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BRANDS, STARS AND REGULAR HACKS – A CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEWS INSTITUTIONS AND JOURNALISTS

By: Saska Saarikoski

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Rationale of the study

This research is about branding. More specifically, it is about media branding which covers everything from established corporate brands like the Guardian or the Helsingin Sanomat to individual journalists.

Branding is an interesting subject for three reasons:

1. It's an organizing concept of post-industrial companies, including media companies.
2. It's an ambivalent and as such an interesting concept – especially for the news organisations and journalists.
3. It's a currency of the attention economy and therefore even a potential source of conflict between media institutions and individuals.

This study tries to find out whether branding could help the media companies in distress. If companies making soda drinks and sneakers desperately want to become valued content producers, shouldn't the newspapers thrive – after all, news has always been about images, trust and loyalty?

Another central theme in this research concerns the changing relationship between institutional and personal brands. Brand researchers have pointed out that a company brand consists of all the messages the company sends out, be it products, advertising, package design or employees. By brand management the company tries to control these messages in order to create a coherent brand. In media companies there are often hundreds, if not thousands, of individual journalists sending out their own messages. They do it through their actual work, but also by appearing in other media or public events, meeting audiences or chatting in social media. How does all this affect the company brand?

It might sometimes look like legacy media institutions are becoming extinct, and the future will belong to individuals constantly tweeting or beeping their own messages. However, institutions do still have an important role to play. Faced with an over-flow of information, people tend to stick with the few channels they know and trust, so the most valued institutions can become multi-platform gatekeepers that help filter the news flow. And the dilemma of getting money for digital content applies even more to individuals than to institutions: even though a celebrity might have millions of Twitter-followers, how many of them would pay a penny for his or her thoughts? Therefore, the future probably belongs to those institutions and those individuals who find ways of working together.

1.2. Organization of the research paper

This research starts by looking at the history and theories of branding. Branding is discussed widely in marketing research, but hardly at all in media studies. This might reflect old mental firewalls between marketing and journalism, which can still be seen in most media companies.
The third chapter contains a case study of the leading Finnish daily newspaper, the Helsingin Sanomat. In 2008 the newspaper conducted a survey about which journalists the readers follow and value. In this research some of those "brand journalists" gave their opinions on their own brands and journalistic branding in general. The editors offered the management's view on the issue.

In chapter four journalistic branding is elaborated further when American and British journalists and researchers offer their insights. Especially in the US, where digitalisation has rocked the very foundations of legacy media, many journalists are trying to make their name by building up strong personal brands. This has created new tensions between media institutions and individual journalists, for example over the ownership of social media accounts.

Finally, the research offers some practical conclusions and recommendations. They are aimed both at journalists struggling to secure their own foothold, and at media organizations trying to find new ways to fight the crisis facing traditional newspapers.

2. BRANDS AND BRANDING

2. 1. Introduction

What is a brand, and how have the brands reached their pre-eminence? This chapter starts by delving into the history of branding which is almost as old as human culture.
Why did a simple advertising concept develop in the late 20th century into such an all-encompassing phenomenon that it seems almost impossible to discuss any ideas or identities without somehow branding them? The history of brands is juxtaposed with an evolution of company structure from factories producing and selling goods to dream factories marketing branded identities.
Are brands good or bad? The second part of the chapter introduces different and often polarized interpretations of branding and its consequences. Some scholars, like Naomi Klein, take a very condemning view on branding seeing it as an ultimate threat to human freedom. Others, like Adam Arvidsson, see branding as an inevitable development with potential benefits to society.
The chapter ends with the impact of branding on the media. Why is the legacy media in crisis when all other companies want to become media companies? And how are the news organisations trying to adapt to this brand new world?

2.2. History of brands

The word “branding” refers originally to the searing of flesh with a hot iron to produce a scar or mark for identification purposes. Livestock were branded by Egyptians as early as 2000 BC. (Danesi, 2006)
Branding of humans was used as a punishment for prisoners in Ancient Greece and Rome, and the procedure was later adopted in many other places. Even though people were sold and bought as slaves, in the early days they were seldom physically marked. This changed during the transatlantic slave trade when branding with a hot iron was frequently used to identify the slaves and indicate their status as property. (Moor, 2007)
Branding of goods started as simple marking of products to indicate their ownership or origins. This could be done for example by monograms, earmarks, ceramic marks or watermarks. Such marks can be traced back to Ancient Greece some 2,500 years ago.
The branding of mass produced consumer goods started in the late 19th century. The likely candidate for the first such product is Harley Proctor’s “Ivory Soap” in 1882. (Danesi, 2006)

Many familiar and successful brands such as Parker Pens, Colgate, Wrigley and Coca-Cola were introduced in the 1890s. Since most branded goods were household commodities such as soaps, jam or toothpaste, the main target of marketing were housewives. This was to continue until the 1970s. The brands were marketed almost entirely through advertising; first by posters, then in newspapers, magazines and radio (which developed a special kind of program format called soap opera), later in cinema, and finally television. (Olins, 2000)

The classical marketing theories of the early 20th century were based on a simple behaviourist view of humans acting and thinking as masses. Since it was, however, obvious that all people were not identical, the households were divided into four categories according to their income and class position. Even though this ABCD-classification was not based on any real data, it has had a lasting impact on the ways we talk about society and consumption.

The cultural turn

In the 1950s the western countries, especially The United States, were quickly moving to unforeseen affluence. This had a dramatic impact on society and the way people saw themselves. The change was recognised in a 1954 book *Motivation and Personality* where Abraham Maslow introduced his hierarchy of needs-pyramid. According to Maslow, people move from fulfilling their basic needs such as food and protection to more advanced needs such as self-esteem and self-actualization. This was certainly happening in the United States.

In the 1950s the admen realised that the advertisers were not reaching people as before. The old thinking had been that everybody wanted to move forward: the young wanted be like their parents and the poor wanted to be rich. Therefore, marketing was about promising people what they wished for.

Now, growing number of people saw themselves as middle-class - and were quite happy to be just that. Instead of “keeping up with the Joneses” they wanted to differentiate themselves from other Joneses. And to do this they were imitating people and life-styles which they witnessed in the movies, magazines and television.

Early signs of this “cultural turn”, as Adam Arvidsson calls it, were captured by market researchers who were applying new computer technology to collect more profound qualitative data on the meanings and values people attached to goods. This new thinking led to the first full-scale life-style advertising campaigns: Coca-Cola and Pepsi tried to capture the generational vibrations, and Marlboro invented a rugged lonely cowboy called the Marlboro Man. (Arvidsson, 2006)

The brand takes over

By the 1980s it was obvious that the rules of the game had changed for good: the decline of manufacturing, the rise of new service companies and finance-driven corporate takeovers had created a new kind of multi-branch company that was bound together by little but the company brand.

The lure of submitting all the different products under one brand name was enhanced by changes in the media. With the fragmentation of old media, the traditional blanket coverage became difficult and less cost-effective. The message had to be simplified to the core: to the brand.

A new kind of innovative and aggressive brands such as Apple, Calvin Klein, the Body Shop, Starbucks and Nike soared in the 1990s. “For these companies, the ostensible product was mere filler for the real production: the brand. They integrated the idea of branding into the very fabric of their companies. Their corporate cultures were so tight and cloistered that to outsiders they appeared to be a cross between fraternity house, religious cult and sanitarium. Everything was an ad for the brand: bizarre lexicons for describing employees (partners, baristas, team players, crew members), company chants, superstar CEOs, fanatical attention to design consistency, a propensity for monument-building, and New Age mission statements.” (Klein, 2001)

New marketing studies proved that it was more profitable to tie existing customers to the brand than try to get new ones by advertising. Thus blanket-campaigns were replaced by targeting of potential customers, loyalty clubs, and membership cards. These could later evolve into brand communities that finalised the transformation of a customer: a passive recipient of goods and messages had become an active participant in the value-formation process of the brand.

The emerging globalized production model worked in the same direction. To lower the production costs many companies outsourced their manufacturing to subcontractors. Soon many consumer products – computers, mobile phones, drugs, cars - were almost identical goods sold in different packages, and under different brands.

Thus successful brands expanded to ever new territories. Caterpillar expanded from bulldozers to clothing and became a “tough brand”. Virgin moved from airlines to record stores, trains, cell phones, and banking under an “attitude brand”. Already by the late 1990s the majority of new products were extensions of old brands. (Olins, 2003)

But branding carries a lethal danger: if the brand drowns, the whole company goes down with it. In the 1990s brand management became of primary importance. First it meant the rise of branding consultancies, but soon companies started to develop their own brand management divisions which eventually often took over the core of corporate management.

Branding acquired an increasing importance inside the new giant companies where traditional hierarchies and company structures had vanished. Wally Olins describes modern companies as jungles of insecurity with no trade unions, no paternalistic employer, no job security, and no jobs for life. All of this meant that the loyalty towards the company was harder to create and sustain. In nearly spiritual fervour Olins summarizes: "As companies mutate into global coalitions with fluid management structures, shifting borders, alliances and business activities, brands increasingly emerge as the most significant spiritual and emotional glue holding organizations together and representing their reputation to all worlds which they deal. Brands become the prime manifestation of the corporate purpose." (Olins, 2003)

The branding that had started with the mundane soap ads in the 1890s was now in the driver's seat of the economy. This had to be taken into financial account, too. Until the 1980s a company's assets had been seen as a sum of its tangible assets like factories and equipment but now it was realized that intangible assets were often the real wealth generators. Especially in the big company mergers of the late 1980s and the 1990s it became important to find ways to calculate the company's "brand equity".

Giving brand a price tag

"Brand equity is a set of assets (and liabilities) linked to a brand's name and symbol that adds to (or subtracts from) the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or that firm's customers." (Aaker, 1991)
David Aaker divides a brand's potential to add value to the business into four components:

1. Loyalty: An emotional bond between the brand and the customer which increases repeated purchases.
2. Awareness: Consumers' familiarity with the brand
3. Perceived quality: Consumers' assessment of the expected quality the brand will deliver.
4. Associations: The images and ideas that are connected to the brand – what brand means to the consumer.

These components formed the basis of Brand Asset Valuator (BAV) developed in 1993 by an advertising agency Young&Rubicam:

1. Differentiation: Originality, creativity, uniqueness.
2. Relevance: This product is for people like me.
3. Esteem: The product is the best in the field

4. Knowledge: How well recognized the product is.

Since brands live in the people's minds, any attempt to assess the brand value must measure consumers' opinions. There are several other calculation formulas. One of the simplest ones is the Equitrend by Harris Interactive.

1. Quality. 10-point scale. A survey.
2. Salience. Percentage of respondents who have an opinion of the brand.
3. Equity. 1 times 2.

Brands definitely have a market value, and these kinds of valuators produce figures to involve in the balance sheets, but how reliable are they in the end? Not very, most researchers say.

"Brand valuation, like most instruments for the valuation of intellectual capital rely on a set of more or less arbitrarily chosen criteria that are transformed into quantifiable variables in some way", Adam Arvidsson snubs.

In his article *Valuing Expressive organizations: Intellectual Capital and the Visualization of Value Creation* Jan Mouritsen discusses the practical impossibility of measuring the intellectual capital of branded company which can involve things like networked relationships, company stories, and loyalty, drive, skills and creativity of people inside and outside of the company.

Mouritsen thinks that age-old accounting methods just can't calculate this value, so basically there is no bottom line, and the value of a firm is simply what somebody is ready to pay for it.

But even though the brand value is difficult to define and even more difficult to calculate, there is a desperate urge to protect it. Since many large companies found themselves in the 1990s with hardly any other assets besides their brands, trademarks, copyrights, patents or other intellectual properties, it became necessary to protect those rights through legislation.

Lately, the brands have been increasingly seen as private property, and even human beings, such as David Beckham and Britney Spears have begun to protect their names and images. (Moor, 2007)

Brand You

Brands have spread with an amazing force and speed. Now they are about to make their final conquest: we are all becoming brands.

"In a sense, each person is a brand – an individual with an identity that is largely a construction derived from specific cultural traditions", sociologist Marcel Danesi writes.

"Brands are no longer perceived to be just 'things' for consumption, but mainly as vehicles for securing a better job, protecting oneself against the hazards of old age and illness, attaining

popularity and personal prestige, obtaining praise from others, increasing pleasure, advancing socially, and maintaining health." (Danesi, 2006)
This has naturally created a world-wide market for self-help books that instruct people in the spirit of Tom Peters: "In today's wired world, you're distinct…or extinct. Survive, triumph by becoming Brand You!" (Peters, 1999)

2.3. Good brands and bad brands

Early definition of brands appeared in the Harvard Business Review in 1955: "It is a complex symbol that represents a variety of ideas and attributes. It tells the consumer many things, not only by the way it sounds (and its literal meaning if it has one) but, more important, via the body of associations it has built up an acquired as a public object over a period of time." (Gardner and Levy, 1955)
More casually the brands are often defined simply by saying that companies make products but people buy brands.
Branding smouldered for a long time as a marketing concept in the company world, but in the 1980s it caught fire and took over the entire corporate landscape when a previously diffuse set of practices like marketing, distribution, media communication and product design consolidated into an integrated approach to marketing and business strategy.
From the corporations branding migrated to such new fields as sports, arts, politics, charities, cities, and even branding of individuals.
Now branding seems to be everywhere. Like Wally Olins says: "The brand has become so significant a phenomenon of our time that it is almost impossible to express any ideas, or even delineate personalities, without branding them." (Olins, 2003)
The rise of branding can be seen in two, totally opposite, ways. Firstly, it can be regarded as the climax of capitalism where commercial brands are privatizing human liberty. We not only consume the branded goods but fill our minds with branded contents, submit our private lives to commercial exploitation, and build our identities within brand produced culture.
The Financial Times once called Naomi Klein's book No Logo "an Orwellian nightmare" and, indeed, Klein does paint a murky picture of a world taken over by companies with super brands like Nike, Shell, Disney, Coca-Cola and McDonald's.
"But today, a clear pattern is emerging: as more and more companies seek to be the overarching brand under which we consume, make art, even build our homes, the entire concept of public space is being redefined. And within these real and virtual branded edifices, options for unbranded

alternatives, for open debate, criticism and uncensored art – for real choice – are facing new and ominous restrictions."

And eventually the branding invades our minds: "This loss of space happens inside the individual: it is colonization not of physical space but of mental space." (Klein, 2001)

However, the development can be seen in a very different, even liberating light. Danish scholar Adam Arvidsson emphasises that in the new brand economy the value is no longer created solely in production controlled by capital but in a complicated process involving independent workers and even consumers, "the self-organizing productive teams of contemporary knowledge-intensive labour" and "the productive practices of consumers". (Arvidsson, 2006)

Arvidsson equates the General Intellect, a term paraphrased by Karl Marx, to present-day consumer community which has grown into free space of flowing ideas, creativity and innovation. "The productivity of immaterial labour builds on the ability of human communication to produce a surplus sociality", Arvidsson writes.

The proponents remind us that companies and their brands can flourish only as long as they are able to maintain the trust of this interconnected global community. Wally Olins states that it is not the brands running the world, like Naomi Klein warns, but people running the brands. (Olins, 2003)

Indeed, even Klein recognises the political boomerang-effect: the bigger the brand becomes, the more it must protect its image. Thus, branded companies are much more vulnerable to public opinion than their unbranded rivals, and that opens new channels for resistance.

Brand has thus evolved from a simple marketing tool into an essential concept in organizing and making sense of production and consumption – and almost any form of interaction – in a post-industrial information society.

Celia Lury emphasises the centrality of media in this new economy. Her phrase "mediatization of society" refers to the increasing importance of information, image and media in the organization and expression of economy, consumer culture and everyday life. (Lury, 2011)

The branding, according to Lury, can be described as mediatization of things: adding information to goods. Therefore mundane consumer goods such as drinks or shoes now contain loads of information, and the companies producing them such as Coca-Cola have started to regard their business as selling lifestyles rather than selling goods.

Many researchers emphasize the emotional component of brands. According to Wally Olins, the most successful brands can compress and express simple, complex, and subtle emotions. "The most powerful factor that makes brands so powerful is empathy. We enjoy their company and depend on their relationship because they help us to define who we are." (Olins, 2000)

Adam Arvidsson thinks that the real essence of a brand is the experience the customer gets by using the product. “With a particular brand I can act, feel and be in a particular way.” (Arvidsson, 2006) Instead of one-off-exchanges, brand companies try to construct permanent relationships with their customers, so they can develop their production processes with ongoing feed-back loops. The brand value rests essentially in the minds of customers, and what the brand owners own is a share of human consciousness: an ability to influence people and empower them to particular directions.

The Matrix becomes reality

The strong affiliation many people nowadays feel towards brands has been explained by the break-up of traditional social values. Brands have replaced old authorities as sources of identity and self-esteem.

According to Francis Fukuyama trust in society has generally diminished. He sees “the decline in a wide range of social structures like neighbourhoods, churches, unions, clubs, and charities; and the general sense among Americans of a lack of shared values and community with those around them” (Fukuyama, 1995)

According to Arvidsson, the last enclaves of anti-consumerist counter-cultures in the British working class communities died out by the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, the “resistance, quite simply had to be found within consumer culture, first with youth, then with women and lately with people qua consumers”.

Arvidsson claims that branding spread in 1990s as a response to existential insecurity of postmodern societies, and particularly to the phenomenon of ‘Generation X’.

“X’rs had grown up with the disintegration of modern communities and securities – from the nuclear family to their own career paths – and the almost complete media saturation of everyday life. Consequently, they had no stable beliefs, no enduring commitments, and no trust in established institutions. It was supposed that brands could come and fill this void.” (Arvidsson, 2006)

An ironic twist in branding is that it brought the critical, anti-consumerist attitudes of the 1960s counter-culture to the core of product development. By constantly sucking up ideas from new, cool and non-conformist sub-cultures brands have built a perpetuum mobile which has made it possible to be both fashionable (to belong to a group) and rebellious (to be an outsider) simply by using branded products.

“This clever marketing strategy allowed consumers to believe that what they bought transformed them into ersatz revolutionaries without having to pay the social price of true nonconformity and dissent”, Marcel Danesi writes. (Danesi, 2006)

By now it has become virtually impossible to step out of the global consumer culture since there is no outside; everything that happens, happens within this consumerist media world. There is nothing outside of text. Matrix has become reality.

Arvidsson writes: "The brand thus corresponds to the condition of a 'network culture' where the mediatisation of the social has progressed to the point that it is no longer meaningful to maintain a distinction between media and reality, where information is no longer something that represents reality, but something that provides an ambience in which reality can unfold."

Naomi Klein writes that in the past companies used celebrities or newspaper ads to boost their brands but the "the nineties-style" brands want to be the main attractions. "It is not to sponsor culture but to *be* culture." (Klein, 2001)

Klein thinks that this eventually means taking over the entire human life as in the branded town Celebrations, Florida built and managed by Disney.

In popular culture this phenomenon has been critically described in movies like the Truman Show (1998) where the whole life of protagonist - played by Jim Carrey - was of branded content, and more recently The Joneses (2010) where a group of people were employed to act as a perfect family to market branded goods in their community.

This mood was also aptly described by author J.G. Ballard in his novel *Crash* (1973).

"We live in a world ruled by fictions of every kind – mass merchandising, advertising, politics conducted as a branch of advertising, the instant translation of science and technology into popular imagery, the increasing blurring and intermingling of identities within the realm of consumer goods, the pre-empting of any free or original imaginative response to experience by the television screen. We live inside an enormous novel. For the writer in particular it is less necessary for him to invent the fictional content of his novel. The fiction is already there. The writer's task is to invent the reality."

You are what you buy

During the last 30 years researchers have witnessed new kind of communities building around such brands as Harley Davidson or Star Trek. This communal trend has been even more obvious in developing countries where modernisation has abruptly severed traditional societies, and western brands have been equated with wealth and progress. In East Africa rich people are nowadays called WaBenzi, members of the Mercedes Benz tribe. (Olins, 2003)

The semiotician Marcel Danesi writes that naming a product is in fact humanizing it. "Across cultures names are perceived as fundamental to the identification and personality of the individual.

Without a name, a human being is often taken to have no true existence psychologically and socially. Names are 'life-givers' in psychological terms. By naming a product, the manufacturer is, in effect, bestowing upon it the same kinds of meanings that are reserved for people. In a basic psychological sense, a product that is named is 'humanized'." (Danesi, 2006)
This is good to bear in mind later when we talk about the newspapers that have during the last 20-30 years moved from almost total anonymity to an abundance of bylines, mug shots and high-profile journalists. Have the newspaper journalists thus been humanized, given a social existence?

Olins thinks that brands even possess semi-religious powers. "Nike and brands like it appear to have this kind of spiritual power. They seem, in an individualistic, materialistic, acquisitive, egocentric era to have become some kind of replacement for or supplement to religious belief". (Olins, 2003)
This quasi-spiritual essence of goods might not be a modern thing but a thing of traditional societies returning after an era of anonymous mass-production.
In their classical work *The World of Goods* Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood showed that goods carry meanings in all societies, and through acquiring, using and exchanging things people come to have social lives. (Douglas, Isherwood, 1979)
Therefore, there is no fundamental difference between a Polynesian warrior who wears a tooth of a wild beast as a necklace and a London hoodie who breaks into a store to rob Nike-shoes. They both think that the things they wear build their identity and social status – and that is what the brands are about.

We have now defined the brands and discussed their meaning and importance. We move on to discuss how come a soda drink or a sneaker can mean more to people than a television channel or a newspaper. After all, a sneaker is just a shoe made in China whereas a newspaper is an entity full of information, opinions, emotions and stories created by a group of passionate individuals. Where did the journalists screw up, and is it too late to go back and fix it?

2.4 Newspapers as brands

Modern consumer brands emerged in the late 19th century when some manufacturers came up with a revolutionary idea to name their products. However, in the newspaper market the idea had always been around. When the first English newspaper was introduced in 1513 it had a name - The True Encounter - and a known publisher: "emprynted by Richard Facques". (Craven, 1992)

No wonder, that in the book *The Business of Brands* Jon Miller and David Muir presented newspapers as classic examples of branding:

"A newspaper's brand is obviously the result of behaviour: the kind of stories and photos chosen, the choice of headlines and use of language – all of this result from the daily activities of the newspaper's journalists and editors. Readers and non-readers alike form an impression of the newspaper – even those who have never even picked it up will have ideas about the kind of people who read it. Of course, those regular readers who buy it daily will tell you 'that's my paper'. The newspaper's brand aligns its writers and readers. The daily production of a newspaper is a complex system of judgments and values – style, presentation of facts, comment etc. The brand provides those working on the newspaper with a shared understanding of the newspaper's stance towards the news, and towards its readers." (Miller, Muir, 2004)

The newspapers are based on trust. Miller and Muir refer to studies that show that people trust their own newspapers more than four times more than the press in general.

When people subscribe to a newspaper's values, they often start to regard the paper as their own. Readers' feedback, tips and opinions influence the paper, and often the readers even become contributors.

Therefore, the making of a newspaper has always been exactly the kind of ongoing loop between the product and consumers as the modern brands are trying to build, according to Celia Lury. And the newspapers have always created communities the same way brands like Harley Davidson are doing today.

A newspaper seems to posses the basic elements of a modern brand: a name, a personality, a set of values and an ongoing two-way relationship with their customers. So, why are newspapers in trouble?

It's not that the people don't care: newspapers have more readers than ever before. They just don't pay. In the digital age people are used to getting news for free, and are not willing to pay for content. (Vehkoo, 2011)

At the same time competition for people's time and attention has got more intense. In the old world the entry to the mass media market required basically a printing press or a television channel. In the

digital world anybody can start a media operation. This has caused a rush into the media market by individuals, organisations and companies. Especially, the consumer brands now see media as a means to promote their business.

Every brand wants to be a media brand

Branding is a mercurial phenomenon that evaporates through all walls and boundaries. In media this means blurring the lines between media content and advertising by advertorials, sponsored content, product placement etc. And it doesn't end there.

The brands want to cut out the middle-men and deal straight with the audience. Naomi Klein describes how consumer brands open websites to serve as a "beachhead from which to expand into other non-virtual media".

"What has become clear is that corporations aren't just selling their products on-line, they're selling a new model for the media's relationship with corporate sponsors and backers." (Klein, 2001)

Now the companies are increasingly undertaking even actual editorial work. In his Mashable-article *Why Brands are Becoming Media* (2010) Brian Solis, a principal at new media agency Future Works, writes that engaging in social media has step by step led companies to start working much like journalists.

"While establishing a presence is elementary, captivating audiences is artful. In the near future, brands and organizations will create new or augment existing roles for editors and publishers to create timely, relevant, and captivating content on all social media channels. This work is in addition to the other reactive and proactive social media campaigns that are already in progress. A strategic editorial calendar should blend video, audio, imagery, text, updates, and other social objects and networks to reach, inspire, and galvanize communities." (Solis, 2010)

Not a newspaper but a brand

The branding did not start from the media but now even the media companies are catching up. Since the 1990s more and more media companies have started to reorganize themselves around their brands.

Dan and Mary Alice Shaver describe the transformation in the article *Generating Audience Loyalty to Internet News Providers through Branding* in the book *Media Brands and Branding*. (Shaver & Shaver, 2008): "In the mid-1990s U.S. media companies faced the need to develop a strategic response to the impact of digital technologies on the competitive structure of media industries that

had historically been relatively protected technological content silos, economic barriers to entry and, often, regulatory barriers."

According to Shavers, the media companies started quickly centering their competitive strategies against existing and new competitors by leveraging the reputation of the firms' existing products with digital brand extensions.

In his article *Media and Brands: New Ground to Explore* in the same book Mart Ots sums up two main reasons for the rise of branding:

1. Technological convergence and audience fragmentation intensify the competition and allow the audience to choose new paths of consumption when choice is abundant and access to media market is easy.
2. In the volatile market media companies cling on to their key asset: their users. They want to build stronger bonds with their audiences in ways that are relevant and unique but not bound to specific channels or formats.

According to Adam Arvidson, technological change has motored media branding by weakening the old earning logic and by creating a new one: "The transformation of the media environment in the 1990s both tended to diminish the effectiveness of advertising and – through the integration of media culture into life in general and the proliferation of new informational tools – enabled a more far-reaching subsumption of the productivity of consumers."

"When a particular media product (or 'content') can be promoted across different media channels and sold in different formats, what is marketed is not so much films or books, as 'content brands' that can travel between and provide a context for the consumption of a number of goods or media products." (Arvidsson, 2006)

In a recent hand book for media students *Mass Media Revolution,* J. Charles Sterin writes that the multi-channel approach is an important factor driving the personal branding of journalists since the one thing that holds the narrative together in different platforms is the story teller. "It's me telling you these things in newspaper, magazine, web site, audio, video, tweets etc." (Sterin,2012).

The core objective of media branding can thus be defined. It is to differentiate and distinguish the brand in the changing market. It allows established news brands to expand to the digital/online market where the environment favors or even requires branded contents.

"If traditional media branding strategies are effective, they must lead consumers from the traditional product to the online product and back again, expanding the total content audience in ways that protect traditional information franchises. At the same time they must create a brand image in the minds of news consumers that provides a competitive advantage against non-traditional sites that

offer news online by differentiating on the basis of quality or dependability", Shaver and Shaver write.

According to Ots, pessimists often say that the media brands are necessarily weak since the alternative is always only one click away, whereas optimists argue that abundance of options in fact strengthens the established media brands since with endless opportunities people tend to stick to the brands they know.

Branding aims to enhance customer loyalty, gather information about customers and by doing these things build up potential for possible further brand extensions.

Ots points out that the branding of media companies follows the same basic patterns as branding elsewhere with two important exceptions:

1. Media companies own powerful mass-marketing tools which they can use to build and promote their brands.
2. Media companies act on dual markets: they market their brands to the customers, but at the same time they sell their customers to advertisers.

In her article *Self-Promotion: Pole Position in Media Brand Management* later in the same book Gabriele Siegert adds a third condition specific to media branding: since the value of media goods (journalistic information or agenda setting) is almost impossible to measure, the journalists are in danger of getting alienated from their audience which can eventually lead to market failure. According to Siegert, branding can ease these problems by giving at least some tools to measure the quality of media experience.

There is even a fourth element specific to media that Ots briefly mentions, but which deserves to be emphasized: the potential conflict between commercial branding and independent journalism. "The search for new ways to increase revenues by capitalizing on brand equity increases the demands for cautious brand management. In media firms, this process can often be traumatic since their greatest fear is loss of integrity, and many media companies, especially news media, rely heavily on the trust of their audiences." (Ots, 2008)

Ots recommends further research, since "little is known how the more stringent implementation of brand platforms and manuals affects the creative work and journalistic output in media firms".

In the Guardian today: Thermal lined leisure trousers

The potential of brand extensions to non-media brands has been an important driving force in the media industry since the 1990s. In their article *Success Factors in Brand Extension in the Newspaper Industry: An Empirical Analysis* Frank Habann, Heinz-Werner Nienstedt, and Julia

Reinelt point out that add-ons like trips, books and calendars have been around for a long time. However, in the early 1990s Spanish and Italian newspaper publishers developed the business to a new level by hugely expanding the output of books and DVDs under newspapers' brand.
"In the course of the advertisement crisis and the decline in advertising sales these instruments which served as means of reader retention before have been rediscovered and repositioned. The current add-on products are not only designed to strengthen the reader-newspaper loyalty, but furthermore are deemed to present an independent source of revenues and profits."
The one thing all the branded companies are fighting for is the access and interaction with the consumers. Apps like Omniture, WebAnalysis and Google Analytics give newspapers much detailed knowledge of their customers' tastes, preferences and habits.
The Guardian is an example of a newspaper that has resolutely aspired to build up a global community of like-minded readers: the socially liberal, well-educated and left-leaning 'guardianistas'. This community would constitute a large and relatively homogenous target group for advertisers as well as for the Guardian's own add-on offers, and eventually enable the newspaper to substitute lost print money with new kind of revenues.
One could find the following add-ons and special events marketed in the Guardian March 3rd 2012:

1. Guardian Book Club
2. Guardian Book Shop
3. Guardian trips (Pompeii, Capri the Bay of Naples, Venice, Cuba)
4. Thermal lined leisure trousers
5. Genuine fine leather shoes
6. Insurances
7. Broadband
8. Advice how to cut gas bills
9. Mortgages
10. Grip socks
11. Steam mops
12. Guardian master classes in writing, photography etc.

Plus on the web:

1. Guardian professional networks
2. Guardian Open weekend

3. A sponsored feature
4. Online dating: The Guardian Soulmate

Media is a weak brand

Even though media companies make their living by selling ideas and images they fare badly in most brand rankings. In the BusinessWeek's and Interbrand's annual ranking, the best global brand in 2011 was Coca-Cola followed by IBM, Microsoft, Google, GE, McDonald's, Intel, Apple, Disney and Hewlett-Packard. The only traditional media brand in the top 100 was Thomson Reuters (37). Gabriele Siegert claims that one should not be deceived by these figures since media brands are mostly local, regional, or national businesses. However, brands don't often fare much better on those levels, either. In the Markkinointi&Mainonta ranking of best brands in Finland 2010, the podium was occupied by companies producing chocolate and kitchen ware. The best news brand (TV channel YLE 2) was 67$^{th.}$

According to Ots, brands have not been very aware of their own image in the minds of their audience. Ots presumes that the media can carry much stronger emotions and associations than has been hitherto known. "The large majority of media have only just begun to explore the 'real' meanings that their brands carry, the images they evoke and feelings they engage."

"Many questions remain unsolved, including the differences in consumers' interpretations and uses of brands across media sectors, or how media industries adopt different strategies to build brand equity depending on situation, media type, and area of business", Ots writes.

Power to the people!

According to David Aaker, a brand's *identity* is what the brand stands for and how strategists want the brand to be perceived, while a brand's *image* is how it is actually perceived. Thus brand consists of two parts and has two domains: the company and the public. (Aaker, 1996)

Philosophically speaking, "brand" resembles the ideas of French scholar Jacques Derrida, who constructed his own terminologies to surpass historical and metaphysical oppositions like the contradictions between good and evil, signifier and signified, or inside and outside. In the case of branding, the essential oppositions surpassed would be private-public, commercial-non-commercial, and, indeed, good-evil.

As a media object possessed jointly by the company and the public brand also surpasses the traditional opposition between the sender and the receiver, and so complies well with such

emerging practices in journalism as open data journalism, crowd sourcing, crowd funding and citizen journalism.

In the longer run branding might, indeed, even have such revolutionary potential as Adam Arvidsson seems to think. If newspapers succeed in building communities of loyal readers, these people will become vitally important to media companies. They would pay for the content, participate in the events and buy add-ons; but they would do much more than that. They would contribute news tips, news pieces and photos, produce web contents, spread articles by sharing them in social media, develop new apps by using the newspaper's open source platforms, sponsor articles and journalists, and give daily feedback to the editors.

Naturally this community of readers would increasingly influence the content, opinions and strategies of the paper, and one day it could even start hiring and firing staff just like the football fans today can sometimes replace coaches they don't like. In the end the question could be asked: to whom does the newspaper belong?

Many journalists would have a short and simple answer to that question: to us. So, let us next move on to examine the choices individual journalists are facing in the new media landscape and the changing balance of power between individuals and the institutions.

2.5 Conclusions

a. Branding is almost as old as human culture. In the modern meaning branding started in the 1880-90s with naming of household goods.

b. Branding expanded gradually from advertising to the core of the company world. Now branding has taken over politics, culture, NGOs, media, and even individuals.

c. Some see brands as the ultimate commercialization of human culture, but for others it means an opportunity to enhance democracy through consumer power.

d. Media companies and especially newspapers have been slow to engage in branding. Media brands rank poorly in the international brands charts.

e. Recently many newspapers have taken on branding in order to differentiate themselves in the media market, to synchronize their content on different platforms, and to build up loyalty and customer communities.

3. CASE STUDY: THE HELSINGIN SANOMAT

3.1. Introduction

How do some journalists become brands? What does it feel like to be a brand? And what happens in a newspaper when some become brands but the others just have to push regular news?
During the last 20-30 years many newspapers, including the leading Finnish daily, the Helsingin Sanomat, have developed from fairly anonymous news institutions into arenas of various voices, dissenting opinions and star journalists.
In 2008 the Helsingin Sanomat conducted a survey where the readers were asked which journalists they know and follow, and how important the bylines and mug shots were to them. The results showed that the topic and the headline were more important to readers than the name of the writer. However, the survey also indicated that especially younger readers wanted to have bylines and mug shots with the articles.
In this chapter some of the Helsingin Sanomat journalists most often recognised by the readers talk about their own “brands” and offer their insights on journalistic branding in general. The editors of the paper and the CEO of Sanoma Group discuss the role of branding in the paper and the entire media company.

3.2. The paper in transformation

For a long time Finland has been a safe haven in the stormy waters of newspaper crisis. While the printed press in most countries has been bleeding, Finnish papers have made big profits because of their regional monopolies and loyal subscribers. A country of 5.4 million people has 194 newspapers, and more journalists per capita than any other country in the world. (Vehkoo, 2011). However, it seems to be a story of paradise lost. During the last decade Finnish newspapers have lost 14 percent of their circulation, and the speed is accelerating.
The Helsingin Sanomat is the biggest daily newspaper in Finland with a daily circulation of some 350,000 copies. Even though the newspaper is still making a profit, the management is trying to cut costs, improve efficiency, find new revenues, and adjust the paper in various ways to the new digital media environment.
The Helsingin Sanomat is undergoing rapid organizational changes which include changing the format from broadsheet to tabloid, integrating television channel Nelonen to the newsroom, considering a digital paywall, and looking for other new revenue sources including add-ons.

Is news like flour?

Finnish media brands have always scored badly in the national brand survey. In 2011 neither the Helsingin Sanomat nor its parent company Sanoma made it to the Top 100 in the annual brand chart conducted by business magazine Markkinointi&Mainonta.

The CEO of Sanoma Company Harri-Pekka Kaukonen came to Sanoma in 2011 from a legendary family company that manages the number one brand in Finland, Fazer chocolates.

Kaukonen finds the bad faring of media brands a bit surprising. ”I believe it’s mainly up to ourselves; how we have communicated our brand to the markets. The Helsingin Sanomat is mainly seen as a print newspaper, and that doesn’t for some reason hold very strong attributes. I think we should be able to make HS ‘a trusted companion’, which represents various contents and services with similar attributes like quality and trustworthiness.”

Kaukonen points out that brands take years to build. “We must ask ourselves why the morning paper doesn’t cause stronger emotions – emotional bonding is very important. Maybe we haven’t been addressing this enough. Or maybe news is like flour – difficult to brand. Or maybe that’s a myth, too. In Fazer we thought that there is no way to brand bread, but in Russia we did just that. I think much depends on ourselves.”

Kaukonen thinks that the assets in the Helsingin Sanomat brand are quality and trust; the weakness might be the old-fashioned air around the printed paper.

Kaukonen sees mutual benefits for the company brands and brands of individual journalists. “It’s just great that some journalists become brands, like Rita Tainola [a celebrity journalist in a red top tabloid Ilta-Sanomat]. I think it’s a win-win-situation which builds up both individual and media brands.”

Branding is certainly not in the pedigree of the Helsingin Sanomat. Until the late 1980’s most of the Helsingin Sanomat articles came without bylines. Only columns and opinion pieces, arts and book reviews, and some foreign reportage had the writer’s name on them.

The use of bylines was gradually expanded in the 1990s against loud opposition from a minority of journalists. “I assume that anonymity was thought to go hand in hand with neutrality and objectivity. Articles with no name were considered more trustworthy, as if they had the Helsingin Sanomat kite mark. Anonymity was also connected with being unopinionated”, tells former editor (retired 2011) of the Helsingin Sanomat, Reetta Meriläinen.

Meriläinen sees a generational gap in regard to bylines. “Older journalists have sometimes found bylines and mug shots embarrassing. Like: ‘Don’t know why anybody should see my face, if not to frighten them!’

According to Meriläinen, this attitude has all but vanished during the last few years, and the size of bylines and mug shots has constantly grown. “Personal visibility is no big deal in the 2010s. Without any scientific evidence I would claim that some journalists really like bylines and mug shots and the fame they bring.”

At the same time the Helsingin Sanomat has adopted a policy of using its journalists in advertising, public events and self-promotion in order to differentiate the professionally produced newspaper from the scores of web sites and free papers.

The Helsingin Sanomat takes on all platforms

The Helsingin Sanomat began publishing an online version in May 1996. The realtime online new service, HS Online, started at in August 2000 with the Sydney Olympics. The first HS blogs were published in the autumn of 2005, and the first tweets in May 2009.

The Helsingin Sanomat has been successful in selling “combined subscriptions” where readers pay a little extra (39 euros a year in 2012) for the full digital content. In spring 2012 about half of the subscribers had chosen this option.

The Helsingin Sanomat parent company, Sanoma, also operates a nation-wide TV channel Nelonen (Channel 4), which moved to the Helsingin Sanomat premises in 2012. The newspaper and the TV channel are building a joint newsroom, and newspaper journalists are being trained to work as TV presenters.

“The whole operation is geared to multiplatform publication strategy, in which there are no borders between the different platforms”, social media editor Jussi Ahlroth tells in an e-mail interview.

The Helsingin Sanomat journalists are encouraged to engage in Facebook and Twitter. Currently some 50 HS employees are tweeting regularly, including the editor-in-chief Mikael Pentikäinen.

“Twitter is best for real time reportage, but also links to quality expert stories. You can truly become a recognised expert, a brand journalist by devoting time and care to your Twitter presence”, Ahlroth says.

The first journalists that the Helsingin Sanomat has actively promoted in the social media are the foreign correspondents, who will also start doing television newscasts at the end of this year.

In Finland most people still get their news from established traditional news sites, but Ahlroth thinks that personally customised news sites are coming to Finland, too.

“HS wants to make it easier for online users - both paying and non-paying users - to customise their experience of HS online. This means our users could for example be presented stories of journalists they have chosen to follow. With Facebook's growing emphasis on the subscription-option for

celebrity profiles, and with the rapid growth of Twitter in Finland, this trend of following particular journalists instead of accessing the main product of the media company is growing."
The Helsingin Sanomat has no specific guidelines on retweeting competitors' news or tweeting breaking news, nor has the newspaper any rules or sanctions about the social media accounts of individual journalists.
"My view is that just as a columnist always brings her audience to the new employer, a Facebook profile or a Twitter account brings her followers as well", Ahlroth says.
"The one crucial exception is the scale. Any media in an English speaking country of course has a much larger potential audience in social media than the Finnish language media has."

The Helsingin Sanomat Brand journalist survey

The Helsingin Sanomat conducted a research on the branded journalists of the newspaper in December (2008 HS Toimittajabränditutkimus). With the survey the Helsingin Sanomat wanted to find out who were the journalists most often recognized by the readers, and how important the bylines and the mug shots were for the readers.
It turned out that 56 percent of the readers could name at least one person working for the Helsingin Sanomat. Most often named was the then editor-in-chief Janne Virkkunen with 22 percent. Most of the writers got low scores ranging from one to six percent.
However, 37 percent of the respondents said that the byline plays at least some role when deciding whether to read the story or not. As many as 90 percent of the respondents preferred to have bylines even in regular news stories. With the group of those under thirty years of age the number of yes-answers was a round 100 percent.
The growing trend of mug shots with the bylines raised more mixed feelings. However, 69 percent of the readers wanted to have pictures at least with columns and opinion pieces.
In conclusion, the survey shows that most readers think that things like the subject matter, the headline, the topicality, the length and the layout of the article are more important to them than the name of the writer. Yet, the byline also seems to have a fair significance, which is even more pronounced among the young readers.

3.3. Interviews of brand journalists

I went on to ask some of the journalists with high scores in the brand survey for their experiences and insights as "branded journalists".

The seven respondents described their own brand as follows:

1. “A wanna-be hippie from Kuusamo.” Female, 30-40, management position.
2. “Dry, traditional journalist.” Male, 50-60, a political journalist and columnist.
3. “He is the guy who tells the things first, and in the sharpest, deepest and most surprising way.” Male, 40-50, a music critic.
4. “A humorist-feminist.” Female, 40-50, a feature writer.
5. “A counterforce to power and money.” Male, 40-50, an investigative journalist.
6. “I am a copy of no-one.” Female, 60-70, a feature writer.
7. “The Helsingin Sanomat can afford to pay for this: look what he is up to now!” Male, 50-60, a feature writer.

The personal data prove that it takes some endurance to become a household name in the Helsingin Sanomat. The average age of the respondents was 51 years. They had worked for the newspaper on average for 24 years.

This reflects the history and peculiar position of the Helsingin Sanomat in the Finnish media field: the paper expanded strongly in the 1970s hiring a lot of young journalists who were able to leap straight to the top of Finnish journalism but later had nowhere to progress to.

One of the respondents is an arts critic, the second a political correspondent, and the third an investigative journalist. Others had more general background in news and features. Of the seven, four had worked in a managerial position.

From the background data one can spot two alternative strategies how a journalist becomes a brand in the Helsingin Sanomat: either you concentrate on a particular area of expertise or then you can develop your own distinctive personal style. The respondents can be put in a continuum where one end is occupied by the investigative journalist, “a counterforce to power and money”, and the other end by the “feminist-humorist” with a characteristic and highly original style. The rest stand between the two poles mixing professionalism and personality in various proportions.

To find out about the makings of a branded journalist, the respondents were asked whether they had written columns, blogs or books, performed on television or other media, or participated in live events with readers or advertisers on behalf of the newspaper.

Of the seven respondents all had published books. Most but not all of the books had been work-related. One of the journalists had published all his books under the Helsingin Sanomat label, others

had used publishers independent of the newspaper. And one of the journalists had won the Finlandia-prize, the most acclaimed literary prize in Finland.

Three out of seven had kept a regular column in the paper, and two had written a regular blog. Nobody was active in Twitter, but the HS Twitter feed was not live at the time of this survey (spring 2011).

All of the seven had represented the Helsingin Sanomat in public events or other media at least occasionally, although an experienced journalist recalls that when he came to the paper in the 1980s this was not regarded positively.

"When I first came to the HS, I didn't know that the journalists were not allowed to perform publicly, so I went to TV and some events without asking anybody and was later told I had broken the rules."

Two of the seven had performed as regular guests in the television talk show Pressiklubi (a Finnish equivalent of Meet the Press). Others had appeared on TV and radio occasionally; one of the respondents held a policy of never performing on TV.

"I don't want total strangers or gossip press to report that 'there she was hugging some strange man in the night club'."

Hence, it can be concluded that although personal styles and journalistic values might differ, the best-known Helsingin Sanomat journalists had become brands through years of traditional newspaper work rather than by any conscious or systematic brand-building or self-promotion.

Even if the surveyed journalists had been actively and personally engaged in promoting the Helsingin Sanomat, they are ready to do even more, if necessary.

All of the seven had been used in the Helsingin Sanomat advertising – either in promotional films featuring the work in the newspaper, or in newspaper ads promoting the Kuukausiliite (the monthly supplement) with the faces of its star reporters.

Every one was ready, some even eager to keep a regular column in the print paper. All but one would take up a regular blog if asked. Four respondents were ready to work or perform regularly on TV, two were reluctant, and one had always refused television.

Some respondents were ready to go as far as to personally go out and sell subscriptions or copies of the newspaper. As one of the journalists said: "I wouldn't do it now, but if times turned really bad, I probably would have to."

Don't ask, don't tell, don't pay

In the early 2000s there was a big row over “brand journalism” in the Helsingin Sanomat after the news editor Reetta Meriläinen had mentioned publicly that the paper needed well-known brand journalists. The comment was widely seen as an insult against equal treatment of staff.
”It caused one of the fiercest debates during all my years as an editor. I really got slaughtered”, Meriläinen recalls. “The discussion ended with my apology and that was the end of the brand talk. The debate made me to realize what a sensitive subject ‘star reporters’ are. In spite of it, I do think that every newspaper needs star reporters to stand out and raise interest, it’s as simple as that.”
When asked whether they think of themselves as “brands”, the respondents - some eagerly, some more hesitantly – all answered positively.

“Yes, because I have a wide network of readers, and I deal with them every day.” (Male, 50-60)
“Yes, a little, but I don’t think it’s essential.” (Male, 40-50)

“Yes, because of the things I write about. I dig up difficult stuff other newspapers can’t because they don’t have the resources, know-how or daring.” (Male, 40-50)
“Yes, over 40 years in HS has left its mark: when I tell my name, every one knows it.” (Female, 60-70)
“I guess so, often I get feed-back where people talk about the Helsingin Sanomat through my work. But brands live, change and disappear.” (Male, 50-60)

With rare exceptions, the respondents had been introduced in their public performances as representatives of the Helsingin Sanomat. However, the newspaper doesn’t seem to be very interested in where and how its journalists perform. None of the journalists had received training or instructions for speaking in public or performing on television – nor did they want any.
Usually the journalists schedule their gigs independently. Some of them might beforehand inform their editors about the events, but that is done in a very casual manner, and the management generally doesn’t interfere in their public performances.
“Usually I send my editor an e-mail and promise to be a good girl.” (Female, 30-40)

“Not any more. Once when I went to TV to talk about a thing that was very sensitive for the paper, the editor-in-chief called to give some background information, but he didn’t even hint what I should say.” (Female, 40-50)
“Yes, I tell them but they couldn’t care less.” (Male, 50-60)
All of the respondents had invested their own free-time, evenings or weekends into meeting readers – and only one expressed some reservations about this.
“I do it, even though it is not considered a part of my work, and I don’t get paid for doing it.”

When asked, the respondents were divided on whether the brand journalists were valued in the paper. It seems that those journalists with more distinctive personal style were sceptical or even somewhat bitter because of the lack of respect, whereas people with more specialist approach were satisfied with their own treatment.

A journalist who thought that the paper didn't value branded journalists said: "The whole thing has never been openly discussed, in fact it's hardly mentioned. I think it's kind of an ambivalent issue in the paper. In a way they know it [a personal brand] is a good thing. But on the other hand there is jealousy. People fear that a brand journalist might get too much attention and influence. The hard-working, low-profile people are respected."

A colleague who was satisfied with the situation commented: "I don't want to over-emphasize the thing. It's the content that counts, not who's saying it."

On a question of compensation there was a total consensus: the Helsingin Sanomat does not reward a personal brand with better pay. Even the question seemed to cause some cynical amusement.

"Ten years ago I got an extra rise because of good work. The main benefit [of the personal brand] is that I am trusted and can go on working with the topics I like. They don't pay extra for a brand – if I even have one."

"Certainly not. They have never paid a penny for it. In fact, I use a lot of my own time, and embarrassing to say, have even spent my own money to buy clothes for my TV appearances."

A majority of the respondents had not felt any drawbacks in being a "brand journalist" apart from "normal crap and jealousy". However, an experienced journalist wrote about "jealousy, back stabbing, relentless mocking, unfounded rumours etc". She summarized: "For a long time it seemed that ordinary articles by the rank and file journalists were commanded highly, but very good pieces by big name journalists were put down harshly. It felt like mediocre people were encouraged but the best journalists were put in line – don't think you are any better than the others."

This sentiment might reflect the deep held Scandinavian egalitarian ethos. As the former news editor Meriläinen said when commenting on the wage issue: "We want to keep the things discreet, and not let the salary gap get out of hand."

According to Meriläinen, the Helsingin Sanomat seldom competes with wages - nor does it have to. Being the only national newspaper in Finland, the Helsingin Sanomat has more or less been able to choose the journalists it has wanted to hire, especially after the media crisis hit the market.

According to the respondents though, there seems to be at least some kind of demand for high-profile journalists in Finland. Three of the seven had been asked to join another news organization

within the last 12 months, two had received tentative offers and two others had received no offers but one of them had considered working as a free-lancer.
While calculating their options, the respondents had valued professional resources, job security and the large audience of a big newspaper over short-term financial considerations. This corroborates most findings about professionals in expert positions: interesting tasks, peer support and good supportive working atmosphere are more important motivational factors than sheer wages.

Me, a brand

Finally the seven journalists were asked for general thoughts and comments about brands, journalism, and branding in journalism.
A veteran journalist reminisced about the long route the Helsingin Sanomat has taken from anonymity to branding. When she came to the paper in the early 1970s, journalism was all about "objectivity" which meant "true, neutral and impersonal information". A byline was a rare privilege. It wasn't until the launch of the Sunday feature section in 1981 that opened a channel for more personal writing with bylines.
"It was self-evident that there was a fierce competition over this privilege, when most of the staff still had to do the routine stuff with no name."
Little by little the bylines started to creep in and take over other parts of the paper until the paper has – according to the journalist – reached an inflationary state where every little news piece has a big byline, if not a mug shot.
"The profusion has enabled some journalists to consciously build up their personal brands. That arrogant status seeking is not good for the upstarts themselves, and it's certainly not good for the paper."
The answers show that journalists who believe in traditional news journalism are generally more satisfied than journalists with distinctive personal styles. The "traditionalists" even raised reservations about the whole issue of branding:
"One usually becomes a brand by writing the same piece a million times, and usually it's some light-weight column. It's fatal if journalists become enclosed in their own brand and start thinking what their brand can or cannot do. But one can also become a brand in a good way: by earning the readers' respect one piece at the time."
Another pointed out the risks of branding: "Building a brand of a journalist involves same dangers as branding in general. The brand of Ari Korvola [an investigative TV journalist] collapsed when he, after 20 years of distinguished work, published one harsh but a bit vague report. Instead of brand building maybe we should emphasize the journalistic power of the paper."

3.4. From survey to strategy

According to Kimmo Pietinen, the managing editor in charge of human resources, the Brand journalist survey of 2008 never led to any action whatsoever. He says that the Helsingin Sanomat has no real plans or strategies on what kind of personal brands the news organisation should have in printed paper, social media or television. Same applies to salaries: the paper doesn't pay extra for a personal brand.

"I don't think it makes any difference in wages. Nor do we have here any intentions at this point."

Pietinen reminds us that there have always been big personalities in the paper. Therefore he doesn't see any great change looming.

"One change, however, is that people have better media literacy, and since all the articles now have bylines, smart readers can tell who writes good pieces and who less so. I think that it is sound individualisation, when quality workers get more respect – but it's all about old-fashioned virtues like collecting information and writing well-structured pieces."

Reetta Räty, the managing editor of features content, has a different and more positive take on branding. "I think the branding is The Big Thing. In this constant cacophony of things we have to attach to something, and at least I, personally, attach to certain writers and journalists. I admire, I follow, I respect, I pay. Maybe it's because I'm a fan of fan culture, but I wouldn't mind having even more stars. And it's not all about social media, it's about normal work - plus a bit extra."

Räty recognizes that branded journalists can become independent, or even grow to be bigger than their institution - but that's not a problem.

"In the big, big world it might be a different thing, but here in Finland it's not a problem. There are so few other places to work at. Of course, a branded writer can go solo but that's totally fine, too."

Räty has worked with several branded journalists and knows the pressures they are facing. "They must keep on producing diamonds with every piece they write. If they don't, people start muttering: clearly going down the hill, same old tricks, not much of a writer, actually…."

Räty acknowledges that some branded journalists might feel that they don't get the attention and recognition they deserve, but reminds us that the branded people are not always the easiest to deal with. She thinks that most branded journalists have adequate salaries, but not all.

"The salaries are a real hotch-potch anyway, and there is no policy on rewarding brands. Maybe there should be…"

But one thing Räty knows for sure: the brands are moving in. "Soon we start putting faces in the telly, that's the next step, and then…Amen."

3.5. Conclusions

a. Even though the CEO of the Sanoma wants to organise the company around brands, in the newspaper the brand is still almost a four-letter word.
b. The well-known journalists recognise themselves as “personal brands”. Their work involves a lot personal “brand management” like dealing with their readers, promoting the paper with their faces or attending public events. This is mostly done independently of the editorial level.
c. The Helsingin Sanomat journalists have become brands through long careers in traditional journalism rather than by “brand building” by themselves or by the newspaper.
d. The branded journalists in the Helsingin Sanomat can be divided into two groups: “experts” who specialize in certain area and “personalities” with their own distinctive and sometimes self-confessional style. However, these groups overlap a lot.
e. “Experts” are much more satisfied with their situation, whereas “personalities” feel under-appreciated.
f. At the editorial level there is no clear strategy regarding high-profile journalists or personal branding. The issue has been assessed occasionally, but with meagre results and no consequences. This might be due to the egalitarian ethos of Finnish society and the lack of media competition.
g. Currently there seems to be two competing interpretations of personal branding: some see it as narcissistic self-promotion which should not be encouraged, whereas others view branding as inevitable development with potential benefits. The rift can be seen even at the editorial level.

4. BRANDED JOURNALISTS AND JOUNALISTIC BRANDING

4.1. Introduction

Can famous journalists help the traditional media or is the celebrity cult the demise of quality journalism?

The chapter starts by elaborating the concept of personal branding and fame in the time of social media. As artist Andy Warhol famously predicted, fame has been democratized and trivialized: now 5 minutes of YouTube-fame is available to almost every one. The change has influenced even the media. In the past famous writers or news broadcasters were distant celebrities, now fame has become a hard job which requires ceaseless communication and constant confessions.

Individuals have learned the new game faster than media institutions which sometimes look hopelessly out of the touch with the zippy social media. Several studies show that in the digital media people prefer individuals over institutions. Can news organisations use the people they employ to make their own brand more human?

As the legacy media is undergoing a difficult transformation from the analogue to digital world, some individuals are seizing the moment and constructing their own personal brands as life jackets in stormy media waters. But is that good or bad for the companies they work for?

In this chapter American and British journalists and media researchers describe the recent trends and growing tensions in a branded new world of media

4.2. The changing concept of fame

There are three forms of celebrity - ascribed, achieved and attributed – Chris Rojke writes in his book *Celebrity.* (Rojek, 1991)

Early on people were famous because who they were, like royals or aristocracy. Then people like artists, scientists or movie actors became famous for their deeds. And finally – according to Rojek – the fame was just attributed to some people by putting them on television.

In the book *Television personalities: Stardom and the Small Screen* James Bennett argues that Rojek's views reflect a well-established perception of the low quality of television. According to Bennett, from early on the "small screen" was seen as inferior to the "silver screen" of the movies. "Television fame is premised on people appearing 'just-as-they-are' without any extraordinary talent." (Bennett, 2011)

Bennett doesn't agree with the scorners, but thinks that television fame does, in fact, require certain skills and qualities such as ordinariness, authenticity, intimacy and familiarity.

"Being ordinary, authentic and affecting intimate connections is therefore recognised as a form of work and skill in celebrity culture", Bennett writes.

During the last one hundred years we have witnessed stars being lowered from silver skies of Hollywood to talking heads in our living rooms, and finally – during the era of social media - to casual acquaintances who often have most embarrassing confessions to make. Bennett tells us about Ashton Kutcher who became one of the world's most popular tweeters by posting things like a photo of his wife Demi Moore's bum.

Bennett writes that boundaries between celebrity, fan and ordinary user are being elided in the contemporary mediascape, when celebrities have gone multi-platform, and audience expects intimate fame everywhere.

"Following a celebrity on Twitter promised the chance to know the celebrity no longer as separated in the media world, but as an everyday, ordinary, and familiar persona", Bennett writes, and continues: "Such a breakdown arguably places renewed emphasis on the presentational self."

Celebrities have more channels to approach their audience, but the audience also has more channels, and more celebrities, to choose from. Therefore, the celebrities don't grow as big as they used to.

"Although the hours of programming necessary to fill the multichannel landscape may produce more presenters and celebrities, it is also apparent that fewer make the transition to television personalities."

Hence, we can summarize that as we have moved from print and movies through television to social media, the celebrities have been transformed from extra-ordinary to ordinary, from distant to intimate, from protected to connected, from enthusiastically adored to casually liked. And all this has important consequences for the media.

4.3. From adventurers to tweeters

In journalism famous personalities are certainly not a new phenomenon. Already in the 19th and early 20th century writers like Mark Twain, Winston Churchill and Henry Stanley were widely followed not only as journalists but as adventurers and public heroes.

Cissy Patterson's adventures were of different kind. Her exotic private life dramas paved the way for modern confessional writers like Caitlin Moran.

Some journalists like Joseph Pulizer and Randolph Hearst – a model for Orson Welles' Citizen Kane - went on to become influential newspaper publishers.

The next century saw many more legendary journalists in Europe and in the US like Emile Zola, Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell, Martha Gelhorn, Robert Capa and Ilja Ehrenburg followed by

the likes of Tom Wolfe, Hunter S. Thompson and the most famous investigative journalist couple of all time, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein.
In the 1950s television gave birth to a new breed of journalists. Many of them combined classical professional values with thick hair and symmetric facial features. One of them, television presenter Edward R. Murrow famously warned about the dangers commercialised news media posed on society and democracy – but that hardly reversed the trend. After Barbara Walters had signed her famous one million dollar deal in the mid-1970s, every American network wanted their own celebrity anchor. People like Walter Cronkite, Dan Rather, Ted Koppel, Judith Miller and Anderson Cooper became household names, trusted figures and celebrities making millions of dollars.
The digital age and social media have produced yet another set of star journalists such as Bagdad blogger Salam Pax aka Salam Abdulmunem, independent White House reporter Paul Brandus, Matt Drudge of The Drudge Report, Hollywood gossip king Perez Hilton aka Mario Lavandeira, political blogger Ana Marie Cox, Mashable founder Pete Cashmore, Jerusalem Post blogger Sarah Nadav, Wired reporter Steve Silberman, online publisher Arianna Huffington, New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, another New York Times writer Brian Stelter, Britain's most followed tweeter Neal Mann and the Times confessional columnist Caitlin Moran - to name just a few.
Most of these journalists work in traditional, English-language media organizations often combining classical journalism with active engagement in social media and digital journalism.
By the force of their talent and personality, skilful use of social media and industrious self-promotion they have made themselves strong personal brands that sometimes challenge or even over-shadow the institutional brands they work for.
The social media have changed the balance of power between the media institutions and the individuals – including the individuals working for those institutions.

Institutions and individuals

Social media favours individuals over institutions. The Twitaholic-chart shows that in 2012 nine of the most followed Twitter-accounts belonged to individuals, most of them pop-stars. The highest placed institution was YouTube (10), and the best media institution CNN Breaking News (28).
In Facebook the only institutional brands that made it to top 25 (December 2011) according to Website Monitoring were the Facebook itself, Texas hold'em, YouTube, Coca-Cola and Disney. Most of the other popular sites belonged to pop-stars and other celebrities.
The same trend has been identified in several studies including the *Project for Excellence in Journalism's State of the Media Report for 2009*, which found that: "Through search, email, blogs,

social media and more, consumers are gravitating to the work of individual writers and voices, and away somewhat from institutional brand. Journalists who have left legacy news organizations are attracting funding to create their own websites."

In his report *Mainstream media and the distribution of news in the age of social discovery* journalist and digital strategist Nic Newman wrote: "It is interesting that individuals are often more effective as 'network nodes' than brands in social spaces because the currency of social media is people, and because of the extra trust involved in receiving news or information from people you know."

These notions were supported by the path-breaking survey *The Revolutions Were Tweeted: Information Flows During the 2011 Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions*. Based on a large amount of data the report concluded that during the 2011 Arab Spring more information flows were started by individuals than by organizations even though organizations tend to have more regular followers than individuals.

"If individuals are generally more successful than organizations in seeding prominent information flows, it may be that they are perceived as more trustworthy than organizations - even when they work for organizations, as in the case of some individual journalists. It could also be that there are simply more individual Twitter accounts, giving them an influential advantage over organizational accounts. Or, it could be that, during politically volatile events, individuals are more willing to spread information than organizations."

There are differing views on how many people get their news from recommendations from friends. According to The State of the News Media 2012 survey by Pew Research Center for Excellence in Journalism, no more than ten percent of American digital news consumers follow news recommendations from Facebook or Twitter "very often".

Quite a different picture was painted in the recent study *Share, Like, Recommend* (2012) by Alfred Hermida, Fred Fletcher, Darryl Korell and Donna Logan. The study stated that in both Facebook and Twitter Canadians were twice as likely to prefer news links and recommendations from friends and family to those from journalists or news organizations. "The results suggest that a significant number of social media users tend to rely on the people around them to tell them what they need to know rather than relying solely on institutional media."

Even though some people (37 percent) would trust the content more if it was curated by a trained journalist, the study indicates the overall loss of power of institutional media.

"Editorially, the traditional gatekeeping function of the media is weakened as a significant proportion of news consumers turn to family, friends and acquaintances to alert them to items of interest. Essentially, a person's social circle takes on the role of news editor, deciding whether a

story, video or other piece of content is important, interesting or entertaining enough to recommend."

4.4. Branding as a life jacket

The United States is in the forefront of the media transformation – a change that is half a crisis, half a paradox. According to a recent study by LinkedIn and the Council of Economic Advisors, newspapers are the fastest-shrinking US industry. At the same time however, newspaper readership continues to run at all-time highs with the soaring website traffic. Only the money is missing. Amidst staff cuts and lay-offs American journalists are trying to find new ways to survive, including building up their personal brands and launching their own web sites. Writer, editor and digital-media consultant Jason Fry is himself one of those one-man-brands. In May 2011 he wrote an article titled *4 questions to determine the value of your brand, plus how to keep your biggest stars happy* in the Poynter-magazine of Northwestern University's Medill Graduate School. (Appendix 1)

In an e-mail interview Fry says that the digital age favors individuals over institutions because people respond better to names and faces than to logos. "It can be done - take Coca-Cola or the New York Times - but it's harder to pull off. So unless you've got a really good institutional brand, individual brands are going to get more traction with readers than beats turned into Twitter feeds will."

Fry thinks that famous journalists like Wolf Blitzer or Andersson Cooper already overshadow their institutional brands – but that is not a new thing. "What's different today is that mid-level journalists can have effective brands of their own too. It used to be you had megastars created by books and TV and everybody else, but now lesser-known columnists and beat writers serve as their own distributors and PR machines, spotlighting their own work and start conversation with readers. It's no longer an all-or-nothing system of recognition."

"The difficulty for institutional brands is that before the rise of Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and everything else, the value of stars almost always accrued to their institutions: If you wanted to engage with Jane Beat Writer, that happened in the pages (whether they were paper or digital) of Jane's paper. Now, readers increasingly engage with stars on their own turf."

Northwestern University's Medill Graduate School in Chicago is a frontrunner in social media and branding of journalists. The Poynter-magazine has recently run a series of articles instructing the

journalism students on how to build their own brands. The magazine has also reported on the growing tensions between traditional news organizations and individual journalists.

In an article *Journalism Students Need to Develop Their Personal Brand* Alfred Hermida, the assistant professor at the Graduate School of Journalism of the University of British Columbia, writes about personal branding as a kind of a life-insurance in an ever-volatile media market.

"A generation ago, a budding journalist could look forward to joining a major news organization and rising through the ranks before heading off into retirement with a solid pension and the fabled gold watch. Today's generation of aspiring journalists face a much more uncertain future, and not just due to the cuts in newsrooms and the precarious financial state of some news organizations." (Hermida, 2009)

According to Hermida, specialization has become a key survival factor in the digital age.

"In the ever-shifting sands of the 21st Century media landscape, two things are self-evident: the evolution towards digital media and the knowledge economy. The new journalist needs to create and develop his or her niche in this new media ecosystem."

Sree Sreenivasan, the dean of student affairs and the digital media professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism says that he has already witnessed many individual success stories.

"In my students I see that not only can you build a brand but you can build a brand very fast. One of my students built a project called Tehran Bureau and became one of the go-to-people of Iran news. I think that you are going to see more and more of that in the months and years ahead", Sreenivasan says in a phone interview.

Sreenivasan tells about another former student of his, Vadim Lavrusik, who built his brand as a social media expert, and was soon doing so well that when he graduated, he was offered a job in the New York Times.

"He turned it down and went instead to take a job in Mashable. When Facebook decided to hire its first journalist, they could have hired anybody in the world, but they picked Vadim. I have seen with my own eyes my students building their brands, and being successful as a result."

In his Poynter-article *Journalists' Plan B Should Include Building Your Brand Online* (appendix 2) Lavrusik tells how the new media field looks through the eyes of an upcoming journalist.

"As more news organizations are laying off full-time reporters, many of them are being replaced by freelancers. On top of that, with the ubiquitous tools that allow anyone to publish, journalists now have to set themselves apart and establish their credibility more than ever. Journalists have to communicate directly with the audience and in many cases become a part of it. They no longer have

just a byline, but a face and a personal brand. There is an increasing shift from the organization that you represent to you as an individual."

In an e-mail interview Lavrusik adds that the idea of branding is catching up even though it has had to overcome old bias. "There is still a lot of scoffing at the idea of 'personal branding' for journalists. Look, if you don't like the word 'personal branding' then think about it as your 'credibility' as a journalist because it's quite similar. Those who scoff at the idea of personal branding for journalists have the misconception of thinking of a journalistic brand as a self-promotion. And that's not what it is at all. In fact, if it's just self-promotion, it's not successful."

Lavrusik describes his own brand "a bit of Facebook journalism guy ". He says that the social media has levelled the playing field and given many more journalists a face of their own.

"Now the former audience of readers is able to learn more about the content producers and a quicker pace through social media. They have direct access to them through social media, whereas a journalist's brand before took years to develop."

According to Lavrusik social media have not edged out old acclaimed journalists but created a new category of stars.

"TV journalists have a lot of 'face time' with the audience and investigative journalists are well respected. However, now you also see a new category emerging: curators. Many of the organizations have journalists that have become well known for their curation: Liz Heron from Wall Street Journal, Andy Carvin from NPR, Anthony De Rosa from Reuters, etc."

The Survivor Game

Alfred Hermida refers in his piece to Tom Peters' article *The Brand Called You* in the Fast Company web magazine. In the article Peters, a well-established popular writer on brands and branding, describes the labor market of today as a kind of a reality game where everybody is out for themselves, and personal branding is the one immunity idol that can save a contestant from swift elimination.

Since this kind of mind-set seems to be working even within journalism – at least in the American journalism - it might be useful to quote Peters' ideas at more length.

Peters says that we are living in a world imbued by brands but the real issue is not Starbucks, Nike or Apple – it's you. "The real action is at the other end: the main chance is becoming a free agent in an economy of free agents, looking to have the best season you can imagine in your field, looking to do your best work and chalk up a remarkable track record, and looking to establish your own micro equivalent of the Nike swoosh."

Peters describes the modern work market as a constantly changing checkerboard with individuals making and breaking liaisons, starting projects and building up their skills, networks and portfolios - and by doing all this, endlessly creating and recreating themselves as branded individuals.
Reading Peters we recognize the source of tension between institutions and individuals, for example traditional newsrooms and branded journalists:
“Today loyalty is the only thing that matters. But it isn't blind loyalty to the company. It's loyalty to your colleagues, loyalty to your team, loyalty to your project, loyalty to your customers, and loyalty to yourself. I see it as a much deeper sense of loyalty than mindless loyalty to the Company Z logo.”
A modern journalist is thus thrown into a schizophrenic situation between two demanding subjects: an institution that requires loyalty and public/social media that require genuine and independent personality.
Alfred Hermida, who was also a founding news editor of the BBC News website, tells in an e-mail interview that this can lead to personal contradictions. “Your brand has to be genuine. You can’t pretend to be some one you are not or you will lose people’s trust. When I worked for the BBC my friends would ask me, did the BBC train me to sound like BBC correspondent since the BBC correspondents all tend to sound the same. When it comes to social media you can’t have that kind of abstract voice of authority or institution.”

In the Forbes-magazine article A New Language of Journalism Speaks to the Rebirth of a Profession Lewis DVorkin describes the new journalistic style of the 21st century revolutionized by the Web. (Dvorkin, 2012)

“My explanations revolve around a theme: journalism must be more about the individual — the actual content creator (journalist or otherwise) and the person who’s consuming the content. In the era of the social Web, journalism can best fulfill its essential mission to inform when the individual who possesses information connects, or transacts-one with the individual who desires it.”
Even DVorkin emphasizes the personal nature of social media – and the importance of being earnest.
“A reporter or writer can no longer hide behind an editor. An editor can’t hide behind a fact checker. With this new self-correcting medium, you can’t run from any subject, topic, person or company. As participants, the audience, too, must accept responsibility to be taken seriously. Everyone is accountable for what they’re saying.

In his book *Brand Me* Thomas Gad writes that in the branded network society you have to be what you are - and make the most of it. The personal brand must be consistent through time and space. Therefore, it can't depend on institutions or any other external authorities. It has to be genuine and authentic, nothing less will do.

"To live the life of a chameleon, to have subpersonalities, will become impossible. In the transparent society in which we live we need to have one personality, not many different ones. In the old days we could be one person at work, one person at home and a third person among friends: no longer!" (Gad, 2002)

Nowadays, almost anything can be copied and mass-produced, even journalism. Stats Money is an American software which can write a decent newspaper article in less than two seconds. Monkey started by writing about baseball but has already moved on to reporting on real estate, traffic and labour markets. (Vehkoo, 2011)

Gad thinks that extreme individuality is humans' only way to stay a step ahead of machines: "The soul becomes the sole way for a human being to be sure of making a difference."

Different brands, different strategies

In Britain most newspapers are losing money, but they still hold a central position in the media field. A special feature of the British press is the fierce competition between many national newspapers. This had greatly influenced the British journalism as can be seen from the ongoing Leveson enquiries. For individual journalists the competition has had its benefits since it has maintained a competition for the best journalists.

In the book *Mainstream media and the distribution of news in the age of social discovery* Nic Newman writes that during the last year or two traditional British media has moved from a situation where the newsrooms were trying to push their journalists to engage in social media to a state where most journalists have acknowledged the professional and personal benefits of blogging and tweeting.

Newman introduces four journalists with different approaches to the social media. ITV's economic correspondent Laura Kuenssberg uses Twitter mainly as another broadcast channel to tell her stories in new ways.

A freelance desk editor and field producer for Sky News Neal Mann has become one of the leading nodes of the peer-to-peer network by building up his own world-wide network in Twitter. The Financial Times foreign news commentator Gideon Rachman uses blogs to provide additional information to his columns and to publish things fast. And the Times columnist David Aaronovich

uses Twitter to cultural and political debate and to enhance his personal brand as a well-known journalist.
The four cases pinpoint some of the critical questions in the triangle newsroom-journalist-social media.

Laura Kuenssberg built her Twitter-account of 60,000 followers while working as a chief political correspondent in BBC. When she moved to ITV, she simply changed her account from BBCLauraK to ITVLaura; it wasn't written in her contract that the account was in any way linked to the BBC. This ran chills through the media industry. Niall Harbison of online magazine Simply Zesty commented: "This case will act as a wake up call for the whole profession and you will see more official Twitter accounts being put in place and lines getting added to contracts defining who owns what."
Harbison saw the Kuenssberg-case as a proof of the rising power of individuals: "There is a move away from all the power sitting with big publications and media organizations towards journalists having their own personal brands. The FT reports that ITV said that the account was a small 'additional benefit' to hiring Mrs Kuenssberg but I would say that is glossing over the truth. I would say one of the main reasons they hired her was her large online following and if that was not reflected in her salary package I would be stunned. Journalists are now commodities and the more personal brand they have the more they will get paid. Simple as that." (Harbison, 2011)
The US court will soon decide on the issue of social media accounts. Californian blog company PhoneDog is suing its former employer Noah Kravitz for "stealing" his 17,000 Twitter followers when leaving the company. The case can even establish the monetary value of a social media follower since the PhoneDog is claiming from Kravitz exactly 2.50 dollars a month per follower totaling 340,000 dollars.

Editor Neal Mann from the Sky News was named the UK's number one tweeter in the research by Tweetminster and the PR agency Portland in 2011. Other top individuals making the top ten were editor-in-chief Alan Rusbridger, science columnist Ben Goldacre, technology editor Charles Arthur and columnist Grace Dent all from the Guardian, and presenter Andrew Neil and economics editor Paul Mason both from the BBC. Three remaining spots were taken by institutional sites: mediaguardian (2.), guardiannews (5.) and bbc5live (7.). Even these results confirm the fact that social media favors individuals over institutions as stated above.

In Newman's interview Neal Mann emphasised the highly personal character of his peer-to-peer network. Building up his "personal newswire service" Mann has "struck up conversations" with other journalists and activists and made them favours in return.

Newman writes: "He [Mann] has become a 'broadcasting channel' in his own right – breaking news, retweeting (passing on) new information, and adding context to important stories through links or by highlighting an authentic voice."

It goes without saying that Mann's peers and followers are loyal personally to him, and vice versa, since this is the nature of trust in social media. But where does it leave the newsroom? This is the big question to be answered.

Mann thinks that becoming a network node and a go-to-person is a "natural way to be a journalist in the 21st century". Certainly it has made him a name which appears along such celebrity journalists as India Knight or Piers Morgan.

Among the interviewees columnist David Aaronovich of the Times was most consciously using the social media to enhance his own personal "multi-platform brand".

"I think you are looking at a variety of strategies and platforms with which you say, like the peacock, here are my wonderful tail feathers for you to look at…where you are running you flag up the pole."

Newspapers have always used independent columnists to widen their appeal to different reader segments. Social media gives the columnists even more space and freedom.

"I think we always did have brands marked off from papers but there is no question it helps people know that I am not the voice of the paper", Aaronovich tells Newman.

Tensions rising

According to Jason Fry tensions between individual and institutional brands are likely to grow since the switching costs for readers to follow their favourite writers have never been lower. "If Joe Columnist builds a following among readers, are those readers loyal to him, or to the news organization he works for? Increasingly, I'd argue, they're loyal to Joe - the individual brand."

In his research Nic Newman acknowledged the growing tension between individuals and institutions. Social media editor at the Daily Telegraph Kay Daly told Newman: "If you have reporters tweeting and building up their profiles, that is great for them but there are some editors who struggle to understand how that is great for the Telegraph."

There have been several recent cases where the tensions between individual journalists and media organizations have surfaced to public.

In January 2012 Matthew Keys, Deputy Social Media Editor at Reuters, wrote a blog post criticizing his former employer (ABC affiliate KGO-TV in San Francisco) for taking issue with his use of social media.

In his blog post Keys told that at KGO-TV his superiors had been quite critical of the way he had engaged in social media even though Keys had thought that his social media supplement had been one of the reasons he had been hired. The bosses had told Keys to focus on his tasks and cut down on tweeting.

"There were several behind-closed-door discussions and back-and-forth emails about my Twitter methods, the sort of language I'd use in certain tweets, the frequency at which tweets went out and whether or not it was acceptable to mention or tweet competitors", Keys wrote in his blog.

Keys had been uneasy because he had witnessed his personal Klout-score (appendix 3) dropping. "I think the bureaucracy, mixed with stagnant progression on the perception of social media at Disney-ABC, led to a decline in influence by way of my personal brand on Twitter. That was definitely disappointing, as I had hoped it would be perceived as a benefit to the company and the station, not as a disturbance."

Since moving to Reuters Keys has seen his Klout-score soaring – not to mention his personal well-being. "The company gives its employees room to breathe. I've seen several colleagues tweet things at Reuters that would never be allowed at KGO and would be frowned upon by the higher-ups at Disney-ABC, but this company recognizes that a little heartburn is expected now and then with the trade-off of allowing your people to be *people* — with personalities, opinions and thoughts."

Another example of organizations clashing with individuals was CNN's Roland Martin's suspension for comments he tweeted during the Super Bowl 2012.

Some news organizations such as Britain's Sky News and ESPN have recently introduced new social media guidelines forbidding, among other things, retweeting competitors' pieces or breaking news on Twitter.

Jason Fry thinks that these cases highlight the confusion of the legacy media institutions with the fast-moving social media. Only a while ago the institutions were pleading their journalists to get on Facebook or Twitter but now the individuals have recognized their personal influence – and the institutions are getting wary.

Fry anticipates that the institutions are trying to come up with new strategies and even legal contracts to protect their economic interests - but the best individuals are not going to give in easily. "The value of followers and digital identities is certainly understood by individual journalists, too - there's no way I'd let my only digital brand be something generic. Speaking broadly, individuals are ahead of institutions in this regard."

Alfred Hermida says that these kinds of schisms are no surprise since the use of social media is challenging the age-old hierarchies of newsrooms.

"The way media has developed during the last couple of hundred years has been very much like hierarchical, top-down control structure. Journalists report to their editors, and the editor can decide whether or not the journalist's piece gets published or broadcast. If you think about Twitter-account or posting something in the Facebook, it doesn't go through the same level of editing. It's outside the old command and control structure."

Searching for a new deal

The Arab Spring study led the researchers to suggest a kind of new deal for the use of social media in news organizations: "For news organizations, our research raises questions about how they should use Twitter, understanding how their reporting may be disseminated through both formal organizational channels and the quasi-official accounts of staff. For example, it may be more effective to let journalists control their individual Twitter accounts and build audiences through them, than to disseminate information through official accounts with organizational identities." (Graeff et al, 2012)

Alfred Hermida says that the big challenge now facing the legacy media institutions is to approach social media in an intelligent way.

"Until recently many institutions only had automated stream of headlines, no interaction and no discussion. Now we have seen that institutions like the New York Times and BBC are working in social media less by broadcasting information and more by engaging with people. You don't want automated headlines, you want to talk with some one in charge, a human has to be involved. The more you have interaction, the more likely you are to attract followers. I think many institutions still have a lot of loyalty and trust built up in their brand. Institutions still have a role to play."

Vadim Lavrusik thinks that in social media the conversation around the content has become just as important as the content itself.

"When a news organization has a journalist with a strong personal brand, it only further helps strengthen the credibility and brand of the news organization as well. I think the New York Times is a great example of this. A lot of their journalists do a great job of engaging their audience on social media and that has only helped further strengthen the brand of the overall organization."

4.5. Much ado about nothing?

It is important to bear in mind that the vast majority of news is still produced in newspapers, radio and television by traditional journalists, and many of them are very sceptical - or even openly hostile – to the recent trends in media.

The rising tide of personalities was recognized - and cursed - a long time ago. In his classic study *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (1962) Daniel J. Boorstin fiercely criticized the thinning up of journalism. Boorstin also offered a lasting definition of a celebrity as "a person who is known for his well-knownness".

In the more recent book *The Mind of a Journalist – How reporters view themselves, their world, and their craft* Jim Willis criticized the rise of celebrity journalism as a rattle of empty barrels: "So journalists are covering celebrities, they are often celebrities themselves, and the result is celebrities covering celebrities."

Willis has noticed that some print journalists are still wary about showing their faces in public – and for a good reason, Willis argues: "Print journalists find anonymity useful because it allows them to blend into the situations they cover without having their mere presence distort these situations. When celebrity journalists show up to cover events, the focus – at least for a while – can turn to that celebrity and away from the event."

Sceptical sentiments are certainly echoed by such old-school British journalists as a veteran editor and columnist Simon Jenkins and an acclaimed investigative journalist of the Guardian, Nick Davies.

Sir Simon Jenkins, a former editor of the Times, chairman of The National Trust and a deputy chairman of The English Heritage is one of the best-known journalists in Britain. He doesn't need to advertise himself in social media.

"Quite a few of my colleagues have web sites and they promote their brands in blogs and twitter. If I would advise a young journalist today, I would probably say: get a web site and a television show, and try to make yourself a public personality. But as for me, I try to keep pedalling the public opinion", Jenkins says.

Jenkins points out that the tradition of journalistic freedom is a post world war II-phenomenon. Before the war no owner allowed contradictory opinions in his paper, but now newspapers consciously seek differing views in order to broaden their readership. The Guardian for example asked two well-known conservative writers Simon Jenkins and Max Hastings to join their opinion pages in 2005.

“I guess they thought their old columnist stable, people like Polly Toynbee, were so left wing that they wanted some new faces. When the Guardian asked me to come, and promised me a lot of money, I thought it was time to take my old show to a new theatre.”

Jenkins appears twice a week on the BBC, and says he could be on Sky News every day if he wanted, since the television channels are in the desperate need of constant commentary.

“Television is a live manifestation of my columns”, Jenkins says and admits that this kind of publicity is certainly one of the reasons the Guardian wanted his services. “I put their name twice a week on television. Of course they value that.”

Many others do, too. Jenkins admits that he is frequently asked how attached he is to the Guardian. “I agree to have a lunch with them just to check my market price.”

Jenkins wants to calm down the excitement around social media. He thinks that the digital is only an intermediate phase between print and a new kind of live reality.

“People regard the screen as a tyrannical common-place. Instead they crave for real life.”

Jenkins reminds us that in music industry most of the money used to come from record sales, but now it comes from live gigs. The same holds true of other areas like book publishing.

“People still buy books, but do they actually read them? I think they most of all want to meet the writer. The new industry for writers is live.”

Nick Davies of the Guardian is probably the most acclaimed investigative journalist in Britain today. His story of the phone-hacking of Milly Dowler’s family prompted the fall of the News of the World newspaper and the nemesis of the Murdoch dynasty.

Despite his professional success Davies keeps a low personal profile and is deeply suspicious of new digital journalism and social media. His views probably reflect those of many traditional news journalists.

“The problem with most internet journalism is not that it is personalised but that it is simply very bad. Unlike professional journalists, most bloggers and tweeters have no training, no skills, no code of conduct, no accountability, and for those reasons - with rare exceptions - they are a source of gross misinformation. They generate the stories which reflect their prejudices, selecting pseudo-facts, twisting logic, distorting the truth and launching crazed verbal attacks on opponents in order to do so”, Davies writes in an e-mail interview.

Davies emphasizes that journalism is not about individuals. “In fact, I don't think there are very many big names in journalism at all. There are a few TV presenters who are well known, but generally speaking, if you asked people in the street to name, for example, five 'big name' journalists, I would be surprised if more than one percent of people could do it. What matters is the

story, not the name at the top of the story."

And, indeed, in Britain there is a newspaper which seems to call to question the whole idea of personal branding. The Economist, a weekly newspaper founded in 1843, is more successful than ever with constantly growing circulation of 1.5 million, and so many advertisers that it has to turn some of them down. Yet, the Economist has zero bylines and mug shots. Even the columns come under institutional titles like Charlemagne, Lexington, Banyan and Schumpeter. Only in the blogs has the Economist admitted a tiny breach in its policy: the writers can sign their blogs with their initials.

However, the Economist is all about branding – but not about branding of journalists but about branding of the paper itself. In the 1980s the Economist decided to concentrate on the brand instead of week-to-week content. The brand of the paper was defined: "The enemy of privilege, pomposity and predictability."

Soon after, the Economist launched huge advertisement campaigns emphasising the emotional value of reading the paper: by reading the Economist you become a member of an elite club.

And the result? More readers, better subscriptions, more loyalty, more quality readers, more advertising revenue, more revenues through brand extensions – a success story that shows no signs of ending even amidst all the media turmoil. No wonder that the Economist was chosen as one of the case studies in Jon Miller's and David Muir's book *The Business of Brands*.

Conclusions

a. As media has moved from the star cult of Hollywood to the intimacy of social media fame has been democratized and trivialized.
b. Media has always had its star journalists, but previously fame was available only for the privileged few, whereas now even the rank and file journalists can become brands.
c. The ongoing structural crisis has damaged the traditional trust and loyalty between news organisations and journalists especially in the US. This has created new tensions, and encouraged journalists to build their personal brands as life jackets.
d. Social media and multi-platform broadcasting favour individuals and increase the need for personal branding.
e. Social media and journalistic branding challenge old news room hierarchies since they can't be controlled in the same way as traditional news flows.

f. There are several unresolved questions regarding the control and ownership of personal social media accounts.
g. In spite of rapid changes the majority of news is still produced by traditional journalists many of whom are very suspicious of multi-platform broadcasting, social media, and personal branding.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the 1980s branding has been established as an organizing principle first in the company world, and later in other fields such as politics, culture, and even among individuals. There are several reasons to this: branding offers a chance to make up for the diminishing profits of globalized production, it creates a unifying totem for the staff of multi-national and multi-branch companies, it produces a concept with which to access the mercurial issue of value-production in the post-modern information society, and it builds meanings and identities to replace those lost in modernization.
The equity of newspapers has for a long time been based on printing presses, office buildings, delivery trucks and other tangible assets. As newspapers go digital most of this value disappears overnight.
The value of newspapers will then be based on the brands newspapers manage, and the customer relationships that are attached to those brands.

Institutions have many advantages

Legacy media companies have been slow to enter branding. One reason is their success. Many newspapers have been making profits of 10-20 percent annually until recently, thus they have had no incentive to change their ways. Branding has also been seen as a marketing concept, and journalists have traditionally built strong fire walls against marketing.
Yet, media companies enjoy a head start in the branded society since many of the things other players are just picking up are old stuff for newspapers. Their trusted brands, loyal customers and well-known journalists would offer the news organisations many trump cards if they wanted to use them.
In the branded world the institutional brand is the basis for everything else, the stronghold to protect. An individual is only an individual, whereas institutions have a history, traditions, values, trust and authority to build on.
Institutional brands are strengthened and managed by honoring old traditions, and doing new things really well. For the newspapers that means things like clever agenda setting day after day, first class editing, constant fact-checking and technological savvy.
In an era of informational over-flow institutional brands hold a definitive advantage: like Mart Ots reminded us, with endless opportunities people tend to stick with the brands they trust.

If a newspaper addresses a niche audience, it can even try to become a shrewd brand like the Economist or the Guardian. But with a broad general audience, the best a news institution can probably do is to be professional and reliable – and that's a big thing, too.

But that's not quite enough. The newspapers need character and personality. And that's where people come in. Within the last 20-30 years newspapers have moved from almost total anonymity to an abundance of bylines, mug shots, columns and personalities. This has enabled newspapers to widen their public appeal, and, at the same time, has made some journalists stars and celebrities quite independent of the institutions.

At least four trends enhance the personal brands of individual journalists in the current media environment:

1. In the digital world it is almost impossible to make money from news. This has pushed newspapers in the direction of analysis, commentary and quality feature writing. The trend enhances the importance of individuals and personalities, especially if newspapers put the content behind a paywall.
2. The new multi-channel strategies which include radio, video, television, and even live events require a new kind of journalistic personalities and performers.
3. Social media favours individuals. According to various studies in social media people follow people rather than institutions. The trend is only accelerated when people can customise their reading experience and choose to follow particular journalists.
4. Leading newspapers are now aiming to build "reader communities" around their brands. This would enable them to get extra revenues by add-ons, events, training etc. All this creates a demand for familiar journalists whom readers can relate to.

The trend is accelerated by the rise of social media which has made some journalists "independent broadcasters" frequently blogging or tweeting their personal thoughts. Because of the instant and personalised nature of social media, it is difficult to manage and control the same way as traditional media content. This has challenged the old newsroom hierarchies.

The personal brands were not born with social media. Newspapers and television have always had their well-known journalists. However, social media enables journalists to bond directly with their followers, which makes it easier and faster even for rank and file or upcoming journalists to build up their public role. The idea appeals especially to younger journalists who were born into an individualistic and branded world, and see their own personal brand as a way to differentiate themselves from the crowd. In the hard times the media institutions are now facing the personal brand can also be seen as a professional life jacket.

The transformation of media from anonymity to the profusion of personalities has often been a haphazard process with no clear overall strategy, as could be seen in the case of the Helsingin Sanomat. The same holds true with social media: individual journalists have become followed names mostly through their own skill and initiative.

The news organisations have until now encouraged their staff to engage in social media in order to get referrals to their institutional websites. However, recently new tensions have emerged between newsrooms and individuals about the use and ownership of social media accounts. Some news organisations are starting to question the benefits of social media engagement of their staff.

As a parallel process with the growing individual leeway there has been another opposite trend in the newsrooms: the move from a printed newspaper to real-time multi-channel broadcasting has led some newspapers to emphasize centralized command structures which aim to bring various information flows under editorial control.

This normalising mode might build up resistance from individuals. As Jason Fry pointed out, many of the best individuals insist on having their own personal brand rather than submitting to the institutional brand. If there is a choice, the most sought after individuals will choose organisations with liberal rather than restrictive social media policies: the Guardian over the Times and Reuters over KGO-TV.

Therefore, some companies are likely to choose the other direction, and organize even their newsrooms along the social media model. That would mean having a newsroom with a weak central hierarchy and free and independent journalists, who share the same goals and common values.

Even though media is generally moving in the same direction there are significant local variations. In the United States the crisis of institutional media has led to large lay-offs, which has weakened individuals' loyalty to institutions. In Finland the legacy media – at least the Helsingin Sanomat – hasn't abandoned the jobs for life policy, and journalists still hold a great personal commitment to their paper. The survey showed that some of the best journalists in Finland were ready to go as far as to sell newspapers on the street.

There are other important local conditions as well like the size of media markets. It is much harder for a Finnish journalist to make it as an individual journalistic brand than for journalists in English-speaking countries.

Peacocks and specialists

In the Helsingin Sanomat the issue of branding has been addressed occasionally (by editor Reetta Meriläinen in 2001 and in the Journalist Brand Survey 2008) but these attempts have either caused a

public outcry, or been buried in silence. It seems that branding still raises strong skepticism in the newspaper both among journalists and even some of the editors, even though it is strongly promoted at the company level.

The sceptical mood might reflect profound confusion about the concept of branding in general. The same division could be seen in the contrasting views of such researchers as Naomi Klein and Adam Arvidsson (chapter 2.3). Journalists like Nick Davies of the Guardian ignore personal branding as merely narcissistic self-promotion which has nothing to do with serious journalism.

And, indeed, some journalists like David Aaronovich of the Times do look a lot like celebrities, "a person who is known for his well-knownness", as Daniel J. Boorstin famously snubbed.

"I think you are looking at a variety of strategies and platforms with which you say, like the peacock, here are my wonderful tail feathers for you to look at…where you are running you flag up the pole", Aaronovich said.

Yet for many others like Vadim Lavrusik, branding has little to do with personal vanity. It means simply developing one's own niche of journalistic expertise and becoming the leading go-to-person in that area.

For ITV's economic correspondent Laura Kuenssberg social media is just another professional tool to broadcast her work. However, even Kuenssberg hasn't been able to avoid becoming a personal brand - @ITVLauraK - with her own following and brand value.

Branding based on journalistic expertise fits more easily into the traditional journalistic discourse than the "peacock-branding" of David Aaronovich. It would therefore be tempting to divide the branded journalists into "good" specialist brands and "bad" personal brands. That would, however, be quite artificial since social media and multi-channel strategies both call for personality and intimacy even from the "specialists" thus gradually making them more than mere experts – personal brands.

From the answers and interviews arises a rough and quite unscientific picture of journalists in transformation:

Traditional journalist	*Branded journalist*
One platform	Multi-platform
Low personal profile	High personal profile
Loyalty to institution	Loyalty to followers
Serious, trustworthy, critical	Playful, speculative, ironic
Facts, news, scoops	Comments, debate, news loops

“Telling people what’s going on” “Asking people what’s going on”

Picnic at the minefield

I am more than aware that all attempts to measure the value of journalistic work is both impossible and potentially dangerous – not least to the person trying it. So, let these following chapters be my little picnic at a minefield.

Earlier in this research (chapter 2.4) Gabriele Siegert pointed out that the value of media goods is almost impossible to measure, which exposes journalism to alienation from its audience, and potential market failure. According to Siegert, branding can ease these problems by giving at least some tools to measure the quality of media experience.

Every editor recognizes the problem of measuring journalistic performance; I certainly did in my job as an Arts Editor at the Helsingin Sanomat. The salaries and even more so bonuses are supposed to be based on objective and transparent criteria, yet there is none, at least that I know of.

In commercially-driven companies there is an ever-growing pressure to develop valorization methods, however artificial they may be. In some countries journalists are already paid by the amount of articles they produce or the amount of page views their pieces get on-line. This cannot but deteriorate the quality of journalism.

Hence, if companies want a more analytical way to calculate their journalistic brands – be it weekly supplements or the work of a journalist – they could use the Brand Asset Valuator (see chapter 2.3) as adapted to journalism by me.

1. Differentiation. (Originality, creativity, uniqueness: this thing/writer really stands out. There is only one of a kind.)
2. Relevance (This is really made for me. He/she writes for people like me. Value of person’s social networks etc.)
3. Esteem (This is the best there is. He/she is the best in the field. The journalistic awards won etc.)
4. Knowledge (How many people recognize the product/the writer by name.)

Right brand in the right place

News organisations need individuals, not only as labourers but as personalities to widen their appeal and humanise their institutional brands. But, as Alfred Hermida pointed out, even individuals – including the best of them - need the media organisations because of the legitimacy, prestige and resources they offer.

Jason Fry puts forward four suggestions to news organizations: Identify your most valuable individual brands; turn centrifugal force into centripetal force; make your individual brands into institutional gateways; get really good at building brands.

Fry thinks that the news organizations should find out who are their star columnists, social media stars, and up-and-coming writers, harness their ambitions and keep them happy. This means enhancing their individual brands, but within the framework of the institutional brand. Even though some branded journalists might later decide to leave, companies have learned how to build brands and can replicate the success.

I think that this kind of strategic thinking should start even earlier, in the recruitment phase. When hiring new people, news organizations should look deeper than merely academic background and journalistic skills; they should assess a person's social media activities and personal networks, special interests and hobbies that could form a basis for niche expertise, and even personality. What kind of role could he or she play in the organization? Could he or she become a go-to-person in some area? Could he or she become an interesting public personality? What kind of people would he or she appeal to? Could he or she add something valuable to the institutional brand – may it be expertise or ethnic diversity?

Then the individual and the institution should openly discuss these issues. What kind of a role and future is the institution planning for the journalist? How is he or she allowed and expected to build up his or her personal brand? What kind of coaching, support and guidelines does the organization have for social media and personal branding? And, in some cases - if a news organization really decides to invest in the personal brand of a journalist - how do they ensure his or her future commitment to the company?

The news organization and individual should try to form a partnership with shared goals and ideas. However, this shouldn't lead to an institution taking a driver's seat and start manufacturing journalistic brands, because that will never work. An enduring personal brand has to be as funny, canny, sexy and consistently inconsistent as only humans can be - it can't be fabricated.

Equality of excellence

In her recent book *Painokoneet seis* (Stop the Press) Johanna Vehkoo suggested that journalists are about to be divided into three layers: robots that perform simple and repetitious tasks, curators/facilitators who do more demanding but quite invisible work, and elite troops, the privileged few, who can report freely about the things they want to.

One can, indeed, come to this conclusion by looking at what is happening in the newsrooms right now. However, in the long run media companies can hardly hire a lot of people to do routine stuff readers are not ready to pay for. Therefore, more and more journalists should become specialists, or, if you will, brand journalists.

When news organizations are cutting down staff, the remaining few have to shoulder an ever growing work load. Thus there is no place for bench warmers in newsrooms. Every journalist is a key asset. Recruiting the right people (and not recruiting the wrong ones) will be crucial for the media companies.

Even though journalists still have to be able to do basic things like news and interviews, they must also have their own area of extraordinariness, be it music, family matters, data journalism or splendid feature writing. The time of mediocrity in journalism is over.

Branding is not about growing inequality but growing equality. In the old world there were few big-name hotshot star journalists, and a lot of regular hacks pushing anonymous news. In future more and more journalists will be stars – some big stars shining all over, some smaller but maybe brighter stars twinkling to some important niche audience. And if a journalist has no twinkle whatsoever – then it’s time to find something else to do.

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Jussi Ahlroth, social editor, the Helsingin Sanomat
Jason Fry, writer, editor and digital-media consultant
Nick Davies, a journalist, the Guardian
Alfred Hermida, an assistant professor, the Graduate School of Journalism, the University of British Columbia
Simon Jenkins, a columnist, the Guardian
Harri-Pekka Kaukonen, CEO, Sanoma Company
Vadim Lavrusik, journalist, the Facebook
Reetta Meriläinen, former news editor, the Helsingin Sanomat
Kimmo Pietinen, editor, the Helsingin Sanomat
Reetta Räty, editor, the Helsingin Sanomat
Sree Sreenivasan, dean of student affairs and digital media professor, the Graduate School of Journalism, the University of British Columbia.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Jason Fry's advice to journalists and news organizations

Fry advises a journalist to ask himself or herself:

Are you someone's habit? Do you have a cadre of regular readers and commentors who compare your latest column, video or whatever against what's come before? Or is your traffic more a function of your beat and/or the regular ebb and flow of news? What, if anything, can you discover about where your traffic is coming from? If a lot it comes from searches for your name, good. If it's from bookmarks for some kind of home for your work, even better. If a lot of it's path-based traffic through a section, your brand may need some more building.

Where is the value of your stuff accruing? Google yourself and your work. (You need to be doing that anyway, so get over whatever residual shame you may have about it.) If people are sharing, discussing, or commenting on your work away from your new organization's site, how are those discussions phrased? Are they referring to you, or to a column on your paper's site, with your name an afterthought or not cited at all?

Does the institutional brand mean more to you than you think? We all have issues with our employers — editors we wish would wield a scalpel instead of a cleaver, bureaucratic dopiness, frustrating technology. And most of us at least daydream about the hue and shade of grass elsewhere. But you may find your sense of worth is more bound up with that institutional brand than you think. Take a deep breath, look in the mirror and introduce yourself as working for your prospective employer. See how it feels. Weird's OK. Disappointing isn't.

How hard are you prepared to work? One of the great benefits of the digital age is we have the tools to advance our personal brands; we can all be publishers if we wish to be, or very effective promoters and republishers if we don't want to go that far. But such tools are so easy to use that we can forget that using them effectively is the work of every day and every hour. Well-established institutional brands allow us to free-ride on their name and marketing muscle: When we stop pedaling we coast a bit, instead of wondering why the bike fell over.

Fry's themes to the news institution are:

Identify your most valuable individual brands. Who are your star columnists, your up-and-coming community stars, your makers of videos that tend to go viral? If you can identify them, so can your competitors, so figure out who they are and look to keep them in the fold.

Turn centrifugal force into centripetal force, or at least balance them. Look for ways to harness your stars' ambitions. Don't worry if that means enhancing their individual brands — because you'll be doing it within the framework of your own institutional brand. Build that columnist's archive out into a destination mini-site, or make that beat writer with a gift of gab into a YouTube star. See if you can build a partnership instead of a zero-sum game.

Make your individual brands into institutional gateways. For all the care and attention lavished on home pages, more and more people are reaching your site through search and social media, and consuming your content piecemeal. That makes each column or video effectively a homepage — the potential first stop for visitors to your site. Think about what you want fans of individual brands

to do next. If people like this columnist, who else might they like? If this writer's beat is what interests them, what other resources can you show them?

Get really good at building brands. Keep your stars happy by helping them build their individual brands, but keep track of what works and what doesn't, so you can replicate those successes as much as is possible.

Appendix 2: Vadim Lavrusik: how to build your media brand

Showcase your blogging skills. More and more journalists are writing articles regularly, while at the same time hosting their own blog or contributing to a news organization's blog. It is evermore important for journalists to practice their blogging and showcase their skills on a personal Web site. This should be a personal blog, but not a "personal" blog; it should be professional in nature and reflect your expertise. Keep the musings about your dinner last night for a separate blog.

Demonstrate your expertise. Though blogging on a specialized topic is a key way to demonstrate your expertise, the entire theme of the Web site should be focused around your brand as a journalist. This means being consistent in the phrases that you use to describe yourself, whether in an "about the author" blurb or the subhead summarizing who you are professionally. Consistency in the way you brand yourself is key. It ultimately creates an image of your personal brand for your Web site's visitors.

Show off your portfolio. A personal site allows you to aggregate and display your professional work. It's a one-stop shop for visitors to see what kind of work you have done. It's a transparent resume of sorts, allowing you to showcase your best writing samples (including blogs), videos, photographs, Web site development, you name it. You can link to the articles, embed videos, or provide a PDF. Remember to provide some information that tells the viewer why you are showcasing a specific sort of work. It should ultimately show off your skills. It goes without saying your Web site should also include a resume page, along with the ability for a visitor to download it as well.

Build an audience, community. It used to be that journalists didn't really have to worry about attracting an audience for their work. The audience was just there. But now journalists play a big role in attracting readers to a news Web site. Your personal site can demonstrate your ability to build an audience and, ultimately, a community of readers. The key is engaging your readers through comments on blog posts, but also providing ways for them to connect to the site and you through RSS, e-mail subscriptions, a contact form, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. It's a good idea to allow your readers to see what you're doing on the Web (example: if you use Twitter, display your tweets them in a sidebar widget on your site). It may feel a bit intrusive to allow readers in to your social media space, but it will provide another way for them to connect back to your site.

Present your new media skills. This doesn't just mean showing your ability to produce content on various platforms, it means displaying your ability to learn new media skills and stay relevant in a time of evolving technology. You put together the Web site, and by doing so you likely learned a lot in the process: how to integrate various features, content management, design that works well and Web usability. These — and the design — should reflect you as a journalist.

Appendix 3: Klout measures the value of your network

Klout is a San Francisco-based company which has since 2008 been measuring user's influence across her or his social network. The analysis is done on data taken from sites like Twitter and Facebook. It measures the size of a person's network, the content created, and how other people interact with that content.

Klout scrapes social network data and creates profiles on individuals and assigns them a ‘Klout score’. Klout scores range from 1 to 100, with higher scores corresponding to a higher assessment by Klout of one's online influence. Klout scores are supplemented with more specific measures, which Klout calls ‘True Reach’, ‘Amplification, and ‘Network Impact’.

True Reach is based on the size of a person's followers and friends who actively listen and react to her or his online messages. Amplification Score relates to the likelihood that one's messages will generate actions (retweets, @messages, likes, and comments). Network Score reflects the computed influence value of a person's engaged audience.

The Klout Company makes business by selling data of high-scoring individuals to companies that want to approach them or supply them with perks they can promote through their networks. The business model has been criticized as manipulative or even evil since it is based on quantifying and commercializing human interaction. The Klout Score and equivalent measurements are also open to manipulation and there are already companies that sell online attention on fixed rate.