

Journalism and Newsrooms in 2021

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Our mission

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism is dedicated to **exploring the future of journalism worldwide through debate, engagement, and research.**

By connecting practice and research, by facilitating global exchange, and by driving conversations around the future of news, we work to ensure that journalists, editors, and media executives face the opportunities and challenges of a changing media environment from a position of strength. Our goal is to help them build better and more sustainable journalism for tomorrow.

WE'LL TALK ABOUT:

**THE NEW NEWSROOM:
REMOTE WORKING AND THE HYBRID MODEL**

THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY

NEW SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

ATTRACTING AND NURTURING TALENT

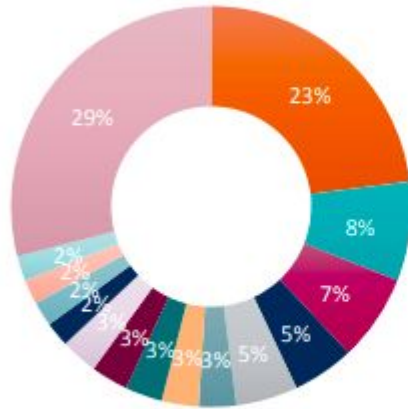


Changing Newsroom 2020

Methodology

This report is based on a survey of a strategic sample of newsroom leaders from around the world.

Survey Country Mix (%)



Survey Job Titles (No.)



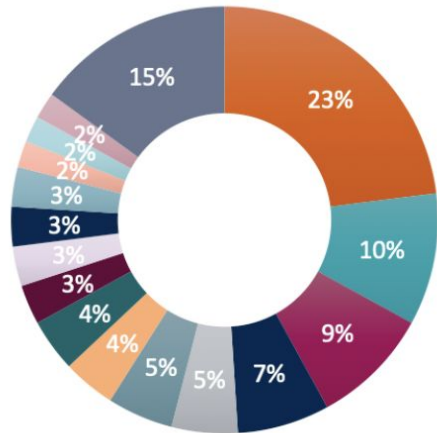
136 newsroom leaders surveyed in 38 countries, between 21 September 2020 and 07 October 2020. Base = 136.

Journalism, media, and technology trends and predictions 2021

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This report is based on a survey of a strategic sample of newsroom leaders from around the world.

Survey Country Mix (%)



Survey Job Titles (No.)



Base = 234 Digital Leaders surveyed, 43 countries, 29 November 2020 – 31 December 2020.

The new newsroom

The impact of remote working

The new hybrid model

The impact of remote working



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MORE EFFICIENT, BUT LESS CREATIVE

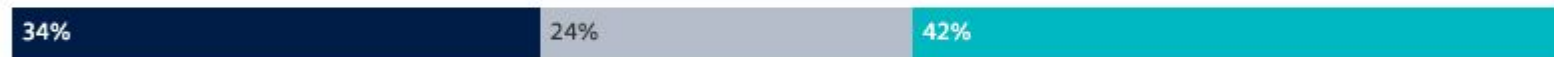
Proportion of respondents that strongly/tend to agree that remote working has

■ Agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree

Made us more efficient



Made us more creative



Made it easier to build and maintain team relationships



Q2. Since coronavirus, more of us are using online collaboration tools to support remote working. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: 135.

THE LOSS OF CREATIVITY

Several industry executives mentioned the challenge of recreating the energy and sparking the creative process of newsroom discussions in an online setting, with spontaneous exchanges diminishing with the lack of in-person interactions:

For people who know each other well, it's possible to work efficiently remotely.

But remote work still lacks the serendipitous conversations that can sometimes lead to great ideas from newsrooms, and people can get tired and distracted on calls easily.

Rohan Venkataramakrishnan, Associate Editor, Scroll Media, India

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

People's well-being and mental health was an important area of concern for the news industry leaders we surveyed. Fears included exhaustion from too many video calls and a blurred demarcation between work time and personal time.

COMMUNICATION STRUGGLES

Survey respondents expressed that remote working had consequences not just on an operational level, but also on the more intangible – yet equally crucial – aspect of shaping newsroom culture.

What emerges from these comments is a sense that successful leadership requires **a more conscious and proactive effort from managers**: communicating more to keep everyone aligned, maintaining a sense of organisational cohesion and team unity, making sure that all voices are heard, and identifying teammates in need of help and support.

BUT ALSO... AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEED UP CHANGE

Some respondents see the shock of COVID-19 and the disruption to entrenched habits as an opportunity to reimagine workflows and accelerate transformation processes that were already underway.

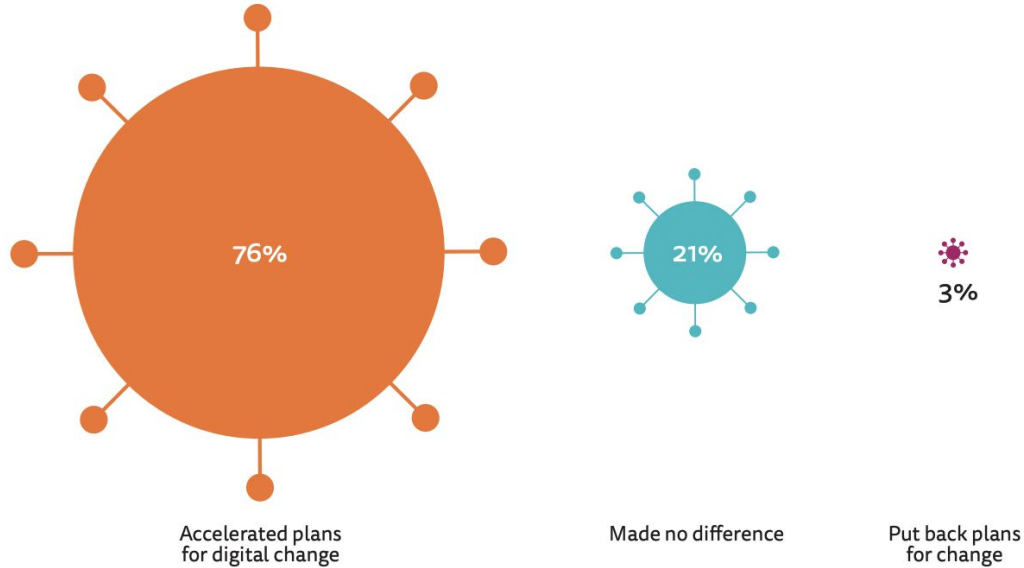
AND INCREASE FLEXIBILITY

It's good for a more effective use of time, good for some home tasks, good for climate change. It also gives the opportunity to have more people all over the country and all over the world.

María Ramírez, Director of Strategy, eldiario.es, Spain

ACCELERATED PLANS FOR DIGITAL CHANGE

How has coronavirus affected digital plans?



Q4. How has coronavirus affected plans for digital change in your company? N = 234.

Source: Journalism, media, and technology trends and predictions 2021

The Hybrid Newsroom



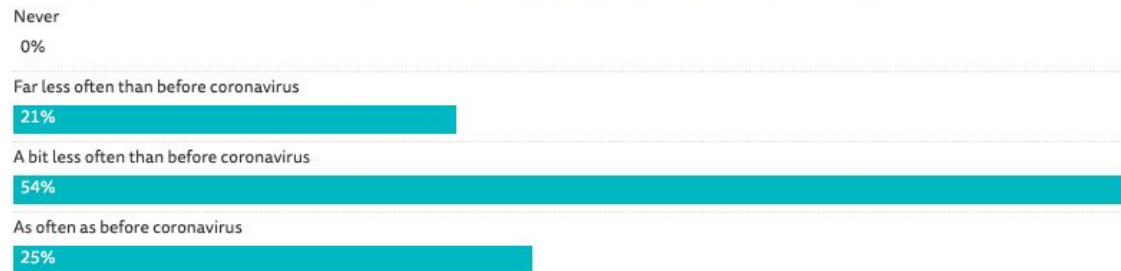
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EXPECTATIONS FOR AFTER THE PANDEMIC: A SHIFT TOWARDS THE HYBRID NEWSROOM?

Proportion that would like to go back to the office



Q3. In terms of your personal views, which of the following comes closest to how you feel? Base: 134.

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Companies are planning to reduce office space



Q4. Is your company actively considering reducing desk/office space as a result of the experience of increased remote work during the pandemic?

Source: Changing Newsroom 2020



Some of the challenges of the hybrid newsroom

- What role for the physical space?
- Making the logistics work
- Communication flows
- Training and mentorship
- Avoiding creating disparities amongst staff
- Legal implications

Reckoning with the lack of diversity in newsrooms



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Even as our respondents feel progress has been made in closing the gender diversity gap, ethnic, political and other forms of diversity are lagging behind

My news organisation is doing a good job with ...

Gender diversity

80%

Political diversity

45%

Ethnic diversity

43%

Diversity from less advantaged background

40%

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. I feel my news organisation is doing a good job with ___ Base: 125.

Source: Changing Newsroom 2020

NEW FOCUS ON ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Biggest priority in the year ahead

Ethnic diversity

42%

Gender diversity

18%

More diversity for those from less advantaged background

15%

Political diversity

11%

None of these

11%

Don't know

3%

Q7. In terms of newsroom diversity, which of the following is the single most important priority in the year ahead? Base: 123.

Source: Changing Newsroom 2020

GATHERING DATA IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS CHANGE

Top diversity initiatives

Collect/monitor data about staff diversity (e.g. gender/ethnicity)

64%

Collect/monitor data about newsroom leadership (e.g. gender, ethnicity)

53%

Someone in charge of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices

46%

Collect/monitor data about contributors (e.g. gender/ethnicity)

41%

Budget for internal initiatives to promote newsroom diversity

36%

None of these

22%

Q10. To the best of your knowledge does your organisation do any of the following? Select all that apply Base: 121.

Source: Changing Newsroom 2020

LACK OF DIVERSITY IN SENIOR POSITIONS COULD BE A BARRIER TO CHANGE

Self-rating of diversity performance at different levels of the organisation

Agree Disagree

Good job at junior level



Good job at mid level



Good job at senior level



Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following. My organisation is doing a good job with diversity at a _____ level . Base: 124.

New skills and competencies



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INNOVATION: PANDEMIC SPARKS MORE RADICAL EXPERIMENTATION

Where do the best ideas come from? Often not from the top

Data from a survey of 234 media leaders in 43 countries for Journalism, Media and Technology Trends and Predictions 2021.

Audience and data insights

74%

Multi-disciplinary teams

68%

Learning from other media companies

48%

Top Leadership

26%

Learning from tech companies

25%

Learning from other industries

22%

Junior staff members

19%

Middle Management

17%

Consultants

3%

Q18. In your experience, where do the best new ideas come from? Choose a MAXIMUM of three? N=228

Source: Journalism, media, and technology trends and predictions 2021

INNOVATION

What should be the focus for innovation in 2021?

Data from a survey of 234 media leaders in 43 countries for Journalism, Media and Technology Trends and Predictions 2021.

Optimising and extending existing products and brands

70%

New products that open up entirely new markets

28%

Don't know

2%

Q16. When thinking about innovation, where should the focus be in the year ahead? N=226

Source: Journalism, media, and technology trends and predictions 2021

FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

The stresses of coronavirus have left many burnt out by the rate of change. It can be easier to start new things in the heat of a crisis but harder to close them down. For some publishers, this means finding better ways to manage and coordinate the process:

Innovation will need to be constant so creating a framework for continuous change is paramount.

Styli Charalambous, CEO of the Daily Maverick in South Africa.

GROWING IMPORTANCE OF BRIDGE / TRANSLATION ROLES, SUCH AS THE PRODUCT MANAGER, BUT...

Product role in your company is...

Data from a survey of 234 media leaders in 43 countries for *Journalism, Media and Technology Trends and Predictions 2021*.

Important

93%

Well understood

43%

Performed by people with the right skills

54%

Effective

58%

Q17. Product management has become an important discipline in media companies in recent years. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the role in your company is ? N=220

Source: Journalism, media, and technology trends and predictions 2021

Attracting, developing and retaining talent



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LEVELS OF CONFIDENCE OF ATTRACTING TALENT OUTSIDE EDITORIAL IS LOW

Confidence in attracting and retaining talent

Showing proportion that are very or extremely confident

Editorial talent

53%

Product, audience and design

23%

Data and insights

21%

Technology

18%

Q12. How confident are you that your organisation can attract and train the talent you need in the following areas? Base: 122.

Source: Changing Newsroom 2020

THE NEWS INDUSTRY IS NOT VERY ATTRACTIVE

When it comes to these increasingly important skills, our respondents are finding that the media industry simply is not very appealing compared with the other options available to relevant talent:

The media industry is not attractive for people coming from other industries, while they are the most needed if we want to perform better.

Gaël Hurlimann, Editor-in-Chief for Digital, Le Temps, Switzerland

Instability of the future of the organisation, sometimes level of salaries, the level of bureaucracy (speed of the decisions), unattractive premises.

Monika Garbačiauskaitė-Budrienė , Director General, Lithuanian National Radio and Television

DIVERSITY, CULTURE AND VALUES WILL PLAY A BIGGER ROLE WITH YOUNGER TALENT

Attracting the best and brightest talent from the next generation will not just be about the fact that a challenged industry is unable to compete with other sectors on salary alone.

It is also about culture and values. This is the case for diversity, as well as for the different kinds of talent that news media need.

As Lucy Kueng has noted, ‘news media will have to rise to the challenge of intergenerational tensions in their own organisations, differences between the values and priorities of many younger professionals, and an often older generation of leaders in news’.

An opportunity to reset and rethink

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Changing Newsrooms 2020: addressing diversity and nurturing talent at a time of unprecedented change

Federica Cherubini, Nic Newman, Prof. Rasmus Kleis Nielsen



Changing Newsrooms 2020

Addressing Diversity and Nurturing Talent at
a Time of Unprecedented Change

Federica Cherubini, Nic Newman,
and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen

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Nic Newman



Thank you

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