

Innovations on Online Journalism: Discussing Social Business Design Models

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The main focus of this paper is the analysis on how social business recent management proposals fit to a media/journalistic business environment. The discussion was based on three research questions focusing on: the drivers and the constraints of disruption innovation strategies; the adequate social business design framework to promote innovation; and an evaluation over the practices/experiences related to disruption, innovation, and creativity in journalistic businesses. A conceptual framework the Latour/Law Actor-Network Theory (ANT) has been taken as. Six possible dimensions of action to make this framework valuable some successful practices have also been identified, and in this paper the authors view over these concepts. The main conclusion goes through the understanding of journalistic culture and legitimacy embedded for centuries over society, and to change this will depend on multiple enablers.

Keywords: disruptive innovations, journalistic culture, social business, social technologies, business design models

Since Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has emerged as a paradigm for the way to inform and communicate in society, journalism and journalists are struggling against major transformations that widely affect identity, legitimacy, structure, business model, audience behavior, and forms of relationship with the society.

It was remarkable the 2006 video E.p.i.c and its opening phrase *it is the best of times, it is the worst of times...* referring to Journalism's future; also remarkable 2009 Clay Shirky's article forcing publishers to *think the unthinkable*, where he affirms that changing times leads to an inversion of perception:

The unthinkable scenario unfolded something like this: The ability to share content wouldn't shrink, it would grow. Walled gardens would prove unpopular. Digital advertising would reduce inefficiencies, and therefore profits. Dislike of micropayments would prevent widespread use. People would resist being educated to act against their own desires. Old habits of advertisers and readers would not transfer online. (Shirky, 2009, online)

Almost 10 years after, now in 2014, journalistic industry is still facing the same scenario: publishers and the industry as whole seeking "the" solution, which could keep their legitimated social and technological status—well controlled and quite profitable, where industry, audience needs, social and technological issues, and social media innovations act in a completely different way related to information and communication consumption.

And yet, researchers, analysts, and experts are spreading words of hope through media industry as the

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magazine editor Ann Friedman states: “this is the best moment to be in journalism. The old stuff isn’t come back, but it is okay” (Friedman, 2013, online). Friedman points some concrete and positive reasons: Journalists access to a world of sources, audience access to a world of media, journalist direct access to audience and a chaotic environment nurturing creativity. Considering all these opportunities, Friedman advises: “the sooner journalists start seeing disruption and technology as opportunity, the better off we’ll all be” (Friedman, 2013, online).

Innovation and disruption with creativity were always presented as media industry’s mantras, the best practice to face technological killer applications changes. But, at the same time, for many media businesses and professionals, these mantras are still being a threaten or at least a burden.

Considering these media industry key moments, and all actions and reactions journalistic businesses had attempted to face them, it is valuable to investigate the core reasons, motives, and constraints that lead the industry to an innovation dilemma (as Clayton Christensen’s concept, 1998).

Many and referral investigations are now pointing this discussion—The Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia University and The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University initiatives and projects; researchers like Boczkowski (2004), Domingo (2008), Hermida and Thurman (2008), Picard (2011), and also independent USA’s initiatives like the American Press Institute, Times Company, Deseret News Company, Digital First Media, and NPR’s journalist Andrew Carvin.

Since the last three years, research group COM+¹ at the Journalism Department, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, is discussing and working (as one of the research themes) on which could be the innovation character, and how it promotes changes and strategies over journalism as a whole, and especially over the major Brazilian media businesses.

At this paper, it intends to present part of this discussion, based on an exploratory research, and analyzes some journalistic business experiments as an answer to the following research questions:

RQ1: Which are the drivers and the constraints to a disruption innovation strategy on journalistic businesses?

RQ2: Is the social business design framework adequate to promote innovation on contemporary media businesses?

RQ3: How successful are the practices/experiences related to disruption, innovation, and creativity in journalistic businesses?

To answer these research questions on an exploratory basis the paper will present the recent literature review, analyze selected practices of success relating them to the social business design framework, and propose at heoretic model to sustain the predictable changes.

A Brief Scenario of Digital Journalism Technological Innovations

First of all, understanding what kind of innovation the authors are talking about is basic to his analysis. According to Bustos and Uranga (2011),

definitions of innovation different from those inspired by Schumpeter and market logic might be considered, such as defining innovation as new forms, as new procedures or ways of acting that contribute to obtaining social or other kinds of results (not necessarily economic ones). (p. 6)

¹ COM+, Digital Communications and Journalism Research Group, <http://grupo-ecausp.com/commais/>

This wider concept fits to industries related to communication and cultural areas, among others, as Bustos and Uranga (2011) argues. Some authors label this industry as creative industry. Besides the label, creativity and innovation are interdependent concepts: The first refers to the act of producing new ideas, ways of thinking and/or ways of approaching actions or activities; however, innovation requires, in addition to the generation of new ideas (the creative act), the application of those ideas in a specific context.

As so, the author states:

innovation activities cannot fail to include those that entail significant changes in the sphere of consumption via the Internet, as well as the use of unprecedented new forms of advertising, or new visions and uses of technology in art, and so on. (Bustos & Uranga, 2011, p. 7)

All the 1990's innovation wave brought to journalistic business, and also to its education field, a huge volume of new processes, newsroom procedures, CMS's—Content Management Systems, aggregation tools, narrative forms, and many other platforms and devices. At the same time, the content of online editions was based on already published material, slightly adapted to the new medium.

From that initial wave till now, through a process of continual change, geographical and cultural boundaries are blurring; businesses are more and more connected; and relationships between users, workers, workplaces are flourishing. Information became a valued good and the technology used in its production and dissemination has been radically changed.

On these early years, media businesses, specially the journalistic one, had experienced the rising of digital mediums and a complete change on the printed due technological and behavioral reasons. According to Khattak, Nasir, and Sultan (2012):

“For years, publishers of newspapers, magazine and other print products have been fascinated with the idea of delivering information electronically. In contrast to conventional printing on paper, delivery by computer and other means seemed to offer several benefits both the producer and consumer.

Second, information could be disseminated to readers more quickly that it could be in printed publication. The bulk of information on a daily newspaper is at least 12 hour old; articles in a monthly magazine are often written three or four months before they are published.

During the next decade, publications turned to several other means of delivering information electronically. Some hooked up with online services as CompuServe and America Online. Other experimented with fax editions and computer bulletin boards. A range of media companies tried their hands at producing CD-ROMs, delivering information by satellite and e-mail and a number of other methods. (p. 259)

The authors had listed a bunch of devices and services used by newsrooms like decentralized printing, tasting methods, TV and newspaper integration, newspapers adapting to cope with the new media; and specially on 2000 early years they focused on group collaboration, discussion forums, weblogs, computer graphics and animations.

Most of these innovations are related to technological infrastructure and some of them related to the newsroom process and its journalist's skills. But, in an amazing pace, technologies evolved, many of them became obsolete and were replaced by new and more conversational ones.

Some media industry and academics, since the 1950s and 1960s, are facing technology and new media innovations as an absolutely fascinating change or something a terrifying one by others. To the author's days, technological, media, and social determinism are being the focus of debates, decisions, strategies, and

regrets.

The following years after 2003-2005 with Web 2.0 format, journalism's technological scenario was affected by the use of dynamic search engines like Google, social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, increasing use of images via YouTube and Vimeo. Audience's behavior change through a more participatory and conversational way, citizen journalism, crowdsourcing, databases, semantics, etc. At the same time, management issues like business models, paywalls, games, tools, information architecture, community, and product management became part of a newsroom routine, revealing a new range of skills, attention, and worries.

As Alexandra Starks affirms: "Our potential to do what is now considered a 'good job' has dramatically decreased due to technological changes, reduced pay and transformations in user behavior" (2012, online).

It is possible to remark that technological change on journalism brought a different perspective to businesses and professionals, categorizing as "technology" many others issues beyond computers, hardware, software, and systems. Audience, economy and technology as itself became a wide interconnected field that emerges as "new technologies" for Journalism, claiming a different kind of impact to the industry.

Mark Deuze had defined this scenario:

Even though the impact of new technologies in the news industry is varied, two general conclusions can be drawn: the process increases demand for and pressures on journalists, who have to retool and diversify their skillset to produce more work in the same amount of time under ongoing deadline pressures for one or more media. A second conclusion must be that technology is not a neutral agent in the way news organizations and individuals newswriters do their work—hardware and software tend to amplify existing ways of doing things, are used to supplement rather than radically change whatever people were already doing, and take a long time to sediment into the working culture of a news organization. The contemporary drive towards some kind of convergence across two or more media thus tends to offer little in terms of radically forms of journalism or ways in which to gather, select or report the news. (Deuze, 2008, p. 11)

Deuze's statement gives the basis to propose and go deeper into one of the objectives of this paper: to identify a different role to "new technologies" and its innovations for contemporary journalism. The non-neutrality of technologies put in perspective the human and management characters of news organizations, playing an important role of understanding, applying and funding innovations.

Paul Bradshaw had published a series on his Online Journalism Blog about this same argument. He affirms that new technologies had changed our society but not so radically as many pundits predicted. All the innovations did not make journalism less important to societies and were absorbed as one more evolving stage. Bradshaw, like Deuze, focuses the technological impact on journalism in three main assets: multimedia, hypertext, and interactivity. All of them remarked by researchers since the digital era emergence. What is new on Bradshaw's view is an interesting concept compilation around the three main assets (see table 1):

Although the compilation shows some overlaying concepts, it is possible to envision new and different forms of technologies that are ruling newsrooms and organizations by now.

Along the same Bradshaw's line, it is important to consider innovations inside the core expertise of journalists: the narrative shaped by a multimedia form. This is the kind of innovation that occurs due the

professional and his personal skills to create contents exploring the three main assets discussed above. According to Ureta (2011, p. 132), “the content sphere represents a real terrain of applied creativity (innovation) in online journalism.”

At last, it is possible to look at all the industry movements since the 1990’s and make sense to the innovation strategies adopted. It is common to find literature and analysis considering this period as a disruption one. Refereeing professor Clayton Christensen and his ideas on the innovator’s dilemma, it is possible to discuss about the understanding that journalistic industry gave to terms as innovation and disruption. In a common sense, innovation could be understood as the creation of better or more effective products, processes, services, technologies or ideas that became useful to society.

Table 1

Digital Journalism Main Assets

Hypertext	Interactivity	Multimedia
Archival	Figurational	Convergence
Contextualization	Immediacy	Hypermedia
Ubiquity	UGC	
Transparency	Participatory Journalism	
Memory	Civic Journalism	
	Personalization	
	Wikijournalism	
	Crowdsourcing	

Christensen (1998) had identified two major types of innovation: the sustaining—an innovation that does not affect existing markets; and the disruptive—an innovation that creates a new market by applying a different set of values which ultimately (and unexpectedly) overtakes an existing market. Sustaining innovations could be evolutionary—an innovation that improves a product in an existing market in ways that customers are expecting, or revolutionary or radical—an innovation that is unexpected, but nevertheless does not affect existing markets.

A firm could choose the innovation strategy for its purposes considering some key factors: the pace of progress, the market awareness for a new need, the company structure, and its willing of investment and risk taking on their choices. Christensen offers a bunch of cases and examples of success and failures, all of them standing out culture’s company as key to define value, which leads to disruption.

As so, for the journalistic (and maybe all media) industry, it is determinant to consider different cultures, different notions of values and different managerial publishers styles to evaluate how innovative a news organization could be.

Effectively, the three assets—hypertext, interactivity, and multimedia—could be considered disruptive as they truly created a new market and new relationships with audience. But, there are considerable differences about the concepts each asset produces. Differences related to the core business and core culture of a media brand; related to the social and economic environment where it operates. Maybe phrases like “new technologies, old practices” could express a significant part of the scenario.

Innovations in Journalism: The Business Design and Actor—Network Theory Framework

Till now, it is possible to remark that innovation is understood in many different views by many different media brands worldwide. Although digital technology and its tools and systems are predominant, there were innovations on newsroom processes, narrative structures and on the relationship with audiences via social media tools.

Even though, innovation still seems a key and unsolvable issue for the industry. Many times, publishers and journalists had considered innovations as something punctual and technical, directly related to an economic payoff, without any intervention on journalism identity and professionals attitudes. Until revenues downfall due to the radical change of audiences behavior to access news and information via social ambiances, innovation began to be considered as a continuous process and an organizational state-of-mind.

It is quite important to understand and assume that, besides the industry character, there is a long path between an ideation process that could create additional or new values to the company, and the execution of this idea as a better or new product/service.

Innovation could be understood as the capability of an organization to manage activities, resources, and people skills from ideas and insights to building and testing processes/products/services results. The question is how media businesses are now experiencing this kind of process.

As different researchers proposals, innovations strategies adopted by any organization will lead to an uncertainty environment. This scenario is called the innovation paradox where the organization must face, simultaneously, evolutionary and revolutionary minds: “the reality is that strategy is about making choices under competition and uncertainty. No choice made today can make future uncertainty go away. The best that great strategy can do is shortening the odds of success” (Kastelles, 2013, online). A second question that emerges is how media businesses could support uncertainty and make strategic choices facing the web 2.0 characters.

To answer these questions there are many different points of views proposed by media management researchers and experts. Almost all of them, as Robert Picard states, are related to a cultural shift and changing media ecology:

The difference is between the functions of traditional media. One function is just information, what’s happening, what’s out there. That doesn’t require a great deal of training, it requires the ability to gather information and convey it in a reasonable way. Journalists have done that historically for about 200 years because nobody else was doing it. But then there’s the news function which is really looking at society and saying here’s the range of information, here’s some issues and things we need to focus our attention on and here’s some things to think about—and that requires training. So what I think will happen in the years to come is that journalists will start moving out of the general information function and move more directly into this function that requires a group of practices of how to ensure you’re actually conveying very good information. (Picard, 2013, online)

It could be said that the cultural shift proposed by Picard would find echoes on what is called “social business” state-of-mind for organizations whose core business are directly related to translate people’s needs and issues. We can state that journalism businesses could be characterized as social businesses. Presently, social business is more discussed among organization consultants and innovative companies, and slightly among media companies. Rachel Miller, a consultant on organizational communication, states that:

Social business is about adapting the way in which an organization delivers its mission and pursues its vision by designing the organization around influence flows, connecting: its people, partners, customers, and other stakeholders; data, information and knowledge in and all around it [...] more openly, productively, and profitably with the application of social web, big data and related information technologies. (Miller, 2013, online)

A recent IBM's report discusses the current organizational working arena, facing simultaneously a number of macro-economic trends, such as compressed and highly volatile economic cycles, a shift of power in commercial relationships from sellers to buyers, and the continued development of an increasingly global, distributed workforce. IBM proposes a social business culture to support this dynamics:

A social business is an organization whose culture and systems encourage networks of people to create business value. Social businesses connect individuals, so they can rapidly share information, knowledge and ideas by having conversations and publishing informal content. They analyze social content from multiple channels and sources, in addition to structured data, to gain insights from both external and internal stakeholders. When those things happen, innovation and business execution rates increase, better decisions are made, and customers and employees are more engaged and satisfied. Social businesses enjoy lower operating costs, faster speed-to-market, improved customer and employee engagement, and increased profitability. (IBM, 2013, p. 3).

IBM's white paper lists six patterns as value-production actions over the business process flow, which could enhance the social culture and provide more proximity between organization and audience's needs and expectations. These are: finding expertise, gaining external customer insights, increasing knowledge sharing, improving recruiting and on-boarding, managing mergers and acquisitions, enabling and improving workplace safety.

For each pattern, IBM recommends a bunch of actions, most of them related to capture, processing and using data information from the stakeholders around the business; and also related to using these data on engaging and contextualizing actions to these publics.

One of our core points of discussion on this paper is to evaluate if social business proposals fit with a media/journalistic business environment, currently characterized as much as "the best and the worst of times". The authors assume this present scenario; it indicates that the journalistic business goes in a state of flux, creating the basic conditions to experiment social business patterns as means to promote an innovative environment.

A study conducted by Spyridouetalli et al. (2013) confirms that it is not viable to investigate innovations in journalism based on a technological determinism vision. As the authors propose:

The impact of technological innovation and relevant tools tends to be investigated through a social constructivist approach. Journalism is perceived as a social phenomenon rooted in and shaped by professional, organizational and economic factors. Empirical attempts to investigate the adoption of technology and newsroom innovation have stressed different agents and conditions influencing the manner in which new technologies are embedded into journalistic practices. (Spyridouetalli et al., 2013, p. 78)

Actor Network Theory (ANT), originally proposed by Latour (2005) and Law (1999), seems to be an adequate conceptual and methodological framework to sustain a social business approach proposal to think about innovation in contemporary journalistic companies, and goes through a social constructivist approach.

Although ANT was originally designed under the scientific knowledge and environment to study

technology and the construction of technological artifacts, its concept had been expanded to other fields: “its focus had been also broadened from the production of knowledge towards agents, social institutions, machines, economic markets and organizations to form a comprehensive theory” (Elbanna, 2009, online). Connecting ANT to media environments is useful for understanding the ways society and specifically audiences relates to technology, offering an interesting view to create innovative content services directly related to audience needs or aspirations.

Spyridou et al. (2013), Saad Correa (2012), Luoma-aho and Ari (2010), Plesner (2009), Langlois et al. (2009), Domingo (2008) are some of the researchers who proposed the use of ANT in journalism innovation. For ANT, every element (persons, institutions, material artifacts) related to a technological innovation is an actor in the process of defining it: while human actors propose definitions of a technology, material actors may limit the spectrum of possible definitions with their own material limitations. Actors are part of a network of relationships that shape the innovation. Spyridou et al. (2013, p. 79) had proposed a parallel between ANT principles and journalism, which inspired us to build the following chart (see the Table 2):

Table 2

ANT and Journalism Theoretical Relationships

ANT	JOURNALISM
The relations among actors are simultaneously material (between things) and semiotic (between concepts).	Within a network of different agents, both human and non-human, all undergoing constant translation, that the embedding of new technologies can be more rigorously analysed and understood.
Different actors negotiate their attributes, roles, and goals in order to reach a specific outcome—a translation process.	Journalism is conceptualized as a complex network of actors, all negotiating with and for and against one another.
The concept of intermediaries and mediators: An intermediary is a network entity of minor importance, while mediators exercise greater influence as they can “transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry”.	Within this network of human and non-human actors, journalists can act either as intermediaries or mediators, and translate the network, meaning affect the practice and outcome of the network (the journalistic product) by negotiating with other human actors (for instance, other journalists, editors, technical staff, users) as well with non-human actors, such as technologies, tools, knowledge and skills, structures, protocols and rules.
The interplay among different networks—perceived in terms of different actors and their relationships—produce patterns, generating and reproducing hierarchies, organizations, agents, and order.	Journalists are a group of professionals operating within a specific journalist culture “manifest in the way journalists think and act; it can be defined as a particular set of ideas and practices by which journalists, consciously or unconsciously, legitimate their role in society and render their work meaningful for themselves and other”.
Social order can be disrupted either because of order resistance or due to novel actors contesting existing hierarchies and the networks’ power relations.	

Notes. Based on Spyridou et al. (2013, p. 79).

The ANT-Journalism matrix demonstrates a viable correlation with social business patterns. For instance, the current media pattern of increasing knowledge sharing could be founded on ANT’s interplay among different networks, with journalists acting as intermediaries/mediators.

These two related conceptual approaches allow to state that changing culture and using of technological digital tools for mediation/intermediation are key and deterministic conditions to innovation.

Based on this approach, it can also be inferred that many of actions, changes, and proposals, which are presently playing in the media business arena, couldn't be considered as innovation in journalism.

As shown in this theoretical framework people, culture and organization ambiance are key issues to analyze media innovative strategies based on ANT and social business. As so, the authors proposed the following hypothesis for this study:

H1: Although the non-deterministic media technology character, human actors do not establish a coherent relationship with the non-human actors due the innovation's uncertainty character.

H2: Traditional media businesses are facing a paradox: the need to promote a shift to a more social business culture and, at the same time, a decreasing competence to translate and dialogue with new audience's information needs.

H3: The innovation process in the media business is multidimensional, non-uniform, and social-organizational-culture dependent.

These proposed hypotheses infer some actions or movements made by media businesses to seek what we call on the next item renewed media ecology:

H1: there is an unbalanced pace between innovation absorption and dissemination;

H2: new players, less related to journalistic origins, are more flexible to the new media environment;

H3: questions of the differences and uniqueness's of media industry.

The following items are dedicated to verify these hypotheses.

The Recent State of Media Businesses Innovative Strategies: Towards A Renewed Media Ecology

As remarked on this paper beginning, during 2012 three reports were publicized among academic researchers, media consultants, and media managers, emphasizing that innovation are directly related to a huge changing process of culture, professional profile, and business strategies. Literature references are favoring the emergence of a new (or renewed, as better) media ecology. Its contents could be considered a first sign that our hypotheses have some adherence to the media businesses move.

Post-Industrial Journalism (Anderson, Bell & Shirky, 2012), published by The Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia University; Be the Disruptor (Christensen & Skok, 2012), published by The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University; and Herding the cats: How to lead journalists in the digital age (Saarikoski, 2012), published by Reuters Institute for Study of Journalism could be considered, as a whole, the turning point to all media managers and journalists.

Although the reports' analysis was focused on the American and European markets and cultures, they offer some common bases applied to media businesses worldwide: the reinforcement of journalism institutions playing a vital role in the democratic process and the rooting for their survival; a business model failure related to a false choice between today's revenues and tomorrow's digital promise; the need of adapting to a world where the people formerly known as the audience are not readers and viewers but users and publishers will mean changing not just tactics but also self-conception.

First of all, it is important to make clear the difference and, at the same time, the relationship between disruption and innovation concepts: *Disruptors are innovators, but not all innovators are disruptors*. Clayton Christensen, from Harvard Nieman Foundation, bases all his researches and theories over this co-relation since

he had published *The Innovator's Dilemma* (1998).

As the author states: “disruption displaces an existing market, industry, or technology and produces something new and more efficient and worthwhile. It is at once destructive and creative” (Christensen, 1998, p. 12). Innovation and disruption are similar in that they are both makers and builders. Disruption takes a left turn by literally uprooting and changing how we think, behave, do business, learn and go about our day-to-day.

Innovation could support hundreds of definitions. To make it simple; an innovation occurs when something fresh (new, improved or evolved) creates a new value to an existing market or industry. Generally it involves creativity—a human ability. Disruption carries the innovation process as a whole to a new market or industry, creating a novel value chain.

Translating Christensen's disruptive innovation concept to the journalism business arena, the industry is facing, during the recent years, a remarkable wave of new entrants that are scaling up leadership by offering to a digitalized audience new forms of content and social relationship. *The Huffington Post*, *BuzzFeed*, *Reuters Social Pulse* are good examples. According to Christensen and Skok (2012),

new entrants to a field establish a foothold at the low end and move up the value network—eating away at the customer base of incumbents—by using a scalable advantage and typically entering the market with a lower-margin profit formula. (p. 6)

Tow Center's report proposes that the pathway to disruption is to build a new media ecosystem, exploring and discovering opportunities beyond the traditional business model that drives the existing value network of news consumption. The “real world” of mobile and apps possibilities, readers' proximity to content production and decentralization of newsroom process is key to this new ecosystem understanding:

That pipeline model is still central to the self-conception of many institutions in the news business, but the gap between that model and the real world has grown large and is growing larger, because the formerly separate worlds of the professionals and the amateurs are intersecting more dramatically, and more unpredictably, by the day. [...] The main effect of digital media is that there is no main effect. The changes wrought by the internet and mobile phones, and the applications built on top of them, are so various and pervasive as to defeat any attempt to understand the current transition as a single force or factor. To understand this as a change to the ecosystem, it helps to have a sense of where the changes are showing up, and how they interact. (Anderson, Bell & Shirky, 2012, pp. 77-78)

Reuters Institute report explores key aspects of journalists' skills and abilities as their creativity and leadership to assume and lead the current transformations. Saarikoski (2012, p. 5) justifies this emphasis: “Earlier studies about leadership and creative people have dealt with business in general. However, leading journalists deserves a research of its own: In journalism, creativity is not only the means, but also the end. Each product, each story, is supposed to be unique”.

Reuters study points three impact aspects that involve people in journalism: motivation to split out of the comfort zone, management of digital change and the professional survival on contemporary media economics:

In the past, journalists had the luxury of concentrating on the product—a story, an article—without having to worry too much about its distribution afterwards. Digitalization and shrinking audiences have changed this: now journalists try to engage their audience by crowdsourcing ideas for stories, sharing their work in the social media and accepting instant feedback. A story is no longer the end of a discussion, but the beginning, as the Economist digital editor Tom Standage put it. This presents new challenges to the editors. Not only do they have to lead a group of talented people not too willing to

be led, but push them—and themselves—out of their old comfort zones. No wonder one editor compared leading journalists to herding cats, giving this research its title. (Saarikoski, 2012, p. 4)

But changes could also bring misunderstandings inside a newsroom and, specially, to their professionals. The new media ecosystem impacts directly at newsroom process due to time pressures; at quality results due to the paradox of increasing efficiency and decreasing creativity; at management issues due to the need of improving internal newsroom communications; and at journalistic identities and cultures due to professional autonomy protection facing the emerging *prosumers* (Bulck & Tambuyzer, 2013).

Presently, it is possible to infer that the media industry is experiencing a real paradox while seeking a new ecology: the efficacy—or not, of the convergence (sometimes simple integration) process on media businesses structures. There are studies and debates pointing de-convergence or non-integration as better ways to promote change and innovations in journalism, as discussed by Tameling and Broersma (2013). In the same track, there are discussions about audience behavior, relationship, and literacy; and about journalists' skills and attributes to perform at this new environment.

It can be considered that the adoption of a disruptive innovation culture and a strategic positioning in renewed media ecology are two sides of the same coin for journalistic businesses. One depends on another to succeed, and both of them depend on a radical and paradigmatically change of business/publishers culture.

Based on our researches, the main drivers of the current ecology are: adoption of newsroom procedures and creation of new services which allow dialogue with the audience and, at the same time, allow the building of meta-data clusters as promoters of proximity between newsrooms and audience.

There are also many others proposals that favor unconventional innovation processes besides the Actor Network Theory (ANT). *Open innovation* is the most popular, promoted by Henry Chesbrough that assumes that firms can and should use external ideas as well as internal ideas, and internal and external paths to market, as the firms look to advance their technology (Chesbrough, 2003: xxiv). *Designthinking* is also an interesting method which takes into account the networked knowledge, multidisciplinary fonts and resources, and interaction among the variables and abstractions. It deals with uncertainty, genuine human and emotional needs, giving a structure to them (Liedtka & Oilvie, 2011, loc, 394). The Design Thinking model is more adequate to rapid and punctual innovation solutions. The *Canvas—the Business Model Innovation* method is also worthy on its proposal to reflect systematically over a business model, which includes as key issues product innovation, new talents discovery, new distribution channels new revenues streams, brand leveraging.

Co-creative collaboration in media work could also be a possible alternative to define new media ecology. This process is being studied by Malmelin and Villi (2014) mainly in magazine media brands context.

The model of co-creative collaboration in media work breaks down into three main segments or categories describing the key processes of this collaboration. These are development, production and marketing. [...] Together, these dimensions describe the modes of co-creative collaboration in media work between the editorial team and the audience community. (Malmelin & Villi, 2014, p. 8)

The development category presupposes community's involvement in developing media brand or even user interfaces and contributing to content ideas. In the production category, community could be part of the

process producing content or sending material to the editorial teams (see Figure 1). The marketing category, according to the authors, refers to “[...] working together with the community to distribute contents in the social media and in this way increasing awareness of the media brand and service” (Malmelin & Villi, 2014, p. 9).

So that the co-creative model could work, media editorial team should be able to manage collaboration with the audience. Malmelin and Villi (2014) identifies roles and functions of media organizations in this process. The first one is the *conceptualization of the platform or service* that refers to providing to community the necessary tools and conditions to collaborate. Second one, *observation and understanding the community*, is a basic role if the media brand wants to track their audience by identifying their needs, interests and concerns. Third task is *development and innovation* that would probably cause a necessary and permanent disruption at the newsrooms.

The fourth task of the editorial team is to facilitate communication within the community and so to inspire interesting discussions on interesting content. [...] Their fifth task is to curate new subjects out of existing contents, aiming to open interesting new angles on specific online contents. (Malmelin & Villi, 2014, p. 10)

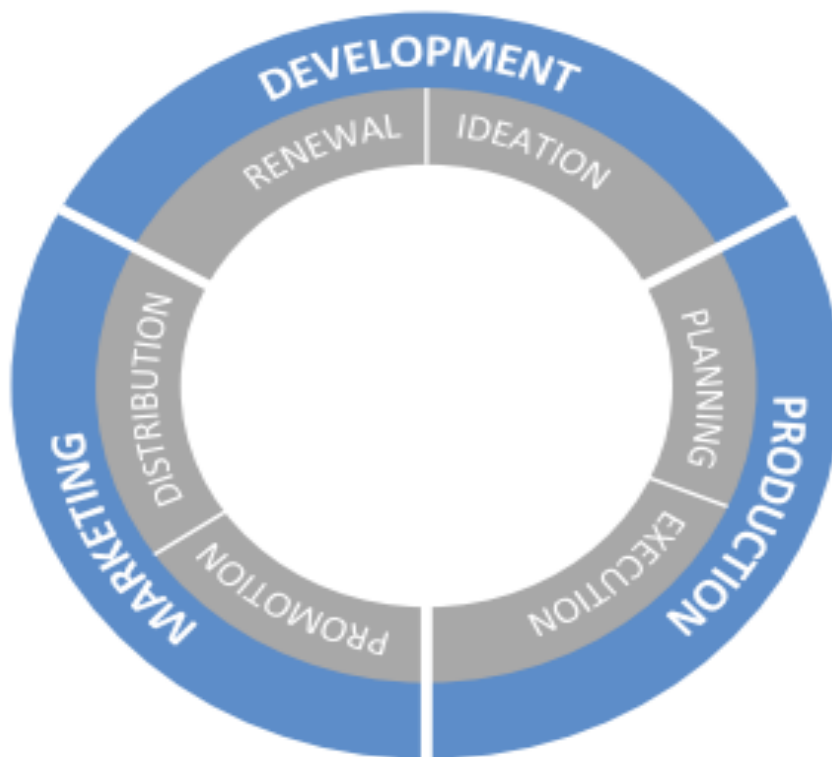


Figure 1. The model of co-creative collaboration in media work.

The adoption of non-traditional features as design thinking, open innovation, actor-network models, and co-creative collaboration in media work are valuable strategies to plunge into innovations that accomplish it. All these possibilities that could favor creativity/innovation processes in media and news industry imply on a huge cultural and organizational transformation, impossible to occur from one moment to another. The authors

believe that these changes are based on a *social business* concept where values, style, structure, teams, systems, and skills will be rethought; where resilience will be the mantra; and integration with task-environment exchanging awareness, experiences, and sociability will be the working tools.

It is known that any culture's change process is complex and a long-term task. To achieve a post-industrial journalism state-of-business—as proposed by the Tow Center study, the news ecosystem foreseen to 2020 “will be a study in expansion, with heightened contrasts between extremes” (Anderson et al., 2012, p. 80). The news environment will experiment gradual and continuous moves and adjustments through newsroom procedures: new non-profit and non-journalistic entrants; decay of the traditional agenda-setting due to a large, interconnected mass of news-consuming citizens; an unequal content distribution and its complex control; data analysis and visualization, techniques; audience and content fragmentation, etc..

To resume our discussion: The authors understand that social business culture and systems could be achieved through renewed media ecology, where journalism and journalists assume an environment mediation attitude, nurtured by disruptive innovations as their default action.

Currently, industry is flowing from possible to definitive change by innovation, and as we can note by these reports, just some traditional players are now acting strategically in this new ecology.

Innovations in Journalism: Cases of a Multidimensional Process

Seeking to verify the hypotheses, the authors focus now on which are examples that could be characterized as innovation in journalism. They are trying here to discuss this issue.

First of all, and as one of the results of our research work at COM+ (University of São Paulo, BRA), they propose that disruptive innovations on a more social business environment in journalism industry is more viable if the whole process is understood as a multidimensional one.

As so, they have identified six dimensions related to disruptive innovation-social business in media industry:

- (1) Audience's relationships and participation due to the expressive behavior change over information access, consumption, production, and circulation;
- (2) Content/narrative forms due to the multiple resources and voices available to build a compelling storytelling;
- (3) Digital technologies due to its continuous development process resulting in apps, systems, and devices based on mobile technologies and databases;
- (4) Business model due to a more variety of revenue sources and a revamped information economics;
- (5) Professional skills and attributes due to new content formats, mobile platforms, sources of information, and audience's need of diversity;
- (6) Organizational structure due to newsroom procedures and production.

It is possible to undertake innovative-social actions in each of these dimensions of a media business. And according to different cultures, economy, and specific conditions, it is easier to change by each dimension than to promote a complete radical change.

It is well known that many media businesses are currently undertaking different actions on these dimensions, simultaneously or not, that could be identified as disruptive innovations. If they analyze remarkable examples of this scenario, it is possible to infer that media industry is moving forward. It is

not a simple survival movement, but a rethinking and repositioning of industry role in contemporary society.

They have organized the following chart to make the innovations scenario more clear and understandable. This chart is the first approach of the current COM+ research work, and it is not completed and revised. We are just working now to identify practices (well succeeded or not), which could be characterized into one or more dimensions. As so, it is important to consider it as a pilot chart.

In the first approach we have analyzed international media innovative actions and strategies. Traditional media brands as *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and one *News Corp* spin-off were three only among multiple new players, some of them related to software or big data operations (see Table 3).

Table 3

Social Business Character and Practices on Media

DISRUPTIVE INNOVATIONS DIMENSIONS	ACTIONS OF SOCIAL BUSINESS CHARACTER	PRACTICES
Audience's relationships and participation	Audience's value first—measurement patterns, indexes; Mediation practices to validate participation and agency; analysis of behavioral data; social graphs; consumer insights for product/content development; transparency; new types of participatory population legitimacy; new entrants of producers/consumers of news.	NPR's social media voice; ProPublica model; Guardian Social Pulse.
Content/narrative forms	Aggregation formats; Multimedia storytelling; Creative storytelling; Branded content; crowdsourced content; co-creation content formats; use of adequate hashtags; observatories/watch platforms.	News events apps (Hurricane HD, WorldCup, etc.); Homicide Watch; Wikileaks data.
Digital technologies	Tagging content databases; CMS, algorithms; Curation tools; Newsgames; Geo-localization of audience+content; news robots; use of "social components" (ex: like, recommend buttons).	Zite, Storify; NYTimes initiatives (special coverage, infographics).
Business model	Redefinition of value chain; Fusions and acquisitions; branded content production; related events; dynamic pay walls; funding and sponsorships; disintermediation; adequacy to consumer's decision journey of information; transparency; niche approach; subsite startups; online-only initiative; consulting services; spin-out internal initiatives.	ProPublica Model; HuffPo blogger—curator partnership; HuffPo and BuzzFeed aggregation models; Christian Science Monitor; News Corp's spin-out of tablet operation.
Professional skills and attributes	Curators; correlations/association skill; design thinking mindset; sharing and collaboration authorship; building and managing communities; culture of affordance; contextualization and interpretations; free commitment to change; team working mindset; consulting.	Non-identified.
Organizational structure	De-convergence; project management initiatives; multi-skilled teams inside the newsroom; transparency; culture of affordance; mixed reporting goals (breaking news + long-form analysis).	Non-identified.

Notes. Chart is produced by the author.

Conclusions

One of the authors' core points of discussion on this paper was to analyze how social business proposals fit to a media/journalistic business environment. Their discussion was based on three research questions aiming adequacy to use disruptive innovations-social business design procedures as a framework of change in contemporary media industry. They have also taken as a conceptual framework the Latour/Law Actor-Network Theory (ANT).

Resuming these research questions, the authors have presented these main concepts and related them

to journalism business arena; identified six possible dimensions of action to make this framework valuable; identified some successful practices, and they present here their view over these proposals and hypotheses.

First and the most important of all is the understanding of journalistic culture and legitimacy embedded for centuries over society. Change or adequate this institution will depend on multiple enablers.

As so, the hypothesis related to ANT, at the level of the exploratory discussion, could be confirmed. Publishers, editors and reporters, human actors on media landscape still have dilemmas on dealing with new devices, apps, measurement systems, content management platforms. And also, have cultural inadequacies to deal with new other human actors—the old reader, which in now an active conversational audience.

To reinforce this view, a study promoted by McKinsey Global Institute (2012) on the same issue the authors are discussing but focused in some consumer products industries,

success in implementing and using social technologies in and across enterprises will depend on transforming their organizations and cultures to take full advantage of the collaborative potential of social technologies. Success in deploying social technologies to connect with broader communities will require the ability to create trust, a critical mass of participation, and positive community cultures and practices. (p. 24)

Although the dilemmas indicated by the H1, they can note that considering the pilot cases analyzed, the traditional media businesses are trying to promote their shift to a more social business culture. The cases they analyzed could not confirm H2's second part related to a decreasing competence to translate and dialogue with new audience's information needs. Besides, the analytic chart indicates that the new players are leading the audience's relationships and participation dimension.

Culture is a two-way path, depending simultaneously on people (producers and consumers) and industry's values and social roles. Journalism culture is still a monolithic culture although it has inevitable changed. As so, the H3 related to a non-uniform and social-organizational-culture dependent multidimensionality innovation process could be confirmed in the here presented.

To innovate via a multidimensional approach could be an immediate alternative, as some practices confirm, but they assume that is a “work in progress” proposal, which is related to the whole industry dynamics.

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