

Problemi dell'Informazione
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Special Issue: Call for Papers

**Beyond Boosterism: New Questions and Approaches regarding
AI and Automation in Journalism**

Guest editors: Colin Porlezza, Aljosha Karim Schapals & Laura Pranteddu

With the launch of ChatGPT, artificial intelligence (AI) has yet again become a trending topic marked by a sense of boosterism. Particularly in news organizations, AI and automation came with great promises and expectations, to the point that the technology has actually become pervasive in the newsmaking process. The advanced application of computing, algorithms, and automation to the gathering, evaluation, composition, presentation, and distribution of news - sometimes referred to as computational, automated, robot, or algorithmic journalism - is commonly regarded as helpful to support newswork. However, these tools not only support journalists in their everyday work, but they change the nature, roles, and workflows of journalism, forcing journalists to find themselves more often than not in interactions with technologies and technologists around the purpose of re-designing and innovating news.

While the scholarly investigation into the different impacts of AI and automation on journalism and journalists have been pushed forward quite a bit, other areas such as the ethical risks, the responsible use, as well as the governance of AI in journalism - in particular since institutions like the European Union or the Council of Europe have started to tighten their regulatory grip around the technology - are only beginning to attract more attention from the academic community. The same applies to the changing relationships between humans and machines, since the increased use of automation requires news organizations to implement new structures and processes; first, to allow for a collaboration between technologists and journalists for tool design and development purposes; and second, to allow for hybrid human-computer news production without undermining editorial oversight. In addition, how is automation impacting journalistic epistemology, and to what extent is the need for an increased AI and data literacy in newsrooms being tackled? Overall, the excitement over the technology comes with many unresolved contradictions about the potential consequences and challenges.

For this special issue of *Problemi dell'informazione*, we are looking for papers that empirically and theoretically engage with the issue of AI and automation in journalism, offering new and alternative approaches in one or more of the following dimensions. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- The governance of AI (e.g. to what extent are regulators including news and journalism in reflections on how to regulate AI? At what level are regulatory frameworks currently sought or implemented? What kind of implications do regulatory frameworks such as the AI Act or the guidelines for responsible use of AI in journalism by the Council of Europe have on news organizations and journalism? What kind of legal challenges does automation entail?)
- Ethical issues related to the design and use of automation in journalism (how can we ensure a responsible use of AI in journalism; to what extent have Codes of Ethics been adapted, and do they need to be adapted in the first place; what kind of ethical risks and societal threats come with the technology?)
- Issues regarding human-computer interaction (what kind of interactions occur between human and non-human producers, distributors and consumers of news; how are hybrid human-AI workflows that reflect domain values designed; how and by what kind of processes are automated systems implemented in newsrooms)?

- The design of AI and automation tools in newsrooms (how can journalists and technologists collaborate in interdisciplinary ways; how are these innovation processes structured within the news organizations; what kind of workflows do co-design processes include?)
- To what extent are AI and automation changing and challenging the epistemologies of journalism (e.g. in terms of knowledge production and dissemination, but also in terms of the field's borders?)
- The need for AI and data literacy (what is currently being done to foster AI and data literacy in news organizations; how should future generations of journalists be educated to be able to collaborate in the co-design, develop, and use AI-driven media tools responsibly? What kind of responsibility do news organizations have in terms of fostering AI and data literacy among the audience?)

Key dates:

- **Deadline for abstract submissions: April 30, 2023**
- Decision by issue editors sent by: May 15, 2023
- Full paper submissions: August 30, 2023
- First round of reviews completed by: October 30, 2023
- Resubmissions of papers: December 15, 2023
- Second round of reviews completed by: January 15, 2024
- Submission of final manuscripts: February 15, 2024

Abstracts (300-500 words plus references) in English or in Italian should be submitted at:
<https://submission.rivisteweb.it/index.php/pdi>

Abstracts should be proposed for the section "Saggi". Please indicate that the proposal is for the special issue edited by *Porlezza, Schapals, Pranteddu* in the box "Comments for the editor".

For further information about the submission process, please contact: laura.pranteddu@usi.ch

About the journal:

Established in 1976, **Problemi dell'Informazione** (PdI) has been the first Italian scientific journal focusing specifically on journalism and communication studies. Since then, PdI has represented a dedicated venue for the development of a vivid debate on these topics, fueled both by academic research and by contributions from professionals. More recently PdI has expanded its aims and scope by broadly considering all forms of communication, also to keep pace with the latest transformations in the field of journalism and of journalism studies. PdI publishes contributions in Italian and in English after a rigorous double-blind peer review process.

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