**Ethics related to cyber medium**

**1- Accuracy:**

Accuracy is the indispensable value in journalism and must not be compromised. Cyber journalists must deliver error-free content. They must ensure that their content is a verifiable representation of the news. They should never intentionally mislead those who depend upon them for information. They must be accurate with their target audiences. Sometimes it's OK to print information that they haven't confirmed with multiple sources.

Just make sure that you label it as such. Never ever publish information that you know not to be true.

**2- Honesty:**

Cyber journalists should be honest and fair in gathering, reporting and interpreting information. They must strive to keep news content free of special interests, inside or outside the news organization. They should embrace the value of transparency.

**3- Honor Copyrights and never plagiarize:**

They should value original thought and expression. Their work should be free from fraud and deception. - - That includes plagiarism and fabrication. We will attribute content and honor copyrights. It includes not just cutting and pasting whole articles, but copying photos, graphics, video and even large text excerpts from others and putting them on your web page as well. If you want to reference something on another website, link it instead. If you are concerned that the page you're linking to will disappear, give your readers the name of the publication that published the page, its date of publication and a short summary of

its content. Just like news reporters used to reference other content before the Web. (“In a Sept. 20

Report, the Wall Street Journal reported....").

**4- Identify and link to sources:**

Cyber journalist should act honorably and ethically in dealing with news sources. He/she should Identify and link to sources, whenever feasible. The public should entitle to as much information as possible on sources’ reliability. He/she should always question sources’ motives before promising secrecy. Clarify conditions attached to any promise made in exchange for information.

**5- Never distort the content of photos and videos:**

Never distort the content of photos without disclosing what has been changed or digitally alter photographs to mislead the audience. Image enhancement is only acceptable for technical clarity. Montage and photo illustrations should be label. Any attempt to confuse readers or misrepresent visual information is prohibited. In photographing news, do not stage or restructure events. Similarly, in editing video, do not insert words or splice together statements made at different times so as to suggest that they were uttered at the same time. Pieces of an interview or address generally should be presented in the order that they occurred. If an interview is presented in question-and answer format, the questions must be presented as they were asked. Reaction shots may not be altered after the fact. Staging is prohibited.

**6- Distinguish factual information and commentary from advertising:**

Cyber journalists should distinguish factual information and commentary from advertising and avoid hybrid or mixture that blurs the lines between the two.

**7- Distinguish between advocacy, commentary and factual information:**

Even advocacy writing and commentary should not misrepresent facts or context of the news event. So, Cyber journalist should strive to distinguish between advocacy, commentary and factual information.

**8- Define and clearly Label, news and opinion:**

Journalists and news organizations should understand the necessity of defining, and clearly labeling, news and opinion. In an open environment like the Web, consistency in presentation can help the reader see clearly where the lines are drawn between news and opinion. Whenever journalists or organizations blur or blend those roles, they need to recognize the risk and consider the consequences.

**9- Privacy:**

Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention. Only a dominant public need can justify interruption into anyone's privacy. Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.

**10- Balance/ Fairness:**

Cyber journalists should create a balance by including all sides relevant to a news story and not take sides in news coverage. In covering controversial issues seek out intelligent, articulate views from all perspectives. Reporters should try genuinely to understand all points of view, rather than simply grab quick quotations to create an impression of balance.

**11- Juveniles and victims of sex crimes**

The Times does not identify the alleged victims of sex crimes or persons under 18 who are charged with crimes. Exceptions occasionally arise. The **decision** to name individuals in such cases rests with the editor or managing **editor** or an editor designated by them.

**12- Criminal suspects**

Cyber journalists should be careful about identifying juvenile suspects, victims of sex crimes and criminal suspects before the formal filing of charges. Cyber journalists should not identify suspects of criminal investigations who have not been charged or arrested. On occasion, the prominence of the suspect or the importance of the case will justify an Exception to this policy. In those instances, we must take great care that our sourcing is reliable and that law enforcement officials have a reasonable basis for considering the individual a suspect. If someone we have identified as a suspect ultimately is not charged, we should make that known in a follow-up story. Show Compassion for those who may be affected adversely by content.

**13- Corrections:**

Cyber Journalists should admit mistakes and correct them promptly and prominently. Correct what we get wrong as promptly and as clearly as possible. Establish systems to enable readers to alert us to mistakes and hold us accountable.

**14- Principle of independence**

Journalists should honor the principle of independence. They should avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts that could put their ability to report or the credibility of their reporting or commentary at risk. They should not accept gifts or favors from people or entities they cover or over whom they might influence coverage. They should deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence content.

**15- Variations of tone and presentation in storytelling:**

Variations of tone and presentation in storytelling are appropriate for reaching new audiences, but those variations should be consistent with the core editorial principles. Be clear on what you stand for, and honor it. These principles apply across all content and all platforms.

**16- Linking decisions:**

The linking decision requires more specific considerations, including the relevance and reliability of the material that might be linked. Linking decisions should be based on serving the audience with as accurate and as complete a picture of the world as possible. Such decisions should not be restricted by commercial concerns about sending customers to others' sites. Linking is at the core of the Web experience, tying together content that allows readers to discover unexpected treasures and contextual information that can't comfortably fit into print and broadcast paradigms. But linking also comes with challenges for media organizations. Until now, content was easily classified -- it was in the paper or it wasn't; it was broadcast on the air or it wasn’t. Linking has created a netherworld in which media companies can point to sites without assuming responsibility for their veracity or standards. So how do media sites embrace linking without compromising their core values?

**17- Principles & Values**

* A link to an external site does not signify an endorsement of that site or its point of view. It is merely a signal to the reader that there may be content of interest on the destination site.
* Despite this, media sites should make it clear to their readers -- in the user agreement, site guidelines or via some other method -- that there's a difference in standards between the content that resides on their own site and the content they link to.
* Because of the spider-like nature of the Web, media sites can't be expected to apply even these relaxed standards to the content of sites that are linked to from sites we link to (the two-click rule).
* When readers put their own links to content in message boards, blog posts, etc., those links should be considered user-generated content and subject to the same controls.
* All media sites should to link to external sites. Linking off-site is an extension of your site's user experience and fosters a feeling of openness that's conducive to repeat visits. Trying to keep readers within just your site is a losing proposition.
* When linking, sites should not be forced into including links that support all sides of an issue. While news articles themselves should adhere to the traditional standards of fairness and accuracy, assuring balance in links run counters to the concept of providing only useful links to the reader.

**Protocols**

When deciding whether to links to other parts of your own site, ask yourself the following questions: Is this content being linked to relevant to someone who would be reading/viewing this content? When choosing whether to include a link to another site, ask yourself the following questions:

Is the linked content relevant for someone who would be reading/viewing this content?

Does the content being linked include content that could potentially fall within the area of defamation or libel?

If the content being linked to falls outside the standards of your site, should you include notification of that fact (i.e., notify users of profanity, nudity, etc.)?

Are you responsible when you link to something offensive? What about when that link links to something really offensive?

17- How do you decide when a user should be banned from publishing on your site?

This question raises a fundamental tension for journalists working in digital media: the need for a news organization to accommodate conflicting views at the same time it creates and maintains a community of civil discourse and debate. News organizations should create terms of service for users contributing content to the news organization's digital editions. Such terms cover such issues as the use of obscenity, personal attacks, etc. in material published by non-staffers. Publishers should also be clear about the consequences for violating terms of service, e.g. immediate banning from further posting, suspension, etc.

**Ethics and Credibility in Online Journalism**

**Introduction**

Ethics and Credibility in Online Journalism The etymology of journalism, from the Latin diurnalis, suggests a daily account or record. The term has come to mean the collection and editing of news for presentation via one or more forms of media. Intraday print issues and hourly broadcasts in the twentieth century distanced the practice from its Latin root. Nearly instantaneous transmission and updates through new electronic media forms further amplifies this divergence. When print was the only medium available to the journalist, ample time was available for proper research, editing, and publication. Indeed, only a few early publishers had access to a printing press with which to make product. As mass media progressed, and new forms of print and broadcasting appeared, the time allowed for journalistic reflection shrank. The Internet allows news and information to move at tremendous dispatch, limited only by the

Speed of the electron or electromagnetic wave. The immediacy brought by the online environment, a medium where everyone is a potential publisher, allows for even less de liberation by the journalist and editor. Matters of anonymity, identity, access to information and protection of intellectual property impact the practice of online journalism. This paper will discuss how journalists and media organizations are dealing with the issues of ethics and credibility on the Web: how cyber journalists can use personal, institutional, and technological tools to ensure the consistency, fairness, and believability of their product.

**Ethics**

**Ethics and Credibility in Online Journalism**

The speed and anonymity provided by the Internet can play fast and loose with journalistic ethics. The Internet has created a fourth kind of journalism next to radio, television, and print journalism. Online journalists have received little or no attention from researchers, perhaps because few, pure online journalistic efforts exist, compared to the wealth of trivia, entertainment, personal communication, and pornography. These bedfellows make adherence to an ethical code all the more necessary, particularly in a time when public trust in journalism has ebbed (Yeshua, 2000).

**The pessimist:**

The newest news dispenser, the runaway Internet, makes a journalist out of anybody who has a modem. It values speed and sensationalism above accuracy. New media will not accept our standards. We are foolish to treat them as if they have. This is a grim time for newspapers. -- Portland Oregonian Editor Sandra Mims Rowe

**The pragmatist:**

It's past time to retire the Internet as a scapegoat for journalistic ills, it’s a medium, not a message, and it can be used as irresponsibly or as honorably as a printing press or a TV network can. --New York Times columnist Frank Rich (Welch, 1998) Matt Drudge has his own self-published Internet scandal sheet (drudgereport.com). He is the poster boy for online journalism ethics, i.e., what can happen without concise ethical standards in a world where everyone is a potential journalist, broadcaster, columnist, commentator, and media critic (Grossman, 1999). See Blumenthal v. Drudge.

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Brill’s Content, Columbia Journalism Review, and American Journalism Review critique newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. Founded in 1998 at the Annenberg School of Journalism, the Online Journalism Review (www.ojr.org) critiques online media (Stern, 1999). The Society of Professional Journalists also maintains an ethics guide at spj.org/ethics. New forms of journalism require new approaches to ethics. Many current ethical issues will remain, and others will emerge. Increasing consolidation of corporate media and the continued evolution of the Internet complicate the ethics of online journalism further. The need for a global approach, requiring a shared set of values, also poses a challenge for journalists in all media (Richards, 1999). Graphic manipulation, banner ads placed atop a newspaper web site, and commingling of editorial and advertising content are just a few of the many ethical issues that new media raise for journalism. News organizations have built and maintain compelling web sites; they now seek to make these sites commercially viable. Many online audiences expect content to be free, but some news organizations have turned to subscription services or paid access. Nevertheless, as the online advertising industry grows, so do the number of ads on these sites. Many media organizations maintain separate “new media” staffs, and a good number of these organizations use these “new media” staffers to create advertisements: Advertising and editorial content intertwine (Pavlik, 1997). Hyperlinks are other issues for online publishers; should a story provide links to other web sites, even if these links are not fully investigated or endorsed by the news entity? Should retractions be posted, or does the webmaster simply overwrite the incorrect content? Professional groups

Such as the Online News Association may provide some leadership in these areas. Online

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Journalism will surely face a great many legal and ethical challenges in the future. Leadership and ethical standards are musts for the maintenance of journalistic standards (Palser, 1999). The rules of copyright and ownership still apply to the Internet. Some sites upload a revised story, noting the time of the revision but leaving no trace of the original. Often, no attempt is made to correct information for those who read the flawed version earlier. Ethical challenges never end. The debates still rage over the application of standards to real life. It will be no different for the Internet as it struggles to find its balance. -- (Kelly, 2000) Codes of journalistic ethics (www.asne.org/ideas/codes/codes.htm) have been written in a broad manner to transcend time. Codes of ethics have framed professional careers. Most journalists contend that traditional values remain relevant online. They disagree sharply about how those values play out in a medium defined by immediacy, interactivity, burgeoning competition, and unflagging pressure to produce revenue. Such ethical uncertainty has not slowed the rush to cyberspace. The problem, say some editors and ethicists, is that the online environment changes rapidly and unpredictably. Decisions are made in a culture still uncertain of itself, and the clamor for profits too often drowns out other concerns. -- (Lynch, 1998)

**Credibility**

Journalism credibility has taken some hits of late. The public view o f news media is on the wane compared with recent decades. A 1999 survey of journalists by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press found a profession in commotion. The poll included journalists from national print, broadcast, and online news organizations; about half said that the press lacks credibility with the public, a reason for declining audiences. Also noted was the eroding distinction between reporting and commentary (Witt, 1999).

Also in 1999, editors and reporters at eight newspapers undertook projects intended to help shore up trust within readership circles. The efforts were products of the American Society.

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Of Newspaper Editors' credibility study, which found that “factual, grammatical, and spelling errors in stories undermine credibility; that the reading public suspects sensational stories are overplayed.” Further findings: “…many think journalists are manipulated by powerful people and advertisers. Admitting errors and running corrections helps, not hurts, credibility” (Truitt, 1999).

The Internet provides the news content equivalent to thousands of newspapers each day through web sites, emails, instant messengers, listeners, discussion groups, or personalized homepages. The Internet also provides a lot of information of dubious value. John Pavlik asks if online journalism is little more than another delivery system for "old" media. He defines news content on the Internet as having gone through three stages.

1. “Repurposed” content from a traditional parent medium
2. Original content augmented with hyperlinks
3. Content designed specifically for the Web as a new medium of communication for an online community.Pavlik notes that news organizations are aware that young people seek news from online media. Future audiences will be drawn by a website's content and perspective, as well as its quality (Pavlik, 1997).Open-source journalism makes news stories available to online communities for scrutiny and corrections before final publication; some say it is the “new journalism,” others strongly oppose it. It is not clear how this technique will jive with tight deadlines (Moon, 1999). Dyed-in-the-wool journalists think mainstream news organizations should not lower their standards in the rush to get online. The role of the gatekeeper has changed, however. Traditional news organizations no longer have the exclusive power of publication (Lasica, 1998).

**Ethics and Credibility in Online Journalism**

Online reporters struggle with credibility because many who publish on the Web are untrained in journalism or industry standards. Striving for accuracy help. There is a pressure on journalists to break news, to scoop.abandon the scoop culture of 100 years ago. Net journalists are taking even less time to check their stories than they did in the old media. The rush to put these online is undermining journalism everywhere. --Media analyst Ellen Hume (Hyland, 1999) Many news stories self-criticize reportage, but they only scratch the surface. Taking exceptional care to be late rather than wrong can increase

Credibility, something difficult to regain once it is lost. The loss of balance and fairness through under sourced and inaccurate reporting will make it much more difficult for the press to perform its watchdog function (Cowan, 1998). Academia Journalism is at a juncture where staid social systems and new technologies converge, placing an unprecedented onus of credibility and objectivity on gatekeepers. Editors wield tremendous social power. Mass media are no longer linear. Communication once directly conveyed messages related to survival. Such data now pass through subjective media filters, ending with a product called “news.” Terms: “News” was first delivered after Gutenberg (c. 1457), and “journalists” began expressing themselves around 1833. Reporters and editors soon became powerful distillers of information. The medium of data transfer was print on paper, readily subject to quality control. Accuracy and balance were valued and controlled.

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The Internet has brought a multiplicity of senders and receivers, destroying the linear paradigm. A blow was dealt to editorial agenda setting. Veracity is paramount in the synaptic ricochet of the online news environment. Retaining credibility in this new psychologically intuitive medium is critical. Control of content and quantity of the news appears to s lip from editors’ control. “Pathfinder” is coined as peers evaluate newsworthiness. Perhaps future gatekeepers will be dubbed “information specialists.” A paper from the Netherlands reports the findings of a pilot project involving online journalists and online journalism graduate students who relate their experiences and views on ethical dilemmas in the new medium; new media ethics are analyzed (home.pscw.uva.nl/deuze/publ15.htm).Loyola University Chicago houses the Ethics Advice Line for Journalists; this is a free service for journalists to call and talk about ethical dilemmas. Volunteers staff the phone lines. Three volunteers teach ethics and two are on the university’s ethics advisory board. The center will log calls to identify areas where journalists are having ethical dilemmas (Garcia, 2001). The University of Florida recently filled its Knight Chair in Journalism with online news professional, Mindy McAdams. The university has a thriving J -school utilizing interactive media. Areas of research include gate keeping theory, diffusion of innovation theory, sociological perspectives, and a perspective that explores the idea of journalism as a cohesive force in society (Singer, 1998).

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The developments of online relationships have been viewed as virtual communities. Findings from an ongoing case study of web-based news suggest the early ideals of democratic community-building on the Web are encountering resistance as media organizations define “virtual geographic space" and stake out "territory" on the Internet. The traditional press is fusing with computing and telecom to create a new medium of human communication. The World Wide Web is a space allowing global community-building without regard to geography or time. Online journalists and media organizations would do well to mine this resource. Common interests make connections; tapping into these connections makes profits (Riley, 1998). In The Printing Press as an Agent of Change, Elizabeth Eisenstein hints that credibility of the printed word accrues through reputation and print quality—two components inherently absent from much of today’s online reportage. Post-publication manipulation of electronic copy and lack of editorial control are also cited for credibility concerns. Some authors speculate on the future demise of press objectivity and ethics, while journalists align with special interests, advocacy groups, and titans of commerce. They see a dismantling of the firewall between advertising and news: Ads, opinion, marketing, and news will become intertwined as the audiences lose their faith in journalistic objectivity. Advertisers have a long tradition of influence peddling with regard to editorial content; it is a vested interest. Media are often susceptible to this pressure. Online news reporting is now dynamic and often “pre-verified.” Print journalism is more static. This disparity fuels the fragmentation of news consumers into readily targetable audiences or niches. These niche targets are sometimes labeled as communities defined by shared interests rather than simple geography. Ambient ads, commercial links, a gauntlet of promotional data, and the ever-

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Coalescing media empires threaten traditionally objective reporting. News and entertainment blur together, as do news and opinion. The marketplace of ideas and audiences are fracturing, i.e., subdividing

Into mini- markets. Terms used include info harvesting and demographic nuggets. Each new communications medium presents challenges to marketers. Tailoring messages and content to audiences is key in the electronic media marketplace. Vertical integration of communications corporations, the social implications of online journalism, and their facilitation of these niche audiences are significant (Borden, 1998). Journalism schools are tapping talent from other disciplines and from online newsrooms. “…but case after worrisome case…marketing and advertising discussions…slopped over into the newsroom" (Harvey, 2000). Content is King says Mark Deuze. Content influences the public agenda. It helps to determine perception. Journalists and editors are responsible for content acquired through media, and thus set an agenda. “…a new type of communicator has arrived: the online journalist” (Deuze, 1998). Some academic links: http://www.aejmc.org/pubs/onlinejournals.html http://www.aejmc.org/pubs/webcourses.html

http://www.worldinternettimes.com/

**Vocational Journalism**

The recent spate of firings at, and the downsizing or disappearance of, many online news outlets not associated with major media companies are a concern. Important points to consider about these endeavors and their employees’ job security, financial viability, and journalistic

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Independence. Advertisers, venture capitalists, and investors have pulled back from these websites, as have many subscribers. APBnews.com was gone (now reborn), and a sleeker Salon.com survives on a shoestring, while Slate Magazine and MSNBC.com, et al, motor on with backing from their huge corporate parents. Niche sites, such as those targeting African-Americans, have struggled in the past, but hopes are that, given sufficient promotion, they can flourish on the Web. Promotion and new technology are also essential. Listservs, web-based tip sheets, and electronic databases are the tools of the new, computer-assisted reporter (CAR). It is difficult to envision a world without email, the Internet, and web sites for most every niche. The field of online journalism is still young. When Congress released the Starr Report on the Web, making it instantly available to the public, the game changed. No waiting for journalists to digest material before telling you about it. It was right there, right away (Rieder, 1999). Lack of diversity plagues online journalism, claims Adam Clayton Powell III. A 1999 Freedom Forum survey showed that a majority of journalists of color at U.S. dailies expects to leave the news business. "There's not just a glass ceiling, but brick walls and hostile gatekeepers" (Powell, 1999).

Recently the Seattle Post-Intelligencer set about the task of recruiting an online producer

to help energize its web site, but the job announcement was "purposely vague," said Lee Rozen, the new media manager at the Post-Intelligencer. Salary, education, and experience levels were omitted. "Perhaps a tolerance for ambiguity is one of the skills I seek," said Rozen. Lack of job standards creates confusion (Perlman, 1999).

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In “We’re All Nerds Now” (1999), Joel Simon and Carol Napolitano synopsize the advent, status, and future of computer-assisted reporting. They discuss the availability of some electronic databases, as well as software used to manipulate these data. Computer literacy is seen as a challenge for inclusion and improved credibility, rather than an obstacle to progress without specialization. This article serves as a primer for modern CAR. On 27 March 1999, Congress's Standing Committee on Correspondents voted to reinterpret its rules on who qualifies for accreditation as a Washington reporter to include online reporters. “The press pass not only provides preferential seating in congressional hearings but also helps open doors to the inner sanctums…” (Meddis, 1999).

http://ajr.newslink.org/special/

http://onlinejournalism.com

http://isyndicate.com/

http://www.netcontent.org/ Conclusion

One of the most easily accessible theories is the journalist as gatekeeper, a role that clearly seems threatened by a medium in which users can put their fingers on virtually any piece of information at will. There exists a proposal to certify web-based news by establishing a “dot news” (.news) domain. Electronic media certainly can be credible, but their advantages of speed and audiovisual enhancements tempt the journalist to hasten his/her copy. The Internet can deliver in -depth stories and news, as well. However, audiences mostly look to this medium for the quick new bites rather than more detailed information.

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In the last century of mass media, we have heard predictions as to the demise of certain media manifestations whenever a more complex form emerges. Generally, each older form falls back into a workable niche, when a new one appears. Just when we feel assurance that we have reached a static pinnacle of communications technology, we are surprised (www.journalists.org). The evolving medium of the Internet provides journalists a fresh means of communication and research. Companions to these new capabilities are potential pitfalls. The

Definitions of journalists and publisher become skewed. Legally, anyone who posts information on the World Wide Web is a publisher; the people who compose the information are journalists, regardless of training or experience. Both are subject to the same privileges and liabilities of their conventional counterparts. The Internet spans the globe, encompassing all manner of geography and political/governmental entities. Today we see online web casts of news (www.freedomforum.org) and even the injection of audience input in breaking news (www.cnn.com/cnn/programs/news.site). It is a brave new world in the field of online journalism. Adhering to conventional ethics and credibility can help ensure its success.

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**Impact of Internet on Journalism**

**Traditional media started developing online presence:**

Because of the massive and extraordinary development the internet has experienced, many traditional media institutions like newspapers, magazines, and radio and television channels started making plans for the Internet future, and put their presence on the web and tried to arrange audio and video broadcasts over the Internet. Most newspapers seem to have chosen one of two approaches to the Internet. The first - and most common - approach is to have selected articles from the newspaper on the internet. The second approach is the same, but with more focus on adding content exclusive to the web pages. This allows the internet pages to have more news aimed at narrow audiences. The latter approach also offers a better integration with news and user interaction. It includes interactivity and innovation.

**Anyone can be publisher**

When print media was the only medium available to journalist, a few publishers had access to printing press with which to make the product. But the internet is largely uncontrolled; anybody can say anything s/he pleases. This has led to many news pages being set up by "The Common Man." Anyone having internet connection can be publisher.

**Internet introduced Mass interaction to mass media:**

Before the Internet, most communication has been largely unidirectional. Journalists gather information and bring it back to the news desk. Here it is edited, and returned to the audience. However, "audience members are rarely able to use the media to send their own messages. Audience feedback is infrequent, indirect, and delayed" The internet changed all this: "What distinguishes the Internet from other media is its ability to provide feedback quickly and easily from receivers to senders. The Internet has introduced mass interaction to mass media."

**Impact of internet on News gathering**

Internet opens new avenues of information for journalists. Journalists can no longer ignore the wealth of valuable information on the Internet. Internet stands as the single largest source of information available anywhere in the world. Journalists are now using the Internet for a wide range of purposes to enhance their newsgathering. Common uses include finding people and news story sources, locating experts for stories, checking clips of other news organizations while preparing stories, conducting background research about businesses and individuals, identifying new story ideas, and locating both public and private information stored in digital form. These online tools save time and money, are more thorough, and can link information in widely diverse locations. Internet and web have totally revolutionized many aspects of journalism in the past 10 years. "The Internet and web have put an unprecedented amount of information at a journalist's finger tips. The Internet and web have also resulted in a great deal of information becoming available globally, thus extending the reach of journalists in quest of information," Reporters can use the Internet to search for information like sports results, company details and phone numbers. It speeds up the process in finding information and contacts and. They can find statements from people online, which help with quotes. That fact alone has meant that journalists in traditional media have New sources and new research tools. "Development of the Internet and web also mean that journalists can now obtain information and records which could not have been accessed before without traveling to particular courts, and government offices. “Online resources have had the greatest impact on news gathering providing rapid and easy access to massive resources for information, potential interviewees, and websites to help verify information, and analyze data such as statistics. Search engines are another tool for gathering online information which opens the door to news resources. Search engines and online directories have made it much easier than ever before to find experts to comment on issues. They have revolutionized a journalist's ability to research, find background information and to track down primary documents and sources.

There is so much information available online that it can be difficult working out where to start and where to stop gathering it. With the change to a much broader reliance on the Internet and web for news, it will become increasingly important for journalists to be multi skilled able to work in more than one medium, and preferably in several, in what has become known as a converged media environment.

**Impact of internet on Access to information and distribution of news**

Internet has changed the way people access to news and provided flexible delivery platforms to keep the audiences up-date. The internet provides 'immediacy of content' and has the technological ability to instantly report an unfolding news event. It disseminates information

Quickly. News consumers no longer have to wait for hourly or half-hourly radio news updates, evening information to the news story), from where and when. In this medium content is user control. Users can access the news and information at any time they want, there is no time limitation because data is stored in archives which can be access afterwards, the only thing is to have an internet connection.

**Flexible Delivery Platforms**

Online news contents included in searchable databases help readers to view content on the topic they are searching for.

**SMS on cells**: News web sites provide its users the facility to subscribe for news alerts and breaking newsand updates available through SMS on cell phones.

**Breaking News emails alerts:** is another flexible delivery platform through which internet users canreceive news updates and alerts by email in their inbox.

**RSS feed….** RSS is a mechanism used to distribute news content without depending on the browser oremail client. RSS stands for “Really Simple Syndication” is a popular choice. In general it means time savings because you stay ahead of what’s new without having to browse every site you normally visit. An RSS reader aggregates the content for you to view in one place; this saves time and brings you the content like when you're reading a newspaper with the advantage to view only headlines. You're in control of which articles you want to read. News services, Databases and many web logs are typically now RSS-enabled. News feeds from major publishers that you can syndicate on your website for free. Cell phone users can read online newspaper, see advertisements and watch television with their phone because of internet technology convergence. The cell phone is one of the vehicles upon which new media can be distributed and broadcast.

**Impact of internet on Process, Production, Storing, retrieval and Presentation of news**

The spread of computers, software and the Internet is changing how reporters work. Reporters now routinely collect information in databases, analyze public records, conduct interviews by e -mail, and research background for articles on the Web. Other major way the Internet and web have improved journalism is that they have made it possible for a journalist with a laptop, mobile Phone and digital camera to work from literally almost anywhere in the world, instead of being limited to working from newsrooms and bureau offices, as they were in the past.E-mail interviews are also valuable because they provide a written record of answers and are a useful research tool for background information in follow-up stories, features and investigative journalism. E -mail has become a great tool for interviewing people and also for forwarding information and text as well as photos and graphics. It is also particularly useful for interviewing people, or contacting people, who live in different time zones. However, unlike other interviews it has the disadvantage of no voice-to-voice contact to detect nuances of mood and character and no room for impromptu questions. E-mail interviews rarely stand-alone and follow- up telephone calls are often needed for clarification and verification. Journalist can write and edit reports and news stories on the laptop or computer and send his reports or news stories to the news room from any location in the world. They can even send pictures and images taken by mobile phone or digital camera through email facility. The Internet provides the journalist with a vast range of new opportunities for feedback, customization of content, instant publishing, archiving, (hyper)linking, the use of audio and video, etc., all of which can have serious implication for online media production and in particular online news presentation.

A news story on the Internet should be structured in chunks of information, all linked to one primary 'anchor text,' which can be seen as the top level that provides the essence of the story. This implies a non-linear type of storytelling that might combine aspects of both print and broadcast media. It is, of course, important that the online journalist can keep the reader curious enough to browse through the different chunks of information (Fredin & David, 1998).

"Primary and highly related aspects of cyber-communication which are at the core of its media logic, and which will continue to present news to shape to the formats of cyber-journalism in the future, are: multimedia, hyper textual, interactional and archival.

**Multimodality**

We mean the extent to which text, graphics, sound, voice, and (still and moving) images are translated and integrated into a common digital form (Dahlgren, 1996, p. 64) . It must be emphasized that multimedia refers to a new media format that results from the convergence and integration of traditional print, audio and video formats.

Internet provides opportunity to the journalists to present **non-linear types of storytelling**, by using hypertext and multimedia in innovative ways. One of the important implications of multimedia is that the online journalist must learn how to work with these different formats. For his writing, the journalist will also need the skills to decide for each story that which part or parts of the story will consist of text and which part(s) will carry audio and/or visual elements.

The online media professional can use hyperlinks that are either internal or external. Internal links refer to other texts (or sections) within the site, while external links refer to texts or sites located elsewhere on the Internet. Effective use of internal and external hyperlinks is a basic element of good online media production. It enables journalists to refer their readers to all kinds of background or related information, ranging over archival documents, illustrations, primary sources, multiple perspectives on a particular topic, and so on.

**Interactivity**

It is related to the user's 'control over content'. Indeed, on the Internet the consumer can determine where, when, how and what he or she wants to consult. In this respect, communication on the Internet seems to shift from the traditional 'transmission' model of communication) to more balanced communication patterns of 'consultation' and 'conversation' (McQuail, 2000, pp. 129-132). In a second sense, interactivity is described in terms of 'feedback' and two- way or multiple-way communication ('conversation') between producer and consumer. This kind of interactivity also takes on different forms: e-mail, chat, message boards, etc.

Internet has provided the ability of storing and archiving journalistic contents including that can be viewed any time from any place. The 'archival' function, for its part, can be seen as an aspect of both interactivity and hypertextuality. Indeed, an online archive - or the information it carries - is 'hyperlinked'with other (fragments of) texts, while the interactive element lies in the user’s ability to 'control' the search in the archive. This function by internet is providing more depth information to the journalistic contents.