

Journalism Professors' Information Seeking Behaviors About Online Tool Use for Teaching

Katherine Hepworth, PhD

Donica Mensing, PhD

Gi Woon Yun, PhD

The Literature

Journalism professors' use of online tools

Professors' online information seeking behaviors

Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers)

Research Questions

RQ1

What are journalism professors' information seeking behaviors around online tools for teaching?

RQ2

After information seeking, which tools do journalism professors ultimately adopt for teaching?

RQ3

How does position on the diffusion of innovations spectrum affect journalism professors information seeking behavior about, and selection of, online tools for teaching?

Method

30 minute, open ended interviews (Responsive Interviewing Model)

Six questions

Participant selection

20 participants

Active teachers

Heavy online tool users

Participants in Online News Association

Results

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS

Innovators — 4 participants

Early Adopters — 10 participants

Early Majority — 5 participants

Late Majority — 1 participant

Laggards — 0 participants

Results

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS

Innovators — generalized information seeking strategies

“I try to attend as many workshops, seminars, conferences and faculty development as I can.”

Results

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS

**Early Adopters & Early Majorities —
use specific, trusted information sources**

Results

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS

Late Majorities — rarely seek information

Results

WHAT INFORMATION ARE PROFESSORS LOOKING FOR ABOUT ONLINE TOOLS?

New tools

Industry standard tools

Reviews of tools

Business news about parent companies

Results

WHERE DO PROFESSORS FIND INFORMATION ABOUT ONLINE TOOLS?

Individuals — media professionals and other professors

Organizations — media outlets and media related foundations

Communities — conferences and Twitter

Results

WHAT DO PROFESSORS USE ONLINE TOOLS FOR?

Content production — creating images, documents, slides

Content publishing — blogs, other websites, file hosting

Private messaging

Social media

Content management

Results

SUPERTOOLS

Tools with multiple features that most professors regularly use

Results

SUPERTOOLS

Facebook

Messages

Newsfeed

Page Insights

Groups

85% participants

Results

SUPERTOOLS

Facebook

Google Drive

Messages

Docs

Newsfeed

File storage (Drive)

Page Insights

Forms

Groups

Sheets

Slides

85% participants

75% participants

Results

SUPERTOOLS

Facebook

Messages

Newsfeed

Page Insights

Groups

85% participants

Google Drive

Docs

File storage (Drive)

Forms

Sheets

Slides

75% participants

Twitter

Analytics

Direct Messages

Hashtags

Polls

Twitter Feed

85% participants

Results

OTHER COMMONLY USED TOOLS

1 Wordpress

5 Storify

2 Blackboard

6 Slack

3 Instagram

7 Pinterest

4 Youtube

8 Canvas

Results

STRESS

90% of professors found information seeking stressful

Early majority were the most stressed

Innovators were moderately stressed

Early adopters were the least stressed

Late majority was not stressed at all

Discussion

An immediate need for reliable, regular information about online tools for journalism education

Information sources about tools are:

- highly fragmented
- hard to find
- not trustworthy
- not suitably distributed

Discussion

Trustworthiness and relevance of information are critical

Professors want to learn about tools in person, from each other

Second preference: information from professors and media professionals through blogs, email newsletters, and social media

Professors are frustrated at the lack of opportunities for seeking reliable, trustworthy, well-publicized information about tools

Discussion

An opportunity for conference organizers, foundations, and publishers

PROPOSED STRATEGY

1 Hire prominent journalism professors to identify industry-relevant and teaching-appropriate tools

2 Distribute their findings through conferences, blogs, email newsletters

Thank you

@khepworth

khepworth@unr.edu

<https://kathep.com/research>