The purpose of this article is to provide an overview of research in online video on newspapers’ websites. Newspapers are still today experimenting with what works and what does not. The results show that even if text is still the most important part on a newspaper’s website, video usage is increasing. The article identifies a number of relevant issues in production and business models and presents research results concerning the production and consumption of online news videos. Advertising in relation to online news videos is also examined.

Keywords
online video, newspapers, business, users, content

INTRODUCTION

The newspaper industry is struggling with difficult economic realities and is seeking new revenue sources. Many newspapers have added online video content in an attempt to compensate for the lost revenues from the decline in traditional print media sales, but the adaptation of these new formats has not been smooth, and many are still struggling to capture the full value. Producing traditional television is too expensive, and the requirements can be too high for the newspaper’s staff. The result has often been that the readers have not been interested in the final product, and without readers, the advertisers are not satisfied and so withdraw their revenue, creating a downward financial spiral.

The purpose of this article is to contribute to the emerging research field about online news video. It addresses two central questions: 1) what is needed for newspapers to deliver news videos; and 2) what should be considered to make these economically viable? The literature review is based on principles in Machi and McEvoy (2012). The main keywords in the search phase were: “online video,” “online video newspaper,” and “online newspaper” combined with asterisks. The review is based (with a few exceptions) on research done on European newspapers between 2008 and 2014. In the literature search we especially targeted three journals: International Journal of Media Management, the Journal of Media Business Studies, and Digital Journalism because of the areas they represent. We also utilized papers from the European Media Management Association research database and the findings of the Reuters Institute Digital News Report. The literature search resulted in a sample of 40 articles or reports to be reviewed. A good 20 of them are referred to in this report. Many of the 40 articles covered online video in general, and did not directly cover the newspaper field. But the ar-
articles did provide background information about user behavior, expectations, and perception of value in online videos.

THE REVIEW
An in-depth search demonstrates that there is a mere handful of research reports that specifically focus on online videos at newspapers’ websites. Instead, a lot of research has been done about online videos, e.g., on YouTube and online publishing, that includes observations that can more or less extend to online news videos.

Toward an online video strategy
For many newspapers, online video is still a new format. To be able to use it in the most effective way, newspaper houses must now develop a clear video strategy (Murschetz, 2014, p. 19). When migrating into offering online videos, producers must understand that there are many factors that are critical for success; without the right resources and competencies, the end result will suffer. A staff with the right skills, and management that understands convergence, technology and logistics, will make the process easier (ibid.) and more likely to succeed.

In many newspapers, journalists have expressed strong resistance toward online news (Thurman & Lupton, 2008). This resistance is based largely on perceptions that the 24/7 online news cycle has resulted in a decline in the quality of content. Some want to work on deeper stories that require more time than the demands of online distribution will allow. Others believe they lack the skills to produce images and videos. Even if many journalists are conservative and might not want to change the way they work, Deuze (2004, p. 145) has argued that journalists are ready to change if they feel that the change is beneficial for them.

One popular myth about online news is that multi-skilled journalists should be able to produce more news for the same amount, or little more, money (Quinn & Filak, 2005, p. 14). Multi-skilled personnel are of interest for newspapers because they are capable of engaging with content across multiple media platforms. As a result, Brown and Collin’s 2010 study “What ‘They’ Want from ‘Us’: Industry Expectations of Journalism Graduates” shows that even if traditional medium-specific skills are still important, there is a need to incorporate more multimedia education into the curricula of journalists-in-training (p. 68). Given that journalism graduates today already have basic multimedia skills and are eager to learn more about it, there are additional pressures on older colleagues to perform or be replaced (Thurman & Lupton, 2008, p. 451). The UK newspaper industry is divided regarding the need for a journalist to be multi-skilled. Some editors prefer journalists who can do everything, while others want special tasks to be handled by specialists. Despite that tension, all those interviewed by Thurman and Lupton agreed that employees with experience from different media fields and strong production skills are needed in tomorrow’s newsrooms (2008, p. 443).

Research suggests that instead of working individually, as many journalists do today, multimedia journalists should work in collaborative cross-departmentalized teams (Deuze, 2004, p. 146). This creates tensions in both the industry and among journalists and might threaten the individual journalists’ way of working. Picard argues that news organizations and journalists must become more flexible and willing to adapt to new opportunities to be able to survive in the future (Picard, 2010, p. 377).

Many newspapers do not use their IT departments to their full potential. The IT department should not be considered a plain helpdesk; they should be engaged in the business and drive the development (Doyle, 2013, p. 7). The Financial Times (ft.com) recruited more specialists in IT, graphics, and data analysis to be able to produce the level of content for which users would be willing to pay (Doyle, 2013, p. 4). Their success suggests there is still a demand for the presentation of exclusive, penetrating, and well-researched stories. In 2008, the total revenues for the FT Group was £390 million, and 31 percent came from online services. Four years later, after 50 percent of staff effort was devoted to online services, to-
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Cross-media newsrooms
When it comes to producing video content, in-house production is the preferred way compared with buying content from other producers because it brings a competitive advantage (Thurman & Lupton, 2008, p. 446). As well, Murschetz (2014, p. 20) argues that costs can be reduced by training in-house staff to be able to produce video content. With unique content, it is also easier to sell advertising in videos. General, low-quality news videos are not what users expect from newspapers, but high-quality niche video content can be expensive to create. Creating unique and branded content requires a production team. Newspapers in the United Kingdom have different setups from one to three people in the team depending on the paper and the assignment. The Sun, for example, used two-person teams that shot for around five hours, and then had a couple of hours for editing to produce a two-minute video (Thurman & Lupton, 2008, p. 446). It might seem that a whole day of work for two persons is a lot, but the editor at the Mirror suggests that working hours spent on video is worth it because video opens up more opportunities for advertising revenue (ibid.).

The Dutch newspaper de Volkskrant decided to implement an integrated cross-media newsroom in 2006 (Tameling & Broersma, 2013). The newspaper tried to stimulate cooperation between online and print staff by physically situating them next to each other. The reorganization was also to show that both sides are equally important. However, as the print product funded the multimedia projects, it was still the priority in the daily work. All decisions were made based on what would suit the paper version the best. According to the newspaper’s official cross-media policy, 98 percent of reporters’ time was to be spent on newspaper production; the rest of the time reporters would make content for the website and later on for the online video site.

Even so, this was met with a lot of cultural resistance from the journalists. They argued that being a radio or television reporter was a totally different profession. They now had multiple deadlines, i.e., the deadline for their main story for the newspaper plus the new deadlines to update the website multiple times a day. As a result, many journalists said that the quality of their stories was lower because they did not have time to check the facts from multiple sources. In 2011, the publisher changed its strategy and separated the online and the print newsrooms. The print newsroom stayed in Amsterdam and the online newsroom moved to Rotterdam. The online newsroom is expected to (re-)produce 200 news stories on weekdays and at least 100 on weekends. According to the editor-in-chief there are no special skills needed for running an online news platform and that is why it is enough with inexperienced journalists.

For convergence to work as expected there are a few requirements that must be met. According to Quinn and Filak, some of the components of “easy” convergence are a committed and focused leadership, a culture of innovation and risk-taking, aligned systems and processes, and the same values (2005, p. 12). The quality of journalism might suffer as a result of convergence, but the Dutch case also showed that de-convergence can have a big impact on the credibility of the brand because of the perceived difference in journalistic quality between paper and online content (Tameling & Broersma, 2013, p. 32). Murschetz (2014) argues that if the quality of the video content differs much from the printed paper there is a chance that it will harm the perception of the newspaper brand (p. 22).

Online video and ads
Newspapers need to find a way to complement the paper and not replace it (Wellbrock & Rausch, 2012, p. 14). Online video is an attractive add-on to the core that is still the traditional paper. Even if the cost-benefit ratio and return on innovation investments of online video are still very low, it is advisable for newspapers to continue to develop competitive new media strategies that may become profitable in the future (Murschetz, 2014, p. 22).
News videos may be more expensive to produce, but they are also more attractive to advertisers than regular text-only content. There are still no ready models on how to implement advertising in the videos. Research shows that with the right length and amount, advertising is accepted by viewers, but there are also differences in the results. In 2007, British media industry leaders agreed that 30-second ads that are normal in TV were too long for online news videos. The *Sun* tried 30-second pre-rolls but many users left before the video started. Based on their own experience, they argued that eight- to 15-second ads seem to be the best length because many of the news videos are under five minutes (Thurman & Lupton, 2008, p. 449). In The *Sun’s* case, eight-second ads increased the number of news videos watched. Placement of the advertising is also important. Pre-rolled ads seem to work best; a mid-roll break with ads often results in users leaving the video. On the other hand, a study in 2013 came to the conclusion that the ideal number of ads, for both users and advertisers, was six 30-second ads per hour (Bellman et al., 2013, as cited in Payne, 2013). That means three minutes of advertising per hour in online content, compared with about 18 minutes per hour in TV. Only one ad per break also improved the product recall (Bellman et al., 2013, as cited in Payne, 2013). There are five years between the two studies, so that could be a reason why the results are different. But it is possible that the results are not that contradictory after all: even if the length is longer, it means that there will not be an ad before every video. And it is also important to remember that we are more used to video ads today than five years ago.

Advertisement revenues tied to online video grew 44 percent from 2012 to 2013 (Pew Research Center, 2014, p. 6). The increase of ads is not something that everybody likes. Many of the participants in Lagger, Lux, and Marques’ study reported that they are annoying (2011, p. 23). The finding is backed by the Ericsson Consumer Labs report where 30 percent of the respondents said that they were ready to pay to have ads removed (Ericsson Consumer Labs, 2014, p. 9). This shows that the ability to opt-in or opt-out from advertising is becoming more important and should be taken into consideration when making online video business strategies.

Consumption of online video

There are many factors that affect how end-users consume online video news. Users are more engaged with the content and not so much the medium; they will use the technology needed to watch the desired content (Livingston, 2004, p. 81). Young news consumers differ from their counterparts from earlier times. It is not so much about consumption of news; it is more about social links and identities (Uliyanova, Holm, & Nielsen, 2014, p. 18). Knowledge about news opens doors to social interaction that is more recognized that the news itself. With devices like mobile phones, tablets, and smart televisions, users can consume online video wherever they want and in the way they want. Newspapers must understand the advantages of each device and why users choose them in order to reach users effectively (Phalen & Ducey, 2012, p. 151).

The diversity of devices requires a delivery platform that is intended for high bandwidth video delivery, and that can be accessed on different devices and browsers. Of course, it is important that the users have the necessary tools for searching and navigating effectively (Murschetz, 2014, p. 21). Young users expect video platforms to respond immediately and do not want to wait. Similar or identical content on multiple platforms enables users to switch to another source of content or just leave the video if the quality does not meet their expectations (Lagger et al., 2012, p. 14).

To deliver the best possible experience for the user, it is important for newspapers to predict popularity to overcome network bottlenecks. Research shows that the number of views of a video on the second day gives a relatively accurate estimate of the following day’s popularity (Lagger et al., 2012, p. 5). This also shows that to be able to deliver online video successfully, newspapers must closely monitor what is viewed and understand what that means.
User-generated content (UGC), also known as user-created content, can have many different forms: participating in content production by uploading images and/or videos and commenting are the most popular. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) proposed three central characteristics for defining UGC: publication requirement, creative effort, and creation outside the professional routines and practices (OECD, 2007, p. 18). Engaging users in interactions with the content and other users helps newspapers understand what content is popular and why; it also opens a direct communications link for the users (Doyle, 2010, p. 8; Evens, 2014, p. 10).

Even if many users upload content to video sharing sites like YouTube, most users do not upload video to newspaper sites, although many newspapers encourage users to do so and often have mobile apps for that purpose. User-generated content clearly attracts viewer interest: in 2012, 39 percent of the top news videos on YouTube were posted by users (Pew Research Center, 2014, p. 9). For journalists, user-uploaded videos or images can play a critical role during breaking news and enable newspapers to be the first to report.

When a user makes the decision to start to publicly share opinions or reactions it shows that the user is interested and engaged with the content. This happens because of different reasons: for example, comments on user content are a way to get more information and user-user commentary demonstrates a need for social interaction (Ksiazek, Peer, & Lessard, 2014, p. 4).

According to Ihlström Eriksson and Åkersson’s study, readers perceive newspapers that support user-generated content as interested in their users and as having better contact with users (Ihlström Eriksson & Åkersson, 2013, p. 8).

Global comparisons
The vast majority of online news consumers still read, rather than watch, their online news. Twenty-eight percent of UK readers mostly consume news in text, but occasionally watch news videos (Reuters Institute, 2014, p. 66). There are also big differences between countries: in the United Kingdom, 46 percent prefer to read text, while in France the number is only 25 percent (p. 64). The report also shows that users value news clips that add context to the text story the most. This is an important aspect when newspapers decide what content to produce as video and what as text. The News Video on the Web report by Pew Research Center in 2014 shows that the consumption of online news videos in the United States rose from 26 percent in 2007 to 36 percent in 2013 (Pew Research Center, 2014, p. 5).

Table 1 shows the reasons why users do not watch news videos. It shows that a combination of technical problems and slow-loading videos is the second

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>GER</th>
<th>SPA</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I do not find them interesting</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not have time</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot get them to play properly</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take too long to load up/play</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather watch on a bigger screen</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to read articles than watch videos</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about cost of access (e.g. via mobile)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Reuters Institute Digital News Report, 2014, p. 66
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Supply behind adoption

What are users watching?

Research shows that the most evident reasons for watching online videos are searching for information, learning new things, and entertainment (Lagger et al., 2011, p. 31). YouTube and Facebook are the most-used platforms for consuming online videos (p. 11). The fact that Facebook is not a primary video platform makes this finding interesting; but Facebook does have a lot of users who post links to other video-sharing platforms.

To be able to successfully pull users into using online video, the creation and selection of content is critical as users are looking for popular and high-quality content (Murschetz, 2014, p. 19). Learning how users behave is as important as views and clicks. This information helps newspapers understand what to offer and how to get users to return. How users watch video content can be divided into two categories: planned viewing (when the user plans to watch something in particular), and unplanned (when they are just “killing” time). Planned viewing is mostly done on a larger screen, and unplanned mostly on mobile devices (Phalen & Ducey, 2012, p. 148).

In their study, “What Makes People Watch Online Videos: An Explorerary Study,” Lagger et al. used qualitative interviews (22 participants) and a quan-
myth that purports that video is less important and inferior in quality compared with traditional print journalism. Better strategies could help to dismantle such myths, but only if the management commit themselves to quality content. Journalists need to be told that there is no return to paper-only, but they also need to be told that there is still need for talented journalists, both online and in print. There is also a perception of online videos being related to increased production demands and a more fast-paced work environment. Finally, resistance is also due to anxiety because of lack of skills in online journalism. Most newspaper journalists, especially the more experienced ones, are still specialized in writing news stories intended for print. The lack of needed skills can be overcome by in-company training, recruitment, and, also, cross-departmental collaboration. News papers need to utilize their IT departments in a more efficient way. Recruiting more IT specialists has been a successful strategy at the Financial Times.

Despite the increasing popularity of online videos, the return on investment is still very low. Newspaper advertising sales have fallen dramatically in many newspaper markets. The possibility of compensating with revenues from video ads has certainly been a main driver in online video investments. There have been a lot of experiments with how to combine videos with ads, and how long the ads can be without annoying the viewer too much. The research-based suggestion for the ideal number of ads per hour is much lower than the equivalent figure in traditional TV.

Today, most newspaper revenue still comes from the printed paper and many users resist paying for online news. More research should be conducted regarding willingness to pay for online content. Technical problems and slow loading times are among the biggest reasons for not watching news videos, according to surveys. These problems should be easy to fix. Their very existence suggests, as a matter of fact, a lack of technological skills at a managerial level. Consumers increasingly watch videos via mobile phones, tablets, and smart televisions. The diversity of devices necessitates a delivery platform that is intended for high bandwidth video delivery, and that can be accessed on different devices and browsers.

To deliver the best possible experience for the user, it is crucial to predict popularity in order to overcome network bottlenecks. To be able to deliver online video successfully, newspapers must closely monitor what is viewed and understand what it means. Learning how users behave and what their preferences are is as important as views and clicks. Knowledge about user preferences is important when balancing videos and ads, as well as text and videos. Research shows that users particularly appreciate news videos that add context to written news stories.

On a general level, user engagement is a key issue, according to a great deal of research. Popular video...
platforms such as YouTube and Facebook rely on videos posted by the users themselves. In contrast, readers tend not to upload videos to newspaper websites, even if many newspapers encourage them to do so.

Our review points to the continuing challenges to making online news production profitable. The relative scarcity of studies during our research period indicates that media scholars at present do not regard online news videos as an essential part of the ongoing digital transition of newspapers. Neither do online news videos appear as something that could drastically improve the economic situation of the newspapers. Because of the lack of research there remain a lot of unsettled issues and questions in this research field.

Statistics and surveys tell us that online news videos are not the most popular videos on the web. Likewise, online newspapers cannot compete with the online video giants, such YouTube and Facebook. However, the popularity of online news videos is growing steadily, at least in the United States, and has been doing so for the last 10 years. For newspapers, this tendency is of course one important impetus to continue experimenting with and developing online news videos. The growing popularity of online videos in general will probably contribute to a long-term shift in newspaper consumption habits, from reading the newspaper to reading and “watching” the newspaper. Therefore, the importance of online news videos will continue to increase. This is why there is a need for more research in this area.

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