



Roman Kessler *

Editor

Home Media: Dow Jones, Frankfurt

Guest Media: The Wall Street Journal, New York, NY

Roman R. Kessler is a European economics reporter covering the current financial crisis and European policy reactions for Dow Jones Newswires' English-language service in Frankfurt, home to the European Central Bank. Roman also writes for *The Wall Street Journal*.

Working as a foreign correspondent in his home country of Germany, his coverage illustrates the German economic psyche and provides insight into the twists and turns of European power sharing.

Roman is a political economist with extensive experience in journalism. He graduated from the School of Advanced International Studies at the Johns-Hopkins University and also holds a

Masters degree in International Relations from Goethe-University in Frankfurt. He previously worked at daily *Frankfurt Rundschau* as a freelancer for six years. He also worked for *Radio FFH* in Frankfurt, and gathered TV experience at German public broadcasters where he received fellowships from the Fritz-Thyssen, the Karl-Gerold, and the Erich-Becker foundations for his academic research.

As a Burns Fellow, Roman will be working at the video department of the wallstreetjournal.com in New York to hone his multimedia skills.

Roman has a weak spot for Italy and loves traveling around the world.

Report by Roman Kessler

Platform-neutral Journalism – Working where the Lines are Blurry

There is this old joke seasoned cameramen make ever so often when they are killing time on the wait. It says: reporters are like in-laws - it's nice to have them, but more fun without. As cameras become smaller, and shooting less of the rocket sciences it used to be, reporters may be getting more of the fun part and crack the line the other way round.

It seems like a logical step to give a camera to the reporter, cut out the middle man and save costs. But it doesn't always work super smoothly, as some of you may have experienced yourselves, and bringing a cameraman sometimes is a real' good idea. To this day, reporters are divided into writers, radio folks and TV guys. Each segment demands specific skills of us journalists to enable them making the most of the story. Many of us are experts of telling a story one way, but we rarely have to think about approaching the story from a different angle with different means. That may change. And sometimes we may even feel limited by the constraints our respective platform offers. A platform could be anything, including the traditional ones such as a magazine, a newspaper, or radio and TV broadcasts.

For me, the Arthur F. Burns Fellowship 2009 was a unique opportunity to tread the lines between the media platforms and become something of a triathlete. Being mainly a writer with a focus on economic stories, I sometimes sat in front of my keyboard at work finding myself being reminiscent of how much fun it was when I used to work with a radio station as a free lancer. And it made me smile to think about my "Hesse's Biggest Burger" video feature and the other 12'30" of my videos that had been aired across Germany before I turned an agency writer. (And it was one huge burger.) After two heavy years in the eye of the financial storm, with banks failing left, right and center, it was about time to do something completely different.

The Wall Street Journal's online Video Unit turned out to be a priceless experience, not only because they like food stories as much as I do. For me it meant to get a chance to deepen my multimedia skills further, which would have been a much more difficult and rookie-like endeavor without this support. I discovered - and so did people I will be working with in the future - that I like being a cameraman as well as piecing the best pictures together.