

Abstract

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**Newspapers' Facebook pages as a
space for interaction with the
readers**

Today's newspapers struggle with persuading readers to pay for online content behind the pay-wall. Social media platforms enable the news media to reach their audiences more immediately than ever before. Combining these two trends we ask how can newspapers use their Facebook (FB) pages to create a reliable and loyal readership, who might consider paying for the online content? Experiments (Mayer, 2017) have demonstrated interaction strategies can be developed to build trust between newsrooms and audiences by using social media.

Despite FB being a preferred social media platform in Finland for consuming news (Digital News Report 2016) there is little interaction between the readers and journalists on newspapers' FB pages (Juntunen, 2017).

The first stage of our on-going project focuses on the content shared by four papers (local and regional) on their FB pages, the second stage analyzes the ways and nature of the interaction on these pages.

The research questions are:

1. What kind of content creates interaction in Finnish newspapers' FB pages?
2. What is the nature of the interaction that occurs in Finnish newspapers' FB pages?

The data consists of the newspapers' FB posts and the readers' responses during one year and is analyzed using quantitative (statistical) and qualitative (close reading and conversation analysis) methods.

The preliminary results show the newspapers generate plenty of readers' activity (reactions and shares) by posting news links on their FB pages. There are notable differences how readers engage in different types of posts by the papers.