



Dan Gillmor

Expert on Citizen Media and the Internet

TOPIC: Technology/Media

SUBTOPICS: Social Change; Inspiration

BIG IDEAS:

We the Media

The collision of media and technology has democratized media. The tools of creation are now in everyone's hands, and people have access to many more sources of media than ever before. This has created enormous challenges for traditional media of all kinds. Nowhere has this been more obvious than in the entertainment industry, which has yet to fully understand, much less adapt to, the shift. Journalism, meanwhile, is undergoing an especially wrenching transformation, and not just in a business sense. As journalism shifts from a lecture to a conversation, all constituencies—journalists, newsmakers, and audiences—will have new rules and roles.

New Rules for Newsmakers

The old, top-down media world is evolving into a vastly more complex media ecosystem, and the result is a radically different environment for communications. Newsmakers—companies, politicians, institutions, celebrities—need to understand the conversation and then join it. A newsmaker has many constituencies, and the press is only one. People are using Web 2.0 tools of “citizen

media,” such as blogging, podcasting and discussion forums to talk about newsmakers. It's vital to join, not shun, those external conversations. But while engaging in other people's conversations is important, it's even more essential to use these same tools to do a better job with one's own communications.

Media Literacy 2.0

In a media-saturated age, when people are creators and not just consumers, we need more sophisticated media literacy. Think of it in terms of principles, which differ somewhat depending on the role one is playing in the media ecosystem. For consumers—and even media creators are more often members of an audience—the principles are: skepticism, trust, understanding media techniques, and digging deeper. For journalists, “amateur” or professional, they are: thoroughness, accuracy, fairness, independence, and transparency.

BIOGRAPHY

Dan Gillmor is a leading authority on the phenomenon of media literacy and citizen journalism. He is the director of the Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship at Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication. In that capacity, he is leading the effort to help create a culture of innovation and risk-taking in journalism education, and in the wider media world. Dan also serves as the school's Kauffman Professor of digital media entrepreneurship. Additionally, Dan is founder and director of the Center for Citizen Media, a project to enhance and expand grassroots media and its reach. The center is an affiliate of ASU and the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University Law School.

One of the preeminent thinkers on the topic of new media, Dan brings deep knowledge of the collision of media and technology and its impact. He is author of *We the Media: Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People*, a book that explains the rise of citizens' media and why it matters.

Dan spent more than 25 years in the newspaper industry as a reporter, writer, and editor and remains a highly respected journalist. For more than a decade, Dan was a columnist at the *San Jose Mercury News*, Silicon Valley's daily newspaper, and wrote a weblog for *SiliconValley.com*. He joined the *San Jose Mercury News* after six years with the *Detroit Free Press*. Before that, he was with the *Kansas City Times* and several newspapers in Vermont. During 2005 he co-founded Bayosphere, a San Francisco Bay Area website, which he sold a year later.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Vermont, Gillmor received a Herbert Davenport fellowship in 1982 for economics and business reporting at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. During the 1986-87 academic year, he was a journalism fellow at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he studied history, political theory, and economics. He has won or shared in several regional and national journalism awards.