# AI ADOPTION IN JOURNALISM: ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND THE NEED FOR AI TRAINING

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## Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence platforms have been widely adopted in newsrooms across the United States. Journalistic training programs designed to guide responsible AI use have struggled to follow the pace at which newsrooms have adopted such platforms. This study examined how journalists use generative AI, their level of AI literacy and training, ethical concerns surrounding AI, and overall perceptions of these technologies.

Using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, this study analyzed data from an online survey of 52 working journalists across various media platforms. This was followed by five in-depth, semi-structured interviews with journalism professionals. Results indicated a notable gap between institutional expectations for AI competency and the training provided. Only 17% of participants reported receiving structured AI training. Most participants ranked professional development as the most pressing need within their newsrooms.

The study results also suggested that journalists who received AI training were more confident using these tools and more likely to view them positively. These findings present a defining challenge for news organizations, journalism educators, and professional associations, highlighting the need for AI training programs and clear editorial frameworks for newsrooms.

# AI Adoption in Journalism: Ethical Challenges and the Need for AI Training

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Generative AI tools are rapidly transforming modern newsrooms. Tasks that once took several hours of editorial work, such as writing a news script or lining up stories for the evening newscast, can now be completed in just minutes using generative AI platforms like ChatGPT and Claude (Lewis et al., 2025). A study of 105 media organizations across 46 countries revealed that generative AI tools are now deeply integrated into nearly every stage of the journalistic process (Xiao et al., 2025). According to Simon, Nielsen, and Fletcher (2025), more than half of all journalists in the United States use generative AI systems to help with routine newsroom tasks. The generative AI functions include the transcription of audio content for a news story and quick proofreading of broadcast scripts prior to air. While many journalists say these tools can streamline the reporting process, the use of generative AI platforms raises important questions about workplace training, expectations, and the ethical responsibilities of journalists adopting AI systems (Mahadevan, 2024).

The emergence of generative AI as a primary resource has begun to restructure professional working relationships within traditional newsrooms. In a survey of 292 news industry professionals, conducted in partnership with The Associated Press, researchers examined how journalists were using generative AI platforms and discovered several key concerns surrounding the adoption of this technology (Diakopoulos et al., 2024). The study concluded that many journalists regularly turned to AI platforms first for brainstorming and headline writing, rather than to a fellow journalist. One reporter said, “Instead of asking a colleague … I always ask ChatGPT first” (Diakopoulos et al., 2024, p. 16).

As the use of generative AI platforms becomes more common in newsrooms, the adoption of these tools has raised several ethical considerations surrounding authorship and ownership of AI-generated content (Brigham et al., 2024). Researchers compared AI-generated drafts with their corresponding published articles and discovered significant overlap between the AI-produced content and final published articles produced by journalists (Brigham et al., 2024). Approximately 9% of all news content published across U.S. print publications uses some degree of AI-generated text (Russell et al., 2025).

According to the Online News Association (2024), a nonprofit organization of digital journalists, as the use of AI platforms becomes more widespread in news organizations, reporters, producers, and newsroom leaders are confronted with new expectations surrounding the responsible use of these tools. Many journalists are independently integrating AI tools without the benefit of formal organizational support. Radcliffe (2025) reported that 58% of journalists had no formal training in generative AI. That gap between adoption and preparation clearly shows the need for news organizations to establish editorial standards for how these tools should be used (Radcliffe, 2025).

AI has divided the journalism profession, with some reporters seeing generative AI as a practical asset (Palla & Kostarella, 2025). AI has compressed the time burden associated with repetitive tasks such as document review, transcription, and data classification (Palla & Kostarella, 2025). Statista (2026), online statistics platform, estimated that AI platforms could save the journalism industry roughly $1.5 billion in operational costs. Despite the financial benefits, some newsroom leaders are deeply concerned that relying on these AI technologies could undermine journalistic credibility (Mahadevan, 2024). More pressing is a growing concern that generative AI could contribute to the spread of misinformation (Peña-Alonso et al., 2025).

How much damage these platforms could cause depends on whether journalists are trained to use these AI tools responsibly (Cools & Diakopoulos, 2024).

This study focuses on three areas: what institutions expect journalists to know about AI, what training newsrooms have actually made available, and how journalists themselves make sense of tools they were handed with little explanation. Central to this study is whether current AI literacy reflects the realities journalists face daily and how newsroom guidance affects concerns regarding misinformation and credibility.

## Research Questions

While artificial intelligence is being used in newsrooms across the U.S., significant concerns remain regarding the ethical implications of its use. This study examines how generative AI is being used in news organizations and how journalism professionals perceive generative AI platforms' impact on contemporary news reporting. The following research questions guide this study: 1) What generative AI tools are currently being used in newsrooms, and how are they integrated into daily storytelling and content creation? 2) What levels of AI literacy are expected of journalists at different stages of their careers, from entry-level (under 5 years of experience) to experienced professionals (more than 10 years of experience)? 3) Do journalists view AI as a useful tool, a threat to the profession, or both? 4) What ethical concerns do journalists have regarding the use of AI in their reporting?

## Research Hypotheses

H1: Journalists working in newsrooms will report higher expectations for AI literacy from employers than the level of actual training provided.

H2: Journalists who have received formal guidance and training with generative AI tools will report higher confidence using AI in reporting compared to those who have not received guidance.

H3: Journalists who regularly use AI tools will be more likely to feel that AI is helpful rather than a threat to journalism.

H4: Journalists who have not received newsroom guidance or training regarding AI will express greater concerns about misinformation and credibility.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Part 1: Generative AI Adoption in Journalism

Clerwall (2014) described the early integration of AI-powered platforms in newsrooms as robot journalism. The most widely used generative AI platforms in news organizations include ChatGPT (OpenAI), Gemini (Google), and Claude (Anthropic) (Simon et al., 2025). The use of these platforms has significantly reduced the time needed for electronic newsgathering, allowing journalists to quickly edit news content (Santos et al., 2025). A study examining IDEIA, a generative AI system developed for newsroom applications, found that the AI tools used in editorial planning and content creation resulted in a reduction of up to 70% in both time spent and cognitive effort (Santos et al., 2025). In addition to helping with newsroom workflow, these tools can also be used for document summarization and speech translation (Chen et al., 2025). According to the Poynter Institute (2024), an industry training organization, generative AI tools have fundamentally transformed news production by enabling journalists to produce content ranging from broadcast scripts to long-form articles. As generative AI continues to expand, a

notable shift is occurring in which traditional journalistic judgment is blending with AI to meet the demands of modern news production (Simon, 2024).

One of the earliest applications of generative AI in journalism was Heliograf, an automated content system developed by *The Washington Post* (Lewis & Simon, 2023). The system was launched in 2016 to cover the Rio Olympics (The Washington Post experiments, 2016). The platform could produce short reports on events such as medal outcomes and competition results. Heliograf operated by processing structured data and converting it into news articles (Lewis & Simon, 2023). Routine news coverage, with data that included election tallies, sports scores, and quarterly earnings, was handed off to the system entirely (The Washington Post, 2016). That shift marked an early and defining moment in how newsrooms began using AI in workflows. Heliograf also clearly demonstrated the technology's ability to scale content creation for news organizations (Moses, 2017).

These AI platforms have been used to develop AI-powered news anchors for major broadcast organizations (Choi & Jang, 2026). The AI anchor arrived publicly in early 2018, when Xinhua News Agency introduced an on-air journalist designed to deliver news like a human presenter (Xiao et al., 2025). South Korea's Joongang Tongyang Broadcasting Company took a similar approach with "Jena," using an AI anchor across its morning news segments (Choi & Jang, 2026). Initial newsroom experimentation with AI tools culminated when Germany's WELT TV produced and aired an entire news program generated by artificial intelligence, a decision that drew widespread scrutiny (Mathey, 2025).

The development of large language models (LLMs), such as ChatGPT (OpenAI) and Claude (Anthropic), has accelerated adoption of generative AI platforms within contemporary newsrooms (Kung, 2023). Unlike earlier AI systems that required manual data input, these

platforms can produce content beyond basic automation (Liu et al., 2023). Understanding the use of generative AI platforms and their underlying implications has become essential for journalists and news organization managers (Cools & Diakopoulos, 2024).

**Part 2: AI Tools and Newsroom Workflow**

Automated transcription services, also known as automatic speech recognition (ASR) systems, represent one of the more prominent ways in which generative AI tools are transforming news workflows (Cools & Diakopoulos, 2024). For most news reporters, transcription work is labor-intensive, requiring them to manually convert audio into written text (Perreault & Ohme, 2025). According to the Center for News, Technology & Innovation (2025), transcription tools like Otter and Trint have been shown to save time in newsroom workflows. These AI-powered solutions provide efficient support for journalists handling a wide variety of projects simultaneously (Kim et al., 2019). The time saved through automated transcription proves invaluable for journalists operating in deadline-driven environments (Perreault & Ohme, 2025).

Central to the effective use of these generative AI tools is "prompting," the construction of precise instructions to guide the AI system toward an accurate response (Liu et al., 2023). Proficiency in prompting has emerged as a valued skill within newsrooms (Perreault & Ohme, 2025); however, recent research has demonstrated that AI systems can generate inaccurate or misleading information (Park & Nan, 2025). Nanz et al. (2025) found that poorly constructed prompts could produce misleading output. That risk compounds when the source material feeding the system is itself flawed or incomplete, meaning that if AI systems do not flag the problem, they reproduce it at scale (Park & Nan, 2025).

**Part 3: Ethical Concerns and Credibility in Newsrooms**

Li and Yang (2024) traced a direct line between generative AI adoption and the acceleration of misinformation across media platforms. This deficiency played out publicly at CNET, where Perreault and Ohme (2025) documented how the outlet's use of AI-generated content quietly introduced factual errors into published stories that carried the publication's editorial brand. Editors appeared unequipped to catch the kind of mistakes generated by outputs, despite going through the editing process (Perreault and Ohme, 2025).

Stojanov (2025) raised the concern that LLMs, by their nature, trend toward homogeneity, producing responses that flatten rather than reflect a larger range of voices in communities. That flattening has ideological consequences, as Chen et al. (2025) found that ChatGPT's treatment of immigration topics consistently reproduced a narrow band of perspectives. Lee et al. (2024) documented how biases embedded in LLMs shaped the way sensitive social issues were framed for general audiences in ways that favored partisan ideals over nuanced ideas.

There are additional ethical considerations when it comes to the operational efficiencies offered by AI-powered transcription platforms. As noted by Kim et al. (2019), ASR systems remain less accurate than human transcription. Such errors can further distort the accuracy of publishing, as inaccuracies in transcribed text can result in the misquotation of sources (Koenecke et al., 2020). These inaccuracies can also lead to unintended shifts and distortions in output (Koenecke et al., 2020). Koenecke et al. (2020) tested the performance of five ASR systems and found that every system produced higher error rates for Black speakers than for White speakers. The disparity illustrates a core concern that the underlying data carries bias and can shift and distort meaning. Koenecke et al. (2020) found that this difference can be attributed

to the limited representation of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in the datasets used to train these models. Harris et al. (2024) tested three ASR models across Standard American English, AAVE, Spanglish, and Chicano English and found that every minority dialect was transcribed less accurately, which extends this bias beyond a Black and White to also include Hispanic communities.

The ethical implications of generative AI content extend beyond the use of the platforms themselves to the individual journalist using these technologies (Wang et al., 2024). As previously discussed, "prompting" refers to the skill of constructing instructions that guide generative AI systems toward an appropriate response (Perreault & Ohme, 2025). Research into this skill demonstrated that the framing of a prompt can significantly affect the reliability of AI-generated responses (Wang et al., 2024). A minor variation in phrasing can produce a completely different outcome (Perreault & Ohme, 2025). The risks involving unchecked AI-generated content are not confined to newsrooms. In the case of *Mata v. Avianca*, a lawyer submitted AI-generated legal research containing entirely fabricated court citations, which underscores how generative AI content can compromise credibility across industries (Merken, 2023). These examples serve as a cautionary tale for journalists to verify AI-generated outputs and carefully evaluate the accuracy of all AI-generated content.

**Professional Perceptions and Training Gaps**

Metajournalism, which is defined as efforts to evaluate the way journalists are using social media and AI in journalistic work, has become an increasingly vital lens for understanding the profession's evolving identity (Carlson, 2016). Broad conversations indicate a clear gap

between journalists who consider AI a helpful tool and those who maintain that "the human has the final responsibility" (Perreault & Ohme, 2025, p. 1). However, it should be noted that there were many fears regarding the implementation of these AI systems, as noted by Lewis et al. (2025). The concerns included loss of employment, destruction of journalism, and domination of AI (Lewis et al., 2025).

Radcliffe (2025) found sweeping inconsistencies in how and whether news organizations formalized their approach to generative AI. Radcliffe reported that four in five participants worked with generative AI tools on the job, yet only 13% could point to a newsroom policy (2025). Across the broader research landscape, AI adoption in journalism had become something that is largely managed by reporters on their own terms (Radcliffe, 2025). Sarrionandia et al. (2025) cited that outlets with staff members exceeding 1,000 had begun developing internal AI training programs, whereas smaller local newsrooms had not. The institutional AI policy landscape reflected that imbalance, as larger organizations had begun creating their own guidelines (Cools & Diakopoulos, 2024). The Associated Press and BBC News were relatively early in establishing written guidelines that defined acceptable AI use and preserved editorial authority over news content (Cools & Diakopoulos, 2024; Poynter Institute, 2024). However, that degree of institutional clarity was not common. Sarrionandia et al. (2025) also found a knowledge gap running through most surveyed organizations, as newsroom managers had greater familiarity with AI platforms than the journalists who reported to them, and policy awareness among staff remained limited.

USA Today, a Gannett Media publication, drew criticism in 2023 after generative AI was used to produce sports articles that contained factual errors and was seen as machine-written (Wu, 2023). Without staff members editing the AI-generated content, the tool was eventually

pulled following public backlash. Examples of the generative AI content included phrases such as “close encounter of the athletic kind” and “shifted into victory gear,” language that readers found stilted and unnatural (Wu, 2023). The case with Gannett also demonstrated that even large, established news organizations can produce low-quality content when AI tools were used without clear AI editorial training and guidelines (Schultz, 2023).

## Chapter 3: Methodology

This study followed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. The quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by a qualitative phase. The survey data on journalists' experiences with generative AI were collected and analyzed before any qualitative data gathering began. Journalists’ professional backgrounds, such as their newsroom roles and current employment status, served as the independent variables. AI adoption levels, newsroom training experience, and ethical concerns connected to AI use operated as dependent variables. This design included an online survey followed by five in-depth interviews intended to expand and reflect upon the survey findings. The survey results collected from 52 journalists revealed similar themes in AI adoption, newsroom training, and overall ethical concerns regarding the use of generative AI platforms in newsrooms. The quantitative results established baseline patterns of generative AI adoption across a range of newsroom environments and professional roles. To further examine those patterns, five in-depth interviews were conducted with journalists and newsroom leaders whose firsthand accounts offered more depth than the survey data.

### Survey Participants

The quantitative phase of the research was conducted among working journalists across various media platforms, including television, digital news, print journalism, radio, and magazine

publishing. The researcher sought to recruit approximately 50 working journalists in the online survey. The study was designed primarily as exploratory research, which did not require large confirmatory samples (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Issues related to the sensitivity of the AI topic and newsroom policies made the recruitment process challenging in accessing larger samples (Diakopoulos et al., 2024). Nevertheless, comparative studies based on similar sample sizes drew strong conclusions (Adjin-Tettey et al., 2024). Recruitment was conducted via messages sent through professional networks, as well as social media outreach, LinkedIn, emails, Instagram, and X (formerly known as Twitter). Additionally, the researcher shared recruitment messages with other newsroom managers across the industry. The content was also shared through professional journalism groups, including TV Women in Broadcast Group (private Facebook group with over 5,000 members) and the Radio in the American Sector (RIAS) Fellowship Networking (over 1,000 active journalists). All participants were practicing journalists working in the field during the time of this study. Participants recruited from these networks did not represent the entire population of journalism practitioners, but only specific geographic locations, certain platforms, or professional acquaintanceship.

In this study, all participants were defined as journalists, including individuals in roles such as reporters, news anchors, producers, editors, photojournalists, and digital content managers. Although these positions involved different responsibilities, they shared similar challenges related to the use and impact of AI in news production (Adjin-Tettey et al., 2024). The study required participants to work in journalism on a full-time or freelance basis, because freelance work is common in the field and frequently carries the same professional expectations as full-time employment. The study included only participants currently working and engaged in active newsrooms.

**Interview Participants**

The qualitative component of this study involved semi-structured, in-depth interviews with a targeted sample of five journalists. The sample range was guided by Guest et al. (2006), who found that saturation of major themes tends to occur within the first few interviews when participants share a common professional background. The five interviewees collectively represented a range of professional roles across commercial and public broadcasting, including a morning news anchor, an investigative reporter, a sports journalist, a radio newsroom manager, and a senior producer. Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns across participants' experiences with generative AI in the newsroom.

**Online Survey**

The quantitative component of the study employed a 26-item online survey administered through Google Forms. The instrument included 25 multiple-choice items (Appendix A) and one open-ended response question. Items were grouped to measure four primary constructs directly tied to the study's hypotheses: (1) employer expectations for AI literacy, (2) formal AI training provided, (3) confidence using AI, and (4) concerns about misinformation and credibility. The researcher created the survey instrument based on existing literature on AI adoption in journalism. No identifiable data were collected from participants.

Employer expectations for AI literacy (H1) were assessed through two items. Question 11 asked participants what level of AI literacy their news organization expected from entry-level journalists. Question 12 turned to veteran staff, asking whether experienced journalists were expected to upskill in AI, with response options ranging from "no formal expectation" to "encouraged but not required" to "upskilling is required." These two items captured how consistently newsrooms were setting and enforcing AI competency standards across career

stages. (Questions 11 and 12) and what they provided in terms of preparation (Questions 13 and 14). The distance between those two sets of responses served as the primary measure for testing that hypothesis.

Formal AI training provided (H1 and H2) was measured through three items. Question 5 asked whether the participants' newsroom provided any professional training. Question 13 asked whether the participant's newsroom offered any training on responsible AI use, while Question 14 had them rate how adequate that training was on a five-point scale — from "not at all adequate" to "very adequate." Together, Questions 11 through 14 were designed to test H1, which predicted a gap between what newsrooms expected of their journalists when it came to AI literacy and what they actually gave them in terms of preparation.

H2 concerned journalists' confidence in using AI for reporting, and two survey items addressed it from different angles. Question 16 presented participants with four statements about generative AI in journalism that it is primarily a useful tool, primarily a threat to integrity and jobs, useful in some respects but concerning in others, or too early to judge. Whether someone sees AI as an asset or a liability is the underlying theme for H2. Question 17 followed up by asking whether participants' views on AI had shifted over time. Question 20 asked whether AI tools complement human judgment or risk creating overreliance, with response options that addressed individual journalist practices. Responses from participants who received formal or structured training (Question 13) were compared with those who received only introductory or no training to test H2, which predicted that journalists with formal AI training would report higher confidence in using AI tools.

The frequency and type of AI tool used (H3) were assessed through two different questions. Question 6 asked participants to identify which generative AI platforms were in use at

their newsroom. The item listed five by name: ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Gemini, Claude, and Perplexity AI. Question 8 allowed participants to select the AI tasks commonly used and performed by AI that occurred in the newsroom. The most frequently reported tasks included transcribing, writing or drafting, research, editing, search engine optimization (SEO) and headline creation, social media creation, and data analysis. Participants who selected multiple active-use categories were classified as regular AI users for the purpose of testing H3, which predicted that journalists who regularly used AI tools would be more likely to view AI as helpful rather than a threat to journalism.

Three survey items were grouped to operationalize H4, which predicted that journalists lacking institutional guidance would voice stronger concerns about misinformation and credibility. Question 19 asked participants to name what they considered the single most pressing risk of AI use in journalism. Question 21 expanded this topic by asking participants to identify ethical issues they associated with AI in journalism more generally. From there, Question 22 moved into perception territory — asking participants how much they believed AI-generated content had affected public trust. The scale gave them a range, from "significantly undermines trust" on one end to "could actually improve trust if disclosed transparently" on the other.

**Semi-Structured Interview Guide**

The semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide (Appendix B) with 15 open-ended questions. The interview guide was divided into four themes. The interview guide was developed in such a way that it enabled participants to discuss in-depth issues related to the same concepts that were evaluated with the help of the survey questionnaire. These themes included the expectations of employers regarding AI knowledge, confidence in the use of AI technologies, usage patterns of the AI tools, and concerns regarding misinformation (Questions

1–3). Question 1 required participants to state the name of the generative AI technologies or platforms used by their newsroom and how long they had been using them. This helped establish the background on adoption by the institution. Question 2 required participants to share examples of AI use at their workplace allowing the researcher to assess depth and regularity of use. Question 3 required participants to explain the way their newsroom ensured proper usage of the technology, and whether a policy existed or not. These questions were designed to complement survey items Q6, Q7, and Q8.

The second thematic section (Questions 4–6) addressed employer expectations for AI literacy and training provision (H1). Question 4 asked participants to identify the level of AI literacy perceived to be expected of early-career journalists with fewer than five years of experience. Question 5 asked how those expectations differed for more senior journalists with five or more years of experience. Question 6 asked if participants' newsroom had provided any formal training on responsible use of AI tools. Together, these questions were designed to test H1, by asking whether institutional demands and actual AI preparation were experienced and whether the gap varied by career stage or newsroom size.

Perceptions of AI use and confidence in its application (H2 and H3) were addressed in Questions 7–10. Question 7 asked participants to share their overall view of generative AI as a useful tool, a threat, or a combination of both. This question mirrored the format of Question 16 in the survey instrument, which allowed for direct comparison. Questions 8 through 10 moved from broad judgment to specific observation. Question 8 returned to a topic already echoed from Question 16 in the survey. It was focused on whether AI ultimately helps or hurts the quality of journalism. Questions 9 and 10 pushed further into specifics, asking to name concrete advantages and risks they had personally encountered. These responses provided evidence that was relevant

to H3's proposition that regular AI use shaped whether journalists viewed the technology as helpful rather than threatening.

Ethical concerns, misinformation, and credibility (H4) were addressed in the fourth thematic section which included Questions 11–15. Question 11 asked participants to identify any ethical concerns they held about AI use in their reporting or newsroom. The choices were centered on accuracy, bias, transparency, and authorship. Question 11 mirrored Question 21 from the survey instrument, enabling direct comparison between quantitative and qualitative responses. Question 12 asked how AI-generated content affected public perceptions of journalist credibility, which complemented survey item Question 22. Question 13 asked who bore responsibility for verifying AI outputs, complementing survey item Q24. Question 14 asked participants to assess the extent to which AI use in journalism contributed to the spread of misinformation. This was directly aligned with H4, which predicted that journalists without institutional guidance would express greater concerns about misinformation and credibility. Question 15, the closing item, asked what single change the participant would make to their newsroom's approach to AI. This question provided a forward-looking measure of how newsrooms might improve their approach to these platforms.

**Survey Procedure**

During a two-week collection window, participants received the survey link via email, direct messaging, or social media. Given that respondents were asked to speak about internal newsroom policies and potential failures, it was essential that participant anonymity be maintained. Journalists participating in this study may have been reluctant to discuss internal policies or concerns regarding AI governance at work. Therefore, no participants or

organizations were identified by name. The researcher estimated that the online questionnaire would take five to ten minutes for completion.

**Interview Procedure**

In-depth interviews were conducted via video conferencing, with Zoom as the preferred platform, depending on the availability of the participant. Interviews took about 30 to 45 minutes. Before every interview session, the participants were provided with an outline of the project. Interviews were audio-recorded or video-recorded with participant permission. All interviews were transcribed using Latakoo and Otter AI, both automated transcription platforms. To ensure accuracy, the researcher verified all quotations cited in the findings against the original recordings.

**Data Analysis**

Results from the survey were analyzed to identify patterns and trends in AI adoption, confidence levels, and newsroom expectations among journalists. The quantitative results provided information for establishing an overview of the status of AI across the journalism profession. The researcher applied thematic analysis to examine survey results and identify patterns across a large volume of open-ended responses. Moving through each response, the researcher identified recurring themes around AI literacy and professional ethics.

With each data source analyzed on its own terms, the researcher then integrated the survey results and interview responses, using the qualitative findings to contextualize and deepen what the numbers alone could not fully explain. This combination of data sets enabled a more thorough understanding of AI expectations and journalists' current level of AI preparedness. These combined approaches were designed to determine whether a gap existed between what

newsrooms expected of their journalists with respect to AI and what journalists had been trained or equipped to do.

Survey data were examined through statistics, frequency counts, and percentages. The end goal was to map the patterns in AI adoption across newsrooms, evaluate the state of journalist training and institutional policy, and gauge journalists' perceptions of AI. Using the automated calculation functions within Google Forms, the researcher calculated the percentage of participants selecting each response option. Multi-select items 6, 8, and 21 were treated as frequency distributions, with percentages calculated per response option.

Thematic analysis provided the foundation for interpreting the interview data. The researcher first read each transcript and then looked for patterns to emerge from the material itself. The process of review involved deductive categorization based on the four hypotheses and the thematic sections in the interview guide. Every theme identified in this study was anchored to the participant's language, with at least one direct quotation from the interview transcripts serving as support for the study. The researcher then evaluated each theme against the study's original questions and hypotheses. These data were used to either corroborate or challenge the assumptions made for this research.

**Survey Participants**

This study presented findings from a survey administered to 52 journalism professionals across the United States. The research examined perceptions toward the use of generative AI in newsrooms. A small subset of items invited optional open-ended commentary. Unless otherwise noted, percentages were calculated from the total number of valid responses per item, excluding non-responses. All findings were reported as they appeared in the data and were contextualized within existing literature on AI adoption in journalism where relevant. The sample was mainly

concentrated on television and broadcast news, with 43 participants identifying this as their primary sector. Multimedia and cross-platform journalists made up roughly 8%, while radio, digital, and other sectors each represented a small minority of the participants.

Most of the participants in this study were experienced professionals with more than 10 years of experience, accounting for 62% of the sample. Mid-career journalists with five to ten years of experience represented roughly 25% of the sample. Entry-level journalists, those with less than five years of experience, represented only 12% of the sample. Reporters and on-air journalists made up the largest portion of the sample at 60%, followed by producers at 16%. Editorial and management represented only 11% of the sample. The concentration of working journalists helped provide results grounded in the daily operational realities of news reporting environments. However, the perspectives of newsroom managers, who were responsible for establishing editorial standards, were underrepresented in this study. This underrepresentation of management perspectives was a notable limitation particularly given their role in shaping the formal use of AI within newsroom environments.

**Semi-Structured Interview Participants**

The qualitative interview sample consisted of five journalism professionals representing a cross-section of newsroom roles. Participants included a morning news anchor, a senior producer, an investigative consumer reporter/producer, a newsroom manager, and a sports digital news reporter. Four of the five participants were based in South Florida, whereas one participant represented a regional public broadcasting newsroom in Mississippi. This sample provided a range of commercial broadcasts, public radio, and digital journalism perspectives. This study did

not collect demographic information, such as age and ethnicity, as these variables fell outside the scope of the research questions being examined.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Survey Response: AI Adoption Is Widespread but Unevenly Governed

Most newsrooms represented in this sample had adopted one or more AI tools, with transcription identified as the most prevalent application; however, institutional adoption of these tools was uneven across the newsrooms represented in the sample. Most practices reflected an absence of formal training or institutional policy guidance. Findings related to general training provision revealed a mixed landscape. Whereas 31.4% of participants indicated that some form of professional training is offered, the largest single category was ‘occasionally, but not consistently,’ which was selected by 39.2% of participants (see Figure 1). These findings suggested that most newsrooms represented in this sample operated with no training at all.

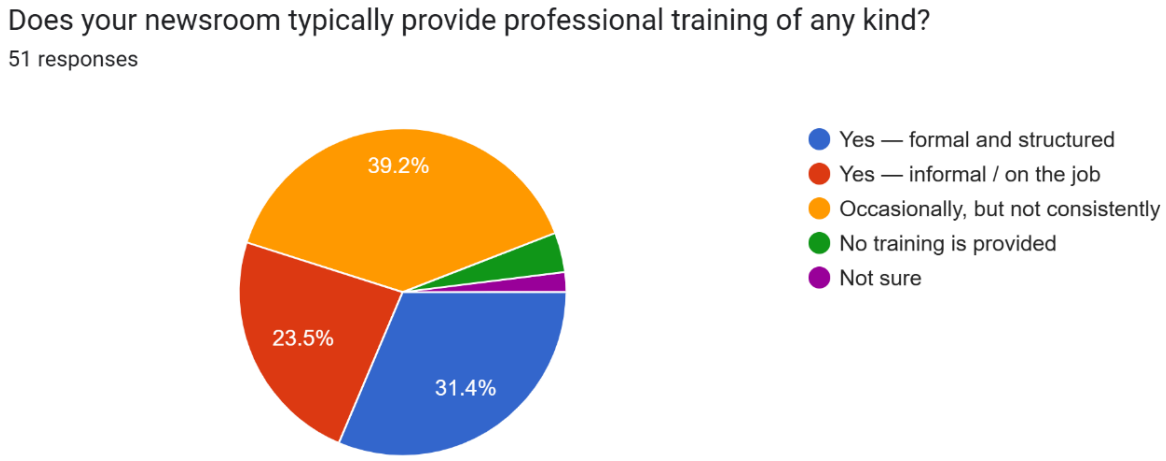


*Figure 1*

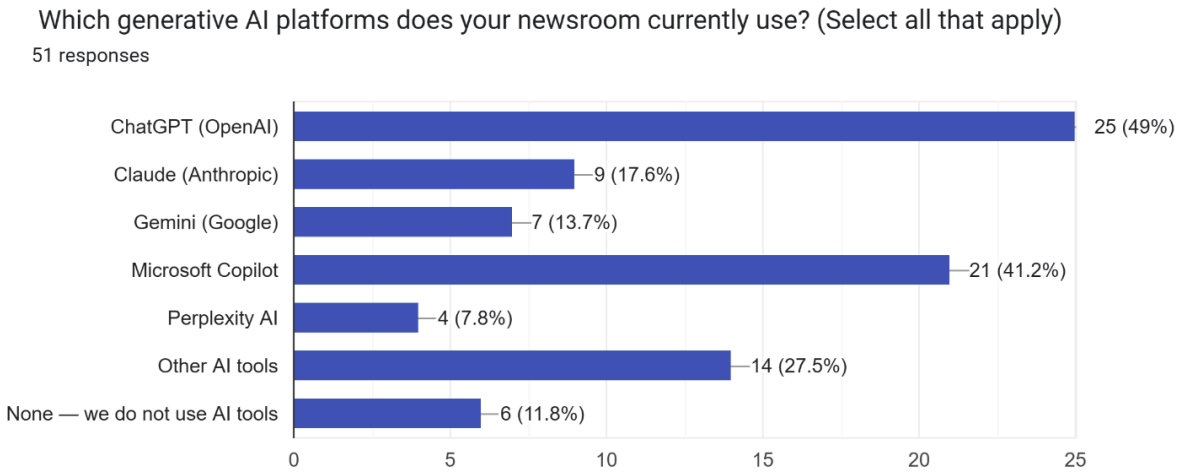


*Figure 2*

ChatGPT (OpenAI) was the most frequently used generative AI platform, reported by 49% of participants (see Figure 2). Microsoft Copilot was reported by approximately 41% of all valid responses when combinations were included, making it the most broadly present tool in the dataset. Claude (Anthropic), Gemini (Google), and Perplexity AI were reported by a smaller share of participants, with specific percentages detailed in Figure 2. About 12% of participants indicated that they had not used any AI tools.

The survey data revealed three distinct adoption pathways. Formal institutional adoption with clear policy was reported by 37.3% of participants, representing the most structured adoption approach identified in the sample (see Figure 3).

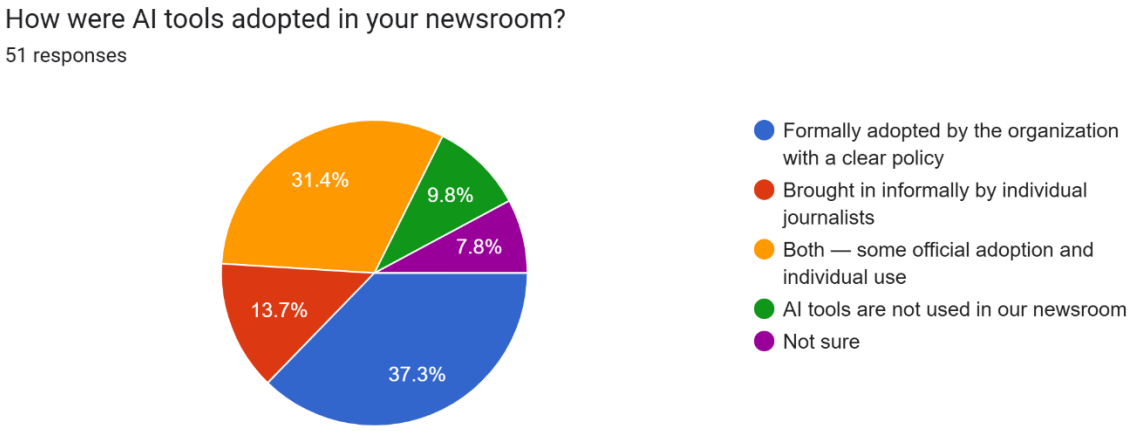


*Figure 3*

Nevertheless, approximately 33% of those surveyed reported using AI both formally and on their own terms. This finding suggested that existing policies may not have fully accounted for all AI use within the organization. An additional 13.7% of participants reported individual, informal AI use. This indicated that a subset of journalists sampled were operating outside any structured organizational framework. When participants were asked to identify how AI tools were used in daily newsroom workflows, audio and interview transcription emerged as the most frequently cited application. Approximately 71% of participants identified AI transcription as part of their daily workflow (see Figure 4).

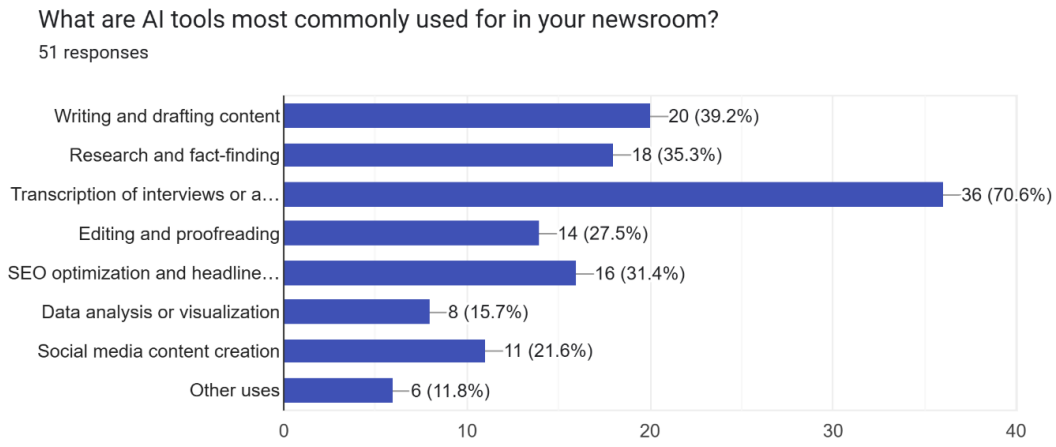


*Figure 4*

Writing, drafting, and research applications appeared in roughly a third to half of responses, indicating that a substantial portion of newsrooms had moved beyond purely mechanical AI applications into content-adjacent uses (see Figure 4). Data analysis and visualization were reported by a smaller share of participants.

**Survey Response: Training Is the Most Urgent and Unmet Need**

Expanded training emerged as a top priority, cited by half of participants as the single most important change they would make to their newsroom's AI approach. Only 18% received comprehensive, structured training, and 52% rated their organization’s training as inadequate. Most participants (58%) identified a gap between institutional AI expectations and actual training provision.

Nearly half of participants (46.2%) reported that some form of AI policy existed within their respective newsrooms (see Figure 5). The uncertainty expressed by 17.3% of participants regarding whether a formal policy existed indicated considerable ambiguity surrounding the communication and visibility of AI policies. With the 11.5% who reported no policy and the

11.5% operating under informal or verbal guidance, these figures indicate that approximately 40% of participants operated in newsrooms without a formal or structured AI governance framework.

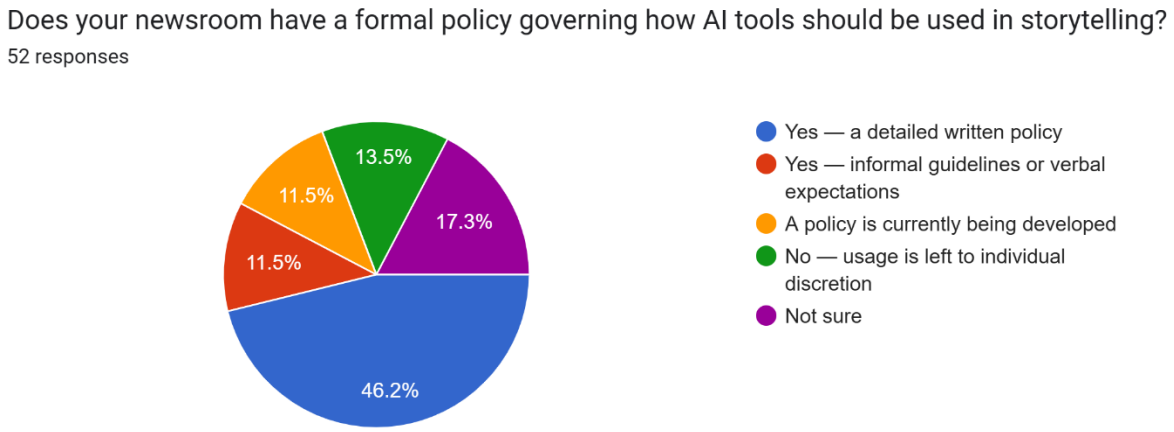


*Figure 5*

Findings related to AI-specific training revealed considerable inconsistency across the sampled newsrooms. While 17.3% of participants reported comprehensive, structured training, the largest single category, at 40.4%, indicated that training was brief or introductory (see Figure 6). An additional 28% of participants reported receiving no formal AI training, and an additional 10.0% indicated that self-directed learning was their organization's primary expectation. Only 4.0% of participants reported being in newsrooms where formal AI training had been planned but had not yet been delivered. This clear deficiency was significant given the widespread growth of AI tool use across newsrooms. The gap between tool adoption and training provision represented central findings of this research.

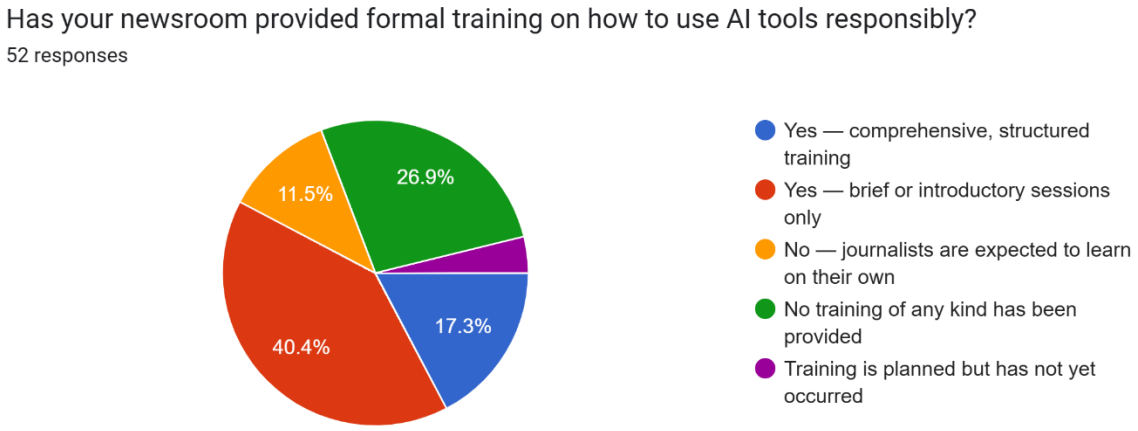


*Figure 6*

**Survey Response: Accuracy and Misinformation Are the Central Professional Anxieties**

Concerns about accuracy and misinformation represented the leading perceived risk of AI in journalism, accounting for 45.1% of responses (see Figure 7). These findings were consistent with the body of literature that identified outdated information and unverified sourcing as primary limitations of existing generative AI systems. The second highest cited risk was the erosion of critical thinking skills at 25.5%. Participants in this category appeared concerned not only that AI might produce inaccurate content, but also that its routine use could affect their critical reasoning abilities. Job displacement was cited by 17.6%, which reflected anxieties about the labor market across the media industry.

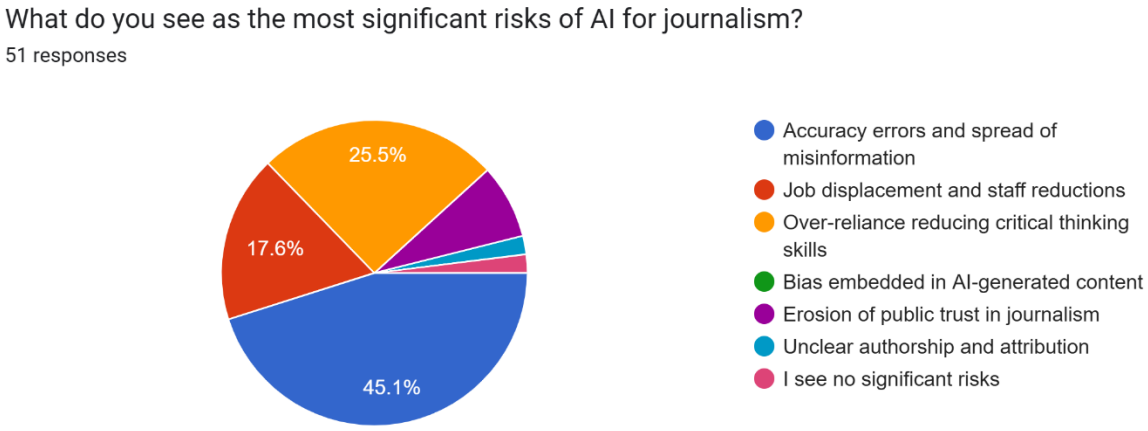


*Figure 7*

Concerns regarding factual errors and the spread of misinformation dominated the responses reported by approximately 82% of participants. Transparency and attribution were identified as significant ethical concerns, cited by 50% of participants (see Figure 8). Approximately 40% of participants stated concerns regarding potential bias in generative AI platforms. Copyright and authorship also remained a top issue for journalists, with nearly a third of participants citing it as a concern. This finding highlighted the challenges that remained unresolved with respect to data ownership, intellectual property rights, and content attribution.

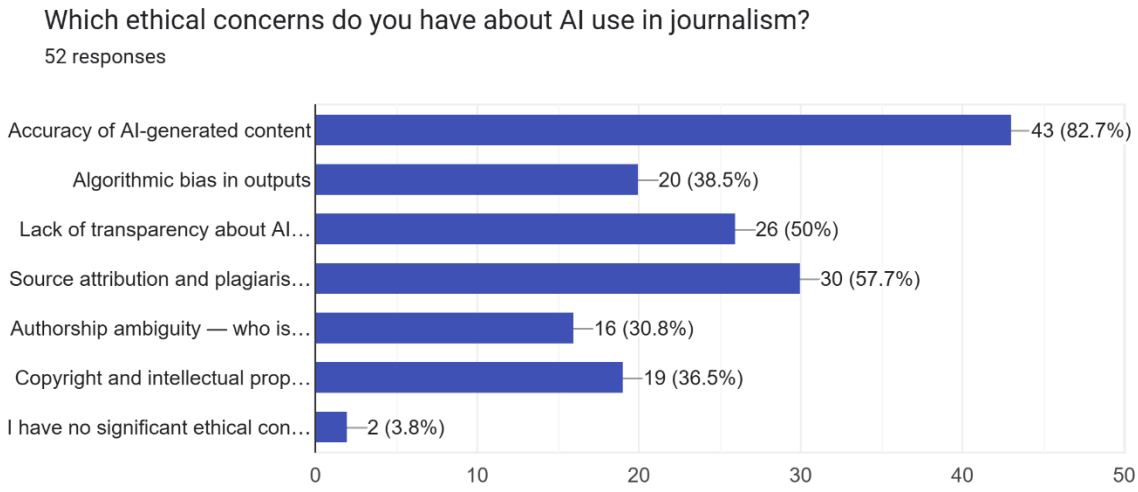


*Figure 8*

When asked about the relationship between AI and human judgment, just over half (51.9%) of participants indicated that the use of AI was dependent on the individual journalist's overall habits (see Figure 9). Twenty-two percent of participants cited overreliance on AI as a significant professional risk, particularly among early-career journalists. This pattern emerged consistently across the qualitative interview data as well, in which experienced journalists expressed concern that early-career journalists might rely on AI as a primary source rather than a supplementary tool.

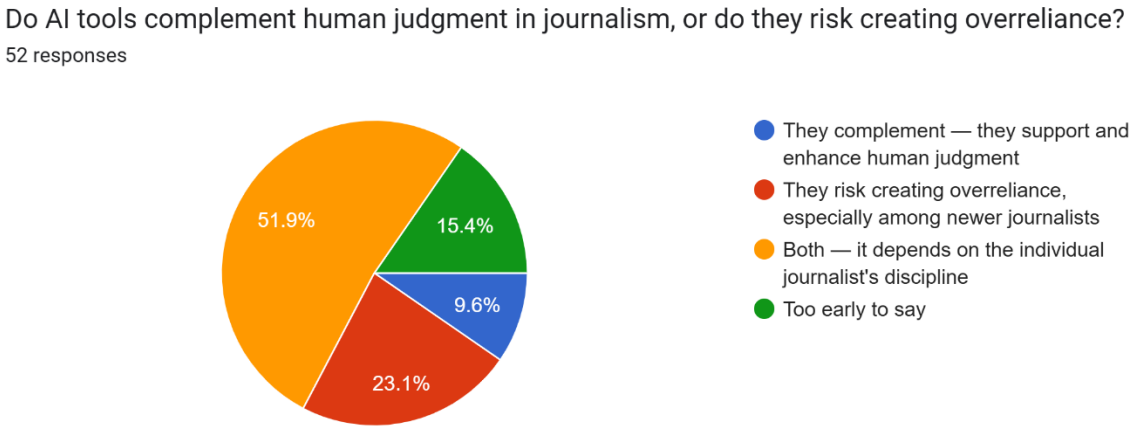


*Figure 9*

**Survey Response: Public View of AI and Media's Disclosure and Accountability Structures**

Participants expressed considerable concern about public trust, with approximately 73% indicating that AI-generated content somewhat or significantly undermined confidence in journalism, representing one of the highest levels across the sample. Only 4.0% viewed AI content as trust-neutral, and a modest 12.0% suggested that transparent disclosure could improve public trust given audiences' existing familiarity with AI in their daily lives.

Among all participants, 74% who anticipated trust erosion likely held a combination of concerns that audiences may be unable to distinguish AI-generated content from human-authored reporting or may feel deceived if AI use is not disclosed (see Figure 10). Moreover, 11.5% of participants expressed conditional optimism, offering an important counterpoint to the prevailing concern regarding trust erosion. If AI disclosure is practiced transparently, it may serve to strengthen public trust and help newsrooms reinforce principles of journalistic ethics.

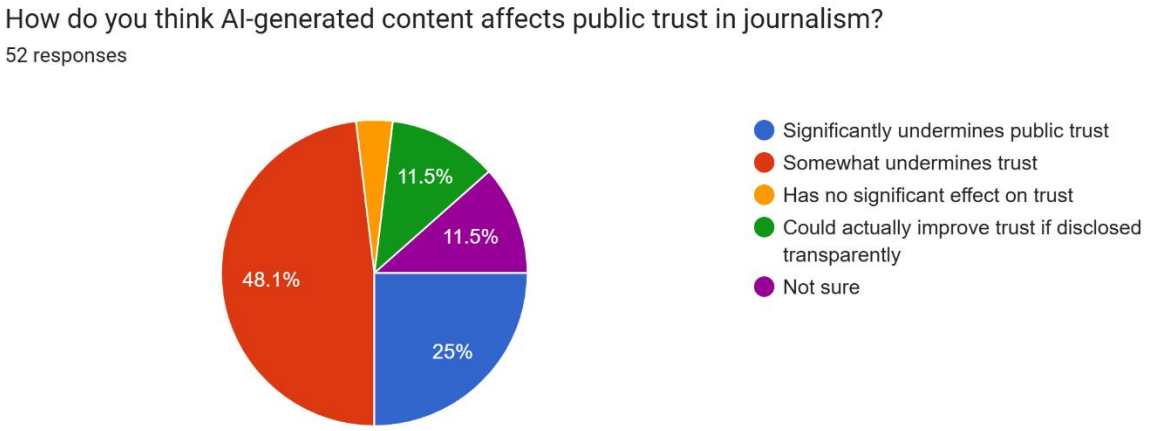


*Figure 10*

Among newsrooms that use generative AI, disclosure practices were markedly inconsistent across the sampled organizations. Of the 36 newsrooms that reported using AI, approximately 21% indicated that they consistently disclosed AI to audiences (see Figure 11). The remaining participants reported inconsistent, rare, or no disclosure of AI use to the public. Consistent with earlier findings, a substantial proportion of the sampled newsrooms lacked formal frameworks for AI use.

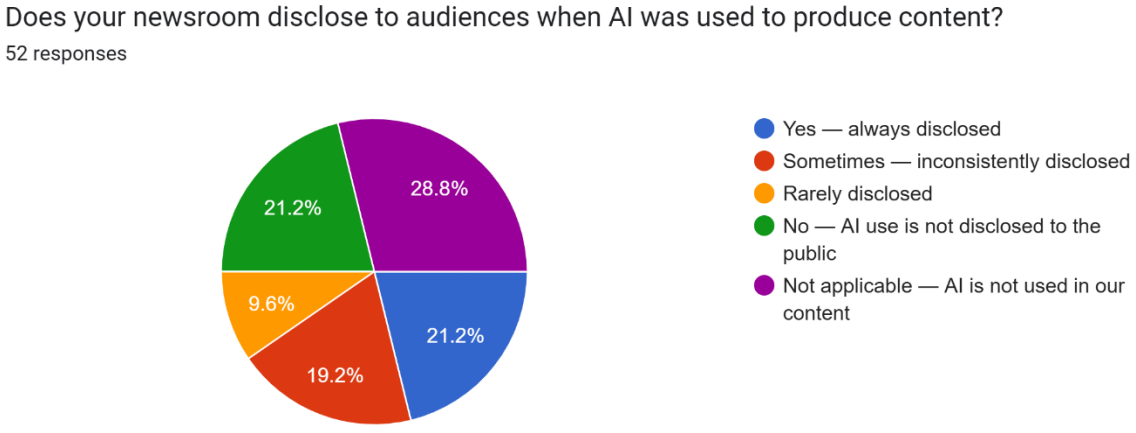


*Figure 11*

Participants held varying perspectives on who should be responsible for the verification of data used from generative AI. The most frequently selected response, at 34.6%, indicated that individual journalists who used the AI tool bore primary responsibility for verification (see Figure 12). Approximately 30.8% indicated that verification was a shared responsibility distributed across journalist and editorial management, as opposed to any one person. This was a realistic recognition of the fact that AI regulation transcended any single professional role within the newsroom. This finding reflected a systemic approach to accountability, acknowledging that the demands of AI oversight exceeded what any single journalist could manage independently. Fewer than one in five (19%) of participants expressed uncertainty regarding where verification responsibility lay.

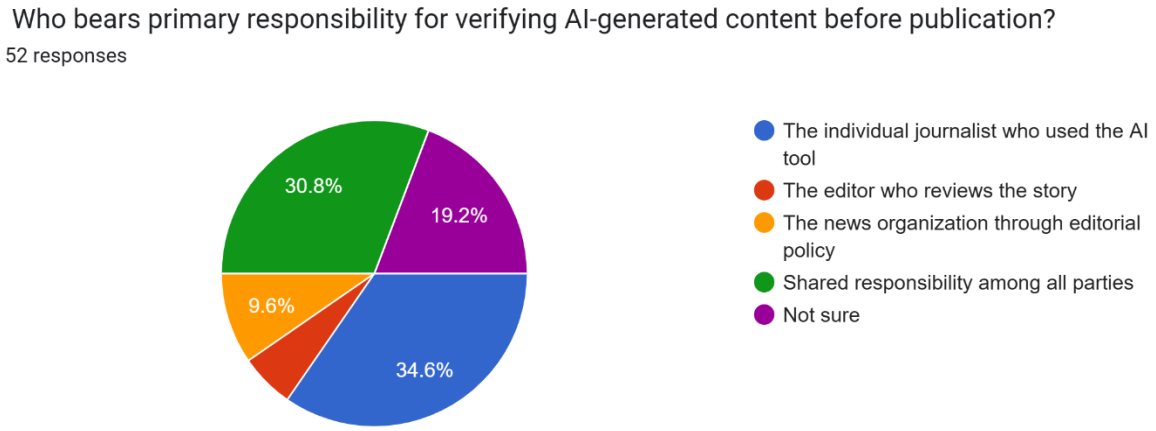


*Figure 12*

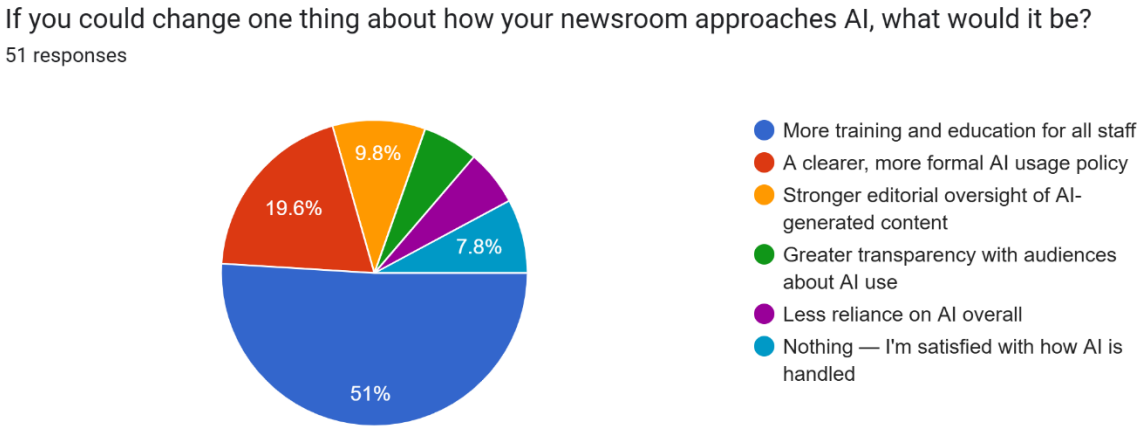


*Figure 13*

The single most consistent finding across this dataset was the overwhelming demand for expanded and improved AI training among the sampled journalists. More than half of the participants (51%) identified expanded professional training as the most important change they would recommend to their newsroom's approach to AI (see Figure 13). The second most common response category was identified as clearer institutional policy cited at 19.6%. Collectively, training and policy accounted for 70.0% of responses to this survey item.

## Semi-Structured Interview Response and Review

### *Interview Response: AI Adoption Is Widespread but Unevenly Governed*

Across all five interviews, participants described a newsroom environment where individual journalists incorporated AI into their daily workflows, often without organizational guidance. This finding was consistent with broader literature documenting the tension between individual AI adoption and the slow pace of institutional adaptation. One participant, who worked as a news anchor said, "Officially, no. But coworkers are using them in different ways,

such as research, writing, social media, even graphics. You can sometimes tell when something has AI influence. But there's no formal use in the newsroom."

Another journalist added, "AI is already integrated into our video archiving system. It allows us to quickly transcribe and translate video, which has significantly sped up writing. This integration happened about two and a half years ago, but we've been using AI for transcription closer to four or five years." This account contrasted with the anchor's description of informal and ungoverned AI use. In this instance, AI integration was well-established within the reporter's newsroom, which included the use of archiving, transcribing and editing. Another participant stated, "I haven't used it much because it doesn't really fit my workflow. It would not produce something I need for broadcast style."

***Interview Response: Training Is the Most Urgent and Unmet Need***

Three of the five interview participants indicated that they had received no formal AI training within their respective newsrooms. This finding was among the most consistent across the interview sample and aligned with survey data showing that 49.0% of participants identified expanded AI training as the most important recommended change within their newsrooms. One participant stated, "Yes, there are formal policies focused on ethics and editorial use. However, they don't fully cover creative applications like video production. Right now, there's an assumption that everyone already knows how to use AI, which isn't realistic." Collectively, participants expressed a consistent demand for expert-led training, reflecting an acknowledgment that existing internal expertise did not appear sufficient to meet the growing demands of AI integration in newsrooms. This perspective was echoed by a newsroom manager who stated, "I'd say embrace it. Learn how to use it. The longer we wait, the further behind we'll be." The

urgency shared in this statement illustrates the demand for structured AI training across sampled newsrooms. A senior producer noted that her newsroom's upcoming 'Activate AI' training course was already fully booked, a clear indicator of strong interest in learning to use AI effectively.

### *Interview Response: Accuracy and Misinformation*

All five participants identified factual accuracy and the spread of misinformation as the most significant concerns associated with the use of generative AI in journalism. These qualitative responses aligned with the quantitative survey findings that showed 45.1% of participants identified accuracy and the spread of misinformation as the most significant risk with the use of AI (see Figure 7). The qualitative interview data offered greater insight into the challenges associated with the absence of institutional policies and formal AI training. The newsroom manager stated, "If you can't verify your sources, you risk legal issues and lose credibility. Everything comes back to trust."

The news anchor stated, "AI reflects what you put into it, and without proper checks, it can reinforce incorrect information. Without standards, that's a real risk, especially for journalists working quickly. The bigger concern is how it can be used to blur the line between what's real and what isn't. That's where it becomes dangerous. Especially with how advanced it's getting in video and images. Credibility is everything in journalism." This distinction carried important implications for how training is designed in newsrooms. According to a senior producer, "with AI-generated content, it's harder to know what's really real. That's why accuracy was more important than speed. Even if we're not first, we always try to prioritize being correct."

***Interview Response: Disclosure and Accountability***

Participants disagreed on whether and how AI use should be disclosed to audiences. Even journalists at the same organization offered different answers, suggesting that there was no shared standard for transparency in most newsrooms, a finding consistent with survey data indicating that only 21.6% of participants reported always disclosing AI use, while 19.6% reported never doing so. The interview data provided greater depth by revealing the reasoning behind current disclosure practices. The news anchor stated, “No, not yet. I think disclosure depends on how AI was used. For simple graphics, maybe not necessary. But if AI is generating video or core content, then yes, there should be transparency. There needs to be a standard similar to AP (Associated Press) style for AI use. Right now, it's a gray area and a slippery slope." This finding implied that while disclosure practices required context sensitivity, the absence of any formal standard left journalists without clear institutional guidance.

One of the participants stated, "Most people don't get news from traditional outlets anymore. They get it from social media. I don't think the average consumer is overly concerned about AI use in newsrooms. However, more informed audiences may care more. If we're transparent and ethical, AI could increase trust, since people already use it in their daily lives. The bigger issue is misinformation.”

# Chapter 5: Discussion

This study examined how generative AI platforms were used in newsrooms across the United States, organized around four recurring themes identified across both data sources. The first theme covered the integration of AI tools and platforms into journalists' everyday routines. The second theme examined institutional expectations for AI literacy among journalists. The third theme highlighted the perceptions of AI use among journalists. And the fourth and final theme examined the ethical concerns surrounding misinformation, credibility and AI-generated content in journalism. Using a sequential mixed-methods design, the researcher administered an online survey to 52 working journalists and conducted five in-depth interviews to identify patterns and themes across both data sources. These findings are discussed in the sections that follow in relation to the earlier proposed hypotheses.

## Themes in AI Adoption: Widespread Use, Uneven Governance

The first research question revolved around what types of generative AI tools are being used in the industry and how they are integrated into daily storytelling and content production. The study's findings confirmed that generative AI was being used extensively in the journalism industry. ChatGPT was identified as the most frequently used generative AI platform, reported by approximately 49% of survey responses. Microsoft Copilot was the second most frequently used platform, reported by approximately 41% of responses. The data further suggested that Copilot adoption was predominantly introduced through institutional adoption rather than individual discretionary use. AI-powered transcription tools were the dominant application, cited by approximately 71% of participants. This finding was consistent with existing literature describing automated speech recognition as one of the earliest and most practical AI integrations in journalistic practice (Kim et al., 2019). The prevalence of transcription as the dominant

application may also be attributed to its lower editorial risk compared to other AI platforms (Thurman et al., 2025).

Despite the widespread adoption of generative AI, it still lacks uniformity in the governance of adoption. While 37.3% of participants said their organizations had no formal AI literacy expectations for entry-level journalists, 54.9% reported that senior journalists were expected to upskill in AI. At the same time, roughly 88% said at least some AI tools had already been adopted in their newsrooms. That gap is telling — it suggests many organizations have given implicit permission to use AI without clearly defining what competency or literacy standards should come with it. Diakopoulos et al. (2024) found that journalists commonly integrate AI at their own discretion, often without institutional support. The findings reflected that same pattern with a large portion of the sampled journalists operating without any formal framework for AI.

The interview data provided additional depth to the survey findings. One participant described a newsroom where AI had taken hold informally for research, writing, and social media. This captured what the anchor cited as 'institutionally invisible' within the newsroom environment. In contrast, the investigative reporter noted that AI had already been integrated into video archiving and transcriptions for several years prior to the study. This suggested that the gap between formal and informal adoption reflected organizational indifference. The senior producer explained that her newsroom maintains "strict standards" around AI use and permits only one approved platform. These accounts illustrate a journalism landscape in which the pace of individual AI adoption has consistently outpaced the development of institutional governance. This tension between individual AI adoption and institutional governance had also been identified as one of the defining conflicts of the AI era in newsrooms (Lewis et al., 2025).

**Supporting Hypothesis One: The Expectation-Training Gap**

The second research question examined what levels of AI literacy were expected of journalists at different stages of their careers. H1 predicted that journalists would report higher expectations for AI literacy from employers than the level of actual training provided. The data collected from both survey and interview sources supported this hypothesis.

Whereas 37.3% of participants reported no formal AI literacy expectations for entry-level journalists in their organizations, 54.9% indicated that senior journalists were expected to upskill in AI literacy. However, approximately 88% of participants indicated that AI tools had already made their way into newsrooms. This implied that organizations had extended implicit permission for AI use without clearly defining the competency standards or literacy expectations that should accompany such adoption.

With respect to AI training provisions, the data revealed a notable deficiency with only 17.3% of participants reporting that they had received structured AI literacy training. The largest group of participants (40.4%) characterized the training they had received as brief. Twenty-eight percent reported receiving no formal AI training, and 9.8% indicated that self-directed learning was the primary expectation within their organizations. When asked whether a gap existed between employer expectations and the training actually provided, 56.8% of respondents confirmed that it did.

Radcliffe (2025) found that 80% of journalists were already using generative AI tools, yet only 13% had a newsroom policy to guide them, and 58% had never received any formal training. The training gap identified in this study reflected a pattern of insufficient AI preparation across the journalism profession (Radcliffe, 2025; Simon et al., 2025).

The qualitative interview data provided concrete evidence of this gap through firsthand accounts. Three of the five interview participants reported receiving no formal AI training within their respective newsrooms. The investigative reporter, employed at a major network affiliated station with existing AI policies, nonetheless identified a significant gap in training for creative and technical applications, calling for expert-led guidance from outside the organization. The newsroom manager added to this point by stating, "I say embrace it. And, learn how to use it. The longer we wait, the further behind we will be." The senior producer pointed to the popularity of a company AI training program, which was fully booked, itself a data point suggesting that the demand for AI education among journalists substantially outpaced what was being offered.

**Supporting Hypothesis Two: Training, Confidence, and Professional Perception**

H2 predicted that journalists who had received formal training would report higher confidence in incorporating AI into their reporting practice compared to those who had received no formal training or self-directed learning. Analysis of the survey and interview data provided support for H2. None of the participants who had received structured training described AI as a 'threat to journalism's integrity and jobs.' But among those without training, the picture was less clear-cut as concerns about AI's implications came up more often. The participants who were more comfortable with AI generally spoke about generative tools in practical terms. The investigative reporter, who worked in a newsroom with a formal AI policy, stated that AI was a practical asset that let her get through large volumes of material in a fraction of the time. The participant expressed confidence in the value of AI when employed as a supplemental supporting tool rather than a replacement for human judgment.

This finding aligned with earlier research suggesting that formal training was positively associated with journalists' confidence in using AI tools (Sarrionandia et al., 2025). The absence of formal training appeared to result in lower levels of confidence among journalists in their use of AI platforms. They also appeared less prepared to critically evaluate appropriate applications of AI systems.

**Supporting Hypothesis Three: Perceptions of AI: Useful Tool, Emerging Threat, or Both?**

The third research question examined whether journalists perceived AI as a tool, a threat, or both. H3 predicted that journalists who use AI tools would be more likely to see AI as a useful tool rather than a threat. The results of the survey revealed considerable ambivalence among participants. The majority of participants (66.7%) landed somewhere in the middle, as they described AI as both useful in some ways, concerning in others. Just 13.7% saw it primarily as a useful tool, and only 9.8% called it a threat to journalism. This finding offered only partial support for H3, as AI users demonstrated moderately more favorable attitudes toward AI use through the predominance of ambivalent responses. Two participants, both regular AI users, did not view AI as a threat to journalism. Journalists with greater AI experience appeared to have developed a clear awareness of its limitations, thereby contributing to the pattern of ambivalence reflected in the responses in the "both" response category.

Perreault and Ohme (2025), found a similar trend, where journalists in Canada, Germany, the UK, and the USA generally endorsed the value of AI while maintaining strong convictions regarding the role of humans in the editorial process. The news anchor's statement, “I lean toward it being a useful tool. The bigger concern is how it can be used to blur the line between what's real and what isn't" illustrated this dual orientation among interview participants.

Credibility was described by multiple interview participants as a foundational principle of journalistic practice. Participants viewed AI as a tool that could either protect or erode journalist credibility depending on how it is used.

A notable finding was connected to the relationship between AI use frequency and journalists' perceptions of the risk of overreliance. Just over half of participants (51.9%) said whether AI complements or undermines human judgment comes down to the individual journalist's discipline. About 22% identified overreliance as a specific risk and expressed concern that earlier-career journalists might use AI as a primary source rather than a supplementary tool.

**Supporting Hypothesis Four: Ethical Concerns, Misinformation, and the Role of Institutional Guidance**

H4 examined what ethical concerns journalists held regarding AI in their reporting practices. H4 predicted that journalists without formal institutional guidance or structured AI training would report greater concerns regarding misinformation and credibility. The data collected from both the survey and interview sources provided considerable support for H4. Across both data sources, concerns about accuracy of AI-generated content emerged as the predominant ethical concern among the participants. In the survey, 84.3% of participants identified the accuracy of AI-generated content as a significant ethical concern. This represented the most frequently cited response category among all ethical concern categories. Forty-five percent of participants identified accuracy errors and the spread of misinformation as the most significant risk associated with AI use in journalism. Notably, all interview participants independently identified accuracy and misinformation as their primary concern.

These findings reflect current literature connected to this topic, as Park & Nan (2025) cited, AI does not independently generate misinformation; rather, it amplifies and lends false credibility to flawed input. These concerns were consistent with findings documented in the existing scholarly literature on AI use in journalism. Research documented the phenomenon of "hallucinations," in which large language model generated plausible but factually inaccurate responses, presenting risk for accuracy (Pew Research, 2025). As the news anchor noted, "AI reflects what you put into it, and without checks, it can reinforce incorrect information." This finding underscores the need for targeted training programs addressing prompt literacy and output verification, particularly as over-reliance on AI can erode logical inference and overall news judgment (Noain-Sánchez, 2022).

Concerns about public trust also emerged prominently, as approximately 73% of participants reported that content developed with AI somewhat or largely contributed to the lack of public trust in journalism. With respect to AI disclosure practices, inconsistency was observed across sampled newsrooms. Among the newsrooms that reported active AI use, approximately 21% consistently disclosed their AI use to their audiences. A considerably larger proportion of participants (nearly 50%) cited disclosing AI content rarely or not at all. The investigative journalist expressed a more optimistic view on the issue, suggesting that being transparent about using AI could build rather than erode trust.

## Chapter 6: Limitations, Recommendations, and Conclusion

This study carries limitations that should be considered before drawing broader conclusions. The sample size used does not fully represent the wider population of journalists in the United States. Of the 52 participants who completed the survey, most were recruited through

the researcher's own professional networks. That approach likely tilted the sample toward certain newsroom types and regions. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (62%) had more than ten years in the field. While entry-level journalists, whose responses were particularly relevant to the study, accounted for just 12% of the sample. These entry-level journalists, whose perspectives were particularly relevant to the study's research questions, made up a fraction of the sample. That imbalance matters because the research questions were built around how newer journalists are navigating AI adoption.

Most interview participants came from a commercial broadcast environment in South Florida. The only exception was from a public broadcasting newsroom in Mississippi. As a result, the sample did not represent the full range of newsroom types and regions across the United States. This is also a noted concern regarding journalists working in both print and international news organizations.

An additional limitation concerns the researcher’s professional position. The researcher is an active broadcast journalist with more than two decades of professional experience in major-market newsrooms. Recruitment for this study was conducted primarily through the researcher's own professional networks. While this access facilitated participant recruitment, it also introduced the possibility of familiarity bias. Future research would benefit from recruitment that extends beyond the researcher's direct professional network.

Of the 52 participants who completed the survey, 84.3% identified television and broadcast news as their primary professional sector. This concentration reflects the researcher's recruitment networks and the demographics of the professional groups. The experiences of print journalists, digital-only reporters, and international news professionals may differ substantially.

## Recommendations

The findings of this study inform the following recommendations for news organizations and journalists, grounded in the patterns identified across both quantitative and qualitative data sources. First, this study recommends that news organizations develop comprehensive AI training programs, moving beyond introductory or basic AI training toward structured programs. Journalists with substantive AI training reported more confidence using the tools, which points to an obvious next step for newsrooms. Training programs should not only address basic AI operation, but also strategies for navigating the editorial challenges posed by generative AI in newsroom workflows.

Second, newsrooms should develop formal AI policies that clearly identify which tools are sanctioned for use across newsgathering and production workflows. Newsrooms should also establish disclosure practices, an area where the findings revealed a notable gap. Without institutional standards, journalists are left to decide on their own whether and how to disclose AI usage to their audiences.

Finally, journalism schools and professional development programs need to build AI literacy into their programs. This would ensure that emerging journalists are fully prepared for the demands of AI-integrated newsroom environments. The curriculum should encompass prompt construction and literacy, along with critical output evaluation and ethical implications of responsible AI use in professional journalism practice.

## Conclusion

This study was designed to examine the adoption of generative AI in U.S. newsrooms, journalists' perceptions of and experiences with that adoption, and the associated risks and ethical challenges of AI integration in journalism. The newsrooms examined in this study told a consistent story: AI adoption among journalists was widespread, but governance structures lagged well behind. Journalists within the sampled population were using these generative AI tools for a range of tasks including transcription, research, writing, and editing. However, these tools were being used, often without formal training, clear policies, or established accountability structures. Without adequate training or formal policies, journalists who participated in this study used these technologies while exposing themselves to significant professional risk with respect to accuracy and credibility.

The most important contribution of this research is its documentation that training and policy are not peripheral concerns but foundational ones. Across both the survey and the interviews, the journalists who expressed greater confidence in AI were those operating within clearer institutional frameworks. Conversely, journalists within the sampled population who expressed the greatest concern were those operating in institutional environments that lacked formal guidance for AI use. Ultimately, this study finds that the window for proactive governance of AI in journalism remains open but is closing rapidly.

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## Appendix A

Survey Questions and Answers: All Questions and Responses

Q1. What media sector do you currently work in?

| Response | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Television / Broadcast news | 43 | 84.3% |
| Multimedia / Cross-platform | 4 | 7.8% |
| Radio / Podcast | 2 | 3.9% |
| Digital / Online news | 1 | 2.0% |
| Other | 1 | 2.0% |

Q2. How many years have you worked in journalism or media production?

| Response | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| More than 10 years (experienced professional) | 32 | 62.7% |
| 5 to 10 years (mid-career) | 13 | 25.5% |
| Under 5 years (entry level) | 6 | 11.8% |

Q3. How would you describe your current role in the newsroom?

| Response | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Reporter / Journalist | 31 | 60.8% |
| Producer | 8 | 15.7% |
| Other | 4 | 7.8% |

| Response | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Editor | 3 | 5.9% |
| Newsroom Manager / Director | 3 | 5.9% |
| Photojournalist / Visual Journalist | 1 | 2.0% |
| Digital Content Producer | 1 | 2.0% |

Q4. Has your use of technology changed significantly over the course of your career?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes, significantly | 36 | 70.6% |
| Somewhat | 11 | 21.6% |
| Not much | 3 | 5.9% |
| No, not at all | 1 | 2.0% |

Q5. Does your newsroom typically provide professional training of any kind?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Occasionally, but not consistently | 19 | 37.3% |
| Yes — formal and structured | 16 | 31.4% |
| Yes — informal / on the job | 12 | 23.5% |
| No training is provided | 2 | 3.9% |
| Not sure | 1 | 2.0% |

Q6. Which generative AI platforms does your newsroom currently use? (Select all that apply)

** Multi-select question; percentages reflect share of participants selecting each option.*

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| ChatGPT (OpenAI) | 24 | 47.1% |
| Microsoft Copilot | 21 | 41.2% |
| Other AI tools | 14 | 27.5% |
| Claude (Anthropic) | 9 | 17.6% |
| Gemini (Google) | 7 | 13.7% |
| None — we do not use AI tools | 6 | 11.8% |
| Perplexity AI | 4 | 7.8% |

Q7. How were AI tools adopted in your newsroom?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Formally adopted by the organization with a clear policy | 19 | 37.3% |
| Both — some official adoption and individual use | 15 | 29.4% |
| Brought in informally by individual journalists | 7 | 13.7% |
| AI tools are not used in our newsroom | 5 | 9.8% |
| Not sure | 3 | 5.9% |

Q8. What are AI tools most commonly used for in your newsroom? (Select all that apply)

** Multi-select question; percentages reflect share of participants selecting each option.*

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Transcription of interviews or audio | 36 | 70.6% |
| Writing and drafting content | 20 | 39.2% |
| SEO optimization and headline generation | 16 | 31.4% |
| Research and fact-finding | 16 | 31.4% |
| Editing and proofreading | 13 | 25.5% |
| Social media content creation | 11 | 21.6% |
| Data analysis or visualization | 8 | 15.7% |
| Other uses | 6 | 11.8% |

Q9. How would you describe the impact of AI tools on content production speed in your newsroom?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Somewhat faster | 21 | 41.2% |
| Significantly faster | 12 | 23.5% |
| No noticeable change | 9 | 17.6% |
| Not applicable — we don't use AI | 4 | 7.8% |
| Somewhat slower (verification takes more time) | 3 | 5.9% |

Q10. Does your newsroom have a formal policy governing how AI tools should be used in storytelling?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes — a detailed written policy | 24 | 47.1% |
| Not sure | 9 | 17.6% |
| No — usage is left to individual discretion | 6 | 11.8% |
| Yes — informal guidelines or verbal expectations | 6 | 11.8% |
| A policy is currently being developed | 5 | 9.8% |

Q11. What level of AI literacy is expected of entry-level journalists (under 5 years experience) at your organization?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| No formal expectations around AI literacy | 19 | 37.3% |
| Not sure | 14 | 27.5% |
| Basic — general familiarity is expected | 10 | 19.6% |
| None — training is provided on the job | 7 | 13.7% |

Q12. Are veteran journalists (10+ years) at your organization expected to upskill in AI?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| No formal expectation | 28 | 54.9% |
| Yes — encouraged but not required | 15 | 29.4% |
| Not sure | 6 | 11.8% |
| Yes — upskilling is required | 1 | 2.0% |

Q13. Has your newsroom provided formal training on how to use AI tools responsibly?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes — brief or introductory sessions only | 20 | 39.2% |
| No training of any kind has been provided | 14 | 27.5% |
| Yes — comprehensive, structured training | 9 | 17.6% |
| No — journalists are expected to learn on their own | 5 | 9.8% |
| Training is planned but has not yet occurred | 2 | 3.9% |

Q14. How adequate do you feel the AI training at your organization is for current demands?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Slightly adequate | 14 | 27.5% |
| Somewhat adequate | 14 | 27.5% |
| Not at all adequate | 11 | 21.6% |
| Mostly adequate | 8 | 15.7% |
| Very adequate | 1 | 2.0% |

Q15. In your experience, is there a gap between what newsrooms expect and what journalists are actually trained to do with AI?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Somewhat of a gap | 17 | 33.3% |
| Yes — there is a significant gap | 12 | 23.5% |
| Not sure | 10 | 19.6% |

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| No gap — training meets expectations | 6 | 11.8% |
| Minimal gap — expectations and training are mostly aligned | 5 | 9.8% |

Q16. Overall, how do you personally view generative AI in journalism?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Both — useful in some ways, concerning in others | 34 | 66.7% |
| Primarily a useful tool that enhances my work | 7 | 13.7% |
| Primarily a threat to journalism's integrity and jobs | 5 | 9.8% |
| Neutral — it's too early to say | 3 | 5.9% |
| I don't have a strong opinion | 1 | 2.0% |

Q17. Has your view of AI in journalism changed over time?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes — I've become more positive about AI | 24 | 47.1% |
| No — my view has stayed the same | 14 | 27.5% |
| Yes — I've become more skeptical or concerned | 7 | 13.7% |
| Not sure | 5 | 9.8% |

Q18. What do you see as the most significant advantages of AI for working journalists?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Speed and efficiency in content production | 13 | 25.5% |
| Faster and more accurate transcription | 12 | 23.5% |
| Research assistance and information gathering | 11 | 21.6% |
| Reducing repetitive, low-value tasks | 6 | 11.8% |
| Breaking language and translation barriers | 6 | 11.8% |
| I see no significant advantages | 2 | 3.9% |

Q19. What do you see as the most significant risks of AI for journalism?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Accuracy errors and spread of misinformation | 23 | 45.1% |
| Over-reliance reducing critical thinking skills | 12 | 23.5% |
| Job displacement and staff reductions | 9 | 17.6% |
| Erosion of public trust in journalism | 4 | 7.8% |
| Unclear authorship and attribution | 1 | 2.0% |
| I see no significant risks | 1 | 2.0% |

Q20. Do AI tools complement human judgment in journalism, or do they risk creating overreliance?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Both — it depends on the individual journalist's discipline | 27 | 52.9% |

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| They risk creating overreliance, especially among newer journalists | 11 | 21.6% |
| Too early to say | 7 | 13.7% |
| They complement — they support and enhance human judgment | 5 | 9.8% |

Q21. Which ethical concerns do you have about AI use in journalism? (Select all that apply)

** Multi-select question; percentages reflect share of participants selecting each option.*

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Accuracy of AI-generated content | 43 | 84.3% |
| Source attribution and plagiarism concerns | 29 | 56.9% |
| Lack of transparency about AI use | 26 | 51.0% |
| Algorithmic bias in outputs | 20 | 39.2% |
| Copyright and intellectual property issues | 18 | 35.3% |
| Authorship ambiguity — who is responsible for AI content? | 16 | 31.4% |
| I have no significant ethical concerns | 2 | 3.9% |

Q22. How do you think AI-generated content affects public trust in journalism?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Somewhat undermines trust | 24 | 47.1% |
| Significantly undermines public trust | 13 | 25.5% |

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Could actually improve trust if disclosed transparently | 6 | 11.8% |
| Not sure | 5 | 9.8% |
| Has no significant effect on trust | 2 | 3.9% |

Q23. Does your newsroom disclose to audiences when AI was used to produce content?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| Not applicable — AI is not used in our content | 14 | 27.5% |
| Yes — always disclosed | 11 | 21.6% |
| No — AI use is not disclosed to the public | 10 | 19.6% |
| Sometimes — inconsistently disclosed | 10 | 19.6% |
| Rarely disclosed | 5 | 9.8% |

Q24. Who bears primary responsibility for verifying AI-generated content before publication?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| The individual journalist who used the AI tool | 18 | 35.3% |
| Shared responsibility among all parties | 16 | 31.4% |
| Not sure | 9 | 17.6% |
| The news organization through editorial policy | 5 | 9.8% |
| The editor who reviews the story | 2 | 3.9% |

Q25. If you could change one thing about how your newsroom approaches AI, what would it be?

| Response | n | % |
|---|---|---|
| More training and education for all staff | 25 | 49.0% |
| A clearer, more formal AI usage policy | 10 | 19.6% |
| Stronger editorial oversight of AI-generated content | 5 | 9.8% |
| Nothing — I'm satisfied with how AI is handled | 4 | 7.8% |
| Less reliance on AI overall | 3 | 5.9% |
| Greater transparency with audiences about AI use | 3 | 5.9% |

Q26. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences with AI in your newsroom? (Optional — open response)

** 10 participants provided comments; selected responses shown below (n/a and blank responses excluded).*

| Resp. | Response |
|---|---|
| 1 | We need to learn to incorporate the use of AI to preserve the integrity of journalism. |
| 2 | I think the training needs to be mandatory and not random open training while also expected to do daily tasks. That means people will either A) opt out or B) rush through it because they don't have time. It's bad training. There also needs to be clear explanation & standards across the newsroom. |
| 3 | We haven't really discussed AI in our newsroom, unfortunately. We need to. |
| 4 | NBC as an entire organization just recently held a week of AI seminars that provided clear guidance on expectations. I sat in those virtual meetings for the week and found them enlightening. They gave clear direction on how to use and when it shouldn't be used. I think it will evolve though. I have a friend at WABC who says ChatGPT is banned in his newsroom. |

| Resp. | Response |
|---|---|
| 5 | AI helps speed up our turnaround time for filing stories by assisting with mundane tasks like logging interviews or sorting through data. It can take our broadcast scripts and reformat it in web script form. Our company adds a footnote about AI being used in the web article if it is indeed used. |
| 6 | I love the advance of technology. I've been an editor for the past 33 years, I've seen it all over the years — looking forward to the new age of AI. |
| 7 | I wish a course was offered on how to identify AI content as the imagery improves. |
| 8 | My manager has been depending on AI to approve scripts. While maybe it can offer some good insight, I don't think AI should ever be a substitute for critical thinking and nuanced editorial judgment. AI-proofed broadcast scripts come back looking like robotic slop that is devoid of the emotion that the medium is supposed to bring to life. |

## Appendix B

*Semi-Structured Interview Question Guide*

Hello, and thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is Constance Simmons, and I am a graduate student at Florida International University's School of Communication and Journalism, where I am completing my Master's.

Today's interview is part of a research study I am conducting on the use of generative AI in newsrooms across the United States. I am really grateful for your willingness to participate and share your perspective. The overall goal is to examine how artificial intelligence is currently being integrated into newsrooms. There are no right or wrong answers. I am here to listen and learn from your experience. Please feel free to speak as openly as you are comfortable with.

1. What media sector do you currently work in?

2. How many years have you worked in journalism or media production? Under 5 years (entry level), 5 to 10 years (mid-career), More than 10 years (experienced professional)

Follow-up: Has your relationship with or use of technology changed significantly over the course of your career?

3. How would you describe your current role in the newsroom?

4. Does your newsroom or organization typically provide you with professional training of any kind — whether related to technology, reporting practices, editorial standards, or something else?

5. Before we move into the main interview questions — is there anything about your professional background or your newsroom environment that you think would be helpful for me to understand?

*AI Tool Integration in Newsrooms*

1. Can you describe the generative AI tools your newsroom currently uses? How long have you been using them?
2. How are AI tools being integrated into your daily newsroom workflow? Can you walk me through a typical use case?
3. How does your newsroom communicate expectations around when and how AI tools should be used in storytelling? Is there a formal policy, or is usage left to individual discretion?

*AI Literacy Expectations Across Career Stages*

*4.* What level of AI literacy do you believe is expected of journalists entering the field today with less than five years of experience?

5. How do AI literacy expectations differ for more experienced journalists?
6. Has your newsroom provided any formal training or structured guidance on how to use AI tools responsibly and effectively?

*Perceptions of AI*

7. Overall, how do you personally view generative AI as a useful tool, a threat to journalism, or something in between?
8. Do you believe AI tools enhance the quality of journalism, or do they risk undermining it? Can you give an example from your own experience?
9. What do you see as the most significant advantages of AI for working journalists? How about the most significant risks or downsides?
10. Have you observed any shifts in how journalists, especially those early in their careers relate to or depend on AI tools in their reporting process?

*Ethical Concerns and Misinformation*

11. What ethical concerns, if any, do you have about the use of AI in your reporting or in your newsroom more broadly? Do concerns include issues of accuracy, bias, transparency, source attribution, or authorship?
12. How do you think AI-generated content affects the credibility and trustworthiness of journalism in the eyes of the public?
13. Who bears responsibility for verifying AI outputs? the journalist, the editor, or the organization?
14. How concerned are you about AI's potential to contribute to the spread of misinformation — either within your newsroom or in the broader media landscape?
15. If you could change one thing about how your newsroom currently approaches AI, whether that is training, policy, oversight, or culture what would it be?

Thank you so much! Just a reminder that everything shared here is confidential, but I'm happy to provide the transcript if you'd like to review it.

## Appendix C: Transcripts of Interviews

Interview 1

Constance Simmons 0:00
Alright, let's get started. Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. As you know, my name is Constance Simmons, and I'm a graduate student at Florida International University.

Today's interview is part of a research study I'm conducting on the use of generative AI in newsrooms across the U.S. The goal is to examine how artificial intelligence is being integrated into newsrooms and to better understand trends within the industry.

There are no right or wrong answers—I'm here to listen and learn from your experiences, so please feel free to speak openly.

To start, what media sector do you currently work in?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 0:41
I work in TV—broadcast, local news.

Constance Simmons 0:45
How many years have you worked in journalism or media production—under five years, five to ten years, or more than ten years?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 0:55
More than ten years.

Constance Simmons 0:56
How would you say your relationship with technology has changed over the course of your career?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 1:07
It's changed in every way, shape, and form. It's gone from being a nice asset to an essential tool. I remember getting the first iPhone and thinking how amazing it was to browse the real web while working on a story. Now, it's the engine behind so much of what we do.

Constance Simmons 1:37
How would you describe your current role—reporter, producer, anchor, editor, EP?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 1:49
I'd describe my role as an anchor, but also as a managing editor or functional EP. Anchoring is the visible part, but there's a lot of training, leadership, and decision-making happening behind the scenes.

Constance Simmons 2:10
Does your newsroom provide any professional training related to technology, reporting, or editorial standards?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 2:32
No.

Constance Simmons 2:42
Before we move on, is there anything else about your background or newsroom that would help better understand your role?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 2:32
Nothing specific—I think it'll come out as we talk.

Constance Simmons 2:42
Can you describe how generative AI tools are used in your newsroom? Are platforms like ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini being used—officially or unofficially?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 2:58
Officially, no. But coworkers are definitely using them in different ways—research, writing, social media, even graphics. You can sometimes tell when something has AI influence. But there's no formal use in the newsroom.

Constance Simmons 3:32
Are AI tools being integrated into your daily workflow in any way—like transcription or editing?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 3:49
Yes. There's a transcription tool built into the upload and logging process for reporters and editors. As for editing, not really—but transcription is definitely being used.

Constance Simmons 4:12
How does your newsroom communicate expectations around AI use?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 4:23
It really hasn't been addressed. There have been discussions, but no cohesive strategy or clear guidelines. I think everyone knows AI will become more relevant, but right now there's no formal approach.

Constance Simmons 5:07
What level of AI literacy do you think is expected of journalists entering the field today?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 5:17
I think a high level should be expected. Newer journalists likely already have more familiarity with AI because it's part of their daily lives. They're probably more comfortable using it professionally than veteran journalists who are adapting established workflows.

Constance Simmons 6:27
Do you think veteran journalists are expected to upskill and learn AI tools?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 6:36
Absolutely. Veteran journalists should be expected to upskill. In fact, they're in the best position to use AI responsibly because they understand verification and journalistic standards. AI can help speed up research, but experience is critical to using it correctly.

Constance Simmons 8:24
Has your newsroom provided any formal training or guidance on using AI responsibly?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 8:49
No.

Constance Simmons 8:49
Overall, do you view generative AI as a useful tool, a threat, or something in between?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 8:49
I lean toward it being a useful tool. The bigger concern is how it can be used to blur the line between what's real and what isn't. That's where it becomes dangerous—especially with how advanced it's getting in video and images. Credibility is everything in journalism, and that's where the risk lies.

Constance Simmons 10:17
Do you think early-career journalists rely on AI in their reporting?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 10:27
Yes, and that's not necessarily a problem—as long as it's not their only source. AI can be part of the process, but verification still has to happen through multiple sources.

Constance Simmons 11:38
Are there concerns around transparency, sourcing, and attribution?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 11:46
Absolutely. You have to verify anything AI gives you with credible sources. If you're just taking it at face value, that's a problem.

Constance Simmons 12:32
Has your newsroom addressed disclosure—telling audiences when AI is used?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 12:50
No, not yet. I think disclosure depends on how AI is used. For simple graphics, maybe not necessary. But if AI is generating video or core content, then yes—there should definitely be transparency.

Constance Simmons 14:05
Who is responsible for verifying AI-generated content?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 14:51
Ultimately, the organization. There needs to be a standard—similar to AP style—for AI use. Right now, it's a gray area and a slippery slope.

Constance Simmons 16:07
How concerned are you about AI spreading misinformation?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 16:26
Very concerned. AI reflects what you put into it, and without proper checks, it can reinforce incorrect information. Without standards, that's a real risk—especially for journalists working quickly.

Constance Simmons 17:28
Finally, if you could change one thing about your newsroom's approach to AI, what would it be?

Morning News Anchor (Miami) 17:37
Establishing clear policies and training. It's one of the biggest issues facing our industry, and not

addressing it is concerning. We need clear standards for how AI should—and should not—be used.

Constance Simmons: Thank you so much for your time! Just a reminder that everything shared here is confidential, but I'm happy to provide the transcript if you'd like to review it.

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Interview 2

Constance Simmons 0:03
Okay, hello—and thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. As you know, my name is Constance Simmons, and I'm a graduate student at Florida International University, where I'm completing my Master of Science degree.

Today's interview is part of a research study I'm conducting on the use of generative AI in newsrooms across the U.S. I really appreciate your willingness to participate and share your perspective.

There are no right or wrong answers—I'm here to listen and learn from your experience, so please feel free to speak openly.

Alright, let's begin. What media sector do you currently work in?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 0:44
I currently work in the broadcast news sector for NBC 6, which is the NBC-owned and operated station in Miami.

Constance Simmons 0:55
How many years have you worked in journalism or media production—under five years, five to ten years, or more than ten years?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 1:07
More than ten years.

Constance Simmons 1:10
Has your use of technology changed significantly over the course of your career? If so, how?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 1:22
Yes. When I started, the big shift was from linear to non-linear editing—that was the first major technological jump I experienced. Since then, I've seen advancements in newsroom software, like systems used to archive scripts and video.

Now we're at another turning point, where AI is being integrated into video editing, graphics, and even script production to some extent. Because I started when digital news was already established, that wasn't my biggest hurdle. Instead, I've seen more incremental advancements that are now becoming deeply integrated into the broadcast process.

Constance Simmons 2:35
How would you describe your role—reporter, producer, editor, manager, or a combination?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 2:43
Currently, I'd say reporter and producer—but over the course of my career, I've done all of those roles.

Constance Simmons 2:53
Does your newsroom provide professional training related to technology, reporting practices, or editorial standards?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 3:14
Yes.

Constance Simmons 3:20
Before we move on, is there anything else about your background or newsroom that would be helpful to understand?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 3:14
No, I think you've got a good understanding.

Constance Simmons 3:20
Can you describe the generative AI tools used in your newsroom—what you use and how long you've been using them?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 3:52
At an NBC-owned station, AI is already integrated into our video archiving system. It allows us to quickly transcribe and translate video, which has significantly sped up writing. This integration happened about two and a half years ago, but we've been using AI for transcription closer to four or five years.

We also use AI in video editing through Adobe Premiere. It can clean up audio, remove background noise, and even generate new audio elements. For example, if we need more music for a package, AI can create something similar.

AI is also used in graphics through platforms like Envato, allowing us to create templates and visuals we didn't have before. And yes, I personally use ChatGPT as well.

Constance Simmons 6:20
Would you say these tools are used more for editing, research, writing, transcription, or all of the above?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 6:30
For me personally—transcription, some video editing, and proofreading digital stories.

Constance Simmons 6:52
Has AI changed the pace or nature of content production?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 7:03
Yes, the pace has changed—we can do more with fewer resources. AI has helped keep teams lean, especially in digital and editing roles.

But in terms of reporting, it hasn't sped things up. Stories still take time because they involve real people, real events, and real research. AI can't replace that human element or critical thinking, so its impact is limited in that sense.

Constance Simmons 8:13
Does your newsroom have formal policies on how AI should be used?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 8:28
Yes, there are formal policies focused on ethics and editorial use. However, they don't fully cover creative applications like video production.

I think eventually, newsrooms will adopt standards from industries like documentary filmmaking, which already have clearer AI guidelines. But right now, the creative side is still a gray area.

Constance Simmons 10:34
What level of AI literacy do you think is expected of journalists entering the field today?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 10:42
Right now, I don't think there's an expectation—but in about five years, there likely will be.

Constance Simmons 11:34
What about journalists with more than ten years of experience?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 11:43
Currently, the expectation is actually not to use it. There's no requirement to adopt AI yet.

Constance Simmons 11:56
Has your newsroom provided training on how to use AI responsibly?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 12:06
Yes, but it's been minimal.

Constance Simmons 12:18
Do you view AI as a useful tool, a threat, or something in between?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 12:30
I don't see it as a threat at all. Journalism has a human element that AI can't replicate.

In fact, I think AI will help us produce deeper investigative stories—especially when working with large datasets. For example, AI can analyze spreadsheets much faster than we could manually. That could lead to stronger reporting and better storytelling.

Constance Simmons 14:02
What concerns do you have about AI—accuracy, bias, sourcing, attribution?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 14:18
If used properly as a tool, I don't have concerns. The problem is when AI creates journalism instead of supporting it.

AI pulls from across the internet, whether the information is accurate or not. The correct approach is to feed it verified information and use it to support—not replace—your reporting.

For example, organizations like The New York Times are developing internal AI tools that only pull from vetted content. That's the responsible way to use it.

Constance Simmons 16:26
How do you think AI affects credibility and trust in journalism?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 16:44
Most people don't get their news from traditional outlets anymore—they get it from social media. I don't think the average consumer is overly concerned about AI use in newsrooms.

However, more informed audiences may care more. If we're transparent and ethical, AI could actually increase trust, since people already use it in their daily lives.

The bigger issue is misinformation—especially from non-journalists using AI. That's outside of newsroom control but still impacts public trust overall.

Constance Simmons 19:23
Finally, if you could change one thing about your newsroom's approach to AI, what would it be?

Investigative Consumer Reporter/Producer (Miami) 19:39
More training—especially on creative applications. Right now, there's an assumption that everyone already knows how to use AI, which isn't realistic.

We need expert-led training to help us use these tools effectively and ethically, and to improve our workflow. That training should likely come from outside the organization to ensure we're learning best practices

Constance Simmons: Thank you so much for your time, Just a reminder that everything shared here is confidential, but I'm happy to provide the transcript if you'd like to review it.

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Interview #3

Constance Simmons 0:06
Alright, hello, and thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is Constance Simmons, and I'm a graduate student at Florida International University's School of Communication.

Today's interview is part of a research study I'm conducting on the use of generative AI in newsrooms across the United States. I'm very grateful for your willingness to participate and share your perspective.

The overall goal is to examine how artificial intelligence is being integrated into newsrooms and to capture both broad trends across journalism and deeper insights from professionals like you.

There are no right or wrong answers—I'm here to listen and learn from your experience, so please feel free to speak openly.

To start, what media sector do you currently work in?

Sports Digital News Reporter 0:55
I work in sports broadcasting—live sports.

Constance Simmons 0:59
And what is your role or position?

Sports Digital News Reporter 1:02
I'm a reporter, a color analyst, and I also do play-by-play commentary—so kind of a hybrid of all three.

Constance Simmons 1:15
How many years have you worked in journalism or media production—under five years, five to ten years, or more than ten years?

Sports Digital News Reporter 1:28
I'm just over ten years—and that's hard to believe. Time goes fast.

Constance Simmons 1:36
Over those ten years, has your relationship with technology changed significantly?

Sports Digital News Reporter 1:46
Yes, definitely. Technology has developed and enhanced over time, but in the last year or two, it's really accelerated—especially with AI becoming a resource for script writing and production elements in television.

Constance Simmons 2:26
How would you describe your current role—editor, manager, producer, reporter, or a combination?

Sports Digital News Reporter 2:39
I'm on-air talent—sideline reporting, color commentary, and play-by-play—but strictly on-air television work.

Constance Simmons 2:57
Does your organization provide professional training related to technology, reporting, or editorial standards?

Sports Digital News Reporter 3:11
Surprisingly, no. I do have calls with talent consultants for on-air coaching—like improving interviews or commentary—but not formal training programs.

Constance Simmons 3:42
Before we move on, is there anything about your work environment that would be helpful to understand?

Sports Digital News Reporter 3:53
Yes—I don't work in a traditional newsroom. My "newsroom" is wherever the game or event is—stadiums, venues—so it varies constantly.

Constance Simmons 4:19
Can you describe any generative AI tools you use and how long you've been using them?

Sports Digital News Reporter 4:32
Honestly, I don't use them for my work. My preparation comes from conversations with coaches and athletes, game notes, stats, and research I gather myself.

I understand how AI could help with research, but I prefer a traditional approach. Doing the research myself improves my on-air performance.

Constance Simmons 5:45
So you're not using AI for stats or game-day information?

Sports Digital News Reporter 6:00
No. I trust the process of gathering the information myself—it makes me more confident and accurate on air.

Constance Simmons 6:20
Do you think AI has changed the pace or nature of sports broadcasting content?

Sports Digital News Reporter 6:37
Yes. It can add more depth and detail, especially historically. It can enhance the level of information available.

Constance Simmons 7:02
Does your organization communicate expectations about using AI?

Sports Digital News Reporter 7:11
No, not from a talent perspective. It might be different on the production side, but not for on-air roles.

Constance Simmons 7:39
What level of AI literacy should early-career journalists have?

Sports Digital News Reporter 7:51
I don't think it's necessary early on. At that stage, you need to learn the fundamentals first. Maybe later in your career, you can incorporate AI.

Constance Simmons 8:18
Are there any expectations from your organization to use AI tools?

Sports Digital News Reporter 8:44
No, none at all.

Constance Simmons 8:48
Has your organization provided any training or guidance on AI?

Sports Digital News Reporter 8:57
No. But if it becomes expected, there should definitely be training.

Constance Simmons 9:15
How do you personally view generative AI—a tool, a threat, or something in between?

Sports Digital News Reporter 9:26
I'd say something in between. It's useful for gathering information, but journalism is about original reporting. Relying too much on AI takes away that originality.

Constance Simmons 10:15
Can AI enhance journalism or undermine it?

Sports Digital News Reporter 10:23
There's a fine line. I trust information I gather myself. I wouldn't feel comfortable relying fully on AI without verifying it.

Constance Simmons 11:11
What are some risks or downsides of AI?

Sports Digital News Reporter 11:23
Accuracy is the biggest concern. Journalism depends on trust, and incorrect information can damage credibility quickly.

Constance Simmons 12:35
What concerns do you have about AI—bias, sourcing, transparency?

Sports Digital News Reporter 12:52
A lot. AI pulls from many sources, and that can introduce bias. If you use it, you have to carefully verify everything before reporting it.

Constance Simmons 13:45
How does AI affect credibility and trust in journalism?

Sports Digital News Reporter 13:59
Credibility is everything. Viewers trust us to deliver accurate information, so it's critical to get it right.

Constance Simmons 14:33
Are there safeguards in place to verify AI-generated content?

Sports Digital News Reporter 14:51
Not that I'm aware of.

Constance Simmons 14:56
Are you concerned about AI contributing to misinformation?

Sports Digital News Reporter 15:09
Yes. It can make things easier, but easier isn't always better. Skipping steps and relying too heavily on AI isn't the right approach.

Constance Simmons 15:46
If you could change one thing about how your workplace approaches AI, what would it be?

Sports Digital News Reporter 16:03
Providing baseline education on how to use it properly would be helpful.

Constance Simmons 16:25
Is there anything else you'd like to share about AI?

Sports Digital News Reporter 16:36
It's amazing how fast technology has advanced—AI can instantly generate detailed information. But I worry it could make people a bit lazier and reduce things like reading and critical thinking, which are important.

Constance Simmons 17:33
Perfect—thank you so much for your time and participation. I really appreciate your insights. Just a reminder that everything shared here is confidential, but I'm happy to provide the transcript if you'd like to review it.

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Interview #4

Constance Simmons 0:03
All right, hello—and thank you so much. Can you hear me? I'm sorry.

Newsroom Manager 0:13
Yes, I can. I can hear you.

Constance Simmons 0:15
Thank you so much for chatting with me today. This interview is part of a research study I'm conducting on the use of generative AI in newsrooms across the U.S. I'm really grateful for your willingness to participate and share your perspective. There are no right or wrong answers—I'm here to listen and learn from your experiences, so please feel free to speak openly.

Newsroom Manager 0:38
Okay.

Constance Simmons 0:40
So, what media sector do you currently work in?

Newsroom Manager 0:44
Right now, I'm in radio—radio news.

Constance Simmons 0:48
How many years of journalism experience do you have—under five, five to ten, or more than ten?

Newsroom Manager 1:00
Twenty-five for me—so more than ten.

Constance Simmons 1:03
Has your relationship with or use of technology changed significantly over your career?

Newsroom Manager 1:10
Oh, absolutely. I started off using tapes—literally recording audio to tape and feeding it into machines. That was in the early 2000s. From then to now, it's been a dramatic change.

Constance Simmons 1:36
How would you describe your current role in the newsroom?

Newsroom Manager 1:40
I'm a managing editor. I make editorial decisions, edit scripts, and work closely with reporters to ensure our content is accurate, balanced, and meets the standards for Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Constance Simmons 2:07
Does your organization provide professional training—technology, reporting, or editorial standards?

Newsroom Manager 2:17
Yes. We use NPR training and PMJ, and occasionally Poynter. Some reporters also use NABJ and IRE trainings.

Constance Simmons 2:51
Can you describe any generative AI tools currently used in your newsroom—like ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini?

Newsroom Manager 3:06
We're not really in that space yet. The main tool we use is transcription software—"Trint"—to transcribe interviews and pull sound bites. We're still in the early stages of introducing tools like ChatGPT or Copilot, mainly because we want to maintain journalistic integrity.

Constance Simmons 3:49
Can you walk me through when AI might be used in a typical news day?

Newsroom Manager 4:01
Primarily for transcription—every day. Reporters upload audio and get transcripts. We've discussed possibly using AI for research or sorting through data, but not for writing scripts or storytelling.

Constance Simmons 4:50
How does your newsroom communicate expectations around AI use?

Newsroom Manager 4:59
It's on a case-by-case basis. For research or brainstorming, we might use it. But not for writing scripts or publishing stories.

Constance Simmons 5:37
Is there a formal policy, or is it left to individual discretion?

Newsroom Manager 5:45
No formal policy yet—we're still in the early stages. Decisions are made collaboratively between managers, the news director, and reporters.

Constance Simmons 6:15
What level of AI literacy should entry-level journalists have?

Newsroom Manager 6:27
They need to understand it and accept that it's here now—not the future. But they also need to use it responsibly. If they rely on it without fact-checking, it can damage credibility and integrity.

Constance Simmons 7:32
How do you personally view AI—tool, threat, or somewhere in between?

Newsroom Manager 7:43
Personally, I love it—I enjoy creativity and new tools. But in journalism, I draw a line. I won't

use it to write stories because of ethical concerns. I also teach, and I don't allow it in my classes. I think some of that hesitation comes from fear of getting things wrong.

Constance Simmons 9:20
What are the biggest advantages and risks of AI in the newsroom?

Newsroom Manager 9:38
The biggest advantage is saving time—research, writing, editing. But the downside is accuracy. AI isn't always up to date. I had a student cite the wrong mayor because they relied on AI. That's a big concern.

Constance Simmons 11:14
That makes sense—AI depends on its data sources.

Newsroom Manager 11:28
Exactly. It can be helpful, but also dangerous. It can impact trust, creativity, and the credibility we've worked hard to build.

Constance Simmons 12:32
Have you seen younger journalists relying on AI?

Newsroom Manager 13:01
Yes. I can tell the difference immediately. If I give an in-class writing test, it's very different from take-home work. AI can handicap them—they struggle with basics like the who, what, when, where, and why.

Constance Simmons 14:43
What ethical concerns do you have—accuracy, bias, sourcing?

Newsroom Manager 15:08
All of the above—but especially trust. If you can't verify your sources, you risk legal issues and losing credibility. Everything comes back to trust.

Constance Simmons 17:15
At NBC, we can use AI for web scripts with disclosure. Do you think transparency helps maintain trust?

Newsroom Manager 17:56
It depends on the audience. Transparency helps, but it's still a gamble. Since we don't use AI yet, it's hard to say definitively.

Constance Simmons 19:35
Who is responsible for verifying AI content?

Newsroom Manager 19:48
Ultimately, me. I ask where the information came from and verify it.

Constance Simmons 20:31
You can tell when something isn't authentic.

Newsroom Manager 20:53
Exactly.

Constance Simmons 20:53
If you could change one thing about your newsroom's approach to AI, what would it be?

Newsroom Manager 20:53
I'd say embrace it. Learn how to use it responsibly. The longer we wait, the further behind we'll be.

Constance Simmons 22:04
Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Newsroom Manager 22:08
No.

Constance Simmons 22:12
Okay, thank you. Just a reminder that everything shared here is confidential, but I'm happy to provide the transcript if you'd like to review it.

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Interview #5

Constance Simmons:
Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me today. As you know, I'm a graduate student at Florida International University's School of Communication, and this interview is part of a research study I'm conducting on the use of generative AI in newsrooms across the United States.

The goal is to better understand how artificial intelligence is currently being used in newsrooms. There are no right or wrong answers—I'm here to listen and learn from your experience, so please feel free to speak openly.

To start, what media sector do you currently work in?

Senior Producer:
Broadcast.

Constance Simmons:
And how many years of experience do you have in journalism—under five years, five to ten, or more than ten?

Senior Producer:
Five to ten years.

Constance Simmons:
Has your relationship with technology changed over the course of your career?

Senior Producer:
Yes.

Constance Simmons:
How would you describe your current role?

Senior Producer:
Producer.

Constance Simmons:
Does your newsroom provide professional training—whether in technology, reporting, or editorial standards?

Senior Producer:
Yes.

Constance Simmons:
Before we move into the main questions, is there anything about your professional background I should know—perhaps experience in other newsrooms or something unique about your role?

Senior Producer:
I'm also a professor at FIU, where I teach multimedia production to aspiring sports journalists.

Constance Simmons:
That's great—that's definitely important context. Thank you for sharing that.

Let's talk about AI. Can you describe how generative AI tools are currently used in your newsroom? I'm thinking of tools like ChatGPT, Claude, or Gemini.

Senior Producer:
We have strict standards around AI use. Right now, we're only supposed to use Copilot, which was recently implemented.

Personally, I haven't used it much because it doesn't really fit my workflow. For example, I wouldn't input a link and ask it to write a script—it wouldn't produce something in a broadcast style.

Some people use it for ideas—like shortening a lower-third banner or tightening a headline. But overall, our newsroom has very clear rules about how AI can and cannot be used, especially when it comes to altering images or video.

Constance Simmons:
How, if at all, is AI integrated into your daily workflow? For example, do you use it for transcription, editing, or research?

Senior Producer:
The main way I use AI is for translation. If I have a Telemundo script in Spanish, I'll put it into Copilot and ask it to translate it into English for my reporter.

I always review it carefully to make sure it makes sense, since translations can vary depending on regional language differences. That English version then helps the reporter write their script if there isn't already one available.

Constance Simmons:
How does your newsroom communicate expectations around AI use?

Senior Producer:
We recently had training on new standards that included AI, with breakout sessions focused specifically on its use.

There's also an upcoming "Activate AI" training through Core Labs, which has been very popular—it's actually fully booked. That shows there's strong interest in learning how to use AI effectively.

Journalism has always evolved—from radio to broadcast to digital and social—and now AI is the next phase.

Constance Simmons:
What level of AI literacy do you think is expected for journalists entering the field, especially those with less than five years of experience?

Senior Producer:
I think they should have a strong understanding of AI. I could use more training myself, but anyone using AI in a newsroom should be well-trained.

At the end of the day, our job is to be accurate and fair, so we need to fully understand the tools we're using.

Constance Simmons:
Do you think veteran journalists should also be expected to upskill and learn AI?

Senior Producer:
Yes. Journalism is constantly evolving, and experienced journalists have already adapted through many changes. AI is just the next step, so it's important for everyone to keep learning

Constance Simmons:
Do you see generative AI as a useful tool, a threat to journalism, or something in between?

Senior Producer:
I see it as a potential threat.

We already go through extensive verification processes for videos and content—checking sources, confirming timelines, and making sure everything is accurate. With AI-generated content, it's harder to know what's real.

That's why accuracy is more important than speed. Even if we're not first, we prioritize being correct.

Constance Simmons:
As a professor, have you noticed any shifts in how students or younger journalists are using AI?

Senior Producer:
Definitely. It's a challenge. I've seen students use AI to generate scripts, and it's very obvious—perfect grammar, generic structure, and formatting that looks like ChatGPT output.

I always tell them to use AI for ideas, not to copy and paste. Otherwise, they end up doing more work when I send it back.

Constance Simmons:
What ethical concerns do you have about AI—things like accuracy, bias, sourcing, or attribution?

Senior Producer:
We recently had a case where a generated image was used, and it raised questions—who created it, what inputs were used, and whether it accurately reflected the story.

In many cases, it's better to rely on in-house graphics teams. AI introduces too many unknowns for our standards.

Constance Simmons:
Do you think AI-generated content affects public trust in journalism?

Senior Producer:
Yes. A lot of people get their news from social media, where AI content is everywhere, and many don't know how to identify it.

That creates confusion and makes it harder for audiences to trust verified reporting.

Constance Simmons:
Are you concerned about AI spreading misinformation?

Senior Producer:
Absolutely. We already see it happening on social media.

Journalists go through a rigorous verification process, but misinformation spreads quickly online. That makes our job harder and can damage credibility.

Constance Simmons:
If you could change one thing about how your newsroom approaches AI, what would it be?

Senior Producer:
More training and clearer guidance.

We're all still learning, but more structured conversations and education would help us understand how to use AI effectively and responsibly.

Constance Simmons:

Thank you so much! Just a reminder that everything shared here is confidential, but I'm happy to provide the transcript if you'd like to review it.

## Student Biography

Constance Simmons is a Master of Global Strategic Communications candidate at Florida International University, where her graduate work focuses on strategic media, social media planning, and international communications. A four-time Emmy nominated journalist, she brings more than two decades of major-market broadcast experience to her academic pursuits, currently anchoring morning newscasts at NBC 6 in Miami.

Simmons holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Radio, Television, and Digital Communication, *cum laude*, from Sam Houston State University, and participated in the Democracy Student Exchange Program at Politehnica University of Timișoara, Romania. In 2025, she was selected as a RIAS Berlin Commission Fellow and named a Finalist for the Florida News Awards in Sports Reporting. She has been recognized among Legacy Magazine's "Most Powerful and Influential Black Professionals" and received the Lifetime of Leadership Award from Girl Scouts of Tropical Florida.

Simmons is based in Miami, Florida.