

Social media profiles: What journalism students should learn about their profiles on social media

Professional Profile on Social Media

Main Issue: Advice for the teaching of 'professional use of social media'; indeed, about the professional social media profile.
 Journalism students must understand the necessary transition from being a private, carefree individual to the public role as a professional journalist.
 The tipsheet refers to issue no. 2 in the IJIE State of the Art analysis (the Ten Tips Guide):
 "Keep a fair balance between journalistic fundamentals, a good general knowledge in social sciences, technological skills and practical onthejob training."

Website: DMJX website, English version: <http://www.dmjx.dk/international>

Course:	Study program	Level	Students
Professional profile in Social Media (part of Journalism Methods 4)	Journalism BA	BA, 8th semester	60

Keywords: social media, personal profile, professional profile, social media content, social media profile, production, event based training, workflow

Short description: This paper is based on experiences from the teaching of social media principles at the Danish School of Media and Journalism, DMJX.

Until 2014, last year students could choose a three-month course in digital journalism with a special focus on mobile and social media. After a curriculum change, students now follow a 4-day workshop on 'professional journalistic use of social media', compulsory by the start of their last year of studies.

The 4-day workshop is conducted via live webinars. Several workshops based on the same principles are offered as mid career training courses.

Lots of social media platforms and tools are highly relevant for journalists – for research, for dialogue, for dissemination. But these platforms can only be exploited fully through the journalist's relevant professional-personal identity and content on social media networks.

The main focus is on how to build, maintain and use a professional presence on social media like Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.

To do	Topic	Teaching method
Admit that you don't master everything.	Social media profile	<p>Make it clear from the beginning that we are on a common quest. We are all boarding the same ship, regardless of age and experience, and nobody fully knows all the tasks or the final result.</p> <p>For the student, this insecurity is uncomfortable; for the teacher, it can be even worse and a difficult process – so be open and transparent about this towards your students.</p>
Allow them time to implement	Social media profile	<p>Set up the teaching so that students can actually implement (parts of) their professional social media profiles parallel to the teaching.</p>
Organize the teaching around experimental testing	Social media profile Production Event based training	<p>Along the same line as above:</p> <p>Smartphones are key to social media, and to contemporary data collection for journalists. If possible, do force students and teachers alike to train mobile social media usage, preferably in a safe environment, preferably an event with a not-too-controversial purpose. Events are an excellent playground for this: Using social media dialogue in the journalistic coverage surrounding an event which is limited in time and space. We have often used local sports events with success.</p>
5 days will do	Social media profile	<p>5 days as an introduction to "journalism professional social media profile" is sufficient. However, the optimal solution is to have this course interlinked with project work, where the journalism students can wadjust, develop and improve their social media profile and use.</p>
Tell them they need digital anchoring	Social media profile Social media	<p>Tell students to consciously select 1-2 social media platforms – and to optimise these pivots or anchors.</p> <p>It can be Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, it can be their Twitter or Instagram handle, it can be a personal blog.</p> <p>Let them optimise this pivot – show how to get it on top of Google searches, keep it alive, keep it updated and instrumental.</p>

To do	Topic	Teaching method
Make it clear that it's the basic tool	Social media profile	To reach the full benefit of the power of social media, the most important tool is the journalist's own professional profile! This basic assumption must be communicated and understood. Lots of social media platforms and tools are highly relevant for journalists – for research, for dialogue, for dissemination – but they can
Teacher: Get there yourself!	Social media profile	You don't have to be a pioneer, ahead of everybody. But at least you must be a professional social media user yourself as a teacher. And if you are, students will openly appreciate it.

To avoid	Topic	Why?
Don't talk about the youth as being social media-savvy!	Social media	Young people – including journalism students - use different social media (SoMe) a lot. But they don't use SoMe professionally. They are not social media experts – so stop talking about them as if they are.
Stop thinking we can't teach it!	Social media	We can. And indeed, we must.
Do not get lost in the myriad of apps and software tools!	Social media Applications Workflow	You can easily spend all time available exploring details, learning features of online services or apps. But the learning really takes off when climbing up a few steps: Leave the app-level, and focus on the workflow-level of social media: mapping of content, monitoring, verification, publishing, etc.

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Bonus material: Recommended resources / tools

The workflow model:

<http://strobech.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/workflowmodellen.pdf>

A long repository of tools for social media teaching (text mainly in Danish, but with many international links.)

<http://bit.ly/1ECVCKa>