There are two things about the news industry that Mark Henderson ’87, online editor at the Worcester Telegram & Gazette, knows. First, in spite of the dramatic changes that have rocked the news industry in recent years, the mission of newspapers remains vibrant. Second, the way news is delivered will keep changing and it is essential that new, better models are developed that retain the intrinsic values of the “fourth estate.”

“The ability and willingness to adapt to a shifting media landscape is critical,” Henderson said. “Things we assumed for years are now ever-changing, and you can’t navigate through this unless you accept that reality. The ones who adapt quickly can thrive and those who don’t will not. Media isn’t alone in this regard. Many industries face the same challenges, but media companies seem to get a lot of coverage.”

Henderson is keenly aware of the events that led him to his current position. “I can say honestly that without my Assumption experience I would not be where I am today,” he said. Henderson wasn’t sure where he was headed after walking across the stage at commencement. He was hired as a part-time copy editor at the Telegram in 1990, while working full-time at a plastics housewares manufacturer to pay the bills. Promoted to lead sports copy editor in 1997 and assistant sports editor two years later, his big break came in 2002. “I was fortunate to be chosen for a five-person team that built, installed and rolled out the paper’s first editorial pagination system,” he said. Henderson was appointed deputy managing editor/technology in 2005 and became online director in January 2008. “The position was intriguing because I thought it was the logical next step for me,” he said.

“An essential part of being a good journalist is objectivity, and that’s a quality, in my case, that I learned at Assumption. Objectivity comes from being unafraid to continually question your beliefs and convictions as circumstances change. That’s difficult to learn unless you trust the people teaching you and are in an environment in which you feel safe emotionally. Assumption excels at both and, for me, it created a mindset that has not changed since I graduated.”

Henderson fondly recalls many Assumption administrators and faculty who had lent an ear or a hand and enriched his college experience. He said, “Perhaps the greatest thing about Assumption is that, if your mind and heart are open to it, you never know when you’re going to have a five- or 10-minute conversation that’s going to change your life.”

“In a course taught by Dr. Louise Carroll Keeley I realized I could challenge my thoughts and beliefs and be all right on the other side. Being aware that I had broken through that was the groundwork for nearly everything that’s happened to me since, so I was fortunate that I took her course early in my Assumption career.”

Despite vast industry changes in recent years, Henderson believes the mission of newspapers remains vibrant. “Our mission remains the

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