



**Medien & Digitale
Technologien**
University of
Applied Sciences
St. Pölten



Call for Abstracts

Joint Conference of the Media Economics Division and the Sociology of Media Communication
Division, University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten, **23–25 September 2026**

Media Production and the Creative Industries Between Niche and Mainstream: Economic and Sociological Approaches

It stands to reason to assign two distinct subject areas to the communication science subdisciplines of media economics and media sociology. According to this assumption, media economics would examine value creation, markets, and structures of media production and the creative industries, while media sociology would focus on media use, its social embeddedness, and the influence of media socialization on everyday life. Yet this dichotomy between markets and structures on the one hand and practices and meanings in media use on the other fails to capture the manyfold overlaps and exchange processes between the two disciplines. Media economists, for instance, also study the preferences and behaviors of media users; conversely, social processes within media organizations have long been and continue to be subjects of sociological inquiry. Consider ethnographies of newspaper and television newsrooms (Tuchman 1980; Gitlin 2005; Born 2004), analyses of production cultures (du Gay 1997; Negus 1999; Lantzsich, Altmeyden & Will 2010), research on the transformation of work in the media and creative industries (Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2011; McRobbie 2015; Wimmer & Hartmann 2016), as well as what is commonly referred to as communicator research in German-speaking contexts. Furthermore, in the age of social media and user-generated content, the distinction between production and reception has itself become porous. Already in the 2000s, concepts such as *produsage* and *prosumption* sought to reflect the increasing ease with which individuals switch between the two sides and the emergence of a wide range of more or less professional niche forms of media production alongside the traditional media industry (Zerdyck et al. 2004; Jenkins 2008; Bruns 2008). Actors in these niches may have different motivations than traditional providers in the media economy, yet they are engaged in media production nonetheless (Siegert 2020).

This brief and selective overview of sociological research on media production and the creative industries is intended to illustrate that media economics and media sociology do not necessarily tackle different subject matters but may instead examine the same phenomena from different vantage points. This openness of media and cultural production research to multiple disciplines and perspectives lies at the heart of the joint conference of the Sociology of Media Communication and Media Economics divisions. The aim is not to eliminate disciplinary differences in favor of a newly defined inter- or transdiscipline, but rather to highlight disciplinary particularities and foster mutual learning. Only a multiperspective approach can do justice to the subject matter. Such an approach considers not only questions of optimal allocation of scarce resources and productive efficiency along the value chain (Pellegrini & Krone 2023) but also power relations, societal functions, and identities.



As diverse as the perspectives are, so too is the subject itself. Media and cultural production occur not only in large publishing houses and media corporations but also in small, non-profit initiatives (from cultural associations to climate NGOs), in the marketing departments of political parties, companies, or public institutions, and, not least, wherever social media users address a diffuse public with their posts and comments. This includes explicitly alternative and anti-capitalist production models such as server collectives or federated platforms like Mastodon, which consciously distance themselves from established market logics. We invite scholars, practitioners, and students from all disciplines to present theoretical reflections and empirical findings on media production from their respective disciplinary perspectives. Contributions may focus on the empirical objects of study or address theoretical and methodological differences across perspectives. In any case, the goal is to initiate dialogue across disciplinary boundaries. We wish to revive the awareness that multiperspectivity has been a central and constitutive element of communication and media studies from the very beginning.

The list of topics below is intended merely as inspiration and may be expanded freely.

Media Production and the Creative Industries from Sociological and Economic Perspectives

- Self-conceptions of journalists, creatives, and managers
- Ecological and ethical challenges of media production – resource consumption, sustainability, and responsibility within production chains
- Creators, bloggers, influencers – media production in the age of social media
- Media work between professionalization and precarization
- Me-too: exploitation and discrimination, sexism and racism in the media
- Local, regional, and global networks in media production and the creative industries
- Managing creativity and innovation – a contradiction in terms?
- Is every company a media company? Content marketing as media production
- Alternatives to market-oriented media structures – public-interest, collectively organized, and non-commercial media projects
- From media industries to digital platforms and back: cross-media strategies
- Value creation in journalism, entertainment production, and on platforms
- When machines take over: artificial intelligence in media production
- And many other topics ...

Divergence and Convergence Between the Disciplines

- Lost in the paradigm jungle: from Critical Theory to neoclassical economics, from system theory to the Studies (Cultural, Queer, Postcolonial, Science & Technology, etc.)
- Multi-, inter-, or transdisciplinarity in communication studies
- Occam's razor or thick description? Epistemological reflections
- Media economics = quantitative vs. media sociology = qualitative? Against methodological determinism!
- Do new phenomena require new creative research approaches, and what can established ones still offer?



- Epistemic cultures and power relations – inequalities and hierarchies in knowledge production and disciplinary development
- And many other topics ...

Additionally, **open panels** will be offered for current contributions without a direct connection to the conference theme.

References

- Born, Georgina. 2004. *Uncertain vision: Birt, Dyke and the reinvention of the BBC*. London: Secker & Warburg.
- Bruns, Axel. 2008. *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond: From Production to Prodisage*. Peter Lang.
- Gay, Paul du. 1997. *Production of Culture/Cultures of Production*. London, Thousand Oaks, New York: Sage.
- Gitlin, Todd. 2005. *Inside Prime Time*. 2nd ed. Communication and Society. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Hesmondhalgh, David, und Sarah Baker. 2011. *Creative labour: media work in three cultural industries*. Culture, economy and the social. London; New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, Henry. 2008. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. Auflage: Revised edition. New York; London: New York University Press.
- Lantzsch, Katja, Klaus-Dieter Altmeyen, und Andreas Will, Hrsg. 2010. *Handbuch Unterhaltungsproduktion: Beschaffung und Produktion von Fernsehunterhaltung*. 1. Aufl. The business of entertainment. Medien, Märkte, Management. Wiesbaden: VS, Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- McRobbie, Angela. 2015. *Be Creative: Making a Living in the New Culture Industries*. Cambridge, UK Malden, MA: Polity press.
- Negus, Keith. 1999. *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Pellegrini, Tassilo und Jan Krone. 2023. Medienökonomie. In: *Grundlagen der Informationswissenschaft*, herausgegeben von Rainer Kuhlen, Dirk Lewandowski, Wolfgang Semar & Christa Womser-Hacker, 633-641, Berlin: De Gruyter Saur.
- Siebert, Wolf. 2020. „Lectures for Digital Residents: Zum Geleit des Handbuchs Medienökonomie“. In *Handbuch Medienökonomie*, herausgegeben von Jan Krone und Tassilo Pellegrini, 1–6. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Tuchman, Gaye. 1980. *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*. First Free Press paperback ed. New York: Free Press [u.a.].
- Wimmer, Jeffrey, und Maren Hartmann, Hrsg. 2016. *Medien-Arbeit im Wandel: Theorie und Empirie zur Arbeit mit und in Medien*. Medien - Kultur - Kommunikation. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.
- Zerdyck, Axel, Arnold Picot, Klaus Schrape, Jean-Claude Burgelman, Roger Silverstone, Valerie Feldmann, Dominik K. Heger, und Carolin Wolff, Hrsg. 2004. *E-Merging Media: Kommunikation und Medienwirtschaft der Zukunft*. Springer eBook Collection Business and Economics. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.



**Medien & Digitale
Technologien**
University of
Applied Sciences
St. Pölten



Submission

Formats and disciplines: We aim to accommodate diverse formats, and submissions from disciplines beyond communication and media studies are welcome. In addition to traditional presentations and panels, proposals for alternative formats (e.g., workshops) are encouraged. If you would like to propose a special format, please indicate this in your submission or contact us in advance.

Submission guidelines: Contributions to the conference must be submitted as anonymized extended abstracts of no more than 800 words (excluding references, figures, etc.) or as applications for other formats (see above). Submissions are accepted from **January 2026** until **31 May 2026** via the conference website <https://jahrestagung2026.ustp.at>

All submissions will undergo a double-blind peer-review process conducted by both divisions. Please ensure that abstracts contain no identifying information. Review results will be communicated in **July 2026**. Submissions are evaluated based on five criteria: relevance to the conference theme, theoretical grounding, methodological appropriateness, clarity and conciseness, and originality. Contributions to the open panel will be assessed using the same procedure, except that “relevance to the conference theme” will not be considered. Submissions must not have been previously published or presented at other conferences at the time of submission.

Each presentation slot will be limited to 30 minutes, with presentations not exceeding 15 minutes to ensure sufficient time for discussion. The conference organizers reserve the right to consider the overall conference structure in the selection process and to invite additional contributions (e.g., commentaries, impulse talks, or conceptual impulses).

Presenters are invited to submit their contributions for publication in the **DGPuK conference proceedings**.

Early-career funding: Doctoral candidates—regardless of the conference theme—may submit their dissertation proposals (max. 3,000 words excluding references) and present them during a doctoral colloquium on **23 September 2026**. Here they will receive feedback from other scholars. If you wish to participate in the colloquium, please indicate this in your submission. You may also submit your dissertation project additionally as a regular conference contribution.

During the conference, the Early Career Award of the Media Economics Division and the Dissertation Award of the Sociology of Media Communication Division will be presented. Separate calls will be issued.

We look forward to your submissions!

Andreas Gebesmair, Stephan Görland, Jan Krone, Paula Nitschke, and Franziska Thiele
Conference Team



**Medien & Digitale
Technologien**
University of
Applied Sciences
St. Pölten



Preliminary Schedule

- **End of 2025:** Publication of the Call for Abstracts
- **31 May 2026:** Submission deadline
- **July 2026:** Notification of acceptance to authors
- **23 September 2026:** Arrival, doctoral colloquium, get-together
- **24–25 September 2026:** Conference panels / Open panel
- **28 February 2027:** Submission of manuscripts for the proceedings

Organisation

FH-Prof. Priv.-Doz. Dr. Andreas Gebesmair & FH-Prof. Dr. Jan Krone
Media Business Research Group
Institute for Creative\Media/Technologies
Department Medien & Digitale Technologien
University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten
Campus-Platz 1
A 3100 St. Pölten
I: <https://mb.ustp.at/>
E: andreas.gebesmair@ustp.at, jan.krone@ustp.at

Further details (conference fees, hotel recommendations, travel information, etc.) will be available on the conference website <https://jahrestagung2026.ustp.at> from early 2026.