The end of broadcast news?

What the changing world of news consumption means for how today’s media organisations produce news
The new news in news

News production is changing and changing fast.

While television remains extremely relevant and highly impactful, people now turn to the internet first for breaking news. This is having a significant effect on how news organisations create and develop their stories.

Fundamentally, it means they must integrate an increasing number of tools, sources and approaches to ensure they get their stories where they need to be fast.
Digital or dead

The reality today is that news breaks first on social media. The initial exposure to a story will come from whoever is on the scene, armed with a smartphone. It means that today’s audiences no longer primarily look to television to find out what’s happening.

As a result, journalists must now take an internet-first approach, creating stories for digital media and then developing them for broadcast later (where people come for greater analysis). And news organisations must become ever more customer-focused, making information available however and whenever audiences want it.

Editorial control, however, remains critical. Editors must add exceptional insight and relevant context if they’re to maintain their well-earned status and brand reputation. However, they now need to do this faster, in an ever-noisier environment.

The need for speed

In the online-driven world, the speed you produce stories is key. If you’re not fast, you’re simply not in the game.

It’s why so many news producers are adopting fully connected wireless cameras. It’s why they’re using a wider range of digital and social tools to publish stories. And it’s why journalists need to be able to do more with less, faster than ever before.

Of course, the challenge lies in running a news operation tuned for rapid delivery. If journalists have to jump from system to system to do their best work, they will always struggle to deliver at speed.

In this guide, we’re going to explore the key challenges faced by today’s news producers. We’ll examine what these seismic changes mean for the news business. And we’ll look at how the latest technology can help you do more, in more places, in less time.

“Organisations must integrate an increasing number of tools, sources and approaches to ensure they get their stories where they need to be fast.”
The challenge lies in running a news operation tuned for speed of delivery in an always-on digital world.
Developing an internet-first, multi-channel news operation has many challenges. While you may know you need to evolve the way you currently work, the number of embedded legacy systems and processes make real change difficult.

Core to the problem is that some parts of the picture will remain largely fixed while others will be changing rapidly.

On the fixed side of the equation, you’ll already have a robust newsroom computer system (NRCS) at the heart of your operation. As an intrinsic part of how journalists produce content every day, it’s unlikely you’ll want to change it anytime soon.

You’ll also have a number of critical production systems in place – from media asset management and editing through to CG and playout. These are core to your everyday news operation.

But what about the more changeable end of the business?
New opportunities, new technologies, new challenges

Today, you’re likely to add new capabilities to your existing systems on a regular basis.

For example, you may need to evolve and update systems to cover new aspects of social media and user generated content (UGC).

With the advances in production technology, you may want to integrate innovations such as next-generation wireless cameras.

You will also need to be able to scale your capabilities up and down to meet changes in the news cycle (not to mention the unexpected events that can derail the very best laid plans).

And, of course, you’ll need to ensure everything is robust, resilient and remains securely protected against ever-changing threats.

The big questions for today’s news producers

This raises three critical questions:

01
How can you balance the fixed with the flexible?

02
How do you achieve this in a world prone to sudden change?

03
And, how will you do it all and still remain within your (probably shrinking) budget?
You will need to be able to scale your capabilities up and down to meet changes in the news cycle (not to mention the unexpected events that can derail the very best laid plans).
Delivering the future of news in the real world

As with any fast-paced, technology-driven market, there can be a tendency towards focusing on grand long-term visions. You see this in every conference as speakers deliver prophesies on everything from the death of news altogether to the need for all stories to be 140 characters or less.

While it’s good to have a clear idea of what the long term may look like, it is just as important to be able to deal with real and present issues right now.

For example, how can you make the NRCS the true hub of the newsroom? How do you stop building silos and achieve the kind of integration you really need (without ripping out everything you’ve already got)? And how can you establish high-performance workflows for an always-on, internet-first world?

From where we are right now, it’s clear: News production environments within a post-broadcast world will need to deliver on a number of key criteria.
Integrating all systems seamlessly under the NRCS

No journalist has the time to jump from one standalone system to another just because they’re working on a story requiring five tweets, a Facebook update, a web article, and a short video package.

To deliver, journalists must be able to access everything they need from within the core NRCS. It shouldn’t matter whether raw content is coming from the wires, a news crew or a member of the public with a smartphone. Likewise, they should be able to quickly produce and publish multiple news elements across multiple media, all from within the NRCS, automating processes wherever possible.

Embedding flexibility into systems and resources

To deal with the unpredictability of modern news, producers must be able to access more capacity on demand – adding new resources at the click of a button (and removing them when not required).

The demand to deliver more information to more places, faster means news organisations will increasingly need to learn key lessons from how major corporations use IT. This will mean seamlessly integrating with central datacentre resources (no matter whether these are on-premise, remotely located or a hybrid of the two).

Gaining a true picture of news operation performance

To thrive in an unpredictable future, today’s news operations need to have a clear picture of exactly how their systems, assets and workflows are performing. This will demand a new focus on Media Operations Management within the news environment.

Essentially, this approach means gaining far greater visibility of the underlying process of news production. This allows you to measure and track key aspects of how your organisation creates and delivers news content. Finally, it enables you to automate certain core processes to deliver higher quality output, faster, for less.

While there are many things to think about, we suggest there are three areas you should begin focusing on right now:

01
Integrating all systems seamlessly under the NRCS

02
Embedding flexibility into systems and resources

03
Gaining a true picture of news operation performance
The good news is that this is not simply a concept, it’s achievable right now.
Today, no news organisation can be complacent about the future. The signs are clear and unambiguous.

Successful news producers will be those that begin to lay solid foundations, right now.

We can help.

Let us show you how to cost-effectively evolve your operations without compromising your ability to deliver.

Our Media Backbone Hive solution allows you to build on the existing capabilities of your current NRCS. It enables you to expand and integrate content and systems in ways that make sense for how you operate in the real world. With Hive, you can allow journalists to focus on what really matters – reporting the story.

So, rather than being the end of broadcast news, welcome to a new beginning for next-generation news production.

Contact us at www.pro.sony.eu/contactus to arrange an initial discussion.
Hype is everywhere. Technology companies the world over endlessly talk up the next big thing – the solution that will solve all your problems. But all too often, these visions of the future are surrounded by ifs. If you standardise all your kit on their platform. If you rip and replace everything you have. If you retrain all your people.

Let’s face it, this isn’t going to happen – not in the real world the rest of us live in. In the real world, you need systems from multiple manufacturers to work seamlessly together. You need to extract every last penny out of the kit you already have and enable your people to do their best work, every time. And, today, you simply don’t have the luxury of downtime.

That’s why every single Sony Professional solution is built from the ground up to meet the challenges of the real world you and your people work in every single day.