INTERNET SOCIAL NETWORKS
AND TRADITIONAL MEDIA[*]

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present the ways and forms in which traditional media have adapted to the digital world, primarily to the Internet social networks and the interactive possibilities provided by them. The research question is: do and to what extent the traditional media use the opportunities offered by social media. During the search for the answer to this question, the results of this academic research and the results obtained from the in-depth interviews with the editors of the web sites of the six leading traditional media in Serbia carried out by the author of this paper were analyzed. The conclusion is that traditional media use social networks predominantly to promote their online editions, and that those media which want to be influential in this filed use social network sites as a source of information and generate a new genre - a live blog.

Key words: traditional media, online media, internet social networks, Twitter effect, digital communication.

ДРУШТВЕНЕ ИНТЕРНЕТСКЕ МРЕЖЕ
И ТРАДИЦИОНАЛНИ МЕДИЈИ

Апстракт

Циљ овог рада је да се прикажу начини и облици на које се традиционални медији прилагођавају дигиталном свету, пре свега друштвеним интернетским мрежама и интерактивним могућностима које оне пружају. Истраживачко питање гласи: Да ли и у којој мери традиционални медији користе могућности које пружају друштвени медији? У потрази за одговором на ово питање анализирани су резултати академских истраживања и резултати добијени дубинским интервјуима са уредницима онлајн издања шест водећих традици-

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[*] This paper derived from the doctoral dissertation "Transformation of traditional media in a new technological environment" defended at the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade.

оналних медија у Србији које је обавила ауторка овог рада. Закључак је да традиционални медији користе друштвене мреже претежно за промоцију садржаја свог онлајн издања, а да они медији који желе да буду утицајни и у овој сфери употребљавају друштвене мреже као извор података и стварају нови жанр – блог уживо.

Кључне речи: традиционални медији, онлајн медији, друштвене интернетске мреже, твитер ефекат, дигитална комуникација.

INTRODUCTION

The changes digital technology has brought into the world of traditional media are so radical that Neil Postman calls this effect "New Media Ecology". Technological changes are not simply adding or eliminating an invention, they are like changes in a natural environment - they signify a new stage in which everything changes. Postman speaks about these radical changes – he claims that they change our interests, as well as the things we think about, and the symbols we use which affect the nature of the community - "the arena where our thoughts develop" (Postman, 1993, pp.18-20). This new media environment cannot be interpreted without relying on two concepts - one is a modern view of the world that emerges from the industrial society, and the other is a postmodern paradigm that links to the post-industrial society (Lankshear, Knobel, 2011, cited by Hermida, 2014, p. 363). Since the mass media have emerged and developed in the industrial society, it includes all the features of modernism, such as the understanding of the world as a unique, linear and causally connected. Thus, in this mass media world, the issuing of newspaper requires significant funds, professionals are engaged in journalism, all information undergoes editorial control and approval, and journalistic texts are mostly signed and have a linear structure. After the printing, a newspaper has a final structure with a clearly defined hierarchy of news. The principles of journalism are clearly defined and sustained by the journalists while the contacts with readers are rare and formalized. The newsroom is the place where journalists really meet and discuss important issues of editorial policy (Hermida, 2014, p. 364). This approach, the research showed, has been retained by traditional media even after the digital technology turned things upside down - they now use the new technology to do old things (Hermida, 2014, p. 364). But their audiences accept the changes and use the tools that are available to them and become a part of this new media landscape. Under the pressure of this new, active audience, the transformation of traditional media begins, which is not only technological but also cultural. An active audience that blogs, tweets, uploads their own video clips on YouTube, etc. is the part of a postmodern paradigm where interactive, hybrid, cooperative, fluid, non-linear and infinite communication dominates.

"Unlike the press or television, anyone can publish and distribute news at any time and without restrictions imposed by traditional journalism, without the established editorial structure and processes. News is broadcast continuously almost in real time" (Hermida, 2014, p. 365).

As Hermida states, this leads to the pressure on journalism that changes by switching from the product to the *process* that has no end.

This paper investigates those aspects of changes of traditional media in the digital world that arise under the influence of social media. The aim of this paper is to show in what ways and forms the traditional media adapt to the digital world, primarily to social networks and the interactive possibilities they provide. The research question is: do the traditional media use the opportunities offered by social media and to what extent? When searching for the answer to this question, the results of academic surveys and the results obtained by the in-depth interviews[1] that the author of this paper did with the editors of online editions of the six leading traditional media in Serbia were analysed. The following traditional media were chosen: media organizations Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) and B92; the daily newspapers Politika, Blic and Danas and a weekly newspaper Vreme. When choosing which traditional media would be used in the research, the influence and reputation they have was taken into account, which is how the following were chosen: RTS – being the public broadcasting service with the program with the highest rating (Ipsos Strategic Marketing, 2015, p. 20); Blic – the daily newspaper whose online edition Blic Online is the most visited information portal (Krivokapić et al., 2017, p. 14; Matić & Valić Nedeljković, 2014, p. 79); B92 – in the past, media with a missionary role and a pioneer role in the development of online editions of traditional media; the daily newspaper Politika, the oldest daily in Serbia and a representative of serious press[2]; the daily Danas and weekly Vreme, which are curiosities as they are media owned by journalists. It was also important that the research sample takes into account all types of traditional media (press, television and radio), as well as various types of media ownership (public broadcasting service and commercial media, including mixed ownership, domestic ownership, foreign ownership and journalists ownership). Interviewees were chosen based on their reputation - those are the journalists who are either the

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[1] The research is a part of wider author's research "Specifics and Perspectives of Traditional Media Transformation in Serbia", conducted for the purpose of the author's doctoral dissertation "Transformation of Traditional Media in a New Technological Environment".

[2] "Among the 12 national daily newspapers, there are only two serious newspapers (Politika and Danas), and a specialized economics newspaper (Pregled)" (Matić & Valić Nedeljković, 2014, p. 90).

editors of online editions (RTS and Danas) or the directors and assistant directors or editors directly involved in the production of traditional media online editions (Blic, Politika, B92 and Vreme). The list of interviewees can be found at the end of the paper. The interviews were conducted from 28th April 2015 to 19th June 2015 in Belgrade, recorded and literally transcribed.

DIGITAL NETWORKS:
A NEW PLATFORM FOR TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Under the influence of the evolved habits of the audience, the traditional media are changing very fast. One of these changes of audience habits is that they use social media as sources of news much more now. That was the result of a global survey on how the audience access news conducted by Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism in 36 countries in 2017. Based on the results of this study, more than half of Americans (51%) use social media as sources of news. Facebook is in the first place, but there is an increase in the number of Twitter users who read the news on this social network - 15% in 2016 compared to 10% in the previous year. Another trend observed in the United States is that news is increasingly read on smartphones, while the use of computers is reduced (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy & Nielsen, 2017, p. 11, p. 101). A trend that mobile phones and social media go hand in hand was identified in a survey by the Pew Research Centre (Rainie, 2015). Social media have become a part of a changing media "mix" which actually means that social media users access the news in other ways - two thirds of these users watch the news both on television and on the official online websites of the mainstream media (Newman et al., 2017, p. 11).

The main trend observed in the United States in 2017 is the elimination of the gap between the news consumption via television and online platforms. While 50% of people still use the television as a news source, as many as 43% often read the news online. The difference between these two news sources was reduced from 19% in 2016 to 7% in 2017. The previously observed trend to read news on mobile phones still continues to increase (45% of people in 2017 compared to 36% in 2016) (Bialic & Matsa, 2017). Around 67% of Americans use social media as sources of news at least occasionally – while 45% of Americans use this network as the only source of news. This is due to the high popularity of this network, where 66% of Americans have Facebook profiles, as well as the fact that most Facebook users read the news on that social media. YouTube is in the second place (18%), while Twitter is in the third place (11%) (Shearer & Gottfried, 2017). Although the data gathered by the Pew Research Centre and the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism somewhat differ due to some differences in research techniques, it is certain that the "power of platforms" is growing.

Americans have little confidence in the information coming from social media. Only 5% of adults in the United States have a lot of confidence in the information they receive from social media, almost identical to 4% who said that in 2016. The survey found that Americans have much more confidence in national and local news organizations, and in the information coming from friends and family (Bialic & Matsa, 2017). Confidence in reputable media is one of the reasons for the growth of online subscription in America in 2017, because people opt for online editions of news media whose reputation is unquestionable (Newman et al., 2017, p. 31).

The analysis of the results of the research done by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism shows the following trends in some countries when it comes to the impact of social media on journalism: news is accessed from social media (the power of the platform grows), the way media content is distributed is changing since the users now find news via browsers and content aggregators, which results in the fact that most users do not remember who the author of the content is (the media brand gets weaker), the economic position of the media changes, and a crisis of trust in journalism arises because of fake news. The growth and scope of online access to the news differs from country to country, while the positive, growing trend is retained in the United States and the United Kingdom (Newman et al., 2017, pp. 10-12).

Listening to the needs of the online audience, Twitter, together with the US news agency Bloomberg, plans to launch a TV channel that will broadcast global breaking news 24 hours a day only on Twitter (Kafka, 2017). YouTube has YouTube TV which has spread to a large portion of the US digital media market in 2017 (Perez, 2017). The British BBC is expanding its presence in the digital world - they have upgraded their mobile phone application, and they also participate in the experiments related to new digital platform capabilities along with Facebook (Newman et al., 2017, p. 54). The German Deutsche Welle are also developing their fourth aspect - social media, in addition to radio, television, and online editions. They have a separate Department of Social Media and they see their potential in that area (Cottrell, 2016, pp. 81-82). Social media, especially Facebook, have been attracting the attention of traditional media from their very start. In 2007, American TV station ABC News was among the first traditional media to start collaborating with Facebook to transition its news to new audiences (Stelter, 2007, according to Al-Rawi, 2017, p. 874). The survey "News values on social media: News organizations' Facebook use" by Ahmed Al-Rawi (2017) shows that four television stations in Arabic (The Iranian Al-Alam TV, Russia Today, Deutsche Welle, and BBC) publish news on their Facebook pages because they want to reach a new audience, and that their criteria for selecting the news are social significance and proximity, as well as the ideological agenda of the media institution (Al-Rawi, 2017, pp. 884-885).

Investing in digital projects has become necessary for many leading traditional news media, according to a survey done by 12 leading traditional private media (print and electronic) in 6 European countries (Cornia, Sehl, & Nielsen, 2017). This research has also shown that traditional media have direct and indirect reasons to invest in the digital media sphere. Some of the direct benefits are: obtaining new audiences, retaining the existing audiences, and encouraging digital subscription. There is also the indirect benefit that is often a motive of equal importance for media organizations. Some of the indirect benefits are: the desire of the media to be seen by the audiences as innovative, the development of new forms of journalistic expression and easier adaptation to inevitable changes (Cornia et al., 2017, p. 7).

CULTURE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

New digital technologies have introduced changes in the way how citizens are informed and they brought with them new communication habits - a new "culture of social media" has emerged that has influenced many elements of journalism (Bossio, 2017). These changes are affecting the standards of journalist professionalism, the behaviour and role of the audiences, editorial practice and functioning of the media organizations, the professional identity of journalists, the modes of distribution and the products of journalistic work themselves, that is, news (Bossio, 2017). Traditional professional standards in journalism: objectivity, information verification and professional autonomy of journalists are caused by new forms of communication on social media. That is why objectivity transitions to authenticity, information verification transitions to transparency, and professional autonomy of journalists transitions to collaboration (Bossio, 2017, pp. 23-45).

The objectivity of traditional media involves numerous practices such as detachment and non-partisanship in reportage, attempted balance in finding news sources, and a distinct style of news writing (Mindich, 1998, p. 2, according to Bossio, 2017, p. 28). Digital technologies have made it possible for the audiences to comment on news, share video clips and photos, and write news. News websites where news is published by audiences only start to appear. One of the most visited political websites - The Huffington Post, which was launched as a citizen journalism site and the first online news media to receive the Pulitzer Prize (Calderone, 2012, according to Bossio, 2017, p. 23), has shown that in the world of digital platforms, objectivity as one of the most important standards of professional journalism disappears. During the pre-election campaign in the United States in 2016, all users who visited this website and clicked on the text on Donald Trump, who was the US presidential candidate back then, could see the following message:

"Note to our readers: Donald Trump is a serial liar, rampant xenophobe, racist, misogynist, birther[3] and bully who has repeatedly pledged to ban all Muslims—1.6 billion members of an entire religion—from entering the U.S." (Sterne 2016, according to Bossio, 2017, p. 23).

Although such a violation of journalistic objectivity was also influenced by the political situation, the culture of social media had the main influence. The main features of this culture, as seen by Diana Bossio are: prioritisation of sharing, authentic self-expression and the rejection of notions of a universal truth (Bossio, 2017, p. 24). Authenticity is defined as a mode of representational practice that emerged out of blogging culture.

Information verification in search of truth as the first principle of journalism had little to do with the audiences until the emergence of social media. The methods used by journalists to determine what information was true derived from a professional culture that highly valued the integrity of journalists and the credibility of the media. With the more dominant role of the audiences and social media, more and more transparency is being noticed. "Transparency thus relates to the openness of both the journalist and the news product to scrutiny from audiences" (Bossio, 2017, p. 34). Another change brought by the active audiences is the fact that journalists become less autonomous, and accept the collaboration with the audiences for the purpose of news production process - the shift from autonomy to collaboration (Bossio, 2017, pp. 37-38).

An earlier study - "Journalists and Social Media" from 2012, published by the European Commission, aimed to determine the attitudes of journalists about social media, as well as to determine how journalists use social media in their journalistic work. For this purpose, 135 journalists from 27 EU member states were interviewed. The most used social media are Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, Flickr and YouTube. This research has shown that besides traditional information sources, journalists also use social media as source of information. The most frequently used traditional sources of information are conversations with people, the Internet and news agencies. It is interesting to mention that most of the journalists who took part in this survey considered the websites traditional information sources, primarily because of their immanent lack of interactivity (Eurobarometer, 2012, p. 7). The most popular social networks among journalists are Facebook and Twitter. It has been noticed that there is a difference in the purpose of using these two social networks - Facebook is used for both private and professional purposes, while Twitter is mainly used for

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[3] "A person who subscribes to or promotes the incorrect belief that former US president Barack Obama was born outside the United States and was therefore ineligible to be president under the provisions of the US Constitution" (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, n. d.).

professional purposes. The majority of journalists use social networks in private life as well, while when asked whether the private use of social media and the professional use of these media are separated, the majority of the respondents gave a negative answer explaining that it is "more practical, more authentic (more credible and natural) and more convenient" (Eurobarometer, 2012, p. 6). The reasons why journalists use social networks for their professional work include the search for specific information and the desire to stay up-to-date with the events, and they see as an advantage of social media that it is much easier to get to the interviewee in this way.

A part of this survey which investigated how traditional media use social media is very interesting for our paper. It has been identified that traditional media also use the social media that journalists use. These are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and blogs. Most often, social media is used to interact with the audience, to notify about the news from traditional media, to promote the above news, and to attract new visitors to the online editions of traditional media, or the audience for traditional media.

Social network Twitter has become an integral part of the professional routine of most traditional media. Twitter was founded in 2006. What is characteristic for this social network is the posting of messages that have been named *tweets*, whose length cannot exceed 140 characters, which is why Twitter is often referred to as the network for micro blogging (Pew Research Center, 2011, p. 3). The survey conducted by the Pew Research Center together with George Washington University in 2011 called "How Mainstream Media Outlets Use Twitter" has shown that the leading media in the USA use their Twitter accounts mainly for the promotion of news from their online edition. Other potentials of this network are very little used, such as the possibility to interact with other users, or to do a survey of their opinions, or to refer others to the news and topics published by other media or institutions (through *retweeting*[4]).

Current surveys, journalism practice and media theory are trying to exploit and explain what could be called the media potential of social networks, primarily Twitter. Among the reporters, there is still an opinion that was uttered by The New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd in 2009, who in a nutshell said that Twitter is "a toy for celebrities who are bored and for high school girls" (Hermida, 2014, p. 364). In the meantime, the popularity of Twitter has significantly increased, as evidenced by the fact that in 2012, 340 million diverse tweets were posted daily (Twitter, 2012, according to Hermida, 2014, p. 360). It is believed that the famous American television host Oprah Winfrey significantly contributed to the popularity of this social network when she opened a Twitter account in

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[4] *Retweeting* is forwarding another message (a tweet) originally posted on another account on Twitter. Since a retweet stands out among other regular tweets, it serves as a recommendation at the same time.

2009 (Hermida, 2013, p. 214). The supporters of journalism as we know it recognize the importance of Twitter and other social networks to promote stories, maintain contacts with readers, and "pass the time on the bus for those with short attention spans", and they point out that if we see social media as a substitute for reporting or a reflection of what is important, that will be "a path to ruin". (Editorial: Lost in the Twitterverse, 2013). Other authors oppose this harsh attitude by emphasizing the role that social networks such as Twitter played during the sudden and important events that took place (for example, anti-government demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011) (Bebawi & Bossio, 2014; Al-Saqaf & Christensen, 2017, March), and by saying "that there is no alternative media universe" and that "media is an all-encompassing world, and Twitter is now very much part of that" (Clune, 2013, November 13).

By defining Twitter as "ambient news network", Alfred Hermida points out that social media technology such as Twitter

> "facilitate the immediate dissemination of digital fragments of news and information creating networked digital technologies as awareness systems that offer diverse means to collect, communicate, share and display news and information in the periphery of a user's awareness in real-time" (Hermida, 2014, p. 360).

Similar to ambient music that is heard in the background and which the listener will pay attention to only when the rhythm or style changes, Twitter network also responds by changing the rhythm and style when big unforeseen events erupt (Bruns & Burgess, 2012, according to Hermida, 2014, p. 361). Ambient journalism involves users in a constant stream of news that are published as Twitter posts, which users use to create meaning and then interact with others on the network to check, add and interpret information. But the nature of the network that allows the constant flow of comments on events, transforming the event into continuous news, eliminates some important elements of traditional journalism such as verification of facts and distance.

It is believed that journalists accepted Twitter primarily to use it when reporting on the most important events, to gather information, to reach competent interviewees, and to increase the visit to the media site they work for. Many newsrooms nowadays use their Twitter accounts to automatically send a link that contains the latest story as soon as it is posted online (Blasingdame, 2011, according to Hermida, 2014, p. 362). Early research of the impact of social networks on journalism has shown that the media use social networks within professional journalism rules (Newman, 2009). Journalists use Twitter to get a different view of an event, and often consider it to be *vox populi* such as journalistic surveys.

A new insight into how traditional media use Twitter and how they get adapted to the digital environment is provided by the studies that analysed the behaviour of traditional media on Twitter during the election

(Vazquez, Zhao, & Nielsen, 2017a; Vazquez, Nurse, Simon, & Nielsen, 2017b; Molyneux & Mourao, 2017; Wei, He, Gao, Li, Zhou, & Wong, 2013). Traditional media are making significant efforts in order to strengthen their positions on social media such as Facebook and Twitter (Wei et al., 2013, p.1). Although the number of Twitter users who use this network as news source is low, political parties still use it to mobilize support or to channel political debate to this media, and the result is an increasing interest of news media in this social network (Vazquez et al., 2017a, p. 2). The research conducted by Vazquez, Zhao & Nielsen analysed the participation of traditional news media and digital-born media in online debates on Twitter during the presidential election in France in 2017. As shown by this survey, traditional media were the dominant ones when it came to the production of news on Twitter, while most of the digital-born media were very little engaged (Vazquez et al., 2017a, p. 7). Similar results were obtained by the research "The Digital-Born and Legacy News Media on Twitter during German Federal Election", which found that traditional media produced most of the news on Twitter during federal elections in Germany, with two weekly newspapers (Die Zeit and Der Spiegel) having had a leading role in the political debate on this social media (Vazquez et al., 2017b, p. 1).

LIVE BLOG: NEW FORMAT

A new format that has appeared is called *live blog*[5] which is a hybrid online site that contains press reports, news and material generated by users and comments sent and published almost in real time. These blogs which are characterized by the almost instant news broadcasting have been accepted by the world's largest media companies including BBC, The Guardian, The New York Times and CNN. According to some authors, live blog has become a standard form when publishing the most important events, sport events broadcasts and scheduled entertainment events (Thurman & Walters, 2013, p. 1). The main feature of this format is that the news on the blog is published in reverse (from the chronological standpoint), so the information that is on the top of the blog is the latest information; multimedia is used, as well as many links, user-generated information is published, Twitter and other social media posts are published and an informal tone is used. Live blog is actually a complement to the news site that is being created to track breaking news.

According to the survey conducted by Neil Thurman and Anna Walters (Thurman & Walters, 2013), live blog visitors prefer to participate

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[5] "*Live blog* is a single blog post on a specific topic to which time-stamped content is progressively added for a finite period - anywhere between half an hour and 24 hours" (Thurman & Walters, 2013, p. 2).

and visit live blogs far more than to post comments on other websites, and even more than to communicate with reporters from other online formats. The advantages that they emphasize are the quality of interaction with journalists working on the blog, the quality of user-generated news, and the great possibility of quick interaction with other users, since everyone is online at the same time. Thurman and Walters testify to the great popularity of this format, which they explain to be a consequence of its features and not the news being published. Journalists working for live blogs are well-aware of the difficulties arising from two difficult-to-reconcile requests: the first is that information is updated at very short time intervals, and the second one is that the information is true. Although one of the shortcomings of this format is a poor verification of facts, users emphasize as an advantage the fact that the event is broadcast almost in real time and they are allowed to make their own conclusions and interpret the event as opposed to reporter's personal view. Emphasizing the intensity, user participation and interest in topics of public interest, Thurman and Walters made a bold conclusion that live blog resembles radical press from the early nineteenth century.

> "In times of economic and political turmoil, live blogs do not only have to abide by the different time and space preferences of users who read the news, but they can provide and offer a level of participation and transparency that is more in line with contemporary democratic demands" (Thurman & Walters, 2013, p. 18).

The disadvantages of this type of online reporting such as the risk of inaccurate news, the lack of context and flow of the text, are also known to journalists and editors of live blogs themselves (Wells, 2011, March 28). However, this format is very popular and often has more visits and views than the articles or photo galleries which broadcast on the same topic. Investigating the popularity of live blogs published in the online edition of The Guardian, Thurman and Walters found that live blog had 233 percent more unique visitors numbers[6] than conventional genres (Thurman & Walters, 2013, p. 5).

The development of this hybrid genre points to the possibility that it might become what is called "the added value" (Heikkilä, Kunelius, & Ahva, 2013), whereby meaning the need for the media to provide the readers with content that they cannot find anywhere else.

In Serbia live blog are being fostered by RTS and Blic. RTS uses live blogs often for reporting about sporting events (for example: Germany won the Confederations Cup, 2017, July 2), and Blic used this

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[6] "The number of unique visitors is the number of people who have visited a site at least once for a certain period of time. Unlike the number of visits, the number of unique visitors will record two visits by the same person as one visitor, because those visits were made by the same person"(Glossary of Internet terms, n.d.).

format frequently, among other things, to monitor the assembly session on which Prime Minister Ana Brnabić delivered her exposé on June 28, 2017 (Agencije, Đorđević & Latković, 2017, June 27).

NEW CONSEQUENCES

The recent theoretical discussion about the CNN effect is becoming obsolete (Makner, 2005, pp. 286-289; Mek Kvin, 2000, pp. 128-129; Bruno, 2010-2011), because of the newly popular Twitter effect, as well as the impact that social networks have had on journalism. The CNN effect was named after the changes caused by the first global television CNN by introducing real-time news reporting[7] (Mihajlov Prokopović, 2009, pp. 111-113; 120-121; 125). Although there is no consensus on the definition of the CNN effect, most authors agree that this way of reporting, in addition to the obvious changes in the work of the international reporters, has largely redefined diplomacy, international relations and military strategy (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 4). Rapid reporting, global coverage of topics and events, and more information are the features of the new role of traditional media that is enabled thanks to *real time news*.

Almost twenty years later, the impact of internet social networks on reporting when disasters and sudden events happened was manifested in all its importance, which was confirmed by the new name - the Tweeter effect. And just like the Gulf War was paradigmatic for the CNN effect, the earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010 was the first "Twitter Disaster" (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 8). This means that the posts from the social network Twitter played a very important role for reporting in the first hours after the earthquake when telephone connections were cut off, and the great part of the island was without electricity. Since the radio and television program in Haiti were interrupted, the only way to communicate was with mobile phones and the Internet. The first tweet was posted seven minutes after the earthquake by Frederic Dupoux (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 5). After that, thousands of tweets followed. Given that there were only two correspondents in Haiti at the time of the earthquake (from the Associated Press and Reuters), and that they were hit by the disaster, there was a problem for all major media on how to report on the most important event from the place where they had no reporters on the ground, a place that became a kind of a "news-vacuum". This problem was solved by the media by using news generated by users, and the most important role was played by Twitter. As Matthew Weaver, the editor with the Guardian explained: tweets go first, then photos, videos, and eventually electronic media (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 7). So, not just Twitter, but other social networks -

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[7] CNN reported in this way for the first time about the Gulf War in 1991.

for example, Facebook, YouTube and Flickr, as well as other platforms provided via the Internet - Skype and traditional blogs, played a significant role in supplying information to the media. This change in the media landscape, analogous to the change that the CNN brought in the nineties called the CNN effect, is called the Twitter effect.

By analyzing how big media like BBC, The Guardian, and CNN used social networks in the "news-vacuum" that arose after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, Nicola Bruno emphasizes the difference between the CNN effect and the Twitter effect. The first difference lies in the fact that the CNN effect required the presence of reporters at the premises, while the Twitter effect actually allows coverage of an event without a reporter on the ground, and information is collected thanks to the online news created by users. Moreover, the CNN effect deals with global crises, while the Twitter effect was created in conditions of major disasters or political protests, and finally the Twitter effect supports the idea of diversity of sources and it is more oriented to the "process" of news-making (Bruno, 2010-2011, pp. 8-9).

Nicola Bruno investigated in his paper how large news media behaved when using the information sent by citizens from the scene (from Haiti). He analyzed the online editions of BBC, The Guardian, and CNN, bearing in mind that these media were among the first to include user-generated content, as well as to develop strategies to collect online news and to check the news sent by users. Furthermore, these media used the live blog format that was defined as "emerging innovation of 2010" in the world of journalism. On the other hand, these three media represent three different models when the technology platform they use is considered and when taking into account their editorial structures. These different models, as Bruno found, had different consequences on the quantity, quality and reliability of user-generated content employed in their coverage of this event (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 29).

The BBC used a somewhat centralized approach to social media. This was in line with the previously developed practice of the BBC platform for citizen journalism known as UGC Hub. The employees from this BBC newsroom were in charge of searching, verifying, and distributing material produced directly by citizens. This is how Silvia Costeloe, a UGC Hub reporter explains this process:

> "We do a lot of news gathering, and we get a lot of reaction from users to feed back into our stories, to get human stories, and elements, and do some news gathering on breaking stories as well" (cited by Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 30).

UGC Hub team's responsibility is to look for videos, images and first-hand accounts and to send them to other BBC newsrooms to be used in various BBC online, radio and TV programs. The idea for this platform

had come from the catastrophic tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004, when the BBC had received thousands of emails, pictures and videos from the citizens on the ground, while the London Underground attacks of 7th July 2005 gave the UGC Hub project acceleration. Initially only three journalists were assigned to the UGC Hub, but with time that number increased (23 journalists worked full-time at the UGC Hub in 2010). The main principle that is not deviated from is to check all online content and source that comes from the user. Various procedures have been developed that make it easier to check the information (Bruno, 2010-2011, pp. 33-38). However, there is some deviation to this rule; for example, for the Live Pages on BBC.com, the user does not need to be talked to if the tweet that person published is an opinion. This platform and its associates - the citizens who post their texts, photos and videos - have testified to many important events and disasters; however, the three major disasters of 2011- the London riots, the tsunami in Japan and the Arab Spring represent a sort of a turning point (Taft, 2014, December 27). Therefore, the main prerequisites for the BBC approach to user-generated content are these two things: centralized approach and checks.

The Guardian represents the second, de-centralized approach to social media. A brand new role within the media organization was created called the "community coordinator" whose job is to read all users' comments, suggestions and questions and be the mediator between the user and the editorial department. There are some community coordinators and they are related to the journalistic team that writes for a specific section (for example, Books Community Coordinator). The Guardian has adopted an extremely open approach when using user-generated content. The live blog format is used a lot in online editions. Although the speed of reporting is very important, The Guardian emphasizes that they adhere to the rule that it is necessary to offer both speed of reporting and in-depth analysis (Bruno, 2010-2011, pp. 39-45). This newspaper company risks to publish the information that are not reliable due to the speed, and they try to protect themselves from this by indicating that the published material has not been checked. However, it had happened that the Guardian published inaccurate information, and that is the toll the Guardian pays for following the rule that the reporting speed is the most important. The Guardian's attitude towards social media is defined by decentralized approach and reporting speed.

In 2006, the CNN launched the *iReport* platform in order to collect user-generated content for breaking news stories. In the beginning, for the first two years, the content was being reviewed by CNN's editors, and they would decide what could be aired on CNN TV channel or in the online edition. On average, 10% of the sent material was published or aired. Two years from its startup, *iReport* had become more like an online community such as YouTube rather than an online edition of traditional

media, which meant that users could submit their content without any pre-reading by the CNN. But a clear difference was established - only the stories that had been vetted and cleared by the CNN would be marked "CNN iReport" and used on-air on CNN TV or on CNN website *CNN.com.* Despite all this, the iReport program received quite a lot negative reviews, particularly because of some rumors they published - as in the case of the 2008 report that Apple CEO Steve Jobs had suffered a heart attack, which even caused the Apple stock to fall (Bruno, 2010-2011, pp. 45-48). In the days following the earthquake in Haiti, the most video material sent by citizens was used by the CNN, thanks to this platform specializing in content generated by users. These contents were broadcast after they were pre-read and edited (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 20).

When reporting from major events with breaking news, social media become an indispensable part of this process, especially if for any reason it is not possible to get information published by agencies or other media. In the so-called "news-vacuum", content published by users becomes very valuable for the media. The research has shown that their role becomes less important when correspondents on the ground appear. However, although there is no quality and reliable reporting without a professional approach, it is being considered nowadays to create a process of cooperation between citizens and journalists in monitoring and reporting of events, and this kind of journalism is called *networked journalism.* The term "networked journalism" was first used by Jeff Jarvis in 2006 (Jarvis, 2006, July 5) in order to show it is possible to overcome the rivalry between mainstream journalism and citizen journalism. This collaboration enables everyone to share ideas, facts, and questions, and it focuses on the journalism as process more than the journalism as product (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 65).

The use of social media has enabled reporting in the conditions when the media do not have their correspondents on the ground and it has emphasized even more the reporting speed as a desirable quality of information. In this modern online environment, this speed is measured in minutes and it has caused the news cycle to be defined as the "1440-minute news-cycle", and not like the previous "24-hour news-cycle" (Dan Gillmor, cited by Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 66).

The reporting speed and the use of content sent by users and journalistic standards of the reliability and verification of the news often act like opposites. If the media apply the strategy "publish first, verify later", they risk to publish inaccurate information. The second strategy, "verify first, publish later" eliminates this risk and is used by the BBC's platform UGC Hub. It is possible to take the best of both approaches, but this requires quick adjustment to the requirements of the new digital environment. Engaging journalists who would follow social media and whose task would be to filter, verify and edit the most relevant content

circulating online using new technological solutions to verify the sources is one of the possible solutions to this problem (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 67; Hermida, 2013. p. 369). Some authors point out that the only true "added value" that independent professionals can offer is verification and guarantee that the information published is accurate (Bruno, 2010-2011, p. 69).

The relationship between the Internet users, *netizens*[8], and professional journalists, as well as traditional media, is the subject of the research done by Elina Noppari, Ari Heinonen and Eliisa Vainikka (2014). They started from the assumption that this relationship is a "clash of cultures" or we may use the term "clash of discourses", because journalists operate in both worlds (they can be *netizens* privately). The "clash of cultures" was approached by these authors through two concepts, anonymity and transparency. From journalists' standpoint, the anonymity provided by the network leads to the chatting on the Internet that is generally irrelevant and boring, and "a negative discussion atmosphere in the discussion forums" is created (Noppari, Heinonen & Vainikka, 2014, p. 4). On the other hand, active Internet users see the media as "gatekeepers" who restrict free discussion when they want to protect their interests, whether these are related to the financials, or to the fact that media does not want to share power with the audience. Of the surveyed respondents, 78 percent said that their own online community approaches issues from mainstream media with suspicion or criticism (Noppari et al., 2014, p. 5). Users want transparency in determining topics and they wish for the entire process of investigating and building a journalist's story to be open, so that users could intervene at any level, expecting journalists to accept remarks. This is most often opposed by editors-in-chief who do not want editorial decisions to be commented online (a statement from one of the interviewed Finnish journalists cited by Noppari et al., 2014, p. 6).

A critical attitude towards traditional media, as well as the demand that online journalists equip their texts with links to the original documents, sources of the information, etc., emphasized by web users in this research, is motivated by the desire to learn more about the event, as well as by the desire of users to evaluate "the contribution of the journalist" (Noppari et al., 2014, p. 7). The conclusion of this research is that this relationship is full of tension, although some collaboration does appear.

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[8] According to the definition given by Oxford Dictionary, *netizen* is an Internet user who uses the Internet frequently and enthusiastically (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, n. d.).

TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND INTERNET SOCIAL NETWORKS
IN SERBIA

Based on the available data, one cannot speak of a big influence of Twitter in Serbia (Zorić, 2015, April 18). However, the media in Serbia, sooner or later, decide to open accounts on social networks. It is interesting to mention weekly newspaper NIN, which opened the account on Twitter on September 11, 2012, while only two days later their collegium met on Twitter (Nedeljković, 2012, September 21). For the sake of comparison, that same year, according to marketing expert Tom Bowman, BBC Worldwide had 26 million friends on Facebook, a million and a half followers on Twitter and was one of the most visited news service on social networks.

> "When people, young or old, shared and recommended stories on social media sites, these stories were often published by the BBC. The British Public Service had committed itself to making the stories available to everyone, regardless of location and type of user engagement. This was one of their six public goals" (Kavaja, 2012, November 20).

So, traditional media go where their audience is, and now it is on social networks. This is especially true for young users, who get informed through social networks, and there is a justifiable fear among the professional public that they are not the audience of traditional media anymore, and they will not be their audience even later, in their mature age (Social networks are the center of information, 2015, February 15). As much as 90.3 percent of internet users in Serbia aged between 16 and 24 have an account on a social network (Republički zavod za statistiku, 2016, p. 27)[9]. Facebook is a very popular social network in Serbia and it is used by 3.5 million people, which makes 91.5% of the overall social media users, while there is a far lower number of Twitter users - only 4% of social media users in Serbia (Krivokapić et al., 2017, p. 15). According to the research "Online media in Serbia", the approach to social media differs from one traditional media to another. For example, for the majority of these media, Facebook is the most important platform, which is why the daily Blic has twice as many followers on Facebook than on Twitter. However, there are exceptions to this rule - RTS has more followers on Twitter than on Facebook (Share Foundation, 2017, without numeration).

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[9] As for the use of the Internet in 2016, the most popular activity is reading online newspapers or magazines (77.4% of users), searching for information is in the second place (71.3%), and in the third place is activity on social networks (68.7%). Furthermore, the Internet is also used to telephone, send and receive emails, upload and share private content, use travel services, online sale and internet banking (Republički zavod za statistiku, 2016, p. 26).

Traditional media in Serbia use social networks for the promotion of their content and as a source of information, as shown by the study conducted by the author for the purpose of this paper. The study included the interviews with the editors of the web sites of the six leading traditional media in Serbia (broadcasting organisations: RTS and B92, dailies: Politika, Blic and Danas, and the weekly newspaper Vreme). They mostly use Facebook and Twitter to promote their content, while RTS, Vreme and Danas use YouTube. In addition, B92 uses Linkedin, and Danas uses Instagram. All interviewees in this survey pointed out that their media organizations use social networks as a source of information, but the information is pre-read and edited.

> "Not even the Prime Minister of Serbia is reliable unless you verify his statements – so why would then social media be considered reliable at all time. I mean, no source of information is that reliable that it should not be verified. It should definitely be checked. If somebody posts on social media that something happened, we do not automatically publish it until we verify it, and if a public figure says something, we then say that he or she said that, because then we do not bear responsibility since we just quoted that person's words. But, I am of the belief that everything needs to be verified. We have the least problems with those sources. We mostly have problems with traditional sources, schemes and spins"(Veselin Simonović, the director of Blic, personal communication, 29th April 2015).

> "That's what's changed the way of writing for the Internet, because you, as a journalist working on the Internet, need to know which information is relevant and which is not. For example, you will need to check whether the Twitter account is verified or not, whether that is a real person or not, etc''(Ivan Jelić, Technical Director of B92.net, personal communication, 19th June 2015).

RTS uses social networks as the source of information mostly when there are no reporters on the ground, or when they are unable to attend the event. These are almost always the information posted on Twitter accounts of the officials who are usually important participants in the event. Ljubiša Obradović, the editor of the Internet portal *RTS.rs*, cites an example of a Twitter account used in such a way – that was the Twitter account of Carl Bildt, a well-known Swedish politician. Another way to use the information from social networks is to find out the attitudes and opinions of certain politicians on certain issues, which is published if relevant, and if it is not published, it serves as a fact to journalists (Ljubiša Obradović, personal communication, April 28th, 2015). Similarly, social networks are also used by Politika:

> "Twitter is, in some situations, significant for the launch of specific news that we publish in the newspaper. We check whether two

politicians exchange some messages, and if we see that something is happening there then we begin with that trace. That is one of the advantages… There are also such politicians in Serbia; the politicians who polemicize and that is an opportunity to see what they think about certain topics. Of course, there are always plenty of people who like to 'stir up trouble', but after the initial turmoil, things quiet down and then people know exactly what interests them and how they should communicate. There are many situations where Twitter can be used for the newspaper" (Nikola Trklja, general secretary in the daily Politika, personal communication, 11th June 2015).

Gordan Brkić, the editor of the Internet portal *Danas.rs*, says that he often meets interesting interviewees and talks about good topics thanks to social networks:

"Since I run my own blog, I post some of those topics on my blog, and some of them are simply published here, in the paper edition of Danas, and then it is transferred to the website" (Gordan Brkić, personal communication, 12th June 2015).

Jovana Gligorijević, assistant to editor-in-chief of Vreme, has a personal Twitter account which she uses to promote her articles and her media house because that is the "synergy they use". She sometimes finds some ideas on social networks for a topic that she later investigates further.

"For example, a lot of dust was stirred on social networks over a man from Kragujevac whose three daughters have been taken away since he is poor and they live in bad conditions, have no running water, and his wife is in hospital... As a journalist, I would like to address the topic of social justice in Serbia, and check whether children in Serbia are taken away because of parents' poverty, whether poverty is a type of violence, both against children and parents who live in poverty. So, that is my pattern for using social networks as a source of information. I get an idea from what is popular on social networks, but I try to investigate further, expand it and put it in the form of a phenomenon" (Jovana Gligorijević, personal communication, 19th June 2015).

Nikola Trklja, general secretary in the daily Politika, uses his Twitter account primarily for entertainment, but he points out the following:

"You need to be aware that whatever you talk about, you speak on your behalf, but you are still a journalist of Politika, for example. And when you Tweet, you are still a Politika journalist" (Nikola Trklja, personal communication, 11th June 2015).

In accordance with the proclaimed strategic direction of development of *B92*, which wants to remain a technological leader among the leading traditional media, it is also developing its presence on social networks (Ivan Jelić, personal communication, 19th June, 2015), and a similar approach has a

daily newspaper Blic which gives priority to the online edition in relation to the printed edition (a strategy known as "digital first") (Veselin Simonović, personal communication, 29th April, 2015). In accordance with the requirements they have to fulfill as a public broadcasting service, RTS uses social media as a source only after they are certain that the information is reliable (the strategy is "to be the first and not to refute"). Politika is primarily oriented to Twitter as a source of information, but solely as an initial idea for reporting which is then done professionally and separately from Twitter. In order to increase their presence on social media, the employees in Danas require better "human and material resources". Vreme thinks they have already achieved a partial success thanks to Twitter, because journalists who have profiles on Twitter have attracted younger audiences.

> "If thanks to your activity on social media - whether you are promoting media content or simply expressing your views or commenting on social phenomena - you attract a large number of people, that also affects the audiences. So, there are people who have started to buy Vreme only because they like the approach of our journalists on Twitter, and when for the first time they hear about that journalist on Twitter, they see that it is the journalist of Vreme and then they want to see what he or she writes, and they buy Vreme. I am talking about the audiences aged between 20 and 25. This is one more way to attract young audiences." (Jovana Gligorijević, personal communication, 19th June 2015).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that traditional media use social networks predominantly to promote the content of their online editions. Those media that want to be influential in this sphere use social networks in two ways: as a data source (primarily Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) and generate a new genre - a live blog. Empirical data show that the interactive potential of social media is not significantly used by traditional media. In this new media environment, a new genre - a live blog - is developing, which is a form in which users significantly participate through social networks.

The literature used in this paper attempts to explain the possibilities open to traditional media by digital social networks. One of the new phenomena of media practice created by digital social networks is called the Twitter effect. The Twitter effect is a real-time reporting method where traditional media use social networks posts created by users who are witnesses or participants in the event being reported. The reason for the phenomenon and development of this phenomenon lies in the fact that professional media and journalists are not always on the spot at the time of the outbreak of catastrophe or other sudden events. In addition to Twitter, which played a key role in the first "Twitter Disaster" (earthquake

in Haiti, 2010), traditional media were later used other social media - Facebook, YouTube and Flickr, for instance.

The results of recent researches show that traditional media develop different models of relationships with online users on social networks. These models grow on the different priorities of traditional media editorial policy. Three models developed by the world's leading media are paradigmatic. BBC applies a centralized model and a mandatory check of data before publishing. The Guardian model features a decentralized approach and speed in reporting, with the growing risk of publishing inaccurate data. The world news channel CNN applies open access on its special platform where it publishes user content that does not pass the editorial verification of CNN.

It has been shown in the work that journalistic professionalism often has a lot of enchanted forms, without letting any users have any more serious influence on media content. The direction that undoubtedly moves the leading traditional media in Serbia explored in this paper is the promotion of content on social networks and the use of social media as a source of information. The only model that is currently being developed by these media is the checking of information appearing on digital networks.

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All interviews were conducted in Belgrade within the research for the doctoral dissertation of Anka Mihajlov Prokopović, "Transformation of traditional media in a new technological environment".

ДРУШТВЕНЕ ИНТЕРНЕТСКЕ МРЕЖЕ И ТРАДИЦИОНАЛНИ МЕДИЈИ

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Резиме

Дигиталне технологије доносе промене у сфери традиционалних медија, које Нил Постман концепцијски одређује као нову медијску екологију. Алфред Хермида указује на то да промене нису само технолошке већ и културне. У новом, дигиталном свету новинарство се мења и добија све карактеристике процеса.

Значајну промену доносе активни корисници и друштвени медији. У раду су приказани резултати истраживања који указују на појаву и јачање последица дигиталних технологија у пољу новинарства. Једна од тих последица је настанак хибридног жанра у коме сарађују новинари и корисници (блог уживо). Друга последица је појава феномена да грађани, захваљујући новим технолошким оруђима као што су „Твитер”, „Јутјуб” или „Скајп”, могу да извештавају са лица места и да замене новинаре. При томе, извештавање добија нове одлике: развија се сарадња између новинара и грађана у улози новинара и размењују се информације и недоумице. Овакво новинарство Џеф Џарвис назива умрежено новинарство.

Иако и у свету и у Србији традиционални медији имају своје налоге на друштвеним мрежама, начин коришћења је исти без обзира на развијеност одређеног медијског система. Углавном се друштвени медији користе за пласирање и промоцију садржаја и као извор података. Дуго прижељкивани развој интерактивности, нарочито између новинара и корисника, одвија се споро. Истраживања показују да, с једне стране, корисници желе да њихове примедбе буду прихваћене од стране редакције и новинара, али, с друге стране, уредници не прихватају да се уређивачка политика и конкретне одлуке коментаришу на друштвеним мрежама.