

TEST YOURSELF

HOW WIRED ARE YOU?

Sure, you can surf websites, send emails and shoot snapshots with your cell-phone — but really, how technically savvy are you?

Can you actually create useful online content?

To survive in the digital age, journalists will need new vocabularies.

New tools. New skills.

So let's test whether you're plugged in and ready to publish — or still stuck in the Stone Age — by answering these 10 questions.

1

Could you create a Web page?

Are you able to use Web-authoring software like Dreamweaver — or better yet, write your own HTML code — to produce a Web page that includes text, headlines, images and links?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

2

Have you written a blog?

Many of us create a blog, post an entry or two, then abandon the whole thing. But have you blogged more consistently than that? Have you tried building a loyal following by posting several times a day?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

3

Are you an avid consumer of digital content?

Do you watch YouTube videos? Download podcasts? Shop online? Stream TV shows and movies? Is your music library digitized? In other words, is your daily life fully plugged into cyberspace?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

4

Do you comment, chat and tweet?

Are you active in online social networks like Facebook or Twitter? Do you participate in discussion groups, post comments and even get into arguments in response to online stories, blogs, wikis, etc.?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

5

Can you create content with your smartphone or tablet?

Could you use different mobile apps to write and transmit a story? To record an interview? To shoot and edit photos?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO



6

Can you shoot a video, edit it and post it online?

Online editors expect all their staffers to provide visuals as well as words. Can you be trusted to shoot, edit and upload video that meets basic journalistic standards?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

7

Can you record audio, edit it and post it online?

Could you interview someone, then turn the highlights of your conversation into a podcast?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO



8

Could you create an interactive graphic?

Have you tried turning a database into a Google map mashup (like this one, pinpointing local gang-related crimes)? Or could you produce a clickable chart or diagram using software like Flash?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

9

Are your primary news sources digital?

Are you a frequent visitor to news sites and blogs? Do you faithfully follow journalists on Facebook and Twitter?

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

10

Could you cover an event at 9 a.m. where you shoot photos and video for your narrated slideshow, then post a 6-inch story (complete with links and images) by noon?

That might sound unrealistic — OK, *crazy* — but it's exactly what some online editors will expect. Not every day. But often enough.

YES SORT OF/MAYBE NO

SCORING

- ◆ For each YES answer, give yourself **2 points**.
- ◆ For each SORT OF/MAYBE, give yourself **1 point**.

YOUR TOTAL:

HOW YOU RATE

16–20 pts.

Congratulations! You've got the new-media skills editors are looking for.

11–15 pts.

You're plenty plugged in, but keep upgrading.

6–10 pts.

Time to reboot and install *lots* of new brainware.

0–5 pts.

Ever feel like the world is passing you by?