

Redefining Editorial Workflows through Organisational Strategies for Cross-Platform Journalism in Malaysian TV Newsrooms

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ABSTRACT

The digital transformation of the media landscape demands a re-evaluation of editorial workflows in Malaysian TV newsrooms. News editors, as key managerial figures, are central to organizational leadership and strategic policy implementation in cross-media production; their role is vital for effective cross-platform journalism. This research explores how news editors conceptualize, implement, and sustain organizational strategies to empower multimedia journalists and uphold journalistic quality across diverse media platforms. Utilizing an adapted Galtung and Ruge (1965) News Value Theory, this qualitative study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). In-depth interviews with 12 news editors from four leading Malaysian TV newsrooms yielded rich insights. Findings reveal two superordinate themes essential to editors' effectiveness in redefining workflows. The first, operational framework emphasises field support, collaborative planning and digital infrastructure, enables news editors to provide practical resources and strategic direction for efficient multi-platform content creation. The second, newsroom culture highlights empowering support and mindset, demonstrates how news editors foster an adaptive environment empowering multimedia journalist to embrace digital tools and enhance journalistic quality. This study offers valuable insights for media organizations to strategically support news editors and multimedia journalists in navigating digital convergence, fostering sustainable cross-platform journalism. Future research could investigate the long-term impact of these strategies on journalistic output and audience engagement across different media platforms.

Keywords: *Digital journalism, cross-platform, multimedia journalist, editorial, interpretative phenomenological approach.*

INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation of the global media landscape has profoundly reshaped the operational paradigms of broadcast journalism, compelling news organizations to adapt to an increasingly dynamic and convergent media ecosystem (Esa et al., 2024). In Malaysia, this paradigm shift is particularly pronounced within television newsrooms, where the imperative for cross-platform content dissemination necessitates a fundamental re-evaluation of established editorial workflows and organizational strategies. Multimedia journalists are now routinely tasked with real-time production and dissemination of content across diverse

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platforms, including for traditional television, web portals, and social media channels, all while rigorously upholding journalistic standards of accuracy, credibility, and public interest (Ren et al., 2024).

Past studies have extensively documented the challenges encountered by multimedia journalists in this fast-evolving environment, encompassing issues such as escalating workload, the demands of technological adaptation, and emergent ethical pressures (Al-Zoubi et al., 2025; Ganzabal Learreta et al., 2023). As key managerial figures, news editors bear significant responsibility for organizational leadership, content oversight, and the strategic implementation of newsroom policies. Past researchers indicated that their central position in navigating the complexities of cross-media production, particularly within legacy broadcast institutions undergoing profound digital transition, remains insufficiently explored (Benham, 2020; Rusdi & Rusdi, 2020). This constitutes a significant research gap, as the efficacy of cross-platform journalism is intrinsically linked to the strategic guidance and organizational frameworks provided by editorial leadership (Esa & Wan Zainodin, 2025).

Addressing this gap, this study focuses on the integral role of news editors within four mainstream Malaysian TV newsroom which are Media Prima Berhad, RTM, Astro Awani, and Bernama TV as they endeavour to redefine editorial workflows in response to the demands of cross-platform journalism. The primary objective of this research is to explore how these news editors conceptualize, implement, and sustain organizational strategies that not only empower multimedia journalists but also consistently uphold journalistic quality across diverse media platforms. This research examines the strategic approaches employed by news editors in managing staffing, facilitating training initiatives, fostering newsroom morale, optimizing workflow processes, and developing robust technological infrastructures.

By centring the perspectives of news editors from Malaysia's leading television newsrooms, this study aims to contribute to the broader academic discourse on media convergence, newsroom innovation, and leadership in cross-platform journalism. It underscores the imperative of strategic editorial management in ensuring that cross-platform journalism effectively serves the public interest while adapting to the complex digital realities of news production.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid evolution of the media landscape has made it increasingly urgent for newsrooms, particularly broadcast organisations, to fundamentally rethink how editorial workflows are structured and managed (Hayes & O' Sullivan, 2024). As audiences' fragment across multiple platforms and the boundaries between television, digital, and social media continue to blur, the pressure on multimedia journalists to produce timely, accurate, and platform-appropriate content has intensified considerably. This section reviews existing scholarship on the challenges confronting multimedia journalists in cross-platform environments and examines the organisational strategies, spanning collaborative practices, management support, continuous training, and editorial leadership, that underpin effective workflow redefinition in contemporary newsrooms.

One of the most consistently cited strategies for managing the demands of cross-platform journalism is collaboration (Kim, 2023). The shift toward multi-platform content creation places considerable strain on individual journalists, requiring them to simultaneously produce, package, and distribute news across formats that each carry their own editorial and

technical requirements (Opgenhaffen & Hendrickx, 2024). In response, scholars have increasingly pointed to collaborative frameworks as essential mechanisms for distributing this workload and maintaining output quality.

Gitonga et al. (2019) demonstrate that active collaboration between multimedia journalists and news editors enables more effective use of cross-media platforms, with strong communication channels between management and frontline journalists consistently associated with positive organisational outcomes. When journalists and editors work in genuine partnership, the result is not simply a more efficient workflow but a more trustworthy one, as open communication supports accuracy, transparency, and responsible reporting across platforms. Iqbal et al. (2023) extend this argument further, contending that collaborative practices play a meaningful role in reducing the spread of misinformation while simultaneously strengthening public trust in media institutions. They also highlight the strategic value of content repurposing, whereby material originally produced for one platform is thoughtfully adapted and remixed to generate new value for audiences on others.

Beyond these outcomes, collaborative workflows provide multimedia journalists with expanded access to shared data, diverse source networks, and audience engagement insights, all of which contribute to more informed editorial decision-making and broader reach (Salzmann et al., 2023). Whether collaboration takes place in person or through virtual channels, the literature underscores its importance as a vehicle for skill development, knowledge exchange, and professional mentorship. These qualities are particularly vital in cross-platform newsrooms, where the pace of production and the diversity of output formats demand that journalists continuously learn from one another and adapt collectively to shifting demands (Gushevinalti & Suparman, 2024).

While collaboration addresses many of the interpersonal and creative dimensions of cross-platform journalism, the structural and technical dimensions require equally deliberate organisational responses (Salamon, 2024). Effective management support and sustained investment in training have both been identified in the literature as indispensable to the successful redefinition of editorial workflows (Esa, 2024).

Research consistently affirms that managerial guidance is critical in helping journalists navigate the complexities of digital production environments (Pedersen et al., 2024). This is especially true during periods of technological transition, when multimedia journalists must rapidly acquire new competencies while continuing to meet the daily demands of news output. Without active managerial support, the risk of disengagement, inconsistency, and declining editorial standards increases significantly (Yang, 2024). Managers who understand the realities of cross-platform production are better positioned to allocate resources appropriately, set realistic expectations, and provide the encouragement that keeps teams motivated during challenging periods of change (Couraceiro & Paisana, 2024).

Complementing managerial support, ongoing training has been widely positioned in the literature as a non-negotiable component of modern newsroom management. In a convergent media landscape, the skill sets required of journalists are no longer fixed. Technical proficiency in digital tools, familiarity with social media algorithms, data literacy, and the ability to produce multimedia content are among the competencies that have become foundational rather than supplementary (Espinosa et al., 2024). Training programmes that address these areas not only equip multimedia journalists with the practical skills needed for multi-platform output but also foster the confidence and adaptability that allow journalists to respond effectively when new platforms and formats emerge (Das &

Upadhyay, 2024). The redefinition of editorial workflows, in this sense, is inseparable from a commitment to continuous professional development at every level of the newsroom.

The structural transformation of newsrooms over recent decades provides important context for understanding why workflow redefinition has become such a pressing concern. Historically, broadcast newsrooms operated within relatively contained and predictable production cycles, with clearly defined roles and a singular primary output (Trielli, 2025). That model has been fundamentally disrupted by the proliferation of digital and social media platforms, each demanding distinct content formats, publishing rhythms, and audience engagement strategies (Çifçi & Ayhan, 2024).

Current newsrooms have evolved from what were once primarily broadcast production environments into complex, multi-platform content hubs (Himma & Ivask, 2024). Weekly video packages, daily blog updates, podcast series, and social media content now sit alongside traditional broadcast bulletins, with multiple contributors involved in producing and distributing each type of output (Harcup, 2023). This diversification, while creating genuine opportunities for broader audience reach and richer storytelling, has also introduced significant challenges around maintaining consistency, quality, and editorial coherence across all channels. Managing these competing demands requires not only sufficient resources and infrastructure but also clearly defined workflows that integrate multi-platform production into a coherent and sustainable operational model (Peukert et al., 2024). Without such frameworks, newsrooms risk producing fragmented content that fails to serve audiences effectively on any single platform.

Underpinning all of these strategies is the broader question of organisational culture and leadership. The literature is clear that structural changes to workflows and investment in training will only deliver meaningful results if they are supported by strong, visionary leadership and a shared sense of organisational purpose.

Srisaracam (2018) draws attention to a dimension of newsroom life that is often underexplored in workflow discussions, namely the anxiety that many journalists experience around job security and the fear that digital transformation may render their skills obsolete or their roles redundant. This climate of uncertainty can significantly undermine the openness to change that cross-platform journalism requires (Verstappen & Opgenhaffen, 2024). Addressing it demands more than reassurance. It requires leadership that is capable of articulating a clear, compelling, and inclusive vision for where the newsroom is headed and what role each team member plays within it.

Senior editors, often described in the literature as the cultural anchors of the newsroom, are particularly instrumental in this regard (Yang et al., 2026). Their ability to model adaptability, champion innovation, and maintain editorial standards while navigating the pressures of digital transformation shapes the broader culture within which multimedia journalists operate. Effective editorial leadership creates an environment in which journalists feel not only technically equipped but also professionally valued and strategically supported (Bossio & Carson, 2025). When leadership and organisational culture align around a shared commitment to quality cross-platform journalism, the conditions are created for workflows to function not merely as operational procedures but as expressions of the newsroom's values and editorial identity (Assmann & Eckert, 2024).

Collectively, the literature points toward a vision of the modern newsroom in which operational efficiency and cultural health are mutually reinforcing. Redefining editorial workflows is not simply a technical or logistical undertaking. It is, fundamentally, an organisational and human one, requiring collaboration, sustained support, continuous learning, and leadership that is equal to the demands of a rapidly changing media environment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is theoretically underpinned by an integrated framework combining Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) News Value Theory with Ittefaq’s (2018) contemporary update. Galtung and Ruge's theory provides foundational insights into the criteria influencing news selection and prominence, such as frequency and unexpectedness. In the context of cross-platform journalism, these traditional news values contribute significantly to the time pressure and workflow complexities experienced by multimedia journalists.

Recognizing the limitations of the original theory in fully capturing digital complexities, Ittefaq’s (2018) updated perspective is integrated. This expanded view incorporates emergent news values like virality, interactivity, and algorithmic visibility, which exert additional pressure on news production and distribution in the digital ecosystem. Collectively, this integrated framework (refer Figure 1). offers a robust lens to examine how news editors, as strategic agents, redefine editorial workflows and implement organizational strategies to effectively manage these evolving news values and facilitate seamless cross-platform content distribution in Malaysian TV newsrooms, ensuring both speed and journalistic quality.

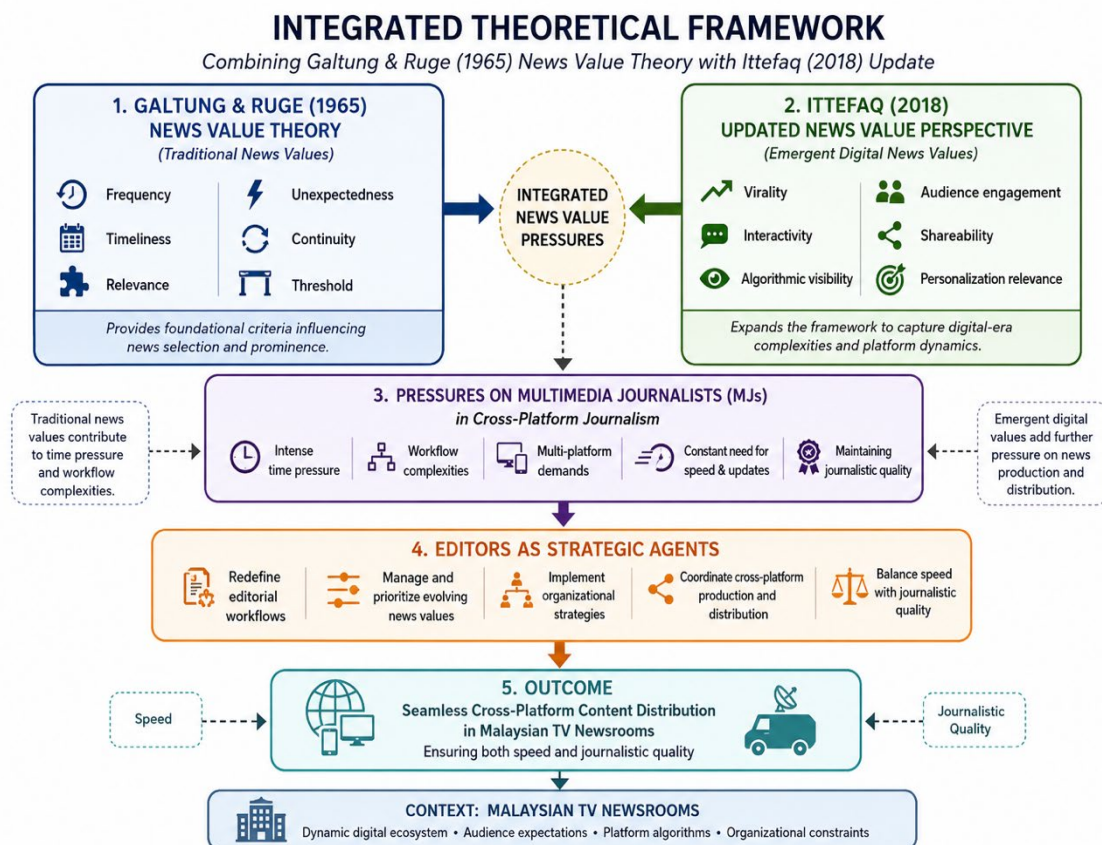


Figure 1: Integrated Theoretical Framework Galtung and Ruge (1965) with Ittefaq (2018)

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach to examine the lived experiences of news editors in Malaysian television newsrooms (refer to Figure 2). Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 news editors, each with more than ten years of professional experience, drawn from four prominent Malaysian broadcast organisations. Data collection continued until saturation was reached, at which point no new themes or insights were emerging from the interviews.

During the interpretative phase of the analysis, the researchers undertook a careful and systematic process of data exploration aimed at uncovering the meanings that participants attributed to their experiences (Bayer, 2024). This involved a close reading of individual accounts, supported by relevant participant quotes, and accompanied by concise summaries documented in structured tables. Recurring meanings across participants were then examined to identify salient subthemes, which were subsequently grouped into broader constituent themes. These themes were organised into a summary table from which superordinate themes were drawn, capturing the overarching essence of the participants' shared experiences. To strengthen the rigour of the analytical process, an independent rater cross-checked the findings, providing an additional layer of validation and minimising the risk of interpretive bias.

A notable observation during the analysis was the absence of significant variation attributable to participant characteristics, suggesting a degree of consistency and commonality across the themes identified (Srivastava et al., 2024). Transparency was maintained throughout the interpretative process by incorporating direct excerpts from the data as illustrative examples, allowing readers to trace how themes were derived and to assess the credibility of the interpretations made. This practice reflects a commitment to openness in qualitative reporting and reinforces the trustworthiness of the findings.

The analytical process was further guided by the four quality indicators outlined by Nizza et al. (2021), which encouraged careful engagement with the data, ongoing reflexivity, active involvement of informants, and transparent reporting practices. These indicators served as benchmarks for ensuring that the analysis met the standards of validity, rigour, and scholarly impact expected of high-quality IPA research. In addition, a range of tools commonly used in phenomenological inquiry were employed to further strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. These included an audit trail to document analytical decisions, member checking to verify interpretations with participants, expert consultation to provide external perspective, and triangulation to cross-validate findings across multiple sources and methods.

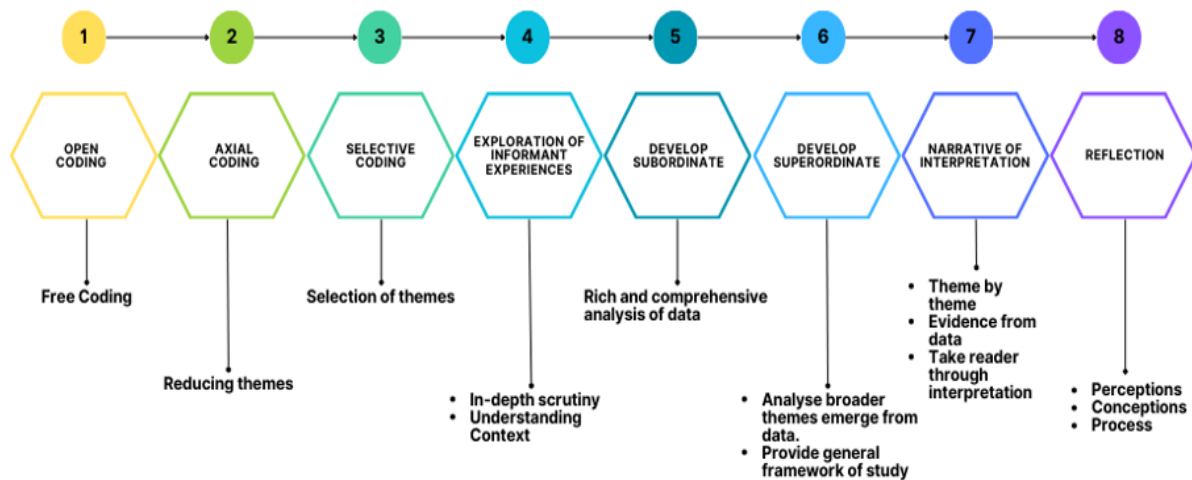


Figure 2: IPA process chart

INFORMANTS' PROFILE

The informants in this study are all news editors who occupy decision-making roles within their respective organisations. On a daily basis, they are responsible for determining which stories get covered, how those stories are framed and presented, and through which platforms the finished content reaches audiences. In overseeing the news department, they hold considerable editorial authority and are deeply embedded in the operational realities of cross-platform journalism. Their firsthand experience in managing news production and distribution across multiple media channels made them particularly well-placed to speak to the central concerns of this study.

Given this, selecting news editors from Astro Awani, Media Prima Berhad (MPB), Bernama TV, and RTM as informants was a deliberate and well-reasoned choice. These organisations represent key players in the Malaysian broadcast media landscape, and their editors bring with them practical, on-the-ground knowledge that is essential for understanding how cross-media platforms are navigated in real newsroom settings.

To ensure that the informants selected could genuinely contribute meaningful and relevant insights, purposive sampling was employed as the recruitment approach. This method allowed the researcher to identify and engage individuals whose backgrounds and roles aligned closely with the objectives of the study, thereby strengthening the overall credibility, rigour, and trustworthiness of the findings. The criteria used to guide the selection process were as follows: firstly, informants were required to hold a managerial position within the news department; secondly, they needed to have accumulated a minimum of ten years of working experience in a newsroom setting; thirdly, they had to be actively involved in daily editorial decision-making; and fourthly, selection was made regardless of gender or news desk specialisation. Table 1 presents the full profiles of the informants who participated in this study.

Table 1: Informants' profile

Informant	Gender	Age	Work Experience
Editor 1, MPB	Male	40	18 years
Editor 2, MPB	Male	45	20 years
Editor 3, Astro Awani	Male	37	14 years
Editor 4, MPB	Male	55	30 years
Editor 5, Astro Awani	Male	36	13 years

Editor 6, RTM	Female	45	21 years
Editor 7, Bernama TV	Male	54	29 years
Editor 8, Bernama TV	Female	49	25 years
Editor 9, Astro Awani	Male	47	23 years
Editor 10, RTM	Female	54	30 years
Editor 11, RTM	Female	41	17 years
Editor 12, Bernama TV	Female	44	20 years

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings demonstrate that operational frameworks, characterized by field support, collaborative planning, and robust digital infrastructure, are fundamental to redefining editorial workflows for cross-platform journalism. Furthermore, newsroom culture, highlighted by informants focused on empowering support an adaptive mindset, emerged as another critical component in this redefinition.

Table 2: Organisational strategies for redefining editorial workflows for cross-platform journalism in Malaysian TV newsrooms

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
Operational Frameworks	Field Support Collaborative Planning Digital Infrastructure
Newsroom Culture	Empowering Support Mindset

Operational Framework

The study shows that news editors sit at the heart of cross-platform journalism in Malaysian TV newsrooms. As their organisations expand across television, online news, and social platforms, editors become the key figures who hold the workflow together, maintain content standards, and support teams both inside the newsroom and in the field.

One distinct finding is the need for a strong operational framework that combines dependable field support, thoughtful planning, and a reliable digital system. Editors are usually the first to know when something goes wrong on an assignment. They hear about malfunctioning equipment, unstable internet connections, or delays that disrupt the flow of information. When these problems are not addressed quickly, they affect not only the speed of production but also the credibility of the final story. This highlights how important it is for editors to push for technical support that can respond quickly. Many editors describe the value of having teams on standby or remote help available during intense coverage such as major elections or national emergencies.

Planning also plays a major role in the editor's job. Many editors rely on pre-event simulations or scenario-based rehearsals to understand where bottlenecks might happen. This preparation becomes especially useful during complicated coverage that involves live broadcasts, online updates, and social media activity happening at the same time. These rehearsals help editors coordinate the newsroom more smoothly and prepare field teams for unexpected changes (Yuyu et al., 2024).

Collaboration across different departments is another essential part of the process. Editors often have to bring the news desk, digital team, and production crew into the same conversation to ensure that everyone follows the same direction and timelines. When

communication flows clearly at the planning stage, it reduces mistakes and prevents delays later in the workflow.

As digital tools become increasingly important, editors are also expected to make sure that field journalists are properly equipped. This might include power banks, lighting kits, tripods, or mobile devices suited to the assignment. Having oversight of these details helps editors maintain technical and visual standards across all platforms.

Overall, the study shows that the role of the news editor has moved far beyond traditional gatekeeping. Editors now act as planners, problem-solvers, and operational leaders. By strengthening support for field teams, encouraging open collaboration across departments, and ensuring that the newsroom has the right digital tools, editors shape a newsroom environment that can keep up with the demands of fast, digital-first journalism.

a. Field Support

The findings show that strong field support is one of the foundations of an effective operational framework, and news editors are central to making this support work in practice. Editors describe how a newsroom culture that values quick problem-solving and open teamwork allows reporters to work more confidently, especially during fast-moving or high-pressure assignments.

Editors from MPB, Astro Awani, and Bernama TV shared how they often act as the first line of help when the crew face difficulties on location. They see it as part of their responsibility to make sure the reporting process continues smoothly and that multimedia journalists are never left to solve problems alone. When equipment fails or unexpected problems occur, these editors look for practical and immediate solutions. Several editors explained that they encourage the crew to switch to smartphones for live broadcasts or social media updates when traditional cameras malfunction. This willingness to improvise reflects how quickly newsroom technologies and digital platforms have evolved, giving editors more flexibility to respond to challenges in the field. One MPB editor captured this spirit of teamwork by saying:

We assist because we're one team. Problems on location become our office problems too. We can't leave multimedia journalists to handle them alone. If equipment breaks, cars stall, or any issues arise, we'll do our best to help.
(Editor 2, MPB)

An editor from Astro Awani shared a similar mindset, explaining how quick thinking and multiple backup plans help them keep coverage on track:

We adapt quickly to camera issues, using crew phones for live social media or pre-recording if needed. If a reporter is late due to traffic, we extend the live cross to the end of the news. Multiple backup plans address technical issues. (Editor 3, Astro Awani)

Editors from RTM, however, offer a different perspective. They emphasise that the crew should have the skills and initiative to resolve many on-location issues on their own when possible. Their priority remains the story itself, and they acknowledge that newsroom processes can sometimes be slowed by administrative steps. From their point of view,

journalists must be ready to act quickly and independently to ensure the news reaches the audience without delay. This sentiment is reflected in the following comment:

Journalists must handle on-location issues, prioritising news material. Management takes time to address complaints, often leading to a focus on manageable tasks. (Editor 6, RTM)

Together, these perspectives highlight how essential field support is for cross-platform reporting. The editors in this study show that responsive, collaborative, and flexible support systems help multimedia journalists work more effectively across TV, digital, and social platforms. This support not only improves day-to-day reporting but also sustains the standards of quality journalism in a media landscape that continues to change rapidly. As newsrooms adjust to the demands of multi-platform work, creating an environment that encourages initiative, shared responsibility, and problem-solving remains a key part of editorial leadership.

b. Collaborative Planning

The findings also show that collaborative planning is a key part of strong editorial leadership, especially when newsrooms prepare for large-scale, like elections or unpredictable events such as disasters. News editors explain that simulations, clear workflows, and steady communication make it easier for teams to stay aligned, reduce errors, and respond quickly when situations change. This kind of planning ensures that all units move together, maintaining both quality and timeliness across platforms.

News editors from MPB, Astro Awani, and Bernama TV describe how routine planning and discussion have become essential in their work. Before major assignments, these newsrooms hold meetings that bring together reporters, editors, and digital staff to walk through possible scenarios, clarify responsibilities, and align content strategies for TV, online, and social media platforms. These sessions help ensure that everyone fully understands their role and that coverage runs smoothly on the day of the event. This approach is exemplified in the following excerpts:

I speak with reporters every day, and we hold monthly meetings to make sure our TV and digital teams move in the same direction. This helps us make decisions quickly and maintain a coordinated newsroom workflow. (Editor 7, Bernama TV)

During state elections, we meet with multimedia journalists regularly under the guidance of an editor. Our collective discussions among editors help us gather input from all sides and resolve issues quickly to keep production running smoothly. (Editor 5, Astro Awani)

Editors from RTM describe a slightly different practice. While they do not meet face-to-face as often, they still place high value on communication, using WhatsApp groups to solve day-to-day issues quickly. One RTM editor explained;

Because time is limited, most issues are discussed immediately through our WhatsApp groups. When long-term solutions or face-to-face conversations are needed, we arrange formal meetings. (Editor 10, RTM)

The findings suggest that RTM could strengthen its operations by adopting a more structured approach to collaboration. Regular monthly or bi-monthly meetings, as suggested by multimedia journalists in the study, would give teams a consistent space to raise concerns, refine workflows, and build stronger coordination. At the same time, the everyday use of WhatsApp or similar platforms should continue to support quick decision-making in a fast-paced newsroom environment. Encouraging open communication and shared problem-solving can help RTM adapt more effectively to the demands of multimedia journalism.

In summary, delivering strong cross-platform journalism requires careful planning, continuous dialogue, and close teamwork. As the media landscape evolves, newsroom leaders must actively embrace these practices. This not only supports multimedia journalists in navigating the complexities of modern reporting but also helps news organisations maintain the standards expected in today's multi-platform environment.

c. Digital Infrastructure

The findings show that digital infrastructure plays an essential role in supporting today's newsroom operations. Editors stress that equal access to digital tools is critical, and that every multimedia journalist should have up-to-date equipment, regardless of their organisation or position. Without this, it becomes difficult to maintain the speed, accuracy, and visual quality required for cross-platform journalism.

Editors shared a range of perspectives on their organisations' technological readiness. At Bernama TV, editors expressed a desire to upgrade their equipment and move toward more advanced digital tools, similar to those used by Astro Awani. However, they explained that being part of a government agency often limits their ability to invest in high-cost technology. One editor described this situation by saying;

We still rely mostly on standard telecom signals, and although we look to Astro Awani as a model, our equipment is limited. As a government agency, we focus on official news and have fewer resources compared to channels like TV3 or Awani. (Editor 7, Bernama TV)

We face a lot of constraints, especially financial ones. Reporters really need basics like tripods and microphones. If I had the means, I would buy the equipment myself. It bothers me to see them working without the proper tools. (Editor 8, Bernama TV)

In contrast, MPB editors shared that they are generally satisfied with their current digital tools and have a more practical approach to Mobile Journalism (MOJO). Equipment is shared efficiently between the digital unit and multimedia journalists, and recent improvements have strengthened their overall readiness. As one MPB editor explained;

Our digital equipment meets the team's needs, and multimedia journalists can get whatever they require from the digital unit. We also increased the phone allowance from RM100 to RM450 to support their field work. (Editor 1, MPB)

Both Astro Awani and MPB show a proactive investment in technology that enhances speed and efficiency in field reporting. Editors from both organisations highlighted the importance of dongles and similar tools that allow journalists to send visuals instantly from the field without returning to the office. The editors described this investment by saying;

I make sure our equipment stays updated, including more than ten live-streaming dongles and even a drone we used during the Johor election. To deliver news first, we need the latest technology so our work moves faster. (Editor 4, MPB)

With AVIWEST, we can livestream straight to social media or TV from anywhere, which makes our workflow much smoother. We do provide tripods, but many multimedia journalists prefer using their own gear since AVIWEST makes everything easier. (Editor 9, Astro Awani)

The findings reaffirm that reliable digital infrastructure is indispensable in modern journalism. When newsroom leaders invest in the right tools, they enable faster, more efficient reporting and support multimedia journalists in producing high-quality content across platforms (Perreault & Tham, 2024). At the same time, the disparities between organisations highlight the need for more equitable access to technology. Ensuring that every multimedia journalist, regardless of their newsroom, is properly equipped is essential for maintaining strong journalistic standards in an increasingly digital media environment.

Newsroom Culture

Beyond operational frameworks, the news editors in this study highlighted newsroom culture as one of the most significant factors shaping journalistic performance in a cross-platform environment. Two key themes stood out: empowering support and a progressive mindset.

The news editors consistently pointed to encouragement as a driving force behind the morale and productivity of multimedia journalists. According to them, the support that flows between management, editors, and journalists on the ground is not something that can be overlooked. It is foundational. When management takes the time to recognise effort and acknowledge good work, journalists feel motivated to push beyond the bare minimum. But the editors were clear that support goes further than celebrating wins. During difficult stretches, whether tight deadlines, breaking stories, or the growing pressure of feeding multiple platforms simultaneously, moral support from editors can make the difference between a team that holds together and one that burns out.

The editors described their own role in this regard as having evolved considerably. Rather than simply directing editorial decisions, they now see themselves as listeners and problem solvers, tuned in to the challenges their teams face day to day. This shift in how editors relate to their journalists, combined with a culture of mutual encouragement across

all levels of the newsroom, helps create an environment where creativity and quality journalism can genuinely thrive.

The second theme the news editors raised was mindset, and the urgent need to move away from a broadcast-first way of thinking. Several editors acknowledged that television newsrooms in Malaysia have historically been built around the rhythm and priorities of broadcast news, and that this culture does not automatically translate to the demands of digital journalism. What is needed, as the editors described it, is a genuine shift in attitude, not just a willingness to tolerate change, but an openness to actively embrace it.

Editors play a central role here, as they set the tone for how change is received within the newsroom. When editors model adaptability and curiosity about digital platforms, it signals to the wider team that evolving is expected and valued, not feared. The editors in this study spoke about digital transformation not as a disruption to manage, but as an opportunity to expand how stories are told and who they reach (Miller, 2025). A newsroom grounded in this forward-looking mindset, they suggested, is far better to keep pace with the shifting media landscape and to produce journalism that resonates across platforms.

a. Empowering Support

News editors in this study were candid about the pressures that come with working in a fast-paced newsroom, and many spoke openly about the need to take mental health seriously as part of their leadership responsibilities. They described the importance of creating an environment where journalists feel safe enough to raise concerns, admit when they are struggling, and ask for help without fear of being judged. For these editors, empowering support was not simply a management strategy but a reflection of how they understood their role (Lehner, 2025). Empathy, appreciation, and mutual respect were qualities they saw as inseparable from good editorial leadership, and they believed that when journalists feel genuinely supported, both their resilience and their creativity improve.

What came through strongly in the editors' accounts was a shift from the traditionally distant, top-down relationship between editors and their teams. Editors spoke about making a conscious effort to build real relationships with their multimedia journalists, to celebrate their efforts, and to make them feel seen. As one editor from Astro Awani described it;

In our newsroom, we make it a point to recognise the efforts of our reporters. When they come in, we greet them with words of encouragement, calling out their names and telling them they have done well. It really lifts the mood and brings the team closer together. (Editor 9, Astro Awani)

Alongside this culture of recognition, the editors also spoke about becoming more open to input from their teams. They acknowledged that multimedia journalists, as the ones closest to the stories on the ground, often have valuable perspectives on how coverage can be improved. Rather than treating editorial decisions as coming solely from the top, many editors described actively inviting ideas and feedback from their journalists. This openness, they felt, not only led to better journalism but also gave multimedia journalists a greater sense of ownership over their work. As one editor from RTM put it:

I always make myself available to anyone who wants to come forward with ideas on how we can do things better. Our goal is to help multimedia journalists grow and develop their skills, and for those who show leadership potential, we want to nurture them into future editors. (Editor 10, RTM)

Teamwork emerged as another value that editors were deliberately trying to embed into the day-to-day culture of their newsrooms. Editors spoke about encouraging multimedia journalists to lean on one another, to share skills, and to approach stories as a collective effort rather than individual assignments. This push toward collaboration, they noted, not only raised the standard of the journalism being produced but had also made the newsroom a more cohesive and supportive place to work. One editor reflected on this during major coverage events:

The way our team works together says a lot about the kind of culture we have built. When big stories break, like during elections, you can see everyone stepping up and looking out for one another. As editors, our job is to keep guiding them and helping them get better. (Editor 11, RTM)

Perhaps the most significant shift the editors described was their growing attention to the mental well-being of their journalists. Several editors spoke about actively listening to their multimedia journalists, checking in on how they were coping, and making themselves available even during demanding periods. This was not something they saw as separate from their editorial duties but as central to them. As one editor from Bernama TV explained:

Making sure our people are in a good headspace matters just as much as meeting deadlines. Even when things get hectic, I try to be there for my team, to hear them out and help them work through whatever they are dealing with, whether it is work-related or otherwise. (Editor 12, Bernama TV)

By taking a more attentive and compassionate approach, editors help to reduce the stigma around mental health in the newsroom. When multimedia journalists feel that their editors genuinely care about their wellbeing, they are more willing to speak up, seek guidance, and work through difficulties rather than letting them build up. This shift in the editor-journalist dynamic, the editors suggested, was quietly but meaningfully changing the culture of their newsrooms for the better.

b. Mindset

If empowering support speaks to how editors relate to their teams, then mindset speaks to how editors and journalists alike relate to change itself (Plotner & Ferrucci, 2024). As the findings from the previous section suggest, building a healthy newsroom culture requires more than structural adjustments. It demands a genuine shift in how people think about their work. The news editors in this study were clear on this point: the move toward cross-platform journalism cannot take root unless the people driving it are willing to rethink deeply ingrained habits and assumptions about what journalism looks like.

For many editors, the central challenge was helping their multimedia journalists let go of a broadcast-first mentality that had shaped how newsrooms operated for decades. This was not simply a matter of learning new tools or platforms. It required a more fundamental change in attitude, one that acknowledges digital audiences not as secondary consumers but as the primary ones. Several editors spoke candidly about how slow and uneven this process had been, particularly in the early stages of convergence. As one editor from MPB reflected:

When we first moved toward convergence back in 2018, the adjustment was gradual. Both editors and multimedia journalists had to rethink how they worked in order to serve both television and digital audiences at the same time. Things are different now though. Multimedia journalists are more proactive, and we have dedicated editors looking after our digital platforms. (Editor 1, MPB)

The challenge was felt even more acutely among senior journalists who had spent years working within a television-oriented framework. For them, adapting to digital ways of working required unlearning habits that had previously served them well. One editor from RTM acknowledged that despite ongoing training efforts, the pace of change had not always matched the urgency of the moment:

Shifting away from a television-centred way of working is not easy, particularly for reporters who have been in the industry for a long time. We have been putting in the effort through training, but the transition toward digital is still a work in progress. (Editor 10, RTM)

Beyond managing resistance to change, the editors also spoke about the importance of initiative as a quality they actively tried to cultivate in their teams. In their view, a progressive mindset is not something that can be handed down through instructions or enforced through policies. It has to come from within. Editors described encouraging multimedia journalists to take ownership of their own professional development, to experiment with new formats and technologies, and to treat learning as an ongoing responsibility rather than a one-time exercise. One editor from Bernama TV put it plainly:

Multimedia journalists need to take it upon themselves to adapt as their roles continue to change. Some found it difficult at first but worked through it and eventually got there. Others have been slower to come around, and in some cases, that comes down to a reluctance to step outside what they already know. (Editor 7, Bernama TV)

Importantly, the editors were equally candid that this expectation of initiative applied to themselves as much as to the journalists they led. Adapting to the digital environment was not a one-sided demand placed on Multimedia journalists alone (Esa et al., 2024). Editors, too, had to keep learning, and part of that learning involved developing a deeper understanding of the pressures and realities their teams were navigating. As one editor from Astro Awani put it:

Moving forward in this industry is something we all have to take personal responsibility for. That goes for editors just as much as it does for Multimedia journalists. We all need to keep adapting and showing a willingness to learn. And for editors, that also means making the effort to truly understand what Multimedia journalists are up against. (Editor 9, Astro Awani)

Taken together, what the editors described was a newsroom culture in the process of reorienting itself. The mindset shift they spoke about was not a single moment of transformation but a continuous, sometimes difficult, collective effort. For Malaysian television newsrooms navigating the pressures of digitalisation, cultivating this kind of forward-looking outlook among both editors and journalists is not optional. It is, as the editors themselves framed it, the foundation on which everything else rests.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that redefining editorial workflows in Malaysian television newsrooms requires a deliberate and sustained commitment to both operational frameworks and newsroom culture. As cross-platform journalism continues to reshape how news is produced and consumed, the role of news editors has expanded well beyond traditional gatekeeping. Editors are now central figures in driving cultural change, supporting their teams through the pressures of digital transformation, and ensuring that journalistic standards are upheld across all platforms.

The findings highlight that a newsroom culture grounded in empowering support and a progressive mindset is not a peripheral concern but a strategic necessity. When editors lead with empathy, foster open communication, and actively cultivate a shared sense of purpose, they create the conditions in which multimedia journalists can adapt, grow, and produce meaningful work. Equally, real-time field support, collaborative editorial planning, and equitable access to digital infrastructure form the operational backbone that makes cross-platform journalism viable and sustainable.

Together, these elements reflect a broader organisational shift that Malaysian television newsrooms must embrace to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive media landscape. Ultimately, it is the editors who set the tone, and their capacity to balance editorial leadership with human-centred management will determine the future direction of journalism in Malaysia.

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