MAPPING THE DIGITAL MEDIA FORMATS USED IN AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT. The digital age brings new technologies that influence the work of professional journalists by providing new opportunities whilst touching also upon the methods and the speed of spreading the information, the communication with the audience, the technologies used by journalist and the media formats. The study has two main purposes: to analyze the new mass media formats and their and to observe how well they are represented in Azerbaijan's mass media. In order to reach these goals, selected literature was reviewed in connection to the topic and mass media websites were observed in Azerbaijan's online landscape, as well as the presence of mass media in social networks. The result of this analysis is that due to technological development journalists started to use formats more connected with new technologies such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality. In Azerbaijan's particular case, the main finding is that the digital media formats are present in mainstream websites and social networks pages with the opportunities that they offer.

Keywords: Digital age, journalism formats, social networks, mass media websites, Azerbaijan mass media

Introduction

Online journalism is the type of journalism that differs from traditional media by using its own technological substance. The three main characteristics in online journalism are multimediality, interactivity and hypertextuality. In professional journalism it is necessary to decide which kind of mutimediality is better to be used in order to provide proper information to the audience. Secondly, a journalist should use

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correctly, interactivity in order to communicate better with the audience, by providing them with an opportunity to comment, to participate and even to provide a story. And finally, when talking about hypertextuality in connection with journalist it means that the journalist has the ability to link events between themselves from other online platforms. (Deuze, M., 2001).

Online news plays a big role in media all over the world. (Mitchelstein, E., & Boczkowski, P. J. ,2009, p. 562). The core of journalism is almost the same - providing information to the mass audience. The only thing is that a journalist has to consider the internet as a system with characteristics like scale, speed, revenue and he has to be ready to work in this kind of conditions (Bell, E. J., Owen, T., Brown, P. D., Hauka, C., & Rashidian, N., 2017, p.15) In news media, the system is blurring the barriers between production and consumption. (Mitchelstein, E., & Boczkowski, P. J. 2009, p.577).

The current journalist's aim is to find balance between profession objectives and the online facilities, most of them understood it like bogged down in the data, social media, search and analysis (Dowd, C. (2020), p. 12)

Online media has passed three phases of development - duplication of traditional media to online platforms (as usatoday.com and nytimes.com); formation of the news content on the internet while providing hyperlinks more information; news content created especially for internet; at the last phase, media starts to consider the audience as an entity with a new view and with some enthusiasm to work with new forms of story telling, that allows the society to freely choose a platform. At this time, the audience can take part in spreading information by posting and adding comments to them on the website, also add comments and information to certain articles. (Chung, C. J., Nam, Y., & Stefanone, M. A., 2012, p.172).

In order to reflect on how digital news work, firstly we have to understand what is the difference between internet media and traditional media, if it is just a new format of spreading information in a number of other existing formats and what kind of online specifics it has that can differ from other media products.

The internet with its technological capability provides new abilities to the media for live reporting and breaking news.

In traditional media, before the existence of the web, journalists used to go out of the office in order to find news, but now the situation has changed, stories can be received through social platforms, so even by the time journalists start to research a story, it's already on social platforms. The only thing that the journalist could do is to take into consideration and find not published information that will open the new part of the story. (Alejandro, J., 2010, p.9)

Mass media has to provide news for multiple platforms - both traditional and online and they have to be multi-skilled. (Alejandro, J., 2010, p.13)

Digital publishing tools and powerful mobile devices are matched by cultural developments such as increased scepticism towards traditional sources of journalistic authority'. (Višňovský, J., & Radošinská, J., 2017, p.6)

According to Stoval, there are three commonly described characteristics of the World Wide Web – its multimediality, hypertextuality, and interactivity (Stoval, 2004, p. 5).

Social media and other internet platforms and companies as Apple, Google, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook are starting to become the key players in distributing news. (Bell, E. J., Owen, T., Brown, P. D., Hauka, C., & Rashidian, N., 2017, p.14)

Nowadays publishers are making platforms for users where they could create content. We could see the power of ordinary user especially on these platforms (where the content can differ depending the platform) Wikipedia, MySpace, Facebook and Youtube, where they could publish, comment, share all types of stories in different multimedia formats. (Alejandro, J., 2010, p.5).

According to Kautsky, R., & Widholm, A.: "The Internet's capacity of linking textual and visual materials to each other has also increased the internal and external intertextuality of news journalism, partly as a consequence of the new possibilities for 're-producing' news that the escalating digitalization of the media industry has brought. Moreover, online news represents profound changes in the

media output that has been more or less neglected in recent years, namely visual and textual transformations over time." (Kautsky, R., & Widholm, A., 2008, p.84-85)

Interactivity and multimedia are providing significant changes to the journalism, because currently, the main mission of the reporter is to provide information to the digital media. Due to new technology audience has started to be involved in news production. (Robinson, S., 2012, p.59)

For the last several years, journalist has started to use the combination of text, image, interactive graphics, audio and video in reporting. Most authors argue that news production nowadays has a close connection with technology development and with opportunities provided by them.

People prefer to use mobile and social web, so, that is why mass media organization move to these platforms and the way of newsrooms performing has changed as well. (Bell, E. J., Owen, T., Brown, P. D., Hauka, C., & Rashidian, N., 2017, p.25)

There is many complete information about platforms provided by a number of authors like Bell, E. J., Owen, T., Brown, P. D., Hauka, C., & Rashidian, N. in the book "The platform press: How Silicon Valley reengineered journalism". When talking about platforms, it is quite noticeable that the technological ones are starting to become publishers in a short period of time. This might be the reason why for mainstream media the subject of their future is recent. If the speed of convergence continues this way, more news organizations are likely to cease publishing—distributing, hosting, and monetizing—as a core activity. In addition, the competition between platforms by producing media products and gathering large reach audience, is more visible than it was before. But it is still difficult to identify the benefits of every single platform and therefore to forecast the profits on investments. For a publisher, the move of profits from advertising, losing of branding, and unavailability of audience data becomes the main challenge. In the case of social platforms, journalism receives a certain amount of influence which is used to create special platforms for journalist with special design, content and live video option.

Nowadays the appearance of fake news compelled by social platforms to be more responsible is pretty common, but they are still providing low-quality content, and destroying high quality stories. Due to such content, professional journalism with high civic value is maintaining the visibility of the discrimination done by the system that provides favors scale and shareability. Now more than ever greater transparency and accountability are required from platform companies. (Bell, E. J., Owen, T., Brown, P. D., Hauka, C., & Rashidian, N., 2017, p.10-11) In the following more will be explained. Especially the fact that the result of the technology development and facilities of platforms, is the change in formats while providing information by journalists in digital age.

Methodology

The first aim of this paper is to understand what kind of formats existed in digital media and which ones are in use nowadays. The second reason was to make an analysis about what kind of formats are present in Azerbaijan's mass media.

In order to find the answer for the first question, I analyzed papers and articles connected to this topic published from the beginning of the XXI century.

Then in order to get information about the situation with format usage in Azerbaijan, I made some quantitative and qualitative analysis of the websites of the TV channels, Radio stations, Newspapers, News agencies, Blogs and Social Network pages.

Firstly, by visiting websites I made an observational analysis of the formats that are presented in the webpages. After collecting this information from each website, it followed the content analysis and comparative analysis between websites and their formats.

Apart from the mainstream format of mass media, the focus was also on the present ones and the usage of different format by them, like main social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and multimedia platforms as YouTube. Then, after the usage of formats

was identified, pages of mass media were visited and the data about numbers of subscribers was collected, ranked from a big amount of audience to small. It allows us to understand whether the public is interested in these media on Social networks and multimedia platform, or not. The part interesting part was where we made a top for the mass media and their pages in order to come out with what type of information are they presenting on their pages while comparing them.

Also I was analyzing the Blogs of 3 authors, who were chosen just because they are more famous in Azerbaijan's blog and media sphere compared with others. Moreover, based on data from some Facebook pages we saw who has biggest number of subscribers. In the desire to understand which social network is the more popular I looked at information from data websites with their figures.

Digital media formats classifications

The development of news in digital technologies is changing the media sphere so fast. New ways of spreading information are appearing, which in a way they are doing the work of journalists more interactive but at the same time asking the media workers to be multi-skilled in order to be able to provide information through all trendy and available formats.

Through the years the formats have been modified due to the new technologies invented. At the beginning of the XXI century the Professor of Media Studies, from University of Amsterdam, Mark Deuze divided in 2003, all formats into four big categories: mainstream news sites, index and category sites, meta- and comment sites and share and discussion sites.

According to Deuze, mainstream news sites are "the most widespread form of news media production online". This type of news describes the one who provides editorial content, with limited or moderated form of audience participating. As an example of mainstream news sites and the sites which have the biggest audience author (CNN, BBC, MSNBC). Also, he added that to this type mostly

we could add online newspapers and Net native news sources, that are not a mainstream media.

As a second type, Deuze notes the index and category sites. He refers this type of news not to mainstream media, but to "search engines (such as Yahoo), marketing research firms (such as Moreover) or agencies (Newsindex), and sometimes even enterprising individuals (Paperboy). "Mostly we could classify this type as journalist portals which due to links provide access to the news sites on the world wide web. These hyperlinks are frequently classified and annotated by editorial teams, that is why most time they consist of material relevant to the context. Editorial original content usually not only offers index and category sites, but sometimes it provides space for chat or exchanging news, tips and links by the general public.

The third category provided by Deuze is meta and comment sites. This category is characterized as web sites which include sites about news media and "media issues in general, sometimes intended as media watchdogs, sometimes intended as an extended index and category site".

The fourth category is the share and discussion sites. The reason why Internet has a great advance is that the online platforms provide the people with an opportunity to communicate with others around the world without borders in real time.

Deuze mentioned that we could consider the Internet as a communication infrastructure which is used by a media organization as a platform for sharing ideas, stories more focused on topics such as worldwide "anti-globalization activism (the aforementioned Independent Media Centers, generally known as Indymedia) or computer news (Slashdot, featuring a tagline reading: 'News for Nerds, Stuff that Matters')".

Lately, one more author, an American technology writer and columnist, director of News Co/Lab, took an initiative to elevate news literacy and awareness, at Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication Gilmor, providing interesting views to the formats of journalism in global network. According to his opinion there were 7 formats at this period of time:

blog, wiki, sms, mobile-connected cameras, internet "broadcasting", peer-to-peer and the rss revolution.

In 2012, Eugenia Siapera, a professor in Information and Communication Studies, provided more specific forms of online journalism: participatory journalism, exemplified by Indymedia; j-blogs, blogs featuring journalistic output, exemplified by TruthOut; multimedia or visual journalism, exemplified by Vimeo; news aggregators, delivering customized news stories on demand, exemplified by Google News; online versions of mainstream news media, exemplified by Guardian Online; open or crowdsourced journalism, exemplified by Wikileaks; and social media journalism, exemplified by Twitter. (Siapera, E., 2012, 161)

Based on these classifications, Social media, Blog, and mainstream platforms are more popular and have a bigger impact both on journalists and audience. Both Twitter and Facebook provide journalists with a platform to send out short bursts of text, photos, or video to a broad audience as the story unfolds before them. Instead of fashioning facts and observations into a self-contained packaged story produced and published later in the day, information is delivered in fragments in real-time, combining observations, impressions, and behind-the-scenes remarks. (Hermida, A., 2012, p.315)

From the grainy mobile phone video of the July 2005 London bombings, to the 2009 Twitter photo of the airplane in the Hudson River, to YouTube videos of the protests in Egypt in 2011, media has become a space shared by journalists and citizens (Hermida, A., 2012, p. 309)

Such an event was when a plane crashed in New York's Hudson River. When dozens of New York-based Twitter users started sending 'tweets' about a possible plane crash in the city, the news spread like wildfire across the Twitter verse. Indeed, Twitter users broke the news of the incident around fifteen minutes before the mainstream media alerted viewers and readers to the crash. The first recorded tweet about the crash came from Jim Hanrahan, aka Manolantern, four minutes after the plane went down, who wrote: "I just watched a plane crash into the Hudson river in Manhattan." (Alejandro, J., 2010, p.20)

Prominent examples of this type of reporting include New York Times journalist Brian Stelter's tweets from the town of Joplin leveled by a tornado in May 2011. On his arrival in Joplin, Stelter was "trying to tweet everything I saw," reflecting that in those first few hours, "I think my best reporting was on Twitter".

Another New York Times journalist, Nicholas Kristof, used Facebook to post updates, observations, or short stories during his reporting of the Arab spring. However, journalists are not abandoning more established news products to report the news, rather they are supplementing traditional practices. The two New York Times journalists cited were also writing stories for the following day's newspaper, in addition to their activities on social media. (Hermida, A., 2012, p.315)

Contemporary technology is everywhere "immersive digital environments, avatarism, organic interfaces, the first cyborg recognized by a European government, interactive museums, new media, Web 4.0, immersive art, e-learning, intelligent houses, artificial intelligence and a multiplicity of other". (Soares, C., & Simão, E., 2019).

People all around the world faced the mass media changings, the growth of blogs and data journalism, occurrence of augmented reality, VR and 360degree videos and its implementation to mass media news, stabilisation of MoJo Mobile Journalism, user generated content and audience participation, opportunities provided by new games as a format to the mass media. (Toural-Bran, C., Vizoso, Á., Pérez-Seijo, S., Rodríguez-Castro, M., & Negreira-Rey, M. C. (Eds.), 2020) and new life of newsletters through e-mail, and radio through podcast.

Data journalism supports journalists by providing a new group of techniques for searching, interpretation and displaying online base data. (Gray, J., Chambers, L., & Bounegru, L. (2012 Page 7). Its practices, forms, roles and identities can be observed differently depending on the contexts. Some distinctions are involving the relationship between technology and traditional characteristics of

journalistic identity, resourcing and government approaches to open data. (Hermida, A., & Young, M. L. 2019)

Another important practice is automated journalism or robot journalism. An example can be that a program turns data into a news narrative, with limited-or zero – human in out. (Vázquez-Herrero, J., Direito-Rebollal, S., Silva-Rodríguez, A., & López-García, X. (Eds.). 2020, p.6) Journalists have always tried to create the most realistic representation possible. In this sense VR offers the most effective way for journalists to redo the effect of "being there" for audience members and VR users. (Sirkkunen, E., & Uskali, T. 2018, p. 24)

Immersive storytelling in virtual reality is raising increasing interest in the field of journalism. (Kauhanen, O., Väätäjä, H., Turunen, M., Keskinen, T., Sirkkunen, E., Uskali, T., ... & Karhu, J. 2017,).

Nowadays new media coverage and dissemination technologies have already start appearing on the market- Drone Journalism. This has given 'eyewitnessing' an extra dimension in enabling video shooting in places either or both inaccessible and dangerous for a human being. (Lauk, E., Uskali, T., Kuutti, H., & Hirvinen, H. 2016, p. 119)

But the most popular format on a personal note is podcasting- a new way of investigative journalism. There is a growing number of audio journalists that gravitated toward deep topics. They have managed to create an investigative hybrid which is the combination between the most important elements of longform print with the entertainment qualities that make podcasts so addictive. (*https://bellocollective.com/podcasts-could-spark-a-new-golden-age-of-investigative-journalism-a3c2dba5b6a5*)

Mainstream media in connection with online formats in Azerbaijan

Based on Date reportal Digital Report 2020 a substantional number of people are using the Internet today (8.05 million of people), almost 3,70 million of them being active social media users. Annually a growth of of 2% (156 thousand) becomes noticeable when internet users

are concern. The access to the internet and social media for 99% of the population is made through mobile phones.
(*https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-azerbaijan*)

After conducting several research through the data from January, it's visible that the most visited websites were: for web search- Google (English, Azerbaijan, Russian version), Yahoo.com; multimedia website (YouTube); Social Networks (Ok.ru, Facebook.com, VK.com); news websites (oxu.az, qafqazinfo.az, big.az, milli.az, musavat.com); online shopping (turbo.az, tap.az, aliexpress.com); Wikipedia and e-taxes.gov.az (*https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-azerbaijan*)

Daily the communication technology in Azerbaijan is developing, showing at every step positive changes.

Mostly the whole population of Azerbaijan has access to the internet. Due to this fact almost, all mass media have an online version of their channel, newspaper, radio, news agencies, magazines. Moreover, there are lot of mass media channels that have just an online version, operating on internet. The internet has opened great opportunities both to mass media and ordinary internet users by allowing them to create different platforms and spread information more freely. Azerbaijan, like most countries, has some popular formats like: mainstream media websites, social media platforms, websites, blogs, RSS, mobile applications (WhatsApp).

In order to have a better understanding on the current situation when the usage of formats comes into picture we will do it connected to media websites (TV channels, radio, newspaper, news agencies), then followed by the analysis of blogs and social network personal pages and groups.

Digital media formats in Azerbaijan TV channels

There are national, local and online TV channels functioning in Azerbaijan. For my analysis we will use the national and online tv channels.

These types of channels are presented by making references to the web, but mainly on the usage of the following formats: mainstream websites, social network pages, YouTube, RSS.

Mainstream websites are providing a great opportunity for the public to watch online live streams from tv channels. In addition, TV channels are working as ordinary news websites while having news feeds with actual information and special places for comments and contacts from the redaction (mail) in order to get feedback from the audience. On every TV channel's website there are links to social network's pages, to WhatsApp and telegram, to G+, to RSS feed and also YouTube.

Below I'm presenting a table with cross-sectional data from TV channels focusing on social networks and YouTube. First of all, it allows us to understand if every TV channel is using social networks or not, which social network is the most popular amongst the TV channels in Azerbaijan and which channel is used more.

TV channels/ Social Network	Facebook Like/ Subscribes	Instagram (Subscribers)	Twitter (Subscribers)	YouTube (Subscribers)
Inter.az	661918 / 701626	775k	933	
ATV	577 920/ 585 570	19,7k	86	397k
Meydan TV az	563 031/ 638 061		14,1k	
Meydan Tv rus	14 885/15 364	692k	588	398k
Meydan TV eng	12 271/12 570		773	
Real TV	123 269/186 795			57k
Idman Azerbaycan	143 522 /144 066			
Khazar	80 091/82 157	157k	1475	1.18m
ITV	100 984/186 746			154k
CBC Sport	68 103/69 784	31,6k	1486	10,7k
ARB	68 162/125 395	52,7k		444k
AzTV	46 434/ 81 367		246	73,4k
CBC	35 354/35 496	866	679	60 k

Dalga	21 489/ 22 029	17,9 k		44,6k
Medeniyyet	15 434/18 789	5,7k		
Muztv.az	11 338/ 11 581	21		14k
ARB Gunesh	7 006/7 068			29,3k
Space	6 538/ 6 610	60,9k	67,4k	63,4k
ARB24	7 084/9 442	3591		11k
Data collected from TV channels Social Networks pages 04.07.2020				

Based on the data from the table we could assume that all TV channels are using social network pages in order to spread information and communicate more with the audience. The most popular social networking service is Facebook. It can easily be recognized that all TV channels have a Facebook page. Instagram is low on the scale of preferences so far, but it is increasing with the audience and therefore with TV channels. Also seen in this table, with the information provided by my research, is that the most popular channel on Facebook is Inter az. Inter.az is the first TV channel operating outside Azerbaijan. (insert the methodological stuff)

The channel Inter.az was first registered in the Russian Federation in 2007, the head office of the channel being located in Moscow and with an official representation in Baku. It broadcasts in Azerbaijani and Russian. InterAz TV covers all of Eurasia and North Africa, including Russia and the CIS, with an open broadcast. In addition, our broadcast reaches a wide audience in Azerbaijan, Russia and Ukraine through dozens of cable and IPTV networks, also using the first national satellite, Azerspace-1. (*https://interaztv.com/about-interaz/*)

Azerspace-1 is located in a geostationary orbit at 46 degrees east longitude and covers Europe, Africa, Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Middle East. Interaz is as accessible as other Azerbaijani TV channels. Because the channel can be watched via satellite from all over the country, InterAz promotes Azerbaijani language, culture, national and spiritual values, traditions and religion, all in an attractive way for the viewers. (*https://interaztv.com/about-interaz/*)

Their website is represented in 6 different languages: Azeri, Russian, Turkish, English, Farsi and Arabic. The information and columns aren't like the typical ones. A main example is the live streaming in Azeri language. Interaz is using the following formats: mainstream website, social service networks, multimedia websites (YouTube), Android application, Mail, WhatsApp. So on its mainstream website, the channel is providing many opportunities to the audience – live streaming, news columns, video news and photo news columns. After this exposure the viewers have the right to comment the published information, and access the links to the social network pages (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), to YouTube, to Google play market to the Interaz Android application for mobile phones. Interaz is using its social network pages for publishing news with the link to the main website and for communication with the public. There is no online streaming on the social media and YouTube, just the usage of recorded videos and news line. (*https://interaztv.com/about-interaz/*)

The second popular channel is the Azad Azerbaijan TV (ATV). It is a private television station in Azerbaijan which broadcasts since December 25, 2000. ATV began broadcasting through movies and music videos, later adding news, shows and other programs. In the past couple of years ATV claimed the spot of the most popular and the most viewed channel in Azerbaijan. As it could be seen from the social network audience, it almost reached the leading position by taking the second place between TV channels and Facebook. (*http://atv.az/about*)

ATV is mainly using websites, social media and YouTube as formats, without any Android application. On its website ATV is providing online live stream from the TV channel, followed by news feeds with video stories, and the opportunity to watch programs and series after the live stream.

The next channel is MeydanTV- one of the top 3 channels- that has a very good position not only with the audience on Facebook but also on Istagram, Youtube and Twitter. On Facebook it can be found with three pages (Azeri, Russian, English), but on the other networks just with one page. Meydan TV is a Berlin-based Azerbaijani, non-profit

media organization, founded by blogger Emin Milli in 2013. As it is written on their official website page, the main purpose of the channel is to "inform active members of the society about the state of affairs in politics, economy and social issues; at the same time providing a platform for open and diverse discussions on all topics concerning Azerbaijani society". It only has an online version that functions through website, social media and YouTube. Video stories made by non professional journalists are the mainly multimedia files provided by the channel on its online platforms. The channel is using WhatsApp as an indirect way of communicating with the public and to get information from it. On their Instagram page they said "Şikayətinizi, probleminizi bizə yazın: +4915777662277" (Write your discontent and problems to us). So, with this type of media channel they are providing a platform to make every voice heard.

As far as I am concern, between all the channels (despite of the rating in social networks) the AzTV channel with its website, social network pages and YouTube page is the most professional and well put TV channel always providing high quality work. Azerbaijan Television and Radio Broadcasting Closed Joint-Stock Company is the oldest television company in our country. Azerbaijan Radio was established on November 6, 1926 while Azerbaijan Television – on February 14, 1956. Azerbaijan Television has played the most significant role in the creation of the country's television network. This proved itself on the background of all television channels, created in the period of independence. Azerbaijan Television has a very wide audience. At the moment, Azerbaijan Television programs can be watched not only in every city, village, and remote locations of our country, but also in many countries of the world. Azerbaijan Television has its own correspondents in Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, Iran, Canada, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. Since 2013 Arab countries and North Africa joined its activities. Currently, Azerbaijan Television presents talk shows on various themes, autobiographical and travel programs, music and entertainment programs, television plays, documentaries and feature

films. In the social network pages AzTV live streams from TV the most actual reports and news with good quality. (*http://www.aztv.az/en/about-us*)

Only AzTV, ITV, ATV are publishing the live stream on their social service network pages. Such channels as Space and Khazar are publishing on social networks the news without video, just text, at the same time announcing programs and series streaming on their channels. The CBC TV Azerbaijan for example is putting links to the videos on its YouTube page and also links to the news on its information website.

Digital media formats in Azerbaijan's News agencies

The other type of mainstream websites consists of news agencies. The top 6 main information agencies in the country are the following: AZERTAC, Trend, Turan, Intrefax, Report and Salam News agency`. The importance of AZERTAC and Trend is more visible.

The Azerbaijan State News Agency – (AZERTAC) is known as a major news and information agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the only source of the official government news. AZERTAC, founded by the Government of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic on March 1, 1920, functioned under various names during the Soviet period. From March 3, 1995 to January 17, 2000 the agency had the name "State Telegraph Agency under the Cabinet of Ministers" and by the end it was renamed "Azerbaijan State Telegraph Agency". Along with the official government information, AZERTAC spreads information in several languages (Azerbaijani, English, Russian, French, German, Arabic, Chinese and Spanish); news covering all aspects of life in Azerbaijan (politics, economy, culture, sports, health, environment and others.) (*https://azertag.az/en/site/about*)

Trend is a news provider from the South Caucasus, Caspian region and Central Asia. Analytical reports and feature articles produced by the agency are highlighting major political, economic, energy developments and financial articles from the rest of the countries. Trend News Agency works with five news services, including

Azerbaijan, English, Russian, Turkish and Persian. They are producing news from other countries and regions by placing more focus on some ongoing events using languages appropriate to specific audiences. Trend covers areas such as politics, business, oil and gas, transport and logistics, finance and banking in Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. (*https://en.trend.az/about*)

As we could see all of them are presented in social networks. Facebook is the most popular social network between news agencies. Also, we could mention that the majority of them have YouTube pages. This means that they are providing not only written information but also multimedia files. Trend, Day.az and Report agencies have an application in google play market.

News Agency/Social Network	Facebook Like/ Subscribes	Instagram (Subscribers)	Twitter (Subscribers)	YouTube (Subscribers)
Azertac ru	208 438/209 576		1463	19,6k
Azertac az		18,5k	7337	48,3k
Azertac en	3 459/3 531			1,67k
Trend ru	26 990/26 764		1689	4,2k
Trend az	19 020/19 036			
Trend en	9 403/9 470		6246	
APA	17 434/18 229	8729	7693	
Interfax.az (ru/az)	12 121/12 071		11	
Turan.az	7 699/8 302	133	6071	10.1k
Report	5 911/6 132	70	76	15k
Data collected from News Agencies Social Networks pages 04.07.2020				

Digital media formats in Azerbaijan Newspapers

Based on information provided on officially webpage Bizim Yol is the daily Azerbaijan political newspaper, which has been published

since 2003. The www.bizimyol.info is the official online address of this newspaper. Bizimyol.info is the news portal that delivers information from Azerbaijan and the whole world, focusing on all areas. Personally Bizimyol.info the most popular news portal in the country. (*https://www.bizimyol.info/az/about*)

1news.az is a news portal established in 2007, which provides hard news, analytics, interviews, photo reports, online TV, author columns and other information to the audience through its website and its social network pages.

Also, in the list there is Ayna (in Azerbaijan language) and Zerkalo (in Russian language) a newspaper that has been published in Azerbaijan, then due to economic situation closed. In the end it's functionating through online platforms, websites and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter. These newspapers are mostly providing the news that have analytical feedback, the opinion of the author/a column of feuilletons and several columns of authors. As the main redactor, Elchin Shixli said: "The newspaper has been turned to the field of serious analytical, investigative journalism and of course to the good quality publicist."

Azadliq qazeti is a daily political newspaper, established in 1989 as a weekly publication of the The Azerbaijani Popular Front Party (APFP). Azadlig, published daily since 1996, increased now up to six times a week while having its own website and pages on social media.

The other party newspaper that has the same features is Musavat. Yeni Musavat" newspaper is a print media belonging to Yeni Musavat Media Group. It was first published in November 10, 1989; it can be known as the press organ of the Azerbaijan National Democratic New Musavat Party, established against the communist Soviet regime. In December 1991, two months after Azerbaijan gained independence, the paper ceased its clandestine activities and was registered. Yeni Musavat is the only newspaper that brings print to Azerbaijan seven times a week. The media outlets belonging to the new Musavat media group are: www.musavat.com, www.minval.az (Russian), *http://minval.info/* and tr.minval.az (Anatolian Turkish).

Yeni Musavat Media Group is one of the main media institutions in Azerbaijan in terms of turnover, circulation and coverage.

Musavat.com, on the Internet since 2001, was originally considered an electronic version of the Yeni Musavat newspaper. Now it has surpassed the newspaper in terms of circulation and gained the title of an independent, online news portal. It is the only online Azerbaijani portal available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is a big variety in this newspaper starting from social political information and finishing with show business and bombshell. The Yeni Musavat has a page on social media as we can notice from the tablet. Moreover, it has its own application in google play.

Online Newspaper/ Social Network	Facebook Like/ Subscribes	Instagram (Subscribers)	Twitter (Subscribers)	YouTube (Subscribers)
BizimYol	1 854 973/ 1 805 496	32.4k	3527	17,8k
1news	1 394 263/ 1 334 506		9179	
Hamamtimes	459 653/ 501 056	254k	1602	109k
BBC news Azerbaycan	355 423/ 360 841	74,1k	162,4k	125k
Milli.az	317 207/ 317 702	681	8997	2,41k
Lent.az	276 091/ 284 500	7594	101k	60,7k
Yenilik.az	275 611/ 311 452	160k		15,4k
Azadliq qazeti	264 312/ 317 433	123k	1646	65,1k
Oxu az Azerbaycan Xeberleri	372 274/ 382 195		2197	
Oxu az Новости Азербайджана	248 415/ 280 868		401	
Day.az	210 951/ 211 437	2718	4637	
Yeni Musavat qazeti	113 267/ 157 765		1381	88,1k
Minval.az	57 805 / 57 016	38,7k	2376	2,93k
Ayna az	37 374/ 37 890			401
Zerkalo az	23 253/ 23 567	142	982	
Data collected from Newspapers Social Networks pages 06.07.2020				

Digital media formats in Azerbaijan's Radio stations

Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty is created by a grant from the US Congress through the US Global Media Agency (USAGM). It is broadcasted in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East. The first program of Azadlıq Radio Azerbaijani service was broadcasted in 1953 from Munich, Germany. In 1995, at the invitation of Czech President Vaclav Havel, Azadlıq Radio moved from Munich to Prague. Azadlıq Radio Baku bureau has been officially operating since 2004. Azadlıq Radio mission is to support democratic values and institutions by disseminating news and ideas. On the official website we can observe live broadcasting, news line, different columns (video, photo, infographic, caricature), research news, information and review to books and also podcasts.

ASAN Radio is a public radio station located in Baku, Azerbaijan. It started with a broadcast test on 24 December 2015. The station also streams content over the Internet for free. It currently broadcasts information about the realized projects, services and innovations served by ASAN service. The national music is a dominant feature on air. "ASAN Radio" is the first and only radio specialized on public services established under the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Asan Radio is present on social media and it has an application on google play market and Iphone market.

Radio Azad Azərbaycan has been operating since June 30, 2004. The slogan of the radio is "National music is on national radio".

The main purpose of Radio Azad Azerbaijan is to promote national music and organize educational programs. Weekly, various programs are broadcasted here 9 hours per day. The names of these programs are popular all over the country: the closest friends to drivers are "Autostop" and "Master Class", the morning show "Businessman", the program "Fashion Show" where you can listen to

the music of the most tasteful performers of the country and get acquainted with their artistic activities.

Radio station/ Social Network	Facebook Like/ Subscribes	Instagram (Subscribers)	Twitter (Subscribers)	YouTube (Subscribers)
Azadliq Radiosu	491 853/ 506 296	483k	27,2k	538k
Asan Radiosu	43 170/ 51 430	6822	318	4,48k
106.3 FM	24 475/ 24 841	888		
Araz FM	15 807/ 16 264	262	20	1,07k
Radio Antenn	16 784 / 16 986	57,7k		210
Media FM	12 433/ 12 435	70,5k		
Ictimai Radio	3 660 / 3 787	2593		658
Data collected from Radio Stations Social Networks pages 06.07.2020				

Like in any country the traditional media in Azerbaijan is losing position due to the speed of sharing information. But of course, the information spread on social platforms is not always correct. Nowadays a lot of mainstream websites have their pages on social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, where people have the opportunity to subscribe to their pages and get credible and checked information.

Blogs in Azerbaijan in digital media

Blogs first appeared in Azerbaijan approximately at the beginning of XXI century. At that time, the purpose of the blogs was also underlined-online marketing and the benefits from it. Blogs in Azerbaijan are mostly built on Wordpress, LiveJournal, Blogspots platforms.

In Azerbaijan, there are no mass media who will publish information made by citizen journalist and bloggers, because they are simply not interested in it. Civic journalist could open blogs and spread information through web platforms, but still, it is very difficult to get public attention. The blogs that cover cultural, live, food, travel

topics are more popular between audience than the ones who write about social, economical and political stuff. There are no permanent blogs and some with an amount of subscribers.

Moreover, social platforms with its marketing policy, space and ability is more suitable for doing business. In Azerbaijan it is not popular to have a blog, compared with a page on a social platform.

Here are some example of blogs - Vecheslav sapunov blog, Gorod by Bahram Bagirzade, Ashurbeyli blog, Orkhan Rzayevin blogu. These four blogs reflect the type of blogs and their themes. Sapunov Vyacheslav is a well-known Baku journalist, blogger, traveler, author of numerous publications about Baku and Baku People in the Azerbaijani and foreign press. He is also known as a creator of television films and programs, winner of the first National Festival of Tourist Films, author of the collection of short stories and stories "Such a Life"; executive editor of Boutique Baku magazine, editor-in-chief of Boutique Travel magazine, artistic director of the NETTY National Internet Award, author of the facebook project "Sapunov Online".

Most of his publications are about Baku - culture, tourism, history, Baku in movies, virtual tours to the Baku of the XIX century, etc. He can be found on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Bahram Bagirzade is an entertainer, TV host, actor, comedian and film director. He is also providing information about Baku in his blog; there are a lot of columns for architecture, persons, history, art, stories, interviews, novels, and one related to the experience and emotions of the author from the foreign country/city. By reading his articles you could easily get to the atmosphere of Baku and the foreign cities.

Orkhan Ashurbeyli is the vice-chairman of the Association of Culinary Specialists of Azerbaijan and a travel blogger. His blog is dedicated to culinary arts, Azerbaijan and information about food from different countries.

Orxan Rzayeviss director of Mediamark Digital Agency, SMM-specialist. he worked as a journalist. He is a co-founder / executor of projects such as Manads, MobChannel, and Keepface. Currently he manages Mediamark Agency established in 2016. For 6 years, he did his

duties in SMM, consulted more than 100 companies and participated at the creation of a digital marketing strategy. He was a participant in different trainings and events held in the USA, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Holland and Turkey. Since 2016, he has conducted his own training "Social Media Marketing". He is a co-founder of "Majlis Business Network". The main information presented on his blog is about startups, social media marketing and new technology, digital media, digital marketing and social media.
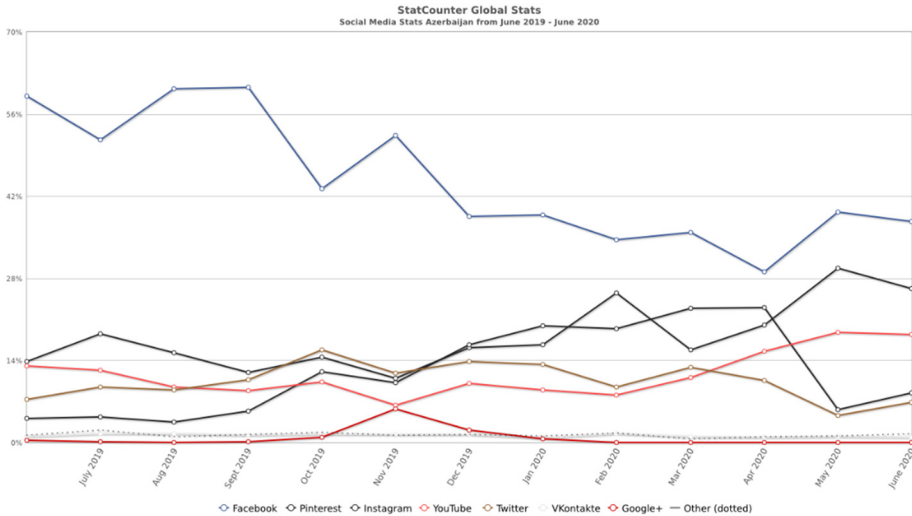
To conclude after presenting all of these important bloggers; they moved from their blog towards social networking pages. All of them have a certain number of subscribers with whom they communicate in a better way. Of course, on social media the information posted by them is not the same as in articles that are published on web blogs, but the opinion and short stories published are gaining the interest of the public in a faster way.

Social Media and Influencers

We talked about mainstream media and their appearance in social networks and Multimedia websites and applications for mobile.

Next I will be giving information about social media networks and their positions as news delivery, adding some examples. Some of the most popular networks in Azerbaijan are: Facebook, Instagram, Vkontakte, Odnoklasniki, Twitter. Base on the Statcounter data on June 2020, Facebook is staying in the leading position, then Instagram, Printerest and Twitter.

statcounter GlobalStats				Press Releases FAQ About Feedback
Facebook	**Pinterest**	**YouTube**	**Instagram**	**Twitter**	**VKontakte**
37.7%	26.25%	18.45%	8.47%	6.82%	0.81%

Social Media Stats in Azerbaijan - June 2020

StatCounter Global Stats
Social Media Stats Azerbaijan from June 2019 - June 2020

https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/azerbaijan

The main popular social media network in Azerbaijan is Facebook, but Instagram is not far behind.

In Azerbaijan being online is a popular thing. First of all because you can choose an open free platform where every single user can share and publish information concerning their interests and the result can be popularity. There are a lot of groups and personal pages trending between Facebook users. Based on information provided by Socialbakers.com the tops 3 community groups are: Azerbaycan Azerbaycan, Azerbaijan and Azerbaycan Respublikasi. Regarding personal pages Alixan Racabov, Mansur Sheris, Rufat Aliyev are have a big number of subscribers and by my observation of the pages also could be add Rafinsh.

(*https://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/facebook/pages/total/azerbaijan/community/personal*)

All of these groups are mainly about Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani communities. The users are performing the tasks of a journalist by sharing information. They are distributing the links towards information published on websites, publish videos made by themselves from events or from the city; some of them are providing

historical information about Azerbaijan. If the event is important for the society then all members are starting to become activists. Moreover, such groups and all the social media in general are acting as a helping platform for people who are in need due to: medical problems, court cases, social problems, educational problem, donation for people who are in need. For example, there are some actions made during the quarantine which are supported by Facebook and its users - "Biz birlikdə güclüyük" (We are more powerful together) with different improvisations "Biz birlikdə güclüyük" Evda Gal (We are more powerful together/ Stay home), "Sənətə dəstək ol" ("Support the art"). One example of helping people who are in need – Kimsesizlere Geng kimse (For those neglected a young person is someone).

Activist organisations are using social media in order to spread information about their events and position, like propaganda. For example, Equal feminist NGO are providing information about feminism and women rights and through social media network they gather women to participate in meetings on Baku streets on 8th of March.

The government is concerned about the performance of activism organisations on social media. In February 2019 some Parliament members suggested to create a new legislation in connection to social media, even Azerbaijan's own social media platform, in order to prevent the spreading of violence, intolerant behavior, activism, slandering and the incorrect way of using information. At the same time the president of Azerbaijan Repubic, Ilham Aliyev gave orders to create the Social Research Center, in order to monitor public opinion.
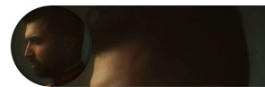
Əlixan Rəcəbov

Total fans
94 275

Mənsur Şərif

Total fans
45 987

Rufat Aliyev

Total fans
36 201

The personal Facebook pages of Alixan Racebov, Rafinsh, Mansur Serif, Rufat Aliyev are a great example of how we can learn through the video stories, interview and video reports made by others.

Alixan Racabov and Mansur Serif are doing short comic videos connected to the society. Rafinsh creates social responsible videos by promoting culture, respect, support to each person, city, country and to the world in general. His videos are feuilletons that reflect the situation between people, by showing the bad of the society, telling what is right and what is wrong. Rufat Aliyev writes articles about Azerbaijan culture, history, some recent topics, and he also did 15 minutes interviews with famous Azerbaijan people from different areas.

There are some journalist that are using social media pages to spread information and their own opinion/position on certain things; amongst them are Osman Mirzeyev, Orduxan Temirxan, Ismail Celilov, Ganimat Zahid and Vahid Mustafayev but they don't have a big numbers of subscribers.

On Instagram there are a lot of influencers from Azerbaijan, but they mostly write about fashion, beauty, tourism and don't touch important themes.

While talking about social media platforms, their format and their usage, it's necessary to mention that due to the knowledge of Russian, Turkish and English, this can contribute to the online subscribing and shifting of the Azerbaijan audience to the foreign bloggers, influencers and media pages.

Conclusion

There are many types of formats as we can see based on authors like Siapera, Deuze, Gillmor, most of them are losing their relevance and disappear, some still exist, having a visible good impact on journalists. Also, after the classification of these authors based on another researcher's investigation, they start to make an analysis of the new contemporary formats like podcast, drone, automated journalism

and VR journalism. But not all of them are well presented on Azerbaijan online platforms, mostly because of culture and interest of the public.

So as far as this investigation is concerned, the main formats in Azerbaijan's online sphere are mainstream media formats, social media and YouTube; even bloggers are moving from weblogs to social media networks and YouTube.

As we could see, all mass media is using mainstream websites, social media and YouTube as a bridge for providing information. In other words, there are a lot of media that appeared only by using online formats, some by using social networks, some webpages, some YouTube and some all of the above. Also, one of concept in Azerbaijan's media is to create applications for iPhone and Android mobile phones and communicate through them with the audience. One new format is WhatsApp with its easy communication and sharing options. Now mass media is using it for an easier communication through messages between audience and news rooms.

Podcast as a format is almost not present in Azerbaijan's digital media landscape, the reason could be the moving of the audience to the English, Turkish, Russian speaking platforms, or due to a good position of the radio stations between audience. Based on the collected data we could see that radio stations are present on Internet, websites and social networks pages, so every single person could listen to it through this platform.

And by observing the mass media activity on online platforms, we haven't noticed the usage of drones, VR and automated journalism.

Nowadays mass media in Azerbaijan as it was told above prefers to use social networks as formats for circulation information. And as the date shows that all mass media are operating through Facebook. This lets them have opportunities of dissemination the information to the audience beginning from ordinary posts till live streaming. Based on data a lot of people subscribe to mass media pages, so social networks as formats are very beneficial for journalists. Also, social networks are starting to be a good platform of free speech to the ordinary user, who

provides information on personal pages on different topics ranging from the beauty and finishing with political social ones. Moreover, lots of people are combined in communities by interests. There are many communities in Azerbaijan's social networks landscape.

And at the same time YouTube mass media pages as multimedia format draw the attention of the audience, so based on collected data not all but majority of TV channels, news agencies, newspapers, radio stations have a page on YouTube, where they are publishing multimedia information.

Summarizing the information above the new technology have provided a wide variation of formats to the mass media in digital age and in Azerbaijan's mass media. Although not adapting so fast to the new formats that new technologies provide to them, but still moving in the direction of evolution and customizing of new formats in suitable interactive way in order not to lose positions on the market and to be in trend between audience.

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