

Is Journalism and Communication Education in Crisis?

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Introduction

- Imagine what the world would be like, in say 20-30 years, if (when?) we have **all-digital news** only.
 - What will the news industry be like?
 - Who and what is a journalist ... what makes a journalist a journalist?
 - What role will journalism school play?
- Our talk today will revolve around these three questions.

Introduction

- The media landscape started to change some 20 years ago and the industry has been slow to adapt to the digital world.
- The big question is not whether the news industry will survive but what form it will take in the future.
- Our question is “What role does and can journalism and communication education play in the process?”

Globalization and ICT

- Globalization, among other things, is about
 - Increasing interconnectedness
 - Compression of time and space
- One of the main driving forces of globalization is advances in information and communication technology (ICT).
- For example: Modern ICT is what makes global finance and internet commerce possible.

The News Industry

- Global forces, driven by technology, is turning the media industry upside down.
- In our discussion, we will focus on the news industry for two reasons:
 - It is the industry in which the biggest impact is felt
 - It is traditionally one of the biggest employers of J-School graduates

Disruptive Innovations

- Advances in ICT is a prime example of what is called **disruptive innovations**.
- We will refer to “advances in ICT” as “the internet” for simplicity.
- The internet has “disrupted”
 - The business model of the new industry
 - Journalism as an institution and a profession

Business Model of Mass Media

- The news industry is in the business of Gathering → processing → distributing
- News is gathered and processed by specialists, and disseminated to a mass audience along with advertising which helps to pay for the operation.
- Revenues of news organizations come from advertising (mostly) and circulation.

The Digital Disruption

- The internet has eroded the barriers to entry in news gathering and distribution – everyone can commit “random acts of journalism.”
- In the digital age, “journalism” is being created and distributed on new platforms outside the traditional business model of mass media.

Disruption in News Creation

- Consumers nowadays don't just passively consume news anymore.
- They contribute (“crowdsourcing”), add to it (write comments and blogs) and share it (post on social media).
- News become a more participatory and social experience in the digit age.

Disruption in News Distribution

- Digitized information – texts, images and sound – can be transmitted around the global almost instantaneously.
- There are now new media platform of all kinds: blogs, forums, webcast, podcast, online news, social networks etc.
- And consumers have more **choices** of news sources as well as **ways to access them** than ever before.

News Media in the Digital Age

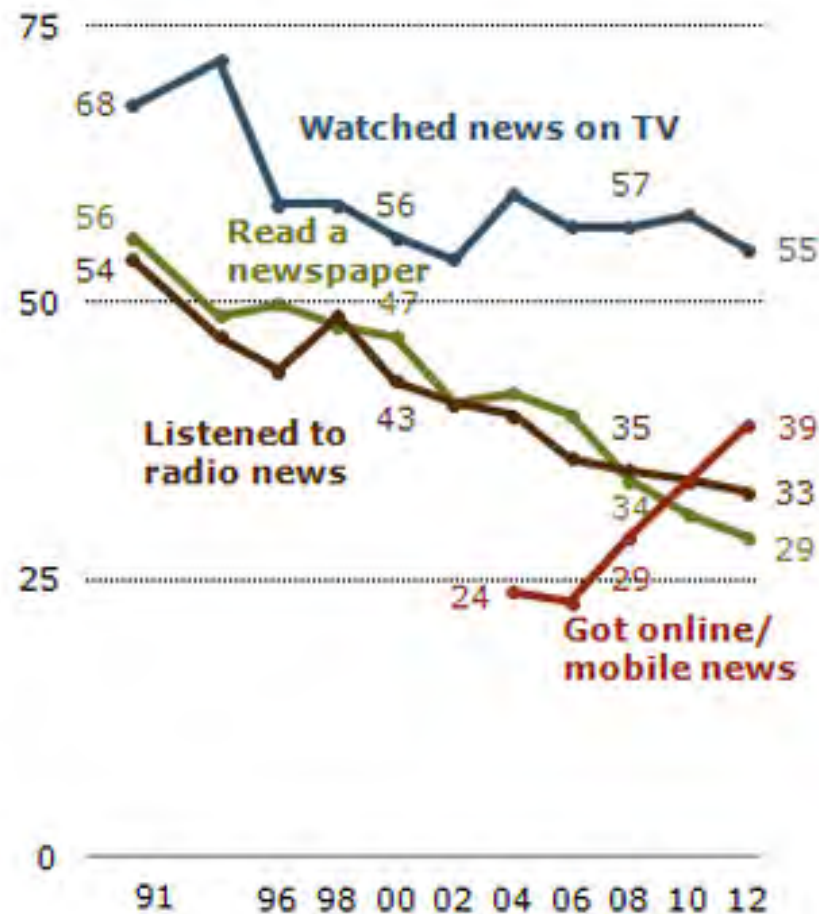
- Digital distribution of news and information has undermined the business model of **mass media** that has served the news industry for over a century.
- Modern technology has also changed news gathering and processing, which in effect is redefining what it means to be a journalist.

An All-digital News Future?

- A world with all-digital news only is not as farfetched as it may seem.
- Statistics of market trends are telling us that the news industry is heading in that direction.
- Social networks which did not exist 10 years ago, for example, are becoming a big part of the news ecosystem.

Digital News Surpasses Newspapers, Radio

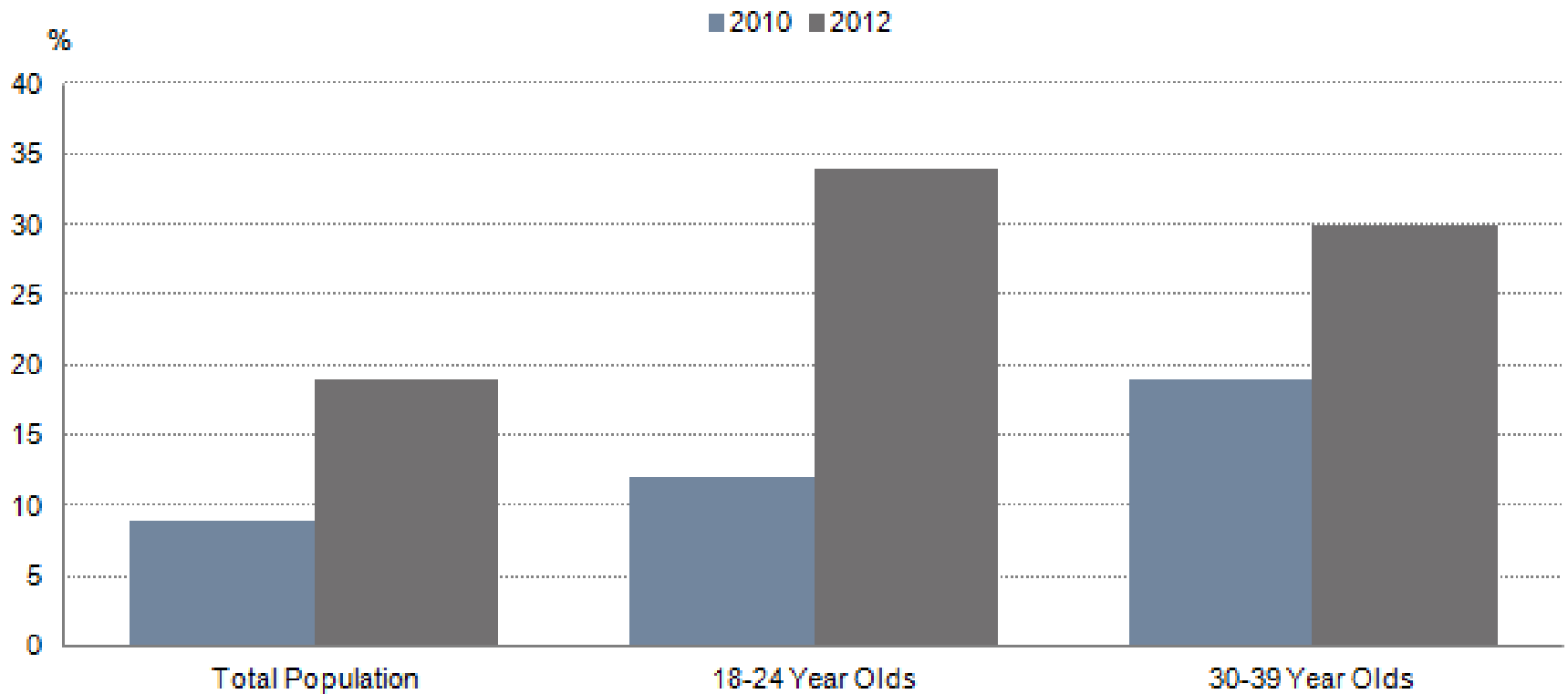
Where did you get news yesterday?



PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 News Consumption Survey.

More People Getting News on Social Networks

Percentage of Respondents



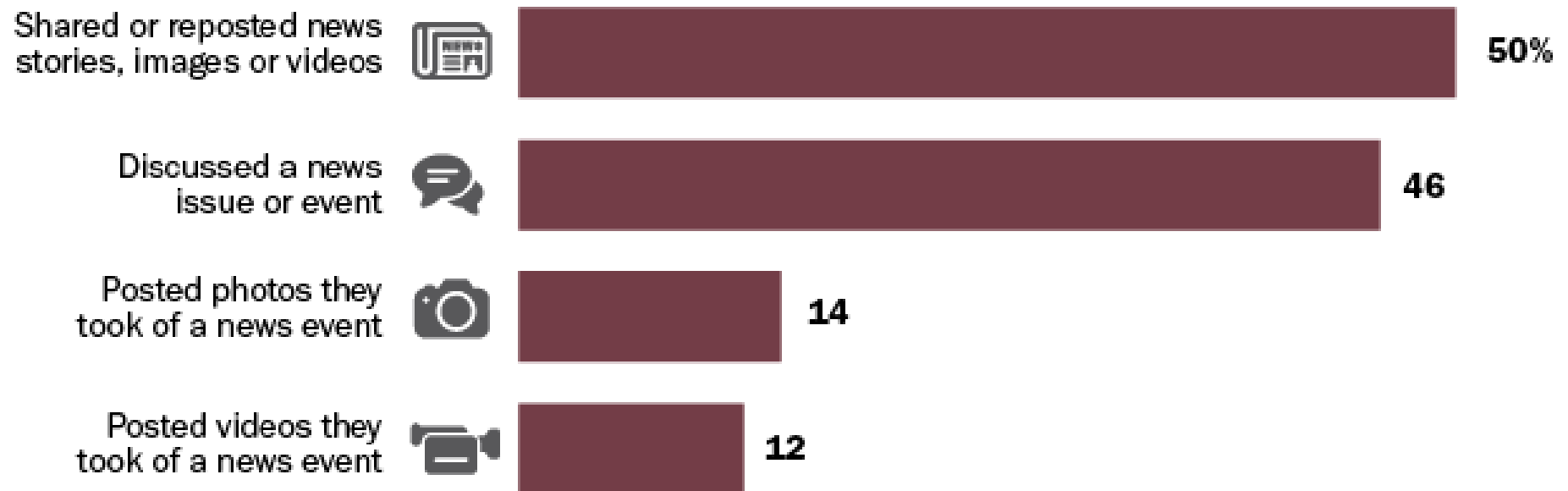
Source: Pew Research Center

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

2013 STATE OF THE NEWS MEDIA

Social Media and News

Percent of social networking site users who have...



Note: This question was asked of social networking site users who also get news online.

Source: Pew Research Center, phone survey Feb. 27-Mar. 2, 2014.

Collapse of the Business Model

- The internet has undermined the business model of mass media of the news industry in two important ways:
 - Drop in advertising revenue
 - The internet offers better and cheaper alternatives
 - Irreversible losses in circulation, especially to the younger generations

A Shrinking Newspaper Market

Growth of the global newspaper market

- 2004: 3.6%
- 2007: 0%
- 2008: -5%

(Source: PwC, 2009a)

Estimated newspaper publishing market decline in OECD countries, 2007-2009

USA	-30%
UK	-21%
Greece	-20%
Italy	-18%
Canada	-17%
Japan	-15%
Korea	-6%

Source: News in the Internet Age, OECD 2010)

In Search of a New Business Model

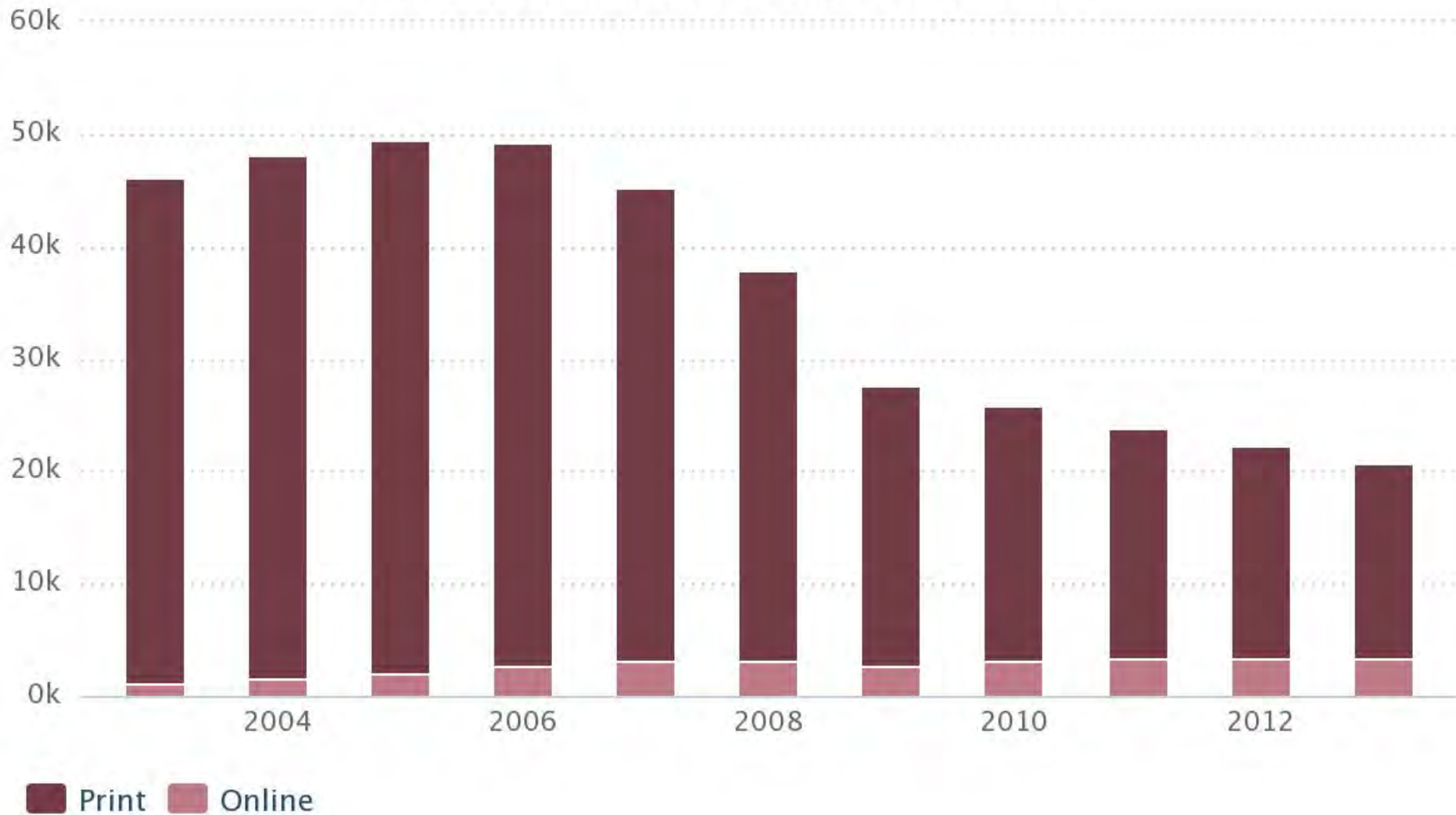
- The news industry has been slow to adapt to the digital age.
- Now almost all newspapers have an online (digital) edition and a print edition.
- While their advertising revenues are shrinking along with circulation, news organizations have yet to figured out how to make money doing journalism online.

Print Dollar vs. Digital Dime

- The ratio of print advertising losses to digital advertising gains was about 10:1 (i.e. \$10 print dollars lost for every digital dollar gained) in 2011.
- The ratio worsen to 15:1 in 2012.

(Source: The State of the News Media 2013, Pew Research Center)

Newspaper Print and Online Ad Revenue



State of Journalism Education

- The future of journalism and journalism education is intimately linked to the future of the media industry.
- While the media industry is transforming and facing an uncertain future, journalism and communication education is itself at an inflection point.

A Poynter NewsU Survey 2012

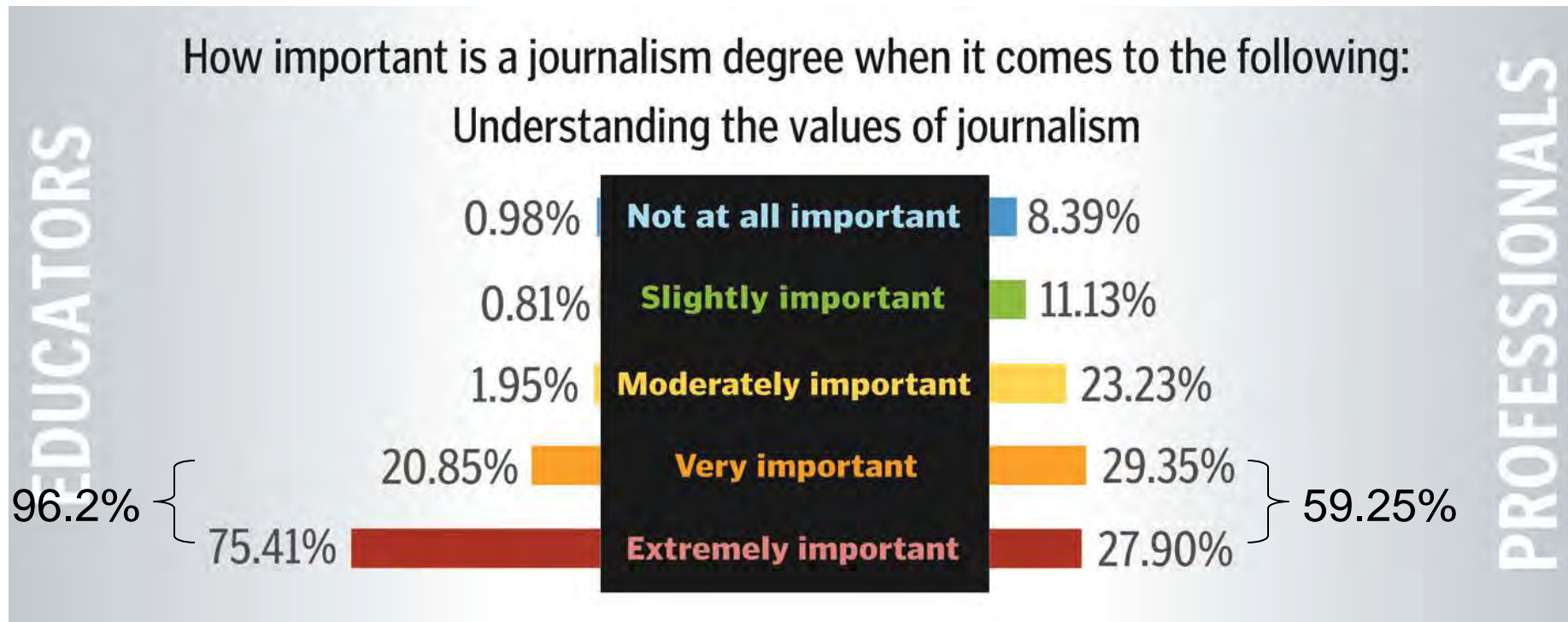
- Poynter News University of the Poynter Institute conducted a survey entitled “The Future of Journalism Education” in the Spring of 2012
- 1,800 responses, equally divided between professionals and academics.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/journ_edu_future2013

How Important is a J-Degree?

- How important is a journalism degree when it comes to
 - Understanding the values of journalism
 - Abilities in news gathering, editing and presenting news
 - Keeping up with industry changes
 - Getting students hired (educators) / hiring (professionals)

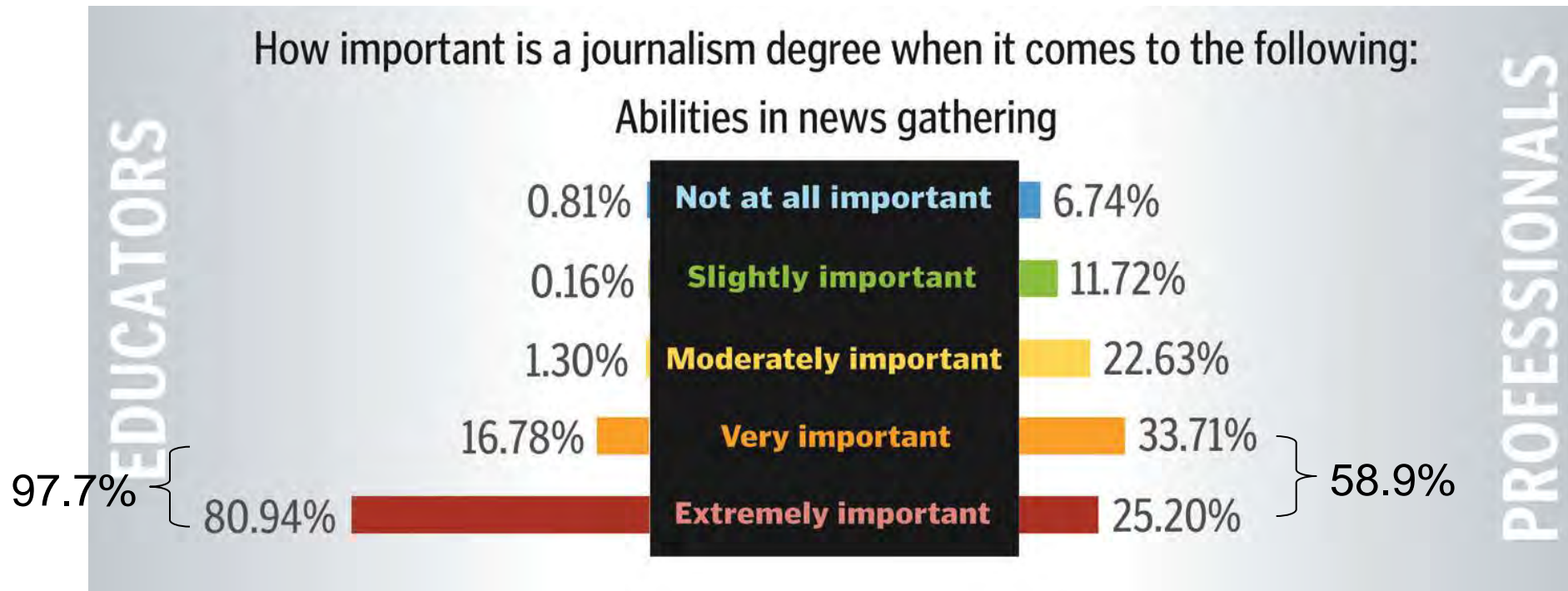
Understanding the Values of Journalism



Source: State of Journalism Education 2013, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies

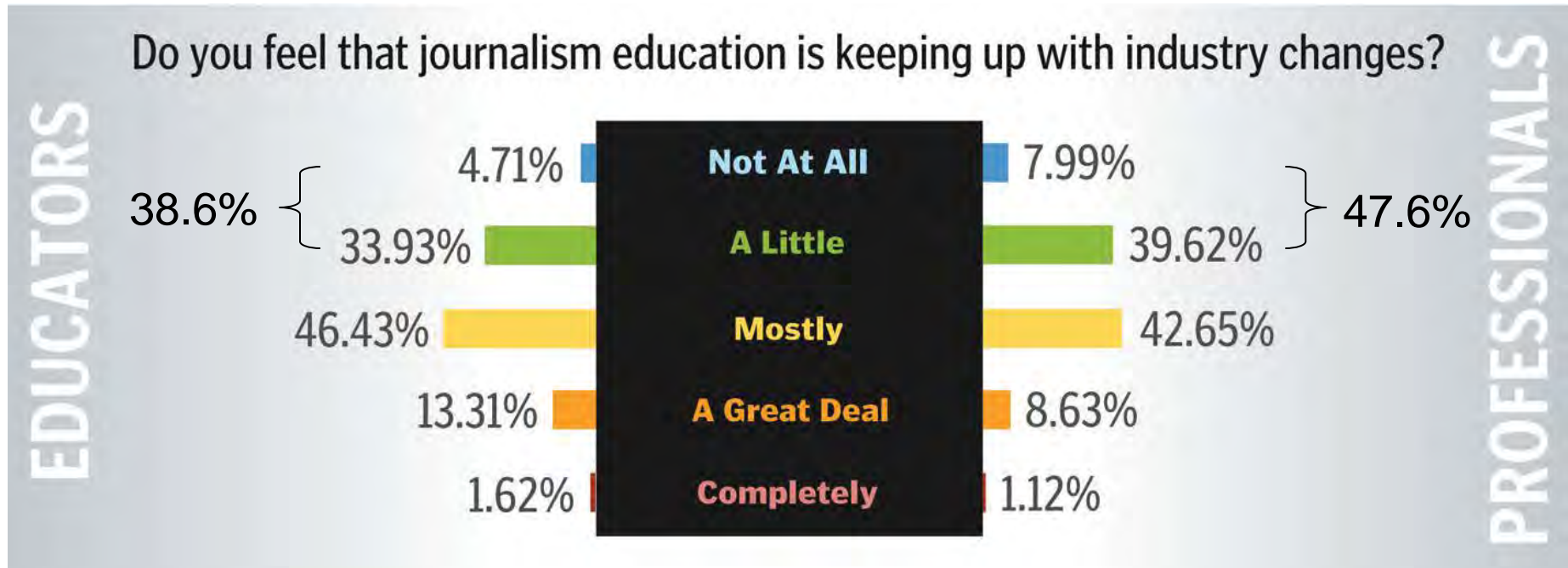
Ability in News Gathering

How important is a journalism degree when it comes to the following:
Abilities in news gathering



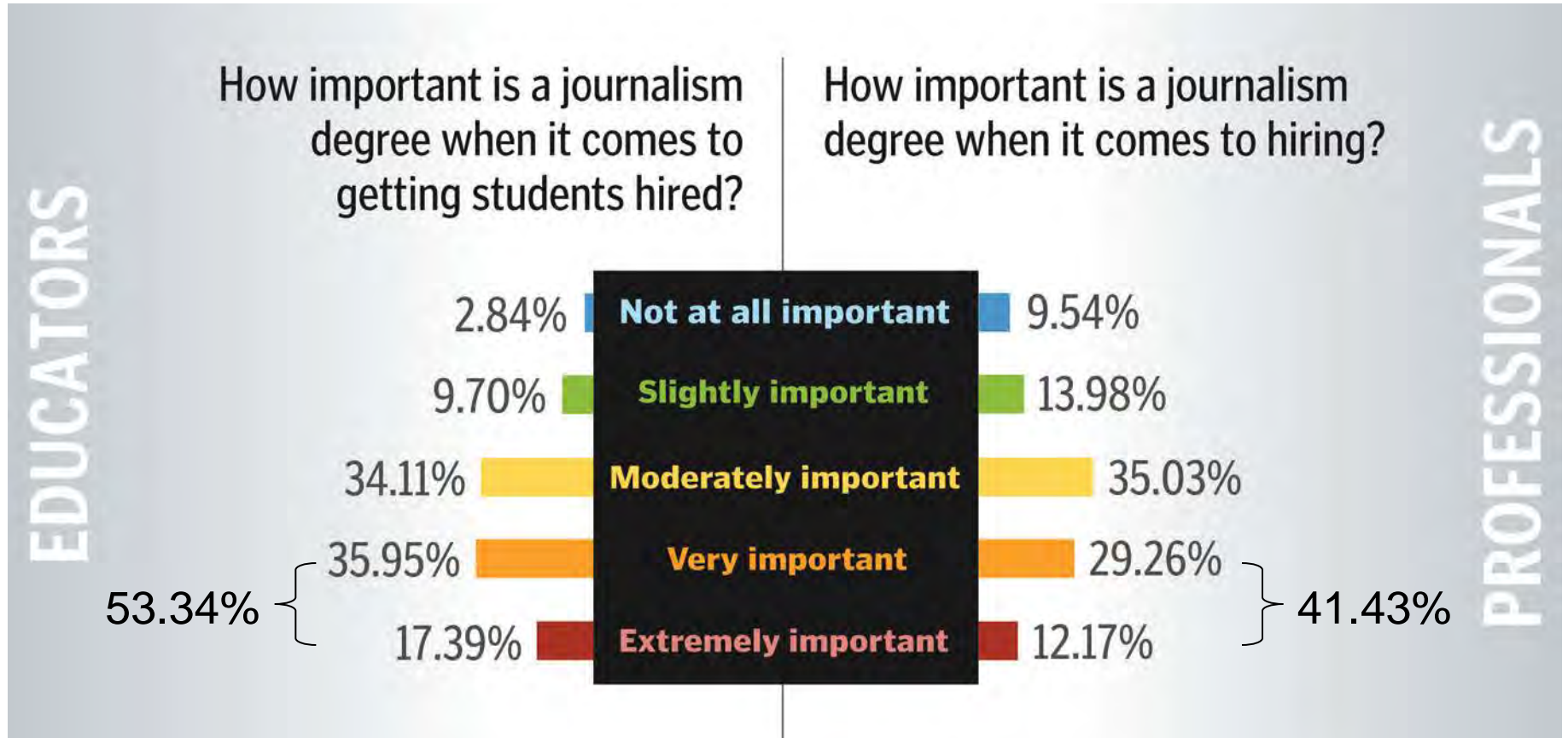
Source: State of Journalism Education 2013, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies

Keeping up with Industry Changes



Source: State of Journalism Education 2013, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies

Getting Students Hired / Hiring



Source: State of Journalism Education 2013, The Poynter Institute for Media Studies

What the Results Tell Us

The survey results seem to indicate that

1. “Educators” and “Professionals” have diverse opinions on the value of a journalism and communication degree
2. The two groups don’t understand each other very well – better communication is needed
3. They are facing two different but related sets of challenges.

Challenges of the News Industry

- There is little doubt that the news industry is in crisis, one not very different from that of the music industry.
- The digital revolution has undermined its business model
 - The traditional market is shrinking fast
 - The younger generations expect news and music to be freely available online

Challenges of Journalism Education

- The results of the Poynter survey seem to indicate that journalism education is being perceived by the industry as irrelevant.
- This perception calls into question the purpose of journalism education.

The “Real” Crisis

- The news industry will have to reinvent itself in the digital age, just like the music industry has been doing.
- Journalism education seems to have lost its purpose when the industry is at a flux.
- The real crisis, in our opinion, is in journalism as an institution and as a profession.

- The news industry is looking for a new business model to survive the digital age.
- As educators, we too need to catch up with the digital age and identify new ways to conceptualize journalism education.

Some Obvious Problems

- Out-dated theory of mass media
- Trade-school model of teaching journalism (apprenticeship)
- Too skills-and-techniques oriented: we introduce new skills to a curriculum that is based on an industry model of the past

Some Ideas to Consider

- “Internship” for faculty
- Collaborative teaching
- A healthy balance between “professional” (research) and “practical” (skills)
- Focus on increasing the ability of students to adapt to a rapidly changing environment

Concluding Remarks

- In examining the state of the news industry and that of journalism education, we have identified more challenges than solutions and have more questions than answers.
- Educators have to work with the industry to invent the future of journalism.

Concluding Remarks

- There will not be a single solution and we have to be willing to experiment.
- Would be nice if we could do a study on Hong Kong (but lack necessary data)

Thank you!