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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ELECTRONIC NEWS DIVISION OF AEJMC

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The END for RTVJ

By Kathleen Ryan, Electronic News Division Head

After several years of discussing a potential name change to our division, members voted this summer to ratify a change from Radio Television Journalism Division to Electronic News Division, or END. This was one of two division name changes approved by AEJMC leadership at the St. Louis Convention. The other was for the Newspaper Division, which is now known as the Newspaper and Online News Division. Both changes went into effect on October 1st.

The online vote was quite successful - we had more than half of our membership cast ballots in the election. Members were given one month to vote over the summer and voting remained open up through the Thursday before our convention business meeting. The vote included three parts: a selection of the preferred name (from three choices based on a survey earlier in the year), a ranking of the three selections, and a ratification of the majority winner. We used an instant runoff voting method as a tiebreaker. Electronic News won in a narrow vote.

This name change offers our division a chance to rebrand itself as we move forward into the next 100 years of AEJMC. The name reflects the reality of the news industry: far from being limited to television or radio, journalists are now multi-platform storytellers, incorporating online and smartphone platforms into their daily rituals. Consumers may get their news from legacy outlets, but the distribution method is less likely to be television, radio or

cable and more likely to be online. And while some may question the removal of the word "journalism" from our divisional identity, I would argue that using the word "news" better reflects the blurring of lines of who is telling the story. News distribution isn't only the purvey of journalists anymore: it can come from bloggers, YouTube postings, Facebook friends, Twitter "tweepies," Google+ circles, documentarians, and a host of other old and emerging sources. Our research already reflects that shift; it's good that our division name now does as well.

Dave Cupp, END Programming Chair, and Dale Edwards, END Research Chair, will be looking for conference programming which helps to discuss what this new divisional identity means for research and scholarship. As END Chair, I'd like us to go one step further. This rebranding offers us a way to demonstrate at the 100th anniversary convention in Chicago that this division is not only a place to go for cutting-edge research and top-notch industry panels, but also a place to find scholars using cutting-edge formats to present that research. In my dream world, the Chicago conference will see interactive poster sessions that are truly interactive (perhaps adding a multimedia component via a laptop or smartphone), research presentations that move beyond the PowerPoint, and panels that engage the audience both intellectually and creatively. Oh, and a consistent internet connection.

Embrace technology: Then What?

By Laura K. Smith, END Teaching Chair

When I hopped on the plane for St. Louis this summer, I boarded with incredible anticipation. I was excited to see my “people”; find out what they were up to; attend some interesting panels; see what the new hot topic would be; find a great GIFT to enhance my teaching. And yes, go to a ball game and knock back a few lattes with friends and former colleagues. I was excited to get off my campus and see what was happening in the world of journalism and communication. Being that I now work in a tiny liberal arts program among an even tinier humanities faculty... I was, in fact, craving communication by, for and with the people who do what I do every day.

I was so excited to get to AEJ that I didn’t pack properly. I was carrying my old-school, non-G Nokia and NO battery charger. And, OMG, I only had about three-quarters of my battery life. By the time we left the tarmac I realized I was going to have to make a choice – use my precious minutes to communicate with my friends and colleagues at the conference or save my minutes for precious morning and nighttime conversations with my daughter and husband. I

was low on funds and paying the hotel’s long distance charges were out of the question.

I was financially and technologically challenged! But I thought to myself, that’s okay, I’ll *be* there. I’ll walk the same halls with them and we can actually talk. We can use the hotel voice mail system to arrange our meetings. It’ll be fine! Turns out, even though I was actually there in the flesh, I’ve never felt more out of touch in my entire life. Everyone was “meeting up” and App-ing and collaborating on their I-Phones and 4-G devices. During panel sessions, many audience members were surfing the web to see if they could confirm what the speakers were discussing or pose a challenging question or well-informed retort. In between sessions, in the halls, their eyes were often cast down, searching their P-D-As for that day’s .pdf and checking their IMs, emails and tweets.

I, on the other hand, was leafing through the program to find out where my “people” were – jogging from room to room to make my connections. I worked diligently to track them

down. And when I did, I got to have some really great, sorely needed quality conversations with people I know, love and admire. It was great. While I did catch up with almost everyone I wanted to see, it took a lot of time and effort. And because I was “out of service,” I missed out on a few fun events and impromptu happy hours.

The experience left me feeling a little sad and out of touch – both literally and figuratively. It got me wondering about all those millions of people for whom digital access and financial deficits are a real, every day struggle. It also got me wondering about who we are as communicators – and what we value.

This year, AEJMCs focus was clearly on technology. “Technology Futurists,” web designers, and social media gurus were the belles of the ball. In countless sessions, we urged each other to embrace technology and all it can do for our students, ourselves and our media futures. There were demonstrations and examples. It was all very visual and interesting to watch. And truly, I appreciate the message.

Continued from page 2

Right now, many of us are enamored with *content delivery*. We're having the same conversation the industry is having. We're scurrying around figuring how to seize on the technological moment. We want to train our students to land those jobs out there and have all the high-tech skills the industry is looking for. And we want to use these whiz-bang tools in our classrooms, too. While I think these issues need critical consideration, it's not the whole picture. The conversations we're having often fail to incorporate the information needs of citizens who are less privileged and less well-connected.

Now don't get me wrong. I love technology. I embrace it and what it can do for our societies. If Arab Spring taught us anything, we learned that journalism and technology – especially social media – can work hand-in-hand to change the world. We can create APPs that help members of our community connect with us and be part of a larger, social conversation.

But as PF&R chair for our division, I'd like to urge my colleagues to keep the "responsibility" of our profession in mind – give *content production* equal

playing time as we consider themes, panel topics and ideas for AEJMC's next annual conference. We're responsible for more than teaching our students how and when to tweet. We're also responsible for instilling in them the values that journalists live by – telling quality stories that serve our communities' localism and diversity needs.

In addition to high-tech bells and whistles, we need to keep having that critical content conversation! Recently, the FCC released a report called "The Information Needs of Communities: The changing media landscape in a broadband age." The authors raise concerns about dwindling local news and accountability reporting. Google it. It's worth a glimpse. The entire report is nearly 500 pages long, so perhaps instead, you could skim the Executive Summary.

Think about ways we can turn this report into some quality content for our next AEJMC sessions. What needs are our student journalists filling in our communities? Are they covering stories that would otherwise go unnoticed? How are our academic institutions reaching out and filling the communication needs of our citizens? How can we help non-profits and low-power

stations produce content on a smaller scale.

These are the things I've been thinking about since St. Louis... since I found myself disconnected and feeling out of touch. I know there are millions of people out there who feel the same way. And they're looking to us – news media practitioners, scholars, and entrepreneurs – for answers. They want to know what their government is doing. They want original reporting about what's happening in their towns. And many of them feel disconnected.

Are we concerned about them, or is our eye on the well-funded, well-equipped future news subscriber? I hope these musings are a "gateway" to some exciting conversations when next we meet, in Chicago.



Laura K. Smith

Call for Papers,

Reviewers Needed, and a New “Works in Progress” Session for the 2012 Southeast Colloquium

By David A. Free, Southeast Colloquium Research Chair, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Texas at Austin

The submission deadline is 5 p.m.,

December 5, 2011.

The Electronic News division is looking forward to your paper submission for the 2012 Southeast Colloquium, set for March 8 – 10, at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia

Southeast Colloquium planners have added a new “Works in Progress” division this year. Researchers may submit a 500 word proposal, including the research questions/hypotheses, methodology, and any results available to date. Submissions of completed research on any topic in broadcast, cable, or electronic journalism will follow the standard guidelines found in the official AEJMC Southeast Colloquium call for

papers, which will be posted soon. All papers and proposals will be submitted electronically via the appropriate division’s research chair. A list of colloquium division research chairs and respective e-mail addresses are found on the AEJMC Website under “Scholarship,” and “AEJMC Calls.”

Reviewers are needed for the Southeast Colloquium papers. Please contact David Free: dfree@austin.rr.com if you are willing to serve. Complete information on registration, cost, and colloquium details will be made available soon on the AEJMC Website.

Panel Proposals for AEJMC 2012

Tentative deadline for Panel proposals is October 21. Dave Cupp will be sending a formal call for panels to our listserv. Tentative theme is Content in a New media World, looking at both historical patterns and new media evolutions from theoretical, pedagogical and skill levels. This would enable us to take advantage of both the 100th anniversary of AEJMC as well as stake out our identity with our new name. Contact Dave at: (dcupp@email.unc.edu).

Be thinking of nominations for The Bliss Award

Dr. Hub Brown, past president, presenting the Edward L. Bliss Award for Distinguished Broadcast Journalism Education to Dr. C.A. “Charlie” Tuggle of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. This award is presented at our annual business meeting each year. It recognizes an electronic journalism educator who has made a significant and lasting contribution to the field in the areas of teaching, service and scholarship.



Pictures from our AEJMC business meeting in St. Louis, MO

Pictures courtesy of William R. Davie



Pictures from our AEJMC panels in St. Louis, MO

Pictures courtesy of Kathleen Ryan

