

Free journalism, fake news & Truth in the age of WordPress

Marco Narzisi
Journalist
Web Designer



«Your application has been accepted»



Wordpress&News: Pros&Cons

- PROS: Everyone can create a newspaper and share facts and opinions.
- CONS: EVERYONE (oh, yes EVERYONE) can create a newspaper. Even who has not really any idea about journalism

Why WordPress can support journalism

- Open Source CMS
- Highly customizable
- Tons of fancy newspaper themes
- User friendly interface



WordPress&News: Making information

- Fact-Checking
- Analysis
- Comments
- Debates
- Promoting social causes



Case 1: // Post



WORDCAMP GENEVE 2022

Online daily newspaper. FREE contents (NO paywall)

Mission: explaining facts: «why..», «What we know about...», «.... Explained well»

Funding: Ads and subscribing for special features (no ads, commenting articles, newsletters...)

Case 2: Open



OPEN

WORDCAMP GENEVE 2022

Online daily newspaper founded by Enrico Mentana managed by a social no-profit enterprise

Mission: Bringing young readers close to information

Focus: fact-checking

Funding: Ads, personal donation by Mentana, volunteer donations for social goals

Case 3: Gas Social



Blog/Magazine founded in Ticino by a collective, managed by a no profit association

Mission: Social and political criticism, promoting social causes

Funding: yearly association fees, subscription for paid content, volunteer donations

WordPress & “news”: Making profit over information

- Satirical news (if we're lucky)
- Clickbaiting
- Fake news websites
- Misinformation websites
- Hateful content



Case 1-bis: Lercio

Satirical website, parody of a
“serious” newspaper

Mission: entertainment

Focus: funny, humoristic news
CLEARLY declared as fake

Funding: ads and merchandising

Bill Gates reveals: 'We were preparing for divorce from 2019 but waiting for PC to finish updating'

Bytes feel the pain: league against file deletion founded

San Marino too decrees 2 metre safety distance: half the population ends up in Italy

Case 2-bis: Pit Poisoners

Pit poisoners

Mission: earning money by ads using clickbaiting titles

Focus: sensationalistic news (most unverified) about crimes, often focusing on ethnical or religious features.

Real news: baby-gang of 30 mixed Italian-not Italian teenagers assault lifeguard

Voxnews title: 30 IMMIGRANTS assault..

Avoid fake news: some tips

Impressum/Team: serious websites show their editorial staff and who's responsible. Misleading websites are usually anonymous

Authors: Serious websites show the authors on every article. Fake news website, of course, don't

Design: serious websites can pay for a web designer, fake websites usually just use basic templates

Images: Serious websites use photograph agency (Keystone, Reuters, ecc..) and show credits; misleading website just take from the Web

So. 'Serious' newspaper always tell the Truth?

A serious, independent newspaper always verify what it's going to publish; run fact-checking; assume his responsibility; avoid sensationalism and click-baiting

A misleading «newspaper» just try to have your click.

Journalists can make a mistake, and if it happens, they publish a correction. Owners of fake news websites does it if they are “forced”

WordPress and journalism: a balance

WordPress has given a great opportunity to develop online journalism with a good degree of independence and freedom
It's a powerful instrument that we can use to give our contribution to information, if we believe that what we have to say is useful for society

Can we all make our own newspaper using WordPress

YES, why not?

If we just follow deontological rules of journalism

If our mission is not just earning money but making information

We can choose to tell our personal, disputable truth based on facts

Or we can bend the Truth and the facts to our selfish goals.

It's about our conscience. If we have one.

*Sometimes people pay with
their lives for saying what they
think out loud.*
Anna Politovskaja

*e le persone pagano con la vita
di dire ad alta voce ciò che pensano.*

POLIT'KOVSKAJA

THANKS!

