

**Day 1, April 21, 2017: Afternoon Session – 4:55-6:15 p.m.**

***Video Everywhere:  
From Live Coverage to VR, 360, and Other Innovative Formats***

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**Chair: R. B. Brenner, Director, UT Austin School of Journalism**

- **Ethar El-Katatney**, Executive Producer, **AJ+**
  - **Micah Gelman**, Senior Editor, Director of Editorial Video, **Washington Post**
  - **Robert Hernandez**, Associate Professor of Professional Practice, **University of Southern California**
  - **(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng**, Senior Operation Director, **Caixin.com, China**
  - **Shaheryar Popalzai**, International Knight Fellow, **ICFJ, Pakistan**
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**Ethar El-Katatney:** Good afternoon, everybody. I'm actually really amazed that everybody is still here. It's 5:00. So, if you have glasses, you kind of notice the yellow and black, and not to name any names, but it has been used a couple of days today, that is our yellow and black. For those who don't know AJ+, we do video. We do video online. We do lots and lots of video. I'm gonna just focus today on all the—what really—why our video really works. What we're most known for is short video, between 45-90 seconds long. Text on screen tells the news of the world. We do... We tied with The New York Times recently at the O&A for Excellence in Digital Journalism. We get about a quarter-billion views a month, and we produce about 100 videos a week, and we live on your social stream.

Let me start by showing what all the other kinds of videos are [that] we do. I'll use two of my precious minutes.

[Video plays.]

*Woman: To the girl on Facebook who comment #AllLivesMatter.*

*Reporter: Folks in the U.S. and around the world have watched Ferguson, Missouri in shock.*

*Crowd Chants: Carefree. Hands up. Carefree. Hands up. Carefree. Hands up.*

*Man: I can't breathe!*

*Officer: Take it easy!*

*Man: I can't breathe!*

*Officer: Sir, calm down. OK?*

*Reporter: We're now at Hegyeshalom Station in Hungary, and these hundreds of refugees—they've been on this road since September 5<sup>th</sup>. It's now September 15<sup>th</sup>.*

*Reporter: We're here in New Orleans, and it's been ten years since Hurricane Katrina.*

*Reporter: California's largest inland body of water used to cover where I'm standing.*

*Reporter: We're in Paris, where world leaders of the UN Climate Conference....*

*Reporter: So we were just visiting the solemn center that you were living in, and people were pretty upset when they saw our cameras. Can you tell us why?*

*Reporter: We're with the man himself—Jon Stewart!  
Jon Stewart: You have to carry that in a fanny pack?*

*Reporter: We made it to the state house in the capital of Columbia where the Confederate flag flies. Is the South more racist?  
Man: The South ain't racist, no.*

*Reporter: [Spanish.]*

*Woman: Strangers lie three times within the first ten minutes of meeting each other.*

*Woman: These days, it's a lot easier and takes fewer people to spy on one person or spy on everyone for that matter.*

*Man: You know, everybody loves your neighborhood teacher, but no one wants to pony up to pay us a salary where we can survive.*

*Woman: You don't have to feel anything really. You feel very non to any emotion.*

*Man: My father was deported when I was in 10<sup>th</sup> grade.*

*President Trump: ...running as a Republican because....*

*Reporter: So as a billionaire and as part of the 1%, how can you possibly represent, let alone relate to, the remaining 99% of America?*

*President Trump: The people I relate to most is the middle class.*

*Reporter: Socialism is a dirty word in American politics. It's logged at presidents to try and tear them down and used by outsiders to set them apart.*

*Woman: Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey!*

*Man: If you put your name on this, they're going to destroy you.*

[End of video.]

**Ethar El-Katatney:** Looks really cool. Very cool. So, I've been with AJ+.... [Applause.] I've been with AJ+ for almost four years now. We launched two-and-a-half years ago. We're consistently the most watched in the world. So the day, for example, Trump was elected, that week we were the second most watched piece of content in the world, which is kind of incredible when you think about it. We're this small team based in San Francisco.

So, here is our secret. I gave it all away. Innovation. Audience first. And platform-specific content. So, a lot of people ask us, what about your content? What makes it? A lot of people actually watch us. A) They don't actually know we're owned by Al Jazeera. I think a lot of people in the audience probably, if you knew AJ+, would think the same.

This is how we're split up into various teams. And each team focuses on a very different kind of content and how we create them. But it really all comes down to two things. You have to be very, very, very responsive to everything that comes up. Every single week, I get something new—VR, AR. "Let's try this." "You need to learn how to use a drone camera." "You need to try this new format, this new animator, this new tool, this new bot." And it is very overwhelming. We originally tried to do everything, and then that kind of failed. So, you kind of have to focus on what are your key strengths [and] what you're doing well. And you have to be very creative and not be afraid to fail.

So, these are literally, I just started writing, and I'm like, I'm only going to fill in one slide, because we've kind of experimented with everything. Every kind of format. Vine. Rest in peace. That was our first. Really difficult. What do you do in a vine? Like Japan says, "No more wailing." That was kind of it. That was the story. Facebook Live. We've had some of our most popular successes. Kind of during the presidential debate, we did like this counter every time Hillary's emails were mentioned, every time Trump blamed someone else, every time he said something. That was super popular. One of our new formats, Direct From, where these are the longer three-part series, where we sent our producer.

So, that video you saw, those are actually—really, they're very much a commitment that we don't typically do. When we began, we were very short form. It was a lot of Reuters, a lot of AP. But then, obviously, as we've grown—we're two-and-a-half-years old now—we're experimenting with more and more.

So, audience first. This, I really liked today, we did mention conversational journalism. We mentioned our tone. And all of these are things that we've learned why they're super important. Because our engagement is through the roof. And that's actually our major metric for success. People talk a lot about views. They talk a lot about shares. We talk about Facebook, the algorithm. All the same conversations, I'm sure, a lot of you have been having over and over again, because we've been having them for years. But once we decided that engagement

was our most important metric and that kind of shaped all the decisions we were making.... (I'm trying to find, where are my minutes? I've got time? OK, cool.) So find out who your audience is. Who are you speaking to?

So, we originally started with—our focus was U.S. millennials, age 18 to 35, and we're all quickly growing out of that target market, which is kind of scary. But once you do, where are they? What are they interested in? Demographics. Psychographics. All of the normal.

You have to engage them. So, engaging, it's a very.... That was what the research panel today talked about [was] audience engagement. And those are always the job titles that are very like, what exactly do they do? Do they moderate comments? Do they answer messages? Do they cultivate relationships? Do they divert conversation? The reality is they kind of do everything. But the most important thing is listening to them.

We have Slack bots that query things from our app from Zen Desk. We have.... We get our pitches of stories through our messages. You would be amazed at how many stories we get just through our messages. "Why are you covering these protests in Romania? Here's what's happening in my country. We need you to cover this." And part of what we struggle with a lot, especially as this kind of two-way conversation is what our role is, and I'm sure a lot of you have the same, which is you write a story and people are like, "How can we help?" Right? I mean, it's immediately in the comment section. Do we include the Go Fund Me link? Do you include...? Especially as an organization that has a tone.

And I think that's one thing which does make AJ+ very unique. It's very clear who we stand for. Someone mentioned today that objectivity is kind of dead. I don't know if I 100% disagree, but I do agree that once it's clear what you stand for in an organization.... AJ+ is very much about minorities, voice of the voiceless, standing up for people we know are being played by systems, and once you know that, it's very easy to produce for your audience.

Just a quick graph from last month. I wouldn't call these our competitors, but mostly people who kind of cover stories that we do. So as you'll see, even though our interaction rate or engagement is always through the roof, so now this would be the closest kind of production to us, but we consistently have more engagement than pretty much anybody else even though we produce the least amount of content.

So, it really isn't about how much you produce. Our team is tiny. You would be amazed at how small the editorial team is. So, we produce about half the content that anyone else does, but we still.... So, if you look, see, this is just in March. But we still do really great.

Shares. We have our own engagement score. It's really important for you to know, what do you value more? Do you value shares? Do you value likes? Comments? Views? Totally wouldn't recommend the views. We optimize for shares. And based

on that, how are you creating your content to make sure people will share it? Why are you creating it? What's the tone of it? And why is it shareable?

And then this, platform specific, is we're on all these platforms. We don't actually have a website, which a lot of people find really creepy. They're like, "Oh, my god, where can we consume your content?" I'm like, "Well, you just see it in your feed." And that's really how it works for us. But that means you have to optimize the content for every platform. And then obviously you enter the normal discussions of, "Oh, my god, Facebook owns us!" We hate them. We love them. It's like an abusive relationship.

So, you ask, "Who is your user? Where are we doing?" Most of our audience comes on mobile. And obviously, Facebook is our biggest distribution platform. We were one of the very first people to optimize video for sound off by adding subtitles, and that created a huge shift in how people consume our content. Because when you think of where you watch video, you watch it on your train. You watch it, you know, on your phone, and you're not usually going to have speakers on.

You have to think of very short attention spans. We had a five-second rule, and that quickly changed to a three-second rule of capturing our audience in the first three seconds. How you optimize thumbnails. What you include first in your story. Is it shareable? What's the retention rate? How do you keep the users on the platform? Because obviously Facebook doesn't want you to go anywhere.

Just very briefly, we're optimized for the experience. Short format. Our yellow and black has obviously become everywhere, which is fine, but it just means that you consistently have to innovate. And you consistently have to be like, "Where do we go next?" If Reuters itself is packaging their stories into formats that are optimized, then how can you just reversion that same Reuter's package? Because you can't always do 100% original content.

And then Twitter. We do a lot of... Our Twitter actually is very fun. I love our Twitter audience. It has a lot more tone, a lot more gifs, of gifs, however it's pronounced now. We do a lot of coverage of breaking news, of light events. We do a lot of raw, Sean Spicer said to Bashar al-Assad or Hitler or etc., etc. Those are very shareable, very timely, and they're very fast.

Our Trump tracker is doing supremely great. This is something we launched. The plan was originally just for the first, like, couple of weeks. We got thousands and thousands of people subscribing, which is basically just, "What did Trump do today?" It's doing great.

YouTube is a whole different kind of monster. (The stop is not yet? No? It's kind of stop now? All right. I just have one more last thing.) So, YouTube we're doing a much more longer format and obviously that needs a very different kind of experience.

But my last kind of message is, there's so much to go into the video of what we do, but really the core of it, what it goes back to, is really your story that you're telling. You know, it doesn't matter how boring the story seems. It doesn't matter which country it's from. We get so many messages from people who are like, "We're amazed that you covered this story from Ghana, from Ethiopia, and you're doing all this coverage." It's really about finding the human element, finding what connects us, and finding, how do you make the story shareable to you, who watch the story? Someone mentioned today about biases and how, like, you look at the things that really matter to you. And one way we have figured out making you care about the stories is finding how that connects to you on a human element.

And that's it.

**Micah Gelman:** Today, I'm going to talk specifically about what we're doing with live and the lessons we've learned—for a year on Facebook Live, not that we started doing live with Facebook. It's really kind of changed our approach. And the reasons why we do live. So first, a little bit of recap of what we've been doing. Like, I'm on the video team, so a video is always better.

[Video plays.]

*Reporter: Now, they're throwing a stun grenade right now. No! There's a stun grenade right there. That's a stun grenade thrown right, right into a group of people.*

*Anna Fifield: From Pyongyang, North Korea, I'm Anna Fifield.*

*Reporter: We're here to really walk you through this remarkable presidential debate.*

*Libby Casey: So, we're really at the center of the action here.*

*Libby Casey: Hi. I'm Libby Casey with The Washington Post on Capitol Hill with reporter Mike DeBonis, who's covering Congress and specifically watching the fate of the healthcare bill.*

*Bill Murray: When you look out that window, you can see the monument and memorial. And it actually gives you goosebumps.*

*Weatherman: This is a major storm affecting the entire Interstate 95 corridor from D.C. to Boston.*

*Reporter: Right from the get-go, you knew this was going to be a different kind of debate, because they stood by each other, and they did not shake hands. They barely made eye contact.*

*Libby Casey: I'm Libby Casey with The Washington Post. I'm with Ed O'Keefe with The Washington Post and Senator Joe Manchin, Democrat, of West Virginia.*

*Ed O’Keefe: José Villarreal at the Trump party there. I see the red hats around, the Make America Great Again hats.*

*José Villarreal: The voters have spoken. He has been elected President of the United States.*

*Reporter: We are going to check in with our colleague, Abby Phillip, who’s standing by at the White House.*

*Reporter: I also heard them say at the luncheon earlier today that Mattis was straight out of central casting.*

*Dalton Bennett: There’s been a large group of black, black protestors that were marching.*

*Reporter: I see folks running. We’ll look into what that is. Our.... There we go. There’s a live view.*

*Reporter: There’s a live view.*

*Reporter: Some kind of—looks like there was something there in Franklin Square Park.*

*Ben Terris: Interesting.*

*Man: We’ve got a fire burning in our country, man. That’s right.*

*Ben Terris: Uh, “We, uh, we have a fire burning in our country,” he said.*

*Ed O’Keefe: So on behalf of Abby Phillip, José Villarreal, the entire political reporting staff of The Washington Post, I’m Ed O’Keefe.*

*Elise Viebeck: And I’m Elise Viebeck. Thank you.*

*Ed O’Keefe: Thank you for joining us, yeah. Good night.*

*Elise: Good night.*

[End of video.]

**Michal Gelman:** So, I do recommend that if you’re going to do a live inauguration coverage, you have a riot break out right outside of your studios, because it’s very convenient. So, why do we do live? [Video playing on screen as he talks.] Well, we do it for the immediacy. There are.... As good and as fast as you will be with video, you can’t be as fast as live. So, this was Libby Casey, who’s one of our political reporters on Capitol Hill, during the healthcare debate just a few weeks ago. This is Congressman Meadows coming out to talk. You know, we could turn that around quickly, but we won’t be able to turn it around as fast as you could watch it live. There’s impact. You know, when you go to someone like Senator Franken and talk to him, the opportunity to do it live and to have that audience—not just Facebook, but we do on our site as well—is really an attractive thing for the audience. And then, it really gives us an opportunity to do deep dives. David Fahrenthold and Steve Ginsburg, you know, could talk frequently during the whole reporting that David was doing this year about why they were pursuing a certain line of interest.

[Video stops.] You know, this is the opportunity for reporters to get, you know, into the weeds a little bit. And they actually respond to it and they like that opportunity.

So, a few lessons of what we've learned over the—over the last year of doing this. Real news does real well. Also, go there. So, we have, you know, very nice studios at The Post. We're very lucky to have that. I get really mad when we do a lot of that, because we should be out on the scene showing you something. Some of our top most watched live events this year were, obviously, the inauguration, about the women's march the day after. You know, when you're on the scene of news, you have much more impact.

It's not a broadcast. We're not trying to be TV. Some of the things we do, you know, have those conventions, but it's not a one-way communication in the way that a broadcast is. We want reader feedback. We want the comments. We want to be able to respond to that in real time. At the same time, you have to have an adult in that room. Show the commenters on Facebook that you are there and you're responding and you're keeping the trolls to a minimum, and then everybody has a much better experience.

Also, when I say it's not a broadcast, you know, we've had really good cases where you've had someone like Dana Milbank, who is a political opinion writer for us, actually change the direction of the story he was going to write based on questions that came from viewers.

Know your audience. Don't try to put, you know, don't try to put things that your audience may not be responsive to down the funnel. You know, we had a celebrity we thought would be great. Terrell Owens was doing something crazy. Not a celebrity, but maybe C level. You know, that's not what our audience wanted. So, you have to make sure that you are programming to the people who, you know, come to you.

And as I said, live is a sweetener. Al Franken [was] much more willing to come to us, because he had the opportunity to be unfiltered and to be live. And it's a sweetener for the reporters who are also able to, you know, get the instant feedback on their work.

Real quick, some of the tools that we use for live. You know, we want to make sure that we're using the right tool for the right platform. The live view or Dejero or TVU is a really great bonded cell phone package. For a more broadcast feel, the DJI Osmo works very well with a cell phone camera. The Mivo is good in some situations; although, you have to be very careful with the Mivo. If everyone saw the Breitbart Sean Spicer interview on Facebook Live from a few weeks ago, where like nobody was looking at the camera right, it was very, very painful. That was done with the Mivo.

So, what's next for us? [Video plays as he talks.] You know, after a year of Facebook Live, we're going to do less moving forward, but we're going to be more focused. We're going to take the lessons that we've learned from there to more

platforms. We are doing live today on Apple TV, on Roku, on Fire TV, on YouTube. It's given us a real opportunity to kind of show our users that when they come to us, we're going to have it live. They don't necessarily need to turn on CNN or MSNBC. And we're creating, as I said, creating the expectation for our users that when you're—when something important is happening, we'll have it. [Video stops.]

And then real quick, I wanted to talk to you a little bit about what else we're doing this year. We're very lucky. The video team started this year at 40 people at The Washington Post. We'll end this year at 70. So, we're adding much more folks to do breaking news, enterprise storytelling, motion graphics, immersive 360 video storytelling, personalities, subscribed content, too, which will be a little bit of a departure for The Washington Post. That has the possibility of a lot of excitement. It also has the possibility of getting me fired. [laughter] And we're going to be adding to our opinion. So, thanks.

**Robert Hernandez:** [Speaks Spanish at first.] [Laughter.] So, I'm starting off the conference. You've got to Google it, Google Translate, get a bot, catch up with that joke. [Laughter.] I'm starting off our incredible panel with kind of setting the table. It's time. It's time. This is my third time speaking at ISOJ, and I spoke in 2015. And as I was preparing for these slides, there's a similar theme that I'm been talking about for a while. And I usually have about three or four slides that are my standard slides. This one is one where I usually ask [for] audience participation to point out how we've just adopted technology at a faster rate. There's a bot for that. We're going to do a bot. I'm Team Mystic now. I'm Team Mystic throwing pokey balls at an augmented reality place. We're just adopting technology at a faster rate than ever before. It's not good or bad. It just is.

We see that evolution in technology, where a computer has gone from a mainframe computer to a desktop to a laptop to our smartphones and to our bodies, right? That's the evolution you see with other technologies. Smaller, cheaper, faster, more features.

We also have this stat, which is—I don't know how many years old it is now, but it's 91% of Americans have their mobile device within arm's reach 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is international. This isn't just American. And 91%, I think, is pessimistic. Raise your hand if you were awakened by your cell phone as your alarm clock today. Right? It's the first thing you look at when you wake up. It's the last thing you look at when you go to sleep. And somehow we're still married. This is our reality, right? These are slides that I used in 2015.

But the narrative is, well, if we continue to understand mobile, mobile first, the evolution of technology, the adoption rate, well, we're not done iterating with these form factors. So, the question is, what is next? Right? When I first talked about this, it was Google Blast. No, it wasn't. But my premise has been for a few years—augmented reality, virtual reality, mixed reality—whatever term you want to use—that is coming. That is coming.

And I said this during a talk at NICAR in 2015 that VR is for reals for reals. And I brought that slide up when I gave my talk in 2015, and here's a photo of me saying, "It's for reals for reals," two years ago. But this was the landscape of head-mounted displays and cameras. This is the landscape now. It has exploded in every which way or form from low-end to high-end production, from video to CG 3D, to consumption, whether it's head-mounted displays using the Oculus Rift or HTC Vive or something low-end like the Google Cardboard or the View Master. It's just that whole spectrum of immersive content being produced.

This is a slide from 2015, where I showed a couple of examples. These are the brands that are doing non-fiction journalism, non-fiction storytelling, immersive storytelling now. And they keep growing and growing and growing.

Get these apps. These are, again, a lot of leading developers. And again, I could keep adding more apps to them. For those who heard the announcement, as well in addition to journalism organizations producing, it's being backed by the infrastructure with Facebook and YouTube. And Vimeo announced during South By Southwest. Facebook is announcing a push into augmented reality. We'll see how real that is. They're developing cameras, a whole ecosystem, probably because they want an ROI on their investment to Oculus.

If you want more information, I have a tip sheet that I routinely update. I'm due to give it another refresh. It's a good way to find out the latest prices on cameras, software, where to start, and some other resources.

Since I spoke about this two years ago, lots of things have happened. Journalism 360 has launched, which is a partnership between the Google News Lab, the Knight Foundation, and the Online News Association. Their first iteration is giving grants out. Several hundred from around the world have applied to get access to these grants. The mission of Journalism 360 is to advance, develop, and support immersive journalism in our newsrooms.

Another thing that I've done with—I have to give it a shout out, because Rosenthal told me I was going to do it, and you don't say no to Rosenthal ever—was a MOOC, Intro to Immersive Journalism. I did a class for the Journalism in the Americas that just concluded, and that was pretty successful.

On a personal note, I am launching Immersive Shooter with some colleagues, launching at NAV next week, where we're going to be covering the emerging community of cameras, hardware, software for immersive journalists, for content creators, of the community, for the community.

And then the point of stuff that we've developed a lot is *journalism*—now a trademark. It's journalism but with a 'v' instead of a 'u.' It's projects that my students and I have done, where we worked with ProPublica and the Texas Tribune, The New York Times, NPR, covering the inauguration, covering some investigations. Currently, we're working with The Desert Sun doing a piece about the salt and sea. We have an app that you can download in IOS and in Android.

But what's next, right? I talked about this a couple of years ago. And sure, I've done—caught you up on some stuff. Snapchat Spectacles, that was kind of neat. It's happening right now. But we may have heard about Magic Leap, which has been talked about for some time. [Video plays as he talks.] A half-billion-dollar—essentially from Google. Is it hype? Is it real? We just retweeted an article about light fields. This is the technology that you need to keep your eye out for. Just to kind of give you context, that didn't just magically happen. In theory, every one of those kids has these glasses [on], has a head-mounted display. Will we get to that reality? We'll find out.

This is another piece of technology I want you to be aware of—photogrammetry and videogrammetry. This is getting actual people in that cylinder. You see that kind of green-screen room there. And the cameras start recording them and create not an artist rendering, but an accurate rendition of who they are. A hologram, if you will. These are Maori guys doing a chant. And that's them. This is from HoloLens. This is the future that's happening now.

This is Kenny. Kenny was an inmate from solitary confinement. He's featured in a story, in a partnership between Frontline and Emblematic, which is Nonny de la Pena's outfit doing immersive journalism. They brought Kenny into this studio. And he talked about his life in solitary confinement. Their piece just released. You can actually see it on their website and through Facebook, where they scanned in the solitary [confinement cell]. That's not a photo. That's not a photo up there. That is a scan of the solitary confinement cell that they put you in, and you share that space with Kenny, as he tells you about his life in solitary confinement. You hold space. You hold presence with Kenny. That future is here.

This is another thing that I saw recently. I saw this ad and video about this harness that it's a full bodysuit that allows you to interact with the virtual world. And I saw that and I thought, this is bullshit! [laughter] Then I got contacted by the company, and [they] said, "Would you like to come do a demo?" And like, "Yeah, I'll do a demo!" [laughter] It's not a full bodysuit, but they have this magic box you put your hand in. Their first iteration is probably going to be a glove. And with air pressure, you feel the virtual world. Here I am feeling a spider on my hand.

[Video plays.]

*Robert: [laughs]*

*Man: Don't move.*

*Robert: Oh, fuck! [laughs]*

[Video continues as he talks.]

Yeah. I felt an apple. I felt a ketchup bottle. It felt like it was in my hand. And that creepy spider, when they put its legs at me, it scared the crap out of me. A whole bunch of nope.

[Video stops.]

So, that's happening. So, the question is, with all these technologies, what is this new form of journalism? Our panelists are going to talk about that, but the bottom line is, a good story is a good story. And the way that we get it, regardless of media or form factor, a good story is a good story. And how do we get there? We're going to have to experiment. We're going to have to practice. And we're going to have to fail.

As you go out in this space and venture and experiment, just because you produce, does not mean you have to publish. I'm going to say that again. Just because you produce the bot or an immersive experience, doesn't mean you have to publish, because it may not be good enough yet. But it's time. It's time for us to lead the next disruption.

Cool. Thank you, guys.

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** So, hello, ISOJ.

**Audience:** Hello.

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** Greetings from China. So, I understand that my name and the pronunciation of my organization is too complicated in English. So I actually have offered people a Mexican alternative that will show up, up there. That's why I'm called Sanchez, basically. [laughter]

**Man:** Thank you. Thank you.

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** But no, the truth is, I like football, so... So in terms of when we are talking about how people are adopting and consuming video in China, technically, it's not that different from all of our peers who are doing it in the U.S. or other parts of the world. We are... The Chinese entertainment media and the news media are really trying to catch up to be on the same page. So, here's a reporting on our national congress, you know, sessions. Some of the news are really struggling to deal with this, and they came out with this, you know, tremendously big gear. Of course, it's not operated by this lady, but by this reporter, who's carrying this 15-kilo, you know, gear and walking around. I'll explain a little bit later why the need [for] something that complicated to, you know, report a congress session.

So, basically, this is part of the things that we did back in 2014. It's a documentary about what we do in the newsroom. So, will it play? Sorry. It doesn't matter if it doesn't play. I'll just skip it. That's not the fanciest video I want to show. So, anyway.

So, basically, what we do in VR or AR or 360 and everything else is—I can't add more things here than my colleagues hear have already said. So, what I'm trying to [do] here of more value is be exotic. So, [I'll] tell you more about the market in

China and how it is working itself out, because obviously here's some numbers of the Chinese market. Everybody owns a phone. Everybody uses it everywhere they travel. And here are the numbers. If it comes to numbers, you know, you know what China's will be like. We're a standalone market, big enough. We have 400-million 4G phone users and growing. It's a big market itself.

And very importantly, we don't really have the presence of these sadly. [Logos of YouTube, Facebook, Netflix and ESPN.] So, without these giants, actually, the Chinese market has grown its own champions, but it's more complicated. It's kind of crowded. And we don't have a dominant in any of the fields. I'm going to show you that actually these guys want to be a lot of those on the right at the same time. [Logos of several Chinese companies.] So, they try to be everything in China. And they try to be dominant, but they couldn't, but they're still burning money to try to be that. And those are just part of the competition. There are still startups that are trying to take up things.

In terms of live video, well, it's another story that obviously you have three major [apps], as I understand, I'm not sure if it is correct, but in China—[audience reacts to slide showing Facebook Live, Periscope, and YouTube Live on the left and 80 Chinese apps on the right]—that's basically some of the major apps who's trying to be dominant in terms of livestream platform, not just having livestream functions, but they want to be platforms. And I'm sure, basically, half of them will die at the end of this year or early next year, but still, we've still got 10 or 20 of them, you know, still burning money out of it.

And also in China, we have these large niche markets that I would doubt whether we should call it niche markets in terms of how big they are. And these niche markets [are] very interesting. They all have their own, you know,—they serve a layer of the Chinese audience that's very unique, and they try to grow based on that. So, this one called bilibili is basically they started with attracting, you know, nerds and gamers, for a start, but now they have 30-million active users. And I would hardly call that a niche market, but still, we categorize them in the niche market.

So, there is another interesting one, this one. It's called Quick Hand in translation. And it basically serves immigrant workers who work in the urban area and also the suburban part of China, the farmers and the bulldozer drivers working on the fields. All these people, they formed this community to share short clips of their daily life. And they have very interesting stuff, like, eating noodles, you know, livestreaming, [laughter], and they have very.... They claim that they have 80-million active users now.

So, this one is more easier. It's celebrities and celebrity wannabes trying to be beautiful in front of a screen. And this is a niche market.

So, it's a very complicated thing if you want to fit news video, you want video journalism to have a place in these kind of platforms. While you want to be on most of the major platforms here, but that means a lot of money, because you have to

upload it to tons of different platforms, and you only have so much manpower. And you have to fit with all the different formats and the requests that they have. And some of them cannot simply be done by machine. Sometimes you have to put the site on some of the logos or you have to take out the ads and everything. So, it cost a lot of money.

And you want to be the first to report on breaking news. That makes a lot of money. That means a lot of money spent. And people are trying to make, you know, longer form of the news video. That means longer than 10 or 15 minutes, so you can put longer ads in the front and back of it. But that means a lot of money for the production, obviously.

And you try to stand out between the fierce competition, not only with, you know, news media, but also with the entertainment or other forms of clips that people are just simply producing for fun. You are really competing with them on all these platforms. So, that means a lot of money and a lot of starts.

So, here's what we are trying—we tried and are trying to do. So, one important thing in reporting breaking news is that you really want to put amateur videos up there, because they are the first place. They are there with a phone, and your correspondent is not. So obviously, you want to put all these amateur videos within your context, and you want to be very quick to publish that. And then you follow up with your professional produced videos.

So, here's a take of that. [Video plays. He narrates as it plays.] So, this is an explosion in Tianjin Port, which is a massive destruction. And we put maps and some of the tags illustrations together with amateur videos showing where the explosion happened. You can't get those materials when you don't have a reporter directly on the scene. That's a shockwave after the blast. [Video stops. Another video plays. He continues narrating.] OK. Then after that, we came up—our reporters come in and with drones, just fly over the zone and see how the destruction is looking like. That's another destruction. Those are new cars ready to be sold. This could be a great AR or VR or 360 video, but we are not really allowed to get into that zone, so the drone flyover is what you can do. [Video stops.]

So, either you will be there, or you are equipped with good tools. So, you are late, but you have very good production. But then we came up with this thinking and possibility. What if we can combine both? So, there is this thing [that] happened in 2015, when there is a hotel attack in Mali, and there are three Chinese involved, so the public attention is high in China. So, here's what happened. This guy is a Chinese merchant [who] works in Mali for several years. And the counterterrorist forces, asks his help to fly a drone over the hotel to check if there are any terrorists hiding on the roof. So, they don't have equipment, but this merchant has. And he happens to be in contact with us. So, we were thinking, what if we...? We're already making him kind of a correspondent there, and he can provide great content over there. So, that's what we actually did.

With our incubator, we have a startup that is now having a lot of correspondents all over the world in many locations. So, they have a little bit of proper training. They are not journalists, but they can provide this video. Well, God bless that video. It's still not that easy to forge. So, people tend to trust video more even if... This is actually what... It's not playing again? OK. That's a video that we did with the Moscow protests. And the people in China tend to comment a lot on that, because they think the video is authentic and they don't really trust the text reporting, you know, Bandi reporters coming back from Russia, oddly.

So, one last thing. I'm short of time. One last thing I want to share with you is, I'm not sure if it's innovation but, again, this platform bilibili. They have a technique that is first to be initiated in Japan by this site nikoniko. That means—what they call it is a barrage of comments over video. So, I'll show you how, but... This one is not playable again? Sadly. Sorry. I think you have to play that one or people won't get the idea of how that works. This is the farewell speech by Barack Obama. And actually, it caught a lot of attention in China. But I never realized that people on bilibili, who used to serve only nerds and geeks, would have so much—they created so much content and comments on U.S. politics and, you know, on comparison between China and the U.S. and everything. Just with the format of flying over. You can just look at that and feel the zeal of people.

[Video plays.]

*Barack Obama: ...on these streets are a witness of the power of faith and the quiet dignity of working people...*

This is real time, so people insert when they are hearing something or watching something. They just type in the comments over there.

*Barack Obama: I can't do that.*

And people are chanting, "Four more years," and then they were just, you know, typing out "four more years" over that. You know?

[Video stops.]

And they are actually debating with each other whether the U.S. presidency system is good or not, on whether we should care about U.S. politics, on talking about Chinese politics. I'm not sure how that will go off in later stages, but it's an interesting thing to watch, whether it will be a platform of civic communication and, you know, the involvement of Chinese in politics. I'm not sure, but that's a way to do it—maybe.

Thank you very much.

**Shaheryar Popalzai:** Hi, guys. I'd like to apologize for quite possibly the ugliest looking presentation you're going to be seeing today. I didn't have a lot of time to prepare for this. So, yeah. So, just to get started, my name is Shaheryar Popalzai.

I'm Knight Fellow and not promoting the unicorn Frappuccino, [points at his blue hair; laughter], like Ethar mentioned earlier. So, what I do is I work with multiple newsrooms in Pakistan. And up to three years back, we've been looking at newsrooms in Europe and the U.S. as benchmarks.

But unfortunately, like most people here, we don't have the luxury of having a lot of funds. Our management didn't allow us to do too much. So, we kind of.... When I got in the fellowship, what I did was I went back in the newsrooms and had them look at how we can turn around interactive projects and innovative projects in shorter times and with little to no cost. So, I worked with three media partners. Two of them are newspapers, and one of them is the biggest news channel in Pakistan. And I'm talking about The Tribune and Geo Today.

Facebook Live first. We started working on Facebook Live last year around April. Our initial approach was like pretty much everybody is sending a reporter out into the field and, you know, just reporting on what's there and on the ground. But then what we did was, we decided to give the viewers at Geo News a behind-the-scenes look at what happens in the studio. And we put a smartphone inside the studio and had the newscasters read the headlines at roughly six p.m., which is a good time. And weirdly enough, that is the video that worked out really well for them. And it crossed a million mark, and we still don't know why.

Then just to expand on that, Geo News was sold. Like I mentioned, we got reporters to go out in the field. And since Geo News was a TV channel, and much like my colleague at The Post said, it's not broadcast, but since this was a TV channel, it is broadcast for them. And what they started doing was, they started porting the exact same TV feed from television to Facebook Live in breaking news situations. And initially, what we were doing was, we were pushing out maybe one Facebook video every two days. And when our frequency increased to five to six a day, the viewership went, like, up insanely. And so, we decided to expand on the breaking news situation with the porting to Facebook Live. And what we did was, we got the clean feeds from the satellite vans in the field and started porting those to Facebook Live. And once again, that started doing pretty well for them.

So, what we did was, we made Facebook Live a part of the daily workflow. So, they would come into work, and they see a breaking news situation happening. They have to port it to Facebook and embed it on their website. So, what that helps them do is, it gives the readers who are sitting on the website a much better picture of what's happening on the scene.

And moving on from beyond that, what they started doing was, they started creating shows just for Facebook Live. And what that helped them do is, content that wasn't doing pretty good for them or wasn't doing well enough for them, it started doing well. For example, health does fairly well, but since they started doing shows designed just for Facebook Live on health, it's done insanely well for them.

And the best part about this was, they didn't spend any money to buy equipment. They had already started giving out mobile kits to the reporters, so we had that.

But what we did was, we made the most of the in-house studio and all the cameras and equipment they had inside. So, like I mentioned, little or no cost. So, Geo did not have to spend any money and management was sold on this. That's why it was easy for them to go big.

So out of the top 50 videos between April last year and April this year, 21 of them were Facebook Live videos for all of the content. And then, like I mentioned, the U.S. has been a benchmark for us as well. AJ+ was one of them. So, they started to replicate the shorter video with the text placed over it, and those videos were doing pretty well. So, they started doing Facebook Live. And like I mentioned, 21 out of 50 was a pretty big number for us.

And they managed to cross the million mark twice. One, like I mentioned, was the live video of the anchors, which is the picture right here. I'm not going to play it, because it's pretty boring. The content by then was nothing. It was after six p.m. The headline they were reading [was] nothing important that happened that day. There was no breaking news. It wasn't a big news day either. So, we, like, it just went big. We're guessing it's the first time that Geo had done a Facebook Live video.

The second video that crossed a million mark... I mean, I don't know the numbers in the U.S., but these were pretty big numbers for us back home. The second was a broadcast straight from television, like I mentioned. Pretty much like this, where the tickers were on top, so they didn't even get a clean feed in, just to make the most of the time available to them.

What has worked really well for us in Pakistan on Facebook Live is the breaking news, like I mentioned. Just porting straight from television. Not even having a reporter in the field. People tend to watch those videos a lot less than they do with like the TV feed. Headlines do really well. So, what they started doing was, initially, we'd go with the nine [a.m.] in the morning, a three p.m. in the afternoon, six p.m. and nine p.m. at night again. Like, we'd just run five-to-eight minutes of the headlines, and that started doing pretty well.

Sports does amazingly well. We don't have fancy sets available to us, so what we normally do is, Cricket is big in Pakistan. We started out by—so, like, we've done TV. China would get done with an analysis show. We'd pull the anchor and the analyst into a board meeting room with a really dirty wall at the back, but that did not make any difference. People interacted a lot. The comments would come in. The numbers went up. So, again, we didn't have any fancy setup but it did fairly well. Food and health do really well. Food is a great topic in Pakistan. We have some of the most amazing food in the world. So, it does pretty well.

Like I mentioned, we work in an environment that doesn't allow the luxury to experiment with things. So when we do pick up a technology, we have to make it work no matter what. 360 is one of those cases for us. When we started out... (Can we load up the videos, please?) When we started out, we went for the video roughly three minutes long with a reporter talking. (It's the second link, not the

first link. Thank you.) So, we sent—or I went out with a reporter. We shot a video at a shrine. It's a fun video I like to show people. But this didn't work out for us, much like it does in the U.S. Like, people, most news organizations are doing 360 video, but that doesn't work for us as well [as] it does over here. And I'm going to show you what works for us right after this video. [Talks to the guy trying to play the video. Unable to play video.]

So, well, it's on Facebook. And there's no way we can work it, because I have the factor authentication on. [Talks to the guy again. Trying again.] Well, anyway, I'll just talk about what worked out for us. So, what we decided to do was, we decided to build in-depth projects around 360 images and videos. We'd go in, we'd pick a story, and we'd shoot multiple scenes. And we'd put those up and isolate our package. And those do a lot better than videos for us. And we design it in a way where we'd have video.... Oh, started it up.

[Video plays. He narrates as it plays.]

This was a shrine that has 100 crocodiles, and people believe they have holy powers. So, they visit them every...[stops talking as video plays] (So, this will be okay. Yeah, that's fine.) [Video stops.] So, this didn't work well for us. The content was great, but the format wasn't for us. So, we decided to drop shorter videos and work on in-depth packages. (Can you load up the second one? The third one. No, the third video. That's right, the third link.)

So, this is a format that does really well for us, and pretty much all media houses in Pakistan, or the three top ones have adopted this. (Can you hit 'begin'? Click on it 'begin.' Yeah.) So, what we do is, we have some text, and then we have multiple scenes from a site. This is Karachi's biggest slum. And we decided to go in and cover it, because it's on the way to private beaches in Karachi, and the elite pass by this area recently, but they don't know what goes on inside. So, we felt this was an important story to tell. (And can you click on the second one? The marketplace, yeah.)

[Video plays as he talks.]

So, we shot video. And so, the best part about doing 360 in Pakistan is the quality of the video doesn't matter. This was shot with a \_\_\_\_\_ and the quality is really muddy, but that doesn't make a difference. It's the content that mattered for us at the end of the day. And what we did was, we didn't place any text over this or make the text prominent in the package of the story, because we felt the visual should be the real story, and we shouldn't be force feeding the story to the readers. (Can you hit...? Yeah) So, we put some text and images to give people a much better picture of what is going on in there, instead of dumping text on there or having voiceovers or just, you know, overloading them with more information. (Can you go back to the presentation?)

[Video stops.]

So, yeah, that worked out for us fairly well. And once we started doing more of these bigger projects, we managed to get our hands on more cameras and started experimenting, got more cameras. But again, the numbers were pretty much the same, decently high. So like I mentioned, it wasn't the quality of the video that mattered. It was the content at the end of the day. And again, in a market like Pakistan, that does really well for us.

So, yeah, like I mentioned, and like pretty much everybody else mentioned today, it's the content and not your platform or the format of what you're doing it in. In-depth stories have worked out really well for us, like I mentioned. And again, keeping visual and text separate inside pretty much everything we do. The plug-ins for putting text on 360 video, again, are expensive, so we can't convince the management to buy them. We tried to go the easy route by placing it in the center, so that didn't work out, so we went with keeping text separate and letting the visual tell the story instead.

What has worked for us is virtual tours, specifically, of historical places. Those do really well, because they're placing people in a place where they can't be or they're not visiting enough. Food, like I mentioned, again, does really well. We shot an in-depth package on a food, \_\_\_\_\_, and we put shorter clips on Facebook just to lead people to that main project, and those did really well for us. And people love watching food being cooked. And if it's free food, that does really well.

And shorter videos. And by shorter videos, I mean, not like the one that I showed you, but much, much shorter. So, I was with the reporters in the field, and there was a bus accident, and we put a camera in front of the bus with people standing there. This was roughly a 30-40 second clip. And it got 75,000 views in five minutes. So, and we had no text, no voiceovers, and a simple caption that said, "Bus accident in Karachi," and that's it. So, the visual told the story and not the text in itself.

And that's about it from my end.

### **Q&A Session:**

**R.B. Brenner:** So, Micah, I can't let it pass without asking you more about scripted journalism. What is it? And what are you thinking?

**Michael Gelman:** So, we've had our heads down in the news for as long as I've been there. And so, we saw a lot of our peers having a little bit more fun, and I think we have that opportunity, too. It'll be under the opinions umbrella, but, you know, I think that there's an opportunity for us to do short satirical, topical storytelling.

**R.B. Brenner:** All of you, one common denominator was a lot of people doing a lot of things and experiment. Some working, some not. Let's talk about the implications for the journalists on your teams, because it kind of raises the issues of specialization [and] expertise versus doing a lot of things and versatility. Ethar, why

don't you start and talk about how you think about it, and then I'll just let others jump in.

**Ethar El-Katatney:** Kind of like cramming for an exam every day that you have nothing about. You've never even opened a book about [it]. It's hard having a lot of different.... We're a very, very diverse newsroom, and that's in terms of entrance, gender, age, everything, and I think where we come from, the backgrounds, and that's really helped create a very niche kind of [newsroom]. In terms of the stories we cover, we don't really have beats, but there really is definitely a distinction between people who do short-form or do longer form, just because they are very different. Doing a three-hour story is very different [than] doing a three-week story. People rotate. They move from like team to team if they want to. Some people don't want to. Being very fluid really helps, according to people's passions, their interests, and also where they come from. If they come from The Guardian and six-year background, it's very different than, you know, a 23-year-old right out of college who just wants to dive in and learn everything. So, being flexible is really what helps it.

**Micah Gelman:** So, we've taken the video team, and we've embedded them across the newsroom. So, if you're a politics video editor or a reporter, you're sitting with the politics team. If you're, you know, doing style, you're sitting with the style team. So, we want them to be experts. We want them to build those relationships across the newsroom. It's really important for the video folks to show that they're on equal footing as the rest of the journalists. And that's how good stories happen, and that's how we're ahead of them, versus having, you know, a group of people who are sitting in a room just kind of taking the next thing off the assembly line.

**R.B. Brenner:** Sanchez, you had at least two, I believe, pretty powerful images of the use of drone video. But it made me wonder, in China, what's the restrictions? How is the government thinking about journalists and drone video? Because potentially it's giving you access to places you might not otherwise get.

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** Well, luckily, as of now, in terms of these emergency situations, especially the breaking news, they are not really aware of trying to block, you know, video shots from drones. And we own.... Well, in Shenzhen, they have the biggest commercial drone manufacturer in the world—DJI. So we've got a lot of people who try to play around with this. Not just video journalists, not just professionals, but a lot of, you know, amateurs, you know, who were trying to fly things all over. And I would think that—I would argue that in China we have a very big traditional newsroom, so not everybody is well equipped with video journalist skills. We only have like less than 10 video journalists, but we're encouraging all the journalists or some of the correspondents that we have overseas to get a command with simple tools, smartphones, and those drones that are easy to command, you know, to control, and try to create content out of their, you know, own chances, whenever they have the chance to, you know, get a shoot.

And in China, my observation is that people really don't care about—that much about the quality of, you know, video journalism as long as they want to see the actual situation. And sometimes they just like these videos where people are running around and bumping, and they say they would consider that to be more real than all of the steady shots. So, that's the take in China.

**R.B. Brenner:** Mm-hmm. Robert, thinking about the spider and just sort of build VR, whether it's build VR or VR that has sort of haptic or other kind of sensory things, take time. And I think one of the reasons we've seen more 360 video right now versus more build VR is just the speed.

**Robert Hernandez:** The speed, yeah.

**R.B. Brenner:** Talk about what's going to be the key for newsrooms or journalism schools saying, "It's worth it to focus more on the built than 360 video."

**Robert Hernandez:** That's actually why I mentioned the photogrammetry and the videogrammetry. If we wanted to do a CG, you know, computer graphic 3D model-based experience, we'd have to hire 3D artists, and most newsrooms don't have them, to build and create those models. But with photogrammetry, I can take a series of photos of an object, run it through a program for free, and it spits out a model that potentially.... You know, if I'm telling the story of this room and I had these particular chairs, we're journalists, these are these particular chairs, not just a regular chair.

**Ethar El-Katatney:** Uncomfortable chairs.

**Robert Hernandez:** What's that?

**Ethar El-Katatney:** These are uncomfortable chairs.

[Laughter.]

**Robert Hernandez:** They are awkward. I'm kind of leaning forward.

**Ethar El-Katatney:** Just saying.

**Robert Hernandez:** That would be the accurate part of the story. But that's something that unlocks potentially with that. And we used that. We did one. We did a piece called Hell and High Water with ProPublica about the Houston ship channel. And one big moment there is about a storm surge that would generate a 30-foot wall of water. And as journalists, we try to show and tell kind of thing. We try to get you to think about, well, what's 30 feet feel like? It's like so-and-so or as tall as a giraffe. Well, with CD graphics, I can use that to create that moment to give you that sense of scale [of] the 30-foot wall of water about to hit a house. But to get to that, it took us some time. But it was the students.

Kind of like you talked about your newsroom. The magic really in my class isn't the technology, but it's letting those students follow their passions and problem solve and given the freedom to experiment and to try the stuff. Hopefully, there are more newsrooms that embrace that approach to give them that runway and that trust to do the journalism with those tools.

**Ethar El-Katatney:** I would also add onto that, that part of the difficulty that we didn't really touch upon is actually convincing newsrooms that these are legitimate investments, especially if they are things that are very new or very complicated or where the return on investment isn't.... You know, why do we need to do this? This is expensive. This is time consuming.

**Robert Hernandez:** Yeah.

**Ethar El-Katatney:** When it was already such.... Especially for those of us who come from legacy organizations, to even make the move into digital, let alone be like, "Well, look at these really cool tools." And they're like, "Well, you have a video. That's enough. Just keep doing what you're doing."

**Robert Hernandez:** Yeah. That's multimedia, by the way. Video is....

**Ethar El-Katatney:** "That's enough." Right?

**Robert Hernandez:** Well, I was going to.... Actually, care if I ask a question? I was going to ask you both about that. Like, how do you guys decide, okay, Alexa is now worthwhile to build something in CG or VR or MR? Like, how do you...? What's the threshold that you look for? How long before you're like, "It didn't work out," and move onto the next thing?

**Micah Gelman:** Well, I think we jump quickly. I mean, we want to jump quickly on new technology to understand what the opportunity is, what the learning [is that] we would need to do. I think we're probably just as quick to decide whether something is not worth pursuing. I mean, all the things we've talked about today—Alexa, VR, AR—those are all things that we feel like have running room and we'll continue to experiment on [them]. But our view is we'd much rather jump and figure it out, and we, fortunately, have the ability to do that, [rather] than to say, you know, "Nah."

**Ethar El Katatney:** Yeah.

**R.B. Brenner:** I'm going to go to a question here.

**Jonathan Groves:** I'm Jonathan Groves from Drury University. Thanks for the inspirational stories and pushing us to experiment. That's definitely what we want to be doing in our classrooms. I was just curious, many of you mentioned Facebook, Facebook Live, Facebook video, and I was just curious how deep the viewing experience you found from your audience, in terms of what percentage or

auto play, what percentage are without sound, and what's the drop-off rate that you see from people?

**Micah Gelman:** You're the Facebook guys.

**Ethar El-Katatney:** It really.... We are very much. It really depends how long a video is. When you talk about retention rate, we typically are around 80% of our audience watch with sound off. When we experiment with things like vertical video, that changes a little bit, because you need to kind of click in to watch it. Or when we place like a 'better with sound' bug, all those kind of things. Or we do an experiment with audio testimonies, like a couple of weeks ago, with sarin attacks in Syria, we had just audio testimonies. So, kind of experimenting with, well, how about we just animate text and use photos? So, those will have different kind of rates. Retention on one-minute videos is typically if we have up to 30% of people watching at least 40% of the video, we consider that kind of a success. For a longer video, two-minute videos, the drop-off rate is usually about 15% into the video.

Auto-play, we do have a percentage of people who turn off auto-play, but that's also because we have a lot of graphic stories. We are a newsroom, and we've never shied away from that. You know, we cover the world, and the world is horrible. So, regardless of how many "warning—graphic," a lot of people do turn off auto-play.

But yes, retention, we've never really taken views as very big, because as you've all see [on] Facebook, every couple of months they come out and they're like, "Oh, we're really sorry. The metrics are really screwed up." So, we've never really taken views; although, they're great. You know, it'd be like, oh, well, our average video gets—we have a big sign in our office which shows like five-mil on a slow day. The average video gets half-a-million views, if that's the kind of benchmark, but much better than that is if it gets over 10,000 shares, that's for us, and we've had up to a million shares.

**R.B. Brenner:** I'm going to start with Shaheryar on this, but also ask all of you, and it's the question of, you talked about people being forgiving about quality if it's the right moment, the right thing. But I also think there's a flipside to that, which particularly in the age of a lot of amateur video, you know, one of the things that's going to distinguish professional journalism from that is quality. So, can all of you talk about that balance between...?

**Shaheryar Popalzai:** One of the reasons that's working out right now is because Facebook and YouTube both compress the video so much that it doesn't really matter if you're shooting in 4K. I mean, we never really bothered about investing in expensive equipment because, one, it's a waste of money. I mean, unless you're putting up an installation somewhere and giving someone a headset, that's different, and not many people own a cardboard or a headset. So, it's kind of, again, obviously money. Too, smaller cameras work out because you're working in areas where you might need to run. I mean, pretty much in the U.S., you might need to bounce immediately, so like running off with a big rig and a big battery is just not on.... That's why the biggest pretty much is the Facebook and YouTube

compression. You can shoot in 4K. It's not going to matter at the end of the day. So....

**Ethar El-Katatney:** Yeah, though, it really does make a difference. It's just so pretty. [laughter] We do a lot. So, our newsroom, for a normal news story, we use a lot of user-generated content. We use agencies such as Storyful and that kind of content. That's where when the urgency of the news—that's where you don't really care about the visuals, because you're watching graphics. But for another really successful part of AJ+, which is our VJ department, our video journalists, we work on commission. We use Story Hunter. And we have these beautiful stories that are shot from all over the world, and they are usually human stories, human solutions to human problems. They are much more feature stories, I guess, would be the typical. And they're usually shot using traditional equipment. And they're just very, very visual. And that's one of the criteria to choose these stories, so it does make a difference.

**Shaheryar Popalzai:** Definitely, I agree with that. If you're featuring documentaries, you want the....

**Ethar El-Katatney:** Yeah. And it depends on the platform. So, Facebook, yes, much so, but also for YouTube. For our docs, we have docs which are eight minutes, which is crazy. When I think I used to watch like PBS or Frontline, it was like an hour. And now it's like eight minutes, oh, too much time. [laughter] But those are also using equipment. So, it depends also how much you've invested into it or what the tale of your story is. Do you want the story to be relevant a year from now, or is it just a story that's a news story for the day?

**Micah Gelman:** You talked about producing specifically for the platform. I mean, the experience you want or you're getting while you're standing in line for coffee in the morning on your phone is very different than the experience you want when you're sitting on your couch at night with a 50- or 65-inch television. So, you know, we're very cognizant of making sure we're producing the right thing for the right platform at the right time. And we're not trying to force an 8- or 12-minute documentary into your morning, you know, coffee routine, but we also know that, you know, a one-minute text on the screen is not really the experience you want when you're sitting at home at night. So, you know, it's the reason we're growing or we've had to grow is because it's not a one-size fits all thing. You can't publish once and expect it's going to work everywhere; although, I think at one point we were hopeful of that many years ago.

**R.B. Brenner:** Sanchez?

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** The Moscow protest video that was unable to play, actually, kind of illustrated my point that, in terms of international reporting, especially in the China scene, for every Chinese to understand, you know, international affairs through video, it's very important that you have professional explanation of the situation. And there are translation issues. So, you can't, you know, simply have an amateur, you know, a tourist, go into Paris and report on a

terrorist attack or any of the events that's happening over there. So, here, you need professional skills, at least language skills. You need correspondents that may not be journalists, but people who understand how journalism works, how explanation works. They are still shooting with phones and, you know, with bumping videos, but they have this illustration [of] the audio added into the video. That is really the augmented value of the video that the amateur videos wouldn't be able to compete [with].

**R.B. Brenner:** Right.

**Man:** Yes. This question is for Sanchez. We hear a lot about the restrictions on especially on media and online in China. We hear about Facebook being blocked, hear about YouTube being blocked, which is why China has their own local versions of these websites. And my question for you is, in your experience, is the regulation by the government, is it affecting the speed at which these technologies are being embraced? And if not, is it affecting these technologies in any other way, the use of them, within mainland China?

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** Well, actually, for this question, sadly not. Actually, because of the absence of all the international competition, actually, this company, you know, they have a lot of domestic market share, and they are actually getting more and more VC money and all these kind of things. And they are not really out of touch with all the new technology that's happening in the U.S. or anywhere else. So, they are bringing in the technologies. And they have a somewhat protected market, you know, market competition position. So, you can see, if you are really living in China, in many of the ways that technology has been innovation and, you know, all these kind of daily life appliances, it's actually growing very fast. I would argue it's maybe not as—maybe as fast as the U.S., if not faster. That's my argument. If you look at one example that some of the U.S. media has been reporting, that the Chinese version of Facebook Messenger, that's WeChat, actually, is having a lot of very good features and is very good use even for many of the foreigners living in China. They would consider that WeChat is much more functional and a better app than many of its competitors in the West.

**Man:** So, it has not affected the embrace of the technologies by the public?

**(Sanchez) Wang Jiapeng:** Not at all ... sadly.

**R.B. Brenner:** Great. We are at time. Please join me in thanking our panelists.

[Applause.]