

Quality journalism in the digital age

The multi-newspaper newsroom. Integrating print and digital work processes. User-generated content. Producing quality journalism with shrinking news budgets. These are just some of the issues to be discussed at the 14th World Editors Forum, to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, 3 - 6 June 2007.

The event, which will run concurrently with the 60th World Newspaper Congress and Info Services Expo 2007, will draw hundreds of editors-in-chief and other senior newsroom executives from around the world. It is the first time both these global meetings of the world's press will be held in Africa.

The Congress, which addresses the business concerns of media companies, and the Editors Forum, which addresses newsroom issues, focus on exchanging knowledge and best practices. The events, which drew more than 1700 participants to Moscow last year, rely heavily on case studies of newspapers and how they perform under challenging conditions.

The theme of the Editors Forum is "Quality Journalism in the Digital Age." Highlights include:

- An in-depth reflection about the future of journalism from Mario Vargas Llosa, of Peru, one of the world's leading novelists and essayists who began as a newspaper reporter.
- The first Newsroom Barometer, an international survey of senior news executives focused on editorial strategies, newsroom integration and the future of journalism.
- Some of the world's leading editors and newspaper professionals speaking on the wide variety of issues facing journalists everywhere.
- Numerous social events, breakfasts with South African leaders and other news making personalities, networking opportunities and more.

The theme of the Forum is "Quality Journalism in the Digital Age." Sessions include:

- "The Newsroom Barometer: How to Define Editorial Quality in the Digital Age," in which John Zogby, president of Zogby International, will present the Newsroom Barometer, a joint international survey by WEF, Zogby and Reuters. He will be joined in a panel discussion by editors from around the world. The session will be chaired by George Brock, editor of the *Saturday Times* and president of the World Editors Forum.
- "The Multi-Newspaper Newsroom is Born," in which Andrea Seibel, deputy editor-in-chief of *Die Welt*, *Welt Kompakt*, *Welt Am Sonntag* and the *Berliner Morgenpost* in Germany, and Birgit Donker, editor-in-chief of *NRC Handelsblad* and *NRC Next* in The Netherlands, will explain how they manage these multi-newspaper newsrooms. The session will be chaired by Xavier Vidal-Folch, deputy editor of *El Pais* in Spain.

- “Integrated newsrooms: what print does best and what online does best,” which will examine several examples of merged print and online newsrooms. The session will feature Jonathan Landman, deputy managing editor, and Jim Roberts, editor of digital news, at *The New York Times*, and Jennifer Carroll, VP for new media content at the Gannett Company in the US.
- In a “Reuters Master Class” on user-generated content, delegates will hear from Adam Pasick, the Reuters journalist whose beat is the Second Life virtual world. Other speakers in the session include Dave Panos, CEO of the social network Pluck (USA), Rebecca MacKinnon, co-founder of the bloggers network Global Voices (USA), Didier Pillet, director of information for Ouest-France, and David Schlesinger, editor-in-chief of Reuters, who will chair the session.
- “Front Page versus Home Page: Design Lessons,” which will examine how web-designed home pages are inspiring new designs for the front pages of print editions. The session will feature Don Wittekind, a leading multimedia graphic design expert, now an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina School of Journalism and the Poynter Institute of Media Studies, and Deborah Withey, design director at *The Virginia Pilot* in the US.
- “Is It Possible to Cover Africa with One Correspondent,” a session that will focus on providing better coverage of a continent of 900 million people and more than 50 countries. The session will feature Ferial Haffajee, editor-in-chief of South Africa's *Mail & Guardian*, and other speakers to be announced.
- “Can Free Papers Produce Quality Journalism,” which will look at the second and third generation of free papers that have emerged, including sports and economic titles and free home-delivered newspapers. The session will feature Ben Rogmans, co-founder and future editor-in-chief of *Dagblad De Pers* in the Netherlands, Toger Seidenfaden, editor-in-chief of *Politiken* in Denmark, and David Trads, editor-in-chief of Denmark's *Nyhedavisen*.
- “Balancing Ethics, Transparency and Independence in the Newsroom,” which will examine the impact of digital media on journalism ethics. Participants include Fritz van Exter, editor-in-chief of *Trouw* in the Netherlands, François Nel, director of the Journalism Leaders Programme at the Lancashire Business School in the UK, and Denis Muzet, director of Mediascopie Institute in France.
- “Sharing Best Practices: Five Examples of Newspaper Cooperation,” which will provide editors with a range of new cooperative initiatives between newsrooms. The session will feature Marcel van Lingen, editorial director of the General Press Association in the Netherlands, a co-operative with 80 journalists that provides news to sixteen Dutch regional newspapers, Akishige Tada, chairman of Press Net Japan (Zenkoku Simbun Net), a new national news website that is a joint project of more than 50 regional newspapers, and Grzegorz Piechota, special projects editor at Gazeta Wyborcza in Poland.

The Forum will also feature several joint sessions with the World Newspaper Congress, notably the presentations of the annual World Press Trends survey and of Innovations in Newspapers 2007.

Full details can be found at www.wan-press.org/capetown2007.

Sponsors of the events include Remgro, Richemont & VenFin, Mondi Shanduka Newsprint & Mondi International, the *Sunday Times*, M & G Media, JohnCom, Media24, Independent Newspapers and Caxton Publishers & Printers.

The Paris-based WEF is the organisation of the World Association of Newspapers that represents senior news executives. WAN, the global organisation for the newspaper industry, represents 18,000 newspapers; its membership includes 76 national newspaper associations, newspapers and newspaper executives in 102 countries, 12 news agencies and ten regional and world-wide press groups.

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