

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

Day 1, Panel 3: Engaging Communities: The old, passive audiences are increasingly becoming clusters of new, active communities that still read, listen and watch the media, but demand to be read, listened and watched. Engaging those communities has become high priority for the media, but are their efforts succeeding?

Moderator/Chair:

António Granado, Visiting Professor, Universidade Nova Lisboa; and Online Editor, Público newspaper, Lisbon, Portugal

Panelists:

Jim Brady, Vice President/Executive Director, WashingtonPost.com

Jim Lenahan, Strategic Development Manager, Gannett Newspapers

Dave Panos, CEO, Pluck Social Media

Georgia Popplewell, Managing Director, GlobalVoicesOnline.org

Mario Tascón, Content Director, Prisacom/El Pais, Spain

Jim Brady: ...the things we've done and some of the lessons we've learned from all of these. The first thing we did was back in early '05 we launched our first blog. This is not one of them. It was much uglier back then. I'm glad you figured the design out since then. Here are examples of two of our blogs. We have about probably 70 active blogs, and 15 or 20 of them generate really, really significant traffic [and] really, really significant repeat usage. RedskinsInsider is an example. The people who post comments on RedskinsInsider are having a huge happy hour for all RedskinsInsider readers right about the beginning of the season. So this is actually a community that not only is talking to each other on the site and discussing, engaging, debating, they are actually going to get together and lock on Jason, lock on Fauria after he thinks about this for a while, [whether he will go] or not to go, but probably will go, knowing Jason, because Jason's, you know, he's -- Jason knows all the -- Jason knows the people who post to his blog. He refers to them by name. He goes into their comments and gets involved in the discussion. So we feel like there's a, you know, these really are building strong communities for us. And this was our first effort, and we suffered from

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

it a little bit at the beginning, because we did what everybody in the mainstream press who launches blogs at the beginning does, is probably underestimates how much time it takes to actually maintain blogs and moderate them. And so we had a fun incident early in '05 where a bunch of bloggers decided to post thousands of comments on one of our blogs in about a six-hour span, and we had no ability to stop it. And we got a lot of really bad press for it, but we learned and we kept moving on.

Another thing we've tried which is a bit of a spinoff on a blog are these moderator -- these panel blogs that we have, where we actually pull together a panel of experts on a certain topic. In this case, faith and global/world politics. And throw questions out and have this debate of experts spend time [inaudible] and discussing. We wanted to do this because we felt like we could bring other voices onto the site. So basically, these are interesting, because there's three levels of conversation going on here. There's the hosts who are throwing out questions. There are the expert panels who are weighing in on the topic of the week. And there's also hundreds, sometimes thousands of comments from readers on it. And these also have been extremely successful.

Live discussions is actually one we've had for a long time. Live discussions we launched on the site back in '97, I think, or '98 possibly. And these are newsmakers, reporters, people coming on for an hour just basically answering questions from readers about whatever the topic of the day is. In this case, Mike Wilbon does a very popular weekly live discussion. We have guests like Bob Schaeffer, Ken Burns. We had most of the presidential candidates on back when there were a lot of them. And these have also been really big loyalty plays. But the problem we've always had with live discussions has been you have Carolyn Hax on for an hour and you get a huge amount of page views for it, but then there's another week before Carolyn comes back or there's another week before Wilbon comes back. We were looking for a while, how do we fill the gap between these live discussions, where there's all these people who want to continue to interact with these personalities? We're not giving them an opportunity.

So we started with this working with Dave Panos and Pluck. [We] launched what we called groups, discussion groups. We have about 520 of these now. And these are very simple, low-effort, high-return pieces of content. These are basically Gene Weingarten and E.J. Dionne, who come in two or three times a week and just post maybe a two or three paragraph reference to something that's happening in the news and turns it over to the audience and lets them just have a conversation after that. Very, very, little effort from the reporter or columnist is really required. E.J. has... You have to sign up for the group. E.J.'s got 2,500 people in his group or something like that, and Gene Weingarten started about a month ago and he's already got a good chunk of people in there. So our general philosophy with all the interactivity has been try a lot of different things. Don't just keep going down the same

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

road and adding more live discussions or adding more blogs. But what are the ways you can try to basically cover an entire week of the year, where you're always giving something? You're always giving somebody who's interested in these people something they can do and some way to interact with them. So these have been really, really strong for us.

Comments on articles is one. We started doing it about a year-and-a-half ago. I probably should have read these comments before I put it up here, knowing anytime you just randomly put comments from articles up you might have something in here you'll regret. But we have also seen a nice spike in comments on articles. We actually have gone with the [inaudible] no moderation, or no moderation, but no, we don't moderate prior to publication. We did that for two reasons. One, because legally you're actually less liable if you don't read comments before they go up. That way if somebody complains about a comment, we take it down. Then we've covered ourselves. If we read everything before we put it up, our lawyers didn't feel like that was the proper way to go. We actually took on more liability. For me, though, the second reason is actually more important, which is as we work so hard to try to keep people on our websites, I always feel like, [if] you post a comment and you don't see it immediately or at least you don't see it for an hour or 45 minutes or even 15 minutes, we may lose you at that point. And when we have you on the site, we're doing everything we can to make sure you don't leave and that you stick around. So we don't moderate. We have all sorts of profanity filters. We block people all the time. So this has been very successful.

I would say, however, out of all the things we've done, we're still working really hard to get the quality of our comments up. And I think anybody in the business will tell you this is one of the big challenges we all face, which is there are actually a lot of good comments in the comments threads, but they are not always easy to unearth, because certain sorting options aren't available. You can't block people necessarily as easily as we would like to. So we are working on a bunch of things to hopefully allow us to lift the stuff that's good. You know, kind of reputation management. If you're a really good poster and you're getting a lot of sort of recommendations from other readers, your stuff moves to the top. And that's the thing we have to figure out, because right now we're still not satisfied. We're satisfied with the traffic, we're satisfied with the loyalty comments, but we're not satisfied with content necessarily.

Another thing we tried a while ago was, how do we take advantage of a sort of shared experience scenario, where everybody is watching the same thing. It might not be on WashintonPost.com. In fact, is not on WashingtonPost.com in most cases. So can we build an audience around an event that actually doesn't emanate from our site? So we did this with a company called Yaklet^[?]. They're basically live discussions you can embed in a page. So for the last five or six Redskins games last year, we just opened

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

up a chatroom and let people just talk to each other for three hours during the game. We did it for the Oscars. We did it for Super Tuesday, for the Potomac Primary, and a bunch of other things. And just basically said, "Have at it." And we moderate. We have somebody who sits in and moderates them. These were very, very successful for the Redskins, very, very successful for the Oscars, very, very successful for politics. We've also... We finally decided we would try it around television shows. Maybe we could do one around *Lost* or maybe we could do one around... Those didn't work. So again, we're experimenting with all these different ways where we can take advantage of the shared experience.

We just launched user generated photos last week, also working with Dave. And this is [something] we've been trying to do for a while, and this is a way for readers to contribute beyond words. This is contributing photos of anything that we want to solicit photos for. So this was our first effort, which was pictures of the Nationals new stadium. We've also done cherry blossoms and of course pets, because we like the cheap pages as much as anybody. And pets now, there's something like a hundred pictures in the pets thing already, and we've barely promoted it. Again, another way to get people engaged and participating, hopefully, in cases where, eventually, where there's news being made, an opportunity to get a photo we can use on the site.

Another thing we've been pushing into is trying to figure out how to take advantage a little bit of the... Yes, you can tell, this is one of the pet photos people. Take advantage of people's engagement on the site to actually give them a place to store their own stuff. So we launched something called My Post about six months ago. It's not quite where it needs to be in terms of all the functionality we want to add to it. But right now, this was a nice ad to be able to put the photos up here. Any comment you leave on an article, any post you make in a group, any photo you upload, any biographical information you want to put in, all gets dumped onto this page. And you can also friend people and message people within the system. And we're going to really push this one harder as we head toward our redesign toward the end of the year, but this was -- getting the photos on there was a very, very important step for us.

This is our first effort in crowd sourcing. It's not probably technically not. It depends on how you define crowd sourcing. We decided to start a blog that's 15 fans, 15 Nats fans who actually have tickets, who go to the games and report back what they are finding out. How's the food? How's the traffic? How's getting...? Is getting to the stadium on the Metro impossibility or is it okay? And we launched this the day the stadium opened. And it's been really surprisingly successful. I wasn't sure if this would take a while to pick up, but right away, we're getting a lot of comments on every post. And people are really kind of engaged in this idea that we're not telling them what's right and wrong about the stadium. Other people who are at the

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

stadium are telling them what's right and wrong about the stadium. It's connected with our readers obviously in a way where, in this case, we actually just got out the way and said, "This is a conversation between readers and readers. We'll provide the forum, we'll edit it, but we'll let you do the talking." So we're going to keep pushing into areas like this, because this has been a very, very successful thing for us.

So that's the stuff we're working on. Glad to take any questions when we're all done. Thank you.

[Audience applause.]

António Granado: Now, we'll be listening to Jim Lenahan, the Strategic Development Manager for Gannett Newspapers.

Jim Lenahan: Okay. How's everybody doing today? This is exciting for me. It's only my second time in Texas. First time in Austin. I'm really excited. I don't understand this Horns thing you guys do, but whatever that is. You aren't from here either, so that's okay.

Audience Member: Hook 'em Horns.

Jim Lenahan: I will... I have a... Earlier, some people were talking about how many years they were going to go back. I'm going to limit this to one year, last year. However, I have 85 newspapers to cover, so we might be here a while. I'm going to go through this as fast as I can. And I tried. I promise you, there's not a lot of reading on these. I know that when you're in a setting like this and that food comes kicking in, right, you don't want to read a lot of stuff. You want to look at pretty pictures. So I'll try accommodate you here. Although, I am a big fan of the written word. Don't get me wrong.

Okay. So online communities at Gannett. At Gannett, we own 85 newspapers across the country. I hope this works. And I'm going to tell you what we're doing in terms of building online communities. Okay? You may have heard of -- if you haven't heard of Gannett, publisher of USA Today, right, and other things, but you may have seen us in Wired Magazine this past year. That was exciting for us, because you don't see a lot of old media, traditional media companies in Wired Magazine, but they focused on us and a lot of our community building efforts. This guy you see right here, Tom Callanan, he's our Executive Editor at the Cincinnati Enquirer. And again, he doesn't look like the kind of guy you see in Wired, right, but there he is. And he kind of plays that crusty, but lovable editor type. And you know, those are the kinds of things -- those are the kinds of people we need to get onboard with community building. And they are doing a great job there in Cincinnati. I'll talk about some of the stuff they are doing.

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

So I'm not going to... People talked about these kind of things before, integration, all that kind of stuff. I'm not going to really get into that here, but it's sort of the center of what we do. A little over a year ago, we sort of transformed all of our newsrooms into what we call local information centers. There's kind of a little mission statement on it. As you can see, I think it's ground that's kind of been covered here already, what that's all about. These are sort of the seven desks that we have, so we no longer have things like the Metro Desk and the Sports Desk and things like that. I mean, those are integrated into these seven desks in some ways that cover a lot of what we're doing, what we're about.

So community building. Traditionally, newspapers are about readers, right? And that's where it starts. And it's kind of for the most part a monologue, a one-way communication. Hope you guys can see this down here. And it's to a mass audience. And then lately, you know, I think a lot in the industry have gone towards audiences, which you hear a lot about here, because... And it's important to view people that way as audiences, because now we're starting to move away from just delivering information to our readers, right, and kind of, you know, looking at who those audiences are, and what they are made up of, and how we're going to get information to different audiences in different ways. And maybe, in part of that, we're moving from a monologue into a dialogue. Okay? Maybe we're not there, but we're moving to that. But to me what's really exciting is the idea of communities. So now we are going niche and we're moving that dialogue, that two-way communication between the newspaper and its users, and now we're into more of a "polylogue" or a "multilogue," right? So now, this is what I think is really exciting is, where not only the interaction between the media operation and the consumers, but then they are starting to interact with each other, and that's where really, I think, the magic happens.

So this is what -- this, I think, kind of illustrates what we're about. You can try to build communities, and you can do a reasonably good job, I think, of building communities in purely an amateur way. And you see that on a lot of sites, and they've done very well. Usually, though, at some point, they got to -- they have to get professionals involved. And that's one thing, one area where you have an abundance of, right? So where I think this is really exciting, this is a simplified chart. This actually would be many, many, many more notes to this, but where you have a journalist at the top, so your professional who is either creating content or moderating content in some way or doing something like that. Then you start to see generators around that, and those are people who are actually generating content around that content, okay? And there's kind of your super-users. And then from those, you get a certain number of responders. So these are the people who aren't necessarily going to want to start the discussion, but they are going to want to respond to the discussion. And then after that, it's all readers. This is actually simplified, like I said. You know, I'm sort of showing a three-to-one ratio. It's really more about like a ten-to-one ratio on all of those. But what

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

it shows you is the power of where you have the journalist at the top, how big that community can grow. And what we're really looking at now, one of the things we're looking at now is, how can we even move people from this reader stage and get them to become, say, responders? Get those responders to become generators, and so on. Because then we know that's going to have a bigger effect moving on down that tree.

One of the great questions that comes up is, how do we do it? You know, with limited resources, all the things going on, how do we do this? One way we do it is we really advise our newspapers, encourage them to have a social media champion. So that's one person in the newsroom. The title can be whatever. But it's somebody in the newsroom who that's their full-time job is just dealing with social media. So all of the conversations going on, on that site, they are either really monitoring that to see what's happening, find interesting things, see what news can come out of that, you know, really getting engaged, helping moderate in some way, and then also kind of engaging community building, which I'm going to get into a little bit. But then the other part of this that's really important is everybody has to be involved in it to some extent, and that's going to vary based on the person, but everybody on the staff. You know, the reporter who's covering a beat has to be involved with what that conversation is around that beat. It makes them a better reporter. And then the same thing for editors and so on and so forth. So everybody has to be involved with social media, but you still need a champion who really drives it.

So this is where we get our new beliefs now, now that we are no longer old media. Forget that. We are an exciting, dynamic, digital company. Our new beliefs are that are readers are our experts, and we are going to let them debate and share, and we don't hold monopoly on, you know, expert opinions and information. And these are just some of the ways. I'm not going to read through this now. I promised no reading, right? So read this on your own, but these are just some of the things we're either doing or working on doing to do that.

So now, I want to get into the -- this is the real Show & Tell, the visual stuff. With the help of Dave's company here, we've actually really embraced social networking and user-generated content in a whole new way. So when you come on one of our sites (this is The Des Moines Register) you'll see, you know, a person can log on, sign in, can, you know, you'll see community blogs, reader photos, recommendations on stories. All of these things that you expect when you go to pretty much any site now are there for ways to engage the community. And much like they are doing at WashingtonPost.com, users, once they register, they can fill out their profile page, so now they are not just a reader. You know, they are not just an audience to us. This is where they are part of the community. They actually have a home on our website, right? They are not just visiting, they are living there. So they have their profile. They can talk about themselves. All their

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

activity on the site, it's aggregated here, so others can see what they are doing. So if you see, hey, this guy's posted some really interesting comments over here, you know, and I can go to his profile page and see that he's also posting some interesting comments in another place. So you can really see how that can kind of build upon itself. So, you know, we think this is really exciting and holds a lot of promise.

I want to talk just a minute on blogs. You know, Jim touched on blogs a little bit too. I think it's tremendous community building potential with blogs. And, you know, like, I know a lot of you are sitting there going, like, duh, right? Newspapers have been slow to embrace blogs. It's only been the last couple of years or so that we've really gotten into blogging, because, you know, we sort of decide that, you know, the blogger is the guy who lives in, you know, his mom's basement, right? He's just going to spout off on different things. Doesn't really know what he's talking about. Well, what we're really come to learn is (again, you can go back to that chart that shows the journalist at the top) if you do something that's high quality, you have somebody who does, you know, have something to say, a community can really build around that. And the best bloggers are the ones who understand that it is only, like, 20% about writing and 80% about community building. And the magic is in the comments and all that conversation that's going on. It usually starts with the comments just to the blogger and the blogger responding back or things like that, but then it starts to branch out in comments the users are making to each other. And it gets really exciting.

I'll just show you a couple of really cool examples. This Yankees blog right here, I don't know if... This is our paper in Westchester, New York. One of the... Depending on who you talk to, it's either the most popular or second most popular blog on the Yankees there is. If you were to Google Yankees blog right now, it would be the top one that would come up, because this guy has done such a great job of building that community, and it's a vibrant community. He gets hundreds of posts or hundreds of comments on every post that he makes. This one right here, which I just grabbed yesterday, he's actually talking about the comments that he's getting.

Pop Candy, which we have at USA Today, a really popular blog that we have. Whitney's been doing it for a long time. It's all around entertainment pop. She does several posts a day. Hundreds, sometimes thousands of comments. Her blog is so popular that the users, when she's on vacation, they are still posting comments on stuff and they are talking to each other. They are just using it as a forum to talk to each other. She goes out and makes appearances in different parts of the country, and people line up to come not only just meet her, but meet each other, because they've met each other through this blog. So it's just a really exciting, dynamic experience. And both of those, Yankees blog and Pop Candy, get over a million page use a month, so they are drawing the traffic too.

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

Now, the other thing we're doing, too, is we're allowing users to create their own blogs on our sites. So in the past, we would kind of do that, and you would have to go through some kind of structure at the newspaper to get approved. And they would give you some training and all that kind of stuff. Well, no more. Now we have Pluck, the Pluck tools on our site. Users can just go right there, start a blog, they start blogging right away. It lives on our site. And you can see, like, you know, I picked Ozarks Hooker here, right? Kind of funny. But the reason for that is because she's into crocheting, just to clarify. The... But, you know, I think this is really interesting. She says, "I've been interested in starting a blog for some time now, but until I saw the mention in The News Leader about their new community, I had not found a source I felt comfortable with." So we're getting people who aren't necessarily interested or comfortable starting blogs elsewhere, but because of the power of, in this case, the Springfield, Missouri News Leader, a trusted brand, they feel it's a safe place where they want to do that. And then, she's going to blog about gastric bypass surgery and all of her experience with that. It will probably be some really interesting content that will come out of that, that we never would have gotten without this tool. And you'll probably see, you know, people then start to comment on what she's going through, and I think it'll be really interesting to watch.

Everybody here is really interested in journalism. How do we preserve the democracy? Very important. And I think community building can really help with that. So all of our sites... Well, maybe not all, but many of our sites have set up watchdog environments, where people can come and they can talk about things that they think the newspaper should investigate or things that they have heard or things that are going on in their communities. And then we have teams that go out and look at that and do that and become kind of partners with some of those people, so it's a real pro-am kind of thing to do.

Here's an example. This is in Fort Myers, Florida, so Fort Myers and some of the other newspapers in Florida for a long time have been trying to get FEMA records from three hurricanes that they had there in 2004. [They] were unable to get those records for a long time. They sued. They finally got access to it. First thing they did in the news press in Fort Myers was they posted the database of all of those records. So the old way of doing things, and I'm very familiar with this having been an editor at various newspapers, the old way of doing things is you get your investigative reporters together and you, you know, send them off to a room somewhere, and they spend a month, two months, whatever it is, going through all of these documents and facts and figures, and they go off and they interview people and they do all these things, and then they come back together with a big investigative piece. "Ah-hah, look what we've discovered!" Now we post the database right up there. 62,000 page views overnight the first night it went up. Tons! We were just flooded with tips on things going on; improprieties of funds that

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

were being paid out. And it generated instant stories, stories that still continue to this day.

Kind of like what Jim was talking about with some expert panels. You can't see this very well, but in Des Moines, we're taking communities and we're building them. We're going out and building them around important topics. So this is bio-fuels, which is an important topic in Des Moines. And you can see down here on the bottom right, we have a bio-fuels brain bank, so those are experts either from Iowa or elsewhere in the country on this topic. And they come in and they blog on a regular basis about what's going on in that space. And that combined with the reporters they have there is a really interesting community around a serious topic.

In Rochester, we're actively going out and we're finding ways to build communities so they have... They wanted to go after young professionals as a group that they really want using the site. And so they set up this environment, this young professionals page, where you can see blogs, you can read forums, and they can interact with each other. And it provides this new space for them to interact and new content for that site as well.

We're also involved with a project called Beat Blogging. We're just kind of now starting getting into this, because of some of the limitation we have with tools that are now in place in these places, but the concept around the beat blogging, if you haven't heard about it, is that we're going to actually use social networking as a means to report on a beat. And so we're doing that in two places: in Fort Myers and in Cincinnati. Those are the beats that will be covered with that.

I'm going to skip over mapping, because let's just say we have cool maps, and we're some stuff with that. In the interest of time, we're going to skip by.

Lastly, I just want to talk real quickly of communities. When I talked about niches, this is the kind of stuff that we're really seeing some success in. So in Indianapolis, we started a mom site. It's almost all user-generated content in the terms of forums and discussions and interaction. It's just had wild success with it to the point now that we have almost, I think, around 60 of these sites across the country now in our different communities. And these moms are, I mean, they are crazy. They are up in the middle of the night. They are on there. They are talking to each other. They are making friends. They are meeting up. I mean, it was like the community just took off to the point where they had to physically meet each other. It has been just a huge success, and we're really happy about it. And then, it also shows you, I think from a journalist perspective, there's a really interesting thing going on here. But they are not just all talking about, oh, you know, toilet training their kids and where great parks [are] and all that, which is important stuff to them, but they are getting around news topics, too. So in Cincinnati, Cincinnati,

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

right? No connection really [to the] Eliot Spitzer story. But immediately, you know, these threads are coming up. And the moms... You can see the traffic, the numbers of posts there, it's pretty high. The moms are talking about Eliot Spitzer and his wife and that dynamic and all of that. And they do this around a lot of news topics and news stories that are coming up.

We are also looking other ways we can create these kinds of communities. Things like sites built around pets. We're looking and we're experimenting with a men's site that might be kind of an equivalent to the moms, but in a different kind of way, because we found in our research that, you know, they don't really want to be dads, they want to be men, and [inaudible].

[Audience laughter.]

College students is a good one to build community around. We're getting more into entertainment. So we have some different approaches that I'll show you real quickly, but what you can't really see on this screen grab is that there's a whole, big, social networking component to this that's going on a little bit farther down the page, but it's all based around local entertainment, in this case, in Indianapolis. And one really cool thing is they get -- the users get karma points for how much they post and how good, you know, how interesting their posts are. And then there's like a leader board of who has the most karma points. So it becomes -- it kind of has some gaming elements to it, which really gets them involved and engaged.

This is another entertainment site we have geared toward young people in Phoenix. And now we actually have a whole partnership, a whole joint venture with Tribune Company, where we're launching these sites called Metromix all across the country that are all around entertainment. And they have a lot of community aspects with ratings and reviews and forums and all -- and user-generated photos from what's going on over the weekend and all of that.

And then one last thing I want to tell you about real quick, because I think this is kind of, sort of community, but I think it really goes to innovation, which is what a number of people have talked about a little bit. But one of the things... We have this thing at Gannett called the Center for Design and Innovation, and we're really looking at, how do we not only create new and interesting tools, but also just kind of whole new business models and whole new ways of operating? And I'll just give you... And we're working on things with, like, high school sports. We are vertical with that. A weather module that can deliver weather-related, weather-specific advertising in real time. And also a vertical around music, local music that will be really cool. But this one here I wanted to show you, because I think it's really interesting. It shows you how different it is from what we normally do. We've partnered with a company called Cozi. And what this is (it's in pilot markets right now) is a family organization tool. So you can, when you click on these different

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

modules, you would actually go into these different pages, but you can put your whole family's calendar of activities, everything they have going on. And it's a shared experience, so Dad can see it at work and Mom can see it at home or visa versa, right? And, you know, you have your shopping lists, and the kids can put in what they want and all that. Anyway, and this is all, you know, walled up, so it's not like this information is public for everybody to see. You only see this, you know, as a user from your own computers.

But what's really cool about that is we're taking -- we're looking at that intersection between personal information and community information. So you can, as a user, put in all of this stuff about what's going on in your family's life. We can then start to deliver community event information into those modules, so you could start to see, well, here's a bunch of weekend festivals going on. And you know, we're looking for something to do this weekend, so we can import that, boom, right into our calendar. We can deliver school-specific calendars on what's going on in the schools, and with one click, you can get all of the school's schedule, the days off for parent/teacher conferences, and all of those kinds of things in there. So it's community in the sense of we're really delivering -- talk about hyper-local. We want to deliver information directly to you in your household. And then, of course, we can sell targeted advertising around that, too, so it can become... As somebody mentioned before, how do you target that? Get to really specific granular, what people are actually doing with their lives. So...

Audience Member: All right.

Jim Lenahan: So, here's my email address for anybody that has any questions afterwards or anything.

[Audience applause.]

António Granado: We'll be listening now to Dave Panos. He is the CEO of Pluck.

Dave Panos: I've got one on. Well, it's fun to follow a couple of your customers on here when they are doing a better job of giving your pitch than you could do. But just a couple of [things]. People go back and talk about a hundred years of history in a newspaper. I've only got a few years in my company, but I do know that when I was talking a couple of years ago at the same event, we had one customer who was doing these kinds of things in the room. It was Tim [?] with the Statesman. And then last year, we would have had three more names that were live at the time, which would have been Hearst and there were two properties in San Francisco and Houston, and Jim was shortly going to come out with their stuff last May in USA Today. Today, it's a much different list. So everyone has sort of taken this stuff to heart. We're working with a lot of companies, media companies primarily, but even

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

brands like Scotts who have people blogging about their lawns and sharing, which is the grass growing, by the hundreds, believe it or not.

But we really got started in news. And so there's a certain very personal passion around news and how you can hopefully make the world a better, more interesting place through working community into the news process. And so we've got national players, and we learn a set of things from them about scale and kind of how they do audience building, but a very different thing, if you look at the second batch of names here, around the regional players. Folks like Cox or Freedom or Gannett, and so they have lots of different newspapers. So if you think about sort of one customer and one site and then three customers and another site, so what does it look like this year? This is just who's currently live with our software. So a couple of hundred websites that are taking social media to heart, whether that's sourcing content from the blogosphere and bring it on site using some of our tools, like Blog Burst or using Site Life to get their own audience to generate a more interesting experience. It's happening all over the country and indeed around the world. And so, I just wanted to share with you some of our perspectives on it and not talk about the tools as much as what I think is the biggest driver of success with any of these initiatives, which is, what's the editor and their role, and how are they going to introduce us to their audience as well as introduce us to their own newsrooms?

And so I just, you know, glibly titled it Editor 2.0, but I really think that's the key differentiator in terms of what works and what doesn't. And so we'll take a survey of a couple of things. One is just, you know, news happens all day every day. That's always been the primary business. But when you start using these tools, stories break differently, and so it requires different, sort of different perspectives and different skills to make it work well, so the news is reported. In this case, you can see on the USA Today up at the top here, this is 5,200 comments on this specific article. You think that's a lot. The Simpsons launch had 20,000 comments on it. So it shows us that people are interested in all kinds of things. But the audience reacts, right? And so what is your editorial team doing while the audience is reacting? Well, they might be finding interesting nuggets in here and using that to kind of report back out to the newsroom as maybe a way the story needs to shift or an angle that people might be interested in now or in the future. But you also have to look out more broadly and say, not only, "What's happening on my site, but what's happening elsewhere?" Somebody in your team has to be thinking about, what's the commentary that's happening off my site that should be a part of that site?

In this case, we're showing blog posts that actually can run on your site coming from a variety of sources, some of those being something like the moderate voice who's talking about the Spitzer affair. But we even have bloggers on our network, like the Wall Street [Journal], who's putting their blog content into our system so that it will show up on media sites around the

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

world. So you need a few different perspectives than what you might have had before. And then this is where you guys are kind of leading the charge, and I figure [there are] occasions where the audience leads the charge. This happens not as frequently, but we start with the Orange County Register and their coverage of the fires. This page, which got an awful lot of attention, became the center point for where users or readers were learning about what was happening, like, this road has been closed, and they've evacuated this place over here, and traffic is piled up over here. And the editorial team was watching the news about what was important to those end users, which is, you know, "Do I need to leave my office? Can I get home? Is the fire getting close?" [This was] actually happening on their pages by their readers, right? So it was a really special moment. And the editorial staff reacted and said, "Well, what can we do to create sort of more -- sort of fast style forums for this conversation to take place?" And so they immediately popped open photo galleries for users to upload pictures, which is visually interesting, but not necessarily instructive. But then [they] created forums where people could come in and really talk and share more information with each other. So the audience sort of had a locus to create news that was useful to people, and in this case, you know, we think in a really responsible way.

So, what does this mean? What sort of shift do we see? Well, now you need a 360-degree view on any topic, because your readers have their views, and people are having conversations off your site. And your job as editors is kind of organize what's happening and present that back to your reader. And so, you end up having more things to do, unfortunately, with probably fewer people. And then you have to get in this mode of, how do I quickly react and program some of these audience-centric site features. And so we'll talk about a few of things in a second.

So that's about just the news and reporting that in kind of a different way than you've done before. But then you have to think through, what are the new possibilities in editorial coverage? So, what can I do now that I couldn't do before or that I wasn't doing before? And how do we get our online audience to power some really interesting areas. The Cinci Moms example is great, and the work around the Redskins is great. I'm going to highlight one here. This is one of three segments that The Houston Chronicle has done. This one around gardening. And you can see the site over here. It hangs off of their Lifestyle Section, but they are gathering user photos. They have their own experts. They'll have reader blogs, and these are some of the bloggers that are on here. This guy happens to be an extension agent. He actually works for the government, but he set up a page, and he talks about some real interesting things as they relate to gardening and farming and those kinds of topics. What's great about this topic is that it's highly monetizable. There's a very discreet number of advertisers who want to get in front of people that are really passionate about it. But Houston has done similar things like this and hyper-local, whether it's... And virtually in every single

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

district in the Houston area and township has a page where people can gather and upload photos.

Another type of coverage is thinking about your audience, and on some level, your advertisers and helping them make connections. And this is an example from The Economist that is now up for a couple of industry awards. It's a debate series that they sponsored at the request of a couple of their advertisers. They said, "We want to do something really interesting with your audience. They represent somebody that we want to be in front of." And the case that started with Intel, they wanted to be associated with education. And so The Economist and their editorial team produced a debate series that lasted for three months. Three different Oxford-style debates that produced phenomenal responses, not just from the people who were debating, (that would be the sort of think tank and experts), but from the audience. But at the end of the day, at the end of each of these debates, they would give the advertiser a printout of all the material that the readers had shared. And in this case, you know, success breeds success. They've sold this out for the rest of the year with a number of other advertisers. And these debates go on and get bigger and bigger every month.

And so a couple of other examples of how the editorial teams have responded to these sort of new programming opportunities. With gas prices going through the roof and people, especially my father, being insane about gas going up three more cents and driving down the street to get it cheaper, they've created special sections and incorporated what's happening from the blogosphere into what might be maybe a two or three month special section compared to the gardening thing which will live on forever. So what are the editorial roles that are new here? Well, one, you've got to be able to recruit experts. You've got to stimulate some focus conversations. You actually have to think about marketing it, because how do you get people to participate? You have to find them and you have to sort of encourage them. In some cases, you actually really have to go out into the community and dig up folks to participate. So these are new things for editorial staffs to do. And as Jim talked about earlier and a lot of folks have, you have to encourage risk taking on your own newsroom. So if you come up with a good idea, you spend a few weeks getting it in place, you're not sure if it's going to work, and if it doesn't, you've got to make sure that the team doesn't feel bad about it, that they are willing to get in there and try it again.

So with that as backdrop, I thought maybe just talk about a couple of really essential skills that we're seeing in high demand as people consider rolling out these types of abilities. The first is organizing your audience and being able to understand what they are interested in, what they might be good at, and providing ample opportunities for them to participate in a fairly structure way. And so, you know, the USA Today sports team, online sports team, knew that they had an awful lot of folks coming online to see what was going on in football throughout the season. So they said, "Hey, next year," which was

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

this last season, "let's organize some people and ask them if they want a seat at the table. You can be the designated blogger for the Buffalo Bills, or you can be the designated blogger for the Dolphins." How cool is it as a user to actually be -- you know, nominate yourself and then be selected to kind of write every day about the thing you love and then be able to share that with all your friends and your family members. And this was phenomenally successful in terms of the number of people participating and the amount of traffic that it generated. So they sourced from their audience.

Jim Lenahan showed some of the work with the Young Professionals Community. This is sourcing by going out into the offline marketplace and seeing where people are gathering. In this place, it's upstate New York, and so they went to the sort of wine clubs and brought wine clubs online and organized them on their website. So you can pick people who are doing things offline and bring them online and give them a home, and you have a higher chance of success than kind of creating something in a vacuum. So, organizing your users is an important skills. Promoting users and their contributions is another, and making their work very, very visible on the site. And the folks at Gannett have done an awful lot of good work about this, on this area; although, this example here happens to be from Freedom Communications, East Valley Tribune. But you can see where it's front and center on every page, is how you get imprint and the most recent items that have been sent up to the website are there for display and users really appreciate getting that. From some of our early installations, I've gotten to know some of the users of our customers, and I get messages back from them all the time. I know that's what they are really focused on, is getting publicity for themselves.

And then I think this next thing is really important, and this is figuring out what community management model works well for you. Jim Lenahan and I were going back and forth yesterday, and they've taken this model, the distributed model, where everybody owns community at some level, and I personally think that's like the optimal answer, but others are finding success with centralized community management, where they have a smaller number of people who live inside the community, and then others have said, "We can't take on this work," or, "Legally, there's too much responsibility. We can't let us go through the nightshift without having anybody look at what's happening on our website." So they've outsourced it to organizations that focus on community management. But I think your organizations need to be very facile at doing that.

And I'm going to go just sort of quickly. One of the things you have to learn is all the tools required to interact with your users, and keep the crazy ones from hurting everybody else, and fostering communication with the users that are on your website and between editorial staffs. So that's another set of new things that weren't in the job descriptions of the folks who got started with you maybe ten years ago.

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

So, what's the final tally? What's the payoff? And ultimately, I think we've seen richer site experiences, better coverage at lower cost, higher degree of relevancy and job satisfaction, and results. And so I'm just going to brag on Jim's team's work at Gannett here, where what you're seeing here in the hockey stick... How about applause for those page views per visit out of...[clapping]? Well, maybe they're just jealous. [some audience laughter] They are averaging about six page views per visit. These sites are Asbury Park in Des Moines Register, Free Press, Tennessee, etcetera. And on average, they are up to about 16 page views per visit. And the thing that accomplished that wasn't the tools necessarily; although, they are an important part of it. But they've launched new versions of their websites where the users were literally at the center. You can't go to a page -- it's inescapable seeing that there is a presence by users on that website. And so they designed that in from the beginning, and the editorial teams have taken it to heart. And they've got sites, if you see, some of these, they are growing month over month. Virtually all of those are growing month over month in terms of the number of page views per visit. So there is the opportunity to do this really right and drive three to four times as much traffic per visit. That's a pretty phenomenal set of results in just a few months. And I think the future for online newspaper business is really quite bright, because we're still at very much the early days of this. So hopefully, we'll have a chance for you guys to ask the experts some questions on how to make this stuff happen. Thanks.

[Audience applause.]

António Granado: We'll now here Georgia Popplewell. She is the Director of Global Voices online.

Georgia Popplewell: Okay. Hi, everyone. Just delighted to be here. It's my first time in Austin. Only my third time in Texas. The first time it was West -- East Texas as well, so it was more like Louisiana. So this is number two. I'm kind of the odd woman out on this panel. When I first looked at the description, I thought, you know, why am I here? But I think there is a very good reason Rosental put me here, because the others have been talking very eloquently about engaging the audiences who are demanding to be heard, and my organization is basically comprised of those people, but somewhere between user and journalist. GlobalVoices deals with bloggers. And what we are basically is a site. I'll bring up a page. I'm going live for this one, because I'm actually coming from a very pure citizen media environment. So, so pure that we actually don't have an office. I live in Trinidad, and it's from Trinidad that I run this organization and work with people all over the world. And we're probably going to remain a virtual organization forever. We don't really see the need, because we are literally all over the world, and most people are part-time.

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

It may not be obvious at a glance exactly what we do. This is the website here. And it shouldn't be confused with GlobalVoices.com, which Staci's presentation included a reference to. Basically, what we do is review, summarize, and amplify the voices of bloggers from throughout the world. If you look at our mission statement up here, it says that we aggregate, curate, and amplify the global conversation online – shining light on places and people other media often ignore. And that other media is the mainstream media against whom we have nothing actually. One of the early arguments around blogging was that it's bloggers versus journalists. We've always been very clear that what we do is just complimentary. And actually, one of our founders is a former CNN person who left CNN on good terms. She still talks to them. We actually have a very strong journalistic component within the community. A lot of our writers are actually journalists who blog, like myself.

A bit of background. In 2004, Ethan Zuckerman and Rebecca MacKinnon were fellows at the Berkman Center at Harvard Law School. Ethan is still there, Rebecca is not. What they were seeing was that around the world there was this burgeoning of blogs, podcasts, video. And people around the world were, first of all, in countries that the media wasn't often reaching or it was covering very incompletely. And they thought it was a shame that this information was, number one, inaccessible to people for all sorts of reasons: people didn't know it existed, it was written in languages that people in this country didn't speak, and then because there was so much of it. One of the big arguments against blogging is credibility. How do we know what bloggers are saying is true? So what they did was set up an organization. And by the middle of 2005, they received funding to create a sort of newsroom, which is pretty much the same structure as exists today.

All we have is a group of regional and language editors. We number about 24 now. We're getting a couple of subject editors as well. We have an environment editor, and we'll soon have a public health editor. And what they are doing is every day reading hundreds and hundreds, thousands sometimes in certain regions, of blogs, selecting the most interesting, news worthy, important conversations, and summarizing them. Today, for instance, on the site, we have a story from Bulgaria. I mean, I don't know if any of the other newspapers in the room is carrying that story. Probably not. And, you know, it's understandable. We talked a lot about relevance here. Mexico. Emo youth in Mexico have become... Although, I've seen that story before. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, China. The [unintelligible] stories per diem. April Fools, you know? That was a few days ago. Jordan. We have a very strong Middle Eastern desk, as you can well imagine. And so this is what basically we are. And this is happening every day going on and on.

In 2007, however, we launched three new departments that actually enhanced the projects immensely. The first one of those is called Rising Voices. And one of the features of the blogosphere, and it's still true, is that the people throughout the world who are blogging are for the most part

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

people with internet access, with access to computers, which means they are probably, you know, at least middle class. And that was an accusation that was leveled at us time and time again. You know, "You all are covering the voices, yes, of people in other countries, but they are still the middle class." So this outreach section, Rising Voices, it was just funded by the Knight Foundation. It actually gives micro-grants to projects which demonstrate that they are introducing citizen media techniques to new groups of people, who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity. We've funded ten projects so far, two cycles of funding, in places like Kenya, Madagascar, Bangladesh, Columbia, Sierra Leone, Bolivia. Actually, a very, very strong project in Bolivia.

And the next thing we started as a department was Advocacy. Huge! Now, these stories are often reported in the media here. The most recent one was the issue of the Moroccan who impersonated the prince, the Saudi prince. But for us, this is every day. We're hearing constantly stories of people and websites being blocked by governments, things being filtered. And this section was set up to report on this, on these stories, but also to create manuals to instruct people how to circumvent some of these blocks. For instance, how do you get onto YouTube if your government has set up filters? We actually have documentation to show that and also some software development.

And the third critical section is called Lingua. And actually, let me go back to that page. Actually, I've got it through here. We were accused often of being a global site that's wrote in English. And while English is kind of the hegemonic, probably not the dominant numerically, but simply the hegemonic language on the internet. It's actually, you know, we really couldn't go on being an English language site, so we started this project called Lingua, where we're translating. And this is hand translation. This is not machine. This if volunteers who are literally translating by hand, which is really currently the only way to do it, into 13 languages, including Macedonian, Albanian, Malagasy, which is shockingly one of the growing sites. And this has really been a tremendous project for us. We discovered that the model we use for translation, which we thought was very simple and ad hoc, actually has been one of the more successful in the world. Because translation is a very difficult thing to do. It's real time. It's thankless to an extent. But we actually have a very, very strong community growing around these languages, and it's one of the growing areas as well.

A project we're doing, it's kind of one-off, but it's actually a very interesting model, is Voices without Votes. This is something we're doing with Reuters, who is one of our big funders. And it basically is a site which says what bloggers outside of the U.S. are saying about the U.S. election race. And as you know, it's very important. This election race is generating an unprecedented level of interest throughout the world. So that's VoicesWithoutVotes.org.

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

Another thing we do is -- go back to the site -- is special coverage pages. Because what we've found is... Let me go back to the structure of the site a bit to show you how we're made up. On the left part of the site, we have longer articles which tend to be thematic. So we have, you know, what a blogger is saying about this minister in Bulgaria [and] the emo youth thing. So that will be several bloggers on a single topic. Then we have these short links, which we have hundreds of these coming out in each of the regions. What happens sometimes is if there is a breaking news story, there will be so much information coming out that we really can't clog up the page with those stories alone. So we started doing these special coverage projects. The latest one is Tibet protests, where we have a timeline. We would actually have stories from just blogs coming on kind of like a roll almost, the cycling. So that we were able to aggregate. Tons and tons of info on a single event. These actually Reuters has used very widely in their coverage and on their pages.

So in three years, we actually have become a pretty unique model, and probably since there are so few of us, [we are] the leading newsrooms for citizen media content, certainly for summarizing. There are others in the media who are producing content, and actually we don't do original reporting as yet. We're doing 13-plus languages. We have 20-something editors, 100-plus volunteer authors working for us. To [unintelligible], we're number 87 in the world, which has to do mainly with people linking back to us, which is done pretty widely. We're not the most social site, interestingly enough. While we're actually... We're built on a repressed blog platform. And one of the reasons for that is that we like to drive traffic away from us, which is kind of counterintuitive, but the point is amplifying voices. So we are, however, working on becoming more social, but we actually have... We need to think hard about, do we want people to stay? Do we want them go? How do we want that to happen?

Currently, we have several people using our--(how do I get back to that?)--several people using our feeds. Let's go there. Every single tag and topic in the country on our site has an RSS feed devoted to it. So this actually is a great way of the mainstream media using our material, and several people already are. We have--(why do I keep losing this?)--The New York Times on the Iraq page. We hope that... Sorry. I think that's too many pages open. This live thing is good in theory, but ... yeah, The New York Times is running... Why is it not working? Anyway, The New York Times runs our feeds on the Iraq page currently, and there are plans for them to do more. Okay. So much for that.

I would like the -- our presence to be slightly bigger on the page. Okay? All the [unintelligible] it was pretty tiny. Reuters Africa as well is -- uses us. Let me see if this will come up. This will be the test. Okay. Well, all right. Well, let's not -- let's not belabor the point. Reuters Africa, which is an award-

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

winning site that Reuters started last year to aggregate both business and news info about Africa. It runs our feeds on the site. And that's actually a pretty successful use. But to be honest, we have been actually very unaggressive about getting the mainstream media to use our material. And a lot of it has become that certain people have just been coming to us pretty often. We have good relationships with the BBC. Of course, Reuters uses us. We have some relationship with The New York Times. We've talked a lot to The Washington Post and one day we're actually going to -- going to work with them, we're convinced. But we actually would like the mainstream media to really start engaging us. And what's good about us is that all our material is created comments. All we ask is that it be attributed to us. So it's free to use. We have the feeds there. We have RSS and JSS feeds. And while there's a lot of talk about relevance and local news, in a country with a huge [unintelligible] communities, a city like this, for instance, with a big Latino community, feeds from... Well, we have Spanish language feeds as well from Mexico, from South America, all over Latin America, in fact. Those are pretty easy to integrate.

But there [is] also another set of things that we want to do that we're now in discussions about, but I thought I'd share with you, simply because this is such a great audience to get feedback from about [it]. [One] is creating a professional newswire based on the best Global Voices stories. This is a very preliminary discussion within the community, but we actually think it will be an exciting idea. Because if you read the stuff on the site, there's some pretty high quality writing on the site.

This is an obvious one: the database of journalists and publications. We actually don't have one. And as I said, we've been really, really non-aggressive about pushing our stuff to journalists, but we are going to set that up. And anybody who's interested in being part of that, please come and talk to me, and I'll gather names, and we're going to put you into that database.

Feature news event service. Provide advance notice. As you know, the local people are sometimes the first ones to know about something. True certainly in cases of disaster reporting and some other kinds of news stories. So we are trying to find a way of, you know, just being a little more predictive about the kind of stuff we can offer to the mainstream media.

Better special coverage pages. We are going into a third stage of our design, so this is going to be a real big area for us, because the special coverage pages have been very, very useful to journalists, to the media, because it just aggregates all the info in one place. And there are really few sites doing that. We are particularly strong on Kenya, Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto's assassination is one we did and got lots of traffic from.

Op-eds, international news media. There is some. We have people who write for com^[?] industry on The Guardian and places like that. We want to do more

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

of that. Supporting our editors in connecting with their own regional media outlets and establishing long-term relationships. And that's about it.

We have taken what we think is a huge step in trying to reform or enhance global media by reporting on opinion from around the world that isn't normally accessible. And some people have begun to realize how valuable that is, but I think that the reason more people don't is that they actually don't know about this.

Please, if you are interested in working with Global Voices, come and talk to me. And by all means, visit the site, GlobalVoicesOnline.org. Thanks.

[Audience applause.]

António Granado: The last speaker will be Mario Tascón. He's the Content Director of Prisa. We'll then have some time for a few questions.

Mario Tascón: Okay. First of all, if any of the Spanish speakers can tell my bad English, perhaps my English is the very bad English in the world. And I apologize not only to the English speaker, but to the Spanish speaker. Because [inaudible], first of all, nobody will understand me. [audience laughter] And for this, I will show you a very visual presentation. Another problem I have is when I see the panel. Rosental, is a friend, I think he was my friend, [audience laughter], but now he invited me to this panel. I have been thinking a lot, why? What type of things can I tell you? Because we have blogs, we have communities, we have all of the things that I suppose, I suppose all of you are speaking about. And then another thing is the innovation of websites, because with you, I can speak about everything without too much problem. But I try to [inaudible] to show you how innovation is the key for building communities, for having an audience, for having readers.

Some few words about the Prisa Group. We work in the main Spanish, perhaps the main Spanish media group in the world. El Pais is the most important brand that we have. The main registration is in Spain, some with the TV station, and all these digital websites make up the Prisa Group. In our company, that is called PrisaCom.

Okay, for example, one of the five things I will speak about is the different interfaces with the readers. Because a lot of times we are only sending one interaction, that is the website. I think we have at least three different interfaces. For me, the interface is for the distance, the way that is, is the interface with only [inaudible]. Another interface is when you have a method of distance. And another one is when you have three methods or more like that. And for the first one, we have the PDF version, but we are showing [inaudible] El Pais, and with a very special visual of the newspaper that you

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

can have in the El Pais website. Very successful for the readers. The people like it a lot.

But really we like to make the newspaper. Really, we like this. It's the deal of the month. And not only with the normal page. Too, with the different space we put in parts of the newspaper what the people like to put on their personal page. To making [inaudible] El Pais like that. The young people can [inaudible]. Too, in Facebook, you have a version of El Pais. And too, of course, in [inaudible] and in a lot of other different websites. Because we like to [inaudible] El Pais for the readers, for the people, for the audience. Too, sometimes we try to make all the monthly papers. Why some of the readers still like to read them in print? Why not the print newspaper? We have experimental thing that is called [inaudible]. That every -- in every moment you can print a small [inaudible] of El Pais. It's making the print, made for the printers, and is working. Now we are attending that technology. Another newspaper in the world, like The Guardian, are another one's [inaudible]. And we are now changing this, because it is so successful in some parts for some specific use.

Too, in the small one interface, in the form, for example, we not only feel -- - we think that the newspaper makes a huge mistake when they think that the website is only to put the same content of the newspaper in the website. I think a lot of websites are making the same mistake when thinking that the form is the same of the website. It's not the same, of course. But we need to think of a different version that we have for the different pockets, for, excuse me, PDAs, pocket PC, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. And not only for the PSP, for example, for the [inaudible] that the young people were connected. We have not only the same version to the content but they are so different sometimes for different interfaces. Of course, for the iPhone, now, in Spain, it is the most awaited. Everybody in Spain tells me that I need to buy the iPhone here. [audience laughter] Because in Spain, we don't have it still. And too, this is for the three more -- three methods, excuse me, interface. We work in different versions of El Pais for the TVs, for the interactive TVs, like the Media Center of Microsoft or the Intel. We are working on this too.

But the second thing is about the content; how can we innovate in the content. Because a lot of people, I think, are so confused at sometimes because we think the newspaper is so different from our website, of course. And in this type of new format, a lot of times I wonder, what is TV and what is the newspaper? And one of this is the CNN and the other one is The New York Times. Really, one is the TV and another one is [inaudible] is the same media. Internet is the same type of media. This is the real convergence. It's not newsroom convergence. This is the real convergence for this type of media.

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

One number. In Spain, like you know, we have the [inaudible] elections, and we can make this streaming of their debates of the candidates. The first place that the people see the debates in Spain was in the newspaper. Not the web or their TVs, but out of the webs of the newspaper. The first one is El Pais, and the second one is ABC. Another one is El Mundo. I think this is something for reflection, because with the Internet we have a very good position, better than the TV sometimes. Every day we put near 50 videos, every day, from different sources. We have, of course, agencies. We have user-generated videos. We have specific people making videos in our newsroom. And we have agreements with some of the best Spanish editors that every week publish in El Pais. One is for Pais and one is for film. Too, we have a satirical program every day that we buy [inaudible]. It's a small one of two minutes. We have the rights of all of the soccer leagues, all the soccer goals of the Spanish league. It's a lot of money. On our website, we buy it, because sometimes the video for the newspaper writing is so amateur. To see the, you know, the journalists speaking like [inaudible] in the TV. We need one who... We need the clever of the TVs. We need more professional items with some things. Because the audience don't like it too much. The amateur can be for the bloggers, can be for the user-generated content, but not for the professionals.

And then for this, we pay a lot for this, but it's all successful. You can support the specific in Spain. Too, [inaudible] reviews or programs like this. Perhaps why not? We don't know if this will work. This is made for one of the professional bloggers that we have. That is another way to see the -- really to listen [to] the news of the El Pais. I don't tell everybody in the newspaper, in the upper levels of the newspaper that we begin to publish this. [audience laughter] And one year before I was here, it's still in El Pais.

[Video starts to play. They make adjustments. Then it continues to play. No audio.]

Mario Tascón: Now, it's [inaudible] news, but in another way. [audience laughter] The people can understand Spanish can make the translation for better than I, but it's really made in the Bronx. I never -- I never ask about the origin of the guy, because I prefer I don't know too much [inaudible]. [audience laughter] But let me see. Excuse me one second. [Making adjustments.] Okay. But another experiment we have is El Pais TV that is continuously streaming with all the video we have. We have three different channels now: the sports channels, [inaudible] channels, a news channel, and two channels of music. Why not? Why not the newspaper? We publish every week a lot of the hits. And we sometimes will have a lot of problems with the rights of this with Yahoo, with other players in Spain in the music area, because we publish for the readers, the music. Like Mozilla, this is new, like, you know, the new video of Mozilla. And too, the broadcasts. Why we make the broadcasts? We have agreement with the radio and we have more than

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

12 hours every day of broadcast different with news, with pleasure, with entertainment that the readers can pay for with the iPhone.

The third way of the opportunity is about the form of the content. We forget that in the beginning the newspaper had not only information. In the beginning, the newspaper is information, entertainment, and education. And we forget two of the parts. One is for the TVs, and another one is only for books. But I think in the web, we can have these three parts again, and we can level up these three parts.

We have a lot of blogs [inaudible], but two permanent blogs. We've got [inaudible] that every day make not [inaudible] that everybody comment. And we have this in [inaudible]. We develop this with an education -- education area of [inaudible]. We could tell you only for children. It's very specific for children. It's really successful in Spain. And this made [inaudible] the children's book of [inaudible]. And too, things like this, that this [inaudible] has made the circle. For live, we don't have rights, but we can make a lot of things to transmit this. This is one. Like you can see here, with a lot of numbers, with a lot of things. But if you like the statistic of every [one] of the games that we have in Spain, every [one] of the players, you can seek for them. In this game, you know the gains. And if you like, you can take some part of this and put in your blogs and put in every [thing] you like to or in the iPhone. Excuse me there, but maybe I should... Okay. [inaudible] We have a lot of games in El Pais. Why not? Because the people like a lot to play.

And now what we learned, our practical guides, are very similar to the [inaudible] to dot-com of The New York Times in Spanish, because in Spain we don't have any of these type of things with progress, with a lot of people writing. We like to speak a little bit about the new narratives, because this is the -- a graphic that El Pais published for the [inaudible] in San Paulo. I like to show you the work of El Pais infographics people that really work in a different way than the paper people work. This is the work is making between the -- with the work of [inaudible]. Okay. And then you can move the airplane, take another way. You can stop it, can [do] everything you like. You can make it. Because this--this work in different narratives, in different ways to show the news for the audience, because we talk a lot about the dialogue, but we are part of the dialogue. Because we forget this, because we are always, "I need to have the newspaper for the readers," but we who are part of the talk.

Okay. The other one is the different contents we have by source. In a newspaper, you know, it's all of the work is professional. Here, not all is professional, a lot of the users. What we are making, this is... Excuse me, I don't have time. I don't have that. It's another idea about this. It's not about reading. The people are waiting for talk. They're waiting for realism, no, for talk to others. And then, for example, one thing that I think is very

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

specific of the European web is the realism interview. Every week we have theme, different, very important people from the secretaries of the many different -- secretaries of the states in Spain, for people from the sports, music people. And the readers of the news, the journalists, and the readers, they watch, make the questions. It's really successful too. Like, another one is we have news comments every [day] of the news. Another one that you have in some parts is [inaudible] journalists that is a success in Spain too. We [inaudible]. Talentos, that many of you know, that is a special project, that the people that they have watch, illustrator/music people, send the best . We show them in the website. We show them in the paper. There you see this is part of the page of El Pais of the Fridays. It is work of these young people. But, too, because our music, we publish the music in the EP3's radio that we have, and, too, the videos in EP3-TV, but too, in El Pais, videos in other parts. This is the EP3 radio. And too, a lot of times, some of these groups of music, for example, we select and we publish the date of the conference, but it's not only video. A lot of times this is the group, one of the groups that send us the music, and we publish the music in internet.

Another real successful project La Comida. La Comida is the blogs of the readers of El Pais. We have more of that, 15 bloggers, active bloggers in El Pais that publish in this area. That is called La Comida.

And one [inaudible] and this is the last part. One profession is, too, about the brands, no? This is all brands, no, all brands. We think a lot and we have for a lot of years [been] talking and telling the young people that, "Come here, come here, because we have very good brands." We have credibility, a lot of [inaudible] that is real. And we don't understand why the people like these other ones. [audience laughter] Perhaps the people like another style. We have a font like the black that is colored in El Pais in what the people can change and have, or the things that they make, the pictures that [they] send, the comments that they send. But why not put together another one that the people like? Another style for El Pais? Please, select the style you like and change. [audience laughter]

Audience Member: That's cute.

Mario Tascón: And this is the end. It's only about the innovation. One thing more that they said it's a new project we learned. It's a semantic web. This is -- I prefer to show you a graphic because with my English you can't understand this graphic [inaudible] beyond this case more. This is [inaudible] that we make with a specific company in Spain, but this is a mix between the two companies. [inaudible], what is the [inaudible]? WIP is the Web Important Port. And this, we send in every moment really, in every moment, bots to the internet--[audience laughter]--to look for people. We have a person that tell the names of the people, and the bots go onto internet and seek the people. And he can know that this is a person or another thing for the semantic web, because he understands what happens. For example, he

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

thinks that if Ronald Reagan come and talk, [inaudible] Reagan talk, talk is about that only a human or, you know, or can be an official human. But if it's for this, it's probably this Ronald Reagan is a man. But if in the page it said the Reagan Ducks in Chicago, perhaps this is not a man, and then it's not a man that we are looking for. With all those, these material, we begin -- the bots begin to understand the different things near this person. For example, be it political, be it president, be it actor. And with all this material, he [is] trying to make a specific database. So Reagan is very close to Bush, it's very close to Gorbachev, it's very close to Carter. It's so close to [inaudible], not too much with Picasso, not too much William [inaudible]. All with this, we make that Reagan... This is what the bots made. That Reagan is fully person, President, political, and, hmm, actor, [audience laughter], not too much. We say when the bots know very really well the person and what the two differences are in that the person, he begins every day to understand, what is the popularity of these people on the Internet, and make a different index, looking in the blogs, looking in the news, looking in the different place, [audience laughter], and making this [inaudible]. And you can see here the [inaudible] hopefully. That you can see the top WIP for the different categories, for the most people that are always going down, going up, and a lot of -- you can play a lot with this. This really is experiment for us. It's not... You know, it's really working well. Every day, we have, we say, [inaudible] near a [inaudible] person every week. And really, we are very happy with the experiment.

But the only recommendation that I can make for you is that you innovate, innovate, and innovate.

Thank you.

[Audience applause.]

Mario Tascón: Okay. We will have five minutes for questions.

Rosental Calmon Alves: Is there a mike?

Georgia Popplewell: Yes, yes.

Rosental Calmon Alves: There is one there. Come to the mike.

Audience Member: How big is your staff?

Rosental Calmon Alves: How big is your staff?

Mario Tascón: Oh, the staff, well, you need to understand that Prisacom is for all the websites of El Groupa Prisa, and we work with El Pais, is the main one, but we have another very really big. We work... In the company Prisacom, 300 person work in total. For El Pais specifically, we have 14 in the

2008 - International Symposium on Online Journalism

content area, and to us, with designers, with documentaries people, perhaps five engineers specific for El Pais.

Rosental Calmon Alves: And in particular to El Pais?

Mario Tascón: Yes. No, with the people in the El Pais newsroom or the people of Prisacom that work for El Pais, it's near 40, too, another five, I think, engineers working for El Pais.

Rosental Calmon Alves: When are you going to do that searching thing [inaudible] in English?

Mario Tascón: We are working on that. Original was in English, but we changed, because for us it's more easy for the semantic web, because I have more Spanish language people working. Like you can see, I can help nothing with the English version.

Audience Member: Question for Georgia. Your colleagues are very worried about money. I take it GlobalVoices, you don't have any plans to -- you don't have a way to monetize this, do you?

Georgia Popplewell: Not currently, but that's one of the discussions we're having. We are a non-profit, which doesn't mean we can't make money.

Audience Member: It's a lot.

Georgia Popplewell: Advertising is one of the things we're grappling with right now. We don't know if it's something we should be doing, but there are a lot of discussions now about at three years old, where we go. We are funded actually by Knights, Reuters, and a few other companies, but of course, you know, it's an ongoing battle. But yes, it is something that we're thinking about.

Audience Member: How much longer? You have funding for how much longer now?

Georgia Popplewell: We have most of our funding for 2008, we think. [laughs]

Rosental Calmon Alves: Okay. So thank you very much.

[Audience applause.]