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News online

News consumption practices on the Internet 1998 to 2003

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Abstract

This dissertation concerns news consumption practises on the Internet and the audience development between 1998 and 2003 among Swedish people aged 15 to 85. The results are built on two different sets of data. A national survey shows how the news audience on the Internet has developed since 1998. Focus groups of users helps to explain and understand this development. The number of Internet users in Sweden has increased fast since 1998. Still one can see big differences related to age and social background. Also the news audience on the Internet has increased in six years. The audience is rather young compared to news audiences using traditional news media. The one single factor that best explains the use of news on the web is general Internet habits. News use is very much related to technological equipment. News reading is not the main reason for going online, other areas like general information search and e-mail are more widespread. People appreciate most of all the fast news distribution on the Internet and the possibility to decide when using news. In general, the use of other news media has changed just slightly during the studied period. But there are tendencies towards a reduced usage of morning newspapers and radio news among the intensive news users on the web. News on the Internet clearly represents an alternative to news channels for certain people, and there is every reason to believe that web news has taken an established position in our daily news life.

Keywords

Internet, news, online, web, Internet users, news users, news audience, news media