

## **Abstract**

In last twenty years the Internet has changed the world. The technological revolution changed everything in people's lives; obviously, it changed the journalism too. Journalism is one of the oldest activities in world history. For example, in 59 B.C. Julius Caesar invented the Acta Diurna; it reported the daily events in Rome.

The press development increased when Johannes Gutenberg invented the movable type printing in 1439. Since the 19th century, newspapers has started to spread in many countries such as England and United States. In the USA Benjamin Day invented the so-called "penny press": cheap newspapers solded on the street. He was the publisher of "The Sun"; "it shines for all" was the subtitle, everyone could buy it and understand it. In Italy a lot of newspapers were born in the late 1800s such as "Il Corriere della Sera", "Il Secolo" and "L'Osservatore Romano".

The early XX century was the time of newspapers, which evolved into a central role in the global public opinion. Publishers increased pages and photos in the newspapers.

The first crisis of newspapers started with the growth of television. Television could have been the end of newspapers but it couldn't. In fact, publishers and journalists of newspapers increased the quality and the deepening of news; many local newspapers failed but a lot of big publishers started to invest a lot of money to earn an higher profit. Newspapers changed again: more pages, longer articles and more topics such as sport and culture. Paul Steiger, one of the most famous American journalist, explain that period during an interview with Enrico Pedemonte. In this way newspapers avoid the "television crisis". This type of newspapers lasted until the coming of the Internet and the World Wide Web.

In the 90s there was the early stage of the World Wide Web: Web 1.0. In Web 1.0 there were few creators of content and users were simply consumers; in Web 1.0 users created personal sites with a low interaction. Web 1.0 was a static web with no interaction between users but it started the crisis of the newspapers. Sites such as eBay, Amazon and Craigslist began the crisis of newspapers; for example, Amazon users makes review of book ignored by the mainstream press. Web 2.0 increased the interaction between users and also the newspapers crisis. In Web 2.0 there are new instruments such as blogs and social networks. Blogs

replace personal sites; bloggers can write posts displayed in reverse chronological order. In social networks people can share thoughts and journalistic articles with their friends.

Web 2.0 could be considered as a “social revolution”, in which every people is on the Internet 24 hours a day; not only using personal computers but using also new devices such as tablets or smartphones.

Meanwhile, the newspapers crisis has started; crisis of sales and crisis of advertising revenue. In the Usa newspapers have lost the two-thirds of advertising revenue in last eight years. The total revenue of 2013 is the lowest in last 50 years. In Italy there is a worse situation. Even if Italy is one of the country with the lowest percentage of people on the Internet, the situation is quite dramatic for the newspapers. The weekday circulation of Italian newspapers has dramatically decreased: from 6.808.501 copies in a day in 1990 to 3.722.600 in 2013. At the same time, advertising revenue has decreased: from 1.933.721 billion euro in 2007 to 822.792.000 million in 2014. A company has to reduce costs if there is a incomes decrease; in fact, publishing companies has reduced costs in last years, especially labor costs. During these years, some newspapers has tried to adapt themselves to the “Internet Revolution”; for example, in 2011 the New York Times introduced a system called “paywall”, in which a user can read free only twenty articles in a day. There was a huge debate about it in 2011 but due years later with the paywall system New York Times can gain an higher profit.

At the same time, there are a lot of new kind of journalism on the Internet. First of all, the citizen journalism. There are eleven layers of citizen journalism, described by Steve Outing in 2005. The top layer of citizen journalism is when there is a newspapers completely written by non-professional journalists. But just to open online articles to the comments by user is a way of citizen journalism. One of the most important site of citizen journalism is Ohmynews.com, a South Korean site which has plenty of citizen journalists. This site is online since 2000 and the motto is “every citizen is a reporter”. Another famous site of citizen journalism is AgoraVox; it was born in France but nowadays there is an Italian version. One of most important site of citizen journalism in Italy is YouReporter; in this site, every citizen can upload videos or photos about a particular event. YouReporter was created in 2008 by three young students and since it is online a lot of videos has been broadcasted on television. The most important example of citizen journalist on television was “Current

Tv” established by the former USA vice-president Al Gore and by Joel Hyatt, a Hewlett-Packard board member. Their aim was to create a totally independent television network with a great contribution by citizen journalist. In fact, the 30% of the tv schedule was composed by user generated contents. Current Tv was a great experience of a new kind of journalism, with a great interaction between traditional journalism and citizen journalism. It was born in 2005 and it was closed in 2013, when Al Jazeera bought it.

Secondly, on the Internet there are two important sites with the prefix “Wiki”: Wikipedia and Wikileaks. Wikipedia is nowadays the most important encyclopedia on the Internet. It was founded in 2001 by Jimmy Wales. It is written by simple users: anyone can modify or add information. In other words, anyone can contribute to the “common knowledge”. During the years Wikipedia has earned credibility thanks to the users who write and who control the truthfulness of the new voices.

Wikileaks is an international organization which publishes secret information and news leaks. The director is Julian Assange, an Australian journalist and activist. The aim of the site is publish secret documents send by anonymous sources. There was an huge debate about Assange and Wikileaks in 2010, when the sites published many secret diplomatic cables. The debate was about if this kind of activity could be considered an journalistic activity. A lot of people said Assange made a journalist activity because the principle aim of a journalist is to inform citizens about something they don't know. WikiLeaks and Wikipedia has only the prefix in common; in fact, the Wikipedia founder said he’s not totally agree with WikiLeaks activities.

Last but not least, another instrument of web 2.0 is the blog. A blog is a web diary in which the owner can publish posts, images and videos. A blog is a instrument of horizontal communication in which there is symbiosis between the author and their users. Users can directly interact with the blogger, giving a feedback.

During the last few years, many personalities has decided to write articles and thoughts in a blog: journalists, musicians, politicians, comedians. In Italy the most famous blog is the Beppe Grillo's one: his blog is very popular and everyday there is a huge debate on the press and on the television about his posts.

Obviously, citizen journalism and Internet journalism has also negative aspects. For example, on the Internet untrue news could get around easily. Traditional journalists has a

low opinion about citizen journalism. During a survey, they said “citizen journalism is important, but it isn't journalism.”. According to traditional journalists, traditional journalism has more credibility because journalists work in credible journalism institutions such as BBC or New York Times. Moreover, traditional journalists think citizen journalists may not have the right qualities to make journalism; for example, they may not know what is a piece of news or they may not have a “editorial judgment”.

Journalist is very important in a democratic society and it's crucial to find solutions against the newspapers crisis. In Italy crisis could be the chance to change our system. First of all, there should exist a law against the advertising concentration. The law governing this matter is not equal because there is no limit against a too high advertising concentration. So television can attract the large part of advertising in the market.

Secondly, in Italy there isn't an adequate antitrust legislation. The main interest of all the publishers in Italy is not about journalism; the publishers of the most important newspapers has other interests. Moreover, in Italy there isn't a strict law against conflict of interest; in fact, a politician can own or simply control newspapers and television channels. The most important example is Silvio Berlusconi, former prime minister and owner of three channels and a newspaper.

In addition, newspapers should adapt themselves to new audience who use Internet every day. Publishers and journalists should make an high-quality journalism to attract a high-quality audience. The high-quality audience nowadays prefer reading news on the Internet instead on the newspapers; this audience has to be regained focusing on journalistic investigations. Furthermore, the newspapers format should be redesigned; for example, reducing the pages number, deleting the useless pages. The actual format of Italian newspapers is quite obsolete because most of people who potentially could read a newspapers are in the “Internet generation”; a generation in which everything is speed and fleeting. And reading a newspaper from beginning to end is not imaginable according to the “Internet generation”.

Last but not least, traditional journalists have to understand that there is no difference between them and the citizen journalists. Journalism should be a service to people, and citizen journalists are able to offer this services. Newspapers should accept contributes by

citizen journalists and maybe; an important piece of news would come by a citizen not associated in the “Journalists association” (Ordine dei Giornalisti in Italy).

Journalists and publishers have to understand that the world is changed and it has been changing nowadays. Publishers have to adapt format newspapers to the present time, trying to look into the future: traditional journalism and journalism 2.0 can coexist in right format. If newspapers offered a high-quality journalism, people would be encouraged to pay for subscriptions and there would be more advertising.

Journalists have to understand what is their main duty: reporting news to citizens, explaining them what they don't know. This has been the first duty of journalism since the “penny press”. And this will be their duty forever, even if newspapers stop to exist. Good journalism is too important for a democratic society, and it has to keep going despite the newspapers crisis.