



NEWS XCHANGE

AN EBU CONFERENCE

2019 PROGRAM

TOWARDS A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT: TRUST, POLARIZATION, AND INNOVATION

Backdrop

From the gilets jaunes to young people taking to the world's streets to demand action on climate change, a new surge of protestors and activists is voicing discontent. They are demanding a new course for ensuring a future that is both sustainable and fair: to citizens, to the environment, to those who are marginalized and silent.

The noted Ghanaian author Pierroo Roobjee recently said in an interview, "It seems as if everything has reached its end."

Among the demands for a new contract between governments and citizens – and between societies and groups – are these:

- A move from representative democracy to a dialogue-driven democracy
- Social justice
- Bold fiscal policy (having rescued the banks, how about rescuing the planet?)
- A fairer tax system
- Rights for nature and wildlife

Are we at a social tipping point? And what does this mean for the media?

Trends

Here are just a few of the terms and trends we're all supposed to keep track of, understand, factor in, deal with, cope with and manage:

Trust	Alt-right	Globalism	Political correctness
Mistrust	Alt-left	More connected	Privacy
Distrust	Alt facts	Less connected	Data breach
Enemy of the people	Misinformation	Fake News	Building a brand
Deepfake	Disinformation	Digital transformation	Conspiracy communities
Snowflake	Income inequality	AI	Tools for good
Personalization	Minding the gap	Singularity	Tools for harm
Polarization	Widening the gap	Robots	Platforms suppressing conservative voices
Identity politics	Trump	Informed vs. mass	Platforms promoting extreme viewpoints
Press freedoms	Brexit	Audience engagement	
Free speech	Populism	Audience	
Targeting journalists	Nationalism	disengagement	

How do we make sense of it? How do we navigate our way through issues that are not only incredibly complicated but also interrelated, diametrically opposed, closely linked, and everything in between?

Where are we?

This year, News Xchange will give us an opportunity to stop for a moment, take a breath, and ask ourselves, Okay, so what is really going on? Why is this happening? And what do we do?

To navigate our way through, we'll have four main pillars:

Understanding: What is the world like today? Where have the seismic shifts brought us? What is the future of audiences – not from the standpoint of numbers and facts and figures, but from the standpoint of values and behaviors? Who are we in the process of becoming? What does it mean?

Trust: Does trust still exist or is it merely a nostalgic memory of the past? What is happening to society? Where does the distrust begin? Where – and when – does it end? Why are those characterized as “more informed” more trusting than those who are characterized as “mass”, and what does that mean?

Polarization: Are we moving farther and further apart, or are we diversifying our perspectives?

Innovation: How are we responding to the urgent desire for change?

And, always, our main point of reference will be: What does this mean for news professionals, especially but not exclusively the mainstream media? And, what does this mean to audiences?

The agenda is a work in progress. We'll be adding, fleshing out, building and fine-tuning. Every week from this point onwards, we'll update the agenda as it comes together.

And we invite you – the News Xchange community comprising people who have attended in each of our 20 years (and, yes, there are a few people who have attended every single year) and people who are new to the event, and everyone in between – to help us build this.

- Please tell us if you have an idea.
- Recommend speakers.
- Put yourself forward or put a friend forward.

Here's what we're building.

TUESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER

Opening night reception hosted by France Television

Venue and details TBC

This is where News Xchange begins. It will be a welcome to Paris and the beginning of a two-day immersion.

Opening keynote (TBC)

WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY, 20 & 21 NOVEMBER

BLOCK 1: UNDERSTANDING

Presentations

We will open with two presentations, each presenting a look at the world as it is today and what this means for the future.

Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X: Who are they, what do they want?

In nearly every conversation these days, news people ask ourselves, How will this play with millennials? And in asking that question, we are actually asking, How will young people see this/ experience it/respond or engage with it?

But simply believing that millennial means young person is to miss something very important. Well, ready or not, here comes Gen Z. What are their characteristics? What are the workplace shifts likely to occur with the arrival of Gen Z workers? What does the world look like with and for our future audiences?

Presentation 1: A 16-year old explains everything we need to know about Generation Z.

This will be followed by:

Presentation 2: Kate Eichhorn, cultural and media studies professor at the New School, author of the new book, The End of Forgetting.

In this new digital world, everything is documented, everything is tagged, and anything can surface at any moment. We're losing the ability to forget, and therefore we're losing the ability to distance ourselves from our past.

"The ability of something from the past to interrupt the present has been amplified over the past decade due to technology. We're just beginning to face the consequences," says Eichhorn. What does this mean to us? What does it mean that 13- and 14-year olds are growing up with extraordinary concern for metrics?

Our two speakers will then sit and, in a moderated conversation, chat about what the world looks like today and what it is likely to look like in 3 years' time, in 10 years' time, in 20 years' time.

Audience Q&A.

BLOCK 2: TRUST

Panel: The Fracturing of Belief

Produced by France Television and News Xchange
Moderated by Eric Scherer, France Television

Participants to be confirmed
Plus voices from around the world

In some studies, such as the Edelman Trust Barometer, an annual look at global trust levels and ups and downs, trust in media is up...but only among some people, not all. And only in some parts of the world, not all.

Why is belief fracturing? Where truth is splintered, trust is divided. Why is this happening? What is media's role in fracturing belief? What is media's role in repairing the damage and rebuilding trust?

What types of journalism help restore belief and trust?
How do we create structures to reinstate trust?
We'll hear from organizations that are renewing and restoring trust and finding new ways of forging and encouraging engagement.

Voices from around the world on trust.

Presentation 3: Deep Fakes, A Live Demo

Earlier this year, a video of Barack Obama calling Trump a 'total and complete dipsh*t', was released in April by film director Jordan Peele in conjunction with BuzzFeed as a way of raising awareness about how AI-generated synthetic media could be used to distort and manipulate reality.

There is a growing number of other deep fakes. How is it done? We will show a demo.

Discussion: How should journalists address the growing problem of synthetic media?

Participants to be confirmed

BLOCK 3: POLARIZATION

Panel: Trump is running for reelection. Will we be ready for him this time?

Produced by The Associated Press and News Xchange

As the world prepares for the next US presidential election – and, really, any and every election that will take place in a world of less trust, polarization, and a massive increase in the number of potential new voters – what are the keys to “getting it right”? The Associated Press will peel back the curtain to share insights on how to plan, what to plan, and how to think about coverage at a time when falsehoods are more abundant than ever before, Trump and his allies are tweeting from more and more “fringe” sources (e.g., TikTok), marginalized groups are increasingly targeted with misinformation campaigns, messaging apps and dating sites are being used to promote misinformation, etc.

Presentation: short sharp(s) on **misinformation and political coverage** (e.g., Spain, India, The Philippines)

Panel: Snowflakery, Identity Politics and Freedom of the Press

In a direct attack on four Congresswoman of colour earlier this summer, Trump — who is seeking re-election in 2020 — suggested that Ilhan Omar, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, and Ayanna Pressley should “go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came”.

His words — later co-opted by his supporters as a menacing “Send Her Back!” chant at one of his rallies — provoked a wave of abuse and death threats against Omar, the only politician of the group who wasn't born in the United States, and raised concerns for her safety.

Media outlets were forced to grapple with how it should approach its coverage of the remarks and the aftermath. Some responded with clear editorial direction, while others were criticized for tiptoeing around the issue. Some headlined their coverage with references to Trump's “racism”; others did not.

While the Washington Post's editor Marty Baron wrote about why the newspaper would be calling the racist tweets “racist”, The New York Times was called out for a piece which referred to “Trump's racially-infused politics”. It prompted Comedy Central's Daily Show to make a “Trump Racist Euphemism Headline Generator” to mock the way some media outlets treated the story.

This is just one example of a growing crisis for news organizations: how to navigate and draw the line between political correctness driven by identity politics and journalistic standards. How to report on transgender issues and stories? Gay stories? Blacks and other minorities? Coverage of political divisions over Brexit, Labour anti-Semitism, the Tory party's Islamophobia scandal, and attacks by far-right or far-left extremists?

Presentation: Does social media affect democracy the same way across the world, or do social platforms have different effects in different nations?

Panel: Who is to blame for the collapse in civil discourse?

Produced by Reuters and News Xchange

Throwing eggs or milkshakes at politicians is now common. In the Western world today, the new norm for social discourse includes online trolling, death threats, physical intimidation, conspiracy to murder, and even – as in the case of MP Jo Cox in 2016 – death.

What happened and who is to blame? Many point a finger at the echo chambers of social media, but this seems like an easy scapegoat in a political climate where bifurcation looks like it's here to stay. The question is - how can media organizations promote the freedom of debate, without hate?

BLOCK 4: INNOVATION

In this final block, we will look at three innovations happening in journalism --- each addressing at least one and often more of the pillars above

Paris, Haute Couture and Surviving the Changes in Tastes, Styles and Relevance – What can we learn from the fashion industry? Meryl Streep’s character in “The Devil Wears Prada” noted it best when she destroys young Anne Hathaway’s character for the cardinal sin of not fully appreciating the cultural implications – and importance -- of a cerulean belt. In Paris, the city of fashion, we will have an opportunity to hear from a top designer and learn how a brand moves with the times, retains its value and significance, and balances the competing virtues of brand consistency and mission with relevance and moving with the times.

Drone footage of Notre Dame – how did the technology enhance our understanding of what happened?

Other components of Innovation to be announced.

CLOSING

In addition to the above, we will be interspersing the program with looks at very specific and often troubling or difficult news stories rocking the world. These include:

Venezuela: An insider's look at what is going on in Venezuela. How incredibly difficult it is to report from there, and a look at how much of the story is understood by audiences.

Update from Reporters Sans Frontieres on the state of press freedom

China: How is China's CGTN covering the trade wars with America, for example.

The polarization of French media: it's not what you were expecting to hear.

ABC and freedom of the press: A presentation when police raided the newsroom, and what this means for freedom of the press