

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERNET AND ONLINE JOURNALISM IN
UZBEKISTAN: HISTORICAL FORMATION, STAGES, AND PERIODIZATION
ISSUES**

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Abstract: This academic article provides a comprehensive analysis of the formation, evolution, and periodization of the Internet and online journalism in Uzbekistan. The study examines the introduction of the Internet into the national information space, the emergence of early electronic publications, the development of professional online media outlets, the rise of social media journalism, and the processes of digital transformation through clearly defined historical stages. Particular attention is paid to the impact of political and legal reforms, information policy, and technological factors on the development of online journalism. Based on the analysis, the author proposes a scientifically grounded periodization model for the evolution of Internet journalism in Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Internet journalism, online media, digital media, media history of Uzbekistan, information society, media reforms, periodization.

INTRODUCTION

The formation of the information society and the rapid development of digital technologies have fundamentally transformed the content, structure, and functions of modern journalism. With the emergence of the Internet, journalism moved beyond traditional print and broadcast formats and evolved into online journalism as an independent and influential information institution. This global process has also had a significant impact on developing countries, including Uzbekistan. The development of the Internet and online journalism in Uzbekistan is closely connected with the country's independence, the formation of information policy, political modernization, and the advancement of communication technologies. Initially perceived as a supplementary technical platform, the Internet has gradually become one of the primary sources for meeting the information needs of society.

The purpose of this article is to conduct a scholarly analysis of the historical development of Internet and online journalism in Uzbekistan, to identify its main stages, and to propose a methodological approach to its periodization.

MAIN PART

1. The Emergence of the Internet and Its Entry into the Information Environment of Uzbekistan (Late 1990s)

The introduction of the Internet in Uzbekistan coincided with the post-independence period of socio-economic transformation. In the late 1990s, Internet technologies were primarily used within academic institutions, higher education establishments, and certain government agencies. During this period, the Internet was not regarded as a mass medium but rather as a technical tool for information exchange.

Early web resources were mainly official and static in nature, providing reference information rather than regularly updated journalistic content. Therefore, this period can be characterized as the preparatory stage of online journalism in Uzbekistan.

2. The Stage of Electronic Versions and Web Publications (2000–2005)

In the early 2000s, print media outlets began to launch electronic versions of their publications. Newspapers and magazines published their materials online in an attempt to expand their

audience. However, the content largely consisted of direct reproductions of print materials, lacking the interactivity, immediacy, and multimedia features characteristic of online journalism. Nevertheless, this stage played an important transitional role in the formation of Internet journalism in Uzbekistan. It marked the beginning of the formation of an online news audience and laid the groundwork for further digital development.

3. The Stage of Professional Online Media and News Agencies (2005–2010)

During this stage, Internet journalism in Uzbekistan reached a new qualitative level. News agencies such as Uza, Jahon, and UzReport began actively using the Internet as a primary platform for information dissemination. The news genre dominated, and the speed of content updates increased significantly.

Institutional foundations of online media were established, and professional journalistic standards gradually began to be implemented. However, analytical and investigative journalism remained limited, while official information continued to prevail.

4. Social Media, Blogging, and Citizen Journalism (2010–2016)

The 2010s marked a turning point in the history of Internet journalism in Uzbekistan. The widespread use of social media disrupted traditional information monopolies and enabled citizens to become active producers of content. Blogging and citizen journalism gained prominence.

During this period, the classical model of journalism underwent significant transformation, as audiences shifted from passive consumers to active participants in the information process. Online platforms became key spaces for discussing social issues, everyday problems, and public opinion.

5. Digital Transformation and the Policy of Openness (Since 2016)

Since 2016, political and information-sector reforms in Uzbekistan have initiated a new stage in the development of online journalism. Government transparency increased, access to information improved, and communication between state institutions and the media became more active.

Today, online journalism in Uzbekistan offers not only breaking news but also analytical articles, investigative reports, and multimedia projects. Internet media have become an important platform for public discussion and social oversight.

CONCLUSION

The development of the Internet and online journalism in Uzbekistan represents a complex and multi-stage historical process closely linked to the country's political, technological, and cultural transformation. Based on the analysis, the following periodization model is proposed:

1. Preparatory stage (late 1990s);
2. Electronic versions stage (2000–2005);
3. Professional online media stage (2005–2010);
4. Social media and citizen journalism stage (2010–2016);
5. Digital transformation stage (since 2016).

This periodization provides a systematic framework for studying the historical evolution of online journalism in Uzbekistan and serves as a methodological foundation for future scholarly research.

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