

Childproofing the new formats

[lse blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2015/10/19/childproofing-the-new-formats/](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2015/10/19/childproofing-the-new-formats/)

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Polis/EBU newsroom fellow **Kritisn Granbo** from Norway will be with Polis for the month of October to research the topic of how the way we report news for children is changing. For more information on this research project contact Kristin via [@KGranbo](https://twitter.com/KGranbo)



How can we make children's news with the same criteria when the terms have changed?

Keeping up with the audience

Keeping up with a middle aged audience is absolutely doable. They have just logged on to Facebook, and (most) are milestones behind media professionals in terms of using social media to keep updated.

Maintaining relevance amongst children and young people is a whole other story. They are likely to have moved on once we have figured out what the next big thing is.

Nevertheless journalists are reforming in order to show their presence wherever their audience may be.



Nordmenn har gitt 30 millioner



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♥ 2 530 likerklikk

nrksupernytt Norske hjelpeorganisasjoner har fått inn nær 30 millioner kroner fra gavmilde nordmenn de siste dagene. Pengene skal brukes på å hjelpe



Competing with new formats

Once upon a time, and not really that long ago, news for children came only in the shape of a TV bulletin including stories which had been carefully selected and shaped to inform young viewers in words they could understand and which would dampen their fear around hard news and current events.

But children have moved on from their TV sets, and so should we, if we want them to pay attention.

In my current research into changes in children's news reporting, journalists were asked what other news sources they see as alternatives for their audience (children).

Nearly all of them said Instagram (93%), 73% said Snapchat, while 63% meant that Facebook was a competitive source of news for children.

News on Instagram and Snapchat

Some children's news programmes around Europe are now taking this information seriously and offering news on new platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat.

Norwegian Broadcasting Corporations' Supernytt, for example, which is aimed at 8-12 year olds, began posting news on Instagram one year ago. They now have nearly 34.000 followers.

Seeing that there are currently 300.000 children in the target audience in Norway, this means one in every ten child follows these news updates on Instagram (we do not, however, know that all followers are in this age group, even though that is the target audience for the account).

A Snapchat account has also been set up in recent months, which is being run by the journalists, where one of the presenters show/present and talk about one big news story of that day.

The screenshot shows the Instagram profile of NRKSUPERNYTT. At the top, the phone status bar displays 'O2-UK' with signal strength, '12.52' as the time, and '73 %' with a battery icon. The profile header 'NRKSUPERNYTT' is centered above a blue navigation bar with a back arrow, three dots, and a green 'FØLGER' (Follow) button with a checkmark. The profile picture is a circular logo for 'nrk super' featuring a globe and the word 'super'. Below the profile are the statistics: 634 posts, 33,8k followers, and 55 following. The bio reads: 'Nyheter fra NRK Supernytt på Instagram. Vi er også på tv, nett og snap.' with the website 'nrksuper.no/supernytt'. The main feed shows nine news stories with images and captions in Norwegian.

NRK Supernytt
Nyheter fra NRK Supernytt på Instagram. Vi er også på tv, nett og snap.
nrksuper.no/supernytt

LSK gikk videre i Champions League

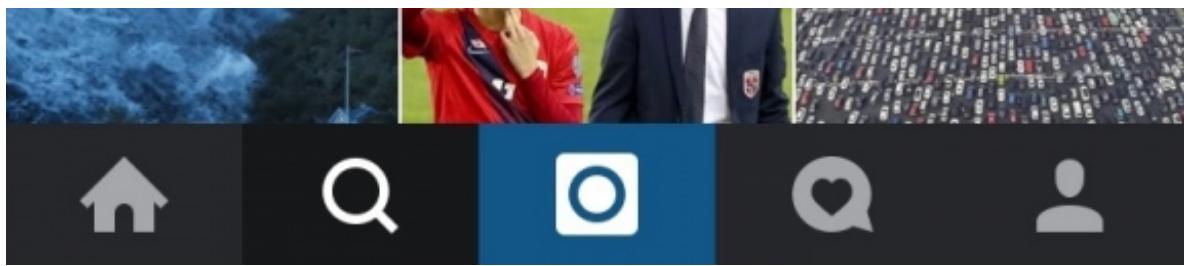
Flyktninger sykler til Norge fra Russland

Fant 700 år gammel ring i gjørma

Vant hurtigsjakk-VM

Sorg og sinne blant folk i Tyrkia

Surfetalent (14) er klar for VM



Same criteria, new challenges

These two platforms are still being tried and tested and is constantly changing, 12 months on, because how do you compress a minute and a half long TV story into a ten seconds long “snap story”? Or how do you say what you would normally say in five paragraphs online, in just a picture and three words on Instagram? There is no quick fix to those questions.

Short formats in bite size servings, easily accessible and continuously updated is naturally a preferred presentation of the news, for adults and children alike (with a short attention span). But how do we ensure that these new formats maintain the same quality as the one minute thirty second TV story?

How do we explain the news in words children understand, with information that gives context to the events of the world, without frightening, but which enlightens them and inspire them to keep watching and listening?

As one journalist in my survey put it: “Children’s news program must be very adaptable”.

No doubt about it, but as the formats get shorter and information is being left out; does the line between children and adult news get blurry? And so how can we best offer news specifically tailored for children on these new platforms and these new formats?

@KGranbo

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