

11th International Newsroom Summit

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Summaries of the 11th International Newsroom Summit

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Newsroom Summit

Change is opportunity for quality journalism

Dear colleague,

From using Twitter to gather information and report it, to raising funds from foundations for serious reporting projects, to hiring researchers and academics to analyse big data, to engaging audiences through social media, to re-organising and integrating newsrooms, our global Newsroom Summit in Hamburg had it all.

If you were unable to attend the summit, or even if you were there, this report is for you. Please feel free to share it with your colleagues.

Editors-in-chief today are faced with constant newsroom change. And while this presents great challenges, the Newsroom Summit demonstrated a variety of ways in which editors are reaping opportunities in the multimedia news environment.

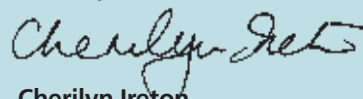
"Never before have we had access to so much information and never before have the possibilities been so limitless for doing journalism," says Paul Lewis, Special Projects Editor for the Guardian.

Tomas Brunegard, CEO of the Stampen Group in Sweden, says the rapid pace of technological change, particular the "tornado" of mobile growth, was also a positive development for news media today.

"We are in the right spot and the right time with the right tools, and it is up to us not to screw it up," he says. "We were taken by surprise by the Internet. We were not taken by surprise this time."

This report summarizes the discussions at the 11th annual Newsroom Summit, organised by the World Editors Forum, the organisation for chief editors and senior newsroom personnel within the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA). We hope you find this report a useful supplement to the conference, and that you'll join us at a future event.

Sincerely,



Cherilyn Ireton

Executive Director, World Editors Forum



Ten trends to watch in journalism



The 11th annual Newsroom Summit opened in Hamburg, Germany, on Thursday with an overview of trends that are defining newsrooms today.

"These trends are occurring at different speeds in different places, but I believe they are present, in one way or another, in newsrooms everywhere," said Erik Bjerager, President of the World Editors Forum, who provided this overview:

1. Newsrooms are increasingly outsourced. "Well-paid journalists in old media are frequently exchanged for free-lancers or external content companies with lower costs," he said. "How this effects editorial integrity and the quality of journalism, we don't really know yet. As editors, you have much less control over content produced by outside partners."
2. Two-speed journalism is now a reality.
3. Breaking news is becoming digital. In this world, speed often trumps accuracy.
4. Data journalism is accepted as a discipline.
5. Infographics dominate print and web.
6. The difference between print and broadcast have shrunk.
7. More momentum from mobile.
8. Social media enrich journalism.
9. Ethics – going back to basics
10. All-round newspapers are challenged online by big tabloids.

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New jobs in the newsroom

“We recruit by filling holes,” says Anette Novak, but filling holes just maintains the status quo. Instead, she says, “every new person you bring into the newsroom should be to do a job you’ve never had before.”

Ms Novak, former Editor of Norran, Sweden, and Board Member World Editors Forum, suggests that for newsrooms to truly move forward, newsroom managers need to consider creating new jobs, such as these seven:

- Traffic conductor – “Someone who knows how to drive traffic to where we can monetise it,” Ms Novak says. “It’s a very sobering experience to find out where your traffic is really coming from.”
- Editorial events director – a person who helps connect your editorial efforts with what is going on in the community.
- Crowd intake co-ordinator – “We need someone to guarantee we always have the best pictures, videos, etc.,” Ms Novak says.
- Community journalism educator – to help people become better contributors.
- Transparency and integrity controller – to make it clear what information is from whom.
- Chief of crowd creativity – “We need to work to help make the crowd more creative,” Ms Novak says. We need to be more specific and more inviting to get them to think more positively and more creatively, she adds.
- Editorial quantifier – if we are to survive, Ms Novak says, we need to calculate what content is interesting to readers. We need to move our thinking from “clicks” (on an article) to “time” (spent reading it).



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The FT and Newsroom 4.0



As the Financial Times moves into 2012 and the future, Managing Editor Lisa MacLeod says the paper's goal is to focus on producing high-quality content and to allow users to access it however they want it.

To do that, it has made many changes during the past several years and has been investing in new-media and related areas, such as creating video teams and interactive teams, increasing production skills, and starting a live news desk.

When we recruit these days, Ms MacLeod says, we are looking for a new kind of journalist with new skills rather than only the traditional ones of good reporting and writing.

She says these new skills include:

- Data skills and the ability to mine and interpret data
- Interactive graphic skills and the ability to work in Flash or HTML5, and translate data into graphical elements
- Video journalism and the ability to work both on and behind the camera and produce high-quality video worth watching
- Web production skills and the ability to understand and maximize excellent presentation of content online and on tablet devices
- SEO and digital headline writing and display text skills
- Multi-media commissioning and story planning
- Innovative and entrepreneurial: Thinking of new ways to engage readers and draw them into specialised content and to new commercial possibilities.

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Re-training journalists to be 'digital ninjas'

"Our parent company is called Digital First, and we view it as more than a name – it's our strategy," says Matt DeRienzo, Connecticut Group Editor of US-based Journal Register Company.

"We've built an infrastructure around breaking news," says Mr DeRienzo.

To help ensure employees have the necessary skills for to execute their new strategy, he says they have created a "digital ninja school" for all newsroom staff.

Mr DeRienzo says there are five key elements for success:

- Pay employees to succeed at training
- Force managers to make time for training
- Measured by evidence of application to job
- Obsessively tied to and teaching metrics
- So hokey that it can't be ignored as another boring bureaucratic program that will just go away

In keeping with the ninja idea, the company has come up with five "belt" levels that are also tied to monetary rewards. The belts and their corresponding financial rewards are:

- White – \$100
- Yellow – \$200
- Orange – \$300
- Green – \$400
- Black Belt – \$1000

Mr DeRienzo says one requirement is that previous belts must be maintained (i.e. if a reporter earns a white belt by doing regular blog posts, they must continue doing blog posts when they move to the yellow belt stage).



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Collaborative reporting and the UK riots



Paul Lewis admits that the title, “Special Projects Editor,” is boring. But the job is anything but.

“It’s not a sexy title, but it essentially it means I have a mandate to innovate and experiment with new possibilities in the digital era,” says Mr Lewis, Special Projects Editor for the Guardian. “I’m encouraged to try out everything possible.”

Mr Lewis took the audience at the annual Newsroom Summit on an excursion to the heart of last year’s riots in the UK, to show how new digital and social media reporting tools allow a new, enriched collaborative journalism approach involving reporters, journalists and academics to provide deeper news coverage.

From using Twitter to gather information and report it, to raising funds from foundations for serious reporting projects, to hiring researchers and academics to analyse big data, to organising crowdsourcing for the benefit of a news organisation, his case study covered it all.

“Never before have we had access to so much information and never before have the possibilities been so limitless for doing journalism,” he says.

Twitter has become an essential tool for covering large-scale, multiple simultaneous events like the riots, Mr Lewis says.

“Nowadays, the first time we hear about a news event is via Twitter.” And during the events, witnesses armed with mobile phones want to help and can be easily recruited. “They have the capacity that journalists have had for decades, recording and then sharing information.”

It’s a two-way street, with witnesses collaborating with reporters who ask questions and request advice, and send them information in return. Mr Lewis describes it as “using people to help me report and feeding information back to the crowd, which is essential. The crowd helps report the story – they’re helping the newsroom. The crowd wants to help the reporting process. When you help the crowd, the crowd wants to help you back.”

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Taking on Google – and winning

A lot of news companies grumble about news aggregators building businesses on the back of their content, without providing compensation. Belgian publishers have done something about it.

Through a rights management company called Copiepresse, which took on Google in a court case and won, Belgian newspapers have succeeded in preventing others from exploiting their content without providing financial compensation.

Margaret Boribon, the Secretary General of Copiepresse, calls it protecting the “fair value chain in the digital world.”

“Every content producer should receive fair remuneration for their efforts. It’s a very simple principle,” she says.

And while some publishers see Google as a collaborator, protecting content revenue is essential, Ms Boribon says.

“In the 20th century, there were two pillars of revenues for the press – circulation and advertising. In the 21st century, a third pillar is needed – licensing the re-use of newspaper content,” she says.

Copiepresse does not object to individuals sharing information. What it does object to is what Ms Boribon calls “systematic and professional piracy.”

When Google announced it intended to establish a Google News in Belgium in 2006, Copiepresse put it on notice that it objected to the inclusion of its members content without payment. When Google ignored the notice, Copiepresse sued.



Six years later – after failed negotiations, retaliation (Google removed Belgian newspapers from Search as well as Google News, restoring it only after threat of lawsuit) and appeals, Copiepresse won its case. Google has one more appeal, with an ultimate decision expected in 2013.

“This is a classical copyright court case to have infringement stopped,” Ms Boribon says.

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Building relations with readers



"We have twice as many readers of our digital editions as of our print," says Jan Helin, Editor-in-Chief of Aftonbladet (Sweden), the largest daily in Scandinavia.

Mr Helin predicts that this year, his newspaper will be the first in the world to have more ad revenue from online operations than from print. "We had it for seven months last year, and this year we think we will have it for the whole year."

"We've tried to build an ecosystem around our readers," he says, adding that that's the starting point for everything.

With a recently intensified focus on areas such as mobile and TV, in addition to print and online, Mr Helin says Aftonbladet is managing that by taking a "story first" approach.

"All reporters are story first," he says.

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Do separate online and print operations deliver more?

“We want to have a good, thoughtful debate with our users and among our users,” says Wolfgang Blau, Editor, Zeit Online.

The German weekly newspaper and its website have been growing over the past several years, with 2011 being their most successful year, Mr Blau says.

“Zeit Online is not profitable yet, but we are confident that we will be soon,” he says.

Noting that his company has an overlap between print and digital of only 6 percent, and that a 5-17 percent overlap between print and digital in European and North American newspapers is not uncommon, Mr Blau is offering some words of caution about the process of integrating print and digital newsrooms.

“Obviously, I am not arguing against the general idea of merging print and online,” he says. “I am rather questioning the premises under which - or the goals and assumptions with which these mergers typically have been carried out so far.”

“Am I personally an opponent of merging teams by principle? Mr Blau asks. “No, of course not. That would be silly. Especially for daily newspapers who are already faced with shrinking revenue, merging both operations often is the only option they have. It seems to me, though, that there is an imbalance between how much attention is often being paid to the physical layout of newly integrated newsrooms and how little attention is being paid to the re-staffing of key positions in these merged teams.”



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A case for paid content



It might seem unusual for The Wall Street Journal to describe itself as “the new guy in town,” but that’s what it is in Germany – its online-only German edition was introduced just four months ago.

And, in a country that doesn’t favour paid on-line content, it is behind a paywall.

“We have unique content and we believe it should not be free,” says Knut Engelmann, Managing Editor of Wall Street Journal Germany, making a case at the annual WEF Newsroom Summit for offering quality content for a price.

“If you use online for a dumping ground for cheap and undistinguished content, you will not succeed,” he says.

Although specialized publications like The Wall Street Journal have unique content that readers are willing to pay for, Mr Engelmann believes general-interest publications can also find such content. He recommends looking deeply into reputation, outlook, focus and uniqueness to determine what might be monetized.

“Every news organisation has to identify the quality content on their own,” he says. “It doesn’t matter where you find it. All that matters is its distinctiveness, its uniqueness.”

“Our success, tentative as it may be at this time, let’s us leapfrog beyond objections you might have for this model,” Mr Engelmann says. “Our business in the digital age is not dead, but what is dead is the notion that if it is online, it’s got to be free.”

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Panel debates paid content



"As a journalist, I want to get out there and reach as many people as I can," says Mathias Müller von Blumencron (centre), Editor-in-Chief of the German news magazine Der Spiegel, during a panel discussion that closes the second session of the day. "Why are so many people thinking that only paid-for content is valuable?"

Knut Engelmann, Managing Editor, Wall Street Journal Germany (right), notes, "I'm interested in long-term survival – if people don't pay, we don't get paid. Should content be paid for? We believe this in the non-digital world. Why should it be different in the digital world?"

Adds Wolfgang Blau, Editor of Germany's Zeit Online: "I think the arguments about paywalls are too ideological, and I wish they were driven by the people on the business side and not the editors, because I think there is a lot of fear that has come into the debate. I also don't think apps have deserved the hype and herd mentality that they have received."

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What you need to charge for content



News companies that are planning to charge for content online need to consider a number of issues beyond the quality of the content itself.

That's the message from Dietmar Schantin, Founder of the Institute for Media Strategies in Austria, in a Newsroom Summit presentation on paid content models in use around the world.

He estimated that only 5 to 20 percent of content is chargeable. "This is our challenge," he said. In addition to type of content, the cornerstones for the paid content concept include the loyalty level of the audience, added values such as convenience, speed and cost, the type of delivery – mobile, tablet, desktop – and the type of models and systems.

"Paid content on digital platforms is not a fashion or fluke, it is a core strategic issue for the future," Mr Schantin says.

"If you stick with the traditional model – advertising sales and (print) circulation revenue – whatever you do, it won't be enough," he says.

In a wide-ranging presentation that provided a strategic approach to monetizing digital content, Mr Schantin identifies five basic models: site subscription, metered access, premium access or freemium, kiosk or newsstand sales, and apps.

He offers a number of examples of each, from The New York Times' metered model to the Times of London's subscription model, each delivering success.

Some of the success factors:

- Obvious added value and benefit.
- Simple and convenient.
- Flat fee across media, pay for brand.
- Predictable and transparent cost.
- Privacy and data protection.

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Newsplex 2012: Newsroom of the future

Olivier Bourgeois, Director General WAN-IFRA South West Europe, France, the final speaker of the first day, describes International Rhône-Alpes Medias (IRAM), a facility and platform for the study and testing of newsrooms that WAN-IFRA is developing in partnership with Université Jean Monnet St-Étienne, Université Lyon II.

Mr Bourgeois says the aim is to establish a prototype future newsroom for training journalists and news professionals to work with the technologies of the future, as well as a platform for monitoring and analysing new media industry practices and technologies.

It will be a place of cutting-edge research, bringing together scientific, technological and cultural organisations active in the industry.

It will open in the autumn of 2012 in France and be part of an international network that includes Newsplex USA in South Carolina and Newsplex in Asia, which will open in September in Singapore.

Mr Bourgeois says IRAM is an international media training, research and monitoring platform dedicated to promoting media convergence.

At the heart of IRAM is a newsroom of the future, Mr Bourgeois says, which is equipped with the latest technologies: a laboratory for training, exchanging views and experiences, researching, discussing, and developing activities to shape the future of the media.



The main financial backers of this project are Région Rhône-Alpes, Conseil Général de la Loire and Saint-Étienne Métropole.

When it opens later this year, it will host the offices of WAN-IFRA South-West Europe, the initial and ongoing degree programmes and vocational training modules.

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Integrating video into the newsroom



When AFP decided a few years ago to make a concentrated effort to expand its online video offering, it faced a number of difficulties.

"Our departments used to work in parallel, and there was almost no collaboration," says Henry Bouvier, Head of Video, AFP, France.

Mr Bouvier adds that there was the problem of reluctance from journalists: " 'I don't want to become a Swiss knife,' or 'The quality of my photos will go down.' We heard all of that. There were lots of arguments against AFP doing what we wanted to do."

"We took a very prudent approach," Mr Bouvier says. "Cultural change isn't something that happens in months, it happens in years. We decided to go slowly, but we would prove to the newsroom that it was possible."

AFP decided to use only journalists who volunteered and trained a number of journalists in Paris and Asia. AFP also decided that doing video should not replace any journalist's main job of getting text or photos.

Quality is the most important part of the project. He says AFP didn't want to get into a situation where they could have been blocked by unions, etc. "So, the project is working. We'd rather have 300-400 doing it regularly and getting good results than to have 2000 doing it reluctantly and poorly. For us, it works quite well," Mr Bouvier says.

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Traditional subbing versus new-age hubbing

“Are we able to increase productivity and efficiency and yet, at the same time, maintain the quality our readers have come to expect? How much money can we save? Can we afford to upset the most important section of any newspaper – the cantankerous, anarchistic subs – an area that has basically remained untouched for 150 years?”

Peter Atkinson, Group Editorial Consultant for Avusa Media in South Africa, set out to answer those questions in his presentation about replacing reporting and editorial teams at individual newspapers with editorial “hubs” for all publications in a company.

He believes it is possible to successfully replace individual editorial teams with hubs, where a smaller number of staff editors, aided by freelancers, do the page subbing across titles. But he had several caveats – the circumstances and criteria have to be right, you have to introduce it correctly, and take staff morale and resistance to change into consideration.

As the process was estimated to save 2 million euros a year, management of the company, which owns the Sunday Times, four daily and eight weekly community papers, was in agreement to do it. But persuading chief editors was more difficult, Mr Atkinson says. “Naturally they felt threatened and emasculated as we discussed setting up a hub 1,500 kilometers away,” he says.

But hubbing made sense, to save costs and increase efficiency in a company that has a variety of papers with very different edition times.

“The quality of copy has improved; productivity has increased especially in the case of Sunday reporters. And we no longer have a situation when six reporters from six different papers flew 1,500 kilometers to the same football match, stayed overnight, did a follow-up, decided to stay another night, be-



cause their expenses were signed by different sports editors – that is gone,” Mr Atkinson says.

“OK...papers might have lost exclusivity, but they have gained in quality and quantity and the reporters are now enjoying the exposure writing for a far larger audience. The domestic travel savings alone would pay for an additional 4 reporters...should we be that indulgent. ”

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Open-source solutions for newsrooms



William Davis, Editor of the Bangor Daily News in Maine, USA, discusses how his 50,000-circulation daily newspaper moved from an outdated content management system (CMS) to using web-based tools that have improved its online efficiency.

Mr Davis says that in the old way of doing things, the print CMS didn't talk to the website or support links. Furthermore, the paper's bureau-based reporters couldn't access the CMS, so they would email their stories to editors, who would edit them and add copy-and-paste links, and then any changes would start the process over again.

The Daily News wanted a flexible system that was easy to use and would support going web-first, but they also did not want to spend a lot of money on a new system.

Mr Davis said the paper tested web-based tools such as Google Docs and WordPress for their website, which staff have continued to use.

He says they are now consistently hitting deadlines better than ever. The paper's website is growing by 40 percent year-on-year. Furthermore, they have saved a considerable amount of money, and 10 positions have been eliminated or re-assigned. "We're producing more content, and it's better content," Mr Davis says.

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Never too late to integrate

Three northern France newspapers will combine their editorial teams next month, but the goal isn't just to save costs and create efficiencies. It will also allow the creation of new jobs to reflect new digital realities.

When the Voix de Nord, Direct Lille and Nord Éclair bring their reporting and editing teams together, there won't be a reduction in staff. But there will be a reorganisation to focus on multimedia, video, interactivity, audience engagement and local and hyperlocal news.

"We decided to learn from other experiences to try to identify major trends and to find good ideas. We went to numerous conferences and saw more than 200 presentations," says Pierre Mauchamp, Deputy Editor-in-chief of La Voix du Nord, who cited dozens of media companies that provided inspiration for the reorganisation – The New York Times, Ringier, Le Parisien, The Telegraph, BBC, Washington Post, Zero Hora, and Le Soir among them.

"Big institutions, small institutions, media around the world, pure players, all contributed without knowing it," he says. "We picked small ideas, and tried to identify the big trends, and chose among the big trends – they're not always compatible."

The new jobs in the newsroom include multimedia sub-editors, community managers, data journalists and visual sub-editors. All journalists will work in multimedia.

Convincing staff to make the transition was a key task. "We told them you can find news ways to our job and mission," Mr Mauchamp says. "At home, our journalists were using digital media, but as soon as they came into the newsroom, they were print journalists. We had to convince them that other people were using digital media too."



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Measuring social media success



Why is social media important? That is the question posed by Lukas Maixner, GM and co-founder of Socialbakers, a social media and digital analytics company with customers in more than 60 countries. There are two main answers: communities and traffic.

Mr Maixner explains that his company helps other companies measure the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns on social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

Social media websites are mostly based on recommendations – rather than search results, he says. “If it comes from social, users are more likely to stay.”

Media companies should also find out the most engaging types of posts – such as links, photos, video, etc.

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Reciprocity key to social media success

Who owns the social media relationship?

"It isn't Facebook, it isn't Twitter, and it isn't you," says Francois Nel, Founding Director of the Journalism Leaders Programme at the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom.

"Relationships are established, maintained, even dissolved. They aren't owned, not by anyone, and they depend on reciprocity," he says.

In a presentation on "the alchemy of social business model innovation," Mr Nel compares the performance of two of the United Kingdom's most successful media companies online: The Mail and the Guardian.

He notes that while both enjoyed exponentially growing audiences in the digital sphere, the Mail was profitable and the Guardian was loss-making. He attributes this to the two companies different approach to online content.

While the Mail kept digital and print separate – even allowing different content to be created and published on digital platforms – the Guardian largely used its digital platforms as a substitute for the print edition, he said.

"With the Mail, we see a strategy where the digital channels supplement the papers," he says. "At the Guardian, the digital channels substitute the paper."



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Digital news co-operatives



Meinolf Ellers, Founder and MD of Germany's dpa infocom, discusses how news agencies and newspapers can work together to cut costs.

The main challenges in the modern newsroom are that there are now more platforms and channels, which lead to more complexity.

"We need more and better customized content, but at the same time we are forced to reduce costs," Mr Ellers says.

The key to moving forward, he says, is using the strict reporter/editor principle: media-neutral news reporting and multi-channel publishing.

In doing this, Mr Ellers says that metadata, structure planning and real-time workflows are essential.

"Newspapers are becoming local news agencies," he says.

"We have to talk about metadata, and I know for editors this is witchcraft, but it's the only way," Mr Ellers says.

Metadata is already being produced, he says – it's just not being used regularly enough by newspapers. For example, once a digital photo is rendered, the metadata is carried through all the processes, all the channels.

"In the end, it's about increasing efficiency," he says.

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Dealing with the enemies of change

Do you enjoy your job? Do you think you're doing the right thing? Do you have a purpose?

Those are the questions media companies should be asking their employees, if they want to succeed in a rapidly changing media environment.

Tomas Brunegard, CEO of Sweden's Stampen Group, put an inspiring finish on the 11th annual Newsroom Summit with a look at the big issues facing news media as they copes with changes that impact the industry's ability to fulfil its central role in democratic society.

He points to how the media can help transform regions as it has done in the Arab Spring. "There is a major democratic movement going on around the world, and this is one of the changes we are seeing – the power of media."

He also calls the rapid pace of technological change, particular the "tornado" of mobile growth, a positive development for news media.

"We are in the right spot and the right time with the right tools, and it is up to us not to screw it up," he says. "We were taken by surprise by the Internet. We were not taken by surprise this time."

Mr Brunegard identifies several "enemies" of change that media companies need to discuss openly and deal with.

One is credibility, and the image the industry has with government and the public. "We need to deal with this because it locks us into a position which has an impact on our ability to work freely," he says.

Another is, "we are so scared about the future and where revenues come from that we jump into any partnerships that are there. I'll just say, 'Apple,' 'Google,' and 'Facebook' and you know what we mean."



Still another is failing to face the reality that power is shifting to consumers and individuals.

A lack of self-confidence is also an enemy of change. "There is a doom and gloom mentality out there. Sometimes we feel it's like it is Jurassic Park we're working in – and we're not. The attitude from us as leaders in the newspaper industry is so important."

But perhaps the biggest enemy is failure to counter the natural human instinct to stick with the familiar and resist change. Motivation is the antidote, he said – ensuring the people have autonomy, are given the opportunity to excel, and have a purpose in their work.

"It's all about attitude, it's between the shoulders," Mr Brunegard concludes. "We can change. We can change together, and we can change at a much faster pace than we have in the past."

"We can make a difference in the future. We can change society."

