

Innovation Journalism: A French perspective

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Abstract

Presented as the intuitive name for journalism covering innovation, Innovation Journalism concerns primarily (but not only) innovation in technology and management (besides political and social issues among other). According to David Nordfors (2004)¹, InJo basically **covers technical, business, legal and political aspects of innovations and innovation systems to enhance the public debate** through better common knowledge and understanding of innovation issues. So in democratic industrial economies, journalism dedicated to covering innovation should be key. What about innovation journalism in France?

Here we propose to stress the issue of Innovation Journalism with a particular slant: rather than to analyze a regular issue about innovation and how journalists cover it, we prefer to **explore how French journalists face and cover innovation for their own craft and industry** – the hard news press (even if innovation is not a prevailing issue in this industry, some major ones exist). We therefore give a grounded picture of how French journalists cover innovation in the news media industry (new products, innovative practices and organizations, new way of thinking the profession, innovation management in journalism, discussion and diffusion of innovation issues in the industry, etc.)

We aim to provide an exploratory contribution rooted in our experience as journalist mixed with our current academic research based on long-term ethnographies and participant observations fieldworks in many newsrooms of French daily newspapers. Indeed we explore **how hard news journalists deal with some of the key innovation issues in news media**: from the basic ones such the implementation of a website as the central tool of the daily work in the newsroom to some more complex issues such the turn a traditional newsroom to a multimedia one or the search for a new business model... Those issues require an innovation-oriented mindset and practices for the journalists or at least an attention work for innovation issues. By exploring those issues we highlight that French hard news journalists – and their newsroom – are few oriented to cover innovation issues, even (or above all?) those they directly face in the media industry. Besides we point out the variables explaining this weak attention work (Nordfors 2006)² of journalists to cover innovation issues; we argue that some of the prevailing reasons are rooted in the organization of the French profession of journalist itself.

¹ Nordfors, D. (2004), "Why We Need Innovation Journalism, and Where It May Have a Market", *Innovation Journalism*, vol.1, n°3

² Nordfors, D. (2006). "PR and the Innovation Communication System", *Innovation Journalism*, vol.3, n°5

1 Introduction

Maybe the definition of Innovation Journalism coined and given by Nordfors (2004) could be not be better suited to highlight and point out the structural weaknesses of the French journalism and news media industry. Indeed Nordfors primarily underscores technology and management as the basic topics of interests of the InJo. As Eric Scherer, a journalist and currently Director of Strategic Planning and Partnerships at Agence France-Presse (the French press agency), mentions it, “finally we can say that French journalism has missed its two recent fundamental revolutions in the last decades: the managerial (and business) one – pictured by the failing of the daily newspapers business models as they appear now through the world – and the technological one (characterized here by the very slow implementation and use of new online tools within the newsrooms and the turn of it into a real multimedia newsroom).”³ Indeed we can state that the current turmoil that faces the French newspaper industry and journalistic craft mainly pertains to the business and managerial side and some technological issues.

Actually French journalism and newspaper industry, and especially the hard news press, faces a crucial period characterized by a major change (a revolution) leading this field and industry from a failing state to a new one which has to define a new sustainable model. We sum and basically represent this need for change as follows:

	“Old” model	“New” model
Business model	Collapse of circulation and advertising rates and flow	<i>Need to find new sources of revenues and create a new business model</i>
Organizational model	Vertical / Hierarchical Tenure and appointed job	Horizontal / Cooperation More freelance jobs and more distant relationship with the management
Relationship media / market	Clear separation and domination up-bottom	Direct and interdependence media and their audience
Technology	A medium for each media	Multimedia newsroom
Professional model	Egotist & self-centric on the writing and journalistic field	A work attention oriented towards market, more entrepreneurship model

Fig.1: major change in the journalistic industry (a first rough)

³ Interview with the author in July 2008; see also the insightful and heuristic reports authored by Eric Scherer, available on his blog: mediawatch.afp.com

In this paper we focus on how French journalists themselves cover the innovation (and thus especially the technological and managerial one) that appears in their newspaper industry. The basic question (and observation on which relies this paper) is the following⁴: we have to acknowledge that the hard news French press (the national daily newspapers and the weekly newsmagazines⁵) is few oriented to cover the innovation and even to cover the innovation issues in the newspapering and news media industries. We attempt here to draw the basic orientations and hypothesis to stress this question. We base our reflection upon two main data gathering process: our personal experience in the journalistic field⁶ and close observation (during about a year in all) of the daily journalistic practices in the newsrooms of three French major newspapers that allows us to ground our reflection not only academic studies but empirical data as well⁷. We are able indeed to express the deep feelings of the journalists in their daily practices and at the same time to distance ourselves from the field (in a double pair process of ‘objectivation’ and reflexivity⁸ required by the position of the researcher who inquires his peers, colleagues, and native profession).

Previously we need to represent the basic issues studied and the position of the journalists as described and inquired: journalist is a position of mediator between innovation process and actors, and the public opinion and (partly) the society.

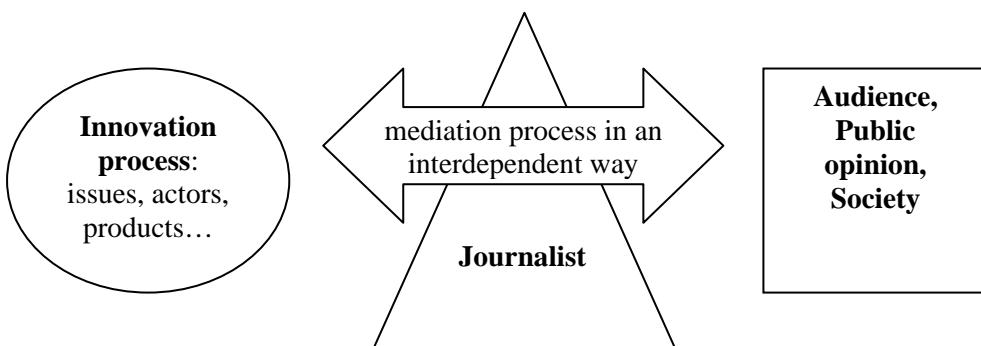


Fig.2: outline of the mediating role of the journalists in covering news and innovation

⁴ This paper is thus voluntarily designed to be mostly part-practitioner and part-academic paper

⁵ We include these both outlets since they represent the ‘aristocracy’ of the newspaper industry through their prevailing role and influence in the running the craft and the definition of its rules.

⁶ We spent about 10 years in the news field as journalist and business manager, plus 4 years as teacher in journalism and media schools and researcher specialized on journalism and newspapering issues.

⁷ The first one, named here ‘newspaper A’, is a paid daily, one of the oldest French media, counts about 80 tenure journalists in his newsroom and has a daily circulation around 100.000 issues ; the second one, ‘newspaper B’, is a free daily that appeared in Paris 6 years ago, has about 70 tenure journalists, has an about 780.000 issues circulation and runs a leading news websites in France; the third one, ‘newspaper C’, is a for-paid daily, publishes 7/7, counts about 300 journalists in all his numerous editions for a daily circulation around 530.000 issues.

⁸ Bourdieu, P. (1992). An invitation to reflexive sociology, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

It's important to remind this basic process in order to highlight that the role and the practice of journalist is not run in a one-way process: the attention of journalists is not focused nor attracted or pulled only by one side (innovation actors or the audience) but simultaneous by the both sides. Journalists have to be constantly aware of innovation issues in all the sectors (even if, of course, it's required that each journalist has to be specialized in one or some sectors, such as medicine, environment, technology, biotechnology, etc.) and – to an extent – aware of the expectations of the audience concerning the news about innovation.

This reminder is particularly useful to avoid a common mistake often used to explain how and why journalists don't cover innovation: this common but false explanation states that the audience is not really interested by news dealing with innovation (specifically in technology and science) and/or that such innovation usually doesn't match the media outlets' formats. We reject this basic and deterministic explanation since our observation and intimate knowledge of the journalistic craft don't find it relevant, and since this kind of explanation is based on a one-way relationship between innovation process and the audience where the journalist is no more an active mediator whose goal and job is to mediate information between both 'worlds'... Rather we mean that **journalists need to manage the double-way relationships between the both sides and we need to remind the nature of this process in our subsequent analysis (fig.2)**.

However have to acknowledge that the French hard news press is not much aware of innovation in many fields (especially in technology and management issues), and more particularly – concerning our research question – not much likely to cover innovation issues in news industry. Why?

We can sum the major explanations given by journalists and media managers:

- there is no fundamental or not identified demand for news about innovation from the audience,
- there is a lack of skills and primary interest among the journalists (except of course those who work in specific magazines focused on science),
- it's difficult to identify and detect the innovation in various fields,
- it's difficult to show and represent some of innovation which can't be formalized by a graph, a picture, a table or a text in a simple manner.

If those explanations could be heuristic concerning some specific issues about innovation in science or technology, we can't reasonably consider them worthy or prevalent in the specific case we inquire here.

Indeed journalists can't mobilize those four explanations since they know (or have to know) the evolution of their own field and consequently the major innovation occurring within it, they don't need high-level specific skills to understand and explain it, and finally we are not able to conclude that the specific audience (that includes journalists and newspeople) or the more general audience (the society or – at least – the general audience of each newspaper) are not interested by major innovation in this field...

2 The specific case of innovation in the newspaper and news media industry.

Thus we propose here to investigate how and why French journalists working in the hard news press are – more or less – reluctant to cover (a few) innovations occurring in their professional field for some years (or decades).

In this chapter we only emphasize the two prevailing innovative issues in the news industry in order to picture how much French journalists don't deeply cover it: in media technology, the implementation (and the turn to) of a multimedia newsroom, and in management, the innovative organizational design and ways to reform and change the newsroom and the practices inside it.

2.1 Technology: the turn to a multimedia newsroom?

Here we rely on recent fieldworks made in three French newspapers' newsroom to give insights about the implementation of technological innovation within those newsrooms and its reception by journalists who are primarily concerned by it.

In these three cases we are able to compare – to an extent – the development of websites of those newspapers towards a content that is more based on a 2.0 model and that requires a growing involvement of the journalists.

In the ‘newspaper A’, the aim concerning the development of the website and the involvement of journalists in a multimedia orientation is limited. Managing directors and journalists regularly claim the following statement: “we know that our website is quite poor developed and we need to give more resources – financial, devices, and human – to develop it but that's not our priority. Thus the turn of our newsroom in a multimedia one is not a primary objective.” However unless ambitioning to reach this ‘ultimate’ goal we observed in this newsroom that the (early) first steps toward an integration of the newsroom in a multimedia organization are not engaged: indeed the journalists are protected by an collective agreement – signed by all the journalists’ unions represented in the newspaper with the CEO – by which they can't be forced by the newsroom director to write on the website nor to collaborate with the online newsroom unit. Thus when a journalist produces some specific online content (it appeared sometimes) this is always and only as a “voluntary service” (based on journalist's own initiative). One of the days of our participant observation in this newspaper, we witnessed a very surprising (for a journalist) event: the new President of the French Republic gave a national speech around 8 p.m. and the editors-in-chiefs on duty have spent a part of the afternoon to look for a political journalist – belonging to the print newsroom – who would agree to stay longer at the office in order to comment in live this speech on the newspaper website (that would have been a new!) but no one has accepted to do this extra-time and extra-duty! The reporter who watched the speech on the TV

in the newsroom didn't want to write a paper for the both media: he just wrote the story for the print newspaper!

In the 'newspaper B', the case is different. If there is only one newsroom, led by the newsroom director, we noted that in fact the online unit and the print one work very differently and share less and less the same professional practices (we can state that two different professional and organizational cultures co-exist!) and especially have two different relationships with the multimedia culture and online journalism. Traditionally 'print journalists' consider online media as a threat for the journalistic values (it can blur the needed and expected time to check and verify basic information) and professional conditions (they see that their online colleagues working more than expected by their employment contract and consider they accept too much managerial innovation). Thus they basically are suspicious about those technological innovations because innovation is seen to carry on not only technology change but managerial and professional change as well.

In the 'newspaper C' we had the chance to observe the attempt (and the first steps) in implementing a multimedia newsroom! The early project has the – modest – ambition to (1) feed a specific online newsroom unit made up of young journalists mastering multimedia tools and online journalism, (2) based on this growing and succeeding website, infusing and diffusing step by step a multimedia culture to the whole newsroom, (3) at the same time more and more 'print' journalists received new smartphones to familiarize them to some multimedia tools and give them the ability to also produce specific online content (indeed some pictures and short videos). Despite this policy implemented and sustained by the new team of directors we noticed that a few journalists (and there is no distinction between the junior and senior journalists) adopt new tools and especially agree with this technological turn to the multimedia... Quite all journalists still remain in their traditional 'print' status without considering the online journalism as a promising adventure but rather as a major threat for themselves and their job! In defense of journalists we reckon that sometimes the editors-in-chiefs were not themselves involved in this project they are supposed to carry on and promote!

Those three major cases show that even in their own newspapers and newsrooms journalists are mainly reluctant to embark themselves in a major and deep technological change toward a multimedia newsroom. However we can consider – even as a journalist – this revolution in the technology of journalism is promising, exciting, we have to reckon that this 'enthusiasm' is not widely shared in the major French newsrooms... We attempt to outline the reasons of this reluctance below after stressing a second major innovative issue that leads – more or less – to the same findings: the managerial innovation in the French news media.

2.2 Management: the turn to a managerial change?

Another major innovative issue that concerns the French newspapering industry deals with management. For a couple of years, hard news press directors (shareholders, CEO...) claim that dailies have to be turned into a managerialization

process designed to redefine the prevailing logics that rule and run the business: in other words it means that newspapers and newsrooms ‘managers have to take in account more and more the business and financial goals and give to them a prevailing role to the detriment of the traditional rules pertaining to professional journalistic values and standards⁹.

The three cases we observed represent the three main models for daily newspapers involved – more or less – in this managerialization process:

- ‘newspaper A’ represent the archetype of the newspapers which are not (not yet?) clearly engaged in this managerial change: they are still run by the traditional professional logic (or institutional logics) dominated by the journalistic values, standards, ways of thinking, and norms. In this model marketing and modern management – if they have influence – remain secondary or nonexistent. The conflicts occurring in the newsroom are thus seldom a struggle between journalistic and managerial goals and the CEO is generally a journalist; if shareholders run the company under the financial and economic rules, the newsroom and journalists remain far from those business rules.

- ‘newspaper B’ is the ideal-type of the newspaper company which is divided or at least is torn between two competitive rules or logics (the traditional journalistic one and the new managerial one); in our case we observe that online newsroom unit and print one are no more run by the same logic. For instance the online team who run the website of this newspaper has created its own rules not only to design and run the website but also to “reinvent” the daily practices and norms, values and standards governing this new way of practicing journalism. Those innovations are rooted in the management: in this case observed we trace the roots of this new online model in strategic decisions mainly made by the CEO and shareholders and partly made by the online team founder and boss. The goal assigned was clear: the website has to become of the top audience-leading news websites in France and therefore has to raise his share in the business model by increasing revenues from the online product. Consequently some innovative rules and practices were defined and implemented compare to the team devoted to the print product: working in a closer relationship with the business team (however without blurring the Chinese wall between editorial and business sides), creating regularly new (editorial and advertising) features on the website, feed the website with fresh news as quick and often as possible, refresh and change the homepage every 2 or 3 minutes, create a new type of job (the front-page editor), etc. However those innovations create a separation in the newsroom between this innovative team which lives in a ever-

⁹ Lardeau, M. (2008). “The rising of the journalist-managers: changing institutional logics in the field of French journalism? Leads to analyze the change of the French daily hard news press business model”, paper presented to the 8th World Media Economics and Management (WMEM) Conference, Lisbon, May; Lardeau, M. (2008). “Managerialization and marketization in the media industry: journalist-managers, the mediators of institutional change in the French hard news press?”, paper presented to the 24th European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS) Colloquium, Vienna, July.

moving process and the team dedicated to the print product which is seen working slower and then slowly and less productive than the online team...

In an intuitive perspective we would have made the hypothesis that the whole newsroom would be inspired by this innovative breathe but our findings were counter-intuitive: indeed the innovative process has been stopped by a double decision made by the CEO: first he pushed a new management vision of the newsroom designed to rationalize its organization and running (with the second-step objective to reduce the role of the journalistic logic in shaping the daily work in the newsroom and in shaping the organizational and business model); second he has created the conditions conducive to the leaving of the people who were ‘the memory’ of the first years of the newspaper and who were the depository people, the holders of the journalistic logic that shape the daily life of the newsroom and the newspaper content until now... Indeed the first newsroom director and online unit chief (who introduce all the innovations for the website) have leaved because of fundamental disagreement with the CEO about the editorial strategic policy: they were opponents to the managerialization process initiated by the CEO in order to rationalize the newsroom running, to blur the Chinese wall between editorial and business sides, and to restrict the room of manoeuvre of the journalists...

- ‘newspaper C’ offers a third model that appears relating the managerialization process: the management of the company decides to change (in a top-down process) some of or all the structural variables that shape the daily run of the company, its organizational design and architecture, and sometimes until modify the business model and the professional model (of the journalism here). Consequently the newspaper top management needs to staff the crucial middle management level in the newsroom with some journalist-managers (journalists who have skills and intent to do this job which is sensitive and controversial) as ‘deputy newsroom unit chief’. We observed that the job of journalist-manager is not fully practiced, especially the managerial duties: rank-in-file journalists are not welcoming for the managerial duties, in particular when they have to be implemented by a journalist who advanced to this job and was a peer of the reporters... Therefore we observed (and experienced that in our professional background) that rank-in-file journalists are seldom directly opposed to their N+ 1 supervisor (the journalist-manager who advanced to the position of deputy newsroom unit chief) but they rather collectively organize themselves to create a kind of collective soft force of inertia that is powerful to annihilate the seldom managerial initiatives taken by middle or top management...

To sum we observed and experienced that in all those newsrooms rank-in-file journalists (and often with the – covert – assistance of the newsroom management and some editors-in-chief who have more to lose than to gain in implementing deep managerial change within the newsroom...) are opposed to major innovation in management and technology even if some of these innovations could have beneficial effects for the future of journalism and the sustainability of hard news press organizations...

3 Discussion: how explaining this reluctance to report innovation?

Given this acknowledgment how can we explain this reluctance of dailies' journalists to report innovation: innovation in the newspaper and news media industry and much broader in other fields?

The common explanation given by journalists themselves (and according received ideas) can be divided in two parts.

3.1 Economic and short-term reasons

The collapse of journalistic jobs and the dark forecasting lead the journalists to concentrate on the daily tasks and be (physically) present in the newsroom as much as possible (by this way they feel that their boss could be notice they work since they are present at their office in the newsroom¹⁰); consequently their attention work is less and less ready to be aware of interesting in covering innovation. Indeed covering innovation for a journalist differs from a more traditional news topic: this kind of news is not easily foreseeable, not so easy to be reported in a basic story, and above all covering innovation requires a specific mindset differing from the 'traditional' one for a journalist: this mindset need to be patient, to follow up folders on a long-term perspective, to be mind flexible and accept to regularly challenge his own ideas, ways of thinking, etc. Thus, specifically in a turmoil period, journalists prefer work on well-known, usual, and common issues rather than to live in the "uncomfortable mindset" required by covering innovation and then risking not to have a story to write each day (and consequently being considered by management and colleagues as a lazy journalist).

3.2 Structural patterns

Besides those economic reasons we outline structural ones pertaining to long-term and prevailing variables that shape the French journalistic field and then explaining the reluctance to widely cover innovation by hard news press journalists and especially to cover technological and managerial innovation in the newspaper industry.

¹⁰ Even if each journalist knows that the best reporting job requires to 'be on the field' (and then outside the newsroom) to gather data, information from the ground and their sources, some managers don't share this basic rule of the journalism. To sum we can state that when a journalist enter a empty newsroom, he says: 'well that means that my journalists are working since they search for information' but when manager (who is not journalist as well) does the same, he says: 'what! nobody works today and I pay my journalists to spent good time outside the newsroom'. Even this sketch could appear 'caricatured', I state it well sums up the basic misunderstanding between managers and journalists about the basic of the craft...

- first we mention that the sociology of French journalists shows that a few of them has an intellectual and/or educational background more favorable to be interested in innovation. Indeed most of them have a literary and a human and social sciences education: here we put the hypothesis (to be assessed in the future...) that this background is less favorable than a quantitative one (for instance in physics, mathematics, biology, medicine...) to give attention to innovation (especially in technology and sciences). Indeed we noticed that the few journalists (observed) specialized in fields more concerned by scientific innovation have a lot of difficulties to publish their stories about innovation: for instance w noticed that about a journalist specialized in bioethics and biotechnology for the ‘newspaper A’ and her colleague in the ‘newspaper C’ specialized on airspace and earth science seldom succeed in publishing stories about those high innovative fields. Moreover besides they specialize themselves in other news fields in order to be able to publish quite a story a day...

- second we point out that the education and training given to the future journalists in the journalism schools are partly responsible for this lack of attention to the innovation issues. Indeed we don’t really train the students to give attention to innovation (especially in technology and science, even about environment issues or ‘green business’) but rather we teach the state-of-art of the craft and the common tools, ideas, and ways allowing to enter the profession after graduation...

- third we experienced and observed that newsroom directors hire journalists who share the same profile: more or less, quite all journalists who compose the French newsrooms of dailies offer the same sociological profile (they belong to the middle-class and come from it), they share the same educational background (most of them are graduated from a university in sociology, political science, history, literature, and quite all the junior reporters are coming from one of the 12 accredited j-schools which offer the same curriculum and deliver the same education!) and consequently they have – more or less – the same way of life... Indeed it’s seldom today to meet a journalist working in those dailies who is a self-made-(wo)man, with no university background, and who is eccentric and whose life and working practices are out of the beaten tracks...

- moreover journalists and their management don’t work on how changing the formats or forms of stories in order to publish more easily stories on technology innovation requiring

Thus this high homogeneity in the newsroom doesn’t favor brainstorming and innovative ways to cover... innovation in newsrooms but rather the development of the pack journalism (the tendency of news reporting to become homogeneous and produce consensus about news gathering, selecting, and commenting through all the news media).

This lazy journalistic approach has another terrific consequence about journalism: the Public Relations and Marketing consultants and firms’ services have developed some tools and ways of working in order to bring to journalists the news they don’t gather themselves... Of course those packaged news are built according to marketing principles and objectives and don’t fit with journalistic principles. Nowadays we can particularly notice that concerning news about green business

and environment (climate change, pollution, etc.) and journalists reckon it's quite impossible to gather news and information outside the PR and marketing influence...

This lazy journalistic approach on general innovation issues is also governing the approach of innovation in newspaper and news media industry. To illustrate this point we only highlight two specific issues:

- for a couple of years many journalists have left their traditional newspapers to create their own news organization (like their US colleagues do to create for instance Propublica, The Politico, the Huffington Post, etc.) to publish new online (and sometimes print) outlets. Among those many launchings we can outline some real innovations: new business models (even if no new online business model is sustainable yet, the innovative process to create and attempt to find 'something new' is worthy of interest), new organizational models (in which working relationships between managing founders and 'rank-in-file' journalists are more on a horizontal dimension than a vertical hierarchical one), new (more critical and independent) way of dealing with and commenting the news, etc. All those innovative issues pertaining to technology, management and business, and profession, and directly concern the future of journalism; however the traditional hard news press doesn't cover a lot those innovations except to announce their launching and report some of their problems!

- another case has to be noted: for about a decade the whole French journalistic profession knows that it has to deeply change its business, organizational, and professional model which are getting less and less relevant and sustainable (the decline of readership and advertising revenues is slow but constant...); however the French journalistic craft has never organized large debate on how to solve those declines and the possible ways to redefine the failing model for a sustainable one. It could be partially explained by the following reasons: there is no national professional order or association that regulates the field (French journalists are traditionally reluctant to be regulated by a regulatory body and like to feel themselves independent, autonomous...) and even if some professional associations of journalists regularly organize meetings and conferences about the state and the future of the profession, no fundamental change has been triggered. Because of this procrastination in the journalistic field the initiative to trigger change came from... the politics and the President of the Republic! Indeed this is the new elected French President of the Republic who decided in mid-2008 to organize a huge conference¹¹ dedicated to gather all major members of the journalistic craft and force them to announce some practical decisions to involve the print press in a change process!

Despite this major event – which has to be criticized given its political origin blurring once again the independence between both worlds – issues discussed during its meetings – and outside, in the newspapers' contents – were not issues about innovation on technology and business! Most of discussions and

¹¹ 'Les Etats Généraux de la Presse écrite': www.etatsgenerauxdelapresseeecrite.fr

recommendations were focused on the political side of this event and on secondary issues; they thus finally tend to reproduce the current patterns shaping and running the journalistic field (see for instance the decision sustaining and reinforcing the system by which central State partly directly finances some of newspapers with low advertising revenues and indirectly with buying some advertising space to do the promotion of the Government policy!) rather than investigating the innovative products and process occurring in new online organizations and new print ones. Assessing those innovations in journalism would have been the first task and goal of these ‘Etats Generaux de la Presse’ which objective and stakes was to “*initiate the adaptation of the print press to its new environment in an uncertain and highly evolving context, and in order to this print press remains alive, vibrant, pluralistic, and independent.*”¹²

To sum this part we pointed out the structural reasons explaining why dailies’ and hard news press journalists so few cover innovation, not only in various fields but also innovation in news media. Those explanatory variables are mainly located in the journalistic craft itself (its running rules, its high homogeneity, etc.) and not primarily in the audience (there is no grounded study showing that audience and readership is not interested in innovation news and issues) neither in the innovative fields...

Given this situation can we find some ways or solution showing that covering innovation is however possible.

4 Conclusion: so, is there nevertheless any solution to cover innovation?

We notice that covering innovation (and in particular innovation in media) appears more common on new online media (news websites or blogs) than in traditional print press. What does it mean concerning our research question?

In one hand this notification is congruent with some variables described above: since most of traditional practices and ways to do journalism are partly replaced by other ones in online outlets, journalists cover news with a more innovative slant (more or less); furthermore online forms and formats are not so restricting than the print one and thus journalists are less constrained in covering news and innovation (in terms of length, forms, number and recurrence of issues, etc.).

Another finding that is congruent with the basic knowledge could be found in the fact that bloggers and online journalists who don’t work for a well-known newspaper are less connected to the PR and marketing organizations and then fewer dependants from those press releases. We can assume (hypothesis needed to

¹² <http://www.etatsgenerauxdelapressecrite.fr/lenjeu/?lang=fr&mode=1>

be assessed) that since those journalists are away from the PR industry and remain in an outsider status, their attention could be more focused on uncommon news issues and then on innovation issues...

In other hand we also assume that covering innovation best suited with an entrepreneurial context. We mean that most of journalists who recently created new online news organization or n innovative print outlets could do that because they left their print newsroom – where it's barely impossible to innovate by creating new products or new ways of working inside their primary newspaper. For instance the following case is illustrative: the four journalists who created the news website – pure player – rue89.com had proposed a similar project to the director of the newspaper they worked for; because it was refused they decided to leave their job tenure in order to be in an entrepreneurial position forcing them to innovate and create a new successful product within a working business and organizational model! Even they didn't find the successful business model yet, they have the virtue of attempting to create something new in the media landscape, in particular the professional model, a pro-am model blending work of professional journalists, citizen journalism, and experts.

Finally we would to shortly present one of the most innovative media launching in France: the magazine or review *XXI*¹³. This case is worthy to study since the successful launching of this journalistic review in 2008 is breaking quite all the rules that shape and run the press.

First this is a *print* review (stories are not available on the website of the review) and is printed on an expensive quality printing paper.

Second its *format* is uncommon and totally new (in France): an Italian (oblong) format which voluntary range the review between books and magazines; therefore the review is only available in bookshops and not in newsstands like the rest of the print press.

Third the *length* of stories is very important (about 20-30 pages for each)

Fourthly the *content* is mainly made by investigating reports (that require an immersion on the field and long-term investigation) and develops in each issue a report or a journalistic story which is written in the form of a comic strip (!).

Fifthly the both creators (a book publisher and an investigating reporter who worked for a major French daily newspaper) defined a *business model* blending a strong editorial perspective with a relevant reflection on business and economics side of this review.

Finally they voluntary left their paid employee job to be in an *entrepreneurship* position fitting better with innovation. By this way they give the evidence that a journalist is able to create a news business and be an entrepreneur (in contrary to a widely common statement that shapes the mindset of journalists...)

¹³ www.leblogde21.com

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