Are email newsletters the future for digital journalism?

A new report by Polis/ Journalistfonden fellow Charlotte Fagerlund asks whether overlooking the ‘old’ technology of email is a missed opportunity for news organisations looking for ways to build their online audience.

The report, Back the Future- Email Newsletters as a Digital Channel for Journalism by Swedish journalist Charlotte Fagerlund and supported by Swedish Journalistfonden, offers a snapshot of news organisations who are currently using newsletter emails effectively and identifies pitfalls and best practice.

It shows how:

- Journalists today have a multitude of ways to get their work to the audience and there has never been more choice for the consumer and so the competition for their attention has never been more intense.

- Email is used more than social media on smart phones by a majority of people so there is still potential growth in this area for journalists to improve reach.

- How you design and distribute your newsletter is vital and the report offers some excellent strategic and detailed insights.

- Market saturation may be on the horizon but there is still room to grow demand from audiences, particularly in the UK

Even if you are not considering using newsletters the report is a fascinating example of how we need to keep thinking with open minds about the tools of the networked journalist’s trade. As the digital ecology evolves it sometimes pays to go back to basics and adapt relatively old ideas for new times.

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