March 21, 2022

Oscar Westlund

Editor-in-Chief, *Digital Journalism*

To Dr. Westlund and the Editors at Digital Journalism,

I’m writing submit our manuscript, entitled ‘Between Individuals and News Organizations: Developing the “News Niche” as a Conceptual Tool for Examining Audience Fragmentation,’ to *Digital Journalism.*

In this study introduce an expanded definition of ‘niche’ news. Building on approaches to the study of audience fragmentation, we explicate the niche as one’s position within the broader news eco-system. This conceptualization is meaningful because it allows researchers to capture audience-level traits that influence one’s preference for ideological news. That is, one’s preference for partisan news is not just a personal decision, but it is also influenced by the choices of others within the same niche. To test these claims, we develop an empirical tool for modelling the news niche using network analysis techniques.

This contribution is important for the field, as attention to news and public affairs is increasingly determined by aggregators and social feeds, which group users by shared interests or motivations. We move beyond the role of individual-level selection habits to incorporate audience- and system-level influences on one’s news ideology. Many of these conversations are already taking place in this journal. We hope you agree that the paper is a good fit for *Digital Journalism*, and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes,

Dr. Trevor Diehl

Central Michigan University