



“If The News Is That Important, It Will Find Me”

The Future of Journalism, Newspapers, and Finding Information

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Key Independent Journalism Sites

In the Spring of 2008, Barry Sussman, editor of the *Nieman Reports* from Harvard University, put the newspaper crisis this way:

Unless newspapers figure out how — in print and online — to continue their essential watchdog role by providing substantive investigative reporting in well-told ways, then whether they survive or not, what they've meant to the survival of our democracy will have vanished.

Today, independent, web-based journalism sites are rising to fill the need. Here are some of the best, working to create commercial independence while giving readers important information and insights that they may not be getting through traditional presses. Just reading through their mission statements is illuminating on the revolution that is taking place in the field.

Center for Investigative Reporting

<http://centerforinvestigativereporting.org>

“The Center for Investigative Reporting is a nonprofit organization that reveals injustice and strengthens democracy through the tools of journalism. Investigative reporting — requiring long lead times and significant investment of resources — is in short supply. Under increasing pressure to deliver higher profits for publicly traded media companies, editors and producers cut back on time and people first. The predictable outcome: a shortage of original, in-depth and risk-taking reporting, and a citizenry deprived of the information required to maintain a vibrant democracy.”

Crosscut.com: News of the Great Nearby

<http://crosscut.com>

“Based in Seattle, Crosscut is a guide to local and Northwest news, a place to report and discuss local news, and a platform for new tools to convey local news. The journalism of regular citizens appears alongside that of professionals. News coverage with detachment, traditionally practiced by mainstream media outlets, coexists with advocacy journalism and opinion.”

MinnPost.com: A Thoughtful Approach to News

<http://www.minnpost.com>

“MinnPost is a nonprofit journalism enterprise that publishes MinnPost.com. Our mission is to provide high-quality journalism for news-intense people who care about Minnesota. Our goal is to create a sustainable business model for this kind of journalism, supported by corporate sponsors, advertisers, and members who make annual donations. High-quality journalism is a community asset that sustains democracy and quality of life, so we are asking people who believe in it to support our work.”

New Haven Independent: It's Your Town. Read All About It.

<http://www.newhavenindependent.org>

“The Online Journalism Project formed in mid-2005 to promote and steer the course of the new journalism. Our mission: to encourage the development of professional-quality hyperlocal and issue-oriented

continued on page 8



text continued from page SC1

online news websites. Sites like this one. We aim to accomplish that by helping stand-alone journalists obtain grants or other financing to develop local news websites meeting professional standards of fact-gathering, accuracy, fairness; by sharing information about this emerging medium; and by adding our voice to the debate over the course of online journalism."

ProPublica: Journalism in the Public Interest

<http://www.propublica.org>

"ProPublica is an independent, non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest. Our work focuses exclusively on truly important stories, stories with 'moral force.' We do this by producing journalism that shines a light on exploitation of the weak by the strong and on the failures of those with power to vindicate the trust placed in them."

Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting

<http://www.pulitzercenter.org>

"The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting is an innovative non-profit leader in supporting the independent international journalism that U.S. media organizations are increasingly less willing to undertake. The Center focuses on under-reported topics, promoting high-quality international reporting and creating platforms that reach broad and diverse audiences."

St. Louis Beacon: News That Matters

<http://www.stlbeacon.org>

"The St. Louis Beacon is a non-profit, online publication dedicated to news that matters for people in our region. A beacon is a light to steer by. Our Beacon shines with quality reporting — frequently updated and featuring depth, context and continuity. We provide thoughtful discussion from many points of view and connect you with good sources of information elsewhere. Founded by veteran journalists, the Beacon aims to serve and engage citizens by creating a distinctive new news medium. Join in this effort by sharing your experience, insight and suggestions. Together, we can create a Beacon that illuminates our region and shines outward to the world."

VoiceofSanDiego.org

<http://voiceofsandiego.org>

"A nonprofit, independent and insightful online newspaper focused on issues impacting the San Diego region. Our mission statement [is] To consistently deliver ground-breaking investigative journalism for the San Diego region. To increase civic participation by giving citizens the knowledge and in-depth analysis necessary to become advocates for good government and social progress."

These new information sources appear to be important sources of information that need to be captured in online databases and other indexes — or their value will be highly diminished. They also need to be archived. Let's just hope that here today doesn't lead to gone tomorrow.

Journalism Genres: A Quick Tour

If you thought all journalism was basically the same, you haven't been keeping up. The field of journalism is very diverse. As a craft, writing — even for the press — is a complicated, diverse, and highly artistic endeavor. Here are just some of the journalistic genres in play today.

Advocacy Journalism: A strongly fact-based type of writing that parallels the work of muckrakers in working to serve the public interest by exposing or describing some public or private-sector issues for their audiences.

Citizen Journalism: The active participation of those generally thought of as the audience in the production and reporting of news and information.

Civic Journalism: Also called public journalism, this form works to inclusively bring "audiences" into the process of learning, understanding, and reporting events and news.???diff with citizen

Gonzo Journalism: A term attributed to Hunter S. Thompson, this form focuses on the ends/truth rather than on the manner or traditional rules of reporting.

Investigative Journalism: Seeking to find truths through a more in-depth, hands-on, or detailed approach to stories or issues.

Literary or Creative Journalism: Focuses on presenting information in a creative, well-written manner with a goal of holding the interest of the reader as well as informing them.

New Journalism: Popular in the 1960s-70s, this style was more common to magazines and tends to use more detailed observations, dialogue, and first-person points of view in reporting information and events.

Visual Journalism: Actively using photographs or video to tell the stories, as opposed to relying on words.

Watchdog Journalism: Focuses on the actions and work of public figures, holding them accountable for their actions (or inactions) and the effects or impacts on the public.



Journalism Timeline

- 1609** First newspapers appear in Europe.
- 1821** First national magazines appear in the U.S. (*Saturday Evening Post*).
- 1841** Horace Greeley begins the editorial page tradition.
- 1858** First trans-Atlantic cable sent.
- 1876** Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone.
- 1923** *TIME*, the country's first news magazine, debuts.
- 1927** William Paley creates CBS, a network of 16 affiliate radio stations.
- 1935** Franklin Roosevelt debuts "Fireside Chats" on radio.
- 1935** George Gallup creates Institute of American Public Opinion.
- 1947** Both NBC and CBS inaugurate newscasts.
- 1961** John F. Kennedy leads the first live televised presidential press conference.
- 1962** First trans-Atlantic television transmission from Telstar I satellite.
- 1969** New York Times Information Bank is created, an electronic collection of *NYT* story abstracts.
- 1969** CompuServe Computer time-sharing service begins operation.
- 1970** In November, AP bureau in Columbia, S.C., sends the first news copy to a computer in Atlanta.
- 1971** Newspapers migrating en masse from mechanical to computer-based production systems.
- 1973** AP announces it is now using computer terminals throughout its U.S. system. UPI announces a similar automation plan.
- 1974** In one of the first such transmissions, *The Wall Street Journal*, Eastern edition, is sent via satellite transmission from Massachusetts to New Jersey.
- 1977** The Toronto *Globe and Mail* offers Info-Globe, the world's first commercial full-text newspaper database.
- 1980** First online newspaper, the *Columbus Dispatch*, debuts.
- 1980** CNN, the first 24-hour cable news channel, debuts.
- 1983** Nexis makes full-text articles of *The New York Times* available to subscribers 24 hours after publication. The full-text archive extends back to June 1, 1980. Articles in abstract form are accessible from Jan. 1, 1969, through June 1, 1980.
- 1984** Dow Jones News/Retrieval services offers full-text access to *The Wall Street Journal*.
- 1985** More than 50 newspapers are now offered for full-text searching and retrieval through vendors such as Dialog, DataTimes, Nexis, and Vu/Text.
- 1986** The *Hamilton* (Ontario) *Spectator* offers readers a BBS feature.
- 1990** An SLA report estimates that 165 U.S. and Canadian daily newspapers have at least portions of their archived articles available online.
- 1991** The Gopher Internet navigation system, WAIS (Wide-Area Information Server), and the World Wide Web program (from CERN) are all released.
- 1992** 150 U.S. newspapers now provide free interactive voice services, with more than 500 offering a fax delivery of the following day's headlines, and seven offering local consumer-oriented videotext services using home computers or terminals.
- 1996** *Christian Science Monitor's* website debuts.
- 1997** First news blogs are created.
- 1998** The Drudge Report, a conservative news aggregation website, breaks the Bill Clinton–Monica Lewinsky story.
- 1998** News trawling services, such as TotalNews and NewsTrawler, which index current content from various web news sources, debut.
- 2001** Newspaper Association of America research finds that more than 4,500 newspapers across the globe are now available online.
- 2002** Google introduces a beta version of Google News.
- 2004** Pew finds "significant numbers of Americans are turning to the Internet for news coverage and images they cannot find in the mainstream media."
- 2005** CBS, ABC and NBC launch blogs written by major station reporters to complement their network products.
- 2005** Google Video launched. The free, video-sharing website in 2006 announces a pilot program "to make holdings of the National Archives available for free online."
- 2005** According to the Newspaper Association of America, there are 1,500 daily papers online and more than 5,000 newspapers online of all types.
- 2006** Broadcast news networks begin to experiment with streaming news programs, posting videos — or shortened segments — on their web-sites either as live feeds or within hours of the initial broadcast.
- 2007** Political repression that followed democratic protests in Myanmar were viewed worldwide due to the illegal sending by citizen journalists of pictures and information via blogging, moblogging, and social networking sites.
- 2007** Nokia and Reuters partner to create the Mobile Journalism Toolkit — a Nokia N95 cell phone, small keyboard, tripod, and solar charger for mobile applications; sales are high to citizen/amateur reporters.
- 2008** Presidential debates broadcast live on YouTube.
- 2008** Poynter Institute's EyeTrack07 finds that online "readers select stories of particular interest and then read them thoroughly. The reading-deep phenomenon is even stronger online than in print."
- 2008** CNN introduces holographic and other innovations to its reporting of the 2008 elections in the U.S.
- 2008** According to a Zogby poll, "Two thirds of Americans — 67% — believe traditional journalism is out of touch with what Americans want from their news" and that the internet is now the top source for news for nearly half of all Americans.