ABSTRACT

BUILDING THE 21ST CENTURY JOURNALIST: REVAMPING JOURNALISM TRAINING TO ADJUST TO CURRENT CHANGES IN THE MEDIA

This study explores the feasibility and potential consequences of introducing entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training in the journalism curriculum. The study argues that technological changes make it necessary to teach students business skills that will enable them to adapt in order to be successful in the profession. The study interviewed media experts and educators and explored their opinions regarding the adaptation of the journalism curriculum for contemporary demands on the field. The experts agreed that there is a need to introduce entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training in the curriculum. Six of eight experts agreed the course should be required and made a core subject. In defending the need for students to continue majoring in journalism and not business, the experts distinguished between the kind of business training required for journalism students and that taught in business schools. Additionally, the study found the experts defined entrepreneurial in various ways, but several recurring themes emerged. The themes include starting new media projects; taking initiative; making journalism profitable and sustainable; and innovation, among others. The definitions amplified the recognition that journalism as a profession is undergoing significant, irreversible changes, and there is no choice for journalism schools and professional journalists but to get on board.

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BUILDING THE 21ST CENTURY JOURNALIST: REVAMPING JOURNALISM TRAINING TO ADJUST TO CURRENT CHANGES IN THE MEDIA

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE | 6 |
| Beyond Media Convergence | 8 |
| Convergence in the Curriculum | 10 |
| Business of Journalism Concerns | 13 |
| Business of Journalism Training | 18 |
| Entrepreneurial Journalism | 25 |
| Research Questions | 32 |
| CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY | 33 |
| Participants | 33 |
| Procedure | 35 |
| CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION | 38 |
| Emerging Themes | 38 |
| Experts’ Definitions | 39 |
| Impact on Students | 49 |
| Mixing Business and Journalism | 55 |
| CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION | 60 |
| Limitations of the Study | 63 |
| REFERENCES | 65 |
| APPENDIX | 70 |
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. *Experts and Their Backgrounds* ......................................................... 34
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study will look at contemporary media and how the changes are affecting journalism students. The study will explore how journalism schools can adjust to the decline of the media and help to train journalists who can succeed in the current media landscape. Additionally the study will examine deficits in the current journalism curriculum that does not include training in business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism. The aim of this exploration will be to see whether such training would help journalism students to be better adapted in a media environment drastically changed by technology in the digital disruptive era.

Digital disruption is changing the media, and it’s imperative for journalism schools to keep pace with the changes taking place to ensure students graduate with skills relevant to the new media landscape. Digital disruption is a term used to describe the fast-paced technological changes taking place that are altering how the audience and media producers interact. In an essay illustrating digital disruption, former Google CEO Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen, director of Google Ideas, in 2010 characterized digital disruption as a phenomenon that empowers the audience enough to topple tyrannical governments armed “with virtually nothing but cell phones” (Schmidt & Cohen, 2010, para. 1).

Hardly a year went by before Schmidt’s prediction came to pass. So far in 2011, two governments in North Africa – Egypt and Tunisia – have fallen, and several others are on the brink of falling to popular citizen uprisings, largely organized and coordinated through cell phones and social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The situation in the Middle East and North Africa illustrates just how powerful alternative media have become and how traditional media are now left behind to play catch up in providing news. The latest Pew (2011) report showed
that the popularity of the Internet as a source of news and information is on a steady rise as traditional media continue to struggle, with virtually every sector of the media experiencing declines in revenue, leading to cutbacks in staff and production. There is a need for traditional journalism to change course in order to stay relevant. This situation is creating concerns about the future of journalism, as well as calls for reviewing training to adjust to the current media landscape. Several adjustments to journalism curriculum, primarily centered on convergence, entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism, are being explored to prepare journalism students for the professional world they now face.

This study will examine whether including entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training in the journalism curriculum as part of the widely embraced convergence journalism training, would help to make journalism students more competitive in the changing news media industry. The study also recognizes that a lot of media jobs have been lost as a result of the digital disruption and a poor economy. In light of this, the study will look into whether students would benefit from studying how to start their own media businesses and/or from developing a business-conscious attitude toward how they conduct their work as journalists.

It’s important to note that key terms such as entrepreneurial journalism and the business of journalism will be used frequently in this study. While the terms may have different meanings to different people, this study will define entrepreneurial journalism as any actions by journalists or journalism students that aim to innovate and do journalism in non-traditional ways. Business of journalism, on the other hand, will be loosely defined as actions by journalists to understand the interests of their employing institutions while performing their roles.
The main premise of the study is derived from the recognition that many journalism schools do not teach entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism awareness. In fact, of the eight Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) accredited journalism programs in California, only half—UC San Diego, USC, UC Berkeley, and San Francisco State—have made a significant move toward incorporating courses in the journalism curriculum to address business concerns created by the digital disruption. This is surprising, considering the reality in the media market, in which newspapers are shutting their doors, and the outlook for the media [according to the Pew State of the News Media report (2011)] is weak and on the decline. Many solutions have been proposed to help the media back on their feet, but the situation is complicated because of the unpredictable nature of the changes taking place.

While this study will incorporate convergence, a concept that describes how the media provide its audience with information from different platforms such as print, broadcast and online, the study will not dwell on it. Instead, this study will treat it as an accepted concept already being exercised in many journalism schools as the way of the future. The focus of this study will therefore be on the question of incorporating entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism principles as core parts of the journalism curriculum. These ideas became prominent when the field of journalism started experiencing both loss of jobs and general apathy from the audience. Some experts have attributed this decline to the lack of business awareness among journalists and the absence of journalism education that teaches students to understand the business issues that keep their industry going. Experts such as Picard (2010a) and McDowell (2011) have directly linked of the decline of journalism to poor decision-making and a weak understanding of business among reporters and editors. Some veteran
journalists and journalism scholars have also identified the lack of business acumen among journalism students as a major handicap to the profession’s continuing survival.

Jeff Jarvis, founder of the entrepreneurial journalism program at the City University of New York (CUNY), argues that the long held notion that journalism and business should not be mixed is no longer valid (Connell, 2010). In 2009, Jarvis gathered journalism professionals and scholars in a conference call to discuss ways of introducing entrepreneurship in journalism. The brainstorming session sought to determine how many schools had some sort of business or journalism and entrepreneurial journalism classes offered to students (Entrepreneurial Journalism Call, 2009). Participants in the conference call included Columbia University Dean of Academic Affairs Bill Grueskin; founder of MarketWatch Larry Kramer; and former Silicon Valley CEO and UC Berkeley professor Alan Mutter, among others. The participants came up with various ideas for introducing entrepreneurial journalism in universities. The ideas ranged from finding ways for business and journalism to work together; to making it a requirement for students to take a class on the business of journalism, as was the case at Columbia University (Entrepreneurial Journalism Call, 2009).

The spirit of the 2009 conference call seems to have persisted, as entrepreneurial journalism is starting to be a major focus of improving journalism in the digital disruption era. Several universities now offer entrepreneurship and business of journalism classes and programs. UC Berkeley (n.d.) and CUNY (Jarvis, 2010a) are just two of the most prominent examples. While it is not realistic to expect journalism students to suddenly be interested in starting their own business, it doesn’t hurt to make them aware of how business works and how their actions affect business. This is also important because while journalism has
shed a lot of jobs, numerous non-journalists such as Arianna Huffington, founder of the Huffington Post, seem to thrive doing journalism. There is plenty to learn from Huffington Post, a successful news aggregator, but the biggest lesson is that journalism is no longer an exclusive profession. This painful lesson is manifested every time sites like Huffington Post use unpaid individuals to write stories that end up receiving major hits on the web and make Huffington Post a leader in the industry.

McDowell (2011) described using amateurs, in the manner Huffington Post does, to produce content as “cheapening” the journalism brand. But this is not about Huffington Post; it’s about journalism making a successful transition during these tumultuous times and emerging strongly. The question that should be present in every journalist’s mind is: what do we do to revamp the profession? And what kind of training should journalism schools provide to make graduates more competitive? This study does not claim to have the answers to these questions, but it seeks to explore ideas that could hold the keys to making the 21st century journalist an even more effective one, and one who can participate in a sustainable, vital news media business as an individual and succeed in gaining an audience and producing professional ethical work.

While this study seeks to explore the feasibility of introducing entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism as standard components in the journalism curriculum, the ultimate goal is to find ways to ensure that strong and meaningful journalism arises and thrives, because our democracy is not complete without a vibrant media that holds those in power accountable and serves the community.
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Journalism as a pillar of democracy is facing huge challenges because of the Internet. But despite awareness of the impending disaster, few journalism schools have adjusted their curricula to prepare students for new digital disruptive environment. Cues that it’s time for journalism schools to start changing their curriculum can be seen from the reaction of major media players. Recognizing the power of the Internet and a vastly changing audience behavior, the New York Times recently instituted a paywall in an effort to monetize its online version of the newspaper, one of the most visited news website in the world (Sulzberger, 2011).

The New York Times move, an attempt to stem loss of revenue due to free consumption of content online, came several months after Tom Curley, Associated Press’s President and CEO, addressed the how digital disruption is affecting the value of journalism. Addressing a gathering of Southern Newspapers Publishers Association, Curley attributed the devaluing of newspaper content to two things:

1. Lack of ways to protect original content from being aggregated by secondary users, through copying, pasting.
2. Lack of ways of controlling content distribution, which has led to secondary parties profiting by inventing ways of distributing news they did not create. (Curley, 2010)

To solve the problem, Curley suggested creating a “clearinghouse” (para. 19), which would manage content distribution in all forms of new media devices and inventing media products that would attract the audience. The AP move crystallizes the level of frustration the digital disruption era is causing in the
industry, but also indicates that perceptions in traditional media are shifting toward engagement with technology rather than working against it. Such moves are welcome because a solution that would strengthen the value of journalism, would most likely, also, provide journalism schools with a template for training their students.

For several years now, media professionals and educators have been looking for the silver bullet that would inoculate the industry from losing ground to new technology. So far, no single solution has been found. New media expert Clay Shirky suggests they should stop looking. In his book *Here Comes Everybody*, Shirky (2009) illustrates the ways in which the audience, using the Internet, has become a driving force for news in a manner traditional media cannot match. Narrating a story about a young woman, Ivanna, who lost her cell phone in a taxi, Shirky tells how Ivanna’s friend Evan used the power of the Internet and social media to retrieve the cell phone. Evan created a blog that provided constant updates about the case.

The blog got the attention of several people who forwarded it to their friends, eventually building a large, active audience of thousands that spread all over the world. The interest in the story attracted the New York Police Department, which at first did not want to get involved. But eventually, because of pressure from the growing audience and the attention the story was getting from major news organizations, a reluctant NYPD was forced to arrest Sasha, the young girl in possession of the phone who had refused to give it back. This story, as Shirky noted, was remarkable for several reasons: Within 10 days, Evan had gained a global audience, attracted coverage from several major news organizations that normally would never cover a lost cell phone, and made the NYPD act on case they originally considered frivolous.
While we don’t know how much Evan spent to set up his blog and gain his audience, we can safely assume he did not spend a fraction of the money needed to run the smallest newspaper for just one day. This story is a classic example of what is currently happening in the media. News organizations no longer control news and information; rather, news is driven from person to person by an audience interested in a subject. This is the landscape journalism students are about to join: a media environment in which traditional media structures are no longer applicable, and the audience calls the shots. To adjust to this situation, many journalism schools have started teaching convergence, an approach that requires students to master skills in all areas of the media, including print, digital, and broadcast journalism.

### Beyond Media Convergence

Convergence is a concept that has already been integrated into most journalism curricula out of necessity, as educators acknowledge that this variety of skills is in demand in the job market. Though this study focuses on how to expand the current convergence journalism curriculum to encompass business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism training, an overview of convergence lays a foundation for understanding the current situation in journalism education and the news media market. A survey of 200 newspapers around the world found that the news media are implementing convergence faster than earlier thought (Huang et al., 2006). Keith Hartenberger, Tribune manager of news and programming, perfectly summarized the importance of convergence in the media: “It’s a multimedia world out there. If you’re just being prepared to write newspaper stories, you won’t be prepared” (Huang et al., 2006, p. 225).
Huang et al. (2006) break down convergence into four components: content convergence, form convergence, corporate convergence and role convergence. First, content convergence is defined as the combination of content between different media without merging the two companies. This is the original definition of convergence. Today the concept is manifested mostly in the Internet, where different entities, such as television stations, can work with a newspaper to merge a news broadcast in the online version of the newspaper.

The second type of convergence is form convergence. Form convergence, also known as technological convergence, is made possible as well through the Internet. Now video, audio, data, still photography, graphics and audiences can be merged to tell a story to different audiences. This type of convergence is regarded as the future of mass communication because it incorporates the Internet in guiding convergence in the industry.

The third type of convergence is corporate convergence. Corporate convergence involves mergers, alliances, acquisitions, and vertical and horizontal integration of companies with an aim of controlling the market and making the most profit. This kind of convergence has been criticized “for making the traditional communication lines less distinguishable” (Huang et al., 2006). It is under this type of convergence that six conglomerates have been able to control most media in the world.

The fourth type of convergence is role convergence. Role convergence is where one person is expected to produce in different media. For example, a TV reporter may be expected to write for the company’s website, and a newspaper still photographer may be expected to produce video for the website. Of the four different types of convergence, Huang et al. (2006) singled out role convergence as having the most direct effect on journalism education. This is because this type
of convergence defines the capabilities of a particular journalist to perform different media functions. With journalism becoming so competitive and revenue so low, employers are likely to prefer journalists who can work across platforms to maximize human resources. It is under role convergence that entrepreneurial journalists are likely to fit in the new media convergence spectrum.

Convergence principles came about to address problems caused by the sudden decline of the media due to disruptive forces of the Internet and modern technology. While these disruptive forces seem to be affecting newspapers the most (Pew, 2011), this is not just about newspapers; it’s about the future of journalism and how journalism can reinvent itself to be relevant to the masses and survive technology-driven changes in the market. This study argues that the way forward is to adapt the curriculum to fit the current changes in the industry through teaching a merged curriculum involving convergence, entrepreneurial and business of journalism principles.

**Convergence in the Curriculum**

Convergence, in this context, is defined as bringing different forms of media—print, broadcast and online—together to provide the audience with choices for consumption. Convergence is already established in journalism education. Most journalism schools have incorporated some form of convergence training in their curriculum. A leading example is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism, which in 2002 adopted its “Convergence Core Curriculum” to provide students with training across media platforms, including print, broadcast, and online. A study of the USC curriculum (Castaneda, Murphy, & Hether, 2005) found mixed results in terms of perception and reality. For example, most students and instructors said they thought the convergence curriculum diluted the
journalism learning process, while in reality most students showed significant skill improvement in key areas, such as writing across different types of media, (print, broadcast and online) and critical thinking. Castaneda et al. also found both students and instructors gave a more favorable view of the curriculum after a review was conducted and proposed changes were made. Part of the concerns from instructors stemmed from the fact that the curriculum seemed to require every story to be synchronized across all media platforms. As a remedy, the curriculum was changed allowing synchronization only when the assignment required it. This study also found a strong interest in writing across the media from both faculty and students, which further supported the need for convergence training.

The concept and principle of convergence curriculum are, however, still in need of better definition and clarification. Another study by Kraeplin and Criado (2005) noted that a truly converged curriculum attempts to blend two very different journalism cultures of print and broadcast, complicated by modern technology. They argue that what most people term as “convergence curriculum” is actually a multidisciplinary approach, which is a lower level of integration across the media. To achieve true convergence, these educators state that schools should adopt an interdisciplinary model, which provides a higher level of integration. Unlike a multidisciplinary approach, which allows different disciplines to provide different perspectives on a given problem, an interdisciplinary approach blends the interdependent parts of certain fields into a single harmonious structure. This can be achieved in a two-step dialectical process; the first level introduces and clarifies the salient concepts, and the second stage resolves and entrenches the concepts identified during the initial stages. For true convergence to take place according to the interdisciplinary theory, all the
media involved must be combined seamlessly. For example, a newspaper story produced under this concept should carry with it complementary video and audio in a package that allows the audience a complete experience. A multidisciplinary approach on the other hand, would allow the independent media formats to maintain their form and reference each other. This approach would require the reader to seek different platforms to gain the complete experience.

As convergence continues, some scholars are looking at changing curricula to prepare journalism students for the changing landscape (Skowran, 2009). The proposed curriculum looks to make journalism students better-rounded and better prepared to face a tougher job market. In anticipation of a changing media landscape, some universities have been quick to adjust to the convergence curriculum. Kraeplin and Criado found most programs overestimated the market’s need for students with convergence skills. The majority of newspaper and television news managers said in 2005 that convergence skills were moderately important to them (Kraeplin & Criado, 2005). This begged the question of whether a disconnect existed between what’s going on in schools and the reality in the market. Is it possible that educators are reading too much into the effects of modern technology on journalism? A disconnect exists on some levels, but both educators and media managers agreed that Internet research skills and writing across the media are vital skills to master in order to survive the current media environment. The difference in levels of perception for the need of convergence skills does not mean either party doubts the importance of convergence in modern journalism; rather, it points to the intensity of the debate (Kraeplin & Criado, 2005).

Some critics question the push toward convergence because they believe the media’s problems are complicated by historical events and government policy
toward the media and cannot be resolved by the Internet and technology. Besides disruptive modern technology, critics, such as Picard (2010a) and McDowell (2011), have both attributed the decline of the media to poor business decision making over the decades. While these two scholars think it is important for the media to embrace business, critics such as Robert McChesney think mixing journalism with business would lead to even worse outcomes for the industry.

**Business of Journalism Concerns**

Some critics warn that commercializing the media undermines its watchdog role (McChesney, 2000, 2004). But the damage has already been done, making it necessary for journalists to understand business. The need for corporate business training for journalism students became urgent after the 1996 Telecommunications Act deregulated the growth of media companies (Economides, 1999). Since then, there have been mergers that have led to a few owners controlling most of the media in the world. The mergers have created several challenges for journalists who now more than ever have to consider the relationship between employees and their companies.

An example of this new complication was highlighted in the media watch website TVnewser.com. Discussing the feud between Jon Stewart, host of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and Jim Cramer, bombastic host of *Mad Money*, a financial show on CNBC, TVNewser reported that MSNBC producers were asked not to highlight the showdown because of the corporate relationship between CNBC and MSNBC. While attacking Cramer, Stewart showed a video where Cramer appeared to be gaming the betting on Wall Street to benefit his show (SteveK, 2009). This incident validates McChesney’s concerns that commercializing the media is bad because it undermines the role of the media in a
democratic society. McChesney (2004) describes eight myths surrounding the media in the U.S. that have been advanced over the years to justify the existence of corporate media:

i. The media do not matter that much. That they merely reflect reality, rather than shape it.

ii. Corporate commercial media system is natural, the intent of the founders and the logical outgrowth of democracy.

iii. Debates concerning media policy in the United States have accurately reflected the range of public opinion and public interests.

iv. Commercial media unquestionably provide the highest quality journalism possible—the caliber of journalism a democracy necessitates for informed self-government.

v. The media in the United States has a left-wing bias: Commercial media, due to competitive pressure for profits, give people what they want.

vi. Technologies determine the nature of media.

vii. There is no alternative to the status quo that would improve the matter. (McChesney, 2004, pp. 7-10)

Debunking these myths, McChesney argues that the media truly influence people’s social behavior. He notes that these myths coincidentally became prominent in the 20th century when big businesses took control of the media. To further his point, McChesney notes the irony of the argument by pointing out the media rake in billions of dollars in advertising revenue stemming from the belief the media can influence people. Corporate interests, according to McChesney, are foreign and new addition to the nature of the media. Disputing the arguments advanced by proponents of the second myth, McChesney (2004) says that the
founding fathers, in imagining the free press, did not sanction the idea that media owners could do anything they want to maximize their profits; rather, they provided “lavish” subsidies to ensure a diverse media mostly generated after a wide public debate. This argument is unlikely to support any ideas that promote entrepreneurial journalism or business of journalism, a central focus of this study. But there is plenty of evidence showing a history of the government supporting the media.

A recent USC report (Cowan & Westphal, 2010) about government subsidies for the media seems to support McChesney’s argument. The report notes that sharp declines in media revenues coincided with a sharp decline in government subsidies to the media. The cuts in government funding can mostly be traced to postal subsidies that have been reduced by more than 80% over the past forty years. Such government actions make it even more necessary for journalism schools to train students to think beyond working for legacy media. Today the subsidies have reduced to 11%; Cowan and Westphal estimate the decline represents a drop from $2 billion in 1970 to $288 million in today’s dollars. Cowan and Westphal (2010) note that by 1970, the Postal Reorganization Act of 1792 that provided the media with heavy subsidies still provided the media with 75% of subsidies that helped to offset a significant portion of their expenses.

Legislation in more than 40 U.S. states to allow government notices to be published on the Internet is also costing the media a valuable source of government revenue and subsidies. Cash-strapped government agencies looking to cut costs have identified paying for newspaper notices to be an easy cut, since most can now post the notices on their websites (Cowan & Westphal, 2010). Print media have also lost massive subsidies in terms of tax breaks from federal and state governments that once amounted to almost $1 billion. The subsidies lost
were based upon favorable treatment of circulation expenditures, magazine returns, newsprint and ink (Cowan & Westphal, 2010).

However, despite the subsidies lost to some media, others are receiving support. The government has provided support to cable, broadcast and Internet providers in several ways; for example, broadcasters were given licenses for free in return for providing news and information, something that they’re in the business to provide anyway. Cable stations benefit from FCC rules that give them the right to bundle their service and receive a portion of the cable subscription fees (Cowan & Westphal, 2010).

Despite disappearing government subsidies for most forms of traditional media, digital media—a viable area for entrepreneurial journalists—is attracting government interest. In an effort to promote Internet entrepreneurship in rural America, President Obama’s administration provided a stimulus package worth billions of dollars to be spent on broadband projects and extending access to high-speed Internet in rural areas (White House, 2010). This funding illustrates the kind of media-government collaboration McChesney credits for the success of the media in the past. Government funding to inspire Internet entrepreneurship is one of the few sources left for the media. Public broadcasting also continues to receive government subsidies. According to Cowan and Westphal (2010), federal and state governments provide almost $2 billion in subsidies to public broadcasting. The service seems to be appreciated by the public. A recent poll found most Americans said they trusted PBS more than any other media (Public Policy Polling, 2011). But recent political events (Steinhauer, 2011) suggests that relying on government funding to support journalism is a risky bet and adjustments are necessary in the journalism curriculum to make students aware of the other
options, such as becoming media entrepreneurs. But the issue of media entrepreneurship seems to be McChesney’s target in at least two myths.

McChesney’s fourth and sixth myths about the media cut through the core argument supporting business and entrepreneurial journalism. He criticizes the idea that commercial media unquestionably provide the highest quality journalism possible, the kind of journalism necessary for self-government. He asks: “What sort of integrity can the news have if it can be bought and sold like advertising?” (McChesney, 2004, p. 9). He argues that it is because of commercial interference in journalism and the need for journalists to appear neutral that journalistic professionalism emerged more than a century ago. During those times, newspapers adopted owners’ views and sometimes sensationalized issues to increase profits. Citing the democratic theory of the press, McChesney notes effective journalism serves three major purposes: 1) act as a people’s watchdog against powerful entities and those seeking power; 2) separate truth from lies; and 3) provide a wide range of positions on key issues. These principles are undermined when media are dominated by a few wealthy people who advance ideas favoring their personal interests and political views.

With regard to the idea that commercial media in pursuit of profit merely respond to the needs of the audience, McChesney (2004) calls this a myth because, while it is true commercial media produce what people want to see, it also produces a lot that people would rather not consume. McChesney says because of media conglomeration, journalists are forced to cover less important stories full of sensationalism and lower information to increase ratings and profit.

While not directly responding to McChesney’s sentiments, Picard (2010a) says understanding business is in fact important for journalism. Picard argues that while the professionalization of journalism increased media credibility among the
masses, it also hurt journalism a great deal because it removed journalists from a role in the organization’s actions and from helping to determine how the businesses sustained themselves. This has resulted in journalists and editors finding themselves without much leverage in fighting layoffs. Before, for nearly a century, journalists refused to participate in making business decisions. Contrary to McChesney, Picard does not think the problems in the media could be solved through not-for-profit enterprises. He says doing so would repeat the same mistake that has brought journalism to its current state in which journalists play little role in making business decisions. For the new media to grow and thrive, according to Picard (2010a), journalists must take responsibility for the operation and produce news and information that is valuable enough to generate sustainable revenue.

The existence of media conglomerates is not a problem that will be going away soon, and there is a need to train journalists on how to navigate through these realities to succeed. The problem is, however, not just how to navigate working within a media dominated by conglomerates, but also how to address the complications brought about by technological disruption of the media that are changing the media landscape forever. The shift to address these two major concerns in the media and make journalism training more responsive to business realities is moving forward with earnest. Various journalism schools are offering business classes for journalism students, with unique approaches within each program.

**Business of Journalism Training**

As of February 2010, more than 10 leading universities had started offering business and technology classes to journalism students, aiming to create journalists who would carry the profession into the new age of journalism.
(Connell, 2010). This move is contrary to a long-standing principle that shunned mixing business with journalism. Joseph Pulitzer, legendary journalist and founder of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, described in 1904 the idea of including business in journalism training as repugnant (Benkoil, 2010). More than 100 years later, some Columbia University graduate students are required to take a business of journalism class. This change at Columbia University should not be viewed as an anomaly, but rather a trend taking hold in several journalism schools such as USC and UC Berkeley among others. This shift in approach validates Picard’s argument and shows journalism is gearing up to correct the course and regain relevance in the society despite technological disruption.

Before delving deeper, it is important to note that this thesis will address two journalism business-related concepts that need to be clearly distinguished: training in the business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism training. Business of journalism training, according to Columbia University course description, means learning about the structure and composition of media companies; how they work, and how they affect the audience and the journalists who work for them. Describing the course in an Entrepreneurial Journo blog, Bill Grueskin, Columbia University Journalism School Dean of Academic Affairs said at the end of the course, students were expected to present either a business plan for either a new media company or a venture within an existing media company. The students are also expected to analyze revenue and expense estimates and provide practical organizational plans (Grueskin, n.d.). In such training, students learn how to participate in revenue generation for their companies and become aware of how the business interests of their company relate to all the parties involved, from the reporter and advertisers all the way to the subject of coverage.
Entrepreneurial journalism training, while closely linked to business of journalism training, is different in the sense that it encourages students to be innovative and look for ways to start their own media companies with the aim of creating their own employment and generating revenue. Entrepreneurial journalism also means that journalists can introduce new innovative ideas in their places of employment that would increase audience participation or profits. The ideas could range from new ways of encouraging the audience to contribute to stories and having reporters and the companies interact with the community.

The business of journalism requires journalists to start minding the welfare of the business while doing their job. This is contrary to the long-held principle that journalists only focused on producing the material for the company they worked for and came back at the end of a specified period to collect a paycheck. The need for understanding the business side of the media is now more important than ever because journalists are losing jobs, and the prospects of new journalists gaining employment in the profession are diminishing (Benkoil, 2010). The business of journalism is in bad shape for two main reasons: the new digital technology has disrupted the journalistic business model for making profits, and the economic recession has had a negative impact on the industry (McDowell, 2011). Additionally, McDowell (2011) notes that because advertisers and audiences already view news as a common product that can be accessed from many credible sources for free, coming up with new business models would not solve the problem. Journalism schools will be well served if they recognize this fact, and work toward training students how to make their work valuable to the audience. There are solutions that could be applied in the industry, but embedding such solutions can start from journalism school classrooms.
For example, to stem the value crisis in the industry, McDowell asserts the media should address both operational effectiveness and brand management. Operational effectiveness is the way the business is managed on a daily basis, while brand management is maintaining the uniqueness of the business that makes it different from the competition. These two concepts are addressed in the CUNY entrepreneurial journalism curriculum in various classes. For example, in the new business models course, students learn how to identify areas in their business models that could succumb to digital disruption and prepare defenses for it. (Jarvis, 2010b). The class readings include Newsonomics by Ken Doctor, the originator of “12 new trends that will shape the news you get.” Doctor’s 10th trend alludes to branding by explicitly proposing the inevitable need for the media to learn how to market itself because the market is also looking for ways to get the most from the media. He notes that the new generation of journalists is required to market their own works and participate in different types of social media:

It’s not just marketing… it’s figuring out what you’re going to write and knowing how it may be received., so all of that, which is part of the job of building a community, building an audience—those are totally new skills.

(Doctor, 2010, p. 176)

Doctor’s insight provides yet another support for preparing journalism schools to include business and entrepreneurial based training to enable their students navigate the era better.

The idea here is not to find a one-size-fit-all solution to journalism, such efforts, according to McDowell are not likely to succeed. McDowell argues the approach that seems to want to save the media as a single entity misses the point completely because it does not address the issue of “competitive advantage of a brand name.” He attributes “competition run amok” within the industry as the
single most disruptive force suffocating journalism today that has been ignored in the discussion of revamping journalism (McDowell, 2011, p. 39).

To survive the threat to journalism’s existence, journalism schools needs more strategic thinking that would train students to sustain the business and protect it from being overwhelmed by competition. Analyzing the Pew (2011) study of the media that found 92% of Americans receive their news from multiple sources (a combination of Internet and offline sources), McDowell disputes the Pew analysts’ conclusion that the migration to Internet news will never provide enough revenue to support the industry. To support his argument, McDowell says the Pew analysts in this case, are confusing business models with business strategies. This is important because in order for entrepreneurial journalism students to be successful, they have to have an impeccable ability to interpret data and draw the right conclusions. Business models, according to Picard (2010b), are the principles upon which businesses are built. These are the kinds of elements in a business that go beyond just finding revenue streams to include the foundation of the business’ logic and its composition. They include companies’ products, their relationship with their customers and partners, operation requirements among other things. Picard (2010b, para. 4) argues that “the biggest problem with the media business today is that media companies are still trying to sell to the public the 19th and 20th century products in the 21st century.”

Picard says to make matters worse the media are trying to sell those products without recognizing their change in value and their new relationship to their audience. There is recognition in the media that to remain relevant, significant adjustments must be made.

It is journalism schools’ responsibility to understand the changes in the media environment and adjust accordingly for the realities of the 21st century. For
example, to address Picard’s concerns stated in the above paragraph, journalism schools can follow the examples of entrepreneurial programs in CUNY and UC Berkeley and Columbia University, which have classes that teach students how to work in the current digital disruptive environment. Using CUNY’s entrepreneurial program as an example, the school has a clear mission to teach students how to be business savvy and up-to-date with the digital trend (Jarvis, 2011b). Columbia University goes a step further. The university is offering a Master’s of Science in Computer Science and Journalism that seeks to train students in creating journalism-centered software (Buskirk, 2010).

The goal of this course is to bridge the gap between journalism and IT. Grueskin says the idea is train journalism students to innovate and come up with technological solutions journalism needs in the current environment. The goal of the course includes creating automated journalism modules that would take care of “routine tasks” such as custom spreadsheets that don’t really need constant human intervention; Data visualization to simplify how news anchors present visual information; Deep data mining and analysis, a technology that would help journalists in finding information that are not easily accessible using regular search engines. Such programs would make it easier for journalists to identify trends in a given data or from social media such as Twitter. The new course also create programs that would make it easier for journalist to practice device-driven journalism, while this area may be well covered with the currently available applications (apps), the Columbia course imagines that for journalists, delivering a more efficient and accurate people-to-people news from mobile devices, needs a an “entirely new architecture.” The new collaboration with technology would also help in building digital trust, a program that would help the consumers in finding credible information. Other areas identified as having the potential of benefitting
from having software engineers with a journalistic bent includes coming up with software that would identify *under-reported events* and how to present *next generation narratives* (Buskirk, 2010).

While the journalism/computer engineering program at Columbia may sound too advanced for the regular journalism school, it is a welcome move because it sets its sights on addressing, perhaps, a major lapse, in journalism training that could give journalists more control over the beast of technological disruption that has the entire media industry on a wild tail spin. The success of such a program would make it easier for journalism schools to have a coherent curriculum where students can be taught how to use specific programs that would make their work easier. Until then, however, journalism needs to go back to the basics and work more closely with its audience.

Rebuilding a relationship with the community is an important factor because it takes journalism back to its historical roots (Mensing, 2010). While the audience is an important factor for reviving the media, it’s not the main problem. According to the Pew (2011) report, while legacy media, especially newspapers, are losing audience to the Web, the audience tends to gravitate to news websites affiliated to legacy media such as CNN and New York Times.

This is good news for journalism schools looking to introduce an entrepreneurial and business-centered curriculum because it shows there is a vibrant market for news out there, and the problem is how to train new journalists how work with the audience and raise sustainable revenue to support the media. The report notes that over the years, advertising revenues in most media have continued to drop as advertisers have found alternative non-media advertising areas such as Google search engines and social networking sites such as Facebook to advertise their products. Rosenstiel (2011), one of the authors of the latest Pew
report on the State of News Media, notes that the findings show the media do not really have an audience problem; rather, they have a revenue problem. This can also be interpreted that the media have a business problem, which could be resolved through changing the curriculum to include entrepreneurial and business courses.

Examples of those courses vary by school. At Columbia University, for example, students are required to take a course on the business of journalism. The course is designed to give students a hands-on understanding of the media as a business and how it has evolved over the years because of changes created by digital disruption (Columbia University, 2011). There are also several entrepreneurial journalism courses that have cropped up across the nation, including the programs at CUNY and UC Berkeley. In these two programs, students are encouraged to look for ways to innovate and create their own work. At UC Berkeley, the entrepreneurial class teaches students important business skills such as creating a business plan, marketing, revenue models, advertising and deal making. The students are expected to produce a “thorough, fact-filled narrative” of their entrepreneurial idea and how it would succeed in the market (UC Berkeley, n.d., para. 5).

Entrepreneurial Journalism

Providing a home for journalists and saving the craft are top priorities for many in the profession. Entrepreneurial journalism provides a likely path for the future (Smith, 2011). The concept of entrepreneurial journalism imagines journalists would be equipped with skills to enable them to start their own media operations, or put in place a system where journalists no longer focus only on producing content; rather, they participate in making daily business decisions
within their media organizations or as individual media business owners. Entrepreneurial journalism also imagines a world where journalists who would create their own media business and earn a sustainable living in the process. It is not easy to pinpoint a single definition for entrepreneurial journalism, but there are various descriptions that paint a picture of what the concept is about.

Nowacki (2010), provided several descriptions of entrepreneurial journalism from experts at various journalism schools and businesses. Jan Schaffer, executive director of J-Lab, described entrepreneurial journalism as a concept that would require emerging journalists to “re-imagine journalism in many facets and re-invent it to address changes” (Nowacki, 2010, p. 6). Arizona State’s entrepreneurial journalism professor, C.J. Cornell, described entrepreneurial journalism as a concept that can be divided into three categories: 1) It can be done within an established organization where entrepreneurial-based projects are undertaken to enhance coverage; 2) It can happen as random acts of journalism to help in covering events around the country from a local perspective; and 3) It can take the shape of a start-up, where individuals form an entity and publish content. David Cohn, founder of Spot.Us said there are two elements that are necessary for entrepreneurial journalism: 1) pushing the boundaries, because it involves trying to change the situation or solving problems: 2) small business ownership (Nowacki, 2010).

Several journalism schools, such as City University of New York and UC Berkeley now offer their students on entrepreneurial skills. Although their programs are still in their conceptual stages, these universities are leading the way by offering master’s degrees and certificates in entrepreneurial journalism.

Leading the charge toward entrenching entrepreneurship in journalism, Jeff Jarvis, founder of the entrepreneurial journalism program at CUNY argues there is
an urgent need for journalism schools to start teaching business principles to students so they can create their own jobs. Jarvis describes the root causes of the current challenges in the media:

We were told when we came up through the business to keep our hands away from that filthy lucre, and the result is I think we gave journalism very bad stewardship. And a lot of the reason that we're in trouble today is because journalists didn't understand their own business. (On the Media, 2010, para 4)

Jarvis argues the lack of business savvy among journalists has led journalism astray. It is important for people in any field to understand how their field works: how revenue is raised and how the company relates to the people necessary for its survival. This view is currently shared by many in the media because the line between the business side of the media, the public relations and the editorial are porous and seriously diminished (Baines & Kennedy, 2010). In their argument, Baines and Kennedy (2010) state because of the current state of affairs in journalism, most students are likely to experience periods of long-term unemployment and short-term contracts, and will be forced to work for themselves. Such prospects make it paramount for journalism schools to consider teaching students skills that go beyond gaining employment in traditional legacy media environments, but also offer innovation and entrepreneurial skills. Such skills, they argue, should make future journalists more than just reporters of news, and should develop more complex skills that would empower them to analyze information and develop entrepreneurial and creative approaches to journalism as a profession.

Expressing similar views, Deuze (2007) says there is an individualization in the contemporary information age. Noting “the global shift toward individual and
the institutional individualization,” Deuze says the individual has become the center of all things, resulting to a decline of people affiliating themselves with traditional social institutions and settings such as joining political parties and religious organizations or subscribing to a newspaper (p. 5). This, however, does not mean people have stopped participating in these activities; rather, it means they do so in a more unpredictable fashion determined by the whims of the individual’s interests. In what he calls the “portfolio lifestyle,” Deuze describes a situation where employers and employees are finding themselves in short-term contracts where the goal is just to take care of the task at hand. Looking at media workers, Deuze (2007) observes that the difference between generations is significant. By the time younger media professionals hit their mid-30s, they’re likely to have worked for three or four employers whereas their older predecessors built the careers mostly through one employer. The portfolio lifestyle is similar with entrepreneurial journalism principles where journalists use their skills to either perform various journalistic roles without a steady employment in a legacy media. This seems to be becoming the reality for many young journalists, and some media educators are working to engage students and help them through the process.

There are several models that are looking and bridging the gap between the old media and the new normal where journalists are required to be more self-driven and business conscious. In the entrepreneurial journalism model at CUNY, Jarvis has designed several courses geared toward enlightening journalism students about the relationships between business and news. In the New Business Models for News course, Jarvis aims to make students understand the key forces in the media business, learn about the changes in the digital age, and imagine the opportunities created by new technology disruption of the old order (Jarvis,
2011b). The courses are designed to educate students on business management and innovation through real-time experience (Dougherty, 2011).

Discussing the CUNY entrepreneurial program syllabus in his blog, BuzzMachine, Jarvis (2010a) says the aim of the program is to bring more innovation and innovators to journalism. According to the course syllabi, the program has eight broad objectives:

1. Understanding the business dynamics and opportunities in the news industry
2. Grasping business basics such as accounting, funding, revenue, budgeting
3. Learning management skills such as project management, leadership, ethics, negotiation, hiring, culture
4. Producing a plan for a sustainable journalistic enterprise
5. Learning collaboration with technologists, partners, business colleagues
6. Gaining practical experience through creating their own business and an apprenticeship
7. Understanding the technology landscape affecting media
8. Addressing ethical issues raised at the intersections of journalism, business, and technology (Jarvis, 2010b)

Reflecting these objectives, the CUNY entrepreneurial journalism curriculum is founded on five courses:

1. New business models for news
2. Fundamentals of business
3. Incubation
4. Technology immersion
5. Apprenticeship, (Jarvis, 2010b)

In the New Business Models for News course, students learn how to take advantage of the current media landscape and come up with a formula that would lay a firm foundation for every format of news media. The course challenges the long-held principle of separating journalism and business by emphasizing the teaching of media sales—advertising, subscription, marketing and distribution.

A more comprehensive approach is seen at Columbia University. The Knight-Bagehot Fellowship is offering one of the most comprehensive programs blending journalism and business (Columbia University, 2011). The fundamentals of business course provide students with business skills such as finance, strategy, marketing and management, among others. Incubation gives students the opportunity to produce a business plan with the ultimate goal of putting the plan into action. The idea is to give the students an opportunity to work with faculty and business leaders in coming up with a workable plan that could eventually turn into a viable business that combines business with journalism ethics.

An entrepreneurial program has also taken root at the Poynter Institute, a journalism organization that seeks to promote excellence in American journalism. In July 2010, the institution named Mark Briggs and Jeremy Caplan, two leading figures in the entrepreneurial journalism world, to head a program funded by the Ford Foundation. Briggs, the author of *Journalism 2.0*, argues that there is a need for new journalists to find ways to be more relevant and marketable in this tougher environment. In the Poynter entrepreneurial journalism program, Briggs and Caplan emphasize ideas similar to those as Jarvis at CUNY. Caplan is affiliated with both CUNY and Poynter. An example of the similarities can be seen in the emphasis on business plans as the core foundation of any business, rather than great journalism skills (Jarvis, 2010a).
In the entrepreneurial journalism curriculum at UC Berkeley (n.d.), the entrepreneurial course description sets a positive tone by viewing the current disruption of the media as an opportunity to revamp the media and come up with a new model that can thrive. Like its peers at CUNY and Poynter, the course emphasizes understanding business plans and entrepreneurial creativity and innovation. While the idea is to come up with a plan that would create a thriving media enterprise, the course description for the UC Berkeley class encourages students not to fear failing:

If a student finds after thorough investigation that a proposed project would be unlikely to succeed, the final narrative will summarize the research and contain discussion of the project that led the author to abandon the project. This outcome is perfectly acceptable and students will not be penalized for not picking a “winner,” because the point of this class is to understand the process and discipline associated with developing a start-up venture. (UC Berkeley, n.d., para 6).

The larger point here is that there seems to be a general agreement on the areas entrepreneurial journalism should include. These areas include studying how to attract an audience, creating business plans, designing business models, and advertising, among others.

As things stand now in journalism education, entrepreneurial journalism is a new concept that is just beginning to weave its way into visibility as dramatic changes continue to take place in journalism. However, it carries a lot of promise in providing an important component in the convergence journalism curriculum that could introduce business principles and encourage innovation among students.

It is important to gain a better understanding of the efforts taking place to entrench entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism as part of the
journalism curriculum. To examine these efforts, this study explores three research questions.

**Research Questions**

The research questions for this study center on defining *business of journalism training* and *entrepreneurial journalism training* and what role these may play in reshaping the journalism curriculum in the media industry and empowering students. The study will seek answers from experts about how these curricular changes can be implemented to breathe life into a profession facing its biggest challenge yet.

RQ1a: How do experts define entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism,

RQ1b: and do they believe these concepts should be included in the journalism curriculum?

RQ2: Do experts believe that entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training would affect students’ understanding of the business environment in the industry and of the audience?

RQ3: How do experts in the field plan to address ethical concerns related to entrepreneurial journalism and the business of journalism?
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This study used semi-structured qualitative research methods to interview journalism educators and experts. The experts are individuals with experience as media executives, journalism professors and professional journalists (see Table 1). The interview questions centered on including business and entrepreneurship training in the journalism curriculum. Experts were chosen because this thesis is an exploration of a relatively new topic in which experts present the best likelihood of understanding current trends and are likely to coherently identify areas that can be improved to make journalism education more versatile and responsive. This research included individuals fitting Van Audenhove’s (2009) description, which defines an expert as a person responsible for development and implementation of solutions, strategies, and policies; or in this case a person with privileged access to information, experience and insight about modern trends in the news media. This definition played a guiding role in identifying the experts to target for interviews.

Participants

The experts were at first promised anonymity, but as the study progressed, it became apparent as was the case with Nowacki (2010) that it would be better were the experts named in the study. A request to lift anonymity was sent to the experts: out of eight, six agreed to be named in the study, one declined and one did not respond. The study will therefore use the names of the experts who agreed to be named and designate the code of Expert 2 and Expert 3 respectively to the ones who did not agree to lifting anonymity. Expert 2 is an administrator at a leading university on the East Coast; he also has experience working with a major
newspaper. Expert 3 is an author of a new media book and a leading advocate for adopting new media approaches in dealing with the technological disruption.

Table 1.

*Experts and Their Backgrounds*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert code</th>
<th>Interview method</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Background / experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alan Mutter</td>
<td>Face to face</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Former CEO in Silicon Valley. Former newspaper reporter and editor, and avid blogger on issues related to media and technology. Currently entrepreneurial journalism adjunct lecturer at UC Berkeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert 2</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>East Coast</td>
<td>Administrator at major East Coast university and former editor of a major U.S. newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Caplan</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Research Ford Fellow in entrepreneurial journalism with Poynter Institute; founding professor in CUNY Entrepreneurial Journalism Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rick Edmonds</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Fellow with Poynter Institute and one of the authors of Pew’s State of News Media Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert 3</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>Author and active advocate of new media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel Kahn</td>
<td>Face to face</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>Former <em>Wall Street Journal</em> newspaper correspondent and editor with international experience. Currently USC media economics and entrepreneurship professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter McDowell</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Author of several papers about media management and audience research issues and professor at the University of Miami, Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Adam Smith</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>John S. Knight Fellow at Stanford University. Founder of a network of ethnic newspapers and social media. Experienced in launching and managing cross-platform projects for non-profit organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Procedure**

The need for interviewing experts for this thesis is consistent with Flick (2009), who states “experts have technical process-oriented and interpretive knowledge referring to their specific professional sphere of activity” (p. 166). While interviewing experts, Flick recommends following the semi-structured interview style to allow for more natural interaction and depth on the subject. A semi-structured interview style uses a general guideline for interviewing the participants without following a strict set of questions. The interviews lasted between 10 to 50 minutes based on the time the expert made available. Two interviews were conducted face-to-face, and the rest were conducted by phone. With one exception, which was recorded on a digital voice recorder only, all the interviews were all recorded on two devices for instant back-up: a digital voice recorder and a laptop computer using Olympus Sonority voice recording software.

The experts were carefully selected from various parts of the nation based upon their work on the Internet and their position at a university or news media company. They were contacted with an e-mail request that briefly described the topic of the thesis without giving specifics. The reason for this initial contact was to mitigate the possibility that the experts might formulate advance answers to the questions and to increase the chances of open discussion. Open discussion is important because business and entrepreneurial journalism are new areas being explored in the media, and the people involved in driving it may not yet fully comprehend what the field entails. By leaving the conversations open, the experts were encouraged to speak freely about the topic.

The choice of the interview method for this study is consistent with various studies that have used it effectively in researching complex topics. Lewis and Reese (2009) used in-depth interviews with war reporters to find out how the Bush
administration’s framing of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as the “War on Terror” affected how they reported the war. Lewis and Reese argue interviews present the opportunity to “tap into the sense-making of social actors, drawing out the rhetorical construction of their experience and perspective” (Lewis & Reese, 2009, p. 89). Lewis and Reese contend that while interviews may not always produce the most accurate information because they rely on memory, interviews do allow the interviewer to explore the respondent’s mind, which creates an understanding of the person’s views and thought process. In this study, the experts were not expected to present answers; rather, they were expected to present ideas and to assess the feasibility of making business and entrepreneurial journalism a core part of the curriculum in journalism schools. This topic made it easy to relax because there were no confrontational questions that were likely to put them on the defensive or make them uncomfortable.

This method of research was also used successfully in a study of digital advertising (Yann, McColl, & Kitchen, 2010). The study used in-depth personal interviews, which were conducted continuously until no new themes emerged. The interviews consisted of conversational interaction in which the questions moved from general to more specific. This study used a similar approach in its questions. The experts were generally asked similar questions, which were adjusted depending on their answers or background. The first questions aimed at establishing their definition of key terms, such as entrepreneurial journalism, and their perspective about revamping the journalism curriculum to include business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism training. The experts were allowed to answer the questions without interruption or redirection. This ensured they were comfortable and encouraged them to speak exhaustively on a given question. After
the questions, each expert was asked to summarize his or her views in a few sentences.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emerging Themes

Several themes emerged from the expert responses in this study. First, *entrepreneurial journalism* and *business of journalism* have several definitions. The definitions centered on starting a media business, innovation within an established media organization, building value in media products, and branding. All eight experts agreed journalism education needs to change and embrace a new way of training students how to navigate the technological disruptions taking place in the media. The experts said the journalism curriculum should include training in entrepreneurship and business of journalism, although not all agreed that such courses should be required as a core part of the curriculum.

Most of the experts also found common ground in accepting entrepreneurial journalism as a possible way of creating employment for journalists in a tough job market and making journalists more competitive and engaged in the profession. Teaching entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism within the umbrella of journalism school, and not business school, was seen as important because business schools and journalism schools emphasize different principles in their training. A strong case was made to shape the business classes in journalism around issues directly linked to journalism.

The issue of branding was raised in various forms by four experts: Mutter, McDowell, Caplan and Expert 2. These four experts noted there was a need for new journalists to find a way of making themselves stand out, market themselves and work to improve their business relationship with their employers and audience. Coupled with branding, the issue of earning a sustainable living also came up in the study. This was manifested when some of the experts asserted that
including entrepreneurial journalism would encourage students to think broadly and build the value of their brand. Mutter observed that incentives and promises that journalism could provide gainful compensation would also attract more students to journalism and advance the profession.

The results demonstrate a sense of general agreement among the experts that journalism curriculum needs to be revamped to include entrepreneurial and business awareness training. Analysis of the interviews reveals that there is no single definition for entrepreneurial journalism, but even with different definitions, the concept seems to center around the idea of conducting journalism in a new way that requires independence and innovation of individual journalists. The experts’ definitions provide insight into understanding their opinion toward introducing entrepreneurial journalism in the curriculum.

**Experts’ Definitions**

Addressing the first research question, which sought to find out how the experts defined entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism, and whether they believed these concepts, should be included in the journalism curriculum. The experts’ views revealed recognition of entrepreneurial journalism as a form of journalism that allows journalists to venture into business and trying things on their own in an effort to inform the audience and earn a living.

Alan Mutter, former Silicon Valley CEO and former editor at *San Francisco Chronicle* who is currently an entrepreneurial journalism professor at UC Berkeley described entrepreneurial journalism as “an empty term you can fill it the way you want.” Breaking it down, Mutter said entrepreneurship is starting things that never used to exist before. In reference to journalism, that means
finding ways to fund journalism activities in other ways besides working in a large media company. Under this banner, Mutter said:

So what we want to do is to explore all the ways that people can get paid to be journalists and that includes freelance articles, creating live events, consulting, writing books…and other things so that people are thinking very broadly about what they can do as a journalist, to become paid to be a journalist.

Expert 2, an administrator at a leading East Coast university, had a similar definition of entrepreneurial journalism to that of Mutter. He defined entrepreneurial journalism as “people starting their own businesses or enterprises in an effort to advance the cause of journalism through independent reporting and fact finding.” This was perhaps the most concise definition from the all the experts. Expert 2 did not, however, agree that entrepreneurial journalism should be included as core part of the journalism curriculum, in his view, very few students would be interested in venturing in journalism as a business because it involved some skills not common among journalists. He argued:

I think there is a limited number of students, honestly, who could be able to accommodate a lot of the skills and techniques an entrepreneurial person needs to do. You have to be able to come up with a business plan and have the ability to work well with potential advertisers. I am not saying it cannot be done, but I think there are certain qualities that are important and it doesn’t come naturally to a lot of journalists.

This view, while widely acknowledged, is challenged by many entrepreneurial journalists and their proponents who think the entrepreneurial skills ought to be taught to equip journalism students with skills relevant to make them competitive in the digital disruption era.
For example, in Mutter’s and Jeremy Adam Smith’s view, it’s important to include entrepreneurial journalism in the curriculum because the landscape for journalists and the field of journalism has drastically changed that it is unrealistic to train students in a manner that directs them toward working for a legacy media. Mutter argues that training in entrepreneurial journalism is more important than ever because very few organizations are willing to pay journalists just to produce content.

I think every journalist should at least be equipped to understand the changes in technology, changes in economics, changes in consumer behavior that has been brought about by the disruptive digital technologies. I think they need to know this just like how to write a lead, how to write a headline and how to crop a picture…this understanding of sort of how journalism fits in the economic ecosystem is even more important maybe than knowing how to do flash animation.

While it may seem as if Expert 2 and Mutter’s views are miles apart, when put into context, their views are really not that far apart. Thinking about it figuratively, Expert 2 sees the need to include business in the journalism curriculum, without emphasizing the need to encourage students to become entrepreneurs. Essentially, Expert 2 agrees there is a need to change how journalism is taught, but he views the best approach as not emphasizing the need for do-it-yourself type of journalism, as advocated by entrepreneurial journalism proponents; rather, he is advocating for journalists to be active participants in the business decisions within their organizations, be they legacy media or new media. This view is illustrated by the following quote from Expert 2:

Students needed to have a good understanding of what it is that constitutes the business side of journalistic enterprises. Whether they start they start
their own businesses. Increasingly journalists need to understand about audiences and advertising models.

He, however, does not think that it is necessary to change the curriculum to require students to take courses in entrepreneurial journalism. Looking closely, Expert 2 is perhaps responsible for providing a clear distinction between teaching students the business of journalism versus entrepreneurial journalism.

Mutter, on the other hand, in other statements mentions that understanding the business of journalism is important for the future of journalists, but views this as one of the elements to be included in a larger course that teaches journalists how to survive in the prevailing conditions. Drawing on his experience as a CEO in the Silicon Valley to illustrate his understanding of the business of journalism, while also making a case for introducing an entrepreneurial journalism curriculum, Mutter said:

When I walked in the Silicon Valley companies it felt a lot like newspapers; there are a lot individual producers writing code [and] doing things. They were all heavy professionals doing individual work really searching for their personal best. But the difference between people in Silicon Valley and journalists is that people in Silicon Valley, no matter what their job, were always concerned with the business of the business, the future of the company, where the money was coming from, because so much of their compensation and in fact their continued employment, depended on the success of the company and the success of the business decisions made by the managers of the company. In contrast journalists just show up and think all they’re need to do is take pictures or shoot videos or write stories.
The business of the business in the above quote refers to employees being sensitive of the well-being of the business and working toward making sure the business not only compensates them, but remains profitable and vibrant.

Smith for his part acknowledged that not all students exposed to entrepreneurial journalism training would end up starting a business but that should not dissuade from teaching the skills:

I think any journalism schools, if they’re not teaching these skills; they’re failing, fundamentally failing. Because if you perceive school as being something in which you prepare students to enter the working world… if a school is not teaching that, they’re fundamentally not preparing the students to enter the new media environment. Now, of course a lot of people will not be entrepreneurs, but they still will work in an entrepreneurial environment, so they need to be prepared for that.

Rick Edmonds, a fellow at Poynter Institute and an author of the Pew State of the News Media report, shared Expert 2’s concerns regarding making entrepreneurial journalism a required course in the journalism curriculum:

I think that there may be some people who are specially oriented to writing; maybe their career goal is to start out small in a newspaper or magazine and be able to move up to bigger jobs and bigger opportunities, and at this point, they may not all that interested in entrepreneurship. I guess I’d a little bit lean on the idea that it’s a good thing to have it there as an option and maybe it should be encouraged, but I don’t know whether it should be required. In contrast, I think journalism training must have some strong orientation and understanding of digital media and digital media skills, and again some may not want to start there, but I just think that’s too important
at almost every news organization for it not really to be a part of the curriculum.

Edmonds’ support for teaching digital media skills, however, can be seen as an endorsement of teaching innovation, a central idea that entrepreneurial journalism proponents such as Mutter, Caplan, Smith and Expert 3 also embrace.

It can therefore be inferred that Edmonds is making a distinction between the idea of entrepreneurship in terms of running a business and entrepreneurship in terms of innovation that makes journalism students more in tune with new technology and ways to manipulate it to reach the audience. This view is suggested by Edmonds’ definition entrepreneurial journalism, which he defines as “starting new enterprises” and being effective at innovation within a traditional organization. This is a pragmatic definition that emphasizes that starting a business also means coming up with a practical plan for making it sustainable. He added that entrepreneurial journalism may also mean “being effective at innovation within a traditional organization in a similar scale and also one that is in demand.”

The view that entrepreneurial journalism is a means of promoting innovation and sustainability within a traditional media organization is also shared by Jeremy Caplan and Expert 3.

Caplan, a founding member of CUNY’s entrepreneurial journalism program and a fellow at Poynter Institute, defined entrepreneurial journalism as an element of journalism, in which people focus on ensuring the future of journalism is secure. He said entrepreneurial journalism is about coming up with new ideas, new revenue, and new publishing and distribution models as well as finding fresh ways to make journalism profitable and sustainable. Caplan said the importance of entrepreneurial journalism is also about establishing the value of journalism:
If you’re forced to think about what would make people pay for journalism or what would make journalism have value to an advertiser or to [a] publisher or to other people involved in the news ecosystem, then you’re forced to think what is the value of journalism, and what kind of journalism do people really need. In other words, when you’re forced to think of journalism not just as an art or craft but as a business, you’re also confronted with questions of what is the real purpose of journalism, what is the real value of journalism, what can journalism do for communities and for people in the communities.

This is consistent with arguments presented by Picard (2010a) and McDowell (2011) in the literature review section of this study, who address in various ways how the news media have lost their value because of poor business understanding among the major players in the industry, such as reporters and editors.

A prevailing notion that journalists were oblivious about attending to the well-being of their business was touched upon by all the experts, but Smith painted a robust picture of why this hands-off attitude in the old media mindset undermined the future of meaningful journalism. Smith, a Knight fellow at Stanford University and a media entrepreneur, defined entrepreneurial journalism as the ability to take initiative and to foster collaboration between different groups. He said entrepreneurial journalism can also be defined as the ability for journalists to launch new projects and to utilize new technology in innovative ways while accepting the possibility of failure.

Including the idea that journalists’ may need to accept “the concept of failure” makes Smith’s definition unique among the experts in this study. Failure as a possible reality for entrepreneurs, and certainly, entrepreneurial journalists, is something Smith sees as a reality journalists would have to embrace in order to
find a working model that would make the profession vibrant again. This is the way to move past the challenging times caused by the digital disruptive age:

If you’re in Silicon Valley, the mantra is “it’s good to fail.” You want to fail and fail and fail until you succeed at something. And that’s the fundamental of the Silicon Valley entrepreneurial mindset that wasn’t in the traditional mindset of people who worked in journalism.

Smith also said it was essential for journalism schools to adopt an entrepreneurial journalism curriculum because that was the reality of the environment students would encounter upon graduation.

This view is shared by University of Miami media management professor Walter McDowell. McDowell said when people discussed entrepreneurial journalism, he understood it to mean teaching students how to prepare grant requests and get support for particular media projects. This definition was perhaps the most unusual among the experts interviewed because it did not seem to include the pursuit of profit or personal compensation.

USC professor of media economics and entrepreneurship Gabriel Kahn said there were two ways of defining entrepreneurial journalism. The first is journalist, centric, in which an individual journalist decides to produce content and finds unique ways of distributing it to the public in non-traditional ways that do not depend on established media channels. The second definition is producing content in a new way by giving people an experience and interaction with information in a way that is not traditional. This he described as a new way of storytelling that includes fusing different media as well as offering people data and an opportunity to interact with the data. Kahn said it was important to teach business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism skills for various reasons:
I think the long answer is that the industry has been transformed and continues to be transformed, so much to the point where the traditional skill set that people had when they came out of journalism school is no longer sufficient on its own to prepare people for the types of careers they’re going to have.

Kahn noted that it has become essential to teach entrepreneurial journalism skills because the old media model is no longer valid. He said the media did not anticipate the current situation because, for a long time, they made comfortable profits. Newspapers in particular, who are worst affected by the current crisis according to numerous surveys including the latest Pew (2011b) report, made about 20% profit margins, which gave them the false impression that everything was going well.

Making a further case for teaching entrepreneurial journalism, Kahn used the newspaper industry to illustrate the magnitude of the change caused by digital disruption:

The reason newspapers made so much money is because they had very little direct competition, and the reason why they had very little direct competition was because the barrier of entry was so high. You needed to buy a fleet of newspaper trucks, you needed to hire newspaper boys, you needed to buy printing presses, you had to win readers, and it was impossible for an upstart to come in and challenge an incumbent. Now that business model is completely gone, there are no barriers to entry. Anybody can challenge anybody else; all you need is a website. Anyone can find themselves very quickly with an audience of the entire world.

Kahn’s statement performs two roles; it makes a case that students can no longer look to newspapers as reliable sources for employment after graduating from
journalism schools, and it also encourages students to think about starting their own media enterprises that could attract a global audience. While Kahn encourages independence, there are also ways of adopting an entrepreneurial mindset within a legacy media setting.

The element of entrepreneurial journalism occurring in established media organizations was raised in Expert 3’s definition. Expert 3, an author of a new media book and an entrepreneurial journalism advocate, defined entrepreneurial journalism as any new business or business effort that has something to do with news and journalism. Uniquely among the experts, Expert 3 noted that entrepreneurial journalism does not necessarily have to occur within a start-up; it could also be used to define the activities of an established media organization that embraces an entrepreneurial mindset by innovating and allowing its journalists to try out new ways of doing business:

Any new business or new business effort that has something that has to do with news and journalism. It doesn’t necessarily have to be a start-up, it could be an activity by a large news corporation, but if they’re starting something new, then I would still classify that as entrepreneurial journalism because they’re trying to innovate into something different.

Expert 3, just like Mutter, Kahn, Caplan, Smith and McDowell, agreed there was a need to include entrepreneurial training skills in the journalism curriculum because it was a necessarily skill for students to have in order to be competitive in the new media environment:

I just think journalism is going to be shaped by new ideas, new businesses and new projects over the next 10 years, and any of the students who want to have a career in journalism need to understand the changing landscape and how the start-ups and the different companies are coming up and
shaping our landscape. It’s not necessarily a matter that students need to go and start new businesses, but an entrepreneurial journalism education will just allow them to understand the digital media landscape and how certain opportunities have paid out better toward different start-up’s and just to have that awareness of what’s going on and how everything is changing. The ability to identify opportunities in the new digital media landscape would empower students because – so far – no one has been able to find a definitive, universal way to navigate this fast-changing digital disruption. The absence of clear solutions is a call to arms to all in the profession, including students, to engage actively. This study explored the level of engagement among students in the second research question.

**Impact on Students**

In exploring the potential impact that entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training would have on students’ engagement and understanding of the business environment, the second research question found a general consensus among the experts that such education is likely to produce positive results that would empower students and make them savvier in reaching sound business decisions.

Mutter agrees that business of journalism training and entrepreneurial journalism, if included in the journalism curriculum, would help students to understand the relationship between business and journalism. Giving an example of his entrepreneurial journalism classes at UC Berkeley, Mutter said one class teaches students how to think through starting a business, from making a business plan to actually starting the business — that is, entrepreneurship more broadly — and the other class teaches about the history of change in media technology, that
is, how technology change the media and how the media change technology. He said the two classes learned how the interaction between the audience and the media has changed over the years, putting consumers in more in control than ever before.

Back when I was a lad, media reported and you sat and listened… Now people contribute to the media. The media have been changed by the fact that the media are now owned and operated by the people who use it and not by the people who own printing presses. In other words, the consumer is in charge, and that’s a complete inside out, upside down complete change in how the media business works from back when I started…all the media has become social; a newspaper cannot be successful unless it’s a social medium as well. There has to be a community; there has to be a sharing back and forth between the audience and the media, and if not, the system breaks down. And that’s a complete, profound change from the way most people have ever thought about the media and…it’s a definite profound change in the way most media professionals who teach journalism think about the media.

Expert 3, Caplan, Edmonds, and Smith seemed to agree with Mutter that entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism curriculum would affect students’ understanding of the media industry and the prevailing business environment. The experts saw such training as having a potential positive impact on students.

For example, Caplan said such training would inspire “new, fresh, innovative ideas for what journalism can be.” He said including entrepreneurial journalism in the curriculum would encourage students to think about how journalism can be nurtured and sustained an attitude that would make students
understand the value of journalism at a personal level. Caplan said the key thing such a curriculum would inspire is the spirit of getting involved in the process:

We no longer as journalists work in a vacuum. We can’t just hope other people on the business side of the operations will take care of making organizations run and curry revenue: we have to take a role in that process… Historically journalists have left that responsibility to others, to take care of business, but we now know that if we don’t take responsibility in some cases no one will. And we have seen dozens and dozens of journalism organizations close and fail, and journalists have lost jobs because the business environment has changed.

Expert 3 noted that including business and entrepreneurial training in the curriculum would be important because it would allow students to become more aware of the business side of journalism. Understanding how the media business works would empower students, because “a smart journalist today is making decisions based not just on journalism but also on the market and the business opportunity and sustainability in an organization.”

Kahn presented one of the most confident endorsements for introducing entrepreneurial journalism training into the curriculum, stating that it would enhance students understanding of the industry and the environment they’re likely to face as professionals. He said the time has come for business and entrepreneurial journalism to be included in the curriculum because “the traditional skill set that people had when they came out of journalism school is no longer sufficient on its own to prepare people for the types of careers they’re going to have.”

Complementing Kahn, Smith and McDowell agreed that it was absolutely essential to include entrepreneurial journalism in the curriculum because it made
sense today. Smith argued that the purpose of a university was to prepare students
to face the working world successfully, and if schools fail to adjust to the
prevailing changes in the media, they would be failing to equip their students with
the skills necessary to compete and succeed. Smith said that while many
journalism students would not become entrepreneurs, the environment they will
work in will be entrepreneurial, and they need to be prepared for that. McDowell
said business and entrepreneurial training for journalism would improve students’
understanding of the industry because it will expose them to the daily jargon and
increase their comfort level when relating to business issues. He said some
universities have already incorporated business in the training of journalists. At the
University of Miami, where McDowell teaches, journalism students are already
being exposed to business, and they seem to like it: “I think they will like it. If it’s
taught properly, I think they will really like it.” McDowell, however, noted that
this moves would require some patience:

Initially, I think a lot of them would say, “that is not of interest to me,” and
then when they get into it, first you give them the horror stories of what it’s
like out there from a business point of view. Then you give them the
awareness that indeed their income is directly connected to this--and then
they start to perk up and they get interested in it. And then toward the end
you can start doing the entrepreneurial, where you say, “Maybe you’d like
to get into this yourself; here’s what you need to do.

The experts speculated that while some students may not like the change at
first, learning about business would be an added advantage to their professional
skills. “I think it will be tremendously rewarding,” Kahn said. “We look at the
challenges but we don’t always understand the opportunities. The opportunities
[are] that somebody can write a story right now and have an audience that includes
the entire world.” Kahn said an entrepreneurial journalism curriculum would teach students how to market themselves and shape their own destinies without relying on large media organizations. He noted that entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training would teach students that “the walls have come down.”

For his part, Mutter said the primary benefits of introducing entrepreneurial journalism in the curriculum would be to make them aware that the terrain has changed and they’re on their own; such awareness would make them more creative in looking for ways to practice journalism and make a living from it. Mutter said journalism has changed dramatically. It is no longer enough to just be aware of the basic skills needed to get by. “Now journalism [is about] becoming an expert, building an audience, building a brand, cultivating a brand, creating conversation with the community. It’s completely different today for modern consumers in the wired world,” Mutter said.

McDowell knows plenty about building and cultivating brands, because has written about business branding extensively. In his view, teaching students entrepreneurship would allow them to understand the business models available, build a personal brand, and instill value in their work that would distinguish them from amateurs. McDowell’s assertions are complemented by Expert 2, who found that students seemed to gain a lot from the business of journalism training classes offered. “Some of them go out and get more involved with the business side of journalism,” Expert 2 said. Understanding the business of journalism, according to Expert 2, also gave the students a complete picture of the importance of all aspects of the business.

The importance of teaching business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism under the banner of journalism and not business also emerged as a
strong point among the experts. Caplan and Expert 3 argued that it was important to study business under the journalism banner other than business school banner because the approaches are different. Caplan argued this point as follows:

If you go to business school, you’re studying things like corporate financing and learning how large financial organizations organize their finances and accounting...The kind of skills you’ll practice on daily basis as an entrepreneurial journalist, are the kind of things that we can teach and focus on in an entrepreneurial journalism program [but], which there may not be a lot of time for in a business program. My point is that business school can teach you some general business skills that are generally taught in a context that’s not necessarily super-relevant or closely connected to the day to day reality that entrepreneurial journalists will face.

The first part of the second research question gained the positive support of all the experts but two, Expert 2 and Edmonds, who preferred for such skills to be offered without making them a requirement in the journalism curriculum. The second portion revealed that all experts viewed exposing students to business training would be beneficial and empowering in the current media environment. But despite the general endorsement from the experts, introducing both business of journalism and entrepreneurial journalism training as part of journalism education is a significant departure from the long-held view that journalism and business should always remain separate. The experts interviewed in this study, however, posit that the situation has changed this principle, and it is time to address how journalists can both perform well as journalists and be conscious of business implications. These dual concerns were addressed by the third research question.
Mixing Business and Journalism

Change is not always embraced, especially when it’s profound and departs significantly from a long-held principle, such as the principle in journalism that the business and the editorial sides of the organization must be separated. As established by Picard (2010a), the separation of business and journalism is perhaps the biggest mistake that led journalism to its current sad state of affairs. There is ample evidence from the experts’ responses that change is long overdue. It can be argued that this change is consistent with Lewin’s (Schein, 1999, p. 60) change theory which states that “all forms of learning and change start with some form of dissatisfaction and frustration” with the prevailing state of affairs. There is plenty of dissatisfaction in the field of journalism at the moment, and part of it stems from the notion that business and journalism should be separate. All the experts stated this was no longer a valid concern largely because, in hindsight, it was impractical.

So how would entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training address ethical concerns in the field? The experts presented a variety of perspectives on this issue. For example, Smith said the original premise of the question that discouraged mixing business and journalism was fundamentally “untrue” because the line between business and journalism has always been blurry. Although he perceived that this would not be a problem in the future, Smith said that as time goes along, an effective system that would provide a structure for business and journalism will be put in place that would guide journalists in the new era. “For now we’re improvising and we should recognize that we’re improvising,” he said.

Expert 3 responded that journalists, who value their principles, are generally ethical. This interviewee noted that the market would play a major role
in stemming corruption because in the current media landscape, everything is happening in a transparent environment. Transparency means that now more than ever, entrepreneurial journalists are willing to share affiliations so that the reader is aware of all the interests involved in every journalism project. An example of such transparency can be seen on Jarvis’s blog *BuzzMachine* (2010a), which lists all his interests and affiliations. Perhaps echoing Jarvis, Expert 3 stated that “any journalism organization that is somewhat worried about training their journalist by exposing them to the business side just needs to put the right transparency protections in place, and whatever happens in the organizations is exposed to everyone.” As digital disruption continues to persist and making old perceptions obsolete.

The question of the possibility of business causing corruption among journalists did not seem a serious matter to Mutter, who discounted it as a non-issue: “I don’t think anything can be corrupted any more than it already is.” In Mutter’s perspective, ethical concerns are overblown, and it is hypocritical to imagine that business and journalism do not blend. “Even non-profits need to figure out how to keep the doors open,” Mutter said. He said that money and business is what makes the “wheels go around in a commercial society.” He warned that failure to recognize the connection between business and journalism could lead to what he described as “journocide,” a phenomenon where people are unwilling to become journalists for fear that it’s not a viable profession.

I already feel like we’re in the era of “journocide,” where some of the best of our people don’t want to be journalists anymore because they don’t know how they can be paid…so they become insurance men, lawyers...they just dump trying to be journalists...we all need to be paid for what we do including journalists…I am sorry, but I don’t think there is
anything in the least bit corrupting to be thinking about the world of journalism as being like any other pursuit.

Expert 2 was not worried about any concerns for corruption, and believed the more students learned about business, the less they were likely to be corrupted. “The more you know about how business works, the more able you’re to accommodate it,” said Expert 2. This means, in Expert 2’s view, that a business curriculum would make students more aware of ethical business practices that would make them even better journalists.

For Edmonds, the issue of corruption through the mixing of business and journalism did not seem like a credible concern, but for a different reason. He noted that media ethics is supposed to train journalism students on proper ways to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Kahn stated sentiments similar to Smith’s. He noted that the definition of corruption in this case was ambiguous. He said that historically, bias was considered to be corruption, and many newspapers and media widely held a biased perspective. “What is really corrupting? Is it corrupt if we don’t have a free accurate flow of information in our society?” he asked. Kahn said that in the previous model of newspapers, people read different newspapers to gain different perspectives, and they did not feel there was anything wrong with that. “Objective journalism is largely an American invention that became mainstream in the 1960s, and now it might be disappearing,” Kahn said. To strengthen the curriculum against ethical violations, Kahn recommended diligent ethical training.

Caplan also believed an emphasis on ethics would stem corruption. He said presenting students with ethical questions centered on their possible work environment would equip them with a good understanding of how to deal with
such situations. He advocated for using media professionals to teach ethics and case studies:

Teach people how to consider ethical questions. Give them ethical case studies to consider…[like those at] Harvard Business School [and] McCormick journalism school [part of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University]. Poynter Institute has some very interesting case studies…students can confront ethical issues alongside professional journalists and professional journalism start-up founders, etc., who can come to the class and talk about some of the ethical questions they face.

He said the curriculum could include professional guest speakers who would address issues students are likely to face in the market. These formal efforts in the classroom could help, but Caplan argued that ultimately, individuals must make ethical decisions. “Anything can corrupt people; it’s up to schools and up to those individuals [who] confront ethical issues, to consider ethical issues and to prepare for them,” Caplan said.

It was evident from their responses that the experts thought the issue of potential corruption from studying business and journalism together was blown out of proportion or that it was an issue but nothing could be done about it. However, it emerged that most of the experts felt that including more ethics instruction in entrepreneurial and business journalism courses would play a significant role in stemming the possibility of a problem.

Caplan, Kahn, and Expert 3, however, provided in-depth responses to this question. The three experts shared the view that generally journalists tend to be ethical and that because there are many competing forces in the media – including watchdog websites – more scrutiny is now being visited upon journalists. Expert 3 said the transparent situation in the media has allowed the audience to learn a lot
about how the media works, thereby also reducing the opportunities for journalists to act unethically without risking detection.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training should be included in the journalism core curriculum in order to expose students to new ways of working as a journalist and getting compensated. This study found that experts viewed the changing news media environment as both a challenge and an opportunity for new journalists. The challenge was finding a new, effective model to reach the audience and getting compensated at the same time. Caplan, when discussing the issue of piracy and protecting intellectual property, said the challenge for entrepreneurial journalism is finding a system that would attract an audience that would be willing to pay for the service just as Apple solved the music industry’s piracy problem by creating iTunes, which allowed people to download their favorite music for just 99 cents. The challenge is to find a similar solution for journalism, a system that would empower students and make their work valuable and easily marketable. Such a solution is not yet in sight and journalism schools, such as Columbia University are working hard to come up with a solution. But despite the challenges, there are also opportunities.

The opportunity, as noted by Kahn, is that the cost of entry into the journalism profession has been significantly lowered, and anybody can instantly gain a global market without spending a great deal of money. As an exploratory study, this research found plenty of indications of the need to change journalism curricula to reflect the prevailing media conditions caused by digital disruption. The study found a general agreement among the experts interviewed that journalism needs a new template to build itself upon, and the time is now. Expert 3 said with the pace of the current technological changes, journalism schools need to find a way to adopt a system that would allow them to update their curricula every
semester or every quarter. This might sound excessive, but the point is that journalism schools should adapt to the changes faster than they’re doing at the moment.

Introducing entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism in the curriculum should not seen as an effort to just find a new place for graduating journalism students to find a means of gainful employment. Rather, it should be seen as a way of making traditional journalism institutions adapt to the changing media landscape through effective entrepreneurial innovation. The idea that journalism can be practiced in a well orchestrated manner, where the process is clearly defined as was practiced in legacy news media organization is not true anymore. Instead, journalists are called to continuously search for new ways of reaching the audience and remaining relevant. As Expert 3 noted, entrepreneurial journalism includes both the efforts of established media organizations embracing the changing media landscape and the implementation of innovation that reflects the needs of their audience.

Journalism professors and educators also need to update themselves on the latest trends in media and technology. This may be a difficult endeavor because, as Mutter noted, some professors have not kept abreast with modern technology, but there are ways to circumvent this problem and provide students the best training relevant to the current media landscape. Ways such training can be implemented include providing professors with regular seminars and workshops on the latest trends in the media, hiring professors who are proficient in new media, hiring professionals experienced in new media and entrepreneurial journalism as adjunct professors, and organizing events for students geared toward use of new media and entrepreneurial journalism techniques to cover news and collaborate with the audience.
The central issue in this study is finding ways to introduce entrepreneurial journalism and business of journalism training in the curriculum. The importance of teaching this subject as a core part of the journalism curriculum was supported by 6 out of 8 experts interviewed. Their views should be taken seriously because this is perhaps the best way of ensuring journalism students are prepared thoroughly for the realities of the journalism world, in which traditional journalism institutions cannot be relied upon to provide employment and mentoring. Teaching entrepreneurial journalism is also important because it would teach students how to run successful businesses, create an awareness of how to seek funding for their ventures, and help to grow the profession as a whole.

Consistent with McDowell’s argument for the importance of teaching entrepreneurial journalism, these curricular changes would help strengthen our democracy because they would aid in the creation of professional, credible journalism that is independent from the government. McDowell argued that the problem in journalism today is that journalists have allowed non-journalists to take over their profession in the name of citizen journalism. The end result has therefore been a cheapening of the value of journalism that has made it difficult for the audience to feel motivated to pay for journalism products. Stating that there is still an appetite for quality journalism, McDowell and Kahn shared the view that, given a compelling reason and value, the audience would still subscribe to traditional sources of news because these traditional sources are credible. McDowell and Kahn pointed to the success of *The Economist* and *The Wall Street Journal* as examples of traditional publications that have thrived during a period when others failed.

*The Economist* and *The Wall Street Journal*, while not entrepreneurial ventures, have one thing in common: they trade on specialized information—
business news—and present a high quality of work. The quality of work is important, and that’s one advantage entrepreneurial journalism students may have over non-journalist media entrepreneurs. Preparing students for entrepreneurial journalism is also likely to create a new environment of quality and credible journalism that is currently under threat from the incredible number of interest-based blogs and websites. While entrepreneurial journalism may not resolve the problem of bias in the media, it would introduce a new system of checks and balances in which transparency and accountability would play a central role. An entrepreneurial journalism curriculum should have a strong ethics theme to emphasize the importance of ethical journalism.

Following Caplan’s suggestion, an entrepreneurial journalism curriculum should address any ethical concerns or conflict of interests brought about by mixing business and journalism by using case studies and ethical forums. There was a clear consensus among the experts that training journalism students to understand how the media business works is imperative and must be undertaken as soon as possible. More studies should be conducted to further explore this view and bring additional ideas to the table on how to implement such a change.

Limitations of the Study

This study had several limitations. The first one was its use of telephone interviews. While cost-effective and efficient, the use of the phone for interviews reduced the interaction with respondents and made it impossible to catch every nuance of the interviewees’ responses. The telephone conversations also tended to be shorter than face-to-face interviews, in which the interviewer and the interviewee were able to interact and questions were answered more thoroughly.
Future studies of this type should be conducted primarily through face-to-face interviews.

The study was also limited in gender representation. All eight experts interviewed were men. While this may not be considered a real issue because the study was not focused on gender, the study would have been more representative had it taken into account views from female experts.

Future research on this topic should include a wide array of experts, and should include in-depth analysis of an entrepreneurial journalism training program and of a business of journalism program that have taken root. Future studies should also track some entrepreneurial journalists to analyze their success and the challenges they’re facing. Because of the shifting landscape in the news media, a future study might undertake the development of a framework that would guide journalism schools in how to implement change in their curricula to prepare students for the current news media environment. Such a curriculum, as suggested by Expert 3, should have within it a mechanism that would allow for swift adjustments, reviewable every semester, or at reasonably short intervals to match the pace of digital media innovation.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX
Interview Questions

1) How do you define entrepreneurial journalism?

2) Do you think journalism schools should make entrepreneurial journalism or business of journalism as a required course?

3) What impact do you think entrepreneurial journalism would have on students if it is included as a core subject in journalism curriculum?

4) Critics say entrepreneurial journalism and business training may corrupt journalists. What do you think?

5) Some people say the problem in journalism right now is a branding crisis; do you agree?

6) Instead of majoring in entrepreneurial journalism, why not just major in business and take journalism on the side?

7) Do you think entrepreneurial journalism would return the media to its watchdog role?

8) In the new media environment, do you think we can control intellectual property?

9) In your view, what are the three main elements a journalism curriculum must have to effectively prepare students for the prevailing media situation?
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Maurice Odhiambo Ndole

Type full name as it appears on submission

July 20, 2011

Date