

Journalism: Possible Impacts of Social Medias on A Press Agency's E-Reputation: Case of The Official Press Agency Of Morocco (MAP)

BOUFOUS Samia

PhD student at the National School of Commerce and Management, Ibn Tofail University of Kenitra, Morocco

Laboratory of Research in Organizational Management Sciences, LRSGO

AZDIMOUSA Hassan

Lecturer-researcher at the National School of Commerce and Management, Ibn Tofail University of Kenitra, Morocco

Laboratory of Research in Organizational Management Sciences, LRSGO

Correspondence address: ENCG, Ibn Tofail University of Kenitra, Morocco

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Abstract:

The sector of journalism in Morocco has undergone a digital revolution during the past years through the integration of devices and social medias even more advanced and often more competitive with a greater connectivity and an increased supply of materials, products and digital services. An urgent reality which imposed itself and manifested under multiple facets. This article develops a reflection on the role of new uses of social medias in the the construction of E-reputation for a press organization. This article, which discusses the use of the Moroccan Press Agency (MAP) of social medias to influence notoriety and E-reputation, leads us to seek to understand the mechanisms that can be implemented through the practices of these tools. The context of our work is twofold and concerns: first, the massive use of social medias by press companies in search of notoriety and reputation online, in a strong competitive environment; then, and because we are part of the MAP team and we are conducting a case study that is based in particular on this organization, that was created in 1959, we propose to first expose the main issues facing press companies with regard to notoriety and E-reputation, and the reasons that led to support us on the case of MAP.

Key words: Journalism, social medias, reputation, e-reputation

Introduction :

The term "social networks" refers to individuals or organizations connected through regular social interactions, while "social media" encompasses activities involving technology, interaction, and content creation (Degenne, A., & Al. 2004). In recent years, these platforms have become central to Internet use, profoundly influencing how citizens think and act. Although they offer benefits like faster information dissemination and greater global awareness, they also present challenges that affect work habits and control various aspects of life (Cardon, D. 2011).

Many Moroccan press companies have enhanced their social media presence over the past decade to share information quickly and improve their e-reputation. This presence is now crucial for brand building and communication strategies. However, despite the interest from management, social media use in Moroccan journalism remains limited and develops slowly due to various constraints. We question whether social media practices truly contribute to the e-reputation of press companies and whether current digitalization levels are sufficient to match larger agencies. Our research intersects Information Sciences and online marketing, focusing on how press organizations leverage social media for recognition in a competitive environment.

To address these questions, we will first describe the current context and then present a literature review highlighting the impact of social media on journalism. Following this, we will outline our methodology and present qualitative study results, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of press agency social media presence. Finally, we will offer recommendations for developing a strong online reputation through effective social media use.

2. Litterature review :

To define social networks precisely, we reviewed existing literature on the topic, focusing on various definitions by different authors and their similarities and differences. We also examined definitions related to journalism and e-reputation, as well as articles linking these concepts.

2.1. Adopted methods:

Our methodology involved searching a scientific database using keywords: "**social medias**," "**journalism**," and "**e-reputation**." We conducted searches in both French and English, targeting exact matches in article titles to ensure clarity. This process resulted in 110 documents, which were narrowed down to 39 based on the clarity of definitions and relevant connections between the concepts.

The final selection criteria focused on resources providing clear definitions for social networks, journalism, and e-reputation, along with articles that interconnect these topics. Table 1 details this

research process.

2.2. Presentation and Data Analysis

Table 1 presents the various definitions of social medias that we were able to identify through the previous research and that we have selected for analysis.

Table No. 1: Evolution of the concept of Social Media: A historical perspective on its development and transformation :

Author	Year	Selected definitions of the concept
Lemieux	1999	A social network is a set of relationships among a group of actors. This group can be organized (such as a company) or unorganized (like a network of friends), and these relationships can be of various natures (power, gift exchanges, advice, etc.), specialized or not, symmetrical or not.
Fondeur et ALL	2006	It is an entity composed of a group of individuals and the relationships they maintain with one another, directly or indirectly through chains of relationships. This definition leads to the understanding of social networks as open-ended spaces.
Nicole Ellison et danah boyd	2007	Web services that allow individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a defined system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share relationships, and view and cross-reference their relationship lists with those created by others across the platform.
Boyd et Ellison	2007	Boyd and Ellison (2007) define web services that allow individuals to articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and to view and navigate their connection lists as well as those established by others within the system. The nature and terminology of these connections can vary from one site to another, enabling individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a system, manage a list of users with whom they share a link, and explore their links along with those set up by others in the system
Stenger, T., & Coutant, A	2010	It represents a revolution in the relationship with consumers and poses both opportunities and risks for businesses

Mercanti-Guérin	2010	An arrangement of links between individuals or organizations, forming a grouping that has meaning.
Antoine dupin	2010	The collection of online platforms that create social interaction among different users around digital content (photos, texts, videos) and based on various degrees of affinity. They are at the center of attention, with their audience continuously growing, and they are increasingly embraced by businesses and institutions. They represent a turning point in information dissemination and respond to new marketing and communication mechanisms.
Nicole ellisson, Anniké Thierry 2011	2011	A networked communication platform where participants have profiles associated with a unique identifier, created from a combination of user-provided content, content from 'friends,' and system data, which can publicly display relationships that may be viewed and accessed by others.
Serge Tisseron	2011	New meeting spaces that not only create different relational dynamics but also establish new economies of self-esteem, making them particularly attractive, especially due to the multitude of access and consultation pathways.
Cardon, D.	2011	A true operator of territorialization, the social network transforms the proliferating universe of the web into a familiar and navigable space. It also imposes a constraint of realism on participants, as it becomes much more challenging to manipulate one's identity traits when they are subject to the scrutiny of close contacts.
Michel Grossetti	2014	It encompasses the entire set of social relationships among individuals, organizations, or other collective forms, as well as the array of tools that provide the opportunity to manage diverse social relationships more reflectively, generally grouped under the term 'friends.' Therefore, it is not excluded that they promote changes in relational structures or at least in forms of engagement in interpersonal relationships.
Bachelet	2020	A social network is a group of actors (individuals, groups, or organizations) connected by social interactions. These interactions can vary in nature: familial, romantic (strong ties), or more distant, such as affinity, business, or work relationships (weak ties). They can be formed through direct contacts or technologically mediated means, such as letter exchanges, emails, chats, social networks, or virtual worlds.

Table N°2 : Evolution of the concept of journalism: A historical analysis of its development and transformation over time :

Author	Year	Selected definitions of the concept
Charon, J. M	1994	To explain, to report faithfully, to highlight the characteristics of a phenomenon of an achievement, such is the primary requirement imposed on this journalism, the weight of which increases with the complexity of reality.
Mathien, M.	1998	The response to a latent need more or less well expressed; knowing what is new or original, or even necessary in our "surrounding universe.
Colette brin et al.	2004	Journalism refers to an interdiscursive practice in the sense that journalism is the encounter on the same material support of several discourses and several sources of discourse.
Zelizer, Barbie	2005	Journalism constitutes an institutional framework and a large-scale and complex phenomenon, whose main effect is to exercise power, shape public opinion and control the distribution of information or symbolic resources in society.
McNair	2005	Journalism in all its variations is defined as the constant accompaniment of daily life and is an integral part of the social and cultural fabric of our lives.
Badillo et Al.	2008	Main profession in charge of the production of information in all its forms.
Gilles Gauthier	2010	Journalism is an enterprise which, by its nature, is linked, formally or structurally, with rationality in both the sense of reasoning and morality.

Olivier Le Deuff	2012	Journalism can be considered as engineering through a rationalization of the knowledge and know-how mobilized.
Proulx et al.	2012	The art of getting to the point while arousing the interest of the reader or listener. It is also the art of choosing the right angle to present meaningful or useful information in an attractive way.
Schudson	2012	The activity or practice of regularly producing and disseminating information on contemporary affairs of public interest and importance. It is a group of institutions that periodically publishes information and commentary on contemporary affairs.
Shapiro	2014	A practice that comprises activities involved in an independent search for accurate information about current or recent events.
Craft and David's	2016	Journalism is a set of transparent and independent procedures aimed at collecting, verifying and reporting truthful information of importance to citizens in a democracy.
Wasco Keita	2019	Journalism is defined as the art of getting to the point while arousing the interest of the reader or listener. It is also the art of choosing the right angle to present meaningful or useful information in an attractive way.

Table N°3 : Evolution of the concept of e-reputation: A historical analysis of its development and transformation over time :

Author	Year	Selected definitions of the concept
Chun, Davies	2001	E-reputation therefore appears a priori as an element of reputation itself, emanating specifically from all forms of electronic contact.
Frochot et Molinaro	2008	E-reputation, also known as cyber reputation, digital reputation or web reputation, is the image that Internet users have of a company or a person based on the information published about them on the Web, what others say about them, messages published by various Internet users (customers, competitors, employees, etc.) or even traces left involuntarily.

Blueboat	2009	E-reputation is composed of the image that the Internet user has of a company based on all the content that is accessible on the web through different sources: blogs, forums, social networks, consumer review sites. It goes through prescribers who give positive or negative opinions. It is important for a company to monitor what is said in order to intervene if necessary.
Merzeau,	2009	E-reputation is composed of the image that the Internet user has of a company based on all the content that is accessible on the web through different sources: blogs, forums, social networks, consumer review sites. It goes through prescribers who give positive or negative opinions. It is important for a company to monitor what is said in order to intervene if necessary.
Paquerot et al,	2011	E-reputation can be defined as the reputation built from all the perceptions that stakeholders will have of the object, from any element of information circulating on the Net.
Julien Pierre	2012	E-reputation appears as an info-communicational object.
Chun et Davis.	2012	E-reputation is the image that Internet users have of a brand or a person. It is unique and personal to each individual thanks to everything that shapes it.
Castellano et Dutot	2013	E-reputation is an extension of reputation on the Web or its transposition onto social networks.
Domenget, J. C.	2015	E-reputation can be considered as an instrumentalized construction of reputation. If today it is up to everyone to build their e-reputation, to work on their visibility to exist, for visibility professionals (SEOs, web marketers, communicators, etc.), the issue becomes crucial.

To analyze the collected data, we conducted a thorough examination of selected definitions of social medias, journalism, and e-reputation to identify their similarities and differences.

2.3. Social Medias in journalism: What impact on the development of E-Reputation?

Even though they are essential for improving and developing the visibility of the media sector, journalism and digital social networks are rarely addressed in the same context. Both require stepping outside conventional boundaries and acting beyond existing predefined parameters and traditional interventions. Indeed, the review conducted on the term "Social Networks" revealed

various definitions of the concept. The study of these definitions shows that the concept is unanimously perceived as a set of web services that allow individuals to articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and to view and browse their connections as well as those made by others within the system.

Regarding journalism, most authors agree that it is defined as a set of transparent and independent procedures aimed at gathering, verifying, and reporting truthful information that is important for citizens. As for e-reputation, it appears as the image that internet users have of a brand or a person. It is unique and personal to each individual, shaped by various factors. Whether perceived as an image, identity, related to digital traces, or as a transposition of reputation into the digital realm, several authors (Georges, 2009; Babkine et al., 2011; Guigou, 2012; Rosoor, 2012; Camille Alloing, 2016; Severo et al., 2017; Galinon-Melenec, 2019, etc.) agree that it pertains to both individuals and legal entities, thus warranting particular attention. Its significance has grown with the proliferation of digital platforms and interactions among internet users, which are, in fact, a result of the rise of the internet and the web.

According to our review, it was noted that articles related to the integration of social networks in the field of journalism began emerging in the early 2000s but notably expanded from 2006 onwards. Indeed, it is crucial to mention the role of social networks, these platforms for exchange, discussion, and dissemination, which have now become necessary reference points for journalists.

Beyond their role in the dissemination of information (Yang and Leskovec, 2011), they constitute tools in the information production process, and in this sense, Valérie Jeanne-Perrier (2018) stated that “being a journalist also involves being interested in how to present one’s information” to describe how journalists have embraced emerging social networks.

Several studies conducted in France (Mercier, 2012; Jeanne-Perrier, 2012; Péliissier and Diallo, 2013), in Europe (Cision, 2012; European Commission, 2012), and in the United States (Armstrong and Gao, 2010) reveal that journalists are increasingly integrating these platforms into their daily professional practices to enhance their visibility. This is particularly true as Rieder and Smyrniaos (2012) noted that the overall evolution of contemporary journalism seems to align well with the use of these tools.

Moreover, the implementation of social networks in journalists' daily work is multifaceted, including finding story ideas, accessing sources, conducting monitoring, promoting their work, communicating with readers and peers, and also building their e-reputation (Antheaume, A. 2013). This latter aspect, more than just a semantic or conceptual question, raises strategic issues for organizations. In a web environment where popularity is a factor of visibility, where influence surpasses informational authority, and where the (digital) identity of authors is a guarantee of credibility and even legitimacy to inform, e-reputation and its multiple documentary markers (stars,

ratings, reviews, likes, retweets, etc.) become benchmarks for media organizations in this digital informational context.

This is even more relevant when their own actions or discourse are evaluated, becoming indicators of past relationships between these organizations and their audiences, which in turn regulate future interactions.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that despite its great value in the intangible assets of a media organization, e-reputation remains a multifactorial, fluctuating asset that is difficult to build but easy to lose, requiring careful management in which communication plays a crucial role. Castellano, S., & Dutot, V. (2013).

Whether a media organization has successfully established a good reputation locally or globally, it must now pay attention to social media, as these platforms are paying attention to it. This is an undeniable reality: the “reputational” challenge has extended online, and e-reputation has become an integral part of organizational image management.

It goes without saying that while social media contributes to a company's reputation and also fosters familiarity with its employer brand (Viot et al., 2016), they also have a significant effect on the attractiveness of companies (Sivertzen et al., 2013).

Considering this factor in the measurement of reputation is imperative due to the practices of the surveyed generation, which is accustomed to new modes of communication and networking.

This is partly why monitoring one's online reputation has become a major issue for both individuals and organizations, and the methods and tools for measuring this on digital networks and the web are multiplying (Alloing, 2015; Boulier and Lohard, 2015) and are accessible to all, provided there is internet access. Anyone can then create an e-reputation and shape their digital identity. It is primarily on social networks that these reputations are constructed. They are user-friendly, making it easy to express oneself.

The main question we strive to address through our work is: To what extent can this e-reputation on social networks influence the credibility and performance of these media organizations?

3. Methodological Approach :

This research adopts a qualitative methodology, focusing on 30 professionals from the Moroccan Press Agency (MAP), including one Marketing Manager, one Multimedia Manager, one Webmaster, two Community Managers, one Editor-in-Chief, and 24 journalists from various regional offices. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, both in person and via phone, aiming to explore the concept of e-reputation in relation to journalism, social media, and its influence on the construction of a media organization's e-reputation.

4. Results and Discussion :

1. E-Reputation: An Academic definition and framework for understanding online reputation dynamics :

The interviews revealed various interpretations of e-reputation among press professionals. Most acknowledged its critical importance in today's digital landscape, emphasizing that it is shaped internally before being communicated externally. The consensus is that e-reputation is an evolution of traditional reputation, influenced by the digital realm. While some interviewees differentiate between the two concepts, others argue they refer to the same underlying idea. This divergence underscores the complexity and multiplicity of definitions surrounding e-reputation, often linked to web marketing, e-influence, and public relations.

2. Analytical perspectives on the use of Social Media platforms: A comprehensive examination of their impacts and implications :

Interviewees emphasized the necessity of a robust social media presence for enhancing e-reputation. One journalist noted the global accessibility of information has transformed local reputations into national and even international ones, necessitating a proactive approach. Another journalist with 30 years of experience stressed the risks associated with neglecting e-reputation, warning of potential financial losses. Marketing strategies must align with corporate values and adapt content to different platforms, thereby fostering audience loyalty. The Strategic Monitoring Manager also highlighted the importance of a multi-channel presence to reinforce credibility and establish the agency as a primary source of information.

3. The influence of E-reputation on credibility and organizational performance: An analytical perspective :

Community manager reflected on MAP's delayed entry into social media, noting its initial hesitance due to concerns over visibility. They acknowledged that engagement on social media has surpassed traditional news consumption among journalists. During the COVID-19 pandemic, MAP positioned itself as a credible information source, significantly enhancing its visibility and e-reputation. The agency's live updates and consistent dissemination of verified information led to an impressive increase in viewership and engagement metrics, including 644,000 organic followers and 10 million interactions within the first month of the pandemic.

Conclusion :

The rise of social connectivity has transformed stakeholder behavior online, compelling organizations to enhance their digital presence and manage their e-reputation through social media. These platforms are not just tools for communication but essential components of marketing strategies. The influence of social media on e-reputation is multifaceted, driven by both organizational content and audience engagement. For press organizations, integrating audience participation in co-constructing their e-reputation is vital, as it fosters a community around their offerings—reflecting the new dynamics of the digital landscape.

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