

We're not the only ones undergoing this change...

Here's an ad for an education reporter circa 1998

- Seeking an **aggressive, experienced** reporter to cover higher education
- Required / Desired
 - At least two years of daily newspaper experience required
 - Computer assisted reporting experience recommended

An ad for an education reporter circa 2008

- Seeking an **ambitious, innovative** education reporter
- Responsible for:
 - meeting deadlines with copy that is clean of spelling and grammatical errors
 - spotting trends and uncovering and writing stories about school system concerns
 - unearthing, investigating and executing original story ideas in consultation with the city editor
 - placing the highest emphasis on accuracy
 - contributing online content to the Web site including news updates and shooting and producing online video.

An ad for an “editor / producer” in Sandusky Ohio

Can you lay out a print page using InDesign?

Have you ever built a Web site, or at least posted to one?

How do you feel about making slideshows and editing short videos?

All these challenges and more could be yours if you join our Design Department, a.k.a. Design Desk, a.k.a. Copy Desk, a.k.a. online production desk.

In the rapidly changing news business we're not entirely certain what to call the job, but your duties will include building print pages, updating a Web site and pulling together materials for a variety of special presentations through several channels.

You'll need to have some basic skills and then be willing for us to train you on the rest, we don't think anyone knows all of this stuff yet. You'll need to be able to paginate daily pages and work in a multi-media environment.

An ad for a sports editor for in Beaumont

Candidates must have imagination, strong leadership skills and an understanding of alternative story forms, multimedia and visuals..

They will be responsible for overseeing reporters and contributing ideas and content to the website, including updating the local sports database and providing video to the site.

Ideal candidate will have good communication, organization and leadership skills; multimedia experience and mindset; the ability to multi-task and stay organized in a fast-paced environment; a collaborative management style with the ability to effectively manage reporters of diverse skills and personalities; and an ability to size up readers' needs and a desire to get to know the community and the people in it.

From an ad for a “web savvy reporter” in Sioux City...

The right candidate will be able to handle breaking news and post it to the web, act as a vigilant watchdog for our readers' interests and, of course, be able to tell a good story. Experience with alternative story forms and multimedia tools, specifically video, are a significant plus. Our next reporters must understand journalism is changing rapidly and have the skills to adapt.

Ad for an entertainment reporter in Des Moines:

This new position will take advantage of the Register's digital tools to deliver information quickly to the DesMoinesRegister.com audience in bold and creative ways – essentially helping people to get the most out of their free time. The beat will focus on the Des Moines metro's array of restaurants, major events, music, family fun and more. The reporter in the course of a week will tackle a variety of assignments: build online guides for events and holidays; ensure a steady flow of entertainment news updates for various online and print products; coordinate local reader crews to report on the entertainment scene; and serve as a host of entertainment content on DesMoinesRegister.com.

Two to three years of journalism experience is preferred, whether in newspapers or entertainment coverage for an equivalent media company. Multimedia skills such as videography are preferred but not essential; candidates at least need to be eager to learn multimedia and incorporate it into the job.

WHAT WOULD THE JOB AD FOR THE LIBRARIAN BE? WHICH OF THOSE LISTED IN THESE ADS COULD YOU DO? (And what about that term... librarian? On the journalismjobs.com site – there are categories for factchecker, archivist, researcher...but not librarian.

In 1999 there was a panel on the evolving role of the news librarian. Ginny Everett wrote about it in News Library News that summer. She summarized the key questions the panel came up with:

- Do we blow up the library and put our resources, including ourselves, in the newsroom?

- Are we journalists, librarians or both? (Out of this discussion, a member of the audience posed one of the most interesting questions of the conference. We may think of ourselves as journalists, but do our reporters and editors see us that way?)
- Which leads us to marketing - to the newsroom and beyond. What is our focus? Are we entrepreneurs - selling our expertise to both our internal and external markets?
- Is part of our value to our organizations contributing to the bottom line? (In the interest of full disclosure, I say an emphatic Yes on this point.)
- What kinds of background and experience are most relevant? Do we need an M.L.S., an M.B.A., a journalism degree?

Are these even the right questions anymore?

I want to share with you some of the insights I got while reading up for this discussion:

In an article in Progressive Librarian in the summer of 1997, called The End of Information and the Future of Libraries, Phil Agre made a compelling argument. He said, "I want to suggest that information might be an obsolete concept." He went on to explain the notion of "information professionalism" and why that might also be outmoded... <read the sections>

In an article in Webology in June 2006, titled Library 2.0 Theory: Web 2.0 and Its implications for Libraries Jack Maness discusses how some of the web 2.0 applications have and will change libraries: he says Library 2.0 would have these four essential elements: <read the elements>

He goes on to discuss how instant messaging, streaming media, social networks, tagging, rss feeds, and mashups can be used in libraries...

It is his conclusion that is most compelling for us as we consider the future of news libraries...

"We should focus on developing not "secured inventory systems but rather collaborative discovery systems." Rather than creating systems and services for patrons, librarians will enable users to create them for themselves. A profession steeped in decades of a culture of control and predictability will need to continue moving toward embracing facilitation and ambiguity."

Library 2.0 is not about searching, but finding; not about access, but sharing. Library 2.0 recognizes that human beings do not seek and utilize information as individuals, but as communities.

As Agre was saying...it's about fostering and engaging the collective cognition of communities.

NOW LET'S LOOK AT YOUR FUTURE VISIONS...

Librarian as Communitarian

COLLECTIVE COGNITION OF THE JOURNALISM COMMUNITY – both within and outside your newsroom

- Systems to support the creation, circulation, and transformation of particular genre of materials.
 - What are those genre? List them...
- Create systems of shared thinking
- F2F and Remote assistance
- Distributed alliances of librarians to support specific distributed communities

Librarian as Historian

Note here, not archivist. Help with the writing of history for context...for newsroom and news consumer.

Librarian as Story Context Coordinator

Who is better suited to provide the sidebar / supplemental links for key stories and for ongoing coverage packages.

Librarian as Usability Coordinator

They need help in figuring out if their new story designs or website functions are working well. Be the one to coordinate quick usability tests and report on what works, or doesn't.

Librarian as Infotools Trainer

It's not just about how to search, it's how to manage your personal information tools. Do reporters know how to set up a personal Google page, set up and manage alerts, create a Google custom search site, use personal content organizers like Iterasi.

Knight News Challenge – using technology to inform and connect communities... what could the library community come up with?

KATHY!! We should look at Association of College and Research Libraries Instruction Section...database of tutorials – Peer Reviewed Instructional Materials Online (PRIMO) to see if we can add / update anything in the site.

