Exploring the Role of Habit on Traditional and Online News Consumption

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This thesis titled

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to understand if the process of habit formation differs between traditional news media consumption and online news media consumption and how the implications for the uses and gratification theory is evolving, as a result. Seven respondents who access news from the web were interviewed, were asked to describe their consumption behaviors in terms of frequency, mode, time, duration and environment of access. The study observed a shift in the way modern day people consume news due to the increase in modes of access. The results of the study indicate that habit formation is now based on RSS feed-based platforms that both give users a wider sense of control over their content, and allow them to maintain an affinity for a platform, while still consuming their preferred content.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Over the years, television has expanded to employ various presentation technologies, creating a movement that fosters multimedia distribution. Cable, satellite and terrestrial platforms have all enabled the use of multimedia content on personal devices such as laptops, desktops, tablets and mobile phones (Chorianopoulos, 2008).

All of this content contributes to the wealth of online news that exists through the Internet. The content is delivered through various displays, over different time periods, from different locations and is available on demand, which all contribute to the convenience of access (Bondad-Brown et al., 2012).

Motivations to use media combined with life circumstances lead individuals to access news through different media, through television and various forms of Internet, in particular. Because habit formation is a result of patterned consumption, this study aims to understand how online media consumption habits develop in comparison to traditional media consumption habits. Understanding the development of patterned consumption would provide an idea of when consumption begins as active behavior, to get a sense for when the active behavior starts to plateau and eventually turn into a passive behavior. Once active behavior becomes passive due to the conservation of mental resources, we can infer that a habit was formed (Diddi & LaRose, 2006).

For this study, traditional media is defined as television and print news, specifically, television that was broadcasted on a television set, prior to smart televisions and On-Demand television that is supported by the Internet and digital video recording (DVR). In this study, new media is defined as any news media delivered through Internet,
such as social media websites, direct news websites, or email and/or RSS feeds. Any television that is consumed through streaming websites like Netflix or Hulu, is considered new media.

New media provides consumers with more avenues and options for the type of content they’d like to consume and from what preferred sources. This makes it important to understand if habit formation is onset by factors unique to new media. We determine this by understanding how active consumers are when using the Internet to consume news and if they are satisfied by the media they seek out. By interviewing subjects about the frequency, duration, visitation patterns, content and context of their online news consumption, we determine if habit formation exists online, and how the process compares to traditional habit formation.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Formation of News Consumption Habits

Considering the abundance of outlets in the current news media, it is easy to assume an individual will engage in the active selection of their news outlet. Diddi and LaRose (2006), whose study looked at news consumption habits among college students, show an opposite phenomenon. According to the theory of media attendance (LaRose, Lin & Eastin, 2003), when supplied with an overabundance of options to choose from, the consumers tend to fall into habitual forms of media consumption. Individuals usually seek out information online to supplement their print news, not to replace it (Althaus & Tewsbury, 2000). However, when the issue of convenience and efficiency enter the equation, different behavioral processes can take over; active selection of informational resources gets sacrificed for conservation of mental resources (Diddi & LaRose, 2006).

The concept of an active audience has been studied in association with uses and gratifications theory, developing into a central assumption of the theory as a whole. Because this study aims to understand how media consumption habits are formed, and because habit formation is dependent on the active audience, we must understand the role of active audience in uses and gratifications research.

In attempts to correlate audience activity with uses and gratifications, Mark R. Levy and Sven Windahl (1984) tried articulating a more theoretic link by testing a model of audience orientations. They found that audience activity is not directly related to uses and gratification, but that it is related as a peripherally associated process (Rubin, 1984). This implies that habits and the way they are formed in relation to uses and gratifications
research is not a scientific, absolute method. Instead, habit formation changes, depending on other variables at hand.

Audience activity comes in different variations across mass communication (Windhal, 1981), revealing that levels of audience activity range from barely active to hyperactive. “More succinctly, different individuals tend to display different types and amounts of activity in different communication settings and at different times in the communication process,” (Ruggiero, 2000). This spectrum is known as the variability of involvement.

Knowing that habits are formed once active selection of media turns passive, because a need has been gratified from a particular media source, this change in activity suggests that habit formation varies across media and setting depending on how satisfied the consumer feels. If there is little satisfaction, the consumer will actively seek out alternative sources to get what they are looking for. If they feel satisfied with what they are consuming, they are less likely to look for something else. Active involvement and the Internet are linked when contrasted to the limited involvement that is linked to television. The greater the variety of options, the more room there is to actively select what to consume.

With time, habits tend to become stronger, in part because of classical conditioning. These habits will stick and continue to strengthen as the lifestyle remains the same. If the individual experiences major lifestyle changes, such as moving out of the home and away to college, changing jobs, or beginning relationships with new people, their news consumption habits tend to change (Diddi & LaRose, 2006).
Motivation for News Consumption

In order to be a contributing member of the democratic process, individuals must be well-informed about local, national and international events (Haplomazian & Feaster, 2009). These news consumers, tend to have certain demographic consistencies such as family ties and home ownership, among others, which when combined, increases their dependency on local news (Stamm & Fortini-Campbell, 1983).

Shade, Kornfield and Oliver (2005) said audiences are active and purposeful, using media in goal-oriented ways. A user may actively choose to watch local television news in order to learn about current events. At the end of a newscast, if they feel satisfied by what they’ve consumed and it has served the purpose at hand, they may choose to return to the program the next time it airs. The more they return to the newscast, based on satisfaction from the previous viewing, the less active their selection becomes. As active selection turns to passive selection, a habit is formed.

Taking a step back, we recall that habits are derived from an initial goal and audiences actively select certain media to achieve those goals. These goals are supported by uses and gratification theory, which focuses on “what people do with media, instead of what the media do to people” (Rubin, 2008; Klapper, 1963). The consumer described above watches the local newscast in order to achieve their goal of learning about local current events. Applying this to uses and gratifications theory, the consumer was seeking information on current events, and used the local newscast to gather that information. The need or desire to learn about local current events, was gratified by the local newscast they watched on television.
Understanding Uses and Gratifications Theory

As a tradition of media effects research (McQuail, 1994), the uses and gratifications theory can be used to understand why individuals organize and consume media content and, what effect it has on their approach to media. As old technologies eventually fade and make room for newer ones, applying the uses and gratification theory proves useful in understanding how and why people use new technological innovations (Guo et. al, 2009). As an applied theory, uses and gratification has evolved to include the Internet, which introduced interactive options for the consumer (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). This evolution poses challenges to the aforementioned gratifications that print and television once served.

The uses and gratifications theory is also helpful in understanding why users make personal innovations in new technologies as presented through their styles of use. The styles of use may include the way users share news content with peers online and how they save it for later access and retrieval.

According to Ko, Cho and Roberts, the uses and gratification theory explains that individuals use and access the same forms of mass media for different purposes (Ko et. al, 2005). Individuals seek out media in order to gratify a particular need, whether it be for information, entertainment, socialization and/or escapism.

If something is relevant to an individual for a certain task, and they need information to fulfill the task, they will seek that information (Hjorland, 1997). Research around entertainment needs reveals that individuals seek out entertainment media to address and often rectify a particular emotion or mood.
Entertainment media, such as movies or television series, provide intrinsic gratification for individuals, either because the resulted affect makes an individual feel better immediately, addressing their mood, or because any resulting emotions can stimulate rewarding social and cognitive experiences that contribute to an individual’s overall emotional wellbeing (Bartsch, 2012).

For individuals looking to participate in, or become a part of an existing group – such as homeowners, Chicagoans, or working professionals, for example – they must think, feel, and act in ways the group considers appropriate (Hodges Persell, 1990). Socialization allows individuals to familiarize themselves with relevant information and interests of those group members, putting them in a better position to understand and associate themselves with the group.

Hirschman (1983) added that consumers may seek pleasurable activities to escape from their everyday reality. Putting themselves in an unfamiliar place, by viewing or reading about something they are unable to relate to, is the proxy for escapism (Addis & Hollbrook, 2010), which is why individuals take to the media to seek that experience.

Impact of Habit on the Consumer

As a result of habit formation, individuals tend to become disconnected with the details of their behavior. It becomes increasingly difficult to recall whether or not a use has been gratified because the process has become so regular. In Diddi and LaRose’s example, if a person was asked to recall if their current news consumption behaviors fulfill the need “to find out about daily life,” those who have fallen into habitual viewing patterns are less likely to be able to recall that information (2006). Because the link
between their news consumption behaviors and their collective ability to find out about real life seems positively correlated, the respondent may agree. Unfortunately, this contributes to poor correlations about media use patterns and how effective they can be. What is most likely the case is that they no longer actively think about their news consumption (Diddi & LaRose, 2006).

It is important to distinguish habitual media consumption from ritualistic media consumption. Ritualistic media consumption still requires some active information processing, whereas habitual consumption is almost entirely passive. The formation of media habits results this way is known as media dependency (Diddi & LaRose, 2006).

Dependency theory suggests that the media’s influence on an individual is determined by the interrelations between media, its audience and society (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982). Rubin and Windahl both argued that message dependency results when individuals seek out information through specific media, or ritualistically use specific communication media channels or messages (cited in Ruggiero, 2000).

According to Rubin (1984), habitual users of media are likely those looking to fill time by using the medium for escapism, arousal, relaxation or companionship needs. These habitual users have an affinity for the medium over the actual content. The non-habitual users (or ritualistic users) are those whose affinity is for the actual content more than for the medium.

Although these conclusions are made in reference to news consumption, these same patterns can be seen when seeking out any type of information. The individual’s active behavior is still necessary for information-seeking; however, it seems to be more
prominent in the earlier stages of the process. Active behavior is most common at the beginning of the media selection process, when selecting which news websites to visit, for instance. Once the user realizes their preferred source of information, the favored source takes precedence, and they are no long faced with having to decide among sources of information (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). When landing on a news website that one finds interesting, one will likely bookmark it or sign up for e-mail subscriptions from the website in order to forego the search and retrieval process in the future.

Advent of New Media and Motivations for Use

New media rarely ever replace old (Barnes, 2005). They do, however, supply users with different outlets for existing habits to thrive. As a new medium, the Internet is comprised of communities of people who use and develop the networks, but it is also made up of resources that can be shared from any place at any time (Hoffman et. al, 1995).

In the modern media news environment, which supplements television and print with multiple 24/7 cable news channels, televised news magazines, talk radio and comedy news, this new media environment is characterized by a variety of choice (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). Network and prime time television can still effectively deliver commentary and in-depth news coverage, a quality once unique to print media.

Individuals are no longer consuming news based on cues from news editors and producers following the “if it bleeds, it leads” strategy; instead, they are taking to the Web to seek out information that seems relevant to them (Tewksbury, 2006). According to Grcic (2009), the saying “if it bleeds, it leads” originates from traditional news’ image-
dominated nature; how much time is devoted to a story depends on how visual it is. Action-packed, dramatic footage takes precedence over less exciting coverage. In the new media landscape, however, full texts of daily newspapers that were written by and reported on by professional journalists, reporters and editors from around the globe are accessible with little effort. Supplemental content, such as the unfiltered news items and blogs that search engines allow to surface, become easily accessible through the Web as well, creating a pool of information that goes beyond the action-packed content found in traditional print media.

Recent lines of research suggest that new media, such as applications, RSS feeds, social media, and others powered by the Internet and available to access on mobile, compete with traditional media such as television and print. What new media offer users is the opportunity to access news when traditional media is either inconvenient or unavailable (Haplomazian & Feaster, 2009). This is in tune with the “lifespace” perspective, which argues that an individual’s current life circumstances determine their daily patterns or habits of behavior (Atkin, 1994).

Media today range from a plethora of devices (smart phones, robots) to channels (Internet, cable) to venues on those channels (social networking sites, home shopping network) and/or devices (smartphone apps), affording users the ability to not only interact with these ‘media’ (human-computer interaction) but also interact through them to communicate with other users (computer mediated communication). (Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

As video and information technologies proliferate, news consumers encounter greater choices for use. Scholars have argued that newspaper consumption is a substitutive medium to television news consumption (Penrose et. al, 1974), but newer
studies have challenged that, discovering that newspapers are supplemental to television (Barnes, 2005). In other words, news junkies on one medium are likely to be equivalent or heavier consumers of another medium (Atkin, 1994), which poses a potential relationship between television news consumers and Web-video news consumers. As consumption behaviors change over time, ritualistic and habitual consumption patterns begin to overlap.

Because of traditional media’s entrance into new media, it is no longer accurate to associate a serious news consumer with print media and a more casual consumer with television. Content now contains different forms of media that can interact and often collaboratively deliver fresh content, a phenomenon heavily representative of new media. New media “‘give users the means to generate, seek, and share content selectively, and to interact with other individuals and groups, on a scale that was impractical with traditional mass media’” (Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2002).

Web sites, where user presence is determined by the creation of a personal account, allow for the active input of personal preference in terms of the content received. Users are increasingly given more control over the nature of their media content, perhaps due to the interactive, customizable nature of the Internet. The birth of RSS feeds (Rich Site Summary also known as Really Simple Syndication) contributes to this customization (Barnes, 2005).

RSS feeds are the solution to the issues that surround content development and deployment. Individuals constantly look for ways to receive relevant information, and feeds permit subscription to updates to those one is connected to (Feed 101). The
increased content control that RSS feeds bring is revolutionary, primarily due to the spam-less delivery, which means that no information is unsolicited. Instead, it’s provided based on the individual consumer’s preferences. It also helps users avoid laboring to find news; using RSS feeds makes staying up-to-date much easier. By putting users in charge of the flow of information, their content consumption can ultimately become more efficient (Barnes, 2005). E-mail subscription services allow users to have a similar sense of control over what information they receive.

As information is brought to subscribers, they have the ability to share with friends or post on social media channels. The option to reach a small, limited network of friends, relates to studies on sociability, which helps explain the extent to which news consumption is ingrained in existing social relations and emphasizes an potential need for socialization, as described in uses and gratification theory. As it relates to the nature of content, previous research reveals that news consumers usually do not share public affairs stories with their acquaintances to steer clear of controversial issues (Boczkowski and Mitchelstein, 2012). Instead, consumers will share content that is more closely linked to opinions they choose to positively associate themselves with. Because the potential for controversy or exclusion is limited, this interactive social behavior has a better chance of sticking, further socializing the sharer into the target group.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the literature cited above, this study will address the following research questions:

R1: What habitual consumption behaviors do individuals engage in?

R2: What are the relationships between Internet habits and Television habits?

R3: What is the relationship between traditional media usage behaviors and contemporary media usage behaviors?

R4: How do life-long media consumptions patterns affect Internet use?

R5: How active are consumers when searching for news content online?

R6: Are consumers clicking through links from news professionals and Internet resources to guide their search? Or are consumers passive when taking in online news content?

R7: Is any passivity a result of habit formation?
CHAPTER 4: METHOD

This study analyzes the effect of habit on online news consumption. By understanding respondents’ initial active information-seeking processes as well as the evolution of the way in which they access those media over time, the study identifies if active processes are sacrificed to conserve mental resources, and if a habit is formed as a result. A surplus of uses may be gratified using the Internet, and once those uses are gratified so often that they become ritualistic, habits begin to form. The intent of this study is to learn where and how individuals’ behavior patterns are developed in the context of online news consumption.

As a qualitative study, subjects participated in open-ended interviews, to collect objective insights on their media consumptions behaviors, allowing observations to be made, without making any conclusions. Interviews were the best method for this research based on the study’s core theory – uses and gratifications. As Diddi and LaRose (2006) observed, individuals tend to lose to the ability to recall if a use was gratified when a habit has formed or is being formed. If participants were given responses to choose from, as opposed to the option to respond to questions openly, it would skew the responses as a whole, and make it more difficult to understand if a habit was formed. Breaking down and analyzing consumption behaviors based on specific open-ended questions helped gauge which nuances were related to habit and the behavior patterns associated with it.

The sample was selected from peers and acquaintances, who volunteered to participate in the study based on the premise that they consume news from the Internet. These individuals were asked about their active processes of seeking out news content.
online, their motivations of use, duration of visits, reactions to use, nature of content, frequency, and modes of use.

For this study, in-depth interviews were held until the interviews reached saturation. Saturation occurs when interviews have been conducted enough times that no new information is forthcoming (Tuckett, 2004). At that point, it is no longer necessary to continue conducting interviews. All participants were asked the same questions. A review of the initial seven participants’ responses revealed common responses in regards to the duration and frequency of Internet media consumption as well as any concurrent extracurricular activity they engaged in. For this reason, the sample consisted of seven participants, total.

The Cultural Consensus Model (CCM) identifies common characteristics between cultural groups and communities (Romney et. al 1986). The model suggests that cultures each share similar views of the world, which creates a cultural consensus. The level of consensus may vary, but there are a limited and finite set of characteristics on which these views are formed. This is a plausible rationale behind the saturation. Because cultural consensus is formed by those who share similar world views, people may actively select and return to certain websites because those in their cultural group do, which could eventually form a habit, so long as their personal use was gratified.

Interviews were conducted online, through email, and were documented. As a thematic analysis, this study focused on discovering identifiable themes and patterns of behavior (Aronson, 1994). No definitive conclusions come from this; instead, the data from the interviews were studied to identify relations to the existing patterns of habit
formation as described and understood in the literature review. Any common consumption patterns observed revealed themes that suggest, but do not necessarily infer, how media consumption habits form for the modern-day consumer as represented by the subjects of the study (Aronson, 1994).
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

The sample chosen for this study consisted of participants ranging in age from 23 to 66 years old. Every participant was a college graduate and employed at the time. Participants’ professions are representative of different industries: marketing; senior account executive for a public relations agency; public relations executive; communications/marketing -- specializing in events; physician; architect; and office manager at a physician’s office. The researcher presented the interview questions and provided each respondent with an online consent form, approved for use by the Institutional Review Board. The participants typed their responses in the form they were given and returned them to the researcher through email. The researcher consolidated responses from all seven participants, and organized them based on interview question. This allowed the researcher to gain an objective view of the responses for each specific question.

Internet Use

While periods of activity ranged, all participants accessed the Internet on a daily basis. Some stated they visited the Internet every day, while others shared more detail, such as staying online for roughly nine to 12 hours daily.

The frequency of Internet visits ranged from “4 to 5 times per day” or “multiple time per day”. Others made a distinction between weekday visiting habits and weekend habits, stating they would visit the Internet between nine and 12 hours during weekdays and between five and 10 hours on the weekends. These numbers are high in volume, likely due to the nature of respondents’ professions or mobile access to the Internet.
Participants claimed to use a variety of devices including, smart phones, tablets, desktop computers, laptops and MP3 players. Some said they preferred different devices based on time of the week and time of day. During the week, some respondents would use their laptop or desktop computers to visit the Internet during the workday, opting to use smart phones, before and after work hours, and their laptops on the weekends, but for a shorter duration of time. Participants accessed the Internet from their home office, office, car, restaurant, gym, home, outdoors and/or on the go.

Participants claimed to spend anywhere from 10 minutes to eight hours in one Internet session. Most described their periods of use to be relatively smaller, such as 10, 20 and 30-minute-sessions. Others expressed online duration in hours-long time blocks, while some shared the entire length of time they were logged on the Internet, typically the entire workday.

Internet for News

When visiting the Internet specifically for news content, respondents’ answers varied. Many would access news on the Internet at least five days per week, while others would visit two to three times a week and some days, never. The duration of their visits ranged from 10 minutes per day to “5 day/week, 15 hours/day.” That particular respondents’ answer is likely a failure to recall how long he or she used the Internet to access news, and instead provided a generalized response of how long he or she was connected to the Internet through one medium or another. Becoming disconnected with the details of one’s behavior consumption behaviors suggests this individual is not
actively logging on to the Internet each day or even in incremental time periods, instead doing so habitually, as supported by research from Diddi and LaRose (2006).

Similarly, one respondent who works in public relations mentioned that the industry he or she works in requires him or her to “check the news very frequently online during the workday.” The decision to check the news and keep a Web browser open was likely an active one in the beginning stages of their job, but turned passive over time, resulting in a habitual behavior, which reveals that modern day consumers working in news-driven industries are likely habitual in their pursuit of news.

News Choice


Respondents did not necessarily make direct visits to news websites; some would use search engines, like Google, and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram that would redirect them to news. Some even sourced news from Gmail, through various newsletters or emails from peers. In some events, news discovered in e-mail came directly from RSS feeds, which as stated, is proactively consented content that the user agreed to have sent to them based on their interest. Based on theory, this would suggest ritualistic consumption, as the user signed up to receive content from a specific
author or content section of a media outlet. Instead of sourcing information from CNN, as an entity, the RSS feed would allow a user to receive feed-specific content, from the technology section, for example. This also supports Barnes’ (2005) statement that new media rarely replace old. Instead, consumers are supplementing and enhancing their news by optimizing its delivery.

While consuming news content, respondents engaged in a number of peripheral activities. Many were working but took breaks to check the news. Others checked the news on the go, while in transit. Others sporadically checked the news or stumbled upon it while texting, chatting, listening to music, ordering food, emailing, talking with friends, paying bills, shopping online, or checking social media. One respondent, in particular, mentioned that he tries not to multitask while consuming news.

He could be aiming to maintain focus by conserving mental resources, which based on theory, is a precursor to habit formation; however, this form of mental conservation doesn’t seem to manifest itself in a noticeable habit, especially because he actively tries not to multitask when consuming news. Alternatively, he could be using this focused consumption method to gratify a specific need faster than he would if he had distractions.

Respondents had varied reactions when asked how they felt these activities affected their news consumption and the overall experience. Those who felt it negatively affected their consumption felt distractions like checking other social media, checking text messages, or traveling to another Web browser tab on their computer would divert their attention from the content they were previously engaged with, preventing them from
satisfying their specific need. Additionally, this would make it difficult to concentrate and digest the information properly because they would need to re-read the content if they were multitasking. To improve the quality of their attention span, many prefer visual content, like infographics, images and sometimes videos. Because habits are formed in efforts to conserve mental resources, relying on visual content helped some respondents digest the news content more efficiently. The preference for visual content, such as video, shows that a use was gratified more effectively through visual content than through reading text. “The more visual graphics the article incorporates, the more appealing it is to me because I am more stimulated by visuals than plain reading,” said one participant.

Some respondents felt that distractions were helpful because they would allow them to share news with others they were connected with at the time. Others noted that while consuming news, they do further research to learn more about specific aspects, which takes them away from reading but allows them to learn something else in the meantime.

As one respondent put it, “[The additional activities I participate in] only enhance the consumption of news, occasionally adding a new perspective to the task I am at. For example, news about a company may add new information about the company I have invested in.” This impetus to do further research, may be encouraged by the ease of access to content on the Internet. Although the respondent’s research behavior is active, it may never become passive enough to form a habit, because the course of each of his peripheral searches is unique, with a different goal in mind. If the respondent hypothetically discovered that articles in Investors Business Daily consistently gave him
the information he was looking for each time he researched a company he had invested in, he may form a ritualistic consumption pattern by way of an affinity for the content.

One respondent said the additional activities that he or she participates in do not affect consumption. Another considered the activity of consuming news to actually affect his or her workday, not the other way around, as news consumption felt like a distraction to work. A different respondent stated, “I just get a high-level look at what is happening and do not absorb all the specifics of what is occurring.” If this respondent is gratified by scanning headlines and abstracts in order to keep tabs on the news, she has likely formed a habit of doing so, and will not actively change this behavior until she needs a deeper understanding of the news. As supported by the “life-space” perspective, lifestyle changes are typically what the individual needs for news shift.

For one respondent, incoming alerts or emails that distracted them from the news they were connected with provided them with additional insight into the weather or retail offers. In comparison to traditional news, where in-session media consumption had little to no option of being disrupted, the complexity and layers in new media make encountering distractions easy.

Some respondents initially learned of news outlets socially from colleagues, interactions at work or generally by word of mouth. Others source their initial exposure to parental or childhood influences; however, this likely does not apply for every outlet they frequent.

Others discovered news outlets by downloading the mobile application through some form of direction, whether it be through marketing, a suggestion from a friend, or a
personal recommendation based on other applications they use. If this individual found news applications to best serve their need for information or socialization, they have likely formed a habitual affinity for the medium or channel of communication.

For many, the news outlets are world renowned, so they’re unable to recall their initial exposure. Yahoo! News, for instance, was just an extension of one respondent’s email account, so their exposure stemmed from an earlier registration with the email host. This is an example of an account-based website, but one where an active selection of content, was not required. New media has cultivated media conglomerates, like Yahoo!, to provide audiences with multiple uses, such as accessing email and news from the same content provider.

Because some email hosts are also news aggregators, there was little active selection of the content, and instead an affinity for the medium, such as AOL News, which, depending on how a user accesses her email, can appear on the AOL homepage. Medium affinity, which has less to do with the user’s preference for the content, and more about the medium, results in habitual consumption. This would imply that news content accessed through an email host is habitually consumed whenever accessing email. On the contrary, if users intentionally went to the AOL homepage, as opposed to the AOL Mail landing page, they have actively chosen to access their email from the landing page where AOL News is published, which still implies habitual consumption.

The news presented in each website varied based on the website’s nature of content, mission, and target audience. One respondent explained, “NBC not only has breaking news, but they also provide news on pop culture, health/fitness, beauty,
inspirational stories and more!” Another shared her preference for websites like “Jezebel, Buzzfeed and the New York Times because they are critical of social issues surrounding politics, women’s right, etc. This content is more interesting to consume than the objective content produced on other sites.” As a fan of the content, this respondent actively or ritualistically chooses to read it.

Others identified the nature of some of the syndicated news that they personally consumed from social platforms like Instagram, Facebook along with newsletters, like The Skimm, to be entertaining. Some visited websites of international news outlets, such as The Hindu. One respondent who read TIME Magazine mentioned, “TIME magazine is well known for its photographs and in-depth journalism.” This response reflects the cultural consensus model, because this magazine is renowned for both its content and the strength of its visuals.

Many chose news websites that would give them a variety of news, including weather updates, as they happen, all in one place. One example was Yahoo! News, which many may habitually consume, because they don’t have to actively search for different types of news. Others working in public relations mentioned they visit technology news blogs, such as VentureBeat, CNET and TechCrunch, because the industry they work in brings them closer to that type of content. These respondents have a particular use for these technology-driven outlets, which in this case is surveillance, to keep up in their industry and the clients they serve. They are gratified by technology blogs, whose content consists of articles, videos, tutorials, infographics and more. Traditionally, surveillance needs were met through newspapers, which were text-heavy, while arousal
and escapism uses were gratified by television, which was rich in visual content (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). With the rise of blogged content, the medium that gratifies surveillance needs has shifted. Long-form articles are not restricted by space on the physical page, allowing reporting to be as detailed or concise as desired.

While some respondents mentioned they typically stick to radio and television news, others mentioned they’ve “stopped watching local TV all together for [their] news because [local television] rarely ever take[s] a stance on social issues and it seems like they just report straight from that day’s ‘police blotter,’ which doesn’t do their audience any favors and they only perpetuate racial, economic and social injustices with their lazy reporting.” As a result, consumers who view local television news reporting that way, are likely not gratified by the medium for hard news and information gathering and will choose to use different media that deliver the information they feel provides a less unjust view.

When revisiting these Web sites, some mentioned they enjoyed the television content from a particular news outlet, such as NBC’s Today Show, so they would visit and revisit the website after the morning show was over.

I enjoy watching the Today Show and then local NBC [N]ews in the mornings, so I frequently visit their websites after the morning show is over. I think NBC/Today Show has very relatable news anchors that I trust to provide me with the latest news along with some laughs (See Appendix C).

Atkin’s research revealed that news junkies on one medium are likely to be equivalent or heavier consumers of another medium (Atkin, 1994). While this respondent watches The Today Show and NBC News by habit, she frequents the show websites to
access the content, which exemplifies the interplay between habitual and ritualistic consumption and demonstrates how they are overlapping as new media evolves. This also addresses one of the research questions, showing that once affinity for content is built, consumers no longer make active decisions to source their news from a source they trust.

For most respondents, the quality of content was a reason to revisit the websites, instilling a sense of trust on the outlet as a whole. Beyond that, the notions of unbiased views and objective reporting was important and a driver of their loyalty to a website.

Aside from the nature of the content, the format of delivery was also important to some respondents. While some preferred the lengthy articles for their depth of reporting, others preferred those delivering shorter, easily digestible overviews, because those did not require the respondent to read a full article to get an understanding of what was happening in that particular news story. Some considered real-time updates and news flashes to be a reason to revisit the website.

Overall, there seems to be a shift in the way news consumers actively select their news outlets they use. Social media platforms, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, allow the option to follow hundreds of different news outlets. Users no longer have to visit individual news websites to access information. Instead, by following the accounts of news outlets that they wish to see content from, their news feed delivers them content produced and posted by these various outlets.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine how media consumption habits differ in new media compared to traditional media. Understanding that new media provides more options than traditional media, the goal was to determine how an overabundance of options, which leads to conservation of mental resources, would impact habit formation.

The study discovered that habit formation is not as clearly demonstrated with new media, and that there is a wealth of overlap between active and passive behaviors. Rather than being forced to choose a single medium that best gratifies a need, users can now actively engage with multiple media, instead building and continuously growing affinities for content. As news content grows exponentially, users are retaining a sense of control through account-based websites and social platforms, giving them the power of preference as a means to tame the overabundance of choice.

When looking back at habit formation and the theory of media attendance, (LaRose, Lin & Eastin, 2003), an overabundance of options to choose from forced the consumers to fall into habitual forms of media consumption, so as to conserve mental resources involved with selection. The Internet provides more room to host content than a traditional newspaper or scheduled television newscast would, and as the blogosphere grows, news consumers have more options, in terms of news outlets and sources. Instead of accessing all of these news websites individually, news consumers can now access all of that information at once, through their social media platforms. Social media platforms, and their built-in feed systems, give the user a single destination to obtain news from various news outlets hosted on the Internet, and when they do consume information
through social feeds, it’s likely due to a combination of habit based on affinity for that social medium, and ritualistic consumption based on affinity to the content from certain news outlets they chose to follow.

In attempts to conserve mental resources, modern news consumers may visit social media to access news, instead of going directly to the television, newspaper or news website, which results in habit formation. Here they are clicking through links from news professionals and Internet resources, but in more of a passive manner, because social media provides a way to bring all of the news directly to them on their news feed without going out of their way, not even to visit a news outlet’s social media page or account. When asked what news websites, they frequently visit, one respondent listed “Facebook, Instagram, Gmail, Google, [v]arious stores.” This shows that modern news consumers consider social media to be viable sources for news content.

It may certainly be the case that active selection is curbed by social media’s ability to deliver news directly to the user; however, active selection still exists, but solely in initial stages. Through social media, active selection is ongoing; a user may actively choose new social media accounts or pages to follow daily, but once followed, consumption of content from those sources tends to become more passive, because the user no longer has to visit each page individually. Content from those sources automatically displays on the user’s newsfeed instead.

I use Twitter to scan headlines for both work and personal purposes. I read The Skimm almost every morning at work with the day’s news highlights. I do that both for personal and work purpose (See Appendix D).
It seems as though life-long consumption patterns have little impact on habit formation today. While some respondents were exposed to a news outlet through their parents during childhood, the Internet hosts thousands of news outlets, whether they are blogs, online news websites, magazine websites or TV and radio shows hosted online. Consumers need not limit their sources of news based on what they were influenced by at a young age, and instead leverage news feeds to expand the breadth of information they are consuming. In fact, some respondents attributed their consumption to their profession.

When comparing Web news consumption to television news consumption, there seems to be a larger sense of control for the consumer on the Web. A television news program runs at its scheduled pace and doesn’t always allow the consumer to skip past sections. The Web allows users to jump around within a newscast or to get a brief recap of a news story by way of blog posts, commentary or summarized articles. Some consumers seem to prefer accessing news online, and revisit certain websites “if they have quick tidbits about what is happening without having to read [full] articles.”

News consumers today seem to first familiarize themselves with a news website by word of mouth, through parental influence, or because the site is renowned. Additionally, mobile applications allow users to have on-the-go access to both their social media platform or individual apps of news outlets. While the Internet provides access to thousands of news sources, the rise of social media and the app economy provides the ability to consolidate all of those news sources in a few, easily accessible places. It seems as though news consumers now form habits of consuming news through social media platforms, or other feed-based websites. While different media were
accessed traditionally to gratify a particular use (i.e. television for entertainment and escapism and newspapers for surveillance), social media allows for a user to gratify multiple uses through one single platform.

The competition among journalists, reporters and news content creators of all sorts is increasing, which is why they must work harder to deliver content that resonates with target audiences and build consumer fan-base. For news seekers, the search for content that serves one’s needs may be ongoing as new authors, reporters, and voices emerge, reiterating the ongoing active selection that comes with social media. They will, however, determine a medium or media that best satisfy them and can conserve mental resources by developing habits of use around specific account-based social platforms.

The more we understand our active and passive behaviors, the more we can understand how and what satisfies us. As we reflect on our habits, depending on their nature, we may be inspired to break them and give something undiscovered a chance but only if we’re willing to try a little harder and use additional mental capacities we’ve allowed to rest.

From the “life-space” perspective, people’s needs for news and information will shift based on the ebb and flow of their lifestyle. As lifestyles changes, needs differ, and the information one seeks will vary. At these times, we shift our consumption behaviors to align with what we’re looking for and likely develop habits that suit us in that phase of life. The wider access to information through social platforms, which is unique to new media, makes it seemingly more difficult to succumb to serious news consumption habits, instead widening our chances of exposure to content we may not have stumbled across on
our own. For this reason, developing media habits need not be categorized as good nor bad, but as a reflection of how much they’re gratifying our personal needs through specific, actively sought out uses. This is how habit operates in the new media landscape.

Limitations

Certain limitations presented in this study revolved around interview responses. Many responded they used the Internet for nine to 12 hours per day but were implying they had a web browser open for that many hours. They may not have been actively viewing their browser for the entire duration. Additionally, the concept of new media seems to change as social media platforms grow and evolve. This does not necessarily limit the research, but it complicates it, providing more intricate and complex use cases that challenge the observations of previous research.

Additionally, the sample size for this study is relatively small, which means there were less data to work with. Should more participants been included, outcomes on habit development and Internet use may have been much different and would provide more behaviors to observe. Similarly, participants were known to the researcher, and may have been atypical representations of new media consumers. Additionally, follow-up interviews did not take place, leaving little room for discussion of RSS feeds and other important concepts outlined in the literature review.

Future Research

Because of the way new media is structured, theoretical applications are changing and evolving, which may require theoretical concepts to be tested against new consumption options. Surveying a larger subject pool could allow us to ask more targeted
questions on how people set-up and use their feed-based social channels, providing wider insights into the genre of use for each social platform. Some questions driving future research could include the following:

1. With the evolution of feed-based social platforms, how does uses and gratifications theory differ today?

2. Are feed-based platforms actually blurring the lines between habitual and ritualistic consumption?

3. How do news consumption habits vary according to profession?

4. How will an increase in account-based social media platforms affect habit formation?

5. Do people use different social media platforms and/or social accounts to source and consume different genres of content? (news, entertainment, business-related, financials, general information, etc.)

6. How do technological advancements, like Smart TVs, impact media consumption habits?

7. How does the increase in access points affect uses and gratification research in the context of news and entertainment media?
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

As technology progresses and more social platforms emerge, news content is presented in increasingly different forms, whether through a hyperlink in the caption of an Instagram post or through a notification from a news outlet’s app. These social platforms contain feeds similar to RSS, in that the user has control over which accounts and/or outlets they allow to deliver information to them. While RSS feed consumption has been historically considered ritualistic due to a preference for content over the medium, consumers are often exposed only to content due to their affinity for the social platform that hosts as many RSS feeds as possible. For example, users may choose to follow preferred reporters and news outlets on Instagram, but they may only access Instagram due to an affinity for the platform itself. An affinity for a medium, such as Instagram, is more habitual consumption, which supports the idea that ritualistic and habitual consumption are overlapping as technology evolves to offer more layered modes of use (Diddi & LaRose, 2006).

The layering and/or interweaving of consumption options suggests the lines are also blurring for uses and gratification research. While one may choose to follow or use the CNN Technology Instagram account to gratify a need for information, they may be using Instagram in a certain instance to gratify a need for entertainment or escapism, but may inadvertently consume news information through a post from CNN Technology once they begin scrolling through their Instagram feed. We see that news consumers are not replacing their traditional news, such as print and any news broadcasts only delivered through a television.
Looking back in history, habits were formed as a result of uses and gratifications. When newspapers and television were the only ways to consume news, television served more as escapism than print news did, but access to news was available through both media (Diddi & LaRose, 2006). Yet there was still a stronger, more direct gratification of a need when actively seeking a type of information.

Today we see a shift in the way people consume news due to the increase in modes of access. People are using feed-based social platforms supported by the Internet, and consume news habitually through their RSS feeds, due to the affinity for a particular social platform, whether that was the need they were looking to gratifying by using that medium or not.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

Ohio University Consent Form

Title of Research: Exploring the Role of Habit on Traditional and Online News Consumption

Researchers: Krithika Rajaraman

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to participate in this study. You may print a copy of this document to take with you.

Explanation of Study

The researcher is interested in understanding how web news consumption behaviors develop into habits and to better understand the role of active news consumption on habit formation.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire in which the researcher will ask you about your process of seeking out and consuming news online; your motivations of use; duration of visits; reactions to use; nature of content; frequency; modes of use; and habits regarding the Web.

You should not participate in this study if you do not consume news online.

Your participation in the study will last between 20 and 30 minutes.

Risks and Discomforts

No risks or discomforts are anticipated

Benefits

The benefits of this study are possibly understanding how web video consumption habits are formed within the population of participants. Although no definitive conclusions can be made, there is a possibility for common behavioral themes to surface. Furthermore, sampling a population that was alive before the Internet was a
mainstream availability, the study could be telling of how consumption habits may have evolved over the decades in which the Internet grew most recently.

You may not benefit, personally by participating in this study.

Confidentiality and Records

Your study information will be kept confidential by Krithika Rajaraman.

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:

* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Krithika Rajaraman, kritrajaraman@gmail.com; (248) 765-4834 or Hans Meyer, meyerh@ohio.edu (740) 597-3084.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Chris Hayhow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740) 593-0664 or hayhow@ohio.edu.

By agreeing to participate in this study, you are agreeing that:

• you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered;
• you have been informed of potential risks and they have been explained to your satisfaction;
• you understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this study;
• you are 18 years of age or older;
• your participation in this research is completely voluntary;
• you may leave the study at any time; if you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

Interview Questions

1. How old are you?
2. What is your profession?
3. How often do you access the Internet?
4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?
9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?
10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?
11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.
12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?
13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT C

1. How old are you?
   24

2. What is your profession?
   Marketing

3. How often do you access the Internet?
   Everyday

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
   My computer and my phone.

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
   My home “office” and on the go.

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
   3 hours

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
   5 hours per week, 1 hour per day M-F.

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?
   NBC/ The Today Show.

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?
   I watch NBC/The Today Show every morning 8-11am M-F.

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?
    I enjoy watching the Today Show and then local NBC news in the mornings, so I frequently visit their websites after the morning show is over. I think NBC/Today
Show has very relatable news anchors that I trust to provide me with the latest news along with some laughs.

11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.

   NBC not only has breaking news, but they also provide news on pop culture, health/fitness, beauty, inspirational stories and more!

12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?

   I am usually working, but frequently take breaks to check NBC/The Today Show.

13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?

   I don’t necessarily think my news consumption is affected, I would say my workday is affected since I am easily distracted by the news. When I am in a rush and want to read or watch a new segment I will skip around and fast-forward just to hear/read the important parts.
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT B

1. How old are you?
   23

2. What is your profession?
   Senior Account Executive for a public relations agency

3. How often do you access the Internet?
   Every day. Probably 9-12 hours during the week and 5-10 on the weekends.

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
   I use my laptop eight hours a day during the week for work. I use my laptop a few hours a day during the weekends and I check my iPhone and use the internet on the phone at least a few hours a day every day.

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
   I use my laptop eight hours a day during the week. After work hours and during the weekend, I will use my laptop to stream television shows, catch up on social media and occasionally read the news.

   I use my iPhone everywhere.

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
   Depends. I use the internet all day (eight hours) for work and I use the internet on my phone in five minute spurts/increments to quickly check/scan social media.

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
   I work in public relations so I check the news very frequently online during the work day (although I’m mostly scanning the headlines and briefly skimming the article). I also apply to a daily newsletter from Pando Daily so that I can skim those headlines, but that’s mostly for work purposes.

   I use Twitter to scan headlines for both work and personal purposes.
I read The Skimm almost every morning at work with the day’s news highlights. I do that both for personal and work purposes.

I also watch a few news clips online per week from the Daily Show or a national news show.

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?

Buzzfeed
The Skimm
Jezebel
UpWorthy
New York Times (op-eds & Nicholas Kristof mostly)
I love the Onion

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?

I started using BuzzFeed because they had funny and interactive quizzes and other content. Eventually I realized that they have great/educational/interesting articles about news topics around current events, religion, social activism, politics, etc. and that’s how they become my main source for consuming news. They definitely cater to a younger audience as well, which I appreciate.

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?

Buzzfeed, Jezebel and the other news websites I listed have articles that align with socially liberal views and are usually fairly lengthy. I surprisingly enjoy that they have lengthy articles because I enjoy the content...it’s quality content and interesting because they tend to take a stance on their subject matter rather than objectively report on it.

11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.

I prefer news websites like Jezebel, BuzzFeed and the New York times because they are critical of social issues surrounding politics, women’s right, etc. This content is more interesting to consume than the objective content produced on other sites.

I’ve stopped watching local TV all together for my news because they rarely ever take a stance on social issues and it seems like they just report straight from
that day’s “police blotter,” which doesn’t do their audience any favors and they only perpetuate racial, economic and social injustices with their lazy reporting.

12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?

If I’m consuming the news while on my phone, I might also be listening to music on my phone and checking any text messages that come in. If I’m consuming media while at work on my laptop, I’m also probably listening to music, checking my phone, answering emails, responding to gchats and instant messages, having side conversations, etc.

13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?

I’m definitely an ADD consumer of media - meaning I would never sit down for a half hour and consume the news that entire time. I would get distracted by my phone or facebook notificiations going off on the other tab on my computer, etc. I wish I was more dedicated to reading the news, but realistically I don’t think that’s ever going to happen.

Having access to the news online is the best way for that news to reach me and although I occassionaly get distracted with my phone or email while I’m consuming the news, I try to fit in a little “news time” / online news browsing on a daily basis.
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT C

1. How old are you?
   23

2. What is your profession?
   Public Relations executive

3. How often do you access the Internet?
   Daily

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
   Laptop, phone, tablet

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
   Home, office, car, restaurant, gym, outdoors

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
   Monday-Friday 8 am – 6 pm consistently, weekends 10-30 minutes at a time on average

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
   5 day/week, 15 hr/day

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?
   CNN, New York Times, Huffington Post, USA Today, Google, The Skimm, VentureBeat, Facebook, Instagram

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?
   Socially and work

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?

11. Entertainment, knowledge, subconscious habit
12. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.

Some news sites I visit for world news, like CNN, NBC, The Skimm. Some sites are solely for entertainment, like Facebook, Instagram, Betches Love This. Other I probably wouldn’t find myself reading if I didn’t work with tech companies, like VentureBeat, Cnet, TechCrunch.

13. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?

Taking notes, talking with friends, emailing, texting, ordering food, working out.

14. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?

Make it more difficult to concentrate/digest what I’m reading. Often times need to reread or rewatch news if multitasking. Can also positively affect consumption by sharing with others that I’m connected with at that time.
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT D

1. How old are you?
   25 years of age

2. What is your profession?
   Communications/Marketing, specifically specialize in events

3. How often do you access the Internet?
   I am constantly on the Internet for research purposes both professional and personal use.

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
   During the week I access via my desktop/laptop computer since I am at work. However, on the weekends and prior to work, I generally use my mobile.

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
   I use my desktop/laptop at work and my mobile outside of work.

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
   At work, only 10-15 minutes. At home, I can spend up to an hour.

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
   Per week, 1-2 hours. Daily – sometimes never, while others for 10 minutes.

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?
   CNN, Bloomberg, NY Times and the Tribune.

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?
   Most of them were learning growing up. My parents influences the news mediums I read today.

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?
    Based on how interested the articles listed are. Additionally, if they have quick
tid-bits about what is happening without having to read FULL articles.

11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.

They provide real-time updates of what is happening locally, nationally, internationally.

12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?

I am generally in transit somewhere, or reading an article that was sent.

13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?

I just get a high-level look at what is happening and do not absorb all the specifics of what is occurring.
APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT E

1. How old are you?
   66.

2. What is your profession?
   Physician.

3. How often do you access the Internet?
   4 – 5 times a day.

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
   Desktop computer, laptop, IPad, IPhone.

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
   Home and work.

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
   10 minutes.

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
   2-3 times a day. About 15 – 18 times a week.

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?
   CNN, Yahoo news, Time magazine, The Hindu.

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?
   The Hindu is a nationwide newspaper in India, Time magazine is a renowned news magazine. CNN has a wide TV presence and Yahoo is just an extension of my mail reading.

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?
    The news provided are reliable and unbiased. They are up to date and usually
they follow up well.

11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.

As mentioned above, The Hindu reports news from India in a very neutral and precise way. Time magazine is well known for its photographs and in-depth journalism. CNN is an excellent source of world news and current affairs and Yahoo provides a variety of news items to satisfy every taste.

12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?

Usually multitasking while reading news, paying bills, reading mail, shopping online etc. The Hindu and morning coffee are inseparable while I was in India.

13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?

They only enhance the consumption of news, occasionally adding a new perspective to the task I am at. For example, a news about a company may add a new information about the company I have invested in.
APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT F

1. How old are you?
   28 years old

2. What is your profession?
   Architect

3. How often do you access the Internet?
   Multiple times a day (at least once an hour)

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?
   Iphone, Ipad, Laptop

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?
   Home & Office (and on the go)

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?
   15 minutes

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?
   Once or twice a week

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?
   Facebook, Instagram, Gmail, Google, Various stores

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?
   Word of mouth

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?
    Keep me stimulated and entertained, keeping in touch with friends/family. Inspiration and artistic ideas.
11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of content they produce.

I get most of my news from television & radio, but if need be, CNN.com, The Hindu for local and word news. Its not just for current events but also updates on arts.

12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?

Reading articles, watching video clips, viewing photo galleries. I try not to multitask when reading the news.

13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience?

The more visual graphics the article incorporates the more appealing it is to me because I am more stimulated by visuals than plain reading. Also, in a world saturated by (social) media, we need more visual appeal to attract us and keep us focused and attentive. Again I am often not doing other activities when perusing the news on the internet.
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT G

1. How old are you?

   54

2. What is your profession?

   Office Manager at a Physicians’s office

3. How often do you access the Internet?

   12 hours per day

4. Which medium(s) do you use most frequently to access the Internet?

   DESKTOP/LAPTOP/PHONE

5. From where do you use each of the media you mentioned?

   office, home, on the go

6. On average, how long do you spend online in one session?

   2 hrs

7. How often do you access the Internet for news per week? Per day?

   maybe twice a week

8. Which news Website(s) do you frequently visit?

   aol news, cnn news

9. How did you begin following this news Website(s)?

   downloaded an app

10. Why do you return to this Website(s)?

    because of the news flashes

11. Tell me about some of the news Websites that you visit and what kind of
content they produce.

News as it happens is very important to me, weather predictions are also very helpful

12. What activities are you usually doing while consuming news on the Web? Why?
    office work, checking mail, checking facebook

13. How do you think these activities affect your consumption and the experience? Help me with the current trends, sales alerts and weather predictions.