

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

### **Day 1, Panel 3: Newsroom Integration and the Prevailing Formula of Multimedia, Multiplatform Content – Is it Working?**

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**Moderator/Chair:**

**Fred Zipp**, Editor, *Austin American-Statesman*

**Panelists:**

**Jim Brady**, Former Vice President and Executive Editor, Washington Post.com

**Sewell Chan**, Bureau Chief of City Room Blog, NYT.com

**Jonathan Dube**, Vice President, ABCNews.com

**Anthony Moor**, Deputy Managing Editor/Interactive, *Dallas Morning News*

**Torry Pedersen**, Chief Executive Office, VG Group (Norway)

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**Rosental Calmon Alves:** I want to invite our Dean of the College of Communication to say a few words to help us to welcome you. And he has been a great supporter, so Dean Rod Hart, please.

[Applause.]

**Dean Rod Hart:** Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to be here. It's sort of interesting to reflect back on our college and connect it with this conference. Some years ago in the late sixties, three department chairs got together on campus and they were thinking that it would make some sense to pull together the individual departments that were focusing on various pieces of the communication puzzle. And so they did. And ultimately the college grew into five departments. But what's really interesting about that initial group of Radio-Television-Film, and Journalism, and Speech Communication, as Advertising and Public Relations came into the college, etc., in some ways, the college had constructed itself with a vision far beyond what it thought it had. Because here we are today with all of these divisions among the various communication silos breaking down, and so much of that is what you all are thinking about and how the web really has changed those very traditional distinctions. And I think back about those three men that got together to form the college and thinking that how prescient they were and how amazed they would be if they were still with us today at how things have changed, and how each day online new things are being invented, new ways of sharing information are being invented.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

So I welcome you to the conference on behalf of all of us on the faculty, but particularly on behalf of those three visionaries that helped put us together and in some sense anticipate the 21<sup>st</sup> century many 50-some years ago. Welcome.

[Applause.]

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** Okay. So I'll let you now with a great panel. Fred Zipp, our Editor of *The Austin American-Statesman*, the local newspaper, will be the chair and moderator.

**Fred Zipp:** Thank you, Rosental. And congratulations [on] 10 years of this symposium. Some of us started here a while back. And what, there were maybe 10 people in the room back then? So it's impressive seeing everybody here today. And welcome. First, let me introduce the panel. I'll do it very quickly. To my left, Jim Brady, former VP for the internet at *Washington Post* and current travel blogger. To his left, Sewell Chan of *The New York Times*. Then Anthony Moor, who is the Deputy Managing Editor, Interactive, at *The Dallas Morning News*, Jonathan Dube, VP at ABC News, and finally, all the way from Oslo, Norway, Torry Pedersen.

We are going to — they are going to, I'm not going to, I'm just going to announce. Our panelists are going to briefly give their thoughts on the topic and then we will follow with a discussion, and what I would ask is that [you] hold your questions until we get into the discussion part and then fire away. So our topic is Newsroom Integration and the Prevailing Formula of Multimedia, Multiplatform Content — Is it working? And what we want to hear is a yes or a no, followed by facts and argument. Leading off will be Anthony Moor.

**Anthony Moor:** Thanks very much, Fred. Is this the right...? Can you hear me? Is this working?

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** Yes.

**Anthony Moor:** (The representative from Texas will speak. Thank you.) [laughter] Thank you, Fred. So my answer to the question, the prevailing form of newsroom integration, multiplatform, multimedia — is it working? The answer is no, I don't believe it is working. And I don't believe that... And actually I believe that some of the problems that we see that are facing newspapers today are due to the fact that it isn't working. There are some pretty standard reasons why it isn't working, and I'm not going to go into them in any great detail, but, you know, you might be not surprised to learn there is a craft expertise in our newsrooms that is not aligned with the type of expertise that is necessary in the digital world. And while we have done a great job of trying to educate staff in some of the new forms of media, it hasn't been as successful, I think, as we would like. And that's due to the

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

fact that a lot of what we've asked people to do is significantly different from a cultural perspective than what they are used to. The other reason it hasn't worked — among the other reasons it hasn't worked is the fact that we really still in our newsrooms are looking at our newsroom staff as product owners, not audience owners. By that I mean that the responsibility for putting out a product, a time-based product, is preeminent, so that you have a metro editor, city editor, a business editor, a sports editor whose responsibility is to put out a product maybe once a day or twice a day and everything else is extra. They are essentially bonused and rewarded for that product, and the success of that product is how they are judged also in the peer community. So there are clearly other reasons why the current format isn't working. Most of the money that is coming in the door is coming from the time-based product. And as a result, that's where people focus their attention.

The new multimedia, digital world is not as well understood, and the ways in which we should be communicating as journalists are still under development. And as a result, instead of having a clear and well-defined workflow that produces a clear and well-defined result, there's a certain sense that anything goes. And that leads to a lack of focus, a little bit of chaos, and it causes the people in the newsroom to question whether or not the people in charge know what they are doing. And they may be doing that with some, you know, with some "that may be true." [chuckles]

So at *The Dallas Morning News*, I'll just give you a little bit of background on what our newsroom is like. I've been there two years. I'm in charge of Interactive in the newsroom. And two years ago when I arrived, they had already taken what was a separate interactive department and blown it up and stuck the various interactive editors in the various departments in the newsroom. So the idea behind that was that you would have these web champs who would parachute in to enemy territory and bring everybody, the troops, to grab the hill and inspire people to do great things. And what in fact happened was they got caught on the steeple at the church and machine-gunned to death. [laughter] Those of you... Some of you remember *The Longest Day*, the World War II movies, where at San Mère-Église you have the American who's got his parachute stuck on the church steeple. That's what I'm referring to. But it's very difficult for — it was initially very difficult for those folks to operate. The idea was that there would be inspiration [that] would take place and that inspired individuals would work. What we really know is that newsroom people are — that's not the number one thing that gets newsroom people going, inspiring [them] to do something different. That may be a factor, but it isn't the main factor. We since... We still have those people in there, but we since realigned and we redirected them. And we at *The Dallas Morning News* now have, two years down the line, we have about 44 people worth of work every day being done by newsroom staff compared to about 21 people who are on the interactive site. So in a newsroom of roughly 300-350, depending on the week, we have quite a bit of newsroom buy-in on doing things for the web.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

But we've also learned a few things about, how can we make this work better? And the answer that we're coming up with — and we're really getting there slowly, it's not like we decided to clear the decks and start over — is that we need to look at the people not as product owners but as owners of audience. And they should be less focused on the time-based product, the once-a-day product, and more focused on producing news in real time throughout the course of the day on their beat. And our number one experimenter in this was a reporter named Kent Fischer, who sadly is leaving us for a huge job at the Gates Foundation or something like that. But he latched onto a BeatBlogging.org experiment with Jay Rosen in which he beat blogged his Dallas ISD beat. And essentially at the end of his 14 months worth of work on this, he realized that he comes to work every day and he interacts with his community of interest on his blog and stories emanate from that. So his editor then can essentially provide an overview look and say, "I think this... You know, you're so busy blogging, you might not have noticed, but this looks like this is a big story today." And he may have noticed and he may not, but that is how they tend to do things. So Kent's position is that editors will take up the role in the future of cleaning up for the print product, for the time-based product, things that are being published in real-time basis by the newsroom itself.

We are committing 18 blogs to local communities starting May 1<sup>st</sup>. 21 reporters will be assigned to these local communities on the city and school beat. We'll be bringing in a group of neighborhood editors who we already have for a different digital effort that we do, a free weekly newspaper and website. The idea being that everybody is going to contribute to a beat blogging experiment in each of these communities. And again, getting away as much as we can from the time-based product with the goal that this extra effort at engaging a community of interest online and in the real world will drive stories out of it and into that once-a-day publication when the presses start rolling. On the breaking news side, we actually segmented that out. We said, "We need some people to do nothing but breaking news for the web." We hired a bunch of college kids, pay them hourly, and they literally come in in the morning and they pick up things early. As long as our newsroom has a time schedule that is based on the time-based product, it's very difficult for us to actually ask of them to beat blog when the web is preeminent. So we're hoping that over the course of time that we'll be able to align our hours more with the beats and less with the time-based product, but that certainly is not where we are today.

Do I have to walk up there to put up my slides? Is that what I do? I'm going to quickly as I...

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** [Inaudible.]

**Anthony Moor:** Right before I close, I just want to really quickly show you a little bit of the thought process that we're thinking of. Why is beat blogging a way of effectively operating? Yeah, if you'll just double-click that. Yeah,

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

that's the one. This is something that Steve Yelvington started. The idea that Steve had here was sort of to visualize the experience, the online experience of blogging. And he pointed out that reporters operate right now very comfortably in the "town crier" mode. Reporters and editors produce content. But in a two-way digital world, reporters and editors also have to remember about the town square. And in the town square, they encourage the community to contribute content while helping them connect with each other, so there is community contribution. Community is part of the town square function. And then there is the town expert function, which is reporters and editors compiling information as data which allows users to search and personalize answers. So the old time-based product was content only. The new beat blogging or digital world includes community, search, and personalization.

If you'll just click to the next slide. Now let's just fill it in. Oh, that's probably the bad thing. Not to do that, yeah. This fills it in with the kinds of information tools or information products that could come out of the various circles that are there. And you'll notice that breaking news and stories is just one function of this, but the other types of things that come out of this cross lines. And Yelvington pointed this out quite well in his post that I thought was really seminal on this. But you'll notice how the town expert overlaps with the town square in things like wikis and user-generated reviews, high school sports content in which the coaches provide their own rosters and data and information. And the town expert actually becomes in a sense a crowd source product, not just a product by reporters.

The next slide, just very quickly, shows you where newsrooms are today. And this is what we're trying to break out of. And clearly if we want to move into a better beat blogging world — click to the last slide here — we have to shrink the production of content. Go ahead, you can click there. And we see blogs as a natural place where a lot of this can come together. And that's why we decided that in order to more effectively integrate the old newsroom model with the new multi-platform world, beat blogs are the way to go.

**Fred Zipp:** Thank you, Anthony. So the answer was no. Jim?

[Laughter.]

**Man:** [Unintelligible.]

**Fred Zipp:** Well, I'm keeping score. That's all I meant there. Not a critique.

**Jim Brady:** I will also answer no with a caveat, which is that it's too broad a question to really give a firm yes or no. I think the answer about any newsroom integration is some of them are working and some of them are not working and that there's... Should you merge newsrooms is one of these questions that everybody seems to, you know, think there's a very clear answer to, but I think if you're looking at how to structure newsrooms, you

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

have to look at a couple of things before you decide, you know. People used to ask all the time about *The Times*, they used to say, "Well, *The Times* has merged and you guys are not. Who's right and who's wrong?" And my answer was we could both be right and we could both be wrong. It's about our culture and it's about the history of the place. Can you put them together effectively? It may be that the right answers for us were completely different answers. So there isn't a right answer about whether to — how to merge newsrooms.

The reason I answer no to the question is because I think conceptually, merging newsrooms is the right thing. I think in practice that's not really what happened. And to continue Anthony's World War II references, I mean, a lot of newsrooms have merged the same way Germany and Poland merged in 1939. [laughter] It's not been a merger in way, shape, or form. It's been the newspaper has taken over the website, and the website staffers have become third/fourth-class citizens. Their voice is sort of drowned out by the mere fact that they are outnumbered, at the *Post* case, 7 to 1 by folks on the print side. So I think it really just matters, you know, how you actually apply it. The answer...

To me, the real question is, do you believe the web is where media companies are going to have to battle for audience and for revenue online in the future? If you think that is the battleground and you also believe that the web is a medium in its own right and not merely just another platform for print journalism, if you believe those two things, then how can you put a structure together that has very few web people anywhere high in the organization or don't really let them have any autonomy? To me, autonomy is the key to any structure if you're going to put the web and the print sides together. If you're going to put the web and the print sides together, the website has to have the ability to push the paper into things it would never do on its own. And I think that's what's been lost in a lot of mergers. You know, what you hear when you talk to a lot of people at a lot of papers about newsroom mergers is, "Now the newspaper just tells us what to do. And our ability to push them into things that they are very uncomfortable with is completely gone." And if that's the result of your merger, then your merger is not going to work. You have to have some autonomy and some ability to push.

And I think that the history of *The Post* was that we were separate for a long time. We were separate longer than anybody. I don't know about maybe... In the U.S. I know that there's still — outside the U.S., there are folks who are separate and adamantly so. And I think for a long time it really worked for us. I think there was always this question if, why does *The Post* have separate newsrooms? Let me clarify this. There were two ways we were separate. We were physically separate. The web newsroom was in Arlington and the print newsroom was downtown. And we were structurally separate. I don't think the physical separation was useful for a long time. Physical separation actually was a huge hindrance to us to not be able to walk across

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

the room and talk to someone on the print side and walk them through why we were doing what we were doing. So I don't think that's ever a good idea. Maybe it was a good idea at *The Post* ten years ago when, you know, we would have been — it would have been horrible to have been in a newsroom and been completely ignored the way that the website was in the early days when I was there. But that long ago became a problem more than it was a good thing. But the structural separation actually was useful for a long time, because when I started as exec editor of the dot-com in late '04, I wanted to launch blogs. Now, you know, I have a tremendous amount of respect for Lynn Downey, who is a good friend of mine, but I was not going to walk over there and just tell him we were going to do it. Of course, I talked to him and explained to him why I thought this was the right thing to do, but at the end of the day, if he was not on board with launching blogs, I could still do it. And I could still say, "This is where we have to go. We've got to get into blogging." You know, I know that sounds so passé, but this was five years ago, and we were a newspaper, so we were a little slower out of the gate.

We did the same thing when we wanted to launch comments on articles. We were one of the first big papers to do comments on articles. And to give you a perfect example of how the cultures are so different is, you know, when I was asked, "Why do you want to launch comments on articles?" my answer was, "Because nobody else — none of the big — none of the really big papers have done it yet." And the newspapers response is always, "Well, if it's such a frickin' good idea, how come nobody else has done it yet?" You know, and it's sort of like you can see the cultures kind of colliding there, which is we want to be aggressive and the paper was looking for a reason not to do it, because, you know, there had to be something lurking around the corner that was problematic. So I think that creative tension, which is a good thing in most newsrooms, I think — historically, creative tension is something newsrooms should have — I think worked in our favor. I got along really well with Lynn, with Phil Bennett, with the people that we had to work with, but I think that tension allowed us to push into areas the paper wouldn't have done. And Lynn has been doing, since he retired, has been doing speaking. He's on Romanesco every three hours speaking somewhere. [laughter] But he has said a lot of times in a lot of his speeches, "The website pushed us to do things we wouldn't have done, and they were the right things."

So I think whether the merger is a right thing or not is too broad a question. It's, do you allow the website to maintain enough autonomy that it can push? Because if this is the battleground, if this is where we're all going to be playing, if this is the playing field that we have to survive in, then you've got to put the people who know that medium, who understand that medium in positions where they can affect real change. If they can't do that, then your structure is not going to work regardless of how many org charts you [have], I mean, how many change management consulting firms you bring in or how many org charts you draw up. If you don't have the right mentality about your merger, it's not going to work no matter what you do.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

And just to tie up *The Post* piece of it, *The Post*, about a year ago when Marcus Brauchli came in as overall Executive Editor, they put the website in the newspaper under Mark, everything under one person for the first time. And so that, the separate newsrooms is sort of a thing of the past. It isn't quite a thing of the past yet, because they're still working on some of the details, but they just announced a re-org yesterday, if anybody has read about it, which sort of takes a first step towards merging the newsrooms. And I think one of the... When I left, one of the things that was written was that I left because we were merging newsrooms. It's not why I left. I didn't leave because we were merging newsrooms. I left because I was concerned that the website, the autonomy the website had had for a long time was going to disappear in that structure. And frankly, I didn't necessarily have the stomach to go back and try to re-fight all those battles that we had fought for five years to sort of move people along. So just to clarify that point.

So that structure is going away, but I'm not, you know, I'm not unsympathetic to the argument that there is a real case to be made that keeping the newsroom separate is the right thing. I think there are places where it is absolutely the right thing. And I assume we're going to hear one argument of that later.

**Fred Zipp:** Thank you. So one no, one qualified no. There's a trend developing. Sewell.

**Sewell Chan:** Can I go up there actually, so I can show the website as well?

**Fred Zipp:** Sure, absolutely.

**Sewell Chan:** Is this clear?

**Man:** Yes.

**Sewell Chan:** All right. So I feel this is like one of those presidential debates where like the moderator tries to get everyone to say yes or no, but do not dodge, do not weave, and so I'm going to offer a yes. Yes.

**Man:** Yeah! [applauds]

**Sewell Chan:** And a pretty unqualified yes. And I don't mean that in a Pollyannish sort of way. I'm actually really struck by the comments of my two distinguished predecessors before me. I come from kind of a different perspective in several ways. I was really a traditional print person. I may be one of the younger members of the panel, but I had been a print reporter for most of my now decade long career until about two years ago. And I'm not really doing much web stuff except filing, you know, breaking news updates to our website. I guess I was known for being productive, and so they thought maybe they could co-opt me into blogging, and they kind of have



## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

successful so far. I'm also not, you know, a [manager]. I mean, I manage a small staff, but I'm not at the very top of the organization. I'm here to offer sort of a ground level view. One thing that's impressed me a lot about *The Times* is for an organization that is so steeped in history, in tradition, and really concerned about maintaining the quality and the values that have sustained it for 150 years, I feel it's an incredibly nimble place to work, where there has been a lot of erosion of job categories and descriptions.

I sit with editors and web producers and copy editors in an almost kind of jumbled mix that kind of works out organically and well. Producers are writing stories. Editors are twittering. Reporters are editing other reporters. I'm not saying this is happening everywhere within the organization, but I've been kind of really impressed at *The Times* at how kind of nimble and agile and flexible people are. I guess sometimes I compare *The New York Times* to like kind of a giant ship or an army that is sometimes a little bit slow on the uptake, but then like once it moves, and once it's like firmly in its turn and it is turning, and once it is planted in a single direction, it's kind of like in some ways a very magnificent thing to watch. And I definitely sense right now a sort of unity of organizational mission and purpose that I think is producing really cool things.

The only caveat to my yes is, you know, people are... I mean, when I came to this panel, I mean, honestly, Rosental, I was a little bit — I thought the integration question was kind of, in my opinion, a little bit stale, to be honest. It's not a word that I hear mentioned at *The New York Times* very much at all. People are very worried about the business model. [chuckles] Very, very worried about the revenue. But if the question has integration worked from a journalistic perspective, I think totally. I mean, I don't think anyone in the organization doubts that.

To give a little bit of history, you know, I guess you need to assign an official date to integration. It was probably around 2005. I guess before then the website had technically been a separate organization in some ways; although, I don't think the separation was nearly as great as what Jim describes, for a couple of different reasons. Just because we were in a building built in 1913, there wasn't enough space for the web people, so they were two blocks away, which was not a huge difference. They were also unionized, represented by the same union. There weren't these sort of major organizational differences between them. They weren't two separately organized companies. They were business units within one company. I don't have to go through the basics of *The New York Times* website. It's the number one newspaper website in America. There are more than 20 million uniques each month. I wanted to trace a little bit. I used to actually work at *The Washington Post* for four-and-a-half years, so I did have a sense of what the culture there was like and how it's different from that of *The Times*.

A few of the key kind of turning points that I would like to note in sort of how integration happened at *The Times*, just for a historical overview, [are] the

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

website started in 1996. In 2000, *The Times* created this so-called Continuous News Desk, which is a team of, at the time, mostly reporters, but now mostly editors, who update the website with breaking news updates. By the time I joined *The New York Times* in 2004, I definitely noticed sort of the integration happening in very real and tangible ways. In 2005, the home page producers moved into the main newsroom of *The New York Times*. And just as importantly, the web and multimedia producers are now about 90 people out of a total organization of about 1,200-1,300 people. So the outnumbering is kind of in a way even greater at *The New York Times*, but I also don't — but unlike Jim, I don't really feel that the web people at *The Times* feel shunted aside. I think they have a lot of autonomy [and] are given a lot of respect, frankly. In 2005, the web and multimedia producers who are now about 90 people and the Continuous News Desk were placed organizationally under the leadership of a single Digital News Editor, now Jim Roberts, who was formerly the National Editor. And Jim reports to Jonathan Landman, who is the Deputy Managing Editor in charge of *The Times'* overall online presentation. And these were guys who traditionally had come from the print side. They were actually both, when they started at *The Times*, copy editors at the National Desk, but I think are really respected for their news judgment, and news values, and above all, for their real adaptability and flexibility. They've kind of embraced themselves fully into the mores and values of the web in a way that's really admirable.

So one takeaway that I would definitely... I'm sorry. Another major step, of course, though, was in 2007 when *The New York Times* moved into its new headquarters. The print and digital newsrooms were completely enmeshed within each other. There's not really any kind of physical separation now. And it's hard to overstate the importance of physical proximity, I would argue. For the first time, section producers at *The New York Times* were embedded within the desks and the departments whose content they handled. The home page producers, for example, occupy a pod that's literally sandwiched between the News Desk, which is the traditional night side operation that oversees the print edition, and the Continuous News Desk. So everyone is sort of seated together. There isn't sort of a sense of physical segregation.

Equally important, the rhythms and folkways of our newsroom culture, if I can draw on this musical or anthropological analogy, shifted in important ways. For example, web producers have become an integral part of our so-called backfield meetings, the twice-a-day meetings in which assignment editors in each department consult with each other about story placement and play and story length. At each of these daily meetings, it's become very customary to ask, "Is there potential for audio and video? What storytelling approach best suits this topic? Is there a document to go with this story?" It's become very second nature. Coverage is often initiated by the producers. It's not coming down from traditional print people saying, "Oh, let's just add some multimedia bells and whistles." Many of the story ideas are resulting generated by multimedia folks and by the section producers.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

At the highest levels of the organization, we've shifted sort of the workflow of *The New York Times* workday. Traditionally, *The New York Times*, the department heads had the first of two Page 1 meetings at noon. About a year-and-a-half ago, that was moved ahead to 10:30 a.m., in large part to allow for earlier planning of how the news report unfolds on the web. Just this past week, the role of that 10:30 meeting was itself modified even further. Department heads are now expected to pitch stories for the home page at that meeting, and in a sense, to compete for space on the digital front page in the same way that they've been competing for play on the print front page.

So having talked a little bit about the organization, I wanted to discuss just briefly a few of my own experiences as a metro reporter. Can I get out of this and to the web? Who has been... My job description has changed substantially just in the last few years. Until about two-and-a-half years ago, I led a pretty traditional print existence. I was part of the team that covered Hurricane Katrina and the New York City transit strike in 2005, which were pretty big stories. But other than that, I was mostly writing for the print edition. In 2007, I was asked to take on a new role helping to launch our first metropolitan news blog, which was pretty late, the fact that we started in 2007. But again, I go back to this idea that *The New York Times*, sometimes we're slow when we start, but once we start, we like to try to do it well. [chuckles] The first *New York Times* blog began in 2005, but now we have more than 70 blogs which arguably is too much, if I can say it. I hope that's not blasphemous. [chuckles] The name we settled on for the metro blog, City Room, harkens back to the traditions of the print newspaper, but it exists in the digital medium in every way. In a sense, starting out was easier. It was easier to say what we were not than what we were.

When I first heard the notion of starting a blog, working on a blog for *The New York Times*, I kind of hesitated or shuddered. I thought about the highly personal, opinionated, gossipy, casual tone of blogs. I thought blogs meant short snippets of information with loose editing standards, if any editing at all. And that isn't what we do or at least not what we do very well. Ours is a group written blog, and it's entirely reported. It's carefully edited, even if occasionally that editing takes place after the item has gone up. And often in much greater detail and length than what we can accommodate in the print edition. We publish 12 to 15 items a day on average, Monday through Friday, from about 8:30 in the morning until about 6:00 in the evening. A web producer works with us on presentation and technology, but otherwise the resources for the blog have come almost entirely from the print side of the operation. There are about three reporters who are dedicated pretty much exclusively to it along with the Deputy Metro Editor and two copy editors who arrive in the mornings and work on early stories in addition to blog items.

And our Metro Department is about 70 reporters, so it's one of the biggest departments at *The Times*. And I'll be honest, it wasn't always easy at first getting everyone to contribute. But I also think there are certain myths or

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

lessons I'd like to share. One myth is that it's younger journalists who are inherently more web savvy or get multimedia or get blogging. We found that often wasn't the case. Our political reporters blog right away, because politics inherently is very conflict driven, very fast moving. I mean, there are certain spheres that work well for blogging. Politics is one of them. If you are covering a village in West Africa, it will not work as well. People are not issuing competing press releases. There isn't... [chuckles] The cycle of the news day will work very differently, especially if you're overseas or in a non-internet rich environment. New York City is a very internet rich environment. We found that some of the veteran beat reporters actually were among the first to embrace the blog. They saw the blog as a way to amplify or enhance their articles in the print edition, to share their expertise with readers, to answer questions they didn't have space to address in the print edition, or pick up a thread of the conversation.

So a few of the sort of highlights of what we've done in the last couple of years in this blog. One is, and this sort of speaks a little bit to — it speaks quite a lot actually to integration, because one thing that we've found ourselves having to confront is sort of the development of new sort of skill sets. And one of them is sort of live blogging. An example, we didn't do... Oh, wait. We did a lot earlier this week actually. So we had a new archbishop of New York who was installed, and we've taken to sort of live blogging a lot of these events. Do-do-do. Oh, my god, there are so many posts that have mentioned this archbishop, so I'll like really scroll down the page. [laughs] Sorry. Do-do-do. So, you know, I mean, we're not competing with local television, but we are providing kind of a lot of blow by blow. This was the first news conference by the new archbishop of New York, who was installed this week. That's one thing that we've learned to do a lot.

We sort of went through this marathon sort of civic experiment, where for two days last year... Well, so, we have term limits in New York City. The mayor was not supposed to run again this year, because he was barred by law from doing so. Our mayor happens to also be one of the richest people in the world, [laughs], and the richest person in New York City. Not that that, well...[laughs] And he decided he wanted to run again, so they changed the law to allow him to run again. And this was a very controversial decision. The City Council basically completely folded, and they were like, "Okay, we're going to do it, because you're our hero. And we need a billionaire to run the city when the city is going bankrupt." [laughs] To make it short. So we decided to really live blog these hearings, where literally over the course of two days hundreds of people came and testified. We got an enormous response from readers who thought that was really positive.

Some of the cultural things that have happened that we've noticed that have happened in the newsroom because of the blog. One is the redefinition of, what is a scoop? I think even when we started the blog two years ago, there was a concern that, "Oh, if I have an exclusive or it's something that only I have and we put it on the blog, well, aren't we going to let all our

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

competitors know?" I think a real turning point in that was the Elliot Spitzer scandal in 2008 when the governor was brought down by a prostitution scandal. *The New York Times* found out about ten in the morning. After confirming it, put it up online before noon. It was global news after that. And people were very savvy to realize, hey, if we found out [at] 11:00 a.m., as good as our reporters are, it would not have stayed until the next day's print edition. So the idea was get it out there, be first, and it's fine. If you're first, you're first. It doesn't matter if no one else is giving credit to you. Most of them will anyway. But a scoop is a scoop. And I think that was one thing, the lesson that came out of that.

Another sort of insight that the blog has helped us develop is what I would call the sort of economy of the link. This is something we're still working with a lot of print reporters to understand, that there is sort of an ethos of sharing and mutual recognition on the web. One of the things we have on our blog is like a pretty comprehensive blog roll, which we are very proud of, that's like literally dozens and dozens of some of the best blogs in New York City. And they actually compete in a sense to be on this blog roll. We don't try to be obnoxious about it, but our standards are pretty high. You have to work a pretty regularly updated blog with original content. And people are constantly, you know, writing to us trying to get on our blog roll. And that's part of like the blog love that people talk about. Like it's a lot of blogging is about, you know, you pat my back, I pat yours ... or scratch or whatever.

Another thing we're learning is that there's a new skill set that's emerging that I would call the sort of skill set of aggregation and curation. And I don't have the time to go into it, but there's a modified version of The New York Times website right now called Times Extra, where you can actually see not just *New York Times* content, but also [the] best of what's around there on the web. And in a smaller way, our blog does that every day. We're constantly linking out to other blogs, and we're sort of bringing you the best of New York. Ideas like becoming a destination, where we're curating a lot of that content.

Yet another cultural shift is that reporting is becoming what I would call more iterative or provisional. If, you know, the newspaper is the first rough draft of history, the blog is maybe the first rough draft of tomorrow's print article. [laughs] We sometimes put things online, get reader response and feedback. Sometimes not only the evidence that's brought to bear for the next day's article, but also the very thesis changes. We've had a number of instances where readers have written in with either factual context or, you know, wholesale criticisms that have then informed how the story in its final edition appeared.

I thought one sort of key — to just give more and more examples — one key thing that happened culturally that we kind of have gotten used to, that we're still getting used to, just happened two weeks ago when students at the New School University took over a university building and occupied it.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

And there was sort of a guerilla video person outside who took pictures of these arrests and of people, you know, they appeared to be getting kind of beaten up by the police. And what happened... Well, one second. Our search function is not great. [laughs] No, hold on. Oops. We posted a video that ended up going really viral that appeared to show... Sorry. Ah! Okay. Well, look at me, not at the screen. [laughs/laughter] Because I'm incompetent at finding this. It appeared to show the police kind of roughing up these protestors, and it went really, really viral. And one really cool thing about it... So this was the original post. It got hundreds and hundreds of comments. And this was the sort of viral video. And by the end of the day, the police department had been so sort of shaken and alarmed by what this video showed, because it appeared to show the police kind of acting a little bit out of hand, that they released their own video. So, you know, we've always had dueling press releases. [laughter] We've always had dueling press. It's old hat now that the official will see your story online and call you and complain, "Why don't you change this? You're not being fair to me." That's--that... We've been there and done that already. This was new. This was like, "We're going to put our own video on YouTube and show our own version." So at one point, there were actually four different competing videos. And the police put their own video on YouTube which showed a very orderly scene inside the school with people, you know, patiently waiting to be arrested, [laughter], you know, negotiating. It was very, very orderly, very seemly. And it was fascinating. It was like a very "Rashomon" like moment. And that was really, really interesting to us.

Another moment I'd like to talk about is how, you know, we've talked a lot about user-generated content already this morning, but sometimes it's like it's not just users, it's like the people who are in the news are now themselves filing the news. To give one example, there was this, you know, fairly minor traffic accident. It wasn't like the biggest deal in the world. But a tractor trailer crashed into a bridge, a highway bridge sign, and, you know, the sign collapsed, this major bridge was closed down, but no one was killed. It's not that huge. But the guy who was in this car, as you can see from like his windshield, he was behind the car that was behind the sign. And actually, like, he kind of didn't even get out of the car before he started filing. We don't know this guy. He just likes to read *The New York Times*. But he called us, filed cell phone images, then later filed the video that he had taken, phoned in his quotes, [laughter], and you know, we pretty much were ready to turn the whole thing over to him and ask him to just write the story and then complain about how it wasn't getting enough play. [laughs/laughter] But, no, that was one thing. You know, I think culturally... I mean, we laugh. I am trying to make you laugh, but it is sort of an interesting cultural shift that's happened at *The Times* in a very, very quick space. You know, this was an example where it wasn't hard to verify. It was obvious from his phone that he was actually there.

I know I'm running out of time. I just want to say a few more quick things. You know, another one of the things that is challenging definitely is sort of

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

assimilating new skills, as I've talked about a bunch already. A big one that we're still... And I sort of wonder sometimes whether we almost need to create new job categories that sort of bridge print and digital. You know, one point I made earlier is that I feel that people at *The Times*, who wanted to be, have been incredibly sort of flexible and adaptable in developing new skills. My editor, for example, has become sort of the official twitterer and chief of *The New York Times*. And he has like a huge, large Twitter following that mostly focuses on New York City news. And that's one thing he's just becoming intensely engaged with. And it sort of intrigued me from the earlier presentations, you know, whether that's something that we need to actually make as a job, you know, the sort of community management and social media management.

One thing that I do know is already kind of a big job at *The New York Times* is we're one of the few websites that prospectively moderates every comment. So your comment is not published unless it's been — until it's been reviewed by a *Times* person. And just on our blog alone, we get probably on the order of often 3,000 comments a week that are published. You know, there are a lot more that are not. And so it's a huge, you know, it's actually kind of a drain on time. I mean, definitely part of... Although I'm painting perhaps a rosy picture of integration, the dark negative side is moderating comments at 4:30 in the morning. [laughs] And I know I'm running kind of out of time, so I'll leave it there.

One of the just like — one closing thing I wanted to say. And I don't know if this is different from the other newsrooms represented on this panel, but I guess one thing that we're really doing that maybe is a little bit distinctive from other newspapers is we're actually kind of appropriating a lot of people from the print side like me and giving them pretty much exclusively digital like responsibilities. Like, I'm not really expected to write for the newspaper. I mean, some of the things I write on the blog go into the paper, but my primary responsibility was to get this blog going. And that's a model that's kind of worked in interesting ways. I mean, you could argue that maybe it's not a good idea, because we're not people who are like digitally native, but there are a lot of people within the organization who have smart ideas and kind of have a sense of where the future of the organization is and want to embrace that.

I'm going to show one more website, one more site. It's actually two hyper local sites that we recently started. And they are actually both run by traditional print reporters, Andy Newman and Tina Kelly. And we're sort of trying it out. It's a different thing. It may not work, but one is for two neighborhoods in Brooklyn and the other one is for three towns in New Jersey. And it's an effort to take a traditional print reporter and have them sort of become a community moderator/editor. We're training community journalists and also working with students at journalism schools who are getting academic credit to cover communities, you know, in real depth. I mean, *The New York Times* has never been the kind of paper that covers

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

high school sports or birth notices, but now we're doing that online for the first time. And that's another interesting example of how we're moving people from print to digital.

So, thanks.

[Applause.]

**Fred Zipp:** Sewell, thank you. I think on enthusiasm I'm going to give him, give or say what now, two to two yes, because—[laughter]—Sewell was so inspired. Torry, yes or no?

**Torry Pedersen:** Well, the headline answer is no. To make it more nuanced, it depends on the scale of your operation, both in terms of how big your newspaper is and how big the market you operate in is. Because for smaller newspaper, a dual newsroom strategy would not work. But for people with national or even global aspirations, I definitely believe in separate newsrooms. And we might recognize that this panel must be biased, because we are in a — have a plurality for no. If you look into a poll among the world's editors, 86% believe in the blessings of the integrated newsrooms. They think they are staffed with journalists so effortlessly versatile that they can make terrific stories both for online and paper day of and day in, and I do not believe in that.

But before I... Since I come from Oslo, Norway, I will show you some pictures of some nice skiers who will stress my points. But before that, maybe I should allow myself to use 60 seconds to give you a framework for the operation I'm in. In Norway, there is 4.8 million inhabitants. It's a small Scandinavian country. The newspaper company where I'm the CEO, we reach 52% of the population every day. So more than half of the country is reading either the newspaper or the online everyday. Of those reading every day, 55% of the daily readers use digital. So that means that there is more readers digital than on newspaper. When it comes to the ad revenue, 42% of the ad revenue is digital. 42%. When it comes to the profit, 39.5% of the profit is digital. When it comes to the profit margin for the digital operation, which is in a separate company owned by the newspaper, it has for the last three years been 42.1%, 43.2%, and 34.9%. I left last year. That's the reason why it's dipped a little bit. [laughter] And we would have been the number four in the American market when it comes to newspaper websites. We have 9.3-million unique visitors a month, 80-million user sessions, and 1.2-billion paging presence monthly. One of the problems with the American markets is that they measure this in monthly figures. In Norway, we measure it by daily figures. And then if you come to television, it's measured by program. When it comes to newspaper readership, it's measured by daily circulation or daily readership. You have to get rid of the measurement system measuring online by month if you are to grow the ad revenue. That's one of my main points.



## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

Okay. Since I've come from Scandinavia, I will show you some nice skiers, which you're probably not very familiar with skiers in Texas.

**Rosental Alves:** No.

[Laughter.]

**Torry Pedersen:** But anyway, these guys, probably for those of you which are very much into skiing, they're probably known anyway. The guy to the left there is Bjorn Daehlie. He has 17 Olympic and world championship gold's in cross-country skiing. He is the guy who has won most in the Olympics for cross-country skiers ever. The guy to the right is Kjetil Aamodt. He is an Alpine skier. He has won nine Olympic and world championship golds. He has won... And both of them are skiing. And they have the same tool and the same delivery mechanism: ski and snow. Just like newspapers and online. Do any one of you think that this guy Daehlie would have been an Olympic champion in downhill skiing? None of you think. Why not? Because the format is different. Is the format between newspapers and digital different? I believe so. And I believe it should be even more different. And the thing is that where it's a real urgency for product development is in newspapers. When it comes to the web, it is developing by the day. It's just like a digital camera. The first digital camera took lousy pictures. Today they are fantastic. They are improving by the seconds. That's happening on the web as well. Where is the urgency for product development? It's in newspapers. Because we still think that we can give the readers sort of fast-food news agenda, which is totally overtaken by the web. So that's just another PowerPoint slide.

This time about water. To the left is a bubbling brook from Newfoundland. To the right is a bottle of water. In the summer of 2007, I lived for six weeks in Manhattan because my wife was working as a correspondent. Then I had the time to read all the terrific newspapers from New York every day: *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*. I took three hours a day to read them. There I found a story that in someplace outside New York they have opened a bar which only sold bottled water. [laughter] And that proved to me that this is some bad place. [laughter] Opening a bar selling bottled water. So what has that to do with journalism then? To the left-hand side is a bubbling brook. It's continuous flow, it's raw, it's unlimited, and it's real time. Is it like the web? To the right is a bottle. It's limited space, it's distilled, it's refined, and it's bottled. Is it like a newspaper? Okay. So because it's water, the same guy should take care of both types of water? Or should the same reporter be so good that he is the best reporter in the newspaper and in online? In my opinion, that will not work. Of course, there are terrific amateurs. There is good both in swimming and field and track, but you will not get a Michael Phelps of journalism if you try to do both newspaper and online.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

So this fantastic idea that journalist is the most versatile people in the world, [laughter], [that] we will be able to be the best both in newspaper and online, is getting old. I do not believe in it. And the reason why I'm so opinionated about it is the figures I just showed you for the operation I've been operating for eight years. Because before I was the publisher for the online edition, I was the executive editor of the newspaper. And it's impossible to have the focus and the speed for both to develop products simultaneously. So my opinion is that to have... I agree with Jim. It has nothing to do with it's a structural separation. We are not in another flat. We are on the same flat as the newspaper. I call the model integrated separation or the best friend model. [laughter] There is no reason to be another over Potomac River. I mean, that's just stupid in my opinion. You should be in the same flat, but it should be structured differently. And I will just show you some example from Norway.

There was a building block collapsing on the western coast of Norway. Building blocks should not collapse in Norway. A lot of people died in the accident. It was big news. On the website, which you can see to the right. And recognize [the] size of the headlines compared to the headlines in American newspapers. That stresses another point. The best production in the world is a newspaper. If left, you will discover things you didn't think you were interested in. Most American newspaper is edited search oriented. If I'm to search, I go to Google. If I'm to browse, I go to a web-run website which gives me headlines that I'm eager to read. So on the other hand, in this story, 28 articles with 113 updates were posted on the website before the newspaper hit the streets. And that's what it's all about. Online is the big now. Newspaper is for a few moments. The reflex of a newspaper journalist is, "Don't publish now. I might need it for tomorrow's newspaper." The reflex of a good online journalism is, "Publish now! As sooner as possible." So it's so important.

And another point. If we — if you merge the newsrooms, the newspaper guys will get the upper hand, and that's because they are still strong, strongest maybe, except from the organization where I'm working in, where it's more or less leveled. But in most other places, it's the newspaper who will get the upper hand, and that will slow the development of the online. So therefore, it will not be a success. So it's so important, in my point of view, to keep them separate, to stress that the urgency for proper development is in the paper. Online, there's a lot of things to do, but it comes naturally. Every day there is product development online. And so, to finalize my point, I do not think that big operations with national or global aspirations should integrate their newsrooms. I think they should be held separate. And there is one thing which stress the point further on — the business model of the online is constructed [so] that it gives disproportionate revenue to the number one in the market, because it's ad finals. The number one get a hell of a lot more money than the number two and number three. And to get this cover to place the number one which we have taken, you have to have focus and

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

speed, and that can just be done with separate newsrooms in a best friend model on the same floor with integrated separation. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**Fred Zipp:** Thank you, Torry. Well, I guess it's a little anticlimactic now, but we've got our answer at least by mathematically with Jonathan. What do you think, yes or no?

**Jonathan Dube:** A little suspense.

**Rosental Alves:** [singsong] "Dun-dun-dun-dun."

**Jonathan Dube:** How's that? Is that high enough? So you thought you had your answer, but I think it's three to one so far?

**Fred Zipp:** Mm-hmm.

**Jonathan Dube:** But I'd like to point out that I work in a broadcast environment. And all three of you work in newspaper environments, so I'd like to suggest that the vote for newspapers is three to one, but that I would case the sole vote for broadcast newsroom. [some laughter]

**Fred Zipp:** Good point.

**Jonathan Dube:** And I say that not to be funny. Oh, well, partly to be funny. But because I think there's actually quite a few differences between... Is this working?

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** Yes.

**Jonathan Dube:** Quite a few differences between the way broadcast newsrooms operate and the way newspapers operate. And I think I've had the privilege, I guess, of having a pretty interesting perspective on how broadcast newsrooms operate from the web perspective, because I worked — I first worked at ABCNews.com about ten years ago, and then I left there, worked at MSNBC.com, ran CBC's website for the past three years, and then rejoined ABCNews.com last fall, which was quite interesting, because I had basically been away from the company for about eight years. So rather than being sort of in the belly of the beast and watching a newsroom organization evolve and having your own sort of personal ties to what is and isn't working, I had the perspective of someone who had been there when there was basically no integration and coming back in a more or less integrated environment. So when I first joined ABC in 1999, they were, you know, the website was completely independent to the degree that I was actually hired in Seattle, while ABC News, the network, as you know, is based in New York City. I was hired by a separate company, which was actually a partner and wasn't even technically owned by Disney at the time, that was running and

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

producing the website for ABC News. So it couldn't have been more sort of separate.

I went to Littleton, Colorado to cover the Columbine shootings and the ABC News folks on air who were covering it at the time barely gave me the time of day when I went there. I basically covered it on my own. I shot video. I did everything on my own. It was almost absurd to the degree that we were operating as sort of two different entities.

A little bit later in my time at ABC News in 2000, I was working on a story where I was breaking some news, and one of the on-air producers called me up and it resulted in us basically working together on a story, and [that was] over the course of two months. And as a result of that, you know, we got to the point where we started breaking some news and we had some decisions to make as to whether we would break some stuff on the air first or on the web. And I remember one day where we had uncovered some news late at night and I was on the phone with the producer for hours, you know, arguing back and forth as to why we should break this on the web. And there had been... You know, there was obviously quite a bit of resistance back then. This was quite a while ago. And, you know, finally, [I] helped persuade them that we should put this on the web. And we actually put some video that had been shot for the evening news on the site first thing in the morning for the first time. And so, you know, I think that was quite a big deal at the time. And that was actually some investigative work that we had been doing in conjunction with Brian Ross, who is, as some of you may know, one of the leading investigative journalists out there. Fast forward to now and Brian Ross and his unit are one of the — at the forefront of breaking news online on the web first before stuff even goes on air. And there have been a number of examples.

And if you go to our website and you see The Blotter, which is our investigative section of our website, it's one of the leading investigative websites out there. And, you know, among the stories that are probably the most famous is that he broke the Mark Foley scandal on our website as opposed to on air. So there's a series of stories like that. And as Paul mentioned this morning, we actually led the site with an investigative story that we worked on with ProPublica last night and this morning, which is going to be on *20/20* this evening. So, to me, that's a great example of how an organization has evolved over time. One of the reasons I think that has been so successful is that there's an understanding of the power of being able to reach people directly. And the way that we're structured to some degree, Brian Ross and his unit, to use an example, sees the web as a program. They see the web as an effective — The Blotter as an effective program on our website in the same way that *20/20* or *Good Morning America* or *Nightline* is a program that they can produce content for. So it's a new outlet for them that they can produce content for. And that has really given them a lot of reason for pushing the web and integrating it into what they do. So, you know, the staff works very closely together.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

I want to talk a little bit about Twitter, if only because I think that's a requirement today, and actually tie it into integration, because I think it's actually a really interesting example. So a couple of things happened. In January or February, the *Nightline* staff sort of talked to us about how they could integrate Twitter into their broadcast and their coverage of the State of the Union. So what we did was we set up some Twitter accounts for them. Excuse me. We broadcast on NewsNow, which is our 24-hour digital network, a live broadcast after the State of the Union with the Nightline anchors twittering back and forth with our audience and talking about the conversation that had happened during the State of the Union, during which the correspondents and anchors were actually twittering with viewers during the State of the Union about what people were talking about. And you could sort of see this sort of real time reaction where all of a sudden, you know, the moment it appeared on TV, we had, you know, thousands of people reacting to Nancy Pelosi's hideous dress. And there was this sort of instantaneous reaction and interaction with our correspondents unlike anything that you can actually — that we've actually had on our website where the comments forum is a little bit less real time.

The other thing that sort of happened with Twitter is it's exploded to a degree that I think very few people could have predicted. Now as you've seen, most media organization have sort of jumped on it. But the two things that I think are interesting are (1) that we've had a real sort of interest in our personalities. This may differ from the experience of some of the newspapers, but the degree to which we've gotten people interested internally and people who are following our correspondents on our shows is actually quite remarkable. Just to review some numbers, which I actually had to update two hours ago and are probably out of date now, George Stephanopoulos has 380,000 followers, *Nightline's* John Donovan has 250,000, Terry Moran has 280,000, *Nightline* has 290,000, *GMA* has 325,000. All of our folks combined probably have over two million people following them. Now we have a pretty large website; nevertheless, that's a lot of people that we can reach directly in a lot of different ways. And *Nightline* itself, which has a growing audience right now, has been doing very successful, has close to a million Twitter followers across its correspondents and the show's website. And this is for a show that gets, you know, close to four million people watching at night. You know, there's no way of actually obviously knowing if those are the same people, but I gather that, you know, (a) there's an overlap, and (b) that we're actually attracting a lot of people to be interested in *Nightline* in a way that we couldn't otherwise do. But I think it's actually quite a fascinating phenomenon.

And because we have... Because Twitter helps creates this direct connection with the audience in a way that — in a different way than the website actually does, it's created a tremendous amount of excitement internally among folks on the broadcast side. And I think for that reason it's actually really helped our integration efforts, and it's gotten a lot of people excited

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

about some of the things that they can do and that we are doing in a way that some of the other things we've done may not have. And so I think there's actually a lot of value from that perspective.

We've also sort of, you know, we've also experimented in some other ways with Twitter. George Stephanopoulos did a Twitter interview with John McCain where they tweeted back and forth. And, you know, it was an interesting way to sort of combat the long-windedness of politicians, because he only had 140 characters. [laughter] And there were actually some interesting questions in there, and it was a little bit fun, you know, a little bit entertaining. And again, it sort of, you know, helped extend our brand and attract new folks. And again today, as you know I think by now, Oprah has joined Twitter, which was a rather big event. [laughter] And we were thrilled to find out, you know, that the fifth tweet that she sent was to George and that they tweeted back and forth this morning when they were taping the show which is going to be on shortly. So I think that, again, that's just another way for us to connect with an audience that we may not have connected and to help bring in new folks and to really get our folks interested in the internet in a way that they couldn't otherwise have experienced.

The last thing I'm going to talk about was a video series that we recently started. This is an idea that was brought to us by one of our executive producers, Andrew Morris. And the notion here was to try to do a series of videos for the web that are different from video that we do on TV. This is something that newspapers have experimented, I'd say, a lot with bringing different videos specifically for the web. And I think broadcast networks have probably done this a lot less, from my experience personally, because we have so much video already. The idea here is to do a daily video series that's designed specifically for the web, a little bit more raw and less produced than traditional broadcast elements, shot using flip cams more or less, give our correspondents a little more voice, and have a little bit of fun. They are produced by five top correspondents. Each one produces a video weekly. Each have an assigned day. And they each have a theme, but they are fairly general. The idea is to give them creative freedom that they might not have on air and to create something that's a little bit more fun, a little bit more viral, and a little bit more webby. It's been something that's been done with very few resources, because in effect the correspondents are shooting the videos themselves using the flip cams. One of them actually edits his own pieces. And one producer deals with the rest of the editing more or less. I'll show you just a quick sort of overview as to what this looks like, and then I'll sort of tell you why I'm actually showing this to you. Let's see if this actually plays here.

*[Video plays...]*

*Reporter: Welcome to the quick fix.*

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

*Reporter: Everybody, you're wondering, what is this? Well, it's a good question. We're trying to do something that's really never been done at ABC News before, because frankly, you remember our Cirque de Soleil experiment?*

*Bill: Well, it's time for the rest of the morning's headlines. Let's turn to Ron Claiborne at the News Desk. Good morning, Ron.*

*Ron: Good morning, Bill and Kate. Good morning, everyone. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton...*

*Man: That was a disaster.*

*Man: But this is the internet. Well, this is the Wild West.*

*Reporter: Tonight I'm going to crash with the coach surfing king of Madrid. Hi. Can I sleep in your house?*

*Man: [Inaudible.]*

*Reporter: We're going to focus on really original reporting, new ideas, people, trends. Dan Harris will present his fixation.*

*Man: The bonobo is our closest cousin in the animal world, and it is the only other animal except for us that actually has sex for fun.*

*Man: John Burman will bring us his four questions.*

*Reporter: I just don't get it. What's cool about the Jonas Brothers? Or is it that I'm just too old? If you have the answers, please let me know. I'm ABC Dude.*

*Reporter: Juju Chang is there for all you working mothers.*

*Juju: Do I sometimes give "this" too much power? Let me tweet all my friends and find out.*

*Reporter: Late night anchor John Anderson checks in from the dark side.*

*Man: And I'll always have an intriguing question from my seven-year-old son. That's not him. That's Brian Kenny. My son doesn't shave.*

*Reporter: So click on us daily, won't ya? Only at ABCNews.com.*

*Man: The fix is in.*

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

*Man: The fix is in.*

*Man: The fix is in.*

*Man: The fix is in.*

*Woman: The fix is in.*

*[End of video.]*

So, to wrap up, the reason I showed that is because it was — the idea was conceived of by someone on the broadcast side. It's been very successful so far. One of the things that has resulted from that is that the folks who are involved in it, primarily folks on the broadcast side, it's helped them get a better understanding of what does and doesn't work on the web, and it's given them some real insight. But the, you know, in the end, it's something that's really being driven by them. The Twitter idea, where we integrated it with the broadcast of the State of the Union and the President's first press conference, was brought to us by the *Nightline* staff. And Brian Ross is day-in and day-out breaking stories on the web before they go on air. So I think those are a couple of really good examples of why integration on the *is* actually working. And so I think I'll close with a one to nothing vote on that.

**Fred Zipp:** Thank you, John.

[Applause.]

**Fred Zipp:** So anybody, questions?

**Rosental Calmon Alves:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

**Fred Zipp:** Yes.

**Question:** Okay. We've heard a lot today about what the insiders think about what needs to be done to help those outsiders consume this journalism and the evolving stages that it's going through. And so my question is, where do the readers fit in to all of this? I'd like to know whether you guys take a proactive approach to gauging your readers such as conducting reader surveys, directly soliciting reader input, or whether you just sit back and monitor the reactions from your readers when you do these things? Because like any product, the customer is the one who ultimately decides whether to accept or reject what you have to offer. So that's my question.

**Jim Brady:** Yes, all of them. At *The Post*, we had a panel of about 3,000 people that we could ask in real time any questions we needed to ask them about a new product, about anything we were doing on the site. So we had really quick turnaround panels. We did deeper focus groups if need be. And



## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

obviously, we monitored traffic pretty closely. I think that was the — that was the reason we pushed so hard to a lot of reader engagement stuff, is we figured out pretty early on that if you can get people to comment on articles or to post a question, do a live discussion, or engage in any way with the site, the likelihood that they became an incredibly loyal reader of the site went up dramatically. So we monitor that stuff very closely. What we didn't do with reader — with traffic numbers was make changes every five minutes on the homepage. We tried not to get into the idea that this story is now the most popular story on the site, we need to make it the lead. We tried to keep the... We tried to make longer-range sort of judgments on what readers were doing and not get too much into real time. But we looked at that stuff incredibly closely, as newspapers would if they could. I mean, that was always... Newspapers always get beat up for not thinking enough about their readers, but it's also fair to say newspapers have a lot harder time getting to that information than we do on the web.

**Fred Zipp:** Anybody care to add to that?

**Anthony Moor:** Yeah. I'd just say that the focus that we... In 2005, when I was in Orlando at *The Orlando Sentinel*, that's when we started rolling out our blog effort. And *The Dallas Morning News* is something of a — was slower than Orlando in this. But in the early stages what that meant really for the newsroom was, "Cool, I have this great place I can post a lot of stuff." And what we're doing now is recognizing that it's not enough to just write things. You need to actually connect with your community, and so we watch. We're watching very closely. And we're beginning to really pay much more close attention to the aggregation of community and the curation of that community, and that comes in both online and offline communication with your audience.

**Fred Zipp:** Yes.

**Nuno Vargas (University of Barcelona, Spain):** Hi. I'm trying to get like general solutions for very specific companies. For instance, *The Washington Post* is kind of different from *The New York Times*, so the sort of integration of solutions should be pretty different. For instance, I was talking to Tom Kennedy a while ago, and he was saying basically what Jim Brady said, like, "We don't need to go through and through again four years and again in another four years with the same issues." So, shouldn't people that are taking, you know, giving the orders or putting the money in like really realize how to engage in the whole embracing the new medium and take advantage of the whole potential they have on their newsrooms and actually make some people there accommodated to a certain function? Work more into, you know, different things. And again, returning to the first question, should we have a common solution for really different companies and newspapers?

**Jim Brady:** I'll repeat what I said earlier. I think every company has got to make its own call on how to structure. I don't think there is a right answer. I

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

think... I don't think anybody on this panel has done it the same way. And I think that's fine. You know, there's... This problem extends to so much of online media. Everything is stated in such definitives, and almost nothing is actually that definitive. "People don't read long stories." Yeah, actually do if they're good stories. There's a lot of [that]. I think, you know, we kind of get into these like there's a right or wrong answer, and there just isn't, I think. We've all got to... You've got to look at who you have. You've got to look at the skill sets you have in your newsroom. You have to look at the history of that newsroom, what its audience is, what you want the audience to be, then you've got to make decisions. I don't know what else to say. I just repeat what I said earlier.

**Dwight Silverman (The Houston Chronicle, USA):** Dwight Silverman. We have integrated at *The Chronicle* and have kind of been going through phases of it, and we're pretty much there now. And one of the interesting things that we've found is that... I was on the web team in 2000 and have been with it when it was just — when it was separated. And what we found is that when you hand off a lot of the decision making of kind of how the web — what you're going to put on the web and how you're going to deal with stories on the web, you see the editors who now have charge of it, who are normally in charge of print sections and so forth, making the mistakes that we made years ago. And you kind of have to bite your tongue sometimes and let them do it. Obviously, if it's going to be calamitous, you step in. But it is a... That's kind of the toughest thing, I think, is you end up kind of spreading the web responsibility across other departments. You know, you're losing some expertise in that case.

**Fred Zipp:** Yes.

**Question:** Okay. Well, I want to know more about the print product. I like the comparison between the waterfall and the bottle of water. How to keep that excitement to the print product when you already see all the updates the day before in the website? What can keep the excitement in the print product? How? What kind of print product do you imagine?

**Torry Pedersen:** Very good question. First of all, I think that we just publish five percent of the stories in the paper on the web. Most U.S. papers put everything they have in the paper on the web. I mean, the web should be different from the newspaper. If there isn't, there is no incentive to buy the paper. So that's an important thing. You cannot take all the stories from your paper and put it on the web, because then it will erode your business model totally. The other thing is that I think that here we are talking a lot about twittering and news that is happening. There's a lot of structures going on in society which is still very, very good coverage journalistically in the newspapers. You should even probably put more efforts into that. And if the web, which is very fast and quick and raw, is telling you *what* happened, the newspaper should probably tell you *why* it happened and the consequence of the happening. What will be the political...? What will happen politically? What

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

will happen in the government? All that sort of thing. So it has to... If you have the same brand as *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and all of us here, has both in paper and online, you have to try to differentiate the products to keep the paper alive as long as possible, because digital will continue to grow and analog will continue to decline. That's more or less an axiom.

**Question:** Given that statement and some of the comments, I'm curious if the perspective was the web and the newspaper aren't products, they are distribution channels, if your perspective would be different on, are they, quote, "different?" It's striking to me that at *The New York Times*, the audience that you've built on your website; yet, I think if I calculated it right, it's maybe seven percent of the editorial resources are dedicated to what they call the web. And is that a strategy that's going to win for [you] if all your resources keep going into the declining part? And should you even look at it as two different parts, or should you just look at it as two distribution channels that you maximize the efficiency of each of them?

**Sewell Chan:** The latter is correct actually, and I hope I made that clear. Maybe I didn't make that clear enough, but I don't — the number of producers was just the number of people who sort of whose sole duties are to push content onto the web, but they are not... We never broke it out like *The Washington Post*. I mean, if I'm not mistaken, you had separate like reporters who actually worked for an online newsroom. Didn't you, sort of?

**Jim Brady:** A few, not a ton.

**Sewell Chan:** A few, but not a ton. We... I mean, yeah, I think increasingly it's seen as we're content gatherers for all different platforms. And I think that's one of the challenges though, because it's not probably just web and print. It's also mobile, social media, and sort of what I alluded to about, you know, even twittering becoming perhaps itself another channel or platform to distribute content.

**Jim Brady:** Just if I could add one thing to that, too, though. Another structure that a lot of people have toyed around with is the idea of creating like a news gathering — a central news gathering team who produces journalism, and then they are product owners of online and print who then take that and distribute it. I think there's a flaw in that theory too, which is that the people at the heart of that can produce journalism for print and for online just simply, easily. It is very different. It may be that print and online can both handle a well written story, but we have some reporters at *The Post* who picked up shooting video really quickly and we have others who in the middle of a video shot turned the camera sideways because they didn't realize you couldn't do that with a video camera. [laughter] So, I mean, you get all different ranges of people in all this, so you really can't have a central team that's going to produce journalism for all platforms, because the journalism itself is different in all those platforms. So I think that model is a

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

little problematic too. But I think the part that — the one thing that I think everybody knows but hasn't really been said yet on the panel is, a lot of the structural decisions at a lot of newspapers that have been made have not been made for strategic reasons, they've been made for financial reasons. We have to have less people in the newsroom, and if we have separate print and web newsrooms, and if we have to have less people, we have to get rid of that separation. So I think that's probably in some ways the biggest problem or the biggest kind of regret I have about seeing all these newsrooms merge is, I don't know that they've been merged for the right reasons. I think they've been merged because they've had to merge. And I think when you get boxed into that corner, the likelihood that you're going to come up with the right structure goes down dramatically.

**Fred Zipp:** Well, let's say that you're exactly right there, that these mergers, this integration is taking place primarily for financial reason. How can this integrated organization then make sure that the decisions about audience building on the web are being made by the people who actually understand the web? What's the way to do that? Any thoughts on that?

**Anthony Moor:** Well, I want to chime in there. Because I think that the key is first to understand that the audience building is your primary function, and I think right now we are still only struggling with that even in newsrooms, in that we aren't sure who our audience is in either medium. We have surveys and things we do, but for instance, our Sports Department, you know, we produce Cowboys coverage that is second to none, and it's obviously just the world can't get enough coverage of the Dallas Cowboys football team. But the question is, how valuable is that to *The Dallas Morning News* from a financial perspective? What I can tell you is that from the audience perspective, it's really, really valuable. And so the Sports Department is struggling with this question of, should we be devoting more resources to this if we're not actually monetizing the audience that we're bringing in? What's our responsibility here? And there's a schizophrenia right now in our news organization about that very question.

**Fred Zipp:** Who wins?

**Anthony Moor:** Well, I mean, we all just work for the shareholders, I guess, but I think that short-term concerns have overtaken longer-term strategic — a longer-term strategic view. Part of that is exacerbated by the fact that there is no clear longer-term strategic view that provides a clear path to a future, which is to say that we believe that by growing your audience and serving your audience really well, you will — a business model will follow, and it's not yet clear to the news organizations that the business model that follows can support all the work we put into it. So I do think that, you know, there is still a little schizophrenia in these newsrooms, and that's part of the reason that we, you know, aren't as effective at integration as we should be.

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

**Question:** In the age of YouTube and other on-demand video, I wonder if the panelists could speak briefly about what you see as the future for local TV and network news? I mean, who's going to be really tuning in at six and ten anymore?

**Jim Brady:** You're the TV guy.

**Anthony Moor:** He has to answer that. You have to answer that in a politic way, right, John?

**Jonathan Dube:** Well, I'm not in local TV. Anthony used to work in local TV. For those of you who don't know, Anthony used to be a television star.

**Anthony Moor:** Years ago.

**Jonathan Dube:** What are your thoughts?

**Anthony Moor:** I don't have any. It's been such a long time ago. [laughter] You have tons of affiliates, don't you?

**Jonathan Dube:** We do. I mean, I guess, I mean...

**Anthony Moor:** You going to cut them out?

**Jonathan Dube:** Are we going to...?

**Anthony Moor:** Are you going to cut them out? I think that's the question. What's the future of local TV if everything is distributed on the web?

**Jim Brady:** I guess I would just say that I have never worked in local TV, but I'm not shy about expressing opinions on which I have no background for. [laughter] So I'll just go ahead and do it anyway. I mean, I think they'll succeed if they adapt. The same way newspapers will succeed if they adapt. I mean, if they depend on producing a six o'clock and eleven o'clock newscast every day and don't focus on anything else, they'll probably die. But if they look at ways to get their, you know, the journalism they produce to people on whatever platform and whatever device at whatever time they want it, that may produce enough additional revenue to keep those newscasts alive, but they're going to have to change obviously, because the ubiquity of video is, I mean, it's unbelievable how that's picked up. So I can't imagine they're going to survive if they stay the way they've been doing things for a long time; although, I know a lot of them are trying a lot of those things. I don't know how successful they've been. That's where my expertise ends. In fact, I didn't have any to begin with. [laughter]

**Jonathan Dube:** Yeah, I mean, I agree. I think there's, you know, the local market, I think, has... There's tremendous ad revenue in the local markets, and I think it's simply a question of how to tap into that. I'm not sure that

## **2009: International Symposium on Online Journalism**

anyone has fully figured out sort of a local online model that really works. And so I think that the... You know, I think that probably applies across the board as to what is the local model and how local broadcasters would be able to tackle that. I don't know that. I think it's probably more similar to some degree in terms of what local newspapers are facing than what our organization is, because the way we work is very different from what a local broadcast does. I know we have a very different audience.

**Fred Zipp:** All right. Thank you to the panelists for this insight.

[Applause.]