

**HELP WANTED 2010:**  
An examination of new media skills required by top U.S. news companies

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## HELP WANTED 2010:

An examination of new media skills required by top U.S. news companies

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*Determining the skills needed for employment and success in the journalism profession has never been more important. In a period of severe economic stress, journalism companies continue to hire staff, but at much reduced levels and amid vast layoffs, particularly within the print industry. Against this backdrop, this paper explores the impact of technological and economic change on the hiring practices of American news media organizations.*

*A content analysis was conducted over a period of three months in 2008 and 2009 for all the employment opportunities posted by the top ten newspaper and broadcast journalism companies in the United States. Each year, more than 700 postings were coded to determine the most desirable skills and attributes for job candidates and the amount of emphasis placed on multimedia expertise. The study also relied on interviews with recruiters for these companies who share their own views on what makes a desirable job candidate and reflect on some of the study's findings.*

*The paper argues that these job postings reflect an entire industry in transition. And in fact, the researchers identified several important changes from year-to-year, including an increased emphasis on Web/multimedia skills for broadcast newsrooms as well as further definition of what those skills should entail. For example, for the first time, an understanding of social media and mobile content delivery emerged as desired skills within job postings.*

*As previous studies in the literature have suggested, even with the technological changes in today's newsrooms, traditional journalism skills are still in demand. This research found that previous professional experience was the top requirement in job postings for both newspaper and broadcast companies, though there was a decrease for 2009 in the percentages of jobs that mentioned that attribute. Strong writing skills continued to be a priority for both newspaper and broadcast position, though recruiters urged educators to consider a broader definition of writing to include writing for multiple platforms versus a specific medium. Our belief is that this type of research may be invaluable to educators who are trying to prepare students for journalism positions in a rapidly evolving employment environment.*

### **Introduction**

Journalism around the globe is in the middle of a major paradigm shift as new media technologies rapidly force changes in the day-to-day practice of journalism, as well as the economic model that has sustained the profession for decades.

Recent surveys have found that the culture of newsrooms is changing. "New job demands are drawing a generation of young, versatile, tech-savvy, high-energy staff as financial pressures drive out higher-salaried veteran reporters and editors" (Pew Research Center, 2009).

According to the 2008 State of the News Media report, the majority of the journalists surveyed (57%) said the Internet is changing the fundamental values of

journalism. The biggest changes reported were “a loosening of standards, more outside voices and an increased emphasis on speed” (State of the News Media, 2008).

The 2008 Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass Communications Graduates found that 64.6% of graduates working in television and 76.9% of graduates working in daily newspapers reported that their jobs involved writing and editing for the Web – both up more than 10% from a year earlier. (Cox Center, 2009).

Journalism programs are feeling the pressure to prepare students for the new job requirements. A survey of journalism and mass communication administrators found that many colleges and universities are quickly incorporating digital developments and multimedia into their programs, and adding more media-skills experts to faculty rosters (ASJMC, 2007).

Against this backdrop, this paper explores the impact of these technological changes on the hiring practices of American news media organizations. A content analysis was conducted over a period of three months in 2008 and in 2009 for all the employment opportunities posted by the top ten newspaper and broadcast journalism companies in the United States.

Though newsroom layoffs were a factor during this period, most of the largest companies continued to hire new staff. The analysis focused on the types of skills these positions listed as requirements.

This mixed method research project also relied on interviews with recruiters for several major media outlets to more fully understand the language of the job postings and the work emphasis within those newsrooms that were hiring.

## L iterature R eview

In the early to mid 1990’s, issues of technological advancements including digital video and photography and the rise of the Internet, as well as convergence and merging media corporations became critical issues for journalism and mass communication educational and hiring trends.

Researchers began investigating the relationship between media hiring trends, education and required or recommended employment skills that reflect the importance of new media and non-traditional occupational roles within journalism.

Studies by Russial and Wanta (1998), Becker, Kosicki, Engleman, and Viswanat, (1993) and Becker, Stone and Graf (1996) among others, addressed the changing landscape of all forms of journalism -- broadcast, print, radio and Web -- and how these changes affected educational practices, employer needs and the diverse desired skill sets for employees. The studies concurred that technological know-how was becoming a de facto hiring criterion for many newsroom positions.

More recent studies report an increase in the need for journalism and mass communication bachelor’s degree recipients to engage in other types of media-based work activities such as graphic design, non-linear video editing, photo imaging, use of still or video cameras and production of content for mobile phones (Cox Center, 2007).

Researchers have found that gaining real-world experience with the technology in today’s newsrooms helps college students get jobs in the industry after graduation. Neidorf (2008 p59) examined employment practices at newspapers and found that college graduates possessing one or more completed internships fared better than students

who had not completed internships at all. The study suggests an internship “threshold” resulting in a “de facto requirement for future newsroom employment.”

Cushion (2007a p428) said that for potential employment, what makes a journalism school “good” in today’s convergent media environment has become a debate between “in the classroom” or “on the beat” experience. Cushion argues that where and how journalism is studied is critically as valuable as the links that academic institutions have with news media and the various industry-related and approved training bodies. As the playing field of media converges, potential employees, including college grads, face the challenge of merging multiple skills and variant skill sets.

Dickson and Brandon studied journalism school curricula and newsroom employee desirability. They found that one of the highest-valued practices in journalism programs is the cross-training of students in more than one media field (Dickson and Brandon 2000 p60), revealing that traditional requirements for specific jobs are becoming further and further blurred by new and differing technologies or practices.

Cushion (2007b p127) argued that journalists are fast becoming “devalued” as media outlets and companies merge, increasing corporate profits at the expense of employee wages, benefits and opportunities. Cleary (2006 pp254-66) calls this a failure of business management and suggests the gap between what journalism education can accomplish and what employers demand could be diminished by an industry-wide commitment to company-sponsored professional development including new media and technology training.

This study examines what employee skills and attributes news companies are seeking in the age of new media.

## Research Questions

RQ1: What are the skills and attributes newspaper and broadcast news companies are seeking in new employees, as posted in their job listings?

RQ2: What skills and attributes are required for specific job positions?

RQ3: In what journalism positions do employers require Web/multimedia skills?

RQ4: What skills and attributes do recruiters look for which are not included in job postings?

RQ5: What are the differences between the skills and attributes desired by recruiters for newspaper employees and those for broadcast employees?

RQ6: What specific new media skills are desired by recruiters?

## Method

A quantitative content analysis was performed on job postings from 17 media companies: Gannett, Tribune, NYT, McClatchy, Advance, Hearst, MediaNews, Cox, Dow Jones, Lee Enterprises, Belo, NBC, Disney, Sinclair, CBS, News Corp, and Univision. The companies were listed as the top U.S. newspaper companies and the top U.S. broadcast companies according to a 2009 Advertising Age survey.

The authors collected job postings from the companies' websites for a three month period, September 15, 2009 to December 15, 2009. Only jobs postings for newsroom positions were taken for analysis. Jobs in such departments as sales, promotions, advertising and engineering were not collected. On the first visit to the websites, all existing job postings listed as "current" on the sites that met the criteria were collected, not just the postings dated September 15, 2009. On the daily subsequent visits, only new postings were collected. In total, 735 job postings were collected.

The job postings were coded for job title, beat, attributes and skills required. The coding sheet was based on a previous study done by the authors (Wenger, et al, 2010). That coding sheet was developed after analyzing hundreds of job postings and noting the most common skills and attributes requested.

Twenty-two skills and attributes were coded for: accuracy, aggressiveness, news judgment, creativity, storytelling, enterprising, willingness to work under pressure/tight deadlines, team player, willingness to work long hours, strong writing, proofreading, ability to develop sources, previous professional experience, communication skills, leadership, multitasking, production/field production, AP style knowledge, software knowledge, shooting/photography, non-linear editing and other Web/multimedia.

The other Web/multimedia category included Web and multimedia skills other than shooting/photography and non-linear editing. Shooting/photography and non-linear editing were coded individually because of the large number of jobs requesting those specific skills.

The authors also coded specific Web/multimedia skills, such as writing for the Web and posting to the Web, as well as specific Web/multimedia programs such as Quark, InDesign, Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop.

The data were coded by the study's three authors. Seventy-four randomly-selected job postings, or approximately 10% of the sample, were coded by all of the authors. The results fell into the acceptable level of intercoder reliability (Cohen's Kappa = ~.80) (Dewey, 1983).

After the data were analyzed, five in-depth interviews were done with recruiters from Hearst, Cox, Gannett, Dow Jones and Tribune.

## Results

The study yielded 735 job postings, about a 3% increase from the previous year. Of the 735 jobs posted, 31.2% (n=229) were newspaper jobs and 68.8% (n=506) were broadcast jobs.

### Newspaper jobs

Of the 229 newspaper job postings, the positions sought were reporter (34.9%), editor (19.2%), entry level/internship (17.5%), copy editor (14%), Web writer/multimedia producer (5.7%), writer (5.2%), photographer (2.2%), and management (1.3%).

Only slightly more than a quarter (28.8%) of the postings mentioned a specific beat that the prospective employee would be responsible for.

Research question one asks what skills and attributes are news companies are seeking in new employees, as posted in their job listings. As shown in Table 1, previous professional experience and strong writing skills were the top two requirements for print

and broadcast positions. The other attributes varied by media type, with newspaper positions requiring more personality-based characteristics such as ability to work under pressure/tight deadlines and being a team player.

To address research question two, the results were also examined at the level of job position. The top five skills and attributes for each position are illustrated in Table 2.

Research question three asks what journalism positions do employers require Web/multimedia skills. Web and multimedia skills, such as writing for the newspaper's Website or posting content online, were mentioned in 41.5% of the job postings examined. Web/multimedia skills were required most often in newspaper job postings for Web writers/multimedia producers (100%), followed by photographers (60%), editors (56.8%), copyeditors (40.5%), reporters (38.8%), and management (33.3%).

In terms of specific Web and multimedia skills desired among newspapers, 21% of newspaper postings asked that applicants have the ability to post to the Web. Other desired skills included writing for the Web (10.9%), experience with Adobe Photoshop (9.2%), experience with Quark (7.9%), experience with InDesign (6.1%), content management system experience (5.2%), HTML knowledge (4.8%), Web analytics experience (4.4%) and Adobe Illustrator (3.9%).

### Broadcast jobs

Of the 506 broadcast news job postings, the positions sought were producer (20.4%), reporter (13%), photographer (8.3%), anchor/reporter (7.7%), internship/entry level (6.5%), executive producer (6.1%), Web writer/multimedia producer (5.7%), assignment desk (5.3%), news director/management (4.7%), anchor (4.3%), editor (4.3%), reporter/photographer (3.6%), reporter/producer (3.6%), assistant producer (3.4%), production assistant (2.6%), director (2.2%) and writer (2.0%).

As shown in Table 1, previous professional experience, strong writing skills and communication skills were the top attributes listed in broadcast job listings. As opposed to newspaper positions, broadcast positions required more technical skills, such as non-linear editing and shooting/photography.

Table 3 shows the top five skills and attributes listed in broadcast job postings organized by position type.

Looking specifically at multimedia, tasks such as writing for the station's Website or posting content online were mentioned in 29.1% of the job postings examined. Web/multimedia skills were required most often in broadcast job postings for Web writers/multimedia producers (100%), followed by directors (54.5%), production assistants (46.2%), anchor/reporters (38.5%), anchors (31.8%), photographers (31%), editors (27.3%), reporters (25.8%) and producers (24.3%).

The specific Web and multimedia skills requested in the broadcast field were the ability to post to the Web (11.3%), writing for the Web (7.3%), experience with Avid editing system (6.7%), experience with Adobe Photoshop (4.5%), experience with Final Cut editing system (3.6%), HTML knowledge (3.2%), experience with social networking websites (2.8%) and creating content for mobile platforms (2.2%).

## In-depth Interviews

The real story is in analysis of the data; however, to answer the remaining research questions and to get a sense of why these particular skills and attributes are critical to the hiring process, the authors conducted in-depth interviews with recruiters for five of the biggest news media companies: Hearst, Dow Jones, Gannett, Tribune and Cox. Three of the recruiters, from Gannett, Tribune and Cox, were interviewed last year about results from the 2008 study. All of them said that the job of recruiting is and has been changing as the industry evolves.

Virgil Smith, vice president of talent management at Gannett, said he and his team of recruiters have begun facing some new challenges in the past year. He said that sometimes the managers doing the hiring are not as far along in understanding industry trends as he thinks they need to be.

“What I’ve found is many colleges are ahead of those working in the shops,” Smith said. “It’s somewhat of a challenge, trying to get managers to understand what young people bring to the table. A lot of the good ones can go to a major site and make a contribution right away. Before, you wanted someone with five or ten years experience.”

Smith’s statement tracks with one of the research findings. The attribute of previous professional experience was mentioned in 8 percent fewer broadcast positions and about 2% fewer print positions than one year previously. (See Table 4.)

Brian Bacco, vice president, news for Hearst Television, said he thinks that drop may be driven by the search for Web-savvy employees.

“We’re not going to find someone with 15 years experience in writing for the Web,” Bracco said. He indicated smaller television stations, in particular, may be willing to hire someone to work on a Web site with little to no previous journalism experience but with strong Web skills.

Michelle LaRoche, editor for training and recruiting at Dow Jones Newswire, said she’s actually feeling more pressure to find more experienced people.

“This has been growing in the last couple years,” LaRoche said. “We want to find people who have covered the beat, who have a proven background for breaking news. Finding somebody with a proven track record is more of an emphasis than it has been in the past.”

Smith is also concerned about the difficulty in finding minority applicants these days. He said it’s a combination of experienced journalists leaving the business and fewer people of color who want to go into journalism in the first place.

Robin Whitmeyer is the news director for WSOC-TV in Charlotte, N.C., an ABC affiliate owned by Cox Enterprises. For the most part, the individual Cox television stations do their own recruiting with the help of a consulting or recruiting firm for some positions. Whitmeyer said that she is looking for employees a bit differently this year.

“I’m not as dependent on ads. I do a lot of talking to people who know people,” Whitmeyer said. “Skills are one thing, but you can’t really get a read on the person to find out if they work hard or are curious unless you talk to someone about them.”

In year one of the study, the three recruiters interviewed agreed that job postings were critical in creating a strong applicant pool. This year, the recruiters were asked how the language of job postings has evolved, if at all, over the past year.

“We tend to mention speed and accuracy more now,” LaRoche said. “We talk more about working under pressure and tight deadlines. That matters more now, as does the ability to break news.”

In fact, more than a quarter of all job postings mention working under pressure/tight deadlines, though the percentages are down slightly for print (5.3%) and significantly for broadcast positions (15.2%). (See Table 4.)

According to Smith, the most significant change is that multimedia is key.

“Video editing skills, social media skills, blogging – with industry transformation and emergence of new technology, multimedia is now included in all of our job descriptions,” said Smith.

Whitmeyer said her postings are getting more specific.

“It’s not just. ‘Do you want to work with the #1 news team?’” said Whitmeyer. “For example, our weekend anchor ad asked for the applicant to tell me about experiences with coaching, about what you do behind the scenes, do [you] have the ability to be a team leader?”

Research question four asks what skills or attributes the recruiters want to see in job applicants, but that are not mentioned specifically in the job postings.

“Two go hand in hand – be smart and know what’s going on in terms of current events,” said Whitmeyer. She said she’s been disappointed many times in how little curiosity about the world many applicants seem to have.

Solomon also mentioned the word curiosity. For LaRoche, it’s all about speed.

“The ability to turn a story quickly in multiple formats,” LaRoche said. “The people who are most successful right away when they come in are those who work for newswires or websites where the real-time aspect is king.”

Bacco is interested in getting applicants with critical thinking skills, but says job postings are limited for a reason.

“You can’t write all the things we want you to do because we want you to do everything,” Bacco said. “The days where [a posting] was really specific – work nine to five, produce the 5 p.m. newscast – have gone by the wayside; employers don’t want to get trapped by that.”

Bacco said it’s incumbent upon the job seeker to research the employer and the position to find out what it will take to get hired.

The recruiters were also asked to help interpret some of the changes in the year-to-year data, as well as to evaluate differences between newspaper and broadcast job postings, as posed in research question five. For example, in the 2008 content analysis, eight of the top ten skills and attributes were identical for both broadcast and print postings. In 2009, there were seven repeats.

“I think the lines are blurring because of multimedia,” Smith said. “I think we’re looking for the same attributes in newspaper and broadcast journalists. We want multimedia journalists with solid basics – the ability to write, inquisitiveness, people who want to dig deeper, who know how to use the tools with an understanding of how their information will be used on multiple platforms.”

Bacco and Whitmeyer agree that the need to produce for the Web is creating a more uniform journalism skill set with all journalists needing multi-platform skills; however, Solomon and LaRoche aren’t sure the lines have blurred entirely.



“I think yes, they are blurring, but I think that not everybody recognizes that yet,” LaRoche said. “When I see a resume from someone who has done a lot of broadcast, the instinct is that they don’t have the qualifications that we’re looking for. But they do in many ways – the ability to think on their feet, to cover a story quickly and coherently. With the live camera on, you have to talk intelligently right away. Talking isn’t writing, but it’s the same concept.”

In both years of the study, Web/multimedia skills were included in the top ten most often mentioned, but on the print side this year, strong writing took over the number two spot from multimedia.

LaRoche said she has seen a new emphasis on writing.

“We’ve put a lot more pressure and done a lot more training internally for our reporters to write shorter, more concisely, without shirking on information; that’s really hard to do. They need to be excellent to do it well and on deadline,” said LaRoche.

Solomon said writing and Web/multimedia skills may be more closely related than it would first appear.

“I think, perhaps, it is because we’re being asked to write for more mediums; now multimedia writing is just something every print or broadcast person is going to do,” Solomon said.

Smith said print journalists may actually be elevating the importance of writing as a skill because it’s something they’ve been taught to do. Yet, he noted that even with a slight decrease in emphasis of Web/multimedia skills for print positions, (41.5% of postings still mention those skills, down from 45% a year ago), on the broadcast side, Web/multimedia skills are mentioned in slightly more postings this year – an increase from 23% to 29.1%. That was enough to move Web/multimedia skills from the number ten to the number five spot on the list of skills and attributes in broadcast postings.

“Broadcast was a little later to the game; they had the natural platform but it was not being executed early on,” Smith said.

Bacco expects that Web/multimedia skills will only get more critical for those applying for broadcast positions.

“I suspect if you do this a year or two from now it will be one or two on the list,” Bacco said. “I don’t think you can enter a TV market now and not have the ability or skill set to publish on the Web site.”

Broadcasters seem to have a little more momentum than their print counterparts when it comes to requiring social media skills and the ability to create content for mobile platforms. Just fewer than three percent (2.8%) of postings for broadcast positions referenced a need for social media skills and a little more than two percent (2.2%) referenced mobile platforms. (The number of mentions of these skills/attributes in print postings was too small to quantify.)

“I’m surprised social networking is as low as it is,” Whitmeyer said. “It’s the buzz; we all have to be there; we’re just not quite sure how to leverage it.”

Whitmeyer also said she expects mobile to be mentioned more in future job postings.

“That’s going to be a big difference next year; we keep talking about it, but we haven’t gotten a hold of it yet,” Whitmeyer said.

Bacco agrees.

“Our audience is mobile; our audience wants their information now and wants it on three screens,” Bacco said. “We need to deliver it on every one and the people we hire need to have that skill set.”

Smith said, “What this tells me is that some of the folks recruiting haven’t made the connection. We reference social media, not only for our journalists, but for our sales positions.”

Solomon and LaRoche were surprised by the lack of social media and mobile platform mentions in print postings.

“They should be included on the newspaper side,” LaRoche said. “That’s what we ask our reporters for. They don’t need to know special software, but many of them do blog and we ask some of them to tweet; some have Facebook pages; they’re doing social networking.”

And despite the growth of the Web as a source of news and information while the traditional media lose audience, Web/multimedia job postings decreased for both broadcast (8.6% to 5.7%) and print (12.7% to 5.7%).

“My theory is that the jobs in newsrooms have changed,” Solomon said. “We don’t have a need for copy editors because we’re outsourcing, so there won’t be a posting for a Web job when all we’re going to do is retrain someone.”

Bacco said the drop may be related to the still struggling economy, but said Hearst has also been training or cross-training existing staff to work on the Web. LaRoche said more jobs at Dow Jones now include multimedia responsibilities, too.

“When someone leaves, sometimes the tasks that person was responsible for are automated or divvied up among other people,” said LaRoche. “It’s not so foreign to people anymore, the idea of posting the Web, for example, is not so scary.”

Another year-to-year change involves the increase in mentions of the need to be a team player. More than a quarter of all of print postings (25.3%) mentioned the attribute this year versus 16.4% last year. Both Smith and LaRoche think this can be attributed to the proverbial need “to do more with less” in newsrooms around the country.

“With fewer people working, we have to be smarter, working together is the only way to get it all done,” LaRoche said. “The world of, ‘You cover your beat and I’ll cover mine,’ just isn’t going to cut it anymore.”

Research question six asks what new media skills are desired by recruiters. In hiring for multimedia positions specifically (postings that were categorized as Web writer/multimedia producer), print and broadcast operations both sought candidates with Web/multimedia skills and previous professional experience as the most important skills or attributes.

Positions posted by traditional print news organizations rounded out the top five skills with the ability to work as a team player (53.8%), multitasking (46.2%) and leadership abilities (38.5%). On the broadcast side it was strong writing (58.6%), non-linear editing capabilities (48.3%) and working under pressure/tight deadlines (44.8%).

All five of the recruiters mentioned the challenge in hiring for Web positions is in knowing what skills or attributes are essential on a platform where technology and audience tastes keep changing.

“We try to stay ahead of what people want, but we don’t know what they want; that’s a real problem,” Whitmeyer said. “Right now we have an open position and we

keep changing the job definition. We can't get a handle on what we need; we want a master of all."

Bacco says Hearst has a digital team with a recruiter who searches the landscape for potential employees. He said all journalists and Web journalists in particular need to be agile.

"We won't know what's going to happen in five years; our business has always been about change," Bracco said. "We just have to adapt it."

## Discussion and Conclusion

The three-month sample yielded 735 job postings – a slight increase (3%) from the postings for the same period a year earlier, though not enough to suggest that the traditional print and broadcast news organizations have or will ever reach the levels of employment found a decade ago.

As previous studies in the literature have suggested, even with the technological changes in today's newsrooms, traditional journalism skills are still in demand; however, Web/multimedia skills appear to be growing in importance for broadcast journalists and remaining relatively steady for print positions.

Web/multimedia skills were mentioned in 41.5% of print postings and 29.1% of broadcast job listings. Last year, the researchers found that broadcast positions seemed to de-emphasize multimedia in favor of more traditional skills and attributes; in fact, Web/multimedia skills ranked tenth on the list of skills and attributes mentioned in broadcast postings. This year, Web/multimedia skills ranked fifth, after previous professional experience, strong writing skills, communication skills and non-linear editing. Two of the recruiters stated that though broadcasters may have lagged behind their print counterparts in understanding the importance of the Web in the past, they believe that's no longer the case, and they fully expect more broadcast positions to emphasize Web/multimedia skills in the future.

Breaking it down by positions other than those specifically categorized as Web/multimedia jobs, the researchers found that some are much more likely than others to mention the need for such skills. For example, 60% of print photojournalist positions list Web/multimedia skills as a requirement, as do 56.8% of editor jobs, 40.5% of copy editor positions and 38.8% of print reporting jobs.

For broadcast positions, 31.8% of anchor openings mentioned multimedia skills and 38.5% of reporter/anchor positions. Production jobs such as director (54.5%), production assistant (46.2%) and editor (27.3%) quite often required Web skills. Jobs posted as reporter-only emphasized non-linear editing (42.4%) and shooting/photo skills (37.9%), which were coded separately from Web/multimedia skills and attributes.

For journalism educators in general, these findings should reinforce the notion that cross-platform skills are and will continue to be important in helping students find employment. Two specific Web/multimedia skills got more mentions than any other – the ability to post to the Web and the ability to write for the Web. In addition, two of the recruiters suggested that speed has become an important aspect of writing – the ability to create content quickly for the Web and mobile devices. Creating opportunities for students to perfect these skills may be critical to their future success.

For schools with a traditional broadcast journalism curriculum, it's interesting to note the percentages of broadcast reporting jobs that require non-linear editing and shooting/photo skills. With well over a third of positions requiring one or both, it's clear that the need to be training broadcast journalists to work alone on producing stories is already essential.

The results also show that previous professional experience was the top requirement in job postings for both newspaper and broadcast companies for the second year in a row. Though, the percentage of postings including the attribute was down slightly for print (57.7% to 55.5%) and a bit more for broadcast (81.4% to 73.3%). One recruiter suggested that some younger journalists, with little to no professional experience, may have much-needed skills that the veterans don't.

Strong writing was also a top requirement for both newspaper (51.1%) and broadcast positions (48.6) once again this year. However, more than one recruiter indicated that strong writing has evolved to mean an ability to write quickly and for multiple media. As one recruiter put it, today's journalists have to know "how to write in AP Style, for Twitter and Facebook."

In newspaper postings, the analysis yielded a significant year-to-year increase in the need for applicants to be team players (16.4% to 25.3%). Several recruiters said they see this as indicative of the changing nature of print newsrooms where more collaboration is necessary than ever before. This finding might suggest that educators teaching print courses should look for opportunities to assign team projects or even to work with other instructors and classes, such as pairing a traditional print reporting class with a Web design class.

For the first time this year, researchers noted experience with social networking websites and creating content for mobile platforms showing up as desired skills in broadcast job postings. All five recruiters indicated they expect mentions of these particular skills to increase dramatically in the coming years for both print and broadcast job openings.

Educators would do well to get ahead of the industry need by preparing students who are ready to step into leadership roles in the area of social media and mobile delivery. One recruiter described college students as "already immersed in the culture of social media," now their instructors need to help them see how social media can be used as a newsgathering and dissemination tool.

Having two years of data has provided the researchers with some interesting points of comparison. For example, the drop in Web/multimedia job postings for both broadcast (8.6% to 5.7%) and print (12.7% to 5.7%) was a surprising finding in light of the increase in online audience. However, the recruiters explained this as a function of two developments: 1) Instead of laying off some existing employees, they're being retrained to take on Web- or multimedia-oriented roles, and 2) Some Web or multimedia functions may have simply been absorbed by existing staff as technological advances and staff familiarity with technology make it easier for them to perform these tasks in addition to other duties.

The research and the recruiters also suggest that the industry's need for multimedia capabilities in its workforce is blurring some of the traditional demarcations between the skills needed to work for a newspaper or a television station. As one recruiter put it, "We're looking for the same core skills and attributes whether we're

hiring for print or broadcast.” This suggests a need for educators to be sure they are instilling cross-platform skills in all journalism students and to help students think more broadly about the job possibilities available to them.

The authors hope to continue taking a longitudinal approach to this research in order to track the changes in job postings as the industry evolves. For example, tracking the particular types of Web/multimedia skills that appear, grow or diminish over time could help educators stay on top of curriculum development.

In addition, the balance between the need for multimedia and platform-specific skills seems to be shifting, and the subject may be fertile ground for future research. Surveys tend to track whether or not journalism and mass communications graduates find employment in the broad field of communications, but beginning to track more specifically where students find jobs, regardless of their area of specialization in school, may be another way to measure the amount of medium-specific instruction needed versus cross-platform skills.

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**Table 1: Percentage of newspaper and broadcast job postings requiring specific skills and attributes**

Skills and Attributes	Newspaper jobs	Broadcast jobs
Previous professional experience	55.5%	73.3%
Strong writing	51.1%	48.6%
Web/multimedia skills	41.5%	29.1%
Working under pressure/tight deadlines	27.5%	27.9%
Team player	25.3%	28.1%
Multitasking	24.0%	15.8%
Enterprising	23.6%	17.6%
Communication skills	22.7%	29.8%
News judgment	21.8%	21.9%
Proofreading	18.3%	5.1%
Leadership	16.6%	18.8%
Accuracy	15.7%	9.7%
Software/computer skills	12.7%	12.3%
Shooting/Photography	12.2%	19.2%
Creativity	9.6%	24.5%
Non-linear editing	9.2%	29.2%
Develop sources	9.2%	9.9%
AP Style knowledge	8.3%	1.0%
Willingness to work long hours	7.4%	21.3%
Storytelling	6.1%	15.0%
Aggressive	5.2%	6.5%
Production/field production	2.6%	18.2%

**Table 2: Top 5 skills and attributes requested for specific newspaper positions.**

Position	1	2	3	4	5
Copy Editor	Previous experience (59.4%)	Strong writing (56.3%)	Working under deadlines/pressure (43.8%)	Web/Multimedia skills (40.5%)	AP Style knowledge (34.4%)
Editor	Previous experience (63.6%)	Web/Multimedia skills (56.8%)	Strong writing (50%)	Proofreading (38.6%)	Leadership (38.6%)
Entry level/Internships	Strong writing (52.5%)	Multitasking (35%)	Previous experience (30%)	Communication skills (22.5%)	Working under deadlines/pressure (22.5%)
Management	Previous experience (100%)	News judgment (100%)	Communication skills (100%)	Leadership (66.7%)	Enterprising (66.7%)
Photographer	Shooting/ Photo skills (100%)	Non-linear editing (60%)	Previous experience (60%)	Web/Multimedia skills (60%)	Working under deadlines/pressure (40%)
Reporter	Previous experience (57.5%)	Strong writing (56.3%)	Web/Multimedia skills (38.8%)	Enterprising (33.8%)	Team player (22.5%)
Web Producer/Writer	Web/Multimedia skills (100%)	Previous experience (92.3%)	Team player (53.8%)	Multitasking (46.2%)	Leadership (38.5%)
Writer	Strong writing (88.3%)	Previous experience (50%)	Creativity (41.7%)	Enterprising (41.7%)	Web/Multimedia skills (33.3%)

**Table 3: Top 5 skills and attributes requested for specific broadcast positions.**

Position	1	2	3	4	5
Anchor	Previous experience (86.4%)	Strong writing (40.9%)	Web/Multimedia skills (31.8%)	Leadership (27.3%)	Storytelling (22.7%)
Anchor/Reporter	Previous experience (92.3%)	Strong writing (76.9%)	Web/Multimedia skills (38.5%)	Team player (25.6%)	Proofreading (25.6%)
Assignment Editor	Previous experience (77.8%)	News judgment (59.3%)	Communication skills (40.7%)	Team player (40.7%)	Multitasking (40.7%)
Assistant Producer	Previous experience (76.5%)	Strong writing (64.7%)	Communication skills (52.9%)	Working under deadline/pressure (52.9%)	Team player (47.1%)
Director	Previous experience (63.6%)	Communication skills (63.6%)	Web/Multimedia skills (54.5%)	Working long hours (54.5%)	Working under deadline/pressure (45.5%)
Editor	Previous experience (75.7%)	Non-linear editing (54.5%) <i>(Avid: 31.8%)</i>	Working under deadline/pressure (36.4%)	Web/Multimedia skills (27.3%)	Communication skills (27.3%)
Entry Level/Internship	Communication skills (24.2%)	Working long hours (12.1%)	Strong writing (12.1%)	Web/Multimedia skills (12.1%)	Software/computer skills (12.1%)
Executive Producer	Previous experience (87.1%)	Leadership (80.6%)	Strong writing (54.8%)	Communication skills (54.8%)	Working under deadline/pressure (51.6%)
News Director/Management	Previous experience (83.3%)	Leadership (70.8%)	Communication skills (41.7%)	News judgment (33.3%)	Working under deadline/pressure (29.2%)
Photographer	Non-linear editing (88.3%)	Shooting/Photo skills (88.1%)	Previous experience (71.4%)	Team player (38.1%)	Creativity (33.3%)
Producer	Strong writing (76.7%)	Previous experience (75.7%)	Creativity (42.7%)	Creativity (42.7%)	News judgment (33.0%)
Production Assistant	Working long hours (61.5%)	Web/Multimedia skills (46.2%) <i>(Posting to the Web: 30.8%)</i>	Working under deadline/pressure (38.5%)	Previous experience (30.8%)	Communication skills (30.8%)
Reporter	Previous experience (78.8%)	Strong writing (74.2%)	Non-linear editing (42.4%)	Enterprising (40.9%)	Shooting/photo skills (37.9%)
Web Writer/Multimedia producer	Web/Multimedia skills (100%) <i>(Posting to the Web: 55.2%)</i>	Previous experience (72.4%)	Strong writing (58.6%)	Non-linear editing (48.3%)	Working under deadline/pressure (44.8%)
Writer	Proofreading (100%)	Previous experience (90%)	Strong writing (80%)	Working under deadline/pressure (80%)	Non-linear editing (50%)

**Table 4: Percentage of newspaper and broadcast job postings requiring specific skills and attributes (year-to-year changes)**

Skills and Attributes	2009 Newspaper	2008 Newspaper	2009 Broadcast	2008 Broadcast
Previous professional experience	55.5%	57.7%	73.3%	81.4%
Strong writing	51.1%	42.3%	48.6%	51.5%
Web/multimedia skills	41.5%	45.0%	29.1%	23.0%
Working under pressure/tight deadlines	27.5%	32.8%	27.9%	45.1%
Team player	25.3%	16.4%	28.1%	32.3%
Multitasking	24.0%	5.3%	15.8%	17.3%
Enterprising	23.6%	22.8%	17.6%	23.6%
Communication skills	22.7%	15.3%	29.8%	29.3%
News judgment	21.8%	20.1%	21.9%	28.5%
Proofreading	18.3%	28.0%	5.1%	8.6%
Leadership	16.6%	13.2%	18.8%	17.7%
Accuracy	15.7%	9.5%	9.7%	9.7%
Software/computer skills	12.7%	22.2%	12.3%	9.7%
Shooting/Photography	12.2%	12.2%	19.2%	20.5%
Creativity	9.6%	3.2%	24.5%	21.9%
Non-linear editing	9.2%	7.9%	29.2%	35.9%
Develop sources	9.2%	N/A	9.9%	N/A
AP Style knowledge	8.3%	11.6%	1.0%	0.6%
Willingness to work long hours	7.4%	6.3%	21.3%	32.7%
Storytelling	6.1%	2.1%	15.0%	14.8%
Aggressiveness	5.2%	N/A	6.5%	N/A
Production/field production	2.6%	0.5%	18.2%	10.5%