

Study on multimedial work in journalism (Feb. 2005)

EU-project TRIMEDIAL

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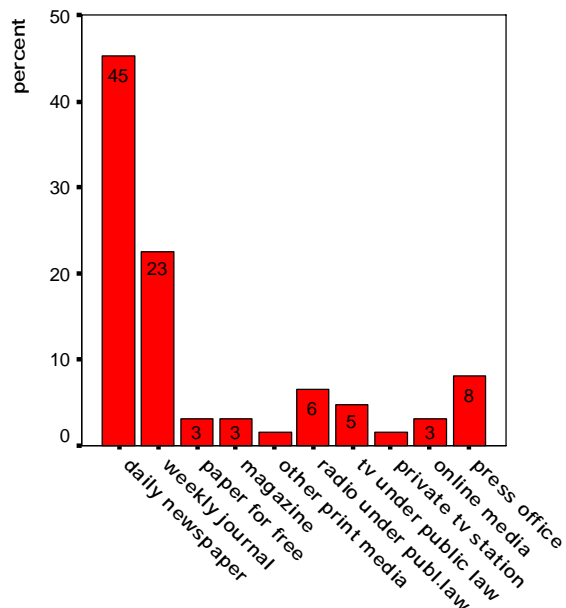
1. Description of the actual demand in Austria

The main empirically proven tendency in Austria is a trend towards a *bimedialisation* of mainly printmedial work in local media. This means that an increasing number of journalists deal with the *conversion of content from print to web*. The transformation of the whole journalistic working routines means challenges for further education.

In Austria, in the framework of a pilot study done between January and February 2005, 62 local journalists filled out an e-mail questionnaire consisting of six closed and open questions with some subquestions. The sample was generated with the help of the address list of the Austrian Trimedial partner institution, the "Kuratorium für Journalistenausbildung" (KfJ). In the address list of the KfJ, in the whole 2.005 Austrian journalists with valid e-mail addresses are listed (out of altogether 4.402). The total number of Austrian journalists is hardly to estimate – the Austrian "Journalisten-, Medien- und PR-Index" lists 11.100 people for 2004 (but in this sum the people doing PR work are included). So we could say that there are approximately between 8.000 and 9.000 journalists in Austria (what means that possibly every second journalist is listed in the KfJ database and what again means that every second Austrian journalist attended a course of KfJ at least one time). Out of the 2.005 journalists with e-mail from the database of KfJ, app. 1.000 local or regional journalists were selected for the Trimedial research – where either the mail address gives enough evidence of the locality or regionality of the medium the journalist works for or where the medium is explicitly listed. The spectrum ranges from local mutations of Austria's largest tabloid daily, the "Neue Kronen Zeitung", to very small and local papers like the "Kitzbüheler Anzeiger". (If you select local media from all media, you always get a kind of 'print bias'.)

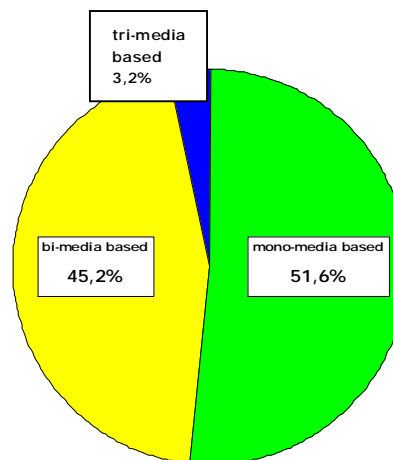
Out of these 1.000 local or regional journalists, a random sample of 276 local or regional journalists working for all media channels (including radio, TV and web) was created. The return rate of 62 journalists (22.5 percent) was very satisfying – for the research team this also stands as an indicator that Austrian journalists are interested in the topic of tri-, cross- or multimedial work.

Concerning the technical kind of media channel the journalist primary works for, we had the following spreading:



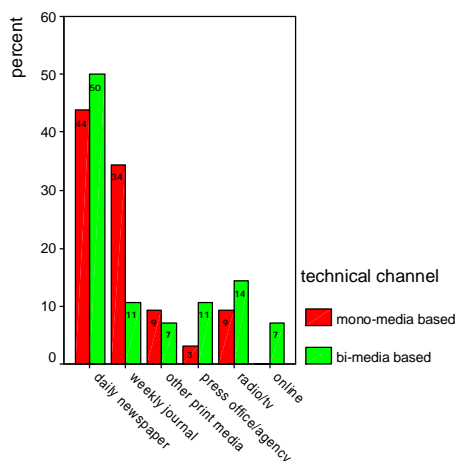
45% of the journalists of the sample work for dailies. This 'bias' is – as mentioned above – caused by the selection of local and regional journalists. Normally, there are only about 25 percent journalists working for dailies (for Austria see Weber 2000, 114).

The main result of the Austrian Trimedial survey is the following: **Already about 45 percent of the journalists do bimедial work.** This clearly indicates that in fact there is a big demand for bi-, tri- and crossmedial training offers.



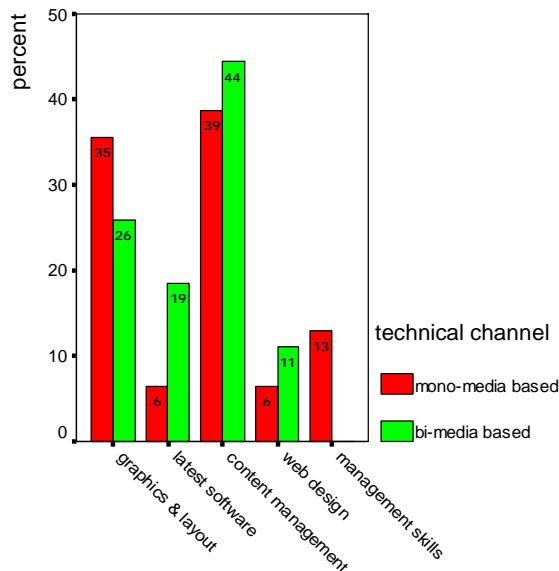
The fact that already nearly every second local or regional journalist in Austria does at least bimедial work was also covered by several Austrian media interested in the Trimedial research results.¹ In our definition, 'mono-media based' means that the journalistic output of the concerning person is released in *one* technical media channel only (e.g. exclusively print *or* radio *or* TV). 'Bi-media based' means that the journalistic output is released in *two* technical media channels with or without mutation (e.g. the person works for a print *and* a web edition, for radio news *and* internet news on the radio's website etc.).

Our next research focus was the question where these once indicated bimедial journalists work. The result is that there are *no significant* differences. But nevertheless in dailies, monomedial and bimедial journalists balance each other (in absolute numbers), in weeklies there are still far more monomedial journalists.



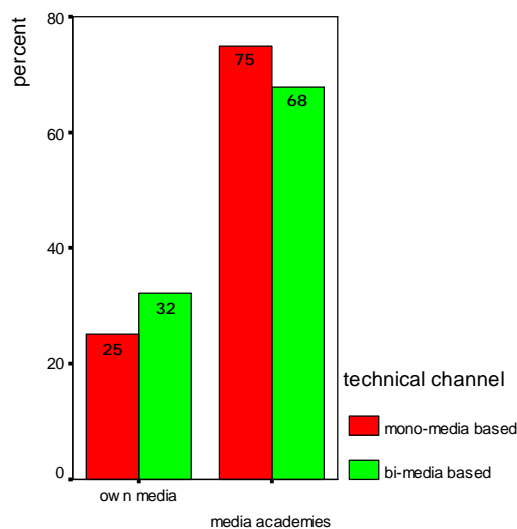
¹ The press coverage of the Austrian Trimedial study (all media mentioning the EU-funded project context) was: Austria Press agency (APA), Austrian's major quality daily "Der Standard" (<http://derstandard.at/?url=?id=1943574>), the official daily "Wiener Zeitung" (<http://www.wienerzeitung.at/frameless/kultur.htm?ID=M10&Menu=224672>) and the Austria-based German online portal for journalists www.newsroom.de (<http://www.newsroom.de/news/display/index.cfm?id=276741>).

More interesting is the question of the shape of bimedial work. The results show a clear tendency: The majority of bi-media based journalists has to do with *the transformation of print media to online media*. This focus is linked to our next result – *the central question of the current deficits in further journalism education and the wants and needs in the future*:



If we look at this diagram, we clearly see that *competence in content management systems seems to be the most desired goal for Austrian journalists* concerning their wishes for further education. *Content management systems* seem to be the 'hottest topic', and monomedial journalists are also very much interested in the improvement of their competences in *graphic design*.

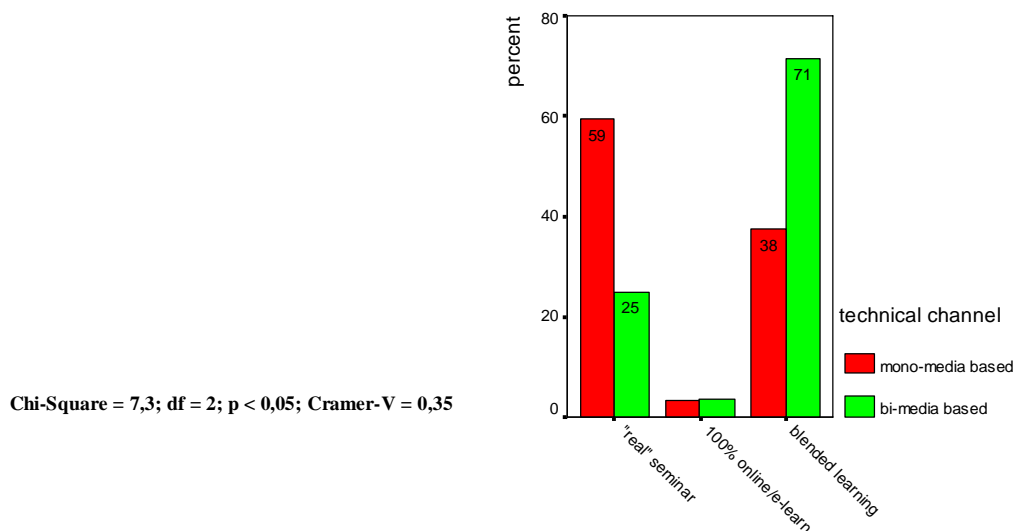
We further asked the journalists about the ideal institution which should offer the desired further educational trainings. The interesting result is that universities and universities of applied sciences aren't seen as candidates to do this job:



The rather astonishing result is the fact that on the questionnaire, there were three categories ("the media you work for which engages external trainers"; "media academies & journalism

schools" and "universities (of applied sciences)", but: *Nobody* out of 60 persons wants the universities to do this task!

We come to our last quantitative result: The question was how this further education should be organised: as 100% e-learning or on line course, as a blended learning module or as a face-to-face-course in an 'old-fashioned' manner. The result was that nearly nobody wants 100% online tutorials in a completely self-organised way – blended learning (= the mixture of e-learning and 'real' attendance) is the future!



So what are the main results of the Austrian national research on the actual demand for trimedial training offerings?

- Ø **'Real' trimedial work – covering print media, radio/TV and the net – is still an exception and can possibly mainly be found by some freelancers offering their ideas and stories to many media and adapting them for all media channels.**
- Ø **But already about 50% of the journalists at least do *bimedial* work. In Austria, in the moment this mainly means *converting print articles to the web* (doing an on line edition of a printed media), but of course also converting radio or TV reports to the web.**
- Ø **Bimedial working journalists see their lack of competence in the moment in the field of *content management systems* and in all areas connected to on line journalism.**
- Ø **Connected to the reality of bimedial work, Austrian journalists want to know more about the *possible synergies and rivalries between print and on line media*, between 'classical' and net-based media (results of the open qualitative questions). In this field, this is also a challenge for media science.**
- Ø **Austrian journalists also want to broaden their horizon – they wish profound *comparisons to European and international media* (again result of open questions).**
- Ø **So the main lacks for Austrian journalists are bimedial competence and a European/international horizon in their work. *Bimedialisation* and '*europisation*' seem to be the major empirical facts to which the Trimedial project reacts.**

2. Offers of training in Austria

In Austria – as probably in every other (European) country – there are at least three logical ways into the journalistic career:

- 1) The *autodidactic way* which somehow is connected to the notion of journalism as 'giftedness' or 'genius': This way empirically seems to be decreasing, but possibly the people claiming to be (completely) autodidactic journalists are not well examined yet.
- 2) The *academic way* into journalism: This means that you study journalism on a university or on a university of applied sciences. In Austria, at the 'classical' universities the study of journalism is always linked to media and/or communication science, whereas at the younger universities of applied sciences you can study journalism alone or also in combination with media management and other core themes.
- 3) The *outer-academic way* into journalism: This means that you learn the job by attending courses at outer-academic journalism training institutions. The biggest institution in Austria founded in 1978 is the 'Kuratorium für Journalistenausbildung' (KfJ).

Of course, this differentiation is a theoretical-logical one: In empirical reality, you can find all three ways into journalism combined in one single person: One can feel 'gifted' and start autodidactic writing, then begin to study mass communication science and add to this education some courses or the journalism college at the KfJ.

In the following, the courses of KfJ are described in the subchapters 2.2 und 2.3 because they are mainly *further* training offers for journalists which are already working in the field.

2.1 Vocational cross-media training

This means that the vocational training for the journalistic profession in Austria is done mainly by the universities. We can differentiate between two kinds of universities:

- 1) *The 'old' or 'classical' universities where you can study mass communication science or media science or communication science in the framework of humanities.* In Austria, there are three possibilities to do that: One can study "Publizistik- und Kommunikationswissenschaft" in Vienna, "Kommunikationswissenschaft" in Salzburg or "Publizistik- und Kommunikationswissenschaft" in Klagenfurt. To start with the smallest diploma study of all three, with Klagenfurt, we have to mention that there you can't find an explicit journalistic education offer. Therefore, there were only two mentionable courses in the summer of 2003 in the context of cross-media training: A course called "web-content" and another course called "print-design". The situation is rather different in Salzburg: There, the students are able to specialise for journalism. At the institute of communication science at the University of Salzburg, there are many cross-media offerings within that context (list since winter 2003):

- Ø "Introduction into Multimedia"
- Ø "On line journalism"
- Ø "Introduction into web design"
- Ø "Economy of the internet"
- Ø "PR work for the internet"
- Ø "Web analysis: Human-Computer-Interaction (HCI)"
- Ø "Multimedial practical course: Web conception/web production"
- Ø "E-Policy"
- Ø "Multimedial design"
- Ø "Media companies online"

- Ø "Digital business communication"
- Ø "Webrelations"
- Ø "The language of the internet"
- Ø "Online journalism – new media, rather old?"

The curriculum in Salzburg may stand as an innovative prototype for academic teaching under the conditions of new media and media transformations: The curriculum seems to fulfil the task of multimedial qualification for becoming journalists, although we have to mention that there is no explicit *trimedial* journalistic practical course so far.

2) *The universities of applied sciences are rather new in the Austrian academic landscape (e.g. compared to Germany or other European countries).* Several universities of applied sciences also offer studies in journalism. Some examples:

- Ø The Danube University Krems (www.donau-uni.ac.at/journalismus) offers a master program called "quality journalism" which is only three semesters long and organised as an in-service training. The program intends to stand "*for an integrated trimedial education in journalism*" (quote from information folder). The master program "quality journalism" is very internationally on both sides – regarding the students and the teachers. In the whole "international journalism centre" (which also features other programs in the fields of PR and management development), there were more than 250 alumni from 24 nations worldwide within the first ten years of the existence of the institution.
- Ø The FHW Wien (<http://www.fhw.ac.at/>) features a course of studies called "journalism", the FH Graz offers a program called "journalism and business communication" and also the FH St. Pölten runs a course called "media management". – So in the moment, there are many ways into journalism offered by the new universities of applied sciences in Austria. And in the moment it is also not sure if the market will need all these journalists graduating from the FHWs. Also the question of the quality of the programs and their evaluation is open.

So we can summarize that in Austria vocational cross-media training in journalism is mainly done at the core study "journalism" at the University of Salzburg and at some universities of applied sciences – mainly at the master program "quality journalism" at Danube University Krems and at the FHW Wien (course of studies "journalism"). Nevertheless, none of these institutions offers so far an explicit module in *trimedial* working.

2.2 Further training (short courses)

In this context, the "Kuratorium für Journalistenausbildung" (*KfJ*) is a bit different. Founded in 1978², this first and still biggest Austrian institution for journalistic (further) training offers already stands for a quite long and interesting history in the context of its occupation with new media. If we look back in history, we see that the first three-days-course called "Elektronik in der Zeitungsredaktion" ("Electronic production in newspaper editorial offices") was organised in 1979 (!). It dealt with integrated text management systems and BTX. A specialised seminar on cable TV and BTX was also offered in 1979 and somehow stands for the beginning of *KfJ*'s occupation with new media.

In March of 1992, a basic training for journalism in Austria was established by the *KfJ*: The "Österreichisches Journalisten Kolleg". It is a bottom-up program lasting several months, so it is described in detail in 2.3. Austria's *KfJ* was also pioneering in organising courses for journalism in the age of the beginning emergence of the internet: In September of 1995, the

² The first printmedial seminars already took place in 1974.

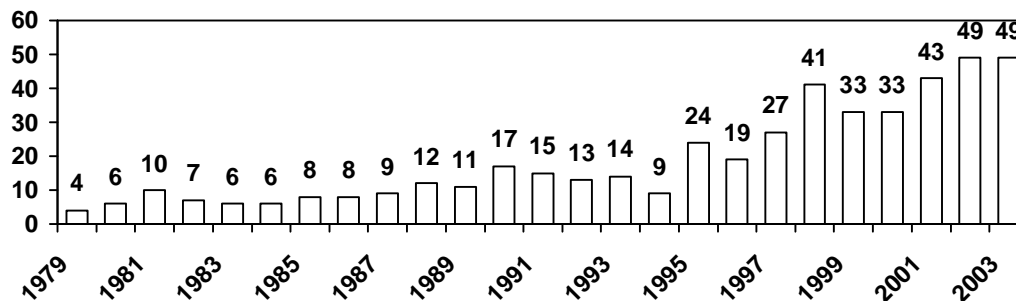
first seminar "internet for journalists" was done. The workshop on internet and data-highway was planned for 20 people, but more than forty registered – the interest was enormous. So the KfJ repeated the workshop since 1995 several times. In collaboration with APA (Austrian Press Agency), ongoing from 1997 special workshops for recherche on the internet were organised.

The KfJ/Austrian Media Academy started with an explicit "online journalism" course in the spring of 1998. The "internet for journalists" workshop offer was extended and in 2000 amended by a special two-days-workshop called "Doing text for the internet". Until today, there are many courses and workshops connected to online and web journalism – the chronological list reads as follows:

- Ø 1979: "Electronic production in newspaper editorial offices" (3 days)
- Ø 1979: "Cable TV and BTX" (3 days)
- Ø Ongoing occupation with new media since then
- Ø Since 1992: "Austrian journalism college", see details in 2.3
- Ø Since 1995: "Internet for Journalists" (1 day)
- Ø 1996: "Trends in European Newspaper Design" (Austrian participation)
- Ø Since 1997: Specialised workshops for internet and internet recherche in collaboration with APA
- Ø Since 1998: "Online-Journalism" as a new pillar of the media academy of KfJ, permanent workshops lasting 1 day
- Ø Since 2000: "Doing text for the internet" (2 days) and many other offerings (digital imaging, online search...)

In the near future, regarding to the Trimedial results of the current deficits of Austrian journalists, the cross-medial and technical course program should be expanded.³ Concerning to its fast reaction to latest technological innovations, the KfJ seminars and courses stand as the premier Austrian best practice example for multimedial further training. All listed workshops stand as prototypes for short and efficient courses lasting from one day to three days.

The total number of courses and workshops offered by the KfJ is increasing since 1979, as the following diagram shows:



For further information on the KfJ see the web document "Wie wird man Journalist in Österreich?" ["How to become a journalist in Austria"; written by Dr. Meinrad Rahofer] at <http://www.kfj.at/kfjjour.htm>, also see Rahofer a.o. 2004.

In the future, comparative European and international journalism research (e.g. Löffelholz a.o.

³ For the context also see other research results concerning journalism and content industry (Janssen/Paukens 2003), the emergence and possible future of online journalism (Neuberger 2003) and cross-media journalism (Neuberger 2005). – For an overview of current trends in an interview form see Pörksen 2005.

2004) will become more important. The results of these surveys and monitoring projects should again have an effect on the construction of an adaptive and innovative curriculum in journalism research. The insight should be that best practice examples can always be found worldwide, as e.g. the "World Newspaper Congress" demonstrates.

2.3 Further training (longer courses)

A much more longer and deep-going training is the "Österreichisches Journalisten Kolleg" (Austrian journalism college) which was founded in 1992. It was the first comprehensive journalism education program in Europe and evaluated as the "best journalism training in the southern german-speaking region". Until today, it guarantees a practical education for Austrian journalists with a trimedial approach. In the first years, the third pillar was not online journalism, but journalism in press agencies. But the theoretical framework was trimedial from the beginning (print, radio/TV and agency; later: print, radio/TV and web).⁴ The complex schedule of the college can be found at <http://www.kfj.at/kolleg.htm>. The Austrian journalism college offered by KfJ is the only further education training for several months. Divided in four parts with each part three weeks long, people get a profound and complex introduction into journalism. The college is attended by people who already started to work, by people wanting to improve their abilities or to 'update' them, but also by students from the institutes of media and communication science in Vienna and Salzburg. A *trimedial online project* is the goal and final product of the college, online projects are realised within the college since 1998 (see the complete archive at the start page <http://www.kfj.at/>). Online journalism and the design of a website are of course integrated modules in the college. More than 260 people graduated from the Austrian journalism college since 1992. The comprehensive schedule marks the most convincing Austrian best practice example for longer further training. We suggest that the Trimedial course that should be established should at least be inspired by the success of the college at least in respect of the adequate organisation and the implementation of quality standards set by the KfJ.

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⁴ KfJ was also pioneering in Europe with *train-the-trainer seminars* for journalistic instructors which are held regularly since 1992.