

Risk Assessment for Journalists

Section: 1.4

Why should journalists access risk?

In a field like journalism, threats are inevitable. The best course of action is not to cede space or self-censor but to understand the risk you're facing and take precautions to mitigate it.

When using the internet we have to talk about **risk**.

Everyone has a different level of risk while using the internet. As journalists, you may face a higher risk using the internet than your average internet user.

Okay, but what is the risk?

'Okay, but what is the risk?' You might be asking yourself.

Well, in as simple terms as possible, in the context of the internet, it is the risk you and your data face by using the internet.

Accessing Risk Online

The internet is a large and vast place which, as time has gone on, requires you as the user to give more and more information. This information exchange seems innocent at first but over time our profiles online begin to get quite extensive. This is where things get risky.

This is also when we, as users, must be cognizant of this risk and prepare ourselves to protect ourselves and our data against external threats. This is where risk assessments come handy.

What is a Risk Assessment?

Risk assessments are a simple list of questions that allow us to ascertain what level of risk we are at.

These questions revolve around risks that might arise from the type of work you do, or how you use the internet, to the security of your devices and accounts. So, if you face threats because of the work you do, then this assessment will show you, through your own answers, how you need to strengthen your own devices and accounts.

Checklist for Risk Assessment

- How many devices do you use and own on a regular basis? Are any of these devices provided by your employer?

- Do you use social media? If so, have you enabled 'two-factor authentication'?

- Does your organization have an IT expert, and a digital security protocol for all employees to follow, with regards to devices and the data they collect for stories?

- How do you store your data, both personal and professional?

- Are you aware of new digital threats like phishing and ransomware attacks?

Download our risk-assessment document to explore the type of risk you face.