Taking the Active User Seriously – Policy Implications from the “Professionalization” of UCC

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User driven journalism

- Provide links & sources
- Investigate
- Fact checking & editing
- Agenda setting
- Contribute content
- Rate
- Rank
Taking the active user seriously
Methods of quality control

- Guidelines
- Tools
- Education
- Different modes of moderation
- Co-operation between amateurs and professional journalists
- User generated quality control
“Professionalizing” UCC

- Control by professional journalists
- Application professional standards and tools
- “Professional education”
• Guarantee lawfulness UCC
• Improve “sellability” of UCC
• Improve “quality” UCC
• Apply journalistic principles the audience is used to
• Citizen journalists can learn a lot (stepping stone)

• Very resource intensive
• UCC is different
  – Spontaneous
  – Different ethics & attitudes
  – Outside established routines
  – Different sources
• What is quality? Says who?
• Professionalization as a means of enforcing gatekeeper positions
Professional legal “media quality” standards

Example: regulation of video content

• Specific rules on:
  – Diversity
  – Percentage of European works
  – Separation commercial and editorial content
  – Free from harmful content, if it can be received by minors

• Rules do not necessarily fit the UCC context
Conclusions

• Citizen journalism can be a valuable and useful contribution to a qualitative and diverse media offer.

• Existing legal framework & trend to professionalize UCC promote a tunnel view of citizen journalism.

• = obstacles to experiment more freely with this upcoming form of journalism.
Policy implications

• Take citizen journalism seriously because it is different from professional journalism.
• Create a level playing field for citizen journalism:
  – Adjust existing regulatory approach
  – Make room for a more egalitarian approach to “media quality”
  – Learn from new, innovative means of quality control.
• More research into forms of cooperation between professional/amateur journalists, and active user involvement.
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