are interesting.

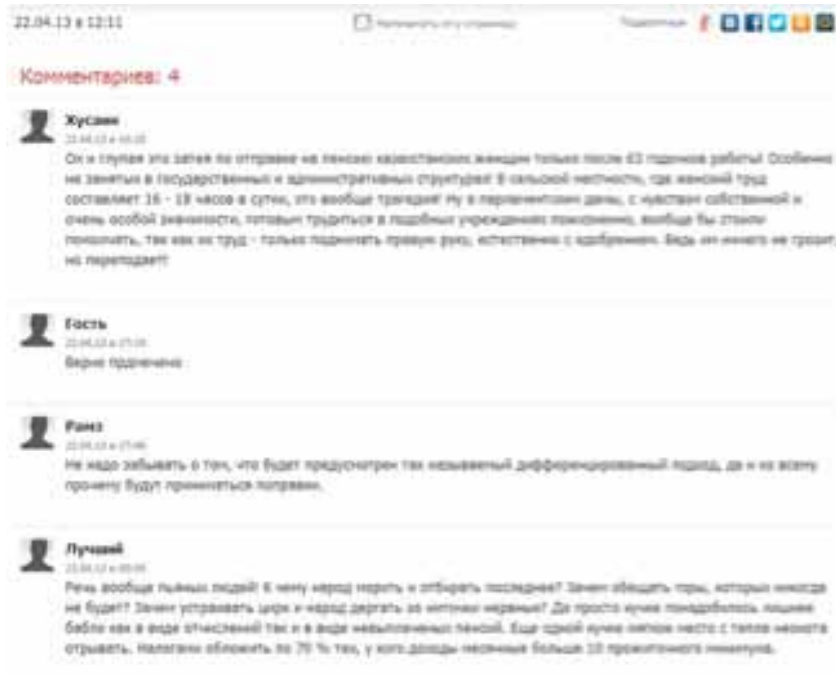


Figure 65. Screenshot of Ivest.

We are still living in times where not every individual in Kazakhstan has a computer at home and the older generation doesn't usually know how to use computer and most of them are not interested in it. That is partly why the printed media is popular in Kazakhstan. But, of course, the trend is changing towards electronic media.

The web site provides not only up-to-date news, but also the opportunity to share the news with other people and to write comment on the news (Screenshot 1). There are a lot of links to different social media channels, providing an opportunity to attract a large number of readers.

Screenshot 2 shows how people share their opinion concerning increasing the pension age for women. This possibility to leave a comment gives an opportunity for people to feel involved and participate in social life, politics as well as economics, and to feel empowered.

3.10 Latvia

Latvia is a Baltic country with 2.2 million inhabitants. The official language is Latvian. Vita Zelce and Klinta Locmele (2010) claim that print media are held in high regard. The first print newspaper *Rigische Montags Ordinari Post-Zeitung* was published in 1680. In 2009 there were approximately 344 newspapers. Most of them are local. There are 12 Latvian dailies and eight in Russian. The biggest Latvian dailies are *Diena*, *Neatkarīga Rita Avize* and *latvijas Avize*. The most important Russian newspapers are *Vesti Segodniya*, *Chas* and *Telegraf*. Magazines seem to appeal to readers more than newspapers. In 2009 there were 370 different titles. (Zelce & Locmele 2010.)

There are many radio stations. Radio Latvia is a public radio channel, with four stations. Super FM has three, and MIX which focuses on the Russian speaking audience, has four. In 2009 there were 25 television channels. *Delfi.lv* was the first news portal to appear in 1999. In 2000 *TV.net.lv* and *Apollo.lv* were established.

The course's Latvian students studied four news sites in Latvia: *Delfi* media company, *IR* magazine, *KasJaunas* magazine and *TvNet* television and radio broadcaster. The news sites use different types of social media patterns. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube were mentioned the most but there is also a national social media platform called Draugiem, which is comparable with Facebook.

1. Share and post: on Facebook, Draugiem, Twitter, Tumblr, Google+, Foursquare, email, RSS feed. The sites have mobile applications for iPhone and Android.
2. Connect: games, jobs
3. Commenting and discussion: Commenting is allowed as a registered user. Comments can be postmoderated.
4. Create: Readers can send their own stories, pictures and videos.
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: On social media sites like Facebook and Draugiem. *IR* also shows which article has the most comments.

Delfi

Delfi is the biggest Internet media company in the Baltic countries and mainly has Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian visitors. The website provides all kinds of current international news online and is available in Lat-

vian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Russian and Ukrainian languages. In Latvia it was launched in 1999. In addition to following the regular news portal, users can watch professional videos, TV reports and news on DELFI.TV. Users can upload their own pictures and take a look at professional photo reportage about current events on foto.delfi.lv. In 2007 Delfi became the owner of the leading Estonian media concern Ekspress Grupp. It has almost 2.6 million registered users.



Figure 66. Screenshot of Delfi.

It is possible to share news from the Latvian *Delfi* on Foursquare, Facebook, Twitter and the Latvian social media platform *Draugiem*. Users can read the news on their mobile phones by using the Delfi App. It is also possible for users to comment on every posted news item. The idea is to make people discuss the news, share their own opinions or post further sources with regard to the report. There are strict rules though, foul and offensive language is prohibited. Such comments will be deleted by the moderator and the user might get blocked.

- www.draugiem.lv ; www.facebook.com ; www.twitter.com ; www.foursquare.com



Figure 67. Screenshot of Delfi's use of Draugiem.

Draugiem is the only social network in Europe that hasn't been surpassed by Facebook in their home countries. It is used by the majority of Latvian speaking people in the world.

Delfi itself is more like a social platform with the advantage of having current news. The difference between this website and other news portals is that users can communicate with each other, forward news on their social media platforms and comment on every topic. It is made for people who want to engage actively in discussions about the news. *Delfi* itself does not affect reader opinions with its point of view. Users can also entertain themselves with games, check the weather forecast, read horoscopes, check the current value of the currency, search for a job and purchase items online. *Delfi* provides users with loads of options, it is not just a dry online newspaper.

“I think it is a very useful and important to be able to comment on articles on *Delfi.lv*. Sometimes your opinion does not match the one in the article and reading the comments helps you to understand what is

right or wrong about it. Some users share independent articles posted on other websites, which helps to understand the topic better.”

“I personally do not post a lot of news but I do post and share information with my friends in order to discuss the news. Delfi uses social media to spread information and to make the website more popular and visited by people in different countries. A lot of Latvian people living abroad still use this source of information in order to keep up on the current situation in their home country.”

IR

IR is a medium to large sized nationwide news site and magazine. The news site includes interesting analytical articles, blogs, info graphics, and a subscription-based version of the printed magazine is available if you pay for it. Also readers can publish their own articles on the site. It is an independent media, owned by AS “Cits medijs”. It was established in 2010. The website is at <http://www.ir.lv/>

“I chose *IR* because it is my favourite weekly magazine in Latvia and one of the websites I read often.”

The key features of the site are enumerated below:

1. On main site of ir.lv there is possibility to read tweets directly: by irLV and also @irLV. <http://www.ir.lv/>
2. After reading each article there is the possibility to share it on Facebook, Twitter, Google + and Draugiem.lv. Draugiem.lv is the most popular social media in Latvia – almost everyone is there. It is more popular than Facebook although lately Facebook’s popularity is increasing. For example, see this article: <http://www.ir.lv/2013/5/20/mates-rausi-un-sveices-paraugs>
3. There is the possibility to blog on the ir.lv homepage and you can read different kinds of blogs there: <http://www.ir.lv/blogi>
4. You can comment on all the articles and blog entries and you can rate other comments by pressing “+” or “-”. When you open an article, the most popular comments are displayed. You can also see other comments if you click “All”.

You can write your own stories, blogs relating to them and sometimes the news site publishes readers' photos (<http://www.ir.lv/skats>).

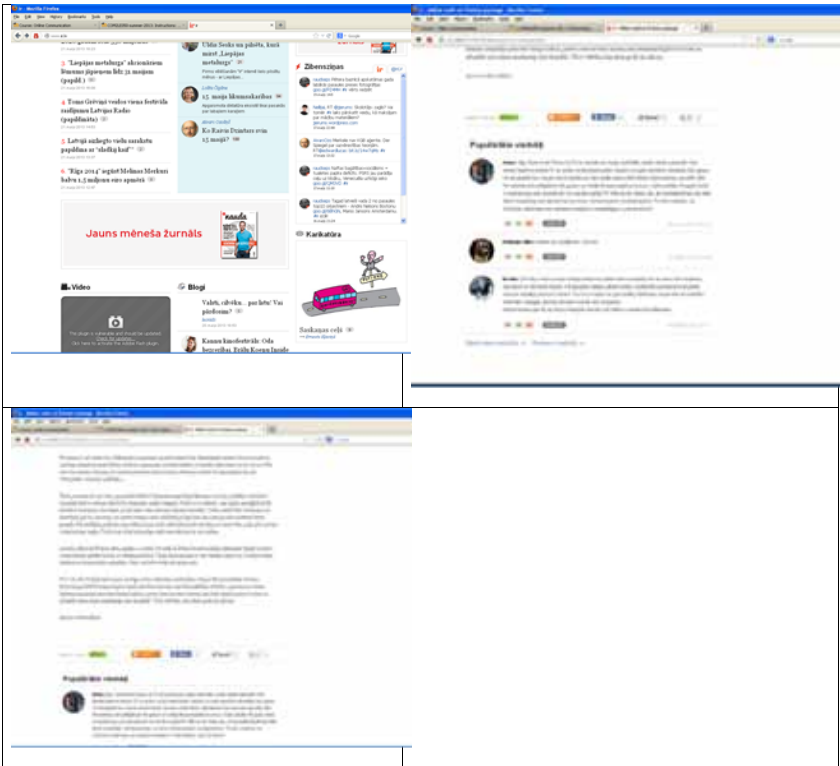


Figure 68. Screenshots of IR.

“The use of social media patterns for IR is definitely about recognition. It offers a kind of advertising for news agencies, whenever somebody “likes” or “shares” something. It is also a good to understand how many “followers” or readers you have. Nowadays the media has to use these patterns because if you don’t “you are not in”. You are not progressive anymore and not so user friendly.”

“For the reader participation is a kind of “status showing” as *IR* is one of the most intellectual and interesting website/magazine out there.”

“I follow *IR* on Twitter to get all the news instantly and read articles on their homepage, because I trust them as a media.”

“For me sharing news is not very important, although I think that sometimes it is very handy if you can do it on your Facebook or Twitter wall. It allows information to circulate faster and in this way I can let also others find out things faster. I don’t share news often, only if there is something really important or interesting for me or others. If I share, then I do it on Facebook, because lately I don’t use Twitter that much. Commenting I think is more important – although there has been a lot of talking in Latvia lately, that people are too rude in their comments when they are anonymous. I am not 100% sure, but I think they are “controlling” the comments. I sometimes also comment on the news. I don’t share my pictures on news sites. The most tempting social media element is sharing and liking. For me it most often happens on Facebook and Draugiem.lv.”

“I trust the news given on *IR* because I trust in those journalists that are writing them, though my approach always is critical of course.”

KasJauns

KasJauns (<http://www.kasjauns.lv>) is an independent medium-sized Latvian national news portal published in Latvian and Russian languages. It has both printed and online editions. *KasJauns* was first published as a weekly magazine in 1997.

The website is a part of “Izdevniecība Rīgas Viļņi” Ltd, the biggest publishing house in Latvia, responsible for different printed journals, also for www.kasjauns.lv. 24, 10% of all Internet users in Latvia visits www.kasjauns.lv, according to the latest statistics show that in February 2013 the website reached 30 445 471 clicks on different articles.

“I chose this site because it is one of leading news website in Latvia, and it offers wide range of information.”

They have their own profile in facebook.com.

What comes to Latvian social networking website www.draugiem.lv, in the website there is available a TOP sites bar, where *Kasjauns.lv* web portal can put news as links to their website. (Screenshot 3)

The website does not have a blog.

All the articles on the website have the possibility to be commented, it is also possible to rate the comments. Comments can be made any-

mously. Comments to the articles are added without checking, but the comments are controlled, racist or rude comments are being erased later.

Topics can be suggested by the readers, they can also just send in their videos or photos, after that the people responsible for the content of the website are evaluating if the material sent is suitable for them.

- <http://www.kasjauns.lv/lv/zinas/115022/pali-versas-plasuma-visa-latgale-un-vidzeme-bistama-situacija-ogres-pilseta-video>
- <http://www.facebook.com/kasjauns?fref=ts>
- http://www.kasjauns.lv/lv/zinas/115032/bostonas-latviesi-pec-spradzieniem-valda-nomakts-un-sudigs-garastavoklis?news_com=1
Comment section
- <http://www.kasjauns.lv/lv/about/kontakti.html> a possibility to contact the staff of the website.



Figure 69. Screenshots of Kasjauns

Profile on Facebook. Website is trying to interact with people in many different ways. Also people can share the news on Facebook, twitter, Google+ and Latvian social networking website www.draugiem.lv, launched in 2004.

“The most tempting media element, in my opinion, is the pattern shown in above. People are using the Latvian networking website draugiem.lv on everyday basis, as facebook.com, so the link to the news website is easily seen. “

The main objective for these patterns is to get more readers, increase information traffic to kasjauns.lv website and attract new readers. Also increasing brand awareness is important, because in that way demand for online advertising in this website increases.

Readers benefit by accessing the information easier and faster, the website is more visible to reader, that’s why the website is using these patterns.

“Personally for me the interaction patterns are not so important. One of the reasons might be, that this particular website is available only in Latvian, and on Facebook, which is used a lot in my everyday life, I have a lot of foreign friends, so sharing this information in Latvian is a little pointless in my case. Also the possibility to comment the articles is not needed in my point, because in the comments section a lot of racist and discriminative comments are being made, without real content.”

“I would call myself a very passive user, because I just read the news, I am not commenting, I am not sharing the news, I am sending my own videos or photos for publishing.”

“I trust this website, because the content is not different from other news website, and the news website is indicating the sources if the information is taken from elsewhere. “

“The website doesn’t have real cultural features, which is a shame actually; because I think that in this aspect Latvia would have a lot to show.”

TVNET

Latvia, latvian, medium size, national. It is a news site with online TV offering online TV as well and many other topics, as worldwide news, section for women, sports, horoscopes, weather, criminal news, health, technologies, car info, culture and entertainment, music, advertisements. It is conservative media. Grafton Entertainment with Andrejs Ēķis owns Tvnet.

Readers can share news in Twitter, Google +, Facebook, draugiem.lv, LinkedIn, Digg, Del.icio.us

They have own site on Facebook and Draugiem.lv. They have blogs on women category. There is possibility to comment news, rate news and rate comments. They publish comments immediately but if they’re rude they can delete them. They publish readers’ pictures, stories , even videos if it’s interesting enough. You can see latest topics what your friends from social sites just have read and recommended as good or interesting.

News site has also mobile news one can read news on iPhone or iPad and one can add comments as well with iPhone. There is a very important

Latvian social site <http://www.draugiem.lv/> which is more popular than Facebook in Latvia.

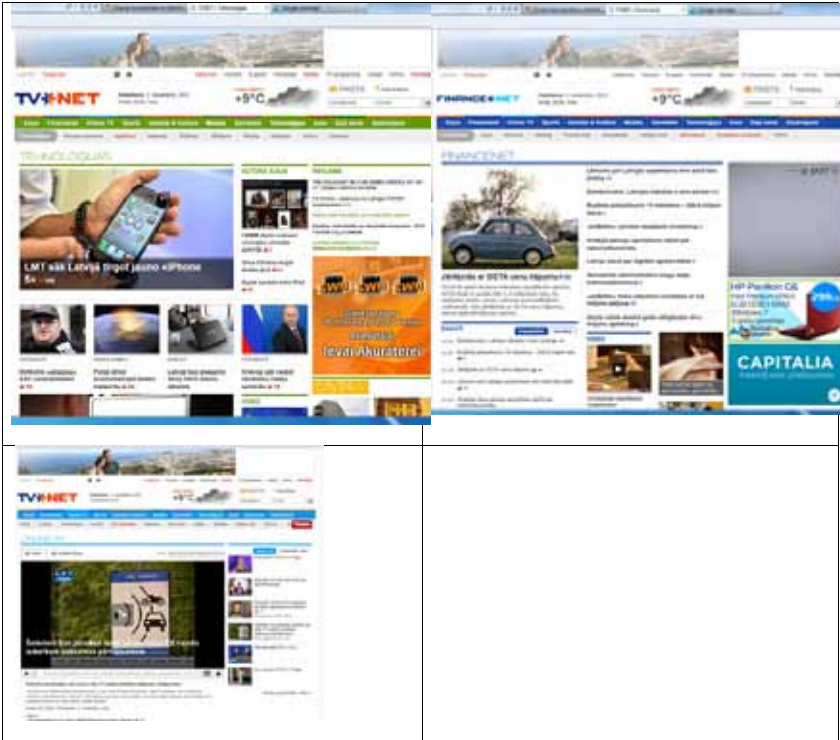


Figure 70. Screenshots of TVNET:

3.11 Russia

Russia is a country rich in newspapers. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics reported 35,500 registered newspapers and 1.7 daily newspapers per one million inhabitants in 2004. But the media landscape has changed also in Russia and according to Krasnoboka (2010) it is difficult to tell exact circulation numbers. The largest circulation of about 4,320,000 copies might be held by *Rossiskaya Gazeta*, the official newspaper of the Russian government. The most widely spread radio channel is state-owned Radio Rossii and the main TV channels are Rossiya, Pervyi Kanal and NTV. The most popular social network site is Odnoklassniki.ru and the second most popular is Vkontakte. There are also about 400 news agencies

and the biggest are ITAR-TASS, Ria Novosti and Interfax. (Krasnoboka 2010.)

In autumn 2013, President Putin merged Ria Novosti and Voice of Russia as a part of the government owned Russia Today company. (Aamulehti 9.12.2013)

The Russian students of the course reviewed 18 different news sites, covering everything from magazines and newspapers through to news portals, news agencies, radio stations and TV broadcasters as well as a search engine. A summary of the social media patterns encountered is provided below.

1. Share and post: Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Google+, LiveJournal, LiveInternet, Pinterest, YouTube, email, RSS feed. Also in Russian social media platforms including Odnoklassniki, V Kontakte and MoiMir. Smartphones were mentioned only with regard to the Vesti website.
2. Connect: games in Rambler, Fontanka
3. Commenting and discussion: Commenting is allowed as a registered user. Comments can be postmoderated.
4. Create: Readers can send their own stories, pictures and videos
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: on social media sites like Facebook. IR also shows which article has the most comments.

Bolshoy Gorod / Big City

- <http://bg.ru/>

Bolshoy Gorod (Большой Город) is a bimonthly print magazine.

The magazine mainly provides news about Moscow and its suburbs. It covers the news and analytic articles about current topics as well as Russian social, cultural and political life. It can be said that the magazine is an independent media. It is especially popular around Moscow and Saint-Petersburg among young, middle-aged, literate, and well-educated people.

The magazine was established in 2002. The circulation is about 180,000. In 2010 the magazine joined media holding company Rain (Дождь).

The owners of the magazine are businessman Vladimir Vinokurov and Nataliya Sineeva, a well-known mass media manager CEO of TV channel Dozhd (Дождь/Rain, <http://tvrain.ru/>). The media holding company is considered as a voice of the opposition, harshly critical of Putin's

regime. Recently, Vladimir Vinokurov posted a message on Twitter saying that he is ready to bestow the magazine to journalists who are currently working in there as “the best model of an independent media is when it is owned by those who create it.”

Readers have the opportunity to actively participate in news discussions, comment and rate news, also in Twitter, Facebook and VK. There is no censorship but offensive language can be deleted by the moderator. Posts are published immediately on social media, but checked before publishing in the online version. Readers can suggest topics, share information, ask questions etc. Additionally, there is an opportunity to upload audio and video files. Twitter has video files (interviews with citizens) and a photo section. The bloggers are mainly the employees of the magazine.

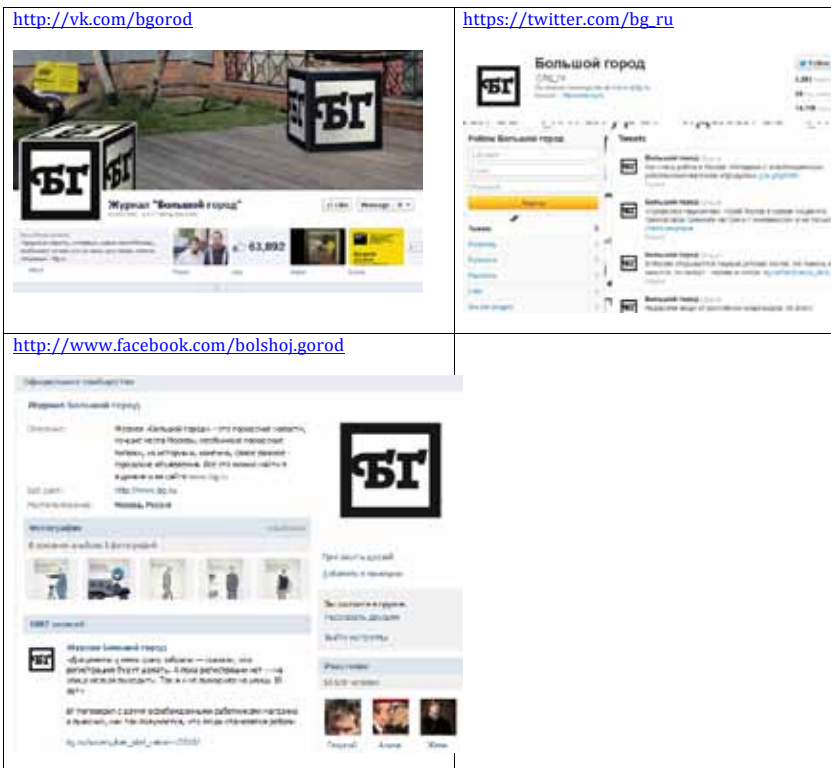


Figure 71. Screenshots of Big City.

The main objectives can be said to be to provide up-to-date information about social, cultural and political life in Moscow and its suburbs. Additionally, the magazine editors try to speak about overall situation in Russia and at the same time involve readers in different discussions in order to

promote independent thinking and give people the opportunity to have truthful information and share their ideas.

“I think that *Bolshey Gorod* is one of the best if not the best and most honest mass media resource in Russia. I have been reading it for several years and can say that the articles are always really interesting, captivating and well-written. The language and topics are brilliant, and always include several angles and points of view. The magazine also contributes to social life though debate on the most controversial problems.”

“In my opinion, feedback (commenting or rating comments) is a crucial element in all communication and a perfect way to attract people because for many of us it is very important not only to get information, but to share our own ideas and participate in social life. The best communicators are those who listen to people.”

Currently more and more people communicate with the help of social media and web resources, especially the young generation and businessmen. Print versions are not as popular as before for several reasons. It is more expensive to print and not so green. The environment factor plays an increasing role in business and social life. Also, the Internet has become the main arena for communication and information gathering. Hence, for any media company it is crucial to find a place in the arena. This potentially boosts readership, leading to success, which is essential for any enterprise. Social media is a cornerstone because the media exists to provide people with information.

“Nowadays many people have accounts in social media like Facebook, VK, Twitter etc. If I’m interested in some topic I try to share my ideas and find out other people’s point of view. They say ‘truth breeds discussion’ and the ability to share ideas is the key benefit for everyone.”

“However, any good invention has drawbacks and social media is no exception. Unfortunately, one should always think carefully about the information that you find on the Internet, read in journals or other resources. Thinking critically and verifying data is good advice for

anyone, especially since social media is a perfect tool for manipulation and brainwashing as well.”

Delovoy Peterburg / Business Petersburg

■ <http://www.dp.ru/>

Delovoy Petersburg is an online business established in 1993. It mainly covers information about business society in St Petersburg and its vicinity. It is considered to be the undisputed leader among regional business portals. More than 80,000 people read news on the website. It describes its mission as “we bring new ideas for the development of business”.

The media’s newspaper sells more than 24,000 paper copies a day and the site 17,000 has subscribers.

It presents the full scale of news: world, country and regional. Despite its business character, the media also widely covers political, cultural, social, etc. news. It is difficult to say what kind of political orientation it has since it’s not supported by any political party or any politician. According to the content it might be characterized as independent. Articles are accompanied by experts’ comments, providing the reader a broader view on what is happening.

The newspaper is divided into several categories: management, Next, Your Business, Weekend and others. It also has subcategories such as Construction World, Education, Auto Insurance, Medicine, Business Centers, Sport, Interviews and many others published on a specific day of the week (image 3).

The media has its own sites on Facebook, Twitter, Vkontakte and Google+.

It is possible to share news on Twitter, Facebook, Vkontakte, Live Journal, LiveInternet, Smi2, News2, Odnoklassniki (Russian social media portal), MoiMir (Russian portal like Google or Yandex), as shown in images 1 and 2 below.

The news can be commented without moderation on the actual website, Facebook, Vkontakte and Twitter. The only condition is that you are to be registered on the newspaper and the social media websites (normal procedure for the commenting possibilities). I suppose that comments containing offensive language are deleted.

Readers cannot suggest topics for discussion or write stories of their own.



Figure 72. Screenshot of Business Petersburg.

As indicated above the motto of the *Delovoy Petersburg* is “we bring new ideas for the development of business.”

By making use of all the main social media sites, the media provides all readers with the opportunity to comment and share ideas openly without being moderated.

The media claims that “we are constantly changing according to the expectations of our readers.”

“In my opinion this particular Media is trustworthy and reliable. I am not very active in all possible social media websites, but mostly

quite passive in commenting the news. However, I read the print copy carefully every now and then and find the experts' comments to be full of criticism, sometimes full of sarcasm and pessimism – that would be absolutely impossible in any government or politically supported media.”

“I absolutely trust the media for its constructive criticism. It is definitely for the thoughtful reader. Sometimes the information is way over your head, narrowly professional in orientation. The target is definitely not to entertain, though you find lots of interesting information about cultural events. “

“The only thing that can disturb me is the amount of advertising in the newspaper, both print and online. But that is natural since this is the source of money. When I am not in Russia I definitely read the media to stay up-to-date on happenings in the world and the St Petersburg region.”

“What I particularly like is the category “Next”, which tells stories of young and successful businessmen who establish businesses and promote ideas without having millions in their bank account. Those stories are truly inspirational.”

Echo of Moscow

- <http://echo.msk.ru>

Echo of Moscow (ЭХО МОСКВЫ) is a large Russian media resource, written in the Russian language. It is oriented to liberal people in Russia, but it also tackles all kinds of opinions and ideas, and also publishes articles from people who represent different political views.

Originally it was the website of radio “Echo of Moscow”, but nowadays it has much more content. This covers not only the programs from the radio, but also videos of programs and participants, articles, blogs and forums for discussion. The medium was established 1990 and became the first independent, non-state owned radio station in the Soviet Union.

If you want to share the news there several links on the website to Livejournal and Vk.com – the largest and most popular social media in Russia, similar to Facebook, Mymail, and Twitter.

The website posts articles from blogs from different media personalities on the latest issues. There you can read opinions and thoughts about the most topical issues in Russia and other countries.

It is possible to comment and rate all articles and comments, so there is usually lots of discussion.

There are people who write articles for the medium regularly and have their own blogs there, but the medium also publishes articles from people who don't deal with the medium on a daily basis. These people are almost always media persons such as journalists, writers, politicians, actors, professors or specialists in fields relating to the issue at hand.

On the website you can also access radio programs, videos of programs and articles. There is no printed version, but there is a radio station, of course.

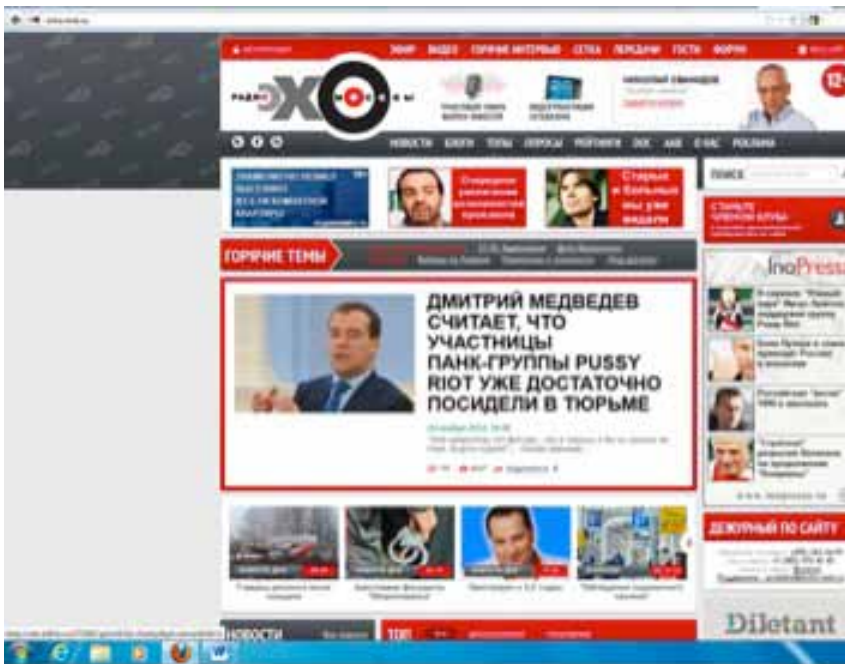


Figure 73. Screenshot of Echo of Moscow.

The objective should be to make the website visible in other media that people use on a daily basis. This allows the medium to earn new readers through such links and connections. It's also convenient for readers, because if you are a subscriber you don't always have to check the website, but can read essential news and articles in social media instead.



Figure 74. Screenshot of Echo of Moscow.

“It is quite important for me to be able to share the news because you can always share something important and make people think about some issue. If people read only the official version or conservative sources, they can get the wrong picture or not enough information. That’s why it is crucial to use different sources and always to be critical. It is also good to discuss news with your friends, people you know or even random people, as sometimes this helps to form your final opinion.”

“In my opinion, there is no source that is 100% trustworthy, but there are media that I trust more or less. Anyway, it’s always important to think critically. “



Figure 75. Echo of Moscow on Facebook.

“I think there is a strange situation in Russia at the moment in that society is split and different groups and classes of people are somehow isolated from each other. Some people would never trust and accept any point of view from the official, governmental media and others would never trust liberal media like *Echo*. That’s why discussion is difficult everywhere, people are arguing a lot, but most of them are not able to accept another point of view. People discuss everything, which is also really important, and hopefully it will lead to more tolerance among people with different and controversial views. Anyway, social media plays great part in the life of modern society. It can bring people

closer, but simultaneously it can make society even more isolated and bring even more misunderstanding, which can also be used politically. This is evident in the “Arabic spring” and other revolutions where social media has played a great role. “



Figure 76. Screenshot of Echo of Moscow.

Fontanka.ru

- <http://www.fontanka.ru/>

Fontanka is a regional, medium-sized online news site. It provides news about St Petersburg and its surroundings and some news about Russia and the world in traditional style. It does not have a print version. It provides conservative and independent content. The site was opened in 2005.

It is somehow peculiar that the site doesn't have its own social media profiles, but one can subscribe to RSS feeds, and news can be read on PDA. The news can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, Google, Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki. It publishes its own blog. The blogger can be anyone who wants to discuss anything in the newspaper. There are also societies of same interests. Readers can publish there their videos and SMS and pictures, but first need to be registered on the site. You can write a story on your own as well. You cannot evaluate the news but you can comment.



Figure 77. Screenshot of Fontanka. URL: <http://blog.fontanka.ru/posts/129700/ comments>

The site benefits from its blog and commenting tool because the reader can interact and put his own ideas first. This can even help reporters find new ideas. People can also talk and comment, make societies and friendships. Together they can be against something, for example. This brings people together and they like to be there more because they can share opinions, not just read the news. People can also let their ideas to be known. Some of them write very interesting news and that makes the newspaper more popular and more readable.

The site doesn't have a social media strategy. It mainly develops its own media on its own blog.

“For me it is not that important to share on the web. I would prefer to do it orally having a cup of tea with my friends. But I know nowadays for many people it is extremely important. If you don't do so you are somewhat backwards. You are not modern or cool anymore!”

“I think commenting and rating is very important because it distinguishes the high importance news from low importance. If you see something highly commented or ranked you can say this is about something you should know. It can even concern the future of the city or country. By ranking you help people to categorise the news and by commenting you express your opinion!”

“I do not share and I hardly ever surf on these kinds of sites. I hate news but I think it would be nice for someone to be heard and his picture to be noticed. If you are touched or amused by something, why not excite the others?”

“For me the most tempting social media element is video sharing. I think video is the thing you can trust the most especially if it is a documentary or “from the scene of the crime”.

“I trust the chosen websites because they it is all official and even normal TV news are based on them and mention them as a source or as a reference.”

“Sometimes Russians like to discuss new laws, events etc. in a “strong” manner. Normally you can't use overly strong expressions on official blogs, but you can still find them. Also Russia is very big and the news are usually divided by regions and every region has its own place, otherwise you can be easily overwhelmed by the info. Also the news are divided into categories like culture, politics, business, city, children etc.”

“The big emphasis is given to history and culture. Russians value their roots.”

Gazeta

- <http://www.gazeta.ru/>

Gazeta is a national newspaper with print and online versions. It is a large newspaper.

Objectives for the news organization can be said to be to increase the distribution of news and involve new readers, to increase traffic to Gazeta.ru's website and FB, VK fan pages, to attract new visitors and to increase brand awareness.

Objectives for readers can be characterised as participation and contribution to the opinion-making process. This type of interaction allows sharing news online, for example via Vkontakte, which allows users to comment and share the news.

Social media are beneficial for organizations producing online news. Users or online followers may find it beneficial and this is also a way to engage in self-branding online.

Gazeta allows everyone share the news via Facebook, Vkontakte, Live Journal and Twitter (see below). Vkontakte users can also comment before posting the link and make this comment visible to all members of the group the user is subscribed to.

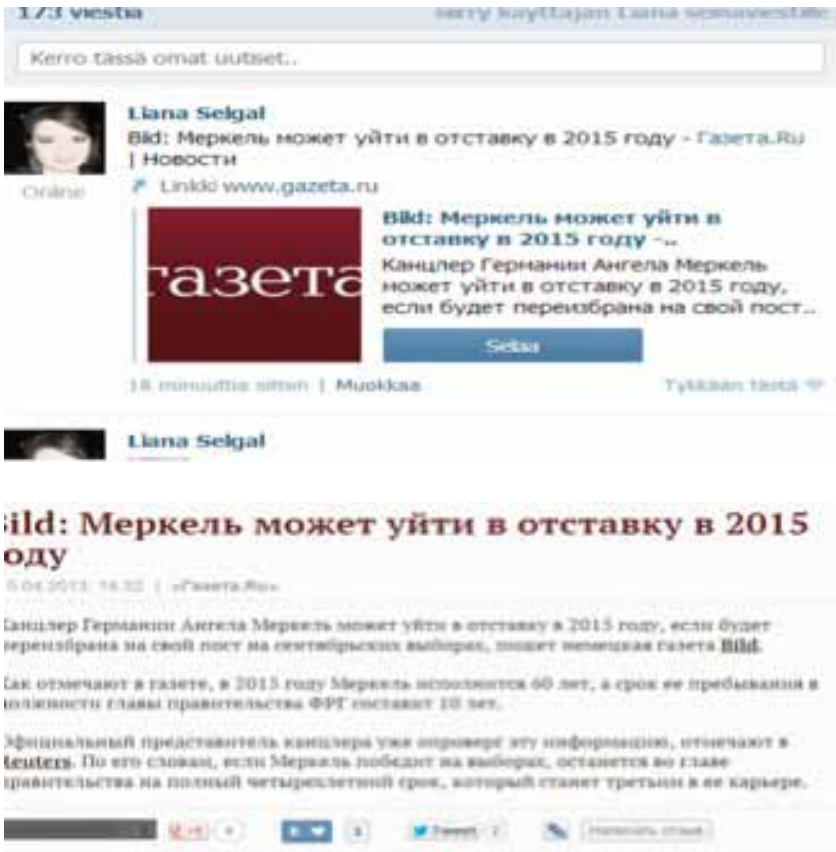


Figure 78. Screenshot of Gazeta.

Interfax

Interfax is a national daily newspaper. It has both online and print editions. It can be categorized as a quality newspaper. *Interfax* uses social media patterns like share on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Livejournal, V Kontakte and Odnoklassniki.

Objectives for the news service: Quick update, agenda of the day, close interaction with population and readers, new way of distributing news. Objectives for users: quick update on the news, quick interaction and sharing information.



Figure 79. Real-time news on Interfax.

The pattern shown above allows the reading of news in real time. Tweeting makes the process of sharing and updating news very fast. It gives voice to readers and a way to affect the news stream and its content.

Interfax is the most powerful agency and I trust the information it provides.

The website shows the reader ways to be connected in real time, via links to Twitter and other social media. The website shows all news available at any particular point in time.

“Social media are very advantageous for *Interfax* as their audience grows on its own and sharing Tweets lets *Interfax* know what topics might be of interest in the future and what sort of things will make a big issue or are already a burning topic in the country.”

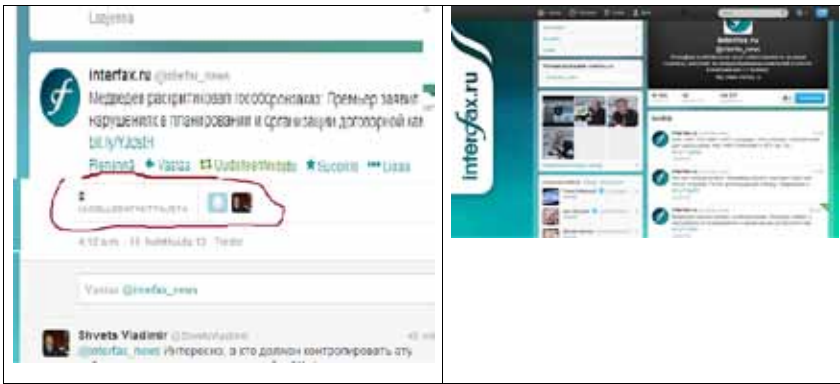


Figure 80. Screenshot of Interfax.

ITAR TASS

- <http://www.itar-tass.com/>

ITAR TASS is a big news agency where you can read news about Russia and the whole world. The main language is Russian, but you can also read news in English, French, Spanish, German and Arabic. The agency was established in 1904.

It's an online news agency but they also release daily bulletins and a weekly business lunch magazine. On the site you can watch videos from TASS TV.

“Because it's the state's enterprise “Informational Telegraph Russian Agency”, it makes me think that it is a conservative type of media.”

Readers can share news on Twitter, Facebook, Vkontakte, LiveJournal and Odnoklassniki. They don't write blogs, more like they post news from main page and you can comment or like. I'm not sure whether you can suggest topics or write your own stories.

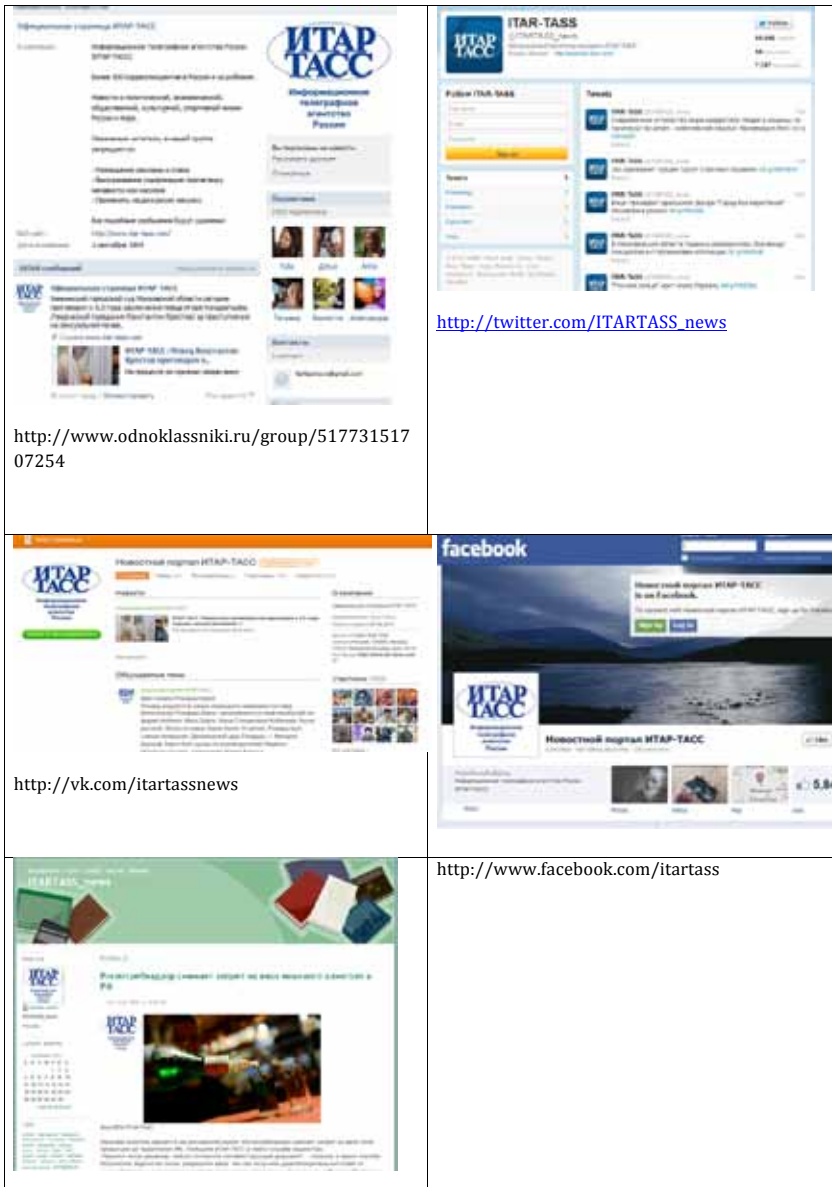


Figure 81. Screenshots of ITAR-TASS.

“In my opinion an objective for the news organisation is to get more readers in different age groups, and for this goal they use social media elements because nowadays people, especially the young, mostly spend their time there.”

Reader benefits include ease in finding the news, the ability to share news with friends and also the ability to comment and express opinions.

Kompravda

- pda.kp.ru

Kompravda readers can share news on Twitter, Odnoklasniki, Facebook, and Vkontakte. You cannot comment on the news or participate in discussions and moderate. You cannot suggest a topic or write a story of your own. They do not publish readers' pictures, videos or SMS.



Figure 82. Screenshot of Kompravda.

The site can be summarised as follows: people cannot comment the news, the site is overloaded with news, the site does not look reliable and there is a lot of unsubstantiated news and gossip.

“I do not share news at all because I think it is our decision whether to read the news or not. Commenting news is not important because there are many strange and psychologically ill people who comment them. I never share my picture on news sites. I trust only 7% of this site's news. The most tempting social media element is provoking videos with celebrities and famous politicians. There is a feature that characterises Russian culture – gossip about the infidelities of Russian celebrities.”

Lenta

■ www.lenta.ru

Lenta is one of the oldest news sites in Russia. It is a big domestic-only online news site, established in 1999. It's a rather liberal media, though not oppositional.

The media makes use of social networks: readers can retweet news, for example on Facebook and Vkontakte. The media has its own official page on Facebook where news are reposted as well as an official Twitter page and an official Vkontakte page. You can comment news on *Lenta* and rate comments left by other users as well as mark them as spam or inappropriate, but not rate the news itself. In order to comment, users have to log in using their account on Facebook, Google+ or some other social media site. Comments are postmoderated, if moderated at all. A tree-like comments hierarchy is implemented, so discussions are possible. The site is not interested in user-generated content. You can easily find on the site e-mails from editors, who are responsible for different topics, and contact them, but there is no obvious prompt to do so. Other interactivity elements include RSS feed and a search window on every page.





Figure 83. Screenshot of Lenta.

The pattern objectives are that the readers can like and share news from *Lenta*, and also state their opinions on the site itself. Benefits for readers are that there is interaction (they can like and share and discuss in social media, as well as discuss news on the site as well). However, the amount of interaction is very limited since the website offers plugins only for the most popular networks (Facebook, Vkontakte, Twitter). The website doesn't prompt readers to generate newslike content, placing its stake on the contribution of professional inhouse journalists. A social media strategy of that kind (or, in other words, lack of a comprehensive social media strategy) the conclusion can be drawn that this news site is following rather "old" traditions, providing ways for interaction only as a tribute to modern trends (if there weren't any social media buttons or presence in social media, the readers would not spread the news from the site and would become disinterested in general).

“For me sharing and liking news is an important activity in social media. I think the possibility to do so is one of the most interesting achievements of the modern Internet. Almost everybody seems to value the possibility to state their opinion quickly by “liking” (or “disliking” on several sites) something, and the possibility to easily repost things a person likes on his/her personal page, making these things a part of their own personal world, even for a day or a few hours (people easily “like” and forget about it quite quickly). It’s

interesting how nowadays people prefer “liking” to writing comments, even short ones. I’m very cautious about the “dislike” feature, which is present on several sites. I think that a topic itself should not be given the possibility to be “disliked” (those who don’t like the topic or news could just move on and not state their negative emotions). However, rating comments on a topic and the possibility to like/dislike comments is quite important. That’s how hateful comments can be massively disliked, which happens quite often. “

“I consider the news on *Lenta* to be quite reliable and prudent, when compared with other national news websites, and can also understand their wish to stay traditional. A media should not chase the trends just for the trends’ sake. If the quality of news is maintained in a traditional way and basic modern-level interactivity is provided, there is nothing wrong about that.”

Pervyy kanal

<http://www.ltv.ru/>

Pervyy kanal is a big website of the main TV channel in Russia. All kinds of news, films and TV are shown on it. It also has an archive (you can see what was shown a week ago). The site is owned by the government. It projects itself as liberal and somehow independent, but in reality everyone considers it conservative. Also you can see foreign news there, and get in touch with them to publish ads.

Readers and watchers can share news on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Vkontakte. It is also possible to leave comments on the site (interactive conversations, comments under each TV programme, video, topic, etc.) The site has its own page on the Russian versions of Facebook – Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki and Moy Mir. I haven’t found any blogs there, but there are articles by journalists and you can leave comments. Some comments are checked before publishing and can be deleted if they do not go along with site’s policy. You can suggest topics for anything, for a new TV show, discussion and so on. There is a field where you can enter your questions.

The channel also has a Livejournal page.



Figure 84. Pervyy kanal on social media sites. URL: <https://www.facebook.com/1tvru>, <http://1tvru.livejournal.com>

As this site is Russian, most of the social media patterns are in Russian – Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki, MoyMir. Of course, there is also Facebook and Twitter. The news organization can promote its ideas and advertise through these patterns. As to benefits for the reader, you can get information about upcoming or past news, TV shows and etc.



Figure 85. Pervyy kanal on Vkontakte. URL: <http://vk.com/1tv>

It is one of the most famous news sources in Russia.

“I think that possibility of sharing news, comments and information is really important. People can see what to expect and learn about the ideas of others. The most important social media patterns in Russia are Vk.com and Odnoklassniki.ru, where almost everyone has a personal page. They are pretty much like Facebook, which is also becoming more and more popular in Russia.”

Rambler

- <http://www.rambler.ru/>

“I thought that would be an interesting example for this research. Moreover, I used to read news from it a lot when I lived in Russia.”

Rambler was established in 1991 and it publishes news in Russian. It is a big site with its own news, games and other portals. The news portal includes only online news, but from different online sources.

Readers can share the news on Twitter, Facebook, Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki. Rambler does not have any official pages in any social media.

There is the possibility to comment on the news and people are using it actively. Readers use this function as a way to have an open discussion, where one’s posts are published immediately. However, there are restrictions concerning the content of your comments, so moderators might delete a comment if the rules are not followed.

You cannot suggest a topic or write a story of your own. The profile pictures and names of people who are commenting can be seen. One can also choose which comments s/he likes or dislikes and which comment s/he wants to comment.

Reader/commentator pictures and videos are not published.



Figure 86. Screenshot of Rambler. URL: <http://news.rambler.ru/18745674/comments/>

For the reader the patterns make it easy to read news, easy to find other news, easy to share in social media (the news itself, not the comments part) and easy to comment (integrated comment pattern).

For the news site, the patterns make it easy to attract more unique visitors, to keep regular readers interested, and to be more visible in social media (people will see that the article is from *Rambler*).

They are using all the most popular social media elements in order to attract more people from different target groups, to see the statistics (what people share the most, where they share it).

“One click and the news are shared in the chosen social media. Very simple.”

“I think it is important to be able to share news. I do share news maybe every week or so.”

“I think commenting or rating comments is important. You can see what other people are thinking and what are the most popular opinions/comments. I do not share my pictures on the news sites. I do not trust the news in general: I read information from several sources and draw my own conclusions. But I assume that many people do trust *Rambler*.”

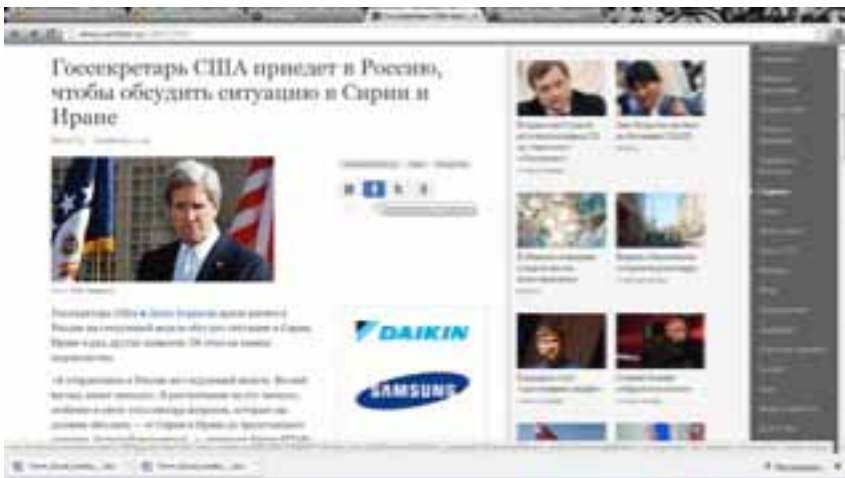


Figure 87. Screenshots of Rambler.

RBC

- www.rbc.ru

RBC (Russian Business Consulting) is a large media company with its own news websites, TV, print media and radio offering. In 2012 the media had an audience of 20 million people.

People can share news by posting them in the social media. People can also email news to other people. People can follow this source of information in the all the main social media platforms.

www.facebook.com, www.vkontakte.ru, www.twitter.com, <http://www.odnoklassniki.ru/>, <http://memori.qip.ru/>.



Figure 88. Screenshot of RBC.

In the digital world it is extremely important to receive real-time news, and social media are very good tool to share the news.

“I subscribe to different magazines in the social media, it is easier to follow news and track announcements. Sharing information is easy and quick via social media. “

Ria

- <http://ria.ru/>

Ria is a big national news site that provides traditional news about Russia. It provides news also for TV channels and radio. It can be categorized as a conservative media. It was established in 1996.

Readers can share news on Twitter, Odnoklasniki, Facebook, and Vkontakte. You can comment news, as well as participate in discussions. You cannot suggest a topic or write a story of your own. Moreover, you can share on Google. In right corner of the page, people can write their comments via Twitter, which are seen there immediately. After each topic it is possible to write your comment, but you have to register first. On the

main page there are different kinds of surveys, which you also can comment.

It is also possible to upload your own material – photos, videos, stories. The website has a blog.

The news site has a section named “you are the reporter”, where you can publish your own news with videos, SMS, photos etc. (<http://www.youreporter.ru/>).

All news can be commented. There are also videos, photos and graphs on the site, as well as surveys, special projects , games and tournaments.

The objectives of the patterns are the opportunity to share the news, to comment and to increase awareness of the news web page

“For me it is important that such patterns exist on news sites. I usually read news through Vkontakte, which has a *RIA* group containing the most important news. So there is no need to go to the official site. People can comment on different topics and comments appear immediately without any moderation. So for me it’s quite useful that I can read news on Vkontakte.”



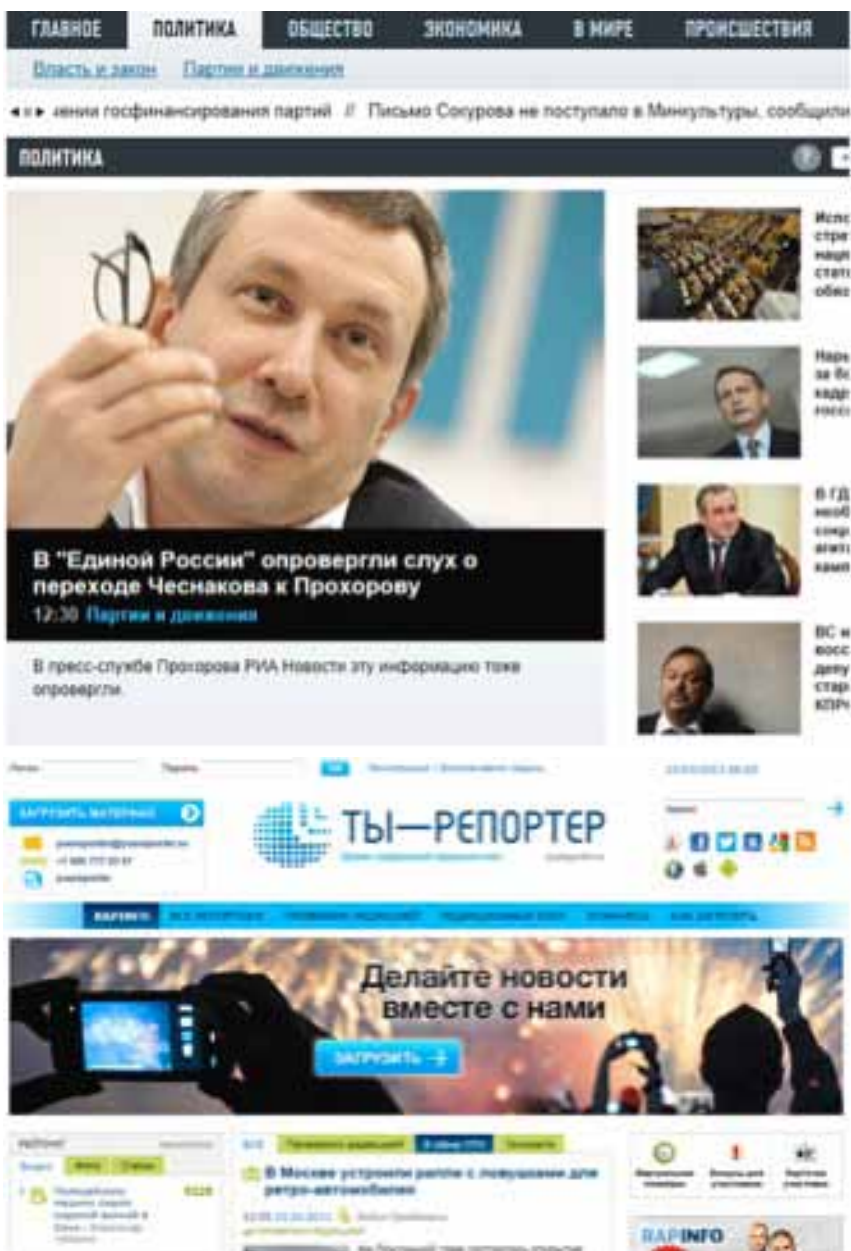


Figure 89. Screenshots of RIA.

“This media is quite a good one. I can rely on the news given there. There is no gossip, no yellow page news. Each of news item is checked, well written and has official status.”

“The pattern shows that news are serious and not about fun. It is important to have the possibility to share such news because they can be useful for people who live in Russia. I don’t share my own pictures because I think it is not important on such a site. People are looking for news and not to read the profiles of others. I trust this site 100%.”

“The site has a really large range of different interactive and social media tools. In my opinion it is social media oriented. It provides not only the interior blog and the tool for own news publishing, commenting and sharing, but also shares worldwide. I think it is good for the newspaper because it makes it more known and many more people want to read it. That provides you a tool to tell your friends on Facebook, to tweet or to publish on Youtube, and the site benefits from this because most probably the other person will also get interested and will go there to read.”

Many interactive tools like games and special project will never let you be bored. The feedback field is also open for your comments and improvements and you will surely be heard ASAP.

You can also vote there for some “up to date” project or news that is highly exiting or touching.

Lots of media there makes you share more eagerly.

Ria Novosti

RIA Novosti is the most popular news portal in Russia. It is in Russian, but it is possible to read news also in English, French, German, and Spanish and other languages. *RIA Novosti* is Russia’s leading news agency in terms of multimedia technologies, website audience reach and quoting by the Russian media. *RIA Novosti*’s history dates back to 1941.

Readers can share news on Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Vkontakte, Pinterest and Instagram. *Ria Novosti* has its own sites on Facebook, Pinterest, Google+, Youtube, Vkontakte, Instagram and Twitter. There is the possibility to comment on the news or even write stories of your own and add your own pictures and videos in the “you are a reporter” section.

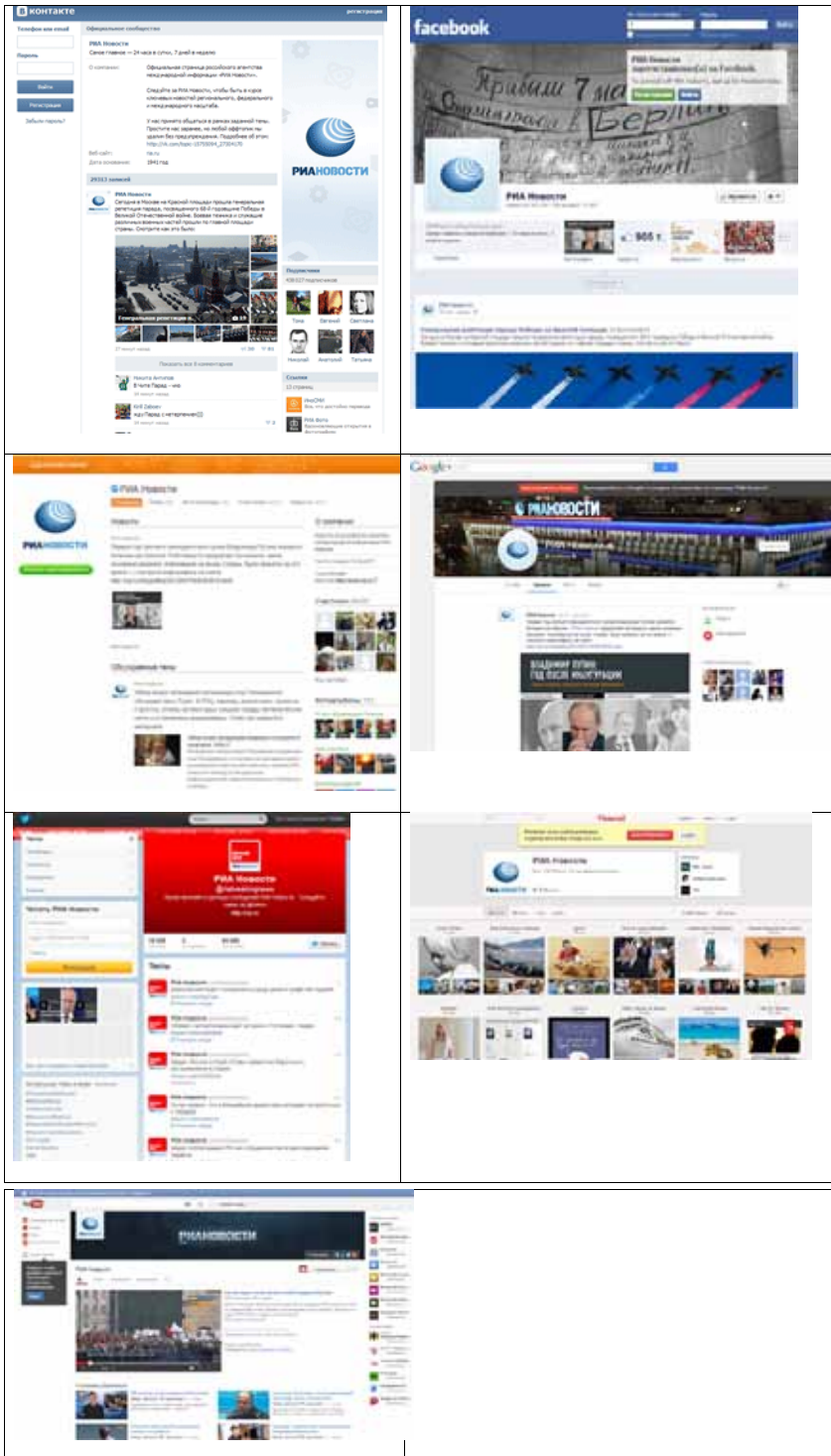


Figure 90. Screenshots of Ria Novosti.

“It is vital for every news organisation to use social media elements. Through them it is possible to reach an immense number of users in just a couple of minutes. It is the fastest way today.”

“Moreover, via social patterns you can get a feedback immediately from huge amount of people. It is a leap forward. It is also a big opportunity for readers to be heard.”

“I do not like social websites like Facebook because they are really time consuming. Of course I have an account there, but only because some information I can get only from there. It is not important for me at all if someone likes my picture/comment there or not. It is a simple logic – if a person wastes all their time for commenting photos of their 600 friends or staring at funny pictures then they have no time left to develop themselves in real life. If I have a choice I always prefer to discuss my news, plans and projects face-to-face with people whose opinions I appreciate.”

“My trust of *Ria Novosti* – 70%.”

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

- <http://rgru.livejournal.com/>,

Rossiiskaya Gazeta is a national Russian print and online news site. It uses the social media pattern share in Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest and Live journal. There is the possibility to comment the news and they have a blog. They don't publish readers' pictures, videos or SMS.



Figure 91. Screenshot of RG.

You can select the area in Russia where you live and read news related to your region, or you can read what is going on in Russia in general, as well as international news.



Figure 92. Screenshot of RG.

“For me, the official website a bit too messy. There are too many boxes, information is everywhere. When I read the news from the social media website, lets say Vkontakte, it is more structured, one news goes after another and it is easier to read.”



Figure 93. Screenshot of RG.

“I share the news on Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki. I never comment news or share pictures. I do share the news because it is much easier rather than copying an URL and passing it on later.”

Русский Репортер (*Russian Reporter*)

- <http://rusrep.ru>

Russian Reporter is a medium-sized magazine that has its own online version. It is available only in Russian.

The magazine writes about pretty much everything: politics, culture, science, sport, cinema and music. They have great photo reports. It could be defined as a liberal magazine. It belongs to the “Expert” media holding company. Its main readership is the active middle class.

Russian Reporter was established in 2007. The ambition of the magazine was to become a world-renowned magazine with a Russian name.

The website has links to *Russian Reporter* pages on Vkontakte, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. On the website they publish a diary linked to a live journal of *Russian Reporter* journalists.

Below each article readers can leave comments. Site visitors need to register using their email account if they want to post comments. In general there are very few comments. You can post a reference to an article on your own live journal page.

Another interesting feature is that if a reader likes an article , journal entry or a photo report, s/he can make a commitment to pay to the writer up to 1,000 roubles. The feature is called Like&Pay.

The last section on the bottom of the page (“With my own eyes”) is devoted to user-generated content other than comments. Readers are encouraged to send in their photo reports and captions.


 <p>www.russianreporter.ru</p>	<p>http://vk.com/russianreporter</p> 
<p>https://twitter.com/russianreporter</p> 	<p>http://instagram.com/rusrep</p> 
<p>http://www.youtube.com/rusreporter</p>	

Figure 94. Screenshots of Russian Reporter.

After analysing the Vkontakte page it became clear why there is so little interaction with the magazine readership on the website. All the interaction and communication is taken to this social media page.

Almost every major article of the magazine appears both on the website and on the Vkontakte page.

In addition to the article there are posts directly addressed to the readers. For example, an announcement about a summer school for aspiring journalists organised by *Russian Reporter*.

There are posts in which they ask readers to upload photos and stories for large magazine projects. For example, they ask readers to upload pictures of their relatives who took part in WW II, as well as short stories about them. This material will be published later on the website.

Readers are encouraged to comment on posts. There are more comments and discussions going on Vkontakte page than on the *Russian Reporter* website.

Russian Reporter is known for its good quality, large photo reports. On the Vkontakte page the magazine hosts a photo competition among the readership.

Obviously, the objective for the magazine is to engage their online audience and get feedback from them. A registered user on Vkontakte can subscribe to various communities or group pages (a lot of periodicals have their groups on this site). Once subscribed a user gets daily, often hourly updates from the community. It really helps to keep readers interest and get closer to the audience.

The content of the magazine's Facebook page is almost the same as on Vkontakte: all the major articles and photo reports. However, there aren't that many comments by readers. Most of the people only leave likes, but do not post much. Or the posts are very short and do not encourage discussions.

Some of the posts by the magazine are very informal (e.g. a cute cat picture with the caption that the magazine staff is on holiday).

For the magazine the objective of being on Facebook is to spread the word (get likes, reposts) rather than engage readers. Facebook seems to be a bit more informal than Vkontakte. Most of the posts from users are very short and contain emotionally charged expressions.

The YouTube channel doesn't seem to be very popular. The content is mostly videos about different cultural topics, reports about the events organised by the magazine, news and issues from the world as well as monthly interviews with the journalists of the magazine. I have the impression that the channel is not really intended for a mass audience but only for the truly loyal readership, journalists and the magazine staff.

Instagram: This channel is not very "crowded" yet. I think it is more of an internal social media for the staff and freelance journalists of the maga-

zine. The objective of it is to post photos off work but related to the life of the magazine.

The way I see it the social media pattern picture is as follows: V Kontakte is a social media tool the magazine is using actively to engage readers, acquire new audiences and become closer to them. Facebook is for quick updates and spreading information. YouTube and Instagram are for loyal readership and staff. In general, their social media strategy is to take the magazine into the social media and make it more interactive.

“I am not an active social media user myself, meaning I do not generate my own content. However, I like the idea that I don’t have to go to the news site to find news. I regularly check my social media accounts and updates and if I see something interesting in my news updates I just follow the link to find out more.”

“I hardly ever share news, but I rate some pieces of news that impressed me. Rating news makes them more visible for other users and draws attention. That is probably what I have in mind when I rate news – I want them to be seen by more people.”

“In my opinion the most tempting social media element is the variety of information and the ability to choose your own updates and focus on all the information that interests you. Another great feature is sharing something you like or impresses you with friends (although I rarely use it).”

“For the news I choose a trustworthy source. If I am interested in some piece of news I usually read about it on two or three international websites.”

Vesti

■ www.vesti.ru

Vesti is the only Russian news channel that broadcasts 24 hours a day. This covers world news and news of Russian regions, as well as economic analysis and interviews with influential figures. Special attention is paid direct television broadcast of the most important world events-economic forums, summits, launches spacecraft. A recent poll indicates that the

news show regularly attracts some 50 million viewers. The channel has been on air since 2006.

Vesti's online site uses such media patterns as Facebook, Twitter, WAP, mobile phone, RSS, Google + and Vkontakte. Readers can share news through these patterns. The news site offers its users the *Vesti* Mobile Informer service and they are able to read and watch news using mobile phones. Also the site has a Facebook page, a Twitter account, and a mobile version.

Vesti has its Vkontakte account <http://vk.com/vesti> and sends posts daily. The Vkontakte site provides users with the possibility to like and comment posts. Sometimes comments get a similar amount of likes as the post itself. As a contact there is mentioned an editorial office of Vesti.ru, but I couldn't access the page because it is blocked for some reason.

Vesti's Facebook account also has "Like", "Comment" and "Share" options and people can discuss news as on Vkontakte. It seems, however, that nobody moderates discussions and comments on both accounts because it is visible that followers are allowed to leave any kind of comments even with offensive words about politicians. In addition, a comment appears immediately once you have sent it. At least they delete spam comments, but they do it afterwards. Unfortunately, readers to post their videos and pictures. By sending a message to *Vesti's* Facebook page, you can suggest story topics. NO such option exists in Vkontakte.



<http://vk.com/vesti>



<http://www.facebook.com/vesti.ru>



https://twitter.com/vesti_news



<http://www.mobile.vesti.ru/>



<http://www.vesti.ru/vesti.rss>

<https://plus.google.com/u/0/+vestiru/posts>

Figure 95. Screenshots of Vesti.

“*Vesti* uses the patterns mentioned above to reach as many readers as possible because some people mostly use Google + to read news and do not use Facebook or Vkontakte at all, and other people use Facebook daily. Also these patterns enable the media to interact with its followers by giving them options such as commenting and suggesting news topics, so users get more involved and hence more interested in the media.”

“As a benefit of social media I see the possibility to receive news and stay up-to-date using channels people prefer and share news people like to share with their friends.”

We are social beings and that is why it is important for people to share, in this case news. Especially, news because afterwards people can discuss with friends and learn about different points of view.

“I use such social webpages as Vkontakte and Facebook on a daily basis. There are streams of news and posts every day and I choose what are the most interesting for me and repost them on my timeline (share posts), which means all my friends who are subscribed to my up-dates can see the same news. I see Facebook as the most tempting social element because people use it around the world despite the fact that there are local sites in many countries.”

“I post my personal pictures on my social webpages, but I do not do that to any news site and I do not post my own pictures to *Vesti* media’s web pages. I pretty much trust *Vesti*, but I tend to check twice before I share news because in a few cases I have found out that the news I shared were fake and the product of somebody’s imagination.”

Commenting and rating is crucial as it shows how people trust news posters/reposters and refer to their opinions in choosing news to share/post.

“For Russian news media I would underline the characteristics of negativity and pessimism. About 95% (at least I see it this way) of news in Russian media is negative. I guess this is because the government, which controls practically all the mass media, especially television and newspapers, wants the Russian people to feel safe at

home. TV screens and newspaper articles say that the world is not safe. When people are afraid and are happy that at least at home they are safe, they will be unlikely to strike against the government. Fortunately, in Finland there is more freedom of speech.”

Yandex

- <http://news.yandex.ru>

Yandex is a national website. It collects news from all over the internet (e-zines, video sites, magazines, etc.) and republishes them on its pages. *Yandex* itself is one of the biggest search engines in Russia, as well as an email platform. Because it republishes news, you can generally find several different articles on any given topic, each with its own twist. The site is more or less independent of political alignment, presenting news as fact rather than opinion. Sometimes, however, you find loud headings for articles that are not that serious in content. You can select news from many different categories, such as sport, economics, politics, hi-tech, etc.

Besides the news, the website also has local weather reports and currency exchange rates.

On this website, you can share news through the following media (half of them are Russian media): Я.ру (<http://my.ya.ru>), ВКонтакте (<http://vk.com>), ОДНОКЛАССНИКИ (social website for (ex-)classmates <http://www.odnoklassniki.ru>), Twitter (<http://twitter.com>), Facebook, Мой Мир (<http://connect.mail.ru>), LiveJournal (<http://www.livejournal.com>), Google Plus (<https://plus.google.com>).

You can find blog entries discussing a certain news article/item. News.yandex.ru itself doesn't have a commentary section, but you can discuss news on the publisher websites or through blogs.

This site offers the possibility for publishing ads, which will be displayed during the search for news, or using the search engine.

A further interesting interactive element is that for the news published you can find on the map where the action is happening, to what location it is related. You can also see news on the map itself (below: map of Moscow). This feature is used a lot by the citizens and visitors of Moscow.

The site also maps traffic jams, given that Moscow is notorious for its busy traffic.



Figure 96. Screenshot of Yandex.

Обвиняемый в драке у ТЦ «Европейский» Р

Инвестстафф

Обвиняемый в драке у ТЦ «Европейский»

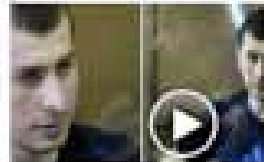
Согласно приговору, осужденному предстоит отбыть 10 лет в колонии. Прокурор требовал приговорить 22-летнего преступника к пожизненному лишению свободы. Судья учла смягчающие обстоятельства и назначила наказание в виде лишения свободы на срок 10 лет.

MAP

СМД Навоим

Обвиняемый в драке у ТЦ «Европейский» с

приговором к восьми годам лишения свободы. Судья учла смягчающие обстоятельства и назначила наказание в виде лишения свободы на срок 8 лет.



16:24 20:04 По версии следствия, 5 июня 2012г. на площади Киевского вокзала около торгового центра «Европейский» Б. Рязанов, имея умысел на убийство футбольного болельщика Алексея Усачева, действуя из хулиганских побуждений и используя малозначительный повод, нанес ему четыре удара ногом в область груди и спины.

ОСУЖДЕН

«Европейский» осужде

Figure 97. Map of Moscow on Yandex.



Figure 98. Map of news in the Moskow region.

Because this website has such a big and various coverage of news, it gains many visitors for itself, and therefore can benefit from more advertisements. The reader, on the other hand, gets the variety s/he wants: *News.yandex.ru* is a sort of “search engine” for news, publishing headlines and links and briefly reporting the facts about what a reader is about to read. It is a sort of hybrid of reader, organizer site and newspapers/magazine.

Of course, social media improves access to websites and spreads content for more users. So it is one of the chains in the link “reader – social media – publisher (*news.yandex.ru*) – article author website”.

As written in its information page, the main purpose of the site is to create a full daily news panorama, formed from the messages of partners – news article websites. Social media, participating in *Yandex’s* partnership program, constantly receive new visitors and expands its audience.

“Personally, I am not a big news sharer via social media. As a matter of fact, I don’t use social media proactively, mainly for important messages or studying/sharing materials. However, I have noticed that friends or relatives often post links to news websites (including *Yandex*), usually when the item is something funny or extraordinary. Sometimes I click the links and read the articles, for example on Russian politics, because it is quite an interesting subject and important area of social life.”

“Disussing the news is also interesting, though I myself never participate. Quite often it is entertaining, you can learn a new viewpoint on a subject, or learn extra details. You can get opinions of “common folk” or see if somebody takes the news personally.”

3.12 Venezuela

The population of Venezuela was 29 million in 2012. Very little information about Venezuela’s media was found. National newspapers include *Ultimas Noticias*, *El Nacional*, *Meridiano*, *Liderendeportes* and *Diario La Verdad*. According to Social Bakers, which is a social media tracking site, these newspaper were tagged on Twitter.

The students from Venezuela studied two news sites: the regional newspaper *El Sol de Margarita* and the national newspaper *El Universal*.

Elsoldemargarita

<http://www.elsoldemargarita.com.ve/site/>

Elsoldemargarita is a small/medium sized regional newspaper with both print and online editions. In Venezuela the government has quite a lot of control so newspapers try to stay as neutral as possible.

The news site does not allow readers to suggest topics or write stories of their own. The site also doesn’t publish readers’ pictures, videos or SMS. The journalistic culture is therefore more closed than open. There is some interaction between the news site and the audience, however, as readers can comment on stories and like them on Facebook. The site also has lots of video news.

1. Share and post: The news site offers the possibility to share news on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Delicious, Pinterest, Stumble Upon, Tumblr, Blogger and 283 different ways. One can subscribe to an RSS feed or send articles via email.
2. Connect: not found
3. Comment and discuss: commenting on Facebook and social media sites
4. Create: not found
5. Vote, rate, recommend and like: on social media



Figure 99. Screenshots of Elsoldemargarita.

With regard to videos, the reader can access the information much more easily and without reading the actual article. The videos are also “easier” to share on Facebook, for example. This is also an easy way of getting publicity. This newspaper focuses on its own region (an island) and doesn’t have that much competition.

“The news is from a high level of authority so they can be trusted. In Venezuela the press is under quite a lot of pressure to tell things in an “appropriate” way so you might get a different kind (limited) of view about international matters. I like the way that they present themselves on the webpage, the style is a lot more provocative and appealing to the eye than a Finnish webpage. I personally prefer to hear the news, as if I was watching TV.”

El Universal

- <http://www.eluniversal.com/>

El Universal is a medium/large national newspaper with print and online editions. Readers can send comments and share the news. You can also register as a subscriber and get a newsletter. *El Universal* also has its own radio station that you can listen through the site.



Figure 100. Screenshot of El Universal.

Since the newspaper is the capital's it is a bit more cosmopolitan and also has more on culture and gossip and other similar topics. They have a mobile application and involve the people more.

“The site is a web surfer’s paradise. you get areas of news you can imagine and you can put the radio on while you are surfing.”

Links to *El Universal* on social media sites are given below:

- <https://www.facebook.com/eluniversal>
- [https://twitter.com/intent/follow?source=followbutton&variant=1.0
&screen_name=ELUniversal](https://twitter.com/intent/follow?source=followbutton&variant=1.0&screen_name=ELUniversal)
- <http://www.youtube.com/user/eluniversal>
- <http://www.eluniversal.com/rss.shtml>

4

Conclusions



■ This chapter returns to our research questions to see what kinds of answers the results of the study provide. Also discussed is how well the explored social media patterns fit into Deuze's model of open and closed journalism culture. In summary, the social media patterns used in this study were: (1) connect, (2) share, (3) post, (4) comment, (5) discussion, (6) create and (7) vote. The patterns were grouped as shown below:

1. share and post
2. connect
3. comment and discussion
4. create
5. vote, rate, recommend and like

Our first research question was:

1. What are the social media patterns used by news media and what purpose do they serve?

The news sites and the media companies chosen by the students were very traditional. Mostly they were national or local daily or weekly print newspapers with online websites, or national radio and TV stations. It would have been interesting to know what were the motives behind the choice of media and why the students did not choose new experimental e-zines or magazines, for example.

Share and **post** was the most used social media pattern – every media in every country used sharing in one way or another. There are tens of ways to share, so if someone is interested in reading the news there are multiple ways to stay connected to the news world. The most popular way to share news in European newspapers was Facebook, and the second was Twitter. In Russia local social media platforms were very popular: Vkontakte.ru, Odnoklassniki.ru and MoiMir.ru. Similarly, in Latvia the local Draugiem.lv was very popular and in Brazil and Venezuela there was Orkut.com. The students from Russia and Latvia seemed to be extremely

proud of these local platforms while also admitting that Facebook is growing in popularity.

The students from Europe, Brazil, Russia and Venezuelan mentioned also Google +, YouTube and Pinterest, but the course's Asian students didn't. In Russia it is very common to share news also on LiveJournal and LiveInternet.

According to the students, news media allow news sharing because news companies want to reach new audiences, they want to make their brand known. The students were also of the opinion that media companies want their competitors to know how effective news producers they are. Only a few students mentioned that maybe media companies want to interact with their readers. It can therefore be said that the students did not believe that media companies want to engage in real dialogue with their readers.

Post as a social media pattern is near share: you can follow certain sites via RSS feed or send specific stories by email to yourself or friends. This pattern was widely used by all of the media companies studied. Still, this pattern did not play any important role for the students participating in this study.

The **Connect** pattern was found in some explored news sites like *City-lehti* in Finland, *Delfi* in Estonia and Latvia, and *Vesti* in Russia. But the pattern was more about connecting readers with each other than readers with journalists. Connecting mostly meant dating or the gaming section.

From the perspective of Deuze's model of open and closed journalism, the patterns share, connect and post are merely instrumental. Communication is unidirectional from media companies to the readers and from the readers to the readers. The news content is produced by the journalists, not the readers.

As described before, the patterns **comment** and **discuss** were pooled because the students were not able to see the difference between the two. Comment and discuss was mostly allowed on social media sites like Facebook, Google+, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest and Yahoo. On some news sites, there was sometimes the possibility to comment some stories just after the story or news item. Almost all media companies required registration. Only a few news sites said that comments can be anonymous without registration. All comments and discussions were moderated.

In the viewpoint of Deuze's model, the comment pattern allows readers to participate, but is monitorial. News sites want to control the com-

ments they accept or not. Sometimes readers can see the comment she made but other readers don't. There is no rule that journalists should answer readers' comments, which means that the communication is still monological or unidirectional.

Discuss is more akin to two-way, dialogical communication. The topics are often provided by the news sites, but nevertheless there is an unspoken promise that journalists participate.

Create: all the participating students mentioned that the media they studied provided the opportunity for suggesting story subjects. Some sites asked readers also to write their own stories and send pictures to some extent. Some sites had special projects for readers' stories, e.g. *Russian Reporter* asked readers to send pictures of relatives from World War II and to write a story about those days.

The students themselves said that they very seldom suggest topics or write stories and send pictures to the news sites. Apart from *Russian Reporter*, students did not mention crowdsourcing or they did not realize that news media were collecting data from the audience or the readers for stories.

Create as a social media pattern represents the open journalistic culture of Deuze (2003). In this model, readers and their content serve as open dialogue as to what kind of contents the readers should be offered. The readers' own stories and pictures also are published and they are distributed through a social medium. This means that the news is made in collaboration with the readers and the news media.

Vote, rate, recommend and like patterns were widely available, but nevertheless only on social media sites like Facebook. These patterns did not play an important role in evaluating the impact or the importance of news dissemination. Students mentioned that it might be nice to check how many likes a news article has, but it is not the reason to read the news.

The diagram below shows the studied social media patterns within Deuze's diagram. Comment and vote are monitored, but the focus is more on public connectivity. Still, the traffic is essentially unidirectional from the news site to the reader, and from reader to reader. Share, post and connect are instrumental because the content is still made by journalists and readers do not add their own content. Subscribing to an RFF feed or newsletter is unidirectional from the news site to the reader. Connect on the site of *Het Parool* was an exception because although the news site al-

lows readers to interact with each other, they cannot add any value to the journalistic content. Discuss and create are social media patterns that are dialogical because readers are a vital part of the journalistic process.



Diagram 1. Social media patterns within Deuze's diagram.

Our second research question was:

2. How do young people value these patterns?

It seems that young people appreciate the share pattern the most. The students said it is good to have the possibility to share important news, but they also said that they were not utilising this possibility. The participants also said that one can judge if a news item is important by how many times it has been shared.

From the students' point of view it is extremely important that the contents can be commented upon and discussed. It makes them feel that there is freedom of speech on the sites even though they are aware that discussions and comments are moderated. They informed, however, that they do not comment very often or suggest news topics, send pictures, recommend news or rate.

Overall, the students said that they read the news if the content is important, interesting and has been shared many times. Otherwise social media is for their own purposes, like connecting with each other.

Even though the news media is offering news for smartphones and tablets, only a few of the students mentioned this. It might be so that smartphones are so common that they did not give a thought to this topic or maybe the news just is not of interest. In a previous research done in the Netherlands, Asian students said that it is important to read and comment

news via smartphones (Gaikhorst, Drake & DeVires 2013). In a spring 2013 study, the laptop emerged as the most used device to surf on the social media among 18–29 year olds. (Drake, Gumse & Koivusalo 2013).

From the viewpoint of news media business models, the findings are depressing. It doesn't matter how news are spread as young people are not very interested in reading the news. Some students even admitted that they don't follow the news at all. This might explain why they chose traditional news companies – they knew them by name. Maybe they didn't bother to try and find out if there are new publishers or sites that might be much more interesting.

3. What kind of cultural and ethical differences can be distinguished?

The results were surprisingly similar even though reading habits and media culture vary in different countries. Some differences were found: Russian, Estonian and Latvian students criticised the reliability of the newspapers to some extent. Finnish and German students reported that they trust the newspapers but at the same time they said it was important to be a critical reader. In some countries like Estonia and Latvia there was some tension between the Russian language newspapers and Estonian and Latvian language newspapers.

The collected data differs per country. The work of the Russian, Estonian and Latvian students was more comprehensive than that of the other European students, so the data is not fully comparable nor is it very profound. Still, the data provide a sufficient understanding of the topic. The pattern approach gave a good starting point for this kind of research and Deuze's theory about open and closed journalistic culture was useful in categorizing the patterns.

The objectives of the study were to learn more about social media use by news sites in different countries and how young people appreciate these patterns. Even though this study only scratches the surface among the thousands of newspaper titles of the world, it gives some kind of idea about the use of social media by news providers. As was said in the introduction, social media is a continuously changing amoeba and this study described a social media in a certain media at a certain time. It would be fruitful to get a bigger picture and forecast what would happen in the next five years in the news sector. We leave that task to future research projects.

In the end we would like to give special thanks to Pekka Savinainen, who originally brought people together into a research group covering HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences, NHL University of Applied Sciences and Twente University. We also thank Ulla Björklund, Heli Lankinen and their students who together with us collected this research data. Without our international students it would not have been possible to proceed with this kind of study. Special thanks to Vera Gaikhorst from NHL – it has been a pleasure to work with you.

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