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**Latin American Online Journalism: An Exploratory Web-Based Survey
for Identifying International Trends in Print-Affiliated Sites**

by

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**Latin American Online Journalism: An Exploratory Web-Based Survey
for Identifying International Trends in Print-Affiliated Sites**

**Approved by
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Mark Tremayne

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Dedication

Para Abel, Betty, Leandro, Catalina y Marco.

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Abstract

Latin American Online Journalism: An Exploratory Web-Based Survey for Identifying International Trends in Print-Affiliated Sites

A descriptive analysis of the data from 74 editors and reporters from 62 print-affiliated newspapers sites in Latin America indicate that journalists and print-based sites follow similar broad tendencies observed in different studies inside and outside of the region. The surveyed online editors and reporters -mainly young men with university studies- have a career background in print newspapers, with salaries equals or lower than their print colleagues. They perform weekly activities more related with immediacy than multimedia, and they perceive their primary function as disseminators and interpreters of information. Working in small and integrated newsrooms, online journalists basically interact with their print partner in terms of editing content. Although, advertising is a primary source of revenue, the majority of national, regional and local print-based sites confirm that they depend on the print partner for content and financing their online operations. Furthermore, the online version of papers do not fully take advantage of the Internet technology and capabilities, particularly multimediality and interactivity, or provide too much original new media content.

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The University of Texas at December, 2004

Supervisor: Mark Tremayne

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This study aims to provide the first explorative overview of online newspapers, journalists and journalism in Latin America at the beginning of the 21st century. It attempts to explore the most controversial issues related to online newspapers, particularly the Web editions of daily and generic-information newspapers, known as “affiliated online sites” (Berkman and Shumway, 2003). Through a Web-based survey, this thesis examines whether international trends in online newspapers and journalism are operating in the print-based sites in Latin America. The Internet questionnaire comprised 31 closed-ended questions related to five topics: occupational profiles, job routines, organization structures, content production, and business models.

A descriptive statistic analysis is used to examine the result of the previous five areas, and compare them with other findings reported by studies conducted outside and inside of Latin America. Furthermore the data provide two parallel levels of analysis. Associations of variables also allow portray tendencies’ similarities and differences among the participants sites of national, regional and local papers in Latin America, and online and print partners. The findings contribute to relate Latin American online newspapers with other peers around the world, and with themselves. This thesis argues that despite certain financial and structural constrains, Latin America online papers are not so different to other worldwide counterparts.

After a long process of e-mail verification, the defined sample constituted 129 print-affiliated sites operating in the 18 Latin American Spanish-speaking countries. Sixty-two sites of papers with national, regional and local circulation (48 percent of the sample) participated in the survey, and 74 online editors and reporters responded the questionnaire. Their answers might help to understand in a large-scale system how are the reporters working in an Internet environment? What professional background do online journalists bring to their jobs? What are the most frequent job routines in online newsrooms? How do online journalists define their professional roles? Do online management structures resemble those of print newsrooms? What is the relationship between traditional and new media? What content is provided by the digital papers? Are the electronic editions only a medium for distributing and promoting print edition content and services? Do the online editions operate merely as “shovelware” or do they provide immediacy, multimedia and interactive information and services? What business models are usually employed by these Web sites?

My interest in exploring the online versions of print newspapers in the region is based on professional and research concerns. First, my experience as a senior editor for a national newspaper’s website in Venezuela raised most of the previous questions, as well as, some theoretical comprehension about this new journalistic path. Second, the lack of quantitative and exploratory approaches about the online journalism of Latin America encouraged me to devote my academic efforts to develop this comprehensive study.

Internationally, scholars have been exploring various aspects of the development of online newspapers over the past ten years. American, European, and Asian scholars have continually monitored the progression of online editions developed by print editions

in their countries and regions. However, in Latin America few media reports and academic articles have investigated issues dealing with Internet newspapers in this region. Empirical studies, mostly content analysis available on the web, are limited to digital versions of a few papers in few countries: Mexico (Navarro, 2003); Argentina (Lemos, 2002; Albarello, 2002); and Peru (Zeta de Pozo, 2002).

Most recently, Guillermo Franco and Julio Cesar Guzman (2004), an online editor and a reporter respectively from the Colombian newspaper, El Tiempo.com, conducted the first web-based survey about online journalism in the region. They surveyed online editors from 70 websites of national papers in Latin American and their results will contribute to the explorative overview proposed in this thesis.

In reviewing the diverse literature about online journalism, newspapers and journalists, relevant and current research and studies were crucial for formulating the research questions and for planning the methodology of this thesis. Quantitative (surveys and content analysis) and qualitative studies have examined the most relevant communication theories, assumptions and concerns about news media and print-based online papers in developed regions and nations

Kopper, Kolthoff, and Czepek (2000) identified seven tracks pursued by research projects about online journalism: “market analysis; product analysis; user studies; occupational changes; quality assessments; macro-studies; and experimental projects.” This thesis explores topics related with the five first perspectives. Reviewing the paths of international research in the topics, these scholars observe that the previous approaches involve the major concerns of the journalism activities on the Internet, and the use of journalism products and services in the profession and among users. Another scholar in

the United States also found the same patterns of online journalism's research classified in three broad sections: production, use and interactivity (Boczkowski, 2001). These authors recognized that the research in this field is just now beginning and that online communication is developing so fast that the patterns of usage, products and technology become outdated immediately.

In this sense, this thesis began with a review of located, and recent international studies, mostly published or presented during the last 3 years, with the purpose of identifying worldwide broad tendencies about occupational profiles, job routines, organization structures, content production, and business models in the Latin American print-based online papers. This study expects to find the following wide-ranging conclusions.

First, online journalists tend to be young professional men, with university degrees. A small number of online reporters are women. Online reporters' salary is similar or lower than the income of their print counterpart. (Deuze and Paulusse, 2002; Neuberger et. al, 1998; He and Zhu, 2002; Chyi and Sylvie, 2001; Quandt et al., 2002; Consello Da Cultura Galega, 2002; Grup de Periodistes Digital i Sindicat de Periodistes de Catalunya, 2003).

Secondly, the role of the online journalists is understood as neutral and quick providers of news, and sometimes educators of complex issues. Political and critical commentaries are not the most important professional functions of these online reporters. Also the examined findings and reports show that online journalists spend most of their time researching news on the Internet, rewriting material and repurposing content

(Consello Da Cultura Galega, 2002; Deuze, 1999; Grup de Periodistes Digitala i Sindicat de Periodistes de Catalunya, 2003; He and Zhu, 2002).

Thirdly, a vast number of worldwide newspapers report online newsrooms without a clear relationship with their print peers. Their staff's relationship is frequently based on strategies of cooperation and coordination, rather than on convergence. The majority of the online employees do not share the same newsroom with their colleagues from the print version. The examined organizational structures suggest a transitional process toward the convergence between media, which is not unambiguous between their actors and processes (Boczkowski, 2004; Singer, 2003a, 2003b).

Fourthly, online content is still based on the traditional print guidelines. A large number of online newspapers have developed the service of breaking news with continuous updates. However, multimedia and interactivity devices still remain lower than hyperlinks. Also the findings illustrate that it's more common in the online newspapers to provide it free content than to charge it (Barnhurst, 2002; Kenney, Gorelik, and Mwangi, 2000; Dibeau, 1999; Greer and Mensing, 2003; Peng, Tham, and Xiaoming, 1999; Massey and Levy, 1999; Schultz, 1999).

Finally, financing is one of the main problems for online newspapers. Several are experiment with new business models to offset the high investment and running costs of digital publications. The most common models seem to be advertising revenue, subscription fees and archival access charges (Chyi and Sylvie, 2000; Greer and Mensing, 2003; Schiff, 2003).

A wide variety of questions can be addressed to draw other conclusions about the status of the print-affiliated sites in the region. However, this study draws attention to the previous most tested and significant issues that need to be considered when a researcher frequently embarks on the process of investigating the topic.

CHAPTER II

Research Questions

RQ1. -Are the professional standards of online journalists in Latin America similar to their worldwide counterparts?

The variable “professional standards” is understood for this study as a set of journalist’s personal data, which include age, sex, educational background and former professional experience. This set of variables is based on surveys conducted by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996). Online journalist is understood for this study as those responsible for the Web content’s plan, production and divulgation. Web content includes texts (news articles and stories), graphics, photos, interactive items, videos or audio clips.

RQ2. -Are the online journalists in Latin America following the same occupational functions than their worldwide counterparts?

The variable “occupational functions” is defined as the most frequent job routines developed by the online journalists in a weekly basis, and the journalist’s description about their main professional roles in the online environment, described by Quandt, Altmeppen, Hanitzsch, and Loeffelholz, in *Online Journalists in Germany* (2002).

RQ3. –How much of the Latin American Journalists’ routines involve

The creation of original content tailored to Web capabilities?

The variable “Web capabilities” is described for this study as the inherent characteristics of hypertextuality, multimediality, interactivity and immediacy (Deuze, 2001; Pavlik, 2001). Original content is understood as all that non-duplicated or reedited content from the print edition.

RQ4. -Are the online versions of newspapers in Latin America operating

some form of convergence with their print partner?

The definition of the variable “some form of convergence” comprises the definitions of the five stages of convergence model developed by Dailey, Demo and Spellman (2003), for illustrating “the interaction and cooperation levels of staff members at newspapers, television stations, and Web organizations with news partnerships.”

This model, called The Convergence Continuum, consists of five stages that extend and apply the diffusion innovations and gate-keeping theories. These five stages are cross promotion, cloning, coopetition, content sharing and convergence

The answers of this research question will provide information to test the assumption of Rich Gordon (2003): “Convergence in media organizations is clearly most prevalent in its ownership and tactical forms. The progression toward information-gathering and storytelling convergence will be slow.” This author defines the convergence concept based on five dimensions (ownership, tactical, structural,

information-gathering convergence and/or presentation convergence), which will be explained in the Theoretical Framework.

RQ5. -What is the most common business model operated by the online versions of the print papers in Latin America and how does this compare to other parts of the world?

The variable “business model” comprises in its definition the array of different options yield by Peng,Tham, and Xioming (1999), and Greer and Messing (2003): Advertising (Banners, Ad pages hosted on the site), Online classified, Subscription fees for some content (Archives, Premium Services), Subscription fees for all content, and Internet access (ISP for subscribers). For this thesis, it was also included the option of revenues obtained through Alliances with other companies.

CHAPTER III

Literature Review

ONLINE NEWSPAPERS AND INTERNET IN LATIN AMERICA: SLOW ADVANCE

A comprehensive study conducted in 2000 revealed that 1,284 print papers circulated in the region, and 45.32 percent of them (582) operated their editions on the Internet. Some comparative statistics show that online newspapers in Latin America constituted 15.7 percent of the worldwide total of 3,696 print newspapers with editions on the Web in 2000. Newspapers in Spanish and Portuguese languages reached 18.5 percent of worldwide editions published on the web (Infoamerica, 2000). The Inter-American Press Association (IAPA) aggregated over 1,300 Latin American newspapers and magazines, and 40 percent of them provided their online edition in 2000 (Nafría, 2000).

Currently, more than 1,000 Latin American media sites on the Internet were reported by several online directories and web databases (Kidon Media Link, 2004). La prensa escrita.com (Print press.com, 2004), one of the most visited and updated directory of Spanish online newspapers, currently reports 114 editions of general information national, regional and local newspapers in Brazil; 115 in Mexico, 113 in Argentina, and 248 daily online version's newspapers in the rest of the region.

The biggest countries (Argentina, Brazil and Mexico) provide clearly the most elevated number of news sites. El Clarin from Argentina and Reforma from Mexico (<http://www.reforma.com>) are among the most 1000 visited online newspapers in the worldwide traffic rank (Infoamerica, 2004). The disparity in the Web presence between the biggest and the smallest countries is also observed in terms of multimedia and interactive development. “Mostly the biggest national newspapers or papers of giant media holdings show more pronounced characteristic of evolution on the Internet than regional, local and independent press. On the contrary, the smallest editions offer static Web sites and are not taking advantage of the new medium’s communicational and business potentialities” (Infoamerica, 2000).

The evolution of print-based sites in the region has barely been reported or studied. An early study about Latin America press on the Internet, conducted by a former UT Journalism student, showed that the main reasons for posting a site on the Web in the region were experimentation, media innovation, and reaching new audience (Morfin, 1997). Although it is unknown when the first Web editions of Latin American newspapers began, at least four papers in Ecuador, Mexico and Costa Rica started experimenting with their own Web pages following the model of The San Jose Mercury News (Font, 1999).

In the beginning, the Latin American newspapers on the Internet published an identical print version copy (Font, 1999). However, this author affirms that some papers have been evolving into sophisticated sites such as the Argentinian Clarín Digital (<http://www.clarin.com.ar>), and the Colombian El Tiempo (<http://eltiempo.terra.com.co>).

In the region, it is very unusual to find a virtual newspaper without the financial support of a print edition (García Villa, 2000).

Navarro (2002) conclude that the online journalism in Mexico has had a slow development, and the print media, as other part around the world, have exploited the new technologies before other media. Few Mexican media take advantage of the Internet capabilities, such as immediacy and interactivity, excluding the dailies Reforma (<http://www.reforma.com>) and El Universal (<http://www.el-universal.com.mx/>). Lemos (2002) carried out a content analysis of 10 Argentinean print-affiliate sites, and the found interactive features are rarely used by the examined papers. Only Clarin and La Nacion (<http://www.lanacion.arg>), the sites of the main national papers, offers an array of different interactive content and services. Similarly, Zeta de Pozo (2002) reveals that the only the biggest newspaper in Peru, El Comercio (<http://www.elcomercioperu.com.pe/online>) provide a diversity of interactive resources. Emails (75%) and forums (12%) are the most used interactive items by 28 Peruvian newspapers.

The daily national-circulated print newspapers in each country offer the most advanced web versions. Most of them seem to replicate and/or adopt the same patterns of evolution displayed by their counterparts worldwide, but with some constraints in terms of technology platforms and devices, financial resources and business operations. In 2001, Pavlik remarked that the online version of Clarin, an Argentinian newspaper, offered a standout quality of audio and video higher than any U.S. newspaper. The Brazilian journalist and scholar Rosental Calmon Alves also highlight this observation. In an interview for this thesis, Calmon Alves asserted that several media companies in

Argentina, Mexico and Brazil are doing outstanding online journalism. In other words, “Latin American media are doing the same thing that the American media are also trying to do: Trying to finding new techniques and new storytelling for taking advantage of the characteristics of this new medium.”

For first time this year a regional foundation dedicated to the Latin American journalism and journalists start to include the Internet category for their annual awards. Jaime Abello, Director of the Fundación para un Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano (Foundation for a New Iberoamerican Journalism), argues that online journalism in Latin America is not still fully consolidated; is still on a process of finding its way. He believes that it is premature to compare the regional online journalism with that observed in U.S. and Europe. “In the developed countries and regions, the media has technology and human resources to reach significant progress in online journalism,” Abello says. In addition, he explains that contrary to Latin America, an adequate telecommunication infrastructure and highest levels of Internet access allow the American and European media to improve their online initiatives in journalism (Clarín.com, 2003).

The transition to the new medium has not been a simple task in a developing region where Internet penetration is still much lower than in other regions such as North America, Europe and Asia. Reports from the site Internet World Statistics (2004) show that 10 percent of the Latin American population has access to the Internet. Despite this limited use of Internet, the media market in Latin America has gradually increased their presence on the web since the late 1990s as other worldwide counterparts. Between 1997 and 2000, online newspapers in Latin American grew up 107 percent (Infoamerica, 2000).

Moreover, the number of broadband households in Latin America was expected to increase from 2002 to 2007. In 2002, the Informa Media Group predicted that the number of broadband households should grow progressively from 1.7 million in 2002 to 4.2 million in 2004 and 11.3 million by 2007 (Nua Internet Surveys 2, 2002). At the same time, the International Telecommunication Union reported that Latin America's wireless markets are beginning to mature. "In the region, the poor fixed-line infrastructure has made mobile phones a necessary substitute for fixed-line phones." In October 2001, Intermarket Group reported that the wireless Internet user population in Latin America will expand 500-fold, from 100,000 in 2000 to 52 million by 2005 (Nua Internet Surveys 3, 2001).

Understanding the World Wide Web as a mass medium, Loosen (2002) infers that this medium is a "process of institutionalization relative to economic, technological, organizational and professional features with all of their advantages and disadvantages." Among these several factors, the rates of Internet access in the region have obvious implications for the evolution of online newspapers in the area. If the predictions hold true, the progress of broadband and wireless technology users will likely contribute to and consolidate the capacity of digital paper's production and operations. Online journalism might take advantage of Internet market factors in Latin America, depending on the audacity, risk and potential of the new generation of newspaper owners, managers and journalists.

ONLINE JOURNALISTS' CHARACTERISTICS, ROUTINES AND ROLES

Some media scholars believe that there are international standards of journalistic professionalism based on similar values. In the scope of the global media, Reese (2001) points out that journalists have gained popularity as a subject of study in the United States and elsewhere. Reese mentions that the studies of the American Journalists conducted by Weaver and Wilhoit have been followed in various international studies. European scholars have shared comparative research issues of their own national media, journalism and journalists.

Reviewing this field's studies, Reese based his understanding of the global journalist on a Hierarchy-of-Influences model. This approach distinguishes different levels of examination (individual journalist, news routines, organizational, extra-media, and ideological) of factors that operate simultaneously to shape media, professional work and news content. The first three factors are analyzed in this chapter.

At the individual level, Reese's model includes the influences of attitudes, training, and background of online journalists, understood for the purposes of this study as those responsible for the Web content plan, production and diffusion in print-based online sites. According to Reese, these attributes of journalists provide an "attractive explanatory perspective for the public and journalists alike"; and valuable individual and social descriptions of those who shape the news in the process of gate-keeping.

Basic demographic data about online journalists (sex, age, education level, years of professional experiences, former media experience and current job position) is useful

in determining what are the most common personal and professional characteristics of the online journalists in Latin American working for print-affiliated online papers.

In addition, this information might illustrate the composition and provoke comparisons of the online news staff in terms of sex, age, levels of knowledge and professional practice. A mature educated professional with previous experiences in other media or young and inexperienced journalists might suggest different implications to the online newsroom's environment, attitudes and processes. Johnstone, Slawski, and Bowman and Weaver and Wilhoit, cited by Vos (2002), argue that education and experience are predictors in the journalist role adoption.

Few international studies have explored topics related to human resources and technology in online newsrooms in the United States or other countries. "Some research studies are concentrating on the content and its perception by the user-in particular the credibility of online sources; ... use of hypertext, and multimedia content as well as the overall usability" (Quant et al., 2002).

Reviewing the development and use of online newspapers in the U.S., Boczkowski (2000) highlights that "online newsrooms have tended to employ younger people, with more diverse educational and career backgrounds than print, while paying them similar salaries." Apparently, this American trend seems to be replicated in other geographies.

At the end of the 1990's, German scholars examined the producers, products and users of online newspapers in their country. They found that the average age of online editorial boards' personnel was considerably lower than the employees' age in other media, and the percentage of women in online journalism was also fairly inferior

(Neuberger et.al, 1998). Four years later, another representative survey on German online journalists found that the average professionals are men and the age average tendency continues. The majority holds a university degree (Quandt et. al, 2002).

Another survey conducted in the Low Countries (the Dutch-speaking areas of the Netherlands and Flanders) shows a bigger gender disparity between Flanders (80% male vs. 20% female) and the Netherlands (67% male vs. 33% female). In terms of age, 60 percent of the 137 participants were younger than 35, and nine out of ten respondents were highly educated (Deuze and Paulussen, 2002).

All the previous studies show that the online reporters' salary is lower than the income of journalists hired by traditional media. Similar results appear in surveys carried out in Spain among online journalist from the regions of Galicia and Catalunya.

A phone-survey conducted by the Consello Da Cultura Galega (2002) shows that salary and work shifts are the most negative aspects of the labor conditions among digital journalists from different media outlets. It also illustrates the highest level of men online journalists (64%) found into its sample, which suggest the first staff of newspapers' Web editions needed professionals with a "Net culture". In this sense, the surveyed women (33%) agreed that they knew cases of gender discrimination in their newsrooms and in others. They also indicate that they earn less than their male counterparts, despite they work more hours and face more job pressures than men.

In addition, this study reveals other similar international standards: young professionals with an age-average of 29; 77% with college degrees; and a similar percentage works full time.

Likewise, other Spanish Web-based survey (Grup de Periodistes Digitals at el., 2003) also portrays the poor labor conditions of online journalists in Catalunya. Half of sixty interviewed journalists say that they supplement their full time job in the online newsroom with other alternative sources of income; 40 percent do not have job contracts and they have less professional clout than their print media reporters, and webmasters.

In the case of Latin America, these same trends might be expected in this study's results. As a precedent, Franco and Guzman (2004) found in its survey similar results:

- ?? “Eighty-seven percent of the journalists at dotcoms and newspapers are between 20 and 30 years old.
- ?? Almost half of the journalists of a paper's digital editions earn less than their print counterparts
- ?? Fifty-three percent of newspaper and Web-based dotcom journalists do not have an educational background in online journalism
- ?? And their print colleagues see them as being at a lower professional level”.

Occupational Routines: Between the Dissemination of the Print Media and the Immediacy Pressure

One of the most serious topics in new media is related to its impacts on the way journalists do their jobs. In 2000, Tom Regan wrote in an article published in the academic journal Nieman Reports that online journalists want to produce multimedia content along with the texts; “they want their e-mail address on everything they write; they want to participate in chats and forums; they want to use the new tools of modern storytelling available on a medium like the Web because they will add richness and depth

to any piece; they want to be able to get pieces to readers as fast as possible” (2000). However, this set of job desires is not a total consummated reality. Some studies reveal a dissimilar picture in terms of online journalists’ routines. The technical attributes of online journalists are perceived as essential for the occupation.

According to Kopper and his research’s colleagues (2000), a broad academic viewpoint affirms that the usage of the Internet does not have produced fundamental modifications of the traditional working routines habits within the most important levels of journalism workforce. On the contrary, this author and his colleagues recommend studying the issues from a “network of electronic information platforms.”

Considering routines as the most important aspect of the journalist functions, Reese (2002) point outs that the routines level of analysis considers the constraining influences of work practices. In addition, he says, “The professionalism may be viewed from a routines perspective.”

Four German scholars replicated some items from the “Third Wave of the American Journalist” study for their first representative phone survey on German online journalists in 2002. From this thesis, similar questions were extracted in order to present the basic demographics of online journalists; their working conditions; job satisfaction; journalists’ ideas about their professional roles; and some structural factors such as business models examined in further chapters, as well as content production and forms of convergences between the online and print newsrooms (Quandt et. al, 2002).

The German study surveyed 461 online journalists from print, broadcasting, online media and public communication. Some of its definitions and questions about the online professional tasks and roles were applied for this thesis.

For defining the online journalists' tasks and roles, Quandt carried out an observation study for detecting and analyzing the rules and structures in five online newspapers during 10 weeks. He combines two dimensions in the online journalist's tasks and roles: the traditional elements of the "core journalism" concept (investigating, selecting, writing and editing news) with the "hybrid formats of journalism" as "infotainment" or "edutainment", understood as life style magazines and special interest publications. In addition, He adds inherent technical attributes of the online media such as online investigation, programming, management and user contacts. (Quandt et.al, 2002).

These work tasks were examined for the current study in terms of weekly frequency for comparing trends about working online routines, identified by Quandt and his colleague's research. They found that 80 percent of online journalists spent the majority of their work time writing news stories, researching online information, selecting news and editing news material from agencies and PR communications (Quandt et.al, 2002). In fact, their findings also corroborate an earlier survey with German online journalists, which concluded that about half of the personnel in online editions have basically technical tasks. The majority of the digital publications surveyed depend on the editorial decision of the print edition (Neuberger et.al, 1998).

Journalists in Latin America intensely use the Internet as a reporting tool, according to a phone survey for the study "Attitudes of Latin American Journalists Regarding the Internet" conducted in 2001 by the Kaagan Research Associates and financing by Cisco System Latin America. The survey interviewed 700 journalists from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela (RedaccionVirtual,

2001). It is important to mention that this survey constitutes likely one of the few representative examinations conducted in recent years with journalists of the region. Although the journalists interviewed were not exclusively online reporters, its findings constitute an important source for this study.

The Kaagan and Cysco's research found that "nine out of every 10 reporters, editors and news directors in the region said that they have some experience with the Internet even though Internet access in Latin America remains low." The study also revealed that nearly 91 percent of the respondent's make daily use of the Internet in professional tasks and 64 percent said that the Web is a "vital tool" for their career. In fact, more than 50 percent of the journalists believe that "the Internet will become a common reporting tool within the next five years." However, the results demonstrate that "journalists covering business (60%), science and technology (71%) are much more likely to use it for their jobs than other reporters" (RedaccionVirtual, 2001).

Other observations might be distinguished in terms of interactivity through this survey. According to the results, seven out of every ten journalists have a job-based e-mail account, and spend an average of 45 minutes per day using the e-mail. A total of 80 percent employ e-mails for collaborating in news stories. In addition, the survey found that 68 percent receive users' electronic messages, and 84 percent frequently answer users' e-mails (RedaccionVirtual, 2001).

At the same time, the respondents were interviewed about the importance of Internet for the journalism and their countries. The findings suggest that Internet provide more improvement than inconvenience for the journalism. Nine out of every 10 surveyed journalists rejected the idea that Internet represents a danger for the traditional

journalism. However, 90 percent say they are dissatisfied with the technological resources available in their jobs, and 61 percent argues that its each respective country is fall behind of the development, access, and use of the Internet.

As Alberto Arébalos, Cisco System Latin America Public Relations Manager, says that “the results show that great advances have been made in this field but there’s still a long way to go” (RedaccionVirtual, 2001).

In the Latin American, Franco and Guzman (2004) also reveal the following results:

?? “Most of the online journalists (87 percent) at newspapers in Latin America are between 20 and 30. At the other Websites, only 63 percent are young.

?? Most of the leaders of newspaper online operations in Latin America believe that online journalists are seen as "of a lower level" than their colleagues of the print edition. A lower percentage, although a significant one, think that digital journalists are the future.

?? About half of the journalists of newspapers' online editions earn less than journalists of the print editions, and 43 percent earn the same as their print edition counterparts. Only one newspaper reported a higher wage rate for online journalists.”

Professional Roles: Neutral Journalists

Reviewing the role of the journalists, Vos (2002) discussed the four conceptions coined by Johnstone, Slawski, and Bowman, Weaver and Wilhoit, and Culbertson. These

authors identified five roles or functions: neutral, participant, disseminator, interpreter and adversarial.

According to Reese (2001) the disseminator and neutral role is increasing among journalists due to the mainstream media, which promote “corporate journalism” through an emphasis on entertainment and celebrity news. Analysis and investigative reporting is substituted by speedy production of news without interpretative and adversary purposes.

Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) defined three different ways journalists see their primary function. In order of prominence, these functions are interpretive, dissemination and adversarial. This “tripartite division of roles” has been used as a model for several worldwide studies to examine journalism professionals (Reese, 2002).

The interpretative role portrays those ‘participant’ journalists who analyze and interpret complex questions, investigate and discuss governmental issues and national policies. The second function of disseminator is mainly related to “getting information to the public quickly” and “concentrating on the largest possible audience.” The adversary notion is defined as a "melding of two items: being constantly skeptical of public officials as well as business interests"-summarized as "skepticism of those in power." Later Wilhoit included a new function called “populist mobilizer”, which comprises publicly expressing views, entertaining and setting the political agenda.

A few studies centered on online journalists have conclusions that differ from this study in some characteristics such as technological knowledge and public service orientation. Also online journalists have to face critics in terms of credibility, reliability and objectivity, which were excluded in this study (Deuze, 2001).

A study by Singer (1997) indicates that people inside the newsroom are modifying their definition of the gatekeeper to incorporate notions of both quality control and sense making. In particular, they see their role as credible interpreters of an unprecedented volume of available information as fundamental to their value - even their survival- in a new media environment. Singers' findings are in line with the most recent survey by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996), who found that journalists continue to see their primary role as interpreters, rather than mere gatherers and disseminators of information.

Vos (2002) mentions based on Zhu, Weaver, Lo, Chen and Wu (1997), that journalists appear to be less than perfectly honest in their self-reporting. For example, essentially no journalists admit to valuing the entertainment role, although news content would seem to suggest otherwise.

On the other hand, Trench and Quinn (2003) found that the majority of the Irish news sites surveyed "implement a traditional news production model, reinforcing the role of the editor, sub-editor and other established production roles in online news provision. Most of those implementing a more user-orientated strategy see this strategy as an extension of the model of professional journalism rather than a reinvention. They are not attempting to rewrite the rules of journalism, they are simply allowing the relationship between the user and the producer to become more active and allowing this to inform and reinvigorate the content carried on the site."

In terms of job satisfaction, Quandt and other scholars expected to find low levels of satisfaction among German online journalists. However, their survey reveals that 90 percent of journalists are fairly or very satisfied with their job despite the "pressure of constant news updates, a relatively low net income and a bad market situation" (2002).

Most of the German online journalists perceive their role as neutral providers of news as quickly as possible and also as journalists who explain complex issues. Other professional functions such as political and critical roles are seen as less important. German online journalists argue that the “decisive factor for the future of the online journalism is the speed of news updates, followed by offering service to the user and cost consciousness” (Quandt et. al, 2002).

In Flanders and the Netherlands, Deuze and Paulussen (2002) notice that online journalists “spend most of their time in the newsroom in front of their computer for research and reporting and rarely leave the editorial floor.” The majority of reporters use the Internet, email and newsgroups on a regular basis as resource tools. In addition, more than 60 percent of surveyed respondents said that they spend more than one hour per day researching news in cyberspace, rewriting material and repurposing content. Nearly 80 percent of the journalists agreed that technological skills are necessary for their daily duties. Based on the results provided by a regional survey, both authors suggest that the online journalism is “predominantly technology-driven, audience-oriented and service-minded.”

Most recently, Boczkowski (2004) argues that the new process of news production in an online environment has transformed the journalist-centered news, defined as a monologue, into audience-centered news, in which multiple conversations occur via e-mail exchange between the journalists and users. Besides this author observes that online news is produced based on a “user-centered” strategy due to the influence of marketing and advertising personnel in the online-news operations.

In Latin America, Franco and Guzman's research found that none of the Latin American papers' online operations consider reporting to be the focus of their journalists' activity. The majority says that their main task is writing and editing: "Ninety-one percent say they edit content from the international wires to some extent. However, 78 percent say they do not rewrite text from the print edition". Also a small percentage considers their job to be the generation of multimedia content (2004).

ONLINE NEWSROOMS: SHARED WITH THE PRINT STAFF AND VIRTUALLY SMALL

The organizational level considers the imperatives that give rise to those routines and how individuals are obliged to relate to others within that larger formal structure. Newsroom studies often contain elements of routines and the organizational perspective. Understanding the organizational structure and its mechanisms may illustrate the way the news is shaped (Reese, 2001).

By contrast, Kopper and his colleagues (2000) found in their worldwide literature review about online newspapers that European papers are "more inclined to see their online activities as separate from the function of the rest of the newspaper." "Most newspapers have traditionally not made room for online producers and editors in their newsrooms, shuffling them off instead to a different floor, or to a different building entirely... But in the past few years, many newspapers have decided that having two newsrooms -one for print and one for online-doesn't make much sense. One by one, papers are moving their online editorial staff into the main newsroom" (Stevens, 2004).

Deuze highlights that in the process of content production –original or shovelware- is almost autonomous, with little or any exchange and collaboration between the online editors and other sectors of the media (2001).

National newspapers in China have the highest proportion of online versions, followed by provincial and municipal newspapers (He and Zhu, 2002). All Chinese online newspapers operate independently from their print versions and provide free access to their content. “The relationship between both staff (online and print journalists) is mainly based on cooperation and coordination. The size of the online staff depends very much on the financial strength of the newspaper. In some small-sized newspapers, only two or three people are assigned to work on their online editions” (He and Zhu, 2002).

Morfin (1997) found that the number of employees in online editions operating in Latin America ranged from one Webmaster to a staff of 30 persons. In 1997, the Brazilian newspaper O Globo –one of the biggest in the region- produced its online editions with an exclusive team of 14 editors and journalists. Most recently, Franco and Guzman’s Web-survey reports sixty-eight percent of Latin American surveyed online newspapers are been operated with eight or fewer journalists. The online sites’ payroll constitutes 5 or 10 percent of the total media company payroll (2004).

CONTENT PRODUCTION: STILL UNDER THE GUIDELINES OF THE PRINT MEDIA

At the end of the last century, daily newspapers had not necessary transformed in the best way to select and disseminate news through Internet. Digital papers were following the traditional print guidelines of presenting news every 24 hours instead of continuous updates around-the-clock. Studies about how news sites are using the typical advantages of the Internet illustrates they are not providing very much interactive content. “It is sometimes even hard to find a single editorial e-mail address on these Websites” (Deuze, 2001).

In 1999, Dibeau examined how the U.S. newspapers were using new technologies on the Internet. She studied the six most prominent national, regional, and local online newspapers. Based on a content analysis, her research provides significant findings that might currently be found in the majority of national, regional and local online newspapers in Latin America: consumer services (95.5%), search engines (79.5%), hyperlinks (53%), forums (31.9%), and instantaneous updates -sports scores and weather information- (25.8%). The percentage of multimedia and interactive devices was lower than 15 percent.

Dibeau (1999) suggests that online newspapers were used to meet the commercial goals of the print editions due to the underdeveloped content focused on classifieds, home finders, job finders, merchandise sales and other consumer services. In addition, she discovers -contrary to expected- regional newspapers show a higher adaptation of multimedia and interactive technologies than national newspapers.

In the United States, an analysis of news website content conducted as part of The Project for Excellency in Journalism (2004a) study concludes “The Internet journalism has not yet succeeded in emancipating itself from the old media.” The research found that “as little as 32 percent of the lead articles on the Websites studied were produced by the organization’s own staff, with the large majority coming from the old media, for example newspapers”. Additionally, the study reports, “for more than 40 percent of front-page news, unedited agency reports were used, which might contribute to the further spread of false information,” the report suggests. In terms of Web capabilities, the report mentions that the news sites “are taking advantage of is the use of hyperlinks to provide background information to their stories. Most sites make only limited use of multimedia and interactive content.”

This panorama is not too dissimilar to that which Neuberger and his research colleagues illustrate in the case of German online newspapers in 1998. This author finds that “the news sections in online papers consist mainly of duplicates of the printed parent-paper.” The findings found were: articles for the online versions were rarely edited; graphics and real audio were not available in the sites due to small staffs and deficient capacity of diffusion on the Internet (Neuberger et.al, 1998). This research also concluded that nine out of ten online papers daily updated their sites, and one in twelve, three or more times a day. In 2002, Quandt and their research’s colleagues found that 62 percent of the German news Websites updates several times an hour or a day.

He and Zhu concluded that Chinese print and online editions do not show significant differences. “Online newspapers do not go beyond their print editions in terms of their objectives, basic tone and news reports. Little content has been produced

specially for the online version. China's online newspapers did not make good use of the freedom provided by cyberspace to make any qualitative changes in their content" (2002).

Online newspapers in China also provided a limited multimedia features, interactive resources, links to background information and updated news (He and Zhu, 2002). For Instance, Massey and Levy (1999) argue that the level of interactivity in Asian online newspapers has not link with the level of capitalist development of the country (GDP, level of consumer spending and per capita income). They believe that the predictors of online journalism in Asia may be located in cultural-political and organizational factors. Massey and Levy highlight three important predictors of the development of interactivity in online newspapers: "size and technical skills of the online staff and newspapers owner's compromise with the technological improvements of the online version."

Most recently, Greer and Mensing (2003) discovered that American news sites have more and more provided content, multimedia and interactivity depending on their print partner size. The presentation of online editions has undergone a remarkable transformation, and they are more likely to update sites and news stories frequently during a single day. Also the online sites include more multimedia technologies and storytelling, but still lag behind in terms of interactivity. These authors argue that American online newspapers are "becoming stand-alone news products rather than supplements or advertising vehicles for their print patents" (Greer and Mensing, 2003).

In 2000, the specialized Spanish site in communication conducted a study of Spanish-online press around the world. A total of 289 examined Latin American online

newspapers (excluding Brazilian papers) offered access to the whole print partner's content in 2000. For that year, nearly 60 percent of the Web sites had been transformed although they even showed a poor display of technological devices, content and services. The majority of the online editions mainly provided access to the print content without updating, re-packaging and including multimedia or interactive components (Infoamerica, 2000).

At the end of the nineties, Morfín (1997) found –in a explorative study about Latin American newspapers in the Internet- that 30 percent of 21 digital editions in the region updated the news stories one or twice per day, and 42 percent never change the information provided by the print partners. At that time, the Websites basically operated the “sholveware” process. However, less than 60 percent of the print content was being transferred to the online editions.

Recently, Franco and Guzman (2004) reported the following findings about content production in national print-based online papers of Latin America:

- ?? “The sections where newspaper dotcoms concentrate the largest amount of content that they generate on their own are, in order: breaking news, entertainment, sports, and technology.
- ?? Only 14 percent of the newsrooms at newspapers generate real-time content for their online editions. Nine percent create original online content out of their own initiative; 63 percent just do so occasionally; and 14 percent never do it.
- ?? Only 19 percent of newspapers' online operations say that the largest share of their content comes from the print edition.

?? Although 92 percent of the newspaper dotcoms say they are autonomous at defining the focus of their publishing, 55 percent mentioned that sometimes content is withheld in deference to the print edition's wishes.

?? 43 percent of the Latin American papers' dotcoms say they use audio and video on their sites. Out of that percentage, half use it systematically and half use it primarily for special projects. 71 percent say this audio and video is processed by their own team of journalists.”

BUSINESS MODELS: TOTALLY SUPPORTED BY THE PRINT PARTNER?

The economic potential of online newspapers is still a question without a clear answer. Financing comprises one of the main problems of online newspapers. Most of the actors involving in the progress of online newspapers are very skeptical about the issue. However, several news organizations continue experimenting to seek profitable business models. Deuze (2001) affirms that future business models for journalism should take media convergence, multimedia and digitalization as a standpoint of venture.

Schiff (2002) yields eight business models to describe the commercial approaches to online news: Advertising revenue; Online traffic; Infant industry profits and stock values; Digital content delivery; Continuous breaking news; Information retrieval and storage; Portal conduit; and, Interactive networking. He found that “most newspapers (in U.S.) have stopped charging for online subscriptions though many still require online registration and only make archives available at a fee.” He argues that advertising revenue does not and probably will not become a primary online revenue source”, but

until now this model seems to be the most common model, including subscription fees and archival access charge.

In 1999, more than three quarters of the 21 surveyed U.S. online newspapers carried advertisements, including 87 percent of the national/metropolitan papers and 73 percent of the local dailies. Most of them said the advertising covered between 10 and 50 percent of their costs. Almost 6 percent of the respondents also say that subscription fees for their online editions generate 15 to 50 percent of their revenues (Peng et. al, 1999).

Years later, a longitudinal content analysis of 83 American online newspapers indicates that the Websites were “looking toward multiple revenue sources to increase their economic viability...newspapers are more likely to require registration for use with at least portions of their sites... The documented increase in types of revenue generators illustrates that non-clear business model has emerged to support online newspapers” (Greer and Mensing, 2003). These authors found that advertising and classified ads were two of seven indicators of potential revenues sources in online newspapers. Besides advertising, the other indicators were subscription fees for the access to content; registration charges to visit part of the site; Internet access to provide Internet Service Provider’s services to the subscribers; charges for searching or accessing the archives; and “in-house online advertising services” through advertiser’s pages hosted on the site.

In Germany, most of the online news companies combine several business models. However, the first source of revenue is online advertising followed by cooperation with other organizations and content syndication. Almost 80 percent of media organization finances their Web operations with the income obtained through Ad banners (Quandt et. al, 2002).

Until 1999, no online newspaper in Latin America had reported revenues. They followed their peers in the United States, which at that time were exploring business models such as charge for access to electronic mails, advertising and online subscriptions to print edition (Font, 1999).

Recently, editors from the national print-affiliated online newspapers surveyed by Franco and Guzman (2004) provide relevant data to portray some trends in business models and own revenues.

?? "Eighty-three percent of the Latin American papers' online operations have discussed the issue of charging for their content. Sixty-one percent already have adopted some model of user registration.

?? At 39 percent of the newspaper dotcoms that responded to the survey, the income they receive supports their operation. On the flip side, 28 percent of those surveyed reported that their Websites don't even generate revenue.

?? Barely 10 percent of the newspapers participating in our survey reported revenue from the sale of their content to the end user, such as archives or databases.

?? Only one newspaper reported its classified ads as an important source of online income (it represents 40 percent of the paper's total revenue).

?? Just 25 percent of the newspapers reported online service subscription-related revenue, and only one of them said that this represents a significant amount of income.

?? Likewise, just 25 percent reported significant revenue due to subscriptions to the print edition submitted through the Internet.

?? On the other hand, 50 percent of the newspapers reported income from licensing content to third parties. Additionally, in at least five of those companies, it represents their most important source of income.”

CHAPTER IV

Theoretical Approaches:

Online Journalism, Newspapers and Journalists

The Internet has changed the journalism profession in at least three dimensions (Deuze, 1999). A new type of journalism has emerged; It has provided to media workers a collection of technological resources to innovate their work; and it has impacted the roles of journalists.

Based on these premises, online journalism, and its products and producers in Latin American are examined in this thesis. Some theoretical notions and approaches are discussed below to frame issues related to online print-based newspapers and journalists.

WHAT IS ONLINE JOURNALISM?

Although a definition of online journalism requires a critical debate about its multiple meanings in a variety of economic, social and cultural contexts, this study will emphasize some elements of this novel and “fast-evolving branch of journalism” (Kopper et al., 2000), which will demarcate their importance for further topics such as online newspapers’ organization, structure, production, business and online journalists’ functions and roles.

As a field of study and instruction, online journalism has its origins- exclusively in the U.S. and some European countries- in electronic databank research and computer assisted reporting (CAR) (Kopper et al., 2000; Garrison, 1998). However, the implications of the Internet for journalism are not restrained to newsgathering and research processes (Deuze and Paulussen, 2002).

Neuberger, Tonnemacher, Biebl, and Duck remarked in 1998, that “the web has the advantages of being interactive, multimedia, of providing internal and external networks and offering selection functions, the possibility of regular updates, access to archives, rapid access to a large number of newspapers, and being paperless, thus creating no problems of waste disposal.”

The basic inherent capabilities of the Internet shape the definition of online journalism, which is also known as digital journalism, multimedia journalism, Internet journalism, Web journalism or Net journalism. In any case, this research asserts that online journalism –“*Periodismo en línea or digital*,” in Spanish- is another form of professional journalism, and should be treated as such, both theoretically and practically. However, some arguments against its still exist among some offline Latin American journalists, according to a recent survey conducted in the region by two Colombian online editors, Guillermo Franco and Julio Cesar Guzman.

This still young form of journalism is frequently described broadly in terms of its technological capacities:

“In the twilight of the twentieth century and the dawn of the twenty-first, there is emerging a new form of journalism whose distinguishing qualities include ubiquitous news, global information access, instantaneous reporting, interactivity, multimedia content, and extreme customization” (Pavlik, 2001).

As a novel type of journalism, media scholars and journalists are still trying to define it beyond its technical nature, and its juxtaposition of old and new concepts.

Online Journalism has the potential to take the best things about newspapers, magazines, radio, and television and wrap them up into a single new product with all the strengths of existing media and few, if any, of the weakness” (Carlson, 2003).

Most recently, Kawamoto (2003) proposes one definition of online journalism that also recognizes the new media user: “the uses of digital technologies to research, produce, and deliver (or make accessible) news and information to a increasingly computer-literate audience.”

In the uses of digital technologies to produce and deliver news and information, worldwide professionals and academics recognize that online journalism should include elements of “hypertextuality, interactivity, multimediality” (Deuze 2001). Others, such as Kawamoto (2003), include –in addition to the three previous characteristics- nonlinearity, convergence, customization and personalization.

On the other hand, Pavlik identifies five basic aspects of this new form of journalism: 1) breadth of communication modalities; 2) hypermedia; 3) heightened audience involvement; 4) dynamic content; and 5) customization (2001). Chyi and Silvie (2001) add additional elements of global reach, unlimited space and immediacy (Peng et al., 1999).

Simply publishing on the Net is not necessarily online journalism. Although media companies have websites, not all of them execute Internet journalism. Since the eruption of the new media, professionals and scholars have agreed that a measure of a

good online news site is that which provides more original content than shovelware, and most recently, there is an assertion that online news should be updated on a daily 24 hour cycle (Deuze, 1999).

On the basis of the above notions and for the purpose of this thesis, online journalism refers to that journalism operated for a Latin American print-based Web site by online editors and journalists who carry out hypertextuality, multimedia, interactivity and immediacy content in a form of convergence with their print parent.

DESCRIBING CHARACTERISTICS OF ONLINE JOURNALISM

As noted above, five different characteristics comprise the thesis' definition of online journalism: Hypertextuality, Interactivity, Multimedia, Immediacy, and Convergence.

Web publishing paradigms -“Hypertextuality”, “Interactivity”, and “Multimediality”- will be discussed following Deuze’s assumptions and other previous scholars’ definitions about Immediacy and Convergence applied to the case of news sites and online newspapers. The practicing of the multiple modalities of the previous concepts will be explored through an e-mail-survey with editors and journalists of the digital versions of newspapers.

This chapter and its following topics will discuss the Research Question number 3: How much of the Latin American Journalists’ routines involve creation of original content tailored to Web capabilities?

Closed Hypertextuality

Hypertextuality refers to an information connection model that uses links - hyperlinks that can refer internally (to other texts within the same site) or externally (to texts located elsewhere outside the site).

Deuze describes two types of hypertextuality: open hypertextuality, which connects online content outside the same media content periphery, and closed hypertextuality, which only links to digitalized documents provided by the same media or their partner (Deuze, 2001a). Hyperlinks allow readers “to go beyond daily news to other information sites and make newspaper reading nonlinear,” as Peng, Tham and Xioming (1999) maintain.

Currently, most news sites employ only a closed hypertextuality, denying users the opportunity to link to the Web as a whole (Deuze, 2001a) and to therefore obtain background to the news. In fact, “few sites put in hyperlinks to pages outside of the branded or partner partners” (Deuze, 2001a). In the same way, Peng, Tham and Xioming (1999) found that less than half of the 80 online papers in US provided hyperlinks to their competitor’s sites.

Some media professionals and players have argued that an open hypertextuality would lead the user to outside their Web sites’ navigation. In addition, Deuze points out the unsolved dilemma of ownership and copyrights when some sites use an open hypertextuality.

Through one inquiry to Latin American online journalists, this thesis seeks to find out whether any kind of hypertextuality is commonly used as an added value to news production by digital versions of generic and daily print newspapers.

Adaptive Interactivity in Four Dimensions

Another Internet characteristic exploited by the new media is Interactivity, divided in three different forms by Deuze: navigational interactivity, functional interactivity and adaptive interactivity. The first one refers to navigational options; the second one, moderated discussion lists; and the last one, comprises chat rooms and personal customization.

Examining various news Web sites, several authors have found that adaptive interactivity is the least used option by news media sites, despite that “as a leaders and servants of a community, newspapers play a role in crystallizing public opinion,” (Peng et al., 1999). Empirical studies of interactivity in Web newspapers indicate that only a minority implement of this potentiality (Schultz, 1999).

“At better news sites, journalists augment stories with hyperlinks, search engines and multimedia features, but the emphasis remains upon a one-way flow of information. Only a handful of sites include original news content designed specifically for the Web as a new medium of communication” (Pavlik, 1997).

Schultz also highlights that “the Internet is a new medium that could extend interactive options in journalism” through e-mail, live chats, online surveys, and online forums. However, this scholar argues that traditional media companies only provided

chatrooms as a conversational space among users, and not necessarily between users and journalists.

Similarly, Dibeau (1999) observed -in her study about how the U.S. daily newspapers are using their Internet counterpart- that national online papers showed -at that time-, a lower adoption of interactive options than regional newspapers.

Most recently, Greer and Messing (2003) conclude, through a longitudinal content analysis of 83 online newspapers in the United States, that “interactivity levels have remained largely unchanged in seven years... the data suggest that newspapers are still working to find interactive elements that function well in an online news environment.”

In this process of exploring interactive components that work properly in news Web sites, Fromkin (2004) recommend that every news site’s home page should be offering a “sort of blog space” for increasing the feedback between journalists posting issues and users posting comments, particularly in local online newspapers.

Kenney, Gorelik and Mwangi (2000) point out these new media, particularly those rooted in traditional media, maintain the “point-to-point communication... balkanizing” their Internet market and closed network.” In addition, they suggest that traditional media on the Internet do not exploit interactive features because they not provide direct commercial revenues.

In research on English-language Web newspapers in Asia, Massey and Levy (1999) examined online journalism based on five dimensions of interactivity, which match with the notion of adaptive interactivity of Deuze, and help to conceptualize the interactive elements explored for this thesis.

Massey and Levy employ the interactive dimensions proposed by Carrie Heeter in 1989, and which might be applied in general for the new communication technologies. These two authors utilized five of the Heeter's six dimensions, which appear "to closely fit the literature of online journalism": complexity of choice available (diversity of original and replicated content with multimedia features); responsiveness to the user (the level of response of e-mails linked to the newsroom and journalists); ease of adding information to the system (technological options to empower the Web newspaper users); facilitation of interpersonal communication (an array of interactive devices to allow a one-to-one interaction among users); and immediacy of content (the provision of instantly reported news).

Massey and Levy explored the degree of interactivity of Asian online newspapers to test the dependency theory. They wanted to probe the traditional assumption about the development of online news sites: that a nation's level of development, quality of life and political participation influence in the development of a better interactive journalism. Their findings suggest the contrary. The level of capitalist development in a country is not a predictor of a prolific interactive online journalism. Massey and Levy recommend basing the development of an interactive online journalism, understood as the ideal Web journalism, on better predictors, on the cultural-political measured variables such as "freedom of press, speech and assembly", or in the organizational level variables of the online newspapers, such as "size and technical skill level of a Web newspaper's staff ... and the willingness of the newspaper's corporate owner to develop the online Web sites".

These Massey and Levy's previous conclusions are examined in this study. The data about newsrooms' size and staff's training and routines in the online newspapers as a possible predictor of the level of the development of interactive journalism.

For the purpose of this thesis, at least four forms of adaptive interactivity in their five dimensions are part of this study: complexity of choice available (conceptualized as the percentage of original content in the site); responsiveness to the user (defined as the frequency of a journalist response to users' e-mail on a weekly basis); facilitation of interpersonal communication (operating as the most common interactive options included in the updated news such as surveys, chats, forums); and immediacy of content (defined as the frequency of a home page is updated daily).

This study examined five dimensions of adaptive interactivity in the online editions of generic and daily print newspapers in Latin America, through the surveys' questions related to content production in the newsrooms.

For the dimension of responsiveness to the user, some evidence of minor activity in this form of interactivity were found during the period of collecting e-mail addresses from the Web sites for sending the study's survey to editors and journalists. However, the survey's response might provide other insight.

Tankard (1999) includes as an adaptive interactivity the provision of e-mails to contact journalists of print and broadcasting's news sites. He found that newspapers were more likely to offer e-mail links to individual reporters and editors, applying the Web potentiality of the "two-way" communication (Tankard, 1999). Moreover, Boczkowski (2000) points out that most consistent interactive element found in online newspapers' research studies is the "very little staff-user interaction."

However, this interactive responsiveness to the user) seems option (to remain undeveloped, or better said, prevented, by Latin American online newspapers. During the period of e-mail collections for this study, it was clear that online sites of print media in Latin American are not offering an array of e-mails to connect directly to journalists and editors. Mainly these type of Websites provide generic e-mails, most of which report failures.

In fact, a contacted journalist from Chile was surprised when he found in his “secret” e-mail account the email inviting him to participate in the survey for this study. He replied to the message requesting how his e-mail address was found and explaining that he got an enormous number of e-mails daily and he did not open many of them anymore. He also pointed out: “The e-mail and Internet bring us closer, but this globalization has its cost, at least in terms of time.”

Multimediality Beyond the Web Restraints

The other Web news media’s characteristic explored in this thesis is multimediality. Deuze (2001a) defines it as the integration of different media formats on the Web, for this study expressed mainly in video and audio clips.

This author notices one problem in media companies that have integrated their print and online newsrooms, ‘—the integration of multimedia content occurs between the Web staff and other outside company providers.

Interpreting this trend, Deuze (2001a) emphasizes—besides the structural problems such as bandwidth and copyright issues- that mulimediality in news sites is represented

by a convergence of media modalities and a “divergent paradigm (where all parts of the site are developed from a multimedia starting point, offering the end-user several ways into and through the site's contents).” He argues that, in general, broadcast news sites, such as CNN or BBC, exhibit mostly the convergent modality. However, he does not mention the case of online newspapers with print partners.

In the State of the News Media 2004, broadcast sites show more links to videos or still photos in their lead stories than news portals and newspapers (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2004a).

The modality of multimediality is analyzed by Greer and Mensing (2003) in their longitudinal study about the evolution of 83 online newspapers in the United States. These authors define the multimedia dimension as the ability to add audio, video, and animation to news stories and other content, as a distinctive feature of online newspapers. They argue that less than a third of newspaper sites employed these technological devices, and the majority of them only used these multimedia features in advertisements and not in news stories. However, their content analysis reports an increase of multimedia elements on the news content (animation, video clips and audio clips). Since 2000, audio and video features report a marked growth, although animation shows some fluctuation in the American online newspapers.

In the scope of this thesis, multimediality is defined as the ability and frequency that Latin American affiliated online papers include audio clips, video clips, and graphics in their updated news stories and text content on the home pages of their Web sites. The surveyed journalists will answer questions related to the frequency and ability to add these kind of multimedia devices. The animation features examined by Greer and

Mensing were not included in this thesis due to the bandwidth limitations in the production and use of Internet content in the region.

Growing Immediacy

A Spanish scholar argues that an online newspaper operates “multiple immediacy” in terms of frequency of news’ diffusion and news’ journalistic processing. Immediacy might be interpreted following Rost’s (2004) dimensions of *actualidad multiple* (concept refers to an interpretation of news content and immediacy based on news-time). The five dimensions are *actualidad reciente* (breaking news), *actualidad sincronica* (live coverage), *actualidad prolongada* (special event news presented in specials projects with multimedia and interactive elements), *actualidad permanente* (ongoing news about one topic), and *no actualidad* (archives)

The live coverage and breaking news are the great advantages that online newspapers have in comparison to their print counterpart. The first is little used by the online newspapers. Some digital news editions use to offer a combination of live coverage with radio stations to broadcast sports games. In addition, some online newspapers also provide on line interviews in real time. Based on Rost’s concepts of actuality, this study defines immediacy as that news content that refers to breaking news, published on the home pages of online version of generic and daily papers in Latin America.

Several recent studies affirm that the immediacy level in news Web sites, particularly in online newspapers, is increasing considerably, in contrast to the interactive

options. Giner (2001) affirms that “new newspapers are becoming 24-hour information engines,” and Trench and Quinn (2003) suggest the reason for this pattern: “under the pressure of economic constraints, but also in response to the purported preferences of Web site users, information is increasingly published in conventional news-story formats, notably as ‘breaking news’.”

Similarly, Greer and Mensing (2003) conclude that US online papers “are more likely to updated frequently, providing more timely information.” They found that most sites offer headlines and “news capsules” on the “first news layer” of navigation to allow the readers select the stories. In addition, this research discovered a standardization of breaking news presentation formats across the examined sites.

He and Zhu (2002) found that the Chinese online editions of newspapers offered a few extra-news, provided almost in their totality by wire agencies. In the USA, the 2004 report on American Journalism, provided by The Project for Excellence in Journalism, shows some significant findings in terms of immediacy: “while a good many of the lead stories are new throughout the course of the day (roughly half), the amount of updating of running stories with substantive new information is more limited (a little more than one in ten stories)” (The Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2004a).

Additionally, the same report described that there are three different types of news sites. The first one produces content generated by its staff, usually from its parent company. The second one relies “almost entirely” on wire services, and the third type of news sites edit and adapt wire copy and add some original content. Among eight studied sites (AOL, CBS, CNN, FOX, LVRJ, MSNBC, NYT and Yahoo), the larger percentage of lead news stories (42 %) were wire stories posted without any editing, complemented

information or Web devices. The majority of these stories were produced by other sources such as The Associated Press and Reuters. However, the report remarks that the sites with copy from news wires without any editing process are more portals than news organizations.

This report, called *The State of News Media 2004*, concluded that Internet journalism on the major news sites “is still largely a medium up of second-hand material, usually from the old media”, which for this study comprise traditional media and wire services (The Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2004a).

In other areas, such as Germany, Quandt (2003) describes online journalism in this country like the print journalism but with “the speed of news agencies.” He observes “a constant pressure to write the next news” and a dependence on the news provided by news agencies because of economic and human restraints. In addition, he asserts that the frequency of updates to the Web sites’ content has a strong impact on work pressure and speed in online journalism.

This study explore these two previous immediacy patterns in terms of daily frequency of home pages’ lead stories, main sources of news updates and frequency of editing news wire stories.

ASSESSING CONVERGENCE FORMS

Understood as the melding or blurring of historically discrete technologies and services, convergence has been a concept frequently used in different contexts and with a diverse form of interpretations and implications (Kawamoto, 2003).

The Convergence Continuum between Content and Newsrooms

A convergence model developed by Dailey, Demo and Spellman (2003) serves as a useful facilitator for the analysis presented here. The model that the authors propose uses convergence for illustrating “the interaction and cooperation levels of staff members at newspapers, television stations, and Web organizations with news partnerships.”

This model, called The Convergence Continuum, consists of five stages that extend and apply the diffusion innovations and gate-keeping theories. These five stages are cross promotion, cloning, competition, content sharing and convergence. Cross promotion is defined by the authors as the process of using content or visuals to promote each partner’s medium. This level shows “the least amount of cooperation and interaction occur among members of the different news organizations”, because they do not work together to produce content.

The cloning stage identifies the practice of one partner’s republishing of the other partner’s product without any modification of this product, or content. At this level, the authors say that the media partners share content after its production without discussing previous newsgathering plans. In the center of the model is the competition stage, when partners cooperate and compete at the same time. The staff of one media produces some content for its partner, but they also produce their own competitive product. According to the authors, at this level some cultural and competition differences between media come to the surface and limit the cooperation and interaction process.

On the other hand, content sharing involves a stage when media partners work together to produce special or investigative projects regularly but not all the time.

At the end of the model is the convergence, in “which the partners cooperate in both gathering and disseminating the news.” The authors explain that convergence demands a “hybrid teams of journalists” from media partners. This group shares activities along the processes of planning, reporting and producing stories and special projects. To apply each Convergence Continuum Model’s level, the authors correlate each stage with types of performance behaviors for the media partners’ workers.

Dailey, Demo and Spellman (2003) make clear that each stage is not a set activity into the process. On the contrary, the workers can pass through each of the model’s stages on a daily basis and “depending on the nature of the news and the commitment to convergence by workers and managers.”

This study adapted the model’s notions to illustrate forms of convergence, specifically regarding content in Research Question # 3. Content in this study can be defined as news articles and stories, graphics, and photos of the print version published in some way on the online site’s partner, or information from news articles and stories, graphics, photos, interactive modules, videos or audio of the online version published on the print partner’s edition.

This study focuses on the following convergence stages by content: cross promotion (cross promotion of content), cloning (reediting content), competition (independent production of original content), content sharing (in special projects); and convergence (joint assignment and content in multimedia projects).

To illustrate the exhibited level of cooperation and integration behaviors between online and print staff, the survey will address the level of performance frequency for each stage, considering that all of them are present in newsrooms and media content

production routines and in some degree of frequency. The answers to this research question will provide information to test the assumption of Rich Gordon (2003): “Convergence in media organizations is clearly most prevalent in its ownership and tactical forms. The progression toward information-gathering and storytelling convergence will be slow.” This author defines convergence based on five different dimensions (ownership, tactical, structural, information-gathering convergence and/or presentation convergence).

Briefly, ownership convergence means the ownership of multiple content and/or distribution channels by a media company. According to Gordon, this type of convergence does not demand any editorial decision sharing or other sort of collaboration between media distribution channels. Also the discussion of ownership convergence is becoming more complex when the distribution channels and content are numerous. The ownership convergence is clearly implicit in this study about online versions of traditional print media in Latin America.

Tactical convergence refers basically to the cross-promotion and sharing of content between media organizations. This convergence does not require necessarily an ownership convergence. Gordon distinguishes three different activities in this kind of convergence: content, marketing, and revenue enhancement. He explains these activities in the scope of TV and newspapers partnerships. However, the notions and examples can be applied in the case of online and print channels of the same media company. For instance, in the content and marketing terrain, both channels converge mainly to engage cross promotion tactics, but also collaboration in terms of daily information, spot news, future news and events schedules, and public services.

In addition, tactical convergence comprises revenue improvements through advertising packages and classified ads distributed in the online and print channels.

On the other hand, Gordon defines structural convergence as all those changes originated in job routines and newsrooms' organization of media that combine their content. Although he recognizes that ownership and tactical convergence do not necessarily require modifications of organizational structures and job procedures, the ideal goal is a structural convergence.

With respect to information-gathering convergence, Gordon explains that this happens when reporters for each media collect information for both. And finally, storytelling convergence refers to three new forms of presenting information, based on digital platforms: desktop computers, portable devices, and interactive television.

After measuring some behaviors described by the Convergence Continuum Model, this study will discuss possible ways in which Gordon's Convergence types are present between online and print editions of Latin American newspaper and their newsrooms. These two approaches will help answer Research Question # 4: Are the online versions of newspapers in Latin America operating some form of convergence with their print partner?

This study suggests that tactic convergence prevails in the case of affiliated online newspapers and print media. Structural and information-gathering convergence might appear on a lower level, but in relatively few cases.

ONLINE NEWSPAPERS' JOURNALISM

In the U.S., Pryor (2002) describes three stages of news content development on the Internet based on the evolution of three components: technological applications, control market and communication support. The first stage comprises the period of videotex services, from 1982 to 1986, when the major media companies offered digital text through TV sets.

The second wave, from 1993 to 2001, is characterized by the “dotcom boom”, when a mixture of big and small ventures provided a more sophisticated range of applications (video, audio) via phone line and cable systems to faster computers, and to some other communication platforms such as cell phones.

The third stage started in 2001 and is still ongoing. After the Internet contraction as a result of the market collapse in 2000, the biggest online players flourished with better and diverse applications (more multimedia, convergence, Weblogs, chat, forums, news alerts, etc.), better-trained staffs and “more mobile platforms and immerse technologies” Pryor (2002).

This progressive evolution noted in the case of American news sites may provide a way to recognize patterns in the evolution of news sites in other regions. However, scholars in Europe have found other approaches that are also relevant for this study.

Types of Online Journalism

Mark Deuze (2001a), identified four types of online journalism, based on a classification of news sites. These are 1) journalism operated by mainstream news sites;

2) index and category sites; 3) meta and comment sites; and 4) shared and discussion sites. In this model, Deuze makes a distinction between two main analytical domains for conceptualizing the term .

Seen as two intersections, he first describes a Content-Connectivity area or horizontal axis, in which Deuze describes content as Editorial Content, meaning, “texts (including written and spoken word, moving and still images), produced and/or edited by journalists.” Connectivity refers to Public Connectivity, which Deuze identifies as “standard point-to-point communication... without a formal barrier of entry such as an editing or moderating process.”

This Editorial Content – Public Connectivity axis constitutes the majority of news sites and manifests the main goal of any media organization, which “tell stories to people or plays the role of facilitator of people telling stories.”

On the other hand, the vertical axis constitutes the “level of participatory communication offered on a news site.” On one extreme of the axis, is located an Open or Unmoderated Participatory Communication, where the news site allows its users to share opinions, and freely post or upload files without a moderating or filtering intervention, such as Usenet newsgroups.

Closed participatory communication, identified as Moderated Participatory Communication, is understood as a news site where users’ communication transactions are “subject to strict editorial moderation and control.”

Although the author recognizes that “not every type of online journalism can be completely demarcated by applying this model”, his model, with its variations and levels, can be applied to the most commonly operating forms of journalism on the Web.

Based on the correlations among the four model-variables, Deuze introduces four types of online journalism and any media organization tends to adopt one or more of the characteristics of these kinds of online journalism.

Mainstream News sites comprise the most extensive form of news media production online, providing a selection of editorial content and a minimal, generally moderated, form of participatory communication. In this category of sites, online journalism follows the pattern of traditional journalism in the process of newsgathering, editing and audience relationships. Many of these sites are affiliated with commercial print or broadcast media (Berkman and Shumway, 2003).

According to these two last authors, the online edition of newspapers such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post are the most popular examples of moderated or closed participatory communication. .

Online Newspapers with Print Counterparts

New media comprises all media forms that combine computing and information technology (IT), communication networks, digitized media and information content, and convergence (Flew, 2002). According to this Flew (p. XXX), new media embraces “the development of unique forms of digital media, and the remarking of more traditional media forms to adopt and adapt to the new media technologies”.

Pavlik asserts that the Internet is changing the way journalists do their work; that structure of the newsroom and news industry is transforming; and that new media are

bringing about a realignment of the relationship between and among news organizations, journalists and their many publics (Peng et al., 1999).

In the same way, Chyi and Sylvie (2001) point out that an online newspaper is the result of the convergence of a newspaper and The Internet. “Most online newspapers are owned and operated by their print counterparts, who also serve as online editions’ primary content providers.”

In the appearance of online newspapers, He and Zhu, (2002) find an explanatory line of reasoning. They argue that the emergence of online newspapers is a result of the convergence and influence of a number of factors. Among these factors, they highlight the “self-interests of the media practitioners and audiences” and that online papers are also “constrained by the interaction of the economy and market, laws, policies, norms and cultural values within each society.”

Even though this study does not attempt to discuss these above mentioned factors, it does recognize the importance of them in the launching, production, operation, structure, transformation, consolidation, restraints and failures of online newspapers in each Latin America country. Even the media history, particularly for this study the print media in each country, should be considered to grasp the dynamic of their Web initiatives to portray a most contextual and knowledgeable insight.

The development of new media also involves the largest traditional media, which has created an enormous digital presence and adjusted their well-known media products, new media content and new media players.

This evolution of online papers on the Internet provides a broad picture about the emergence of new regimes of content creation and patterns in the construction of information on the Internet (Boczkowski, 2001).

Deuze argues that the industry is responding conservative to change. Although bandwidth and copyrights are still two structural factors, he observes that companies are still struggling with how to integrate print and online newsrooms, ignoring how to reach and integrate content with other content providers.

For this study, an online newspaper is defined as a Web site created and maintained by a print media organization with a generic and daily paper (McGregor, 1998). This online newspaper shares a name and/or brand identity with a “parent” print newspaper, which called an “affiliated online site” (Berkman and Shumway, 2003).

However this type of Web site constitutes other competitors in the online print market, such as other Internet versions of specialized papers, magazines, and Web-based newspapers, which were excluded in the analysis of this research.

For Carlson (2003) an online paper can have “the depth and breadth of newspapers, the immediacy of radio, television’s ability to make us ‘eyewitnesses’ to events, and the typography and resolution of slick magazines.”

Current research about online newspapers is evolving rapidly and in many directions (Boczkowski, 2000). In his review of existing literature of this type of news site, this author observes that production, use, and interactivity have been the areas most examined by the scholars worldwide.

In terms of production, Boczkowski summarizes that “the commodification of online papers may not be congenial with the supposedly more communitarian ethos of the Internet” (2000).

However, Boczkowski sustains that the original content has been increasing in the last years although shovelware is still the dominant content.

On the other hand, Boczkowski (2004) argues that “innovation in online newspapers is an ongoing process in which different combinations of initial conditions and local factors lead publishers along different paths.”

Boczkowski also recommends that online newspapers understand and identify the sharing-routines and values of newsmaking between the print and online editions; the conceptualization of “occupational identities”; the impact on news production of different groups in the online environment; and the relationship among all of these agents such as technicians, designers, public relations professionals, and marketing managers.

Boczkowski (2004) suggests the study of the comparable dynamic of operations and interactions in print and online newsrooms to know how the news is shaped of news. In addition, he proposes to include in this study other actors with primary influence in the news making process, such as advertising and marketing personnel, technical and design personnel, and users expressed in forums, chat rooms, and Weblogs presented on the news sites. All these actors are involved directly or indirectly in the news production.

Financial Dependency of the Print Partner

A recent article published by Online Journalism Review looks at what newspapers and their Web sites have to do to survive. Its author, Vin Crosbie (2004), argues that “newspapers online and newsprint editions aren’t Siamese twins: the newsprint edition can exist without the online editions – but online editions can’t exist without newsprint editions.”

Although it has elapsed ten years into “the era of publishing via the Internet”, online affiliated newspapers still depend on the newsprint edition for content and financial support, Crosbie assures.

In 2002, the Newspaper Association of America and the Inter-American Press Association conducted an international survey for re-examining the Web business mode (Innovation, 2003). The conclusions of more than 400 worldwide newspaper executives’ responses showed that:

- ?? Only 17 percent of the online newspapers were profitable (5 percent in Latin America);
- ?? 58 percent were losing money worldwide and also in the region;
- ?? 40 percent of Latin American newspapers were very unlikely to charge readers in 2003, and 30 percent, very likely.
- ?? Only 15 percent of newspapers with charges for subscriptions were profitable, meanwhile 78 percent report profitability charge the user for specific services.

Most recently, in 2003, another worldwide survey with 40 top print executives from 33 countries shows that the first priority, among 17 main concerns, was the creation of profitable Websites (Desafios, 2003).

On the other hand, a longitudinal study of 83 American online newspapers report that in 2003 15 percent charged for subscriptions; 77.5 percent charged for archives uses; and 48 percent required user registrations. These three modalities increased substantially from 1997, meanwhile other potential revenue sources, such as Internet access and hosting internal ad services, declined dramatically over the last six years (Greer and Mensing, 2003).

Reviewing the revenue models, Chyi and Sylvie (2000) interviewed 14 U.S. online newspaper executives and they agreed that advertising (banners, classifieds, sponsorship of the site and e-mail news) would be the main revenue basis.

However, Crosbie (2004) says that many newspapers affirms revenues in online classified and banner ad, but at the same time some are bolstering their online sales by forcing their clients to buy print and online classified ads. He mentions a survey of 247 American newspaper Websites in 2003, which found that “about 36 percent of newspaper online revenues came from convincing (and sometimes forcing) print ad buyers to also take out ads online.”

Although many newspaper companies recently reported profitable online operations, Crosbie also observes that the revenues are not enough to reimburse the investments. Moreover, he explains that many online versions are “in the black” because they do not pay for their expenses, which are covered by their print partners.

In addition, Crosbie clarifies that some newspapers with reported “profitable” Web sites, such as the New York Times, include “non-news site revenues in their Internet divisions' profits.”

Based on his previous observation, Crosbie believes that “very few newspapers' online editions are actually profitable solely from their own operations.” He argues that this online dependency is a risk, because the media invest “today in disseminating the news, not in collecting”, which impacts negatively on the organization and production with fewer full-time newsroom employees, less technological development, and an increase in the number of information suppliers.

For this author, the solution for online newspapers does not rely on a multimedia presentation of the print edition. On the contrary, the goal is supported by the use of new technologies to create a unique and complete package of content geared to the individual users' interest; and in the real convergence among print, digital and wireless divisions into a single product. Crosbie predicts that this total convergence could be a reality within 10 years.

To examine the Research Question # 5 about the business model operated by Latin American affiliates online papers, it was employed in this thesis some business models proposed by different author in their researches.

The variable “business model” comprises in its definition the array of different options yield by Peng,Tham, and Xioming (1999), and Greer and Messing (2003):

- ?? Advertising (Banners, Ad pages hosted on the site)
- ?? Online Classified Ads
- ?? Subscription fees for Certain Content (Archives, Premium Services)

- ?? Subscription fees for the Whole Content
- ?? Alliances with other companies (Joint ventures)
- ?? Internet Access (ISP for subscribers)
- ?? None
- ?? Others

Peng, Tham, and Xioming found that online newspapers were exploring in 1999 a variety of sources of revenues, such as advertising, subscription fees, archival access charge and Internet-related services. At that time, the most common revenue source was Internet related services, which were provided by less than half the 80 American digital papers examined.

In 2003, Greer and Mensing found that advertising and classified ads were two of seven indicators of potential revenues sources in online newspapers. Besides advertising, the other indicators were subscription fees for the access to content; registration charges to visit part of the site; Internet access to provide Internet Service Provider's services to the subscribers; charges for searching or accessing the archives; and "in-house online advertising services" through advertiser's pages hosted on the site.

For this thesis, it was also included the option of revenues obtained through Alliances with other companies.

ONLINE JOURNALISTS

Framing a Definition of an Online Journalist

Some scholars argue that technology has impacts on operational procedures and technological innovations. The new media might bring some modifications of professional procedures, rules and, in general, for the distinction between technological and editorial functions.

Citing Weischemberg and Ursell, Loosen (2002) sustains that technology has and will have an impact on operational procedures and technological innovations, which have been important for modification of professional procedures and professional roles.

But what is the journalist of the Internet era like? Providing a possible answer, Berkman and Shumway (2003) discusses the two main dissimilar theories of journalism. The traditionalists frame the journalist's identification on individual values and ethical standards. On the contrary, critical theorists are more likely to see the journalist as an agent of structural factors' influence.

Among the traditionalists, Berkman and Shumway review the notions of theorists Bill Kovach and Tom Rosentiel, who argue that online journalists mainly apply the same standards and practices of general journalists: "gate-keeping the information for citizens and interpreting what others have delivered ahead of them." Although Kovach and Rosentiel maintain that the online journalist has been "in a state of disorientation" due to the evolving change in technology and some business interests, they assure that the Internet journalist must follow their nine ethics and principles of good journalism to be called a journalist.

Berkman and Shumway point out that Kovach and Rosentiel's principles: obligation to the truth; loyalty to the citizens; discipline of verification; independence in the coverage; monitoring power with autonomy; providing a space for public criticism and debate; making the significant interesting and relevant; keeping the news comprehensive and proportional; and exercising their personal conscience (2003).

On the other side, some communications scholars, such as Robert McChesney, employ the structural criticism of the media to interpret the definition of online journalists and their roles. According to Berman and Shumway, the online journalist, like other journalists, is seen as one more actor of the logic of the market, which pressures the press professional to quickly and cheaply repackage trivial and commercial content provided by affiliated companies.

Beyond these divergent points of view, Deuze articulates the Kovach and Rosentiel's approach with some notions about the Internet potential capabilities for practicing a more participatory journalism.

Deuze sees an online journalist as "one who could add the purpose of offering users platforms and tools to exchange views and information needed to realize freedom and self-government." He strongly believes that online news services must facilitate citizen empowerment and strengthen democracy.

For this study, an online journalist is one who is responsible for the Web content's plan, coordination, production, distribution, and also for the interaction with the users in the Internet version of a daily and generic newspaper in Latin America. In this definition, Web content carries out implicitly some of the values of hypertextuality, multimedia,

interactivity and immediacy in its plan, coordination, production, distribution and/or interaction.

Basic Characteristics of Online Journalists

The first stage explores the personal journalist's profile based on demographic variables such as age, sex, educational and professional background, and facilitates a general overview about the newsrooms' staff. This set of variables is based on surveys conducted by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996). In this study, these variables will be called "professional standards".

The identification of these variables will contribute to answer Research Question # 1.: Are the professional standards of online journalists in Latin America similar to their worldwide counterparts?

As this thesis will show in the Literature review, some scholars have reported similar personal and professional profiles among online journalists in different countries. Online journalists tend to be young professional men, with university degrees, most of them with previous journalistic experience in newspapers, with only a small percentage of women. (Deuze and Paulusse, 2002; Neuberger et. al, 1998; He and Zhu, 2002; Chyi and Sylvie, 2001; Quandt et al., 2002).

The first Research Question tries to illustrate whether these patterns are similar in Latin American. In addition, other questions in this study's survey might provide some ideas about other occupational concerns such as salaries, and level of job satisfaction. In both issues, worldwide studies reveal lower or identical wages for online journalists

compared with their counterparts in the print editions, although the job satisfaction seems to be moderated.

Online Journalists' Routines and Roles

Based on the traditional standards of journalists' roles and values, Deuze combines them with different types of online journalism for proposing a new perspective, which include the open journalism found in the interactive capacity of the Internet to provide a two-way communication between journalists and citizens.

Deuze asserts that the characteristics and potentialities of online journalism change the roles and functions of journalism, the newsroom culture and professional journalists. He distinguishes four types of journalism as an extension of his correlation between Editorial Content and Public Connectivity and Open or Unmoderated Participatory Communication. Reconsidering his same approach, Deuze refines the concepts to address four new definitions, which contemplate different levels of interactivity: orientating, instrumental, monitorial and dialogical journalisms.

Orientating journalism offers orientation or background explanations to the public. Instrumental journalism provides practical and specialized information of interest to the audiences. These two types of journalism constitute a symbiotic relationship between journalists and their audience. This relationship is based on interactivity and content added to traditional news work. The journalists provide archives, interactive multimedia and hyperlinked platforms for self-searching and participation without a direct, systematic and involving interaction with content providers (Deuze, 2003).

On the other hand, monitorial and dialogical journalism contemplate a more open journalism dynamic than the two previous types of online journalism. In monitorial journalism, the journalist is not just a provider of content. However, the interaction in two-way communication is localized in the closed journalistic culture. Although news sites could offer different platforms for facilitating readers expression of their points of view about self-interested issues, journalists most often address the concerns and demands of their readers by posting news or leaving the answer of questions or opinions to the system of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

Dialogical journalism is interpreted by Deuze when the majority of the content of the site is administrated by journalists in a systematic interaction with their audience. According this author, this kind of journalism is the most expression of open journalism, due to there is not a rigorous division between producers and consumers.

Adapting these definitions of online journalism, Deuze maintains that mainstream media are frequently practicing an orientating and an instrumental journalism because they are inclined to translate the traditional and print news-making process. However, he recognizes that news sites are not static organizations with a clear and predetermined consensus and routines related only to one of these different types of journalism. He asserts that the characteristic of each type could be detected in some process or periods of time, although the newsrooms' organization, function and culture frequently exhibit one trend directly associated with one type of journalism.

Into this scope, the previous Deuze's concepts and this last assumption about mainstream media help to outline in this thesis the possible profiles, function and roles of

those journalists and editors who works for the online versions of mainstream newspapers in Latin America.

To measure the routines and functions of online journalists, this thesis replicates two questions from a survey conducted in Germany in 2002 by Quandt, Altmeyen, Hanitzsch and Loeffelholz. For examining global journalists' routines and organizational differences, Reese (2001) recommends conducting cross-national studies.

Quandt and his colleagues based their questions on a criteria suggested in Quandt's previous observational study on five online newspapers over ten weeks. He coded more than ten thousand actions, which help to analyze and define the rules and functions of journalists and editors in online newsrooms. Quandt concluded that online journalism is similar to print journalism, but with the speed of a broadcast news agency. In addition, he argues that the tasks performed by online journalists seem to demonstrate the "traditional role model" of the journalists, in terms of the standards defined by traditional theorists.

Based on the standards of the traditional roles and tasks of the journalists, Quandt and his colleagues classify online journalists' tasks in a set of eleven activities: online investigation, writing, news selection, editing news material from news agencies, copying and/or transferring text onto the site, management, offline investigation, editing material from colleagues, user contact, production, and programming.

These authors include in their criteria Internet activities such as online investigation, user contact, management and programming. All these tasks were included in the survey for this thesis.

In addition, this study replicates the set of variables provided by Quandt and his colleagues for examining the main professional functions or roles of online journalists. Eight of the eleven proposed variables were adapted for this question about professional functions: getting information to the public quickly, getting information to the public neutrally, getting interested information for the mass, offering entertainment to the public, explaining complex information, presenting opinions to the public, offering assistance to the public, and giving the audience a chance to express their opinion on topics of public interest.

These are the most comprehensive professional roles of journalists identified in Western and democratic countries, and included in several journalism surveys (Quandt et al., 2002).

The selection of these two questions about tasks and roles will help to answer the Research Question # 2: Are online journalists in Latin America following the same occupational functions as their worldwide counterparts?

The data collected will illustrate the journalist's perception of their own professional roles and their possible interpretations based on the orientating, instrumental, monitorial or dialogical functions of the online journalism as described above by Deuze.

In addition, other concepts formulated by Pablo Boczkowski are considered in this section to interpret the role of online journalists. Boczkowski offers a new perspective about the roles of online journalists when he explains the news making process and operational dynamic in a newsroom. He argues that online news could be journalist-centered or user-centered. "Instead of being primarily journalist-centered, the news online appears increasingly to be also user-centered," (2004).

This author believes that journalist-centered online news is “fundamentally a monologue communicated uni-directionally and adding very few, if any, responses from readers in venues such as letters to the editor.”

On the other side, a user-centered news includes a “higher degree of contestation, expressed either by direct conflict of opinions or indirect multiplicity of views, than is typical with traditional media.” Journalists are interested in their audience’s opinions and include them in the content. The author says this process is increasing in traditional and nontraditional news sites, as well as weblogs.

For this study, an orientating journalist tends to offer basically news and explanation to the audience. An instrumental journalist is more likely to provide information regarding the interests of a mass audience. In these two cases, the journalist still is the center of news making with a sparse or non-existent level of interactivity involving the readers.

A monitorial journalist is one who facilitates different interactive options for their readers, monitors content in forums and answers some questions or demands of their users, often indirectly or without a clear identification through generic emails identified by sections or newsrooms’ contacts.

On the contrary, a dialogical journalist has a systematic interaction with his or her readers and includes their opinions in the news making process. These last two definitions might be interpreted in the conceptualization of the two different levels of user-centered journalists.

CHAPTER V

Methodology

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT: A FIVE SECTIONS WEB- BASED SURVEY

This exploratory study is a Web-based survey responded by 74 editors and reporters working for 62 online editions of daily generic information national, regional and local newspapers in Latin America (See Appendices B, D and E). Three editors and journalist from other Websites without print counterpart responded the survey, but their answers were excluded from the data. Eleven sites reported more than one respondent. In each case and for some questions, the editor's responses were selected for this study, excluding reporter's answers.

The survey was conducted from May through July 2004. The announcement of the Web survey was made via an e-mail invitation to a defined population of potential participants of the study. A total of 129 print-based online papers comprised the sample, and 48 percent of them participated in the survey.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the results and the distribution of attributes in several questions, as well as provide some measures of association between variables. In the analysis process, results and findings from different studies conducted inside and outside the region were considered to compare tendencies, particularly the

Web-based survey of Franco and Guzman (2004). They surveyed editors of 70 national-circulation newspapers sites in the region.

The primary objectives of the survey were: drawing a representative picture of Latin American “online affiliated newspapers” (Berkman and Shumway, 2003) and digital journalists, and identifying the most common broad international trends in print-based online papers. Divided in five sections, the Web-based survey consists of a total 31 closed-ended questions regarding to the basic characteristics of online journalists and their occupational routines and roles; online newsroom operations; content production, interactions between online and print staffs, and sites’ business models (See Appendix A).

For the Web-based survey’s construction, two surveys with online journalists conducted in Germany and in the Low Countries were reviewed (Quandt et. al, 2002; Deuze and Paulussen, 2002). Some questions were extracted from the previous studies to examine socio-demographic information of the journalists, levels of education, professional background, salaries, job satisfaction, weekly tasks performed, and professional functions.

According to Deuze (1999), the replication of surveys could provide broad trends nationally, locally or even particular cultural aspects of online news media and journalists. “Evaluation of results from a single country makes more sense when compared with findings from other countries where the same research methodology was used.”

The survey also comprises questions regarding original content (percentage of non-duplicated or reedited content); immediacy (frequency of updated news stories),

multimedia and interactivity (the most common multimedia and/or interactive content in updated news); access content; sources of revenues; current financial status; and forms of relationship between the online and print media (See Appendix A).

The Web-based survey was programmed in a HTML format, with drop-down boxes and a scrolling navigation bar. It was hosted by the server at the Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas. The submitted responses were sent directly to a database, programmed exclusively for this research, and the results were transferred to an Excel spreadsheet for the descriptive analysis of the data.

It is important to mention some observations about the methodology used in this study. There are some advantages and disadvantages in the construction and completing processes of a Web-based survey. Some errors and limitations were detected during the process of construction, programming, and distribution of the Internet survey.

For this thesis, the use of some specialized survey software would have avoided programming mistakes like the one it was faced with one questions of the survey in HTML format (See Appendix A). Also it would have been necessary to include other questions to test and corroborate the results for some variables such as those related to interaction process between the online and print staffs issues in question number 5 (See Appendix A). Some extra questions should have improved the findings about convergence. These questions should have been based on descriptions of practice than theory concepts to avoid erroneous interpretations, as two participants suggested.

DEFINING THE SAMPLE: IMPEDIMENTS AND ADJUSTMENTS

The sample exclusively comprises online editions of daily and generic national, regional and local newspapers with some active emails accounts in 18 Latin American countries. Among 62 participants' print-based online papers, 36 were sites from national dailies; 14 from regional newspapers; and 8 from local papers. Four respondents did not provide information about the circulation area of their print partners (See Appendices D and E).

Online sites from Cuba was not included the survey because it was addresses online sites of privately- owned newspapers. Additionally, digital papers from non-Spanish speaking countries also were excluded, although one response from Brazil was considered in the data. Furthermore, online editions of specialized newspapers, weeklies, magazines and online news media without a print counterpart were excluded from this study.

After searching the most comprehensive and updated Spanish online newspapers directories on the Internet (Infoamerica.com and Laprensaescrita.com), the total census of online national, regional, and local newspapers with a online edition in Latin America was 597: 115 online editions in Mexico; 113 in Argentina; and 369 in the rest of the South and Central American countries, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean nations (Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico).

Each Website was visited to locate contact e-mails for sending an introductory message with the Web survey as a link into the message. Among these 597 online editions, a total of 454 e-mail addresses were collected from 129 digital affiliated

versions. The e-mail addresses collected defined the sample of this study. Although the total sample represents 22 percent of the total online editions found in press directories, this was the only portion (129 online sites), which could be chosen based on the availability of active e-mail accounts on the sites.

The process of sending out the Web survey also represented a time consuming process, which demanded a constant redefinition of the sample due to the inability of reaching some potential respondents, and multiple attempts to contact editors and journalists, who in some cases required up to 10 contact attempts. For instance, the failures reported by local newspapers' sites impacted the number of them in the sample.

Among the 113 online affiliated sites found in Argentina, 26 percent reported broken links, and 12 percent did not offer any e-mail contact. In the case of Mexico with 115 editions, 13 percent of the sites were not available due to broken links, and a group of 60 regional and local newspapers (Organización de Editores de Mexico- OEM) provide frequently the same contact e-mail from few workers.

Subsequently, the e-mail addresses collected contain one or more electronic addresses provided by the sample of 129 online newspapers. This lengthy process for defining the sample evidenced a main constraint: Over half of the online editions offered only one all-purpose e-mail for the online newsroom, an unidentified contact, a Webmaster, or an electronic account belonging to the print newsroom. These distinctions affected the possibility of using the strategy of personalization, as recommended by scholars specialized in survey methods (Tuten, Urban and Bosnjak, 2001).

A total of 107 e-mail addresses reported problems such as address unknown, temp failure, mailbox full, or unknown user. However, over 70 percent of the 454 e-mails sent

reached the sample, which 52 percent corresponded to journalists' personal accounts and 19 percent reported communication failures. The rest comprises all-purpose e-mail accounts. The invitational e-mail with the survey's link were sent individually in order to avoid Anti-Spam filters in each site.

Citing Couper's conclusions, Gunn (2002) argues that the most common mistakes in any Web-based survey involve sampling, coverage, non-response, and what was actually being measured. In this thesis, some of these problems were faced. First, the sampling process had to be adjusted based on the accessibility to e-mail accounts. The coverage of the sample was not unfortunately as large as was estimated during the planning stage of this research.

Second, electronic email invitations were sent without advance notice and without any monetary incentive, or personalization or sponsorship for improving the response rates (Tuten et al., 2001). Personalization strategies were difficult to apply. Generally, the majority of the sample's sites (53%) do not display the e-mail addresses of each member of online staff. Methods of incentives and sponsorship were not practicable. The only existing incentive for the respondents was the agreement to distribute the final and general results among the survey's participants.

In terms of sponsorship, it would have been important to receive logistical support to more successfully promote the survey by phone, as Guillermo Franco mention in an interview for this thesis. He obtained a high response speed thanks to the support of the Grupo de Diarios de America (GDA), a consortium of the 14 most influential newspapers in Latin America. This group helped him with phone calls to the online sites editors, encouraged them to participate in the survey.

Presumably a population of online newspapers should not report problems to be reached, but as described above many of them were inaccessible via e-mail. Although the Internet offers the capacity to contact potential respondents in a vast geographic area, some technical and cultural restrictions still restrain a possible communication. These two limitations must be taken into consideration in further research studies about online newspapers in the region, and particularly in studies about user contact, responsiveness of reader's emails, and open two-way communications with online journalists.

CHAPTER VI

Results

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ONLINE JOURNALISTS

A total of 74 online workers from 62 affiliated digital papers in Latin America participated in the Web-survey (See Appendix B and E). Three editors and journalist from other Websites without print counterpart responded the survey, but their answers were excluded from the data. For the basic characteristics of online journalists, all 74 answers were taken in account. Although more than one respondent reported in the case of 11 digital papers, the global sample was considered for reporting personal information and professional standards (See Appendix C).

The basic demographic data show that almost 60 percent report an age between 20 and 35. Among them 70 percent of the participants are males. Their average age is 38 years old as can be seen in Table.1. The female worker is younger than her male colleague. As shown by the data in Table 2, She is around 32 years old. These characteristics match with the results of worldwide surveys.

Table 1 Participants' Age Range

<i>Age Range</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
20-27	7	9
26-30	21	28
31-35	16	22
36-40	7	9
41-45	9	12
46-50	6	8
51-55	5	7
56-70	2	3
No Answer	2	3
Total	74	100

Franco and Guzman (2004) also reported that 87 percent of the more than 70 surveyed editors in online newspapers in Latin America are between 20 and 30.

As Deuze and Paulussen (2002) point out, it is expected to find young online journalists due to the novelty of the profession. In addition, the gender inequity was also reported in other international and regional surveys.

In the case of Latin America, the gender imbalance in the online staff suggests a different situation with other media, particularly print and TV media, which the women payroll is higher than their men colleagues.

Table 2 Men's Basic characteristics

<i>Basic Characteristics</i>	<i>N</i>	
Male	53	70%
Age (average)	51	38 years
University Degree	43	83%
Former Print Experience	38	73%
Editors-in-chief/Senior Editors	41	79%
Salaries Lower Print Staff	16	31%

Table 3 Women's Basic Characteristics

<i>Basic Characteristics</i>	<i>N</i>	
Female	22	30%
Age (average)	21	32 years
University Degree	21	95%
Former Print Experience	12	55%
Editors-in chief/Senior Editors	15	68%
Salaries Lower Print Staff	9	41%

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Highly Educated Journalists

The online journalist in Latin America is highly educated. Over 80 percent of the respondents have a university degree. The Table 2 shows that among the men, 83 percent have completed a Bachelors (55%) or Masters program (27%). With respect to the women, Table 3 illustrate that almost all of them (21 of 22 respondents) report having a university degree (68% completed college and 27% received MBA).

Print Background

In terms of their former major media experience, the majority of online journalists in Latin America come from print culture. The survey shows that 68 percent of the respondents select newspapers as their media and professional background before being hired by the affiliated online paper, followed by 14 percent of online workers with previous job experience in online companies. Tables 2 and 3 summarize that more than half of men and women have a former print experience (73% into the male group, and 55% for the female).

The domination of print professionals in online newsrooms, particularly those separate geographically from the print newsroom and with clear position distinctions, might suggest a former job relationship with the print edition of the online site. In addition, this finding might contribute to interpreting the impact of print culture in the roles, processes, products and services of the digital environment.

More than half of the respondents (58%) work for online editions of national-circulation and generic information print papers; 26 percent for digital versions of regional-circulation newspapers; and 11 percent for local-circulation papers.

Among them, 77 percent of the female respondents and 50 percent of men work for the Internet sites of national print media.

The participants also specified their current job position in the online edition. Over 80 percent describe positions directly related to the managing, coordination or production of the online sites (28 editors-in-chief or senior editors; 12 directors; 10 reporters or content producers; 8 content coordinators; and 4 Internet chiefs). Similar patterns of job position between genders were found. Whether men or women had equal responsibilities, all the directors were men. The data illustrate in Table 2 and 3 reveal that 64 percent of the women are editors-in-chief or senior editors, content coordinators and reporters, and 60 percent of the men similarly report the same job positions, excluding the director position, which constitutes 23 percent into the male group.

Despite both genders sharing analogous job positions, the women report lower salaries in comparison with their print counterparts, and also their workmates in the online edition as can be seen from the data in Table 4. Meanwhile, male professionals say they earn similar (52 %) or lower (31%) salaries than their equivalents in the print

edition, women say their job income is inferior (41%) or equal (32 %) to their colleagues in the print partner.

Table 4 Salary Comparison between Online and Print Staff by Gender

	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Similar Online-Print	34 (46%)	27 (52%)	7 (32%)
Online is Higher	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (9%)
Online is Lower	25 (34%)	16 (31%)	9 (41%)
I Don't Know	7 (9%)	6 (12%)	1 (5%)
No Answer	6 (8%)	3 (6%)	3 (14%)
Total	74	52	22

However, the global data about salaries illustrate that almost half of online journalists have comparable incomes (46%) to their print counterparts, and 34 percent earn minor wages. Only four respondents reported a higher salary than the print journalists.

A similar result was determined by Franco and Guzman (2004) in their survey. They found that about the half of online journalists earn less than their print colleagues, and 43 percent report an equal salary.

The disparity between salaries is more unbalanced in Websites of national circulation papers than in regional or locals publications. As it can be seen from Table 5, 16 participants (45%) from 42 online papers report lower wages than their counterparts in the print partner edition.

Table 5 Salary Comparison between Online and Print Staff by Papers' Circulation ¹

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N Respondent</i>
Similar Online/ Print	14 (39%)	8 (57%)	5 (63 %)	1 (25%)	28
Online is Lower	16 (45%)	2 (14%)	1 (12%)	2 (50%)	21
Online is Higher	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
I Don't Know	2 (6%)	2 (14%)	1 (12%)	0 (0%)	5
No Answer	2 (6%)	2 (14%)	1 (12%)	1 (25%)	6
N Papers	36	14	8	4	62

The data also provide the possibility to compare other variables in terms of salaries. For instance, a relationship between level of wages and online and print staff working in the same physical space suggest that a spatial convergence might impact the equality of wages. A total of 35 online newspapers reported to share the same newsroom with their print counterpart. Among them 51 percent of the surveyed editors and reporters say that their job income was similar to their colleagues on the print staff and 29 percent states lower salaries. On the contrary, professionals from separate online newsroom provided the inverse percentage relation: 46 percent reported lower salaries and 35 percent equal income to their print partners. Although the proportion is not too divergent, further studies might examine further whether convergence, at least spatial, could influence the balance of wages for online journalists.

¹ Among 11 online papers with more than two respondents, three sites reported divergent answers about the correlation between the print's partner circulation area and salaries. The answer from the editor or the participant with the reported highest position in the site was selected for the calculation of these results.

For further studies, it would be interesting to explore the same personal and professional standards for the print staff. An explorative and parallel Web-survey among journalists from both staff might provide new clues to compare different variables examined in this thesis.

According to the studied variables (sex, age, educational background and former professional experience), the analyzed data above shows clear-cut findings to the first research questions. Online journalists in Latin America are more likely to show similar personal profiles and professional standards as other worldwide counterparts illustrated in different surveys and papers.

OCCUPATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Based on 74 surveyed respondents, the findings provide a set of 12 multiple-choice items for examining the frequency of online tasks performed by each journalist during an average week. Among the first set of answers, not all 74 respondents answered questions 9 and 10 of the survey. For instance, four participants, reporters included in the group of eleven papers with more than one respondent, seemed to prefer that their managers provide answers about staff tasks and roles.

More than half of the respondents say they “always” do online searching (57%), respond to user’s emails (57%), and organize content (54%) during a normal week. About half of them also say they “always” do weekly news selection processes (45%) and edit news from agencies and other media. In this last point, it is important to highlight that a lower percentage (34%) say that they “always” edit material from print colleagues, and 31 percent report re-packaging print text.

The tasks of offline investigation, writing original stories, producing multimedia content and programming seem to be less systematic than in the online newsrooms. For instance, in the task of writing original content, the highest rate of the respondents (24%) reported that they “sometimes” write original stories, followed by 19 percent who say they “always” perform this routine, and 12 percent who “frequently” perform this process.

In the case of multimedia production, 20 percent of the respondents reported it to be a “rarely” performed weekly activity, 16 percent reported “frequently” and 16 percent, “sometimes”. The task of programming is the process with the largest disparity in the range of answers. While 38 percent of the participants say they perform programming activities always or frequently weekly, 32 percent say they do not carry out any programming tasks.

Overall, Latin American online journalists are more likely to perform the traditional activities of any journalists such as investigation, selecting, writing and editing news on a weekly basis. But at the same time, they add to their routines technical elements of online media such as online investigation, content management and user contact. However, in an average week, other Internet activities, multimedia production and programming tasks, seem to be carried out less frequently or performed by another online staff’s members.

Table 6 Frequency of Weekly Performed Tasks by Online Journalists in Percentages

	<i>Always</i>	<i>Frequently</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
Online Investigation (Online Searching/Researching)	57	22	0	3	4
News Selection	45	23	4	5	7
Editing News from Agencies and other Media	49	14	4	11	5
Transferring /Re-Packing Print Text	31	16	18	8	11
Writing Original Stories	19	12	24	11	9
Editing Material from Print Colleagues	34	23	12	8	4
Offline Investigation (Live Coverage)	24	15	14	16	14
Multimedia Production	14	16	16	20	15
User Contact (Response User's Emails)	57	19	4	3	1
Programming	27	11	8	12	20
Management (Organizing Content)	54	12	7	4	3
Others	16	7	5	5	4

An analysis of data on Table 6, suggests that online journalists spend the greater part of their average week on online investigations, news selection, organizing content, editing news from wire agencies, and answering readers' emails. These types of activities are performed by more than 50 percent of the surveyed online editors and reporters. Similar results were found in a survey with online journalist in Germany (Quandt et. al, 2002).

The editing process of news provided by wire agencies and the user contact, together with online investigations constitute common activities for editors and reporters. Meanwhile multimedia production, programming, off-line investigations and writing original stories might be produced by other members of the online staff, and also for other colleagues of the print publication in the case of live coverage.

These findings also corroborate Franco and Guzman's (2004) results: reporting is not a main activity for the surveyed online journalists in Latin America, who believe their focus is text writing and editing. Also a small number of the participants think they are the generation of multimedia content.

Online Professional Roles

In order of importance, the 74 respondents also describe their professional roles in the online units. The data in Table 7 show that the majority of editors and reporters perceive themselves as neutral news journalists. More than half of them (66%) say that "getting information quickly to the public" is a very important role, followed by "getting information neutrally to the public" (53%).

Among other functions with high relevance, almost 50 percent state that they "concentrate on information for the largest audience" and "express my opinions to the public"(51%).

Interpreting the data from Table 7, the Latin American online journalist might play a disseminator and interpreter role, according to the notions defined by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996). Although the journalists affirmed that they consider the function of

dissemination of information to be very important, they also recognized, in a small difference of percentage, their function to “interpret complex information”, and “express their opinion to the public”.

The data displayed in Table 7 also show that the highest percentage of participants selected as not important “offering entertainment and relaxation to the people,” which, according to Reese (2001), is considered an item related to the functions of “corporate journalism.” Despite this result, some doubts remain whether journalists will admit the entertainment role, as Vos argues (2002).

The category “provide a chance for the public to express its opinion” was considered a very important function by 46 percent of the respondents. This item could show evidence of an audience-centered journalism, according to Boczkowski (2004). However, it would be important to compare this result with other subsequent findings about the most common uses of interactive features in news production. A high rate of forums, chats, and surveys added to the news stories would be suggested an audience-centered journalism. Unfortunately, it not possible to determine from this data whether the journalists infer that “give a chance for the public to express its opinion” means answering user opinions by email or allowing them to participate in the production of news.

Table 7 Participants' Perceptions about Professional Roles in Percentages

	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>
Get information to the public quickly	66	14	3	1
Get information to the public neutrally	52	19	7	1
Concentrate on information for the largest audience	49	28	5	0
Interpret complex information	47	31	5	1
Offer entertainment and relaxation to the people	7	11	26	41
Offer assistance to the public	30	30	19	5
Give a chance for the public to express its opinion	46	23	12	1
Express my opinions to the public	51	28	4	0

Job Satisfaction

Replicating the question of job satisfaction from the German survey (Quandt et. al, 2002), the results were similar in the case of Latin American online journalists: More than eighty percent of them are “very” or “fairly” satisfied with their jobs. Only 14 percent of the 74 surveyed participants reported being dissatisfied. Despite certain low rates of income and inconsistent in-house technical training as illustrated above, the

findings here, like in the German study, are surprising. The German scholars speculate that the high rate of job satisfaction could be related to the novelty of the field, the low rate of experience as online journalists and the small size of the Internet staff (Quandt et al., 2002). Levels of satisfaction were also examined by gender. Men were more frequently “very satisfied” (58%) than women (27%).

Table 8 Participants’ Job Satisfaction

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Very Satisfied	36	49
Fairly Satisfied	25	34
Fairly Dissatisfied	9	12
Very Dissatisfied	1	1
No Answer	3	4

THE ORGANIZATION OF ONLINE NEWSPAPERS

A total of 62 (48 percent of the sample) online editions of daily and generic print papers in Latin America participated in the Web-survey. For 11 of these online papers, more than one respondent filled in the questionnaire (See Appendix C). A total of 23 answers was reported by this group of sites. When an editor and a reporter had different answers, the editor’s answers were selected. The editor’s answers were chosen for the calculation of results related to the online organization, operation, and business.

Eighteen Latin American countries are represented in the survey. Mexico (9), Argentina (8), Venezuela (7), Colombia (6), and Chile (6) constitute the nations with more than five participant sites in the sample (See Appendix D).

Over 50 percent of the participants work for online editions of daily and generic national-circulation newspapers in the region. As revealed in Table 9, the Websites of the largest national circulation newspapers in each country are included in the survey.

Table 9 Relationship between the Online Sites and their Print Partners, according to Print's Circulation-Area²

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
National	36	58
Regional	14	23
Local	8	13
No Answer	4	6
Total	62	100

The average operations period for the sites is six years. Almost half of the surveyed online papers (45%) have been operating in cyberspace for more than six years. Table 10 table shows 16 percent was launched between 1993-1995. The rest (29%) have been operating an Internet site for less than five years.

The following pages compare the number of years on the Internet with the content production and financial aspects to determine whether the amount of online experience is an indicator of a more developed online journalism.

² Among 11 online papers with more than two respondents, 3 sites reported different answers about print's partner circulation area. The answer from the editor or the participant with the reported highest position in the site was selected for the calculation of these results.

Table 10 Sites' Launching Date³

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
1993-1995	10	16
1996-1998	18	29
1999-2001	19	31
2002-2004	12	19
No Answer	3	5
Total	62	100

At this point it is important to mention that six newspapers with more than one respondent showed different answers for this question. Dissimilar responses reported for the same paper suggests that employees, particularly journalists or content producers, are unaware of the history and corporative information about their online sites. When an editor and a reporter had different answers, the editors' answers were selected. The first step for confirming the launch year for these six online newspapers was to check their sites for this data. However, only one online newspaper, Clarin, offers an institutional section about the media group with historical and chronological information. The online versions of the Chilean newspapers El Mercurio, La Segunda, y La Tercera, as well as Trincheras de la Noticia from Nicaragua and El Nacional from Venezuela, do not provide any data about the company. This lack of availability of corporative information in the sites might contribute to disinformation among the employees.

Comparing the period of operation of the site with the circulation-size of the print media, the findings are varied, particularly in the case of national print papers. It was expected that most of them would have more than 6 years on the Internet. Half of these

³ Among 11 online papers with more than two respondents, 3 sites reported different answers about years of online operations. The answer from the editor or the participant with the reported highest position in the site was selected for the calculation of these results.

papers launched their Web sites between 1996 and 2001, while half started their online operations after 1999. In the cases of regional and local circulation papers, it is clear in Table 11 that they started their online operations after the national papers

Table 11 Sites' Launching Date according to Type of Print Partner in Percentages⁴

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>
1993-1995	22	0	12	25
1996-1998	28	50	0	25
1999-2001	20	50	38	50
2002-2004	22	0	50	0
No Answer	8	0	0	0
N	36	14	8	4

Full Time Workers

The affiliated online newspapers in Latin America are more likely to hire full time professionals than part time workers (See Table 12). Exactly half of the newsrooms with full time employees is operated with 8 or fewer workers.

Table 12 Online Staffs' Payroll

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
Only Full Time	31	50
Only Part Time	8	13
Full and Part Time	20	32
No Answer	3	5
Total	62	100

⁴ Among 11 online papers with more than two respondents, 3 sites reported different answers for print's size circulation and years of online operations. The answer from the editor or the participant with the reported highest position in the site was selected for the calculation of these results.

Table 12 also suggests that a combination of full and part-time employees comprise the total payroll of 32 percent of the online papers. Under this modality, about half of the dailies are inclined to operate with a small number of workers in their online divisions. As revealed by data in Table 13, Web editions with full and part-time employees operate with a small staff ranging from 1 to 8 workers.

Further investigations might explore what kind of positions full and part-time workers perform tasks in order to examine their functions and impact in the news production processes. For instance, it would be relevant to know whether the part-time workers split their time between the print and online editions of the same media. Besides it also be interesting to explore in which are commonly work the part-time personnel.

According to German scholars, some economic constrains might be affect the reduction of staff, and the hiring of full time workers. They say freelancers or part-time employees are a cheap alternative for the Web media (Quandt et al., 2002). However, this trend was observed in Germany, and there is not previous evidence in Latin America to compare in a longitudinal analysis the decrease or increase of professionals in the papers' Websites during the last five years.

Table 13 Number of Online Employees in Percentages ⁵

	<i>Full Time</i>	<i>Part Time</i>	<i>Full and Part Full Time</i>	<i>Time Part Time</i>
1-3 Employees	32	75	45	50
4-8 Employees	29	25	30	35
9-12 Employees	13	0	10	10
More than 12	26	0	15	5
N	31	8	20	20

⁵ Among 11 online papers with more than two respondents, 3 sites reported different answers about the number of the online staff. The answer from the editor or the participant with the reported highest position in the site was selected for the calculation of these results

On the other hand, Table 14 reveals that national circulation sites are more likely to hire full and part-time workers, or to be completely staffed by full time employees. The size of this type of paper’s organization might be a reason to avoid using only part-time workers. Despite the trend of using full-time employees on their sites, national papers also seem to operate with a small staff composed with 8 employees or less (See Table 15).

Table 14 Online Staffs’ by Type of Print Papers in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>
Full Time	53	57	37	25
Part Time	0	21	37	50
Full and Part-Time	44	14	13	25
No Answer	3	7	13	0
N	36	14	8	4

Table 15 Number of Online Employees in Papers of National Circulation in Percentages

	<i>Full Time</i>	<i>Full and Part-Time</i>
1-3 Employees	21	50-50
4-8 Employees	42	19-31
9-12 Employees	21	13-13
More than 12	16	10-6
N	19	16

In the case of regional dailies’ sites, the data illustrate a similar payroll pattern found in the national counterparts. As described on Table 16, full-time workers frequently form the organizational structure of the online editions of regional papers.

Table 16 Number of Online Employees in Papers of Regional Circulation in Percentages

	<i>Full Time</i>	<i>Part Time</i>	<i>Full and Part-Time</i>
1-3 Employees	50	67	50-50
4-8 Employees	13	33	50-50
9-12 Employees	0	0	
More than 12	38	0	
N	8	3	2

Local papers with Internet editions reveal a different situation. As shown in Table 17, part-time workers are more likely to operate the online sites. However, the data, based exclusively on eight participants, cannot be taken as conclusive evidence.

Table 17 Number of Online Employees in Papers of Local Circulation in Percentages

	<i>Full-Time</i>	<i>Part-Time</i>	<i>Full and Part-Time</i>
1-3 Employees	67	100	0-100
4-8 Employees	0	0	100-0
9-12 Employees	0	0	0
More than 12	33	0	0
N	3	3	1

Inconsistent Training

Asking about how often the media train the online staff in new technological skills, the data shown in Table 18 illustrate two diverse results. Approximately half of the sites reported that their media company support with certain frequency the process of training. The other half says the contrary. A marginally small percentage of difference between both groups of data provides an unclear trend.

Table 18 Frequency of Tech Training Supported by the Media Company

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Always	4	6
Frequent	10	16
Sometimes	16	25
Rarely	17	27
Never	12	19
Do not Know	2	5
No Answer	1	2
Online Papers	62	100

Nearly half of the sites reported that the media “rarely” (27%) or “never” (19%) train their online personnel. Other 42 percent suggest the companies are engaged in some frequent training section for their online units. This percentage is similar to that found by Franco and Guzman (2004) in their survey, which revealed that only 43 percent of the surveyed sites provide “in-office digital journalism training for their journalist.” These two Colombian reporters also highlighted that 53 percent of their survey’s participants do not have an academic background in online journalism due to in part the lack of academic programs in their countries. Besides they found that 70 percent of the Latin American online managers consider as a “greatest need” the multimedia training for the personnel.

Table 19 Frequency of Tech Training by Type of Print Paper in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>
Always	0	21	13	0
Frequent	19	7	13	25
Sometimes	25	29	22	25
Rarely	33	14	13	50
Never	19	29	13	0
Do not Know	3	0	13	0
No Answer	0	0	13	0
N	36	14	8	4

Table 19 shows that national papers' online units do not "always" training as other regional and local media with sites. On the contrary, it was expected that national media with more financial resources than other print publications.

Sharing the same Newsroom

More than half of the Web sites reported sharing the same physical space with the print staff as it can be seen in Table 20. For the online editions of national newspapers, about half of online newsrooms share the working space with the print staff. Table 21 shows that the other half reports separate newsrooms. On the contrary, regional and local newspapers are more likely to operate their sites from the same print newsroom.

Table 20 Same Newsroom Used by Online and Print Staff⁶

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	35	56
No	26	42
No Answer	1	2
Online Sites	62	100

Table 21 Same Newsroom Used by Online and Print Staff, according to Type of Print Paper in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>
Yes	50	79	75	0
No	47	21	25	100
No Answer	3	0	0	0
N	36	14	8	4

⁶ Among 11 online papers with more than two respondents, 3 sites reported different answers for this question. The answer from the editor or the participant with the reported highest position in the site was selected for the calculation of these results.

These findings encourage speculation about the spatial interaction between the two staff, and the formulation of new research questions. First, the data about regional and local newspapers might suggest that they could be operating their sites from the same print newsroom due to the size of the papers, and structural and/or financial factors. Second, the national papers, with more staff and financial resources than the regional and local papers, might be showing that these factors are not necessarily a limitation to operated different newsroom for each media. Finally, the data also might to suggest some level of convergence between the online and print edition.

This variable leads to the formulation of different questions that could be partially answered in this thesis.

Are the online sites with more than six years on the Internet more likely to work in a shared-newsroom than the earliest Web editions?

The association between years of operation and type of online-print staff spatial relation shows that 43 percent of the sites with shared newsroom have six years on the cyberspace. However, more than half of sites (54%) with separate newsroom have been on the Web for the same period. This link suggests that the number of years of experience on the Internet is not necessarily an indicator of spatial convergence between the online and print newsrooms.

Are the online sites with shared-newsrooms more likely to operate with less full time employees than the digital editions with separate newsrooms?

The relation between number of full time workers and type of online-print newsroom shows that 72 percent of online sites operates with eight or less employees in the same space with the print newsroom. Meanwhile, 62 percent of the digital editions

with separate newsrooms are working with the same range of employees. The difference between staffs of both types of newsrooms does not seem relevant. The size of the online staff does not seem to be determined by the factor of relation between the digital and print newsrooms. In fact, about the same number of online sites (6 with shared newsrooms and 5 with separate newsrooms) operate with more than 12 workers.

Are the online sites with separate newsrooms providing more original content than the Web editions with shared newsrooms?

The comparison of the original content percentage on the Web site and the type of newsroom does not show any connection. Among 35 digital editions with shared newsrooms, 49 percent reported original content ranging from 40 to 100 percent of the site. In the other case, a higher rate was provided by the 26 sites with separate newsrooms, in which 65 percent of the respondents say their sites offer non-republished content from the print edition in a range of 40-100 percent. Among the sites with more than 50 percent of original content, the proportion was almost the same for both type of newsrooms: 20 percent for sites with shared newsrooms, and 27 percent for Web editions with separate newsrooms.

Are online journalists from shared newsrooms using the print staff's content as a their first source of information?

The data show a positive answer. Among 35 online sites with a shared newsroom, 89 percent report the print newsroom as the first source of information. Although the percentage of print newsrooms as first provider of information is also high for 26 Web sites with a separate newsroom (58 %), news wire agencies were reported as the main source of information in 42 percent of these digital editions.

In conclusion, the previous four comparisons suggest that a shared newsroom for the print and Web operations does not necessarily indicate either a longer history of Web operations or the need for fewer online employees.

On the other hand, the production of original content for the sites might be superior in Web editions with separate newsrooms from the print staff. However, this connection must be further explored with questions based on particular types of original content among the diverse sections of the online news sites.

The only comparison with a clear assertion seems to be that between the type of newsroom and the first sources of information used by the online staff. Almost all the sites with shared newsrooms reported their print staff to be the main provider of information. This result might suggest that a shared newsroom is more likely to expand the diffusion of breaking information provided by the print partner. However, it should be specified what kind of information is diffused. For instance, are the international information provided by foreign correspondents of the print media or the traditional wire agencies?

Identifying the Editorial Agenda

Most of the online newspapers report consistently sharing with the print staff the same editorial agenda for selecting and publishing the news on the home page and the front page. As shown in Table 22, 42 percent of the surveyed sites reported that they always share the same agenda, and 38 percent reported that their sites frequently publish the same news selected and published by the print partner.

This result to some extent contradicts Franco and Guzman’s findings. They found that 92 percent of the sites are “autonomous at defining the focus of their publishing”. However, they also point out that “sometimes content” on 55 percent of the sites is not different from the print edition.

Table 22 Frequency of Editorial Agenda Sharing between the Online and Print Partners

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Always	26	42
Frequent	23	37
Sometimes	6	10
Rarely	1	2
Never	3	5
Do not Know	2	3
No Answer	1	2
Online papers	62	100

In the scope of diverse dailies, there is not any relevant distinction among them. National, regional and local papers’ Websites are more likely to follow the same editorial agenda in the selection and publication of news stories with their print counterpart. However, one-half of the national dailies’ sites reported frequently sharing a similar agenda, but not always. That result might imply some level of independence in defining a particular online editorial agenda, which could be influenced by diverse factors such as the relation between both media newsrooms, and exclusive characteristics of the Internet media such as the news-day cycle of publication determined by the process of constant updating.

Table 23 Frequency of Editorial Agenda Sharing by Type of Print Paper in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	N
Always	28	86	37	25	26
Frequent	50	7	37	25	23
Sometimes	11	7	0	25	6
Rarely	3	0	0	0	1
Never	5	0	0	25	3
Do not Know	3	0	13	0	2
No Answer	0	0	13	0	1
N	36	14	8	4	62

A comparison between the frequency of sharing the same editorial agenda and type of newsroom, Table 24 might suggest that the spatial location of the print and online newsrooms would not have any impact in the communication flow between both staffs. Shared and separate newsrooms illustrate similar patterns of constant frequency in the sharing of rules and routines to show analogous news gate-keeping between both media. It could thus be of interest to learn more about how the gate-keeping process is performed by an affiliated news sites with a print partner.

Table 24 Frequency of Editorial Agenda Sharing By Type of Newsroom in Percentages

	<i>Shared Newsrooms</i>	<i>Separate Newsrooms</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	N
Always	51	27	100	26
Frequent	43	31	0	23
Sometimes	3	19	0	6
Rarely	0	4	0	1
Never	0	11	0	3
Do not Know	3	4	0	2
No Answer	0	4	0	1
N	35	26	1	62

CONTENT PRODUCTION

The production of original content on affiliated Web sites in Latin America seems to be sparse. Nearly 60 percent of the sites reported an estimated percentage of original content on their editions ranging from 0 to 60 percent. Understood as non-duplicated or re-packaged content, Table 25 shows that only 27 percent of online dailies offer 60 to 100 percent of original content on their Websites.

These findings might suggest that content provided by the print edition or other media, wire agencies, is still predominant on the sites.

Table 25 Percentage of Original Content in the Sites

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Between 0% - 20%	16	26
Between 20% - 40%	9	15
Between 40% - 60%	20	32
Between 60% - 80%	10	16
Between 80% - 100%	7	11
Online sites	62	100

Reporting the responses about original content by type of newspaper sites, it was surprising to find that online editions from national papers reported having a proportionally lower percentage of original content than other publications' sites. As the data show in Table 26, almost 50 percent of the national papers' sites reported providing from 0 to 60 percent original content.

Table 26 Original Content by Circulation Area of the Print Partners in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>
Between 0% - 20%	28	29	25	0
Between 20% - 40%	19	7	13	0
Between 40% - 60%	33	29	25	50
Between 60% - 80%	14	21	0	0
Between 80% - 100%	6	14	37	50
N	36	14	8	4

Sites' News Updating

Only 39 percent of the newspapers' sites update their content several times per hour, although not necessarily 24 hours a day. For other Websites, frequent updating is not a common practice. Table 27 also illustrates that 34 percent of the sites are still only providing a duplication of the print parent's paper.

Although this thesis did not examine where online sites concentrate their original content, Franco and Guzman's research found that breaking news, entertainment, sports, and technology are the main sections with content produced directly by the online staff.

Table 27 Frequency of News Updating

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Several Times an Hour	24	39
Several Times a Day	14	23
Once a Day	21	33
No Answer	3	5
Online Sites	62	100

National and regional papers seem to be the only print media that updates their sites hourly. Digital editions of local newspapers still remain in the phase of republishing the print edition. The highest percentage of hourly updating was found on national

papers’ digital versions. This result was expected due to different factors such as the size of the online staff.

Sources of Information in News Stories

Table 28 Frequency of Sites Updating by Type of Print Papers in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>
Several Times per Hour.	50	45	0	25
Several Times a Day	28	14	3	25
Once a Day	19	45	87	50
No Answer	3	14	0	0
N	36	14	8	4

Print newsrooms and news agencies were selected as the main sources of information used to update news stories on the online edition. Based on the results illustrated in Table 29, nearly 80 percent of the sites report the information provided by the print partner’s newsroom as a first option. Another 23 percent say the first sources of information are wire agencies, which also were considered the most used second source of information (47%) by the surveyed papers.

Both findings were expected considering the modality of affiliation between online and print media. In addition, the continuous updating obliges the online editions to be dependent on wire agencies.

Franco and Guzman’s (2004) results also show that 91 percent of the surveyed respondents say they edit content from news agencies, and 14 percent generate real-time content. Contrary to the above findings, they found that only 19 percent say their content come from the print edition.

A recent study conducted by The Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ) concludes that the large majority of the Internet content in US comes from traditional media such as newspapers, and more than 40 percent consists of unedited wire agencies' reports. To address this question in the scope of Latin American online affiliated sites it would be necessary to carry out a content analysis. However, the results shown in this thesis might help reinforce other further research studies.

Table 29 Main Sources of Information in Online News in Percentages

	<i>First Source</i>	<i>Second Source⁷</i>
Print Newsroom	76	00
News Agencies	22	47
TV	0	15
Radio	0	7
Web sites	0	3
Others	2	7

The trend described above is replicated with similar proportions by any kind of newspaper site. As a first source of information, 31 percent of the national papers' online editions selected news agencies. The findings shown in Table 30 might suggest a lack of interaction with the print edition.

Table 30 First Source of Information, according to Type of Print Paper in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N</i>
Print Newsroom	69	100	75	50	47
News Agencies	31	0	13	50	14
TV	0	0	0	0	0
Radio	0	0	0	0	0
Web sites	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	13	0	1
N	36	14	8	4	62

⁷ Fourteen respondents did not select any second option

In the case of local newspapers' sites, it is relevant to observe that radio stations and Web sites constitute the second source of information. These findings might imply the scarcity of financial resources in their online operations.

Table 31 Second Source of Information, according to Type of Print Paper in Percentages⁸

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N</i>
Print Newsroom	0	0	0	0	0
News Agencies	63	80	0	33	29
TV	25	0	0	33	9
Radio	3	10	33	33	4
Web sites	3	0	33	0	2
Others	6	10	33	0	4
N	32	10	3	3	48

Multimedia and Interactive Features in Updated News Stories

In terms of multimedia and interactive features regularly employed to complement news stories in the online edition, the respondents generally select at least three choices. "Hyperlinks" (52%) is the feature most often selected as the first option by 62 online papers, followed by photos (35%). Only 55 papers selected a second option. In this case, "photos" (55%) is the second item most often employed to complement the news stories. In third place, "surveys" (40%) was the most used device. For this last selection, only 45 sites participated.

This set of results invites different interpretations. First, almost a third of the participant sites are not provided with an array of multimedia and interactive devices to

⁸ Fourteen respondents did not select any second option

include in news production, as the data illustrate for the total result of the third column in Table 32.

Second, the highest percentage of hyperlinks used as a first option seems to suggest the existence of internal Internet links to different documents and pages on the same site. This finding also might offer some clues to determining the closed communication structure of the sites.

Third, the use of photos as first and second options might be interpreted as the influence of the traditional media, in this case print, in the online environment. Multimedia and interactive features are rarely employed as an added value to news production. Audio, video, forum and chat features seem not to be included in the process of news production.

These findings contradict in part the data on content found by Franco and Guzman. Their survey shows that 43 percent of Latin American papers' online editions say they use audio and video on their sites. Half of them use them regularly, and the other half for special projects.

This thesis shows that video and audio are not regularly used to complement news stories. In that regard, it could be reasoned that they are only employed for special projects, as Franco and Guzman mention in their study (2004). Some issues of special features with multimedia and interactive items are explored in the following question.

Table 32 Most Frequent Multimedia and Interactive Features in News Stories in Percentages

	First Option	Second Option ⁹	Third Option ¹⁰
Hyperlinks	52	0	0
Photos	36	55	0
Info-graphs (Flash, Graphs)	5	14	16
Video Clips	0	7	4
Audio Clips	0	4	4
Surveys/Polls	0	9	40
Forums	0	4	18
Chat Rooms	0	2	0
Mobile format	0	2	2
None	2	2	0
Others	2	0	12
No Answer	3	4	4
N	62	55	45

Exploring the frequency of the production of multimedia and interactive special features by the online staff, the Table 33 illustrates that the activity is not systematic in digital newsrooms for the 32 percent of the sites. Only 23 percent of the respondents say they produce weekly special projects.

This result and the previous variable might suggest that most sites make only limited use of multimedia and interactive content, as different scholars have argued in other research related to news sites in USA, Germany, and China.

⁹ Seven participants did not select any second option

¹⁰ Seventeen participants did not select any third option

Table 33 Frequency of Multimedia and Interactive Special Projects or Features in Percentages

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Occasionally	20	32
Weekly	14	23
Never	9	15
Daily	8	13
Monthly	8	13
Every two weeks	3	5
Total	62	100

Only 28 percent of national papers’ sites mentioned that they produce special projects “daily” or “weekly”. The production of this kind of content is scarce in the other publications’ sites.

Table 34 Frequency of Multimedia and Interactive Special Projects By Type of Print Paper in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N</i>
Occasionally	39	21	25	25	20
Weekly	17	14	37	75	14
Never	8	29	25	0	9
Daily	11	29	0	0	8
Monthly	19	0	13	0	8
Every two weeks	6	7	0	0	3
N	36	14	8	4	62

Type of Content Access

The majority of the surveyed sites (73%) provide free and open access to their content. From the data in Table 35, it is clear that the online affiliated papers do not currently explore the other modalities of access to the content. Free subscriptions and content access charges remain low among the participant digital editions.

According to Franco and Guzman (2004), 83 percent of the Latin American papers' online have already discussed the possibility of charging for their content, and 61 percent have already adopted some model of user registration.

Table 35 Type of Access Content

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Totally Open	45	73
Open to Whole Content with free subscription	4	6
Open to Certain Content with Free subscription	4	6
Open to Whole or Certain Content with Charge	6	10
No Answer	3	5
Total	62	100

Partner sites of national newspapers more frequently tend to require free subscriptions or to charge for access to certain parts or the content as a whole. However, the open access model is also reported high for sites with national print partners, as can be seen on Table 36.

Table 36 Type of Access Content by Type of Print Partner in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N</i>
Totally Open	69	79	75	75	45
Open to Whole Content with Free Subscription	16	0	13	25	4
Open to Certain Content with Free Subscription	11	0	0	0	4
Open to Whole or Certain Content with Charge	11	7	13	0	6
No Answer	3	14	0	0	3
N	36	14	8	4	62

ONLINE BUSINESS

Advertising is a primary source of revenue for the Latin American online newspapers surveyed. Almost 42 percent of the participants selected this model of revenue. The other most relevant source selected is none (27%). Advertising profits seem also to be the main source of revenue for national and regional online affiliated papers.

Table 37 Main Source of Revenues for the Sites

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Advertising	26	42
Online Classified	3	5
Subscription Fees for Certain Content	1	2
Subscription Fees for Whole Content	4	6
Alliances with other Companies	4	6
Internet Access	0	0
Others	6	10
None	17	27
No Answer	1	2
Total	62	100

Table 38 Main Source of Revenues for the Sites by Type of Print Paper

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N</i>
Advertising	42	50	25	50	26
Online Classified	3	14	0	0	3
Subscription Fees for Certain Content	3	0	0	0	1
Subscription Fees for Whole Content	8	0	13	0	4
Alliances with other Companies	8	0	0	25	4
Internet Access	0	0	0	0	0
Others	3	22	13	25	6
None	30	14	50	0	17
No Answer	3	0	0	0	1
Total	36	14	8	4	62

The current financial status of Latin American online papers seems optimistic in some sense. Despite that 27 percent of the sites are totally supported by the print partner, 34 percent show “enough” or “little” revenues, and almost 10 percent expect profit soon.

Among online papers, the sites from national print media show a better financial profile than the others, as Table 40 shows.

In a correlation between source of revenue and financial status, it was found that “enough” or “little revenues” come from sites with advertising models, subscriptions, alliances and online classifieds.

Table 39 Current Financial Status

	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Totally Supported by the Print Partner	17	27
Provides Enough Revenues	10	16
Provides Little Revenues	11	18
Profit are Expected Soon	6	10
Loses Money	2	3
Neither Gains nor Loses Money	9	15
It is not Financially Viable	3	5
No Answer	4	6
Total	62	100

Table 40 Current Financial Status by Type of Print Paper in Percentages

	<i>National</i>	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Undefined</i>	<i>N</i>
Totally Supported by the Print Partner	31	29	25	0	17
Provides Enough Revenues	19	14	13	0	10
Provides Little Revenues	17	7	13	75	11
Profit are Expected Soon	11	14	0	0	6
Loses Money	3	0	13	0	2
Neither Gains nor Loses Money	13	20	13	0	9
It is not Financially Viable	3	7	13	0	3
No Answer	3	7	13	25	4
Total	36	14	8	4	62

FORMS OF CONVERGENCE BETWEEN ONLINE AND PRINT

The most frequent form of interaction between online and print staffs was the cloning of content. Over 60 percent of the respondents say that they republish content always or frequently from the print edition. The next most common relationship between the two media staff is the cross promotion of content. One half of the respondents agree that the promotion of content occurs always or frequently.

On the contrary, almost 53 percent report as a rare or nonexistent the practice of sharing assignments to develop multimedia projects, which is understood as a form of convergence.

In terms of competition and content sharing, the opinions are diverse. Sharing information between the online and print staff for producing original content in each media seems to be a frequent practice for 41 percent of the digital dailies, but a non-existent activity for 24 percent of them.

The relation in terms of content sharing is similar to the previous process. The percentages are almost identical.

As Table 41 shows, the data emphasize the promotion of content between both media, and republishing of content from the print to the online edition is the most common process.

Table 41 Frequency of Forms of Convergence between Online and Print Partners in Percentages

	<i>Always</i>	<i>Frequent</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rare</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
Cross Promotion (Promoting content)	22	28	23	5	5	16
Cloning (Republishing/Reedinting content)	41	22	14	7	3	15
Coopetition (Sharing information for independent producing original content)	22	19	19	9	15	16
Content Sharing (Exchanging ideas and jointly producing occasional special projects)	18	23	22	14	9	15
Convergence (Sharing assignments and content to produce multimedia projects)	11	12	18	19	20	14
None	3	0	1	1	27	7

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions by Research Question

RQ1. –Are the professional profiles of online journalists in Latin America similar to their worldwide counterparts?

Like their counterparts around the world, Latin American online journalists who work for print-affiliated sites, are young professionals with a high level of education. (Deuze & Paulusse, 2002; Neuberger et. al, 1998; He & Zhu, 2002; Chyi & Sylvie, 2001; Quandt et al., 2002). Almost 60 percent of the surveys' participants reported an age between 20 and 35. More than 80 percent have a university degree. The surveyed online editors and reporters mainly have a background in print newspapers, with salaries equals to or lower than their print colleagues. Nearly 70 percent of the respondents selected newspapers as their main media and professional background. Almost half of online journalists have comparable incomes (46%) to their print counterparts, and 34 percent say they earn less.

Additionally, thirty percent of the respondents were women, and 41 percent reported inferior salaries compared to their print counterparts, while 31 percent of male professionals says they have lower salaries than their equivalents for the print edition. Spanish surveys of online journalists also illustrate salary differences between print and online staff, as well German and Dutch scholars (Consello Da Cultura Galega, 2002; and

Grup de Periodistes Digitals i Sindicat de Periodistes de Catalunya, 2003; Deuze & Paulusse, 2002; Quandt et al., 2002).

Similar results were also reported by Franco and Guzman (2004) in their survey of Latin American online editors and reporters exclusively working for national print-based paper sites. They found online journalists are between 20 and 30 years old, and almost half of them earn less than their print counterparts. This survey did not report level of education. However, Franco and Guzman (2004) asked about background in online journalism, and 53 percent of their respondents said they did not have any.

Overall, Latin American online journalists have similar basic characteristics and professional profiles as online journalists from different parts of the world (Europe, U.S.), in terms of age and educational background. However, the findings indicate other pattern for salaries and journalists' former media experience. In some countries such as Germany and the United States, some research has found that online professionals have diverse media experiences different from print, and their incomes are similar to other journalists from the print partner (Boczkowski, 2000; Quandt et al., 2002).

RQ2. -Do online journalists in Latin America have the same occupational functions as their worldwide counterparts?

The variable occupational functions comprise job routines performed weekly and professional roles. In terms of routines, Latin American online journalists, - working for print-affiliated sites- are frequently performing some traditional weekly activities as any journalist such as selecting, and editing news, particularly from news wire agencies. For

instance, almost half of them (45%) say they “always” do weekly news selection processes and 49 percent edit news from agencies and other media. However, writing original stories is a task only performed “always” by 31 percent of the surveyed journalists during a week; and 24 percent say they “always” do live coverage. A similar percentage (31%) reported the activity of transferring or repacking print text.

Additionally, their routines include tasks with technical attributes of the online media such as online investigation, user contacts through emails, and content management. More than half of the respondents say they “always” do online searching (57%); and respond to user’s emails (57%), and organize content (54%) weekly. On the contrary, the duties of multimedia production and programming reported to be less frequently done on an average week than the previous tasks with technical elements. In the case of multimedia production, 20 percent of the respondents reported it to be a “rarely” performed weekly activity, 16 percent reported “frequently” and 16 percent, “sometimes”. The task of programming is the process with the largest disparity in the range of answers. While 38 percent of the participants say they perform programming activities always or frequently weekly, 32 percent say they do not carry out any programming tasks.

These findings corroborate those found by Franco and Guzman (2004) in their recent survey conducted by with journalists from national print-based online papers in Latin America. Their study revealed that the majority of the surveyed journalists believe their main job function is to write and edit texts, particularly content provided by international news agencies. A small percentage reported multimedia production as the main activity.

Other surveys reported analogous results regarding the most common tasks performed by online journalists. For instance, Deuze and Paulssen (2002) concluded that the vast majority of the surveyed online journalists in the Low Countries (Netherlands and Flanders) spent most of their time in the newsroom searching, rewriting material from others or repurposing content from their parent medium. Also 65 percent of their respondents said they spent more than an hour per day technically managing content for the website. A large number of journalists (69% in Holland, and 78% in Flanders) also agree they used to answers the users' emails daily.

In Germany, a survey concluded that online journalists spend the most part of their week on writing, online investigations, news selection and editing content from news agencies and other media (Quandt et. al, 2002). Programming and user contacts were infrequent. Compared with the findings of this thesis, the evidence that editors and reporters from print sites in Latin America perform certain common job routines observed in other studies outside and inside the region, such as searching and selecting news, managing content, and editing content from news agencies and other media partners. However, the data suggest dissimilarities in the frequency of programming and multimedia production activities, as well as users contact through e-mails.

In terms of professional roles, Latin American online editors and reporters from print-based online papers perceive themselves as neutral news journalists, mainly getting information quickly and neutrally to the public. More than half of them (66%) say that "getting information quickly to the public" is a very important role, followed by "getting information neutrally to the public" (53%). They primarily seek to play the role of information disseminators.

However, the data show they also consider it important to function as interpreters, “explaining some complex issues” (47%), and they see as an important function “express their opinion to the public” (51%). This last item illustrates that online journalists are also more inclined to play a critical role. This result might imply that this attribution is related to the print professional background of the majority of the surveyed online editors and reporters. As mentioned in Chapter III, education and experience are predictors in journalists’ role adoption. Although there is no doubt about the role of disseminators and interpreters, it is not clear from the data if Latin American online journalists are playing in fact a critical role.

Additionally, the respondents (46%) insist that they give the public the option to express their opinion. However, it is not clear how they offer this opportunity. The respondents also say that they always provide responses user’s emails but it is unclear from the data other types of interactivity. There are few interactive features, such as forums, chats and surveys in individual news stories and sites, as the data show for the findings regarding interactive content. According to Deuze (2003), the mainstream media are frequently practicing an orienting and an instrumental journalism. Based on interactivity levels, the interaction between journalists and audience is indirect in these two previous types of journalism. Mainly the online journalists provide information or background explanations to practical and specialized news without any two-way communication with the readers. On the contrary, a monitorial and dialogical journalism let the readers an open participation posting news, answering questions, and shaping the content.

Based on the same set of professional roles' descriptions, Quandt and his research colleagues (2002) found that German online journalists see themselves as neutral journalists although they consider too much less important than Latin American surveyed counterparts "present their opinion to the public." In Deuze and Paulssen (2002) survey, Dutch and Flemish respondents selected as their main functions disseminating information quickly and providing explanations.

In conclusion, Latin American journalists in print-affiliated online papers do perform weekly activities more related with immediacy than multimedia and programming. They are not frequently doing live coverage or writing original stories. Their weekly routines mainly comprise online searching, editing news from wire agencies and material from print colleagues.

Additionally, Latin American online journalists mainly perceive their primary function as similar to their counterparts outside the region. They basically function as disseminators and interpreters of information. However, Latin American editors and reporters from print-based online papers agree that it is also very important to express their opinion to the public and let the readers to express their point of view.

RQ3.- How much of the Latin American online journalists' routines involve the creation of original content tailored to web?

Among the four web capabilities examined in this study, hypertextuality and immediacy are the most common elements in the creation of original content in the

journalists' routines. The other capabilities, multimediality and interactivity, are occasionally used in the online newsrooms' production of news.

The journalists most frequently use hypertextuality, understood as the connection of links to external or internal texts. Hyperlinks (52%) is the feature most often selected as the first option by 52 percent of the 62 participant online papers, followed by photos (35%). The highest percentage of hyperlinks used as a first option seems to suggest the existence of internal Internet links to different documents and pages on the same site. This finding also might offer some clues to determining the closed communication structure of the sites. Additionally, the use of photos as first and second options might be interpreted as the influence of the traditional media, in this case print, in the online environment.

Multimedia and interactive features are rarely employed as an added value to news production. They were only selected as second options but in smallest percentages. Audio clips (4%), video clips (7%), forums (4%), and chat rooms (2%) features seem not to be included in the process of news production. Surveys (48%), forums (18%), and animated graphics (16%) obtained the highest percentages only as third options multimedia and interactive features selected for the updated news. Additionally, multimedia and interactive special projects are "occasionally" done by 20 percent of the sites. Only 14 percent of the sites produce special projects weekly, and 8 percent, daily.

Franco and Guzman (2004) found that 43 percent of Latin American papers' online editions say they use audio and video on their sites. Half of them use them regularly, and the other half for special projects. However, they did not specify if these multimedia features are been employed to complement the news stories. This thesis shows that video and audio are not regularly used to complement news stories. On the

other side, immediacy was to be a relevant capability for more than half of the surveyed sites. Sixty-two respondents reported updating their sites several times an hour (39%) and several times a day (14%). Although the frequency of updating is not necessarily around-the-clock, national and regional print's online editions are more likely to update their sites than online papers from local print media. Half of national print-based online papers update their sites several times an hour, and 28%, several times a day. Thirty-six regional print-affiliated sites are updating their sites several times an hour, and 14%, several times a day.

Certain indicators reveal that immediacy is a constant element in the production of content. For instance, news wire agencies were selected as a second source of information by 47 percent of the sites, particularly for the online editions of national papers (63%). Almost 50 percent of surveyed journalists agreed that they edited news from agencies and other media in an average week. These findings might be interpreted as evidence that the majority of the original content in the sites comprises updated news.

Other studies conducted outside of the Latin America show comparable findings. For instance, a longitudinal content analysis of 83 online newspapers in the United States revealed that interactive elements remain limited in the online news, but multimedia features have increased on the news content (Greer and Messing, 2003). The previous authors also found that print partner size determine the frequency of creation of multimedia and interactivity in the sites. In addition, the study concludes that the newspapers' sites are more likely to update their news stories frequently during a single day.

An analysis of the news website content conducted as part of the Project for Excellence in Journalism (2004) conclude that the majority of the examined sites do not take advantage of multimedia and interactive content, and the use of hyperlinks is the technical capability most used. He and Zhu (2002) concluded that Chinese online newspapers provide insufficient multimedia resources and interactive functions.

From the theoretical perspective, the results about immediacy might be interpreted following Rost's (2004) dimensions of *actualidad multiple* (concept refers to an interpretation of news content and immediacy based on news-time). Applying his notions to the results, it might be suggested that Latin American journalists' routines mainly involve the dimension of *actualidad reciente* (breaking news) due to news are being updated with daily frequency. However, the *actualidad sincronica* (live coverage) and *actualidad prolongada* (special event news presented in specials projects with multimedia and interactive elements) are barely produced by the sites.

In terms of multimediality and interactivity, the journalists' routines do not involve them constantly in the production of news. In fact, the use of video clips, audio features, forums, and chats rooms in news production were substantially lower than hyperlinks and photos. Multimedia production was also selected as an activity inconsistently performed during the week routine. The surveyed journalists also specified that the use of multimedia and interactive special features is limited to special, infrequent, projects.

For the case of interactive capabilities, the results indicate frequent use of e-mail to respond to users, but remain undeveloped in other features as forums and chat rooms, called adaptive interactivity by Deuze (2001a). Two of Massey and Levy's (1999) four

dimensions of interactivity seem to be incorporated regularly into the routine of online newsrooms: responsiveness to the user (defined as the frequency of journalist's responses to users' emails on a weekly basis) and immediacy of content (defined as the frequency of home page updating). The dimension of complexity of choice available (percentage of original content in the site) is also present in the sites with percentages ranging from 20 to 60. Finally, the last dimension, facilitation of interpersonal communication (interactive options such as surveys, chat rooms, and forums), is infrequently used.

The analysis of the results in terms of interactive items also suggest the web editions of Latin American generic and daily papers offer an array of editorial content with a closed participation of users, according to the Deuze's observations. In few words, the Latin American online journalists' routines involve the creation of original content tailored to only two web capabilities: hypertextuality and immediacy. Multimediality and interactivity are not frequently included in the production of original content.

RQ4. -Are the online versions of newspapers in Latin America operating some form of convergence with their print partner?

First, it is important to mention that the surveyed Latin American print-based online papers are inclined to operate with a small number of workers ranging from 1 to 8. Fifty percent show online staffs exclusively integrated by full-time professional, and 32 percent combine full and part-time workers in their Internet units. At the same time, half of the respondents say they share their newsroom with their print counterparts, and 42 percent operate in a separate newsroom. The online staffs from sites of national circulation newspapers show the same percentage difference, meanwhile more than half

regional dailies (79%) and local papers (75%) reported shared newsrooms for their online and print editions. Integrated newsrooms in the majority of the surveyed print-based online papers imply that some forms of interaction, at least spatial, between the online and print media. Deuze (2003) reviewed different authors who argue that an optimal convergent relationship between the online site and their print partner occur in integrated newsrooms. However, the convergence concepts, process and strategies are so varied as the journalists, media and business involve them. For this thesis, it was used a convergence model to illustrate forms of convergence, specifically regarding content (Dailey, Demo and Spellman 2003), and it also was considered some Gordon's dimensions of convergence. To illustrate levels of cooperation and integration behaviors between online and print staff, the respondent chose some content convergence process and their frequency of performing.

Online and print staffs regularly interact in one of the five stages of The Convergence Continuum (Dailey, Demo and Spellman, 2003): content cloning or editing content. Almost half of the respondents (41%) say online staff "always" edits content from the print edition. This result indicates that sites are using so-called "shovelware." Lower percentages (22%) were found for cross promotion (content promotion between both media), and cooptation (independent production of original content). Both previous interactions are "frequently" or "sometimes" operated, but not "always" like content cloning. The last stages, content sharing (exchange ideas and jointly develop occasional special projects) and convergence (share content to develop multimedia projects) were rarely reported. Content sharing is frequent (23%) or sometimes (22%) used, but true convergence is rarely (19%) or never (20%) achieved

Based on the data, some of Gordon's (2003) convergence types are also evident. As expected, a certain level of tactical convergence based on cross promotion and content sharing was found on this study. According to the Gordon's five dimensions of convergence, the results might also demonstrate at some grades that structural and information-gathering convergence might be happening in the online and print routines. For instance, the majority of digital units that works in the same space with the print staff reported that their main source of information is the print newsroom. However, other newsrooms reported wire agencies as the main source of information.

Boczkowski (2004) reviewed literature about the relationship between print and online newsrooms and he found that the different journalist cultures impact in the cooperation and coordination in editorial routines and production processes. Singer (2003a, 2003b) found that the implementation of convergence is difficult because of the social and physical structures of the newsrooms. Factors such as competition, former media experience, journalists' own perceptions about their roles, lack of training in technological tools and interpersonal communications might facilitate or obstruct the application of convergence in newsrooms routines and norms. A comprehensive study about multimedia news and media companies in the United Kingdom, Spain, France and Sweden report low levels of collaboration between print and web editions, and "convergence is seen as merely automatic content sharing between different platforms" (Aquino et. al, 2001).

To summarize, Latin American print-affiliated online papers are mainly interacting with their print partner in terms of editing content, and less frequently in cross promotion and cooperation. The convergence, understood in this study as the sharing

assignments and content in the production of multimedia project between both staff, is a rare routine. Based on the data available, Latin American print-based online papers show different frequency of practice in content interactions between the sites and their print partner. Additionally, the results suggest that the different stages of the convergence model are an ongoing process that it seems to be difficult to clearly detect by the journalists automatically involve in the multiple functions and routines. For understanding deeply this model, it should be explored other processes and kind of interactions between both staffs. Similarly, a deep study about convergence might include other questions to examine the concerns and obstacles mentioned above by Boczkowski (2004), Singer (2003a, 2003b) and Aquino et. al, (2001).

RQ5. -What is the most common business model operated by the online versions of the print papers in Latin America and how does this compare to other parts of the world?

Advertising is a primary source of revenue for the Latin American online online papers surveyed (26%). Among them, national print-based online papers (42%) reported advertising as primary source of revenues, followed by “any source of revenue” (30%). This last item suggests that some online papers are not operating any model of business and they are only a mere extension of their print partner, which financially supported them. An exact half of regional newspaper’s sites show advertising, and 22 percent of this type of print-based online papers states “others” as main sources of revenues. Profits for subscription fees to some or all content were only reported by national print-based online

newspapers. However both types of subscriptions were mentioned by 12 percent of these type of online papers.

Asking about the current financial status, 17 percent of the participants reported that the websites are totally supported by the print partner. Eleven percent of the respondents said their sites provide little revenues, and other 10 percent, offer enough revenues. Almost 20 percent of the online editions of national newspapers reported enough profits and 17 percent, little revenues. Online papers of regional print media show that 14 percent of them obtain enough revenues, and 7 percent, little profits.

Comparing the current financial situation with sources of revenues, the sites that reported profitability (22%) operate four different models of business. Twenty-six online papers with an advertising model reported enough or little profits (42%) and 15 percent are expecting revenues soon Only one paper says it is losing money, and four are totally supported by the print partner. Among five papers, which report subscription fees to all or some content, two are reporting some revenues (little or enough). Alliances with other companies are only generating profits for four papers, and online classifieds, for three sites

Some of the findings in this question confirm the results revealed by Franco and Guzman (2004). For instance, 39 percent of their surveyed sites of national print media in Latin America reported to be totally supported by the print partner. This percentage is similar to that found for national print-based sites in this thesis, as well as the proportion of sites, which reported any sources of revenue (28% vs. 30%). In the same way, less than 15 percent of the national newspapers with sites are obtaining profits from subscription fees to some or all their content.

With respect to other findings revealed outside of Latin America, German scholars concluded that almost 80 percent of media companies finance their online operations with the revenues obtained through Ad banners (Quandt et. al, 2002). In the United States, Greer and Mensing (2003) state that websites of American newspapers are operating different types of business models, which the most used are advertising and registration fees. In 1999, more than three quarters of the 21 national and local surveyed U.S. online newspapers carried advertisements and most of them said the advertising covered between 10 and 50 percent of their costs (Peng et. al, 1999). One year later, Chy and Sylvie (2000) interviewed 14 American online papers' executive and they agreed that advertising would remain as the first source of revenue for the print-based online media.

To conclude, Latin American print-affiliated online newspapers, as well as other worldwide web papers, are still depending on advertising for obtaining some profits, and the print partner's support for financing their operations. A small number of sites reported some revenues charging for subscriptions. Although advertising is expected to be the predominant business model among the news sites of papers, some Latin American print-based online newspapers –particularly national media- are replicating or thinking in implementing charge for their content as Franco and Guzman (2004) remarked in their study.

CHAPTER VII

Discussion

This exploratory study sought to provide some modest insight into trends in online journalism in Latin America. Overall, the journalism on print-Web affiliated sites in the region does not seem significantly different from that in other parts of the globe. In a second level of interpretation, the data gathered for this study show that sites of national papers in Latin America reveal a high level of online development compared to regional and local papers' sites. The boundaries and relations between print and online papers remain difficult to distinguish and categorize.

Seventy-four editors and reporters from 62 online sites with print counterparts in Latin America also provided enough evidence to portray some tendencies in online journalism. The results contributed to compare them with others found in previous surveys and studies conducted inside and outside of the region and examined some relations between online and print partners; particularly in the news production process performed by print-affiliated Web sites.

Additionally, the data gathered for this study may facilitate future longitudinal or comparative studies. Other research methods, such as content analysis, could corroborate the findings of this study. Although this study's survey was based on a preliminary content analysis of some print-based online newspapers, it would have been better to employ a multi-method investigation to compare the data and refine the results.

For instance, a content analysis would have provided an alternative data for comparing with those found in the Web-based survey.

Although it is difficult to make generalizations about communication processes, cross-national and comparative studies of journalism, as Reese (2001) recommends, must be conducted. This is particularly true in of Latin America, with its linguistic, cultural, and historical links. Also cross-national research can provide deep and more representative insights for media sociology comparisons. National Web or phone surveys might contribute to portray a more precise outline of the online journalism in each country. Financial and logistic support from universities, media and/or public or private institutions would facilitate such an endeavor.

Much remains to be learned about online journalism in Latin America. It would be relevant to conduct an historical analysis about the evolution of online newspapers and their relationship between their parent paper, other traditional and new media, and other new players in the telecommunications market. As a participant of the Web-based survey of this study commented, it is very important to find the future path for online journalism, as well as the importance of the convergence between the online newspapers with other radio and TV partners.

To understand the new journalism better, further research could address the editorial and managerial policies of print-based online newspapers; definitions of audiences; and usages of online newspapers. Cases studies may contribute to examine experiences and patterns in each country. Experimental research may provide insights about users' participation and usability of the sites.

Overall, this study offers some clues about professional profiles, occupational functions, content production, and business models. It would be necessary to explore each topic more, such as the convergence models between the online and print newsrooms. It would also be relevant to ask in other surveys the perceptions that online journalists have about the future of online journalism. For instance, this study suggests that the first generation of online editors and reporters in Latin America has to deal with fundamental issues of journalism professionalism. Journalists at different Web sites have diverse ideas about their professional role. They seem to fulfill the promise and perceived roles of online journalism when they are supported in terms of financing, infrastructure, and training.

Several theoretical approaches may help define the different processes involved in online journalism. Singer (1998, 2003) and Garrison (2001) suggest that it was not clear at the end of the 20th century how the diffusion of technologies in newsrooms was changing the journalists' jobs and roles. These authors propose several theoretical approaches to examine how the new media environment is transforming gate-keeping practices, information-gathering and dissemination patterns, reporting functions, process of making news, journalistic values and media-effects.

Singer recommended gate-keeping theory and diffusion of innovations to provide a framework to understand how the job routines and professional roles of online journalist have or have not been transformed. This author and others also suggest applying a multidisciplinary range of approaches for understanding online journalism, processes, products and producers (Boczkowski, 2000). For instance, it could be helpful

to understand alternative models of decision-making and their impacts in online journalists' routines and roles.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

ONLINE LATIN AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS WEB-SURVEY 2003

Dear Respondent:

The current survey, regarding the development of online newspapers in Latin America, was designed to be answered in approximately 5-10 minutes. It constitutes the main component of a research project supervised by professors of the School of Journalism of the University of Texas at Austin.

UT-Journalism Graduate Student Silvina Acosta developed the questionnaire and is conducting a research as part of her Master's thesis. The project is supervised by professors James Tankard and Rosental Calmon Alves. Simple and closed-response questions are used to gather statistical data that will help determine the current status of online journalism in Latin America.

The survey includes five broad topics:

- ?? Occupational profiles
- ?? Organization structures
- ?? Online operations
- ?? Content production
- ?? Business models

This questionnaire has been sent electronically to editors and reporters of online newspapers in Latin America, whose e-mails addresses appear published on the Websites.

Before your participation, please note the following points:

- ?? The participation in the survey is voluntary.
- ?? The participant is not obliged to answer all the questions.
- ?? The individual responses are confidential.
- ?? The participant does not need to disclose her or his identity.

- ?? The participant's comments will not be made public without the explicit consent of the participant.
- ?? The results will be processed and presented in a general way, without referring to particular cases.
- ?? A preliminary draft of the overall results of this survey will be sent to each participating newspaper.

Your participation is extremely valuable to the research, and your contribution will make a difference. We would like to thank you in advance for your input.

QUESTIONNAIRE

General Information about the Participant

Participant's Name: _____ (Optional)

Sex: Male ____ Female ____

Age: _____

Level of Education: (Select one option)

Master Degree

Undergraduate Degree

Technical Studies

Current University Student

High School

None

Former Main Media Experience: (Select one option)

Newspapers

TV

Radio

Magazines

News Wire Agency

Online Company

Others

None

Current Job Position: _____

E-mail: _____ (Optional)

General Information of the Online and Print Media

Newspaper's Name (print edition): _____

Country: _____

Print Edition's Circulation Area: (Select one option)

National

Regional

Local

Online Newspaper's URL: _____

Estimated number of unique online users:

Daily _____ *and/or Monthly* _____

Estimated number of online page views by users:

Daily _____ *and/or Monthly* _____

I-II Online Newspaper's Organization and Occupational Profiles

1. When did the newspaper's online edition start its online operations? (Select one option)

1993

1994

1995

1996

1997

1998

1999

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2. Who produce the newspaper's online edition? (Select one option) ¹¹

- Printed edition's staff*
- Separate online edition's staff*
- Printed and Online edition's staff*
- Webmasters/Technicians*
- External Company*
- Others*

3. How many employees exclusively work for the online newspaper?

Full Time _____ *Part Time* _____

4. Does the site's staff share a common newsroom with the print journalists? (Select one option)

- No*
- Yes*

5. How often the online and print edition's staffs perform the following operations?
(Range all that apply)

_____ Always Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never _____

- Cross promotion (promote content)*
- Cloning (republish /reediting content)*
- Coopetition (independent production of original content)*
- Content Sharing (Exchange content to jointly develop occasional special projects)*
- Convergence (Share assignments to develop multimedia projects)*
- None*

6. Do the online and print staffs share the same editorial policy for selecting the news published on the home page and the front page, respectively? (Select one option)

- Always*
- Frequently*
- Occasionally*
- Rarely*
- Never*
- Don't Know*

¹¹ This question had to be excluded from the data. A programming error caused missing results.

7. How do the online edition's journalist salaries compare to those of their print edition colleagues? (Select one option)

- Similar*
- Online is Higher*
- Online is Lower*
- I don't know*

8. Does the company usually support the training of its online staff in new technological skills? (Select one option)

- Always*
- Frequently*
- Occasionally*
- Rarely*
- Never*
- Don't Know*

III-Online Operations

9. How often are the following tasks performed by you on an average week in the online newsroom? (Select all that apply)

Always Frequently Sometimes Rarely Never

- Online Investigation (Online Searching/Researching)*
- News Selection*
- Editing News from Agencies and other media*
- Editing/Re-packing Print Text*
- Writing original stories*
- Editing Material from Print Colleagues*
- Offline Investigation (Live Coverage)*
- Multimedia Production*
- User Contact (Response user's emails)*
- Programming*
- Management (Organize content)*
- Others*

10. How do you best describe your professional roles for the online edition?
(Select all that apply)

Very important Important Somewhat important Not important

Get information quickly to the public
Get information neutrally to the public
Concentrate on information for the largest audience
Interpret complex information
Express my opinions to the public
Offer entertainment and relaxation to the people
Offer assistance to the public
Give a chance for the public to express its opinion

11. Are you satisfied with your professional functions in the online newsroom? (Select one option)

Very Satisfied
Fairly Satisfied
Fairly Dissatisfied
Very Dissatisfied
No Answer

IV-Content Production

12. What estimated percentage of the site's content is original (That is not simply duplicating or re-packing content from the print edition)? (Select one option)

Between 0% and 20%
Between 20% and 40%
Between 40% and 60%
Between 60% and 80%
Between 80% and 100%

13. How many times is the Web site updated daily? (Select one option)

Several Times an Hour
Several Times a Day
Once a Day

14. Which are the main sources of information utilized to update news stories on the online edition? (Select only two options)

Print Newsroom

News Agencies

TV

Radio

Web sites

Others

15. Which are the multimedia and/or interactive resources that usually complement the news stories on the online edition? (Select only three options)

Hyperlinks

Photos

Infographics (Flash, Graphs)

Video clips

Audio clips

Surveys/Polls

Forums

Chat Rooms

Mobile format

None

Others

16. How often are multimedia and interactive special features produced by the online edition? (Select one option)

Daily

Weekly

Every two weeks

Monthly

Occasionally

Never

17. What kind of content access does the site offer to its users? (Select one option)

Totally Open

Open to Whole Content with free subscription

Open to Certain Content with free subscription (archives, premium services...)

Open to Whole Content with charge

Open to Certain Content with charge

V- Online Business

18. What is the main source of own revenue of the online edition? (Select one option)

Advertising

Online Classified

Subscription fees of Certain Content (Archives, Premium Services)

Subscription fees of the Whole Content

Alliances with other companies

Internet Access

Others Specify

None

19. How would you describe the financial status of the online edition? (Select one option)

Totally supported by the print partner

Provides enough revenues

Provides little revenues

Profit are expected soon

Loses Money

Neither gains nor loses money

It is not financially viable

Please use the following space for comments (Optional):

Esta página Web fue actualizada el 05 de April de 2004

[Silvina Acosta](#)

We appreciate your help. We will contact you as soon as we have the results of this survey.

APPENDIX B

Country	Papers' Sites	Country	Papers' Sites
Argentina	Clarín	Mexico	El Diario
	Diario Castellanos		El Norte
	El Cronista Regional		El Sol de México
	El Liberal		El Universal
	La Nación		El Vigía
	Misiones On Line		Mural
	Tiempo Sur		Pesquisas en Linea
Bolivia	Jornada		Reforma
Brasil	La Palabra de Beni	Nicaragua	The Toledo Times
	Folha de S.Paulo		El Nuevo Diario
Chile	El Maucho		La Capital
	El Mercurio		La Prensa
	El Volcán		Trinchera de la Noticia
	La Segunda	Panama	El Panamá América
	La Tercera, La Cuarta	Peru	El Comercio de Lima
	Las Ultimas Noticias		La Industria de Trujillo
			Peru.21
Colombia	El Colombiano	Puerto Rico	El Nuevo Día
	El Espacio	Uruguay	El País
	El Espectador	Venezuela	Diario 2001
	El Tiempo		El Carabobeño
	El Universal		El Nacional
Costa Rica	La Patria		El Universal
	El Heraldo de la Nueva Era		Panorama
	La Nación		Sol de Margarita
Dominican Republic	La República		TalCual
Ecuador	El Caribe		
	Diario Hoy		
	El Mercurio On Line		
	Expreso		
El Salvador	La Hora		
	Co Latino		
Guatemala	El Periódico		
	Prensa Libre		
Honduras	El Heraldo		

APPENDIX C

Papers' Sites with more than One Participant

<i>Papers' Sites</i>	<i>Country</i>
Clarín	Argentina
Diario El Mercurio SAP	Chile
El Caribe	Dominican Republic
El Colombiano	Colombia
El Nacional	Venezuela
El Norte	Mexico
El Vigía	Mexico
La Nación	Costa Rica
La Segunda	Chile
La Tercera, La Cuarta	Chile
Trinchera de la Noticia	Nicaragua

APPENDIX D

Number of Participants Print-Affiliated Online Sites by Country

<i>Country</i>	<i>N</i>
Argentina	8
Bolivia	2
Brasil	1
Chile	6
Colombia	6
Costa Rica	3
Dominican Republic	1
Ecuador	4
El Salvador	2
Guatemala	2
Honduras	1
Mexico	9
Nicaragua	4
Panama	1
Peru	3
Puerto Rico	1
Uruguay	1
Venezuela	7
<i>Total</i>	<i>62</i>

Appendix E

Number of Papers' Sites by Circulation Area of the Print Partner

<u>National (36)</u>	<u>Local (8)</u>	<u>Regional (15)</u>
Argentina (2)	Argentina (1)	Argentina (4)
Bolivia (1)	Chile (2)	Bolivia (1)
Brazil (1)	Mexico (3)	Chile (1)
Chile (3)	Nicaragua (1)	Colombia (3)
Colombia (3)	Venezuela (1)	Mexico (3)
Costa Rica (3)		Nicaragua (1)
Dominican Republic (1)		Peru (1)
Ecuador (4)		Venezuela (1)
El Salvador (1)		
Guatemala (2)		
Honduras (1)		
Mexico (3)		
Nicaragua (1)		
Panama (1)		
Peru (2)		
Puerto Rico (1)		
Uruguay (1)		
Venezuela (5)		

Undefined Area (3)

Sites' by Circulation	
Area of Print Paper	N
National	36
Regional	15
Local	8
Undefined Area	3
TOTAL	62

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