



ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNALISM HANDBOOK

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CONTENTS

5 Foreword – Christian Spahr	
7 Introduction	
9 Basics of Online Journalism – Marko Nedeljković	
How to create good online content in seven steps?	9
Title or title block	9
The composition and use of keywords in the text	11
Overview and easy text scanning	12
Multimedia text editing	12
Links in the text and linking techniques	14
Tags or keywords	16
Text optimization	16
18 Journalism of the digital era – Marko Nedeljković	
Characteristics of the journalist of today	18
Ethics of online media	20
22 Entrepreneurship online – Miloš Petrović	
Writing and profits	22
Choice of topics	23
Entrepreneurial journalist = salesperson	23
Research of a market niche	24
Supply analysis	25
Demand analysis	26
Competition analysis	30
Profitability calculation	31
Results of research and choice of areas	32
Business models	32

Sale of advertising space	33
Percentage from concrete actions of visitors	33
The freemium business model	34

35 | Website design and development – Veroljub Zmijanac

The role of a journalist in website development	35
How to start creating a website	36
Website architecture	37
The website creation process	38
Phase 1: Definition of objectives	38
Phase 2: Target group definition	39
Phase 3: Analysis of the competition	41
Phase 4: Analysis of the use scenarios	41
Phase 5: Information architecture	43
Phase 6: Creating the prototype (Wireframing) and the design of the user interface	44
Phase 7: Project specification	45

47 | Conclusion

FOREWORD

Greater media pluralism through entrepreneurial thinking

Christian Spahr, Director Media Program
South East Europe, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Dear readers,

Journalism and entrepreneurship are currently entering into an important relationship in South East Europe: Particularly on the Internet, freelancers are making a significant contribution to pluralism in the media, since conventional media are often not critical enough and insufficiently independent. For more and more citizens, online media are an important news source.

Together with the authors of this book, Marko Nedeljković, Miloš Petrović and Veroljub Zmijanac, the KAS Media Program South East Europe has therefore developed a training course in self-employment for online journalists, which took place for the first time from 23rd to 25th October 2013 in Belgrade, Serbia. The findings from this training are presented in a compact form in this handbook. It is especially suitable for journalistic start-ups on the Internet, but also gives freelance journalists in other media divisions valuable suggestions. Of course, many tips are not limited to South Eastern Europe, but are of universal application.

In transitional countries, especially young journalists are facing a dilemma. Many of them have already enjoyed a modern training and completed exchange programmes with Germany and other Western countries. But the conditions of working in many media outlets are not very attractive, not only on financial grounds. Media owners often have little interest in independent reporting since they exploit their newspapers and broadcasting channels for political or purely economic purposes. In addition, modern management methods are still found to be lacking here and there and those joining the profession cannot apply everything they have learned in practice.

As a result, self-employment may well be an alternative for many journalists in the region. In this book, the basic foundations of online

journalism are described. Another area covered in detail is the production of websites, including practical advice on increasing the attractiveness of one's own texts, for example the use of carefully selected keywords to ensure better search engine positioning and the right combination of text and multimedia content. Journalists are also made aware of the pitfalls of copyright law.

In addition, readers are given in-depth insights into the development of business models on the Internet. Not only high quality, but also the right economic concept, is important. It is a key prerequisite for success on the Web. Journalists receive tips about how online projects can be developed and what kind of strategic analyses are necessary in advance. In addition, they receive detailed guidance how to develop co-operation with business partners and which service providers are of assistance in managing one's own offering. Last but not least, successful online journalism is a question of credibility, so that the book also goes into ethical aspects. Journalistic values should be observed in online publications no less than in traditional media.

The KAS Media Program South East Europe will offer further training courses of this kind and publish material on the subject. I am sure all readers, especially freelance journalists, will find valuable advice in this handbook.

Sofia, 1 September 2014

INTRODUCTION

Although it is not traditionally expected of journalists to engage in business activities, the financial situation of traditional media is becoming more and more difficult and the expansion of the Internet is increasingly redefining this understanding. This is leading to a new term being used to indicate what the future of journalism may look like: "entrepreneurial journalism", which basically points to the need for journalists to act in an economic sense, to redefine their profession through innovation and to explore new opportunities for making a living.

There is no universal interpretation of "entrepreneurial journalism". Some see it as a new way of creating profit in the media sphere, others think it is a new understanding of part-time journalism, while there are also some who basically associate it with freelance online reporting.

If, however, entrepreneurial journalism would like to be more than just a new name for the part-time work which has always existed, or for freelance online journalism, then it could be said that it is defined by journalists developing new business models on the Internet as individual entrepreneurs or by journalists joining together in order to start a new business.

This is the sense in which entrepreneurial journalism will be treated in this handbook and, accordingly, all significant elements will be presented which journalist entrepreneurs should have in mind when starting their own business.

We also need to bear in mind the fact that the revolution in communication, caused by the Internet, has shaken the traditional strategy of financing professional journalism on the basis of advertising so that new circumstances require the search for new sustainable business models.

We know that the financial situation, which is becoming increasingly difficult, and the decreasing number of employment opportunities are making journalists look for other sources of income and leave journalism in order to dedicate themselves to more profitable businesses. Thus the concept of entrepreneurial journalism represents a way in which journalists can adjust to the digital era and deal with the economic reality of their profession.

In order to be able to keep up with the actual changes in the media sphere many universities, especially in the U.S.A., have already introduced courses of entrepreneurial journalism into their curricula. The development of entrepreneurial journalism in Western Europe is still in its early stages, while the concept is practically completely new in the countries of South East Europe.

The aim of this handbook is to expedite the development and acceptance of this idea in South East Europe and to make it easier for journalists to survive in the digital era by encouraging them to start their own projects based on their individual skills.

This is especially significant for young journalists whose careers will increasingly depend on their ability to create and start profitable online projects, although their work will continue to include journalistic competences. Writing articles and creating multimedia content will still be the basis of their work, but the success of these projects will above all depend on their entrepreneurial skills.

There are three basic elements of entrepreneurial journalism presented in this handbook, i.e. three main requirements necessary in order to initiate successful online journalism projects:

1. Basics of online journalism

2. Internet entrepreneurship

3. Website production

Each of these three segments will be presented in the form of a manual for entrepreneurial journalists. The objective is to describe the path from the emergence and clarification of the idea to its implementation, that is, the initiation of the concrete Internet project.

BASICS OF ONLINE JOURNALISM

How to create good online content in seven steps?

The main requirement of every journalistic undertaking is knowing the basics and specifics of online journalism. All three main journalistic rules and principles of traditional media apply in online journalism as well, although there are some important differences for writing and editing online.

The handbook is meant for professional journalists who have already adopted the theory and basics of journalistic techniques and it focuses on characteristics of online journalism that every journalistic entrepreneur should embrace before launching his or her project.

Since multimedia content¹ is the main product of online journalism, its main elements will be presented, as well as rules and good practice recommendations, which all online journalists should follow when creating content for the web

You can read the following manual on how to create good content online in seven basic steps:

- 1. Title or titleblock**
- 2. Composition and use of keywords in the text**
- 3. Overview and easy text scanning**
- 4. Multimedia text editing**
- 5. Links in the text and linking technique**
- 6. Tags or keywords**
- 7. Text optimization**

1. Title or title block

The first difference between writing for print media and writing online is already visible when drafting a title for an article. While in print

¹ A text containing multimedia material such as photographs, video and audio clips, graphs, illustrations, infograp.

media it is often required to have a creative title which will draw the readers' attention by its originality, more simple and informative titles without poetic elements are preferred online.

In print media, the absence of keywords in the title is not a mistake if the title effectively draws the attention of the readers, while such practice is almost unimaginable online. Therefore, online titles should be clear, unambiguous and to point to the topic, which normally takes using keywords in the title itself. In other words, online titles should above all be descriptive.

The main reason for this is that online texts are mostly found by searching the keywords for topics we are interested in. Thus the absence of one of the keywords in the title on the web will make positioning and finding texts significantly harder. Using keywords is one of the main rules for writing online titles.

We should also bear in mind the fact that the attention span of Internet users is much smaller than that of print media readers, because they surf on an endless source of content in which it is necessary to find exactly what they are interested in. Therefore, it is important to be able to understand from title what the story is about. Average users are normally searching for very specific topics and if they don't recognize them in the title, the chance of their "opening" the article is practically minimal.

Good titles on
the website
theguardian.com

source: theguardian.com / screenshot

Ukraine troops regain control of Slavyansk



President Poroshenko orders flag to fly over rebel stronghold after armed pro-Russian separatists flee

239 comments

Labour unveils 'master teachers' plan

Last updated 11 minutes ago



Tristram Hunt says elite grade of higher paid teachers would boost career structure and improve retention

154 comments

Taliban destroy Afghan oil trucks



Militants set fire to around 200 trucks carrying fuel for Nato forces in country, say officials

Taliban attack tankers — in pictures

Palestinian boy 'was burned alive'

Last updated 10 minutes ago



Palestine attorney general says Mohammed Abu Khdeir was burned alive as violence grips West Bank and East Jerusalem

Israel bus assault video reveals level of tension

worldcup2014



Injured Neymar out of the World Cup

Brazilian has broken vertebra and will miss the rest of the tournament, while Thiago Silva is suspended for semi-final

LATEST

"Fifa's has confirmed that it will look into the challenge from Colombia's Juan Zuniga that ended Neymar's World Cup. We are awaiting the official match..."
World Cup 2014: day 24 — live!

- World Cup talking points: where do Brazil go now?
- Neymar out of the World Cup — in quotes and pictures
- Michael Cox: How will Brazil cope tactically without Neymar?
- Match report: Brazil 2-1 Colombia



World Cup Show: day 24 news

Video: Nat Coombs casts his eye over Brazil's 2-1 win against Colombia and Germany's victory over France

Hide World Cup 2014

Live scores

Results, fixtures, live scores and more



World Cup Show

A new dawn for the sport in the USA?



Saturday previews

Owen Gibson

How Van Gaal got Van Persie smiling



Which World Cup player are you?

Take our test



The next characteristic of online titles is the great success of titles announcing practical recommendations in the article, i.e. title such as: "How to...", "Get rid of...", "The best way to...", "What everybody should know about...", etc. Such titles attract the attention of users so they have become very popular, especially on specialized websites. Such titles may be used, but only when the article really offers the content which they suggest. Otherwise this practice will be counterproductive.

2. The composition and use of keywords in the text

In most cases, basic journalist techniques are also applied online, so it will depend on the topic that we are writing about whether a news story or an article will be written in the "inverted pyramid" or "postponed effect" method. However, just as in the case of writing titles, it is recommended to use keywords or just one key notion more frequently in the article itself, because that will optimize the article, making it easier to find on the web.

Therefore, keywords should be used at the very beginning of an article (in a lead or in the first paragraph), and if this doesn't affect the style, it should be repeated throughout the body. Such practice is considered a mistake in print media, which do not depend on such technical considerations.

The other significant characteristic of drafting an online story is influenced by the fact that online editions can also use multimedia contents. The position of these contents in an article should determine its structure. Describing a video clip before putting it into a text is one of the most common mistakes when writing online articles. There is no excitement in watching a video that has been described already. When publishing multimedia content is the main focus and there is no need to provide additional information or interpretation, it is enough to write a good title and a short announcement that draws the user's attention to the multimedia material.

However, more frequently the central element is text and the multimedia content is only there to make it more attractive. In that case, the composition of a text depends above all on the topic. When we are writing hard news, we use the inverted pyramid approach, which means that we position information based on its significance (the most significant at the beginning, the less significant at the end) while with soft news we can use the "postponed effect" approach and place the most important information not at the beginning, but later on, maybe even at the end of the text.

BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- use keywords in titles
- create informative and simple titles (short and direct), which are clearly pointing to the subject you are writing about
- avoid poetic elements
- use useful ("how to") and very specific titles ("the best way to...")

BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- always make sure that online article should be easy to find
- use leads because they contribute to better optimization and they make the text visually more attractive
- use keywords at the beginning of the text (in a lead and in the first paragraph)
- repeat the keyword or keywords several times in the text
- adjust the composition and the content of the text to multimedia contents and always bear in mind that nobody likes the point of a video or audio clip be revealed before watching
- adhere to journalistic rules and use the "inverted pyramid" or "postponed effect" approach depending on the topic.

3. Overview and easy text scanning

When writing online articles, it is important always to make sure that the text should be easy to scan and that there is a good overview of it. Users must be able to see the most significant parts when scrolling through the text. This is achieved by bolding key sentences, parts of sentences or words in the text. Bolding is suggesting to the readers/users what segments they should pay their attention to.

Bolding is a frequent practice, because many users do not read articles from top to bottom, but only certain parts. Thus visual pointing to the most significant parts draws the user's attention to the main messages or information. Such emphasis is aimed at making the best use of the limited amount of time that users spend reading an article. This is the way to choose the most important pieces of information, which enables even those who spend only a few dozen seconds reading an article to find out about its essence.

This is only one of the ways to take advantage of the technical possibilities of the Internet in order to adapt the content to all groups of users – which is not possible in print media because they have a standardized design and the text is being placed into predetermined “moulds”. In the press, journalists are not able to point out the most important sentences in an article.

That is a significant disadvantage of the press when compared to online journalism, because everybody knows that newspapers are more often being “scanned” and not thoroughly read and the readers are often only reading titles and first sentences of articles.

On the web, in order to have a better overview of an article, it is necessary to write short paragraphs and to make sure that each paragraph includes one idea. It is also important to bear in mind the fact that the reader's attention is primarily focused on the visible portion of the story and that it significantly decreases if additional sections of should be scrolled down. Therefore, online articles should be shorter in length and use of links should provide additional information on the topic.

Specific topics, however, will require somewhat more comprehensive articles and they should not be avoided when it is necessary to offer a more complete analysis and interpretation. Apart from all aforementioned recommendations, in such cases titles should also be used to separate specific parts of the text.

BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

bold the most important sentences or parts of sentences in the text

write short paragraphs

make sure that every paragraph has one idea

write short texts whenever possible, and use links to point to other useful contents

in case of longer stories, use titles between sections

4. Multimedia text editing

We pointed out at the beginning of this handbook that multimedia content is the main product of online journalism, which means that

photographs, video and audio clips, as well as different illustrations, have the same significance as the writing itself. That is what online journalists should have in mind when creating content for the web and they should take full advantage of the fact that there are very few limitations on the Internet when compared to traditional media (press, radio and television).

A journalist working in print media is limited by the number of characters set for an article. Photoreporters make dozens, sometimes even hundreds of photographs of which only one appears in the newspaper. Also, television reporters have only a minute or two to present their stories with a video clip.

An online journalist has, however, none of the mentioned limitations, and an article can be longer than in the press. A gallery of photographs, and not just one, can be inserted, and it can also have a video clip made by a journalist or taken from a video service. The only limitation on the Internet is the capacity of the server on which the website is placed, but with the development of technology, these limitations become smaller.

Examples of a good multimedia story on the website latimes.com²

source: latimes.com / screenshot

Americans still struggle with lasting effects of the recession

Posted By: Bryan Chan
Posted On: 1:43 p.m. | December 23, 2011

Throughout U.S. history, economic downturns have taken lasting tolls - reducing family earnings, diminishing expectations and straining relationships. These days, two years after the official end of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, untold numbers of Americans continue to struggle.

The Times followed three families struggling to regain their footing. The Petersens, the Longs and the Tuckers come from different backgrounds; their prospects vary.

PREVIOUS POST: Mortician with a badge

NEXT POST: Dylan Catania's journey continues

Advertisement: TURKISH AIRLINES

² The whole article is available on: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-recession-vignette-html,0,175173.htmlstory#>

**BEST PRACTICE
RECOMMENDATIONS:**

having a well-rounded web story is important as we seek to stimulate our reader to consume a story with multiple senses. By using audio and video content, we let them see and hear something relevant to our topic. Infographics help making a text visually more appealing, while galleries contribute to better storytelling.

always have in mind that the main objective of online journalism is to create a multimedia story

spend time creating or choosing available multimedia contents because that is what makes your publishing successful

explore free services with photographs and video clips and create a list of those that are useful for your everyday work

respect copyright

Therefore, online journalists have to present their story by combining different formats and adding some of the following elements to the text:

1. **photographs**
2. **video clips**
3. **audio clips**
4. **graphs and infographics**
5. **photo galleries or video clips**
6. **different illustrations**
7. **embedded Twitter and Facebook statuses**

It would be ideal to combine several different formats, but only if they bring an added value to the overall presentation of the topic. That means that photos and videos should be used for reason, not just because it is desirable. Journalists should obtain proper permissions to use any copyrighted material in their stories in order to avoid problems and legal issues. Nowadays numerous online services provide free photos and videos, but even in those cases journalists should double-check the terms of use.

5. Links in the text and linking techniques

Links are one of the most notable features of online journalism. A link (hyperlink) is an address that connects your text to another online document or media content and thus helps better understanding of certain aspects of a story. Therefore we can say that links have the role of *news background* and they often lead to contents which would normally be put in in the sidebar in print media.

Linking enables online journalists to offer additional content that is relevant to the story and makes it more understandable (providing explanation of a certain term, previous developments or making a reference to relevant research). At the same time, linking enables us to avoid unnecessary explanations within the text, letting readers decide whether they want to use it as an additional online source. It is not difficult to conclude that carefully selected links pointing to a credible content are very valuable elements of every online article. When choosing contents to be linked, the journalist should follow all the rules which apply when choosing information for an article: they should check the credibility of an outside content they are pointing their readers to. By linking to a certain content, a journalist is almost offering a guarantee for its accuracy or authenticity and must be aware of this every time in using this option.

The linking technique, however, includes not only the accuracy check of the “online source” but also a number of other rules which online journalists should obey. In practice they unfortunately frequently break the main linking rules. Here are the most significant ones:

- **Hyperlinks should not be put in the first two paragraphs** (sometimes it can be used in the second paragraph if the journalist estimates that it is important to link certain information from that paragraph). The reason for this is that a link represents a call to action and by putting it at the beginning of the text we are inviting readers to leave our story by clicking on the link, at least temporarily, and directing their attention to outside content at the very beginning.
- **One paragraph should not contain more than one or two links at most**, because that burdens the text and has a confusing impact on readers.
- **When choosing words that we will link** we should follow the same rule as when choosing keywords or titles.
- **Only a few words should be linked**, preferably three to seven words.
- **The linked words should clearly hint at the content** the link is leading to, because readers should know what to expect before clicking on the link.

We should bear in mind that a link does not fulfill its function if it is:

- **Vague** – it should be clear to an averagely intelligent reader what kind of content will be opened when clicking on the link.
- **Too general** – when a link is leading to the homepage of a certain website, expecting a reader to look up for content himself. Links should always lead directly to the information that is significant for our text.
- **Irrelevant** – if links lead to content that is not directly connected to the story.
- **Non-existent** – when journalist is linking to a content that could be unavailable to certain users, time-limited or completely removed. Links also have a significant role in optimizing contents for browsers. Google can position texts better when they have hyperlinks and it makes a distinction between internal links (links leading to contents on the main website) and external links (links to pages on other websites).

External links are an especially interesting topic, because with a click on an external link the visitor is leaving your website, but thus you are giving new value both to them and to the website you are pointing them to. It is a frequent practice that other websites return a link to you which presents a kind of networking of relevant contents and websites.

BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

use linking in articles whenever they can help better understanding of a topic or an event

links can replace the sidebars

don't burden your text with information or explanations that are already online and could be linked

always check the accuracy of the content you are linking to, but also the credibility of the website

respect the main linking rules (previously mentioned)

don't use links that do not fulfil their function (previously mentioned)

6. Tags or keywords

Determining keywords or tags has become necessary when publishing online. This allows finding the text by the browser and searching for those keywords in the texts on the website. Therefore, tagging must be included in every online article.

Tags are expressions, names or terms used in our text – that we would also use to search the Internet in order to find the text. Although the number of tags mostly depends on the length of the text, between five and eight tags is an optimal number for an average story.

BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS:
tags should be part of every published online content
for determining tags, decide on expressions that you would use to find a story
the optimal number of tags for average sized texts is five to eight

Control board on the WordPress platform with the Yoast's SEO plugin for better optimization of contents³

WordPress / screenshot

The screenshot shows a WordPress control board. At the top, there is a pie chart titled 'GENERAL NEWS' with four segments: 10% (blue), 22% (green), 29% (red), and 7% (yellow). Below the chart, there is a text box with the following content:

Izveštaj je takode pružio dokaz da novinari igraju ključnu ulogu u društvenim medijima. U Velikoj Britaniji, analiza YuGov-a urađena za Institut Rojters koja prati korišćenje Tvitera na reprezentativnom uzorku navodi da 64 % (oko 5,4 miliona) prati nalog profesionalnih medija, a 40 % od njih (oko 2,6 miliona) prati bar jedan nalog novinara u poređenju sa 40 % (oko 2,2 miliona) koji prate naloge najnovijih vesti.

Below the text box, there is a status bar with the text: 'Putanja: p Brojač reči: 618 Poslednji put izmenjeno od strane korisnika Marko Nedeljkovic 5. jul 2014. u 14:55'.

The Yoast SEO plugin interface is visible below the status bar. It has tabs for 'General', 'Page Analysis', and 'Social'. The 'Page Analysis' tab is active, showing a yellow warning box: 'To update this page analysis, save as draft or update and check this tab again.' Below the warning box, there is a list of 13 items, each with a colored dot indicating its status (red for warning, green for good):

- The keyword density is 0.46%, which is a bit low. the keyword was found 3 times.
- The slug for this page is a bit long, consider shortening it.
- The page title contains keyword / phrase. but it does not appear at the beginning: try and move it to the beginning.
- No subheading tags (like an H2) appear in the copy.
- This page has 3 outbound link(s).
- The keyword / phrase appears in the URL for this page.
- The images on this page contain alt tags with the target keyword / phrase.
- You've never used this focus keyword before. very good.
- In the specified meta description, consider: How does it compare to the competition? Could it be made more appealing?
- The meta description contains the primary keyword / phrase.
- There are 646 words contained in the body copy. this is more than the 300 word recommended minimum.
- The page title is more than 40 characters and less than the recommended 70 character limit.
- The keyword appears in the first paragraph of the copy.

³ When using optimization plugins, journalists can check the quality of optimization already when entering the text on the control board. In the presented case, with the Yoast's SEO plugin on the WordPress platform they can automatically get information for 13 items and thus what should eventually be improved is clearly presented.

positioning on search engines. More advanced possibilities of text optimization depend on the available Content Management System (CMS) and possible plugins that should be used whenever possible.

These seven steps

title
composition and use of keywords in the text
overview and easy text scanning
multimedia text editing
links in the text and linking techniques
tags or keywords
text optimization

are the most necessary tools and tips for every journalist who wishes to write for the web. Online journalists need to know their CMSes well, as they are expected to be able to draft, format, and publish their multimedia stories without any assistance. Thus it is important to read user manuals and other available tutorials to make the best use of a CMS.

**BEST PRACTICE
RECOMMENDATIONS:**

always use tags

use keywords in titles, titles between paragraphs and in the text body

use all advanced possibilities and plugins for content optimization offered by the CMS

use marks and tags for photographs and other formats which you are using in the text, because the results of the search show such contents if their marks and tags are in accordance with your inquiry

JOURNALISM OF THE DIGITAL ERA

Characteristics of the journalist of today

Besides knowing the basics of online journalism, which were presented briefly in the first part of this handbook, online journalists should bear in mind that with the transfer to Web 2.0 technologies, there were huge changes in the nature of journalism itself. Until a few years ago, the usual one-way communication became increasingly unnatural on the Internet and this turned into a two-way communication, in which the borders between journalists and the audience are fading. Journalists, who used to be unchallenged creators of media content, are today turning into content supervisors and reliable demonstrators. They are professionals whose work is no longer limited to created content for the audience, but including the audience into the process of creating and distributing media content.

Today there is almost no editorial office or media organization that is not present on social networks, and there are many whose presence on social networks is determined by internal norms and regulations. Special guidelines are being determined which apply to social media, responsible editors are being appointed, training for journalists is being organized and the intensity of the two-way communication with citizens is being expanded every year. Many media are thus moving towards the concept of "open-source journalism"⁴ which includes a more intensified engagement with the audience in order to better tailor and deepen their reporting.⁵ The inclusion of the audience in

⁴ Open-source journalism is a term which was established in 1999 in an article by Andrew Leonard for salon.com about online terrorism when after the comment from the blog Slashdot and Jane's Intelligence Review the author wrote again his article using information and formulations which he received as a response from readers to the first article. Initially the term included paying for new information and respecting copyrights, but in time it came closer to the principles of open code in programming i.e. free taking over of content (under the license Creative Commons) while adding a link to the source from which the content was taken which enables it be amended later.

⁵ The forerunner of a greater opening towards users is the British Guardian which started a campaign in 2012 in which the concept of "open-source journalism" is promoted and citizens are invited to participate in the production of media contents. One of the largest promoters of the "new culture of

creating news and media content changes the way how journalists are investigating and “telling stories”.

Therefore, the perfect online content should call for action – to leave a comment, share on social networks, give feedback or additional information, or take a concrete action in the real world. Thus, the journalist’s work is not over in publishing an article, but continues in direct communication with readers. There are several ways to do this and the following are the main ones which online journalists should utilize:

- 1. Allowing comments on stories, disclosing e-mail and other contact details so that authors could receive suggestions and feedback from their readers**
- 2. Active communication with the audience on social networks, above all on Twitter and Facebook**

All the possibilities mentioned should only not be used in declarative form. Suggestions, proposals or critics of users should be accepted when they are justified, because this is the only way to establish trust and build a loyal community of users.

It is a fact that “social recommendation”, i.e. the recommendation of a media content on social networks, is becoming increasingly significant when presenting media contents,⁶ because of the gap between the amount of articles on the web and the reader’s attention span. Recommendation from a friend or follower is a new way of selecting media content that readers tend to respond to.

A new phenomenon of ‘online intrusion’ has taken place as traditional media pick up on a topic that previously generated interest from online readers, which was hard to imagine just a few years ago.

All of this is changing the previously-known role of media professionals, especially online journalists, who have to accept the fact that listening to the needs and demands of the online audience has become a part of their profession. Success on the Web will be increasingly dependent on that.

Based on the above considerations, some basic characteristics of online journalists in the digital era can be summed up as a guideline for online journalists, or those who plan to become so.

- 1. The journalist of today is a “multimedia storyteller”** because (s)he is capable of offering a story in many formats although (s)he may specialize in one. He/She thinks digitally and knows how to use words, visual presentations, video and audio clips and graphs at the same time.⁷

informing” is the Guardian editor Alan Rusbridger, who points out that “journalists are not the only experts in the world” and that their work is no longer possible without the co-operation and participation of the readers.

⁶ Nic Newman, The rise of social media and its impact on mainstream journalism, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2009

⁷ The term “digital thinking” was used for the first time by the editor of the New York Times Jonathan Landman who pointed out that besides digital skills the future journalist needs also the ability of digital thinking in order to understand the logic of social media and to be successful in the digital era.

2. **The journalist of today is building a community⁸** by connecting with the audience and developing a two-way communication. By building such a community, the journalist is actually acting as its manager.
3. **The journalist of today is listening, not only sending** messages or content via social media. He/She finds new topics in social media, provides attention, builds and improves his/her personal image.
4. **The journalist of today needs to adhere to journalistic standards and reliable sources** – all information that (s)he publishes or shares must be verified and truthful.
5. **The journalist of today is working in cooperation with others**, and knows how to make the best use of his/her fellow colleagues and various sources. He/She is not making a story from scratch.
6. **The journalist of today is a blogger and uses social networks.** He/She is directly engaging with an audience and participating in the so-called 'link economy' (sharing links).

Ethics of online media

The ethics of social media should not be neglected, because besides the many changes in the way of reporting, in business activities and the functioning of the media, the digital era has also brought ethical dilemmas. Should journalists be friends with their sources on Facebook, should they share their tweets, is it justifiable to "like" the page of the company they are reporting on or does this kind of support compromise the journalist's objectivity? These are only some of the questions editorial offices all over the world are trying to find an answer to.

And while some media such as the Associated Press and Wallstreet Journal have written instructions for the behaviour of a journalist on social networks, Reuter's manual⁹ remarks that the world is changing quickly and that journalists will have to apply their common sense in many cases. Although "liking" somebody's Facebook page seems contrary to the objectivity of the journalist at first glance, that is often the only way to follow all publications at the page and to find potential sources as well.

Therefore, ethics are definitely no longer unambiguous as they used to be, a consensus is becoming increasingly difficult to reach when it

⁸ Sree Sreenivasan and Vadim Lavrusik, *The Future Journalist*, presentation available on bit.ly/futurej

⁹ The manual is available on: http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=Reporting_From_the_Internet_And_Using_Social_Media#Using_Social_Media

comes to the ideal practice, and the line between private and professional spheres is becoming blurred. Thus the advice of the American Society of News Editors from the guide called "10 best practices for social media" would be very useful to all online journalists as guidelines for their behaviour on the Web:

- 1. Traditional ethical norms apply on the Internet as well**
- 2. Always assume that everything you write online will become public**
- 3. Use social media for the interaction with the audience, but in a professional manner**
- 4. Publish the latest news on the website of your media, not on Twitter**
- 5. Pay attention to how you will be perceived and understood**
- 6. Make an independent check of everything that you find on social networks**
- 7. Always present yourself as a journalist**
- 8. Social networks are tools, not toys**
- 9. Be transparent and admit online when you have made a mistake**
- 10. Keep discussions among colleagues confidential¹⁰**

¹⁰ Guide available on: http://asne.org/Files/pdf/10_Best_Practices_for_Social_Media.pdf

ENTREPRENEURSHIP ONLINE

In the digital world, journalism is gaining a completely new role and dimension. Although online publishing can influence the reduction of the circulation of printed editions, the Internet is giving a new chance to all journalists, because it is the best friend of journalistic entrepreneurship and online journalism is closely connected to online marketing.

The biggest advantage of the Internet is the fact that every written and published article is "living" online as long as the website itself exists. It does not "live" only in one issue for one day, it does not get thrown away after reading. An online article is publically available every day and depending on how it was written and on the structure of the website, a once written article for which two or three hours were spent can be read a 100 times a day, every day, 365 days a year. That is the main potential of the Internet and the starting point of entrepreneurial journalism.

Writing and profits

When it comes to earning profits from online journalism, the focus changes from charging for articles in the classical way to cases in which the journalist is able to profit from writing and from association with the website.

The profit depends on the following:

- **on the subject area the journalist is writing about**
- **is the journalist a good seller**

The first point is something journalists think about anyway, while the second is usually a completely new dimension of the job. However, entrepreneurial journalism is to some extent like any other journalism. There is a market - supply and demand - and therefore the reporter strives to charge his services and advertising space. Before starting with the realisation of any online project, it is always important to bear in mind the two points mentioned above and to assign them equal significance.

Choice of topics

It makes a difference if the journalist is writing on a topic which is very popular or, on the other hand, on a topic or area which does not offer earning opportunities. The journalist cannot expect identical results if writing about sports equipment and about museums.

This is where journalists are often emotionally engaged because many articles are created due to personal interest in a topic. Nevertheless, journalists have to bear in mind two strategic writing orientations: writing "for their own enjoyment" and writing for profit. It is ideal when these two orientations coincide, because there is no better situation than earning money and enjoying yourself at the same time, but online journalists have to know that this is not always the case.

If a journalist is writing about something that totally suits them, which is at the same time also interesting, (s)he will enjoy his/her work. However, it can turn out to be a dead end from the entrepreneurial point of view, because the general field is not attractive, the target group is not determined and the readers are too lazy or too poor for any action apart from reading the articles. Therefore, from the entrepreneurial point of view, it is important to think about how profitable the field is which you are writing about, or at least the target group which will read the articles. If there is money and potential in an area, the success of the entrepreneurial undertaking will be more certain.

If a passion for writing is not primary, the entrepreneurial journalist may be in a better position. Good online research, analysis of the number of searches for keywords and profitable market niches as well as the general topic will be most significant.

Entrepreneurial journalist = salesperson

If a journalistic entrepreneur is independently running a website and wants to monetize it, they will sooner or later be in a position to sell advertising space, a part of the website, a part of the text, a link in the text, etc. It is ideal when somebody who is interested in advertising contacts the owner of the website and asks about the price of a space on the website. In this situation, the journalist is also a salesperson, because they will have to negotiate the price.

We should know from the beginning that entrepreneurial journalism is not just about writing. It is important to be aware of the fact that the journalist will also need the traits of a good salesperson. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the name of the website, because you

will go public with that name, go to a business meeting, negotiate and fight for your own brand.

It is also important to bear in mind that a concrete name of the website with a clear target group is always a winning combination for Internet marketing and for sales later. A good example can be the Serbian project "mobilnatelefonija.net" (English: mobiletelephony) where the name of the domain refers directly to mobile phones or packages and offers of mobile operators. The website was not given the name "allpackages.com" or something more abstract, but it is directly and in the most simple way describing what the website is about. The website soon attracted the attention of the company Telenor and of other mobile operators, because its name pointed clearly to what those companies are offering.

Good articles on a website with a clear name and a clear target group can be an extraordinary marketing synergy. The better articles are connected to the name of the website, the greater are the chances for the website to have a better position on Google. Thus, it will attract a larger audience and make it easier to monetize the website.

If the focus is on selling advertising space, then not only the journalistic entrepreneur needs to deal with sales. It is always possible to hire somebody to do that instead. But that person has to be paid. Practically, if a journalistic entrepreneur also has good management skills, (s)he can work in a team.

Research of a market niche

The most important step in the work of every entrepreneur is the choice of a market niche. The same applies to entrepreneurial journalism because it is necessary to choose a subject area in which profit can be earned. The choice of the right subject area is not easy, but there are online tools which can help find a good and profitable market niche.

Important steps in researching a market niche are the following:

- 1. Supply analysis**
- 2. Demand analysis**
- 3. Competition analysis**
- 4. Profitability calculation**

These are four most important steps. If this methodology is implemented in a professional manner, there are huge chances for the project to be successful. Even if the analysis takes months, a good basis is the key to success. Briefly, it is necessary to have large supply, large demand, weak competition and huge profitability, meaning a larger price of the product or service on which the whole project is based.

1. Supply analysis

The subject area about which the journalist entrepreneur wants to write will not make any sense if it doesn't include a variety of topics. The more potential topics, services, and products about which articles can be written, the greater the chances for success of the journalistic undertaking.

It is necessary to make a difference between the competition and supply. The competition are websites and entrepreneurs who have already started something similar, while the supply includes everything that can be sold.

The supply can be researched with online methods, for instance the Google search of keywords. Areas, products and services can be found which are supplied by others and which the journalist entrepreneur can write about. There are areas which are not completely digitalized, but that is nowadays a diminishing proportion. These data are more difficult to find and for that reason it is also necessary to conduct research outside of the Internet.

EXAMPLE 1: CURRENT POLITICAL TOPICS OF THE EU

If the journalist wants to start a website about current political issues regarding the European Union, it is clear that the topic is excellent since this website deals with news. In politics things happen on a daily basis, so news from EU politics is practically never ending.

EXAMPLE 2: TENNIS

Tennis as a topic can be approached from two sides: first tennis news and second tennis equipment. In both cases, the supply is very good and there are things to write about. This is, however, a moment when the focus of journalism entrepreneurship can be shifted from classic journalistic topics: news to something which is not part of classic news, but can be monetized. Tennis news is an obvious choice and this is the first association. But the tennis equipment should also be considered, because from the point of view of the Google search a website like that can be very important for those who are looking for tennis equipment where monetization is more than obvious and concrete.

EXAMPLE 3: VILLAS ON THE MEDITERRANIAN

This topic is directing us towards tourism. It is a completely different area compared to those mentioned above, but it is interesting because it represents a specific market niche which can be popular in different European countries and outside of Europe. The content and topics are not never-ending as in foreign policy, but the supply most certainly exists. With a creative approach, this topic can be dealt with from several sides and concerning many destinations. It can be very suitable for monetization especially when it comes to exclusive villas.

2. Demand analysis

There are concrete tools, i.e. from Google, which can help the journalistic entrepreneur to analyse the demand for a product, services, Internet areas. Those are Google Keyword Planner and Google Trends.

Google Keyword Planner

Google Keyword Planner,¹¹ previously “Keyword Tool”, is a tool for displaying Google searches in a specific country according to keywords on a monthly level. For the use of this tool, it is necessary to be logged in to the Google account.

It works by the system of entering keywords and the choice of location from which the keywords are being searched. The data are obtained in form of digits on a monthly level (average monthly searches). As example we will use the following: EU politics, tennis equipment, mediterranean villa.

In the part of targeting it can be set to search data from the territory of one state, several states or globally. In the part “All languages” the browser languages can be chosen from all languages installed in the

Search for keywords
with the help of Google
Keyword Planner

Source: Google
Keyword Planner /
screenshot

▼ Search for new keyword and ad group ideas

Enter one or more of the following:

Your product or service

eu politics, tennis equipment, mediterranean villa

Your landing page

www.example.com/page

Your product category

Enter or select a product category

Targeting ?

- All locations
- All languages
- Google
- Negative keywords

Customize your search ?

Keyword filters

Keyword options

- Show broadly related ideas
- Hide keywords in my account
- Hide keywords in my plan

¹¹ It is available at the following address: <https://adwords.google.com/ko/KeywordPlanner/Home>

Ad group ideas		Keyword ideas		Download	Add all (803)
Search terms	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad Impr. share	Add to plan
tennis equipment	4,400	High	\$0.93	0%	»
mediterranean villa	1,600	Low	\$1.47	0%	»
eu politics	170	Low	-	0%	»

1 - 3 of 3 keywords

Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches	Competition	Suggested bid	Ad Impr. share	Add to plan
tennis equipment uk	260	High	\$0.85	0%	»
tennis equipment online	110	High	\$0.78	0%	»
tennis equipment brands	390	Low	\$0.29	0%	»

user’s Internet browser. The displayed search is concretely exploring how many people are globally searching for the phrases “EU politics”, “tennis equipment”, “mediterranean villa”, regardless of the browser language.

Next, the search results are presented, and by choosing the option “Keyword ideas”, the exact number of monthly searches for the mentioned keywords is presented as well.

In the mentioned example it was shown that the phrase “tennis equipment” is being searched on a monthly level 4,400 times globally, the phrase “mediterranean villa” 1,600 times, and “EU politics” 170 times.

Below the first table there are also suggestions based on the entered results offered by the Google Keyword Planner. The most precise research is obtained if similar keywords are entered in the upper part, i.e. words from the same niche. In this case, that are phrases referring to tennis equipment.

In this part most of the results we got are from the subject area of tennis equipment, because those are the most searched words among all the entered during the analysis. The focus can be placed only on one niche by entering similar key phrases at the beginning and that is how more precise results are obtained.

If you want to research by browsing concrete countries and not globally, when entering keywords at the beginning you need to enter the concrete country in the part “All locations”. That is the way to localize results and to obtain results from specific countries.

In the following example we are focusing only on the phrase “mediterranean villa”, we are adding the phrase “mediterranean villas” to it, and in the part “location” we are selecting Italy, the US and England.

Presented intensity of searching for specific keywords

Source: Google Keyword Planner / screenshot

Searching mentioned keywords in selected countries

Source: Google Keyword Planner / screenshot

▼ Search for new keyword and ad group ideas

Enter one or more of the following:

Your product or service

Your landing page

Your product category

Targeting [?]

Italy, United States, England

All languages

Google

Negative keywords

Customize your search [?]

Keyword filters

Keyword options

Show broadly related ideas

Hide keywords in my account

Hide keywords in my plan

Presentation of the intensity of the search for mentioned keywords

Source: Google Keyword Planner / screenshot

The results will be different because we have narrowed down the selection of countries instead of using the global search. Therefore we now have 1,300 searches of the phrase "mediterranean villa". The newly introduced phrase, although it is just the plural of the first one, has 210 searches. It is very important that generated keyword suggestions are following. By looking at these results we can get new ideas on niches, areas, searches. It is very legitimate to estimate through this search system that some other keywords are searched a lot more than those primarily set. We can conclude that some other topics are searched for more often or remain with previous keywords

Search terms	Avg. monthly searches [?]	Competition [?]	Suggested bid [?]	Ad impr. share [?]	Add to plan
mediterranean villas	210	Medium	\$2.28	0%	»
mediterranean villa	1,300	Low	\$1.50	0%	»

1 - 2 of 2 keywords

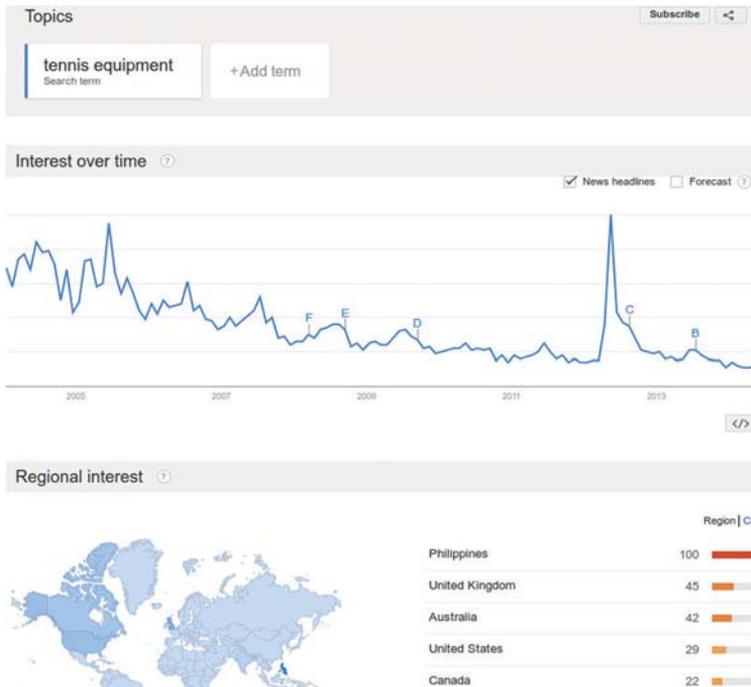
Keyword (by relevance)	Avg. monthly searches [?]	Competition [?]	Suggested bid [?]	Ad impr. share [?]	Add to plan
villa	60,500	Low	\$0.32	0%	»
villa holiday	1,600	Medium	\$2.50	0%	»
holiday lettings	165,000	Medium	\$0.30	0%	»

in order to continue with the analysis, because the number of searches isn't the only thing relevant for the final conclusion.

Google Trends

The other tool is Google Trends¹² which is presenting seasonal searches of specific keywords. the search of the phrase "tennis equipment" can be seen in the graph below. According to the graph we can see that the search trend is decreasing from 2006 until 2012, when happened a boom in that field. After that period it is decreasing again. However, if the trend of a word is decreasing, that does not mean that the number of searches is small, but that it was searched less than in another period of time. It is ideal to find a phrase with a growth trend, because that can guarantee larger success in the future, especially if the competition is not increasing.

The display of countries in which the search of the phrase is most frequent is given below the graph. In this case those are the Philippines with an extremely large number of searches compared to other countries. Great Britain, Australia, the USA and Canada are following. Based on this we can go back to the Google Keyword Planner and in the selection of countries set up the Philippines in the search of the key phrase for tennis equipment. Thus we would localize the search and see the results for the concrete country. That would strategically mean that it is a good idea to start a website in that



Presentation of seasonal searches of certain keywords

Source: Google Trends / screenshot

¹² It is available at the following address: <http://www.google.com/trends/>

country which is practically possible from any part of the world, because this job has an absolutely global character and local barriers are there to be broken.

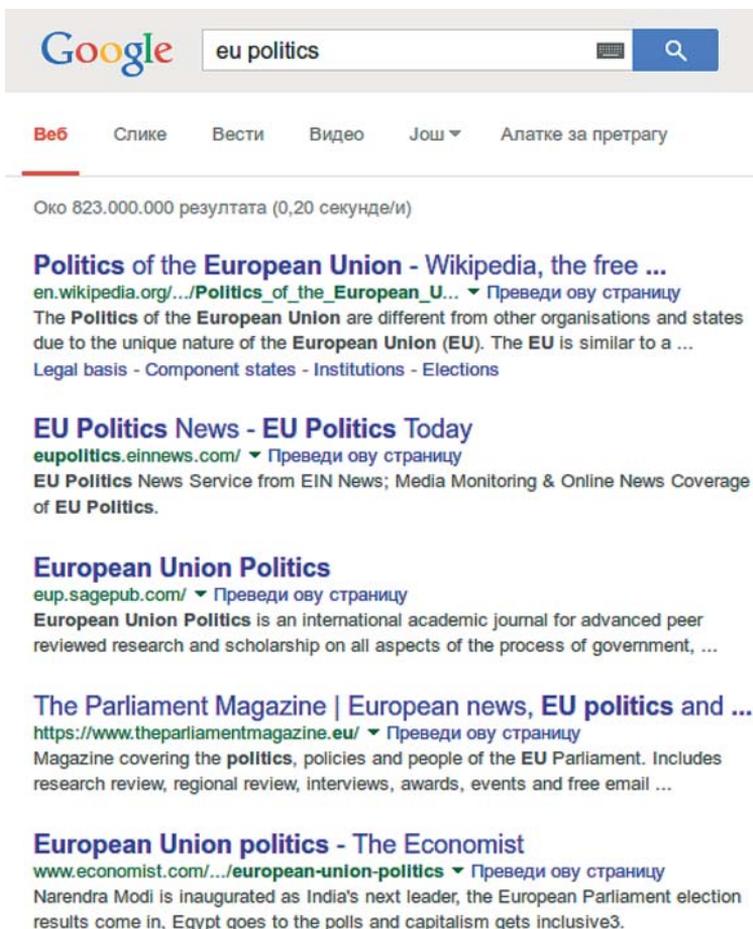
With the combination of the tools Google Keyword Planner and Google Trends, it is possible to obtain very good and useful information about the demand on the Internet (about the concrete number of searches). Therefore, starting an online project without having checked how demanded a certain topic is would be a rather uncertain move.

3. Competition analysis

The research of online competition is conducted manually via Google search. It is similar to the supply analysis although it focuses on websites which could be a competition in publishing. The fewer websites we can find, the greater our chances of success are.

Competition search
online for the term
"eu politics"

Source: Google /
screenshot



The screenshot shows a Google search interface with the query "eu politics" entered in the search bar. Below the search bar, there are navigation options: Веб, Сликe, Вести, Видео, Још, and Алатке за претрагу. The search results are displayed below, starting with the text "Око 823.000.000 резултата (0,20 секунде/и)". The first result is "Politics of the European Union - Wikipedia, the free ..." with a snippet: "The Politics of the European Union are different from other organisations and states due to the unique nature of the European Union (EU). The EU is similar to a ... Legal basis - Component states - Institutions - Elections". The second result is "EU Politics News - EU Politics Today" with a snippet: "EU Politics News Service from EIN News; Media Monitoring & Online News Coverage of EU Politics.". The third result is "European Union Politics" with a snippet: "European Union Politics is an international academic journal for advanced peer reviewed research and scholarship on all aspects of the process of government, ...". The fourth result is "The Parliament Magazine | European news, EU politics and ..." with a snippet: "Magazine covering the politics, policies and people of the EU Parliament. Includes research review, regional review, interviews, awards, events and free email ...". The fifth result is "European Union politics - The Economist" with a snippet: "Narendra Modi is inaugurated as India's next leader, the European Parliament election results come in, Egypt goes to the polls and capitalism gets inclusive3."

Most important is the first page of Google search because it presents the most relevant results. The results are diverse, from relevant political websites to news sites. It is important to bear in mind that the biggest competition are websites specialized in the topic which is being searched. Thus, study possible competitors well and find out whether there are websites with a similar idea.

Bear in mind that the phrase you have entered will never be the only one through which visitors will find your website. Once you start publishing, you will have more keywords from that subject area, which will increase the chances of visitors finding you. For that reason it is necessary to enter similar keywords when analysing the competition.

It is important to know that the website which is first on the list never attracts clicks from all searches, but those clicks are distributed to other websites as well. It is estimated that the first website usually attracts around 35 percent of clicks.

When researching the competition for terms "tennis equipment" and "mediterranean villa", it's easy to notice very strong competition. In case of global project and global search it is very difficult to find an area without competition and for that reason the job can be localized to specific countries or it can be done globally in sub-niches of the searched area (for instance: mediterranean villa italy).

4. Profitability calculation

The profitability depends, above all, on the subject area you are writing about. In the part "Writing and profits" it has already been marked that the subject area represents probably the main part in the whole research and beginning of work. Financially speaking, it won't be the same if the entrepreneurial journalist is writing about automobiles or crafts. It is very important to choose a profitable niche.

An important item to be considered is also the percentage. If in a certain market area somebody is ready to give a percentage from sales, it is important to know what is the amount, because there is a difference between 10 percent for a 5,000 Euros service and a product of 50 Euros.

Every subject area has its own way of monetization. When it comes to the mediterranean villas, it is probably better to have online reservations, similar to a website like booking.com. When it comes to tennis equipment, it is best to give advice, and for the topic "EU politics" it is best to write texts and analysis. In all three cases the monetization would perform in a different way: in the first case it might be a percentage from booking, in the second case it would be the profit from Google ads and banners, and in the third case the freemium model would be most effective.

Results of research and choice of areas

A good supply, large demand, low competition and good profitability in the subject area represent the main guidelines for the choice of a suitable market niche. If one of these items has contrary results, for instance if the supply is good, but the demand small, even if the competition is low and the profitability high, it is very possible that entering that market niche will not lead to success.

It is very important to look at the business of entrepreneurial journalism, especially when it comes to online journalism, from the above mentioned perspective. None of these examples is probably ideal, because they would have been already used in practice if they were ideal. So, the research of market niches is something the entrepreneurial journalist needs to be able to do, because a detailed research and analysis of the obtained results leads to finding out which subject is profitable.

It is ideal when all four elements show good results (see table below: situation 1), the most unfavourable situation is when none of the elements show good results and that is a certain indicator that such subject area should be given up (situation 2). However, there will be mixed situations in practice, which will require a careful choice of business models or searching for sub-niches (situation 3 and 4).

Research results which are making a profitable market niche easier to find

Source: Miloš Petrović

Area	Supply	Demand	Competition	Profit
Situation 1	Excellent	Excellent	Weak	Excellent
Situation 2	Weak	Weak	Strong	Weak
Situation 3	Good	Weak	Strong	Unpredictable
Situation 4	Weak	Excellent	Weak	Unpredictable

Business models

In entrepreneurial journalism it is important to talk also about concrete ways of making profit. There are different business models, but we can say that three of them are the main business models:

- 1. Sale of advertising space**
- 2. Percentage from concrete actions of visitors**
- 3. The freemium model**

Each of these models can lead to profit and it is important to consider each model from the beginning on, in combination with the previous market analysis.

1. Sale of advertising space

Sale of advertising space is probably the least profitable business model for which good negotiation and sales skills are necessary. In entrepreneurial journalism and in online writing the following things can be sold:

- a link in the text
- a banner in the text
- a banner in a part of the website
- a banner in the background of the website

Most valuable is the space which is in the focus of the readers. Although very small, a link in the text can attract a larger number of clicks than, for instance, a banner in the right part of the website. A banner in the text is also a good option, but only if it is connected to the text, i.e. if it is referring to the same topic. A banner in the site background – a background which can be clicked on – is highly noticeable and it is usually more profitable.

Whichever space is chosen, it is usually sold for a time period, for instance, a banner for a month, but there is also the option of charging per display, based on the statistics of the number of displays. Charging by the click is avoided, because it is the least profitable.

This business model can be applied to the example of the tennis equipment. If the website would publish only texts about the topic “tennis equipment”, a lot of keywords from that subject area would be collected. It would be very interesting for a company which is selling tennis equipment to buy a banner on such a website, because its content is directly linked to what that company is offering.

2. Percentage from concrete actions of visitors

A percentage from concrete actions of visitors is more demanding but fair profit compared to the sale of advertising space, because the website is earning from the concrete action of one visitor. The action can include a phone call, sending an e-mail or the purchase of a product the text is about. This business model is demanding for the measurement and for following, but it can provide long-term profits which can be even larger than from the sale of advertising space.

The example of tennis equipment could be used to create a concrete action called “Order equipment” (as a special website option) where visitors would choose what they would like to order or buy and from which manufacturer. The owner of the website would, in that case, have a percentage from realized purchases while not even having to have the equipment stored. He/She can only forward orders to the

tennis equipment salesperson. It is important to point out that publishing PR texts on the websites is not the requirement for this model, because the credibility of the website and the quality of its content is motivating visitors to visit it and the advertiser has a direct interest in being present on that website and in enabling the sales because that is where his target group is. The website with a business model based on PR texts loses its credibility and the trust of the readers so, in the long run, it cannot build a community large enough to attract advertisers.

3. The freemium business model

The freemium business model means that a part of the content or services on the website is free whereas additional options, contents or services are charged. It is used most frequently in applications and games, less in classic websites, but it is something to consider.

News about EU politics could, in an ideal case, fit to this business model. The site would have standard news from the EU, while, for example, the access to the section with exclusive interviews or analysis would be charged. This model of charging is still not functioning successfully in journalism in the countries of South East Europe and it is debatable if online journalists starting new projects could rely on this business model as a sustainable solution.

WEBSITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The role of a journalist in website development

An entrepreneurial project on the Internet is basically the same as a classic entrepreneurial project. That means that all the rules, learned lessons and recommendations, strategies, financial constructions and other elements of entrepreneurship refer to an Internet magazine just as they refer to a hairdresser's shop or high-technology startup company.

As the initiator of an online entrepreneurial project, a journalist cannot circumvent his role of "entrepreneur", so it is very important to test his entrepreneurial and leadership skills and to learn how to write a business plan and other parts of conducting business which are necessary for the development and monetization of the business idea.

In that sense, the skill of writing is just a basic skill. The professional know-how of the journalist who is creating a product (in our case an Internet magazine, for instance) is necessary for the project. But his dedication as an entrepreneur, persistence, sales skills, personal presentation, project organisation and other business skills will be of crucial significance as much as his writing skills.

Unfortunately, these skills are mostly not learned during basic education. There is a need for additional education, and it is also necessary to learn through experience. An Internet magazine is an excellent opportunity for that.

Because of all of that, a journalist has normally a twofold role in development of entrepreneurial projects online:

- 1. The journalist is creating a high quality product for readers (he is in role of writer and editor)**
- 2. He is developing a business project and ensuring its sustainability and profitability**

NOTE: *Because of the fast creation and development, when it comes to small investments, online magazines are for many individuals a simple way of entering the world of entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, a great many of these magazines are unsuccessful. One of the reasons for the large number of websites which were initiated with great enthusiasm but had to end their work is bad planning and bad running the website as a business project with financial objectives and analysis of investment return.*

Before starting any production process, i.e. before starting to think about your next article, you should create a business plan where the most important stakeholders and partners will be marked as well as the necessary resources, the competition, the sources of income and other significant factors necessary to increase the chance for your idea to succeed.

ADVICE FROM THE PRACTICE: *Instead of hiring a programmer to create your website, you can create a Facebook page and invest into its promotion. Your Facebook page can be the test for your future magazine. Ask yourself: what can I learn about the needs of the target group in the chosen niche? What are the visitors having the best reaction to? What did I think would be a successful content and it turned out that the users were not interested? In what way is my page working together with the pages of companies and brands from my niche?*

Already in the beginning you should have in mind that having any business plan is better than having no business plan.

Before you start producing your website, it is extremely important to:

- 1. take a free online course about creating entrepreneurial projects¹³**
- 2. create a scheme of your business model¹⁴**
- 3. create a basic business plan.**

By going over these steps you will learn a lot about your idea, you will build a team, you will get to know the market you are working on and you will see the good solutions from competition. Therefore, it is important to have the basics set up correctly in the beginning in order for your project to achieve long-term success.

How to start creating a website

After you have made the analysis of your business idea and you have decided how to provide sustainability for your website and also your long-term satisfaction in dealing with the chosen topic, you have to collect the means to pay for the server, the domain and the technical support, mostly also the complete creation of the website. After decisions comes realization of your idea. That first step, the decision, is also the first step in the production process of the website.

ADVICE: *We will once again repeat the basic mistake and recommendation for all journalists in the world of Internet magazines. Before you start doing anything on your website, you analyse once again how your website will earn money. A frequent mistake of those who are creating a website is that they create it solely for website visitors (those who are consuming the content you are creating) and not also for the direct target group (partners, advertisers and other subjects who will be your source of income).*

¹³ Free Start-up Course – free online course on start-ups, which can help you to see your magazine as a start-up company <https://www.udacity.com/course/ep245>

¹⁴ Business Model Generation – a film explaining the Business model generation canvas <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoAOzMTLP5s>

Besides the value you are creating for your readers, you should also be creating value for your partners who will pay for the service.

Except in the case when your readers are the only source of income (you are charging for the content), it is important to plan the layout and functionality of your website also for the direct target group to which you will “sell” your product.

How to start creating a website? Since it is less likely that you have already created a website like this, you should start thinking about it as if you were building a skyscraper. Imagine a huge skyscraper with restaurants, shops, offices, a gym, a kindergarten, a swimming pool on the roof, apartments, etc. If you would have the task to build that, you probably wouldn't dare to start the building process without a plan, without understanding the whole process, all its phases and most important elements.

Even if you were not a construction engineer, you would probably think about many requirements you should meet before starting to build: about the blueprints of all rooms, the plan of electrical installations, the plan of purchasing material, the operative plan for coordinating different teams, the plan of evacuation in case of natural disasters, licenses, traffic, environment, etc.

In this broader sense the design of websites is a process on which not only the layout of your website will depend (design of the user interface) but also the user experience, usefulness and the way how the website is creating value for different target groups. This makes the main difference between a successful and unsuccessful online project.

The first step when creating a website

Source: Veroljub Zmijanac

Characteristics	Building	Website
The look	Modern, glass or concrete and massive	Minimal design in white colour with large photographs and large font or small details with a lot of text and graphic elements.
Functionality	Business space with infrastructure (parking space, internet, gym, restaurant) or an apartment building	A magazine for reading or a website offering additional functionalities: restaurant grading and recommendations, food orders, online sales
Usefulness	Need for peace and quiet (an apartment building) or the need to spend some time and do the shopping (a shopping mall)	Need for information (reading content) or the need to socialize (social networks)

Website architecture

The architecture of the website is a complex process which is leading to a complete website design and its creation specification. This process includes a number of other segments such as the design of the user interface, of the user experience and information architecture (information structure).

In this and the following sections of the handbook we will try to use the “step by step” approach in order to offer enough information for

journalists or editorial teams about all elements of the website design. Even if they are not leading the process of website creation themselves, it is important for journalists to be part of the process and to understand all elements of their future entrepreneurial undertaking.

RECOMMENDATION: *Journalists who are starting their website would benefit from the practice and previous experience in already existing online projects. A practice or a job in online projects of similar size or in a similar subject area may reveal enough information about "how to" and "what not to do" when planning and maintaining a website.*

The website creation process

The website creation process consists of 7 phases:

1. **Definition of objectives**
2. **Target group definition**
3. **Competition analysis**
4. **Scenario Mapping**
5. **Information architecture**
6. **Creation of the prototype and design of the user interface**
7. **Project specification**

Each phase in the process of website design represents the continuation of the previous one and we will discuss each of them separately.

Phase 1: Definition of objectives

Try to describe your website in one paragraph. Then try to define the essence of your website in one sentence. The objective is to finally define a syntagm with two to three words which would perfectly describe why your website exists.

ADVICE: *This is a very important step, because during the design process, by researching examples from abroad and similar domestic websites, you will have a lot of ideas which can be great, but inadequate for your main idea or at least in the first phase of website development.*

In the first phase of website development, while you still have no idea how the audience is going to react, every time when you think of adding another functionality, ask yourself: Is this essential for my users? Is this function really necessary for my website?

The whole process of website creation is led by well defined objectives. The objectives may be different: to achieve influence on decision makers, to sell products, to brand yourself as a consultant in a certain field, etc. After you have set your objectives, you need to define success criteria for each one of them. Quantitative data will be very useful after the

beginning enthusiasm when you start thinking whether you are on the right track and what you should do in order to be more successful.

A good way of setting objectives is to use the SMART model for setting objectives:¹⁵

S - (specific)	M - (measurable)	A - (achievable)	R - (result oriented)	T - (time constrained)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific, concrete, recognizable, clear, understandable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> measurable, it can be checked if the objective has been met and to what degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> achievable, in accordance with available resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> result oriented in accordance with realistically available resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> time constrained, with a precisely defined deadline for realization

A concrete objective may be to achieve an income of 2,000 Euros in the next two years through the monetization of advertising space and through the offer of products specialized for the target group or to increase the average time spent on the website per visitor by one minute in the next three months.

Well defined objectives are also significant when presenting your idea to potential partners and co-workers.

Result of this phase: As the result of this step you should have a list of project objectives.

Dobar model za određivanje ciljeva

Izvor: Veroljub Zmijanac

Phase 2: Target group definition

In this phase we will explore standpoints, habits, traits and other characteristics of the target group which will visit our website. Each of the groups has its own specific needs which will be met by using the website.

In the target group definition phase we are using two techniques. First, we will define all groups of users who will use the website and then for each group we will create the description of one typical person which we are calling "user persona".

Based on all of this information the "web copy" is determined, i.e. the tone and sentences with which we will communicate with our users.

Thus, the journalist will have a different discussion on a website about foreign politics than on a site for cat lovers.

Creating user personas

User personas are detailed descriptions of imaginary persons who represent typical persons which will visit and use the website. The

¹⁵ SMART model for setting objectives: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria

#	Target group 1	Target group 2	Target group 3
Socio-demographic characteristics Age, nationality (if relevant), gender, education, occupation, place of residence, marital status and other relevant characteristics of the target group.			
Needs and wishes Why does the user want to subscribe to the website, to leave his e-mail address, what problems does he want to solve? What is the user ready to pay for, what can he find on your website?			
Competition Maybe the competition is not obvious in your niche, but it exists. For instance, competition to a magazine about theaters can be a website about films or exhibitions.			
Life style Describe the most important psychological traits: temperament, motivation, values, etc. Are these persons ready for a change, do they want new things? Is entertainment more important than honesty or vice versa, etc.			
Income What is the purchasing power of your target group? What products and services can you offer having that in mind?			
One typical day Describe one typical working day of your target group. When is a member of your target group getting up and where, what is he doing then, how is he spending his free time? What is he eating, who are his friends? Finally, when is this person visiting your website and from where?			

Process of target group definition

user persona is a person which journalists should know well and have in mind when they are creating content for a website.

Source: Veroljub Zmijanac

For each group we are creating a user persona which includes concrete information about a specific person from this group. A user



Milan Knežević – Miki is 21 years old and he is currently on the second year of the Faculty of organisational sciences. After finishing high-school, he stopped seeing his basketball buddies on a regular basis and replaced playing basketball with sitting in the reading room.

Miki is from Valjevo and he is currently living in the students' dorm in New Belgrade. Miki does not have a girlfriend and he is going out on Fridays and Saturdays. Sometimes he is going to the cinema and sometimes he is playing video games with his friends. He does not have a job.

In order to stay fit, Miki is running two to three times a week. He has no running experience except that he was "bored" from running while he was training basketball in elementary school. Besides the basic information about food and training, he is especially interested in advice about how to finish his first race. On the website, he would like to meet people who – like him – have started running while they were students, who are not professionals and with whom he could sometimes go for a run.

Example for the creation of a user persona

persona is always an imaginary person with typical, but concrete characteristics.

Source: Veroljub Zmijanac

Result of this phase of work: After this step you will have a document consisting of a table of target groups and descriptions of user personas for each of them.

Phase 3: Analysis of the competition

In order to ensure the success of the project but also to differentiate our idea from existing solutions it is necessary to get to know the competition so that we can be one step ahead of it. When we are analysing the competition, we are looking at strong and weak points and there is a number of methodologies which can help us in that undertaking.

ADVICE: *If you are creating a local website, don't focus only on sites in the same language. It is essential to have an example or several examples of websites from all over the world which are working in similar category. It is a rule that everything that you can think of already exists, if not, the question is why. It is important to get a new perspective and inspiration for your projects.*

EXAMPLE: *When the magazine on running "Trčanje.rs" was started in 2009, there were no such websites in Serbia. The initial team explored a few foreign websites and that helped them understand and create the information architecture as well as other elements of the website.*

Competition	Characteristics
Runner's World	Greatest runners' magazine in the world, print/online edition, credibility
Trčanje.info	Local project – forum. Vivid discussion and community. Good for the analysis of ideas for texts and contents

The competition can be divided into two groups:

- **Direct competition** – websites which are targeting the same target group and have analog products. For instance, for the website Trčanje.rs, the direct competition is the website Trkač.net.
- **Indirect competition** – websites with similar products which, however, satisfy only a part of the needs of the target group. An indirect competition to the website Trčanje.rs is the website Menshealth.com.

The result of this phase of work: 1. List of competitors; 2. 2. Ideas and findings that you have gained during the analysis

Examples for the analysis of the competition

Source: Veroljub Zmijanac

Phase 4: Analysis of the use scenarios

After the definition of user personas, we can continue with a more detailed creation of solutions for their problems.

Goals of users

Every person-visitor has their own short-term and long-term goals. These are very personal goals which we can call needs or wishes.

Those are the things our website needs to respond to. For instance, if somebody wants to improve their physical fitness, they have the goal to find a training program or a gym.

Thus, it is important to find out the goals of our users in order to be able to see what problems they have and to offer solutions. This way we are sure that our website is creating additional value for visitors.

RECOMMENDATION: *When you are creating the website you will have a lot of goals of your users. For instance, your users maybe like to listen to music, but it doesn't mean that your website should offer music. The more things we add, the more we are distancing website from the main idea of our business. Go back to the beginning of the process of creating a website and compare whether the addition you are intending to create fits into the essence of your website.*

Problems of users

When we have concrete goals, we can also analyse problems users are facing. For instance, the user can have the goal to buy running shoes. This goal is complex: how should they choose optimal running shoes, according to what criteria, are the most expensive shoes also the best? What is topical, which design is fashionable? Where can they buy a certain model for the least amount of money?

Our solutions

Now that we have identified goals and problems, it is a lot easier to create our solutions for them. In the next step we have to create the functionality of our website which will solve the problems of our users, which is, by itself, a good feeling.

User analysis by
model: goal –
problem – solution

Source: Veroljub
Zmijanac

Goal	Problem	Solution
Miki – student from Valjevo, new in town and a new runner.		
Finding a running plan	He is not sure if he is running correctly and enough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – program for recreational running – communication with other website visitors – asking questions to an expert
Buying running shoes	How to decide which running shoes to buy for up to 50 Euros?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – product catalog – shopping guide (quiz) – asking questions to an expert
Finding running buddies	He would like to get to know some interesting people to run with because he is bored running alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – section: find a buddy – calender of local races – list of race tracks

The analysis of scenarios is revealing possible movements of users through the website, i.e. through all "solutions" you have prepared for them.

We are again imagining being the user of the website and thinking about how the user would move through our website. Every goal of

the user persona has its own set of scenarios with which the user is reaching a solution.

These scenarios of website use can help us reveal the weak points of our ideas. They will later additionally help the designer to create the appropriate look of the website which will enable easy navigation and a quick arrival at the wanted content.

Example of the website use scenario

Source: Veroljub Zmijanac

Goal of the user	Scenarios	Website functionalities
Choosing running shoes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ENTRY: visit the home page 2. Choose the link "Equipment" in the main section 3. On the page "Equipment" click on the banner "Guide to buying running shoes" 4. Visit and read the "Shopping guide" 5. Click on the link "Tested running shoes" 6. Read texts and choose three models of shoes 7. Return to the page with equipment 8. Click on the link "Running equipment stores" 9. Visit the page "Stores" and see which is the closest 10. Find the phone number and website of the store 11. EXIT: Go to the store page 	Page: EQUIPMENT Content: Guide to buying shoes Content: equipment tests Page: equipment stores (with map and contact data)
Finding a preparation program for the half marathon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ENTRY: After the Google search for the keyword "half marathon preparation plan" the user is entering the page "half marathon preparation guide" 2. He is reading the text 3. He is clicking on RELATED BOX and going to the text about advanced half marathon preparation 4. He clicks to the sidebar: he applies for information about the half marathon 5. EXIT: he signs up to the mailing list of the website 	Banner: half marathon preparation guide Page with the preparation program Banner for signing up to the mailing list
...

Result of this phase of work: The result is the table of scenarios in which every goal of the user is followed by a scenario and by elements which are necessary to be created on the website.

Phase 5: Information architecture

In the previous phases we have come to a number of functionalities which are to be created on the website. We have seen a lot of content which have to be offered to the users. Good information architecture helps us to connect this content intuitively and to structure it into one unit – your website.

ADVICE: For the creation of the information structure you can use free software for mind maps (e.g. online MindMap) or Microsoft Excel.

Elements of the information architecture are the following:

- **categories (topics)** – they are representing sections with several articles. One category can have more sub-categories (e.g. the category Sport on the website B92.net has the sub-category Football).
- **pages** – elements of the website which are giving information in a longer period of time (e.g. page on conditions of use or contact page)
- **special pages, search, evaluation page, maps, different wizards, forms etc.**

Articles – concrete articles (e.g. “Victory of football players of Barcelona 3:1”) are not displayed in the information architecture.

ADVICE: *Most frequently top categories (categories without the parent category) are a part of the main menu. For instance, on the website about running they are the following: Training, Food, Equipment, etc.*

The result of this phase of work: Map of all contents and the relationship between them.

Phase 6: Creating the prototype (Wireframing) and the design of the user interface

The prototype is a draft page on which elements are set up but without the “final processing”, i.e. without colours, shadows, styles etc. After the prototype is adopted, it will be sent as a part of the documentation to the designer who will create the design which will be coded by the programmer and thus we will get the final product.

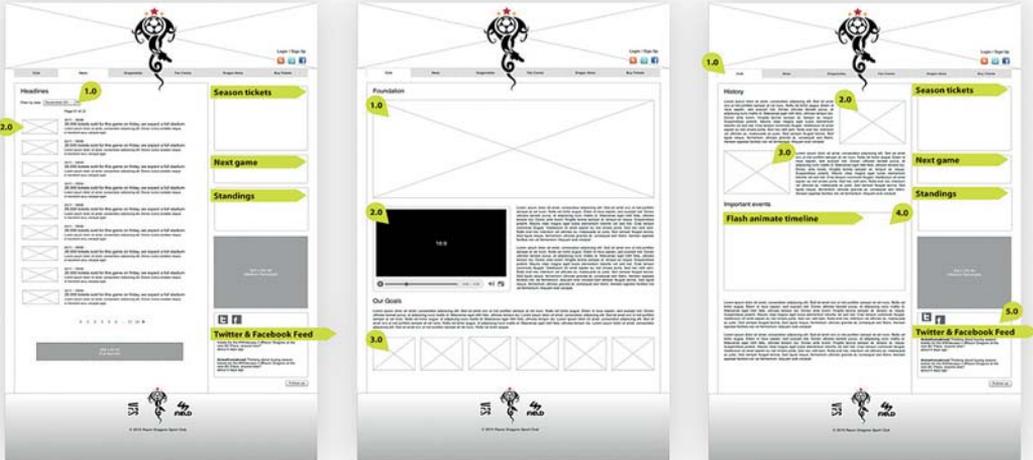
When creating the prototype, we are paying attention to the means of fulfilling the goals of the user in order for them to be able to reach the solution to their problem with as few clicks as possible.

We are making prototypes for all typical pages on our website and we can draw by hand or in Microsoft Word. If the designer is drawing your prototypes (s)he will probably use graphics software for that.

Some of the prototyping elements:

- **Primary – main menu** (number and sequence of links)
- **Header** – the header section consists of the main menu, the search field, logotypes, the contact page
- **Contextual elements** – those are the parts of the website which appear on certain pages such as the box with tags, the comments section, the sidebar etc.
- **Footer** – a part of the website at the bottom, which can include the copy of the main menu, links to social networks, a link to user rules etc.

RECOMMENDATION: Although creating prototypes can be a tiring job, the more precisely they are created, the less room for dilemmas in the communication with the designer there will be later. These possible dilemmas and the subsequent change of the design can significantly prolong the process of creating the website and make it more expensive.



The final look of the website is created based on the prototypes.

In order for the designer of the user interface to be able to create the final look of the website, (s)he will need a “book of standards” of the brand which includes the list of all fonts, colours and logotypes used in order for the appearance online as well as offline to be unique.

Since the creation of a book of standards for a brand is often a long and expensive process in this phase, the founder of the website will give specific information to the website designer: which colours to use, whether the website should be minimalist or with details, etc. The designer may ask the founder of the website to send them some of their favourite sites in order to see what they like.

ADVICE: Since the Wordpress platform is being used for media websites, instead of creating a design theme from scratch the website initiators can look for one of the many Wordpress topics which can be used. A theme can be free and if it is not free, the price is usually up to a hundred Euros. The theme can additionally be adjusted in order to be appropriate for the informational architecture and elements of your website. The second option is to create a theme from scratch, which is a longer and more expensive process.

The result of this phase of work: The design of all pages to be created.

Phase 7: Project specification

The last phase of the website design process is the creation of the project specification. This document consists of a detailed plan of all steps in the architecture of the website.

Example of the prototype creation and user interface design

Source: Website Design: 'Razor Dragons' by Felipe Dos Santos & Luis Francisco Baroni Coutinho, flickr

The project specification includes also the description of technologies and the system for content management (Wordpress, Joomla, the custom solution) which will be used when programming the website.

Once the project specification is approved, the programming of the website can start. The entrepreneurial journalist is there to answer all additional questions asked by the team.

ADVICE: *The creation process itself is the beginning, because during the creation you will reveal new connections between your data as well as illogicalities which are difficult to link in the movement dynamics. It is advised to consistently follow the logic that you have created for your users, but also to be open for advice and to be ready to change certain elements if the persons in your team agree on that.*

CONCLUSION

Although the knowledge and skills that journalists need to have in order to build a profitable online project of good quality are beyond the scope of this handbook, it should provide a good basis for anyone who intends to engage in journalistic entrepreneurship. The venture carries many risks, of which the greatest one is faced at the very beginning because most projects are already doomed from the start. The reason for this is that many journalists are not aware of all the things they need to have in mind in the preparatory stage. They often believe that knowledge and experience in journalism are sufficient to start their own online media.

The digital era has significantly changed things. On the one hand, there has never been an opportunity to start a media project with so little resources, but on the other hand, there was never the need for so much comprehensive knowledge to be able to succeed.

This handbook aims to present all the basics journalists need to know and put into practice before launching their own website. By following this information, they will have a chance to survive in the market and earn money from their own project. It is especially important to keep in mind that building a successful project takes several years, which may be wasted if only one step in the beginning is overlooked.

This handbook is thus created in the hope that it will help many journalists to find an unexploited niche market that offers an opportunity for profit, as well as for their self-employment, through launching their own media projects on the Web.

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