

Sport and New Media:
A Profile of Internet Sport Journalists in Australia

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Abstract

The Internet is now a significant medium for sport coverage, allowing fans to access the latest news about their favourite team, sport or event. To date, Internet sport journalists, the content creators of sporting news websites, have received little attention in academic research. Accordingly, the aim of this research project was to construct a profile of Australian Internet sport journalists within the context of recent developments in the field of sport and new media. In terms of print journalism, some researchers have previously examined the educational background, working practices and self-assessment of print sport journalists. Similar themes were explored in this thesis, using semi-structured interviews with thirteen Internet sport journalists. Key research questions that guided the study were: How did the subjects become Internet sport journalists? What are their work routines? What are their experiences of online sport journalism and what is their perception of the future of sport journalism? It was discovered that, with certain limitations, traditional journalism skills still apply to the Internet sport environment. In comparison to print media, Internet sport journalists tend to write shorter articles, have to respond to a continuous deadline and do not work within a traditional beat system. In addition, it can be noted that the interactivity of the Internet forces Internet sport journalists to continually re-evaluate their skills and the manner in which they respond to their audience. Overall, this thesis provides important insights into the working practices of Australian Internet sport journalists and the online environment, an occupational field that is currently in a considerable state of flux.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAP	Australian Associated Press
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AFL	Australian Football League
AFP	Agence France Press
APSE	Associated Press Sports Editor
CAR	Computer-assisted Reporting
CD-ROM	Compact Disc Read-Only Memory
DVD	Digital Video Disc
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
IOC	International Olympic Committee
MEAA	Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance
PANDORA	Preserving and Accessing Documentary Resources of Australia
PC	Personal Computer
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
SMS	Short Message Service
URL	Universal Resource Locator
WAP	Wireless Application Protocol
WWW	World Wide Web