



Journalism that Matters: The New News Ecology

<http://www.journalismthatmatters.org/newsecology/>

May 4, 2008

The future of journalism centers around the **power of storytelling** to create healthy communities. Specifically:

- **Cultivating “healthy journalists”**, renewing the inner life of the journalist;
- **Preparing the next generation**, with an eye towards the emerging citizen journalist; and
- **Inventing a new economic model.** As one participant put it, “Rather than further compromise the work, it’s time to separate journalism from its current funding sources and find a new model.”

Some of its seeds include:

- **Journalism as a conversation** – a groundbreaking shift from journalism as a lecture;
- **Shaping a new “master narrative”**– Recovering the mythic story of journalists as conveners and navigators through a changing world prepares them to support communities in shaping a new national “master narrative” for our times.
- **High tech/high touch journalism** – Whether on the web or in the café, new storytelling forms are emerging that engage us on cell phones and iPods, and in gathering places with food, music and the arts; and
- **Ready, Fire, Aim** – A strategy of “just do it,” moving from idea (ready) to implementation (fire) without months of planning (aim).

By metaphorically removing the newsroom walls and taking the journalist out of the cube, the qualities of the new news ecology emerge.

CURRENT NEWSROOM	NEW NEWS ECOLOGY
Journalism as...	
Lecture	conversation
low tolerance for experimentation (like peanut butter in the fridge; it doesn't move)	community of innovation
central authority	community connector
knowledge-centric	relationship-centric
one-to-many	many-to-many
profit-driven	mission-driven
Accurate, verified and fair	Transparent, accurate, verified and fair

Journalist as...	
outsider	community member
lone wolf	collaborative partner
gatekeeper	sense-maker
focused on the external world	focused on their inner life and the external world
expert, arbiter of truth	coordinator, facilitator, convener, evaluator, refiner
Journalist as...	

professional, dispassionate	professional and citizen, passion in the mix
content creator	content creator and guide

Content that...	
arouses	inspires engagement
publisher owns and creates	public owns and creates
answers who, what when, where, why and how	contextualizes purpose – why the audience should care – and answers who, what when, where, why and how
pours around the ads	serves a greater good
follows the inverted pyramid	edited for readability, not style

Stories sourced...	
from within the news organization	from many people and places
are deadline driven	are continually unfolding

Dissemination of stories...	
media specific	multi-purpose (e.g., print, broadcast, web, podcast, cell phone, etc.)

Economics...	
ad supported	multiple sources of support
high cost of production and distribution	low-cost distribution
most of the cost is not journalism	costs mostly journalism related

Education ...	
for journalists	for: * journalists * the public * "citizen journalists"
in journalism's values and tools	in: * media literacy for everyone * journalism's values and tools * the art of engagement