

Can We Save Journalism? (Should we?) YLE seminar live

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Thinking Media in Helsinki

I am in Helsinki for a conference on the future of public service

media. You can watch an excellent video podcast of the talk [here](#).

First I had lunch with the boss of the Finnish version of the BBC, YLE, Mikael Jungner. He's a young ex-Microsoft executive who claims to be three months ahead of the BBC on new media.

He has already put their archive online, for example, and is keen to develop more partnerships with the public and other media organisations.

He has also got into hot water over an investigation into the Finnish PM, so perhaps more like the BBC than you think.

Jungner likes the idea that I put to him that public and private sector media either works together or dies together. But culture and politics militates against reform, he says.

Finns are inveterate conformists he suggests, so they are not good at taking bold risks. We shall find out from the seminar whether his staff share his enthusiasm for change.

Fascinating presentation from semi-regional paper Turun Sanomat editor Riita Monto. Her solution to the challenge of new media was to boost the paper's cultural output to give it added value that would help it stand out in the national market.

She doesn't call the present-day problems for media a 'crisis'. Journalism is still important to the public, she insists, it is a question of changing speed and skills not the essential product.

'Why shouldn't our profession change when everything else around us is changing' says Riita Monto.

Her paper has typically-chic Finnish design and excellent use of photographs. So the packaging is great. But she also has a 24/7 website that networks into local sources. She sees the job of her staff as to 'ponder' those sources and then provide an edited, accessible version.

She gave a great example of a typical local story: a fire. As the flames raged her staff sorted out rumour from fact gathered from social media before they put it on their site.

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