JOURNALISM QUALITY IN LATVIA: LOOKING FOR NEW VALUES IN THE MIDDLE OF CHAOS

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ABSTRACT: During the last decade, Latvian journalism has seen a lot of changes: a versatile commercial media system has strengthened its positions within the local media market, increasing demand for cheap information targeted for mass audience. The technological development, under influence of which a large proportion of audience has changed their media consumption habits, have again made us look for the answer to a question of journalism’s role in society, and its main functions. Media professionals were encouraged to find answers to these questions by the economic recession: a number of media disappeared, journalism’s market reduced, media environment changed, as well as did requirements of journalistic practice. Searching for new ways for development outside the traditional media environment, journalists have found new media models and professional approaches, and have acknowledged the importance of self-regulation and maintaining high quality standards. This article analyzes trends in Latvian journalistic development since 2004 when Latvia became a member of the European Union. By using interviews with many media editors and journalists, as well as applying media content analysis, this article seeks to evaluate current journalistic values, understanding of professional journalism, the situation in employment market, and changes within the Latvian journalistic environment during the economic recession from 2008 until 2011.

KEYWORDS: journalism quality, media responsibility, investigative journalism, journalists’ job market
PLEASE CALL ME A JOURNALIST

No matter how versatile is journalistic work, none of Latvian media professionals were during the last few years able to avoid the changes brought by the transformation of global media environment and the deep economic recession in Latvia. This transformation of media professionals’ working standards is so all-encompassing that it sometimes resembles a mid-flight fuel change: many journalists are forced to adapt to new media management requirements and needs and take responsibility for media commercial success. The shrinking of employment market forced them to search for new survival strategies, and, at the same time, journalists’ role in public communication narrowed considerably. The constant stress brought by inevitable changes has left an impact on journalistic quality in Latvia and created new professional traditions. During the years of economic growth between 2003 and 2008, when the market experienced an uncontrolled real estate growth and the flourishing of commercial media system, journalist ability to take part in creating media profit was more important than media responsibility and professional quality. Fragmented, but, from business point of view, ineffective media system (Doyle, 2002), when, hoping for quick success, tens of new players entered the media sector, made professional journalists to view each other also as competitors, rather than look for common values. Journalists were quick to take up responsibility for the media owners’ interests, leaving behind the need to maintain self-regulatory standards and professional principles. At the present moment, Latvian media environment and journalists’ professional behavior is characterized by dominating level of competition, media owners’ interests, management demands, and traditional understanding of professional journalistic practice.

While at the beginning of 21st century under the influence of technological development, journalists all over the world tried to answer a question of whether journalism is needed and how it is going to change, in Latvia, these questions were also relevant; however, Latvian media professionals forgot to answer one crucial question – what journalism is for? To be precise, the answer was very similar to the direction in which media owners’ goals and the now changed media system itself developed. After a relatively unstable and difficult period of 1990’s, when Latvian media system experienced a shock of free market, in the beginning of 21st century, encouraged by the growth of economy, media environment changed. At the time, media content began to be dominated by entertainment, celebrity magazines and consumer periodicals gained strength, which helped consumers in Latvia find their way among the new possibilities and praised consumerist ideology that offered to solve social problems by means of purchase (Featherstone, 1998).
People’s interest in politics already decreased during the economic crisis of mid-1990’s and the end of the century (under the impact of the economic crisis in Russia), therefore there was an increasing demand for information that helped one immerse into individual everyday problems by substituting real problem analysis with offerings of new products and services. The everyday filled with consumption opportunities brings new advertiser-inspired themes into media content, which increases the amount of service journalism.

Without doubt, the early journalistic traditions, based on the notions of pre-independence standards, are still influential, when journalists that advanced the ideas of the free state became the ‘heroes of the era’ (Brikse, Skudra & Tjarve, 2002: 70). Although demand for analytic journalism declines and investigative journalism is being developed only in some daily and regional papers, ratings show that news and debates are still socially important. A small part of serious journalistic work can be found in magazines that offer in-depth interviews, analysis of social issues, and different opinions. Nonetheless, news content and a style of debates are being altered by commercial media interests.

The field of public relations grows its influence by receiving more financial benefits from their corporate management. Public relations attract the best of media professionals; this field can create a lot of new information and pseudo-events. They flood media space, creating new media stars and promoting various ideas that have little in common with actual social problems. Yet it would not be correct to argue that the professional level of Latvian journalism has gone down due only to media owners’ commercial interests, society’s resistance against difficult analytic media content or country’s economic circumstances. One cannot talk about problems in the system because some trends are created by people.

Journalists easily adapt to the new conditions within commercial media system, where research and selection is substituted by ready-made information, which also facilitates the blooming of churnalism (Davis, 2009) which is dominated by information taken solely from press releases. Many journalists are eager to become constant guests of corporate presentations and parties – this is a possibility to get close to the glamorous celebrity society. In return for favorable articles, journalists are offered expensive dinners with representatives of large firms, small presents, and paid journeys. This is how certain journalism is produced where independent and versatile representation of events is of no importance, where more important is an ability to get an interview with a millionaire or invitation to visit a home of a TV show host. Journalists become close with representative of certain fields because close relationships mean easier acquisi-
tion of exclusive information, therefore it become more difficult to find neutral information on show business, sports, or politics. Versatile representation of events, creating one’s own agenda and media value development is substituted by *clientelism* (Balcyiene, 2009) in relationships between journalists and their sources. Under these circumstances, an audience is viewed as consumers rather than citizens, and media managements’ wish to offer entertaining, yet meaningless information is interpreted as audience needs.

No one has banned serious or professional journalism, however the amount of business news is on decline, serious cultural event representation is substituted by entertainment news; instead of information on international relations media publish news of catastrophes and accidents in other countries, social issues are shown by means of representation of deviant individuals. Media content is flooded with practical information that helps people to get to know themselves and enjoy their lives. In a situation when serious news and analysis is replaced by celebration of life, TV shows, lifestyle stories, “prospects for traditional journalism are looking grim” (Turner, 2009: 390). No doubt that the journalists’ new working practice is easier and less difficult, yet what becomes more and more unnoticeable is a link between journalism’s professional principles and journalistic ethics. Young people’s interest in journalism is on the rise because media offer a quick way to become ‘a star’; journalists are also eager to become celebrities, but at the same time this shows a decline in society’s trust in media.

To be a popular, recognizable, and scandalous journalist seems to be a convenient status, therefore notoriety and sensationalism becomes exercise in selfishness, rather than striving for professional quality. Although the stereotype of differences between Russian and Latvian media in Latvia is still alive, there are only few contrasts in these ethnic media practices. The main differences can be seen in media political agendas and journalistic styles. Latvian media are likely to support liberal governments; however Russian media criticize them, stressing the importance of social issues. In Russian journalism has developed a notion of journalist as ‘a friend and partner’, yet both Russian and Latvian journalists maintain relationships with various easily accessible sources. Russian newspapers even offer such a service as ‘informational following’, which means that they follow events whose organizers pay for them; otherwise events in question would not be covered. Most of media sources are various experts who are more likely than media editors to set medium’s agenda (Kulenius, 2008). Russian journalism, under the influence of Russian publicity school, is more friendly in style, it allows more commentary; in Latvian journalism, however, neutrality is still essential.
A small content analysis on November 18th, the anniversary of proclamation of Latvian Republic, showed very little difference in media agendas; what differed was the amount of information, because its coverage in Russian media was very formal. For all journalists time factor and original information is still crucial – the speed and pursuit of an exclusive piece makes media professionals competitors. This kind of relationships is convenient for media owners, because in these circumstances journalist corporate identity is more powerful than the professional one.

There is no doubt that that is a part of a global process of journalism, which is determined by technological development. Having begun as *McDonaldization* of journalism (Reese, 2009), it continues with the development of online journalism, as the result of which journalism, public relations, and advertising industries merge. Technological development increases the spread and amount of information, increasing cases of sloppy journalistic practice. Internet news sites are filled with same opinion news that loses its value in a few hours. One sentence, one photo, or one opinion easily can become news which can then be demonstrated to advertisers as a click champion, but this sort of information soon loses pluralism, balance, and correctness. Understanding that in the Internet the speed of news is very important and that information is constantly updated, a study, done in the beginning of 2012, of top 3 news sources among the biggest Latvian news websites showed that more than 60% of news has only one source, and, following development of news, it was revealed that very many statements and information are not provided with an alternative viewpoint, another opinion, or a right of reply.

The circulation speed and increasing amount of news in the Internet sets lower standards for the information quality, and editors at traditional media still do not quite believe that, in the Internet, clever, sophisticated journalism targeted to thinking people is possible. Therefore one is not surprised to find in almost any Internet medium such headlines as “The world’s fattest woman cures herself by means of sex”. Preparing information for newspaper Internet platform, editors do not pay much attention to content quality, and publish the more valuable material in printed versions. At the same time, another part of Internet information is provided by amateur volunteers. Major news sites use these materials mainly for entertainment, interactivity and unique information purposes due to fact that amateur informational supply tends not to be stable. In the age of blogging and volunteer reporting, an important question is what it means to be a real journalist and what society can expect from a person calling him/herself a journalist. Although investing less professional quality and taking less responsibility for their work, media amateurs demand same protection by means of legal norms as pro-
fessional journalists. In the professional environment, this situation has actualized a debate on necessity of organizing a journalist register in which an audience could distinguish professionals from amateurs driven by various interests, whose created content enriches media space. Many of these processes are best seen in news journalism, which is dominated by political topics – political journalism is like a litmus paper of the journalism quality in Latvia.

DAILY LIFE OF JOURNALISTS: A HORSE RACE

The natural competition within the commercial media system and media owners’ greed are also phenomena that draw a lot of criticism towards media and journalists. It is sensationalism, dramatization, cheap content whose aim is to get audience’s attention. That is why almost all topics are presented in the most entertaining way, creating a new wave of infotainment. Speed, competition and Internet demand for fresh news has left a twofold impact on Latvian journalism: firstly, a large portion of journalists from information searchers turn into its producers or ‘packers’ because many journalists form their material from ready-made informational pattern; secondly, trends of news dramatization and sensationalism spread. Following this trend, journalists become more reluctant to provide analysis of political ideas and processes, instead putting political personalities in the center of news. Their relationships, personal or communicational features and private life details are more important than their political decisions. The presentation of political players as contemporary heroes demonstrates framing of politics as a strategic game (Aalberg, Strömbäck & De Vreese, 2011) which is “characterized by a focus on questions related to who is winning and losing, the performances of politicians and parties, and on campaign strategies and tactics” (Aalberg, Strömbäck & De Vreese, 2011: 162). This process can be partially explained by a fact that dynamically presented news with individuals at its center has significant news values like conflict, excellence, and interestingness.

At the same time, several authors have demonstrated that this particular framing of politics increases political distrust and cynicism (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997) or has a negative effect on citizens’ knowledge acquisitions, although there are also studies suggesting that this type of framing may boost public interest in politics (Aalberg, Strömbäck & De Vreese, 2011), while diminishing understanding of political process and threaten democratic quality. Particularly vivid these processes can be seen in a pre-election coverage where debates, politician behavior, and their relationships with journalists become a central part of news. Meanwhile publishing of polling information makes politics resemble a horse race.
Nevertheless, by trying to understand the reasons behind this way of journalistic development, one can conclude that journalism itself is like a competition because journalists have to constantly worry about deadlines, besides, dramatization and conflicts allow for news personalization. However, the ever-present aim to be the first within circumstances where agenda is set by Internet news sites for other media journalists becomes almost a ‘mission impossible’ because there is always someone before you.

Time and space in journalism are no longer the most important factors, therefore journalistic requirements change within an employment market, and media professionals themselves begin to search for ways to improve the quality of their content. These pursuits are influenced by situation in an employment market that has altered the definition of what it means to be a good journalist.

**QUALITY OF NEWS: A PARADOX OF UNIFORMITY**

On the one hand, journalists are convinced that there are general indicators of journalistic quality which are to be followed independent of other circumstances because these indicators influence their choices and dilemmas (Lasmane, 2012). The most important values are opinion diversity and honesty. Even more important is an opportunity to freely produce content and be independent of employer’s considerations. Yet these are ideals of how it should be, and the real situation depends on particular media.

Many journalists from different media, especially from those influenced by political interests, receive clear instructions how to create and present information. Media owners view these interests as natural and legitimate because priorities are set by an owner’s right to manage their property the way they intend. Anita Daukšte, the chief editor of Neatkarīgā newspaper, has formulated the compromise situation of Latvian journalism by arguing that, “there is no independent journalism in Latvia. There is free journalism as long as a journalist is able to freely choose media channel, environment, and particular medium where he/she can freely work and express his/hers opinions. Journalism, if by it we understand process that is paid by readers and advertisers, does not exist in Latvia” (Tribine.lv, 2009). It is not uncommon for journalists to succumb to political influence and commissions to create politically biased content because it is the only way to realize their professional ambitions within the quantitatively limited Latvian media market. A conviction that ‘everyone does this’ allows one to accept the situation and view the deliberate breaking of professional principles as a mere feature of media environment.
Influence on journalism has also a reverse side. Sometimes journalists’ freedom is inflated to absolute proportions forgetting about any professional criteria or responsibility. This attitude means that any criticism addressed to journalists is labeled as an attack on freedom of press, or editing process is equated with censorship. This kind of attitude reduces the significance of such influential journalistic aspects as editorial policy, media format, and responsibility in the name of which journalists get opportunities to receive information, present it, and protect their sources.

Paradoxically, journalists are more ready to acknowledge medium’s commercial interests in degradation of content, rather than guidelines on representing political allies. Editors and journalists take responsibility for their medium’s commercial success and accept a situation where quality of their work is measured by sales, ratings or clicks. Owners whose decisions determine company’s commercial success are also likely to blame content producers for medium’s failures. The importance of profit for the medium’s owner was voiced, after sacking, by former TV5 journalist Oleg Ignatyev, who said, „We all know what is a private company. There is also a good Russian saying ‘hozyain – barin’ or ‘the owner is the master’. For God’s sake! This is why I say that I wouldn’t have any problems if I was summoned and told: “Ignatyev, you stand in the way of us receiving money from a certain politician. It is either you accept a compromise or not. But when I came to work at TV5, I was promised that I would be able to work according to all normal journalistic principles. However, later I had a feeling that they were making a prostitute out of me while, at the same time, trying to still make me look decent” (Petrenko, 2011). Although cheap, sensational journalism attracts a large portion of the audience, from media professionals’ point of view journalistic quality is mainly associated with a level of demand. In the name of advertising interests, editors are easily persuaded to make changes to media content. This is how they understand loyalty to their employer, although it is common that advertisers’ interests (especially in cases of covert advertising) go against professional principles or even journalist’s terms of contract. When asked to characterize editorial independence, Ingus Bērziņš, the editor-in-chief at Delfi.lv, an Internet news site, stresses the advertisers’ positive influence on professional quality. Referring to the case with the rumors about problems at Swedbank, he mentions how the company’s advertising people appealed to Delfi to take into account how important an advertiser the bank in question has been for the website. „That made us think twice, wait, and double-check the information”, said I. Bērziņš. This is how he characterizes Delfi’s editorial ability to combine quality journalism with company’s commercial success.
This example shows different media strategies. Although in most cases commercial profit compels editors to give in to laying off staff, to transforming content for it to become more entertaining and comprehensible, the situation is not uniform. Despite a tendency of media secularization (Kunelius, 2009), in Latvia, there are still several commercial media organizations that manage to balance between journalistic quality and commercial success. Such organizations are, for example, ‘Žurnāls Santa’, ‘Cits medijs’ (owners of the weekly Ir and its online platform ir.lv), ‘Dienas žurnāli’. Journalists’ and editors’ views on audience interests are crucial to media quality. Major part of information on content’s receiver media professionals get from quantitative data that are used to attract advertisers and characterize medium’s audience structure. Therefore they reflect advertiser interests and show audience demographics, not its interests or needs (Rožukalne, 2009).

Since precise studies are not available, it is common for editors to base decisions on interpretation of quantitative data, assuming that bestselling press publications, TV and radio broadcasts with the highest ratings, and the most viewed Internet articles characterize the needs of the entire audience. Such attitude encourages one to perceive “communication with audience as informational flow, rather than meaningful process” (Brikše, Skudra & Tjarve, 2002: 100).

Because market data show the popularity of entertaining information presenting the lives of celebrities, media content gradually becomes dependent on these values. The amount of topics and formats that, according to quantitative data, are less popular goes down. However, if audience data are evaluated in more detail, it shows fragmentation of interests and media usage habits, i.e. the most popular content can attract just a quantitatively small part of audience. For example, the most popular TV programs are watched by about 15 per cent of all viewers (or 20-30 per cent of all the audience that is watching TV at the particular moment); press and Internet audiences show similar data. Nevertheless, media professionals, in hope of bigger audience attention, try to adapt content to thematically shallow and easily perceptible journalism.

Therefore content of different media basically serves the needs of a minority audience and realizes undifferentiated media functions. The needs of the rest of the audience to receive qualitatively different content are met in a limited amount. A notion of audience determined by commercial interests has created a paradoxical situation when “amount of information has increased, but its diversity is getting down” (Bird, 2009: 294). The abovementioned reasons can help answer the question of why many journalistic approaches and genres are disap-
pearing. Although under current circumstances of news redundancy the need for analysis and setting agenda priorities becomes more outspoken, journalists’ professional overload prevents them from offering an in-depth analysis. It is not uncommon for journalists to offer an opinion compilation as a piece of analysis. Journalists try to cover every event from the viewpoint of various experts, avoiding coming to their own conclusions.

This creates the so-called ‘opinion journalism’ formed by judgments and viewpoints, but without factual material what these views are based on. Due to lack of time and other resources, journalists are eager to use information and opinions initiated by public relation professionals, creating a situation where medium’s agenda is set outside its editorial office. A significant exception is the magazine Ir and its website ir.lv that regularly offer process analysis. There are also several powerful investigative journalistic projects created within Latvian media environment.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM: PROJECT APPROACH

By its response, media audience has shown its interest in the work of investigative journalists which is also commercially convenient from the point of view of media organizations. It was not a surprise that the commercial channel TV3, in 2007, took over the ‘De facto’ program team (after the conflict with the public broadcaster) to create the new ‘Nekā personīga’ (Nothing personal), which, according to TNS Latvia, is regularly among the top 10 of the most viewed broadcasts. News that cover journalist investigative reports also draw a lot of audience attention.

The investigative journalism in Latvia is developing in two directions. The main aim of the first is to expose the elite, that is why it appears as articles and reports that reveal unlawful acts and tries to force changes: dismissal of officials, decision-making transparency, responsibility for political processes. These examples of investigative journalism not only include facts, but also demonstrate material gathering process; therefore many stories show how journalists follow sources that are unwilling to testify or their concealed observation. By this, journalists can prove the authenticity of gathered material, and the form of presentation by staging a conflict between ‘good’ and ‘evil’ makes these journalistic stories entertaining.

The second approach to investigative journalism in Latvia is based on attempts to gather a larger amount of information about essential processes and evaluate their accordance to society needs, trying to find ways to excitingly present
data that have been gathered in a longer period of time. One of the most vivid examples is the Baltic investigative journalism center Re:Baltica’s study ‘Hot bills’ that tried to find an explanation to the difference in heating costs in different Latvian cities. In Re:Baltica studies new methods and software were used, which facilitates researches by finding invisible relations among a large amount of data, as well as visualizing them.

Re:Baltica work and its studies impact on media content testifies for changes in Latvian journalism’s organizational structures. Significant investigative projects are carried out outside the traditional media environment. Journalism becomes project-type work that is financed by means coming from outside an institution. These changes also influence journalists’ abilities to present projects, search for financial support, and realize project management.

Meanwhile, investigative journalism projects are also established by existing media organizations: LTV1 ‘De facto’, Latvian Radio program ‘Krustupunktā’ (‘Intersection’), Delfi news website (its study of the reasons behind Latvian economic crisis), several regional media.

Changes in investigative journalism are also demonstrated by establishment of various Internet websites. Pietiek.com (Enough) and kompromat.lv, the Latvian equivalents of Wikileaks, not only publish documents that expose officials (interrogation protocols, telephone call records and email correspondences, government officials’ tax returns, and bank account information), which have been acquired from different government agencies, but also aim to provide analytical articles and commentaries.

**JOURNALIST AS ‘UNIVERSAL WARRIOR’**

Information provided by journalists from different media organizations shows that during economic recession the number of media jobs went down by 15-25 per cent, and salaries were reduced by 25-40 per cent. In order to keep their jobs, media workers agreed to a drop in salaries. Only a handful of media remained their previous level of salaries. At the same time, amount of work increased and the payment principles changed, which meant receiving royalties for separate publications, rather than a monthly salary. Small salaries and author payments allow media management reduce the amount of payable taxes (in Latvia, one does not pay a social tax from author’s payments), which lowers journalists’ degree of social security.
Even in companies where along payments journalists receive a constant salary, professional relationships develop in two ways: first, social protection is minimal or there is none, and second, it increases the amount of tasks that are not paid for. More common payment model consists of a constant salary according to a contract (mostly it is the state-determined minimal salary or a bit bigger sum) and author’s payments (usually it makes 2/3 of an entire income). This model has a number of hybrids, for example, a fixed author’s payment as a compromise between the reduced social security and stable income.

It must be said that this is not the rule in every media organization; there are exceptions, although during the last years payment models have changed. Journalists are offered (in many cases without any choice) to suspend contracts and continue as partners, sign special contracts, or set up production enterprises. The change in the form of contracts does not affect the nature of work – journalists are still required to follow working guidelines, requirements, and deadlines. Media environment is looking for alternatives: journalists set up their own production companies and micro-enterprises in order to provide unique content; such a solution is used, for example, by the team behind the investigative program ‘Nekā personīga’ and other production teams which create particular products for TV channels. This form of partnership is more suitable for media whose content is dependent on projects. This model is possible in Latvia, however its success is made problematic because of the limited market and media competition.

After the recession, media market experiences a conflict between the demand and supply. Media organizations seek for workers with versatile skills, personal initiative, experience, and ability to independently solve difficult tasks. The keywords are speed, originality, and low costs, which shows media management’s strive to find a journalist – universal warrior. Some journalists who have spent some time unemployed or have worked outside media environment would like to return to their professions, yet do not want to go back to old work conditions, relationships, and payments. This characterizes the antinomy between the demands from media owners and the way some journalists professionally see themselves. Journalists become more likely to understand that, in the era of informational redundancy, when media content is filled with coverage of celebrities and extraordinary events, there are still a few socially important topics that need ‘professional journalists’ (Bird, 2009: 295). The mentioned changes and also those yet to come show that next few years will see crucial changes in Latvian journalistic quality and media system.
SUMMARY

Just like in other countries, Latvia has experienced essential changes in journalistic practice in 21st century. Watching traditional media audiences fragment and diminish, Latvian media professionals have also experienced something of global hysteria of what is the future of journalism.

The first answers to these questions were very superficial – journalists became part of celebration of consumerism and easily rejected the most essential professional principles since these principles were not deeply rooted in Latvian media tradition. Latvian journalists were ready to become celebrities themselves; they learned how to produce dramatic news and sensational headlines even if available information did not provide anything unique. However, the economic recession forced them to take a different look on the prospects of journalism and try to regain professional self-esteem and partially lost audience trust.

By evaluating these changes, it is possible to determine the following trends of journalistic development in Latvia:

(1) Public and social network idealization among journalists and media editors has come to an end. Media professionals understand that under the circumstances of informational redundancy the quality of content is crucially important. Still, information provided by bloggers and civic journalism activists is useful and can be used in finding new topics and sources, as well as increasing the versatility of entire content; it is also useful as a marketing tool.

(2) The pressure to be professional can be noticed by the reduction in digi-journalism. It is a paradox because every mass media organization develops a multimedia content, yet editors have understood that the skills to take pictures, film, record sound, and prepare text files are useful in emergency situation, while everyday journalism requires professionals not only to be able to manage different gadgets, but also to do that on a high level of quality.

(3) Under the conditions of smaller media market, media professionals search for new business forms and begin to offer the so called corporative journalism, where a journalist is also a business man, providing major media organizations with services. Journalists have understood that it is possible to combine a neutral viewpoint and an active approach to problem-solving, while not being politically influenced (Kunelius, 2009); this changes the value of objectivity: transparency of information gathering and content production becomes even more important.
Latvian journalists begin to acknowledge the importance of self-regulation, which is why, in 2010, Latvian Association of Journalists was established that came to be the adversary of Latvian Journalist Union, a passive organization that has been left from the Soviet times. Like in other countries, Latvian journalists understand that journalism’s future is unthinkable without journalists, but they will have to be even more clear that journalism concerns every one of us, “that journalists work best when they are professionally secure; and that diversity is essential to democracy” (Mosco, 2009: 350).

Latvian investigating journalism is experiencing a real revival, and it often sets agenda for other media. Investigative journalists become more active in applying technologies and programs that allow them to entertainingly present large amounts of information to wide audiences.

To attract audience, journalists have to invest more resources not only into production of content, but also into promoting it. Professional journalists and editors are used to constantly drawing attention to themselves in social networks, directly communicating, and reacting to audience’s opinions because “‘professional’ journalism has been placed in dialog with citizens with their own forms of journalism and in juxtaposition to alternative accounts readily available across national borders. Within these networks are embedded the deliberative spaces of democratic life”. (Reese, 2009: 362).

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