

Quizzes and Polls – Is this trend in journalism here to stay?

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By Summer School student Yunfei Cheng on a talk by Telegraph Trending Journalist Helena Horton

In the context of ever-shifting digital tools and trends, journalists need to adapt their content and formats to attract larger audiences and increase online traffic.

For [Helena Horton](#), Trending Journalist at The Telegraph, one example of innovation comes in the form of online quizzes or polls that engage with a topical subject and keep readers on the site for longer.

A key part of Horton's role involves predicting trends in news formats and trying out new ways of engaging readers. She uses Twitter and Facebook as well as various analytics tools such as Spike by NewsWhip to dig up news. She also uses Google Trends and looks out for social media angles on the big mainstream news stories.

Many of Horton's quizzes have an educational aspect, often adding to reader's understanding of a key political issue as well as entertaining. Ahead of the EU referendum, the Telegraph carried out an online quiz testing readers' knowledge of key facts. When they answered a question wrong, they would be quickly shown the right answer.



If people get most of their answers right, there was a higher probability that they would share it on social media.

There are some potential pitfalls to this approach- the polls users would not represent a true cross-section of society although they might appear to reflect public opinion.

Quizzes and polls are innovative ways to engage readers for today's journalism but more consideration should be given when employing them on the websites going forward. No one can predict how long this new format will last. After all, the internet is a transforming technology and digital tools are in the ascendant.

This article by Polis Summer School student Yunfei Cheng.

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