

Is news liberated or enslaved? Consequences of news aggregation



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ABSTRACT: This paper discusses the consequences of news aggregation in mobile applications. These applications retrieve news items from the Internet, rank them and subsequently stream in the theme channels automatically. While doing so, they transform the original layout and context of the news. As a result, the news is situated beyond the control of the authors and editors. Is therefore the reference to the news as being “enslaved” justified? The conducted analyses allowed the author to draw different conclusions. News enslavement is about its being protected against aggregators through licences and paywalls. Another question then arises: does observing only selected channels with many news items but on a limited number of topics limit or help the reader? Having considered all the pros and cons, the balance is positive: mobile applications enable readers’ access to the news published on small, unknown and local sites.

KEYWORDS: aggregator, application, news, convergence, journalism



INTRODUCTION

A reader interested in news must now use additional tools to be able to force his way through a mass of unimportant information and to reach the content of interest to him. Millions of users apply mobile tools in the news selection process. These applications, commonly referred to as “news aggregators,” constitute an important element of not only the media but also marketing revolution. They have become a cog in news distribution and consumption chain. Mobile news aggregators such as specialised tablet and smartphone applications have been present on the market since 2010 — the time when the iPad appeared. They have gone all the way from childhood through mature, conciliatory stabilisation. We are therefore able to explore the consumption of the news, which takes place through different types of news feeders.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The aggregator algorithms collect the news from the media and other locations and additionally they learn to recognise user behaviour and preferences. These applica-

tions present the collected articles in categories and display them according to user preferences. One could say that the aggregator builds bricolage from the news, which is an outcome of the process of creation of “objects with materials to hand, re-using existing artefacts and incorporating bits and pieces” (Lévi-Strauss, 1962; Hartley, 2002). It has to be emphasised that the operation of the aggregators has nothing to do with robot journalism (described by: van Dalen, 2012) because aggregators do not create their own texts. They use ready materials marked with tags and hash tags already at the stage of text development by people (editors, journalists), who decide about the classical news value content (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Hetherington, 1985; Schlesinger, 1987; Bell, 1991; McQuail, 1994; Harcup & O’Neill, 2001).

There is no doubt that the most popular current information selection tool is social media, even more so now that we are twice as likely to prefer news links and recommendations from friends and family, than from journalists or news organizations with the majority of the social media users believing that they will find more information there than on traditional media (Hermida et al., 2012). Still, mobile aggregators may satisfy expectations of different groups of users. One of the groups is described by researchers as interested in receiving only some information — best in the simplest form (Lipsitz et al., 2005). Other groups are made up of users who want to have access to the most important and most current news at first glance (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink, 2014).

The rapid development of mobile aggregators confirms an opinion put forth by some of academics that the digitalization of journalism has not only led to a decline in reading habits (Rosenstiel, 2013; Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink, 2014). Currently, 63 per cent of Internet users want to be up to date with the news (Kimball, 2014). Every third resident of the USA (Pew Research Center, 2012) and nearly every other Briton (Kantar Media, 2012) retrieve the required information using feed readers. These data concern older generation aggregators, which operate as web sites. They include Yahoo News, Google News (both use algorithms to create the site), Huffington Post or Digg (in this case the order is determined by the site users). It is these aggregators that were accused of producing cheaper content for digital platforms by using “aggregation, content farms and Huffinization” rather than professional journalists proliferate (Bakker, 2012). I will return to similar charges against mobile aggregators in the following parts of the paper. So far it was the web, not mobile aggregators that have been explored. This is a pity as the latter are used by hundreds of millions of people around the world.

Already in 1995 Negroponte coined the term “Daily Me”: a news ecosystem dominated by customized and personalized media, tailored to individual’s interests and tastes. In the following years, opinions were heard that such a daily newspaper customized to one’s tastes may result in limited access to information due to the permanent reinforcement of an individual’s interests (Johnson, 2001).

I have similar fears with respect to the aggregators which can be classified as “Daily Me” newspapers.

Taking into account the foregoing doubts and my own research areas, I put forth the following hypotheses and research questions in my article:

H: Aggregators transform the original layout and context of the news. The new context is supposedly unwanted by the reader/recipient (perhaps also by the news, should the latter have a personality). Given these circumstances, one can put forth a thesis that the news in the mobile aggregator is probably enslaved.

RQ: A collection of news is closed into a single or several, a maximum of up to a dozen of specified topics and does not go beyond this limit. Does observing only selected channels with many news items but on a limited number of topics limit or enrich the reader?

Order

Having presented the theoretical framework, I now intend to move on to the research methodology. I will present the justification for the applied method and then I will describe the selected aggregators. After the analysis and results, I will also present my opinion on the thesis and research question. I will also provide an explanation on how copyright produces certain results, and not any other. After limitations and discussion I will present conclusions and a proposal of areas for further research on aggregators.

Methodology

I examine the aggregators from the media studies perspective. Therefore, I am interested in the information stream content and its use by the recipient. I apply empirical methods; the analysis of data which I carry out is mainly based on content analysis aimed at identifying the key motives and prevailing forms. This method is particularly useful when examining aggregators where we deal with a stream of pure news, which is not disturbed by other users, as is the case with social media. My content analysis is consistent with traditional understanding of communication and media language research when we look for the answer to classical questions: “Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect” (Lasswell, 1948). This is compared with a prescription for the sociolinguistic enterprise: “Who speaks what language to whom and when?” (Fishman, 1965). In Berelson’s perspective such content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Berelson, 1971). Such content analysis allows carrying out in-depth exploration into what happens to the news when the aggregator takes it out from the site.

Objects of research

Six mobile news feeder applications were subject to empirical analysis. The criterion for the application selection was their popularity in this segment of the market and innovation. Mobile aggregators also differ in the manner of obtaining content and the way it is presented.

The popular Flipboard from Palo Alto (California) may be a symbol of a bridge between the web and mobile aggregators. Flipboard was initially developed as a future web site. After the iPad was introduced this idea was modified (Carlson, 2010). Flipboard became an Appstore hit following its introduction in July 2010. The application interface is similar to the layout of a glossy magazine, which bases its content on the materials spread by Twitter.

Zite is a personalised digital paper, which learns the user's behaviour and provides him with the content which keeps adjusting to his interests. Zite was developed in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia's Laboratory of Computational Intelligence. In 2011, it was purchased by CNN, and by March 2014 it had already belonged to Zite-competitive Flipboard.

Two Stanford students, Akshay Kothari and Ankit Gupta, developed the Pulse application. Microsoft was supporting them in the preparation of the web version. In April 2013, LinkedIn purchased Pulse for ca. 90 million dollars.

A similar idea of the interface i.e. moving horizontal strips, was used by the British Taptu established in Cambridge.

News360 has been developing in Moscow since 2010. At the present moment, the team also have their office in Silicon Valley (USA). This app (which is not the largest of its kind) indexes daily as much as 100,000 sources covering 250,000 articles a day (Reid, 2013).

In addition to these "veterans" one has to reach out for one of the latest aggregators. In January 2014, Trove was relaunched. It had been developed since 2010 by the Washington Post team. The journal belonged to the current owner of Trove, i.e. Donald E. Graham. He sold The Washington Post in October 2013. Trove, as Zite, endeavours to adapt the content to readers' behaviour. Trove streams also have their own curators.

The above-mentioned applications will be the subject of analysis but one can also refer to Daily Beast, Newser, or Reddit. There are also aggregators developed by the media, but they use limited sources and are not as popular as independent software. Gaining in popularity are aggregators using video recordings such as Wibbitz, NowThis or Newsy.

All aggregators combine many pieces of news (abridged or not) into a completely new layout. Thus it becomes separate from the place assigned to it by the professional editor in the original news service. A consequence of this situation is a change of the time of news exposure and the context of its occurrence.

Subjects of research

The applications are produced for various mobile operations systems. For the analysis the version for iPad was selected. These applications were originally developed for that device. The author examined two types of information streams. In the first group subject to analysis were 600 news in total — in each application 100 individual pieces of news were analysed which appeared one after the other (from the latest to the oldest) within a specified stream. Each application rank organises its content in a different way. To be able to observe the news and to obtain comparable results subject to analysis were the streams which were the closest to a typical media start/home page i.e. they included the latest news from the world. These included the World News (Zite), News — Top Stories (Flipboard), Best of News (Pulse), US World News (Taptu), Top Stories (News360) and World News (Trove). The results were to be subsequently used in the analysis of the transformation of the original news by the application and the sources it was taken from.

The general news category was not analysed beyond a general selection for the analysis of the streams containing hard news. It was insignificant in the determination of the manner of their use by the aggregators. It is more important to specify the original source of the news and description of the transformations it undergoes within the aggregator.

All the analyses were made by the author in the period 16–19 April 2014. They were preceded by trial analyses during which the correctness of the criteria was tested, as well as their usefulness in answering the key research question. iPad applications were used, as they are richer versions with a richer interface in comparison with the versions designed for Smartphones while presenting the same content in the same sequence.

Analysis

Aggregators use dozens of thousands of sources. However, to present the news in the analysed streams they usually use the total of ca. 30 web services. They can be found in different applications. Such as for example The Guardian, The Telegraph, Los Angeles Times, or USA Today. All of them are in English, usually American or British. But there are also sources from Australia, India, and Israel. Out of 15 first pieces of news in each of the analysed streams, an overlap of at least eight common topics was observed. The order of the news differed depending on the site and they were separated by other news. While downloading the text from the sites, all applications strip the news off its original layout and put it into their own. As a result, each aggregator created a new paper without any ads and independent of the original order and layouts existing on the source pages. Hence, it was independent in the layout even of itself: with each navigation or scrolling of the site view in the

stream the user is directed to another page. However, the fact that it is the second, third and another site is usually strongly correlated with the time of the news placement in the service and not the decision that it is information of lesser importance.

There are three ways of presenting the content: having clicked on a given topic, the user can see the entire text or its part with a link directing him to the site or he immediately opens the source site. The detailed results of the analysis are given below.

Flipboard creates its stream from the selected articles sent through Twitter by the media such as AP, BBC, The Guardian, Los Angeles Times, The New York Times (one of the few applications where you can read full texts from the newspaper), NBC, Al Jazeera, or The Daily Beast. All of the 100 articles subject to analysis were presented by the application in full text with illustrations or possibly with additional video materials or podcasts (which could be heard in the background after switching on and return to stream viewing).

Zite (where the reader flips over the sites in the same manner as in the Flipboard magazine) in the analysed stream had more varied providers of the news in comparison with other applications. The sources for 100 pieces of news were as follows:

— news from the local web sites (NBC): 5, the source page would open immediately following the click on.

— news from the traditional large medium: 14 with full texts (e.g. The Guardian, Al Jazeera), 21 directly to the source page (e.g. The Washington Post, The Times, Los Angeles Times).

— news from the Internet medium: 13 with full texts (e.g. Salon, Boing Boing, globalpost.com), 26 directly to the source page (e. g. Quartz, Mashable, Red Write Web, salon.com).

— news from blogs: 12 with full texts (e.g. Creativelive).

— news from the non-profit organisations: 6 directly to the source site (American Press Institute, Pew Research Center).

— news from other sites — 3 full sites from Youtube, WikiLeaks, YahooNews.

To summarise the Zite: 54 news items would open on the source sites and 46 displayed the full texts.

Pulse had a stream of Best of News including a little more sensational information and interesting stories in comparison with other aggregates. It is worth mentioning here however, that the content of the news was not subject to analysis. In Pulse, however, the social components are highlighted and the number of user evaluations and recommendations are presented. It affects the layout of the news in the Best of News stream. The numerical result of the analysis is exactly the same as in Zite, subject to 54 news items opened in the source sites (which, however, were not the sites of the leading media, but for example the LinkedIn Influencers, Daily Dot, or Slate sites) and 46 would not open as full texts but as fragments (e.g. The Time, Fox News, Salon).

Taptu is characterised with a limited number of sources in the analysed US World News stream. The articles presented in a minimalistic layout are often dis-

rupted most probably due to the imperfection of the algorithm. Inside the texts, there are redundant words such as “advertising” or “image” — in the places where they occurred in the original. At the same time this imperfection has a stronger effect on the original than could be observed in other aggregators which remove similar traces from the articles.¹ In the analysed stream, 76 news items could be read inside the application (the sources were for example UK Reuters, Fox, Al Jazeera, Sfgate.com, or Fox). In 24 cases the user was immediately directed to the original web site (usually New York Times, but also the Washington Post)

News360 has an interface which is geometrically divided into six tiles, which can be turned independently like a cubic. In the analysed stream, 47 tiles directed the viewer immediately to the original web site (e.g. Reuters, Los Angeles Times, The Guardian, Philly, or USA Today). On the other hand 53 presented fragments of a text (usually from smaller outlets such as The Sydney Morning Herald, WCVB.com, SFGate.com) encouraging to “continue in reader.” News360, as the only one of the analysed applications, leaves the view of the original site — in the top right-hand corner there is a miniature of the source site. It is not however a tribute to the authors but a button directing to the site.

Trove has a news stream called World News by Editors (21,098 followers) hence the conclusion that it is probably moderated. Perhaps that is why the articles are not presented in chronological order: the top news items were published 11 hours ago and in the first fifteen there is news published one hour ago, as well as 14 hours ago. Among the analysed news, 75 presented full texts after a single click (Al Jazeera, UK Reuters, Fox News, CBC News, CNN, and SFGate). The 25 articles shown in fragments were sourced mainly from The New York Times and The Washington Post (as in Taptu).

Results

Ad. H: News in the mobile aggregator is not enslaved, so the hypothesis is not confirmed. But another conclusion derived from the analysis is that the more expensive the production of news, the higher the news protection.

Among all 600 analysed news presented in the aggregators, the largest number i.e. 50 per cent (297), were presented in the form of full texts collected from the original site. Of these, 30 per cent (179) could be read only on the original web site.

¹ Taptu also publishes unrelated pictures next to the texts incorrectly downloaded from the original site. Other types of errors were found in an attempt at locating a stream using “Poland” as the key word in each application (only Taptu failed to create a channel related to this key word). It was also found that in Zite there were frequent errors related to the algorithm’s interpretation of the word related to “Poland”: on average every ninth news item was about “nail polish.” It has to be added that the news fed by the aggregators in the “Poland” stream came from a larger number of smaller sources than in the analyzed stream news. All news was in English. In Zite, they originated, among other things, from two sources created in Poland — inside-poland.com, and en.poland.gov.pl.

Another 20 per cent (124) were presented only in parts (extracts). The news is therefore liberated from the layout for which it was intended and from the advertisements which financed its creation. It is subsequently enclosed in the business model of the aggregator.

Taking into account that 30 per cent of the articles were read on the original sites and 50 per cent were texts downloaded from the web sites, there is no unequivocal confirmation or rejection of the news enslavement hypothesis. Taking into account the logical rules it means that the hypothesis is not confirmed.

It can only be stated — slightly pervasively — that half of the texts were freed from the layout, which I mentioned in the preceding sentences.

I made an interesting observation during the research. Following the analysis of the aggregator content and their business conditions, one may reasonably assume that the news liberation is determined by the price of the information. The lower the costs of obtaining the news, the greater the freedom and the smaller the control of the creator over the distribution. A news value protection principle can therefore be put forth: the more expensive the production of news, the higher the news protection. It is the key conclusion derived from the analysis.

The foregoing is consistent with the conclusions of Tan, i.e. the most valuable news for the media is hot news, and it is this news that is protected by the media organisations against its being redistributed (2013). The most expensive news items are created in editorial offices by professional journalists. The cheapest, hence liberated and available without any difficulty, is the news created and distributed by the users of social media. This model appears to be universal and will not change even after additional changes, which still occur in the world of digitalised media.²

Professional, expensive news is sometimes shut down behind the paywalls, and its use (for example through the aggregators) is subject to strict restrictions and agreements. In this context one can talk about a particular news enslavement. Retrieving the news from the original site and releasing it into a broader circulation requires considerable technical and organisational effort. This however takes place with the consent of the news producer. Its enslavement by downloading from the original site and its placement in a different context and layout does not seem to be a problem to any of the parties.

² Similar problems recur as the media market changes. For example, in 1933, in fear of the declining sales in newspapers, the printed media and news agencies in the USA made an agreement with the radio broadcasting corporations aimed at limiting the amount of news items in the news services. The agreement was valid until 1938 but the news divisions were restored on the radio before that date. At the same time the 1918 dispute concerning the plagiarism of news from the battlefield during the First World War between the Associated Press and the International News Service is worth mentioning here. INS was suspected of paying the employees of the AP off to relay the news to them and were suspected of rewriting the AP wires and publishing them as their own. The dispute was resolved through an out-of-court agreement.

Ad. RQ: Observing selected channels with many news items but on a limited number of topics enrich the reader: mobile applications enable readers' access to the news published on small and unknown sites.

Personalisation enriches the creators of applications and advertisers with the profits from advertising. Does it enhance the user as well? Or, perhaps, it limits them? For example, as much as 67 per cent of Americans follow a concrete topic of interest to them (Purcell et al., 2010, p. 43). Are the directed interests an unawareness trap? A collection of news items reaching the user through the aggregate is closed in a maximum dozen or so predefined topics and if the reader does not add any new streams himself he will not go beyond these topics. However, by surfing the Internet individually he shuts himself off as well — but this time the limit is the number of sites being visited. On these sites, the user finds information that he will never use. Therefore, he chooses to use the aggregator to eliminate the overflow.

Information in the aggregator considerably reduces the “news gap” between news offerings and the demand for news referred to by Boczkowski and Mitchellstein (2013). The aggregator provides information from the stream selected by the user. It does so contrary to the opinions that users do not want to personalise their news because they do not want to miss anything and instead prefer to “check” (Costera Meijer, 2008) or “monitor” the headlines (Schudson, 1998). It is consistent with the requirements of those who are identified as expecting that an organisation and its editors will select and identify the key news (Costera Meijer & Groot Kormelink, 2014).

In the situation of a balance achieved by being enclosed in the streams, or sites, much more is needed to tip the balance. An additional burden is the fact that when using more definite streams in aggregators, the reader also receives the news from smaller and local sites. It would never occur to the reader because he does not know about their existence. By entering it, he not only acquires knowledge but also manages to reduce the news concentration. He goes beyond the limited circles of news from different sites. By using smaller and local sites, the user absorbs more original information thus releasing it into a broader information circle (at the same time by clicking providing additional income to the site owner).

Copyright and the manner of news presentation on the media

To understand why the aggregator present the news in such a way, one has to move back to the discussions and disputes taking place in the early days of mobile applications. They allowed to stabilise the model and the applications began to cooperate in different ways with various suppliers.³

³ There is also an area of native advertisements, which imitates the journalistic material and is not subject to the same protection as the journalistic content.

In March 2011, the producers of the original content for over 300 newspapers, magazines and programmes (represented by the lawyers) sent a letter to Zite CEO Ali Davar. They wrote about an “unauthorised use of intellectual property.”⁴ The content of the letter is a clear illustration of the charges against news aggregators, especially in view of the fact that the operation of the application and in particular the manner of presentation of the article (in part, or in fragments, texts and pictures presented in the aggregator or immediate redirecting to the original web site) are determined to a larger extent by legal rather than technical limitations. The authors of the letter would emphasise that “by systematically reformatting, republishing and redistributing our original content on a mass commercial scale without our permission in your iPad application, Zite directly and adversely impacts our businesses. Your application takes the intellectual property of our companies, as well as the hard and sometimes dangerous work of tens of thousands of people. It deprives our websites of traffic and advertising revenue” (Swisher, 2011).

Freedman (2010) pointed out a similar problem in his earlier works, emphasising that traffic goes more and more to internet portals and aggregators who invest nothing in original news content and simultaneously fail to expand significantly the range of source materials. It is a problematic issue in the sense that news production is characterised by high fixed costs, which do not vary with the number of copies produced but with the number of products produced (Hamilton, 2004).

Interestingly, the editorial letter does not mention anything about advertisers. And yet, the media operate in “two-sided markets” (Picard, [2002] 2011) which depend on both advertisers as well as readers. Revenue derived from these sources was at risk and that was the main theme of the letter.

The letter produced the expected result. Ali Davar said: “We’re talking to publishers right now to find a win-win for them monetarily and at the same time to preserve the great user experience” (Swisher, 2011).

In a similar dispute, although on a smaller scale a year earlier, Flipboard’s co-founder and CEO Mike McCue explained: “If any publishers [...] feel we’re showing too much content, it’s very easy for us in a server file to dial that down and do something that they’re more comfortable with. [...] We’re going to make money with them not off of them” (Carlson, 2010).

Since then the companies have entered into the relevant agreements,⁵ and the ads in the aggregators have been discreetly working in favour of both sides — especially where the full articles are presented. For example, News360 mainly encourages the readers to purchase the native advertisements i.e. texts paid by the advertisers. These articles cannot be distinguished from common journalistic texts,

⁴ As of 2010 individual publishers/editors put forth similar charges against aggregators but the action undertaken against Zite was the first on this scale.

⁵ For example, at the end of June 2012, Flipboard made an agreement with the New York Times on making available some of the content in apps for paid subscribers. In Pulse, it was possible to read The Wall Street Journal for an extra charge thus enabling it to develop the subscriber base.

especially those published in the sections devoted to technologies and different equipment. This discrete and yet increasingly popular form of advertising is not foreign to other aggregators. Single graphical advertisements, usually private ones, appear in the windows of the Zite stream. In Flipboard, while flipping over the pages, full-page adverts can be found as in centrefolds of the glossy magazines.

The advertising model is incomplete without personalisation. Aggregators are usually promoted as “user learning apps” which adapt the presented content to their needs and expectations. The same feature is also of great importance for the advertisement and may become a part of the advertising offer of the aggregators. Being aware of the preference of concrete recipients, they may present relevant ads in a similar way as Google.

Limitations

The conducted survey has limitations typical for the content analysis method i.e. it provides a directed snapshot oriented towards research issues instead of providing a cross-section statistical view. While performing empirical research based on observation and evaluation, one has to remember that “there is no objective or neutral way of deciding which categories should be used” (McQuail, 1977). Additionally, the aggregator market is dynamic, applications are subject to modifications and ownership transfers, or there appear new apps making the current ones less important. Nevertheless, the general models and operating principles remain the same.

DISCUSSION

Apparent news immensity — the Internet is deservedly perceived as a place of freedom. It is through the web where independent news items are presented during social and political revolution such as the Arab Spring or in Ukraine. The distribution of this and other information is practically free for the users of the Internet. But in the world of the professional media there are no free news items, and their existence is a guise standing in contradiction with the media business model. It was possible to put this observation to the test on the basis of the above-mentioned dispute between the media and the aggregators. As the aggregators become fixed on the market they also obtain licences to content (the entire article or its specified part) and share profits from media advertisements. Thanks to the profits this market continues to expand. Thus the increasing number of distribution channels leads to news omnipresence. That is not to say that there is more professional information. On the contrary, all aggregators used almost the same sources, which is also confirmed by the results of this analysis. Their multiplication artificially boosts the number of news items on the net. Apparently, the amount of information on the net increases but in fact it is just a pure multiplication. In effect only about one-third

of the content produced by the mainstream news media is perceived as noteworthy (Lee & Chyi, 2014). This is especially true in a situation where the majority of news outlets use the news produced by other organisations and all the foreign news in the USA has come for years from the “Big Four” news agencies: Reuters, Associated Press, United Press International and Agence France Presse (Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen, 1998).

Furthermore, the aggregator may redirect the reader to another aggregator. In the Taptu stream, there is a short piece of news from The Huffington Post — a web news aggregator. By entering a new source site using the application, it turned out that it was not the source page at all: The Huffington Post also redirected the reader from the text to another page. The site was in fact the original owner of the text. In this curious way the aggregator redirects the viewers to another aggregator. Only the news phantom is used which magnifies the apparent quantity of information on the net.

Man instead of algorithms — one has to pay attention to the trends in the ever-changing model of aggregator operation, both web and mobile. For example, web aggregators, including such big aggregators as The Huffington Post or BuzzFeed, employed in 2013 a considerable number of journalists, including many known from the conventional media. In 2009, the YahooNews staff ranks ordering the information were dismissed only to be replaced with algorithms (Kanjilal, 2010). At the present moment, the company is in the process of re-employment of editors (Pew Research Center, 2014). We cannot exclude the possibility that at least some of the mobile aggregators may take similar action. No wonder that in the Facebook application launched in 2014 called Paper, in addition to the algorithms curators are also employed. At Trove, curators sign their names under the channels, which they take care of. Therefore, a question occurs: whether and when will the aggregators commence to employ journalists, not only to write texts within the scope of the native advertising but also to create the qualitative articles? Therefore they could race with the media to maintain the recipient i.e. the advertisements. Thus it is becoming a legacy medium. At any rate, in some of the companies introducing the aggregators there was such an obvious substantial inflow of money that they were able to hire curators at the very least.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the conducted analysis, I formulated the principle of news protection: the more expensive the production of the news, the more it is protected by the producer. This rule constitutes the manner of news presentation in the aggregator channels. Also worth taking into account is the fact that the most expensive news will not reach the aggregator as they will be covered behind the paywall.

In return, the aggregator user is directed to the news websites which he would not be able to find on his own while searching for the desired information. It may

be a chance for smaller web sites; for the reader it is a chance to expand the sources. The use of the aggregator channels limits, upon reader request, the content of the received news offering him in exchange a broad range of its sources.

Research issues to be taken up are as follows. In the discussed context, one should search for the reply to other research questions: to what extent do people feel advised? It is obvious that they complain about the deluge of information, which the segregators only help them to distil. It does not mean that they have to be happy with the information they receive, its scope or quantity. In the near future more research will have to be undertaken into the sense of the audience being informed, which may be helpful in identifying subsequent news in the news area.

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